

Headline	Country's flora has not been fully documented: FRIM		
MediaTitle	Daily Express (KK)		
Date	04 Aug 2023	Color	Black/white
Section	Nation	Circulation	25,055
Page No	4	Readership	75,165
Language	English	ArticleSize	136 cm ²
Journalist	N/A	AdValue	RM 289
Frequency	Daily (EM)	PR Value	RM 867



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KUALA LUMPUR: The Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM) will continue its efforts to document the country's flora biodiversity based on scientific knowledge.

It is to enable well-planned conservation and sustainable environmental management by the government and stakeholders, FRIM said in a statement today.

"Basic biological and ecological diversity information, geographic distribution, habitat requirements and conservation status are crucial in this documentation process. These factors will also contribute to the country's development in education, research, agro-food, eco-tourism and other areas," it added.

According to FRIM, until now the country's flora has not been fully documented.

Malaysia stands among the 17 megadiverse countries globally, boasting a diverse and exceptional array of flora and fauna, where 30 per cent or 4,500 of the 15,000

plant species in Malaysia, are considered endemic, indicating that they exist exclusively in specific regions, it added.

Protecting these species is of utmost importance for Malaysia since their extinction here would lead to their global disappearance, FRIM said.

Meanwhile, FRIM announced that the ongoing flora research projects focused on documenting Malaysia's flora, the "Flora of Peninsular Malaysia" and "Tree Flora of Sabah and Sarawak", have received a full commitment from dedicated research teams in the country and collaborative efforts from research institutions and universities worldwide.

Both projects have thoroughly studied and fully documented a total of 2,235 species (or 63.9 per cent) out of 3,500 tree species in Sabah and Sarawak, as well as 1,358 species (or 16.4 per cent) out of 8,300 vascular plant species in Peninsular Malaysia. – Bernama