The Role of Protected Areas in the context of the Malaysia's Vision 2020

Malaysia

- Current population: 30million
- Land Area: 330,803km^2
- GDP Growth Rate: 5.6%
- Per-capita income: USD9,991
- Inflation rate: 1.6
- Incidence of poverty: 1.5%

Source: EPU: The Malaysian Economy in Figures 2013

2020

- The ultimate objective that we should aim for a Malaysia that is a fully developed country by the year 2020.
- We should be a developed country in our own mold.

Mahathir Mohamad, 1993


60%


10.64%

Rich Biodiversity

Tapping the wealth of our biodiversity

NST 22/7/13

MORE COORDINATION: Malaysia needs to rethink its policies if it is to reap the bounty of its natural heritage

EVERYONE agrees there is strength in diversity. But what do we do to tap into this strength? This can be diversity in ethnicity, gender, language, culture and skill, just to name a few.

In an age where multi-disciplinary knowledge is viewed as an asset, countries more able to capitalise on the synergy of diversity are ahead in the race for global competitiveness. In recent years, a branch of diversity which has become a topic of public debate is biodiversity. This is the diversity of life forms, including plants and animals. Many are concerned that through the activities of man, the planet's biodiversity is under serious threat. Unless acted upon soon, this can eventually threaten the survival of man himself.

Biodiversity has often been referred to as the "fabric of life". There is evidence to show that without biodiversity, man will perish. What are we doing then to preserve biodiversity? In the ruthless pursuit of progress, has man compromised the sanctity of biodiversity?

Evidence has also shown that biodiversity offers potential economic benefits to mankind. Such riches can be in the form of compounds that can provide the solutions to man's continuing search for medical therapies to combat new diseases, nutritious food for a growing population and other materials for fuel and energy. How do we extract such wealth without inflicting irreversible destruction to the fragile biodiversity?

Malaysia is one of the twelve mega-biodiversity countries in the world. Such countries are blessed with a diversity of species, flora and fauna, many of which are still unknown. We are in fact the envy of many countries. But what have we done to benefit from such wealth? Do we have a plan?

So far we have launched a number of attempts to study the diversity of the country's untapped resources. The impact has unfortunately been minimal. We need a better coordinated strategy.

Dr Ahmad Ibrahim
Fellow, Academy of Sciences Malaysia

A mega-science study on biodiversity conducted by the Academy of Sciences Malaysia has produced a number of recommendations on how we can get better organised to realise value from the potential wealth in the country's biodiversity.

The study not only addresses the conventional wisdom of conserving biodiversity, but also novel wealth creation opportunities. The aim is to make biodiversity a viable source of the country's income, without of course compromising its richness and its natural ecosystem function. Can we do it?

A number of findings and recommendations have been put forward from the study. First, there is a need to understand how man's activities threaten biodiversity.

Second, we need to determine what treasures lie hidden in our biodiversity through scientific research. Unless we know what we have, it is difficult to plan what we want to extract for potential economic gain.

Adequate funding for such exploratory research is the key to success. It is not unlike the investment oil companies put in exploration.

On the policy front, notwithstanding the existence of more than 40 environment-related rules and regulations in the country, there may still be a need for new rules and regulations to address new and emerging issues.

But we need to ensure proper coordination, consolidation and communication of rules and regulations on biodiversity and its resources between and within different ministries and departments at the federal level and also their state counterparts.

There is no denying the need to revisit the various national plans to ensure they do not contradict sustainable development.

Research on biodiversity should have a balance of basic and applied R&D. We also need to build the appropriate human resource including taxonomists, molecular biologists, biotechnologists, biochemists, and bioinformatics.

If there is a lack of expertise in specific sectors of biodiversity within the country, efforts should be made to source from other countries. It is high time for the country to establish a National Biodiversity Centre along with its National Natural History Institute.

The main task of the centre is to consolidate and coordinate the conservation, the sustainable use and the wealth creation from the biological resources of mega-diverse Malaysia. Only then can we truly tap its riches.

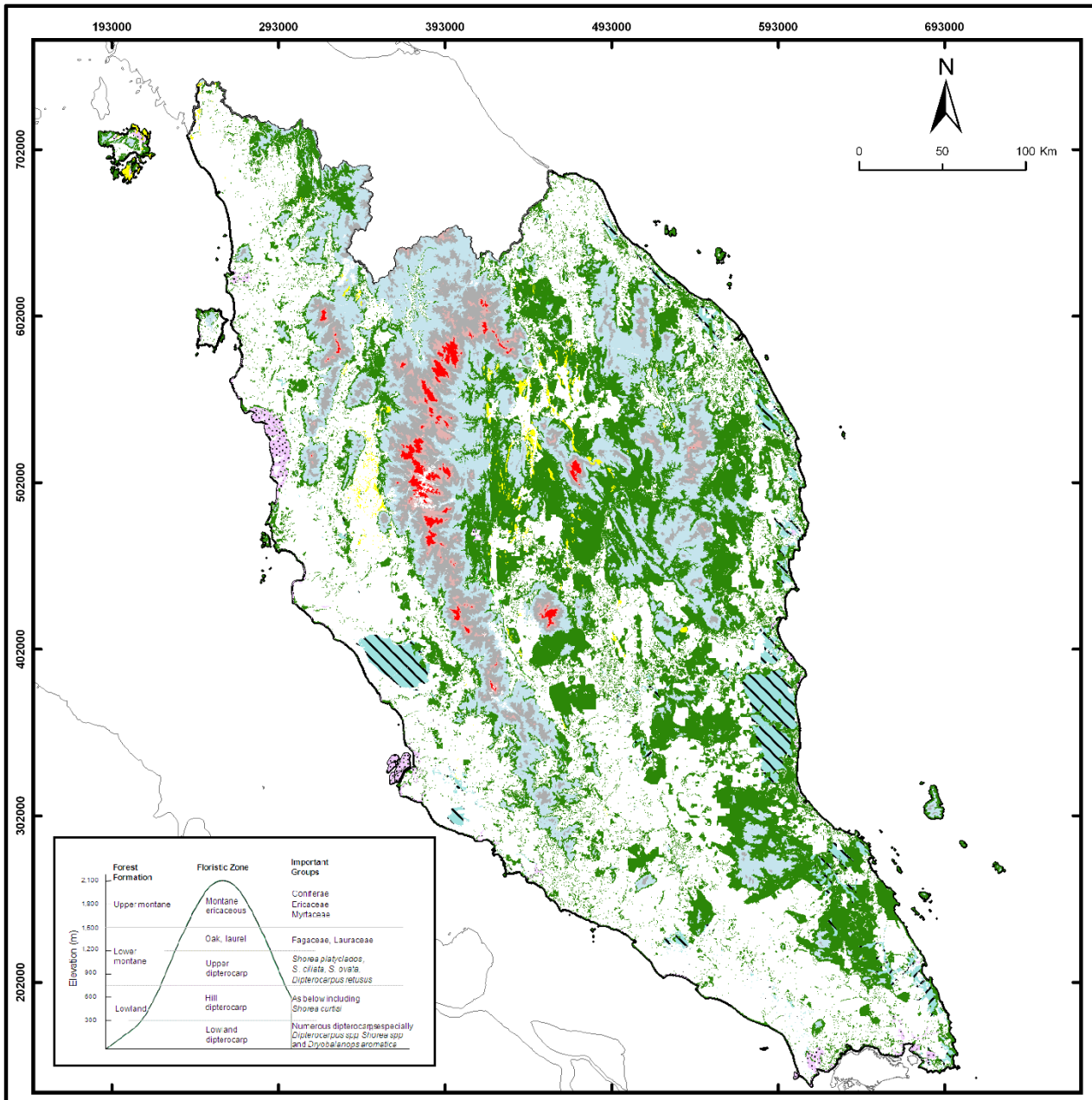
New Economic Model (NEM), 2010

- Malaysia's rich biodiversity can be harnessed to generate economic benefits from tourism, recreation, pharmaceutical applications and nutritional products.

- Building on Malaysia's natural resources and biodiversity is central to strengthening our comparative advantages.

Protected Areas

- Common Vision on Biodiversity, 2009
  - Biodiversity Conservation
- Ecosystem Services
- Wealth Generation
  - Tourism
  - Bioprospecting



Peninsular Malaysia
Main Vegetation Types
2006 Extent

Habitat types	2006 extent (%) 1,000 ha	%
Lowland less than 300 m		
Mangrove	88.3	0.67
Beach vegetation	0.1	0.0008
Freshwater swamp	25.1	0.19
Peat swamp	338.5	2.57
Lowland dipterocarp	3398.0	25.78
Habitat over limestone	60.4	0.46
Habitat over ultra-basic	1.2	0.01
Heath	0.7	0.01
Lowland 300 m - 770 m		
Hill dipterocarp	1938.7	14.71
Lower montane 750 m - 1,300 m		
Lower montane	186.5	1.41
Upper dipterocarp	716.9	5.44
Upper montane > 1,500 m		
Upper montane	73.0	0.55
Peninsular Malaysia	8814.1	100.0

Source Materials:
Department of Agriculture, 2006. Land use 1: 50,000
Symington, C.F., 1974. A forester's manual of dipterocarps. Malayan Forest Records No.16. FRIM

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment NRE

1 October 2009

Source: NH Hamid

HAZE

Water Shortage

Source: Malay mail

Making NEM Sustainable

- Paradigm shift not just a development agenda - well being and sustainability
- Reinvest in Biodiversity
- Conservation & mainstream
  - Including ecosystem services

SOLUTIONS

1. Enhance management of PAs through economic instruments including sustainable financing schemes

2. Creating linkages for Protected Areas

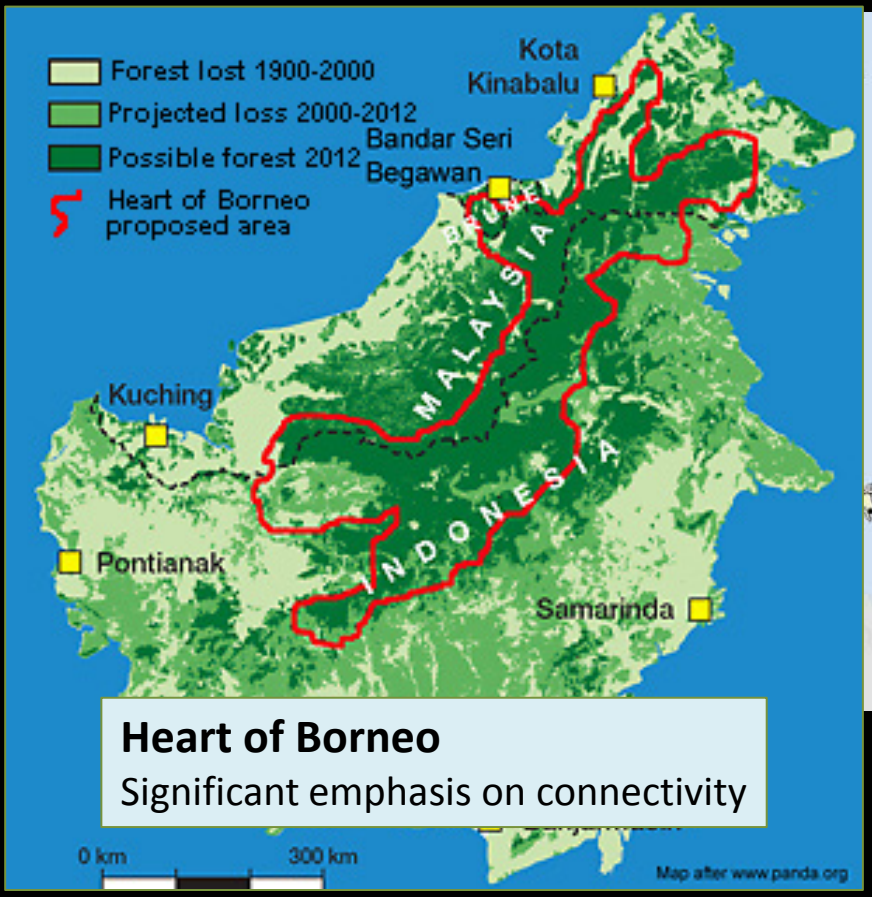
3. Enhance CEPA to Internalize the appreciation of Biodiversity

Solution 1

- Performance Based Financing
  - Increased funding allocation
- Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN)
  - innovative and holistic approach to address the biodiversity finance challenge
  - building a sound business case for increased investment in the management of ecosystems and biodiversity via a bottom up approach
- PES

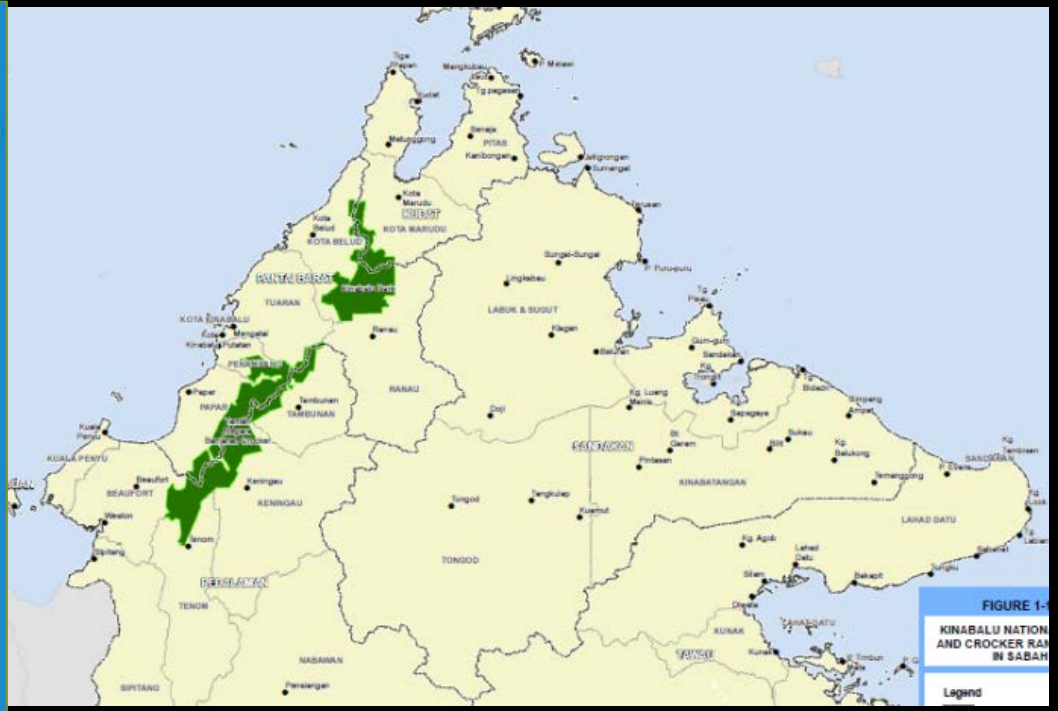
Solution 2

- Central Forest Spine
  - Creating linkages
  - Smart Green Infrastructure
- Kinabalu Ecolinc
  - linking Kinabalu Park and Crocker Range Park
- Heart of Borneo



Heart of Borneo

Significant emphasis on connectivity

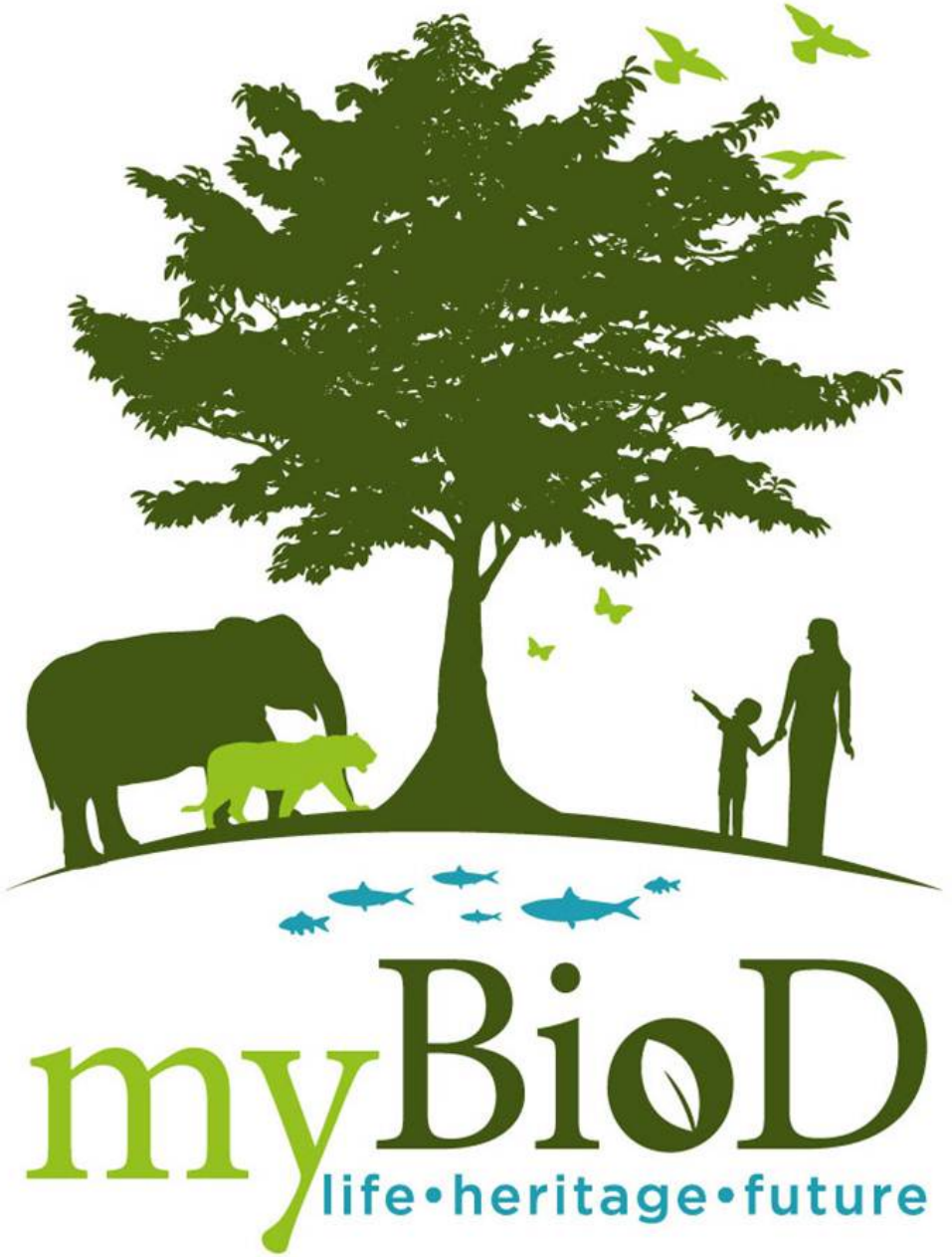


Sabah ECOLINK

Smart Green Infrastructure

Solution 3

- Knowledge, Attitude, Practice
- Branding
- Internalisation



As you sit here…. This goes on in our Protected Areas in Malaysia

Some mornings, while you are at home, office, or school, this is what happens in Malaysian forests

Thank you

Acknowledgement: NRE, UNDP, MEME