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SOCIAL FORESTRY

2006 marks the beginning of the recognition era of social forestry in Sabah. The Federal Government finally recognized that social forestry is an important component in balancing the socio-economic-environmental problems associated with forestry in the State. The various efforts on social forestry by the Sabah Forestry Department since 1984, utilizing various but limited funds of the State Government, eventually received Federal Government financial assistance. A total of RM11.5 million have been approved by the Federal Government for the implementation of various social forestry projects, within the RMK9 period, i.e., 2006-2010. The new social forestry projects have been highlighted last year and the progress in 2006 are described in the following sub-topics.

Joint Forest Management

Mangkuwagu Forest Reserve

The Sabah Forestry Department has initiated a project entitled “Agroforestry Development Project in Mangkuwagu Forest Reserve, Tongod, Sandakan, Sabah” (P23 10800 015) with RM 3 million funding for implementation within RMK9. The ultimate aims are to restore forest cover with a combination of mixed-dipterocarp trees and economic crops, and at the same time enhancing the socio-economic level of the local communities.

Some of the activities carried out through the year include meetings and dialogues with the villagers, renovation of the Mukim Mangkuwagu Forestry Station (March), and maintenance of a dirt road leading to Kg Tampasak and Kg Mangkuwagu (May). Demarcation for agroforestry lots were carried out in September to December. Agroforestry lots allocated for Kg Mangkuwagu is 642.5 ha, Kg Saguon - 360.6 ha and Kg Tampasak Darat - 117.7 ha. The total area set aside for agroforestry is 1,120.8 ha or 13.4 % of the 8,335 ha MFR. Project implementation by DFO Petin Kilou has been running smoothly this year in accordance with the Plan of Operations.

Bengkoka Forest Reserve

This project entitled ‘Social Forestry Pilot Project and Restoring Bengkoka Forest Reserve into Watershed Area’ (P23 10800 007) was allocated RM 4.5 million from the Federal Government. The aim is to restore the FR with suitable mixed-


dipterocarp species with the participation of local communities around the area.

Only preparatory activities were done this year, such as conducting social baseline surveys, ground surveying and mapping, determination of planting strategies and discussion with stakeholders. Seedlings such as Geronggang (*Cratoxylon arborescens*), timber-latex rubber and mixed-dipterocarp species have been ordered from dependable sources.

Another social forestry activity in Bengkoka FR which started in March, is the establishment of an Agroforestry Trial-cum-Demonstration Plot by Dr. Kazuki Miyamoto of the JIRCAS-SFD Agroforestry Research Collaboration Project. The existing plantation trees were used as a nurse-tree to the planted mixed-dipterocarp species, while on the 0.75ha clearings, economic (rubber) and medicinal crops (mengkudu) were inter-planted in rows. Growth & yield data collection from this plot will be done by the Plantation Branch of FRC after the collaboration project terminates in March next year. To support the ongoing RMK9 project, JIRCAS has donated 10,000 mixed-dipterocarp seedlings to the DFO Pitas.

![Design of the SFD-JIRCAS agroforestry model plot.](image)

**Lingkabau Forest Reserve**

Kg Gana is a new settlement established 8 years ago to accommodate 10 hill communities previously living inside or adjacent to Lingkabau FR. In order to stabilize the surrounding forest and the communities, a project entitled ‘Social Forestry Project at Kg Gana, Kota Marudu’ (P23 10800 016) was initiated with a RM 3 million fund.

In 2006, works done were mainly preparatory, such as conducting meetings with the villagers and stakeholders, household surveys, detail planning with relevant government or NGOs in Kota Marudu, and ordering necessary seedlings for enrichment and buffer zone plantings. Other project components such as establishment of woodlots, field plantings and agroforestry activities will be done beginning next year.

**Tamparuli Forest Reserve (TFR)**

Tamparuli FR is a 60 ha Class III (Domestic) forest reserve located only about 2 km from Tamparuli town. The area is hilly and most of the cultivable areas have been encroached by landless local farmers. Some claimed that they have been there for more than 20 years already. There are about 15 households located sporadically inside the FR. The local communities plant annual and perennial crops (particularly rubber, fruit trees and pineapple), and rearing chicken and fishes.

In order to mitigate the problem, a project entitled ‘Restoration of Tamparuli Forest Reserve, Kota Kinabalu through the Agroforestry Approach’ (P23 10800 010) has been designed with the following set of objectives:-

- to reforest the denuded part of the FR with fast growing tree species.
- to integrate the current forest encroacher into the management of TFR through agroforestry approach.
- to protect the steep slopes with forest vegetation to avoid further erosion and land slides.
- to help in the capacity building of the forest encroacher with the intention that they will be able to find better lives outside the FR in the future, especially their younger generation.

The project was approved for implementation during RMK9 and has received RM 1 million funding from the Federal Government. Project components are planting of fast growing tree species (30 ha), integration of pineapples, fish-ponding, apiculture, assistance in marketing of products, construction of site office and control gate, maintenance of gravel road (1.5 km), and purchasing of fire extinguishing equipment, office equipment, machineries and vehicle. However, since funds will only be available next year, only limited activities were done in 2006, such as boundary survey, meeting and dialogue with villagers, determination of site office, mini-nursery and planting areas, determination of suitable reforestation species and its supplier, and discussion and detail planning of agroforestry activities with relevant government agencies.

### Other Projects

**Kelawat Forest Reserve JFM Project**

This JFM model project continued to thrive in balancing ecological needs with the socio-economic needs of the local communities, either at Kg Ponopuan on the hill or Kg. Lapai and Kg. Kelawat down streams. However, in order for the reserve to be gradually turned back into a mixed-dipterocarp forest, as in the original plan, it is high time for the SFD to execute a second round of major enrichment plantings, preferably in 2007.

**Deramakot Forest Reserve (DFR) Social Forestry Committee**

DFR has budgeted RM30,000.00 for social forestry activities in 2006. Among the activities carried out were boundary clearing and planting of trees along the boundary by the local communities, guided tours and meetings of the DFR SF Committee in DFR, regular maintenance of the existing gravity water system and talks and training of preventing and controlling forest fire by DFO Kinabatangan. As a contribution for socio-economic enhancement of the local communities, DFO Mr Subari Suparlan has issued a letter of offer for them to participate in carrying out silvicultural treatment in Tangkulap FR. So far, this committee has succeeded in eliminating tension between the SFD and the local communities, and has provided an opportunity for social forestry development to benefit both parties. This setup is indeed A MODEL for other SFMLA holders to follow.

**Serudong Forest Reserve Social Forestry Committee**

Mr. De Almeida Galima Yukong, Serudong District Forestry Officer has prepared a working paper on the feasibility of supplying fresh and clean gravity water from Serudong Forest Reserve, as an aid to adjacent village of Kg Serudong Laut. After much deliberation, it was finally approved with RM23,000.00 funding from the PPM Trust Fund. The project was scheduled to be implemented in February-April 2007 with the cooperation of Raleigh International. Different from previous gravity water projects, the Serudong project features the need to hang a cable across a logging road and a 50m-width section of Sg Serudong river to support the pipeline. The cable has to be positioned as high as possible to avoid passing vehicles such as logging trucks, tall winch-fitted scows and others. Technical expertise would be sought from the Skyline Unit of Deramakot Forestry Office to install the cable line.
Social Baseline Surveys

In August, the SFM Division had participated in the Baseline Assessment of Ulu Segama–Malua Forest Reserves conducted by GFS (Global Forestry Services Sdn Bhd). In social forestry, assessment was made at several villages adjacent to the forest reserves. Three out of 19 major and minor gaps identified were on social aspects, which have to be rectified by the SFMLA holder – the Sabah Foundation Group.

In October, the SFM Division had engaged several staff of the Pitas DFO to conduct SBS on all villages inside and adjacent to FMU No.2, which consists of Paitan FR and Sugut FR. From a total of 41 potential villages around the FRs, 12 villages were identified inside Paitan FR and 1 in Sugut FR. 11 more villages are located adjacent to the FRs. As an SFMLA holder, the North Borneo Timbers Corporation Sdn. Bhd. would need to consider the best management regime for the approximately 420 households, totaling more than 2200 local people, who unofficially claimed to farm about 2060 ha inside the FMU.

Gana Resettlement & Integrated Development (GRID) Project

Socio-economic Development

Among the major initiatives for socio-economic development was an invitation to several private agencies specializing in long-term economic crops to conduct feasibility studies on oil palm, rubber and wet paddy. In September, FELCRA Berhad presented a development plan which was accepted by the GRID Project Steering Committee, but approval and funds from their higher authorities were yet to be received. The SFD has funded the JBIC-UPEN research on Rural Growth Centre implemented by the Kota Marudu Agriculture Department. Participation from the community in planting and marketing of select vegetables was encouraging. Other initiatives include the establishment of animal farms, cooperatives and the acquisition of official land status for the various types of land uses of Kg Gana.

Infrastructural Development

In general, the infrastructure in the settlement have deteriorated with time. Both roads connecting the village to the town were unreliable, prone to problems such as land slides and mud due to bad weather. Timberwell Berhad, as the Lingkabau FR SFMLA holder had assisted in the maintenance of the road at many occasions. Water shortage has been alleviated with the construction of several gravity water feed systems, but a permanent solution is still needed. Government buildings such as a school, library, clinic and community hall still had to rely on generators for electricity. However, a positive sign in adaptability to the new settlement and self-reliance were observed, when several villagers began renovating, extending or painting their respective houses themselves. Overall, all infrastructure needed as a settlement had been provided, but the conditions would have to be improved. This however, would require huge additional funding.

Human Resource Development

Through strong justification made by Mr Jeflus S Sinajin to the UNDP, the Gana Youth Club, supported by both PACOS and the SFD, has secured a budget amounting to RM175,000.00 from the EU-UNDP Small Grants Programme for Operations to Promote Tropical Forests (SGP PTF). The fund has been used for:-
- creating, managing and conserving community watershed areas and other forest products in sustainable manner.
- increasing the awareness of the community and related government agencies on the importance of community watershed management,
- assisting the community in upgrading their standard of living through various socio-economic activities.
During the year, the Youth Club conducted several coordination meetings with the SFD and PACOS for smooth implementation of its planned activities. This close coordination, and active participation and intervention both from PACOS and the SFD have enhanced the human capacity of Kg Gana.

Other CFDP
The Sugut-Beluran CFDP had finally received an approval from the Office of the Attorney General to continue and complete the construction of 350 houses in Paitan. This would be completed in 2007. The Sugut-Beluran Community Forestry Committee has intensified their efforts to complete the project on time.

The SFD has also received many requests for the maintenance of various PPM houses which were constructed previously. Unfortunately, the SFD rejected all these applications because they are no longer the priority of the Department. Priority of the SFD is on uplifting or enhancing the economic status of the most backward villages or people, within or adjacent to forest reserves, in line with the government’s determination to alleviate poverty.

Social Forestry Collaboration with NGOs

SFD-UNDP-WWF Social Forestry Collaboration Project
This collaboration project took off in June with a small opening ceremony held in Kota Kinabalu. Under the umbrella of the State Economic Planning Unit (UPEN) as the National Execution Agency, Mr Jeflus S Sinajin was appointed as the National Project Director who is responsible to the State Project Steering Committee (SPSC) to provide the overall guidance to the implementation of the project. The Project Management Team is headed by the Project Manager Mr Richard Taumas. The project will produce five key outputs, which are:

- Zonation and protection of multiple use areas within FMU17 in the Forest Management Plan based on a current database of the communities.
- Forest Management and Certification Committee established to ensure community participation.
- Institutional arrangements and the study of the legal framework and options for communities in Forest Reserves.
- Three (3) demonstration sites on community related forestry projects established to improve livelihood in three villages in Mangkuwagu FR.
- Identification of types of cottage industries for women.

Social Forestry Collaboration with NGOs

The official launching of this project, specifically entitled “Promoting Sustainable Use & Conservation of Forest Mangkuwagu Forest Reserve through Capacity Building & Community Forestry” was held on 7th November at Kg Mangkuwagu Community Hall. The launching ceremony was successfully carried out by Dr. Richard Leete, the UNDP Resident Representative for Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei Darussalam. More than 500 local participants attended. About 30 invited guests from Kuala Lumpur, Kota Kinabalu, Tongod District and SFD officers from all over Sabah, including seven reporters attended.

Raleigh International (RI)
The RI Team made their presence twice in Tongod District this year. In February-March, the team, assisted by PACOS and local villagers had successfully constructed a kindergarten for the Kg Soguon community. At the same time, they also repaired the gravity water feed system which was constructed in 2005, also with the involvement of RI. The whole project was funded by Nestle Malaysia. In June-September, a team of 12 staff and venturers were dispatched again to construct another kindergarten at Kg Mangkuwagu, a remote village, which has a shortage of teachers and suitable buildings for its pre-schooling. In both projects, the Tongod DFO Mr Petin

Gana resettlement & Integrated Development (GRID) Project

(1) PSC GRID Meeting at Kg Gana headed by new DO Mr Matius Sator; (2) the DO handing over presents to winners of Village Cleanliness Competition witnessed by DFO Mr Abtah Derti; (3) deteriorated road condition all over the settlement; (4) the village nursery constructed by the EC-UNDP project; (5) Gana Youth Club proudly showing their project t-shirt; and (6) one of the renovated houses.
Kilou and Telupid DFO Mr Arshad Ismail assisted the RI Team by providing vehicles for transporting the team thrice in and out of the village to Telupid after their 3-week stint. Carpenters were sought from the village itself. The Hongkong & Shanghai Bank funded the construction of the much needed kindergarten of Kg Mangkuwagu.

WWF-Malaysia
In order to assist the SFD in the management of Mangkuwagu FR, a community workshop was organized by Ms Linda Edward Giyung and Audrey Lee of WWF-Malaysia on January 26th with the objective of developing a Forest Management & Forest Certification committee from among the communities. The event took place at Kg Soguon Primary School and about 40 people participated. Mr. RA Martin and DFO Mr. Petin Kilou assisted by giving talks and facilitated the workshop.

PACOS Trust
The PACOS Trust has been instrumental in the community development of FMU17B - Mangkuwagu Forest Reserve by facilitating various infrastructural projects such as provision of gravity water feed systems and kindergarten. PACOS was also the backbone of the Gana Youth Club, who had secured quite a sizeable amount of funds from the EU-UNDP SGP-PTF Project for human resource development and watershed conservation project in Kg Gana, Kota Marudu.

JIRCAS
In February, a SFM Division staff attended a 3-week research attachment program in JIRCAS Headquarters, Tsukuba, Japan. The objectives of the program are two- prong, viz: to consult with several JIRCAS, FFPRI, JIFPRO and University of Tokyo scientists who have been working in tropical countries, regarding social forestry aspects for forest rehabilitation in Sabah; and to study the production, processing and marketing of Noni (Morinda citrifolia), which is a potential perennial economic crop for local communities participating in forest rehabilitation.

In order to accomplish the set objectives, comprehensive discussions with several resource persons knowledgeable in respective aspects, personal observations, interviews with key persons and mini-seminars were carried-out in several locations in Japan such as in Tsukuba, Tokyo, Okinawa (Ishigaki & Taketomi), Kyoto, Osaka and Kobe, with the assistance of Mr. Yasuhiro Yokota. As a counterpart to JIRCAS, several reports were produced and presented, such as:


To wind up the 5-year research cooperation project, a seminar on Development and Application of Agroforestry Technology in Sabah was organized on 28th-29th November. A total of 15 papers were presented and discussed among participants from relevant stakeholders on agroforestry in Sabah. It was learnt that the project has established 2 field research plots in Lungmanis and Segaliud-Lokan FRs, and as a showcase to all the efforts, an agroforestry demonstration plot at Bengkoka FR was established.
**JIFPRO**

Resulting from the presentation and discussion made by Mr. R. A. Martin at the JIFPRO (Japan International Forestry Promotion and Cooperation Center) headquarters in Japan, an attempt to get international funding for Bengkoka was facilitated by JIFPRO. Mr. Jefius S Sinajin, the Head of Division has prepared a project proposal entitled - *Forest Restoration and Rehabilitation Project in Bengkoka Forest Reserve*. After much deliberation and a site visit, the potential funding agency - Toyota Corporation of Japan finally chose another project in the Philippines for its financial support, and not Bengkoka.

**JBIC**

In May, the SFD hosted the visit of two JBIC (Japan Bank for International Cooperation) consultants. The JBIC mission was to interview several SFD officers concerning the current effort of the Sabah Government in the utilization of natural resources. This is part of the JBIC mission that is to formulate a new ODA Loan for poverty alleviation in Sabah through sustainable natural resource use.

JBIC activities in Sabah were assisted by the State Economic Planning Unit (SEPU). Later this year, Kg Gana of Kota Marudu has been selected by the Rural Growth Centre Action Committee of SEPU as the agricultural and marketing research site, out of 10 short-listed potential villages across the State. In November, the SFD provided RM35,000.00 to the Agriculture Department of Kota Marudu to implement the research and then report to JBIC & SEPU.

**Advisory Role of the SFM Division to SFM License Agreement Holders**

The SFM Division has continued its role as the advisor to many SFMLAs on the issues of social forestry in their respective areas. There are still several minor conflicts between the SFMLA and local communities, especially where land for farming is scarce. As always, the common conflict resolution technique was to determine the problem, conduct a dialogue and find an amicable win-win solution to all parties.