

NEWSLETTER

SABAH WETLANDS CONSERVATION SOCIETY



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THE CELEBRATION OF WORLD WETLANDS DAY 2020

"Wetlands and Biodiversity" is the theme for World Wetlands Days 2020. Wetlands are rich with biodiversity and are a habitat for a dense variety of plant and animal species. The latest report shows a global decline in biodiversity and wetlands are disappearing three times faster than forests. This year's theme is a unique opportunity to highlight wetland biodiversity, the importance of wetlands and to promote actions to reverse its loss.

In conjunction with World Wetlands Day 2020, Sabah Wetlands Conservation Society (SWCS) celebrated the 20th Anniversary of Kota Kinabalu Wetland. This environmental education center has opened to the public on 1 March 2000 and since its opening, SWCS has welcomed more than 190,000 visitors to Kota Kinabalu Wetland.

OBJECTIVES

To promote the conservation of wetlands in Sabah and the variety of plants, birds and other kinds of organisms found in them.

To raise public awareness and appreciation of wetlands and public involvement in protecting wetlands.

To manage Kota Kinabalu Wetland (KKW) as a model wetlands centre for the purpose of conservation, education, recreation, tourism and research.



Sabah Wetlands Conservation Society

A Non-Governmental Organization working on Conservation of Wetlands in Sabah

Established on 22 August 2005

IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF KOTA KINABALU WETLAND

The double celebrations were officiated by Y.B Datuk Christina Liew, the Deputy Chief Minister cum Minister of Tourism, Culture and Environment of Sabah which represented by Y.Bhg. Dr Jamili Nais, the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Environment Sabah.



Welcoming Remarks by Y.Bhg. Datuk Zainie Abdul Aucasa, SWCS's President



Officiating Speech by Y.Bhg. Dr Jamili Nais, Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Environment Sabah

Among other activities; the moonlight cinema by Borneo Eco Film Festival and ANBATAR, the Night Walk, the launching of Coffee Table Book: Oasis in the City, Kota Kinabalu Wetland Ramsar Site, exhibition by University College Sabah Foundation and Sabah Forestry Department, performances by Jesselton International School and Synthesis of the Soul Dance Studio, face painting by Chanteq Chamber, Henna Arts by Mitch Rons, Wood Art Prints & Air Brush by TaLac and many other activities.



Presentation of memento to the Guest of Honor by SWCS President



Launching of the Coffee Table Book: Oasis in the City, Kota Kinabalu Wetland Ramsar Site

The Moment...



The Moment...



Newspaper Clippings

Society receives govt praise for lifting wetlands

Published on: Monday, March 02, 2020
By: Shoroff Jeffrey

Text Size: + -



Jamili (left) and Zainie (second from right) visiting booths opened in conjunction with the event.

KOTA KINABALU: Sabah Wetlands Conservation Society (SWCS) received well deserved praise from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Environment for their tireless efforts in lifting Kota Kinabalu Wetland to where it is now.

Kota Kinabalu Wetland has transformed from its humble beginnings 20 years ago to what is now a hub for nature lovers.

Over the years, continuous massive rehabilitation efforts by the early staff members of the Sabah Wildlife Department, WWF-Malaysia, the Likas Wetlands Sanctuary Management Committee and later SWCS, together with volunteers from all ages were a success.

The swamp is now covered with various species of mangrove plants as evidence of the successful conservation efforts.

"SWCS deserves to be warmly felicitated for their admirable efforts at raising the awareness and appreciation of wetlands," said its Minister Datuk Christina Liew, during the World Wetlands Day 2020 celebration, here, Saturday.

Her speech was delivered by the Ministry's Permanent Secretary, Dr Jamili Nais.

She said Kota Kinabalu Wetland's designation as a Ramsar Site further enhances the appeal of the site and brings value to managing biodiversity and eventually benefitting tourism, while ensuring the protection and preservation of the environment for the inheritance of present and future generations.

"I wish the SWCS every success in its efforts as they continue to work collaboratively to protect wetlands, forming a working network among wetland conservation agencies in Sabah and Malaysia as a whole, and pushing for another international recognition for Kota Kinabalu Wetland to secure its continued role as a model environmental educational site," she said.

Meanwhile, SWCS President Datuk Zainie Abdul Aucasa, said they recorded more than 190,000 visitors both local and international since opening its doors to the public on March 1, 2000.

He said the site provides the opportunity for the public to experience and learn first-hand about mangroves habitat and its conservation, without the burden of having to travel to a distant location.

The 24-hectares Kota Kinabalu Wetland Ramsar Site not only strategically located in the heart of the city centre, but also acts as a window to other larger wetlands area in Sabah.

"Last year, we recorded a total of 10,800 visitors and conducted hundreds of environmental education programmes with various learning institutions in the State," he said.

The main goal, he said, is to forward knowledge and to produce younger generation who are aware of the importance of protecting the environment.

In the programme, the mangrove forests acts as a platform and source in the teaching and learning process.

He noted that despite the challenges, especially in protecting wetland from the imminent threat of developments, which are cropping at the border, the persistent hard work and determination over the decades has multiple protections as the Bird Sanctuary, Cultural Heritage Site (Conservation) and now a Ramsar Site.

"Despite all the challenges, we are fortunate to have the strong support from our committee members, ex-officio, partners, supporters and especially the staff who continue to contribute in many important ways.

"It is through these efforts that we continue to strive to achieve our mission to ensure protection and wise use of all wetlands in Sabah, through education, research and advocacy," he said.

The event also saw launching of their 150 pages coffee table book "Oasis in the City: Kota Kinabalu Wetlands".

It is a pictorial coffee table book depicting the history, moments and list of fauna and flora found in Kota Kinabalu Wetland. The publication is to further promote Kota Kinabalu Wetland to the eye of the world in line with their international recognition as the first urban Ramsar site mangrove type in the world.

Also featured was a mangrove night walk, dance performances by Synthesis of the Sould Dance Studio and short documentaries by Borneo Eco Film Festival and Anbatar.

<http://www.dailyexpress.com.my/>

The Borneo Post (Sabah)

Liew: Educate people on importance of wetlands

KOTA KINABALU: Educate people of all ages on the importance of wetlands to the world, urged Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Christina Liew.

Liew, also Tourism, Culture and Environment Minister, said the wetlands, a habitat for various flora and fauna, have been significantly destroyed to make way for development.

"Unquestionably, wetlands are among the most threatened ecosystems in the world," said Liew, whose speech was delivered by Tourism, Culture and Environment Ministry permanent secretary Dr Jamili Nais, during the World Wetlands Day 2020 held in conjunction with the 20th Anniversary of Kota Kinabalu Wetland at Kota Kinabalu Wetland Ramsar Site here on Saturday night.

"Fewer people are aware that the wetland ecosystems play a vital role in the mitigation of climate change, purify and replenish our groundwater, act as a natural shield protecting coastlines against flooding and the list goes

on. However, these benefits are not widely known, and we need to educate people of all ages to understand how wetlands play an important part in our lives.

"We should all care as passionately for their maintenance and restoration. I believe that through education and public awareness campaigns, the message of the importance of conserving the wetlands will reach the public.

"This event is an ideal way to create awareness on the importance of respecting and appreciating our environment and enabling our younger generation to be more environmentally conscientious and become stewards of the environment," she added.

Liew said the event is an ideal way to create awareness on the importance of respecting and appreciating the environment, enabling the younger generation to



Jamili (centre) accepting the "Oasis in the City" book from Zainie during the World Wetlands Day 2020 and 20th Anniversary of Kota Kinabalu Wetland celebrations at the Kota Kinabalu Wetland Ramsar Site.

be more environmentally conscientious and become stewards of the environment.

"Our beautiful state of Sabah is endowed with an abundance of natural resources and has more than 60 per cent of national total area of coastal wetlands, hence we all have a duty as a responsible citizen to ensure the conservation and wise use of our wetlands in our quest to achieve the status as a developed state in a sustainable

manner," she said.

Liew also called upon the Sabah Wetlands Conservation Society (SWCS) to continue its successful efforts to protect the wetlands, forming a working network among wetland conservation agencies in Sabah and Malaysia, and pushing for another international recognition for Kota Kinabalu Wetland to secure its continued role as a model environmental educational site.

SWCS president Datuk Zainie Abdul Aucasa was amongst the dignitaries at the celebration.

<https://www.pressreader.com/malaysia/the-borneo-post-sabah>

Newspaper Clippings

Wetlands are among the world's most threatened ecosystems – Liew

2nd March, 2020

By MOHD IZHAM B. HASHIM

KOTA KINABALU: Wetlands play a vital role in mitigating the effects of climate change through capturing and storing carbon to reduce greenhouse gases, as well as natural shields protecting coastlines against flooding and erosion.

"Sabah, home to 60 per cent of the nation's total area of coastal wetlands, is a major focus for conservation efforts to protect our magnificent natural attractions, and ensure the preservation of the rich biodiversity, for the inheritance of present and future generations," said Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Christina Liew.

Speaking at the launching of World Wetlands Day 2020 on Saturday, Christina stressed wetlands are among the world's most threatened ecosystems, thus makes the protection and restoration of wetlands and mangroves integral in efforts to build a sustainable future while Sabah pursues development.

The importance of wetlands and ecosystems to Sabah is undeniable highlights Christina, mangroves can help purify, replenish groundwater, support the breeding of important estuarine species which makes it an important source of food.

"Not to mention, our natural splendours are prime attractions that attract tourists who come to Sabah to enjoy the wonders of nature and a wide variety endemic flora and fauna," said Christina, who is also Minister of Tourism, Culture and Environment.

In addition, Christina also extended her appreciation to the Sabah Wetlands Conservation Society (SWCS) for hosting the programme which was held in conjunction with their 20th anniversary, in which through the Society's relentless efforts had acquired Ramsar status for the 24-acre Kota Kinabalu Wetland Centre (Ramsar Site No. 2290).

Due to its immense benefits, she underlined greater appreciation on the inseparable role of mangroves and wetlands must be expanded through education and awareness campaigns to deliver the message of conservation of wetlands to reach the public.

"Celebrating World Wetlands Day gives us the wonderful opportunity to reflect on the invaluable role of mangroves and wetlands as well as educating the younger generation to be more environmentally conscious and contribute to conservation and sustainable use of our wetlands," she said in her speech which was delivered by the Ministry's Permanent Secretary, Dr Jamili Nais.

The Kota Kinabalu Wetland Ramsar Site had recorded more than 90 species of birds, 32 species of mangrove trees and a list of reptiles and other living organisms that call the mangroves and wetlands home. For this year, the theme puts the focus on the biodiversity of wetlands and its importance, and promoting actions to reverse its loss.

"The designation of the coveted Ramsar Site further enhances the attraction of the centre and brings value to managing biodiversity and eventually benefitting tourism, while ensuring the environmental protection and preservation," she said.

To mark this prolific event, SWCS President Datuk Hj Zaini Abd Aucasa said the society is celebrating its 20th anniversary since the founding of the Centre on 1 March 2000 when it first opened its doors to the public, and has since welcomed more than 190,000 visitors.

"It has been my greatest pleasure to see the transformation of the KK Wetland Centre's transformation from its humble beginnings to a fully fledged eco hub for nature lovers.

Despite many challenges, especially in protecting it from the imminent threat of development creeping at its borders, however with persistent hard work and determination over the decades, we are delighted that the centre has multiple protections as a Bird Sanctuary, Cultural Heritage Site (Conservation) and now the Ramsar Site No 2290," he said.

INTRODUCING OUR NEW JOCV

Selamat berkenalan!

My name is Hiroyuki Endo from Tokyo, Japan. I am the 5th JICA Volunteer staff in Kota Kinabalu wetland. I will work here until March 2021. I'm looking forward to see you all in Kota Kinabalu Wetland. Thank you.



Name: Hiroyuki Endo

Age: 34 years old

Home town: Tokyo, Japan

Working experience: Orient corporation Co.,Ltd (Apr,2008-present), 11 years in Sales and Marketing experience in the financial service field

Education: Juntendo university (Apr, 2004-Mac,2008), Bachelor of Sports and science

Interests : Playing and watching soccer, playing piano and scuba diving.

WORLD WETLANDS DAY 2020

Three Key Messages

1

Wetlands are important habitats for biodiversity

- Over 40% of plants and animals live and breed in wetlands.
- More than 100,000 freshwater species are found here.

2

Wetland biodiversity is essential for all life to thrive

- Swamp vegetation filters out pollutants and improves water quality
- Wetlands provide livelihoods for 1 billion people
- Almost 3 billion people depend on rice grown in wetland paddies, while most fish rely on coastal wetlands as part of their life cycle
- Peatland, mangrove, and seagrass salt marsh store carbon and matter for climate action
- Mangroves and corals protect coastal communities during storm surges, hurricanes, and tsunamis thus preventing disasters
- Wetlands provide ecosystem services worth USD 47 trillion annually, more than those from forests, deserts or grassland.

3

Wetlands are disappearing three times faster than forests, threatening biodiversity

- Wetland species are the quickest to decline out of the one million animal and plant species threatened with extinction.
- Waste pollution, draining or infilling for agriculture and construction, over fishing, and over-extraction are why 35% of the world's wetlands have declined since the 70s.
- Waterbirds, freshwater - dependent mammals, sea turtles, and coral species are among the 23% of wetland species threatened with extinction.

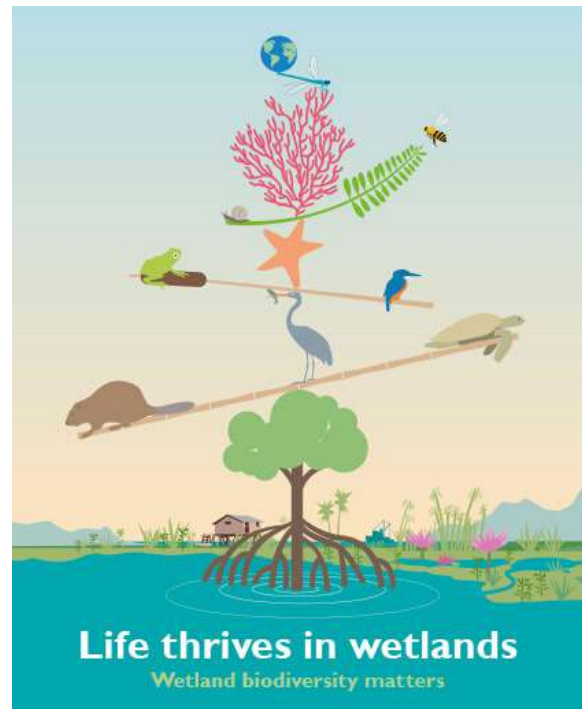
**World
Wetlands Day**

2 February 2020

Wetlands and biodiversity



- 25% of wetland species are threatened with extinction, including water birds, freshwater-dependent mammals, marine turtles and coral-reef-building species.
- Fish, birds, mammals, amphibians, and reptiles have declined by 60% from 1970-2014.



Take Action for wetlands

- Conserve and protect wetlands to end biodiversity loss .
- Practice wise use of wetlands to conserve biodiversity.
- Restore wetlands, to restore biodiversity
- It's time to value wetlands – Wetland services are priceless

<https://www.global-wetland-outlook.ramsar.org/>

<http://www.publish.csiro.au/mf/MF18391>

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2019/05/nature-decline-unprecedented-report/>

<https://www.ramsar.org/news/wetlands-worlds-most-valuable-ecosystem-disappearing-three-times-faster-than-forests-warns-new>

Compilation of snippets : What Are Environmental News Happened In January & February

Buildings as CO2 sinks: Build out of wood instead of cement and steel

A new study found that replacing cement and steel for wood in urban construction benefits climate stabilization! It completely avoids the greenhouse emissions of cement and steel production. Also, the engineered timber acts as carbon sinks by storing the CO2 absorbed from the air as they are harvested. However, this will require careful, sustainable management and governance according to the authors.

<https://www.sciencedaily.com>

More rain + Less snow = Increase flood risks

A study of 400 watersheds from 1980-2016 show that winter floods that are driven by rainfall can be more than 2.5 times larger than those driven by snowmelt. Furthermore, the researchers found when higher precipitation falls as rain, the flood size increases exponentially. This means that the size of floods increases at a faster rate than the increase in rain.

<https://www.sciencedaily.com>

Two more pygmy elephants found dead in Sabah

Recently, two female Bornean pygmy elephants were found dead in separate oil palm plantations in Sabah's east coast. The first was found in Ladang Sentosa in Sukau, while the latter in Ladang Tangkulap IOI in Sandakan. Last year, 25 elephant death cases were recorded in Sabah.

<https://www.nst.com.my/>

Conservationists welcome China's wildlife trade ban

As an effort to contain the Coronavirus outbreak, the Chinese government has temporarily banned the sale of wildlife in markets, restaurants, and e-commerce. This is welcoming news to conservationists. The virus is defined as a zoonotic disease and may have originated from a snake that can be traced back to a market in Wuhan that is known for selling wild animals for consumption.

<https://news.mongabay.com>

Mangrove forests provide cause for conservation optimism, for now

An international team of researchers found that globally, mangrove loss rates have been reduced from one to three percent a year to about 0.3 to 0.6 percent a year between the late 20th century and the early 21st century.

<https://www.sciencedaily.com>

Air pollution is one of the world's most dangerous health risks

Polluted air is a public health hazard that cannot be evaded. It is widely known that long-term exposure to air pollution enhances the risks of cardiovascular and respiratory diseases. Scientists from the Max Planck Institute for Chemistry and the University Medical Center Mainz now calculated in a new study that the global, public loss of life expectancy caused by air pollution is higher than many other risk factors such as smoking, infectious diseases or violence.

<https://www.sciencedaily.com>



11th January 2020. Environmental Education Programme with Keishi High School Japan & SM All Saint Kota Kinabalu.



15th January 2020. Environmental Education Programme with Osaka Nogei High School Japan.



18th January 2020. Junior Wetlands Discovery Programme



5th February 2020. Environmental Education Programme with Young Explorer Academy



5th February 2020. Environmental Education Programme with Persatuan IKSAS UPSI.



9th February 2020. Environmental Education Programme (Mangrove wise use) with UITM



13th February 2020. Environmental Education Programme with Camp Borneo.



15th February 2020. Junior Wetlands Discovery

Guests' comments



Thank You for the good experience!
- AIESEC VOLUNTEER

Upcoming Events

Environmental Education Programme

- Jesselton International School
- Young Explorer Academy

Environmental Voluntary Work

- Politeknik Kota Kinabalu
- AMC College

Outreach

- Junior Wetlands Discovery

Other

- Junior Wetlands Discovery

VOLUNTEER NEEDED!

01 Volunteering is good for your heart

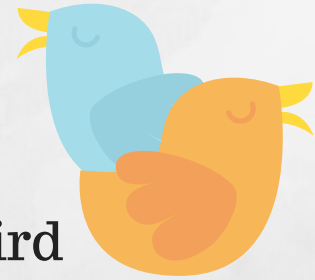
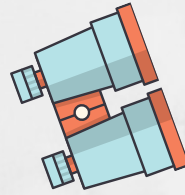
Volunteering for KK Wetland Ramsar Site can be a great fun! If you have passion for the environment or just want to gain more outdoor experiences, this is the appropriate channel. Do not miss the chance! Sign up to be a volunteer now or contact us for more information.

03 membership

Benefits of being our member

- As a member, you will be able to participate in members' events and enjoy free entry to Kota Kinabalu Wetlands Ramsar Site
- Eligible for 50% discount for binoculars rental*.
- Most importantly, you know you are helping this ecosystem to survive and provide essential services to it.

02



Monthly Bird Monitoring



Join our monthly birding activity on every 15th-17th day of the month

FOR
MORE
INFO

How to
REGISTER

Call us at
088-246955
or drop us an email at
swcs@sabahwetlands.org

04

DONATION



Join the forces with us and help save our Wetlands by giving donation to Sabah Wetlands Conservation Society.

Bank Transfer to;
SWCS Account No:392050779101
(HSBC)

support us by joining our programmes

1. Environmental Education Programme

- KK Wetlands Mangrove Experience Programme
- Mangrove Conservation Experience Programme
- Handcrafting from Mangrove

2 Environmental Voluntary Work

- Nursery Work
- Mangrove Clean-Up

CONTRIBUTORS

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