

**Sabah Wetlands
Conservation Society
(SWCS)**

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

**Established on
22 August 2005**

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 Wetlands (KKW) as a model wetlands centre for the purpose of conservation, education, recreation, tourism and research.

Contact us:

Tel: +6088-246 955
Fax: +6088-247 955
or
swcs@sabahwetlands.org

Like us on Facebook:
(<https://www.facebook.com/SabahWetlandsConservationSociety>)

Visit our Website:
www.sabahwetlands.org
Visit us today : Tue-Sun
(including PH)
8.00am–6.00pm

CIMB Community Link Project: Mangrove Tree Planting

CIMB Community Link is one of CIMB Group's key Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives. It is a unique program aimed at forging closer ties with the local communities served by CIMB Bank and CIMB Islamic branches. The programme empowers customers to propose initiatives or social causes that will enhance the lives of those within the community. These causes will then be funded by the Bank. (More info at www.cimbbizchannel.com).



The first tree planting team from Maktab Sabah. These energetic students have planted 125 mangrove saplings (*Rhizophora apiculata*)

A total of 12 schools around Kota Kinabalu and nearby districts, with more than 360 secondary school students have been selected and will be participated in this project. The project site is located at Kota Kinabalu Wetlands (KKW) within a 24-hectare mangrove swamp and at Sulaman Lake Forest Reserve, Tuaran. Through this project, we aim to provide these younger generation;

- 1) To gain more experience, information and basic understanding on the wetlands ecosystem,
- 2) To be more aware, alert and concern towards the mangrove conservation and issues related to it, and
- 3) To possess value, cultivate positive attitude and love for the environment, as a whole.

We are grateful to be selected as one of the beneficiaries for the CSR project - Mangrove Tree Planting under our Green CSR Proposal, with the objectives;

- 1) To plant 1,500 mangrove saplings (*Rhizophora apiculata*) in the degraded mangrove area at Sulaman Lake Forest Reserve, Tuaran, and
- 2) To leverage off replanting efforts to create public awareness on the importance of wetlands.



WETLANDS: A THREATENED AND VULNERABLE RESOURCE

Wetlands are a reliable resource for the wellbeing of both humans and the other wildlife that live in there. It provides food, security, timber product, reduces the risk of disasters (read more in SWCS February 2017 newsletter). Besides all of this, wetlands are also a source of infinite oxygen supply, to name a few. Being one of the most important resources in the world, our wetlands are still listed as one of the top affected ecosystems, directly or indirectly, by human activities. This article will highlight a few important issues related to how human activities have impacted our wetlands.

1. CLIMATE CHANGE: Climate change has serious impact on coastlines involving mangrove forest. Increased temperature has caused the rise of sea level; which in the long term will decrease the spatial size of coastal wetlands such as mudflats. Some species of wildlife can adapt to these changes, but for those who are incapable of adapting, are prone to extinction. Loss of inshore coral reefs and coastal mangrove forests will add to the potential damage caused by sea level rise and coastal erosion.

2. HABITAT FRAGMENTATION AND ENCROACHMENT: Deforestation of our wetland areas will threaten animal habitats. It's because by clearing these forests, much fragmentation will occur as a result of the encroachment of riparian reserves. In Sabah, as a result of mangrove forest devastation, populations of Proboscis Monkeys have dwindled. A good example is the population of Proboscis Monkey in Tempasuk River, in Kota Belud, Sabah. Clearing of mangrove forest along the river for rice farming, building houses and roads has caused highly fragmented the vegetation along the river. Although there has been no clear report on the dynamic of the monkey population in the area, with restricted movement, fragmented habitat and limited food, the Proboscis Monkey in this area will probably extinct due to inbreeding effect, food scarcity and high conflict with human population.

3. INVASIVE SPECIES: Invasive species can cause severe impact on local flora and fauna as it can upset the natural balance of the local ecosystem in the wetlands. Human activities like urban development, farming nearby the wetlands, recreation and gardening may introduce many kind of non-native species; be it plants or animals to the area. This impacts the local species at wetland areas because the invasive species compete with the native species. Worse scenario is that the invasive species usually has natural high competitive ability. Thus, this competition could impact the native species, further downstream.



Plastics are the most obvious solid waste accumulates in coastal and mangrove wetlands.

4. POLLUTION: Pollution in the wetlands is a growing concern. It affects the wetlands in every way; chemically, physically and biologically. Shamefully, humans are the sole contributor of this problem. Toilet outlets, pesticides and heavy metals, solid wastes, and fertilizers are some of the most popular pollutants in the wetlands. Although wetlands are well-known for its ability to absorb pollutants, intense pollution can exceed the ability of the wetlands' natural ability to absorb and mitigate the problem.

5. LANDUSE CONVERSION: Human activities have affected the wetlands in various ways. The most popular effect is the reclamation of wetland areas. In most countries of the world, capital cities are mostly situated nearer to the sea. Over the years, with economic development and human population increasing; there are demands for more development. The first land area targeted for reclamation are of course the wetland areas such as swamps, beaches and mudflats. In most developed countries like China and Singapore, most coastal wetlands are being reclaimed for development. In addition, wetland areas, which so happen to be flatlands. Hence, a good reason for why there's much intensive reclamation of wetlands nowadays.

In conclusion, mangrove forests have always been exposed to danger due to human activities that damage the structure, ecosystem and the habitat of wildlife. We need to find a way to conserve and protect this natural treasure to ensure that our wetlands will remain for the future generations to come.

Further reading:

- wwf.panda.org/about_our_earth/about_freshwater/intro/threats/

MARCH

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ACTIVITY



1 March 2017:
POLITEKNIK
IBRAHIM SULTAN
JOHOR

The students collecting solid waste in the muddy mangrove — to provide a more clean habitat for the mangrove flora and fauna!



4 March 2017 :
POLITEKNIK
KOTA KINABALU

Appreciating the beautiful mangrove nature — a stroll of 1.5km educational walk before starting their conservation activity.



5 March 2017:
PETROSAINS
PLAYSMART
KOTA KINABALU

SWCS as one of the exhibitors at the *Petrosains Playsmart Merayakan Hari Alam Sekitar 2017* — promoting wetlands conservation.



7 March 2017:
ADMIRALTY
PRIMARY
SCHOOL,
SINGAPORE

A pose at the mangrove nursery after completing their conservation activity which is to plant the *Rhizophora* seedlings in the polybags.



8 March 2017:
LA SALLE-
GRUBBE CARBON-
OFFSETTING
PROJECT

An annual visit from the team — thank you for the continued support and generous donation, it is a huge contribution to the wetlands!



11 March 2017:
INNER WHEELS

At Sulaman, Tuaran (planting site) — Inner Wheels is also one of the continuous donors to the conservation of mangrove. Moreover they planted a total of 100 mangrove saplings!



24 March 2017:
SEISHIN GIRL
HIGH SCHOOL,
JAPAN

Again! We received a visit from this high school, participating the interpretative walk in the mangrove.



28 March 2017:
SMK TANSAU

This group conducted not one, but two conservation works! They enjoyed and learned a lot during the mangrove clean up and work at the nursery.



31 March 2017:
SM ALL SAINTS

Adding dried leaves in the compost heap — an environmental activity for the school project.

Sayonara to our JICA Volunteer - TORU TAMAMUSHI

After two years service, it is finally the time to bid farewell to our Japanese volunteer, Toru Tamamushi. For the past two years, Toru's service has been a great assistance towards SWCS. He was a fast learner, hardworking, helpful, and most of all, he is a punctual person (as expected from a Japanese man).

"As far as I remember, all of our JICA volunteers have been very helpful and reliable", said Datuk Haji Zainie ,

the SWCS President when he met Toru on 11th March. Toru was the third JICA volunteer in KK Wetlands since SWCS was formed in 2006.

Farewell lunch party at KK Wetlands, 13th March 2017



Datuk Zainie handing over his personal token of appreciation to Toru.

Few throwback photos of Toru in KK Wetlands



Collecting mangrove seedling and fencing inspection



Handling Environment Education and Voluntary Work (mangrove clean up)

Kota Kinabalu Wetlands

This is a 24-hectare mangrove forest reserve right in the heart of the city of Kota Kinabalu that has been designated as a State Cultural Heritage site since 1998. It is managed by SABAH WETLANDS CONSERVATION SOCIETY.

This environmental education centre on the site has been in operation since 2000. It has an administrative building with an exhibition hall, a 1.5 km boardwalk, a bird hide, observation tower and outdoor classroom.

Benefits of Being Our Member



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

*Subject to change without further notice

What Can You do to Help?

- Be a member
- Be a volunteer
- Perform Environmental Voluntary Work
- Carry out Corporate Social Responsibility

Contributors:

Nurmala, Christabel
Nazri, Zuhelmi & Nurshamimi
(Internship Students)
Davisthon Soitoh
(Conservation & Education Assistant)

Compiled by :

Davisthon Soitoh

Editor:

Rita Ignatius

SUPPORT US BY JOINING OUR PROGRAMMES:

Environmental Educational

Programmes:

- KK Wetlands Mangrove Experience Programme
- Mangrove Conservation Experience Programme (includes tree planting in Tuaran)
- Handcrafting from Mangrove

Environmental Voluntary Work

(* Contact us for activity booking form)

Tel No: 088-246955

Email: swcs@sabawetlands.org

In conservation, we are fighting none other than our own greed...

© Sabah Wetlands Conservation Society, 2017. All rights reserved.