

CNS8268

R GE 13-09 00179 EA721

aae tbe

Repeat, replacing earlier item

Mahathir-forest

REDRESS FORESTRY MANAGEMENT CRITERIA IMMEDIATELY, SAYS MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept. 13 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today sustainable forest management and criteria should be redressed immediately and applied to all types of forests and timbers.

He said despite efforts to develop and adopt a more balanced framework globally, tropical forests continued to face unfair scrutiny from developed countries and were subjected to mounting pressures and bans.

Opening the 14th Commonwealth Forestry Conference attended by about 400 participants here, the Prime Minister, known for his outspokenness on the issue, said currently the only set of internationally-agreed standards on sustainability was the one adopted by the International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO) which applied exclusively to tropical forests.

He added: "What bothers us most is that non-tropical forests and timbers which competes with tropical timber in the same international timber market are not being subjected at all to any internationally-agreed standards and commitment to sustainability. -- more

TCL LDB

▼13/09/18-02MST

R GE 13-09 00205 EA704

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Mahathir-forest 2 Kuala Lumpur

"Yet, we know that the practice of clear felling of miles and miles of temperate forests causes more environmental damage than the controlled selective logging practised in tropical forests."

He said the North rejected a proposal to expand the International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA) 1983 to cover all timbers so that non-tropical timbers could be subjected to the same sustainability criteria and thus eliminate all problems of discrimination and double standards.

Taking to task the North for not being serious and sincere in making any concrete commitment, even outside ITTA, Dr Mahathir said: "Forests are renewable natural resources and the developed countries can redeem themselves by raising their forest cover to a respectable level through, perhaps, the conversion to forests of their heavily subsidised farms which are causing grievous harm to unsubsidised commodity exports of developing countries."

Dr Mahathir outlined Malaysia's conservation efforts and reaffirmed the country's commitment to the ITTO's sustainable target by the year 2000 as well as drew attention to the lack of support from many countries on the establishment of an independent world commission on forests and sustainable development. -- more

TCL LDB

▼13/09/15-06MST

R GE 13-09 00186 EA705

aae tbe

Mahathir-forest 3 Kuala Lumpur

He said apart from the decision by the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) to review forestry-related matters in 1995, there had been no significant implementation of decisions by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) on forestry.

In view of the urgency of the forest issue it was imperative that an inter-governmental task force on forestry be established under the aegis of the CSD to undertake the necessary preparations and consultations for the 1995 review, he added.

Dr Mahathir said the Commonwealth was well placed to once again lead by example the implementation of UNCED decisions in view of its pioneer effort in promoting a balanced approach to the global issues of forests and environment through the Langkawi Declaration.

He suggested several initiatives to implement UNCED forest principles within the Commonwealth. They included the recognition that all states have the sovereign right to manage their forest resources on sustainable basis taking into account the need for social and economic development. -- more

TCL LDB

▼13/09/15-12MST

CNS8068

R GE 13-09 00108 EA706

aae tbe

Mahathir-forest 4 (last) Kuala Lumpur

Urging for sustainable forest management and criteria for all types of forests and timbers, he said efforts towards greening the world should be the main responsibility of those countries with low forest cover.

He called for the world's forest cover to be increased to 30 per cent by the year 2000.

Developing countries should also be provided with new and additional resources and access to environmentally-sound technologies, he said, adding that a supportive and non-discriminatory international economic climate and trade in forest products was also necessary. -- Bernama

TCL LDB

▼13/09/15-14MST