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WWF: Environmental health left out

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - The environment has been neglected in Budget 2003, World Wide Fund for Nature Malaysia said.

Though the Budget had incentives for the use of renewable energy, it did not address broader environmental issues, its National Programme director Kevin Hiew said.

"The health of our waters and forests, which form the foundation for a strong economy, have been side-stepped again in this budget," he said.

Budget 2003 was tabled in Parliament yesterday by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who said the Government recognised bio-diesel, solar power and hydro power as sources of renewable, or non-polluting energy.

The Budget proposed that current incentives for companies using bio-mass to generate renewable energy, be extended for three more years. It also proposed that these incentives be extended to companies producing solar and hydro power.