

Newspaper

The Star

Date

23 February 2016

Better biodiversity efforts with revised policy

The Star - 23/2/2016

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KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia has further increased its commitment to biodiversity management with the launch of a revised National Policy on Biological Diversity.

The revised policy emphasises the need for continued conservation, sustainable utilisation and the sharing of benefits from biodiversity in a fair and equitable manner, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

The policy, said Najib, will provide the nation's guide to manage biodiversity over the next decade.

"It has clear targets, actions and timelines for implementation and calls for active participation by all stakeholders.

"The revised policy complements Malaysia's obligations under the United Nation's Convention on Biological Diversity and to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals," said Najib in his speech at the fourth plenary of the Intergovernmental Platform For Biodiversity And Ecosystem Services (IPBES) yesterday.

Also present were Natural Resources and Environment Minister Datuk Seri Dr Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar, former Prime Minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and his wife Tun Jeanne Abdullah.

Najib said different countries have different issues when it comes to dealing with environmental conservation.

For developing countries, finding the right balance in bringing in much needed development without sacrificing nature is pivotal.

Malaysia has also had its fair share in finding the right balance, said Najib.



Setting new standards: Najib launching the National Policy on Biological Diversity during the opening of the Fourth Plenary Session of the United Nations Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre. Looking on is Dr Wan Junaidi (second left). — Bernama

Citing the opening of the Federal Land Development Authority (Felda) scheme in 1956 to alleviate poverty, Najib said the plan was a success with the drop of poverty level from 49% to less than four percent now.

"But I will be the first to admit that development through the opening of land for agriculture, human settlement, industrialisation, transport, has had significant impact on the natural environment.

"The issue at hand is sustainabili-

ty and how to harness the power of technology and knowledge to ensure that while we continue with our growth momentum, we are also able to preserve our natural heritage," he added.

Najib said Malaysia has also undertaken various efforts to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity.

Among them are the Central Forest Spine, an initiative that will link four main forest complexes which form the central mountain range in the peninsular.

Later in a press conference, Wan Junaidi said his ministry has consulted various stakeholders since 2014 before including it in the policy.

He said 29 comprehensive consultations were carried out between 2014 and 2015.

The first National Policy on Biological Diversity was formulated in 1989.

The revised policy will provide the direction and framework in conserving the nation's biodiversity and use it sustainably in the face of increasing challenges.