

Forest Policy and Experiences on Professional Advancement of Foresters – Malaysian Perspective



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2023 National Conference

8-12 Nov 2023

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Evolution of SFM



- Early 1920s started with “Departmental Regeneration Improvement Felling (DRIF)” – to improve the existing stock through the removal of inferior species
- In 1930s - “Commercial Regeneration Improvement Felling (CRIF)”
 - due to rising demand for firewood and poles from the mining industries
- In 1948 - “Malayan Uniform System (MUS)”
 - due to increased demand for raw materials - removing the mature crop in one single felling of all trees down to 45cm dbh for all species
- In 1978 - “Selective Management System (SMS)”
 - since it has been found to be unsuccessful in hill dipterocarp forest and **the need to safeguard the environment**



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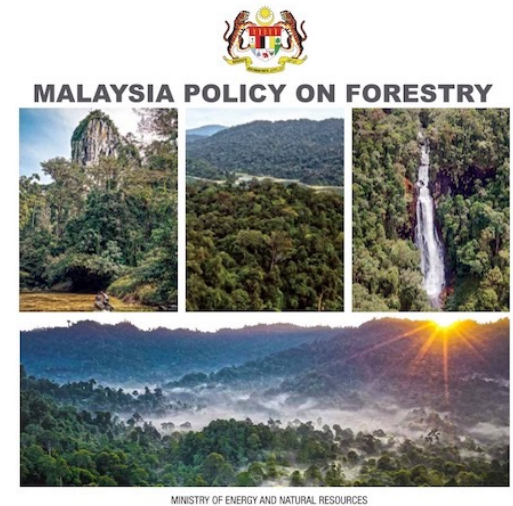


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Evolution Of Forest Policy



- In 1978, National Forestry Policy (NFP) for Peninsular Malaysia was approved to facilitate forestry issues especially related to harvesting
- In 2015, “National Policy on Biodiversity 2015-2025” was formulated
 - to protect Malaysia’s rich flora and fauna for the benefit of present and future generations
 - sustainable utilisation of biological resources
- In 2021, new “Malaysia Policy on Forestry” was approved
 - include SFM, protection and conservation of biodiversity and climate change mitigation and adaptation



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Professional Development



- The necessary human capital to manage the forest and its resources must be developed through a **proper education scheme**
- Who produced Professional Foresters?
 - Tertiary Education – university level degree
- In Malaysia – formal tertiary education on forestry was only formed in 1976
 - structured program to produce Professional Foresters
 - was mainly **focused on the extraction of timber** and other forestry resources



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Forestry Education - Relevancy



- In many forest-rich nations, forestry education has remained with **traditional model** (still resemble a century old Oxford syllabus)
- Global change in **forest roles** - shift towards the social, cultural and ecological values of the forests
 - the traditional forestry education model appears to be ill equipped to produce the necessary human capital
- Thus, forestry education all over the world is under growing pressure **to remain relevant** as a professional career education



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Forestry Program - Challenges



- Reduce interest in forestry academic programs among school leavers
 - Tendency to choose careers with high salary that offers a grand life style
 - Good students choose other field of studies
 - The growing competition from graduates of other disciplines - nature, environment, biology, eco-tourism and biodiversity-related
- Due to declining student interest and enrolment:
 - Must reform **university-level forestry programs**
 - Employers and universities must assess the gap between **training professional foresters and the market needs**



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Employment Issues



- Despite the significant change in the scope of forestry (i.e. to preserve its complex environment and biodiversity):
 - this **has not been translated into greater employment opportunities** for forestry graduates
 - In reality, the forestry sector in Malaysia has emerged as a **low-wage sector**
- Although efforts have been taken to address some of these skills mismatch:
 - **the restructuring** of the curricula is far from satisfactory
 - therefore, marketing forestry programs is becoming increasingly difficult



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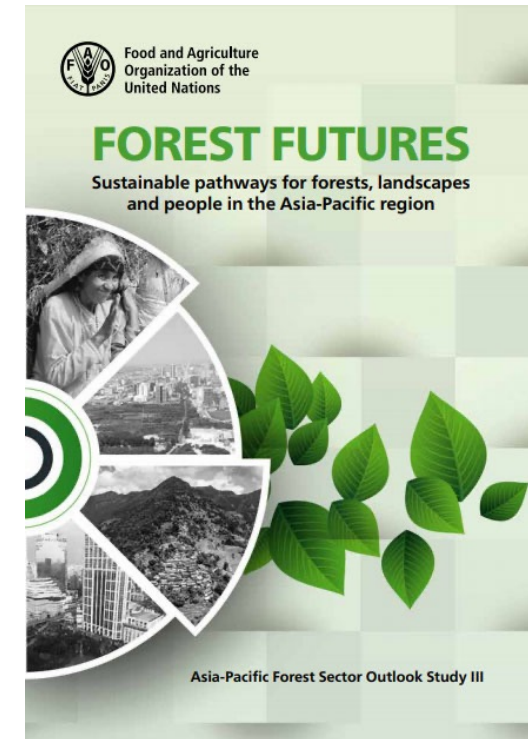


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Forestry For The Future



- The traditional forestry education will have to shift towards:
 - social forestry, community forestry, and environmental conservation
 - move towards holism and **away from industrial-based** forestry education models
 - higher degree of flexibility, which allows forestry graduates to adapt to the changing work-environment and market needs
- Needs to collaborate among agencies of Professional Foresters in tropical countries/SEA region
 - exchange ideas/knowledge to improve our profession



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Final Thoughts



- Institute of Foresters Malaysia is a professional body for Professional Foresters
 - is to improve the standards of forestry practice and professionalism
 - to provide advisory services to any related forestry development
 - ensure only Professional Foresters undertake **forestry related jobs**
 - accept only applicants with **forestry degree** to become members
- Should we accept those with other backgrounds (conservation biologist; botanist; ecologist; environmentalist, hydrologist; zoologist, tourism management etc)?
 - Can they also become “Professional Forester”???
 - Or perhaps, Professional Forestry should also evolve



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Thank you



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