



PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

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“Corporate Social Responsibility Breathes Hope into Terengganu’s Mangroves”

KUALA LUMPUR, March 31: The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has cited Petra Perdana Bhd, an Integrated Service Provider for the upstream oil and gas industry, as a best practice in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in its latest advocacy report.

The report, titled, “Malaysia – Mangrove Regeneration: CSR In Action,” is the eighth in a series of periodic publications reporting on UNDP Malaysia’s work in its energy, environment and human development practice areas.

It spotlights the UNDP-Petra Mangrove Regeneration project, based in Pengkalan Gelap, Setiu, which is the first community-led environment project of its type in Malaysia.

In addition to rehabilitating the degraded mangrove forests in the state and gazettement of the site as a protected area, the project aims to improve the livelihoods of the rural poor in Terengganu by establishing pro-business activities for the communities in the areas of eco-tourism, fishing and handicrafts.

The project was initiated in late 2005, with over RM 200, 000 in funding from Petra Perdana as part of its CSR efforts, and is poised to be wholly managed by the local communities in the area, with support from the state government, by mid year.

“UNDP considers CSR a valuable tool to improve competitiveness and profitability of participating companies. We aim to play a catalytic role as part of the UN Global Compact to promote CSR in Malaysia, and bring all stakeholders- companies, associations, trade unions, government, local authorities, NGOs, local communities – together,” said Dr. Richard Leete, UNDP Resident Representative for Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei.

He added that the Mangrove Regeneration project stands out as an example of how efforts to give back to the community and foster ethical behaviour among business can be sustainable with multi-stakeholder involvement, sound implementation and the buy-in of local communities.

At the international level, the project has also being cited for best practice initiatives by UNDP’s Asia Pacific Regional Bureau to promote poverty reduction in conjunction with environmental conservation initiatives.

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"The comprehensive involvement of community support in the implementation of the project has shown how, with a fair degree of cooperation and coordination, people can claim ownership of their environment and influence their own futures.

"With children, parents and grandparents participating in various aspects of the project, they have demonstrated the value of their environment and how it can be sustained for future generations," he added.

Mangrove forests are one of the Earth's most productive and biologically diverse habitats, yet amongst its most threatened. Once a rich natural diversity, the mangroves along the East Coast of Malaysia are becoming increasingly fragmented as a result of deforestation, reclamation, pollution, establishment or development of harbours or ports, proposed industrialisation and urbanisation.

In their most recent assessment, FAO/UNEP estimate that deforestation of mangrove forests continues at a rate of about 1.1 percent per annum. The 2000 estimate by the FAO/UNEP for Malaysia, extrapolated from a 1995 figure, indicated a total area of about 572,100 ha (about 4% of the world total), down from 674,000 ha in the 1980 FAO/UNEP Assessment.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns into their business operations and in interactions with stakeholders on a voluntary basis. CSR is an important tool for the private sector to actively contribute to sustainable development, which is a long-term goal of Malaysia.

The UN Global Compact Initiative is the biggest CSR network in the world, facilitated at country level by UNDP and other partner agencies.

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Note to Editor:

About UNDP:

UNDP is the UN's global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. We are on the ground in 166 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. As they develop local capacity, they draw on the people of UNDP and our wide range of partners. UNDP's current priority is to help all countries achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015.

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