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Publication Launch

**Malaysia's Peat Swamp Forests:
Conservation and Sustainable Use**

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Yang Berhormat Datuk Seri Azmi Khalid, Honourable Minister of Natural Resources and Environment,

Yang Bahagia, Dato' Dr. Abdul Razak Mohd. Ali, Director-General, Forest Research Institute of Malaysia,

Excellencies, Distinguished guests

Members of the media

Selamat pagi dan selamat sejahtera kepada semua para hadirin. Saya berasa amat gembira pada pagi ini dan berbesar hati kerana diberi peluang untuk memberi sepatah dua kata, sempena pelancaran buku mengenai hutan paya gambut.

On behalf of UNDP, I would like to thank most sincerely, the Honourable Minister, Datuk Seri Azmi Khalid, Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, for giving up his valuable time to join us this morning at the launching of the UNDP-GOM publication on *Malaysia's Peat Swamp Forest: Conservation and Sustainable Use*.

I would also like to sincerely thank Dato' Dr. Abdul Razak Mohd. Ali, Director-General, Forest Research Institute of Malaysia for hosting the launch here in FRIM, as well as expressing my appreciation to the entire Peat Swamp project team.

Distinguished guests

Industrialization and modernization are spreading everywhere, albeit at differing paces and with differing consequences. And as they spread, alongside increased economic growth and reduced poverty, there is increasing fossil fuel use, natural resource depletion and loss of biodiversity. In order to help respond to these challenges, and to promote higher human development, UNDP Malaysia is supporting the Malaysian government in several projects that are designed to ensure sustainable environmental management and the development of renewable energy resources.

Malaysia's wetlands are a crucial component of the nation's ecosystem. Good management of the wetlands is essential for maintaining ecological balance, and for preserving the nation's wonderful biodiversity.

The importance of wetlands are multiple, including as a source of rich flora and fauna diversity, as water catchment areas, as natural food mitigating systems, as well as for providing forest produce for the livelihoods of the local communities.

Peat swamp forests and mangroves are the main wetlands in Malaysia. UNDP is actively helping to support the sustainability of Malaysia's wetlands. I would like now to share with you, a 5-minute video, which shows how we are working to regenerate Malaysia's mangrove forests.