

on 14 November 2013

**Agreement inked for sustainability study**



SIGNED AND SEALED: Taib (fourth left), Awang Tengah (third left) and Abang Johari (second right) witnessing the exchange of documents by Curtis (left), Gan (second left) and Harry. — Photo by Muhammad Rais Sanusi

KUCHING: Projek Bandar Samariang Sdn Bhd (PBS), in collaboration with Sentoria Borneo Samariang Sdn Bhd (SBS), yesterday announced a research agreement with Unimas Holdings Sdn Bhd.

PBS is a wholly owned subsidiary of Cahya Mata Sarawak Bhd while Unimas Holdings Sdn Bhd is a wholly owned company of Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas).

The research agreement is for Unimas Holdings Sdn Bhd to undertake a tourism sustainability study of Kuching Wetlands National Park (KWNP).

In conjunction with the upcoming Bandar Samariang Resort City (BSRC) and its world class facilities, the adjoining KWNP looks set to become a popular tourist attraction for the BSRC residents and visitors alike.

The study which will take 15 months to complete is to determine the sustainability of tourism offerings associated with KWNP and its immediate surroundings.

The study focuses on wildlife (dolphins, fireflies, monkeys, birds and crocodiles), river cruise and adjoining fishing villages' maintenance and sustainability.

The assessment will also include looking into visitor arrivals from the adjacent BSRC and a suggested sustainability management plan that will transform KWNP into a destination for visitors to encourage learning, awareness and appreciation of natural values — under the principles of Ramsar Convention.

On Oct 10, 2002, a total of 6,610 hectares (38 per cent) of the former Sarawak Mangrove Forest Reserve (SMFR) was classified as a Totally Protected Area (TPA) and gazetted as KWNP under the Sarawak National Parks and Nature Reserves Ordinance 1998.

On Nov 8, 2005, the park was declared a Ramsar site, the first in Sarawak and the fifth in the country.

Witnessing the signing was Chief Minister Pehin Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud. Signing for PBS was CMSB group managing director Datuk Richard Curtis, whilst signing for SBS was Datuk Gan Kim Leong, who is Sentoria Group Bhd joint managing director, while Unimas Holdings Sdn Bhd general manager Dr Harry Entebang signed for Unimas.

The Bandar Samariang Resort City is an up and coming suburb in north Kuching. In addition to around 40,000 residential units, the resort city will include world class theme park attractions such as water theme park and safari park, resort accommodation, MICE facilities and family friendly recreational facilities.

Among those present during the ceremony were Tourism Minister Datuk Amar Abang Johari Tun Openg and Second Resource Planning and Environment Minister Datuk Amar Awang Tengah Ali Hasan.

Source: The Borneo Post