

An Overview of MUCED Experience, Achievement and Future Planning with respect to the Implementation of SLUSE Programme in Malaysia

Murtedza Mohamed

Research Management Unit

Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas)

94300 Kota Samarahan, Sarawak, Malaysia.

ted@frst.unimas.my

ABSTRACT

Successful implementation of natural resource and environmental policies, programmes and projects presumes the availability of adequate local capacity, in terms of number and quality, in local, sectoral, federal and regional agencies. SLUSE capacity building programme is seen as extremely relevant in meeting the aforementioned need of the nation through enhancing opportunities for training and education, as well as for engaging in pertinent research to generate appropriate multidisciplinary knowledge for the practice of sustainable land-use and natural resource management. The implementation of SLUSE project in Malaysia (MUCED-SLUSE) under the support of DANIDA had recently been concluded. The end-of-project situation confirmed that the Project has largely delivered the promised outputs. The Project had successfully developed, tested and operationalised academic curricula for two masters' programmes, namely M Env Sc (Land Use and Water Resource Management) and M Env Mgt (Development Planning). These were offered to 76 students in three cohorts. This paper highlights some of the experiences and achievements of the project. Also discussed are some of the identified future plans to sustain the MUCED-SLUSE activities.

INTRODUCTION

The ecosystems throughout Southeast Asia are experiencing growing competition for water and land resources. Inequitable and inefficient allocation of these resources, and degradation of their qualities are widely noted. Discernible and obvious problems include deforestation and soil erosion attributable to large scale land conversion for commercial monocropping ventures, declining soil fertility, subsidence and 'denaturation' of peatland, salt water intrusion in coastal areas, and spread of water borne diseases (Murtedza, 2003). These threats to natural resources have their root in several anthropogenic factors, including:

- A poor level of awareness, particularly within the government and private sectors, on the strategic value of natural resources for sustainable economic development.
- A combination of increasing population pressures, poverty, limited alternative livelihood options, and poor land use practices and development policies,