

**A STUDY ON ECOTOURISM
PRODUCTS DEVELOPMENT AND
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT OF THE
MALUDAM NATIONAL PARK
BETONG DIVISION SARAWAK**

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1.0 Background and Overview

1.1 Maludam National Park

Maludam National Park was formally gazetted on 31st May 2000. The park covers a total area of 34,147 hectares consisting of the former Maludam Forest Reserve (16,592 hectares) and the Triso Protected Forest (26,555 hectares). It is located mainly in the sub-district of Maludam in the Betong division. The park occupies almost the entire Maludam Peninsula and is part of the flood plain of the Lupar and Saribas rivers. Maludam National Park was established for three (3) major purposes. First, to protect biodiversity of the area, comprising wildlife species such as the red-banded langurs (*Presbytis melalophos cruciger*), the proboscis monkeys (*Nasalis larvatus*) and the silvered langurs (*Presbytis cristata*). Second, to conserve part of the largest patch peat swamp forests in Sarawak. Third, to provide buffer to existing farms and settlements against droughts and floods.

1.2 Peat Swamp Forest Protection and Conservation

Peat Swamp Forest is a useful ecosystem in supporting economic growth, in safeguarding the livelihoods of dependent rural population and in protecting the environment. Accordingly, benefits derived from Peat Swamp Forest extended from direct consumptive uses (e.g. source of food supplies, timber and conversion to agriculture purposes) but to encompassed non-consumptive uses (e.g. protect water supply, flood and drought control, habitat for wildlife). In other words, the actual benefits of the Peat Swamp Forest involved both economic values (e.g. market values of forest products, jungle produce) and non-economic values (e.g. quality of life, scenic values and wildlife values). Apart from generating economic benefits, the ecological functions (e.g. conservation of biodiversity and gene pool, provision of watershed functions, food security and tourism, sink to carbon dioxide sequestration and maintain air quality) of Swamp Forest ecosystem has been increasingly attracted attention of global communities. With the rapid growth of human activities in the Peat Swamp Forest, the issue of protecting the Peat Swamp Forest is considered vital and need to given higher priority. In