

PEATWISE

New Educational Tools for Sustainable Management of Peatlands in the Humid Tropics

Key words Integrated land and water resources management of tropical peatlands, curriculum development

Objective

To develop a curriculum on the sustainable development of peatlands by the introduction of innovative educational methods and tools, in order to promote the wise use of the resource and to enhance sustainable economic development, particularly in the areas of Sarawak, Malaysia and Central Kalimantan, Indonesia.



Main activities

The project covers the entire sequence of curriculum development, the production of educational tools and course materials and the training of staff in the dissemination of the knowledge. To allow for a correct scientific development of the project within the budget framework, a phased approach is adopted:

1. **Inception:** (i) Market assessment; (ii) Inventory of existing curricula and courses and (iii) Inventory of existing educational infrastructure
2. **Development of the curriculum:** (i) Ecology and natural sciences; (ii) Water resources and hydrology; (iii) Soil and land use (agriculture, forestry etc); (iv) Human dimensions and resource economics, and (iv) GIS and Remote Sensing
3. **Implementation:** (i) Marketing; (ii) Training, and (iii) Testing

Relation to other projects and programs:



- **STRAPEAT:** Strategies for implementing sustainable management of peatlands in Borneo (EU INCO-DEV)
- **Research into Drainage and Water Management Guidelines for Agricultural Development in Coastal Peat Swamps of Sarawak, Phase 1** (Department of Irrigation and Drainage Sarawak < Malaysia).
- **Fuel for forest fires?** Promoting the river basin and ecosystem approach for sustainable management of Southeast Asian lowland peat swamp forest (Partners for Water Programme, The Netherlands)

Innovative aspects

Co-operation between two South East Asian and two European Universities for the development of innovative educational methods and tools, i.e. distance learning, for each University targeted towards their own student population.

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The project has received financial support from the European Commission Asia-Link Curriculum

Development Programme and the Netherlands Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries

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PROJECT DETAILS

- Partners** Wageningen University and Research Centre (The Netherlands), Leicester University (United Kingdom), University Malaysia Sarawak (Malaysia) and University of Palangka Raya (Indonesia)
- Country** Indonesia, Malaysia, U.K. and The Netherlands; Worldwide applicable
- User group** University Staff and Students
- Duration** April 2003 to April 2006
- Total value** € 427.000 (EU-contribution € 300.000, partners contribution € 127.000, a.o. Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, The Netherlands)



Project description

About one quarter of the world's **tropical peatlands** (11 million hectares) occur in Borneo. These peatlands have **global ecological significance**, being some of the largest remaining areas of lowland rainforest in SE Asia that provide the habitat of many endangered species. In addition, they are large stores of carbon and water and also have an **important regional economic role**, providing forest products and land for settlement and agricultural development. Owing to a lack of awareness and understanding about sustainable land management practices, however, many peatland development projects fail, resulting in serious environmental degradation and impoverishment of local communities. The PEATWISE project will address issues of **sustainable land management**, with particular reference to tropical peatlands, through the **development of new university curricula** by a **multilateral network** of South East Asian and European universities. Using **innovative educational tools**, it will produce and make available course materials and training modules that incorporate up-to-date research results and advice on the wise use of natural resources, thus **improving academic provision, enhancing skills and expertise, contributing to the sustainable use of natural resources** and **improving socio-economic conditions** across the peat-covered lowlands of Borneo.

CATEGORY & PRODUCTS

Themes

- agriculture and food security
- nature and ecosystems
- integrated river basins
- institutional
- valuation of water / performance assessment

Categories

- education
- research
- consultancy



Deliverables & (sub) products

- Strengthened institutional capacity to identify and implement "wise use" strategies for tropical peatlands.
- Study material, including distance learning modules
- Enhanced skills and expertise of University Staff and students
- Common curriculum, pooling of expertise, mutual recognition of study programmes
- Mutual exchange of information and staff
- Scientific publications

For more information: www.peatwise.alterra.nl