

**Sustainable Living in Malaysia:  
Living Well Within the Ecological Limits of Our Planet**

Workshop On Introduction To Ecological Footprint, 13 & 14 June 2007, Menara MBPJ

Friday, 15 & Saturday, 16 June 2007, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur

Opening Address By Y.Bhg. Tuan Haji Mohamad Roslan Sakiman, Mayor, Petaling Jaya  
City Council

Assamulaikum Wallahikatul and a very good morning to,

Y.B. Dato' Lim Choon Kin, Chairman of the Social Integration Working Committee,  
Local Agenda 21 Petaling Jaya

Yg. Berusaha Mr. Nithiyananthan Nesadurai, Vice President, Environmental Protection  
Society Malaysia (EPSM)

Y.Bhg. Datuk Hajjah Rosnani bt Ibrahim, Director General of the Department of  
Environment

Professor Dr. William E. Rees, Originator of the Ecological Footprint Concept

Dr. David Meyrick and Mrs. Jane Meyrick, Special Advisor to the ICLEI

Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

First of all, let me thank you the Organiser for inviting me to officiate the Workshop entitled Introduction To Ecological Footprint. I am indeed very happy to be present here with you as I am of the opinion that Ecological Footprint is an important management tool to assess the sustainability performance of an individual, a community, a city and even a country. This Workshop is more meaningful and memorable particularly to the Environmental Protection Society Malaysia and Petaling Jaya City Council.

EPSM was instrumental in introducing Local Agenda 21 to Malaysia ten years ago. If I could recall, at that time, MBPJ was the only Local Authority participated in the First Workshop held at Shah's Village Motel, Petaling Jaya. Subsequent year witnessed MBPJ took a bold step by partnering EPSM in organising the Second Workshop. It is no turning back for the Council. Through our active involvement and learning process on Local Agenda 21, MBPJ managed to kick-start and later flourish the implementation of Local Agenda 21 program at Petaling Jaya. LA 21 PJ has since become a model for other local authorities in Malaysia.

I am convinced that Ecological Footprint concept as a management tool to measure sustainability performance will be well received and enjoy similar success story of Local Agenda 21 in Malaysia. Having said that, as the pioneer in understanding the ideas about Ecological Footprint concept, distinguished participants, your involvement and active

promotion of Ecological Footprint to at least the organisation or city where you come from is very critical and appreciated.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to extend my warmest welcome to our foreign guests and other distinguished participants to Petaling Jaya, the newest city in Malaysia. I am happy to see the gathering of you, a congregation of distinguished participants from all over the country; local authorities representatives, civil servants, academician, professionals, environmentalists, community leaders and volunteers engaged in the field of sustainable development.

I understand that you have been selected to learn the new tools and to share and exchange your experiences with the view of identifying an appropriate approaches in implementing Ecological Footprint. I understand the Workshop will introduce to you the concept of Ecological Footprint and you will be guided thoroughly on the whole process of data collection, analysis and indicators formulation.

It is indeed timely that such an in depth Workshop is conducted in order for us to learn to assess our sustainability performance, set target and implement programmes on achieving sustainable development. I am convinced that your participation and valuable input coupled with the guidance of the facilitators, Dr David and Jane Meyrick of ICLEI will be another important milestone for sustainable development movement in Malaysia.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

While our country is aspiring to reach developed nation by year 2020, rapid development and urbanisation has resulted in servile environmental degradation, traffic congestion, urban sprawl, solid waste management problem, insufficient of public facilities and infrastructure as well as social ills. As you may aware that one of the critical environmental problem we are facing in Malaysia nowadays is none other than the higher consumption rate of natural resources, thus requiring higher production rate and rapid disposal rate of solid waste.

I understand that Malaysia is one of the countries that produce a lot of rubbish in which 17,000 tonnes is generated everyday. In PJ alone, more than 300 tonnes of rubbish is generated daily. This problem is aggravated due to the changing of lifestyle with increase income among urban residents. Sadly to say, the consumption trend especially amongst the urban folks have gone beyond fulfilling the basic need and a decent lifestyle, but rather luxury and lavish.

While higher consumption is needed to accelerate the economic development of Our Country, the pattern with too much wastage shall be curbed. We have to devote methods to utilise resources efficiently and to reduce waste generation that lead us to ecological deficiency. But the question remained here is how to alert the individual and Local Authorities on the efficiency in consumption and reduction in wastage so that informed decision on sustainability can be made. In this respect, the understanding and practice of Ecological Footprint concept by stakeholders is crucial.

Many of us realise the importance of sustainable living by eating healthier, exercise more and thrifty in spending. However, it is sad to note that practice on achieving and maintaining higher quality of living has not reached the desired state although there are considerably high level of awareness amongst the people, young and old, women and children. We are still lagging behind and the habit of sustainable living has yet to implant with the routine daily living of people. For us to reach the benchmark of average 1.9 Global Hectares per Capital (GHA) as envisioned in the Ecological Footprint Analysis, Ladies and Gentlemen, enhance your knowledge, change your attitude and then practice sustainable lifestyle in your daily living is indeed an obligation and very much needed.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the midst of celebrating our 1st Anniversary City Day on 20th June, I would like to assure you that MBPJ would continue to explore new approaches and initiatives to mould a sustainable city of Petaling Jaya. We are committed to partner organisations like EPSM in search of solutions to our urban development and management challenges. Towards that, we would provide our assistance and continue our effort in promoting and implementing Ecological Footprint concept as well as other management tools on achieving sustainable development. Let's work together for a better, green and sustained Malaysia and in particular Petaling Jaya City.

Last but not least, congratulation once again to EPSM and Unit of Local Agenda 21, MBPJ for their tireless effort in organising this important and long over due event. SYABAS. Also not forgetting valuable input from Professor William E. Rees, Dr David and Jane Meyrick, Lestari UKM and Department of Environment in making this Workshop a success. This form of partnership is indeed in accordance with the spirits of Local Agenda 21 Petaling Jaya, that partnership and participation amongst different stakeholders can ensure the success of sustainable development programs implementation.

I sincerely hope that this form of partnership would sustain and enhance in order to create an inclusive society. I hope that this effort of gathering representatives from different agencies and organisations to discuss the common challenges we face in sustainability is a starting point for more mutual efforts and initiatives to come by. With that note, I wish you having a fruitful discussion and officially announce the opening of this Workshop.

Thank you and wassalam.