

## **International Forestry Graduate Students' Conference 2013 (FORGRAD2013)**

The Forestry Graduate Students' Society (FORGRAD), in collaboration with the management of Faculty of Forestry and Marketing and Communication Unit (MARCOMN), Universiti Putra Malaysia had successfully organized the International Forestry Graduate Students' Conference 2013 (FORGRAD2013) on 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4 July 2013. Sponsored by Ministry of Education (MOE), Malaysia and Asia Pacific Forest Institute (APAFRI), FORGRAD2013 congregated postgraduate students from various backgrounds around the globe including Indonesia, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Iran Estonia as well as local participants. FORGRAD2013 was officiated by Prof. Dr. -Ing. Ir. Renuganth Varatharajoo with the presence of Dean of the Faculty of Forestry, UPM, Prof. Datin Dr. Faridah Hanum Ibrahim. The main purpose of this conference is to gather all postgraduate students with forestry background to meet and share their current research and also to confer issues related to forestry, climate change, environmental health and also eco-tourism in line with the FORGRAD2013 theme "Navigating Knowledge Exchange for Future Excellence". About 70 papers were presented by which 64 are presented orally while the other are poster presentation. Tan Sri Dato' Seri Dr. Salleh Mohd. Nor, adjunct professor of the Faculty of Forestry, UPM was FORGRAD2013 keynote speaker, in which had opportunity to share with all the participants and audiences about the current situation of forest around the world in his talk entitled "The Challenges to Our Future Environment: How can a Knowledge Economy Address This? FORGRAD2013 plenary speakers, include Prof. Dr. Toshinori Okuda, from Graduate School of Integrated Arts and Sciences, Hiroshima University, Japan, Mr. Zulkepli Abd. Rani, Director Manager of MTB The current situation and issues related on forest management was presented by another plenary speaker, Dato' Prof. Dr. Haji. Abd. Rahman B. Hj. Abd. Rahim For ecotourism part, Mr Arham Syazaili Bin Yahya from Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP), Malaysia. This three days conference also embroiled a half day tour trips to Putrajaya Botanical Garden whereby all the participants and committee members were brought to explore and see how the botanical garden is managed including the landscaping work and architecture. Later, a 3 days post-conference tour encompassed of a journey to Paya Indah Wetland was organized. At Paya Indah Wetland, participants are familiarized to how wildlife taken into care and

their breeding. Besides that, participants had also the opportunity of patting animals namely hippocampus and porcupine. After Paya Indah Wetland, participants are brought to Sultan Idris Shah (SISFEC), UPM at Hutan Simpan Ayer Hitam Forest Reserve, Perak. Participants went on a jungle trekking expedition to observe the forest management of the secondary forest around SISFEC. Later in the evening, Mr. Mohd Farhan Shahrin presented an ephemeral discourse regarding SISFEC, its facilities and research opportunity with the anticipation that it might elicit the interest among the participants to collaborate with local lecturers and postgraduate in undertaking research or other intellectual activities. The final program in-line for FORGRAD2013 post-conference was a two days and one night at Kampung Jahang Camp Site, Gopeng, Perak. Overall, FORGRAD2013, the first forestry postgraduate student's conference that was held can be denoted as a pioneer initiative for the future proceedings. It is aspirated that the university will be able to uphold such event every two years once.