

## POTENTIAL ECOTOURISM VALUES

The Meliau Range, with its ultramafic outcrops, rugged and steep pointed mountains, clear water rivers, as well as unique vegetation and biodiversity, is an unexplored jewel in terms of ecotourism. It offers a variety of spectacular landscapes and sceneries, unrivalled elsewhere.

The Meliau River, which originates from the Range, is a major attraction in the area. With numerous deep rock pools, small waterfalls and interesting rock formations, it provides a clean and picturesque natural setting for soft nature tourism activities such as picnics, camping, swimming as well as nature interpretation and environmental education.

The natural attractions of the Meliau Range further make it an important landscape-level conservation unit.

## PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR THE FUTURE

These include:

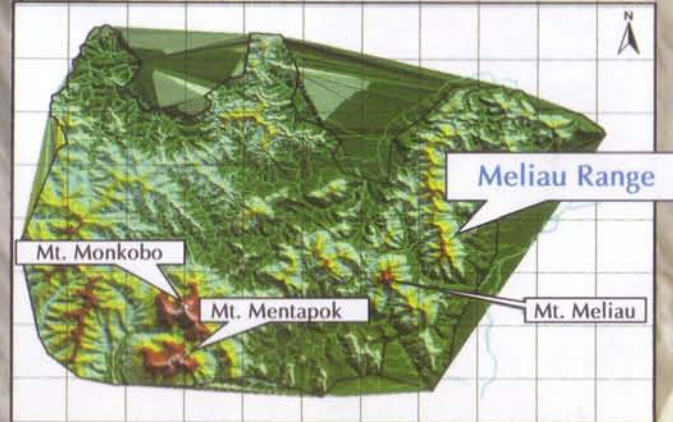
1. A scientific expedition to carry out a more detailed biodiversity assessment in August 2004.
2. Fire prevention and management - development of a fire prevention strategy with relevant stakeholders.
3. Assessment of aquatic resources within the Meliau Range and its tributaries.
4. Development of a planning and management strategy for conservation of Ultramafic Forests.

## FUNDING

Currently, funding is provided by the Keindanren Nature Conservation Fund (KNCF) of Japan, with the SFD, GEC and TSH providing support in kind.

Further funding is needed to support the MRCP and its ultimate goal of conserving biodiversity of areas with ultramafic soils in Sabah. The Programme welcomes the participation of other partners.

## Location of Meliau Range in Sabah



# Meliau Range Conservation Programme

Sabah, Malaysia

For further information,  
please contact:

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### Partners



Global  
Environment  
Centre



TSH  
Resources  
Bhd



Sabah  
Forestry  
Department

# The Meliau Range Conservation Programme

## BACKGROUND

The Ultramafic Forests of Borneo Island, with their very unique vegetation and biodiversity are little known or documented, in Malaysia, one of the largest extents can be found on the Meliau Range in Sabah. This picturesque area of ultramafic outcrops and steep pointed mountains is located in the eastern quarter of the Ulu Tungud Forest Reserve. Management of the Reserve has been granted to TSH Resources Berhad., a public-listed Malaysian company, as Forest Management Unit No. 4, through a 100-year Management Agreement by the Sabah State Government.

The Meliau Range Conservation Programme (MRCP) is an initiative by the Global Environment Centre (GEC), an international NGO based in Malaysia, the Sabah Forestry Department (SFD), and TSH Resources Berhad. It is regarded as a starting point for the conservation of this unique forest type in Borneo. It is expected to open up exciting possibilities for research by scientists from within and outside Malaysia.

## GOAL

The MRCP aims to promote conservation of Meliau Range and stimulate research and conservation of biodiversity of ultramafic soils.

## OBJECTIVES

1. Development and implementation of strategies for conservation and research.
2. Generating resources from donors, government and private sectors to support activities.
3. Promote the Meliau Range as a centre for research and conservation activities.
4. Publishing and promoting outcomes of research and studies.

## INITIAL BIODIVERSITY SURVEYS

Initial studies of the biodiversity of the Meliau Range are being undertaken in 2003 - 2004.

The information from these studies will help the partners to explore management options for the proposed conservation of the Meliau Range.

## Findings of Preliminary Biodiversity Study

An initial study by scientists from the Forest Research Centre (FRC) of the Sabah Forestry Department in 2003

provided the following findings:

1. Plant diversity is high compared to other ultramafic forests in Sabah. Of 334 species identified, 34 are endemic to Borneo, 15 are endemic to Sabah and may be absolutely restricted to ultrabasic areas in Sabah, and 10 are rare. These include *Borneodendron aenigmaticum* and *Phyllanthus lamprophyllus* (Euphorbiaceae), seven species of pitcher plants (Nepenthes), as well as ultramafic and endemic orchids.
2. Of the moths surveyed, 11% were species that favour Ultramafic Forests. A quarter of the moths sampled were endemic to Borneo. The beetle family diversity was relatively high, with 39 families sampled through light-trapping.
3. Freshwater fish species included the rare *Nandus nandus* and the Pelian (*Tor* spp.).

## Other Unique Features

The study also found a patch of "glowing forest", presumed to be luminous fungi, covering the forest floor. This unique and unusual occurrence should be studied further.



## PHOTO CAPTIONS

1. Ultramafic Forest in the Meliau Range. 2. *Borneodendron aenigmaticum*, Endemic to Borneo (Sabah). 3. Moths sampled from the preliminary survey. 4. *Nepenthes stenophylla* (Nepenthaceae). Endemic to Borneo. 5. A striking jewel beetle *Chrysodema doriana* (Buprestidae). 6. *Chalcosoma moellenkampi* (male). 7. Workshop on Conservation of Biodiversity in Ulu Tungud Forest Reserve, Sabah, held on 27 April 2004. 8. Field visit on 28 April 2003. 9. Clear water in Meliau River. 10. Fish sampled from the Meliau River. 11. The Meliau River. [Photo credits FRC/ GEC]