

Conservation of Southeast Portion of North Selangor Peat Swamp Forest Phase 1 - Bukit Belata (Ext) Forest Reserve (BBEFR) Project

A Brief Progress Update from December 2021 until April 2022

1. Introduction

The Global Environment Centre (GEC), a Malaysian non-profit organisation with expertise in peatland conservation, and Prosper Oil Palm (Prosper), a Malaysian oil palm company, signed an Agreement in March 2020 to support the conservation of the Southeast portion of the 81,000ha North Selangor Peat Swamp Forest (NSPSF), which is the largest contiguous peat swamp forest in Peninsular Malaysia. Phase 1 of the project (2020-2023) is focused on Bukit Belata (Ext.) Forest Reserve (BBEFR), which covers 3,140 ha. It has been designed by Prosper as part of its Recovery Plan. The work is undertaken in the framework of the MoU between GEC and the Selangor State Government, which has facilitated joint forest conservation actions in NSPSF since 2010. This brief report describes the progress of the activities conducted from December 2021 until April 2022 according to the project implementation plan.

2. Progress of the activities according to the project implementation plan from December 2021 until April 2022

The following table outlines the progress of the activities from December 2021 until April 2022 according to the project implementation plan:

Code	Activity	Progress and accomplishment of the activities
Activity 2 : Rehabilitation of 200 ha through rewetting and assisted natural regeneration and selected planting in priority portions of the BBEFR		
Act 2.1	Canal blocking and rewetting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Problematic canals (draining) to construct nine (9) units of canal blocks (7 units in FC 3 and 2 units in FC 2) have been identified, confirmed and the canal dimensions (length, depth and width) have been measured and recorded. ▪ At the time of reporting, the construction of four (4) units of canal blocks was completed (Table 1, Figure 1) and the remaining three (3) units at FC 3 and two units at FC 25 will be completed by the middle of May 2022.
Activity 3 : Enhance the understanding of community and stakeholders on peat hydrology, sustainable management on peatland and fire prevention with local communities and landowners		
Act 3.1 & Act 3.2	Organization of meetings with stakeholders, local communities and landowners to discuss on sustainable use of peatland, fire risk and prevention measures (Act 3.1) & Promoting the Malaysia Good Agriculture Practices (MyGAP), Malaysian Sustainable Palm Oil (MSPO) and Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) Manual (Act 3.2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Thirty-seven (37) delegates of the National Peatland Agricultural Management Technical Committee from seven states of Peninsular Malaysia as well as Sabah and Sarawak (including the officers from GEC and SSFD) visited GEC-CoSPeC and NSPSF on 1st April 2022 to acquire some insights on sustainable management of sensitive areas (peatlands) for the purpose of agricultural activities. ▪ A comprehensive briefing on NSPSF, its ecosystem services, threats as well as the community-based peatland rehabilitation programme, fire prevention and monitoring work as part of nature-based solutions (NbS) was presented to the delegates. ▪ The delegates were brought to FCC 99 and 100 of Raja Musa Forest Reserve to showcase the implementation

		and success of the rehabilitation and fire prevention initiatives undertaken by GEC and SSFD with the support from the local communities, particularly the Friends of North Selangor Peat Swamp Forest, Prosper and various funders through CSR projects (Figure 2) .
3.5	Establishment/guidance of local fire prevention and monitoring team to monitor and communicate with relevant authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Two patrollers of KWHSTS from Felda Sg. Tenggi Selatan actively undertook community-based patrolling and monitoring activities at fire-prone peatland areas from December 2021 until April 2022 in BBEFR (Figure 3). ▪ The patrollers updated the Fire Danger Risk Warning Signboards according to the Fire Danger Rating System (FDRS) on daily basis. ▪ The appointed patrollers performed water table monitoring activities at the forest and adjacent oil palm plantations twice per week, 16 times a month. ▪ No encroachment, illegal activities and fire incidents recorded during the patrolling period
Act 3.6 & Act 3.7	Boundary signage and protection post establishment (Act 3.6) & Installation of Fire Danger Risk warning signs in fire prone sites (Act 3.7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Completed the installation of twenty (20) units of 'No Entry' signboard (0.75 m x 0.60 m) along the boundary of FC 98 RMFR and FC 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 31, 32, 33, 125, 126 & 127, SKFR in collaboration with Sub-renj Bestari Jaya (SSFD) (Table 2, Figure 4).

3. Problems encountered during the implementation period (December 2021 until April 2022)

3.1 High water tables due to periodical rain associated with the northeast monsoon (November 2021 - March 2022) and transitional monsoon (April, 2022)

The frequent rain episodes brought by the northeast monsoon and transitional monsoon have caused high water tables in the areas proposed for canal blocking at FC 3 and 25, BBEFR. This was coupled with El-Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO), which causes the La Nina phenomena in Malaysia causes most states of Malaysia to receive rainfall between 150mm and 600mm. This has delayed the commencement of the canal blocking activity due to the high water tables at the rehabilitation site of FC 3 and 25 proposed for nine units of canal block construction. Therefore, the canal blocking and other planned field activities have to be delayed until the water levels subsided. Meanwhile, a regular site inspection has been conducted to monitor the site conditions and the planned activities restored in April 2022 once the sites are resumed to normal condition.

3.2 The issues related to the changing of the contractors for the canal block construction at FC 3 and FC 25, BBEFR

The locals who had agreed to undertake the canal block construction work initially moved out of Selangor to be involved with another project. The Komuniti Warisan Hutan Sungai Tenggi Selatan (KWHSTS) are still not able to build canal blocks due to lack of experience. Therefore, a member from the Friends of NSPSF (local community) was selected to undertake the canal blocking works in BBEFR. Nevertheless, the new contractor's team was unable to carry out the construction of the barrier due to the high water level before April, so the work to block the canal at BBEFR was conducted in April 2022.

4. Pictorial report of the activities implemented from April until November 2021

Table 1

Four units of canal blocks constructed at FC 3, BBEFR.

Canal Block	GPS Coordinates	Photo (Before)	Photo (After)
CB1	3°35'42.04"N 101°23'37.04"E		
CB2	3°35'43.69"N 101°23'45.50"E		
CB3	3°35'53.78"N 101°23'40.46"E		
CB4	3°35'29.90"N 101°23'44.29"E		



Figure 1. Map showing the four units of canal blocks at FC3, BBEFR



Figure 2. The visit of the delegate to GEC-CoSPeC and NSPSF (Raja Musa Forest Reserve).



Figure 3. Patrolling and water table monitoring activities conducted by KWHSTS community patrollers at the adjacent land of BBEFR (pictures taken on 21st & 23rd April 2022)

Table 2
The types, units and location of installation of the signboards

Types of signboards	Printed (units)	Installed (units)	Installation Location
Rehabilitation Project Signboard (1.5 m x 1.0 m)	2	2	FC 3 & 25, BBEFR
Forest Enactment Signboard (1.2 m x 1.8 m)	4	4	FC 2, 3 & 25, BBEFR; FC 82, Raja Musa Forest Reserve (RMFR)
Fire Danger Risk Warning Signboard (1.2 m x 1.8 m)	12	12	Felda Sg. Tenggi; Felda Sg. Tenggi Selatan; Felda Soeharto; FC 3, 4, 23 & 25, BBEFR; State lands adjacent to Sungai Dusun Wildlife Centre; FC 73, RMFR.
'No Entry' Signboard (1.3 m x 1.0 m)	5	5	FC 2, 3 & 25, BBEFR; FC 82, RMFR
'No Entry' Signboard (0.75 m x 0.60 m)	50	50*	FC 3, 6, 10, 12, 20, 35 & 37, BBEFR; FC 82, 98 RMFR; FC 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 31, 32, 33, 125, 126 & 127, SKFR

Notes:

- * 30 units were installed and reported previously and the installation of the remaining 20 units are included in in this report. The FCs in blue refer to the new locations at which the remaining 20 units of signboards were installed.

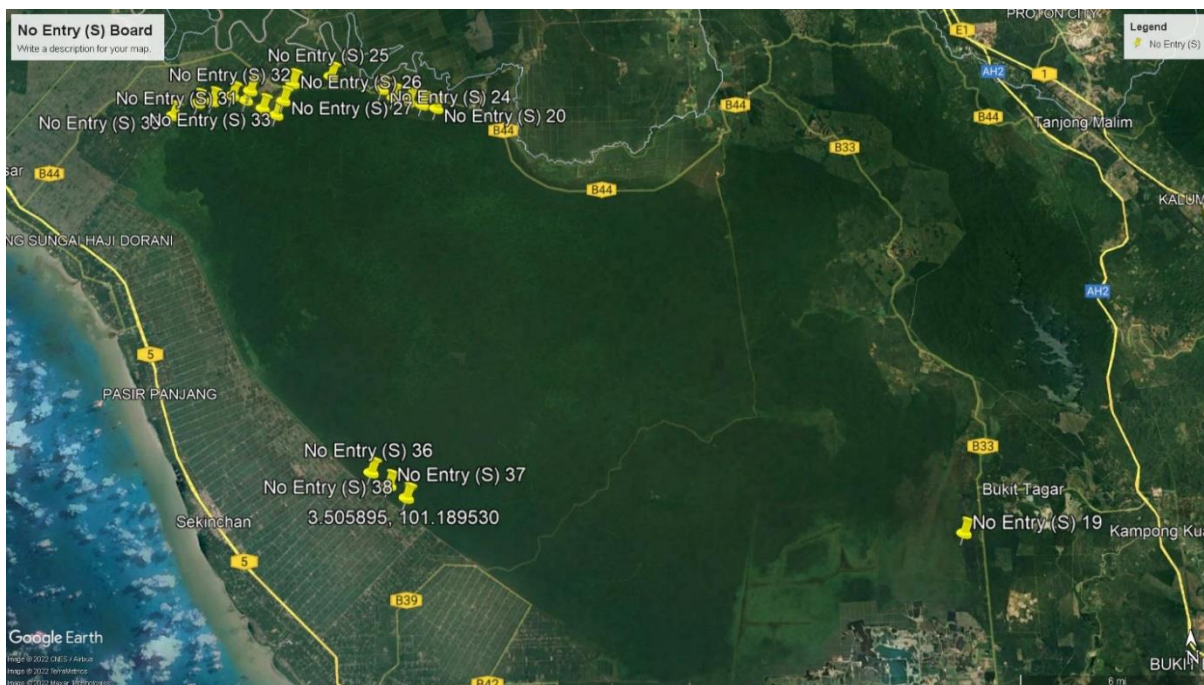


Figure 4. The overall map showing the entire locations of 20 units of 'No Entry' signboards at SKFR and RMFR.

Note:

Detailed report of each of the activities described in this summary report and associated pictures has been included in the semi-annual progress report for December 2021 – April 2022.