

Opinion Piece/Sharing

Environmental Issues and Solutions (Malaysia)

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Introduction

- Many of the environmental problems that occur in the country are due to the following main factors:
 - Lack of environmental considerations in the exploitation, development and management of resources.
 - Lack of control of pollution sources resulting in the ecosystem extending beyond the limits of its resilience.

Environmental Issues

- Over exploitation of natural resources such as
 - Forest for timber;
 - Land for agriculture, housing, industry and minerals;
 - Raw water for water supply; and
 - Irrigation and electricity generation without proper controls.

that contribute to the environmental problems

Environmental Issues

- Industrial as well as urban development without proper planning, assessment and effective pollution measures.
- It resulted in further stress to the receiving environment.

Environmental Issues

- As a consequence the country today is faced with problems of:
 - *Water pollution;*
 - *Air pollution;*
 - *Solid waste pollution;*
 - *Illegal dumping hazardous wastes; and*
 - *Noise pollution.*

Environmental Issues

- In addition, the country is also experiencing transboundary environmental problems such as
 - Haze;
 - Illegal discharge of hazardous wastes into Malaysia waters; and
 - Illegal importation of hazardous substances banned or severely restricted by the country of origin.

Environmental Issues

- Pollution problems and environmental degradation become increasingly **prominent agendas** in the midst of our aggressive but decisive approach to develop.
- The thrust of environmental management is to strike a **balance** between development needs and the environmental objectives.

Environmental Solutions

- In order to reduce the environmental issues, the environmental management must give due consideration to *economic growth*, *reduction in resource consumption* and *declining environmental degradation*.
- Emphasis must be given to the *integration* of environmental dimensions in all project planning and implementation.

Environmental Solutions

- In Malaysia, the main environmental problems in the past were largely due to discharges from the primary commodities sector mainly rubber and palm oil industries as well as domestic sewage industries.
- Pollution from the processing of natural rubber and palm oil were minimized with the introduction of the Environmental Quality Act 1974 (EQA).

Environmental Solutions

- The remedial approach, which constitutes **enforcement** of the EQA and its regulations, is **insufficient** and **inadequate** to tackle the emerging environmental problems.
- It is due to the accelerated growth in the industrial sector and infrastructure development in the 1980's.

Environmental Solutions

- A preventive approach was therefore adopted to complement the remedial approach taken in the 1970's.
- The preventive approach emphasizes land use planning, the integration of environmental factors in the implementation of development projects and the conduct of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

Environmental Solutions

- Also, in line with the National Policy on the Environment, the Department of Environment adopted the following strategies:
 - Pollution prevention and control;
 - Integration of environmental dimension in development planning;

Environmental Solutions

- Sustainable development through conservation of resources;
- Promotion of environmental education and awareness;
- Inter-agency and Federal-State cooperation; and
- Bilateral, regional and international cooperation.

Conclusion

- Environment issues in Malaysia are currently under control and manageable.
- Environmental solutions could be better depending on the economic aspects of Malaysia.
- Ministry will implement more stringent environmental regulation in the near future.