



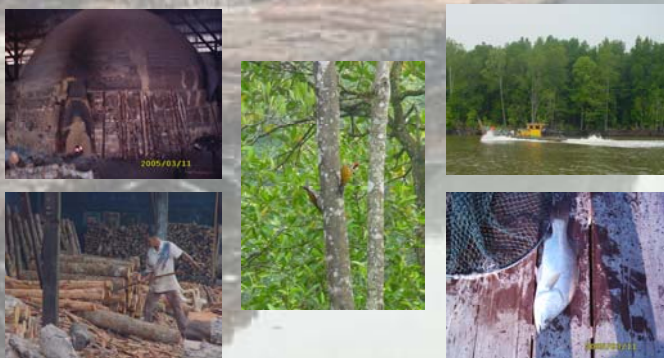
# Opportunities and Level Playing Field for Local Communities in Ecotourism Development in Matang Mangrove Forest, Perak



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## PROJECT SUMMARY

Matang mangrove forest management is globally recognized for its sustainable management not only for timber extraction but as new ecotourism attraction. It has played a vital role for nature and wildlife conservation and social well-being. Socio-economics activities include productions of construction poles and charcoal, seafood industries, coastal and off-shore fishery, restaurants and ecotourism. Hence, the creation of social's shares for the benefits and opportunities for of Matang's community are therefore needed. However, such opportunities are not being fully developed and participate by the local people of villages in Matang. There are instance where people from outside the area enjoying the tourism businesses. A Focus Group Meeting or workshop (FGM) with the local communities was held and identified ecotourism as the opportunities to be involved in with mangrove as the background setting. The FGM used methods to elicit the perception of local communities towards the potential of ecotourism industry in Matang and their likely participation. The results of the FGM confirmed that the local communities have positive views on the future of ecotourism industry and would like to participate. Following this, a questionnaire survey was conducted to selected local communities to get their responses toward the ecotourism industry. From the exercise, several local people in Kuala Gula and Kuala Sepetang are already involved in tourism services. However, more people would like to be involved but still unsure how to go about it. While developing ecotourism industry in mangrove forests, it is vital to consider the local communities to increase the economics share and opportunities particularly the nearby villages. Currently, the ecotourism development in Matang Mangrove Forest is still in its juvenile stage, therefore, it is recommended to develop further the industry by including the local community to be given the space and opportunities through a level playing field procedure.

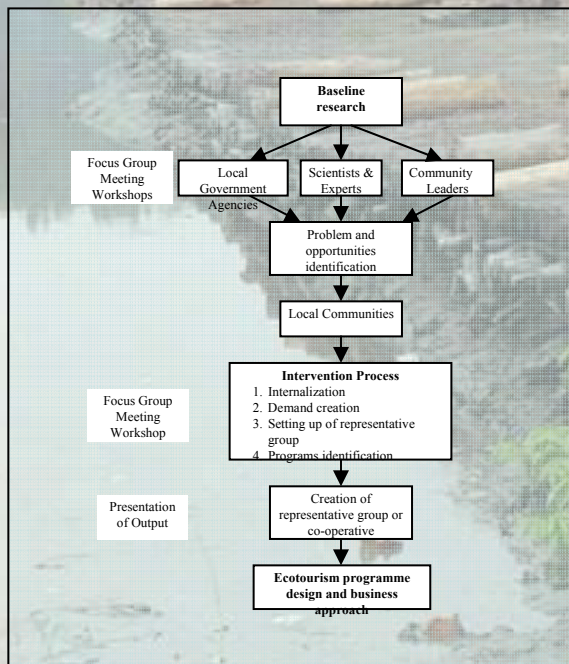


## Project's Potential

- Identify ecotourism as business proposition to be participated by villagers in Mukim Matang
- Create the need to set up villager representatives group or co-operatives to lead the activities related to ecotourism entrepreneurship
- Design programme making villagers to participate in ecotourism industry



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