

# **LOOKING AT THE LAW AND POLICY OF RECYCLING IN MALAYSIA**

By

Ad'lean binti Mohd Yusof (2004283002)

Heleyaniiza binti Mohd Said (2002375752)

Ruzanna binti Ahmad (2004215834)

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The students/authors confirm that the work submitted is their own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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**ABSTRACT**

In Malaysia, the Environment Act is silent on matters relating to recycling which is deemed to be important.

From this research, one of the problems that arise due to recycling is that the level of awareness is too poor among the citizens, the facilities are not sufficient and adequate in order to encourage people to recycle and mostly, there was no law that governed recycling in Malaysia.

As compared to foreign law such as laws that govern haulers, law which has been divided between recycling materials, recycling provisions on the matters of penalties and others that have been passed by their legislation. This shows that they take recycling as a serious matter. Moreover, they provide sufficient facilities and encourage their citizens to recycle. Further, if the law is not complied with, penalties will be imposed against them.

The level of awareness among their citizens is tremendous where their citizens are more responsible and understand their duties and role to obey the law. Thus this research will look at the general problems on recycling, comparison between Malaysian law and foreign law such as United States and Japan and recommendations to the loopholes in Malaysian policy.

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Recycling is one of the ways to help the environment, but it must be noted that, it is not just about putting cans and newspaper into a recycle bin. As in late twentieth century, recycling has been one of the best environmental success stories. For example, in the United States, recycling including composting diverted about 30 percent of the solid waste stream from landfills and some others<sup>1</sup>.

The general public has a narrow view of recycling, but understands some of the broader purposes of recycling. Recycling is most often described as an activity in which people separate their trash (glass, plastic, paper and the residual) for the purpose of reusing the materials or making new products. This is because the general public is caught up in the daily logistics separating their trash and complying with the trash hauler requirements. Some can distinguish recycling and reusing as parts of the concept, but few address the issue of reducing consumption. When asked about the three R's (reduce, reused, recycled) campaign, a few think that reducing means reducing trash in landfills<sup>2</sup>.

As in the wake of 'plant more trees' campaign, government had launched a recycling operation. This is a reminder of how serious the degradation of our environment has become. Not many Malaysians realize that, each of us throw away an average of 0.8 kilograms of waste daily<sup>3</sup>. Malaysia is one of the countries with a high rate of waste generation. Our country generates around 15 000 tones of waste every day, and if this is accumulated together, we have enough waste to fill up the Kuala Lumpur Twin Tower in just 9.5 days.

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<sup>1</sup> Elden D. Enger, *Environmental Science A Study on Interrelationships*, Mc Graw Hill Education, 2006, p 429 – 430.

<sup>2</sup> Federal Environmental Executive, *CE RECYCLING FOCUS GROUPS REPORT*, [www.ofee.gov/wpr/ceq.htm](http://www.ofee.gov/wpr/ceq.htm) (Sept 19,2006)

<sup>3</sup> Jenny Eng, *Recycle is Better Way*. MBSA/ALAM FLORA, 2006, p 1 – 3.