

Heritage Value Of The Traditional Malay Villages As Protected Landscapes

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ABSTRACT

In Malaysia, environments such as the rural countryside that are characterized by paddy fields, fruit orchards, rustic villages, forests, river banks and coastal plains are slowly being transformed and converted to other land uses. The general public awareness on the heritage value of such environment is very low and disappointing. Governmental authorities, land owners and developers view these environments as areas potential for future development, without much consideration into their historical and heritage values. These rural landscapes form part of the national landscape character in many districts in peninsular Malaysia. As such the purpose of this paper is to highlight the importance of the traditional rural Malay villages as cultural landscapes that are worthy of preserving. Protecting these cultural landscapes is crucial before more and more of such areas being lost to give way to urban types of development. Using the Landscape Value Method, the three case study examples from the district of Kuala Muda in the state of Kedah, district of Kerian and sub-district of Lenggong in the state of Perak provide sufficient evidence on the importance of preserving these traditional Malay rural environments. This paper concludes with some measures to preserve the rural Malay heritage as IUCN's Category V (protected landscapes).

Key Words: Malay heritage, Rural environment, Protected landscapes.

INTRODUCTION

The transformation of rural areas into urban types of development is driven by the pressure on land and eagerness for modern development. In many countries, the countryside is being treated like a reservoir, providing potential land for future development. This attitude poses tremendous threats to the rural areas and could destroy the heritage value and the traditional character that has evolved over a long time. Mitchell and Buggiey (2001) highlighted the need to protect these heritage areas, which they considered as cultural landscapes, because in their view, these areas "belong to the most fragile and threatened sites on earth" (p.18).

In the Malaysian context, large-scale conversion of forests and agricultural land to urban uses has taken place since the country gained independence. To the state and local authorities, the general public and also many people, the rural heritage and cultural landscapes, which are abundance in the rural areas, are seen as ordinary landscapes (Meinig, 1979). Because of their ordinariness, they are facing pressure by development, urbanisation and agricultural modernisation. This issue is more pronounced in the peninsula compared to the rural parts of Sarawak or Sabah on Borneo Island. Khairiah (1999) termed development schemes that are more than 100 hectares as mega projects and described that such developments consist of housing, commercial and industrial land uses. According to her, because these projects are

located mainly on former agricultural lands and suburban forests, they are usually outside of recommended development plans prepared by the Federal or State Town and Country Planning Department thus escaped the scrutiny of planning controls. There is an urgent need to protect the rural areas from being further transformed because the countryside of the Malay heartland represents the transformation of the people, their culture and livelihood over time.

This paper discusses the significant characteristics of the Malay villages, settlements, and traditional agricultural practices including farming, fishing and related traditional jobs, which dominate much of the rural environment in peninsular Malaysia. These are cultural landscapes and contain significant heritage values that needed protection. Views from the local community were sought by using photographs and in-depth interviews. The respondents range from local community leaders to ordinary village residents. The issues derived from the three case studies described in this paper highlight the importance of protecting the natural and cultural resources of the rural areas.

THE METHODOLOGY AND CASE STUDIES

This research aim is to highlight the unique character and heritage value of the predominant cultural landscape in the rural parts of peninsular Malaysia i.e. the Malay villages, settlements and the traditional agricultural practices. The Landscape Value Method was used to evaluate how the local people perceive and value their rural surroundings and their value judgments provide the basis for understanding the meanings of rural heritage and cultural landscape. In this study, photographs were used as surrogates, to represent specific components of the countryside. Photographic language conveys landscape meanings quite well compared to written languages and many researchers in other countries had used similar technique including in New Zealand (Swaffield and Foster, 2000) and the United States (Ryan, 2006).

In the study approach, photographs of the countryside and daily community living in the study areas were taken based on initial assessment of topographic maps and preliminary gathering of information from the local community informants. Various countryside settings such as land use types, economic base, social attributes, physical characteristics, tangible and intangible Malay/ rural heritage were captured. After selecting the best photographs for each component, a field survey was done for the three case study areas. During the one-week survey period at each study area, the survey locations had to be adjusted in response to low turnout at some locations or overwhelming responses at others. Besides conducting the photo-based survey at community halls, mosques, recreational areas, and Chieftan's (*Penghulu*) offices, the research team also approach respondents at their homes. Survey participation and outcome were affected to a certain degree by the working time of farmers, fishermen and housewives and these in turn affected the choice of locations at certain places.

The three case study examples used in this research are Kuala Muda District (covering four *mukims*) in Kedah, Kerian District and Lenggong Sub-district in Perak. The three case studies are briefly described in the paragraphs below.

Kuala Muda District, Kedah

The district of Kuala Muda is bordered in the south by the Muda River, in the north by the Merbok River and in the west by one of the Straits of Malacca. The two rivers from the mountain range, which forms the eastern boundary, meander gently through the landscape and into the sea. The research concentrated on four *mukims* (sub-districts) i.e. Bukit Meriam, Kuala, Haji Kudong and Kota. This area is near the ancient Hindu archaeological site of Lembah Bujang. Some of the coastal landscapes in the study area were badly hit by the *tsunami* of 2004. The landscape of the study area is characterised by a distinct flat plain in the middle ground, where paddies are grown and

is surrounded by mangrove and nipah forests in the background. The kampongs are scattered throughout the area. The land-uses of the Kuala Muda district are agriculture (predominantly paddy fields then followed by rubber and palm oil), forests and a small portion of built-up area (Malaysian Government, 2002). The villagers are mostly involved in the agricultural sub-sectors like farming and fishing, with some in forestry in addition to working in a small town community.

Kerian District, Perak

The district of Kerian is situated on the northwest corner of the state, bordering the states of Pulau Pinang (Seberang Perai Selatan district) and Kedah (Bandar Baharu district). The Kerian River demarcates the boundary between Kerian and the other two states. Except for parts of *mukim* Beriah, around Gunung Semanggol which is hilly, the district is relatively flat and known for its vast tracts of paddy fields. These landscapes, which are characterized by extensive stretches of paddy fields and traditional settlements, were shaped by the Malay community, namely the Banjarese who had migrated to Malaya since the early part of the 20th century (Mohd Hanip, 1982). There are also fishing activities along the coasts from Sungai Aceh to Kuala Kurau. The district consists of eight *mukims* – Bagan Serai, Bagan Tiang, Beriah, Gunung Semanggol, Kuala Kurau, Parit Buntar, Selinsing and Tanjung Piandang.

Lenggong Sub- District, Perak

Lenggong is part of the Hulu Perak district. This sub-district consists of three *mukims* which are Lenggong, Temelong and Durian Pipit. Lenggong is one of the least developed parts of the state before the construction of the northern East-West highway due to its location in the interior part of the country. Located on the foothills of two mountain ranges, the Titiwangsa and the Bintang ranges, the Lenggong Valley is known for its caves and forest products like rattan, honey, exotic fruits and medicinal plants. The major land use in the study area is agriculture, covering approximately 64 percent of the total area. This includes fruit orchards, oil palm plantations, rubber plantations, livestock grazing/ farms, freshwater fishing/ fish-farming, herbs planting and also forest-based resources. The local residents were also involved in cottage industries and Lenggong is popular for the freshwater fermented fish known as *ikan pekasam* which is processed by villagers living along the Tasik Raban. With the recent listing in the UNESCO World Heritage list for its archaeological significance, Lenggong has great tourism potential in the future.



Figure 1 (a,b & c) Rural Characters: Kuala Muda Coastline, Kerian Paddy Field and Lenggong Hillside

HISTORY OF THE MALAY SETTLEMENTS

According to historian Professor Khoo Kay Kim (1997) it is not known when the Malay Peninsula became populated. However, it is a fact that by 1400s, during the Malacca Sultanate, isolated settlements had been established, some of which

eventually became kingdoms, located at the fringes of the peninsula. The Malays, who during those early times were a seafaring people, founded these settlements. Zaharah (197: 87) stated that people from outside like the Thais, Bugis, Achinese, Minangkabaus and the Javanese settled in the Malay Peninsula and their life centred on cultivating rice. Zaharah described the morphology of the traditional Malay settlement (kampong) as below:

“a collection or cluster of homesteads frequently arranged in a haphazard manner. Even the larger kampongs do not possess a defined street pattern, merely paths that criss-cross each other, leading to individual houses”.

The immigration of Indonesians continued for a long time, beginning from the 15th century until the 19th century. In terms of religion, culture and lifestyle of the Malays in the peninsula, after an early period of Indianization, they were later greatly influenced by the arrival of Islam in Southeast Asia. During these early centuries, the indigenous population was also small. Dobby (1956) quoted in Sidhu and Jones (1981, p.1), reported that by the end of the 18th Century, the Malay Peninsula had a population of less than a quarter million people. Dobby described the form of early Malay settlements as below:

“People lived in settlements strung along the coasts and rivers where transport by small boats, drinking water and irrigation water was available. Malay political units, sultanates, chieftainces [village heads] and so on were shaped around river estuaries where rice growing was easy and where the coastal riverine strings of villages met”.

Khoo (1997) reported that the significant movement of capital and population into the Malay Peninsula began with the introduction of commercial agriculture and the expansion of tin mining by the British. The development of commercial agriculture led to the clearing of the natural forests though not immediately. Sidhu and Jones (1981) stated that by the turn of the 20th Century, and the 1911 Census, the entire demographic and settlement characters of the peninsula had changed. Different ethnic groups not only occupied different spatial units but they were also engaged in different occupations. While the Malays remained concentrated in their kampongs (villages) along the coasts and lower riverine settlements, the non-Malays were concentrated in the western foothill zone and the major port towns of the west coast. Rice cultivation was exclusively in Malay hands. Tin mining, trade and commerce were established as Chinese preserves while the Indians were strongly associated with European-owned rubber (and later, in the 1920s, oil palm) plantations.

DISCUSSION

This paper highlights important landscape characteristics, historical and heritage values of the rural Malay villages as perceived by the local residents. In the research, a photo-based instrument was used to record responses and opinions from the respondents. There were 106 respondents in the Kuala Muda case study, 99 and 113 respondents in the Kerian and Lenggong case studies respectively. The respondents' profiles are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 6 Respondents' Profile

		Case Study		
		Kuala Muda District	Kerian	Lenggong
Gender	Male	71.7%	59.0%	57.2%
	Female	28.3%	41.0%	42.8%
Age	15 – 19	1.7%	9.1%	13.6%

	20 – 29	10.0%	15.2%	17.9%
	30 – 39	11.7%	33.3%	12.7%
	40 - 49	33.3%	20.2%	16.4%
	50 – 59	16.7%	20.2%	19.0%
	60 - 86	20.0%	2.0%	20.4%
Level of Education	Primary School	43.3%	19.0%	22.7%
	Secondary School	56.7%	21.5%	21.2%
	Finish SPM		43.7%	38.8%
	College/ University	0.0%	15.6%	17.3%

For all three areas, there were more males who turn out at the research locations. Research assistants brought the research instruments to homes in attempting to get more responses from the womenfolk. In terms of age, majority of the respondents were in the 30 to 49 age categories. There were also the younger generation, the elderly and pensioners who wanted to participate and share their perspectives about their villages. Almost 60 percent of the respondents had attained secondary school education.

The respondents value certain attributes of the traditional villages. Through the responses, the respondents were factored into 4 groups or themes. The groups are respondents whose viewpoints captured the values or characteristics of the Malay villages as follows:

- livelihood and income (33%)
- historical and heritage (30%)
- human and natural environments (25%)
- cultural landscape (12%)

Livelihood and Income

Respondents in the Kuala Muda case study valued tangible properties like the fish market as a point of interest to the local community and also as a symbolic feature of livelihood and income for the local community. The fish-selling method by whispering between the seller and the buyer, locally know as *bisik-bisik* is an age-old tradition still being practised until today at the Kuala Muda fish market. A 43 years old community leader highlighted that the fish market “*dapat beri keuntungan kepada nelayan, tak perlu orang tengah atau peraih, untuk ekonomi nelayan* (can benefit the fishermen, no need for middlemen or a broker, for the fishermen’s economy)”. A female resident aged 59 stated that the fish market “*adalah perlu untuk warisan kampung turun temurun* (important for village heritage from generation to generation)”. A 75 years old community leader, viewed the fish market as “*warisan daripada datuk nenek moyang... sebagai tempat para nelayan mendapatkan sumber pendapatan* (heritage from the ancestors.. a place for the fishermen to earn a living)”.

Respondents also value the economic importance of farming to the farmers and fishing to the fishermen and their families. A 63 years old female local resident stated that paddy farming “*merupakan mata pencarian utama dan sumber ekonomi keluarga sejak turun-temurun* (is the main incomet and source of family economy from earlier generations)”. A 54 years old fisherman and a 40 years old male resident agreed that fishing is the source of income, besides being a “*tradisi lama yang unik* (unique old tradition)” and it also supply “*ikan segar bagi penduduk tepi pantai* (fresh fish for people along the shore)”. The drying of salt fish was also viewed by respondents as an effort to supplement the family income. For example, a 60 years old female respondent said

that this activity provides “*pendapatan sampingan bagi keluarga nelayan... supaya tidak membazirkan ikan* (side income for fishermen’s families... so as not to waste unsold fish)”. Similarly a community leader indicated that salt fish could “*menolong dan meningkatkan pendapatan penduduk dan nelayan... usaha isteri membantu suami dan keluarga* (assist and increase residents and fishermen’s income... effort by wives to help husbands and families)”. In the Malay villages, the local residents were also involved in cottage industries. For example in Lenggong, the residents are proud of “*ikan pekasam*” the freshwater fermented fish which are processed by villagers living along the Tasik Raban.



Figure 4 (a,b & c) Livelihood: Kuala Muda Fish Market, Salted Fish and Fermented Fish

Historical and Heritage

The Malay rural character represented values that were not only beneficial to the present but also for future generations. The respondents strongly believed that the remnants of history must be conserved and protected. They suggested that the local history is to be made available by presenting it to the public. The importance of Malay villages as a local heritage was expressed by a 35 years old woman who said that these areas should be preserved “*untuk warisan di masa depan. Kalau tidak dijaga, tiada bukti sejarah* (for heritage in the future. If it’s not taken care of, there will be no proof of history)”.

Respondents also highlighted that sites of historical significance are important for the future generations. As an example, a 48 years old women in the Kuala Muda case study said “*Kota lama adalah kota bersejarah. Patut dijadikan panduan untuk anak cucu. Sekiranya dikekalkan boleh menjadi tunjukkan untuk anak-anak* (the old fort is a historical fort. It should provide guidance for children and grand-children. If it is preserved, it can be shown to the children)”. A 49 years old community leader expressed that the old fortress in town represents “*Sejarah pekan Kota Kuala Muda, pintu gerbang merupakan lambang pintu masuk negeri Kedah suatu ketika dahulu* (it’s the history of the town of Kuala Muda. The gateway was a symbol of an entry point into Kedah during those times)”.

In the Lenggong case study, the breakthrough archaeological finding of a prehistoric man was highly valued. Many local residents share with a 55 years old male respondent who acknowledged that the “Perak Man” as one of the historical attraction. Another male respondent aged 22 named “Gua Gunung Runtuh” (the cave where the Perak Man was found) as one of the historical attraction in Lenggong. There were also respondents who expressed their worry about development being so near to historical sites that could pose some threats. A 45 years old man urged that these historical and heritage areas “*perlu dijaga dengan baik. Terancam kerana kewujudan rumah-rumah berdekatan* (need to be well cared for. They are under threat because of nearby houses)”.

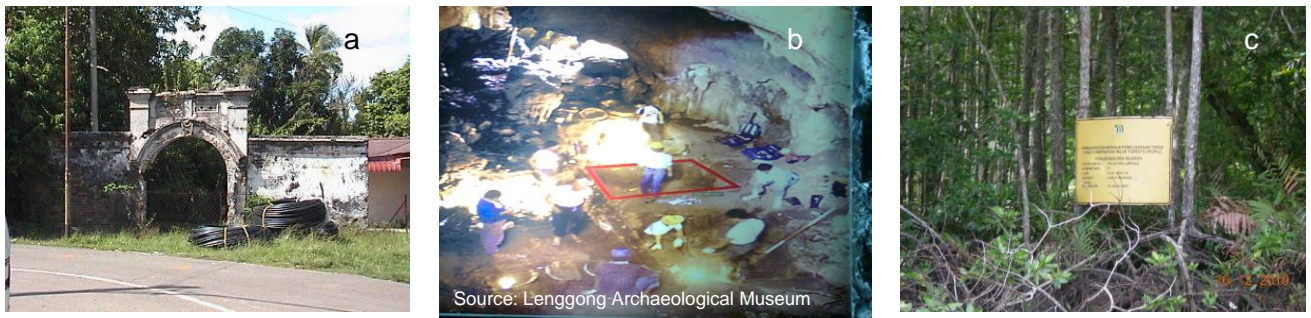


Figure 2 (a,b & c) Historical Values: Kota Kuala Muda, Gua Gunung Runtuh and Pulau Kalumpang

Traditional built features were also highly valued by respondents. This can be seen by their strong liking for photographs that showed local Malay building types. The traditional Malay houses were seen by many respondents as having heritage value. A woman pensioner aged 60 said “*struktur rumah yang masih elok dan teguh. Sesuai dijadikan sebagai warisan. Untuk dipertontonkan kepada orang ramai* (the house structure is still good and sound. Suitable for heritage, to be shown to the public)”. Similarly, a 53 years old man perceived the heritage value of the traditional houses. He stated that these houses were “*Rumah warisan yang perlu dikekalkan untuk orang muda. Rumah warisan melayu, rumah bumbung Perak* (Heritage house that needs to be preserved for the younger people. Malay heritage house, house with Perak roof)”. A 45 years old man expressed that these houses are under threat and that they were hard to find nowadays. “*Rumah lama terancam kerana zaman sekarang sudah pakai rumah batu. Bahan-bahan untuk buat rumah pun berubah* (These old houses are under threat because now people build brick houses. Materials for house construction have changed)”.

The respondents also stated that these traditional houses not only portrayed crafted artwork of unique quality but also reflected the Malay identity. Traditional houses give a sense of identity to the place as stated by a young man, aged 19 who said that these buildings are “*warisan yang perlu dikekalkan sebagai identiti kampung* (heritage that needs to be preserved as the village identity)”. His view was also shared by a 60 years old man who said “*Sifat kemelayuan...kekalkan sebegitu, pembangunan tidak sesuai* (Malay character...let it remain that way, development is not suitable)”. Another respondent, a 63 years old man offered similar view by saying that these houses “*perlu dikekalkan sebagai warisan turun-temurun. Rumah sebegini sejuk... lain dari yang lain, ada kesenian tersendiri* (need to be preserved as hereditary heritage. Houses like these are cool..different from the rest, have its own art)”. The need for protection of these houses were expressed by several other respondents like a 27 years old woman who said “*Kekalkan rekabentuk... jarang didapati pada masa kini walaupun di kampung* (Preserve the design... difficult to find nowadays, even in the villages)”. A 46 years old village head also urged for protecting these houses. In his words this “*Rumah pusaka dan tradisi perlu dikekalkan sebagai warisan nenek moyang. Sekiranya tidak dijaga akan pupus* (This inherited and traditional house need to be preserved as a heritage from our ancestors. If it's not maintained it will disappear)”.



Figure 3 (a,b & c) Traditional Malay House in Kuala Muda, Kerian and Lenggong

Human and Natural Environments

Respondents in this group valued the natural and cultural importance of the rural landscape. They highlighted the need to preserve these for the future generation while attracting tourists at the same time. The age-old boat transportation was also a highly valued cultural element. A 42 years old community leader said the boats were the “*perhubungan Kedah dengan Pulau Pinang, tradisi orang dulu-dulu* (transportation between Kedah and Penang, past people tradition)”. The boat transportation were also seen by respondents as something to be preserved for the future generation.

Respondents in this group also highlighted the significance of Pantai Merdeka (a local beach in Kuala Muda), Pantai Ban Pecah and Kuala Sungai Baru (beaches in Kerian) and Lata Kekabu (a waterfall in Lenggong) in fulfilling the recreational needs of the people and also for tourism purposes. To many residents, these natural environments are the only beach or waterfall nearby to cater for the surrounding population. A 37 years old male resident said “*untuk rekreasi dan sumber riadah bagi penduduk sekitar, perlu dilindungi* (for recreation and exercise for surrounding people)”. Similarly, a 45 years old resident said “*satu-satunya pantai yang ada. Tumpuan orang utara Perak, Penang dan keseluruhan Kedah* (the only beach available, attraction for people in north Perak, Penang and the whole of Kedah)”.

Many respondents also found the natural environment as pleasing, relaxing and stress-relieving and they want the beauty of this place to be sustained. A 15 years old female said that the natural environment possesses “*suasana menarik dan tidak sibuk* (attractive environment and not hectic)”. This view is also expressed by a 45 years old female who said that nature is “*tenang dan sunyi, bersih, penempatan jauh antara satu sama lain dan tanah lebih luas* (calm and quiet, clean, remote settlements to each other and the wider land)”.



Figure 6 (a,b & c) Natural Environment: Pantai Merdeka, Pantai Ban Pecah and Lata Kekabu

Cultural Landscape

The idyllic, serenity and scenic beauty of the paddy fields were highly valued by respondents in this group. A 53 years old farmer who had live all his life in this rural setting described the paddy field landscape as “*suasana elok, nyaman, indah, udara bersih... sesuai dengan persekitaran kampung* (nice environment, peaceful, beautiful, clean air... suitable with village setting)”. This perception is also shared by a local resident who said that paddy fields possess “*pemandangan yang cantik, sebagai ketenangan jiwa serta melambangkan kebersihan* (beautiful scene, provide tranquility to the soul and denotes cleanliness)”. Respondents in this group value the rural landscape setting dominated by paddy fields dearly and do not want it to be destroyed as it portrays the place identity, as expressed by a 68 years old resident who stated that “*kekalkan kawasan sawah, sawah sebagai identiti negeri/ desa serta memberikan pendapatan* (preserve the paddy field, it is the state/rural identity and provides income). Many share the same view: a 53 years old farmer said “*perlu dikekalkan alam semulajadi, saya suka suasana aman* (need to preserve the natural environment, I like a peaceful atmosphere)”; a 53 years old community leader said “*kekalkan untuk masa akan datang, kalau buat rumah, kaedah dan cara lama dikekalkan* (preserved it for the future, if need to construct a house, utilize the old technique and method)”; a 47 years old said “*sawah padi perlu dikekalkan, sumber makanan untuk kehidupan, jaga elok-elok* (paddy field should be preserved, source of food and for a living, take good care of it)”.

Besides images of paddy fields, respondents in this group also appreciate natural areas like the mangrove forest along the shores. A pensioner who had stayed in the village for the past thirty years said that “*paya bakau perlu dikekalkan* (mangrove forest should be preserved)” and a 45 years old female respondent viewed these picturesque views as tourist attractions, stating that “*sebagai tarikan pelancong dan dapat mengelakkan hakisan laut* (as a tourist attraction and could avoid sea erosion). Respondents in Lenggong values the manmade lake, Tasik Raban, which was originally a traditional village that is being purposely submerged during the construction the Chenderoh dam for hydroelectric power generation during the 1920s. They urged that these areas should be retained in its original form.



Figure 5 (a,b & c) Cultural Landscapes: Paddy Field, Mangrove and Raban Lake

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Cultural landscapes, especially those that are in existence in rural areas, are among our national treasures and heritage. Akagawa and Sirisrisak (2008) state that cultural heritage “conveys message from the past” which could guide future development. They suggest that “the protection of cultural landscapes could be integrated into city planning and development rather than setting it aside... as a part of heritage conservation” (Akagawa & Sirisrisak, 2008: 188). The traditional Malay villages in the rural parts of many states in Peninsular Malaysia fulfil the requirements to be designated under Category V (Protected Landscape) in the IUCN protected area

categorization. According to IUCN, cultural and traditional landscapes are classified under Category V. It is defined as:

“Area of land, with coast and sea as appropriate, where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant aesthetic, ecological and/or cultural value, and often with high biological diversity. Safeguarding the integrity of this traditional interaction is vital to the protection, maintenance and evolution of such an area.” (IUCN, 1994: 22).

Objectives of management for a Protected Landscape as stated by IUCN (1994: 22) are:

1. to maintain the harmonious interaction of nature and culture through the protection of landscape and/or seascape and the continuation of traditional land uses, building practices and social and cultural manifestations;
2. to support lifestyles and economic activities which are in harmony with nature and the preservation of the social and cultural fabric of the communities concerned;
3. to maintain the diversity of landscape and habitat, and of associated species and ecosystems;
4. to eliminate where necessary, and thereafter prevent, land uses and activities which are inappropriate in scale and/or character;
5. to provide opportunities for public enjoyment through recreation and tourism appropriate in type and scale to the essential qualities of the areas;
6. to encourage scientific and educational activities which will contribute to the long term well-being of resident populations and to the development of public support for the environmental protection of such areas; and
7. To bring benefits to, and to contribute to the welfare of, the local community through the provision of natural products (such as forest and fisheries products) and services (such as clean water or income derived from sustainable forms of tourism).

The three case studies presented in this paper indicated there is awareness among the local residents with regards to the heritage value of the Malay kampongs. However the policy and mechanism of protecting these areas had not been implemented. Principle 5 of the Second National Physical Plan (NPP) focuses on the importance of conservation. It deals with the protection of “National Heritage Areas and Avoid Disrupting Ecological Stability”.

In particular, a sense of value and national pride for areas of natural beauty and ecological richness, historical sites and areas of cultural association should be fostered. Such areas and sites may include pristine forests, hills and wetlands, habitats for the Malaysian wildlife and fauna, rural landscapes, particular sites and locations as well as individual buildings of architecture merits and historical interests. Conservation must be in tandem with the promotion of such areas, locations, sites and buildings as attractions for international and local tourism...” (FDTCP, 2010: 2-12)

In conclusion, Malaysia must seriously consider having cultural landscapes under its system of protected areas to remain relevant to society. Protecting these areas is increasingly important in Malaysia as the demand for land increases, the effects of globalization upon rural areas could be felt, and the process of urbanization that threatens the countryside.

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