

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Malaysia is endowed with lush, humid, tropical rainforest, often referred to as the wet equatorial rainforest. However, not all the forests in Malaysia have similar texture and structure. They differ with location and altitude and it would be a great mistake to have a single management procedure for all the forests in Malaysia, or to expect a forest to respond similarly to a particular management practice. The mangroves, for instance, certainly behave differently from the high forest which in turn differs from the lowland and the hill forests.

Issues on forest management and the sustainability of the world's forests have been widely deliberated in recent years. Public concern on environmental quality and stability has been rising and the fact that forest use is central to this anxiety cannot be over-emphasised. Countries rich in forest, including Malaysia, have been looked upon as likely saviours in regard to climate deterioration such as global warming and thinning of the ozone layer. Deforestation and industrialisation have been seen as contributory toward environmental instability and must be addressed wisely for the security and sustainability of mankind, biodiversity of flora and fauna, and national development.

## **2.0 PHYSICAL FEATURES**

### **2.1 Location**

Peninsular Malaysia lies at the southern-most tip of mainland South-east Asia, while the states of Sabah and Sarawak lie to the east on the island of Borneo. The total land area is approximately 32.9 million hectares with 13.2 million hectares in Peninsular Malaysia, which comprises eleven states and the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur; 7.4 million hectares in Sabah (including the Federal Territory of Labuan), and 12.3 million hectares in Sarawak. Peninsular Malaysia is separated from Sabah and Sarawak by 720 km of the South China Sea, and the country as a whole has a coastline of about 4,830 km.

### **2.2 Topography**

Peninsular Malaysia consists of east and west coastal plains and central mountain ranges running roughly north to south and reaching up to 2,130 m in some places. The two largest rivers, the Perak River and the Pahang River, flow towards the Straits of Malacca and the South China Sea respectively. At their sources and upper reaches, the rivers are fast-flowing but in the lower reaches those on the west coast often meander through swampy land, while the east coast rivers are sometimes impeded by sand bars.

Sabah and Sarawak consist of alluvial and often swampy coastal plains with hilly rolling country inland and mountain ranges in the interior. In Sabah, the central mountain ranges rise abruptly from the west coast to Mt. Kinabalu which, at 4,100 m, is the highest mountain in South-east Asia. It is the source of many rivers flowing north-west and east to the South China Sea and Sulu Sea respectively. The largest river is the Kinabatangan which is navigable for considerable distances and has an extensive plain. In Sarawak, the eastern