Eco-tourism sites need rating system

VIKNESWARAN: Rating necessary

KUCHING, Wed. — A reliable rating system for eco-tourism sites should be set in place to ensure they are planned and guided in a controlled manner for sustainable development.

Taylor’s College lecturer Vikneswaran Nair said today with around 420 eco-tourism sites in Malaysia and too few enforcement officers, a rating system was vital to make sure the wildlife, flora and fauna of the sites were properly managed.

The problem now is that there is no proper enforcement as no site is checked.

“We have to take care of the ecology of these sites so future generations can actually get to see the same things we are seeing now,” he said in his paper on Expert Rating System for Sustainable Management of Ecotourism Sites in Peninsular Malaysia presented at the Second World Engineering Congress 2002 here.

Citing Gunung Ledang as a site that was deteriorating, he said it had no proper enforcement and the environmental and safety aspect of the site was getting worse.

This was in addition to insufficient environmental and ecological expertise, lack of consistent approaches and unreliable and incomplete databases, he said.

The eco-tourism sites that are doing well are mostly in Sabah and Sarawak, although some sites like Mount Kinabalu have been getting some flak over their safety features.

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