



## River Restoration in Conjunction with World Biodiversity Day 2010

### Background

The source of Pencala River has been used by Global Environment Centre (GEC) as an open classroom for over 8 years to teach children and adults alike about natural rivers and its importance for biodiversity. Originating from the top of the Kiara Hill, the source of Pencala River is the only urban river in the heart of Kuala Lumpur where the water is still Class 1 quality and can be drunk without any treatment. Unfortunately, the condition of the source of Pencala River has deteriorated over the years and threatens the important and valuable ecosystem components of the river. Some of the major issues identified were river bank erosion, excessive sedimentation and obstructions to the river flow. As such, the source of Pencala River was in dire need of restoration in order to sustain its natural physical conditions and biodiversity.

### The event

To restore the natural environment and enhance the river's biodiversity, GEC initiated restoration works for the source of Pencala River on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2010. This was also to celebrate and promote the International Year of Biodiversity 2010. The restoration works was carried out in partnership with the National Landscape Department and Federal Territory Drainage and Irrigation Department and funded by GAB Foundation. GEC was assisted by a group of indigenous people to carry out the restoration works using materials found naturally in the environment. It took 2 weeks to complete the works, which included creating habitat within and around the river, bank stabilization using fallen trees and sand removal in certain areas to create pools.

The ultimate goal of this activity was to restore the source of Pencala River and its biodiversity and to maintain the integrity of the river's environment and ensure that the source of Pencala River remains a pristine water resource. In addition, the restoration of the source of Pencala River had specific objectives:

- To protect and conserve the only Class I river available in an urban area
- Promoting the river restoration process to other agencies and corporate organisations
- Restoring the habitat for biodiversity
- Creating and establishing public awareness and community participation in river restoration
- Celebrating World Biodiversity Day 2010



*Stabilising the banks with rocks*



*Removing excess sand*



*Bank stabilization using fallen trees*



*Habitat creation*

The restoration works ended with a celebration in conjunction with World Biodiversity Day on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2010. Over 80 staff and volunteers from GAB, National Landscape Department, Federal Territory Drainage and Irrigation Department, Friends of Bukit Kiara, TTDI Resident's Association, TRAKS and the Kuala Lumpur Municipal Council participated in the half-day event, which focused on completing the restoration works and providing an opportunity to explore the river's natural environment.



*Open classroom signboard*



*Nature Hunt participants figuring out a question*

There were various activities on the day itself such as tree planting, tree tagging, habitat creation and the releasing of local fish species into the river to enhance the river's biodiversity. Participants also took part in a Nature Hunt that took them to different parts of the river and allowed them to enjoy and appreciate the natural environment. Educational signboards were also erected and revealed that day to highlight important locations of the river: one at its source and another at the open classroom site. In an aim to make the event a sustainable one, all meals were served on banana leaves and all organic waste was composted on site to reduce waste to landfill.



*Participants cleaning up the river*



*Releasing the fish*



*Tree tagging group*



*Group photo!*

The participants have to be congratulated for their commitment to the event as they continued to work even as it rained heavily and maintained high spirits throughout the morning. As a token of appreciation, they were presented certificates for their participation at the end of the event.



*Prize-giving ceremony*



*Certificate presentation*

The restoration works has improved the environment and water flow of Pencala River significantly and created a wider range of habitats for biodiversity. It has also enhanced the educational functions of the area to be used as an open classroom to teach the public about natural rivers and its biodiversity. The event was also invaluable in helping to promote the importance of the river and its biodiversity to the participants and the users of the park and it is hoped that this will ensure the preservation of the river and its natural environment.

Before Restoration



## During Restoration



## After Restoration

