

Preliminary ecological input assessment of EIAs of selected quarries and oil palm plantation projects in Sabah, Malaysia

Abstract

Since the introduction of Environmental Quality Act (Prescribed Activities) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Order 1987 in Malaysia, submission of an environmental impact assessment (EIA) report for approval is mandatory before the commencement of any of the prescribed activities. However, the insufficient ecological inputs have always been the major shortcomings of most EIA reports. Thus, this study aims to critically review EIA reports and compare the ecological input between EIA reports of quarry and oil palm plantation activities using a designated checklist. The common weaknesses identified in both EIA reports of quarry and oil palm plantation activities include the inadequacy of survey's coverage and duration, description of flora and fauna species without quantification and status, surveys which showed bias toward terrestrial ecosystem than aquatic ecosystem and impacts prediction which were descriptive in nature. It was found that greater emphasize of ecological input was on site assessment for the quarry activities whereby mitigating measures and monitoring programmes were emphasized in the oil palm plantation activities.