



LESTARI, ICSU ASIA PACIFIC, AND ACADEMY SCIENCES MALAYSIA PRESENT:

SPECIAL FORUM

Date: 15 October 2008

Time: 2.30 p.m.

Venue: LESTARI Resource Centre, UKM

Sustainability and Human Well Being: Can We Meet the Challenge ?

Professor Kamal Bawa, University of Massachusetts, Boston

Humanity's quest for sustainability will be the dominant theme of the twenty first century. The major challenges to this quest are the inter-related problems of environmental degradation and poverty, exacerbated now with climate change. Progress on technological, social and economic fronts would be necessary to meet these challenges. However, existing institutions in much of the developing world do not have the capacity to respond to complex environmental and social challenges. New institutions are required to cope with poverty, environment, and sustainability. Such institutions should be problem driven with explicit goals of addressing environmental degradation, poverty alleviation and social change. Moreover these institutions should transcend traditional disciplinary boundaries to generate new ideas and technologies, and link new findings with changes in policy and governance. I will provide some examples of such institutions and their innovative sustainability programs and discuss ways to make further progress in meeting environmental, social, and economic challenges of our time.

Kamal Bawa, a conservation biologist, obtained his doctoral degree from Punjab University, India. He has held Bullard and Cabot Fellowships at Harvard University, and has also been named a Guggenheim Fellow as well as a Pew Scholar in Conservation and the Environment. Currently, a Distinguished Professor of Biology at the University of Massachusetts at Boston, Kamal Bawa, has published more than 180 papers, and edited eight books, monographs or special issues of journals. He is the editor-in-chief of *Conservation and Society*, an interdisciplinary journal in conservation, and also serves on the editorial boards of several other journals. He has served on many national and international advisory panels. He has been the President of the Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation, and a member of the governing board of several foundations and non government organizations. Kamal Bawa is the Founder-President of the Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE), a non-governmental organisation devoted to research, policy analysis, and education in India (www.atree.org). He is also a Founder-Trustee of the Center for Interdisciplinary studies in Environment and Development, Bangalore, India (www.cised.org).