

Recent Activity:

FAAM Committee trip to Pangkor in support of an environmental project led by a Fulbrighter

On 4 January 2015, the FAAM Committee visited the project site of Fulbrighter Dr. Tan Ching Seong, who leads a local community effort to reduce chemical pollutants in Pangkor.

As a native of Pangkor, Dr. Tan is concerned about the growing environmental degradation there. The problem has been compounded by the construction of municipal waste incinerators, power generation plants and iron ore refinery on this island and her surroundings.



December 2014: The rubbish “mountain” was an ugly sight on the island, and polluting the environment. It collapse and covered on the main ring road.

Moved by the desire to preserve the beauty of his hometown and to protect the livelihood of the islanders, Dr. Tan started a project to actively engage the local community. Some of the initiatives undertaken include:

- 1) Collecting a few samples of chemical pollutants in ambient air, water and soil will be collected and measured to survey the current contamination level nearby the incinerator. The worsening effect of the pollutants will be reported and awareness campaign will be launched to change their behaviour towards higher environmental awareness.
- 2) Using the same measurement and monitoring results, the project will be strategized on engaging businesses and policy makers to help reduce pollution prone projects and activities. Proper waste management and collection system should be in place regardless of the technology in the waste treatment and disposal. For example, by reducing the solid waste disposal significantly, the incinerator will

- be put to no use, and hence air pollution from the incinerator will be reduced.
- 3) Stimulating the business model. The local community will be encouraged to take up new business opportunities, such as: solid waste collector, value added products from reuse and recycling of solid waste, new equipment operators, waste collection and separation services, new biodegradable products to reduce solid waste and etc.
 - 4) Implementing a core program of 3R (reduce, reuse, and recycle) within the Island compound based on the zero-waste principle.



January 2015: Dr Abtar Kaur (middle), President of the Fulbright Alumni Association Malaysia, visited the site and congratulated the committee for good effort in environmental protection and education. The collapsed rubbish has been cleared. However, the rubbish “mountain” remains.

It is fervently hoped that the efforts by Dr. Tan will help to reduce chemical pollutants in Pangkor.