

RESEARCH PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN MALAYSIA

All researchers (foreign, Malaysian nationals domicile overseas) intending to conduct research in Malaysia must obtain prior written approval from the Government of Malaysia. Detailed information on the rules of application to conduct research in Malaysia may be obtained from:

Economic Planning Unit

Prime Minister's Department
Complex B, Level 4,
Block B5, Federal Government Administration Centre
62502 Putrajaya
Malaysia

Tel: 603-88882823

Fax: 603-88883798

Website: <http://www.epu.jpm.my>

APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN MALAYSIA

All researchers (foreign, Malaysian nationals domicile overseas) intending to conduct biological/biodiversity research in Sabah, Malaysia must obtain prior written approval from the Government of Sabah. The researcher is required to have an Access License. This has to be applied in writing and to be submitted to the Council through Sabah Biodiversity Centre. Detailed information on the rules of application may be obtained from:

Sabah Biodiversity Centre

Natural Resources Office, Chief Minister's Department

7th Floor, Menara Tun Mustapha
88502 Kota Kinabalu
Sabah, Malaysia

Tel: 6088-423111 ext. 2121, 2127, 2120, 2122, 2430

Fax: 6088-430573

Website: <http://www.sabah.gov.my/sabc>

To facilitate and expedite applications for research permits, researchers (foreign, Malaysian nationals domicile overseas and locals) may contact the Danum Valley Management Committee (DVMC) to obtain recommendation to conduct research in DVCA respectively. **Application forms** can be obtained from:

DVMC Secretary

c/o Conservation & Environmental Management Division
Yayasan Sabah Group
Level 12, Menara Tun Mustapha,
Likas Bay,
P.O.Box 11622
88817 KOTA KINABALU
Sabah, Malaysia

Email: damai.secretariat@gmail.com

Tel: 6088-326300

Fax: 6088-326316

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APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Prospective researchers need to do the following:

- Contact the Danum Valley Management Committee Secretary to clarify procedures and for guidance on the design and likely acceptability of the proposed research project.
- Prospective researchers need to have a budget allocation for funding local collaborators for the duration of their research project.
- May visit DVCA for up to two weeks to conduct a preliminary study provided this does not involve collection of specimens or subsequent publication. The researcher may also take this opportunity to develop personal contacts with prospective collaborative agencies.
- Complete and return the “RAINFOREST RESEARCH AND TRAINING PROGRAMME RESEARCH PROPOSAL FORM” which can be obtained from the DVMC Secretary.

Research Proposals/Applications must be supported with the following:

- The research proposal outlining objective(s) of the research, scope, research design, general techniques, overall budget and research schedule.
- An official letter from the financial sponsor, stating amount of financial assistance obtained, terms of contract (if applicable) or bank guarantee for those who are self-funded.
- A letter of consent from the Malaysian collaborator who must be in Malaysia for the duration of the research project.
- A copy of Identity Card (Malaysians) or passport (foreigners).
- Two passport-size photographs.

- Application Processing Fee of RM500.00 plus bank charges (if any).

The DVMC Secretary processes the research proposals/applications and table them at the DVMC Meeting for consideration. Where necessary, and in order to speed up the application process, the DVMC Secretary will refer them to the relevant organisations/departments/institutions for comments before making a recommendation to the Sabah Biodiversity Council (SaBC). Applicants will be informed of the decision on his/her research proposal/application as well as any changes/recommendations that may need to be made in relation to the research proposal. **The SaBC is the approving body for biological/biodiversity research in Sabah.**

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BEFORE ARRIVING IN MALAYSIA

Researchers approved to conduct research in DVCA must ensure that the Local Collaborator liaises with the Sabah Department of Immigration to ensure smooth immigration process and obtain an Entry Visa from the nearest Malaysian Embassy/High Commission in country of origin.

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ON ARRIVAL IN SABAH/(DVCA/MBCA/ICCA)

Researchers must apply for a special/professional visit pass from the Sabah Department of Immigration in Kota Kinabalu. To facilitate this process, researchers must seek assistance from their local collaborator(s) and also obtain a letter of support from the DVMC Secretary.

Researchers must also report to the Conservation and Environmental Management Division, Yayasan Sabah to obtain the letter of support required by the Sabah Department of Immigration and other relevant documents.

On arrival in DVCA, researchers must report to the Manager of respective area to discuss and sort out logistics requirements such as local zoning, field assistants, transportation and accommodation etc.

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RESPONSIBILITIES OF RESEARCHERS

- Researchers cannot change the research proposal without prior approval from DVMC and the relevant authorities.
- Researchers must secure personal insurance coverage.
- Researchers will be entirely responsible for any accidents, thefts or other misfortunes suffered.
- Researchers shall fund local collaborator(s) where necessary.
- Researchers shall conduct seminars/workshops on their research findings (if required).
- Researchers must submit progress reports on a periodic basis.
- Researchers shall provide training and funds relevant to the research carried out.
- Researchers must not raise or touch on controversial issues in their findings/reports (progress/preliminary/final) and/or in papers published on the basis of findings of the research.
- Researchers must not make press statements or release any information to the media, nor discuss policy matters with the media under any circumstances.
- Researchers are subject to the Code of Conduct and Guidelines in the collection and distribution of specimens when conducting research in DVCA. They must also abide by all conditions set by DVMC and related agencies.

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RESEARCH REPORTS & PUBLICATIONS

- Researchers are required to submit to DVMC a brief annual report during the field phase of the research project. DVMC requires an interim report at the end of each calendar year (for inclusion in the DVCA Annual Report).>
- Researchers must submit a final report to DVMC before they leave the state/country on completion of their research project. Final report/thesis is to be submitted in the form of hard copy (3 copies) and digital (1 copy).
- Researchers must also submit copy of all subsequent papers to DVMC. Master copies of all reports, theses and reprints will be filed with the DVMC Secretary. Copies will also be deposited at the respective area's Library and to four signatory agencies in DVMC
- Researchers must obtain approval from DVMC before submitting manuscripts for publication in a named journal. This is to safeguard against avoidable factual error or unjustified general critical remarks, and to ensure that collaborators and the DVCA programmes are acknowledged.

RESEARCH EQUIPMENT

Any equipment purchased through a specific grant/fund (tailored) provided under research involving DVCA and its buffer zone is to be deposited at the DVFC, unless specified otherwise at the beginning of the project.

RESEARCH COLLABORATOR

Prospective visiting researchers to DVCA must have a Malaysian collaborator, who will be the key person responsible for overseeing the implementation of the research project and thus ensure technology/skill transfer, as well as ensuring that all stipulated regulations/conditions are met.

A person who consents to be the local collaborator must be a Malaysian citizen attached to a recognized institution/agency based in Sabah with identified expertise.

The overall collaboration should be based on individual expertise.

The local collaborator is responsible for the following:

- Ensure he/she is fully briefed on the nature of the research proposal, and to make recommendations to the DVMC
- Provide assistance to check status of research application to EPU/SaBC.
- Be able to assess and be committed to ensure that the objectives of the research are achieved.
- To assist researchers to acquire suitably qualified research assistants.
- To evaluate request by researchers who wish to bring in foreign research assistants, and to make recommendations to DVMC
- Provide assistance to foreign researchers in applying for the Professional Visit Pass from the Sabah Immigration Department.
- In the process of transferring research skills and technology, the local collaborator is expected to spend a minimum of two weeks in fieldwork with the researcher.
- Monitor the research activities and to ensure that the researcher who he/she is responsible for abides by the “Code of Conduct for Foreign Researcher”.

- Ensure that the rules pertaining to the collection and distribution of specimens are in accordance with those specified by DVMC/EPU/SaBC.
- Be completely responsible for the research conducted by the researcher, and to ensure that the researcher does not deal with sensitive matters that can adversely affect the image of the nation.
- Will not, under any circumstances, discuss or pass on information to the press about the research.
- To furnish information and feedback on the progress of the research to DVMC, EPU/SaBC and other agencies/institutions, if requested.
- Ensure that the findings of the research are submitted to DVMC and EPU/SaBC.
- Ensure that the findings of the research are not published without prior approval from DVMC and EPU/SaBC.

In the event the local collaborator switches job or is transferred elsewhere, he/she may choose to continue as local collaborator subject to approval by the respective institution involved or hand over the responsibility to his/her successor and seek endorsement from DVMC.

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RESEARCH ASSISTANTS

Researchers who need research assistant(s) to assist in their research projects must liaise with their Local Collaborator to employ local research assistants. The employment of foreign research assistants are not encouraged, but in the event that the research project requires research assistants with specialized skills not available in Sabah, Malaysia, the researcher may forward a formal application to DVMC to seek approval to bring in foreign research assistant(s).

Application to engage foreign research assistants must provide the following information/documents:

- Personal particulars of research assistant(s) (name, gender, country of origin, passport number, etc.)
- Educational background
- Research experience
- Justification on need for foreign research assistant(s)
- Period of attachment/employment as research assistant
- Letter of Recommendation from the Local Collaborator

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EXTENSION OF DURATION OF RESEARCH

Researchers who intend to extend the duration of their research must get written approval from DVMC and EPU/SaBC at least one month before the expiry date of their research permits. A formal request must be made stating reasons for requiring the extension, and supported by the following documents:

- Progress report.
- Schedule of work for the period extension sought.
- Letter of support from the local collaborator(s)

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ON COMPLETION OF RESEARCH

Researchers are to submit to DVMC a preliminary report of their findings at least two weeks prior to the expiry date of the duration of the research.

Researchers are to submit to DVMC a final report before they leave the country on completion of their research project.

If deemed necessary, researchers will be required to present and discuss their findings at a workshop/seminar upon completion of their research project.

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GUIDELINES ON THE COLLECTION AND DISTRIBUTION OF SPECIMENS

Prior written permission must be obtained from the Sabah Wildlife Department and Sabah Forestry Department before animal and plant specimens can be collected in Sabah, in addition to the research approval from DVMC and access license from SaBC.

HERBARIUM SPECIMENS

- All foreign researchers collecting plants/herbarium specimens for research must work in collaboration with the collaborative institution.

- In collecting plants for herbarium purposes, the reproductive material should not be collected within 20m of the existing trail system at DVCA. This is to protect readily visible flowering and fruiting specimens for the benefit of visitors.
- Collected specimens distribution must adhere to the EPU research guidelines. As far as possible duplicate specimens of all plants must be first taken to Sepilok Forest Research Centre, from where the herbarium will distribute numbered copies to all relevant institutions.

ANIMAL SPECIMENS

In the case of vertebrates, collecting will not normally be permitted within the Conservation Area itself.

FIELD COLLECTING RULES

Collection is permitted only for research purposes, and each project will be reviewed on its merits by the DVMC on a case by case basis. There shall be no collection of vertebrates within the conservation area. Where the existence of a new form/specimen is suspected, exception may be given, however, exceptions require explicit approval from the DVMC. This restriction, however, does not apply to invertebrates or to vertebrates live-trapped and subsequently released.

Collection is permitted outside the conservation area but vertebrate biologists wishing to collect more than 10 specimens of one species or 50 in total, are not allowed to do so within 2 km of the Danum Valley Field Centre.

DEPOSITION OF SPECIMENS

Apart from normal DVMC requirements (viz. Application to Conduct Research, Submission of Preliminary and Final Reports), prior written approval for collecting specimens by foreign researchers or institutions must be obtained from the Sabah Wildlife Department (in the case of vertebrates) and from the Sabah Forestry Department, Sepilok Forest Research Centre (in the case of invertebrates). These institutions, acting as “lead agencies” shall liaise with other interested parties in determining deposition requirements for other local institutions such as Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, State and National Museums. Requests will normally be entertained only from reputable overseas museums or other institutions.

A reasonable share of material collected, preferably identified as far as possible, must be deposited with the agreed institutions at an agreed future

date after completion of the fieldwork. The usual basis for negotiation will be an even share of material between the collector's and Malaysian institution. All such agreements must be reached before the commencement of the fieldwork.

In each case, the nominated "lead agency" in Sabah (e.g. Forestry Department) reserves the right to insist on the return of unique and major share of small series (i.e insects). Holotype material may be deposited in a recognized international institution, provided that it is freely available on loan to all bona fide scientists, and paratypes are deposited with the "lead agency". Such holotypes shall be regarded as the property of the nominated agency on indefinite loan. The agency will in its turn give ample notice (at least a year) of its intention to demand return of such material and will likewise ensure that after return the types are made available in a similar manner to the international scientific community.

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