



Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang Consumers Association of Penang

檳城消費人協會 பிளாங்கு பயனீட்டாளர் சங்கம்

10 Jalan Masjid Negeri, 11600 Pulau Pinang, Malaysia
Tel: 604-8299511 Fax: 604-8298109
email: consumerofpenang@gmail.com

Websites:
www.consumer.org.my

Press Statement

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Stop Soil Erosion, Save Our Future

Today, the equivalent of one football pitch of soil is eroded every five seconds, and the planet is on a path that could lead to the degradation of more than 90 percent of all the Earth's soils by 2050, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

In the 2015 Status of the World's Soil Resources Report (FAO and ITPS, 2015), soil erosion was judged to be the number one threat to soil functions in five of seven regions (Africa, Asia, Latin America, Near East and North Africa, and North America). In Malaysia, we are already experiencing soil erosion which is affecting our crop yields, food security and the environment.

Soil is a finite resource, meaning its loss and degradation is not recoverable within a human lifespan. Despite its importance to life on Earth, it is disheartening that our soils continue to be exploited and in danger because of rapid urbanisation, deforestation, unsustainable land use and management practices, intensive use of agrochemicals, mono-cropping, pollution, industrial and mining activities and climate change.

Hence the theme for World Soil Day 2019 which falls on 5 December, "Stop soil erosion, Save our future" is very apt for interventions to be taken urgently to prevent, remediate and mitigate soil erosion. Rehabilitation of degraded soil should not be through pumping in chemical fertilisers because chemicals kill our soils and threaten our farms.

Recognising that soil is our life support system, the Consumers' Association of Penang (CAP) has been long campaigning to prevent soil erosion caused by mal-development and promotes good soil management practices through organic methods.

CAP's publication titled "Soil Health" is a guidebook that details measures to be taken to rejuvenate and maintain soil health. These include composting, mulching, adding green manure, cover crops, inter cropping, practising crop rotation and controlling nematodes and root diseases in plants.

Introducing more organic input is the simplest way to maximise microbial activity in the soil. Earthworms, often referred to as farmers' friends are the pulse of the soil. Hence we must not use agrochemicals that destroy the soil system by killing microbes and earthworms.

Stopping soil erosion and restoration of degraded soils are imperative for our survival.
Join us to turn the tide to #StopSoilErosion.

Mohideen Abdul Kader
President
Consumers Association of Penang