

Climatic Hazards Programme

Malaysia Window to Cambridge at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (MW2C@UKM) Inaugural Training

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On the field trip at Gunung Pass which is exposed to recurrent and large-scale landslides, endangering highway infrastructures and road users. *Photo by Dato' Yunus Abdul Razak.*

The Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 identifies the need for progressive communication strategies and preparedness through a participatory process tailored to the need of a wide range of stakeholders. Geoscientists play a crucial role in conveying the results, advice and recommendations from geological investigations. The ability to communicate geohazards effectively to stakeholders is important towards developing community resilience as well as addressing development issues. However, geohazards communication to stakeholders is still a key challenge for geoscientists.

In an effort to address this situation, the inaugural Malaysia Window to Cambridge at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (MW2C@UKM) Training Workshop on "Geohazards and Disaster Risk Reduction: Communicating with Stakeholders" was held from 10th to 12th October 2017 in Malaysia. It was attended by 31 local and regional participants from ASEAN countries as well as the United Kingdom. The training workshop was conducted to enhance the capacity of geologists as geohazard communicators through the sharing of professional experiences and the different modes of risk communication.

The workshop comprised five main sessions: two sessions of technical paper presentations, field trip, a session each on regional perspectives and communicating geoscience. The technical paper presentations on geohazards, disaster risk reduction and engineering geology sessions were held at Hotel Istana Kuala Lumpur in conjunction with the 30th National Geoscience Conference 2017 (NGC 2017) which was organised by the Geological Society of Malaysia. The third session on the second day of the training involved a field trip that started from Kuala Lumpur towards Tambun in Ipoh, Gunung Pass and lastly Cameron Highlands. The focus of the field trip was on geohazard occurrences and also geohazard sites of interest. Local experts from the Department of Minerals and Geoscience Malaysia (JMG) and Public Works Department (JKR) were involved as guides throughout the field trip.

The fourth session on Regional Perspectives was conducted at Heritage Hotel in Cameron Highlands where participants from the ASEAN countries shared their experiences and knowledge related to the issues of geohazards and disaster risk reduction. The last session was on Communicating Geoscience, facilitated by Dr. Alan Thompson who is a director at Cuesta Consulting Ltd., United Kingdom. The discourse was focused on the crucial skills and strategies needed for communicating geohazards particularly to non-specialists; it also addressed local needs in communicating geohazards to various stakeholders with different backgrounds and capacity.