

## Melvin Ku

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**From:** evelyn.teh@seri.com.my on behalf of Evelyn Teh  
<evelyn.teh@penanginstitute.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, 15 January, 2016 9:29 AM  
**To:** cheah@mtcc.com.my  
**Cc:** Stuart MacDonald  
**Subject:** MC&I (Natural Forest): First Public Comment [Nov 2015 - Jan 2016]

Dear Mr Cheah,

The Penang Institute has received the MC&I (Natural Forest) for the first public comment sometime in November 2015. On behalf of and within the capacity of the Penang Institute, I would like to submit my comments as follows:

### 1) General Comments:

The principles of MC&I are well deliberated and have included an extensive list of verifiers to support the criteria and indicators. Just one general comment would be on the role of forest managers. Since they are playing the main role in the MC&I, it is worth a consideration to incorporate an element of accountability and transparency of the forest managers' responsibilities in the MC&I, thus requiring an auditing exercise of the forest managers.

### 2) Specific Comments:

Principle/Criterion/Indicator/Verifier	Proposal for Amendment/deletion/ addition	Reasons for proposed amendment/ deletion/ addition
Criterion 2.2 : Indicator 2.2.2 → Verifier Criterion 2.3 : Indicator 2.3.1 → Verifier Criterion 3.1 : Indicator 3.1.1 → Verifier Peninsular Malaysia  and all other information kept in the records of forest managers or management authorities	These information listed in the verifiers should be made accessible publicly, or at least when requested based on reasonable grounds (rights to information access)	Often, data and information like these which are important for research are not shared when requested. The common reason given is often based on the unverifiable and unjustifiable grounds that it is a confidential information.  As of now, this might seem like a challenging task as there is no legislation in Malaysia such as the Freedom to Information Act to provide the rights to information. Instead, the presence of Official Secrets Act 1972 potentially hinders the dissemination of non-classified (in its nature) but important information to the relevant interest group which requires such information for decision making.
Criterion 4.4: Indicator 4.4.1	Evaluations of social impact should consider including consultations with experts where relevant in although may not be a directly affected people group	This is in order to provide a more learned and informed evaluation to assist the people groups who are directly affected in their decision making. At the very least, it is crucial to have the presence of experts as observers to ensure that the consultations are conducted

		fairly and effectively.
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Please do not hesitate to get in touch in case there is a request for clarification or further information.

Thank you,

Evelyn Teh