

論文の内容の要旨 **Abstract of Dissertation**

**Small scale urban natural ecosystem and its services on human wellbeing
- A study on the remnant urban nature in a highly urbanized region in Malaysia**

(都市内の小規模自然エコシステムとその生活福利への提供サービスに関する研究：マレーシアにおける都市化地域における残存自然地を事例として)

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Extensive modernization and continuing urban sprawl in Klang Valley region, Malaysia, have catalyzed the disappearing of its invaluable evergreen tropical rainforests. The impact of natural forest diminishing on the urban dwellers is, perhaps, no less than their rural counterparts, in the sense that it estranges urban dwellers from being interacted with the nature, and further contributes to the formation of apathy toward environmental concern and forest conservation. Moreover, increasing development pressure in this region has degraded the natural forests from a fully functioning ecosystem to the remnants of secondary forest or woodland which deemed to possess insignificant biodiversity importance, leading to a situation where decision on forest conversion or conservation has to be made.

Drawing upon this background, the present study aims to explore the significance and importance of small natural forest ecosystem to the urban dwellers within a human-dominated urban ecosystem in the Klang Valley region, through examining people's responses, perceptions, preferences, and interests with respect to the roles and functions played by the remnant lowland forests to their quality of life. The study is deliberately devoted to understand the interaction between urban dwellers and forest, which is (1) how the changing of life quality brought changes to the values and meanings people associate with the forests, as well as the recognition of ecosystem services provided by the forests; and (2) how different degree of naturalness of a forest and the connectivity people have with the forest may affect the value and expectation people placed on the forest. The contention of this study is that the conservation value (which is derived from the forest value) of urban forest is socially constructed due to the mutual influence between urban dwellers and the forests that they have contact with. Such value will not be degraded, instead, transform from one phase into another phase as the forest-public relationship changes.

It is no doubt that the ultimate goal of this study (if possible) is to contribute to the conservation of remnant lowland forests in a way that discovering the contemporary role of forest to the urban dwellers, so that the forests which previously treated as abandoned land could be fully appreciated for their contribution to urban life, and will be valued accordingly among city planners and political decision-

makers when the land is claimed for exploitation. The author believes that with the increased understanding of the forest-public relationship, people will be motivated to care more about the nature and their role in it, which then can be the key to foster public stewardship of conservation issues and environmental protection.