
Japanese "green" tours

A Japanese tree planting tour group called "Green Mission" is planning to visit Malaysia in March 1998. The tour is organized by Kumon-Child Institute and Forest Culture Association of Japan, and backed up by the Ministry of Education of Japan, the Environment Agency of Japan, the Forest Agency of Japan, and the tourism department of the Malaysian Government. There will be around 60 children and adults participating in the tour. They will stay in Kuala Lumpur on the 25th, and then travel to other regions of the country, where tree planting activities will take place. A visit to elementary schools and to the mangroves area is also planned.

It would be interesting to know the aims behind this unusual interest of Japanese governmental organizations to promote "green" activities, as well as their real nature. The Japanese cooperation agency JICA has been very active in promoting the large-scale fast-growing species plantation model in several countries of the Third World, as for example in Uruguay. At the same time, Japanese companies have been performing unsustainable logging activities worldwide.

Source: Kazuko Matsue, Forest Research Center Japan.