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Cultural i Natural**

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# La dimensió social en la gestió dels espais naturals

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**Conferència i taula rodona**

19 de juny, de 9:00 a 13:15 h

Auditori Manel Xifra, Edifici Narcís Monturiol  
Parc Científic i Tecnològic . Universitat de Girona



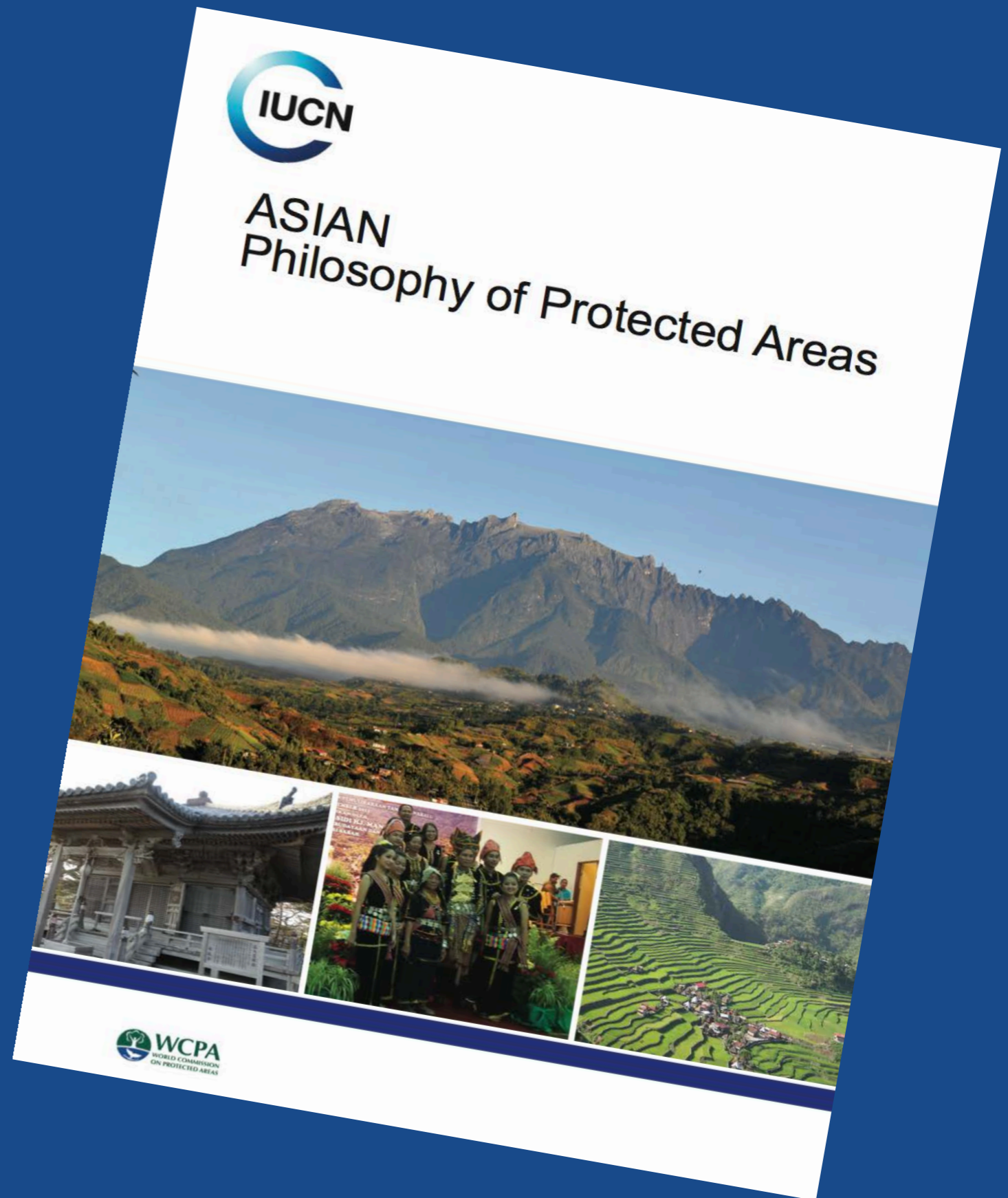
# The Asian Philosophy of Protected Areas in the Context of Nature-Culture Linkages



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# CONTENTS

1. Harmony between humans and nature
2. Challenges and threats
3. Revitalising the Asian Philosophy of Protected Areas



# Colonial Model of Protected Areas

Displacement

Non compliance

Protected Areas

Encroachment

Contestations

# 'Traditional' Protected Areas in Asia



sacred natural sites held with reverence

# Asian Philosophy of Protected Areas


Harmony  
between  
humans &  
nature



# A Philosophy Shaped By Necessity?



Asia 25 times more susceptible to natural disasters than Europe and North America

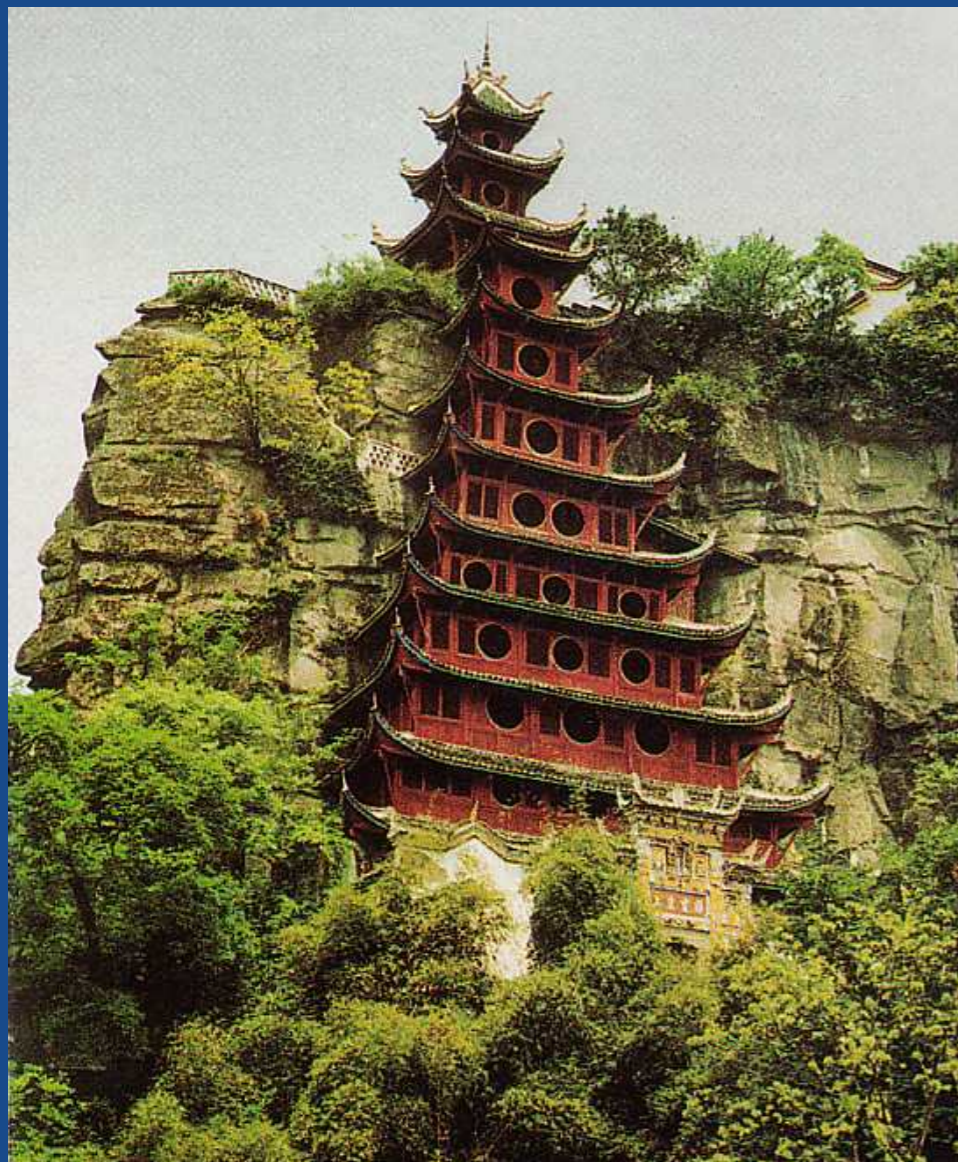


*“The Chinese and Japanese... always believe there may be an earthquake or some other disaster around the corner, so they feel the need to put something by”.*

The late Lee Kuan Yew

# China

- Daoism - humans and nature are represented as a unitary whole (oneness with nature)
- *Shan shui* philosophy (mountain and water)



Source: Trevor Sofield

# Calligraphy or Graffiti?

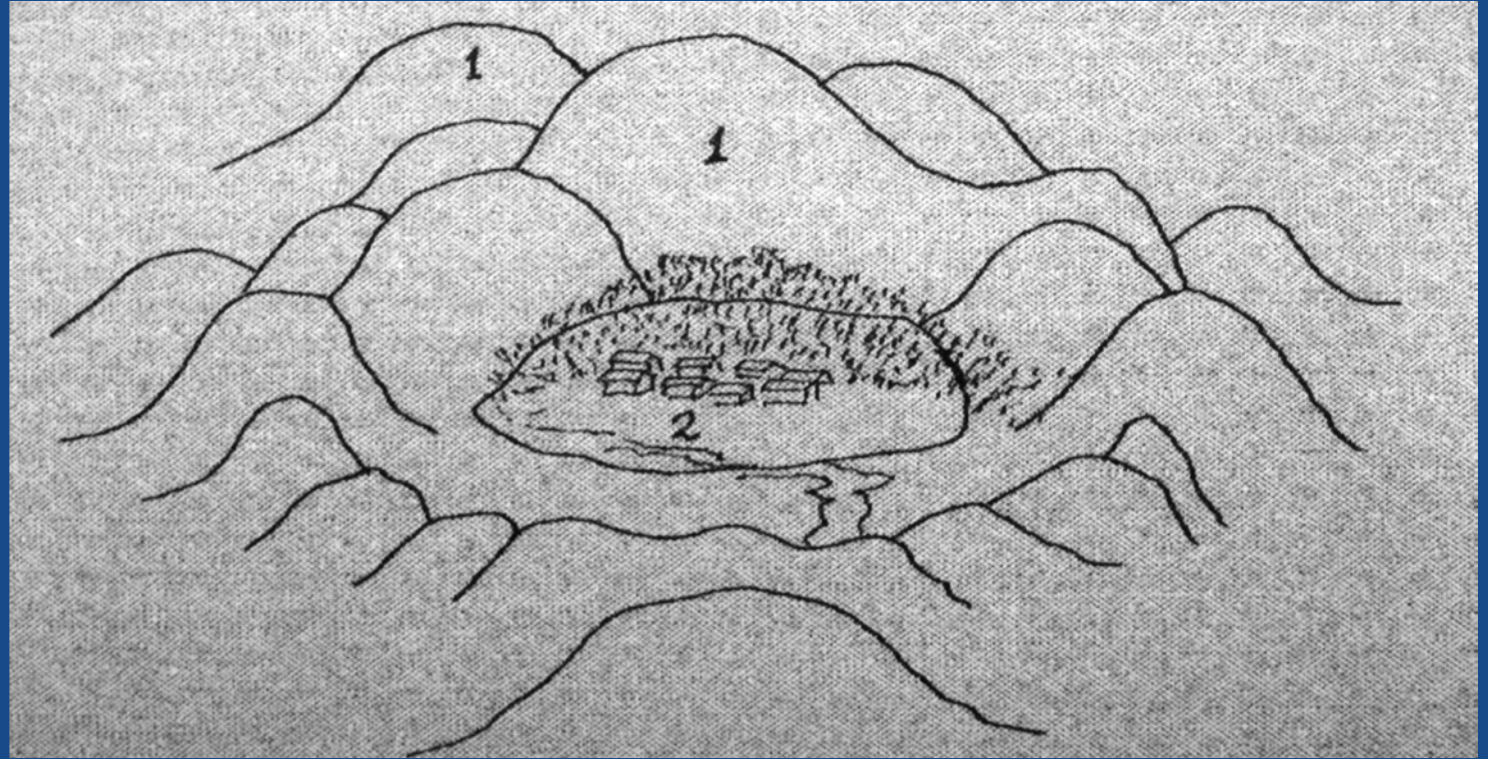


*Calligraphy  
adorns natural  
sites all over  
China*



# ***Fengshui Forests***

More than 6000  
*fengshui* (sacred)  
forests in China



# India

- Over 100,000 sacred groves in India
- Attract millions of pilgrimage
- Very rich in biodiversity



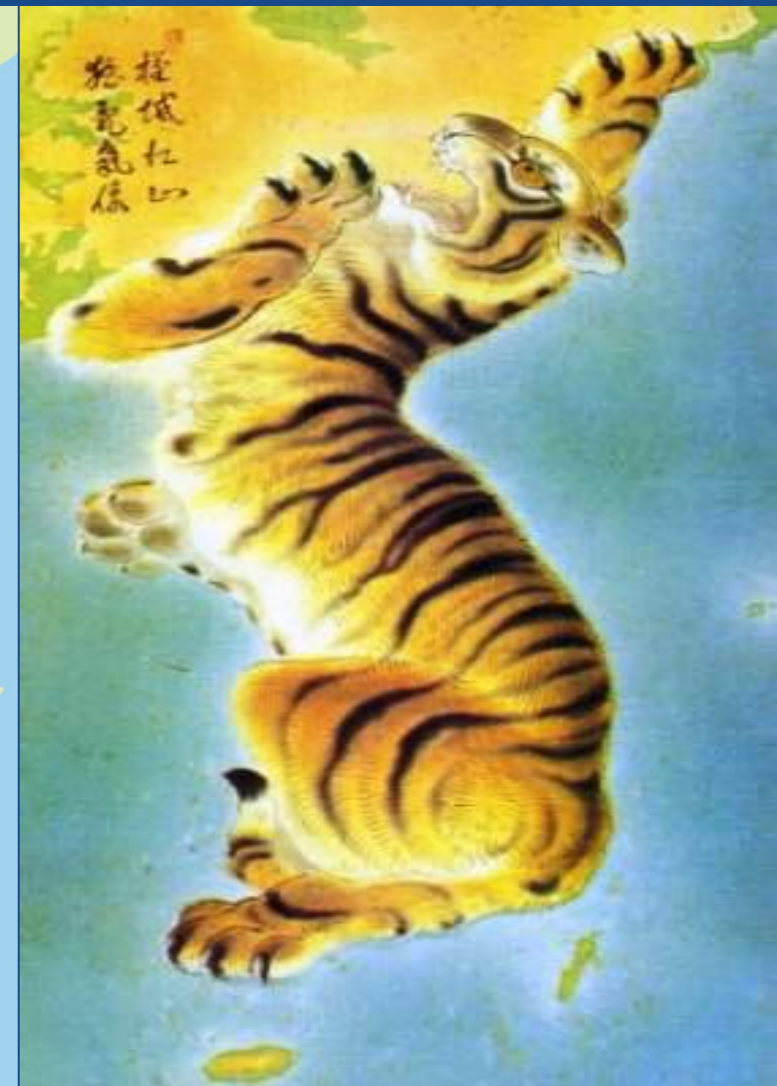
# Japan

- *Chinju no mori* (small forests surrounding Shinto shrines)
- Gave birth to harmonious relationship between humans and nature



# South Korea

- The **Baekdu-daegan Mountain-system** resembles spine of crouching tiger
- Hundreds of sacred natural sites
- Six types of village forests



# Bhutan

- Natural environment shaped political and religious worldview
- Protected areas cover more than half of country



# Mongolia



**The four mountains surrounding Ulaan Baatar (capital city of Mongolia) revered as sacred mountains**

# Malaysia

- Forests believed to be inhabited by good and evil spirits
- With supernatural powers known as *Semangat* or *Hantu Hutan*



# Commonalities Across Asia

- Sacred natural sites created out of reverence and respect for physical elements
- Mountains, forests, rivers contain spirits
- Bad things would happen if sacred natural sites are encroached upon



# Why the Sudden Interest in Sacred Natural Sites?

- Sacred groves etc. contain higher levels of biodiversity
- Complement 'formal' protected areas in achieving Aichi Target 11



# Traditional Ecological Knowledge in Asia

- Satoyama/Satoumi in Japan and beyond
- Traditional model of sustainable resource management



# Traditional Ecological Knowledge (cont.)

- *Tagal* fishery system in Sabah, Malaysia
- Once or twice a year *tagal* (prohibition) lifted allowing community a whole day of fishing



# Traditional Ecological Knowledge (cont.)

- Integrated water temple system in Bali, Indonesia
- For combined production of rice, fish and downstream products



# Challenges



Decreasing emotional attachment to traditional beliefs and taboos

# Shaman's Lament



# Challenges (cont.)

‘Homogenous’ global community with diminishing appreciation of traditional values and traditions.



# Challenges (cont.)

Sacred natural areas created by beliefs and taboos are not legally protected



# Challenges (cont.)

Contemporary interpretation by mainstream religions in Asia erasing ancient wisdom in human-environment relationships



# Challenges (cont.)

Influx of domestic tourists to national parks in Asia



*'Disneyfication' in Yaolin Cave, China?*

# MIMICKING NATURE



**Marina Sands/Gardens By The Bay, Singapore**

# MAN MADE 'NATIONAL PARK' FOR ASIA'S GEN Y?



# Man - Made Cloud Forest



No insects and no need for good walking shoes

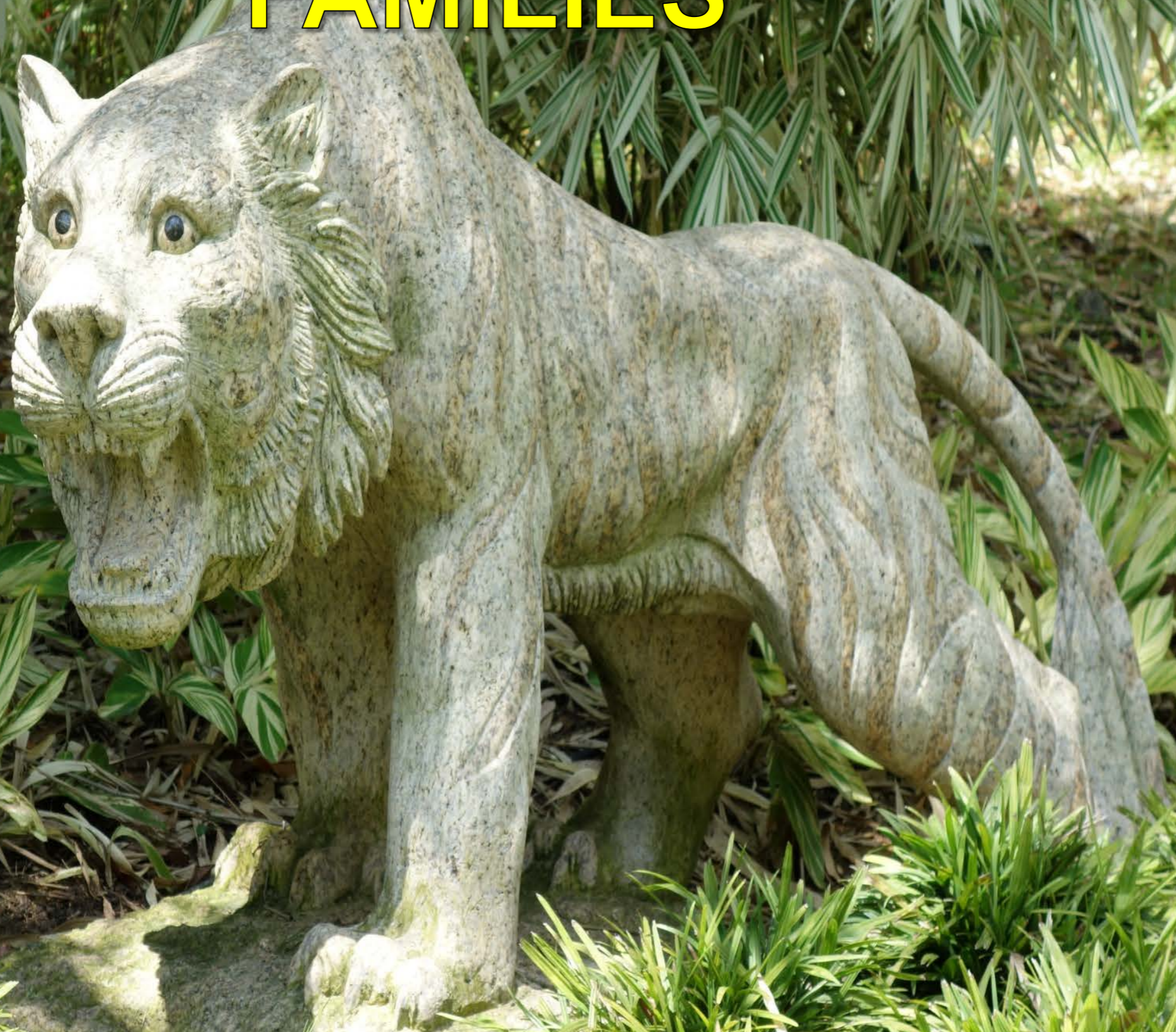
# Wildlife Encounter According To Season



# **SNAKE IN MALAYSIAN JUNGLE – Fear Factor!**



# MENACING BUT SAFE FOR FAMILIES



**WOULD TOURISTS PREFER  
THIS KIND OF ENCOUNTER?**



# USING TECHNOLOGY TO ACHIEVE SUSTAINABILITY

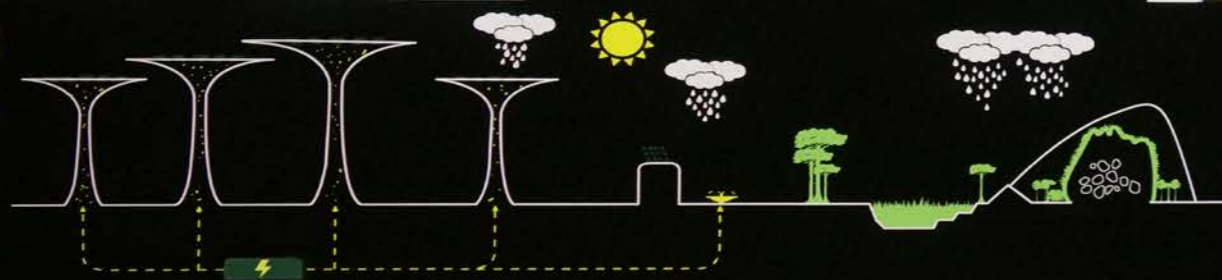
## Sustainable nature cycles

Gardens By the Bay has been conceived as a beacon of clean, green design. Our objective is to inform people about Earth's environment and make a statement about the dangers of climate change.



Landscape view of our site.

The design of this complex has been inspired by the cycles of nature, creating a sustainable system between the biomes and the supertrees.



Cross section view of Gardens by the Bay.

A biomass furnace burning old plant matter provides energy to generate a cooler climate in both biomes: is a sustainable system, with a low carbon footprint. We are minimising our dependence on the Singapore electricity grid, thus reducing the use of fossil fuel.



Side view of biomass furnace on site.

Front View.

Sunlight and old plant matter provide energy to generate the climate in both biomes: it is a sustainable, carbon neutral system.

And remember, the plants and trees that grow here are creating habitats, as well as constantly absorbing the global warming gases that threaten our planet's equilibrium.



# Mount Kinabalu Natural World Heritage Sabah, Malaysia



Established as protected area in 1964 based on colonial  
model - local communities displaced

# Outstanding Universal Value

- Inscribed as WH in 2000
- Exceptional levels of biological diversity and rates of endemic species



# Spiritual Relationship and Reverence

*Aki na ba lu* –  
Perpetual resting  
place of spirits of  
ancestors



# Nature-Culture Nexus Ignored

Dossier regarded surrounding communities as threat to mountain's biodiversity



# Community Day (*Kakakapan id Gayo Ngaran*)

After being  
prohibited for 45  
years surrounding  
communities  
allowed annual  
pilgrimage since  
2010



# Nature Strikes Back

Earthquake a week  
after Western tourists  
posed naked on top of  
sacred mountain in  
2015

## Nation

[Home](#) > [News](#) > [Nation](#)

Published: Friday June 5, 2015 MYT 11:03:00 AM

Updated: Saturday June 6, 2015 MYT 11:41:07 AM

### Sabah quake: Mount Kinabalu may be “angry” with nudists, say locals

BY MICHELLE TAM AND STEPHANIE LEE



FACEBOOK



TWITTER



GOOGLE+



LINKEDIN



# Lost in Translation



# Beyond Call of Duty

- Local guides risked their lives rescuing stranded young climbers
- To ensure sacredness of mountain



# Death Toll



16 (including 10 schoolchildren and 3 local guides)

# Lessons To Be Learned

- Thin line between sacred and profane
- Spiritual values kept alive by local pride and stewardship
- Personality led initiatives e.g. Community Day unsustainable without reforms in governance



# Conclusions



Title: Industrial Pollution

Headline Translation: Let the hills be hills and the rivers be rivers.

## Where do we go from here?



# ***Shan Shui Cities?***

