

Strategic Collaboration between Singapore-ETH Centre (SEC) and Department of Urban and Regional Planning Takes Off

Following a fruitful courtesy visit by *The Singapore-ETH Centre for Global Environmental Sustainability* (SEC) to the Faculty of Built Environment (FAB), UTMJB on 28 April 2015, 9 member delegation from the Department of Urban and Regional Planning (JPBW), FAB made a reciprocal visit to the SEC in the University Town of the National University of Singapore (NUS) on 04 August 2015.

The purpose of the reciprocal visit, led by Prof. Dr. Amran Hamzah, Director of the Centre for Innovative Planning and Development (CiPD), FAB, has been to learn more about SEC research programs and chart a concrete pathway towards actualising research collaborations between SEC and UTM in strategic areas that were identified in SEC's April visit to UTM.

The half-day visit saw a productive sharing and exchange of research outcomes as well as ongoing research on both the Malaysian and Singapore sides. Building on common research interests and specific strengths of both institutions, the following strategic research projects have been identified for immediate follow-up and implementation:

1. Iskandar Explorer and Shared Data Repository;
2. Community-based Approach to Promoting Resilience and Tourism Development;
3. Urban-rural Development and Planning;
4. Place Remaking with Tourism; and
5. ASEAN+ for standardisation of information and statistics among ASEAM member countries.

The first SEC-UTM collaboration activity took place on 19 August 2015 with the presentations by three SEC's Future Cities Laboratory (FCL) researchers alongside Prof. Amran Hamzah at the *One-day Workshop on Reconciling Tensions between Tourism and Heritage Conservation in Melaka World Heritage City* organised by the Melaka World Heritage Office.

The SEC was established in Singapore in 2010 as a joint initiative between *ETH Zurich* and Singapore's *National Research Foundation* (NRF). *ETH Zurich* (*Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich*, or the *Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich*) is one of the leading international universities for technology and the natural sciences; it was founded in 1855 and has since nurtured 21 Nobel Laureates, including Albert Einstein.

The continuous development of strong academic links between UTM's JPBW and various internationally renowned institutions bears testimony to the Department's consistent commitment to enhancing its teaching and research in urban and regional planning as well as the international recognition that it is increasingly gaining.



UTM Department of Urban Regional Planning visit to the SEC led by Prof. Amran Hamzah (*front row third from right*), Prof. Ho Chin Siong (*fourth from right*), Prof. Ahmad Nazri Muhamad Ludin (*right*) and Assoc. Prof. Mohamad Rafee Majid (*second from right*).



Prof. Amran Hamzah (*second from right*) leads the UTM delegation towards concretising research activities with the SEC. Sitting to the right of Prof. Amran is Prof. Stephen Cairns, Future Cities Laboratory (FCL) Scientific Director.



Full UTM Department of Urban and Regional Planning delegation at the SEC's Future Cities Laboratory.