

Detailed instructions

Local collaboration

All non-Malaysian researchers need to collaborate with a Malaysian scientist from a Sabah-based university, research institute or Government Department who is willing to support their application. Applications to the Danum Valley and/or Maliau Basin Management Committees and the Sabah Biodiversity Centre can only go forward once collaboration is in place.

The local collaborator would normally be expected to be working in the same or a closely related field to your area of research – and, in most cases, be qualified to an equivalent level in the type of study you are proposing i.e. a collaborator on a PhD project would be expected to hold a PhD themselves.

Should you require help in finding an appropriate collaborator, please email [Dr. Glen Reynolds](#).

*Please note: We **strongly** recommend that you make time to meet with your collaborator before starting any research, keep them regularly updated as to your progress and schedule – and budget for a visit by your collaborator to you in the field. Aside from this being good practice in terms of knowledge transfer, please also remember if that for any reason you need to extend your research or have any visa-related problems, your collaborator will be the first point of reference.*

Sabah Biodiversity Centre (SaBC) Permission

SaBC regulations can be found [online](#). You will need to check these regulations and then fill in and submit the SaBC Application Form by email, along with any supporting documents, to the [SaBC](#).

SaBC charges a modest fee for processing applications and this needs to be paid in Malaysian Ringgit. Given that this can be difficult to arrange unless you are in Malaysia, SEARRP can pay this on your behalf – so make this clear in any cover letter/email that accompanies your application and please advise SEARRP's Admin Director, [Mrs. Irene Jintoni](#) that she needs to make the payment to SaBC.

Danum Valley & Maliau Basin Management Committees

Depending on where you plan to work, applications also need to be made to either

the Danum Valley Management Committee (DVMC), for work in Danum Valley and the surrounding forests (including the Sabah Biodiversity Experiment), or to the Maliau Basin Management Committee (MBMC) for work within Maliau Basin and the surrounding forests (including the SAFE Project). If you plan to work at multiple sites – or your research involves neither Danum, Maliau or their associated projects - please contact [Dr. Glen Reynolds](#) for advice.

Sabah Immigration Department procedures

Once SaBC permission has been granted, you need to apply for a Visit Pass Professional (essentially a visa that allows you multiple entries to Sabah to carry out research). For most Commonwealth citizens it is possible to enter Sabah on a standard Tourist Visa and have this upgraded to a Visit Pass Professional. However, for citizens of other nations, you will need to check with your local Malaysian Embassy (explaining that you plan to enter Sabah to do research, have approval to do so and will apply upon arrival for a Visit Pass Professional) whether you need to apply for a Single Entry Visa before entering Malaysia.

Visa applications are processed in Kota Kinabalu. Although the process is relatively straightforward, it is long-winded and completing the forms and getting them signed, making the necessary payments and copying supporting documents etc will likely take at least one full day. Given that the buildings/departments you need to visit are widely disbursed through the city it makes sense to hire a taxi on an hourly or even whole-day basis to take you from one office to another.

This application involves the following five steps:

1. Collecting and filling in Immigration forms—You need to fill in form numbers 6, 11, 12 and 62, which can all be collected from the Sabah Immigration Department in the Kompleks Persekutuan, Kota Kinabalu. This is along Jalan UMS (up the coast from central KK), between the Yayasan Sabah building and the entrance to Universiti Malaysia Sabah. Taxi drivers know where it is. Go to Floor No. 2 (first floor) of the Immigration Office and ask at window number 1. These forms should be filled in as completely as possible, but you may need help from [Yayasan Sabah](#), SEARRP or from your local collaborator with Form 62 (which is in Malay) and Form 11 (which needs to be signed by either your local collaborator or someone from Yayasan Sabah).

2. Meeting with Rose John Kidi or Rita Stuel Galid (from the Secretariat of the Danum Valley/Maliau Basin Management Committee) at Yayasan Sabah to obtain a DVMC or MBMC Support letter—It is helpful to email or telephone in advance to arrange a meeting and to check that someone will be there to meet you ([Rose John Kidi](#), +60 (0)88 326300; or [Rita Stuel Galid](#),+60 (0)88 326563/326300 ext. 6563). Their offices are both on the 12th floor of the Yayasan Sabah building, which is in the Likas area of Kota Kinabalu, (up the coast from the town centre, but not as far along as the Immigration Department – the building is shaped like a giant battery). If your collaborator is not based in Kota Kinabalu and you have not been able to meet with them yet (though we strongly urge you to meet your collaborator at this stage), Rose or Rita are able to sign Form 11 for you. You will need to get two copies of the ID card of whoever signs.
3. Paying stamp duty at the Income Tax Office—Once Form 11 (the yellow one) has been signed, you need to take it to the Sabah Income Tax Department and pay a stamp duty of RM10.00. The Income Tax Department is in the Lembaga Hasil Building opposite Wisma KWSP and near the Karamunsing Complex. Just present the form, pay the cash, and the form will be stamped.
4. Submitting all forms, photocopies and photographs to the Immigration Office and getting a Visit Pass (Professional)—You need to submit the following documents to the Immigration Office:
 - Your passport plus 4 photocopies (of the page with your photo and the page with your entry visa stamp)
 - 4 colour passport photographs (you can get these done at photographic shops)
 - The research pass issued to you by SaBC
 - Letter of support from DVMC/MCBC (from Rose or Rita)
 - A copy of the support letter from your local collaborator
 - Two photocopies of the ID card of whoever signed Form 11 for you
 - Forms 6, 11, 12 and 62 fully filled in

- Stamp duty paid on Form 11

Go to floor 2 of the Immigration Office, Room number 18 and hand in all your paperwork. Processing may take up to 3 working days, but it is sometimes possible to pick your pass up the next day, depending on how busy the office is. When you go to pick up your Research Permit Visa you need to pay a fee of RM90.00 (cash only) to the cashier (window number 15). You then need to hand in your passport and your receipt from the cashier to window number 9 to get your visa. There are facilities to take passport photos and make photocopies at the Immigration Department, but it makes sense to have the photos and copies you need ready before making your way to the Immigration Department.

If you hit the buffers with any of these steps please contact Glen Reynolds or Irene Jintoni from SEARRP.

Look-see & planning visits

Scientists wishing to visit Danum Valley Field Centre, the Maliau Basin or any of the SEARRP project sites in the short-term (< 14 days) to assess its suitability as a research site can do so on a tourist visa, but must apply to the Danum Valley Management Committee or the Maliau Basin Management Committee for look-see permission to visit. Completed [forms](#) should be emailed to [Rose John Kidi](#).

Supervisory visits

Project supervisors do not normally need to apply for research approval unless long field visits (> 1 month) are involved. However, supervisors should ask your students/post-docs to advise their local collaborators and the respective managers of the Danum Valley or Maliau Basin centres of your visit.

Non-Malaysian Research Assistants

If visiting researchers wish to bring out non-Malaysian volunteers to help them in their research, they first need to obtain a letter of support from their Local Collaborator explaining briefly why you need to use an overseas volunteer rather than employ a local research assistant. This letter should also be emailed to [Rose John Kidi](#) at the Danum Valley/Maliau Basin Management Committee.