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EU to assist in environmental conservation exchange programme

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WITH the assistance of the European Union (EU), Myanmar will conduct a student and teacher exchange programme on environmental conservation, which will involve three foreign universities and four local universities.

Dr Sai Sein Lin Oo, a lecturer from Mandalay University and national project coordinator, said, "Students pursuing a master's in botany, marine zoology and forestry at Myeik University, Mawlamyine University, Mandalay University and University of Forestry in Myanmar, and Germany-based University of Gottingen, University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences in Vienna of Australia, as well as University of Extremadura in Spain, are eligible for the programme."

The EuMuCAP project will be officially launched in October this year and will run until 2020.

Dr Sai Sein Lin Oo said, "The exchange programme will provide opportunities for Myanmar students to study abroad and help promote the teaching skills of the faculty members of local universities.

The project is expected to be beneficial to both students and teachers. In our country, a lot of field research in the related subjects is being conducted. However, the country is in a position to publish only a handful of research articles internationally. We hope the programme will produce more professional researchers, who can present their findings internationally."

U Thein Aung, chairman of Myanmar Birds and Nature Society, said students will be given lessons on wildlife and related plants, including theoretical knowledge, as well as practical works under this programme. "In addition to these, the course will provide knowledge about the habitats

of wildlife, including birds, endangered species of animals, administration of national gardens and sanctuaries, illegal trading of wildlife, international organisations working for environmental conservation, as well as domestic and international laws related to the environment," he added.

U Thein Aung said, "As a biodiverse country, Myanmar needs to produce professional researchers who can apply their knowledge and experience to the field of biodiversity conservation. Students will enjoy the opportunity to take field trips to forest reserves and wildlife sanctuaries located near the respective universities." The European Union has pledged to offer financial assistance and the necessary teaching aids under the three-year project. The detailed curriculum and the procedures for the project will be discussed at the meeting, which will take place in June or July in Mandalay.