

2

**USE OF CONSTRUCTED WETLANDS FOR WATER QUALITY
MANAGEMENT IN PUTRAJAYA, MALAYSIA**

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ABSTRACT

Water quality monitoring was carried out in Malaysia's first constructed wetlands at Putrajaya, a new government administrative centre or a new garden city, from March 1997 to July 2000. The constructed wetlands represent an environmental showpiece and living demonstration on wetlands. The main objective of the wetlands is to create a self-sustaining and balanced lake ecosystem. Other multi-functional purposes include provision for flood control, stormwater quality treatment, habitat, recreation, aesthetic amenity, a focus for scientific, biological and environmental education centre for the nation. The design process involves assessment of surface run-off water quantity and quality, with emphasis on pollutant loads generated from this new development administration centre and downstream river system. The construction of wetlands also incorporates an innovative multi-cell and cascading weir system to maximise stormwater run-off treatment and retention times. Water quality data of 41 months was obtained to study the trend of the water quality from three wetland cells; the Upper North (UN) wetland cells, central wetlands (CW) and the primary lake (PL). All the data obtained has been classified into three phases, which is the pre-construction (March 1997 – April 1998), during construction (May 1998 – September 1999) and after construction of wetland cells (October 1999 – July 2000). This study was aimed at evaluating the trend of water quality during the different periods of the establishment of the wetlands, to assess the water quality index (WQI) and water quality parameters, to classify the water quality data with Class IIB water standards stipulated in the Interim National Water Quality Standards for Malaysia (INWQSM) and to assess the effects of season on water quality. WQI is based on six water quality parameters which include pH, dissolved oxygen (DO), biological oxygen demand (BOD), chemical oxygen demand (COD), ammoniacal nitrogen (AN) and total suspended solids (TSS). There was significant difference in WQI observed among the three phases ($p < 0.05$). WQI was high before any commencement of civil works (March – May 1997). It deteriorated during the period of heavy civil works on the construction of wetland cells (Jun 1997 – April 1998). WQI recovered after the formation of wetland cells with $WQI \geq 80$. There were significant temporal differences in means of pH, DO, BOD, COD, AN and TSS among the three phases. This was clearly revealed by the Principal Component Analysis (PCA) where temporal variability were observed (high mean BOD, AN, pH and TSS were obtained at pre-construction of wetland cells). Significant differences between dry and wet seasons were also observed for all the water quality parameters except pH and TSS. Among the water quality parameters analysed, only mean DO and COD concentrations for the three sites were well within the Class IIB limits of 5 – 7 mg L⁻¹ and 25 mg L⁻¹ through out the study period. Mean BOD, AN, TSS concentrations were well within the Class IIB limits of 3 mg L⁻¹, 0.3 mg L⁻¹ and 25 mg L⁻¹ after the construction of wetland cells. Mean pH recorded was lower than the Class IIB limits of 6.5 – 9.0 in UN and CW after construction of wetland cells. An increase of 5.1%, 8.3% and 10.5% of WQI, pH and DO was observed for Putrajaya constructed wetlands system throughout the study period. The results also indicated a 61% reduction in mean TSS from inflow (21.1 ± 11.6 mg L⁻¹) to 8.2 ± 3.9 mg L⁻¹ at the outflow. All these significant observations suggest that the constructed wetlands will have a long-term positive impact on the water quality at the Putrajaya wetlands system.

ABSTRAK

Pengawasan kualiti air telah dilakukan ke atas tanah lembab buatan yang pertama di Putrajaya, Malaysia, sebuah pusat pentadbiran yang baru atau sebuah bandaraya bertaman yang baru bermula pada Mac 1997 hingga Julai 2000. Tanah lembab buatan telah mewakili contoh alam sekitar dan kehidupan wetland. Objektif utama tanah lembab buatan tersebut adalah untuk mewujudkan ekosistem yang boleh mempertahankan diri dan seimbang. Peranan yang lain termasuk mengawal banjir, merawat kualiti air daripada ribut taufan, menyediakan habitat, rekreasi, kemudahan estetika, fokus sebagai pusat sains, biologi dan pendidikan alam sekitar demi masyarakat. Proses rekabentuk merangkumi penilaian kuantiti dan kualiti larian permukaan air, dengan mengutamakan muatan bahan-bahan pencemaran yang dijanakan oleh pembangunan pusat pentadbiran yang baru ini dan sistem aliran hilir sungai. Tanah lembab buatan juga mempunyai sistem berbagai bahagian dan sistem penambakan bertingkat untuk meningkatkan rawatan larian permukaan air semasa ribut taufan dan juga masa penambakan air. Data-data kualiti air untuk 41 bulan telah diperolehi untuk mengkaji aliran kualiti air daripada tiga bahagian tanah lembab: Tanah lembab utara bahagian atas (UN), pusat tanah lembab (CW) dan tasik utama (PL). Kesemua data yang diperolehi boleh dikelaskan kepada tiga fasa iaitu sebelum pembinaan (Mac 1997 – April 1998), semasa pembinaan (Mei 1998 – September 1999) dan selepas pembinaan bahagian-bahagian tanah lembab (Oktober 1999 – Julai 2000). Ini adalah bertujuan untuk menilai aliran kualiti air pada peringkat masa yang berlainan sepanjang masa pembinaan, untuk menilai Indeks Kualiti Air (IKA) dan parameter-parameter kualiti air, untuk mengelaskan data-data kualiti air dengan Kelas IIB seperti yang ditetapkan dalam Piawaian Interim Kualiti Air Kebangsaan untuk Malaysia dan juga untuk menilai kesan musim ke atas kualiti air. Perbezaan signifikan IKA telah diperhatikan di antara ketiga-tiga fasa ($p < 0.05$). IKA adalah tinggi sebelum sebarang kerja-kerja pembinaan. IKA merosot semasa kerja-kerja pembinaan yang berat dijalankan (Jun 1997 – April 1998). IKA pulih setelah pembentukan bahagian-bahagian tanah lembab buatan dengan IKA ≥ 80 . Terdapat juga perbezaan masa untuk min pH, oksigen terlarut, permintaan oksigen biologi, permintaan oksigen kimia, amoniakal nitrogen and pepejal terampai di antara ketiga-tiga fasa. Ini jelas diperhatikan oleh Analisis Komponen Utama (PCA) di mana keragaman masa telah diperhatikan (min permintaan oksigen biologi, amoniakal nitrogen, pH dan pepejal terampai yang tinggi telah diperolehi sebelum pembinaan bahagian-bahagian tanah lembab). Perbezaan yang signifikan di antara musim kering dan basah telah diperhatikan untuk semua parameter-parameter kualiti air kecuali pH dan pepejal terampai. Di antara parameter-parameter kualiti air yang dianalisis, hanya min oksigen terlarut dan permintaan oksigen kimia untuk ketiga-tiga lokasi mematuhi had Kelas IIB iaitu 5 – 7 mg L⁻¹ dan 25 mg L⁻¹ sepanjang masa penyelidikan. Min kepekatan permintaan oksigen biologi, amoniakal nitrogen, pepejal terampai adalah mematuhi had Kelas IIB iaitu 3 mg L⁻¹, 0.3 mg L⁻¹ dan 25 mg L⁻¹ selepas pembinaan bahagian-bahagian tanah lembab. Min pH yang direkod adalah lebih rendah daripada had Kelas IIB iaitu 6.5 – 9.0 di UN dan CW selepas pembinaan bahagian-bahagian tanah lembab. Dalam kajian ini, kenaikan peratusan sebanyak 5.1%, 8.3% dan 10.5% untuk IKA, pH dan oksigen terlarut telah diperhatikan untuk system tanah lembab buatan di Putrajaya. Di sampling itu,

pengurangan min pepejal terampai sebanyak 61% telah ditunjukkan di mana pepejal terampai sebanyak $21.1 \pm 11.6 \text{ mg L}^{-1}$ dari aliran masuk telah dikurangkan ke $8.2 \pm 3.9 \text{ mg L}^{-1}$ di aliran keluar ke Sungai Langat. Kesemua pemerhatian yang signifikan ini telah mencadangkan bahawa tanah lembab buatan mempunyai impak positif yang lama ke atas kualiti air di sistem tanah lembab Putrajaya.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

ABSTRACT

ABSTRACT

DECLARATION

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF APPENDICES

ABBREVIATIONS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 General Introduction

1.2 Importance of the Study

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.4 Scope

1.5 Organization

1.6 Summary

1.7 Acknowledgements

1.8 References

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Importance of the Study

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ABSTRAK	Iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	Vi
LIST OF TABLES	Xii
LIST OF FIGURES	xv
LIST OF APPENDICES	xx
ABBREVIATIONS	xxi
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 General Introduction	1
1.2 Constructed Wetlands in Putrajaya	2
1.3 Objectives of the Putrajaya Wetlands	3
1.4 Location	4
1.5 Topography	6
1.6 Drainage	6
1.7 Existing Landuse	6
1.8 Importance and Aims of the Study	8
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW	9
2.1 Definitions of Wetlands	9
2.2 Importance of Wetlands	11

2.3	Constructed Wetlands	13
2.3.1	Development of Constructed Wetlands	14
2.3.2	Type of Constructed Wetlands	15
2.4	Constructed Wetlands for Water Pollution Control	17
2.4.1	Constructed Wetlands for Wastewater Treatment	17
2.4.2	Constructed Wetlands for Stormwater/Runoff Treatment and Control	20
2.5	Treatment Processes	21
2.5.1	Biological Processes	22
2.5.2	Chemical Processes	24
2.5.3	Physical Process	25
2.6	Factors Influencing Wetlands Treatment Processes	26
2.6.1	Climate	26
2.6.2	Oxygen	27
2.6.3	pH	29
2.6.4	Temperature	29
2.7	Pollutant Removal	29
2.7.1	Gross Pollutants	29
2.7.2	Suspended Solids	30
2.7.3	Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD)	31
2.7.4	Phosphorus	31
2.7.5	Nitrogen	32
2.7.6	Heavy Metals	32
2.7.7	Hydrocarbons	33
2.7.8	Pathogens	33

2.8	Role of Wetland Vegetation	34
2.9	Putrajaya Constructed Wetland and Design Strategy	36
2.9.1	Wetland Components	36
2.9.2	Wetland Design	39
2.9.3	Hydraulic Efficiency	39
2.9.4	Vegetation Layout	39
2.9.4.1	Upper North (UN) Wetland Arm	40
2.9.4.2	Central Wetlands (CW)	40
2.9.4.3	Wetland Treatment Zones	42
2.9.5	Inlet Zones, Primary Sedimentation Basins and Outlet Design	46
2.9.6	Water Re-circulation System	49
2.9.7	Mosquito Control	51
2.10	Wetland Species and Planting	51
2.11	Limitations of Wetland Processes in Improving Water Quality	53
2.11.1	Rates of Processes	53
2.11.2	Hydrological Limitations	53
2.11.3	Environmental limitations	55
CHAPTER 3	MATERIALS AND METHODS	56
3.1	Introduction	56
3.2	Sampling Strategy	56
3.3	Environmental Data Collection	78
3.3.1	Water Quality	78
3.3.2	Atmospheric Parameters	78

3.4	Sampling Parameters and Methodologies	78
3.5	Laboratory Analysis	83
3.5.1	pH	83
3.5.2	Dissolved Oxygen (DO)	83
3.5.3	Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD)	84
3.5.4	Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD)	84
3.5.5	Total Suspended Solids (TSS)	85
3.5.6	Ammoniacal Nitrogen (AN)	85
3.6	Statistical Analysis	86
 CHAPTER 4 RESULTS		88
4.1	Description of the Putrajaya Freshwater Ecosystem	88
4.1.1	Before Wetlands Construction	88
4.1.2	After Wetlands Construction	88
4.2	Baseline Information on River Water Quality	92
4.3	Trend in Water Quality Index (WQI)	93
4.3.1	Pre-construction of Wetland Cells	94
4.3.2	During Construction of Wetland Cells	94
4.3.3	After Construction of Wetland Cells	95
4.4	Trend of Water Quality Parameters	102
4.4.1	Water Quality Parameters for Pre-construction of Wetland Cells	102
4.4.1.1	pH	102
4.4.1.2	Dissolved Oxygen (DO)	104
4.4.1.3	Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD)	106

4.4.1.4	Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD)	108
4.4.1.5	Ammoniacal Nitrogen (AN)	110
4.4.1.6	Total Suspended Solids (TSS)	112
4.4.2	During Construction of Wetland Cells	114
4.4.2.1	pH	114
4.4.2.2	Dissolved Oxygen (DO)	116
4.4.2.3	Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD)	118
4.4.2.4	Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD)	120
4.4.2.5	Ammoniacal Nitrogen (AN)	122
4.4.2.6	Total Suspended Solids (TSS)	124
4.4.3	After Construction of Wetland Cells	126
4.4.3.1	pH	126
4.4.3.2	Dissolved Oxygen (DO)	128
4.4.3.3	Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD)	130
4.4.3.4	Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD)	132
4.4.3.5	Ammoniacal Nitrogen (AN)	133
4.4.3.6	Total Suspended Solids (TSS)	135
4.5	Meteorological Data	137
4.5.1	Rainfall	137
4.5.2	Temperature	137
4.5.3	Solar Radiation	138
4.5.4	Cloud	138
4.6	Statistical Analysis	140
4.6.1	Simple Correlation between WQI with Water Quality Parameters and Meteorological Data	140

4.6.2	Simple Correlation among Water Quality Parameter with Meteorological Data	141
4.6.3	Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)	142
4.6.4	Principal Components Analysis (PCA)	162
4.7	Performance of Constructed Wetlands	168
CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION		175
5.1	Trend of Water Quality Index (WQI)	175
5.2	Trend of Water Quality Parameters	177
5.2.1	Temporal, Spatial and Seasonal Effects on pH	178
5.2.2	Temporal, Spatial and Seasonal Effects on Dissolved Oxygen (DO)	180
5.2.3	Temporal, Spatial and Seasonal Effects on Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD)	182
5.2.4	Temporal, Spatial and Seasonal Effects on Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD)	184
5.2.5	Temporal, Spatial and Seasonal Effects on Ammoniacal Nitrogen (AN)	185
5.2.6	Temporal, Spatial and Seasonal Effects on Total Suspended Solids (TSS)	187
5.3	Performance of Constructed Wetlands in Removing Pollutants	189
5.4	Conclusion/Future Areas for Research	191
CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION		194
REFERENCES		198
APPENDICES		205

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Title	Page
1	Natural Functions of Wetlands	12
2	Overview of Pollutant Removal Mechanisms	34
3	Effects of Pollutant Overloading on Wetlands and Wetland Processes	54
4	Coordinates of Water Sampling Locations before Construction of Wetland Cells	58
5	Coordinates of Water Sampling Locations After Construction of Wetland Cells	59
6	Interim National Water Quality Standard for Malaysia (INWQSM)	82
7	Species in the Macrophytic Sub-Zones	90
8	Species in the Fringing Marsh (Zone F1 of the ZII)	91
9	Species in the Swamp Forest (Zone F2 of the ZII)	92
10	Water Quality Index of Water in the Putrajaya Wetlands, 9-11th December 1996	93
11	Water Quality Index (WQI) at Upper North (UN) Wetland Cells, Central Wetlands (CW) and Primary Lake (PL) for the Pre-construction of Wetland Cells	98
12	Water Quality Index (WQI) at Upper North (UN) Wetland Cells, Central Wetlands (CW) and Primary Lake (PL) During Construction of Wetland Cells	99
13	Water Quality Index (WQI) at Upper North (UN) Wetland Cells, Central Wetlands (CW) and Primary Lake (PL) After-Construction of Wetland Cells	101
14	pH Values for Pre-construction of Wetland Cells	103
15	DO Values (mg L^{-1}) for Pre-construction of Wetland Cells	105
16	BOD Values (mg L^{-1}) for Pre-construction of Wetland Cells	107
17	COD Values (mg L^{-1}) for Pre-construction of Wetland Cells	109

18	AN Values (mg L^{-1}) for Pre-construction of Wetland Cells	111
19	TSS Values (mg L^{-1}) for Pre-construction of Wetland Cells	113
20	pH Values During Construction of Wetland Cells	115
21	DO Values (mg L^{-1}) During Construction of Wetland Cells	117
22	BOD Values (mg L^{-1}) During Construction of Wetland Cells	119
23	COD Values (mg L^{-1}) During Construction of Wetland Cells	121
24	AN Values (mg L^{-1}) During Construction of Wetland Cells	123
25	TSS Values (mg L^{-1}) During Construction of Wetland Cells	125
26	pH Values After Construction of Wetland Cells	127
27	DO Values (mg L^{-1}) After Construction of Wetland Cells	129
28	BOD Values (mg L^{-1}) After Construction of Wetland Cells	131
29	COD Values (mg L^{-1}) After Construction of Wetland Cells	132
30	AN Values (mg L^{-1}) After Construction of Wetland Cells	134
31	TSS Values (mg L^{-1}) After Construction of Wetland Cells	136
32	Correlation between WQI with Water Quality Parameters and Meteorological Data (Significant at $P < 0.05$)	140
33	Correlation between Water Quality Parameters with Meteorological Data (Significant at $P < 0.05$)	142
34	Mean Rainfall Data from 1966 – 2000 from Malaysia Meteorological Service (MMS)	143
35	Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) in WQI as Influenced by Phases, Locations and Seasons	144
36	Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) in pH as Influenced by Phases, Locations and Seasons	147
37	Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) in DO as Influenced by Phases, Locations and Seasons	149
38	Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) in BOD as Influenced by Phases, Locations and Seasons	152

39	Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) in COD as Influenced by Phases, Locations and Seasons	155
40	Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) in AN as Influenced by Phases, Locations and Seasons	158
41	Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) in TSS as Influenced by Phases, Locations and Seasons	161
42	Variances (eigenvalue) and Proportion to Total Variance for Each Principal Component	163
43	Extracted Principal Components and Respective Matrix of Coefficients	164
44	Abbreviation for PCA Plot	167
45	Mean Performance Data from for Putrajaya Constructed Wetlands	170
46	Interim National Water Quality Standard for Malaysia (INWQSM)	177

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Title	Page
1	Location of the Constructed Wetlands of Putrajaya	5
2	Main Catchment of the Constructed Wetlands at Putrajaya	7
3	Wetland Arms in Putrajaya Wetlands	38
4	Wetland Cell Designed Water Levels	41
5	Typical Cross Section of the Constructed Wetland Cell	43
6	Water Recirculation in Putrajaya Wetland Systems	50
7	Water Quality Monitoring Points Before Construction of Wetland Cells	60
8	Water Sampling Point at UN1 before Construction of Wetland Cells	61
9	Water Sampling Point at UN2 before Construction of Wetland Cells	61
10	Water Sampling Point at UN3 before Construction of Wetland Cells	62
11	Water Sampling Point at UN4 before Construction of Wetland Cells	62
12	Water Sampling Point at C1 before Construction of Wetland Cells	63
13	Water Sampling Point at C2 before Construction of Wetland Cells	63
14	Water Sampling Point at P1 before Construction of Wetland Cells	64
15	Water Sampling Point at P2 before Construction of Wetland Cells	64
16	Water Sampling Point at P3 before Construction of Wetland Cells	65
17	Water Quality Monitoring Points After Construction of Wetland Cells	66
18	Water Sampling Point at UN8 after Construction of Wetland Cells	67
19	Water Sampling Point at UN7 after Construction of Wetland Cells	67

20	Water Sampling Point at UN6 after Construction of Wetland Cells	68
21	Water Sampling Point at UN5 after Construction of Wetland Cells	68
22	Water Sampling Point at UN4 after Construction of Wetland Cells	69
23	Water Sampling Point at UN3 after Construction of Wetland Cells	69
24	Water Sampling Point at UN2 after Construction of Wetland Cells	70
25	Water Sampling Point at UN1 after Construction of Wetland Cells	70
26	Water Sampling Point at CW1 after Construction of Wetland Cells	71
27	Water Sampling Point at CW2 after Construction of Wetland Cells	71
28	Water Sampling Point at CW3 after Construction of Wetland Cells	72
29	Water Sampling Point at CW4 after Construction of Wetland Cells	72
30	Water Sampling Point at PL1 after Construction of Wetland Cells	73
31	Water Sampling Point at PL2 after Construction of Wetland Cells	73
32	Water Sampling Point at PL3 after Construction of Wetland Cells	74
33	Water Sampling Point at PL4 after Construction of Wetland Cells	74
34	Water Sampling Point at PL5 after Construction of Wetland Cells	75
35	Water Sampling Point at PL6 after Construction of Wetland Cells	75
36	Water Sampling Point at PL7 after Construction of Wetland Cells	76
37	Water Sampling Point at PL8 after Construction of Wetland Cells	76
38	Water Sampling Point at PL9 after Construction of Wetland Cells	77
39	Water Sampling Point at PL10 after Construction of Wetland Cells	77
40	WQI for Pre-Construction of Wetland Cells for UN, CW and PL	96
41	WQI During Construction of Wetland Cells for UN, CW and PL	96
42	WQI After Construction of wetland cells for UN, CW and PL	97
43	pH Values for pre-construction of Wetland Cells	104

44	DO Values (mg L^{-1}) for Pre-Construction of Wetland Cells	106
45	BOD Values (mg L^{-1}) for Pre-Construction of Wetland Cells	108
46	COD Values (mg L^{-1}) for Pre-Construction of Wetland Cells	110
47	AN Values (mg L^{-1}) for Pre-Construction of Wetland Cells	112
48	TSS Values (mg L^{-1}) for Pre-Construction of Wetland Cells	114
49	pH Values During Construction of Wetland Cells	116
50	DO Values (mg L^{-1}) During Construction of Wetland Cells	118
51	BOD Values (mg L^{-1}) During Construction of Wetland Cells	120
52	COD Values (mg L^{-1}) During Construction of Wetland Cells	122
53	AN Values (mg L^{-1}) During Construction of Wetland Cells	124
54	TSS Values (mg L^{-1}) During Construction of Wetland Cells	126
55	pH Values After Construction of Wetland Cells	128
56	DO Values (mg L^{-1}) After Construction of Wetland Cells	129
57	BOD Values (mg L^{-1}) After Construction of Wetland Cells	131
58	COD Values (mg L^{-1}) After Construction of Wetland Cells	133
59	AN Values (mg L^{-1}) After Construction of Wetland Cells	135
60	TSS Values (mg L^{-1}) After Construction of Wetland Cells	136
61	Meteorological Data from March 1997 to July 2000	139
62	Mean WQI of UN, CW and PL for phase 1 (pre-construction), 2 (during construction) and 3 (after construction)	145
63	Mean WQI as Influenced by Phases (1 = pre-construction*; 2 = during construction*; 3 = after construction), Locations (UN*CW*PL) and Seasons (wet*dry)	145
64	Mean pH of UN, CW and PL for Phase 1 (pre-construction), 2 (during construction) and 3 (after construction)	147

65	Mean pH as Influenced by Phases (1 = pre-construction*; 2 = during construction*; 3 = after construction), Locations (UN*CW*PL) and Seasons (wet*dry)	148
66	Mean DO of UN, CW and PL for Phase 1 (pre-construction), 2 (during construction) and 3 (after construction)	150
67	Mean DO as Influenced by Phases (1 = pre-construction*; 2 = during construction*; 3 = after construction), Locations (UN*CW*PL) and Seasons (wet*dry)	150
68	Mean BOD of UN, CW and PL for Phase 1 (pre-construction), 2 (during construction) and 3 (after construction)	153
69	Mean BOD as Influenced by Phases (pre-construction*during construction*after construction), Locations (UN*CW*PL) and Seasons (wet*dry)	153
70	Mean COD of UN, CW and PL for Phase 1 (pre-construction), 2 (during construction) and 3 (after construction)	156
71	Mean COD as Influenced by Phases (pre-construction*during construction*after construction), Locations (UN*CW*PL) and Seasons (wet*dry)	156
72	Mean AN of UN, CW and PL for Phase 1 (pre-construction), 2 (during construction) and 3 (after construction)	159
73	Mean AN as influenced by Phases (pre-construction*during construction*after construction), Locations (UN*CW*PL) and Seasons (wet*dry)	159
74	Mean TSS of UN, CW and PL for Phase 1 (pre-construction), 2 (during construction) and 3 (after construction)	161
75	Mean TSS as influenced by Phases (pre-construction*during construction*after construction), Locations (UN*CW*PL) and Seasons (wet*dry)	162
76	PCA Ordination Showing the Distribution of Water Quality Parameters (arrowed) in Relation to the Water Samples. (circles indicate water samples collected at pre-construction phase. + indicates water sample samples collected during construction phase and * indicated water samples collected after construction phase)	166
77	Mean pH in Inflow (UN) and Outflow (PL)	171

78	Mean DO in Inflow (UN) and Outflow (PL)	171
79	Mean BOD in Inflow (UN) and Outflow (PL)	172
80	Mean COD in Inflow (UN) and Outflow (PL)	172
81	Mean AN in Inflow (UN) and Outflow (PL)	173
82	Mean TSS in Inflow (UN) and Outflow (PL)	173
83	Mean WQI in Inflow (UN) and Outflow (PL)	174

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix	Title	Page
1	Working Procedures for Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD), Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD) and Ammoniacal Nitrogen (AN)	205
2	List of Flora and Fauna before Construction of Wetland Cells	212
3	Results of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)	214

ABBREVIATIONS

ANOVA	Analyses of Variance
ANZECC	Australian & New Zealand Environment & Conservation Council
AN	Ammoniacal nitrogen
APHA	American Public Health Association
ARIMA	Autoregressive-Integrated Moving Average
BOD	Biochemical oxygen demand
COD	Chemical oxygen demand
CANOCA	Canonical Community Ordination
DO	Dissolved oxygen
DOE	Department of Environment
ERL	Electric Rail Link
FWS	Free water surface
GPT	Gross pollutant trap
HSF	Horizontal subsurface flow
INWQSM	Interim National Water Quality Standards of Malaysia
KLIA	Kuala Lumpur International Airport
LE	Lower east wetland cells
MARDI	Malaysia agricultural, research and development Institute
MMM	Marimas - Magna Prima - Mesra Hijau Sdn. Bhd. joint venture group
MMS	Malaysian Meteorological Services
NWI	National wetlands inventory

PCA	Principal Component Analysis
PJH	Putrajaya Holdings Sdn. Bhd
PP	Perbadanan Putrajaya
SD	Standard Deviation
SF	Subsurface Flow
Sg	Sungai
SKVE	South Klang Valley Expressway
TNB	Tenaga Nasional Berhad
TSS	Total Suspended Solids
UB	Upper Bisa
UE	Upper East
UN	Upper North
UPM	University Putra Malaysia
UV	Ultra Violet
UW	Upper West
USAGE	United Sate Army Corporation of Engineers
US EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
VSF	Vertical Subsurface Flow