

UMS holds first MySun National Conference on March 15 and 16

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KOTA KINABALU: Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) is holding the first Malaysia Sustainable University Network (MySun) National Conference 2022 on March 15 and 16.

According to UMS Vice Chancellor Professor Datuk Dr Taufiq Yap Yun Hin, the universities involved in the cooperation and collaboration to promote campus sustainability in Malaysia were Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Universiti Malaysia Pahang and Multimedia University Malaysia, while international counterparts were Universitat de Alicante, Universita Degli Studi Di Genova and FH Joanneum University of Applied Sciences.

"Indeed, there is a significant merit in this sort of a network approach to sustainability. Considering the knowledge base of universities is always expanding and interdisciplinary expertise is widely dispersed, such network will pave the way for organizational synergies particularly among MYSUN university partners that can become a catalyst in forging research and development alliances to achieve the shared sustainability-related goals.

"I have no doubt that institutions of higher learning should leverage their resources for a sustainable future. Higher learning institutions can and should play a much bigger role in this endeavor.

"A conference such as this provides a highly interactive platform to discuss new possibilities and to explore avenues for expanding the role of universities in promoting sustainability. Through our combined strengths and collective efforts, we should be able to realise the desired outcomes of ensuring the sustainability of our institutions, resources and environment for future generations," he said.

He added that the conference had attracted presenters from various institutions locally and internationally.

"However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic and for the interest of safety, it is rather appropriate that the conference is conducted in a hybrid mode. Nevertheless, I believe that the hybrid mode will not compromise the quality of the conference.

"Instead, it gives the opportunity for more participants who are interested with sustainability-related issues but are unable to attend physically due to Covid-19 travel restrictions, to join the conference virtually, instead," he added.

He also said that by looking at the various themes available in this conference, ranging from energy, climate change, natural resources, food security, engineering, green technology, social sciences, as well as information and communications technology, it will be possible to identify ways in which sustainable development can be further embedded in the ethos of higher education.

This will resonate with the shared values of global institutions striving for the wellbeing of the society in a fast-changing environment, he said.

Dr Taufiq also said that universities are carrying out various research related to sustainability, and are aware of international treaties, conventions, and declarations such as UN Sustainable Development Goals, that require us to go beyond teaching and research, to influence policies and implement their evidence-based findings to actively drive sustainable development.

"Hence, I believe it will be very inspiring to all sections of the society if they are aware of how sustainability policies could bring benefits to the communities.

"In this context, we should continue to emphasize on capitalizing the emerging technologies of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (IR4) that have the potential of facilitating a rapid transition towards sustainable development," he said.