

Sustainable seed supply crucial to aquaculture growth, says UMS V-C

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KOTAKINABALU: There is a need for new approaches and ideas in protecting and preserving the State's ocean wealth, said Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) Vice-Chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Mohd Noh Dalimin.

He said aquaculture plays a pivotal role by increasing fish supply from hatchery and grow-out systems that will eventually lessen pressure on the wild stock.

He suggested that besides research on marine conservation, efforts be stepped up to accelerate sustainable development of aquatic food resources through freshwater as well as marine aquaculture and sea

ranching.

"We need to protect the aquatic ecosystems, rebuild the depleted stocks through habitat improvement and sea ranching. When aquatic food supply increase, pressure on natural population will obviously decline," he said in his speech which was read by Deputy Vice Chancellor Prof Datuk Kamruzaman Ampon at the opening of a Training Workshop entitled "Fish Seed Production Techniques" at Borneo Marine Research Institute (BMRI) of UMS here, yesterday.

The intensive technology transfer programme from Monday to Friday was jointly organized by BMRI and

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and held at the BMRI building in UMS.

Mohd Noh, among other things, stressed the importance of fish seed supply in ensuring the growth of aquaculture industry, saying that the growth of aquaculture industry is inconceivable without sustainable seed supply.

He said all fish and shellfish farms are depending on seed supply and cannot afford to run their own hatcheries. Therefore, seed supply centres should ensure sustainable supply is available.

"Their farming operations will stop or close down if seeds are not

available," he said, adding that easy supply of seed is a major factor in agricultural development and the challenge before aquaculture is to ensure sustainable seed supply.

He said BMRI together with State Government agencies can develop mechanisms and detailed plans for seeking support of the government or the consortium of stake holders in the private sector.

He urged the aquaculture industry players to increase their R & D activities and seek partners in the scientific community for a fast track approach to solutions of the problems that traditional approaches have failed to resolve.