

UMS institute gets RM50,000 to study heavy metal pollution

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KOTA KINABALU: Universiti Malaysia Sabah's (UMS) Borneo Marine Research Institute received a shot in the arm from Sabah Ports Sdn Bhd to conduct a study on heavy metal pollution in the coastal sediments of Sepangar Bay and the city.

The RM50,000 fund was provided for a year long study which is expected to be completed in the middle of next year.

Suria Capital Holdings Berhad Group Managing Director cum Sabah Ports Sdn Bhd Managing Director Ng Kiat Min said, as a sea-based business, they have a strong interest in marine-based conservation programmes conducted within the State.

"We are keen to be part of new innovative marine conservation measures and engaging Borneo Marine Research Institute is evidence of our continued commitment.

"Both Sepangar Bay and Kota Kinabalu are areas of business for Sabah Ports Sdn Bhd, thus we are keen to be part of long term remedial efforts that support the ocean's ecology and sustainability," she said in a statement, here, on Wednesday.

The study titled "Status of Heavy Metal Pollution of Coastal Sediments at Kota Kinabalu and Sepangar Bay" will yield crucial information on the ecological status of Sepangar Bay and Kota Kinabalu waters as well as draw up mitigation strategies that will help minimise the effects of ship-based pollutants.

Ng said the project entails monthly sampling of seabed sediments by Borneo Marine Research Institute researchers to verify water quality, oil and grease water content.

Upon completion, Sabah Ports Sdn Bhd intends to share the findings with maritime agencies and marine researchers as well as for academia purposes.

Borneo Marine Research Institute Director Dr Rosita Sapawi said through the collaboration, the Institute and Sabah Ports will be able to serve the community via the determination of baseline information about heavy metal pollutants in the researched areas.

"We hope that many other maritime-related industries will follow the footsteps of Sabah Ports Sdn Bhd's good example in supporting conservation efforts towards preservation of the aquatic ecosystem and marine life in the coastal waters of Sabah," she said.