

Dr Harun: Relevant agencies to develop guidelines for small-scale fishermen

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KOTA KINABALU: The small-scale fishery sector needs to be reformed to maintain the sustainability of the marine resources.

Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) vice chancellor, Prof Datuk Dr Mohd Harun Abdullah in making the call said fishermen need to be educated on catching for long-term benefits.

"These will greatly help in the ecosystem approach to fisheries management which in Malaysia has become a national policy objective," he said during the 3rd Pillar Workshop (Marine Environment) KESBAN at Sea be-

tween Maritime Institute of Malaysia (MIMA), UMS and National Security Council (MKN) at UMS, yesterday.

In this context, he believed the relevant agencies can develop guidelines consistent with the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and ground realities in our country.

"Any programme for educating fishermen on their voluntary contribution to sustainability will be easier if we have approved guidelines written in an easily understandable language for fishermen.

"I hope Datuk Seri Panglima Yahya Hussin (Minister

of Agriculture and Food Industries) will consider this matter," said Dr Harun.

Meanwhile, he said efforts are needed to work with the vulnerable sections of the society through structured community outreach programmes in the Easter Sabah Security Zone (ESSZone).

"However, since we in the university are only armed with knowledge, we need a security cover to implement projects there, for example to help the community extend farming operations in the sea or to promote marine ecotourism," he said.

He believed a knowledge-empowered community

will reduce the burden on security agencies as they will see more benefits in peace, prosperity and the sense of being enlightened as well as respected members of the society.

According to him, the workshop is not just about discussing the problems but to identify policies, strategies and plans for sustainable development of marine resources.

Besides that, it is also aimed at identifying impediments to implement them and proposing follow-up action towards better management of the marine environment and resources in ESSZone.