

'Govt open to knowledge-based ideas'

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By PAUL MU

KOTA KINABALU: The government is receptive to knowledge-based ideas as it could influence policies and actions positively.

Science, Technology and Innovation Minister (MOSTI) Datuk Seri Panglima Wilfred Madius Tangau said: "Personally, I am keen to take decisions that are well-informed by professional opinion."

Scientists require knowledge to address the sustainability issue of ocean governance, said Madius during the launch of 'International Conference on Marine Science and Aquaculture Ocean Governance: Issues, Priorities and Strategies' at a resort yesterday.

"The planet requires a resolve that is rooted in scientific knowledge and motivated by consideration of sustainable development," said Madius in his speech read by MOSTI Deputy Secretary-General Prof Madya Dr Ramzah Dambul.

He said ocean governance is



Dr Ramzah (second left) launching the conference as Dr Kamaruddin (third left) and guests look on.

a very complex and highly technical matter, and it is a work in progress because of the vastness of the sea and

limitations of our capabilities.

There are international conventions and agreements for

ocean governance handle by many national agencies, and yet 40 per cent of the world oceans are heavily affected by

human activities, he said.

"Globally, the market value of marine and coastal resources and industries is estimated at \$3-trillion per year. This makes 5 per cent of gross development product," said Madius.

"Malaysia has national interests in protecting the marine ecosystem services, that play an increasingly important role in our economy, lifestyles and everyday life," he said.

Malaysia needs a dynamic workforce with diverse skills and expertise in marine-related fields to deal with issues that are environmental, economic, social, cultural and related to national security, he said.

In this context, he said Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) through its educational programmes and ocean outreach can contribute significantly to producing ocean professionals and different levels of workforce to help the country more effectively govern its marine heritage.

"I am glad to see scientists of Borneo Marine Research

Institute (BMRI) trying to play their role in research, human capital development and public outreach," Madius noted.

The institute is handling the management of Coral Triangle Initiative of MOSTI, implementing R&D projects funded by the government agencies and offering professional opinion on key topics related to marine environment and aquaculture, he said.

"Your efforts can contribute to ocean governance, reducing anthropogenic pressures by new approaches to fisheries management, sea farming and blue economy," said Madius.

He said the ability of UMS to deliver was indicated through the launch of their first issue of Borneo Journal of Marine Science & Aquaculture yesterday.

Also present were UMS vice-chancellor Prof Datuk Dr D Kamarudin D Mudin, BMRI director Prof Dr Rossita Shapawi and conference chairperson Assoc Prof Dr Julian Ransangan.