

'Finding balance between sustainability requires wisdom'

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KOTA KINABALU: Biodiversity conservation is becoming increasingly an crucial issue amid growing concerns that conservation appears to conflict with economic growth and social development.

Finding balance between the need

for sustainability, according to JICA Malaysia, Migawa Tomoko, requires wisdom and closer attention to ensure priceless natural wonders and biodiversity wealth are preserved for future generations.

"The extension of the Third Country Training Programme (TCTP) on Integrated Biodiversity Conservation underlines the commitment to

provide the platform for experience sharing among developing nations on maintaining conservation strategies for biodiversity and ecosystems in an integrated and coordinated manner," said the Japan International Cooperation Agency official.

Migawa was speaking at the closing of the Sabah TCTP 2017 at the Institute for Tropical Biology and

Conservation, University Malaysia Sabah (UMS) yesterday.

This year's training programme benefitted 15 participants from different countries. They received their certificates presented by UMS Deputy Vice Chancellor, Prof Dr Shahril Yusof who represented Vice Chancellor, Prof Dr Kamarudin D. Mudin.

"Sabah has become a training ground for integrated biodiversity and ecosystem management," he said and expressed hope that participants can initiate their own conservation plans for their own countries from the knowledge, skills and experience they gained in Sabah.

Extending his praise to participants for their success in completing their training, Dr Kamarudin said the Sabah TCTP secretariat will follow-up on their progress and implementation of plans of actions in their respective countries.

"Sabah TCTP signifies the close cooperation between both governments of Malaysia and Japan aimed at sharing Sabah's experience in the implementation of integrated biodiversity and ecosystem management, and we would like to extend our heartfelt appreciation for supporting the training programme expenses incurred," he said in his speech read by Dr Shahril.

The training programme for the 2nd programme of the 3rd cycle of

the Sabah TCTP saw participants from six countries, Botswana, Sri Lanka, The Philippines, Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand.

Meanwhile, acting director of the Institute of Tropical Biology and Conservation (ITBC) of UMS, Prof Dr Monica Suleiman said the success of the programme benefitted more than 100 government conservation officers from 17 countries.

"For the last 16 years, we have produced highly qualified and experienced conservation officers from Sabah who are now training our fellow conservationists from other developing nations in Sabah TCTP," she said, and extended her congratulations to participants who successfully completed their training this year.

The first cycle was initiated in 2009 to 2011 followed by the second cycle in 2012 to 2015 where ITBC acts as the training institution with the Natural Resources Office of Sabah (NRO) as its partner and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) as a collaborating agency.

The training programme has also been placed under the Malaysia Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP), under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Among those who attended the closing ceremony included Hiroko Matsuo, Head of the Japan Consular Office in Kota Kinabalu.



TOGETHER FOR CONSERVATION ... Prof Dr Shahril (1st row, 7th left) together with Tomoko (1st row, 4th left) and Matsuo (1st row, 6th left)



CERTS ... Prof Dr Shahril (2nd right) presenting a certificate to a participant from one of the six countries participating in this year's training course.