



Dr Shahril (front, centre) with the TCTP participants and invited guests after yesterday's closing ceremony.

15 attend UMS Third Country Training Program

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KOTA KINABALU: After a little over two weeks, the University Malaysia Sabah (UMS) Third Country Training Programme (TCTP) officially came to an end yesterday with a closing ceremony attended by all 15 participants and official dignitaries.

The participants, hailing from Botswana, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand, had attended lectures given by various personnel from key state agencies and departments, including NGOs that took part in the Borneon Biodiversity and Ecosystem Conservation (BBEC) project.

They had also undergone a series of discussions and workshops to come up with project proposals or plans of action to be implemented in their respective countries, by emulating and considering the experiences, knowledge and skills garnered and gained during the TCTP.

UMS deputy Vice Chancellor (research and innovation),

Professor Dr Shahril Yusuf, said the Sabah TCTP secretariat will follow up on the progress of the implementation of each action plan by all participants, who are now TCTP alumni. In his closing remarks, Dr Shahril noted the need to conserve flora and fauna here as the State's biggest asset, through concerted environmental conservation efforts.

"This (TCTP) is an approach we take to embrace the Industrial Revolution 4.0 (IR 4.0) with the application of learned knowledge and holistic skills from formal learning, as well as other unique experiences acquired by other Sabah-based institutions and NGOs that are independent of the BBEC Programme, which we hope can be applied by participants in their respective countries.

"As much as the IR 4.0 will be shaped by futuristic technologies, it must be defined by a development model that respects the biodiversity and sustains healthy ecosystems,"

he said.

During a sharing session, economic researcher, Mar Lacambra, from the Philippines said that the TCTP equipped participants with necessary skills and knowledge to play their roles of ambassadors for biodiversity conservation, accompanied by a sense of fulfillment and educational milestone during the once in a lifetime opportunity.

"It was my expectation that this training would be like any other, but I did not expect the responsibility of congregating and applying what we have learned. Now, we've gained knowledge and have a proposal or plan of action to be applied in our own country.

"I realise the application of acquired knowledge would give life to conservation and management integration," he said, expressing hope for more power and unending inspiration in the name of Mother Earth.