

# Aquaculture to become mainstay of economy

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**KOTA KINABALU:** Aquaculture is now being promoted in Malaysia as an important engine of growth and is expected to become the mainstay of the nation's economy eventually.

Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Datuk Madius Tangau said that the country had always strived to ensure the sector was not sidelined in its development effort.

He stressed that the government was concerned in ensuring the sustainability of the country's seafood supply and wants the aquaculture industry to grow.

As testimony to this, he said the aquaculture sector had been listed amongst the 16 Agro-food Entry Point Projects (EPP) of the National Key Economic Area (NKEA).

"The government aims to double the agro-food sector's contribution to the Gross National Income (GNI) from RM20.2 billion in the year 2010 to RM49.1 billion by 2020, or an increase of RM28.9 billion," he said.

Madius also said that he was convinced the aquaculture industry will play an increasingly

prominent role in the nation's seafood security initiatives.

Hence, it is important for the industry to focus on research and development in the coming years, he said.

"There must be high intensity levels of research and development on STI as well as application of entirely new problem-solving approaches in managing the country's marine bioresources, particularly in aquaculture," he said.

He then commended Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) for giving high priority to marine resources in its research and development programmes and for continuously working with the state and federal government agencies in the area.

"By working on marine ecosystem services and seafood security, you are helping the government achieve Sustainable Development Goals identified by the United Nations and ratified by most countries, including Malaysia."

Madius also stressed that for the sector to be developed in a sustainable manner and still be able to meet the increase in national demands, it was crucial



Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Datuk Madius Tangau (third, right), with Vice Chancellor of Universiti Malaysia Sabah Prof Datuk Dr Mohd Harun Abdullah (second, right), at the International Conference On Marine Science And Aquaculture (ICOMSA) 2017 at UMS yesterday. - Bernama photo

to have appropriate and dynamic governance mechanisms, scientific understanding of our marine science and aquaculture and more importantly, how science, technology and innovation (STI) can be applied in this sector.

"An example of how STI can advance the aquaculture practise is currently being developed by MIMOS, an agency under my

ministry through the MIMOS Sensor Unified Technology for Aquaculture (Mi-SUTRA) which is the monitoring of physical parameters in environmental conditions through sensor technology and smart devices to optimise production in promoting yield and quality while minimising environmental impact and reducing labour dependencies."