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### Malaysia's First Academic Research on Palm Oil Sustainability (ARPOS) Network Symposium

*Advocating sustainable palm oil management and production*

**KUALA LUMPUR, 3 JUNE 2014** – Aiming to engage the Malaysian academia via a network of palm oil researchers, a symposium - An Academic Research on Palm Oil Sustainability (ARPOS), will be held for the first time in Malaysia from 10 June to 11 June 2014.

Oil palm is the world's most efficient vegetable oil crop and palm oil's versatility for food and non-food uses means global demand continues to rise. Although the industry has developed best agricultural practices for more than three decades, growing environmentalism has put it under scrutiny. In 2004, the industry established a multi-stakeholder organisation, the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil, to promote the production and use of sustainable palm oil. However, little has been done to establish a network between the palm oil industry and the academia involved in research related to sustainable palm oil.

The two-day symposium, which will be held at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), targets to gather data from all participating institutions to be used for policy advocacy and public education on the sustainable practices of the industry. The symposium will also discuss the multi-disciplinary and coordinated approaches in the research on palm oil sustainability.

In tandem with the objectives of the symposium, the ARPOS Network initiated by UKM – Yayasan Sime Darby (YSD) Chair in Climate Change, will also be officially launched during the symposium. The ARPOS Network will operate as a platform for the academic palm oil sustainability research to feed results and findings that can aid the decision-making process in the palm oil industry and Malaysian government's policy making.

The symposium will be officiated by YBhg Dato' Seri Ir. Dr. Zaini bin Ujang, Secretary General II, Ministry of Education Malaysia at UKM on 10 June 2014 while the keynote address will be delivered by YBhg Tan Sri Dato' Dr. Wan Mohd Zahid Mohd Noordin, YSD Governing Council Member on 11 June 2014.

Eminent speakers from tertiary institutions in Malaysia will speak on various topics related to the industry and share their thoughts, presenting case studies and outcome of researches carried out to date.

Among the topics to be presented will be on Emission Mapping and Environmental Impacts Related to Oil Palm and Palm Oil Production by Professor Datin Dr. Zuriati Zakaria from the Environment Engineering and Green Technology, Malaysia-Japan International Institute of Technology (MJIIT), Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur and the Spatial and Temporal Analysis of Oil Palm in Selangor: Implication to Carbon Stock above Ground by Professor Dato' Dr. Sharifah Mastura Syed Abdullah, Director, Institute of Climate Change, UKM who is also the second Chair Holder of UKM-YSD Chair in Climate Change.

The ARPOS Network Symposium will see participations from 13 of Malaysia's top universities and research institutions including the UKM-YSD Chair in Climate Change, the UKM-YSD Chair for Sustainable Development: Zero Waste Technology in the Palm Oil Industry, the MPOB-UKM Endowed Chair in Oil Palm Industry

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Development for Sustainable Economy, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, The University of Nottingham Malaysia Campus, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Universiti Malaya and Universiti Sains Malaysia to name a few.

YSD has since 2010 supported and funded integrated and applicable academic research for sustainable management of palm oil with the UKM-YSD Chair in Climate Change and the UKM-YSD Chair for Sustainable Development: Zero Waste Technology in the Palm Oil Industry. The two initiatives under its Education and Environment pillars focus on the positive ecological and social consequences that can be generated through the sustainable management of palm oil.

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