



PRESS RELEASE

MINISTRY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON BIOPOLYMERS 2024 (ISBP2024)

PENANG, 21 OCTOBER 2024 - Today, YB Tuan Chang Lih Kang, the Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation officiated The 19th International Symposium on Biopolymers 2024 (ISBP 2024), which carries the theme, *“Towards Safe and Sustainable Biopolymers for Our Future”*. This year's theme, highlights the critical need for innovative solutions in the biopolymer sector to combat global plastic pollution. This event took place at the Setia Spice Convention Center in Penang, Malaysia, organized by the School of Biological Sciences, Universiti Sains Malaysia in collaboration with the National Institutes Biotechnology Malaysia (NIBM) and Malaysian Bioeconomy Development Corporation (BEC).

This international symposium is being held for the first time in Southeast Asia. The four-day symposium brings together world renowned scientists, researchers and industry experts from 33 countries. Talks and discussions will focus on the latest development in biobased and biodegradable plastics, industrial production and application, as well as policy matters.

YB Tuan Chang Lih Kang in his opening speech commended the efforts of the international scientific community in advancing biopolymer research. In his speech, he mentioned, “I would like to take a moment to acknowledge and celebrate the incredible work of the scientists, researchers, and innovators who are at the forefront of biotechnology; particularly biopolymer research. In particular, I am immensely proud that Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) as part of its APEX initiatives continues to play a leading role in biopolymer research in Malaysia. USM has not only excelled in advancing knowledge in this critical field but has also been instrumental in translating that research into practical, real-world applications. The Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation recognizes the importance of collaboration between the public sector, academia, and industry in driving forward new innovations.”

As Southeast Asian countries grapple with increasing plastic pollution, the ISBP 2024 is a timely symposium that aims to provide a platform for researchers, industry leaders, and policymakers to discuss innovative solutions and share best practices. Biotechnology plays a crucial role in addressing these challenges. The National Institutes of Biotechnology and Malaysian Bioeconomy Development Corporation are agencies under the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation that facilitate collaborative research and commercialisation in biotechnology in alignment with the objectives outlined in the National Biotechnology Policy 2.0.

The four-day symposium will also feature two concurrent mini-workshops, one on marine biodegradation of polymer on 23rd October 2024, with distinguished scientists who will share their insights into cutting edge research on biodegradable plastics designed for marine environments and the SATREPS Oil Palm Trunk (OPT) Project's Mini Symposium titled "From SATREPS to Social Implementation: The First Step Towards Sustainable Palm Plantation Management and Palm Biomass Utilization" on the 22nd October 2024 that will focus on the oil palm biomass industry and the utilization of oil palm trunks. The symposium will conclude with a dedicated Industry Day event co-organised by GO!PHA (Global Organization for PHA), a coalition of over 70 stakeholders, focusing on regulatory landscapes, investment opportunities, and success stories from the bioplastics sector.

With Malaysia recently shining in the Global Innovation Index ranking 33rd in the world, this gathering of think tanks from around the world in Malaysia indicates the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation's commitment to continue improving the country's R&D and innovation ecosystem.

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Prepared by,

**MINISTRY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION
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