

# **OFFICIAL SPEECH FROM HOST COUNTRY**

**DR UMI KALSOM ABU BAKAR**

**DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL (MARDI)**

**IMPROVING LIVELIHOODS THROUGH KNOWLEDGE SOLUTIONS**

**AND PARTNERSHIPS**

**Asian- Pacific Member Countries Regional Consultation**

**Putrajaya Marriot Hotel, Putrajaya, Malaysia**

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Mr Philip Walters  
Chair of CABI Governing Board

Dr Trevor Nicholls  
Chief Executive Officer

Dr Vibha Dawan  
Member CABI Governing Board

Dr Dennis Rangi  
CABI Director General for Development

Honorable Speakers,

International Delegates,

Distinguished Participants and Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assalamualaikum and a very Good morning.

1. On behalf of the Director General of The Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute (**MARDI**), I would like to thank and congratulate the organizers for organizing the CABI **Asian-Pacific Member Countries Regional Consultation with the theme IMPROVING LIVELIHOODS THROUGH KNOWLEDGE SOLUTIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS** . This consultation session will be held for three days from today till Friday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2015. Y Bhg Dato' Sharif Haron sends his warm regards and apologies for

not able to be here today due to unforeseen commitments. He wishes everyone here a fruitful and impactful session.

2. It is great to see so many International and local participants here at the CABI Asian- Pacific Member Countries Regional Consultation. This shows the commitments of member countries to see developments and advancements in Agriculture and Biosciences in this region. Being a matured organization of more than a century old, CABI has played a great role in providing scientific expertise, products and resources to its 48 member countries to solve problems in agriculture and the environment. The support I am seeing today is an assurance that we will all stay committed and work together with CABI to bring more advancements and prosperity to the region.

Distinguished guests, Ladies and gentleman,

3. An organization like CABI is very important to facilitate collaboration and cooperation among member countries. The world is facing many challenges in sustaining agricultural production. Issues related to food security, malnutrition, climate change, food loss and poverty are common to many countries including Malaysia and is better to be addressed in a collective manner. So, I call upon all of you today to play an active part in this consultation session to further strengthen

the role of CABI in bridging scientific knowledge and building strategic partnerships among its member countries especially in the Asia-Pacific Region.

4. On a local note, this consultation is very timely as well. We are approaching our 11<sup>th</sup> Malaysian plan which will begin in 2016. Aiming for productivity-driven economic growth , the 5 year plan encourages up-skilling (teaching new skills) and re-skilling (retraining staff) as well as research through increased industry-academia collaboration, more targeted skills training programmes and increased support for industrial and social innovation activities. In the field of agriculture as well, emphasis will be on increasing productivity through the modernisation of the sector, supported by greater innovation and research and development. All of these initiatives are in-line with CABI's roles and functions, so I am sure for Malaysia, we will be able to complement CABI in its missions and future endeavours.

Distinguished guests, Ladies and gentleman,

5. MARDI has had a good long relationship with CABI Malaysia since its inception in 1988. Sharing the same grounds, and close

personnel relationship, MARDI – CABI Cooperation includes capacity building, consultation as well as sharing of expertise. CABI is also a good link for MARDI to other renowned research and academic institutions in the world. Apart from that, MARDI also benefits from CAB Direct and CAB Abstracts which is a good source of publications and knowledge. With the recent signing of a new Memorandum of Understanding on Agriculture, MARDI-CABI relationship should further prosper in the future as it entails and aims to forge more win-win and synergistic collaboration in the future.

6. One example of such cooperation is the "Workshop on the diagnostics of whiteflies" which was held recently in September 2015. The training workshop was jointly organized by MARDI, CABI and ASEANET and ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (AANZFTA) which is managed by the Department of Agriculture Australia. The focus of the workshop was to learn efficient techniques for collection, preparation and identification of the major groups of pest whiteflies including the biology, taxonomy and the quarantine risk associated with different species. This workshop was represented and benefited all ASEAN countries and is a good regional initiative.

7. I am sure MARDI-CABI relationship can further grow to benefit not only Malaysia, but other member countries of CABI. With a good volume of research scientists, personnel, expertise and leading-edge infrastructure in MARDI, there is much room for future cooperation. Perhaps CABI and MARDI can have a joint laboratory that can be utilized together to benefit ourselves and other member countries in the region. MARDI and CABI should also embark on future international programs perhaps under the ASEAN or APEC umbrella.

Ladies and Gentleman,

8. I therefore welcome exchange of constructive views and ideas in this consultation session that can help CABI to realize its mission, aims and future directions which in turn will expedite cooperation and collaborations within its member countries especially in the ASIA pacific region.
9. Apart from that, attending this program should not be about work only. I hope the International participants will enjoy Malaysia that's 'Truly Asia'. Do unwind with our warm Malaysian hospitality and enjoy the diversity and colour of our people, culture and food .

10. In closing, I wish all a successful and fruitful deliberation and hope all of you have an enjoyable stay in Malaysia.

Thank you.

Wassalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh.