True to the core, the theme of the National Maritime Conference (NMC) 2019@LIMA19 - 'Malaysia a Maritime Nation' - has indeed charted the passage for the country to emerge as a true maritime country. Tagging Malaysia as a maritime nation truly befits us where the importance of the sea to our nation is obvious. Our past and present have manifested the fact that Malaysia, by all account, is a maritime nation. Our economy, security, identity and, to a large extent, our way of life are dependent upon and shaped by the seas. The seas connect us as a community, bring us prosperity and attracts foreign influence. Historically, our ancestors were in fact renowned seafarers and even well before Columbus started his journey, our ships had already reached the shores of China and the Arabian Peninsula. Living now in a different time, we are currently facing a different set of challenges but with a different set of opportunities as a maritime nation.

NMC 2019 was organised by the Royal Malaysian Navy and officiated by the Prime Minister, Tun Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad, with the main intent of charting the passage for Malaysia a Maritime Nation Agenda. The presence of the Malaysian Premier at the conference reflected the significant weight placed by the national leadership on the development of the maritime community and its contribution to the well-being of the nation. First introduced during the early edition of LIMA in the 90’s as a platform for the national maritime agencies and industries to discuss maritime issues of national significance, NMC was first rebranded as the International Maritime Conference in 1997 to allow broader international maritime communities’ participation. However, taking advantage of the gathering of many senior government officials, policy makers and academia as key players in Malaysia’s maritime sphere, the NMC2019 @LIMA19 was reintroduced this year to incite a more vigorous and meaningful deliberation on maritime issues and challenges faced by the nation. The biggest representation of academia was from Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, led by the Vice Chancellor as a naval Honorary Captain. UMT also played a significant role as part of the organizing committee of NMC2019 led by RMN Sea Power Centre.

By Professor Dr Izatul Asma Wan Talaat
Head of Ocean Governance Research Programme

At the conference, Tun Mahathir also delivered the keynote address and was followed by 2 separate fora, with esteemed moderators and speakers from the broad maritime sphere. The first forum deliberated on “The Future of Ocean Governance in Malaysia”. Since Malaysia is surrounded by seas and has virtually a greater maritime space, which is two times bigger than our land areas, our dependency on the seas extent to almost all sectors particularly in food, trade, energy, transportation, tourism and security. Since the surrounding waters carry tremendous environmental, socio-economic and strategic value to the nation, this topic was carefully chosen to explore the notion of having a maritime ministry or a single governing body to coordinate and take charge of maritime policy in line with the effort to elevate Malaysia’s status as a strategic and important maritime nation.

The second forum on “Maritime Domain Awareness Applications: Empowering Collaboration”, was designed to encourage collaborations amongst maritime agencies and stakeholders towards effective enforcement at sea through information sharing and resource optimization. This topic is timely due to fact that illegal maritime-related activities remain a major challenge despite the huge amount of money spent to empower the management and enforcement in our waters, Taking note of the importance of Maritime Domain Awareness, a well-coordinated effort cutting across all the government sectors is needed to counter these maritime threats that could adversely impact our security, safety, economy, and environment.

Noting the importance of Malaysia a Maritime Nation agenda, Tun Mahathir spoke on the urgency of ocean governance, starting with having a national ocean policy, in his keynote address in the conference. NMC2019 has indeed charted the passage to place Malaysia in the world map – rightfully as a maritime nation – and UMT, with the biggest pool of expertise in marine and ocean matters in the country, has indeed a big role to play.
Student Research Day was held from 20 to 21 May 2019 at UMT to share the development of innovative technology or research findings performed by university to the industry and society. Wan Adibah Wan Mahari, a PhD student from School of Ocean Engineering was awarded with Vice Chancellor Champion Trophy and PhD Best Project (Engineering & Technology Category). Wan Adibah has successfully developed an innovative microwave pyrolysis technique, which can be used to transform waste materials into fuel. Microwave pyrolysis is capable to produce more than 80 wt. % yield of liquid oil, containing light C4-C24 hydrocarbons which is within the hydrocarbon range of commercial transport-grade fuels. Wan Adibah was grateful to his supervisor, Assoc. Prof. Ts. Dr. Lam Su Shiung and UMT for providing the guidance, platform, and resources that led to this promising outcome. She was also deeply grateful to UMT for providing scholarship for her PhD study and wished to dedicate herself to academia and research as her career of choice.
Associate Professor Ts. Dr. Lam Su Shiung from the School of Ocean Engineering of UMT was invited as a keynote speaker for the e-ASIA International Symposium on Biomass Utilization and Functional Materials held on 10 July 2019 in Kumamoto University, Japan, in conjunction with the ‘JST SAKURA Exchange Program in Science’.

Dr. Lam gave a keynote lecture on “Microwave Pyrolysis and its potential, application, and commercialization via joint collaboration”, highlighting the findings from research work performed by his research group in UMT, particularly the advantages and potential of microwave pyrolysis process to produce environmental friendly biochar and biofuel from biomass materials.

Following the conference, the Department of Applied Chemistry & Biochemistry, Graduate School of Science & Technology of Kumamoto University had meetings and discussion with Dr Lam on research collaboration and academic exchange between Kumamoto University and UMT.

From the discussions, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been proposed in the form of cultural exchange and joint research that involves exchange of internship, final year and postgraduate students. A joint research on combining microwave pyrolysis, carbo-catalyst, and CO2 utilization has also been proposed for sustainable production of biofuel and biochemical from waste and biomass materials. The project will involve joint grant application, exchange or attachment of researcher and student between UMT and Kumamoto University, and sharing of research facilities between the two institutes. In particular, students from UMT are welcomed to Kumamoto University for cultural exchange and joint research.
Event was held at the Kenyir Research Station together with Prof. Dato’ Dr. Mohd Tajuddin Abdullah and a group of Bachelor of Applied Science Biodiversity Conservation and Management students. A total of six fruit trees were planted at the forest such as, Longevity spinach (Gynura procumbens), durian tree (Durio zibethinus), mango trees (Mangifera indica), pulasan tree (Nephelium ramboutan) and rambutan. This is one of the initiatives to ensure that the land is well used and can be an attraction for the insects, birds, mammals and visitors who enjoy the environment. The target is to obtain about 1,000 fruit trees from all staff of Universiti Malaysia Terengganu. The concept of “one person one plant” can be introduced, aiming to make Kenyir Research Station as an attraction for all. Despite that, it will also help in making a big difference at our research station natural landscape. We hope that this effort would receive full support from UMT to contribute in future events. Thus, donation in terms of planting materials would be appreciated. For any inquiries, please contact Puan Norsyarinie binti Young Rockie at 096683129 (Office Number), norsyarinie@umt.edu.my (email)
JOINT ASFA-UMT CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT
ENABLING GREY LITERATURE DISCOVERY TO BENEFIT AQUATIC SCIENCES, FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE RESEARCH

Conference Date: 25th September 2019
Conference Location: University Malaysia Terengganu, Terengganu, Malaysia

The ASFA Secretariat is pleased to announce that for the first time in its almost fifty year history, ASFA is combining its Advisory Board Meeting with a one day Conference on Grey Literature, open to all members of the aquatic sciences, fisheries and aquaculture community to attend. The Conference is jointly hosted by ASFA and the Malaysian National Partner, the University Malaysia Terengganu (UMT). The theme of the conference is how information services, such as ASFA, can improve the discovery of grey literature in order to benefit aquatic sciences, fisheries and aquaculture research. Improving discovery is vital to ensure that grey literature is not overlooked or forgotten and that it remains available to researchers beyond specific project cycles or conference dates. Grey Literature is often described as literature not controlled by commercial publishers but of sufficient quality to be collected and preserved by libraries and institutions. This Conference will demonstrate the wide variety of formats and content Grey Literature can encompass, and how innovative information services can facilitate their discovery to the advantage of scientists and researchers. The Conference will bring together information managers and those working as researchers, policy makers or scientists in the fields of aquatic sciences, fisheries or aquaculture. During this Conference, ASFA’s strategy on the monitoring and coverage of grey literature will be presented, with options for attendees to provide feedback.

Conference Topics:
1. How new technologies are improving the discovery of Grey Literature
2. The role of A&I services in enabling discovery of global grey literature
3. Changing formats of grey literature in a digital age
4. Researchers’ grey literature storage and retrieval priorities

Call for Abstracts
If you are interested in presenting a paper at this conference, please email your abstract to ASFA-Secretariat@fao.org by no later than 16th June. Abstracts should be 300-400 words, and please ensure to include in your email the title of your paper, the full author name and author institution, and also indicate which Conference topics your abstract relates to. Authors will be notified by 19th June 2019 whether their abstract has been selected.

Conference Registration
There is no cost to attend the Conference, however ASFA is unable to provide sponsorship for those wishing to attend. There are only a limited number of places available. Therefore if you wish to attend the Conference, please email the ASFA Secretariat; (ASFA-Secretariat@fao.org) citing your full name; Organization/Institution; and Job Title. You will then receive confirmation of your registration in due course.
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- Marketing Management
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- Application will only be processed on receipt of full supporting documentation required.
- All application received will be processed and successful applicants will be notified without delay.
- Recommendation by two (2) academic referees (sealed) for students with degree other than conferred by UMT.
- Please include any other relevant documents e.g Curriculum vitae, supporting letter (s) and professional certificates (if any).
- Intake: September
- MBA program is offered at UMT Off-Campus Cyberjaya

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