

UPMKB hosts inaugural CropBio meeting to boost crop biodiversity

BINTULU: Universiti Putra Malaysia Bintulu Campus (UPMKB) has successfully hosted the first edition of the CropBio Project Inception Meeting and Field Demonstration.

The project titled 'Promoting Crop Biodiversity through Innovative Space Applications (CropBio)' was initiated by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (Escap) and the Aerospace Information Research Institute Chinese Academy of Sciences (Aircas).

In a statement, UPMKB said the project aims to improve the availability and accessibility of

crop biodiversity data in pilot locations in Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines.

This will be done by building geospatial crop databases and conducting crop diversity assessments to support agricultural resilience and biodiversity goals.

"The initiation of the project is a follow-up to discussions at the Regional Forum on Geospatial Information Applications for Resilient Agriculture in Southeast Asia held in Kunming, China," it said.

Institute of Ecosystem Science Borneo deputy director Dr Wan Zanariah Zainol Abdullah recommended expanding the use

of space applications and digital innovations in crop biodiversity mapping in line with the Asia-Pacific Plan of Action on Space Applications for Sustainable Development (2018-2030).

The inception meeting was attended by Indonesia's National Research and Innovation Agency and Brawijaya University, the Malaysian Space Agency and UPMKB, the Philippines' Space Agency and Mariano Marcos State University, Aircas, as well as Escap secretariats.

"It is not just a meeting but also a field visit to Kampung Bukit, Sungai Plan which is located within 20km of

UPMKB," said Wan Zanariah.

In his opening remarks, Escap chief (Space Applications) Keran Wang expressed his sincere appreciation to UPMKB for the warm welcome and hospitality as well as the excellent organisation of the meeting and field demonstration.

"We are gathered because of our shared belief that space science and technology with its applications can support sustainable development.

"Our discussion will focus on a concrete initiative, the CropBio project will be implemented together in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines until 2027," said Wang.



UPMKB staff and project participants in a photo call during a field visit. — UPMKB photo