



MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

OFFICIATING SPEECH

**YBHG. DATUK WIRA ANIS RIZANA BINTI MOHD ZAINUDIN
SECRETARY GENERAL
MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY (NRES)**

FOR

**LAUNCHING OF NATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION (NPOA 2.0)
AND NRES-UMS AGREEMENT SIGNING CEREMONY**

IN CONJUNCTION WITH

**12TH MARINE PROTECTED AREAS (MPA) AND THE CORAL TRIANGLE
(CT) ATLAS TECHNICAL REGIONAL EXCHANGE (TREX) AND MPA
TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP (TWG) MEETING**

**LE MERIDIEN, KOTA KINABALU, SABAH
20 MAY 2026 (WEDNESDAY) | 8.00 PM**

SALUTATION (TBD)

1. YBhg. Prof. Kasim Hj. Mansor

Vice Chancellor of Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS)

2. YBrs. Dr. Maklarin bin Lakim,

Director of Sabah Parks (National Focal Point for MPA TWG)

3. Distinguished CT6 Focal Points and MPA Managers,

4. Regional Secretariat,

5. Partners,

6. Ladies and Gentlemen.

INTRODUCTION

1. On behalf of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Sustainability (NRES) and Government of Malaysia, I wish to extend a warm welcome to all delegates gathered here for this official dinner in conjunction with the 12th Marine Protected Areas (MPA) & the Coral Triangle (CT) Atlas Technical Regional Exchange (TREX) & MPA Technical Working Group (TWG) Meeting CTI-CFF. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Sabah Parks for their commitment and dedication in acting as the host and National Focal Point for this significant gathering.

2. This week's TREX, held under the theme "Road Towards 2030: Resilient & Effective MPAs in the Coral Triangle Region" is a vital step aimed at promoting the sustainable management of marine biodiversity by strengthening MPA governance, standardizing capacity development, and enhancing stakeholder engagement across the Coral Triangle region.

3. As Malaysia chairs the MPA TWG for the 2026-2027 term, it is our distinct privilege and responsibility to foster the unity, cooperation, and progress of our regional family. We are sincerely grateful for your presence, and we hope that during your time here in Kota Kinabalu, you will experience not only productive deliberations but also the warm hospitality and cultural richness that our country has to offer.

Ladies and gentlemen,

4. Tonight marks a significant milestone with the launch of the National Plan of Action (NPOA) 2.0 Document, a testament to Malaysia's steadfast commitment as a member state to the Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI). This document reflects our nation's collective resolve to safeguard our marine heritage, and since 2024, we have proudly expanded our implementation scope beyond previous boundaries to include Peninsular Malaysia and Sarawak alongside Sabah. This broader approach ensures that ecologically valuable reefs, such as those in Pulau Redang and Pulau Tioman, are integrated into our biodiversity conservation and community livelihood efforts. Our shared responsibility under the Regional Plan of Action (RPOA) 2.0 calls upon us to strengthen collaboration and address climate change impacts while ensuring that our marine governance remains inclusive through science-based approaches and the integration of Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI).

5. Malaysia has made meaningful progress under NPOA 1.0, reflecting our strong commitment to marine conservation and sustainable resource management. One of our key achievements is the gazettelement of Tun Mustapha Park in Kudat, Sabah, in 2016 the first multi-use marine park in Malaysia, which demonstrates how conservation and sustainable livelihoods can be managed in harmony. More recently, in 2024, a collaborative national effort involving university researchers, NGOs, and government experts successfully identified 24 key Ecologically and Biologically Sensitive Areas (EBSAs), providing a

critical scientific foundation to guide marine spatial planning and conservation priorities. These milestones highlight Malaysia's integrated and science-based approach, grounded in partnerships and shared responsibility across sectors.

6. In line with the Government's aspiration to remain a committed member of the CTI-CFF, the signing of the collaboration agreement between NRES and UMS shortly hereafter signifies our dedication to integrating academic excellence with government policy. It is important to note that UMS has previously served as the CTI Sabah Branch Operations Office (CTI-SAB) through previous agreements, and tonight's signing reaffirms and formalizes this vital partnership. Under this agreement, CTI-SAB will play a pivotal role in assisting the Malaysia National Coordinating Committee (NCC) in the implementation of CTI programs and activities at both the state and national levels.

Ladies and gentlemen,

7. At a time when the world is facing increasing global supply chain disruptions, climate-related challenges, and growing pressure on food and natural resource security, the role of marine ecosystems has become more critical than ever. Healthy oceans are fundamental not only to biodiversity conservation, but also to sustaining livelihoods, ensuring food security, supporting economic resilience, and strengthening regional stability. In this regard, NRES remains committed to advancing sustainable environmental governance and strengthening regional cooperation to safeguard our natural resources for present and

future generations. I would also like to express my sincere appreciation to Sabah Parks for their commitment and dedication in acting as the host and National Focal Point for this significant gathering.

8. In pursuit of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Life Below Water, NRES is currently undertaking a Mid-Term Review of three core national policies related to plastic pollution. This review includes the National Marine Litter Policy and Action Plan (NMLPAP), the Malaysia Roadmap towards Zero Single-Use Plastics and the Malaysia Plastic Sustainability Roadmap (MPSR). The primary objective of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of implementation, reassess existing action plans, and propose long-term improvements to targets. This proactive stance is essential in addressing biodiversity threats and marine litter holistically, ensuring a thriving ocean ecosystem for generations to come.

9. Our journey this week continues with a site visit to Tun Mustapha Park, Kudat tomorrow, 21 May, followed by the strategized MPA TWG Meeting on 22 May. These sessions serve as a valuable platform for CT6 countries to align our next course of action through thoughtful exchanges, ensuring our decisions remain inclusive, transparent, and forward-looking.

10. I hope your time in Kota Kinabalu is filled with productive deliberations that lead to impactful results. It is now my great pleasure and honour to officially commence the Launching of NPOA 2.0 and the NRES-UMS Agreement Signing Ceremony. Thank you and have a wonderful evening.