

NST 20/7/2020 m/s 6

STUDY ON TERENGGANU MARINE LIFE

UMT, Marine Parks Dept to find out health of coral reefs post Covid-19

KUALA NERUS

UNIVERSITI Malaysia Terengganu (UMT), in cooperation with the Marine Parks Department, will carry out an expedition to study marine life post-Covid-19 around Terengganu from this month to November.

Vice-Chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Nor Aiemi Mokhtar said the goal of the expedition was to determine the condition and health of the coral reefs, quality of seawater as well as the effect of islands' closure on the socioeconomy of communities and tourism operators.

"The closure of the islands and marine parks during Covid-19 (through the implementation of

the Movement Control Order) has affected marine life, whereby we find that the condition of the sea to be better and improving prior to the closure.

"Researchers also viewed the formation of coral reefs and other marine life to be inspiring after Covid-19. This expedition will see which resources were affected or if there are new discoveries that we can then explore."

She said this after the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between UMT and the Fisheries Department, witnessed by Agriculture and Food Industries Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ronald Kiandee yesterday.

The expedition, involving 21 researchers from UMT with personnel from the Marine Parks and Resource Management Division of the Fisheries Department, will cover Pulau Redang, Pulau Perhentian, Pulau Kapas and Pulau Tenggol.

Kiandee said the MoU was a strategic collaboration to develop and modernise the fisheries sector through sustainable, dynamic

and competitive management and development, which are based on scientific information as well as quality services.

"I was informed that the scope of cooperation will comprise various fields of fisheries, including the science and ecology of marine and land fisheries; management of resources, marine sanctuary areas and biodiversity; and the effect of climate change on fishery resources.

"The form of cooperation included joint research, development and commercialisation of research findings, development capacity of both organisations and sharing of information that will lead to creating a centre of excellence as one of the by-products of this cooperation."

The centre of excellence will become an institution in the development of human capital of both organisations as well as in the development of targeted groups headed by the ministry through the Agricultural Skills Training Division.

Bernama



The expedition by Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, in cooperation with the Marine Parks Department, will cover Pulau Redang, Pulau Perhentian, Pulau Kapas and Pulau Tenggol. FILE PIC