

DOF LAUNCHES "NO SINGLE-USE PLASTIC" CAMPAIGN AT 56 MARINE PARKS NATIONWIDE

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KUALA NERUS, June 8 (Bernama) -- The Department of Fisheries Malaysia (DOF) is rolling out a "No Single-Use Plastic" campaign at 56 island marine parks nationwide in a decisive move to protect marine ecosystems from pollution and the growing threat of microplastics.

Fisheries director-general Datuk Adnan Hussain said the campaign, launched in conjunction with World Oceans Day 2026, calls on tourists, resort operators and tourism players to rethink their use of plastic bags when visiting marine park islands.

Visitors, he added, are strongly encouraged to bring reusable containers or eco-friendly alternatives to help reduce the risk of marine contamination.

"We do not encourage tourists to bring plastic bags to the islands, because these plastics will eventually be discarded, polluting the ecosystem and potentially breaking down into harmful microplastics.

"This threatens not just marine life, coral reefs and seagrass but also human health," he told reporters after the World Oceans Day 2026 celebration at Pulau Redang Marine Park here today.

Adnan said that for now, the approach focuses primarily on awareness campaigns rather than enforcement action or fines.

"We are still studying the matter. If this campaign proves insufficient, appropriate regulations could be drawn up in the future," he said.

He emphasised that single-use plastics pose a serious threat to the marine ecosystem, as they can be ingested by marine life such as turtles and also have the potential to break down into microplastics that enter the food chain.

He revealed that 548,598 visitors were recorded at Malaysia's Marine Parks in 2025. Of that total, 64 per cent were recorded in Terengganu's Marine Parks, which include Pulau Redang, Pulau Perhentian and Pulau Kapas.

Earlier, DOF and its strategic partners, including the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (Perhilitan), Aquaria KLCC and Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT), launched three programmes in conjunction with World Oceans Day 2026.

It included a coral restoration programme involving the planting of 600 coral nubbins and the release of wildlife on Pulau Redang.

Adnan highlighted that coral restoration is essential for rebuilding reef populations devastated by die-offs and bleaching.

"If we don't act now, I believe our marine parks will gradually lose their coral reefs and with them, a lifeline for the entire marine ecosystem," he cautioned.

On a related front, Adnan acknowledged that research on microplastics in Malaysia's commercial fish is still in its early stages, with much more data needed.

His comments follow scientific studies by the Fisheries Research Institute confirming the presence of microplastics in the marine ecosystem, including in commercial fish species, a clear signal of rising pollution in our oceans.

He said DOF has applied for funding under the 13th Malaysia Plan to expand research, in collaboration with local universities, to better assess microplastic risks in the country's marine environment.

Also present at the event were Perhilitan director-general Datuk Abdul Kadir Abu Hashim, Terengganu Fisheries director Pang Nyukang, Aquawalk Group Bhd chief executive officer Daryl Foong, and INOS UMT director Prof Dr Zainudin Bachok.

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TAGS: DOF, "No Single-Use Plastic", campaign, island, marine parks, microplastics, threat, Perhilitan, UMT, Aquaria KLCC

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