

MPOB'S ADVANCED BIOTECHNOLOGY AND BREEDING CENTRE WINS THE PRESTIGIOUS 2022 MAHATHIR SCIENCE AWARD

KUALA LUMPUR, 31st October 2022 – The Advanced Biotechnology and Breeding Centre (ABBC), Malaysian Palm Oil Board (MPOB), is the recipient of the 2022 Mahathir Science Award. ABBC won the Award in the Tropical Natural Resources category in recognition of its foresightedness in prospecting oil palm germplasms that have become an essential resource in driving the socioeconomic value of the oil palm industry nationally and globally.

These germplasm collections have enabled crop improvement and trait development breakthroughs, leading to groundbreaking research discoveries and increased commercial value. Currently, ABBC's DNA gene bank is home to the world's most extensive collection of oil palm germplasm for conservation and oil palm molecular-based research.

ABBC's contributions were examined through six impact dimensions: knowledge networks, stock of creative talent, new knowledge, economic development, branding and positioning, and societal development. ABBC is the third Malaysian recipient of the Mahathir Science Award in its 17-year history.

Academy of Sciences Malaysia President cum Country's Science, Technology and Innovation Advisor, Professor Emerita Datuk Dr Asma Ismail, commented, "The milestones of the Advanced Biotechnology and Breeding Centre of MPOB are an exceptional achievement in the palm oil industry, be it locally and internationally. Once again, a Malaysian recipient has been recognised for this esteemed award. This impactful innovation is hoped to champion sustainability in terms of economic growth, societal well-being and conservation of the environment."

"We are incredibly proud to receive the prestigious Mahathir Science Award, a Malaysian award of global standard. MPOB's breakthrough research in biotechnology due to the vast oil palm germplasm collection, the largest in the world, is an important contributor to the development of

new-generation planting material. The resource also proved essential in the discovery of genes controlling important agronomic traits of oil palm. If the collection, were a book, there would be hundreds of chapters, many of which are jewels yet to be uncovered. We look forward to advancing our research with the prize of continuing our impact on the Tropics, and the world,” remarked the Director General of MPOB, Datuk Dr Ahmad Parveez Ghulam Kadir.

The Mahathir Science Award is an annual recognition by the Mahathir Science Award Foundation, a global award given to individuals or organisations using science and technology to make outstanding contributions to the tropics. Nominees for the Mahathir Science Award undergo a rigorous selection process modeled on the Nobel Prize selection procedures to ensure that the award is presented to the best candidate. The Academy of Sciences Malaysia Fellows and an International Advisory Panel perform the evaluation.

The Mahathir Science Award winner receives USD100,000, a gold medal and a certificate. The Award Ceremony for the 2022 Mahathir Science Award will be held in May 2023.

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About The Mahathir Science Award

The Mahathir Science Award (MSA) was set up in 2004 by the Academy of Sciences Malaysia (ASM) in honour of Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad's contributions to science and technology in Malaysia. In 2010, the Mahathir Science Award Foundation was established to manage the Award.

The Award is positioned as the world's most prestigious science award for tropical sciences and bestowed on any scientist, institution, or organisation worldwide in recognition of contributions and innovations towards solving problems in the tropics through science and technology. It is awarded to the most deserving based on merit.

One award is conferred each year covering one of the four categories, which are:

- Tropical Agriculture
- Tropical Architecture and Engineering
- Tropical Natural Resources
- Tropical Medicine



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The award carries a cash prize of USD 100,000.00, a gold medal and a certificate. The award is presented during an official ceremony in Kuala Lumpur with eminent leaders from the scientific community, ministries and science agencies, industry leaders, members of the media and partners of the Foundation in attendance.