

SPEECH TEXT
YANG BERHORMAT DATO' DR. XAVIER JAYAKUMAR
MINISTER OF WATER, LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

OPENING SPEECH
BIODIVERSITY FORUM FOR BUSINESS AND PRIVATE SECTOR IN
MALAYSIA

7 JANUARY 2020 (TUESDAY)
9.00 AM
HOTEL ISTANA KUALA LUMPUR

Thank you, Master of Ceremony,

YANG BERHORMAT TENGKU ZULPURI SHAH RAJA PUJI

Deputy Minister, Ministry of Water, Land and Natural Resources;

YANG BERBAHAGIA DATUK ZURINAH PAWANTEH,

Secretary General, Ministry of Water, Land and Natural Resources;

MR. MARK ALEXANDER OLIVER,

Managing Director of DHI Water & Environment (M) Sdn. Bhd;

Industry representatives

Member of media

Distinguished guests

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. Good morning and a very warm welcome to each and everyone present here today. I would like to take this opportunity to thank DHI Water & Environment (M) Sdn. Bhd. for inviting me here today. To be honest, I am more than happy to be surrounded by the Malaysia's key industrial players here this morning, as it indicates the support and confidence

among our business and private sector towards the efforts of biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use in Malaysia.

2. It is also a pleasure to be here, speaking at this Biodiversity Forum for Business and Private Sector in Malaysia, organized by DHI and supported by the Ministry of Water, Land and Natural Resources or KATS. The attendance of well-represented speakers and key stakeholders clearly reflects the significance of biodiversity and ecosystem services to the business and the private sector in Malaysia. I congratulate DHI for organizing this important forum.

Ladies and gentlemen,

3. Biodiversity is a fundamental component for a long-term survival of the business and private sector as they rely on the genes, species, and ecosystem services provided by biodiversity as critical inputs throughout their supply chain. Although this is the case, at the same time the business and private sector have a huge footprint on biodiversity as they directly or indirectly impact the same biodiversity they depend on.

4. The newly approved Global Assessment Report by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services or IPBES has found that the five direct drivers of change in nature with the largest relative global impacts are change in land and sea use; direct exploitation of organisms; climate change; pollution; and invasive alien species - all these can be attributed to the activities of the business and the private sector.

5. The report has also reminded us that urgent and concerted efforts that foster transformative change are needed to achieve the 2050 Vision when “by 2050, biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people.”

Ladies and gentlemen,

6. Transformative change involves doing things differently, meaning that business-as-usual is already unacceptable. One of the ways to ensure transformative changes is to mainstream biodiversity and ecosystem services across all sectors. This simply means that conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity are integrated into planning and decision making processes, regardless of whether governments or businesses lead the process. This is where the business and private sector in Malaysia can play a crucial role.

7. Consequently, it is our belief that the business and private sector should not only be viewed as stakeholders but as partners for the conservation and protection of biodiversity and ecosystem services, especially in megadiversity countries like Malaysia. Active engagement with sectors, like agriculture, energy, tourism and infrastructure is then important to ensure a successful implementation of any biodiversity agenda, especially biodiversity mainstreaming at both national and global levels.

8. At the national level, the National Policy on Biological Diversity 2016-2025 (NPBD) specifies the need to include the participation of the business and private sector as biodiversity and ecosystem services are

the shared responsibility of all sectors of society and their planning is to be carried out in a participatory manner involving all sectors including the business and private sector.

9. Globally, for more than 10 years, the Convention on Biological Diversity or CBD, in which Malaysia is a Party since 1994, has actively engaged with the business and private sector to achieve the three main objectives of the CBD, namely the conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use of biodiversity, and fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of genetic resources.

Ladies and gentlemen,

10. The 10th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD (COP10) in Nagoya, Japan has called upon governments and private sector to engage in dialogue through the establishment of a global platform on business and biodiversity. This platform aims at enhancing the participation of business and private sector towards achieving the objectives of the CBD, especially at the national level.

11. Under this platform, 'Global Partnership for Business and Biodiversity' or GPBB programme involving among others Finland, India, Japan, Brazil, Canada and the European Union have been established. KATS believes that it is timely for Malaysia to establish a 'Malaysian Platform for Business and Biodiversity' (MPBB) under the auspices of the CBD and to be led by the private sectors themselves.

12. MPBB can complement and support the National Biodiversity Roundtable or NBR established under KATS to advise and support KATS

in the implementation and monitoring of the National Policy on Biodiversity. Once established, the MPBB is expected to raise awareness of biodiversity and sustainability issues amongst the business community and to encourage dialogue amongst stakeholders.

13. Apart from this, MPBB can be a bridge for a stronger collaboration between KATS and Malaysian businesses. It is also expected that MPBB will assist KATS in the dissemination of biodiversity issues at national and global levels, and advice on how businesses and related stakeholders can help to deal with these issues, as widely as possible. KATS believes MPBB can encourage and enable companies to understand and mainstream the objectives and aspirations of the NPBD and the CBD.

Ladies and gentlemen,

14. As we start with the year 2020, some things are coming to an end. The ‘Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Targets’, a ten-year framework for action to conserve biodiversity agreed by the Parties to the CBD will now conclude. With the conclusion, the CBD has embarked on a journey for a new biodiversity framework, dubbed the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

15. This framework, which started at the 14th Meeting of the COP in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt in 2018 will be finalized in the upcoming COP15 in October 2020 in Kunming, China. During the COP14 in Egypt, Parties have agreed to include the participation of the business and private sector in the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework process. It is also expected that the new principle framework will guide the global community, including Malaysia, mainly to halt the loss of biodiversity.

16. The participation and input from the Malaysian business and private sector are invaluable for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. KATS is expected to translate this new framework of biodiversity conservation within the national biodiversity agenda. As such, we realize the importance of the business and private sector participation in this new Global Biodiversity Framework.

17. For this reason, we believe that this Forum is a timely event as the inputs from the Malaysian business and private sector on these topics gathered during the Biodiversity Forum will be presented at the ASEAN Conference on Biodiversity 2020 (ACB2020) in March 2020 and a Forum report will be submitted to the Secretariat of the CBD as an 'Information Note' document for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework process.

Ladies and gentlemen,

18. As you can see, many efforts have been undertaken by the government in conserving our biodiversity. One of the efforts is the Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, and the Role of Conservation, Sustainable Management of Forests, and Enhancement of Carbon Stocks or REDD Plus under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

19. REDD Plus is an incentive mechanism for developing countries to protect and conserve their forest. The REDD Plus implementation would require funds to perform various conservation activities. I would like to

encourage Malaysian business and private sector to support this endeavour.

20. As an ending note, I would like to again extend our heartiest appreciation and congratulations to DHI for organizing this forum. I also appreciate each and everyone present here today, which is as a symbol of your commitment and endless support to our biodiversity conservation agenda.

21. On that note, it is a great pleasure for me to declare the Biodiversity Forum for Business and Private Sector in Malaysia officially open, and wish you all a fruitful discussion.

Thank you.

YB. DATO' DR. XAVIER JAYAKUMAR
MINISTER OF WATER, LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

7 JANUARY 2020