

MEDIA RELEASE

UNIVERSITI MALAYA PARTNERS RHB ISLAMIC TO AMPLIFY PROTECTION OF MARINE ECOSYSTEM

KUALA LUMPUR, 29 MARCH 2022 – Universiti Malaya (“UM”) and RHB Islamic Bank Berhad (“RHB Islamic”) recently signed a memorandum of understanding (“MoU”), signifying the beginning of a long-term partnership centred on coral reef rehabilitation.

The MoU serves as a framework for future joint activities between Universiti Malaya’s marine scientists and RHB Islamic, dedicated towards increasing awareness on the coral reef ecosystem and developing science-based solutions to address coral reef degradation. Coral reef rehabilitation research at Universiti Malaya will be spearheaded through Project PULIH, a research team that studies how to rehabilitate coral reefs from physical damage by converging different scientific disciplines - ecology, geography, physiology and molecular biology.

The MoU was signed between RHB Islamic and Universiti Malaya, represented by Dato’ Adissadikin Ali, Managing Director of RHB Islamic Bank Berhad and Professor Dr. Sabri Musa, Deputy Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, Universiti Malaya.

“Coral reefs provide resources that sustain the economy and culture of Malaysians. More than 25% of all marine species call the coral reef their home, including the fish and seafood that we eat, and what our fishermen depend on for their bread and butter. The amount of coral cover in Malaysia, however, has halved since 1990. It is timely to reverse the coral reef decline by helping our reefs to recover, and this partnership with RHB Islamic will put the attention of relevant parties on centre stage and increase our capacity to do so,” said Affendi Yang Amri, Coral Reef Scientist of Project PULIH.

The partnership is an extension of RHB Islamic’s flagship initiative, ‘Ocean Harmoni’, that aims to raise public awareness on the importance for marine ecosystem conservation. Through this shared vision, UM and RHB Islamic reinforce their commitment to the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), SDG14 “Life Below Water” and SDG17 “Partnerships for the Goals”.

“It is vital that we play our part in driving sustainable development, and this includes protecting our ocean and its marine life. Coral reef rehabilitation and restoration will bring significant benefits socially and economically, as reefs often form the backbone of tropical regions and developing

countries' economies. We are delighted to be part of this strategic partnership with Universiti Malaya to intensify our sustainability efforts in driving SDG14 "Life Below Water" for the benefit of the environment, economy and society in a more meaningful, structured, and sustainable manner," said Dato' Adissadikin Ali, Managing Director of RHB Islamic Bank Berhad.

Some activities in the pipeline under the UM and RHB Islamic partnership include hosting naturalist dives, marine awareness programs, and deploying coral rehabilitation programs for citizen scientists.
