

Intellectual property protection filed for Adenosma species in Sarawak

KUCHING: The intellectual property (IP) for a plant species named 'Adenosma nelsonioides' has been filed for protection, says State Secretary Datuk Amar Jaul Samion.

In addition to this, he points out that the essential oil derived from this particular plant has been trademarked as 'AdenoSara', while its Geographical Indication (GI) has been registered as 'Sarawak Adenosma'.

It is known that this wild herb is referred to as 'Bunga Ta'ang' by the Bidayus, while the Ibans call it 'Bangkit Engkerawan'.

"It seems that the properties (of this plant) found in Sarawak

is uniquely different, in terms of the essential oil composition, as compared with (those found in) other countries.

"Most importantly, the IP would be up for commercialisation (in collaboration) with the communities, who are our partners," he spoke at the AdenoSara benefit-sharing agreement signing ceremony at Kampung Semadang near here yesterday.

According to Jaul, the laboratory tests and data from Sarawak Biodiversity Centre (SBC) have shown that AdenoSara holds anti-bacterial and anti-fungal attributes, making it a highly-potential key

ingredient in developing all-organic oral care and other body hygiene products such as mouthwash and hand sanitisers.

Among the local communities, Adenosma is also known for its natural characteristic as a repellent – this highlights its potential of being developed into a range of animal care products, which has a huge market prospect.

In this respect, Jaul said with all these naturally-beneficial properties, the AdenoSara could become a key multi-purpose ingredient in developing and innovating healthcare products meant for both humans and animals.

He regarded the essential oil extracted from the leaves and stem of the Adenosma plant, as the 'prized ingredient'.

"It exudes a strong aroma, similar to oregano, which is described by a perfumist as 'spicy'."

According to Jaul, the major chemical composition of this essential oil is Carvacrol – a compound widely used in the manufacturing of fragrances and cosmetics, as a flavouring agent in food industry, and also in producing green pesticides due to its insecticidal properties.

On the benefit-sharing agreement, Jaul said it would empower the communities to have strong ownership in

protecting their traditional knowledge and biological resources.

He said the agreement also signified the commitment of SBC, via its 'Traditional Knowledge Documentation Programme', which was built on the foundation of mutual trust with the indigenous communities of Sarawak.

"It is important for SBC to work with our indigenous communities and keep in touch with the global development in biodiversity management and conservation.

"This benefit-sharing agreement also marks the first step towards the commercialisation of local

resources and should pave the way for additional income-generation for the rural communities to improve their livelihood," he said.

Jaul signed the agreement on the behalf of SBC, while Ketua Kaum Austin Mapus and Simon Kiai were the respective signatories representing the Bidayuh community of Kampung Semadang and the Iban community of Rumah Simon in Lubok Antu.

Minister of Education, Science and Technological Research Datuk Amar Michael Manyin witnessed the ceremony.

SBC chief executive officer Dr Yeo Tiong Chia was also present at the event.