



Manyin, flanked by Jaul (front, left) and Yeo, launches the AdenoSara project as others look on.

'SBC must strive for innovation, discovery of new products'

KUCHING: Sarawak Biodiversity Centre (SBC) must continue to strive towards innovation and discovery of new products from Sarawak's rich biodiversity and traditional knowledge of the ethnic communities.

Minister of Education, Science and Technological Research Datuk Amar Michael Manyin said this would ensure that local communities could enjoy the benefits from the utilisation of their knowledge.

He said the local communities must be empowered so that they too could play an important role in the conservation and sustainable use of those biological resources.

He also urged the people to continuously support SBC by sharing their traditional knowledge.

"The global health and wellness sector has grown significantly in recent years and is predicted to grow steadily at a compound annual growth rate of over six per cent in the 2020-2024 period, as reported by Technavio.

"I believe that through the strong dedication demonstrated by our scientists and the

greater participation of our indigenous communities, Sarawak will be able to tap into the health and wellness sector through innovative solutions from nature," he said at the signing of AdenoSara benefit-sharing agreement in Kampung Semadang near here yesterday.

Manyin said the AdenoSara project and the signing of benefit sharing agreement would underscore three pertinent aspects – Sarawak would continue to be on the forefront in line with an international convention on the recognition of community rights on biological and traditional wisdom; demonstration of good governance for genetic and traditional knowledge resources through sharing and sustainable use of biodiversity; and commitment to do research and development (R&D) in the pursuit of developing Sarawak's bio-economy sector.

He added that Sarawak was the first state in Malaysia to implement the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS).

Sarawak, through SBC on Mar 20, 2019, signed the first benefit-sharing agreement under

the LitSara Project with five communities – the Bidayus of Kampung Kiding, the Kelabits of Pa'Ukat and Pa'Lungan in Bario, and the Lun Bawang of Long Telingan and Long Kerebangan in Lawas.

The Nagoya Protocol is an international agreement that covers traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources.

It is aimed at sharing the benefits arising from the utilisation of genetic resources in a fair and equitable way. The protocol came into force on Oct 12, 2014 while Malaysia joined the protocol on Feb 3 last year.

Manyin said Sarawak had since then been serious in implementing the provisions of the Nagoya Protocol, especially in ensuring that the benefits could be shared with the indigenous communities.

He commended SBC, the Bidayus of Semadang and the Ibans of Rumah Simon for the successful implementation of the AdenoSara project.

State Secretary and SBC chairman Datuk Amar Jaul Samion and SBC chief executive officer Dr Teo Tiong Chia were also present at the event.