

**SPEECH BY YBHG. DATO' HASLINA BINTI ABDUL HAMID,
SECRETARY GENERAL
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD INDUSTRIES
IN CONJUNCTION WITH
“VIRTUAL BRIDGE TO ENVIRONMENT AND
SUSTAINABILITY (VIBES+ BY BB4SCP) YOUTH
CONFERENCE”
31 AUGUST 2021, 10.00 am
VIA LIVE RECORDING**

Salutation

Ms. Sophia Lim, Executive Director/ CEO of WWF-Malaysia

Distinguished delegates and panel of experts

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning and *Selamat Sejahtera*

Introduction

First, it is my tremendous pleasure and honour to be here in The Virtual Bridge to Environment and Sustainability or VIBES+ Youth Conference organised by WWF-Malaysia.

2. I wish to extend my gratitude and congratulate the WWF-Malaysia for organising this conference which serves as an important avenue to build awareness on the concept of Sustainable Consumption and Production or S.C.P. in Malaysia. I believe that this is a good platform to encourage discussions and networking between the youths, experts, government, private enterprises, and NGOs.

3. I was informed that the theme chosen is “Youth: Food Changemaker” and I could not be more pleased as it is in line with our National Agrofood Policy or N.A.P 2.0 that will be launched soon.

Addressing Food Loss and Food Waste

Ladies and Gentlemen,

4. According to the data reported by Solid Waste Management and Public Cleansing Corporation or SWCorp, 17,000 tonnes of food wastes are produced by Malaysians daily. Just imagine that this amount of food wastes is enough to feed 3 million people for 3 meals a day in Malaysia.

5. In addressing the issue of food loss and food wastes, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industries or MAFI made it a point in our policy to focus on efforts towards sustainable agricultural practices and food systems. We wish to reduce food wastage along the value chain and develop a healthy sustainable food system.

6. This effort requires innovative solutions such as greater adoption of sustainable farming practices and promotion on conservation of biodiversity for sustainable agriculture.

7. I hope that we can reduce food wastes in the future and promote the use of food wastes as input through “Waste to Wealth” concept, in line with the circular economy principle.

Youth As Changemaker

Distinguished delegates,

8. The youth contribute to 45 percent or 14.6 million of the total population in Malaysia. Despite this figure, only 15 percent of them are involved in the agriculture sector. Whereby, at the tertiary level, only 4 percent of students are considering a career in agriculture.

9. Therefore, we need to rejuvenate this industry and boost the participation of the younger generation. Our agenda is to continuously engage the youth to participate, so that they can value agriculture as a promising career to be considered. This is possible through venturing into the field not merely as a farmer, but from an entrepreneur's perspective.

10. For this reason, we have a special initiative for youth under the name of the Young Agropreneur Program. It is designed to facilitate and encourage the younger generation's involvement in agriculture activities within the agro-food value chain. Since 2016, 7,775 young agropreneurs have benefited from the program through the grant, loans, and technical training.

National Agrofood Policy 2.0

Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

11. This year, the ministry will introduce the National Agrofood Policy or N.A.P 2.0 that sets the policy direction for the next 10 years, from 2021 to 2030. It was developed with extensive consultation and engagement with our stakeholders to ensure that everyone benefits from it.

12. Plus, we have established the Food Security Cabinet Committee or F.S.C.C. chaired by the Prime Minister that signifies the government's effort to put food security matters in the forefront to address relevant issues that concern most people.

Conclusion

Before I conclude, I wish to take the opportunity to thank WWF-Malaysia for an amazing job holding this event during the time of pandemic.

13. On behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industries, I would like to express my appreciation to all delegates and experts for participating in this conference.

14. Finally, it is with great pleasure that I officiate the closing of the VIBES+ Youth Conference 2021.

Thank you.
