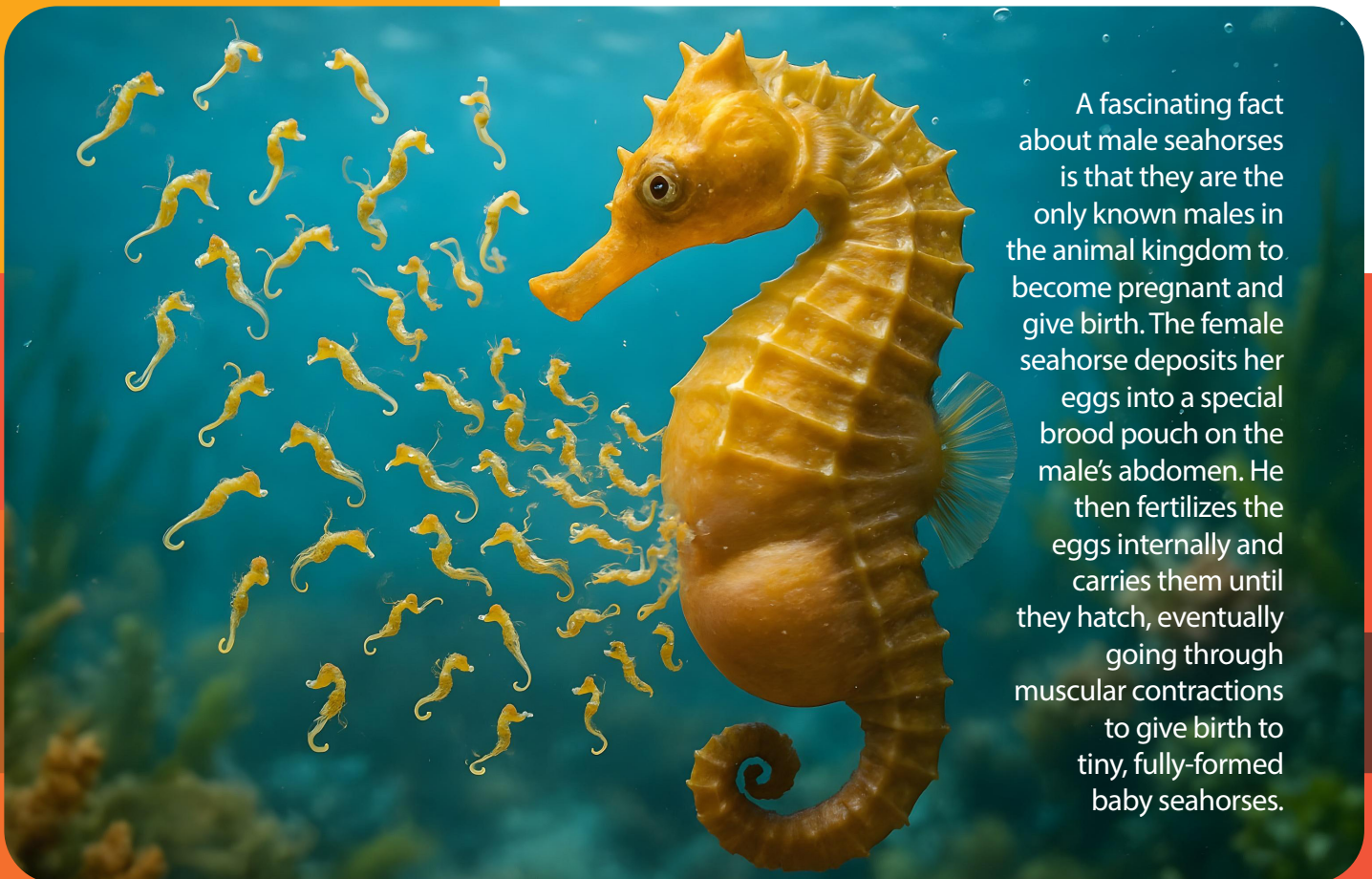




A fascinating fact about male seahorses is that they are the only known males in the animal kingdom to become pregnant and give birth. The female seahorse deposits her eggs into a special brood pouch on the male's abdomen. He then fertilizes the eggs internally and carries them until they hatch, eventually going through muscular contractions to give birth to tiny, fully-formed baby seahorses.

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At Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT), we believe that excellence is not a destination, but a journey—one shaped by the passion of our students and alumni, the collaboration of our academia and industries, the hard work of the managerial and supporting staff, and the promise of new minds eager to navigate their path through knowledge and discovery.

This edition of the newsletter reflects UMT's transformation into a globally recognized, marine-focused institution. We proudly highlight our recent collaboration with Guangdong Ocean University (GDOU) in China. This strategic alliance bridges academic boundaries and strengthens international research efforts in marine science, technology, and sustainability. Partnerships like these open doors to joint innovation and global impact.

In a story that resonates deeply with our spirit of exploration, we honor a remarkable feat by one of our very own, selected to represent Malaysia in the Antarctica Fall-Winter Expedition. His journey into the Ross Sea is more than a scientific achievement; it is a testament to UMT's growing contributions to frontier research on climate and polar studies.

Our commitment to shaping globally competent graduates continues through our Inbound Mobility Programme with Universitas Brawijaya (UB) in Indonesia. This initiative enhances cross-cultural learning and fosters scientific exchange, providing students with a unique opportunity to apply knowledge across borders—an experience that defines the UMT learning environment.

We are equally excited to announce our collaboration with Hot FM, one of Malaysia's most popular radio networks. Through this innovative partnership, UMT will bring the ocean's mysteries into the homes of thousands. It's a pioneering effort to make science more accessible, engaging, and part of everyday life.

To our alumni, we thank you for embodying the UMT spirit in the world and invite you to remain connected as mentors, collaborators, and advocates. To our partners, your ongoing trust empowers us to achieve even more. And to prospective students, your journey of purpose, passion, and discovery can start here. Let's choose UMT for the upcoming intake!

Together, we are making waves and setting new currents in motion.



Zukiferee bin Ibrahim
Executive Editor

UMT NEWSLETTER

Vol. 5 Issue 5, May 2025

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Zukiferee bin Ibrahim

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Mahasiswa Idaman are Catalysts for a Malaysia Madani

In the 2025 New Year Address, I introduced the concept of the **Mahasiswa IDAMAN** (Ideal Students) — a vision of students who are the choice of industry, the dream of society, and the hope of the nation.

To support this vision, the Office of Student and Alumni Affairs (HEPA) outlined six key traits in shaping the Ideal Students. The word shape is deliberately used, reflecting the effort to mould and polish something of high value such as students. Shaping students is just like refining diamonds. The six traits are:

1. Intellectual and scholarly, embracing a culture of knowledge.
2. Service-oriented, contributing meaningfully to the nation and society.
3. Peaceful and environmentally conscious, valuing well-being and sustainability.
4. Independent and self-reliant, developing personal potential.
5. A future distinguished alumnus, with strong ties to their alma mater.
6. Rooted in national identity, while aspiring to be global citizens.

The Ideal Students are thinkers, open to ideas and critical in thought. Amendments to the Universities and University Colleges Act (AUKU), which grant greater freedom and responsibility, should be a catalyst for intellectual growth. Freedom of speech and political engagement must be exercised with wisdom, shared values, and informed perspectives.

Such students contribute more than they receive. Volunteerism, particularly through community service, helps students apply classroom knowledge to real-world challenges. Active engagement with society strengthens empathy and a sense of responsibility.



Student well-being is also a priority. At Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT), the Student Well-being Index (IKP) helps identify key issues—such as mental health and financial stress—allowing timely interventions.

Environmental values should be embedded into campus life through ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) principles. Students can play a key role in advocating sustainability and raising awareness.

The Ideal Students are self-driven, resilient, and prepared for the demands of the modern workforce. Entrepreneurial thinking and career readiness are essential to ensure they thrive independently after graduation.

These students also represent the future alumni who will give back to their institutions. Campus experiences lay the foundation for future contributions in leadership, entrepreneurship, culture, and sports.

Lastly, Ideal Students carry strong national values and identity. They may aim to succeed globally, but remain grounded in their Malaysian roots. This mirrors the national aspiration of “reaching for the skies while remaining rooted to the earth.”

Through sports, culture, and heritage, students can develop patriotism and pride in their own traditions.

This holistic development of students is key to building a sustainable and values-driven *Malaysia MADANI*.

Bridging Boundaries: AEC Inbound Mobility with Indonesia's Universitas Brawijaya

By Dr. Maisarah binti Jaafar and Assoc. Prof. ChM. Dr. Azrilawani binti Ahmad @ Othman

The Inbound Mobility Programme between Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT) and Indonesia's Universitas Brawijaya (UB) offers a dynamic opportunity for students to merge theoretical learning with hands-on experience in Environmental Chemistry and Analysis. This programme has strengthened the collaboration between the Analytical and Environmental Chemistry (AEC) programme at UMT's Faculty of Science and Marine Environment (FSSM) and UB's Department of Chemistry.

For this year's International Inbound Mobility III (SSM4963) course that was recently held, six third-year UB students embarked on a 3-credit hybrid learning journey.

The programme commenced with two-day, expert-led virtual lectures, introducing students to key environmental monitoring and analytical techniques concepts. The students then participated in laboratory sessions focused on analytical instrumentation at UMT, followed by hands-on environmental fieldwork at the Kenyir Biodiversity Research Station (KBR), accompanied by their lecturers, Prof. Dr. Barlah Rumhayati and Mrs. Ellya Indahyanti. This fieldwork, conducted from 9 to 13 April 2025, was integrated with the *Introduction to Environmental Analysis* (AEC3733) course, a core subject in the AEC program.

The students collected and analyzed air, water, and soil samples both in-situ and in field laboratories, while also conducting a topographic survey to better understand the landscape and its ecological features. This fieldwork proved invaluable for environmental analysis, as students gained essential skills in environmental monitoring and analysis. Their exposure to real-world analytical instruments and sampling techniques greatly enhanced their applied understanding of environmental challenges.

The students also explored UMT's cutting-edge research during their visit to the INOS Gallery, which showcases the



university's expertise in marine and aquatic research. This visit enhanced their appreciation of UMT's significant contributions to impactful environmental research.

The students continued with an additional 14 days of interactive virtual lectures, further solidifying their theoretical foundation in environmental chemistry and analysis.

UB students and lecturers shared positive feedback, particularly on the hands-on laboratory sessions and immersive fieldwork at Kenyir. The practical experience was not only enjoyable but also crucial in deepening their understanding of environmental analysis. Prof. Barlah Mrs. Ellya praised the well-structured integration of theory and fieldwork, noting its strong impact on student learning and engagement. The participants strongly encouraged the continuation of this mobility initiative.

This collaboration is not only bridging boundaries in education but also creating lasting opportunities for international learning and research. Not only does it serve as a springboard for future academic and research collaborations, but it also supports the UN Sustainable Development Goals: Quality Education (SDG 4), Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG 6), Life on Land (SDG 15), and Partnerships for the Goals (SDG 17).

UMT-GDOU Forge Ahead in Marine and Maritime Cooperation

By Syarifah Noormaisarah Tuan Besar, International Centre

In a move to strengthen bilateral ties in higher education and research, particularly in the fields of marine science and maritime technology, UMT recently hosted a visit from Guandong Ocean University (GDOU) of China.

The four-member delegation was led by Prof. Yang Zhou, General Secretary of GDOU, and included Prof. Chen Jinjun (Director of the International Affairs Office), Prof. Zheng Dianfeng (Secretary of the College of Coastal Agriculture), and Prof. Wang Xuefeng (Deputy Director of the Museum of Aquatic Organisms).

During the official meeting, UMT and GDOU reaffirmed their ongoing commitment to expanding the strategic partnership that has been established since 2020. Sharing a mutual niche in marine studies, GDOU sees great potential in deepening academic and research collaborations with UMT.

"We are excited to strengthen our partnership with UMT," Prof. Yang Zhou said. "This collaboration will bring great opportunities for both our institutions."

Several areas of future cooperation were identified, including:

- The implementation of a dual degree programme with Marine Technology and Shipbuilding Institute
- Postgraduate studies (Master's and PhD) for GDOU staff at UMT
- Inbound and outbound mobility programmes for students and staff
- Implementation of an Integrated PhD (i-PhD) in maritime fields
- Collaboration in Veterinary Science, Food Technology, and Animal Production
- Organisation of a Summer School focusing on culture and heritage
- Visiting Professor in Renewable Energy, Electronics and Instrumentation, Naval Architecture, and Maritime Technology
- Research and academic collaboration in Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- Opportunities for Master's studies in Coastal Zone Management
- Student Development Programme across disciplines
- Joint research initiatives in Marine Biotechnology involving aquatic organisms



UMT Vice-Chancellor Prof. Ts. Dr. Mohd Zamri Ibrahim described the GDOU's visit as a strong endorsement of UMT's expertise in marine disciplines and expressed optimism that this collaboration will lead to impactful regional advancements in maritime education and research.

"UMT warmly welcomes high-impact international collaborations such as this, which support our mission to be a global leader in marine and maritime knowledge," said Prof. Zamri said during the welcoming session.

This partnership is expected to significantly enhance academic development, student mobility, and collaborative research, while furthering UMT's internationalization agenda.

FEAST'25: Nurturing The Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow

By Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nor Fazliyana Mohtar, Centre for Entrepreneurship and Graduate Employability (UMT-GEM)

In support of the national entrepreneurship agenda, UMT has formed a strategic collaboration with the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) to organize the Future Entrepreneurs in Food Security Convention (FEAST).

FEAST is a national-level convention that brings together 1,000 student entrepreneurs from more than 25 Malaysian public institutions of higher learning. This initiative aims to enhance student engagement in entrepreneurship and empower them to become ideal entrepreneurs capable of creating employment opportunities within their communities.

Through FEAST, student entrepreneurs will gain hands-on experience in business management, marketing, and in leveraging technology, innovation, and digital tools to scale their ventures, ultimately culminating in the establishment of student-led Start-Ups by the end of the convention.

FEAST emphasizes the agenda of food security, one of UMT's areas of specialisation. UMT has been recognized by Talentbank with the Employer's Choice Award for 2024 and 2025 under the Food Science and Technology cluster.

Food security serves as the primary theme for students' business ideas, where they will innovate with the integration of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) elements.

Through a successful competitive pitching exercise, the Centre for Entrepreneurship and Graduate Employability (UMT-GEM) secured a grant of RM166,015 to support the implementation of this high-impact programme, which has been positioned as UMT's flagship high-impact entrepreneurial initiative for 2025. FEAST is one of the several initiatives by UMT-GEM. The centre has taken proactive steps to invigorate the student entrepreneurship ecosystem.

The FEAST Bootcamp was recently held at UMT to bring together participating students and mentors from all institutions in preparation for the main convention in November 2025.

Held from 17–20 April, the bootcamp provided participants with a series of business insights and essential elements crucial for the upcoming convention. The four-day session also featured expert mentorship sessions and networking opportunities with successful Malaysian entrepreneurs.



The bootcamp was well-received by the participants. Asran, a student from Universiti Malaysia Sabah, was grateful for the enriching experience.

"I truly enjoyed my stay at the bootcamp," he said. "I am hopeful that I can take all the knowledge and experience I gained from FEAST Bootcamp and apply it to develop and grow my business idea."

The next phase involves a six-month product development period, during which students will complete their projects at their respective institutions, culminating in a final project showcase in November.

As the entrepreneurial spirit continues to thrive among Malaysian youth, initiatives like FEAST play a vital role in shaping resilient, innovative, and business-savvy graduates. With continued support and collaboration between universities, industries, and government agencies, the seeds planted during FEAST are expected to grow into sustainable ventures that will meaningfully contribute to the nation's economy.

UMT Designates Kampung Menerong as MADANI Village, Aims to Boost Its Development

By Siti Nurhassira Abu Hassan,
Centre for Knowledge Transfer, Industry and Community Linkages

Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT) has taken another big step in strengthening its role in community development when it designated Kampung Menerong as a Kampung Angkat MADANI (KAM). The move was in response to one of the government's initiatives introduced by the Prime Minister in the 2024 Budget.

The announcement of Kampung Menerong being designated a MADANI Village under UMT's guidance was made during the Aidilfitri 2025 celebration at the Kampung Menerong Mosque.

This programme will be implemented using the Whole of Government approach to ensure rural residents have comprehensive access to basic facilities and development opportunities.

According to UMT Pro Vice-Chancellor (Industry, Community and Digital Network), Professor Ts. Dr. Noor Maizura Mohamad Noor, RM1 million has been allocated to upgrade infrastructure and implement various community development initiatives in the village.

"The relationship between UMT and Kampung Menerong has long been established through various knowledge-sharing projects. Among them is the Stingless Bee Farming Project, which has led to the production of various stingless bee honey-based products and the establishment of the Kelulut Gallery as an information hub and marketplace for local products," she explained.

UMT will provide support to ensure the success of the Community-Based Tourism (CBT) Little Amazon Project, which aims to highlight the natural beauty of Kampung Menerong to tourists. This community-driven tourism initiative will not only enhance the local economy sustainably but also promote the concept of ecotourism.

Additionally, village residents will be given the opportunity to participate in various university-organised exhibitions and carnivals, providing a direct platform for training and skills development. Through these activities, villagers can enhance their communication, confidence, and ability to market local products to a wider audience.



The entire programme is backed by the Dana Sejati MADANI fund, amounting to RM200,000, along with the Komuniti@UniMADANI initiative worth RM36,200. UMT students will be actively involved in the implementation of the projects, fostering values of volunteerism, leadership, and social responsibility among undergraduates.

Chairman of the Federal Village Development and Security Committee (JPKKP), Mr. Zainuddin Mohd, expressed the community's gratitude to UMT and the government.

"With UMT's support, we are confident that Kampung Menerong will continue to grow, not only economically but also in terms of education and the development of future generations in our village," he said.

This initiative aligns with the aspirations of Malaysia MADANI and has the potential to establish Kampung Menerong as a model of progressive rural community in the future.

Antarctica Fall-Winter Expedition: A Malaysian Scientist's Journey into the Ross Sea

By Assoc. Prof. Dr. Muhammad Hafiz Borkhanuddin,
Faculty of Marine Science and Environment

represented Malaysia in the Austral Fall-Winter Expedition to the Ross Sea, Antarctica.

Organised by the Polar Research Institute of China (PRIC), this expedition marked a milestone in Antarctic research.

It spanned 38 days (18 March–26 April 2025), taking us from Christchurch, New Zealand, to Hobart, Australia, aboard Xuelong 2, a 120-meter vessel capable of navigating 1.5 meters of solid ice.

We worked under extreme fall-winter conditions alongside 40 international scientists in oceanography, atmospheric science, biology, chemistry, and ecological modelling.

As a marine biologist specializing in molecular parasitology, I studied parasites in zooplankton, particularly their diversity, host specificity, and how environmental factors like temperature and salinity influence their distribution. Understanding these host-parasite relationships is key to assessing ecosystem health and predicting the impact of climate change on marine biodiversity.

This fall-winter expedition provided a rare opportunity to study Antarctic marine life outside of the typical summer research window. Our team collected vertically stratified zooplankton samples across key regions of the Ross Sea: the Islin Shelf, multiple polynya stations, and along a South-North transect through the Drygalski Trough, including its northern areas.

Salps and pteropods (*Limacina* sp.) were frequently observed as the dominant zooplankton in the upper water layers across most sampling stations. Krill larvae were found in high concentrations near the polynya, indicating this region may function as an important nursery ground during the fall-winter season. Small numbers of fish larvae and adult krill were occasionally detected in the samples.

What made this expedition unique was its timing. Most Antarctic research is conducted during the more accessible summer months. In contrast, our fall-winter mission aimed to understand how marine ecosystems adapt to extreme cold, prolonged darkness, and expanding sea ice. We investigated deep water convection, carbon export, and biological activity during a season when data is scarce but critical for understanding long-term climate and ocean changes.



Despite the unpredictable weather and freight delays, the collaborative spirit among the team ensured the mission's success. The level of preparedness, mutual support, and interdisciplinary synergy onboard reflected the best of scientific cooperation. I was inspired by how PRIC nurtures young scientific talent through hands-on mentoring and respectful teamwork, a model worth emulating in Malaysia.

This once-in-a-lifetime experience was possible through PRIC, National Antarctic Research Centre (NARC), and Yayasan Penyelidikan Antartika Sultan Mizan (YPASM) collaboration. Although polar research is still niche in Malaysia, our country has been active in Antarctic studies through NARC and YPASM. Their commitment to polar science continues to open doors for Malaysian researchers on the global stage.

I am grateful for the support from Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT), Prof. Siti Aisyah Alias (Universiti Malaya), and Dr. Wan Mohd Rauhan (UMT).

This expedition reinforced the importance of global cooperation and long-term commitment to scientific discovery. As Malaysia continues to contribute to polar research, more young scientists should pursue this frontier — because Antarctica, though remote, holds vital answers about our planet's future.

UMT, HOT FM Sign MoA to Launch Live Broadcast from Underwater

By Hasmadiana binti Che Mohamad Aasdik,
Centre for Research and Field Services

Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT) has made history recently when they signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with Media Prima Audio and its popular radio station, Hot FM, to broadcast a special radio show, *Bekpes Hot Tawan Laut*, live from underwater!

This partnership will also help strengthen ties between the academic world and the broadcasting industry.

UMT Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ir. Ts. Dr. Mohd Zamri Ibrahim, said this partnership is a major step towards creating a unique and exciting programme, *Bekpes Hot Tawan Laut*. This is not just a regular radio show but will set a record as Malaysia's first-ever underwater broadcast and have the potential to make history on a global scale as well.

This collaboration with Hot FM also provides UMT with a broad platform to showcase its expertise in marine and environmental sustainability sciences.

Beyond boosting UMT's presence at national and international levels, the initiative offers invaluable out-of-classroom experiences to UMT students, allowing them to participate in broadcast programmes and career interaction sessions with popular Hot FM hosts, including Khairy Jamaluddin (KJ), Fara Fauzana, Johan, and AG.

In his closing speech, Prof. Zamri thanked Media Prima Audio and Hot FM for their trust and support towards UMT. He also expressed his appreciation for the efforts of everyone involved, including teams from PPPL, HEPA, the Corporate Communications Centre, and Hot FM's technical and production crews for making the event a success.

With the signing of this MoA, UMT has embarked on a new chapter in its strategic partnership with the broadcasting industry. The university believes this will serve as the best platform to spread knowledge, raise public awareness, and improve its global reputation.

Over the years, UMT has had impressive achievements through its Diving Centre, overseen by the Research and Field Services Centre (PPPL). These accomplishments have established UMT as Malaysia's first university to receive ISO 9001:2015 certification for education management and scuba diving licensing.



Among these achievements are the establishment of Malaysia's first Underwater Gallery, the execution of the longest underwater human chain, the largest clownfish release, recognition from the *Malaysia Book of Records* for the biggest simultaneous scuba licensing programme, and the installation of Malaysia's first underwater RHB ATM.



Prof. Dr Shamsul Bahri Abd Razak obtained his bachelor's degree in Botany from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (1991) and pursued his Master's and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degrees in Plant Cell Biology at Durham University, United Kingdom (2000).

He began his career in 1991 as a Senior Research Officer at the Rubber Research Institute of Malaysia (RRIM) before joining UMT in 2012.

His current research focuses on the morphology, taxonomy, and behaviour of Indo-Malayan stingless bees and their economic contribution in agriculture and community well-being.

He has led several stingless bee expeditions across Malaysia, Cambodia, Indonesia, and Thailand to document bee specimens. These efforts led to the establishment of the Living Stingless Bee Museum (Repository) in Sekayu and at UMT's second campus in Bukit Kor, which houses 25 species of stingless bees from the Indo-Malayan clade. This museum is the only living stingless bee museum in the world.

To understand the role of stingless bees in agriculture, he has also conducted palynological studies, by analysing the pollen profiles collected by the bees. Through these studies, pollen profiles and calendars from various locations in Terengganu have been successfully documented.

Prof. Shamsul is also actively involved in community projects, particularly those involving single mothers and underprivileged groups, aiming to improve their socioeconomic status. A project integrating stingless bees into stevia plantations with a community of single mothers in Besut, Terengganu, has successfully produced premium stingless bee honey, scientifically proven to contain the bioactive compound stevioside. This innovative project has won multiple national-level awards. In addition, the integration of stingless bees in rubber plantations has also helped smallholders increase their income through honey production.

He has thus far published 150 scientific journals and eight academic books. Two of these books—*Indo-Malayan Stingless Bee Repository in Sekayu* (2018) and *Kelulutologi* (2022)—have won National Book Awards. *Kelulutologi* has also received several other publishing accolades, including the DPB Book Award (2024) and the MAPIM/KPT Award (2024). His contributions were further recognised with the National Academic Award in 2023.

Prof. Shamsul remains committed to empowering communities through various knowledge-based initiatives, positioning stingless bees as a catalyst for transformation in the agricultural sector and local community economy.



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IMPORTANT DATES

Early bird abstract due 31 st May 2025	Early bird registration 30 th June 2025	Notice of acceptance 14 th August 2025
Notice of acceptance 14 th June 2025		Normal abstract due 31 st July 2025
Full paper submission and registration due 31 st August 2025		

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IMPORTANT DATE

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

• 1st MAY, 2025

NOTICE OF ABSTRACT ACCEPTANCE

• 7th JUNE, 2025

PAYMENT DEADLINE

• 1st JULY, 2025

CONFERENCE DATE

• 5 - 7 AUGUST, 2025

FULLPAPER SUBMISSION DEADLINE

• 31st October, 2025

LOCATION OF CONFERENCE



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More Information



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5 - 7 AUGUST 2025

The International Conference on Ocean Engineering Technology (ICOET) has been organized by Faculty of Ocean Engineering Technology, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT). Prospect authors are welcoming to submit an abstract of the research paper as to share the valuable knowledge and current information. The accepted abstract will be notified to present the research.



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