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FRIM to mainstream commercialisation activities

KUALA LUMPUR: The Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM) is committed to mainstreaming technology commercialisation activities as one of its main sources of revenue through products and technologies developed by its scientists.

Its Innovation and Commercialisation Division (ICD) director Mahmudin Saleh said FRIM's Research and Development (R&D) projects successfully produced potential outputs in various forms such as products, processes, formulations, designs and plant varieties.

He said that all the institute's intellectual property was developed by FRIM scientists using local bio-resources which are suitable for the climatic environment and applications as well as meet industry standards and market requirements.

"Overall, FRIM generates around RM7 million a year through commercialisation and services, but it is not enough to cover R&D costs as well as the technology development stage in the next application or commercial phase," he said when met by Bernama.

He added that the return from commercialisation has a lot of room to improve to increase FRIM's revenue from year to year.

He said the commercialisation of FRIM's range of products and technologies across wood-based; natural products; forestry biotechnology as well as biodiversity management and tropical forestry, involves various upstream and downstream sectors which have yet to be fully explored.

Apart from that, Mahmudin said FRIM's legacy of R&D excellence, some of which span almost 100 years, is now known as a national and regional reference centre including the Herbarium which has over 350,000 plant specimens and the Insectarium (over 600,000 insect specimens).

There are several other key references including Fungarium with a collection of over 3,000 fungal specimens, Xylarium (over 10,000 wood specimens), Seeds (over 1,000,000) and Plant Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) (over 22,000).

Also, references of interest include bioprospects of medicinal and herbal plant species, plant extracts, essential oils, pure chemical compounds, microbial isolates and 32 collections of chemical markers of herbal species of national importance.

At the same time, he said that the network of more than 30 laboratories and facilities at FRIM also provides services covering more than 200 types of test scopes certified and accredited by local and international accreditation agencies, through various layers of industry in the upstream and downstream sectors of the country's tropical forestry.

"FRIM has 35 areas of expertise and is ready to provide expert consulting services to customers covering the entire upstream and downstream chain of tropical forestry and including information and communication technology (ICT) applications," he said. — Bernama