



كمنترين قمبراؤونن
KEMENTERIAN PEMBANGUNAN
BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

Keynote Address

**YANG BERTHORMAT
DATO SERI SETIA AWANG HAJI MUHAMMAD JUANDA
BIN HAJI ABDUL RASHID
MINISTER OF DEVELOPMENT
BRUNEI DARUSSALAM**

**OPENING CEREMONY
ENVIRONMENT WEEK
“ROAD TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT #BeTheSolution”**

CHANCELLOR HALL, UNIVERSITI BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

**MONDAY,
7 ZULHIJAH 1444 / 26 JUNE 2023
8.30 am**

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

Alhamdulillah Rabbil Alamin Wassalatu Wassalamu 'Ala Asyrafil Anbiyaie Wal
Mursalin Sayyidina Muhammadin Wa 'Ala Alihi Wasahbihi Ajmain.

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh and a very good morning.

Yang Mulia, Permanent Secretaries and Deputy Permanent Secretaries,
Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

1. First and foremost, allow me to take this opportunity to congratulate and express my utmost appreciation to the members of the working committee of the Environment Week for their invaluable efforts and time spent in organising this important awareness event. I am certain that the next 3 days are in the good hands of the team, Insya Allah.

2. Reflecting on the theme “Road Towards a Sustainable Environment #BeTheSolution”, all of us are already aware of the biggest environmental issues the world is facing today:

- a) Firstly, **plastic**, in many ways can contribute positively to our day-to-day lives. However, it cannot be denied that certain practices of production, use and disposal of plastics are polluting ecosystems, creating risks for human health and destabilizing the climate. Indeed, data has shown that oceans have suffered greatly, where around 75 to 199 million tonnes of plastic are currently found in them.

- b) Secondly, **biodiversity**, or the variety of all living things on our planet, has been declining at an alarming rate in recent years. This is mainly due to human activities causing land use changes, pollution and climate change. According to a 2021 UN report, around 1 million animal and plant species are now threatened with extinction, many within decades, more than ever before in human history.

- c) And thirdly, while **natural resources** are essential for the world's economy and the functioning society, its rapid depletion is highly concerning. Consumption habits, population growth, industrialization, climate change and pollution are some of the main causes of natural resource depletion.

3. The overarching solution to all these environmental problems is what we are all familiar with: **SUSTAINABILITY**. The classic definition of sustainable development states: "development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". In the context of achieving a clean, safe, healthy and sustainable environment, it is crucial to maintain an ecological balance in our planet's natural environment and conserve natural resources to support the wellbeing of current future generations.

4. Alhamdulillah, for years, Brunei Darussalam has incorporated safeguarding the environment and ensuring its sustainability into its development agenda. Many measures, initiatives, polices and regulations have been implemented and put in place for this purpose, including among others:

- a) The enactment of the **Environmental Protection and Management Act, Chapter 240**. As its name suggests, this Act has the sole purpose of protecting and properly managing the environment with the objective for environmental pollution to be prevented or at least minimised.

Since its entry into force in 2016, more and more industries and new developments have incorporated environmental consideration into their planning and taken mitigative and preventive measures against pollution, such as conducting Environmental Impact Assessments and devising Environmental Management and Monitoring Plans.

- b) **Efforts to reduce the use of single-use plastics** are also increasing. From government initiatives such as the No Plastic Bag Every day and Plastic Bottle Free Initiative, to NGOs-led campaigns such Zero Waste Brunei and various recycling drives, as well as the increasing availability of reusables by the F&B and other private vendors.
- c) And in 2020, the **Brunei Darussalam National Climate Change Policy (BNCCP)** was formulated to pave the way towards a low carbon, climate-resilient and sustainable nation. Among others, it has set a target of planting 500,000 new trees by 2035, increasing total share of renewable energy to at least 30% in the power mix by 2035, and introducing carbon pricing.

5. With this in mind, allow me to suggest three key ways to ensure our efforts in sustaining the environment are in itself sustainable through the Three Malay P's (3MPs):

- a) The first P is **Pengetahuan** (Knowledge). Be knowledgeable of what impact a development may have on the environment as this would increase your awareness on the importance of the need to protect it. Be knowledgeable of the relevant science and data, as this would help you in making informed decisions. Be knowledgeable of our local tendencies and surroundings, and in the context of Brunei Darussalam, our national principles, aspirations and priorities.

- b) The second P is ***Pimpin*** (Lead). Achieving sustainability is not a one-man job. It requires a team, and a team requires a leader. Leadership requires us to act, particularly in making difficult decisions and having the courage to do what is right, in a timely manner.
- c) And finally, the third P is ***Penyertaan*** (Participation). We may be aware and knowledgeable of the importance of safeguarding the environment and the science behind it, and we may have the best policies, initiatives and programmes in place, but without the participation and collective efforts of all stakeholders, we would not be able to yield the desirable outcome and achieve our goal holistically.

6. Today and tomorrow will see environmental experts from the government, private sector, academia, NGOs and businesses convening to share their knowledge and exchange ideas on current environmental affairs and sustainability. We will also see exhibitions showcasing a range of green initiatives and services, providing opportunities for all of us to gain knowledge and to interact with each other. Therefore, let me wish everyone involved: participants, speakers, presenters, moderators and exhibitors as well as the working committee, a meaningful and fruitful time ahead.

7. To conclude my remarks, I humbly urge all of us to move from words to action, to (hashtag#) Be the solution, as it is our shared responsibility to do everything we can to protect the environment that has no voice.

Thank you. Wabillahi Taufiq Walhidayah, Wassamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.