## 4<sup>th</sup> Scientific Committee Meeting of Borneo Studies Network 26<sup>th</sup> August 2020

UBD hosted the 4<sup>th</sup> Borneo Studies Network (BSN) Scientific Committee Meeting (SCM) on the 26<sup>th</sup> August 2020 via the Microsoft Teams virtual platform. In attendance were members from Universitas Borneo Tarakan (UBT), Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD), Universitas Islam Kalimantan (UNISKA), Universitas Lambung Mangkurat (ULM), Universitas Mulawarman (UNMUL), Universitas Palangkaraya (UPR), Universitas Tanjungpura (UNTAN), Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS), Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS), STAKATN & Institute Mata Enggang (IME). The meeting was chaired by Dr Joyce Teo Siew Yean, Assistant Vice Chancellor (Global Affairs) and co-chaired by Dk Dr Noor Hasharina Pg Hj Hassan (Head of BSN Secretariat Office, UBD).

The meeting agenda included member institutions' update on BSN Research and Academic Collaboration and Activities which included the progress of the five research groups. The 5 Research Groups are:

- 1. Borneo Biodiversity,
- 2. Borneo Cultural Heritage & Ethnic Groups,
- 3. Borneo Renewable Energy & Advanced Material (REAM),
- 4. Borneo Sustainable Community Transformation, and
- 5. Borneo Economy and Banking.

The Renewable Energy & Advanced Material (REAM) Research Group has successfully organised the first BSN International Webinar on Biomass-based Materials and Energy: Prospects & Challenges in Borneo on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2020 amid the Covid-19 situation via the Zoom virtual platform. The speakers from Brunei Darussalam and Kalimantan were Dr Rosnah Abdullah (UBD), Dr Sunardi (ULM), Made Dirgantara (UPR) and Sri Rezeki (UNTAN) with about 330 participants in attendance. The REAM research continues well despite researchers from different institutions are not able to conduct field trips and field visits due to the pandemic situation. Nevertheless, some of the member universities were able to continue research at its own institution and share their findings and data to be analysed together via regular online discussions. The SCM enabled

the BSN members to discuss ways to overcome issues identified related to research to further strengthen and sustain the research groups especially during the pandemic time.

Members also agreed to postpone in-person student activities to 2021. The meeting also discussed extensively on how the network can adapt to the current changing situation and new norm due to the pandemic. Furthermore, the meeting also highlighted the need to reconsider how student activities and programmes can be conducted via online mode. Members unanimously agreed to organise the 3<sup>rd</sup> BSN Young Researchers Workshop (online) in early November 2020 that would involve the coming together of graduate students from the 12 BSN institutions to learn and enrich their research and analytical skills. The 3<sup>rd</sup> BSN Young Researchers Workshop will be facilitated by UPR in collaboration with other BSN members.

Members were also briefed on the proposal to organise the BSN Conference which is to be held in mid-2021 at UBD. The conference aims at increasing and making visible the different research and publication on Borneo particularly by researchers from the Borneo Island. It explores various themes that is related to the BSN Research Groups and Borneo's relationship with countries and regions beyond the island including Southeast Asia, Asia and the world. The two days conference will also be opened to other researchers and participants outside the consortium but have an interest on the island. The conference will be held back-to-back with the 4<sup>th</sup> BSN Governing Council Meeting and the 4<sup>th</sup> BSN Young Researchers Workshop. The 4th SCM meeting adjourned with the 12 universities agreed to continuously support the BSN's commitment.



