

PRESS RELEASE

UiTM RESEARCH COLLABORATION TO OFFER ECOLOGICAL- LOW-COST SOLUTION TO TREAT ORGANIC WASTE IN LANDFILLS

SHAH ALAM, 14 JULY 2022 – Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) have collaborated with industry research partners to develop a solution to treat organic waste in landfills. This environmentally-friendly and low-cost solution uses insects like the Black Soldier Fly to recycle organic waste in landfills, reuse old landfills and also treat wastewater.

The collaboration was revealed at the exchange of Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) between UiTM and Berjaya EnviroPark Sdn Bhd as well as Entomo Agroindustrial from Spain. UiTM was represented by its Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Datuk Ts. Dr Hajah Roziah Mohd Janor, while Berjaya EnviroParks Sdn Bhd was represented by Senior Managing Director, Peter Wong and Entomo Agroindustrial was represented by its Director of Science, Juan Cortés. The event was held at UiTM Canseleri Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin today.

Lead researcher, Assoc. Prof. Dr Heo Chong Chin, and Research Fellow, Dr. Tania Ivorra from UiTM Faculty of Medicine, secured a research grant under the Malaysia-Spain Innovation Program (MySIP) 2020 for their 2-year project entitled 'Innovative, Ecological, and Low Cost Solutions for Organic Waste and Wastewater Treatment'. MySIP is an international matching grant for research projects by Malaysian public universities, funded by the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE), Malaysian Industry-Government Group for High Technology (MIGHT) and Center for Industrial Technology Development, Spain (CTDI).

This collaborative research uses black soldier flies (*Hermetia Illucens*) to recycle organic waste in landfills, and subsequently use the extracted chitosan from black soldier flies in sewage treatment plants. This research project is designed to achieve various goals in K-economy and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Expected to commence in August 2022, through this project UiTM will conduct data analysis on organic waste segregation component undertaken by Berjaya EnviroPark. Entomo Agroindustrial (Spain) will design an automated cargo container suited to tropical conditions in the treatment of organic waste using black soldier flies. This device will be shipped all the way from Spain and placed at the Bukit Tagar Sanitary Landfill.

Solid waste generated in Malaysia is estimated to be 38,427 metric tonnes per day in 2021 with more than 80% ending up in landfills. This is expected to reach 14 million metric tonnes in 2022, equivalent to be filling the PETRONAS Twin Towers 52 times. Furthermore 50% of the solid waste generated are of organic origin which could be converted into better usage. A novel solution is urgently needed to recycle these organic wastes and one such bioconversion agent is insects.

Prof. Datuk Roziah expressed her hope that this innovative industry-academic project can improve current waste management operations of facilities to be more sustainable and ecologically friendly, as well as to improve waste management regulations in the country.

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ABOUT UiTM

Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) is the largest comprehensive university in Malaysia providing innovative education with state-of-the-art infrastructure and technology within reach at its 34 campuses, 31 faculties and centres of excellence all over the country.

UiTM offers over 500 academic programmes at Foundation, Pre-Diploma, Diploma, Bachelor's, Master's, and PhD level, as well as Professional Programmes. It continues to expand access to higher education, playing its role in nation building by unleashing potentials, shaping the future.

Amongst its long lines of accolades, UiTM is ranked 105th in the QS Asia University Rankings 2022 and placed 651–701 in the QS World University Rankings 2022. The Hospitality and Leisure Management subject is placed at 42nd best in the world, and overall 14 UiTM subjects are ranked in the QS World University Rankings by Subject. In 2021, UiTM was in the 101-200th position in THE Impact Rankings 2021 and ranked 150th in the UI GreenMetric (UIGM) World University Rankings 2021. In 2020, UiTM won gold for the Best International Print-ads at the QS APPLE Creative Awards.

With over 900,000 alumni in science, technology, humanities and entrepreneurship, UiTM offers opportunities to shape leaders at national, industry and global levels and is well poised to become a globally renowned university by 2025.

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**Senior Director
Communication Department
Universiti Teknologi MARA
Email: azida767@uitm.edu.my
Tel: [+6014.841.1191](tel:+6014.841.1191)**