

## The 13th International Sago Symposium Report

The 13th International Sago Symposium: Partnership in Cooperation and Management of Sago Palm was held from 2nd October to 6th October 2017 at Riverside Majestic Hotel in Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia. Universiti Teknologi Mara Sarawak (UiTM) hosted the symposium. Eight members of the Society of Sago Palm Studies (SSPS) joined the technical committee of the symposium and four members of SSPS participated in the sessions in Kuching and the excursion in Mukah.

Mr. Datuk Amar Douglas Uggah Embas, Deputy Chief Minister and Minister of Modernization of Agriculture, Native Land and Regional Development, Sarawak delivered Chief Minister Mr. Datuk Patinggi Abang Johari Tun's text of speech and declared the opening of the presentation programs for two days. Dr. Yoshinori Yamamoto (Prof. Emeritus, Kochi University), former Vice President of SPSS, Prof. Hiroshi Ehara (Nagoya University), President of SPSS, and Prof. Yukio Toyoda (Rikkyo University), Vice President of SPSS contributed for the keynote lecture, plenary and oral sessions, respectively. Dr. Yamamoto proposed to establish an international research center for sago palm studies in his talk. In each session, various new achievements in agronomic and social scientific studies, and innovative studies to utilize agricultural residues and by-products of sago starch production were introduced. Based on such academic reports, the participants have discussed lively in each study field.

In the closing ceremony on the 2nd day of the main programs, deputy Minister of Plantation and Industries and Commodities Datuk Datu Nasrun Datu Mansur read the speech of Minister Datuk Seri Mah Siew Keong to support for the establishment of the International Sago Research Centre to conduct various researches on sago palm, sago starch and its utilization. On the following day, the participants flew to Sibu and went on one day excursion to a sago producing site and a traditional village in Mukah. We shared information about the current situation of sago palm production and advanced starch processing in Sarawak. We learned the traditional culture and life-style there as well.

(Hiroshi Ehara)

