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## Re-vitalizing the Coconut Industry in Malaysia - Policies and Strategies for Implementation

RAJ R. D' NATHAN

*Kementerian Pertanian dan Industri Asas Tani, Bahagian Industri Tanaman, Temakan dan Perikanan (ITTP, MoA-ABI), Aras 10 & 11, Wisma Tani, No. 28, Persiaran Perdana, Persint 4, 62624 Putrajaya, Malaysia*

*The paper covers an overview on the coconut industry in Malaysia in terms of the planted area, production, the industry aspects and exports of products. The challenges faced by the industry are also highlighted and these include: (i) Aging palms; (ii) Low utilization of modern management system and technology, (iii) Declining planted areas, and (iv) Insufficient hybrid seedlings. To meet these challenges, the government has put in place a Coconut Industry Road-Map (2009 - 2015) to provide funds for various short and long term programs and for seedlings production to cater for the various replanting and re-habilitation schemes. The government had allocated a total of about RM71.5 million for the coconut industry based on the Ninth Malaysia Plan, Mid-Term Review and the Economic stimulus package. Based on the short term program (2009-2010), the replanting scheme involves 3,800 ha with MATAG and aromatic (pandan) varieties and the rehabilitation scheme covered 4,000 ha funding assistance. Based on the long term program, the replanting scheme entailed 10,000 ha and the rehabilitation scheme 47,2000 ha. Seedling production is focused on the production of MATAG and aromatic varieties in various locations driven by the Department of Agriculture and the private sector. Besides these activities, the Ministry has also administratively strengthened itself at the regional level as the current focal point for Malaysia in the Asian Pacific Coconut Community (APCC).*

*The expected impact on the industry would be reflected in terms of increased income from US\$100/month to US\$300/month; increased productivity in terms of yield from an average 3,500 nuts/ha/year (Malayan Tall) to 20,000 nuts/ha/year from MATAG and rehabilitation of Malayan Tall is expected to give yields of 7,000 nuts/ha/year from current yield of 3,500 nuts/ha/year. It is anticipated that the yield increase from these programs will meet 66% of the local demand requirement. The future activities, especially in terms of hybrid seedling development, virgin coconut oil, and other research and development activities that underpin the progress of the coconut sector are also addressed.*

**Keywords:** *Coconut, Malaysia challenges, policies, strategies*

