

Timber exports decline 5.7 per cent from January to August

October 19, 2018, Friday

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Kok (left) and Low (second right) are seen listening to ABB Malaysia Sdn Bhd vice president Laurent Maillefer (right) while visiting the 'Towards A Better Tomorrow' conference's exhibition. Kok says with Malaysia's commitment in maintaining its forest cover at above 50 per cent, the timber industry must remain sustainable in the long-term. — Bernama photo

KUALA LUMPUR: The total export of timber and timber products declined 5.7 per cent to RM14.6 billion from January to August this year compared to the same period of 2017 due to weather factors.

Malaysian Timber Council (MTC) chairman Datuk Low Kian Chuan said although there was a decrease, the council was confident of realising its yearly export target by year-end.

"So far, our main revenue generators, namely wooden furniture, plywood, sawn timber, fibreboard and builders' joinery and carpentry are doing well," he said on the sidelines of the first Malaysian Timber Conference here yesterday.

Meanwhile, Primary Industries Minister Teresa Kok said with Malaysia's commitment in maintaining its forest cover at above 50 per cent, the timber industry must remain sustainable in the long-term.

"Timber-based manufacturers must identify and overcome common pitfalls associated with growth so that their business can continue to thrive.

"We also need to face up to challenges by employing innovative, sustainable and market-driven solutions," she added,

The timber industry contributed about 1.7 per cent to the national Gross Domestic Product with earnings of RM23.2 billion in 2017.

Kok said Malaysian timber manufacturers were widely respected for producing top quality products, hence it was important to maintain the country's position in the global market.

Themed, 'Towards A Better Tomorrow', the one-day conference will analyse global economic outlooks, timber demand and supply worldwide, the need for certification to prove that the timber was extracted in a sustainable and legal manner, embracing technology in relation to Industry 4.0 and commercialisation of research findings. — Bernama