

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY FRAMEWORK

National Vision Policy (2001-2010)

The National Vision Policy aims to establish a united, progressive and prosperous Bangsa Malaysia. It endeavours to build a resilient and competitive nation, and equitable society with the overriding objective of National Unity. It has seven critical thrusts, as follows:

- Building a resilient nation;
- Promoting an equitable society;
- Sustaining high economic growth;
- Enhancing competitiveness;
- Developing a knowledge-based economy;
- Strengthening human resource development; and
- Pursuing environmentally sustainable development.

The National Vision Policy provides the overriding objectives for the various national initiatives over the period. The National Vision Policy is operationalised through the Third Outline Perspective Plan.

Third Outline Perspective Plan

The strategic thrusts of the Third Outline Perspective Plan (OPP3) are as follows:

- Strengthening the manufacturing sector;
- Restructuring and modernising the agriculture sector to be dynamic and competitive;
- Developing the services sector as the main engine of growth;
- Accelerating the development of S&T capacity and capability to further increase competitiveness and efficiency;
- Increasing the usage of ICT in all sectors to increase productivity; and
- Increasing coverage as well as improving access and quality of basic infrastructure and social services to increase efficiency and quality of life.

The strategic thrusts of the OPP3 serve as the guiding framework for the various Malaysia Plans during the period, including the Eighth Malaysia Plan.

AGRICULTURAL POLICY FRAMEWORK

During the OPP3 period, it can be seen that one of the strategic thrusts outlined was to restructure and modernise the agriculture sector to be dynamic and competitive.

Transforming Agriculture into a modern, dynamic and competitive sector

Measures identified to achieve this objective during the Eighth Malaysia Plan period are as follows:

- Expanding food production to reduce import and increasing export;
- Promoting private sector participation in medium- and large-scale commercial food production through permanent food production zone;
- Intensifying aquaculture development, both inland and open sea;
- Intensifying land use, promoting cost-and labour-saving technology ;
- Intensifying R&D and commercialization of R&D findings;
- Consolidating oil palm hectarage;
- Utilising natural resources, particularly forestry on a sustainable basis and promoting linkages with other sectors;
- Developing activities and crops with commercial potential including specialty natural products, other non-timber forest products, biotechnology products, floriculture and ornamental fish;
- Strengthening human resource development by promoting new skills such as those relat-ed to ICT and new technologies; and
- Enhancing income of farmers and smallholders through improvement in support services and facilities.

These measures serve to reinforce the various initiatives outlined under the Third National Agricultural Policy.

The Third National Agricultural Policy

The Third National Agricultural Policy has identified the following challenges faced by the nation:

- Modernising the smallholder sector and ensuring sustainable agricultural and forestry sector;
- Ensuring sufficiency in the supply of food with high quality at reasonable price;
- Reducing labour utilisation in agricultural activities;
- Increasing private-sector participation, and maximising the utilisation of limited resources, such as land and water;
- Enhancing the competitiveness of the agricultural sector;
- Supporting industrialisation and foreign investment;
- Reducing rubber, rice, coconut and cocoa hectarages. These areas will be replanted with agro-forestry crops, oil palm and fruit trees and vegetables; and
- New agricultural land development will only be carried out in Sabah and Sarawak.

The Third National Agricultural Policy (NAP3) has also identified the specialty natural products industry as a new emerging industry for the further development of agriculture. Malaysia intends to be a major producer in the international herbal industry by 2010. Herbal-based products are identified as new products and future industry group, categorized under the specialty natural products. This product category refers to natural products based on botanicals (herbs, medicinal plants, spices and aromatic plants) and aquatic plants and animals.

As further illustrated by the product category, botanicals also include their extracts, exudates and essential oils which are utilised in a wide range of products including food and beverages, pharmaceuticals, herbal/traditional medicine, health-care, health-enhancing products, dietary supplements, flavours and fragrances, cosmetics and toiletries, and various consumer goods such as dyes, detergents, biopesticides and other industrial chemicals.