



## The 8th Asian Pacific Phycological Forum 2017 (APPF 2017), 8 to 13 October 2017, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

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The 8th Asian Pacific Phycological Forum 2017 (APPF 2017) with the theme “Algae: New perspectives towards a progressive and sustainable living” was successfully organized by the Institute of Ocean and Earth Sciences (IOES), University of Malaya (UM), under the auspices of the Asian Pacific Phycological Association (APPA). The primary aim of APPF was to facilitate the exchange of the latest scientific discoveries and breakthroughs in algal research. In addition, the conference provided the platform for the establishment of networks among the Asian Pacific scientists to work together on the use of algae for the benefit of mankind. There will be opportunities for networking and collaboration, not only among phycologists but also with the entrepreneurs from the algal industries. APPA was established in 1996 to serve as a forum for the exchange of information related to phycology and to promote cooperation among phycologists in the Asia-Pacific region, as well as networking with the global phycological societies. The APPF is held once every three years and is one of the most influential phycological forums in the Asia-Pacific region, and forms a vital part of the APPA’s activities in facilitating the exchange of current research, enabling scientists, technologists, and people interested in phycology to gather and share their latest research findings. This conference provides an excellent opportunity for young phycologists to meet and be inspired by the leaders in phycological research as well as entrepreneurs from the algal industries. APPF has been successfully held previously in six countries: Australia (1996); Hong Kong, China (1999); Japan (2002); Thailand (2005); New Zealand (2008); South Korea (2011); and China (2014).

APPF2017 was held at the Pullman Hotel, Bangsar, Kuala Lumpur, from 8 to 13 October 2017. More than 300 participants in the field of phycology from 20 countries, including researchers and postgraduate students from Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, Vietnam, the Philippines, China, Australia, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, India, Bangladesh, New Zealand, Spain, Sri Lanka, and the UK, gathered in Kuala Lumpur for the 8th APPF 2017 (Figs. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12). Interested participants had the opportunity to go on a one-day field trip to Cape Rachado, Port Dickson, during the pre-conference excursion. Two training workshops were held, namely, the “4<sup>th</sup> Southeast Asian Seaweed Taxonomy Workshop (SEASTax IV),” and the “Understanding Algal Responses to Environmental Stimuli through Molecular Biology and Photophysiology” workshop, as part of the efforts to enhance capacity building in these areas of phycology in the region.

There were 82 posters and 140 oral papers, including one Keynote and 4 Plenary Lectures presented in this conference. The presentations covered a wide range of topics, including algal diversity and cultivation of algae and algal products, especially biopharmaceuticals and biofuels. Professor Siew Moi Phang, in her keynote lecture, described the development of phycological research in Malaysia and addressed the importance and contributions of algal research in finding solutions to today’s world of energy and food crises amid a changing climate. The plenary speakers, Prof. John Beardall, Prof. Qiang Hu, Prof. Hiroshi Kawai, and Prof. You-Jin Jeon, spoke on algae and the environment, algal biomass for biofuels, algal systematics and phylogenetics, and therapeutic applications of algae, respectively. In terms of the distribution of papers according to topics, the highest number of papers presented were on algal taxonomy, phylogeny, and diversity, followed by algal natural products, bioactive compounds, and bio-based materials. This trend is similar to that shown in the previous APPF. This further shows that there is increasing interest in applied phycology and in the potential for commercialization.

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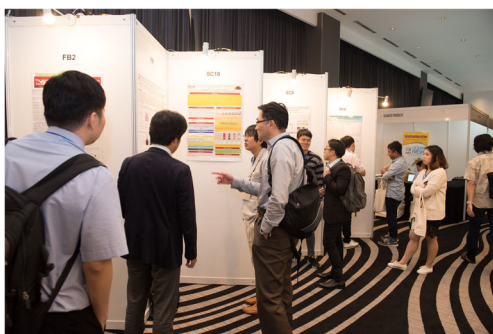
**Fig. 1** Group photo of the participants, invited speakers, and members of the local organizing committee



**Fig. 2** Opening ceremony officiated by Associate Professor Dr. Ramzah Dambul, Deputy Secretary General (Science, Technology and Innovation), Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, Malaysia



**Fig. 4** One of the oral presentation session



**Fig. 3** One of the poster viewing session



**Fig. 5** Winners of the Outstanding Oral Presentation Award





Fig. 6 Winners of the Outstanding Poster Presentation Award



Fig. 10 Photo of (from left to right) Professors Yusho Aruga (first president of APPA), In Kyu Lee (second president of APPA), Sung Min Boo (current president of APPA), Siew Moi Phang (third president of APPA), and Phaik Eem Lim (organizing chair of APPF 2017)



Fig. 7 Winners of the Young Women Phycologist Award sponsored by L'Oreal



Fig. 11 Group photo taken during the Students' Networking Session



Fig. 8 Participants enjoying themselves on stage with traditional dancing on Gala Night



Fig. 9 Group photo of the APPA council members



Fig. 12 Photo of (from left to right) Professors Phaik Eem Lim (organizing chair of APPF 2017), Juliet Brodie, Christine Maggs, Gill Malin, and Siew Moi Phang (advisor of the local organizing committee of APPF 2017)