

BRUNEI AGRO TECHNOLOGY PARK (BATP)



Figure 1: Overview of the Agro Technology Park

The Government of Brunei Darussalam has identified the need to provide support for innovative technology-oriented businesses in the agro sectors of the economy. This strategy is linked to the desire to develop a more diversified, competitive and sustainable economy, helping Brunei to move away from an over-reliance on oil and gas production. Moreover the Department of Agriculture and Agrifood's vision includes the need to shift their focus towards promoting agribusiness, and creating a sustainable and competitive sector addressing quality and safety and ensuring food security for Brunei Darussalam.

As a key element of its economic diversification strategy the Government of Brunei is developing an international standard Agro Technology Park. The park was officially named as Brunei Agro Technology Park (BATP) by His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Negara Brunei Darussalam, during the opening of Agriculture and Agrifood Expo 2009.

The BATP vision highlights building strong relations between the academic and business circles at both on national and international level, ensuring an investor friendly atmosphere to secure global investors representing top technology in order to promote modern agriculture innovation, healthy and safe agricultural products and introduce green tourism and export oriented agriculture to Brunei.

The development is situated at Kg. Tungku, Mukim Gadong where an extensive site has already been earmarked for this flagship development which will be the centrepiece of a

wider range of food sector projects for the area. The park will provide local and international food sector companies with a state of the art platform to support their activities in Brunei and the region. In addition to manufacturing the BATP will accommodate research and innovative technology applications to support diversification in agriculture, fisheries, forestry and related processing. A particular emphasis of the park will be its role in supporting the development of the Brunei Halal Brand, a Ministry of Industry and Primary Resources initiative, implemented through the Department of Agriculture and Agrifood, which is already opening up new markets to Brunei manufacturers.

The existence of the Brunei Halal Brand is due to the sense of responsibility of 'Fardhu Kifayah' and also the escalating number of Muslim consumers throughout the world. The key feature of the Brunei Halal Brand is to certify for quality and purity. It is also will become the zenith collaboration factor for the BATP establishment. It is hoped that through BATP achievement growth in agricultural output in the country will be estimated B\$2.7 billion by 2023.

In developing detailed proposals for the BATP particular stress was laid on identifying niche markets and products where Brunei can realistically expect to compete with other food production centres. This revealed the importance of a strong Halal brand in developing the food sector in Brunei as well as a range of opportunities in the pharmaceutical and cosmetics sector where Brunei's unique biosphere reserve can play a key role.

The conceptual master plan for the BATP was prepared by a reputable consultant from United Kingdom, SQW Limited, one of the world's leading economic development consultancies. SQW has a continuing role in ensuring the success of the project and is at present preparing detailed recommendation for a Food Processing Incubators to encourage the development of local food manufacturing on the BATP site. There are three phases for the feasibility study on BATP firstly on design which focuses on the potential market for the BATP that includes a review of agro technology trends, a survey of firms and an assessment of Brunei's infrastructure, secondly on conceptual master plan, which focuses on the physical characteristics of the proposed BATP that includes design principles and uses of the park plus formulating terms of reference for appointment of master planning experts and finally on implementation that focuses on covering the commercial framework, management arrangements, recommendations on marketing and promotion.

An outline master plan has been produced, together with design guidelines which will support the creation of a high quality, well landscaped, development with distinct zones for

different uses. Total development costs are estimated at US\$400m, and the amount is divided between the Brunei Government and the private investors.

The total land available for at Kampong Tungku, Mukim Gadong is approximately 500 hectares. The site has been earmarked by the Government for research and commercialisation in agriculture, fisheries, horticulture, food and forest products, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics and aromatics, testing and certification, business incubation and innovation, production, distribution, logistics and a primary produce park. Moreover it will be the centre for education and training, specialist education and training and agriculture training and innovation centre.

The B ATP is easily accessible whereby it is situated nearby the capital and is only 15 km from the Brunei International Airport, 30 km from the port and served by major highways leading to the airport and seaport.

An integrated development the site will contain a number of attractive and exciting facilities for locals and visitors; such as in health and therapeutic spa with associated retail and hotel facilities, magnificent botanic gardens that display the natural flora of Borneo and landscaped parklands which incorporates flora and live animals and visitor activities such as walking trails and demonstration farms. Tourism development in the Sultanate is another key Government strategy and in the future, B ATP will become one of the main places of interest to visit for the locals and also most particularly tourists from overseas wishing to experience the unique ecology of Brunei even though their visit may be brief.

To be developed on a site of some 500 hectares the B ATP bounds the Tungku Highway ensuring that this key initiative will be both highly accessible and highly visible. To be built in a series of phases in line with emerging demand the B ATP will also contain a range of commercial and tourism related elements including a major new shopping mall, hotels and a Botanic Garden developed in collaboration with a globally renowned British institution. When completed it is anticipated that the B ATP will generate up to 9,000 new jobs for the country, many of them highly skilled.

An area of approximately 50 hectares in the southern portion of the B ATP site is identified as Phase one development. The Phase 1 includes a mix of business uses, government laboratories, the Food Development Centre, Halal Science Centre, Food Processing Incubators and the first phase of the Botanic Gardens. An area adjacent to the site will be retained for the purpose of experimental and high-technology farming. The infrastructure development consultancy for Phase 1 was given to a local consultant Sepakat Setia

Perunding (B) Sendirian Berhad (SSP) and the implementation of the project is under the supervision of the Ministry of Development. Already considerable interest has been shown by local and international companies in the BATP.

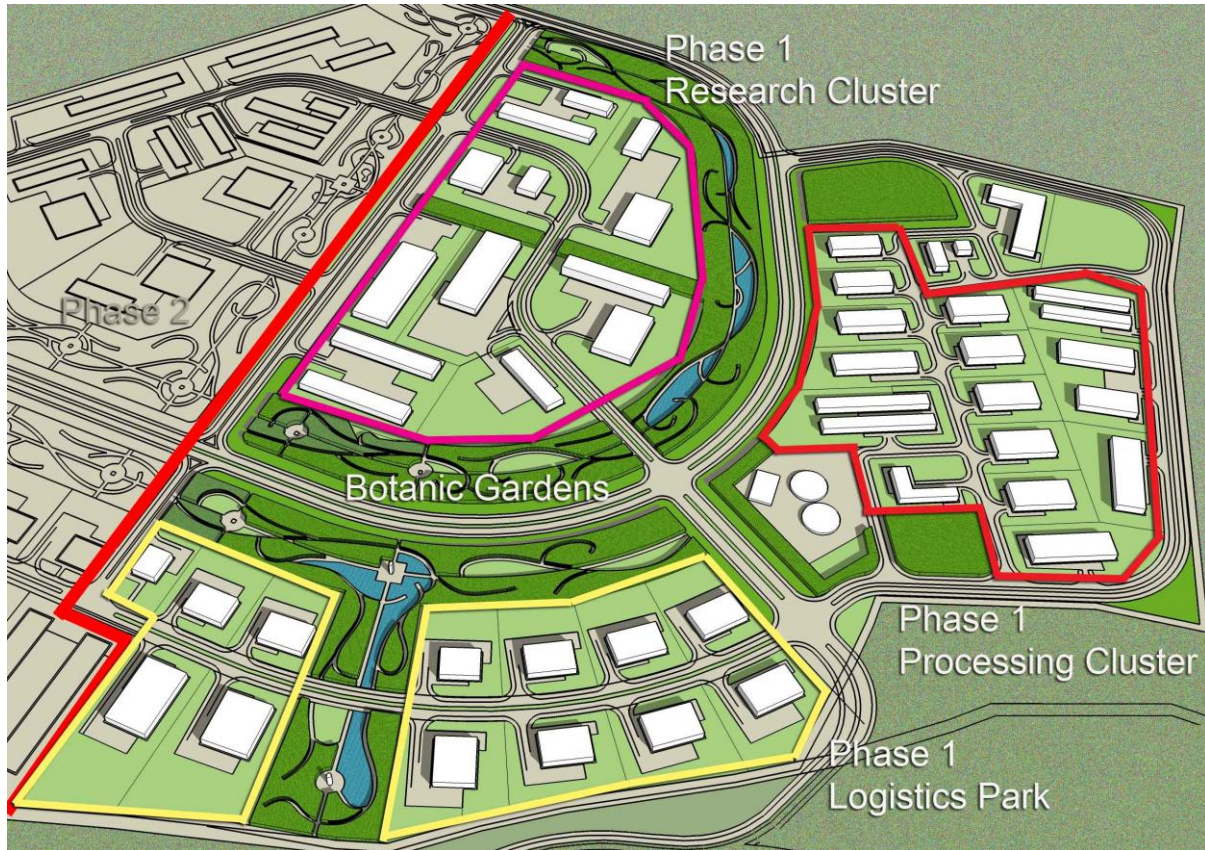


Figure 2: ATP Phase 1