

Evolva to develop Malaysia's natural products

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Mr Murali Muthuswamy Panchapagesa, managing director, Evolva Holdings said that the firm is partnering with two Malaysian organizations, to develop sustainable production methods for Malaysian natural products.

Mr Panchapagesa said that Evolva will collaborate with Universiti Malaysia Pahang (UMP) and establish a scientific center of excellence for manufacturing natural products as part of the Flavor and Fragrance Cluster in the state of Pahang. The team would focus on developing natural compounds using Evolva's yeast fermentation production platform.

With the partnership, Evolva Holdings expects to establish a link between science and business. The abundant natural resources of Malaysia can be developed into high purity ingredients, which then could be used in cosmetics, pharmaceuticals and other industries Mr Murali added further.

The first program to be focused on is the production of agarwood fragrances via yeast fermentation. This is to help Malaysians widen the use of agarwood, a highly priced product, used by incense and perfume makers worldwide. Agarwood has recently fallen into the endangered species list updated by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

UMP vice chancellor, Prof. Nasir Ibrahim said that the partnership was a interesting venture and that the scientific facilities and growing talent in UMP would be instrumental in adding value to the research.

Mr Neil Goldsmith, chief executive officer, Evolva, said, "We are looking at generating positive economic and environmental benefits for all, and are delighted to participate in this venture in Malaysia. We are keen on working with young talented scientists in UMP and culminating our research into something of benefit for the society."