

Malaysia to explain palm oil stance in mission to Belgium in May

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KUALA LUMPUR, March 23 (Bernama) -- Primary Industries Minister Teresa Kok will lead a mission to Belgium in May to explain the country's stance on the European Union's (EU) decision to phase out the use of palm oil in biofuels in the trading bloc.

The mission will also object to the EU draft delegated act that classifies palm oil as "high risk" feedstock for greenhouse gas emissions.

She said this was among the more aggressive approaches taken by the government to state its position and eliminate any form of discrimination towards Malaysia.

"All this time, government agencies do not have enough funds to promote palm oil. We have not been so successful in fending off allegations thrown by those coached by anti-palm oil non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

"Therefore, I will go to Europe in May to meet with leaders who have an anti-palm oil sentiment and seek to explain further to them on the matter," she told Bernama when met at the Pakatan Harapan government's welfare briefing programme in Bukit Jalil today.

The draft delegated act will be reviewed by the European Parliament for two months starting March 13. Kok's visit in May is to oppose the act, which is seen as discriminatory to developing economies and the livelihood of smallholders.

Recently, Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Malaysia would consider

retaliatory action against European exports if the EU proceeded to implement the delegated act.

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