JOHOR BAHARU: Johor will expand the use of effective microorganisms (EM) for environmental protection, says State Housing, Local Government, Public Works and Public Utilities Committee Chairman, Datuk Ahmad Zahri Jamil.

He said local governments have been directed to use microbe technology in wastewater treatment, landscaping, cleaning of river water and care of air quality and for landfill.

"For example, flowering plants in Jalan Tun Razak and Jalan Skudai are given organic fertilisers mixed with EM to make them look more beautiful and healthy.

"Johor Premium Outlet in Kulaijaya is no longer facing problem of flies when the entire 1km area is sprayed with EM," he said after witnessing the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Johor Biotechnology & Biodiversity Corporation (J-Bio Tech) and the Faculty of Bioscience and Engineering, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) to organise BIO Johor 2012 here yesterday.

J-Bio Tech was represented by chief executive officer Datuk Dr Harris Salleh while UTM was represented by Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) Prof Ir Dr Azraai Mohd Kassim.

Zahri said the state government has allocated RM1mil for the use of EM in environmental protection in which the results have been very satisfactory.

On BIO Johor 2012, Harris said more than 100 working papers have been received including from Britain, India, Iran, Latvia and Pakistan to be presented at the conference.

Microbes industry players are also invited to hold an exhibition during the conference with the theme "Harnessing Microbes For A Sustainable Future" to introduce their products to the public.

-Bernama