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TAJUK ARTIKEL	UNLOCKING NEW PATHWAYS		
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Unlocking new pathways



One for the album: (First row from left) Yasmin, Wong, Chang, Chan and Wang posing with attendees of the inaugural Asia ESG Summit 2025. Looking on is Ng (second row, fifth from left) — AZMAN GHANI/The Star

Time for Asia to balance economic growth with green ambition

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PETALING JAYA: Asia must strike a balance between economic development and green ambition, moving towards growth that is inclusive and enduring, whereby sustainability isn't just a destination but a sign of progress.

Science, Technology and Innovation Minister (Mosti) Chang Lih Kang said the global sustainability agenda is accelerating, as environmental standards are becoming more stringent.

"Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) reporting is becoming mandatory, and investors are demanding greater transparency and accountability."

"While these trends raise the bar for all organisations, they also present Asia with a significant opportunity," he said.

"By embedding sustainability at the very heart of business strategy, we can unlock new pathways into the green economy. To navigate the path to net-zero while sustaining economic vibrancy, we must be strategic, inclusive and grounded in local realities."

Chang said this in his keynote address at the Asia ESG Summit 2025 titled "Navigating the Path to Net-Zero: Overcoming Resource Limitations and Rising Environmental Standards in Asia to Balance Global Sustainability Targets with Local Economic Realities."

To achieve this, Chang said that global targets must be contextualised locally, followed by empowering science, technology and innovation (STI) to unlock opportunities in renewable energy, green materials and digital innovation.

Additionally, he said public-private partnerships must be strengthened through policies and direction set by the governments, and the agility and creativity of the private sector.

He added that the ministry continues to collaborate with investors, research institutions and enterprises across Asean to implement solutions.

Chang said the transition must be just and inclusive to ensure



All smiles: (From left) Shivakumar, Ng, Wong, Chang, Chan, Wang, Wiberg and Yasmin in a group photo at the summit. — SIA HONG KIAU/The Star

sustainability uplifts both rural entrepreneurs and skilled professionals.

"No Malaysian should be left behind as we build a knowledge-based green economy. Malaysia also remains fully aligned with Asean's shared agenda to advance sustainability and innovation across the region."

"Through platforms such as the Asia ESG Summit, we exchange experiences, accelerate regional initiatives and strengthen cooperation in clean energy, climate resilience and circular economy systems," he said.

Meanwhile, Star Media Group (SMG) group chief executive officer Chan Seng Fatt said hosting the first Asia ESG Summit reflects the trust placed in the company to spearhead this regional initiative and set the tone for meaningful dialogue and collaboration on sustainability.

"For us, it's not just about bringing together policymakers, corporate leaders and changemakers under one roof — it's about cultivating an ecosystem that sparks partnerships, innovation and long-term impact."

"The summit is a timely extension of the Asean Summit 2025 theme of 'Inclusivity and Sustainability', which is in line with our ESG principles and agenda."

"So, the timing is just perfect for us to engage with industry captains to further push for its execu-

tion and implementation," he said.

Sime Darby Property chief marketing and sales officer Datuk Lai Shu Wei, in a statement, said that sustainability is not a parallel agenda; it is central to how they plan, decide and operate.

"As a developer, our role is about shaping resilient communities that coexist with nature while advancing social and economic well-being. Our partnership in the Asia ESG Positive Impact Consortium (A-EPIC) initiatives, such as the Asia ESG Summit, reflects this commitment."

"It creates a platform to exchange ideas and accelerate practical ESG adoption across industries. Guided by our 'Purpose to be a Value Multiplier' for people, businesses, economies, and the planet, we focus on actions that are measurable and accountable," he said.

On how media powerhouses should actively lead the ESG conversation in Indonesia and across the region, KG Media sustainability vice-president Wisnu Nugroho said sustainability isn't an abstract agenda; it's daily life.

"Coastal villages facing rising seas, farmers reading erratic seasons, cities breathing hazardous air. Media powerhouses like KG Media hold trust, reach and convening power."

"That makes us uniquely responsible to translate ESG jargon into culture, rooted in

mutual cooperation, culture and intergenerational duty while using data journalism to expose greenwashing and elevate real solutions," he said.

Philippine Daily Inquirer chief operating officer Rudyard Arbolado spoke about their strong legacy of "Balanced News, Fearless Views" being translated into the ESG space.

"This is realised through rigorous, data-based reporting. We go beyond surface-level narratives by examining both the real challenges and tangible achievements of corporate sustainability efforts while fiercely holding institutions accountable for transparency and their social and environmental impact," he said.

Among the highlights yesterday was the panel discussion on "Leadership Dialogue (Navigating the Trans-Border Economic Climate Collaboration: Lessons from Asia's Leaders)."

It featured the Philippines Ambassador to Malaysia Maria Angela A. Ponce, Australian High Commission regional climate counsellor Ashley Brosnan and United Nations Global Compact Network Malaysia & Brunei executive director Faroze Nadar.

The session was moderated by the founder and chief executive officer of Stellar SparX International and vice-chair of Malaysia New Zealand Chamber of Commerce Esther Yap.

At the event, Sime Darby

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Property general manager for sustainability Dr Yasmin Rasyid presented a talk titled "Fostering Resilient Communities: The Sime Darby Property Approach."

The Asia ESG Summit 2025 themed, "Future-Ready Asia: Driving Sustainable Impact", offers opportunities to engage with thought leaders and decision-makers shaping the region's sustainable future.

Organised by SMG, with Sime Darby Property as the Urban Biodiversity Partner, it is held from Nov 5 to 7 at Sunway Resort Hotel.

It is also the inaugural summit of the A-EPIC — an effort led by SMG, KG Media and the Inquirer Group of Companies — reflecting the shared commitment of media leaders to champion sustainable progress across the region.

Also present at the summit yesterday were SMG chairman Tan Sri Wong Foon Meng, chief operating officer Lydia Wang, chief content officer Datin Paduka Esther Ng, Singapore Deputy High Commissioner Shivakumar Nair and Sweden Ambassador Lars Niklas Wiberg.

WATCH THE VIDEO



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