

EDITOR'S NOTE

A lot has happened since the first issue of the monthly *ESG* pullout in April. Conversations about environmental, social and governance (ESG) reporting, ratings and criteria dominated the corporate scene in Malaysia, with every other conference having at least one session dedicated to this topic.

There is a clear drive by people to understand what ESG is, whether it is because they are forced to by regulators, investors or consumers or because it is something they believe in.

It is interesting to observe that the push to disseminate information about ESG in Malaysia is not just through a top-down approach. Members of corporate Malaysia, including directors, CEOs and heads of sustainability, have volunteered their time and effort through organisations to help others along this journey. They are also using this opportunity to gather feedback and engage with the government on related matters.

On the other hand, individuals in other fields, such as scientists, economists and lawyers, have been contributing to the ESG movement by providing much-needed research, resources and even legal opinions that shed light on why focusing on ESG matters to companies' bottom lines.

Activists and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) also play a role in calling out companies that are not doing as they say they are and holding them accountable. All this reflects the role that society must play in the bigger scheme of things.

In our annual *ESG* magazine and *The Edge Malaysia ESG Awards 2022* special report last month, the *ESG* team highlighted the corporations in Malaysia that were either raising the bar or outperforming their peers.

In this final issue of the year, we recognise the individuals across a wide spectrum of industries and organisations who

have contributed to the adoption of ESG in Malaysia.

For instance, we interviewed Dr Zelina Zaiton Ibrahim, a former associate professor at the Department of Environment in Universiti Putra Malaysia and contributor to the United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's report. These reports, which summarise the latest scientific findings on climate change, are the key sources of information on the state of the natural world. (See Page 4.)

We also interviewed Janet Looi, partner and co-head of the ESG Practice Group at Skrine, for her work in writing a legal opinion on a director's duties to consider climate change risks and opportunities. Her co-writer, Tan Sri Zarinah Anwar, former chairman of the Securities Commission Malaysia, is featured for her work on founding the 30% Club Malaysia, which increases the representation of women on boards and management of public-listed companies.

All this progress on ESG, however, is not without hiccups. Many stones have been thrown at it by critics, whether it is greenwashing accusations or that they believe it is diverting attention from profit-making.

We address this in our cover story, in which we answer the question: Will ESG still be relevant? How will these challenges change the trajectory of ESG adoption across the world? We also explore the origins of ESG and what to expect in 2023.

All in all, 2022 has been an exciting year for the *ESG* team, and we hope our content has been helpful to our readers. We wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. ■

Tan Zhai Yun

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