



PRESS RELEASE

MORE THAN 300 PARTICIPANTS FROM ASEAN MEMBER STATES AND HONG KONG, CHINA BENEFITED FROM THE SHARING OF BEST PRACTICES ON ESG

KUALA LUMPUR, 27 June 2024 – SME Corp. Malaysia, an agency under the Ministry of Entrepreneur and Cooperatives Development (MECD), spearheaded a pivotal event, the ASEAN Hong Kong, China (AHKC) SMEs Going ESG Policy Dialogue and Workshop 2024. This event, which drew over 300 participants from local SMEs, ASEAN Member States, and Hong Kong, China, served as a platform for knowledge exchange, fostering awareness of Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) practices, and sharing best practices on sustainability among ASEAN countries. The opening ceremony, held in conjunction with the commemoration of International MSME Day 2024, was graced by YB Datuk Ewon Benedick, Minister of Entrepreneur and Cooperatives Development, at the Sunway Putra Hotel, Kuala Lumpur today.

The one-and-a-half-day event centred around the theme "Empowering SME Sustainability". This event, attended by government officials, ESG experts, SME owners, representatives from financial institutions, and academia, aimed to educate participants on the importance of ESG practices, development of ESG strategy, as well as measurement and monitoring of ESG performance. The dialogue session focused on developing policy recommendations to promote the adoption of ESG practices among SMEs, sharing stories of SMEs pioneering the ESG journey, and highlighting efforts of the government and relevant agencies in the region. The sharing session specifically provided participants with insights into best practices, challenges, and recommendations from prominent speakers.

YB Datuk Ewon Benedick, during his keynote speech, said, "ASEAN is committed to promoting sustainability in the region through various initiatives. For Malaysia, encouraging SMEs to embrace ESG practices is a path towards reinforcing our commitment to the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and The Paris Agreement under The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Accelerating ESG adoption is also among the initiatives planned under the Mid-Term Review of the Twelfth Malaysian Plan 2021 - 2025".

“SME Corp. Malaysia is highly committed to the continuous growth and development of resilient SMEs. We have identified key focus areas as catalysts to accelerate SMEs capacity and capability with ESG as a key component”, stated YBhg. Tan Sri Datuk Seri Panglima Bernard Giluk Dompok, Chairman of SME Corp. Malaysia, in his welcoming remarks.

Meanwhile, Mr. Rizal bin Dato’ Nainy, the Chief Executive Officer of SME Corp. Malaysia, shared his thoughts, "Being ESG-ready is a huge advantage for SMEs to access local and global markets. Hence, SME Corp. Malaysia has launched the ESG Quick Guide for MSMEs to facilitate the adoption of ESG practices among MSMEs, which can be downloaded for free upon taking the ESG assessment on our website. Given its importance, SME Corp. Malaysia has also taken the initiative to recognise the MSMEs that actively integrate ESG practices into the company's business and strategy with a new special award under the Enterprise 50 Programme this year, the Best E50 Award for ESG Practice".

Apart from the dialogue and sharing sessions, participants also had the opportunity to participate in the workshop sessions, which provided practical and applicable knowledge in developing a firm's business sustainability plan and guided them in preparing the ESG reporting. The workshop aims to enhance participants' understanding and knowledge of ESG practices and to encourage them to take the first step on their ESG journey.

Also present during the ASEAN Hong Kong, China (AHKC) SMEs Going ESG Policy Dialogue and Workshop 2024 opening ceremony were YBhg. Dato' Sri Suriani binti Dato' Ahmad, Secretary General of MECD, YBhg. Tan Sri Datuk Seri Panglima Bernard Giluk Dompok, Chairman of SME Corp. Malaysia, Miss Libera Cheng Ching-mon, Director-General of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, Jakarta and Mr. Rizal bin Dato’ Nainy, CEO of SME Corp. Malaysia. This event was supported by the ASEAN – Hong Kong, China Free Trade Agreement Economic and Technical Cooperation (AHKCFTA ECOTECH) Work Programme.

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About SME Corp. Malaysia

SME Corporation Malaysia (SME Corp. Malaysia) is the central coordinating agency (CCA) under the Ministry of Entrepreneur and Cooperatives Development (MECD) that coordinates the implementation of development programmes for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) across all related Ministries and agencies. It acts as the central point of reference for research and data dissemination on MSMEs, as well as provides business advisory services for MSMEs throughout the country.

Beginning on 2 May 1996, SME Corp. Malaysia was formerly known as the Small and Medium Industry Development Corporation (SMIDEC), which aims to develop the small and medium industries that are capable and resilient to be able to compete in the global market. In 2007, SMIDEC was mandated by the National SME Development Council chaired by the YAB Prime Minister to formulate comprehensive policies and strategies for SMEs and drive SME programmes across Ministries and Agencies. Accordingly, SMIDEC has been officially rebranded as SME Corp. Malaysia on 2 October 2009.

SME CORPORATION MALAYSIA (SME CORP. MALAYSIA)

Level 6, Block B, Platinum Sentral

Jalan Stesen Sentral 2

Kuala Lumpur Sentral

50470 Kuala Lumpur

Tel : 03-9213 0077

Fax : 03-2775 6001

E-mail : info@smecorp.gov.my

Website : www.smecorp.gov.my

Director

Corporate Communications Division

(Attn. : Pn. Suraini Mohamad Sulaiman)

Tel : 03-2775 6290

Email : suraini@smecorp.gov.my