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## The Edge Malaysia ESG Awards 2023 celebrates 48 winners

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MAMG Global Environment MYR (Maybank Asset Management Sdn Bhd) received Gold for the Best Overall award under the funds category. (From left) The Edge Malaysia ESG editor Tan Zhai Yun, The Edge Malaysia managing editor Anna Taing, Maybank Asset Management Sdn Bhd CEO Ahmad Muzni Mohamad, The Edge Media Group publisher and group CEO Datuk Ho Kay Tat, BMW Group financial services Malaysia CEO Matthias Schlesiger, and Morningstar Asia head of business development Shihan Abeyguna. (Photo by Low Yen Yeing/The Ed)



**KUALA LUMPUR (Nov 6):** The success of Malaysia's sustainability goals will depend significantly on effective public-private partnerships. This was the key message of The Edge Malaysia ESG Awards 2023, an annual event recognising leaders among public-listed companies (PLCs) and asset management firms in the environment, social and governance (ESG) space in Malaysia.

"If the two important players, which are the government and private sectors, do not act together, then we do not stand a chance in saving our planet," stressed Natural Resources, Environment, and Climate Change Minister Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad, who was the guest of honour at the second edition of the annual award ceremony on Monday.

A total of 63 awards were presented to 48 companies during the gala dinner attended by more than 380 people at Hilton Kuala Lumpur.

The biggest winners at the event include Press Metal Aluminium Holdings Bhd, which clinched two gold awards in the equities category for industrial products and services and the green transition awards, and Hektar Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT), which bagged two gold awards under REITs and the outstanding ESG and dividend returns category.

In the asset management space, the biggest winner is BIMB Investment Management Bhd, which took home three gold and three silver awards.



Datuk Ho Kay Tat, publisher and group CEO of The Edge Media Group, said that despite the economic uncertainties, net inflows into ESG funds were still positive up to the second quarter this year. Additionally, ESG continues to be an integral strategy for public limited companies (PLCs).

"From these trends, it is clear that more corporates and funds are responding to requirements by their investors, global supply chain partners and customers to be ESG-compliant and to improve their sustainability reporting," he said.

Nik Nazmi shared the government's ongoing effort in balancing sustainability goals and subsidy programmes to ensure that the economically disadvantaged do not bear the brunt of the transition.

"One of the major challenges that we face for sustainability is the blanket subsidies. As I'm sure BMW recognises our journey to embrace electric vehicles will be made easier if there's less or no petrol subsidies," he said.

The transition towards targeted subsidies needs to happen not just to meet the country's sustainability ambitions but to also ensure that the interests of underprivileged communities are safeguarded, said Nik Nazmi.

"This year alone, out of a budget of RM388 billion, subsidies in total were estimated to be RM64 billion. But now, it's estimated to be RM81 billion, which is a huge chunk of our budget. So, we need to start this transition, and we want to make it fair to ensure that those who need it continue to be assisted, but it's certainly unfair for the top richest households to be getting most of the subsidies, whether we are talking about fuel or electricity," he said.

"But at the same time, what we're doing to balance this out is to enable easier access to solar power as an incentive for consumers to reduce the use of conventional energy, which is also covered by subsidies."

The Edge Malaysia ESG Awards 2023 winners		
<b>EQUITIES CATEGORY</b> <b>By Sector</b> <b>Construction</b> Gold: George Kent (M) Bhd Silver: MCB Bhd <b>Consumer products and services</b> Silver: Keme Bhd <b>Energy</b> Gold: Deleum Bhd Silver: Bumi Armada Bhd <b>Financial services</b> Gold: Hong Leong Bank Bhd Silver: FHB Bank Bhd <b>Healthcare</b> Gold: Duspherna Biotech Bhd Silver: Hartataga Holdings Bhd <b>Industrial products and services</b> Gold: Press Metal Aluminium Holdings Bhd Silver: Sunway Bhd <b>Plantation</b> Gold: KSI Corporation Bhd Silver: Genting Plantations Bhd <b>Property</b> Gold: KSI Properties Group Bhd Silver: Mah Sing Group Bhd <b>REITs</b> Gold: Heitar REIT Silver: Sunway REIT <b>Technology</b> Gold: Malaysian Pacific Industries Bhd Silver: Inari Amertron Bhd <b>Telco &amp; media</b> Gold: CelcomDigi Bhd Silver: Axiata Group Bhd <b>Transport &amp; logistics</b> Gold: Westports Holdings Bhd Silver: MSC Bhd	<b>Utilities</b> Gold: YTL Corp Bhd Gold: Rasthli Utilities Bhd <b>Most Improved Performance Over 3 Years</b> Gold: Ultra Corp Bhd <b>Market cap over RM5 billion</b> Gold: Ultra Corp Bhd <b>Market cap between RM800 million and RMS billion</b> Gold: Fricoren Corporation Bhd Silver: GHL Systems Bhd <b>Market cap between RM300 million and RM600 million</b> Gold: Dezhom Holdings Bhd Silver: LBS Bina Group Bhd <b>Market cap less than RM300 million</b> Gold: Malaysia Steel Works (M) Bhd Silver: George Kent (Malaysia) Bhd <b>Most Consistent Performer Over 5 Years</b> Gold: Hengqum Refining Company Bhd Silver: Malaysian Resources Corp Bhd <b>Outstanding ESG and Dividend Return</b> Gold: Heitar Real Estate Investment Trust Silver: Malayan Banking Bhd <b>Green Transition</b> Gold: Press Metal Aluminium Holdings Bhd Silver: Malaysia Marine and Heavy Engineering Holdings Bhd Silver: Hibiscus Petroleum Bhd <b>FUNDS CATEGORY</b> <b>Best Overall Winner</b> Gold: MAMG Global Environment Fund MYR Silver: BMO-Arabesque Global Shariah-ESG AI Technology Fund RM	<b>Best Fund Based On Asset Class</b> <b>Fixed Income</b> Gold: ANAM ESG SGD Bond Fund (formerly known as Affin iWeang SGD Bond Fund) Silver: United Sustainable Series – Global Credit Fund RMBH <b>Equity</b> Silver: BMO-Arabesque Global Shariah-ESG AI Technology Fund RM <b>Allocation</b> Gold: FMBESG Multi-Asset Fund RM Hedged Silver: Makmur myWafaf Fund RM <b>Best E, S And G</b> <b>E</b> Gold: Makmur myWafaf Fund RM Silver: Public e-Carbon Efficient Fund <b>S</b> Gold: Makmur myWafaf Fund RM Silver: ASEAN Equity Fund <b>G</b> Gold: Makmur myWafaf Fund RM Silver: ASEAN Equity Fund <b>Best Impact</b> <b>Climate action</b> Gold: Principal Asia Pacific Renewables Fund MYRH Silver: Sustainable Series – Climate Tech Fund RM <b>Basic needs</b> Gold: Manulife Global Aqua Fund A RMH Silver: Sustainable Series – Positive Change Fund MYRH <b>Resource security</b> Gold: Manulife Global Aqua Fund A RMH Silver: RHB Climate Change Solutions Fund RM Hedged <b>Best Low Carbon Award</b> Gold: Public e-Carbon Efficient Fund Silver: Maybank Global Sustainable Technology Fund USD

Additionally, Nik Nazmi reiterated the government's intentions in rolling out the National Energy Transition Roadmap (NETR) in August, which outlined Malaysia's strategy to reduce carbon emissions within the energy sector.

"Our goal is to systematically increase the contribution of RE (renewable energy) in our Total Primary Energy Supply from the current 4% to 23% by 2050. The successful execution of NETR is projected to significantly boost Malaysia's gross domestic product from RM25 billion in 2023 to RM220 billion by 2050. This is also expected to generate 310,000 jobs," he said.

## A wider universe for equities

This year, 356 PLCs were appraised by FTSE Russell and therefore eligible to be considered for the awards under the equities category, compared to 296 last year.

Under the funds category, the number of funds designated as sustainable and responsible investment funds in Malaysia increased from 52 last year to 69, as at August.

Moreover, two new awards were added this year in the equities category to recognise PLCs that not only do well in ESG but also give consistent dividends to shareholders.

"It is important to strike the right balance to meet the needs of the various stakeholders," said Ho.

The other new category rewarded PLCs in high-emission sectors that have been doing more to be part of the "green transition".

"The transition to net zero cannot happen overnight. For some industries, it may take years, so this award is to acknowledge those who have started the journey in a small but meaningful way," added Ho.

The Edge Malaysia ESG Awards 2023 is organised in partnership with Bursa Malaysia and FTSE Russell, with Morningstar as the knowledge partner for the funds category and Deloitte as the auditor. UOB Malaysia is the main partner again for this year's awards, with Astro Awani as the official broadcast partner. A new partner for the awards this year is BMW Group Malaysia, which has introduced electric vehicles with a focus on sustainability and circularity.