

NEWSLETTER

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APPGM-SDG



SUSTAINING MERSING: BALANCING NATURAL TREASURES AND COMMUNITY SOCIOECONOMICS

YB Tuan Haji Muhammad Islahuddin Abas
Member of Parliament for Mersing

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SUSTAINING MERSING: BALANCING NATURAL TREASURES AND COMMUNITY SOCIOECONOMICS

YB Tuan Haji Muhammad Islahuddin Abas
(Member of Parliament for Mersing)

As the Member of Parliament for Mersing, every time I look at the map of our district, which spans 14% of the total area of Johor, I am constantly reminded of a profound responsibility. Covering an area of over 705,000 acres from Endau to Tenggara, Mersing is far more than just a geographical boundary. It is a unique natural paradise, encompassing precious lowland ecosystems, permanent forest reserves spanning over 111,000 hectares, and a breathtaking chain of islands that have been gazetted as a Marine Park since 1994.

However, behind Mersing's status as an international tourism hub and the fishing core of the Eastern Region of Johor, we are facing urgent ecological challenges. Global climate change and the post-pandemic impact are no longer just theories on paper; they are realities threatening the economic chain and safety of our 78,195 residents. **My vision is clear: we must preserve Mersing's environment, but this sustainability must not sacrifice the livelihoods of the local community.**



Threatened Marine and Coastal Ecosystems

The primary economic sector of Mersing is fisheries, followed closely by tourism and agriculture. During an issue mapping visit conducted with APPGM-SDG in 2023, the Tunku Abdul Jalil Conservation Centre (TAJCC) reported the destruction of seagrass and coral reefs due to global warming and climate change since December 2022. Even more dishearteningly, we are witnessing threats to the survival of turtle eggs due to predator disturbances, illegal poaching activities, and the dumping of plastic waste left behind by tourists on the beaches.

This pollution issue not only tarnishes Mersing's image but also damages the ecosystem that serves as the livelihood for our fishing community. In the Teluk Buih Fishing Village, fishermen report that their catches have plummeted by up to 50 percent. Aside from unpredictable weather and sea conditions, the lack of fish breeding grounds is also a major factor impacting their yields. This situation is further exacerbated by the encroachment of illegal trawler boats and foreign fishermen (from Vietnam, Indonesia, and Myanmar) violating our territorial waters.

The Flood Issue: A Clear Signal of Climate Change

On land, the manifestation of climate change arrives in the form of worsening annual monsoon floods. Residents in Kampung Air Papan and Tenglu Laut frequently fall victim to river overflows into their village areas. A field assessment session with the APPGM-SDG revealed that the root cause of this overflow is damaged water gate infrastructure and drainage systems that have left unrepaired due to funding constraints faced by the responsible authorities at the time. The Kampung Orang Asli Peta settlement in Endau Rompin is also not spared from experiencing these flood issues.

In the short term, we require a more thorough preparation of flood relief supplies, such as boats, mattresses, and medicines at Temporary Evacuation Centres (PPS). However, for the long term, my focus is to push for the construction of a comprehensive flood mitigation system and to upgrade existing PPS into safer Permanent Evacuation Centres (PPK) to fulfill SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and SDG 13 (Climate Action).

Empowering Inland Communities and Traditional Sectors

Environmental sustainability is incomplete without equitable development for the communities closest to nature, specifically the Orang Asli Peta community on the fringes of the Endau-Rompin National Park. They face wildlife conflicts involving elephants and wild boars that destroy their crops, as well as damaged access roads, and thus urgently require our attention.



Kampung Peta, an Orang Asli village in Endau Park, Rompin, experiences flooding when the river water rises.



Soil erosion and landslides caused by prolonged heavy rain.

To ensure that no one is left behind (SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities), the Mersing Parliamentary Office is fully committed to forging strategic partnerships (SDG 17) with agencies such as FAMA, RISDA, FELDA, JAKOA, and the Mersing District Council. We want to introduce technology-driven solutions, such as modern agricultural skills courses for youth (TVET) to cultivate modern farmers who can maximise the yield of Mersing's bris soil, thereby guaranteeing food security (SDG 2: Zero Hunger).

Moving Forward

Mersing requires a paradigm shift. The forest reserve boundaries that make up 55% of the restricted development areas in our district are not a limitation, but rather a high-value carbon and ecotourism asset. My dream is to see Mersing thrive as a district where modern technology helps our farmers and fishermen increase their income, while our forest and marine treasures remain meticulously preserved for generations to come. Insya-Allah, by working hand-in-hand with all residents of Mersing, we can build a green, prosperous, and sustainable future.



THE RIVER THAT WAS ONCE A DRAIN

What a disappearing riverbank in Kulim tells us about development, risk and governance

In May 2026, following concerns surfaced through APPGM-SDG's earlier issue-mapping exercise in the Padang Serai parliamentary constituency, I visited Kulim, Kedah, to examine what appeared to be a local erosion problem. What we found was something larger. The river system was exposing the limits of how we plan development, manage risk and compensate people when the ground itself begins to move.

Older residents remember Sungai Kélang Lama as a *parit gila*, a modest monsoon stream that carried away excess rain. Nobody feared it. Today, the channel has widened, deepened and shifted across land that families still legally own.

One landowner once held 18,000 square feet. About 8,000 square feet have disappeared. At an estimated RM25 per square foot, roughly RM200,000 in family wealth has been lost without a sale, acquisition or compensation.

The river simply moved in.

This is why the case matters. Erosion is usually treated as a technical problem at the water's edge. In Kulim, it is a development problem moving through a watershed.



Exposed sandy bank of Sg Kélang Lama

Sungai Kélang Lama is a tributary of Sungai Kulim, a steep and sediment-active tropical basin. From the western slopes of Gunung Bongsu, the river system loses about 480 metres of elevation within its first nine kilometres. Heavy rain can therefore become fast runoff with considerable erosive force.



How Sg. Kélang Lama now cuts across private lots before linking to the Sg. Kulim system.

But rainfall is only part of the story.

Kulim has changed dramatically. The development of the Kulim Hi-Tech Park from the 1990s helped establish an important industrial growth pole. Yet as plantation and estate land gave way to roofs, roads and factories, the hydrological behaviour of the landscape also changed. Land that once absorbed more rainfall increasingly shed water more quickly.

The point is not to blame one industrial park, one culvert or one sand-mining operation. Rivers rarely change because of a single villain. They respond to the balance of water, sediment, slope and resistance. Alter runoff, disturb sediment movement, constrain channels, then add repeated floods, and a river adjusts.

Research on Sungai Kulim found that river cross-sections had changed following major floods between 1991 and 2003, with modelling indicating bed degradation along a 14.4-kilometre stretch. When a riverbed lowers, banks can become steeper and unstable. Floodwater may recede in days. The physical damage can continue for years.

That is the deeper warning from Sungai Kélang Lama. We still plan as though land is fixed and water is temporary. In Kulim, the land is what has moved.

At Kampung Sungai Badak, residents say eight families face immediate danger. The bank has moved to within about three metres of a village road and nearby water and electricity infrastructure. Gabions installed to hold the bank have been displaced or tipped over. Erosion threatens homes, infrastructure and basic services alongside the soil itself.



FGD with Local Society & Community Representative in Padang Serai Constituency

Yet our institutions encounter this moving risk through fixed mandates.

The Department of Irrigation and Drainage sees hydraulic risk. The land office sees titles and river reserves. The local authority sees drainage and development control. Mining regulators see extraction permits. Utilities see exposed assets. Residents see orchards, homes and inheritance disappearing.

Each institution is acting within a recognisable mandate. The problem is that the river joins together what government separates.

This mismatch becomes stark when private land disappears. The cadastral map remains neat. The physical river corridor moves across titled lots regardless. Residents report that the administrative response was a reduction in annual quit rent from RM16 to RM14. It is an extraordinary symbol of policy inadequacy. The state can acknowledge that the taxable land has shrunk. It has no ready mechanism to address the much larger loss borne by the household.

This leaves a larger policy question. Who pays when the cumulative effects of development, altered runoff, sediment disturbance and extreme rainfall are transferred downstream to communities least able to absorb them?

The answer cannot be another isolated engineering repair.

Sungai Kélang Lama and Sungai Kulim need to be treated as one connected river corridor. That means basin-scale diagnosis of runoff, sediment, erosion hotspots and infrastructure exposure rather than project-by-project fixes. It means a shared governance arrangement requiring land, water, planning, mining and utility agencies to work from the same risk picture.

It also requires a financing principle under which major beneficiaries of basin development contribute to resilience as part of the real cost of maintaining a functioning growth corridor. And it requires a fairer mechanism for households that lose land or safety through progressive river migration. These ideas build directly on the wider governance and financing argument in the original field essay.

Climate change raises the stakes. A warmer atmosphere can hold more moisture, increasing the potential for intense rainfall. In a steep, increasingly urbanised basin, current institutional gaps will face stronger rainfall extremes in the years ahead.

Sungai Kélang Lama is a warning about development that has outgrown the institutions meant to manage its consequences.

Kulim once treated this river as a drain. It has become something far more consequential.

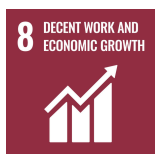
The question now is whether our governance can change as quickly as the river already has.

Author acknowledgment: I am grateful to APPGM-SDG and Persatuan Penduduk Desa Lembah Sungai Kulim for facilitating local engagement and access to affected sites.

By Dr. Hezri Adnan
(Senior Advisor on Sustainable Development, UNDP Malaysia,
Singapore and Brunei)



SABAH METAL FARMING: ADVANCING COMMUNITY WELL-BEING AND SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH THE SDGs



As a researcher within the Research Interest Group (RIG TANI) at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Sabah Branch, I am dedicated to driving green innovations that foster environmental sustainability and community growth. A definitive milestone in my academic career has been my active research into Metal Farming, focusing on *Phyllanthus rufuschaneyi*, a nickel-hyperaccumulating plant native to Sabah.

This journey was sparked by the untapped potential of ultramafic soils—lands rich in nickel and magnesium that were traditionally dismissed as marginal and low-value for conventional farming. Direct fieldwork in Kampung Pahu Pinawantai, Ranau, completely shifted this narrative, proving that these unique soil profiles present an innovative landscape for sustainable development rather than an agricultural limitation.

Collaborating with UiTM researchers, our industry partner Botanickel, and local stakeholders led to the establishment of Ladang Pahu—the world's pioneering field plot for Metal Farming. By systematically cultivating *Phyllanthus rufuschaneyi*, we harness natural bioaccumulation to extract nickel. This ground-level deployment underscores that scientific research achieves its highest purpose when it transforms raw data into a catalyst for social change.

Engaging directly with the local community remains the most rewarding aspect of this initiative. Through strategic knowledge transfer, technical training, and hands-on guidance, rural families have embraced the commercial potential of their land, actively integrating themselves into the Metal Farming value chain. This journey redefined my role from an academic researcher to a grassroots change facilitator.



By leveraging the APPGM-SDG platform, we have successfully translated academic insights into inclusive, high-impact community programs, notably the **Community-Based Tourism-Metal Farming (COBT-MF)** initiative. This project provides sustainable economic alternatives for residents, drives local youth engagement, and helps mitigate rural-urban migration pressures.

Ultimately, Metal Farming stands out as a robust, science-based intervention aligning directly with multiple Sustainable Development Goals: SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), SDG 13 (Climate Action), SDG 15 (Life on Land), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). It stands as tangible proof that strategic cross-sector collaborations yield impacts far beyond academic journals.

I am incredibly privileged to contribute to this framework. It has transformed my perspective on science in society—evolving it from knowledge creation into a profound social responsibility to empower local communities and protect our planet. Through APPGM-SDG and the scaling of Metal Farming, we see a clear roadmap where science, community, and policy unite for a sustainable future.



By Jacqueline Joseph
(APPGM-SDG Solution Provider)

About phytomining

Phytomining—also known as agromining—is an innovative green technology that utilises hyperaccumulator plants to extract high-value metals from mineral-rich or contaminated soils. Hyperaccumulators are unique plant species capable of naturally absorbing and concentrating metals, such as nickel and zinc, into their above-ground biomass at levels that would be toxic to ordinary vegetation. A prime example is *Phyllanthus rufuschaneyi*, a rare woody shrub endemic to the tropical forests of Sabah, Malaysia. Recognised as one of the world's most effective nickel hyperaccumulators, this species is systematically cultivated on the ultramafic soils of Ranau to bioaccumulate nickel, offering a sustainable alternative to conventional open-cast mining while simultaneously empowering local grassroots economies.

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FROM LISTENING TO ACTION: MY ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING JOURNEY IN MASJID TANAH



When I took on the role of Local Coordinator (LC) for APPGM-SDG in Masjid Tanah earlier this year, I saw it as a responsibility to connect community feedback with practical environmental initiatives. While the initial issue mapping provided a framework, my work truly began when I started engaging with local leaders, government agencies, and residents to understand the ground realities.



The above photo shows a discussion among local leaders regarding issues arising in their area. These engagement sessions served as a vital platform for stakeholders to voice their concerns. Through these discussions, it became clear that environmental challenges are closely tied to the daily lives of the community. A recurring topic was waste management. Local leaders and residents often highlighted how improper waste disposal affects the cleanliness of our villages and the condition of our local rivers. Similarly, concerns regarding ageing drainage systems were frequently raised, particularly regarding the increased risk of flash floods during periods of heavy rainfall.

These conversations shifted my perspective. I realised that environmental sustainability is not just about the technical aspects of nature conservation; it is equally about community well-being. Pollution impacts the livelihoods of local fishermen, and poor drainage directly affects families in flood-prone areas. It is about addressing these practical concerns to improve the quality of life in our neighbourhoods.

My experience so far has reinforced the importance of collaboration. Addressing these environmental issues requires the coordinated efforts of local communities, village leaders, and government agencies. I have seen the value of this firsthand during our capacity-building sessions, where open dialogue has allowed us to explore potential solutions collectively.

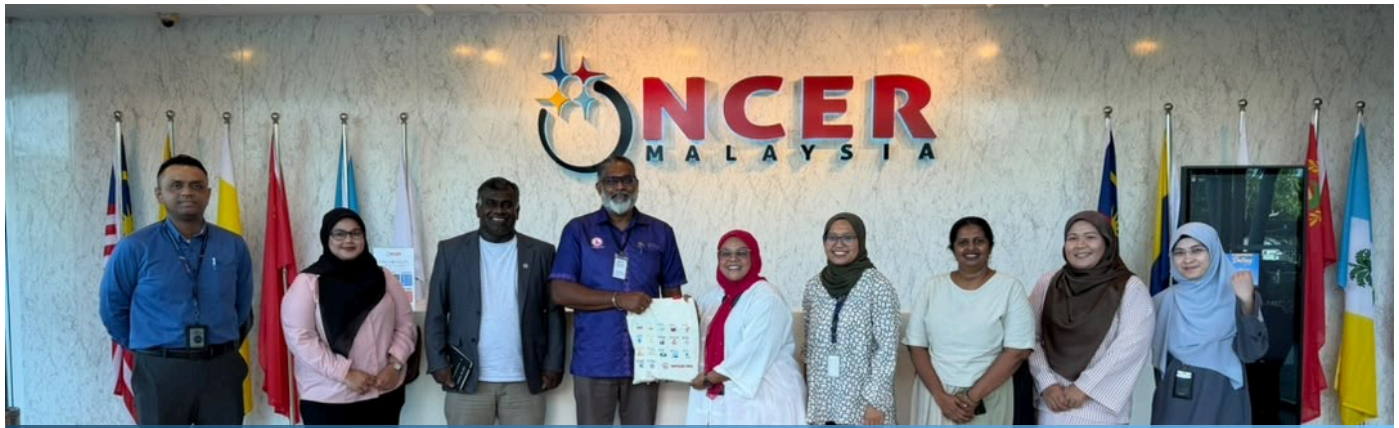


The above photo shows participants from local agencies during a capacity-building session in Masjid Tanah. These sessions brought together a dedicated group of local stakeholders committed to driving positive change in our district. My journey as an LC is still in its early stages, but these interactions have strengthened my belief that effective environmental action starts with active listening. Every conversation and shared concern helps us move toward a more sustainable future. While progress takes time, I am confident that these collective, step-by-step efforts are essential in achieving our Sustainable Development Goals and ensuring that our community needs are addressed. Seeing the commitment of the local leaders and agencies in these sessions gives me the confidence that we are moving in the right direction, one conversation at a time.

*By Noor Salehan Mohammad Sabli
(Local Coordinator for Masjid Tanah)*



8 JUNE 2026



DRIVING NORTHERN ZONE INNOVATION: THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK OF APPGM-SDG AND NCER

A recent strategic meeting between APPGM-SDG and the Northern Corridor Economic Region (NCER) has marked a new chapter in driving the sustainable development agenda across the northern zone. This long-term collaboration is designed to move beyond short-term programme execution, focusing comprehensively on integrating grassroots community data into regional corridor strategic investment plans. As an initial step, both parties have agreed to mutually support the implementation of NCER SDG Day and active participation in the TAMU SDG programme, which will serve as a primary platform to translate policy into tangible impact.

APPGM-SDG also presented four key strategic areas of cooperation to explore with NCER to support the regional development agenda, border economics, the blue economy, and SDG-driven community development.

In efforts to stimulate socio-economic growth, discussions centered on strengthening the Malaysia-Thailand cross-border economy. APPGM-SDG emphasised the importance of reassessing commercial infrastructure, logistics, and population mobility in strategic areas such as Wang Kelian, Padang Besar, Bukit Kayu Hitam, and Pengkalan Hulu.

Furthermore, the proposed reopening of Wang Kelian is viewed as highly critical to serve as a catalyst for the local economy, offering direct benefits to communities in Perlis while supporting major industrial ecosystems like Kedah Rubber City.

This synergy is also extended to the blue economy sector and the agro-food industry by elevating local products. Key highlights included the gazetting of Geographical Indication (GI) status for Balik Pulau Durian, alongside addressing issues related to fishers, the fishing industry, local product development, and value-added advancements for agricultural yields.



Beyond physical development, both agencies expressed a solid commitment to strengthening policy governance, the Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) agenda, and monitoring mechanisms for the 13th Malaysia Plan (RMK-13). To address policy gaps and the risk of greenwashing, APPGM-SDG proposed that SDG indicators be fully integrated into NCER's regional development reporting system. This step is crucial to ensure that achievements at the district and zone levels can be translated into national indicators, contributing directly to the Voluntary National Review (VNR) report and preparatory inputs ahead of the National SDG Summit scheduled for the fourth quarter of this year.

Additionally, both parties discussed the potential engagement of the private sector through the ESG agenda to support targeted families and communities in a more structured manner over the coming years. APPGM-SDG proposed a model where private companies can sponsor or mentor a specific number of families, monitoring their progress and contributing to their income growth and well-being as part of their ESG commitments. This approach is seen as far more effective in generating measurable change compared to short-term corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives.

APPGM-SDG also explained that its core strength lies in its "bottom-up" approach, which directly gathers community voices and data—including localised issues that may not be visible in national statistics. This community data is viewed as a complement to official government data and can help identify the actual gaps faced by society at the local level. This approach enables policy development and interventions to be executed based on the genuine needs of the community.



Discussions also focused heavily on public housing issues, community development, and improving the quality of life. APPGM-SDG raised various challenges, such as poor strata management, abandoned housing projects, resident resettlement, living conditions in People's Housing Projects (PPR), income-generating opportunities, and the impact of housing design on the social and mental well-being of residents. APPGM-SDG maintained that development should not focus solely on providing physical infrastructure but must encompass sustainable community capacity building, economic opportunities, and social support systems.

Another important theme discussed was the mismatch between the education system and industry requirements. APPGM-SDG pointed out that many educational institutions and TVET programmes are still not aligned with rapid technological advancements and the actual demands of the market. Therefore, industry-driven talent development models, practical training, job placements, and direct collaborations between companies, universities, and development agencies must be strengthened to ensure graduates possess relevant skills that meet employment market demands.

Next Steps

As a result of the discussions, both parties agreed to move forward through a follow-up meeting focusing on the execution of NCER SDG Day, NCER's involvement in TAMU SDG, the joint development of strategic projects, and a more comprehensive SDG reporting mechanism. This cooperation is seen as an initial step toward building a long-term strategic partnership leading up to 2030 that combines community development, border economics, the blue economy, talent development, innovation, policy reform, and the SDG agenda to deliver a more inclusive, sustainable development impact centred on the people's well-being. In addition to the implementation of NCER SDG Day and NCER's participation in the TAMU SDG programme, APPGM-SDG also shared that the National SDG Centre is expected to host the National SDG Summit in the fourth quarter (Q4) of this year. In relation to this, the strategic partnership between NCER and APPGM-SDG holds the potential to become a national best-practice model that can be documented and reported at the federal level.

*By Preveena Balakrishnan
(Local Coordinator for Bayan Baru)*



EAST COAST ZONE SDG POLICY INTERVENTION FORUM STRENGTHENS DISTRICT ROLE IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

District leadership plays a critical role in ensuring that the sustainable development agenda is effectively translated at the grassroots level. Recognising this reality, the SDG Policy Intervention Forum for Policy Drivers and Administrators of the East Coast Zone took place from 15 to 16 June 2026 at the Astana Grand Ballroom, Grand Darul Makmur Hotel, Kuantan, Pahang.

The two-day forum gathered 46 participants, including District Officers and Head of Districts (*Ketua Jajahan*), Chief and Assistant District Officers, Presidents of Local Authorities, representatives from State Economic Planning Units (UPEN/BPEN), and academics from across Pahang, Terengganu, and Kelantan.

The opening ceremony of the forum, themed "East Coast Resilience: Strong Economy, Prepared Community," was officiated by Dato' Ts. Gs. Dr. Mohd Zakaria Ibrahim, Deputy State Secretary of Pahang (Management). Also present to deliver a special address during the opening ceremony was Mrs. Raja Nor Dianna Raja Harun, Head of Partnership at Yayasan Hasanah, who expressed Yayasan Hasanah's continuous commitment to supporting the implementation of the APPGM-SDG Policy Intervention Initiative.



The forum commenced with a keynote address titled "District Development Transformation: Integrating Economic Sustainability and Disaster Resilience in Grassroots Administration," delivered by Dato' Sri Mustapa Mohamed. During the evening session of the first day, participants were introduced to the APPGM-SDG Policy Intervention Initiative through a session titled "From Village to Parliament," presented by Dr. Wan Asiah Nurjannah Wan Ahmad Tajuddin, Deputy Director of the APPGM-SDG Policy Solutions Department.

The second day of the forum continued with a perspective-sharing session by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Rohana Ahmad, who discussed the challenges of translating policy into action on the ground. A major highlight of the forum was a panel session titled "East Coast Sustainability Discourse: Balancing Rapid Rural Development with Economic and Environmental Sustainability Goals (SDG)." This panel featured TPr. Mohammad Yusup, Senior Lecturer at the Faculty of Built Environment, UiTM Puncak Alam; Haji Zuwislan Awang, President of the Kemaman Municipal Council; and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mohd Hanif Yaacob, Consultant Expert at the Terengganu Strategic and Integrity Institute. The discussion focused closely on rural development issues, local governance, and the balance between economic growth and environmental preservation.

In addition to the knowledge-sharing sessions, participants took part in an interactive workshop titled "Mission Possible: SDG in Action," which provided a platform for them to share best practices

from their respective districts. This approach not only encouraged mutual learning but also strengthened collaborative networks among district administrators in the East Coast Zone.

Throughout the forum, participants also had the opportunity to visit exhibition booths highlighting various initiatives and products from APPGM-SDG solution providers. The program concluded with a closing speech by Datuk Seri Rohani Abdul Karim, Chairman of LPPKN, Honorary Advisor to PPMPL, and former Minister of Women, Family, and Community Development.

Overall, the forum successfully served as a strategic platform to empower district administration, strengthen cross-agency networks, and stimulate the exchange of ideas toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on the East Coast. It is hoped that initiatives like this will continue to enhance the capacity of district administrations to face future challenges while ensuring a more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable development framework.



*By Zurratul Aina Mohd Zahidin
(East Coast Zone SDG Forum Project Director)*

The Launch of APPGM-SDG 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Organised by All-Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia on
Sustainable Development Goals (APPGM-SDG)



DATE
9 July 2026 (Thursday)



VENUE
Parliament of Malaysia

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EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES, SHOWCASING IMPACT: INAUGURAL RISE X TAMU SDG TOUR IGNITES LOCAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN KOTA BHARU

The RISE X TAMU SDG East Coast Zone 2026 programme, held on June 21, 2026, in Kota Bharu, Kelantan, marked a significant milestone as the inaugural destination for this year's regional tour. Guided by the theme "Empowering Communities, Showcasing Impact," this initiative seamlessly combined a Solution Provider Capacity Building Conference with an interactive sales carnival. It served as a living testament to how the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are being translated into tangible actions that resonate deeply with the local community.

The comprehensive 3-day, 2-night programme was strategically designed to achieve three primary objectives: grounding the SDGs through direct grassroots action, empowering local entrepreneurs within a sustainable ecosystem, and strengthening the Third Sector as a vital bridge between government policy and the heartbeat of the people. Crucially, these programmes are organised in alignment with the 13th Malaysia Plan (RMK-13), which prioritises the Social Economy and the Third Sector as key drivers for inclusive and sustainable national development.



This mission was made possible through the dedicated support of Yayasan Hasanah through *Dana Kelestarian Rakan APPGM-SDG*. This initiative is a collaborative effort under the *Inisiatif Intervensi Dasar*, with strategic collaboration from Yayasan Hasanah and the Ministry of Finance, ensuring that local solutions receive the necessary resources and policy backing to flourish.

The journey began at the H Elite Hotel with the RISE (The Rising Impact through Sustainable Empowerment) capacity building conference. The opening ceremony was officiated by Yang Berhormat Dato' Hajah Siti Zailah Mohd Yusoff, a member of the APPGM-SDG Committee and Member of Parliament for Rantau Panjang. In her address, she emphasised the importance of equipping our solution providers with strategic knowledge and skills to ensure their social and environmental impacts are both scalable and sustainable. Throughout the RISE sessions, participants engaged in interactive sessions, including a RMK-13 discussion, roving workshop, talk on sustainable financial management, impact marketing strategies, and best practice sharing sessions.



The programme also received strong support from government agencies, notably through the presence of Mrs. Haslinda Sujak, Director of the Cooperative Institute of Malaysia (IKMa) East Coast Zone, who provided invaluable insights into strengthening cooperatives within the SDG framework. This is significant as the movement is anchored by the Solution Provider's Association for Sustainable Development Goal (PRS-MPL) and the Sustainable Development Goals Cooperative Berhad (KOP-MPL).

The energy from RISE then transitioned to the concourse of Mydin Tunjong for TAMU SDG, which was officiated by Yang Berbahagia TPr. Dr. Hajah. Hasnina Hassan, Director of Town Planning and Landscape for the Kota Bharu Municipal Council Islamic City (MPKB-BRI) in Kelantan. . A total of 11 booths were set up, with 7 booths managed by solution providers showcasing handicrafts, agricultural products and bakery products. The remaining booths served as interactive hubs featuring APPGM-SDG's work profiles and social-themed educational displays.



The outcomes of this initiative were truly inspiring. Beyond recording a total sales figure of RM5,337 with a profit of RM1,893+, the programme achieved a broader impact. Approximately 277 visitors received direct exposure to sustainable living practices, while top vendors such as Zegwa Sarah (RM2,760), Mat Zaid (RM681), and Wanita Inspirasi Kuantan (RM618) proved that SDG-aligned products hold significant market value. Furthermore, the ties between APPGM-SDG, IKMa, and local entrepreneurs were strengthened, paving the way for future strategic collaborations that align with the nation's inclusive growth agenda.



This programme demonstrates that following the success at the Parliament of Malaysia in December 2025, the East Coast community is ready to lead the charge for change. A heartfelt thank you goes out to East Coast Head Zone, Dr. Siti Nur Ain Zakinuddin, Program Manager Mr. Muhammad Noraiman Hakim Ahmad Zaki and the entire APPGM secretariat for their tireless work behind the scenes. Let us continue to support community products and build a more sustainable future for all.



*By Nur Farah Ezzaty Abd Aziz
(Project Management Department)*



24 JUNE 2026



ACCELERATING SDGs AND COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS INSIGHTS FROM PARTNERS IN ACCELERATING SDGs

Co-hosted by MySDG Academy, APPGM-SDG, and Sunway Centre for Planetary Health, Partners in Accelerating SDGs in Malaysia convened the third meeting, with the aim of strengthening meaningful partnerships to advance sustainable development in the country.

of efforts across isolated organisations now represent a critical "strategic liability", and thus reflections on the past failures stand as the analytical toolkit behind the future success.



The session was chaired by Dato' Sri Mustapa Mohamed, bringing together over 20 representatives of government agencies, universities, civil society, and the corporate sector. The agenda of the meeting was to critically assess the nation's sustainability trajectory and forge an integrated, collaborative knowledge network.

Redefining Collaboration Through Institutional Transparency

A cornerstone of the agenda was the "Failing Forward" session - a deviation from traditional success stories sharing which challenged the development sector's historical risk aversion to discussing programmatic shortcomings in public settings. Participants were explicitly urged to share specific, honest accounts of strategies, partnerships, or assumptions that **failed** to achieve their desired impact. The underlying rationale is simple - unexamined failures and the subsequent duplication



Over 20 partners, representing private sector, academia, CSOs, and government bodies, observed that the admission of setbacks is essential for genuine accountability and cross-sector growth. As the room was full of experienced professionals, the discussion outlined several practical points. One of them was that when reflecting on what has worked out and what has not, a helpful solution would be compiling this information in a toolkit, rather than simply moving past it. That could be a simple, replicable checklist for organisations in the sector, featuring the outcomes of strategies that led to success, along with those which failed. Dismantling parallel operational silos is a prerequisite for achieving comprehensive progress, - this was the commonly agreed point, shared by Dr. Kalanithi Nesaretnam, a Director at IOI Corporation.

Assessing Progress and Identifying Strategic Imperatives

The dialogue subsequently transitioned to a rigorous, data-driven evaluation of Malaysia's current SDG performance, led by the Director of the National SDG Centre (*Pusat SDG Negara*), Mr. Asfaazam Kasbani. With reported macro-level indicators reflecting commendable progress, Malaysia is at 58% targets to be on track by 2030, with global level at 18%, as shared by the DOSM data 2024 (published in December 2025). Another update on the Centre's initiatives was the ongoing development of the SDG Roadmap Phase 3, to be aligned with the 13th Malaysia Plan (RMK13). Ten SDG focus areas were outlined to accelerate SDGs through the past year, with ongoing efforts on accelerating development at the national level.



Key Takeaways

The common vision was clear: to accelerate development on the country level, there is a necessity of pivoting from mere problem identification to the deployment of pragmatic, scalable solutions. Partners advocated strongly for future cross-sectoral collaborations to centre the joint efforts on practical implementation strategies, successful programmatic models, and measurable action plans that can be readily replicated by more organisations.

"Sustainable development yields the highest returns when local communities are engaged as active participants rather than passive beneficiaries," - that idea, despite being trivial, stood out as a red thread throughout the conversation.



Despite the frank admission of systemic challenges, the collaborative energy in the room underscored a confident outlook for Malaysia's sustainable future, and Partners in Accelerating SDGs once again reaffirmed the commitment to enhancing meaningful partnerships as a distinct movement, driving the nation to a more resilient and sustainable future.

*By Zoel Ng & Saparguly Mahtumov
(MySDG Academy)*



25 JUNE 2026



FROM LOCALISED DATA TO LEGISLATIVE ACTION: MPs CHAMPION APPGM-SDG's FOUR POLICY RECOMMENDATION REPORTS IN PARLIAMENT

On 24 June 2026, APPGM-SDG launched four policy reports focusing primarily on the importance of community-based rehabilitation centres for children with special needs and strategies to ensure sustainable food security in Malaysia. The launch marks the start of APPGM-SDG's policy advocacy around two core themes. First, APPGM-SDG advocates targeted strategies to build a more inclusive and sustainable care economy for vulnerable groups, specifically children with special needs. Second, APPGM-SDG recognises the urgent need to ensure sustainable food security amid rising food-production costs, growing reliance on imported food, and increasing threats from climate change, global warming and pollution.

The four reports are tangible outcomes of APPGM-SDG's strengthened multi-stakeholder engagement through the localisation of the SDGs. They are based on the APPGM-SDG's issue-mapping across 143 parliamentary constituencies from 2020–2025. APPGM-SDG then engaged experts and advocates to analyse emerging trends common across constituencies. To ensure pragmatic recommendations, APPGM-SDG held courtesy meetings with relevant ministries to discuss the proposed policies and strategies. During the first and second parliamentary sittings, APPGM-SDG hosted four roundtable discussions with Members of Parliament from different parties to discuss the issues and advocacy priorities. The four reports reflect joint efforts across these key stakeholders.

To celebrate the collaborations, APPGM-SDG invited four Members of Parliament to present the reports. Each MP underscored the importance of translating the reports into concrete action as the next milestone in APPGM-SDG's advocacy.



The first report, "*Pemeriksaan Program Pemulihan Dalam Komuniti (PDK): Strategi Memperkukuhkan Ekonomi Penjagaan dan Inklusiviti OKU di Malaysia*" (Empowerment of Community Rehabilitation Program (PDK) — Strategy to Strengthen the Care Economy and Inclusivity for Persons with Disabilities in Malaysia), was presented by YB Puan Rodziah Ismail, Member of Parliament for Ampang (P.099). Drawing on APPGM-SDG's issue mapping and a subsequent survey of 100 PDKs nationwide, the report provides an in-depth assessment of challenges facing PDKs. It argues for professional training for PDK operators to better serve trainees with special needs and for more sustainable government support mechanisms to ensure PDKs can continue providing community services.

The second report, "*Dari Ekosistem Pantai ke Penuaian: Menjamin Keterjaminan Makanan dan Kedaulatan Negara Melalui Pengurusan Mampan Ekosistem Pantai dan Marin*" (From Coastal Ecosystems to Harvesting: Securing National Food Security and Sovereignty through Sustainable Management of Coastal and Marine Ecosystems), was presented by YB Tuan Rushdan Rusmi, Member of Parliament for Padang Besar (P.001). The report highlights the importance of marine ecosystems for the livelihoods of approximately 140,000 small-scale fishers in Malaysia. It draws attention to the close link between coastal ecosystems and fishers' livelihoods— an area often

overlooked in policy discussions—and recommends a National Plan of Action for Small-Scale Fisheries (NPOA-SSF) complemented by a thematic working committee (TWC) to strengthen cross-ministerial implementation.

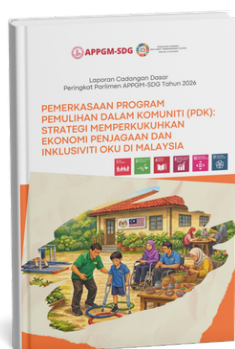
The third report titled *"Memperkukuh Peranan Petani Skala Kecil dalam Membina Keterjaminan Makanan dan Makanan Selamat demi Kesihatan Negara"* (Strengthening the Role of Small-Scale Farmers in Building Food Security and Safe Food for the Nation's Health) was presented by YB Puan Young Syefura Othman, MP of Bentong (P.089). The report focuses on small-scale farmers producing safe, affordable food for local consumption. Referencing the National Agri-Food Policy (NAP 2.0) and the 13th Malaysia Plan, it calls for measures to strengthen the safety, affordability and sustainability of Malaysia's food supply. The report addresses challenges faced by local smallholders and external market pressures on the food supply chain, calls for greater transparency in determining floor prices for agricultural products, and encourages smallholders to obtain MyGAP and MyOrganic certifications. To increase uptake, the report recommends simplifying the certification application process. Above all, it emphasises cross-ministerial responsibilities and cross-sector partnerships between government agencies and civil society to ensure effective outcomes.



The fourth report titled *"Keterjaminan Makanan: Cabaran Perubahan Iklim dan Kesiapsiagaan Menghadapi Bencana di Sarawak"* (Food Security: Climate Change Challenges and Disaster Preparedness in Sarawak) was presented by YB Tuan Oscar Ling Chai Yew, MP of Sibu (P.212). The report addresses paddy production in Sarawak and the challenges posed by climate change. Aligned with Sarawak's aspiration to achieve an 80% self-sufficiency level (SSL) for rice, the report proposes three policy strategies: establishing community-based seed banks for paddy, developing community-based ecological calendars, and mapping agricultural production and climate impacts at the local level. Each strategy stresses multi-stakeholder engagement—including government agencies, experts and, crucially, local communities—and highlights the need to conserve traditional knowledge and preserve heirloom rice varieties through partnerships with indigenous communities in Sarawak.

The launch of these four reports marks another milestone for APPGM-SDG, made possible by active participation and concerted efforts from diverse stakeholders committed to localising the SDGs in Malaysia. The reports demonstrate that cross-sectoral partnerships are both pivotal and feasible, and that participation from every stakeholder is vital. Moving forward, APPGM-SDG will continue to engage MPs, national ministries, state and district government agencies, local authorities, civil society and community groups to translate the reports' strategies into measurable outcomes aligned with the SDG framework.

By Dr. Teo Sue Ann
(Parliamentary Policy Advocacy Department)



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REPORTS NOW



*The reports are in Malay language.

10 29 - 30 JUNE 2026



EMPOWERING SABAH'S DISTRICTS: APPGM-SDG GOVERNANCE FORUM UNLOCKS BEST PRACTICES FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE

The All-Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia on Sustainable Development Goals (APPGM-SDG) Sabah Region, through its Policy Intervention Initiative and in collaboration with Yayasan Hasanah and the Ministry of Finance Malaysia, successfully organised the Sabah Regional Governance Leadership and Best Practices Forum 2026 at the Promenade Hotel, Kota Kinabalu. Guided by the theme "Driving Sustainable, Inclusive, and Resilient Local Governance," the two-day forum served as a strategic platform bringing together district administrative leadership, local authorities, ministries, departments, and government agencies to share experiences, exchange best practices, and strengthen cooperation in empowering regional governance across Sabah.



The event commenced with a welcoming address by Mc Jeanet Lempisik, Head of Sabah Region, APPGM-SDG, followed by a special address from Nur Rahmah Othman, Executive Director of APPGM-SDG. The forum was then officially inaugurated by Datuk Hajah Myrna Jimenez @ Isabelo, Permanent Secretary of the Sabah Ministry of Rural Development (KPLB).

The forum was organised to strengthen the leadership capacity of district administrations, promote the sharing of best practices in local governance, empower strategic cooperation between the state government, Federal government, and local

authorities, as well as support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the *Sabah Maju Jaya* (SMJ) development agenda.

Forum Highlights

The forum featured a lineup of panelists comprising state government leaders, senior agency officials, academic experts, and District Officers who shared their experiences, challenges, and best practices in strengthening regional governance in Sabah.

The forum began with an introduction to APPGM-SDG's "From Village to Parliament" initiative, which emphasises the importance of formulating evidence-based, inclusive policies rooted in community data collection. The agenda then continued with three main plenary sessions: Plenary Session 1 focused on empowering district economic administration, local innovation, and synergy with the *Sabah Maju Jaya* (SMJ) agenda; Plenary Session 2 explored best practices by districts and local authorities (PBT) in strengthening social inclusivity and community well-being; while Plenary Session 3 discussed solid waste management and natural disaster preparedness to build districts that are more resilient against the impacts of climate change and disaster risks.



In addition to the plenaries, the forum featured two special sharing sessions regarding the integration of data into district development plans by IDS Sabah, alongside the direction of SMJ 2.0 and the role of local authorities by the Chief Political Secretary to the Chief Minister of Sabah. The programme culminated in a President, Mayor, and District Officers Roundtable Session, which served as an interactive platform for participants to discuss current challenges, exchange local implementation milestones, and formulate collaborative solutions to strengthen district development governance in Sabah.



Attendance Summary

The forum garnered impressive participation from various stakeholders, including 19 District Officers (including Sub-District Officers), 22 Assistant District Officers (including representatives), and the President of the Penampang Municipal Council representing local authorities (PBT). A total of 11 districts sent both their District Officers and Assistant District Officers as official delegates, reflecting a high level of commitment toward strengthening local governance. The forum was also strategically supported by the Sabah Maju Jaya Secretariat (SSMJ), the Sabah State Economic Planning Unit (UPEN), and the Sabah Tourism Board, all of whom shared state development initiatives and aspirations. Furthermore, 14 exhibitors consisting of APPGM-SDG solution providers showcased various innovations, technologies, and sustainable development solutions.

The presence and active engagement of various tiers of district leadership reflect a collective commitment to reinforcing a more inclusive, collaborative, and high-impact regional governance framework for the well-being of the people of Sabah. Overall, the Sabah Regional Governance Leadership and Best Practices Forum 2026 achieved its objectives as a strategic platform to solidify cooperation networks between the state government, Federal government, local authorities, and stakeholders in driving Sabah's regional governance forward.



Through knowledge-sharing sessions, panel forums, strategic presentations, and roundtable discussions, participants successfully exchanged insights on contemporary challenges, shared best practices, and identified innovative approaches to enhance the effectiveness of district administrations. Insights shared by the lineup of panelists—comprising senior government officials, academic experts, and District Officers—provided valuable perspectives for efforts to strengthen the public service delivery system and regional development.

Aligned with the theme "Driving Sustainable, Inclusive, and Resilient Local Governance," this forum is envisioned to be a catalyst for more effective policy execution at the district level, ultimately supporting the aspirations of Sabah Maju Jaya (SMJ), the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the enhancement of public well-being through efficient, high-integrity, and people-centric governance.

*By Mohd Ikram Arman
(Sabah Region APPGM-SDG Office)*

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We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to the Members of Parliament for their unwavering cooperation and commitment. Throughout the month, APPGM-SDG has had the privilege of engaging with various parliamentary constituencies through various meeting and events. These milestones were made possible through the dedicated efforts between the Members of Parliament and APPGM-SDG. We value this synergy between policy and grassroots action, and we look forward to further strengthening our partnership to advance the Sustainable Development Goals across Malaysia.

UPCOMING EVENTS IN JULY 2026

APPGM-SDG 2025 Annual Report Launch

9 July 2026

2025 Issue Mapping Sharing Session

10 July 2026

APPGM-SDG 2nd Quarter Staff Meeting & Retreat

11 - 14 July 2026

Youth SDG Summit

30 July 2026



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