

PRESS RELEASE

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Youth take lead in finding solutions for climate resilience

Youth Climate Adaptation Forum addresses climate and environmental challenges unique to Malaysia

Kuala Lumpur, 11 October 2024 – YB Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad, Minister of Natural Resources and Environmental Sustainability, led discussions with young people at the Youth Climate Adaptation Forum (YCAF). The forum, organised by the Ministry of Natural Resources & Environmental Sustainability, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), empowered young active participants in climate action and resilience-building efforts to tackle climate and environmental issues unique to Malaysia.

Nik Nazmi in his opening speech said: “The National Policy on Climate Change 2.0 is one example of how we are updating policies to accelerate our climate ambitions. We may be a small country, contributing just 0.8% to global greenhouse gas emissions, but we understand that our actions will shape the world our children and grandchildren will inherit. Just as the youth are not too young to make a difference, our country is not too small to have an impact on the world.”

On 30 September, the Minister launched the National Policy on Climate Change 2.0. The update to the policy that was first published in 2009, reflects a broadened understanding of the impacts of climate change on our economy, natural environment, and communities. Additionally, Malaysia is developing the Malaysia National Adaptation Plan (MyNAP) to address key adaptation challenges.

Malaysia committed to enhancing adaptation actions and aligning its efforts with the targets outlined in the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience, during the 28th Conference of the Parties (COP 28) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). In tandem, as Malaysia prepares to chair ASEAN in 2025, we aim to be a proactive force for change on the region’s most critical issues – starting with the most urgent one: the climate crisis.

On 7 June 2024, NRES established the Youth Cluster, a sub-panel under the Climate Change Consultation Panel, to incorporate youth perspectives from diverse organisations and communities into national climate initiatives.

A joint UNDP-UNICEF-EcoKnight's Change for Climate report (2020) found that 92% of young people surveyed in Malaysia acknowledge climate change is a crisis and expressed willingness to take climate action. Therefore, engaging youth in adaptation and resilience building is the most effective way to protect youth and their communities from the immediate and expected impacts of climate change.

Aidil Iman Aidid, founder of Kolektif Iklim and moderator of the fireside chat with the Minister during the forum, said: "Young people are at the forefront of community-based climate adaptation efforts, from mobilising flood relief initiatives to organising tree planting events. Our youth have a stake in this planet more than ever amidst the climate crisis. By letting them participate in climate adaptation, we can ensure a climate resilient world."

The Youth Climate Adaptation Forum centers young people in climate action. The forum featured conversations on sustainable cities, biodiversity conservation and ecosystem restoration; sustainable agriculture and food security; and climate justice, awareness and education. The conversations aimed to foster partnership between educational institutions, NGOs, and government agencies to enhance climate literacy and action.

Sanja Saranovic, Deputy Representative, UNICEF Malaysia, said: "This youth-led forum represents the latest chapter in UNICEF's 70-year legacy of standing up for children's rights in Malaysia. Climate change is a child rights issue we cannot ignore any longer. We're here to transform urgency into agency by mobilizing youth for change through inclusive and meaningful engagement for climate action."

H.E. Dr Peter Blomeyer, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Malaysia, said: "In Germany, we have seen how powerful, young voices can drive climate action. Greta Thunberg's Fridays for Future movement, which has resonated worldwide, has found strong echoes among young German activists like Luisa Neubauer. The German government values youth-led efforts and actively seeks to engage young people in the national dialogue on climate adaptation. Through the Youth Climate Adaptation Forum, we aim to empower the next generation for our shared sustainable future."

The forum highlighted innovative projects and climate solutions developed by young activists and eco-preneurs. Youth also had the opportunity to voice their personal stories, insights, and aspirations committed to climate resilience. These narratives will be curated for the 29th Conference of the Parties (COP29), ensuring that Malaysian youth perspectives and contributions are represented on the global stage.

The Madani government has shown a strong commitment to climate action. In line with the *Kemampuan* or sustainability policy under Malaysia Madani, the government is taking the leadership to address climate change ensuring Malaysia fulfils its international commitments to support global climate ambitions. This includes implementing comprehensive strategies to reduce carbon emissions, and promoting renewable energy, creating a sustainable future for all Malaysians.

Youth Climate Adaptation Forum (YCAF) took place within the International Greentech & Eco Products Exhibition & Conference Malaysia (IGEM) and is part of the Malaysia National Adaptation Plan (MyNAP) initiative.

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Notes to the Editor

About UNICEF

UNICEF works in some of the world's toughest places, to reach the world's most disadvantaged children. Across 190 countries and territories, we work for every child, everywhere, to build a better world for everyone.

For more information about UNICEF and its work in Malaysia, visit: www.unicef.org/malaysia. Follow UNICEF Malaysia on [X](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#)

About GIZ

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH is a federal enterprise with worldwide operations. It supports the German Government in the field of international cooperation for sustainable development. It is also engaged in educational activities around the globe. GIZ assists people and societies in shaping their future and improving their living conditions.

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