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## Malaysia to launch sustainability professionals body by end-2026

The Malaysian Reserve, Malaysia



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MALAYSIA is set to launch a new professional body for sustainability practitioners by the end of 2026 as businesses face growing demands to meet sustainability reporting standards and translate them into business decisions.

The Association of Sustainability Professionals (ASP), incubated by the Securities Commission Malaysia (SC), will serve as a national platform to strengthen professional standards and sustainability capabilities across industries.

ASP chairperson Raja Amir Shah Raja Azwa said the association comes as sustainability takes on a bigger role in corporate decision-making and business performance.

"Sustainability is no longer a specific topic sitting on the margins of business. It is increasingly shaping how organisations manage risk, allocate capital, report performance, as well as build long-term resilience.

"Across Malaysia, businesses are being asked to respond to evolving sustainability standards, regulations, as well as stakeholder expectations," he said at the JC3 Journey to Zero Conference 2026 in Kuala Lumpur (KL) recently.



Raja Amir Shah says ASP aims to professionalise sustainability practitioners, raise the profession's credibility and help organisations build their capabilities and talent pipelines

Source: JC3's LinkedIn

In particular, evolving requirements under Malaysia's National Sustainability Reporting Framework (NSRF) are increasing the need for practitioners who can manage reporting expectations and risks while translating sustainability requirements into credible business strategies.

ASP forms part of the Capital Market Masterplan 2026-2030 and has received seed funding from the Capital Markets Development Fund.

Its establishment follows the SC's Sustainability Officers Dialogue in April 2025, where more than 50 practitioners discussed capacity needs, the talent pipeline, reporting challenges and the need for a formal platform for collaboration.

A key role for ASP will be to establish more consistent competency standards for sustainability practitioners as the field becomes increasingly regulated and technically demanding.

The association aims to become a reference point for recognising and accrediting sustainability competencies, including recognising high-quality training and certification offerings.

"The intended outcome is to professionalise sustainability practitioners, raise the credibility of the profession, and give organisations a trusted reference point when building their capabilities and talent pipelines," Raja Amir Shah said.

ASP will focus on three areas — building a national community of sustainability professionals, promoting professionalism and ethics while developing future-ready competencies, and providing a collective voice for the profession.

It will also serve as a sounding board on policy and market developments, allowing practitioners' perspectives to contribute to Malaysia's wider sustainability agenda.

Membership will extend beyond those holding sustainability-specific positions to professionals in risk management, finance, operations, procurement, facilities management and other related functions.

Members will have access to learning and development opportunities, professional development and certification pathways, cross-industry collaboration and policy dialogue.

The association's inaugural executive committee brings together senior sustainability and corporate leaders from financial institutions, listed companies and professional organisations.

Raja Amir Shah is also HSBC Amanah Malaysia Bhd CEO and HSBC Bank Malaysia Bhd chief sustainability officer, while Tenaga Nasional Bhd (TNB) chief sustainability officer Leo Pui Yong serves as ASP deputy chairman.

Other organisations represented include RHB Bank Bhd, Sime Darby Property Bhd, Bursa Malaysia Bhd, SD Guthrie Bhd, Gamuda Bhd, Press Metal Aluminium Holdings Bhd, PwC Malaysia and UN Global Compact Network Malaysia and Brunei.

With its launch expected by year-end, ASP is intended to provide a more structured professional framework for sustainability practitioners as reporting and regulatory requirements continue to develop.

— by AUFA MARDHIAH