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## Alam Flora drives sustainable change



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## MODERNISING WASTE INFRASTRUCTURE

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Company seeks to transform into integrated environmental solutions provider

ASIA IAI II  
KUALA LUMPUR  
bt@nst.com.my

**A**LAM Flora Sdn Bhd is stepping up efforts to integrate sustainability in its operations while raising awareness on the importance of recycling to boost households' participation in waste separation.

To modernise its fleet, the company is headed towards a green operating environment by including more electric vehicles (EVs).

Alam Flora chief executive officer Shariman Yusuf Mohamed Zain said the company was embarking on proof of concept (PoC) for EVs like its compactors and road sweepers, following a fleet replacement last year that included enhanced technology in the vehicles, such as mobile device video recording, which has artificial intelligence (AI) features.

"Upon success [of the PoC] then we will embark on the next phase of the fleet replacement. The subsequent phases are expected to progressively introduce more EV units and advanced monitoring

technologies across high-density service routes," he added.

Another phase of EVs that the company is bringing in will include display multimedia, which Shariman said can be used to incorporate information on recycling.

"This could also be a new source of revenue if we can use it for advertising."

The EVs are expected to arrive by the second half of this year.

Additionally, Shariman said by modernising the conventional work in Alam Flora, it would enable the company to reskill its workforce and employ more locals for tech-related jobs.

"We may be able to attract the right and young talent, more locals, when we do more modernisation in our operations. To support this transition, Alam Flora is exploring structured upskilling programmes to equip workers with technical competencies required for operating sophisticated machinery."

#### Separation at Source

One main issue that Alam Flora is trying to swiftly address is waste separation at households.

Shariman said separation at source was not happening at a desired pace that could enhance recycling efficiency in the country.

Alam Flora is involved in post-collection recycling via material and integrated recycling facilities.

However, households should take it upon themselves to initiate recycling at the pre-collection stage as a collective effort to achieve the government's zero-waste goals.

"We should take the responsibility ourselves and do more. Some of these things are easy, like separating plastic bottles, papers or cans.

"If you do a lot more of that, then you will be helping in separation at source, as well as reducing waste and recycling."

"The government is looking to facilitate these habits by introducing a second bin."

To ensure ease of recycling, Alam Flora has developed the Recyclink app, which provides users with necessary information on recycling.

Currently operating in its second version, the app provides locations of Alam Flora's buyback centres and drive-through recycling centres and is equipped with a re-

cycling calculator. The updated version comes with an e-wallet for a seamless recycling experience.

"In the 3.0 version, we are going to introduce a bit of Grab-like services. If you have bulky waste, you can schedule a pickup.

"That one is being piloted in several areas. We are working out its feasibility before we roll it out to more areas," said Shariman.

Alam Flora has also built Fasilitas Inovasi Kitar Semula (FIKS), a one-stop centre that educates the public on the recycling process and waste management.

The centre was developed using recycled materials, such as wooden pallets and shipping containers, to integrate the 3R concept in its building.

#### Investment in Waste Management

Besides fleet improvement, Alam Flora is also investing in a waste-to-energy (WTE) plant and expanding into the scheduled waste business through its subsidiary, Alam Flora Environmental Solutions Sdn Bhd (AFES).

The WTE project is undertaken via a concession company, Sungai Udang WTE Sdn Bhd, a single-purpose joint venture incorporated specifically for the project. Malakoff Corp Bhd holds a 60 per cent equity stake, while the remaining 40 per cent is held by AFES.

The WTE facility is designed to process up to 1,056 tonnes of municipal solid waste per day and generate about 22 MW of gross renewable energy under a power purchase agreement with Tenaga Nasional Bhd.

This milestone reflects Malakoff's commitment to managing 10,000 tonnes of waste per day by 2031 through innovative, integrated and sustainable strategies.

On scheduled waste, Shariman said that these include industrial waste, electronic waste or other hazardous materials.

"We're investing in a plant in Terengganu and we plan to have that on board by the end of next year. That will be our first major foray into processing hazardous

waste," he said.

Alam Flora has made investments for a plant in Kemaman that can undertake slightly under 50 tonnes per day of scheduled waste.

#### Regional Expansion

On its regional expansion plans, Shariman said that Alam Flora would need to maximise its plans domestically first before expanding its footprint elsewhere.

He noted that a few more areas like Selangor, Penang and Labuan plan to come under Act 672 of the Solid Waste and Public Cleansing Management Act 2007. Other states like Terengganu and Kelantan may follow suit to adopt the act.

The act mandates centralised waste management with uniform standards and services in the country, where the services are provided by concessionaires like Alam Flora.

"We have 30 years of experience, so we definitely want to offer our expertise. In fact, for Selangor, we were the ones originally doing it until 2011.

"As these states want to embark on Act 672, we also want to find a way to participate and share our experience," he added.

Given their extensive competencies and experience, Shariman did not rule out the possibility of expanding Alam Flora's technical expertise into regional markets.

"Several companies in other countries have reached out to Alam Flora because we are a market leader. Regional expansion is in the plans, but we will prioritise our domestic market first.

"We are looking at it opportunistically. Some markets, like Singapore, are more mature, so we may have less to offer. But for the rest of the region in Southeast Asia, I think there is play for us," he added.

Alam Flora's established expertise in large-scale waste management, recycling innovation, and WTE initiatives positions it well for regional market entry, especially in countries investing in modernising their waste infrastructure.



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