

Headline	Coca-Cola Malaysia promotes circular economy with key partners		
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Coca-Cola Malaysia promotes circular economy with key partners

KUALA LUMPUR: Coca-Cola Malaysia, in association with the American Malaysian Chamber Of Commerce (Amcham Malaysia), hosted a special spotlight session titled "Our Future, Our Choice – Sustainability Forum." The forum focused on accelerating the transition to circularity for plastic packaging in Malaysia.

The event was honoured by the presence of the Minister of Natural Resources, Environment, and Climate Change, Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad. It also received significant backing from the key partner, the Malaysian Recycling Alliance (MAREA). This collaboration underlines a shared commitment towards environmental sustainability.

"Our shift towards a circular economy is not just a policy initiative; it's a systemic move towards resilience, sustainability, and a brighter future. Our commitment, as reflected in our national policies, signifies our determination to efficiently use resources, reduce waste, and minimise environmental impact.

"It's a shared responsibility, and initiatives like Coca-Cola's dedication to innovative packaging solutions play a vital

role in supporting our journey towards a circular economy," said Nik Nazmi.

While plastic has become an integral part of modern society, the proportion of plastic waste not properly managed in Malaysia is a cause for concern. With data showing that just 24 per cent of plastics introduced into the Malaysian market

were recycled in 2019, Coca-Cola Malaysia acknowledges the pressing need to tackle the issue of plastic waste.

"At Coca-Cola, we recognise the urgency and complexity of the plastic waste challenge in Malaysia. No single entity can overcome this challenge alone. Inspired by the circular economy model, we constantly leverage

resources to eliminate waste and tackle climate problems caused by packaging.

"Our 'World Without Waste' initiative embodies this dedication, driving global sustainable packaging efforts aiming for recyclability and a sustainable environment," said Kirsten van Zandwijk, sustainability and partnerships

director, Asean and South Pacific, The Coca-Cola Company.

Khairul Anwar Ab Gahani, public affairs, communications and sustainability director, Malaysia-Singapore-Brunei, Coca-Cola Bottlers Malaysia concurred that collaboration and a circular economy are vital to Coca-Cola's commitment.

"All their packaging, including cans and PET bottles, is fully recyclable. Utilising recyclable materials in our packaging is another step towards reducing environmental footprint," he said.

Coca-Cola Malaysia actively works with various NGOs, such as the Malaysian Nature Society and Waste Management Association of Malaysia, to promote responsible waste management and recycling.

They also collaborate with esteemed organisations like SWM Environment Sdn Bhd, Muslim Aid, Forest Research Institute Malaysia, MareCet Malaysia, Global Environment Centre, Reef Check, The Ocean Cleanup, and selected universities.

In his address at the event, Roberto Benetello, the CEO of the Malaysian Recycling Alliance (MAREA), emphasised the

organisation's commitment to driving positive change.

He stated, "MAREA, a coalition of prominent industry leaders actively participating in voluntary Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) initiatives, is dedicated to taking tangible steps to boost recycling rates and minimise packaging leakage into the environment.

"Our members have made substantial commitments to ensure a significant portion of their packaging materials are recovered and recycled. They are eager to embrace secondary raw materials like rPET and strive to make these materials accessible at equitable prices. MAREA is poised to play a pivotal role in facilitating this transition."

As a founding member of MAREA, Coca-Cola Malaysia attaches high importance to establishing strong collaborations with stakeholders, government bodies, industry colleagues, and local organisations.

"We're deeply committed to leading strategic alliances with key parties. Collaboratively, we're paving the way in collection and recycling of packaging to support the progression of a circular economy within Malaysia."

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(From left) Siobhan Das from Amcham, Kirsten, Nik Nazmi, Khairul and Roberto Benetello from Marea served as keynote speakers for Coca-Cola Malaysia's Amcham Spotlight Session to drive circular economy in Malaysia.