

EcoKnights®

IMPACT REPORT

2017





EcoKnights®

INSPIRING SUSTAINABLE LIVING



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BACKGROUND

When I think about the work that EcoKnights has done, the wise words of American Engineer & Statistician William Edwards Deming echo in my mind – “not everything that our belief matters can be measured and not everything that is measured matters”. However, this act of measurement is necessary in demonstrating the value of our work, especially over the years, to the outside world and to ensure that the public and our donors understand the impact we have on their society and country.

For some, the impact of our work needs to be explained through rigorous quantitative and qualitative measurements along with a longitudinal examination of the effectiveness of our programs. If you can't measure it, then the impact is not there. For others, the impact of our work is measured through the behavioral changes we impart to the beneficiaries of our programs. At EcoKnights, we firmly believe that the real impact of what we do lies somewhere in the middle – where science meets action.

This is our first Impact Report and I am proud to share our theory of change and the assessment techniques for all our programs that we have initiated and completed in the last year. This report will also share the stories of the beneficiaries of our programs, some of whom have grown with us over the years. I hope that both the stories and the data in this report will prove the value of the work we do. However, a report is a report; It can only inform our stakeholders, donors and the country for which we are accountable.

What is more valuable than this report are the journeys which we have been a part of in the lives of the young leaders in our organization, and that look in the eyes of our beneficiaries as they experience their first nature camp or when they move up the ranks from a program participant to a program leader.

I hope that this Impact Report has captured the value of our work and, most importantly, has provided clarity on how you can help EcoKnights on our journey to create, implement and deliver even more programs and activities in pursuit of a more sustainable Malaysia.

Sincerely,

Yasmin Rasyid
Founder of EcoKnights
President 2017/2018

ABOUT US



VISION

To mainstream sustainability practices in Malaysia.

MISSION

To mobilize and facilitate the adoption of sustainable living practices through:

- I. Education and Awareness
- II. Interventions for Sustainable Community Development
- III. Partnerships and Volunteerism
- IV. Advocacy and Promotion of Sustainable Policies

CORE VALUES

CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION

At EcoKnights, we believe in consistently evolving with the Malaysian mainstream mindset in order to position our educational and awareness-building activities as relevant, solutions-oriented and positive.

The heart of our concepts and designs focuses on creativity and innovation. This helps partners and donors conduct effective campaigns and community outreach efforts.

SUSTAINABILITY

We like to practice what we preach and anyone involved with EcoKnights is encouraged to be more responsible – at work or home, making the current world slightly better one less truant at a time.

It's not easy, but there is always something in our daily habits that can be made more sustainable. At EcoKnights, we help ourselves and others open their minds towards embracing sustainability.

PASSION

Passion is a big deal at EcoKnights. A passion to serve and protect humanity by working on small efforts at the grass-roots level is drilled into the team to produce individuals that are both ecologically conscious and responsible.

RESPECT

Without respect, we wouldn't be able to create engaging and meaningful programmes that serve the broader goals of sustainability. We strive to ensure that all our activities are conducted with the utmost respect to any and every sensitivity that arises.



MEASURING OUR IMPACT

WHY WE EVALUATE OUR PROGRAMS

If we are to encourage Malaysians to adopt a sustainable way of living, we must be sure our programs have the capacity to transform the individuals we work with – whether young or old.

For this reason, we take the evaluation of our programs very seriously. Some of our programs have been evaluated since 2008 and we have continually invested in our capacity to measure our outcomes.

In each of our program reports, we summarize the outcomes and amount of progress we are making, based on our assessment and evaluation methods.

HOW WE EVALUATE OUR PROGRAMS

The evaluation of our programs is based on several aspects. Firstly, one of the evaluation methods involves tracking the participation of our beneficiaries. The main way we do this is by quantifying the number of beneficiaries of our programs.

Another of our evaluation methods is based on measuring the attitudes, skills, and behaviors (e.g., social and emotional skills or soft skills) that our beneficiaries develop during their exposure to our programs. The primary way of capturing this data involves asking the participants to complete feedback surveys or questionnaires at the end of the program. This allows us to gather better data about the impact of our programs have in their lives especially towards their attitudes, beliefs, skills, and sustainable behaviors and practices.

From the collated and analyzed data, we are able to assess the overall effectiveness of our programs. Recently we have started collecting qualitative data from the beneficiaries of our programs so that we can learn about the value our beneficiaries place on their experiences with EcoKnights and what aspects of their experiences are most valuable to them.

Combining quantitative and qualitative information helps us identify the domains in which we can improve in to ensure we continue to deliver quality and impactful programs to Malaysians.

A significant step forward in our impact reporting has been the development of our Theory of Change logical framework. This is the fabric the key principles behind what we do come from, in addition to the steps that go into creating the outcomes we aim to achieve on every intervention or program we deliver.

It is through this Theory of Change that we are able to identify the role we can play in facilitating the adoption of sustainable practices in the daily lives of our beneficiaries, whatever their background or circumstance.

A NOTE ABOUT THIS REPORT

This is the first impact report produced by EcoKnights since the organization was established in 2005. The research and evaluation of the findings used to produce this impact report were derived from different sources. Results reported for beneficiaries are, in the most part, derived from questionnaire data we collected. Where lasting impact findings are reported, these refer to either a follow-up evaluation conducted twelve months after the program or an interview conducted with the beneficiaries between one to five years after their experience.

We present testimonials alongside our quantitative data to place the improvements reported in context. Some of the testimonials were provided during the questionnaire while some were provided at least a year after the participants experienced our programs. Names and photographs of the beneficiaries of our programs are included in this report with their permission.



Above: A tree planting and trail run CSR collaboration with Pernod Ricard Malaysia

THE CHALLENGES WITH THE MALAYSIAN ENVIRONMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS

In a 2017 study by Mei *et al.*¹, it was revealed that among four areas that relate to sustainability; water, air, waste and climate change, Malaysians have the highest awareness on water-related issues (e.g., floods, water disruptions, water pollution), followed by air-related issues (haze, city smog), waste (3Rs) and climate change issues (anthropogenic factors).

When the environmental behaviors of the respondents were measured, the study revealed that Malaysians took more sustainable actions in areas related to water, followed by climate change, waste and air. The researchers noted that Malaysians would only take environmentally friendly actions if there were economic incentives (savings in their daily lives such as water and electricity tariffs, energy-saving appliances). Environmentally friendly behaviors to address proper waste management and the reduction of air-polluting habits were the least popular behaviors among Malaysians.



Above: Activities during our 'River Explorer' program we conduct with the children of riverine communities in conjunction with the 'River Of Life' project.



Above: A community clean-up during the 'Knights of Nature' camp we conduct with youth, in conjunction with Malaysia Marine and Heavy Engineering Holdings Berhad

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AND LEADERSHIP

Despite the strengthening of environmental governance since the 1990s, Malaysia exhibits most of the environmental problems that are typical of many developing economies. Lack of ethical business attitudes, insufficient monitoring, enforcement capacities, and communication strategies have encouraged civil society organizations to pave the way in mobilizing and catalyzing Malaysian society towards a demand for a sustainably managed future.

Additionally, with the advancements in mass media, environmental concerns have garnered more attention today than ever before because of the virality of environment-related news or information. More people are aware and are taking action, however not many are leading the movement in a holistic manner.

TRANSITION FROM AWARENESS TO ACTION

Said *et al.* (2007)² study on the level of environmental understanding and participation of youths in Malaysian secondary schools illustrated that while youths were aware of environmental issues, they were only moderately concerned by them.

Separately, a study on the sustainable behavior of youths in a university by Asmuni *et al.* (2017)³ revealed that university students from rural areas exhibited a significantly higher adoption rate of sustainable actions (recycling, buying energy efficient appliances) compared to university students from urban areas. The adoption of sustainable practices were not influenced by their parents' educational backgrounds or genders.



Above: A river-themed educational talk to increase youths understanding and awareness on the River of Life initiative

¹ Mei, N. S., Wai, C. W., & Ahamad, R. (2017). Public Environmental Awareness and Behaviour in Malaysia. *Asian Journal of Quality of Life*, 2(5), 43-53.

² Said, A. M., Yahaya, N., & Ahmadun, F. L. R. (2007). Environmental Comprehension and Participation of Malaysian Secondary School Students. *Environmental Education Research*, 13(1), 17-31.

³ Asmuni, S., Khalili, J. M., & Zain, Z. M. (2017). Sustainable Consumption Practices of University Students in Selangor, Malaysia. *Journal of Asian Behavioural Studies*, 2(5), 79-86.

OUR SOLUTION – EMPOWERING MALAYSIANS TO ADOPT SUSTAINABLE LIVING

DEVELOPING PEOPLE'S GREEN SKILLS AND PRACTICES

We focus on developing understanding of green skills and habits among the youth in order to empower them to make sustainable changes head-on in their professional and personal lives. These are the skills that are critical to the sustainable future of this country. These skills underpin how we interact with and treat the environment, how we handle environmental pressures, how we tackle these pressures and mold the attitudes and behaviors that will help determine sustainable choices in life.

To facilitate this transition from awareness to action, the ability to embrace new sustainable skills becomes particularly important. This ability acts as an adoption and mitigation factor that helps us as a nation avoid unsustainable patterns of behavior and stay on track with our commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These skills are able to give us the confidence to reach out for help, to understand and take action on environmental issues, and to adapt positively to challenging environmental, social and economic changes.

It's during periods of environmental stress or crisis that many of the young people we work with experience EcoKnights. They may be struggling with a new-found understanding of their impact on the planet, or have feelings of anxiety about their future. Perhaps they have started to take green initiatives but struggle to encourage their friends and families to do the same. They may be demotivated and uninspired in the face a personal challenge or have been ridiculed in the past for their green advocacy.

Others may be academically knowledgeable about the environment but fail to apply their knowledge in a practical manner during their daily lives. There are also those who have just begun taking baby steps towards practicing sustainable changes in their lives and have yet to develop the kinds of sustainable behavior, skills or attitudes they need in a holistic manner.

DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE MINDSETS NATURALLY

Each EcoKnights program uses creativity and innovation in crafting just the right exposure for people who are new to sustainability or are facing challenges in addressing sustainability. At the same time, we also equip them with the green skills they need to build a sustainable mindset.

Each program aims to achieve a specific learning outcome or action for the participants involved. Additionally, our officers work closely alongside our donors and partners as well as the young people themselves in order to encourage the development of action plans for applying new skills and concepts after the program has ended.

Our Theory of Change which is listed in the next few pages shares the four key principles that underpin how we design our programs and the steps that lead to the development of empowered young Malaysians who understand, take sustainable actions and lead sustainable efforts.



Above: EcoKnights advocates for sustainable living through campaigns, educational activities and public events

ECOKNIGHTS' THEORY OF CHANGE

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AN ECKNIGHT	WHAT HAPPENS IN A PROGRAM	WHAT THIS ACHIEVES	WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOUNG MALAYSIANS
<p>AUTHENTIC EXPERIENCE</p> <p>An authentic experience provides opportunities for our participants to respond to the daily challenges and uncertainties about sustainable living. When positively experienced, this encourages them to embrace, rather than avoid, these challenges and uncertainties in the future. We firmly believe that an authentic experience improves psychological outcomes such as self-reliance, resilience to environmental challenges, and overall well-being.</p>	<p>Participants achieve more self-awareness and develop a better sense of their impact on the environment.</p>	<p>Participants become more aware of sustainable practices and develop a sense of urgency or need to address them.</p>	<p>Participants slowly gain knowledge and become informed of the alternative solution - sustainable living.</p>
<p>CREATING THE RIGHT ENVIRONMENT</p> <p>Creating the right environment to facilitate an authentic experience in any of our programs provide the optimum conditions for learning. Our programs take place in nature and such learning environments have been associated with outcomes such as increased knowledge and understanding, the development of skills, improved attitudes and behaviors compatible with sustainable living, and self-reliance.</p>	<p>Participants brainstorm solutions to the challenges outlined in the program. This requires sustained effort and results in a variety of emotional, social, and environmental benefits.</p>	<p>Participants develop sustainable skills.</p>	<p>Participants develop solutions to address unsustainable practices and work towards their aspirations.</p>
<p>REFLECTIVE LEARNING</p> <p>Programs delivered with specific outcomes designed to be integrated into the daily lives of our participants have been shown to deliver stronger and more lasting outcomes. Using learning strategies like feedback, and even goal setting, our programs helped improve the participant's outcomes.</p>	<p>Participants take action which requires planning and implementation of their original sustainable solutions and reflection on their actions.</p>	<p>Participants enhance their actions and skills in sustainable practice(s) and develop personal responsibility.</p>	<p>Participants are better equipped to plan the steps they need to achieve their goals and follow through with them.</p>
<p>THE RESIDENTIAL EXPERIENCE</p> <p>Over the last decade, our residential volunteer and internship experiences have had some impact on relationships between peers. This experience develops resilience and an overall affinity for green living, in addition to improving engagement with sustainable behaviors and building a preparedness for a transition to the adoption of more sustainable habits and actions.</p>	<p>Participants try to live sustainably and lead other efforts related to sustainability</p>	<p>Sustainable behaviors and attitudes are formed. These contribute to the development of sustainable skills, such as leadership and empathy.</p>	<p>Participants lead, practice, embrace and advocate for sustainable living at home or the work environment, and work alongside others to achieve national or global sustainable goals</p>



OVERALL

The EcoKnights programs and activities act as a catalyst for positive change. The positive results seen from small changes encourage further change, and thus our participants and beneficiaries continue to develop following their EcoKnights experience and approach.

Through our programs, EcoKnights participants are empowered with the attitudes, skills and behaviours they need make sustainable changes in their lives. The skills they gain as EcoKnights participants allow them to thrive in their education, training and at work and throughout their lives.

ECOKNIGHTS FOCUS AREAS FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVING

WASTE MANAGEMENT

A growing population and an abundance of urbanization and growth has caused the municipal solid waste (MSW) generation in Malaysia to rise. The quantity of MSW generation, particularly in Peninsular Malaysia, has increased from 16,200 tonnes per day in 2001 to 19,100 tonnes per day in 2005 or an average of 0.8 kg/capita/day.

The amount increases yearly and seems to grow in parallel with the increasing amount of urban areas in many Asian countries, which are estimated to produce approximately 8 million tonnes of MSW per day (Zamali *et al.*, 2009)¹. According to United Nation data on MSW generation rates, on average Malaysians generate about 1.1 kg/cap/day of MSW. With a population of 30 million, a better engineered MSW management system is required to prevent environmental deterioration.

EcoKnights provides its community with solid waste recycling services on its premises and tracks the number of recyclables collected. We also work with local authorities to advocate for more responsible waste management while influencing change at the public level through strategic environmental communication.

SUSTAINABLE WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Malaysia is currently facing a threat to water security. From water supply and demand management, enforcement of policies to protect water resources, the World Resources Institute (WRI), which developed the Aqueduct Water Risk Atlas has projected a 1.4-fold increase in water stress levels for some areas in Kedah, Penang, Kelantan, Perak, Selangor, Kuala Lumpur, Malacca, Negri Sembilan and Johor by 2020.

The projected change shows how development and climate change are expected to affect water stress in the country. An increase in the population alongside a decrease in water resources could cause water-related stressors like river pollution to rise.

EcoKnights works at a very localized level (local authorization community groups and NGOs) to increase stakeholder participation and action on responsible water resources management practices.

From community river clean-ups to onfluencing stakeholders for change, we strive to ensure our water resources are more sustainably managed.

RESPONSIBLE CONSUMERISM

At the rate of how we are currently consuming resources, we would need four planet Earths to fuel our consumption patterns. Consumption in Malaysia has risen much faster over the last decade than in other industrialized countries due to our rate of population growth, fast urban development, increased motorization, and industrialization. Additionally, the general public is not aware of the ethical dimensions of consumption.

At EK, we promote responsible consumerism through the Green Market platform where we create a better understanding of sustainable consumption to the public. Through strong media advocacy and public engagement activities, EK works in collaboration with green businesses to mobilize and catalyze efforts in sustainable consumption and production, which is our commitment to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, Goal 12.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND HUMAN HEALTH

Long-term, persistent stress on the natural environment will harm human health. For example, the burning of forests or fire disasters in plantations results in air pollution like haze which in turn harms people, and eventually the economy. Similarly, irresponsible disposal of plastic bags in the environment will cause these plastic materials to break into smaller pieces, enter waterways, and pollute estuaries and the sea with microplastics. These microscopic hazards enter the food chain and end up being consumed by human beings. Similarly, the development of natural resources through activities like mining yield undesirable results like waterway pollution when done in excess.

This vicious cycle is continuously threatening the quality of our lives. At EcoKnights, we work in collaboration with academia and research agencies to study, document, and advocate better, more holistic management practices of the environment in order to protect human health.

¹ Zamali, T., Mohd, L.A., Abu, O.M.T (2009). An Overview of Municipal Solid Wastes Generation in Malaysia. *Jurnal Teknologi*, 51(F) 1-15, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia.

THE JOURNEY OF A MALAYSIAN TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY

THE PATH A MEMBER OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC TAKES WHEN THEY ENGAGE WITH ECKNIGHTS



DEVELOPING A MALAYSIAN'S KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS



"One of the things I've learned is how to practice a green lifestyle. Here in the office itself, we have our own compost bin to produce compost for our plants. We also separate our wastes.

Other than that, I also learned about the urban farming system which has already been installed in the office."

- Emirul Redzuan, 26, EcoKnights employee.



"I think this camp is a great way to viscerally experience sustainability in all its different aspects. Hearing from marine scientists and an Orang Asal spokesperson allowed me to gain a more holistic view of the Malaysian environment."

- Muhammad Luqman Avicenna, 21, EcoKnights employee.



"I was given the opportunity to try out different variety of work such as preparing slides for talk, getting the chance to be at IM4U studio to learn how to share and speak in media interviews, preparing for Green Market and film screening session, facilitating the Knights of Nature camp, setting up exhibition booth and explaining about climate change to the public and so many more.

These hands-on experiences trained me to be more calm and steady when we face problems and the importance of teamwork to handle and solve all the challenges."

- Lam Hui Yee, 24, university graduate, former EcoKnights Intern.

“ I think this camp is a great way to **viscerally experience** sustainability in all its different aspects. ”



In an EcoKnights program, participants receive knowledge and information and a sense of understanding on their impact on the environment.



As a result, they become more aware of their capabilities and participate and take action through skills development and capacity building.



This means that they will develop higher aspirations to be leaders with sustainable behaviors.

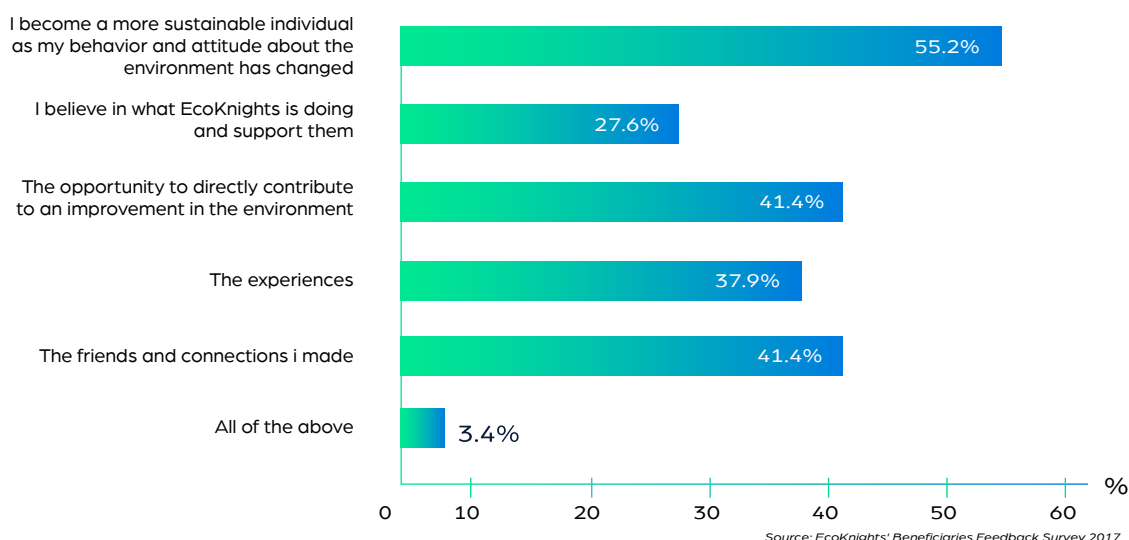
MALAYSIANS WHO ARE AWARE OF THEIR IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND TAKE ACTION

We believe that our ability to inspire sustainable living strongly affects the achievement of our mission and goals. Studies have already shown that if young people are given the information, knowledge, and the opportunity to participate in environmental programs and activities, then they are more likely to ditch their unsustainable daily habits for ones that are more sustainable. Self-sustainability, in particular, is a critical transformational effect of our programs and activities.

Every EcoKnights program and activity is designed to stretch and develop a young person’s understanding of sustainability and the capabilities they have to change present unsustainable behaviors. In Anugerah Hijau and the Knights of Nature Sustainability Camp, the participants are challenged to address or face a new environmental challenge. For some it’s about providing technological solutions, for others it may be about guiding a community to face their fear of cultural anxiety. These programs offer opportunities for participants to experience new things – for instance eating a meal with an indigenous community, or sharing a living space with people who have differing opinions about sustainability.

The 2017 impact survey we conducted with the stakeholders of our programs revealed that the valuable aspects of participating, volunteering, donating, and/or collaborating with EcoKnights and its programs made them adopt a more positive attitude about sustainable living and also caused them to adopt sustainable behaviors (55.2%). The other valuable aspects of being a part of our programs are that our stakeholders felt that they were able to contribute something positive for the environment (41.4%), in addition to benefitting from the connections and experiences gained from their participation (41.4%).

FIGURE 1: STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK ON THE VALUABLE ASPECT OF ECKNIGHTS PROGRAMS



“EcoKnights has helped me understand better about environmental sustainability. While interning with EcoKnights, I participated, assisted and even facilitated various environment-themed talks and workshops (soap making by reusing used cooking oil, eco enzyme, backyard composting workshops etc & KLEFF forum series) and learned little green habits as well as the importance of preserving the environment.

KLEFF’s films have also opened my eyes on global environmental issues. After watching the documentary “Straw” I’m keen and more motivated to live a no-straw life (I ask for no straw when ordering my drinks and I even bought metal straws for myself). My next target/mission is to influence my family to practice/do backyard composting at our lovely home.” – **Fara Amina Othman, 22**

MALAYSIANS WHO ADDRESS SUSTAINABLE WASTE MANAGEMENT

HOUSEHOLD SOLID WASTE

In 2016, EcoKnights initiated a community recycling program in collaboration with I-Cycle Global. This collaboration saw the establishment of the EcoKnights headquarters as a community recycling center. A blue collection bin was installed to accommodate the recyclable items, and various talks and workshops were organized for the public to provide a clearer understanding of how the recycling system works and the importance of recycling. In the last year of our operation, the quantity of recyclable items has been documented to understand the impact of this effort.

In 2017, the total amount of solid waste collected for recycling and upcycling was 4,807 kg and Figure 2 details the monthly amount of recyclables collected. On average, the EcoKnights community recycling program collects an average of 400 kg of household solid waste a month. A breakdown of the household solid waste collected is indicated in Figure 3.



TTDI Resident Margaret Lee, 57, visits the EcoKnights community recycling center frequently as "she has more confidence in the NGO's way of handling the recyclables". Read more at <https://www.thestar.com.my/metro/community/2017/04/28/go-be-more-transparent-about-recycling-management-govt-needs-to-be-upfront-about-how-it-manages-rec/#A1E1uvIH-stY6w2K3.99> - The Star, 28th April 2017

FIGURE 2: WEIGHT OF RECYCLABLES COLLECTED MONTHLY (KG) FOR 2017

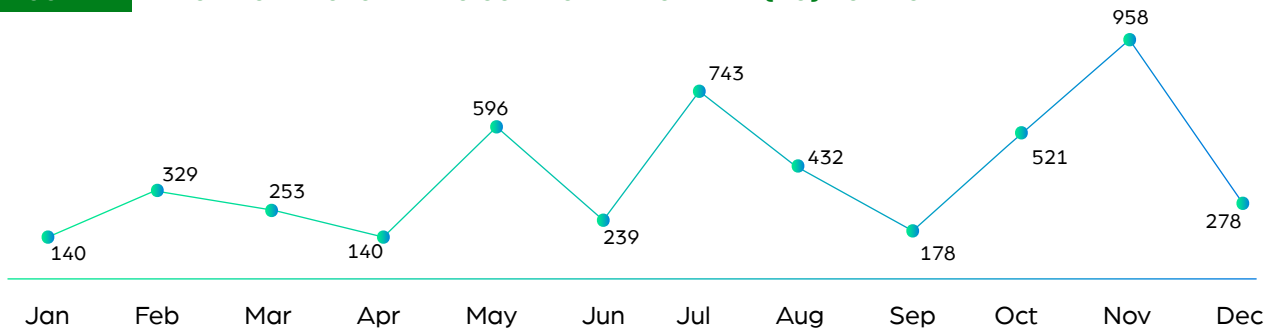
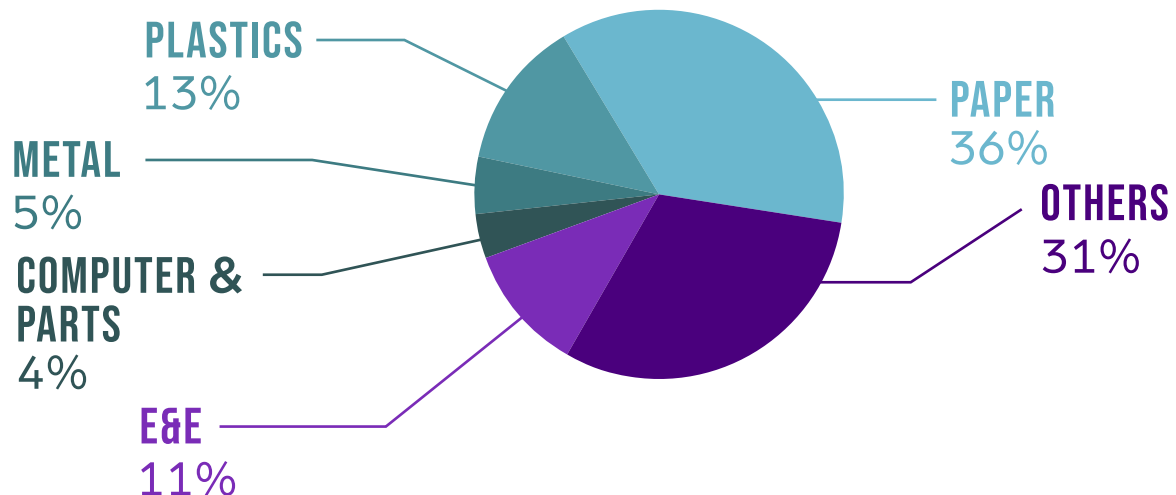


FIGURE 3: BREAKDOWN OF RECYCLED ITEMS COLLECTED (JAN - DEC 2017)



MALAYSIANS WHO ADDRESS SUSTAINABLE WASTE MANAGEMENT

HOUSEHOLD ORGANIC WASTE

(a) Community Used Cooking Oil Collection Program with Green Yards

EcoKnights provides the public with a proper channel to dispose their used cooking oil. In partnership with Green Yards, the used cooking oil are reprocessed into eco-soaps which are commercialized by Green Yards. Awareness, education, and workshops on upcycling used cooking oil are delivered to the public to advocate for responsible disposal practices for used cooking oil. In 2017, 475 kg of used cooking oil was collected and subsequently upcycled into 5000 pieces of soap.

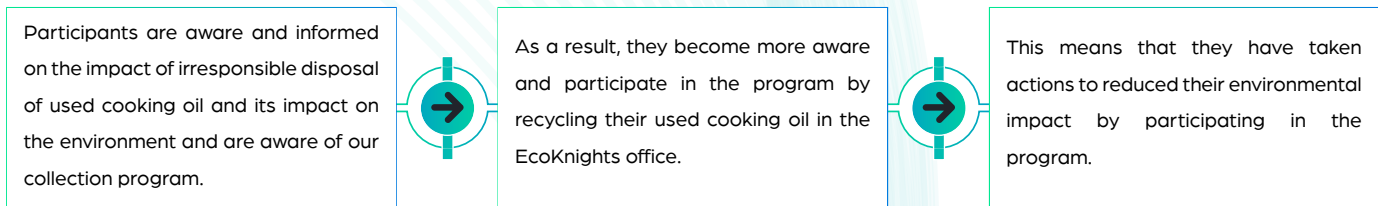


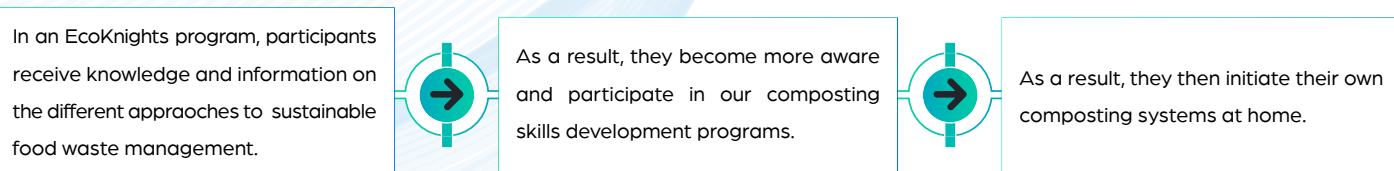
TABLE 1: VOLUME OF USED COOKING OIL COLLECTED IN 2017

Date of Collection	8/6/16	9/9/16	9/11/16	12/2/17	20/3/17	8/5/17	13/6/17	20/6/17	8/8/17	9/9/17
Volume (litres,kg)	80	50	65	40	30	49	35	25	48	53



(b) Garbage To Garden Program (Food Waste Composting)

EcoKnights delivers composting awareness, education, and training programs to the public aimed at reducing the amount of waste sent to landfills. From talks to workshops, the program also provides the participants with the option of using a 60L EcoKnights compost bin. In 2017, 200 number of people were trained, a total of 298 bins were distributed, and a total of 2,544 kg of food waste has been estimated to be prevented from landfills.



Number of People Trained About Composting in Workshops (2017)	Number of Bins Provided	Number of Composting Workshops Conducted	Amount of Food Waste Reduced from Landfills
200	298	15	2,544 kg

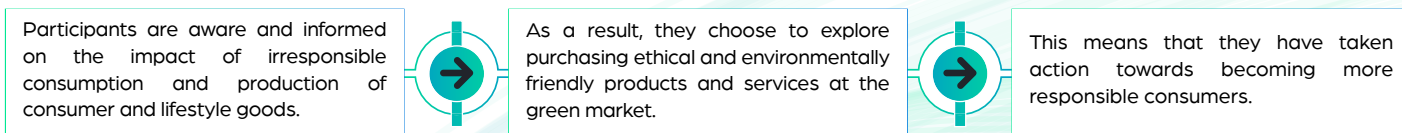
MALAYSIANS AND RESPONSIBLE CONSUMERISM

THE GREEN MARKET

Consumers are critical in driving sustainable production and play a central role in sustainable development. One of EcoKnights' key initiatives in promoting responsible consumerism is the Green Market. Through this program, responsible consumerism is considered in economic, environmental and social terms, while also taking into account the social and ethical dimensions of the products, such as how they are produced or their ecological impacts.

The Green Market's main objective is to create a consumer market for fair trade, ethical and sustainable products in Malaysia that measurably contributes to the improvement of livelihoods of small local green businesses. This challenge relates directly to Sustainable Development Goals 12, which aims to enhance sustainable consumption and production, which consequently reduces negative impacts on the environment. Proper awareness generation among the public about the concepts and principles of sustainable consumption and production are also incorporated within the activities of the Green Market.

The data presented since 2015 shows that the Green Market is an event that continues to attract the public. Over the last two years, 6 Green Markets have been organized and a total of 214 green businesses have participated. Out of the 214 green businesses, 29 kinds of green products and services were promoted. As a whole, over the past two years, the total amount of sales by green businesses at the Green Market is approximately RM 326,180. The event generated a PR value of RM 124,460 in 2017.



Number of Green Markets Organised from 2015 to 2017	Number of Green Businesses That Participated in the Green Market from 2015 to 2017	Total Amount of Sales by the Green Businesses at the Green Market from 2015 to 2017	PR Value Generated in 2017	Numbers of Green Products and Services Promoted from 2015 to 2017
6	214	RM 326,180*	RM 124,460.00	29

(*An estimated amount)

#BEGTOBEKAS - A PLASTIC BAG-FREE MALAYSIA!

The first #BegtoBekas initiative kicked off in 2017 with the aim of encouraging Malaysians to move away from the practice of using single-use plastic bags and opt for reusable bags instead, which are more sustainable and environmentally friendly. At local 'Pasar Malam' (night markets) and Ramadhan bazaars, EcoKnights worked with local authorities and corporate partners to create awareness about plastic bags and to encourage shoppers to make a habit of saying no to plastic and bringing their own shopping bags.

The program generated a PR value of RM 36,528.00. Under this initiative, 154 cloth reusable bags were distributed to the public. Before the bags were distributed, the public had to answer a survey in which they were asked about their knowledge of plastic decomposition, the impact of plastic on the environment, their plastic bag usage and their opinion on how to reduce plastic bag consumption.

Through the survey, we found out that out of 154 respondents:

- i) 63.40% of the respondents are aware that it takes more than 10 years for plastic bags to decompose;
- ii) 83.77% of the respondents agree that plastic directly or indirectly impacts the river;
- iii) 42.85% of the respondents rarely bring their own bags when they shop;
- iv) 44.65% of the respondents suggested that people use reusable bags.

Number of Cloth Reusable Bags Distributed in 2017	PR Value in 2017
154	RM 36,528.00

BUILDING RESILIENT MALAYSIANS

Qualities such as resilience, determination, and leadership are fundamental to whether we succeed or fail – in maintaining a sustainable lifestyle in school, at work, and at home. Without them, we give up at the first sign of failure, and we are less likely to positively change.

These qualities are important for young Malaysians when they transition from one stage of education to the next and when they move into employment. The outcomes that our programs present to our participants are carefully designed so that the participants can address specific environmental challenges – they learn about what it takes to tackle an environmental challenge, adopting an innovative and collaborative, for instance, working with local communities and businesses, while initiating and creating ideas and activities that will later empower them to lead in sustainability efforts.

TESTIMONIALS

"I become more aware and understand my responsibility as "steward" on this lovely home we call Earth and I'm more cautious in how I take care or treat the environment.

From meeting new people (EcoKnights' staff, stakeholders, collaborators, and participants) from all walks of life who truly care about the environment, I'm inspired to live my life more sustainably.

I hope from the knowledge that I've gained and the new green habits I'm currently practicing, I'm able to inspire my loved ones to join me in this journey."

- Fara Amina , 22

"I have been exposed to many forms of contributing factors that affects the environment and it has certainly increased my awareness on environmental issues." - Sanjevakumarran Elii, 25

"I have been involved with EK ever since I was 13 and I think some of the things which I have learnt through EK has been implemented at home as well.

For example, I implemented the idea of having a herbs garden which I learnt in school back at home."

-Nurfarhana Adam Malik, 23



In Anugerah Hijau or Knights of Nature, participants receive information and knowledge and a sense of understanding on a particular environmental challenge or issue.



As a result, they understand and develop actions to address the environmental challenges in a collaborative manner.



Participants acquire skills and aspirations to be leaders to empower others to adopt a sustainable lifestyle.



MALAYSIANS WHO ARE EMPOWERED TO BE LEADERS

ANUGERAH HIJAU

The Anugerah Hijau (AH) national school competition is one of EcoKnights flagship programs which began in 2009. To date, the program spans 9 states and is endorsed and supported by the Ministry of Education. Since 2009, AH has reached out to 108 schools and more than 29,000 students between the ages of 13 and 17 have participated in the program. This has resulted in a total of 180 green solutions created under the program.



Participants are aware and informed about the importance and need to establish green practices and program in schools and universities.



As a result, they choose to explore their capabilities by participating in the program with the aim of operationalizing their green efforts.



Participants take actions to be green at school or university based on the program's requirements.

Number of States Involved (2009 - 2017)	Number of Green Solutions by Finalists from 2009 to 2017	Number of High Schools Involved from 2009 to 2017	Number of Student Participants Involved from 2009 to 2017
9	180	148	29,850 ¹

KNIGHTS OF NATURE SUSTAINABILITY CAMP

Knights of Nature (KON) Sustainability Camp is another flagship program of EcoKnights which began in 2012. The aim of the program is to provide an outdoor hands-on learning experience for young Malaysians eager to address and engage in environmental challenges. EcoKnights works with partners and collaborators to design camps that inspire the youth to be more aware of environmental challenges.

In addition to that, we also encourage participants to participate and engage with local communities that are making a difference in this area. Lastly, the program also grooms the participants with the necessary qualities and characteristics to be emerging sustainability leaders. To date, EcoKnights has organized 13 camps in which around 520² young Malaysians participated and benefitted from the program.



Participants are made aware of the importance of building their own skills and knowledge, and enhance networking in the field of sustainable development.



As a result, they participate in the camp and engage in learning opportunities to address a specific environmental issue.



This means that they have taken actions to address an environmental challenge.

Number of Camps from 2012 to 2017	Number of Participants from 2012 to 2017
13	520 ²

¹ From 2009 to 2011, the estimated number of students involved is 3,000

² An average of 40 participants per camp

KUALA LUMPUR ECO FILM FESTIVAL (KLEFF)



The International Kuala Lumpur Eco Film Festival (KLEFF) is Malaysia’s first and longest serving environment-themed film festival. This initiative was created as a not-for-profit platform to engage Malaysians on issues related to sustainability through a creative platform using audio visual materials. It started in 2008 as a small grassroots community-based film festival. Over the years, it has evolved into an international platform offering opportunities for local and international filmmakers to create traction within the environmental movement. By 2011, KLEFF proved it was able to attract the mass public and data began to be collected for future reference.

Keeping in mind that the data tracking began in 2011, 549 environmental-themed films were screened to date. Under KLEFF, 60 community workshops were organised and 276 stakeholders and partnerships were established. Starting 2015, volunteers participated in the event and since then, 631 volunteers have taken part in KLEFF. The 2017 KLEFF generated a PR value of RM 2,654,492.00. It is expected for the following years that KLEFF’s traction will continue to grow.

Number of Environmental Films Screened at KLEFF from 2011 to 2017	Number of Community Workshops Organised at KLEFF from 2011 to 2017	Number of Volunteers Who Participated from 2015 to 2017	Number of Stakeholders/Partners Engaged from 2011 to 2017	PR Value Generated in 2017
549	60	631	276	RM 2,654,492.00

TESTIMONIALS

“The Kuala Lumpur Eco Film Festival certainly is a festival like no other. I have personally experienced it twice and look forward to it every year. People from all over the world would make their way here just for the experience. There is really something for everyone to enjoy from a wide range of selected local and international environmental films ranging from full-length documentaries to animations, games, performances, workshops and a green market for green products.

The festival also calls for volunteers, a great opportunity for passionate individuals who wish to contribute for a cause. All in all, a weekend filled with fun and games which also spreads some love and awareness for this beloved planet we call home.”

– **Sanjevakumaran Elilalagan, KLEFF volunteer.**

“We need to see KLEFF beyond its name to understand its desired impact. In the YouTube era, now more than ever, movies are an effective medium to reach a large audience and capture attention on social and environmental issues. The movie screenings at KLEFF is just a trigger towards mobilizing society towards sustainable and responsible living. That is why all other activities surrounding the movie screening are as important (if not more) than the movie themselves.”

– **Giorgio Catucci, DHL, KLEFF partner, and volunteer**

EMPOWERING MALAYSIANS TOWARDS PARTICIPATION IN WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Through smart partnerships with government agencies, community groups and also private industry players, EcoKnights works across multiple sectors while promoting sustainable water resource management with a strong focus on community-based river management and rehabilitation efforts. Our work also supports and complements the efforts of the country's River of Life program.

With a strong communication and media strategy, EcoKnights advocates for more community-based solutions to tackle the severely polluted and badly managed rivers in the city centers. From workshops to talks, public events to initiating partnerships with local government, EK strives to contribute to better river governance for a sustainable city and community.

Participants become aware of their impact on water resources.



As a result, they participate in EcoKnights' programs



Participants initiate and participate in partnerships with local authorities and NGOs to initiate their own efforts in water resource protection.



KLEAR AND SUNGAI BUNUS ACTION COMMITTEE GROUP

The Klang Community Learning, Engagement and Action on Rivers (KLEAR) is a public outreach program that aims to increase awareness, participation, and action from the stakeholders in the river basin. This program supports and complements the government's River of Life program. Targeting youths and riverine communities, KLEAR is a three-year effort to encourage public action and participation in order to protect, rehabilitate and restore city rivers.

EcoKnights is also an active stakeholder in the Sungai Bunus Working Committee (Jawatankuasa Kerja Sungai Bunus) in which EcoKnights is currently the chairing organization. EcoKnights' role is to facilitate inclusive multi-stakeholder engagements and dialogues towards sustainable governance and management of Sungai Bunus. Additionally, other community-based activities that are organized include river awareness and education activities, regular discussions, and engagements with relevant government agencies and outreach.

Participants are made aware and informed about the importance of river health and the impact of humans on rivers.



As a result, they become interested and participate in our programs.



Over time, the participants initiate their own community-based efforts to reduce their impact on river systems.

River	Number of Partnerships and Collaborators in the Program (2017)	Number of Trees Planted	Number of Community Engagements Conducted	Number of Community-based Initiatives Implemented
Sungai Bunus	5	47	3	3
Sungai Kerayong	3	N/A	5	1



AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS



NGO LEADERSHIP AWARD 2017 – at the 2017 World CSR Congress, Mumbai, India.



SOCIAL INNOVATION AWARD 2017 – at the Malaysia Business Awards 2017 organized by the Kuala Lumpur Malay Chamber of Commerce, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

PARTNERING FOR CHANGE

EcoKnights works closely with corporate partners to provide both internal and external benefits to their employees when it comes to promoting sustainable living. Coined as corporate social responsibility, EcoKnights facilitates and mobilizes programs and activities that fulfill a corporate's social and environmental commitment while enriching the lives of its employees with knowledge and experiential learning experiences on sustainability.

Since 2008, we have collaborated with more than 50 corporate companies from 8 states, benefiting more than 15,000 employees and garnering close to RM 9 million in media value on such CSR efforts.

Corporate beneficiaries enhance their awareness and knowledge on environmental issues.



As a result, they participate and take action in learning about the solutions.



Corporate beneficiaries then initiate their own internal and external actions to foster adoption of sustainable living.

SUMMARY

The first EcoKnights impact report is committed to showcasing how the organization spends its resources to meet the needs of our stakeholders in promoting, advocating, and implementing sustainable development initiatives. Over the last 12 years, EcoKnights has delivered programs and activities to help increase Malaysian understanding, participation, action, and inspiration in order to make a positive impact on the environment. This report serves as a baseline and benchmark in monitoring, assessing, and measuring the organization's impact in years to come.

