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# Epson SEA, WWF partner for the region's sustainability



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Epson Southeast Asia announced recently its partnership with World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) as part of the Japan-based company's commitment to co-create sustainable solutions and empower communities.

In an online news briefing on March 18, Siew Jin Kiat, regional managing director of Epson Southeast Asia, told journalists from the region that the new partnership seeks to scale marine conservation impact and climate solutions across Southeast Asia by working with youths, citizen scientists, as well as businesses and local communities.

"Sustainability has been and will continue to be a core focus for Epson as part of our renewed Epson 25 Corporate Vision," Jin Kiat said.

"Beyond our ongoing efforts to deliver sustainable technology and solutions to our customers and partners, we are extremely proud to be extending this focus on sustainability to the places we operate in by co-creating a myriad of eco-innovative solutions with WWF and local communities to truly make an impact on a greener tomorrow," he added.

Jien Kiat said Epson is supporting WWF in order to scale coral restoration efforts in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore, as well as mangrove restoration in the Philippines to sustain the Coral Triangle, that is acknowledged as the Earth's epicenter of marine biodiversity.

Moreover, he said saving the Coral Triangle is important because it hosts 76 percent of the world's coral species and the most mangrove-rich areas on the planet and over 6,000 species of fish.

As a key part of Southeast Asia, and extending south toward the Pacific, Jien Kiat pointed out that marine and coastal resources from the Coral Triangle directly sustain the food and livelihoods of over 130 million people, with billions more tracing their food sources to this region.

“Yet, decades of overfishing, unsustainable tourism and urbanization, and the climate crisis threaten to destroy the critical marine and coastal habitats in and around the Coral Triangle,” he said.

He said working with the local stakeholders and institutions is important to ensure these restoration efforts’, aim to support and restore the critically important marine ecosystem health that people all depend on, while, at the same time, building capacity among local communities as key stakeholders in the long-term maintenance and management of their coastal resources.

For the Philippines, the company said it is a “globally significant biogeographic unit of the Coral Triangle.” It said mangrove conservation is of utmost importance for the protection of marine ecosystem services and vulnerable coastal communities.

It is estimated that nearly 80 percent of global fish catches depend on mangrove sites. Moreover, mangrove ecosystems protect coastal communities from wave action and storms, helping to prevent loss of life, property damage and soil erosion.

Jie Kien said increasingly intense natural disasters, coastal reclamation and overexploitation of resources has led to a deterioration in mangrove sites and consequent rapid decline in fish stocks.

He said more than half of the Philippines original mangrove cover has been lost within the last century. The result has indicated a significant impact on the human wellbeing and livelihoods of coastal communities in the area.

In this regard, the company will support WWF to work with local communities to restore several mangrove sites in southern Palawan.

Epson said local capacity building efforts will focus on mangrove restoration and protection, including seed planting, monitoring and assessment, coastal resource management planning, and more.

To ensure the longevity of restoration efforts by coastal communities, Epson will support WWF to establish a Community Learning and Innovation Hub focused on mangrove

restoration. This is part of a network that empowers communities to sustain capacity building, share best practices, and exchange practitioner knowledge.

“Lasting conservation impact is achieved through collaboration with sincere partners,” said WWF-Singapore CEO R. Raghunathan.

“We look forward to working closely with Epson that is committed to real climate action and to drive meaningful efforts to ensure that conservation of our environment is in tandem with economic empowerment and humans living in harmony with nature,” Raghunathan said.

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