



# Maybank Global Banking focusing on customer value creation in navigating a dynamic risk environment

In a calculated move emblematic of corporate foresight, Maybank has been strategically growing its global banking operations in the ever-evolving Asean region, marking a pivotal step in fortifying its commitment to customer value creation while adhering to environmental, social and governance (ESG) principles.

This strategic endeavour not only solidifies Maybank's standing as a regional financial juggernaut but also underscores its unyielding dedication to sustainable and responsible business practices.

One of the crucial figures in this move is Maybank Global Banking Group CEO Datuk Muzaffar Hisham, whose strategic acumen has played an integral role in shaping the institution's approach to integrating ESG into the group's businesses.

"We are blessed that because of our size and presence in 10 markets in Asean, we always have this opportunity to complement not only our customers, but also the policy-makers in shaping the country's economic agenda," he said.

Under Maybank's M25+ strategy, Muzaffar said it is ever more crucial for Maybank Global Banking to work with its clients in dealing with growing external uncertainties in the region, from energy transition and social impact to ways of maintaining corporate discipline in ensuring compliance with stringent governance standards.

"One of the few main focuses that we are looking at under the M25+ is the emphasis on customer centricity, how best we can complement the customers in the partnership that we have," he said.

"When we talk about customers, we always think that global banking is about large corporates, but it also involves other segments including mid-capitalisation companies. We have transaction banking under the cash and trade business, and of course, treasury or the global markets businesses."

"We also have asset management, and HouzKEY, a unique collaboration with Maybank Islamic. To a certain extent, parts of retail, we collaborate with our community financial services businesses," Muzaffar explained.

"From a bank's perspective, whether to raise Singapore dollar, Indonesian rupiah, provide merger and acquisition advisory, and facilitate cross-border transactions, the beauty of Maybank, is our diversity. If a Malaysian company goes to say Cambodia, we can get our colleagues there to see how best we can support. We can leverage our key centres in Malaysia and Singapore, and the size of our balance sheet in local currency to take a holistic view in serving our customers," he added.

## Embedding ESG into customer value creation

Muzaffar said one of the advantages Maybank Global Banking has is being able to leverage its financial prowess to steer sustainable development.

This enabled Maybank's operations in Asean to serve as a linchpin for inclusive growth, providing support to businesses and communities while adhering to the most stringent ESG standards.

It is worth noting that Maybank's regional sustainability financing team is the first in Malaysia and among the first in Asean to be certified by the International Capital Market Association (ICMA).



Muzaffar said Maybank Investment Banking Group under Global Banking is one of the first in its industry in Asean to establish a dedicated ESG research team and its own proprietary ESG rating and scoring.

At the core of Maybank's ESG agenda is an unwavering commitment to environmental sustainability, and Muzaffar shed light on the bank's green financing initiatives, revealing that the group has mobilised nearly RM53 billion in sustainable finance between January 2021 and end-September this year, surpassing the initial RM50 billion target, and is on track to achieve the target of RM80 billion by 2025.

He shared that Maybank has also signed a memorandum of understanding with Iskandar Investment Bhd (IIB) in Johor to provide end-to-end sustainable financing and transition support, while exploring the feasibility of the latter's mangrove land — some 224ha of it — as a nature-based solutions carbon credit project.

At COP28, Maybank launched its Transition Finance Framework, the first by a Malaysian bank, to outline its approach of classifying

and recognising financing solutions offered as credible transition finance, complementing the bank's Sustainable Product Framework. These two frameworks reinforce Maybank's commitment to playing a leading role in the systematic transformation towards a net zero economy.

"Our business revolves around managing risks, a core fundamental of banking that is becoming increasingly important as we navigate dynamic risks. We are partnering clients to manage and hedge," he said.

"It is going to be challenging, of course, but we have seen resilience, not just at Maybank, but in working with our clients, even during the tough days of Covid-19," he added.

## Robust governance key to fostering market confidence

Furthermore, Maybank Global Banking's operations in Asean align with robust governance practices, as highlighted by Muzaffar. The bank places a premium on transparency, accountability and ethical conduct, cultivating trust among stakeholders and strengthening

the overall stability of the financial system.

"If you look at Malaysia, at how the capital market has evolved, it's not just about raising money, the bond market or about number of IPOs (initial public offerings). I have seen a lot of transactions where if the market doesn't believe in you, and if you don't provide the right disclosure, they will penalise you," he said.

This discipline would ultimately help build confidence and enhance capital mobility among different countries in Asean, said Muzaffar.

As Maybank Global Banking manages the intricacies of cross-border businesses, its emphasis on ESG principles amid dynamic risks in the Asean region serves as an exemplar for financial institutions seeking to harmonise economic growth with social and environmental stewardship.

This strategic value proposition not only reinforces Maybank Global Banking's regional prominence but also underscores the undeniable significance of sustainable business practices in navigating the ever-shifting currents of global risks.



Maybank Singapore extended a US\$100 million sustainability-linked Islamic revolving credit facility (RCF-i) — Southeast Asia's first such RCF in the shipping industry — to AET, a leading global owner and operator of maritime transportation assets and specialised services. Present at the signing ceremony were (from left) Maybank Global Banking Group CEO Datuk Muzaffar Hisham, Maybank Singapore Head of Global Banking Gregory Seow, AET Global Director of Finance Winnie Cruz-Ding and AET President & CEO Zahid Osman.