

Before 1995, waste collection was a service provided by local authority and the services was not standardised between all areas. It was then decided by the federal government to improve management of waste collection and public cleaning.

**Alamflora**  
Appreciating LIFE

Over the past 30 years, with rapid development and urbanisation, service improvement has been one of the key drivers in stimulating greater competition and efficiency in public services especially so, in providing a fair level of services, for all Malaysians to enjoy, be it in major towns or rural areas. This includes, the important aspect of cleanliness and safer environment in the form of solid waste management services.

Realising this, in 1995, the Malaysian government had made a crucial decision that set the future of the country's waste management industry to greater heights when it decided to fully privatise solid waste management to further enhance and improve it. Over 50 companies tendered for the full privatisation of the solid waste management of the country and Alam Flora was chosen based on its detailed plan in transforming the waste management to be on par with other developing countries at that time.

The company, since winning the solid waste management and public cleansing tender for the central region, immediately added 400 compactors and went on to provide waste collection and cleaning services for Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur (WPKL), Wilayah Persekutuan Putrajaya (WPPJ), Selangor and Pahang, but on an interim basis. The solid waste management full privatisation agreement was finally signed in 2011.

Today, Alam Flora has more than 1000 fleets of vehicles including compactors, open tipper lorries, arm roll lorries, and high-pressure jettors, Vacall, Road Sweeper, actively clearing removing 1.01 million tonnes of waste annually from major public spaces in the city and residential. Taking waste management seriously, the group did not sit on its laurels with the concessions, but further invested in technology and digitalisation to move the process of waste management up the value chain in tandem with European standards.



Alam Flora worker is collecting used cooking oil

After 25 years of establishment, Alam Flora is taking a step further to put Malaysia's solid waste management practices commensurate with developed countries, by going beyond waste management. This is being done through a number of initiatives involving waste diversion and recovery.

In 2013, the group established its subsidiary, Alam Flora Environmental Solutions Sdn Bhd (AFES) with the main agenda to continue exploring the field of environmental sustainability through its services which covers waste facility management such as landfills, incinerator, leachate treatment plant, port reception facilities, integrated recycling facilities, waste collection, and scrap recovery.

With its agenda of creating a sustainable living environment, AFES was also tasked to provide holistic asset and facility management services. With sustainability in mind and in reducing energy waste, AFES uses Computerised Maintenance Monitoring System (CMMS), Building Management System (BMS), Condition Base Maintenance (CBM) and Centralised Monitoring System (CEMOS) to help keep facilities and building infrastructure operational at optimum levels albeit efficiently.

In an exclusive interview with Business Today, Chief Executive Officer Dato Mohd Zain Hassan who comes with over two decades of experience in the field said "Our business model is towards providing sustainable solutions, we will invest in more sustainable facilities and better technologies to treat waste, so it won't end up in landfills. Also, through our partnership with a few manufacturers, we are currently



promoting circular economy to ensure that the recyclables from the waste collected go back to the manufacturers and millers. This is also called cradle-to-cradle concept."

Alam Flora is upbeat with the transformation the industry is currently going through, global issues that are impacting the planet like climate change and Malaysia's ambition in reducing carbon emission is giving waste management a much-needed attention that it never got before.

The current limelight will bode well for the rehabilitation of the environment, with its mantra of always looking to hand over a cleaner planet to the next generation, the company is also heavily promoting its 5R program

which is an additional 'R' from the conventional 3R, here it stands for Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Recovery. The intention, Dato' Mohd Zain adds is to give awareness and help to increase the national recycling rate, in line with Malaysia's target to achieve a 40% recycling rate by 2025.

One of the top programmes by Alam Flora, is the soon-to-be launched Recovery Initiative Sustainable Eco-Facility (RISE@ KL) a facility designed based on a semi-automated process to accept and sort recyclable materials.

Dato Mohd Zain was extremely excited to share this latest addition for the group, which he adds will change the way the public views of waste! (more on RISE later)



## Waste Management in the New Era

Alam Flora takes most of its cue on waste management from Europe, adopting the standards practiced in these developed countries the company can chart the path Malaysia can take in sustainability and environmental guardianship.

To meet those standards, the deeply passionate CEO adds that Malaysians have to be more conscious about their waste and where the plastic bag will eventually end! While in developed countries, households have started practicing 'buy only what you need' or sustainable spending, by propagating waste separation practice at home.

While he admits that it will take time and education to change mind-sets, Alam Flora is committed in doing as much of the cleaning and keeping the city safe and healthy as they can. Adding that the use of new technology has eased some of the laborious tasks, especially with gathering data which has become a useful tool for the industry.

In the waste management industry, there are a few aspects that is important: Data analytics, Tracking & Monitoring. Dato' Mohd Zain adds "It helps us to manage our operations, which is currently using the fleet monitoring system and Alam Flora reporting system. Both systems help us to track our day-to-day services and reports to SWCorp without any use of paper. A lot of data were collected based on our operations, therefore properly analysing these data will help us to improve our services and provide a better customer experience."

"Also, we need to be close to the Public, if there is any reports or complaints, our Flora Care system will channel it to our operations directly which really improves our efficiency and response time."

With innovation at the heart of the company, AFES is currently piloting a few research and development initiatives on the conversion of plastics to fuel, food waste to energy and the use of black soldier fly in the bio-waste treatment while continuing to maximise the recovery of recyclables and reduce landfill waste. These are some of the progressive efforts that the company is undertaking to achieve a linear circular economy that can possibly lead to zero waste!



Alam Flora continue to organise program with kids on environment awareness

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**Alam Flora is aiming to be the company of choice when it comes to championing the circular economy activities and together with other players, to be an active role model in promoting environmental causes locally and internationally**

*Dato Zain Hassan, CEO Alam Flora*

## Towards Zero Waste- Circular Economy

Alam Flora has adopted an amazing 9 of the 17 United Nations' Sustainability Development Goals (SDG) as it strives to create a sustainable planet beyond waste management. The areas it will be committed to are clean water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy, industry innovation and infrastructure, sustainable cities and communities, responsible consumption and production, climate action, life below water, and life on land.

"As a company that continuously promotes environmental preservation and sustainability, we always relate our services to SDG. This is clearly mentioned on our website, our programmes, promotions, and partnership objectives. Our main target is to increase recycling rate, not only thru public awareness programme but also initiatives on waste recovery and treatment, in line with SDG 9, 11, and 12" says Dato' Mohd Zain.







Fasiliti Inovasi Kitar Semula (FIKS) is a recycle education centre to promote 5R to Malaysians, as well as to help reduce recyclable waste sent to landfills

Alam Flora's main target is to reduce waste and to achieve this, the circular economy can offer some resolution to the current problem of economic consumption, which relies heavily on the limited resources that lead to unnecessary waste. The concept also applies to the 3R model that can change waste to greater value, as secondary resources.

Alam Flora has been proactive in this aspect, the group has already set up a Material Recovery Facility (MRF) in Putrajaya, with 500 tonnes of recyclable waste processed per month and, together with a waste management and recycling education centre for the public to know more about the 3R process known as Fasiliti Inovasi Kitar Semula or FIKS.

"The RISE@KL (Recovery Initiative Sustainable Eco-Facility) will be a big-scale sorting centre which will purely focus on recycling and recovery municipal solid waste to implement circular economy model and commit to sustainability. We have the FIKS, 13 buy-back centres, and also RISE@KL and have committed to the Sustainable Development Goals No 12, while also supporting Malaysia's ambition to achieve carbon-neutral status by 2050," adds Dato Mohd Zain

### Next Phase- Sustainability

Clearly, Alam Flora is well-positioned to lead the agenda for environmental sustainability with its wealth of operational knowledge, after all the company has been in the business for more than 25 years.

Apart from having its own Environmental Centre of Excellence that promotes education, research and development, and sustainability initiatives on waste management, the focus now is also

to be a partner and think tank team to the government to promote sustainability agenda and provide inputs and assistance in promoting policies on sustainability.

Alam Flora is aiming to be the company of choice when it comes to championing the circular economy activities and together with other players, to be an active role model in promoting environmental causes locally and internationally.

Going beyond waste management, Dato' Mohd Zain and his team are on a mission to provide green solutions, a clean nation, and a sustainable environment and help to create a recycling culture among Malaysians.

"We want to be an active player, to be part of the solution in eradicating the environmental problems faced by the country and world today and shall continue to strive to give the best in terms of work commitment and together, help create the future we want, a better and sustainable living environment for all to live in and prosper," conclude Dato' Mohd Zain. **BT**



Cyber Eco Hunt event joined by key opinion leaders, influencers and bloggers