

Malaysia: first of its kind home-based activities to mark World Oceans Day

The British High Commission will mark World Oceans Day on 8 June 2020 with the Blu Hope campaign, a first of its kind online campaign which runs from 8th to 12th June 2020. The campaign aims to raise awareness of the importance of the world's oceans, how plastic pollution is damaging ocean biodiversity and to encourage action in tackling marine pollution.

The campaign encompasses an interactive home-based activity sheet aimed at encouraging children to think more holistically about their plastic usage habits; as well as a series of marine-themed webinars targeted toward businesses, policy makers and academia to encourage discourse and inform policy making. This campaign is supported by the Malaysian Ministry of Education, Ministry of Environment and Water. Other partners include Plastic Oceans UK, Mura Technology, TimorBlue, WRAP, Asia Dive Expo, ZuBlu and YTL.

H.E. Charles Hay MVO, British High Commissioner to Malaysia, said:

Collaboration is at the heart of tackling the global problem of plastic pollution in the oceans. This is why I'm very pleased that the UK is working with Malaysia and international partners on such an important cause. This Blu Hope campaign showcases not just international collaboration to raise awareness, but also research, science and technology that is being deployed to help create a plastic neutral circular economy.

Tackling plastic pollution is one of the UK Government's commitments in the broader agenda of conserving the environment and addressing climate change. The UK is championing these causes and will be co-chairing the very important United Nations' Climate Change Conference of Parties or COP26 in November 2021.

This online campaign, which is well-suited to the current environment where people are encouraged to stay home, will enable children in Malaysia, SE Asia and beyond to participate by doing the 'Plastic Detectives' activity sheet which is available in Bahasa Malaysia, Chinese and English languages. The activity challenges children to record and track their household plastic consumption for one week (8th to 14th June) and upload their findings on the campaign website. The data and findings will be tallied with the objective of informing future policy on plastic.

To further promote participation, the Ministry of Education Malaysia will disseminate the activity sheet to 10,000 public primary and secondary schools in Malaysia.

The special lesson plan and activity sheet was developed by British NGO Plastic Oceans UK. Jo Ruxton, its founder and director, said:

Since our work began in 2009, I have been delivering presentations on plastic to school pupils of all age groups. I've seen how effectively these students take that message on to their friends, relatives and even their teachers. Our 'Plastic Detectives' activity sheet will engage those young minds. But it will also show how much single-use plastic has entered into our homes, unnoticed. We hope that those who take part, with their families, will feel a new sense of responsibility to break the plastic habit. We're empowering young leaders to become plastic intelligent through our behaviour change programmes.

The live webinars and online panel discussions will feature a line-up of Malaysian and international speakers. Among the topics which will be covered are oceans and biodiversity; protection of mangrove and corals; sustainable tourism, chemical recycling among others. There will also be sessions where eco warriors and professional divers will share tales and tips and also daily screenings of 'A Plastic Ocean'. These webinars and online discussions have been made possible with the help of Asia Dive Expo (ADEX) who will co-host the sessions.

The Plastic Detective activity sheet, webinar schedule and other campaign materials are available at [Blu Hope](#).

Blu Hope is the third phase of the British High Commission's ongoing Green is GREAT campaign, which was first launched in September 2019 with the VVIP screening of BBC's Blue Planet II graced by TRHs The Prince Edward Earl of Wessex and Tengku Zatashah binti Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah. The second phase of the Green is GREAT campaign was held in conjunction with Commonwealth Day in March this year.