



# JURUTERA

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### **THE INSTITUTION OF ENGINEERS, MALAYSIA**

Bangunan Ingenieur, Lots 60 & 62, Jalan 52/4, P.O. Box 223,  
(Jalan Sultan) 46720 Petaling Jaya, Selangor.  
Tel: 03-7968 4001/4002 Fax: 03-7957 7678

E-mail: sec@iem.org.my Homepage: <http://www.iem.org.my>



## RE-Positioning Towards Sustainable Future

By: Engr. Mah Soo, F.I.E.M., P.Eng.

Greetings to all our readers, members, management and staff of IEM and friends who have just enjoyed the recent celebrations of Deepavali and Hari Raya Aidilfitri. Let us hope that we could work towards sustainable development to perpetuate the celebration of all festivities for our many future generations to come.

If the average man on the street is asked: "How can development be made sustainable?", the answer given might be "Que sera sera, whatever will be, will be, the future is not for us to see." On the contrary, when asked to predict the future cost of goods and services, most will reply off the cuff that these will go up (and definitely not down) in support of the insatiable demand for consumer goods. Even Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik, as reported by the media, quoted "Higher gas price is inevitable" and "While Malaysia may not run out of gas for another 30 years. That does not mean the country should use it all up at the expense of future generation".

As such, Malaysia has taken the correct approach with the formulation of the Fifth Fuel Policy by the Government and the Small Renewable Energy Program (SREP) by the Energy Commission, but with marginal success. Further action plans are definitely required to revive the impetus towards better results.

Recently, together with another Japanese expert, we conducted a very meaningful Regional Workshop, in Bangkok, on "Energy Efficiency and Re-use of Biomass Waste" for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) for the five countries within the Greater Mekong Sub-Region of ASEAN. It was a worthwhile experience to note that there is such enthusiasm, commitment and networking among the participants in working towards sustainable development through RE or Renewable Energy. Such ideas could be extended, such as in the usage of wastes than to cause nuisance, pollution and health issues.

The haze has recently returned causing much discomfort and concerns to the general health of residents around the region. If the haze is caused by the modus operandi of slash-and-burn as reported, then maybe Indonesia could take a cue in mitigating this problem by using the RE concept of turning waste to energy. IEM, through close rapport with its Indonesian counterpart could spearhead some initiatives to bring the discussion to some common platform, either in collaboration between professional institutions or between government to government. What could be better than to use this to kick start the IEM ETI (Engineering, Technology & Innovation) Services among IEM members as well as to export our expert services to professional counterparts of other countries. ■