

The Star
25 October 2021

VALUES are a core foundation for mankind and can be applied across a broad spectrum when investing. While the concept of environmental, social and governance (ESG) investing is not new, its significance among the Malaysian public is fast growing.

This is due to the increasing awareness of environmental, social as well as corporate governance issues that is gaining the attention of businesses, investors and governments.

According to Sun Life Malaysia chief executive officer president and country head Raymond Lew, advancing sustainability will remain a key focus for Sun Life Malaysia.

"For Sun Life, sustainability means more than simply being accountable. It is about taking actions that will drive positive environmental and social outcomes for our clients, employees, communities, and shareholders over the longer term.

"Our sustainability measures currently focus on three key areas – advancing sustainable investing, increasing financial security, and fostering healthier lives," he says.

To achieve one of the group's key sustainability measures in the area of "advancing sustainable investing", the company recently introduced an investment-linked ESG fund – the Sun Life Malaysia Global Sustainable Fund that aims to make ESG investing more accessible.

It is the first Malaysian life insurance company to roll out an ESG-themed fund for clients through its investment-linked insurance plans (ILP). The fund is a collaboration between Sun Life Malaysia and Nomura Asset Management Malaysia via a feeder fund.

"This fund also ties in well with the company's overarching commitment to help clients invest responsibly and helps address pressing issues such as climate change and other social issues.

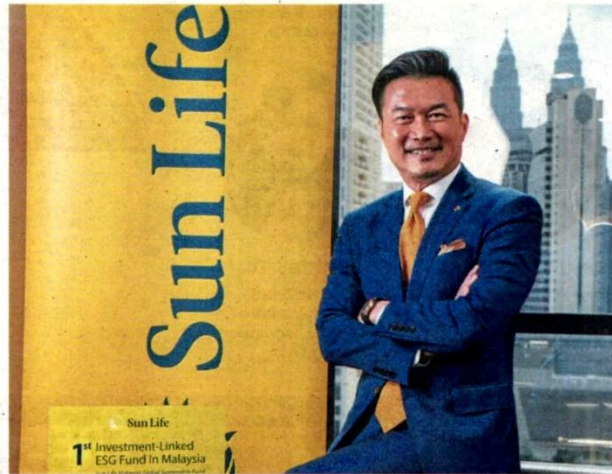
"It is timely to shift mindsets that investing should incorporate a purpose that creates long-term values without compromising on returns," says Lew.

ESG and your investment

ESG investing is the way forward, says Lew, as Sun Life aspires to deliver sustainable returns for clients and contribute to the tran-

THE WAY TO SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT

Sun Life Malaysia aims to help Malaysians inject ESG values into their investment portfolio



Lew says Sun Life aspires to deliver sustainable returns for clients and drive the transition to a low-carbon, sustainable economy through ESG investing.

sition to a low-carbon and sustainable economy.

When considering building ESG values into an investment portfolio, look at companies that incorporate ESG factors into their operations. For example, assess companies in areas such as:

- > How well they manage their carbon footprint.
- > Social effects such as labour laws and gender equality.
- > Corporate governance leadership in the businesses.

Tips for investors

Sun Life Malaysia encourages investors looking to integrate ESG factors into their investment approach to look into:

- > **Identifying your core values:** An ESG investment would enable you to create a responsible portfolio based on your personal values. It will help you maintain peace of mind and a clear conscience – that you are making a positive impact – while benefiting financially when you choose the right areas of investment to focus on based on your values.

> **Build your portfolio / find the right financial partner:** Look at the options available when selecting a fund that aligns with your value/interest. Educate yourself on the specific details of the fund like its objective, strategy, track record and fees before selecting the most appropriate fund. For investors that prefer ESG exposure through an insurance plan instead, firms like Sun Life Malaysia offers ILP for those who are interested in ESG investing.

Sun Life and ESG investing

Sun Life Malaysia is a member company of Sun Life, a global insurance leader and one of the largest public companies in Canada.

Since 2006, Sun Life has consistently received industry recognition for its sustainability leadership. It has been listed for 15 consecutive years on the Dow Jones Sustainability North America Index for its ESG performance, and recognised by Corporate Knights as one of the world's most sustainable corporations and one of the best 50 corporate citizens in Canada for 12 and 15 consecutive years respectively.

Globally, Sun Life has been helping its clients pave the way in their journey towards more sustainable investment where it manages its own accounts and clients' investment with sustainability embedded in its investment process and portfolio construction. To date, Sun Life investments into these efforts amounts to nearly US\$60bil and is also looking to invest an additional US\$20bil across the group's general account and third-party investments over the next five years.

"In alignment with Sun Life's global efforts, Sun Life Malaysia is committed to partner our clients throughout their journey towards sustainability. We want to make sure they get the protection they need and at the same time, maximise our contribution to society," Lew says.

Go to www.sunlifemalaysia.com for more details