



NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2025 | VOLUME 14

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Greetings everyone.

As we finish the third quarter of 2025, it has been rather eventful with the Institute receiving a number of courtesy visits, hosting and organising engagements/events.

Under our Communication Division, we have hosted public talks with speakers from our corporate members, namely SAINS and LCDA, covering vital topics such as cybersecurity and social impact assessment for urban renewal, as well as a roundtable session with Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) Malaysia, on the prospects and realities of TVET in Sarawak. To beef up communication capacities and capabilities in the Communication Division, we also organised a Social and Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) Training to equip our officers with the skills to carry out effective stakeholder engagement and participation. The training was insightful and necessary to enhance our strategic communication role for more effective and efficient delivery of government development initiatives.

SDI also rekindled networking and collaboration opportunities with peer organisations in the region with courtesy visits from the Institute for Development Studies (Sabah); *Institut Darul Ridzuan*, Perak (online) and Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Malaysia. We also received a visit from i-CATS University College and Sunway College Kuching as we continue to explore research collaborations with the local universities.

This 14th edition features the first part of our new Carbon Series by our Research Leads, which unpacks global and local perspectives on climate change as Sarawak charts its path in the carbon economy under PCDS 2030. The contributors to climate change will be further explored through our study on *"An Assessment of the Domestic Household Solid Waste Management Dynamics in Sarawak"*, which aims to shape policies for improving our environmental sustainability.

As we inch closer to the 30th Anniversary Celebration of our Institute, I would also like to record my appreciation to the past chairmen of SDI for sharing their reflections and thoughts over the past 3 decades. Their insights will be a significant highlight during the anniversary celebration. In this edition, we also feature some of the members' experiences with the Institute. On that note, it is my pleasure also to welcome all the new members on board, and we look forward to their active participation.

Happy reading.

Warm regards,
Lelia Sim
Chief Executive Officer

NEWSLETTER HIGHLIGHTS

Message from the CEO

Feature Article

Past Public Talks

New Research Project

On-going Research

Visits/Events

30th Anniversary Celebration

New SDI Members

New SDI Staff

UPCOMING PUBLIC TALK

ADVANCING SUSTAINABILITY AND FUTURE PROOFING FOR SMEs



Friday, 24th October 2025



10.00 a.m.



Virtual Talk via zoom

Mr. Eric Chong

Founder of BoostBiz
&

Vice President of ESG
Association of Malaysia



FEATURE ARTICLE

A series on ^{CO₂} CARBON¹

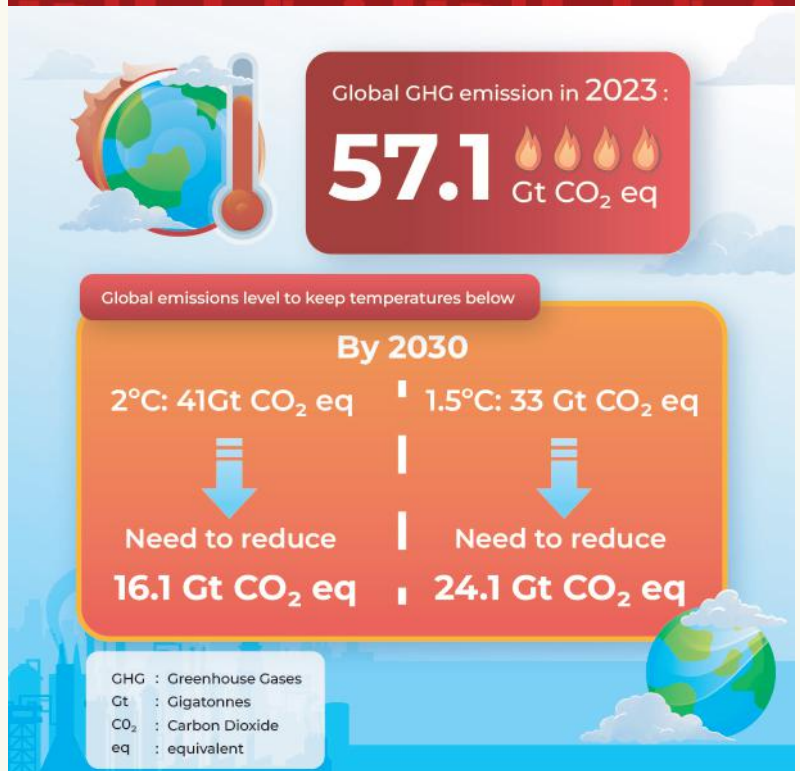
With Sarawak making inroads into carbon economy guided by the PCDS 2030, we believe there is a need to expound further on concepts and information about the topic. This article series on Carbon are insights shared by SDI's Research Leads.

If carbon occurred naturally on earth for millions of years, how is the element suddenly credited to cause climate change? Carbon is, after all, one of the more widely available elements. The element is found everywhere from everyday cheap pencils to the rarer expensive girl's best friend, diamond. It is in every bottle of fizzy drink that we consume. It is the building block of every living being from humans, animals to plants. It is in the air that we exhale. However, in its gaseous form and being excessively present in the atmosphere creates problems for earth's climate regulation.

The term 'carbon' is often misleadingly used as a shorthand for carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the context of climate change. The gas is one of the main emissions from various human activities; particularly from the burning of fossil fuels (coal, oil, and natural gas) for electricity, heat, and transportation. CO₂ is one of the primary greenhouse gases (gases that trap heat from the sun), much like glass in a greenhouse (producing the 'greenhouse effect') and causes global temperature rise.

Every fraction of a degree of warming matters because it will manifest in more frequent and intense extreme weather events (heat, drought, storms, floods) that affect health, agriculture and food production, and natural disaster losses. It is then a matter of humanity's survival to reduce our CO₂ emissions. We have reached unprecedented levels of global warming in 2024 where the average global temperature exceeded 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, marking it the warmest year on record globally. "To limit global warming to 1.5°C, greenhouse gas emissions must peak before 2025 at the latest and decline 43% by 2030" (UNFCCC)¹. **Every action counts in the urgent need to reduce GHG emissions and global temperatures.**

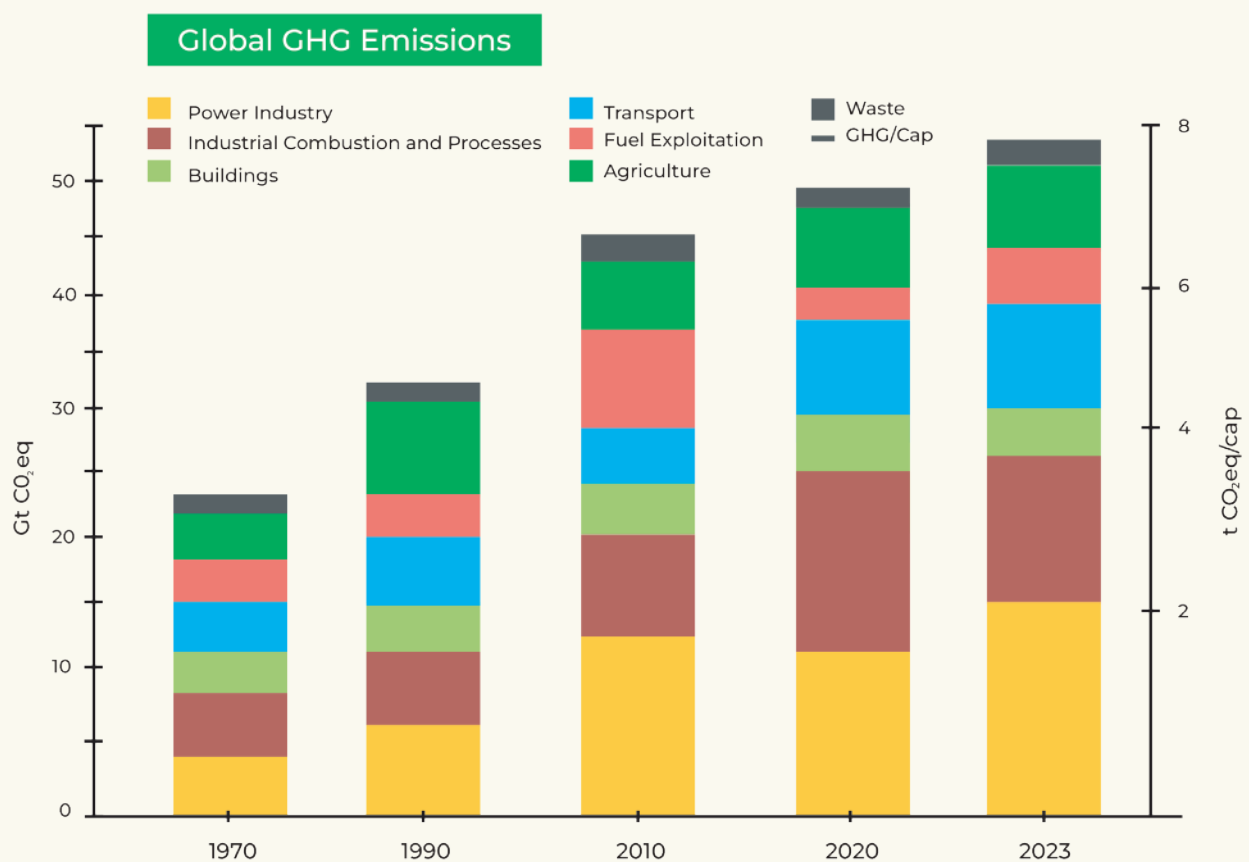
From UN Emissions Gap Report 2024



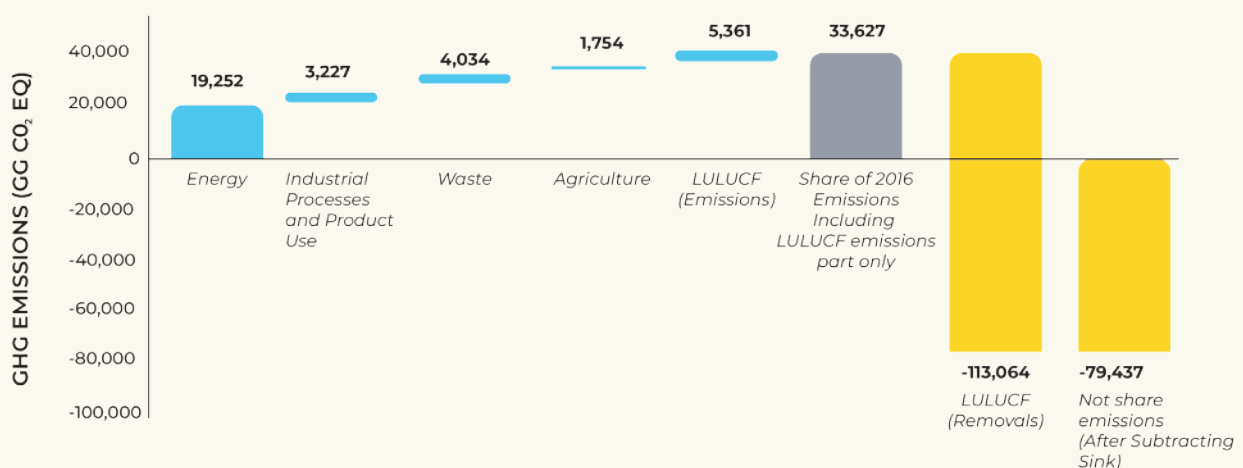
¹ <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement>

Malaysia & Sarawak

Sarawak's emission in 2016: -79,437 Gg CO₂ eq (79.43 million tonnes). Sarawak's strength lies in maintaining itself as a carbon sink, by leveraging on low carbon development initiatives to increasing the range and quality of its natural carbon sinks. Studies have shown that carbon sinks need to be kept as long as possible (multi-centuries) to stabilise atmospheric carbon without human interventions. We not only need to achieve net-zero emissions but we need to be able to achieve net-zero atmospheric CO₂ growth rate (concentration in the atmosphere - the carbon blanket needs to be thinner) to be able to sustain the climate and temperature reduction benefits over an inter-generational timeline from all the efforts that have been put in for addressing the climate crisis. Otherwise, we are just slowing down global warming but it would not halt it.



Sarawak's GHG emissions, 2016 (estimated share based on National GHG inventory)



PAST PUBLIC TALKS

Sharing Session on Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) & Qualitative Study Among Urban Poor: Case Study Kuching *Tuesday, 5th August 2025 | Telang Usan Hotel*

SDI organised the session on the findings of the in-house research that was carried out with the support of the Society for Kuching Urban Poor (SKUP), a non-profit organisation known for its soup kitchen and various initiatives supporting Kuching's urban poor.

The presentation delivered by Dr. Yuen Kok Leong, SDI's Research Lead (Social Inclusivity), shared the study's scope and findings and emphasised the importance of obtaining more granular data to better reflect the realities faced by Sarawak's urban poor. He also outlined recommendations to address emerging trends, including greater support for naturally occurring retirement communities (NORC) and better integration of existing assistance by formal welfare systems.

The session also featured Mr. Peter Wong, Chairman of SKUP, who provided an overview of the Society's work in helping the urban poor in Kuching, regardless of creed or race, through initiatives that have been sustained for over a decade. Participants at the session offered feedback and highlighted the relevance of the study as a valuable reference for future research and policy-making on urban poverty.

The full report of the study is now available for download from SDI's website.



SAINS' Role in Securing Sarawak Government Services *Friday, 8th August 2025 | via ZOOM Application*

The public talk was delivered by Ms. Azyan Nadzira, Security Engineer at Sarawak Information Systems (SAINS). SAINS is a corporate member of SDI.

She highlighted the growing cyber threat landscape, noting that fraud remains the top incident reported in Malaysia, with phishing and AI-driven attacks on the rise. With 95% of cyber incidents linked to human error, the need for a secure digital identity and access is critical. Ms. Azyan shared the initiatives from SAINS such as the SCS Mobile+ platform and SarawakID 2.0 to strengthen authentication, secure communication, and enhance trust in government e-services. Their 24/7 Security Operations Centre (SOC), penetration testing, and awareness training for over 20,000 government personnel further reinforce Sarawak's digital resilience. Ms. Azyan emphasised that cybersecurity is not just about technology, but also about cultivating awareness and readiness across all levels of government. Participants also exchanged insights on best practices for digital security and learned in more detail of SAINS' ongoing efforts to strengthen cybersecurity and support a safer digital environment for its clients.





**Social Impact
Assessment (SIA)
in Urban Renewal
Projects in
Sarawak**



**Social Impact
Assessment (SIA)
in Urban Renewal
Projects in
Sarawak**

Social Impact Assessment (SIA) in Urban Renewal Projects in Sarawak
Tuesday, 9th September 2025 | via ZOOM Application

The public talk featuring Mr. Saiful Bahari Amra Ramly, Senior Manager, Corporate Affairs Division, LCDA (a corporate member of SDI) provided insights into how SIA serves as a vital tool in evaluating, predicting, and managing the social consequences of development projects.

Mr. Saiful highlighted the importance of SIA in ensuring that communities affected by urban renewal are not only fairly compensated but also engaged throughout the process. By anticipating potential social impacts, SIA helps minimise disruptions, preserve cultural identity, and enhance opportunities for socio-economic growth. Drawing on case studies such as the Darul Hana redevelopment, he illustrated how proper application of SIA supports sustainable development while safeguarding community well-being and fostering inclusive participation. Participants also raised issues related to stakeholder engagement, policy compliance and the future role of SIA in shaping Sarawak's urban landscape.

NEW RESEARCH PROJECT

Assessment of Domestic Household Solid Waste Management Dynamics in Sarawak

SDI has initiated a study aimed to support the management of domestic household solid waste in Sarawak. The study involves surveys aimed at gathering insights on behaviour and biases of household waste generators that influence their waste management habits. Results of the study will be shared with the Ministry of Public Health, Housing and Local Government (MPHLG) Sarawak to support the development of behaviourally informed policy, strategies, and communication plans for increasing recycling rate and enhancing solid waste management practices in Sarawak. The study is expected to be completed within nine months.

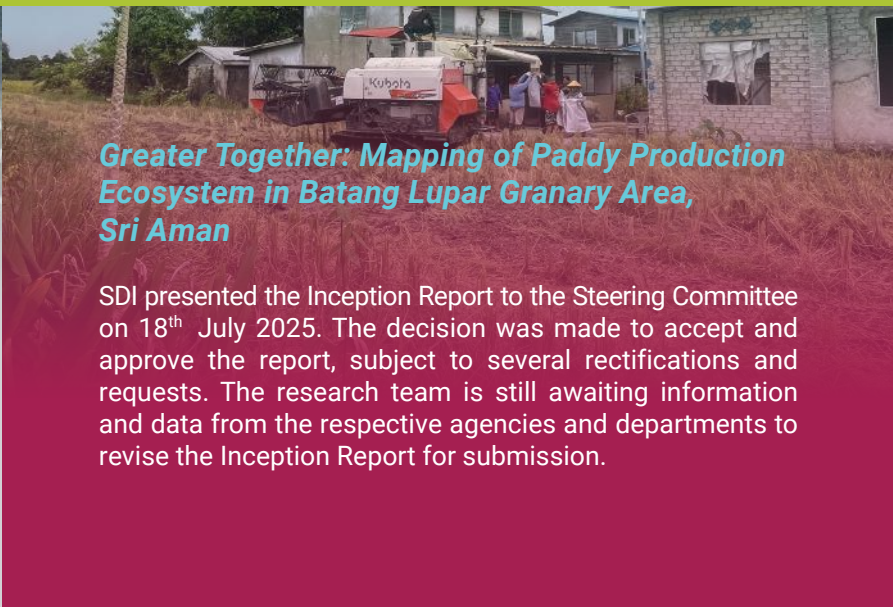
ON-GOING RESEARCH

Master Plan for Community Development in the Resettlement Areas 2050

This masterplan report is nearing completion. The draft of Final Report 2 was submitted to the Economic Planning Unit Sarawak in July 2025. A presentation to the Steering Committee for approval is scheduled in October 2025.

Greater Together: Mapping of Paddy Production Ecosystem in Batang Lupar Granary Area, Sri Aman

SDI presented the Inception Report to the Steering Committee on 18th July 2025. The decision was made to accept and approve the report, subject to several rectifications and requests. The research team is still awaiting information and data from the respective agencies and departments to revise the Inception Report for submission.



VISITS/EVENTS



Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) Malaysia

Wednesday, 16th July 2025 | SDI Office

Mrs. Natalie Russmann, Country Director, and Mr. Idzaid Idros, Programme Manager, of KAS Malaysia paid a courtesy visit to the Institute to share updates on their organisation – especially on their thematic focus on sustainability, inclusivity, security, digitalisation, and economic cooperation between Germany, the EU, and Malaysia. KAS Malaysia is also interested in strengthening their engagement in Sarawak, particularly in Sarawak's priorities on digital economy, entrepreneurship, and green development. The discussion from this visit resulted in a collaboration between KAS Malaysia and SDI for a roundtable session on TVET in Sarawak. This visit re-establishes SDI's relationship with KAS (formerly Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation, KAF) which started in the mid-90s.



i-CATS University College and Sunway College Kuching

Wednesday, 23rd July 2025 | SDI Office

We were pleased to host representatives from i-CATS University College and Sunway College Kuching for a discussion on building stronger linkages and exploring potential areas of collaboration aligned with SDI's focus areas. The delegation was led by Prof. Dr. Abdul Mutalip bin Abdullah, Director of the Internationalisation Office, i-CATS University College, and Dr. Owen Voon Boo Khoo, CEO of Sunway College Kuching. Among the topics of discussion were on the prospects of collaboration in the area of the Malaysia Research Assessment (MyRA) Instrument and SDI's Emerging Scholars Grant (SESG).

Institute for Development Studies (Sabah)

Tuesday, 26th August 2025 | Gallery Floor, Tun Jugah Building

SDI also hosted a delegation from the Institute for Development Studies (IDS), led by Mr. Azaharuddin Bin Hassanuddin, Chief Strategy Officer, for a knowledge-sharing session held at the Lifestyle Gallery of Tun Jugah Tower. Mdm. Rosalind Wong shared SDI's strategic transformation and highlighted key ongoing initiatives that reflect the Institute's commitment to supporting Sarawak's development agenda, while Mr. Azaharuddin shared the background of IDS and provided an overview of its core research focus areas, programmes, and contributions toward shaping Sabah's socio-economic development. The session was lively and filled with a constructive exchange of ideas, where both organisations explored potential avenues for collaboration. Discussions centred on how institutions like SDI and IDS play a crucial role in addressing shared development challenges while generating policy insights beneficial to respective regional needs.



Institut Darul Ridzuan (IDR), Perak

Tuesday, 2nd September 2025 | SDI Office via Microsoft Teams

Mdm. Lelia and senior officers of the Institute had an online first meeting with Dr. Maisarah Ahmad, CEO, and Mr. Azizul Hakim Abdul Karim, COO, of IDR to exchange information on each other's institution, particularly in the work of supporting the respective state governments' development vision – the PCDS 2030 for Sarawak and *Perak Sejahtera 2030*. In addition, Dr. Maisarah also brought up for discussion the idea of forming a coalition or alliance of think-tanks with various like-minded institutions across Malaysia to facilitate knowledge sharing and enhance opportunities for countrywide collaboration. She will keep us updated on initiating a meeting with the relevant think-tanks in Malaysia.



Social and Behavioural Change Communication (SBCC) Training

18th- 20th August 2025 | Chemsain Building Kuching



Eighteen officers from SDI and three officers from SDI's Corporate Members participated in the "Communicate to Cultivate: SBCC Training for Community Empowerment", which was conducted by two trainers from the Universiti Putra Malaysia-UNICEF Communication for Development (UPM-UNICEF C4D) Centre. During the three-day training, Dr. Diyana Nawar Kasimon, Director, and Ms. Syafika Ghazi, Coordinator, from the Centre focused on Behavioural Insights (BI) and how they influence and determine Social and Behavioural Change Communication (SBCC).

The overall training objectives are to understand behavioural theories and the principles and applications of Social and Behavioural Change (SBC), apply strategic design processes to develop effective communication interventions, and adopt various communication tools and tactics, both mediated and non-mediated, to implement the interventions.



The participants presented some of their on-going and proposed projects as practical cases to apply SBCC principles and concepts throughout the three-day training session with inputs and feedback from the trainers.

Empowering Sarawak through TVET - Knowledge Exchange with Germany *Wednesday, 10th September 2025 | UCSI Hotel Kuching*

The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) Malaysia and Sarawak Development Institute (SDI) convened the half-day roundtable session that featured presentations by the German-Malaysia Institute (GMI), the Malaysian-German Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MGCC), and the Ministry of Education, Innovation and Talent Development (MEITD), Sarawak.

Mdm. Aniella ak Siam, Deputy Permanent Secretary of MEITD, shared Sarawak's perspective on TVET, highlighting that only 21.2% of the state's workforce is skilled. This low percentage can be attributed, in part, to the relatively small number of school leavers pursuing tertiary education each year. Of the 32,000 to 42,000 students who graduate from secondary school annually, only around 18,000 continue to higher education. She also highlighted the urgent need to increase cooperation amongst industry, government and educational institutions to develop a robust TVET ecosystem in Sarawak and to develop a state-level pilot skills training model that features elements of the German TVET model.



Key takeaways from the roundtable include the importance of school leaders promoting TVET pathways, and supported by capacity-building for school counsellors to guide students on TVET opportunities as a career; enhance communication and engagement with TVET stakeholders — particularly local SMEs, encourage greater participation in skills training and upskilling; develop stronger narratives to elevate the perception and value of TVET education; and co-design a skills training model suited to Sarawak's context to strengthen partnerships among industry, government, and educational institutions.



The session was attended by key stakeholders from Petroleum Sarawak Berhad, SEDC Energy Sdn. Bhd., Ministry of Natural Resources and Urban Development, University of Technology Sarawak, Ministry of Utility and Telecommunication, Ministry of Food Industry, Commodity and Regional Development Sarawak, CIDB Sarawak, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, Sarawak Skills, Sarawak Metro Sdn. Bhd., Sarawak Science Centre, LONGi (Kuching) Sdn. Bhd. and the Sarawak Research and Development Council.

30TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Logo Concept

The 30th anniversary logo of Sarawak Development Institute (SDI) is designed to reflect the theme “Transformative”. It symbolises SDI’s 30 year journey of socio-economic research, high-level development discourse, engagement and networking with relevant stakeholders for knowledge development, while highlighting its new commitment to data-driven government policies and strategic communication for the future. The dynamic shapes, modern typography, and harmonious colours express the idea of continuous transformation and impactful contribution to Sarawak’s development.



Logo Meaning

The dynamic “30” in blue and green represents innovation, adaptability, and sustainable progress. The five green circular motifs reflect SDI’s five new focus areas, aligning with Sarawak’s green economy focus under PCDS 2030. Its overall form symbolises sustainability and circularity, while the dynamic movement within the shape conveys the transformation of SDI. The blue circle, featuring the SDI emblem, signifies professionalism, credibility, and a global vision at the core of its mission. The golden ribbon highlights excellence and achievement in celebrating this 30-year milestone. Finally, the theme “Transformative” reinforces SDI’s role as a catalyst for impactful change and also Sarawak’s era of transformation.

Dr. Nurhani Aba Ibrahim

Dr. Nurhani, a lecturer at UiTM Samarahan with over 30 years of experience in economics, has been an SDI member for more than 15 years. Passionate about Sarawak’s economic growth, she was attracted by SDI’s focus in the socio-economic development of Sarawak and has contributed to the Institute through various events, especially on the topics of minimum wage and Sarawak’s high-income development status. She believes SDI has the capacity to bring together academicians, like herself, to further accelerate and support the development agenda in Sarawak. Looking ahead, Dr. Nurhani hopes SDI will further establish itself as a leading think-tank by engaging more academics and showcasing its in-house research.



INTERVIEW SNIPPETS



Dr. Dorothy Chong

Dr. Dorothy, a long-time member, shared her journey since joining SDI in 2003. Impressed by SDI’s vision to be a leading research institution, she values its role in shaping Sarawak’s development through research, seminars, and collaborations. She was also happy to be involved with the SDI Meet & Chat Session organised to bring members together as well as meet newcomers.

Dr. Dorothy praises SDI’s alignment with Sarawak’s PCDS 2030 and its focus on policy input, education, and resource development. She hopes SDI will continue to drive innovation, human development, and environmental stewardship under strong leadership, contributing to Sarawak’s goal of becoming a developed nation by 2050.



NEW SDI MEMBERS

Dr. Sylvia Chung Mei Ying

Ordinary Member

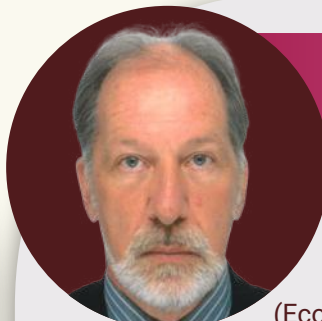
Consultant
(Human Capital Development)
Protean Consulting PLT
PhD Education



Mr. Christoph David Weinmann

Associate Member

Consultant
(Economics and Complex Systems)
Protean Consulting PLT
MSc Economics, PGrad German Development Institute



Ms. Priscilla Grace

Ordinary Member

Executive
Sarawak Economic
Development Corporation (SEDC)
Bachelor of Social Sciences with Honours
(Politics and Government Studies)



Dr. Melody Lynch

Associate Member

Lecturer
Department of Geography,
Planning & Environment
Concordia University, Montreal, Quebec
PhD Geography



NEW STAFF

Jerneh Hong Pei Swee
Content Writer

Master of Arts in TV
Production, Bournemouth
University, UK.
Bachelor of Arts in Mass
Communication, Pittsburg
State University, USA.



Airyl Ashzan bin Yuszida
Graphic Designer

Bachelor of Graphic
Design (Honors)
UiTM Puncak Alam,
Selangor

