

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Climate Resilient Tree Database Set to Help Citymakers Place The Right Tree At The Right Place

GEORGE TOWN, PENANG, 1 November 2022 – Think City, with the support of Penang Island City Council and EIT Climate-KIC, developed the Atlas of Climate Resilient Trees (ACResT), an online, open-collaborative platform, to discover and document climate resilient tree species in the country, with the aim to guide city planners and landscapers to place the right tree at the right place. There are various benefits with climate resilient trees other than increasing urban greening, such as shading and reducing the urban heat island, combat climate crisis, restore biodiversity amongst others. The platform is a result of the Climate-resilient Urban Tree Species Study for Malaysia, a research spearheaded by Think City in 2020, which documented 251 species.

The knowledge- and evidence-based online database was launched today by the Mayor of the City Council of Penang Island YBhg. Dato' Ar. Yew Tung Seang. Also present at the event were Think City's Chairman YBhg. Dato' Seri Anwar Fazal, as well as a host of other dignitaries, city council members, academics, representatives from government agencies and other guests.

In 2019, Think City initiated Penang Nature Based Climate Adaptation Programme (PNBCAP), the first urban climate adaptation programme to be developed for Malaysia. The programme was developed in collaboration with UN-Habitat, Ministry of Environment and Water, Penang State Government, Penang Island City Council, and the Department of Irrigation and Drainage.

In the last few years, Penang has been severely impacted by climate change especially the island due to its geography and infrastructure which is a combination of historical and heritage site as well as modern, urban development. On a daily basis, the George Town World Heritage Site faces high temperatures due to the Urban Heat Island Effect and is highly susceptible to floods during monsoon season, with the worst flooding to ever happen in 2017.

The climate adaptation programme won the prestigious Climathon Global Cities Award in 2020, and the prize money was used to fund the Climate-resilient Urban Tree Species Study for Malaysia.

YBhg. Dato' Ar. Yew Tung Seang said, "The Penang Nature Based Climate Adaptation Programme is a step in the right direction to help implement effective and safe nature-based solutions to improve liveability and sustainability of the city and safeguard its rich culture and heritage for many years to come.

"In line with this, we are pleased to have co-funded the development of ACResT and we are looking forward to seeing this resource benefit the council in identifying the right tree for the right place. Planting trees have never been so important as Penang works to counter climate change. In the same spirit, the Penang Island City Council had recently announced the planting of an estimated 100,000 trees within three years to boost urban greening on the island. We hope that the council's involvement and initiation of such green efforts will be seen as a benchmark to lead the whole nation to move towards building more resilient cities

with the planting of the right tree species. I look forward to seeing ACResT add benefit to citymakers and landscapers in preparing to adapt to climate change, and I urge city councils in the country to make use of this resource."

ACResT aims to gather and share crucial climate resilience information about tree species in Malaysia as well as in Singapore, and Kalimantan. In addition to that, the platforms also aims to pave the way for more effective urban planning with the inclusion of climate resilient street trees which will, ultimately result in higher quality urban spaces.

Think City's Chairman, YBhg. Dato' Seri Dr. Anwar Fazal said, "ACResT was developed with the support of Penang Island City Council and EIT Climate-KIC, and through Think City's outstanding knowledge and know-how in the field of nature-based solutions for climate adaptation with a focus on how to mitigate the negative impacts of climate change in cities. Think City's vast experience in environment and climate adaptation work in cities stands on their own merit through efforts such as the Sungai Perai Action Plan, Penang Climate Action Week in 2019 and the Penang Nature Based Climate Adaptation Programme. Think City's work in this space is centred in building resilience for the environment and communities."

ACResT is an open-sourced database, developed by Think City and produced by VeecoTech Sdn. Bhd., that can be accessed by anyone, and can be used for settings within cities and even homes. The information presented in the database is catered primarily for researchers, students, city councils, property developers, landscape architects, and relevant parties within the field.

For more information, visit www.crest.com.my.

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About Think City

Think City is an impact organisation established in 2009 to create more sustainable and equitable places for the benefit of all. Our knowledge, skills and strategies focus on urban solutions, the environment, social communities, and the cultural economy. Think City is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Khazanah Nasional Berhad (the sovereign wealth fund of the Government of Malaysia). For more information, log on to www.thinkcity.com.my.

About ACResT

The Atlas of Climate Resilient Trees (ACResT) is an online, open-collaborative extension of the Climate-resilient Urban Tree Species Study for Malaysia, a research spearheaded by Think City in 2020, to document tree species in the country, with the aim to guide city planners, landscapers and more to place the right trees at the right place. The knowledge- and evidence-based platform was developed by Think City and is supported by Penang Island City Council and EIT Climate-KIC, through its Climathon Global Cities Award in 2020. For more information, log on to www.crest.com.my.

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