

# Press Release

## Malaysian youths launch marine environmental card game

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Petaling Jaya - Four Malaysian youths with marine conservation backgrounds have launched Reef Stakes® - a card game focusing on marine environmental issues yesterday.

The game, Reef Stakes®, is designed to mimic real-life stakeholder relationships in determining the future of a reef ecosystem. It would also introduce some of Malaysia's iconic marine species and local threats to coral reefs.

With the tagline Build.Protect.Balance, the game aims to engage and educate the general public (ages 13 and up) to think about the challenges faced by our marine environments.

Reef Stakes® is one of the twenty-one projects funded by the Young Southeast Asia Leadership Initiative (YSEALI) Seeds for the Future 2017 Grant. The grant provides funding for the region's young leaders to carry out projects across themes of Civic Engagement, Education, Economic Growth and Sustainable Development.

The U.S. Embassy in Kuala Lumpur was impressed that Reef Stakes team was able to include all four themes identified in the Seeds grant requirements for its project: civic engagement, education, economic growth and sustainable development.

"The Seeds for the Future Grant truly recognizes some of the most talented young innovators from throughout Southeast Asia," said Sarah Talalay, Assistant Cultural Affairs Officer at the U.S. Embassy. "We couldn't be more proud of the Reef Stakes team, and think they are wonderful representatives of the outstanding young men and women we work with in Malaysia."

The team gave away 50 sets of Reef Stakes to several NGOs, environmental institutions and scuba diving operators at the launch in hopes to spread positive environmental messaging. Each set contains a deck of cards and instruction booklet encapsulated in a hard box.

Of the recipients, Dr. Louisa Ponnampalam, a local marine mammalogist and Pew Marine Fellow mentioned that such a game would be helpful in efforts to reach out to a wider community. "Scientific concepts often scare the public thus creating a general disinterest in environmental matters amongst them. Games can help to bridge that gap by making crucial information more accessible to the layperson," she said.

She added that her organisation, MareCet works with youth in urban and rural areas, and that such a game will benefit their outreach work. "We are keen to trial this card game with youths where we work to spread marine conservation awareness. Tak kenal, maka tak cinta."

"It is a proud moment for us to launch our idea to the world. The team worked really hard for the past one and a half years," said Edmund Lau Chai Ming, team member of Reef Stakes®. "Ideally, players will leave the game better equipped to take part in stakeholder discussions which determine the future of critical marine environments,"

The team expects to market the cards to local and international audiences by early 2019. "If you're looking for an educational, portable and fun filled experience, look no further!" he added.

**For more details or enquiries, please visit [www.reefstakes.com](http://www.reefstakes.com) or drop the team an email via [reefstakes@gmail.com](mailto:reefstakes@gmail.com).**