

SUSTAINABILITY REPORT 2023





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1. OVERVIEW

1.1 About This Report

Areca Capital Sdn Bhd ("Areca" or "Areca Capital") Sustainability Report provides an overview of our sustainability journey and approach, describing how we identify and integrate sustainability initiatives into our business units and operations.

This Report has been prepared with reference to the Global Reporting Initiative ("GRI") Standards. The GRI Content Index can be found on page 37-39. By referring to the GRI Standards, we aim to communicate our material impacts relating to Economic, Environmental, Social and Governance ("EESG"). A materiality assessment was conducted in December 2023 to identify and prioritise the EESG topics material to Areca Capital and its stakeholders.

The Report covers information for the calendar year period 1st January 2023 through 31st December 2023, unless stated otherwise. This contrasts with Areca Capital's financial reporting period of 1st May to 30th April, as the Report corresponds to Areca Capital's operational cycle.

The content and data in this Report mainly focus on the operations in Areca Capital's headquarters office in Petaling Jaya, Selangor. It does not include data from other branches nationwide, unless stated otherwise.

We are steadfast in our commitment to raising our sustainability performance as we work towards ongoing improvement. We aim to improve in the upcoming years to further demonstrate our commitment to ethical and sustainable business practices.

The Board of Directors and Senior Management have internally reviewed and approved the Sustainability Report 2023. Moving forward, we aim to continuously enhance our data collection process and disclosures in future reports as we progress along our sustainability journey.

Feedback

As part of our continuous effort to improve, we welcome feedbacks from stakeholders. You may provide us your feedback at sustainability@arecacapital.com.

Our Sustainability Report is also available on our corporate website https://www.arecacapital.com/.

^{*}As we kickstart our sustainability journey, we remain committed to fully adhering to the GRI Standards and other sustainability standards and frameworks in the mid-to-long term.



1.2 About Areca Capital

Areca Capital is a private wealth management company incorporated in Malaysia, focusing on fund management and wealth advisory. We are licensed and registered with the Securities Commission Malaysia ("SC") and Federation of Investment Managers Malaysia ("FiMM").

Since our inception in 2006, we have built a reputation as an innovative and high-performing fund manager, winning new clients with our performance track record and exceptional client service qualities.

Our services encompass a broad wealth management spectrum – from wealth protection to distribution. We pride ourselves on our professional yet friendly approach.

Areca Capital seeks to provide our clients with cost-effective wealth management services and consistent risk-adjusted returns over the long term. Our clients range from individuals to corporates, family and private trusts, foundations and other institutions.



^{*}As of December 2023

Our Private Wealth Platform & Services

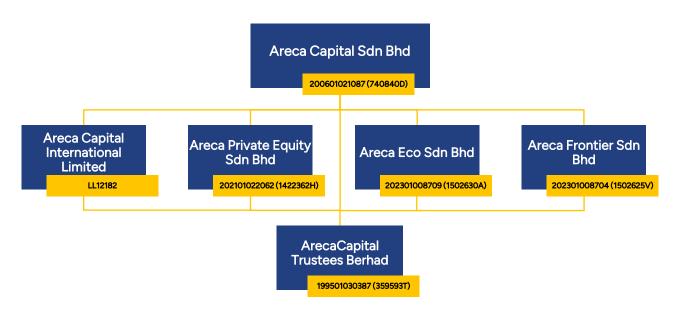
Investment Management	 We offer Investment Management services with a range of unit trust funds: our in-house funds and funds distributed by other fund houses from our Multi-Manager Platform. Private investment mandate services – for clients seeking a personalised and customised portfolio.
Financial Advisory	 We provide a range of Financial Advisory and Planning services to assist clients in managing their investments that are in line with their financial goals.
Private Trust	Our Private Trust service not only focuses on wealth distribution, but with our Investment Management expertise, we can professionally manage their portfolio and potentially produce a return enhancement to their trust assets.



Our Vision, Values and Mission

Our Vision	Our Core Values	Our Mission
Your trusted partner in wealth management journey. We hope to create true wealth and endless possibilities for a lifetime as well as for generations to come, ultimately preserving your legacy and name.	 Trustworthy, Ethical and Integrity Client-focused Friendly Teampower 	 To be the wealth management partner through generations To be the region's leading and innovative wealth management solutions provider To be employer of choice To exceed expectations of stakeholders To contribute towards the betterment of the financial industry

Areca Capital Group Structure





1.3 CEO's Statement



The year 2023 marks Areca Capital's first step towards the ESG agenda in our corporate and business operations. We will be progressively adopting the ESG considerations on a phased approach within the company towards the ultimate aim of Net Zero by 2050.

In line with the global shift towards sustainability, Areca Capital will strive to play its part within the financial services industry. We see tremendous efforts being spearheaded by financial regulators such as the Securities Commission Malaysia, Bursa Malaysia and many more. We take cognizant of our role – not just as a wealth manager in safeguarding the assets of our investors and clients, but also to help educate and bring focus to the importance of sustainability and responsible investing to them and our other stakeholders.

Our mission statement is to be our clients' wealth management partner through generations, and this involves ensuring the company's business operations are sustainable for the years to come. With Board-level and Management commitment to set the strategic directions of the company, all our colleagues are collectively working hand-in-hand in a company-wide effort to incorporate sustainability in achieving our goals. ESG factors will be progressively implemented within the company; across not just investments and product development but also business operating decisions eventually.

Within the short to medium term, we are building capacity required to properly address our Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions and reporting. As the main business of the company lies in fund management, Scope 3 inevitably forms a major part of our reporting. We aim to be a signatory of the United Nations' Principles of Responsible Investing (UN PRI) framework over the medium term. For the investment team, efforts are underway in reviewing the sectoral materiality factors as part of the ESG investing framework.



2. OUR SUSTAINABILITY JOURNEY

Areca Capital's Sustainability Journey in 2023				
February	Established Sustainability Committee			
March	ESG Training for Middle & Senior Management and Board of Directors Introduction of the Sustainability Committee and Initiatives **Initiative Launch: Single-use Plastic Bottle Reduction, Type 1 & 2 Plastic Recycling*			
April	First Recycling Activity Earth Day Event 2 nd Initiative Launch: Single-use Plastic Cutlery & Straw Reduction			
May	3 rd Initiative Launch: Single-use Plastic Food Container Reduction, Type 4 & 5 Plastic Recycling			
June	World Environment Month: Let's #BeatPlasticPollution! Shared weekly Sustainability Education and Awareness contents internally			
July	Distribution of Areca's Reusable Bag and Metal Straw to Areca Employees Upgraded Recycling Station in Areca Office 4th Initiative Launch: Energy Efficiency and Conservation, Plastic Bag Reduction			
August i September	Maintain the above Sustainability Activities and Initiatives			
October	Launch of Areca Capital New Private Trust Service			
December	Start of Materiality Assessment and Corporate Reporting Process			

We have established an in-house Sustainability Committee comprising of representative staff from all departments in the 1st quarter of 2023. It was a year with a steep learning curve, nevertheless, the Committee moved quickly within the first 3 months to engage and drive the initiatives across the company.

An appropriate structure is paramount in any development and execution of strategy. The Committee established a group of advisors and 3 project teams heading the respective initiatives. Along the way, we learned that a combination of top-down communication with a bottom-up approach has to be undertaken to get our message across from the Senior Management team and Sustainability Committee. To this day, the team continues to employ various creative ways to reach out to the colleagues, from texts via emails to infographics and videos in WhatsApp and informal workshop sessions on the ground to circumvent any communication fatigue.

Adaptability from the project team members was crucial in getting the wheels off the ground; to encourage and educate the larger "Areca population". We are most proud to say that everyone is onboard with these initiatives.

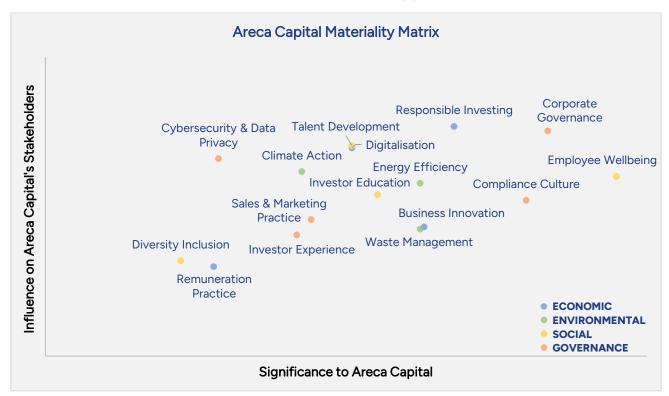


2.1 Materiality Assessment

In December 2023, we started the materiality assessment and corporate reporting process. We divided it into four sections: Economic, Environmental, Social and Governance.



After gathering the responses from our internal and external stakeholder groups, we have determined the relative importance of several EESG subjects and topics to Areca. The results will help us prioritise and formulate our actions for the upcoming years.





2.2 Material Topics

Material Topics	GRI Topics	Description		
ECONOMIC				
Responsible Investing	GRI 201: Economic Performance 2016	Integrating ESG factors into Areca's investment process while seeking to generate financial returns.		
Digitalisation		Enhancing Areca's work process by leveraging technologies to enhance efficiency and innovation.		
Remuneration Practice		Financial Advisors' remuneration is structured to be aligned to the interests of clients through a remuneration system that rewards an advisory-based approach and excellent client service. This reduces product churning and charging of excessive front-end fees.		
Business Innovation		Creating a platform to promote and generate new ideas, methods, products and services.		
	ENVIRON	MENTAL		
Waste Management	GRI 301: Materials 2016	Managing and taking steps to reduce, reuse and recycle waste within Areca's offices.		
Energy Efficiency	GRI 302: Energy 2016	Managing and taking steps to reduce electricity consumption within Areca's offices.		
Climate Action	GRI 305: Emissions 2016	Involves integrating climate-related issues into investment decisions, as well as managing and reducing greenhouse gas ("GHG") emissions from Areca to promote long-term sustainability and resilience in a transitioning economy.		
	SOC	IAL		
Employee Wellbeing	GRI 401: Employment 2016	Fostering a supportive and fulfilling work environment.		
Talent Development	GRI 404: Training and Education 2016	Enhancing the skills, knowledge and capabilities of employees for career advancement and personal development.		
Diversity Inclusion	GRI 405: Diversity and Equal Opportunity 2016 GRI 406: Non- Discrimination 2016	Promoting a diverse, inclusive and non-discriminatory workplace.		
Investor Education	Promoting financial literacy, risk aware			
	GOVERN	NANCE		
Corporate Governance	GRI 205: Anti-Corruption 2016	 Ensuring compliance with regulations, establishing oversight, and mitigating risks for Areca and investors. Establishing and upholding a rigorous system of rules, practices, and processes. 		
Compliance Culture		Instilling a robust compliance and risk management culture across the company, involving Financial/Investment Advisors, business units, support functions, and compliance and risk management teams in risk identification, reporting, review, and control measure formulation.		



Investor Experience	CDI 417: Marketing and	 Creating a positive, seamless and fulfilling relationship between Areca and its clients. Ultimately, our mission lies in working together with clients and their families, children or the next generation in their wealth management needs. 		
Sales & Marketing Practice	GRI 417: Marketing and Labeling 2016	 Ensuring advisory-based approach in constructing client portfolios based on their needs and circumstances, with proper risk disclosure. Provide lasting value to clients and investors through strong risk-adjusted returns and excellent service. 		
Cybersecurity & Data Privacy	GRI 418: Customer Privacy 2016	Implementing measures and practices to safeguard Areca and customer information.		

2.3 Stakeholders Engagement

We constantly strive to enhance our methods of engagement through various communication platforms to effectively gather our stakeholders' feedback and not only meet, but exceed their expectations.

Stakeholder Groups	Why We Engage	How We Engage
Shareholders and Board of Directors	To produce sustainable, long- term value for our stakeholders developing business strategies, updates on broad initiatives and developments e.g. incorporation of ESG initiatives.	 Quarterly and ad-hoc Board of Directors' meetings. Monthly Investment Committee meetings. Bi-annual discussions with the Shareholders on business progress and plans.
Investors	 To keep investors informed & updated on the investment performances of their mandates/accounts/funds as well as our investment or relevant business strategies. To seek feedback and comments to enable us to produce sustainable, long-term value. 	 Updates and notices issued via company announcements, press releases, market outlook or financial reports. Close interactions between our investors and Financial Advisors to always be ready to address their needs and meet their expectations. Regular market outlook briefings and roadshow sessions to allow our investors to directly engage with our CEO and CIO.
Regulators	 To instill a robust compliance culture across the company and promoting the development and improvement of the industry. 	 Engage in industry dialogue and ensure full compliance with the latest regulations and guidelines as well as industry development.



Employees	To foster an ethical, supportive and safe work environment.	 Host regular discussions via employee and management meetings, town halls, team- building activities, performance-review sessions and training.
Public	To promote financial literacy, risk awareness, and long-term financial well-being for Areca's investors and the public.	 Participate in external media's market outlook and view contents. Regularly publish our views on the latest developments on the market and economy via our social media, public roadshow and website.

2.4 Sustainability Goals and Roadmap

As we work towards establishing our official ESG Corporate and Investing Frameworks, our Sustainability Committee has outlined the backbone of Areca Capital's Sustainability Goals and the near-term roadmap.

Economic	Environmental	Social	Governance
 To set up a full ESG Investment Integration Strategy & Framework. To increase digitalisation and automation for efficiency. To deliver longterm value to clients and stakeholders via existing solutions and business innovation. 	 To achieve Net-Zero emission by 2050. To promote awareness and develop skills of employees and stakeholders on effective waste management and climate action. 	 Maintain and promote diversity and inclusion in the workplace. Empower and educate investors to make informed financial decisions for their total wealth. 	Maintain and promote effective corporate governance to ensure transparency, accountability, and sustainable business practices.

Sustainability Roadmap





3. ECONOMIC

3.1 Responsible Investing

By aligning our investments with ESG considerations, we can not only effectively manage risks and rewards relating to sustainability, but also meet the increasing demand from investors who seek to align their values with their financial goals.

While works are underway on developing our ESG investment framework, our current manuals on equity and fixed income investments provide adequate coverage on risk management policy and procedures. Both manuals outline the approach and measures adopted to effectively identify, monitor, measure, and manage the risks of the positions of the fund and their overall contributions to the risk profile of the fund. The following outlines Areca Capital's risk management process:



Investment Management Policies & Procedures Manuals

- Equity Investment Manual
- Fixed Income Investment Manual

On 13th March 2023, Equity and Fixed Income Analysts and Fund Managers from the Fund Management Department, along with members of the Board of Directors, Senior Management, Compliance and Marketing Support Department attended a curated full-day ESG Scoring Training and Workshop, conducted by the Securities Industry Development Corporation (SIDC) and Thoughts in Gear.



Programme Overview	 Understanding and interpreting ESG ratings, metrics, scores and reporting for investment analysis Develop a deeper understanding of the potentials and challenges of ESG considerations in investment analysis Be equipped with the tools and knowledge needed to make informed investment decisions with respect to ESG considerations
Learning Outcomes	 Define the concept, value and importance of ESG scoring in investment analysis Describe how ESG scores should be evaluated with respect to both external and/or internal providers Analyse the ESG scoring in relation to its investment and business performance Discuss the opportunities and challenges of employing ESG scoring in performing investments / business analysis

Following the ESG Scoring Training and Workshop, members of the Fund Management Team had begun the process of researching and evaluating for our ESG investment framework.

Future Plans:

To setup a full ESG Investment Integration Strategy and Framework To be a United Nation Principle of Responsible Investing (UN PRI) Signatory

To implement the ESG Investment Integration Strategy and Framework on a minimum of 50% of total assets under management (AUM) by 2030 To offer more sustainable and responsible investment products consisting of both conventional and thematic funds tied to sustainability themes



3.2 Digitalisation

Digitalisation allows us to not only streamline operations and enhance efficiency but improve client experiences as well. By leveraging digital tools and platforms, we can automate routine tasks and optimise processes for better decision-making.

Continuous improvement in Back-to-Middle office departmental systems

Crea8 Capital, a Malaysian WealthTech provider for one of the global funds managed Website revamp for a more informative and user-friendly view of fund/investment information

Future Plans:

- Developing a Mobile App for investor education and registration of events.
- Back-office system and procedure enhancement.
- Website enhancement: To boost investment experience while serving as a platform for investor education.

3.3 Business Innovation

One of our mission statements is "To be the region's leading and innovative wealth management solutions provider". Our commitment to business and product innovation allows us to be agile to changing market dynamics, stay competitive and meet evolving client needs.

Investment Solutions

Considering the highly volatile environment and need for stable returns, we have launched several types of funds in 2023 that suit our target investors:

Areca Strategic	Areca Progressive	Areca Strategic	Areca Islamic
Income Fund 9.0	Income Fund 8.0	Income Fund 8.0	incomeTRUST Fund
A short-term wholesale fund invests into Fixed Income securities / Collective Investment Schemes that is consistent with the fund's investment objective.	A wholesale fund with strategic investment in income-yielding securities backed by quality assets.	A wholesale fund with strategic investment in income-yielding securities backed by quality assets	A retail shariah compliant fixed income fund aims to provide investors with short-to-mediumterm capital preservation and a regular income.



Private Trust Service

In October 2023, we launched our new private trust service with a refreshed logo. We acquired a company, Alliance Trustee Berhad, which had been renamed to ArecaCapital Trustees Berhad, for our estate planning solutions. Our new private trust service provides tailored solutions and estate planning for high-net-worth and mass-affluent clients. By combining wealth and long-term investment management, we offer a holistic approach to help clients grow, preserve, and distribute their wealth through generations.

The refreshed logo embodies our vision of partnering hand-in-hand with our clients on their wealth management journey. The logo's distinctive elements reflect the stability and trust that Areca Capital has built over the years while embracing a fresh, contemporary look to signify its evolution. Excited about the future, we remain dedicated to providing innovative financial solutions.

The introduction of the new private trust service and a refreshed logo mark significant steps towards this mission.





Future Plans:

We will continue to retain focus on Private Trust as we aim to enable these services to be accessible to a broader spectrum of clients, such as the mass-affluent segment, and not just for the ultra-rich investors.

Ultimately, our product development revolves around meeting the needs of our niche clientele while considering the investment climates. Other proposed products and mandates in the pipeline include:

- Mandates that leverage on our WealthTech partner's capabilities in a Man + Machine approach. These can be global or take into consideration E, S or G features.
- Partnering with our investee Fintech companies for specialised products for the emerging affluent market.

3.4 Remuneration Practice

Our Financial Advisors' remuneration is structured to be aligned to the interests of clients through a remuneration system that rewards an advisory-based approach and excellent client service. This is in practice for all the Advisors to reduce product churning and charging of excessive front-end fees.

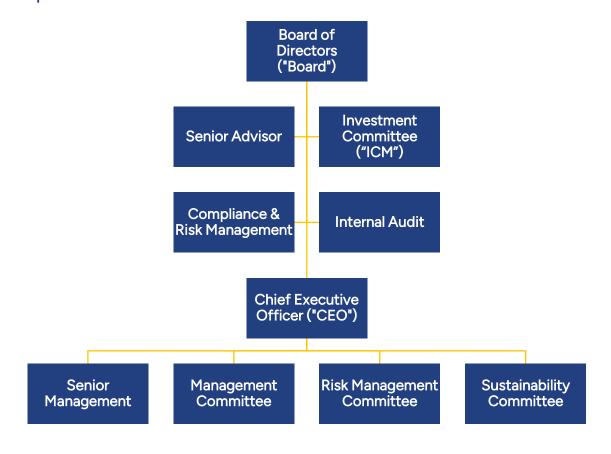
The majority of our Financial Advisors are in-house employees, ensuring a professional and long-term commitment in managing the relationship with our clientele.



4. GOVERNANCE

As a private wealth management company, it is crucial for us to have strong governance standards to ensure good business conduct as well as to efficiently manage the EESG subjects that we have identified. We embedded robust business policies, internal controls, risk management and compliance measures in place to ensure sustainable business operations in support of the overall corporate strategy.

4.1 Corporate Governance

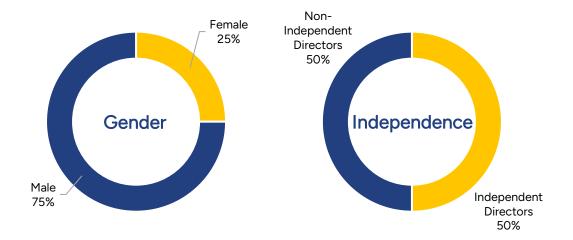


Board Diversity & Composition

Being a Public-Interest-Entity, the Board of Directors composition consists of individuals that have a diverse range of expertise in the banking and fund management industry. The requirement for our Board of Directors nomination is in accordance with the Securities Commission Guidelines on Unit Trust Funds and the national policy of Malaysia and Terms of Reference set by the company, whereby we maintain at least 2 independent members or a minimum ratio of 1/3 independent members at all times. Independent members provide check and balance between the respective members of the Board. The roles of the Board Chairperson and CEO are separated, with the Chairperson serving as an independent non-executive director.

On a company-wide level, our Board of Directors, assisted by the CEO and Senior Management will monitor and oversee the company's operations, ensuring competent and prudent management, sound planning, proper procedures for the maintenance of adequate accounting and other records and systems of internal control, and compliance with all laws, regulations and guidelines.





Committees Roles & Responsibilities

Board of Directors ("Board")	Highest approval authority to monitor and oversee the operations of the company. The Board also oversees and is reported to on the implementation of sustainability strategies into the company's business and operations.	Meeting Frequency: Quarterly	
Senior Advisor	Review and provide strategic guidance to the company's management and sustainability management.		
Investment Committee	Responsible for reviewing and approving the funds' investment strategies and guidelines. Review investment risks identified and adjust the overall firmwide risk level, if necessary.	Meeting Frequency: Monthly	
Chief Executive Officer ("CEO")	Provides the strategic direction and steering of the business. Managing the overall operations of the company.	Masting	
Senior Management	A team of senior executives headed by the CEO is responsible for developing company strategies, executing major business decisions and overall overseeing the activities of different parts of the business.	Meeting Frequency: Monthly	
Management Committee	Comprising all department and function heads, the Committee discusses and reports on the progress and status of the company's business operations.	Meeting Frequency: Monthly	
Risk Management Committee	Assist the Senior Management in assessing all aspects of risks and risk management within the company and its products and services.	Meeting Frequency: Ad Hoc Basis	
Sustainability Committee	Established with a committee of advisors and comprised of representatives from departments across the company, the Committee is responsible for developing and executing sustainability initiatives and strategies.	Meeting Frequency: Monthly	



4.2 Compliance Culture

Regulatory compliance is of utmost importance to Areca Capital. This is overseen by the Compliance Division, which provides checks and balances, with independent assurance from Internal Audit. To strengthen the effectiveness of the risk management function, the responsibility is functionally segregated into 3 Lines of Defence, with oversight from the Board and the Risk Management Committee.

Functional Segregation and Key Responsibilities	
First line of Defence	Front and Middle Office and Other Support Units Monitor activities to ensure adherence to approved policies and procedures
Second line of Defence	Compliance and Risk Management Providing an independent risk oversight and ensuring compliance to applicable laws, regulations, established policies and procedures
Third line of Defence	Internal Audit Provide independent assessments of the adequacy and effectiveness of risk processes and internal controls

Anti-Money Laundering and Anti-Corruption

All Areca Capital employees are required to attend training sessions and complete E-Tests on Anti-Money Laundering, Anti-Terrorism Financing ("AMLA") and Anti-Bribery and Corruption ("ABC"). The session is conducted annually by the Compliance Department. For outstation employees, the session is delivered digitally with reading materials and assessments provided, with full participation. This is to ensure all employees are familiar with the relevant frameworks, policies and practices. Additionally, the Board and Senior Advisor also receive annual training sessions on AMLA and ABC. Their training session is held separately from the management and employees in the company.

	No. of employees participated training session	Training Hours
GM / Executive Director	16	128
Female	8	64
Male	8	64
Managerial	54	432
Female	31	248
Male	23	184
Executive	25	200
Female	15	120
Male	10	80
Clerical	7	53
Female	4	32
Male	3	21



Grand Total 102 813

Employee AMLA/ABC Training Summary

*Data as of November 2023

Prevention of Financial Crimes

Areca Capital has zero tolerance for financial crimes. Besides having training sessions on AMLA and ABC, we have internal manuals and procedures in place to not only prevent and combat money laundering and terrorism financing, but also policies and procedures for anti-corruption, bribery and gratification matters.

Senior Management and Board of Directors will regularly review and ensure that all policies, procedures and controls are effective and in line with all relevant guidelines and laws. All Areca Capital employees are obligated to be informed and fully understand these policies to ensure that our business is conducted with the highest ethical standards.

Manuals & Policies	Description
Anti-Money Laundering, Anti-Terrorism Financing and Proliferation Financing Manual	Policies and procedures for client identification and due diligence, retention of financial transaction documents and reporting of suspicious transactions.
Anti-Corruption Manual	Policies and procedures for anti-corruption practices, retention of transaction documents and reporting of suspicious activities.
Framework in Relation to the Dealings with Government-Linked Company and Government-Linked Investment Company	Policies and procedures to actively prevent activities promoting unethical or corrupt practices and activities through effective prevention, detection, investigative and deterrent measures in dealing with Government-Linked Company ("GLC") or Government-Linked Investment Company ("GLIC").
Whistleblowing Policy and Procedures	This policy provides a formal, confidential channel to enable the Company's employees and members of the public to report in good faith, serious concerns of any Improper Conduct while protecting the person making such disclosures from any reprisal and / or detrimental action.
Conflict of Interest Policy	This policy sets clear expectations, guidelines and procedures for the Company, including its Directors, Investment Committee's Members, employees and appointed representatives to identify, disclose, evaluate, and manage conflicts of interest.

Depending on the possible conflict of interest situations that may arise, the non-exhaustive list of measures that may be taken includes Policies and Procedures, Segregation of Duties, Disclosure to Clients and Chinese Wall policies.

Conflicts of interest and the policies in handling such conflicts must be disclosed to clients. Employees must avoid any actual or potential conflict of interest situation or any abuse of their positions of trust in all personal investment transactions and personal financial transactions. This extends to activities outside of the Company (e.g. taking part directly or indirectly in the management of business activities, direct or indirect ownership). Annual disclosures to the Company are required.



In instances such as cross-board memberships in investee companies, disclosures will be made to investors of the funds managed depending on materiality and other measures to be taken, such as abstaining from decision-making.

In 2023, there were <u>zero</u> cases of fraud, corruption and bribery incidents recorded in Areca Capital

Internal Policies & Manuals

Areca Capital has relevant policies & manuals in place to ensure compliance with the regulations and securities laws, establishing oversight, as well as risk mitigation for the company and our investors. An Internal Audit function ultimately provides its regular independent assessment of the adequacy and effectiveness of risk policies and internal controls. All Areca Capital employees are able to access these policies and manuals through our internal server.

Governance & Regulatory Compliance	 Anti-Money Laundering, Anti-Terrorism Financing and Proliferation Financing Manual Anti-Corruption Manual Framework in Relation to the Dealings with Government-Linked Company and Government-Linked Investment Company Conflict of Interest Policy Whistleblowing Policy and Procedures Compliance Framework Internal Control Manual Internal Audit Manual Discretionary Authority Limits Manual
Responsible Investing & Product Development	 Equity Investment Manual Fixed Income Investment Manual Product Development Manual
Sales & Marketing Practice	 Financial Planning Manual Investment Advice Manual Suitability Assessment Framework Marketing Manual Investor Care Manual Unit Trust Scheme Consultant ("UTSC") Manual Transaction Application Guidebook
Employee & Talent Management	 Code of Ethics and Conduct Employees Policies and Procedures Manual
Cybersecurity & Data Privacy	Information Technology Manual
Business Operations	Business Continuity PlanOperation ManualFinance Fund Accounting Manual



4.3 Investor Experience / Sales & Marketing Practice

With our mission statement on being our clients' wealth management partner through generations, it is our priority that we are always ready to address our clients' needs and meet their expectations, as we work closely with their families or next generation to ultimately preserve their wealth and legacy. We are committed to delivering long-term value to our clients and investors through our products and services.

Guided by policies and guidelines from governing regulators, it is our responsibility to ensure that the information on our marketing materials is accurate, transparent and accessible. This is to enable our clients and investors to be clearly informed on our financial products and services before making investment decisions. Our investor care as well as sales and marketing policies and procedures are also in adherence to the guidelines from the governing regulators, which may include but are not limited to the following list:

Governing Regulators	Policies / Guidelines
Securities Commission Malaysia ("SC")	 Licensing Handbook Guidelines on Unit Trust Funds Guidelines on Sales Practices of Unlisted Capital Market Products Guidelines on Marketing and Distribution of Unit Trust Funds Guidelines on Advertising for Capital Market Products and Related Services Guidelines on Online Transactions and Activities in Relation to Unit Trusts Guidelines on Conduct for Capital Market Intermediaries
Federation of Investment Managers Malaysia ("FiMM")	Code of EthicsFiMM's Consolidated Rules
Companies Commission of Malaysia	Company's Act 2016

Complaint or Enquiry Handling Process in Areca Capital

- To ensure that our clients' and the public's voices are heard, we have internal policies and procedures with regards to sales, advertising, and communications that we adhere to in order to uphold a consistent standard.
- There are detailed procedures for handling enquiries and complaints in place. Our digital communication platform includes corporate website, Facebook and LinkedIn page as well as a WhatsApp number as our communication touchpoints with our clients. We also have physical branches present in 7 states with landline for clients to call in for enquiries.

Industry Dispute Resolution



- On top of internal dispute resolution, clients and stakeholders may refer their dispute via the following independent bodies if they are unsatisfied with the outcome:
 - Securities Commission Malaysia (SC) Investor Affairs & Complaints Department
 - Securities Industry Dispute Resolution Center (SIDREC)
 - Federation of Investment Managers Malaysia (FiMM)'s Complaints Bureau
- Contact information for the above independent bodies can be found on the corporate website.

In 2023, there were <u>zero</u> incidents of non-compliance concerning laws and regulations, marketing communications as well as product and service information and labelling in Areca Capital.

4.4 Cybersecurity & Data Privacy

Areca Capital's cybersecurity policies and procedures are also in adherence to the guidelines from Securities Commission Malaysia, which may include but are not limited to the following list:

Guidelines on Management of Cyber Risk*

Areca Capital implements policies and measures according to this guideline. This guideline sets out the requirement on Governance and Management of Cyber Risk which includes:

- Roles and responsibilities of the Board of Directors and Management in the oversight and management of cyber risk;
- Cyber risk policies and procedures that should be developed and implemented;
- Requirements for managing cyber risk; and
- Reporting requirements to the Securities Commission Malaysia

Guidelines on Online Transactions and Activities in Relation to Unit Trusts

Areca Capital implements policies and requirements according to this guideline, which includes:

 Systems and security measures to ensure the reliability, availability, integrity, and confidentiality of the application or other related information or transactions transmitted online.

Areca Capital Cybersecurity Measures

- Participate in yearly cyber drill exercise conducted by Securities Commission Malaysia to test the effectiveness of Cyber Incident Response Plan.
- Participate in Capital Market Cyber Tabletop Exercise organised by Securities Commission Malaysia to prepare on incident handling and procedure, identification of potential gaps and rehearsals to maintain smooth market operations.
- Data protection through Access Control where authorization and authentication control limit
 the access rights by restricting the access matrix by user roles. Access rights are granted to
 authorised employees only and information is given based on a need-to-know basis.

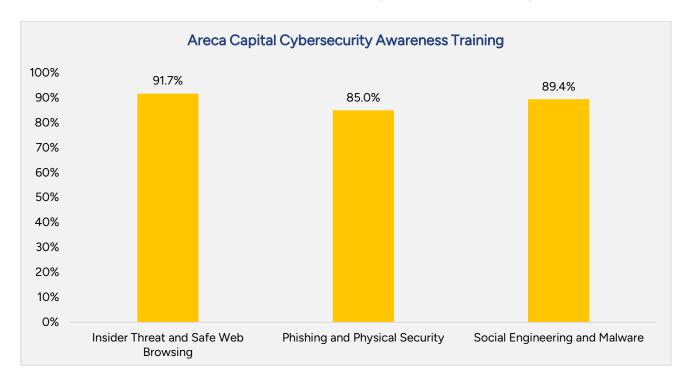
^{*}This guideline will be superseded by the Guidelines on Technology Risk Management effective 1 August 2024



- Engage security expert for cybersecurity assessment to identify and close the potential gaps.
- Phishing simulation campaign is conducted regularly to educate the employee on how to identify and respond to phishing emails to prevent potential threats and phishing attacks.
- Raising employees' awareness and improving their knowledge on data protection and cybersecurity by conducting mandatory e-learning trainings.



Several Cybersecurity Awareness trainings have been conducted throughout 2023 and the completion rate in Areca Capital is 100%. The average score for the trainings are around 89%.



In 2023, there were <u>zero</u> number of substantiated complaints concerning breaches of customer privacy and losses of customer data in Areca Capital.

Future Plans:

We remain committed to maintaining a high standard of corporate governance and compliance culture. We aim to continuously enhance our business practices and standards of conduct, as well as regularly review and update our policies & procedures to ensure full compliance with the latest regulations and guidelines.



5. SOCIAL

5.1 Employee Wellbeing

At Areca Capital, we continuously invest in the quality of our employees' well-being. Their physical and mental wellness are not just essential to our success; they are also at the core of who we are. We strive to create a supportive, valued, and cherished environment because when our team thrives, so does our company. We prioritise the well-being of our employees within the office environment and ensure that they have access to the benefits and healthcare needed.

Employee Benefits

Our Employee Procedures and Policies adhere strictly to local labour standards, ensuring that our employees receive the care and support they deserve and enhancing the quality of our workforce. Our employees' benefits include the following:



Group

Surgical

Care





Clinical Care



Optical Care



Dental Care



Leave Allocation

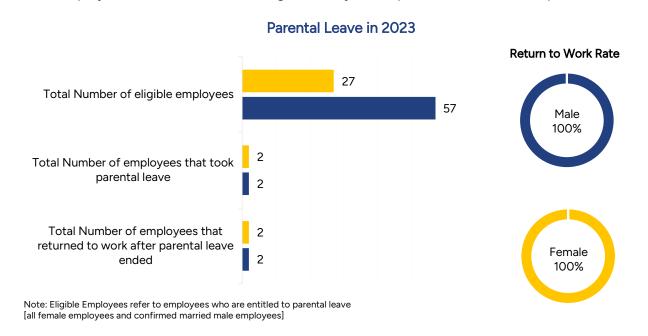


Birthday Leave



Group **Personal** Accident

We also ensure that our Employee Procedures and Policies are in line with and updated according to the local labour standards. In 2023, our Employee Procedures and Policies were updated with the latest Employment Labour Law, including maternity leave, parental leave, and hospitalisation leave.





5.2 Talent Development

We believe in the culture of continuous learning for our team, providing them with ample opportunities for growth and development. This investment ensures a skilled workforce, enabling us to remain competitive, innovative, and foster employee fulfilment and advancement.

We have 6 approaches to our training and development in effect to develop and upskill our employees in line with the company strategies. In 2023, a total of 118 employees participated in the training and development.

New Hire Orientation Program	To familiarise new employees with the company culture, policies, procedures, and expectations
On the Job Training	To develop employees' skills and knowledge within their actual work environment
Job Specific Training	To focus on the specific skills, knowledge, and competencies required to perform particular job roles or positions
Soft Skill Training	To focus on non-technical skills essential for effective collaboration and navigating diversity in the workplace
Mandatory Training	To provide employees with essential knowledge of corporate governance and regulatory compliance for safe and effective performance
Leadership Training	To develop leadership skills and employees' capabilities for career advancement and growth, aligning with the company's strategy

Training and Development – 2023 Highlight



Total Enrollments in Training & Development

786



Total Training Hours

3,895.5



Average Training Hours Per Employee

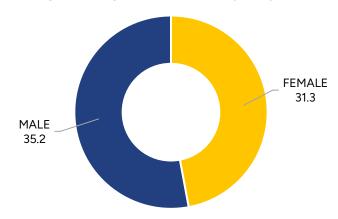
33



Average Training Hours Per Employee By Category



Average Training Hours Per Employee By Gender



In Areca Capital, learning and development are continuous cycles. We are dedicated to cultivating an environment where our employees engage in active continuous learning, drawing from their day-to-day tasks, formal training programs and collaborative knowledge sharing among colleagues.

5.3 Employee Performance Management

Areca Capital follows a structured Performance Management Cycle, consisting of two key reviews: one in the 2nd quarter and another in the 4th quarter of each year, applicable to all levels of employees. Our approach is guided by the Performance Matrix and aligned with the company's strategies for development. Employee Performance Management serves as a cornerstone for talent cultivation, learning, and individual advancement within the organisation.



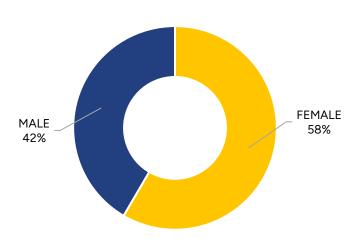
This comprehensive process enables us to monitor employee performance effectively, analysing their strengths and areas for growth. In instances of underperformance, we implement a Performance Improvement Plan as a supportive measure to guide the employee's development.

Total Eligible Employees	Workforce %
89	88.12%

By Employee Category



By Gender





5.4 Diversity Inclusion

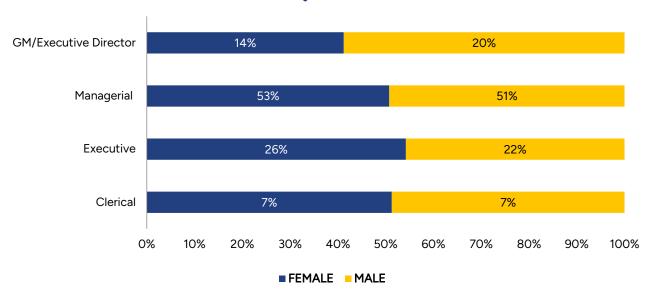
At Areca Capital, we work together as one team, united in our pursuit of shared goals, regardless of gender or age. Our core values of trustworthiness, friendliness, and teampower drive our every action. We are committed to fostering diversity, inclusion, and anti-discrimination. Embracing the multitude of perspectives these differences bring, we create an environment where every individual feels respected and valued. By providing growth opportunities and actively combating discrimination, we cultivate a workplace that encourages innovation and success for all. From recruitment processes to talent development, we practice and promote anti-discrimination and equal opportunities in every aspect of our operations. As of 2023, we had a total number of 102 employees.

Areca Capital's Employees

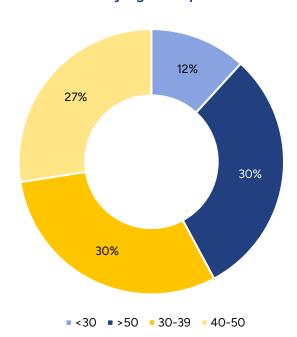
Age Group	Female	Male	Grand Total
GM / Executive Director	8	9	17
30-39		1	1
40-49	3		3
50-59	5	4	9
60-69		2	2
70-79		1	1
80-89		1	1
Managerial	30	23	53
20-29	1		1
30-39	6	12	18
40-49	11	4	15
50-59	10	5	15
60-69	1	2	3
70-79	1		1
Executive	15	10	25
20-29	7	4	11
30-39	6	4	10
40-49	2	2	4
Clerical	4	3	7
30-39	2		2
50-59		3	3
60-69	1		1
70-79	1		1
Grand Total	57	45	102



By Gender

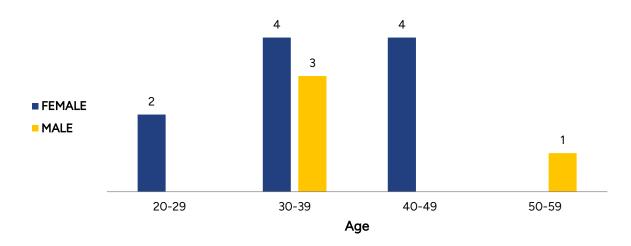


By Age Group

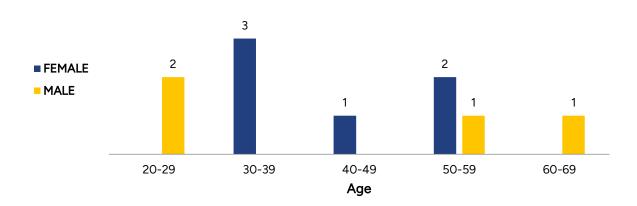








Number of Employee Turnover in 2023 $\frac{10}{\text{(Turnover Rate = 9\%)}}$



Note: Both Retention Rate and Turnover Rate are calculated using the number of employees at the start of the reporting period i.e. 1st Jan 2023 as the denominator. The calculation for Retention Rate excludes the new hires during the reporting period.

In 2023, there were <u>zero</u> cases of discrimination, bullying and harassment reported in Areca Capital.

Future Plans:

Our mission is to become the employer of choice by fostering employee well-being, growth, and inclusivity. We actively pursue local standards to ensure our workplace is dynamic, where every individual is valued, empowered to grow, and feels a sense of belonging. Through continuous improvement and a commitment to diversity, we aim to create a culture where our employees flourish, innovate, and contribute to our collective success.



5.5 Investor Education

We believe that an informed public on financial planning and education is important. We participate in various talks, interviews and forums organised by media companies like The Edge, The Star, BFM 89.9, CityPlus FM as well as other platforms, as part of our investor education initiatives. This is on top of our regular investor updates and any invitation from our partners to speak on topics of interest, as well as education providers like colleges etc.

We actively engage with regulators and relevant associations, such as Securities Commission Malaysia, Federation of Investment Managers Malaysia and Financial Planning Association Malaysia to play our part in industry development for the benefit of the stakeholders. Additionally, our CEO is an elected Director of FiMM.

Investor Education section on corporate website

https://arecacapital.com/introduction-to-capital-market-and-unit-trust/

Areca Flash (E-Magazine)



Annual Roadshow in November 2023 in states such as Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Ipoh, Malacca, Johor Bahru, Kuching and Kota Kinabalu, where all our physical branches are present.

Annual Roadshow on Market Outlook / Fund Updates





1. Platinum Sponsor for Sustainable And Responsible Investment (SRI) 2023 Virtual Conference, "Join The Race For Sustainability: Empower Your Company At SRI 2023" organised by the Securities Industry Development Corporation (SIDC). The conference was held on the 21st - 22nd of June 2023.

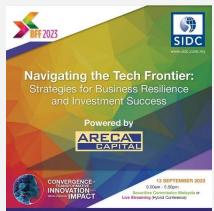


Our CEO, Danny Wong, was also a panellist in the session on "Investors' Stewardship Priorities".

Media Appearances / Investment Talks / Sponsorship Events



Diamond Sponsor for Business Foresight Forum (BFF) 2023 on 13
 September 2023 at SIDC. Danny Wong was one of the panellists for Session 3 – Navigating the Tech Frontier: Strategies for Business Resilience and Investment Success







3. Titanium Sponsor for **Pharmacy Association Business Insights Seminar** on 10 December 2023. Danny Wong was one of the speakers for the seminar.



4. **The Edge Wealth bumper issue interview:** DPS advertorial on 25 December 2023



6. ENVIRONMENTAL

Areca Capital pledges to introduce an environmentally friendly workplace by creating awareness and being mindful of our carbon emissions. By re-evaluating how we handle our day-to-day operations, we aim to gradually introduce more environmentally sound methods to our existing structure where possible.

The Sustainability Committee was established in February 2023, and we have begun our path towards a lower carbon environment and moving towards a more sustainable operation.

We started on a small-scale basis in our headquarters office before gradually incorporating more sustainability initiatives for other branches to follow. It is through education first that we create the awareness needed towards a greener future. Including every employee in the initiatives create a sense of togetherness as well as working together to achieve a common goal.

While we have been focusing on three main areas: Waste Management, Climate Action and Energy Efficiency, we aim to expand to other areas of environmental aspects and establish new initiatives.

Additionally, we aim to achieve the following long-term climate-related goal:

Achieve NET-ZERO Emissions by 2050

The data collected is based on Areca Capital's headquarter ("HQ") office, unless stated otherwise.

6.1 Waste Management

Paper Consumption

A4 Paper Reams Bought in 2023	300
-------------------------------	-----

^{*1} Ream = 500 sheets of paper

The use of paper is vital in the company's day-to-day operations. It is a key component for new clients' account opening forms and other legal and binding financial documents. To reduce our usage, we have increasingly been looking towards digitalising our operations.

Beginning in 2023, the company has already begun moving towards paperless statements when communicating with clients, such as the introduction of e-statements and e-advices. The change towards a more digital operation will help reduce waste as well as facilitate data shared across the company's network.

Materials Collected and Recycled

Materials	Total Weight Recycled (Kg)
Plastic	43.2
Cardboard	61.7
Grand Total	104.9

^{*}Data collected from April (start of initiatives) to December 2023



Two main materials were recycled in Areca HQ, plastic and cardboard. Materials were primarily obtained from waste produced by day-to-day operations at Areca HQ as well as personal waste products from employees. In the span of 8 months, a total of 104.9kg of materials were recycled at Areca HQ.

6.2 Climate Action

Greenhouse Gas Emissions ("GHG")

2023 is the first year that Areca Capital has begun tracking its emissions:

Scope 1	Direct emissions from company-owned vehicles
Scope 2	Electricity usage in Areca HQ office

Note: Scope 3 GHG Emissions will be considered in future reports.

The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Initiative was first introduced by the Sustainability Committee on July 2023. Since then, we started logging data to give us insight on our emissions based on our daily operations, and it helps us identify and plan to reduce emissions where possible.

Direct (Scope 1) GHG Emissions

For Scope 1 GHG emissions, the total fuel consumption amount is retrieved from company-owned vehicles, throughout the year 2023.

Total Fuel Consumption	3,036.3 L
Total Carbon Emissions	7.05 tCO₂e

Indirect (Scope 2) GHG Emissions

For Scope 2 GHG emissions, the total electricity consumption amount is derived from Areca HQ office electricity bills, throughout the year 2023.

Total Electricity Consumption	92,270 kWh
Total Carbon Emissions	71.97 tCO₂e

Note: Scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions calculations are sourced from Malaysian Green Technology and Climate Change Corporation (MGTC) website*

34 l

^{*} https://www.mgtc.gov.my/lcos-sme-calculator/



6.3 Energy Efficiency

Energy Consumption

4,000 2,000 0

Total Electricity Consumption in 2023



92,270 kWh

The monthly electricity usage breakdown shows a downward trend from its peak in June, following the introduction of the Energy Efficiency and Conservation initiative in July.

Jun

Jul

Aug

Sep

Oct

Nov

Dec

May

Energy Intensity Per Employee

Jan

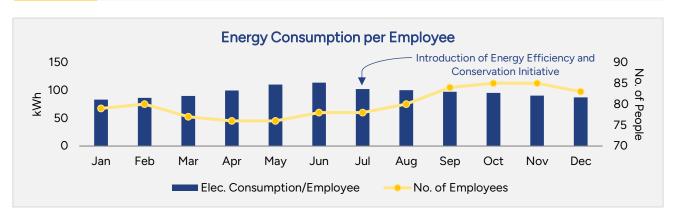
Feb

Mar

Apr

To identify how intense our usage of electricity was, we have taken into consideration how much energy was consumed per employee.

	Electricity Usage	Average Number of Employees	Average Energy Consumption per Employee
1H 2023	45,156 kWh	78	578.92 kWh
2H 2023	47,114 kWh	83	567.64 kWh



The increase in total electricity usage in 2H 2023 was partly due to an increase in the number of new employees. However, the average energy consumption per employee has gone down since July, showing that the initiative approach and awareness efforts have been effective in encouraging employees to reduce their electricity usage.



6.4 Reduction of Emissions and Consumption

Areca Capital has embarked on a sustainability journey starting in 2023, implementing various initiatives aimed at reducing our environmental impact. These include initiatives such as plastic waste reduction, promoting recycling, enhancing energy efficiency, and raising awareness about sustainability among our employees.

Our Sustainability Committee, along with employees' participation, plays a crucial role in driving these efforts. Through conducting surveys and collecting data on usage trends and employee preferences, it helps us identify areas for improvement and prioritise our sustainability initiatives effectively.

We actively encourage all employees to engage in our sustainability initiatives and events, whether it's participating in recycling drives or attending educational workshops. Every contribution, no matter how small, makes a difference.

Furthermore, we are committed to continuous improvement. Currently, our focus areas include Reduction, Recycling, Energy Efficiency & Conservation, and Education & Awareness. These areas guide our ongoing efforts to enhance sustainability practices throughout our organisation.

Reduction	Providing alternatives to single-use plastics, such as reusable or paper bags as a substitute for plastic bags, metal straws for plastic straws. • Single-use Plastic Bottle Reduction • Single-use Plastic Cutlery & Straw Reduction • Single-used Plastic Food Container Reduction		
Recycling	 Establish a dedicated recycling section in Areca HQ office for recycling. Plastic Recycling: Type 1 & 2 Type 4 & 5 		
Energy Efficiency & Conservation	 Encourage employees to adopt energy-saving practices. Conduct regular reviews of energy used throughout the HQ offices to identify areas where energy saving can be done and increase energy efficiency Implement energy efficiency practices and monitor the impact of consumption 		
Education & Awareness	 Raise awareness around the workplace. Organising events & workshops in regard to special days, such as Earth Day and sustainability. Placing reminders throughout the workplace to encourage sustainability practices Sharing awareness emails in regard to sustainability initiatives as well as sustainability knowledge 		

Future Plans:

The company is still exploring other avenues where we can enhance our data collection methods and sustainability strategies and awareness. Currently, we are working on promoting awareness and developing skills of employees and stakeholders on effective waste management and climate action. Additionally, once we see continuous improvements in our reduction efforts in the HQ office, we will gradually incorporate other branches nationwide to follow in our HQ office footsteps. We strive to continuously play our part in reducing environmental impacts, in efforts to ultimately achieve our climate-related goal of Net-Zero Emissions by 2050.



7. OUR AWARDS & RECOGNITION

2023	Areca equityTrust - Best Equity Malaysia Fund, 5 years Areca equityTrust - Best Equity Malaysia Fund, 10 years
2022	Areca equityTrust - Best Equity Malaysia Fund, 5 years Areca equityTrust - Best Equity Malaysia Fund, 10 years Areca Dividend Income Fund - Best Equity Malaysia Income Fund, 3 years Areca Dividend Income Fund - Best Equity Malaysia Income Fund, 5 years
2021	Areca equityTrust - Best Equity Malaysia Fund, 3 years Areca equityTrust - Best Equity Malaysia Fund, 5 years Areca equityTrust - Best Equity Malaysia Fund, 10 years
2020	Areca equityTrust - Best Equity Malaysia Fund, 3 years Areca equityTrust - Best Equity Malaysia Fund, 5 years Areca equityTrust - Best Equity Malaysia Fund, 10 years Areca Dividend Income Fund - Best Equity Malaysia Income Fund, 3 years
2019	Areca equityTrust - Best Equity Malaysia Fund, 3 years Areca equityTrust - Best Equity Malaysia Fund, 5 years Areca equityTrust - Best Equity Malaysia Fund, 10 years
2018	Areca equityTrust - Best Equity Malaysia Fund, 3 years Areca equityTrust - Best Equity Malaysia Fund, 5 years Areca equityTrust - Best Equity Malaysia Fund, 10 years
2017	Areca equityTrust - Best Equity Malaysia Fund, 3 years Areca equityTrust - Best Equity Malaysia Fund, 5 years Areca equityTrust - Best Equity Malaysia Fund, 10 years
2016	Areca equityTrust - Best Equity Malaysia Fund, 3 years Areca equityTrust - Best Equity Malaysia Fund, 5 years



Scan this QR Code to find out more



8. GRI CONTENT INDEX

Statement of Use	Areca Capital Sdn Bhd has reported the information cited in this GRI content index for the period 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023 with reference to the GRI Standards.
GRI 1 Used	GRI 1: Foundation 2021

GRI Standards & Disclosures	Topics Description	Page Number	Omissions & Explanation
GRI 2: GENER	AL DISCLOSURES 2021		
2-1	Organizational details	2-3	
2-2	Entities included in the organization's sustainability reporting	1	
2-3	Reporting period, frequency and contact point	1	
2-4	Restatements of information	-	Not Applicable
2-5	External assurance	-	Not Applicable
2-6	Activities, value chain and other business relationships	2	
2-7	Employees	26	
2-8	Workers who are not employees	-	Not Applicable
2-9	Governance structure and composition	14-15	
2-10	Nomination and selection of the highest governance body	14	
2-11	Chair of the highest governance body	14	
2-12	Role of the highest governance body in overseeing the management of impacts	15	
2-13	Delegation of responsibility for managing impacts	15	
2-14	Role of the highest governance body in sustainability reporting	15	
2-15	Conflicts of interest	17	
2-16	Communication of critical concerns	16	
2-17	Collective knowledge of the highest governance body	10	
2-18	Evaluation of the performance of the highest governance body	14	
2-19	Remuneration policies	-	Unable to disclose due to confidentiality constraints
2-20	Process to determine remuneration	-	Unable to disclose due to confidentiality constraints
2-21	Annual total compensation ratio	-	Unable to disclose due to confidentiality constraints
2-22	Statement on sustainable development strategy	4	



2-23	Policy commitments	18-20	
2-24	Embedding policy commitments	18-20	
2-24		19	
2-25	Processes to remediate negative impacts	19	
2-26	Mechanisms for seeking advice and raising concerns	17, 19	
2-27	Compliance with laws and regulations	19	
2-28	Membership associations	2, 19, 29	
2-29	Approach to stakeholder engagement	8	
2-30	Collective bargaining agreements	-	Not Applicable
	ECONOMIC		
GRI 201: ECON	NOMIC PERFORMANCE 2016		
201-2	Financial implications and other risks and opportunities due to climate change	10	
	GOVERNANCE		
GRI 205: ANTI	-CORRUPTION 2016		
	Communication and training about anti-	40.47	
205-2	corruption policies and procedures	16-17	
205-3	Confirmed incidents of corruption and actions taken	17	
GRI 417: MARK	CETING AND LABELING 2016		
417-1	Requirements for product and service information and labeling	18-19	
417-2	Incidents of non-compliance concerning product and service information and labeling	19	
417-3	Incidents of non-compliance concerning marketing communications	19	
GRI 418: CUST	OMER PRIVACY 2016		
418-1	Substantiated complaints concerning breaches of customer privacy and losses of customer data	21	
	SOCIAL		
GRI 401: EMPL	OYMENT 2016		
401-1	New employee hires and employee turnover	28	
	Benefits provided to full-time employees that		
401-2	are not provided to temporary or part-time	22	
	employees		
401-3	Parental leave	22	
GRI 404: TRAI	NING AND EDUCATION 2016		
404-1	Average hours of training per year per employee	16, 24	
404-2	Programs for upgrading employee skills and transition assistance programs	23	
404-3	Percentage of employees receiving regular performance and career development reviews	24-25	
	RSITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY 2016		
405-1	Diversity of governance bodies and employees	15, 26-27	



GRI 406: NON-DISCRIMINATION 2016			
406-1	Incidents of discrimination and corrective actions taken	28	
ENVIRONMENTAL			
GRI 301: MATERIALS 2016			
301-1	Materials used by weight or volume	32	
301-2	Recycled input materials used	32-33	
GRI 302: ENERGY 2016			
302-1	Energy consumption within the organization	34	
302-3	Energy intensity	34	
302-4	Reduction of energy consumption	34-35	
GRI 305: EMISSIONS 2016			
305-1	Direct (Scope 1) GHG emissions	33	
305-2	Energy indirect (Scope 2) GHG emissions	33	
305-5	Reduction of GHG emissions	35	