11 July 2014

Towards Adaptation to Climate Change

The Green Trends Seminar 2014 armed participants with relevant knowledge to help them prepare for climate change

As the myriad effects of global warming and climate change continue to make their presence felt, the global community is beginning to take a more proactive stance in understanding and then addressing these critical environmental issues. Indeed, the latest Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) from the United Nations’ Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) predicts that sea levels may rise as much as 0.82 meters by the year 2100, depending on the magnitude of greenhouse gas emissions. Closer to home, the IPCC also forecasted that South East Asia will become hotter and wetter in the future, with prolonged rainy seasons and dry spells increasing in both frequency and intensity.

“Clearly, climate change is a reality and we will have to face up to the challenges and adapt accordingly,” urged Mr Ng Eng Kiong, President of the Singapore Green Building Council (SGBC). He was speaking at the Green Trends Seminar 2014 held at the Singapore Marriott Hotel on 11 July 2014, more than 100 business professionals and key decision-makers got to glean insights on the latest trends and developments for the green building movement.
As a fitting backdrop for the entire seminar, Ms Evelyn Khoo, Director of the National Climate Change Secretariat (NCSS), took participants through the recent climate change report released by the IPCC, as well as shared developments on Singapore’s involvement and approach towards the new global climate change agreement that will come into effect after 2020.

Following that, Mr Goh Chee Kiong, Executive Director of the Economic Development Board (EDB), spoke about a brighter future, quite literally as he went over Singapore’s solar revolution. From innovative business models like solar leasing to the government’s SolarNova lead demand programme, Mr Goh made a strong case for the feasibility of solar energy in the Singaporean context.
Carbon emissions may be a buzzword in any discussion on climate change, but it is also a very suitable means of assessment to measure the effects that buildings have on the environment. Dr Song Bin, Senior Scientist from the Singapore Institute of Manufacturing Technology (SIMTech), gave a concise presentation on the carbon footprint for buildings, in line with the new global ISO standard for the quantification and communication of carbon footprint in products (ISO/TS 14067). He gave participants an idea on how a building’s carbon footprint is calculated, what elements are considered and what a building’s carbon footprint indicates.

The carbon footprint will be incorporated as a requirement under the certification criteria under SGBC’s Singapore Green Building Product labelling scheme, in a bid to create a low embodied carbon building environment for Singapore. On the same note, SGBC will be partnering with SIMTech to launch a carbon footprint training programme for the building and construction industry later this year, aimed at equipping the industry with sufficient knowledge to undertake and report the carbon footprint for their buildings as well as to enhance the global competitiveness of the local industry.

After a networking reception, Mr Benjamin Kwek, Director of EHTA Engineering Pte Ltd, took participants through a more “cooling” presentation, speaking on active dehumidification with liquid desiccants for humid and tropical environments. Although the topic seemed to be a little technical and information-heavy, Mr Kwek made use of diagrams to accurately illustrate his points – the usage of simple liquid desiccant systems is able to provide significant economic and functional benefits.
Finally, to round up the Green Trends Seminar 2014, Mr Jeff Cheong and Mr Wong Song Yeng, Chief Executive and Chief Operation Officer respectively from Sinjia RTE Solutions spoke about energy self-sufficiency in buildings using fuel cell technology. Previously stagnated due to safety, reliability and spatial issues, fuel cell technology has evolved tremendously over the past few years to become a viable source of alternative energy that can be fitted into buildings for them to generate their own electricity.

As a signature event organised by SGBC, the Green Trends Seminar 2014 once again brought the various knowledge bases together with members of the building and construction industry to share ideas, perspectives and collaborative opportunities.

For more information and news from SGBC, please visit: http://sgbc.sg/news/sgbc-news/