



BCA and UNEP Establish a Centre on Sustainable Buildings in SE Asia

(14 October- Paris/Singapore) The Building and Construction Authority of Singapore (BCA) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) have joined forces in the fight against climate change. The two organizations finalized an agreement to collaborate on work to promote and establish sustainable building policies and practices in the Southeast Asia region. On 14 September, at the International Green Building Conference 2011, held during Singapore Green Building Week, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed, formalizing cooperation between BCA and UNEP to provide policy advice and outreach activities related to sustainable resource management in the building sector.

The agreement between UNEP and BCA formally established BCA's Centre for Sustainable Buildings as a "Centre Collaborating with UNEP" to assist in developing tools, approaches and support to countries in the region in a coordinated effort to elevate sustainable solutions in the building sector. Through identification of successful policies, strategies and technologies at the regional and national levels, BCA will support the propagation of sustainability in the building sector in Southeast Asia.

BG (NS) Tan Chuan-Jin, Minister of State for National Development and Manpower, the Guest of Honour at the opening of the International Green Building Conference 2011 witnessed the signing of the MOU between UNEP and BCA. During his opening address, he said, "Singapore remains fully committed to sustainable development and climate change mitigation, and we will do our part as a global citizen to reduce carbon emissions."

Buildings are a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions, responsible for a third of total global emissions each year. The collaboration between the BCA and UNEP marks a recognition of the role that a sustainable building and construction sector will play in helping to keep global rises in temperature to below two degrees above pre-industrial levels, and so avoid further damaging climate change, and its contribution to the creation of new, green jobs that will be pivotal in the switch to a Green Economy.

"A transition to a Green Economy will in part depend on sectors like building and construction investing in innovation that catalyses low carbon technologies and practises as well as contributing to more sustainable working," said Dr Achim Steiner, UNEP's Executive Director and United Nations Under Secretary-General. "I congratulate the Building and Construction Authority of Singapore on its foresight in taking a leading role, and UNEP looks forward to working together."

"We are very pleased to formally establish BCA's Centre for Sustainable Buildings as a centre collaborating with UNEP," said Dr. Arab Hoballah, Chief of UNEP's Sustainable Consumption and Production Branch. "Access to BCA's expertise and regional network will broaden our collective



ability to not only widen adoption of sustainable building policies in the region through outreach and awareness, but will also expand the research and analysis needed to establish baselines, facilitate best practices and look more specifically at the unique aspects of sustainable building in tropical countries.”

Dr John Keung, BCA Chief Executive Officer added, “This marks a new chapter in our collaboration with UNEP. The new Collaborating Centre in Singapore, the first in Asia and one of the few collaborating centres with UNEP, is an endorsement of our concerted efforts in driving sustainability in the built environment and in building capabilities, regionally and internationally. We will strive to grow the BCA Centre for Sustainable Buildings into a hub for green buildings in the region and contribute to the global efforts of reducing carbon emissions from buildings.”

In 2006, UNEP launched what is now the Sustainable Buildings and Climate Initiative (UNEP-SBCI), a partnership with key stakeholders in the building sector to promote the global adoption of sustainable buildings as a key strategy to address climate change impact. BCA joined the initiative, originally the Sustainable Buildings and Construction Initiative, in 2009 and has become since become an important advocate in the Southeast Asia region. BCA has a diverse portfolio of activities related to sustainable buildings. In addition to the BCA Centre for Sustainable Buildings, it operates the BCA Academy of the Built Environment, a research and education arm, providing training for the advancement of the building industry. BCA has also established the BCA Green Mark, a successful rating scheme used to benchmark sustainable buildings in the Tropics.

BCA is currently producing a series of [‘State of Play’ reports](#) for eight Southeast Asia countries to contribute to UNEP-SBCI’s growing publications assessing policies and practices in sustainable building. The formal collaboration will expand these joint activities to include workshops, training, outreach, fundraising, and potentially the implementation of international projects in the region, broadening the reach and distribution of UNEP’s work on sustainable buildings and cities. In addition to the country reports currently being produced by BCA for UNEP-SBCI, the groups will develop a joint work plan to guide the collaboration over the coming years.

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About the Building and Construction Authority of Singapore

The Building and Construction Authority (BCA) of Singapore *is an agency under the Ministry of National Development*. BCA champions the development of an excellent built environment for Singapore. Our mission is to shape a safe, high quality, sustainable and friendly built environment, as these are four key elements where BCA has significant influence on. In doing so, we aim to differentiate Singapore's built environment from those of other cities and contribute to a better quality life for our people. Hence, our vision is to have "the best built environment for Singapore, our distinctive global city". BCA works closely with its education hub, the BCA Academy of the Built Environment, and industry partners to develop skills and expertise that help shape the best built environment for Singapore.

For more information, visit www.bca.gov.sg.

About the United Nations Environment Programme

Established in 1972, the mission of UNEP is to provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations. For more information, visit www.unep.org.

UNEP-SBCI works to promote sustainable building practices worldwide in a joint effort with key stakeholders in this sector (industry, business, governments, local authorities, research institutions, academia, experts and NGOs). UNEP-SBCI is developing policy strategies and tools such as the Common Carbon Metric (CCM), a globally applicable protocol to measure energy consumption and report Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions from building operations. For more information, visit www.unep.org/sbc.