

IPS Roundtable

“Developing Strategies to Respond to Climate Change in your Organisation”

Speaker: Tejas Ewing, Carbon Markets Coordinator, The New Economics Foundation

7 June 2010

Amid talks and concerns on the threats and challenges posed by climate change and global warming, IPS convened a Roundtable, which was focused on helping organisations develop strategies to respond to climate change. Held on 7 June 2010, the invited speaker was Mr Tejas Ewing, Carbon Markets Coordinator of the New Economics Foundation. IPS Research Fellow, Lee Yoong Yoong, moderated the session. A total of 25 participants attended the roundtable, including Dr Bindu Lohani of the Asian Development Bank (ADB).



Mr Ewing provided his insights and perspectives on the impact climate change could have within an organisation. For instance, how would a company capitalise on opportunities from “green growth”? He cited several examples from companies within Asia, which have undertaken climate change and sustainable strategies within their organisations. These strategies, he explained, were in response to policy changes and changing consumer demands arising from global warming. One of the companies he mentioned was Keppel Corporation Limited. Mr Ewing also stressed that while the initial cost of being sustainable is huge, it would not be wise to totally ignore the challenges and issues climate change brought.



Following Mr Ewing’s presentation, participants were engaged in a lively discussion. The participants gave their perspectives on how Singapore and the region could be more carbon-friendly and also suggested ways companies operating in Singapore could promote and sustain a clean and green environment. Dr Lee Boon Yang, Chairman, Keppel Corporation Limited and Dr Lohani shared the methods their respective organisations – Keppel Corporation and its private housing projects, as well as the ADB – had adopted in an effort to promote energy efficiency and conservation, and also suggested ways organizations could go green. Additionally, Dr Lohani pointed out that Asians should

first work on correcting the mindset that having a car is a status symbol. With an ever-increasing car population in Asia, the challenge now is how to better prepare Asian cities to face the impacts of greenhouse gas emissions.

The general consensus amongst participants was that the government, consumers, public and private institutions, and non-governmental organisations all have a role to play in dealing with issues arising from global warming. Such issues are applicable to entire societies and are not solely the responsibility of organisations. Governments have to take leadership in terms of setting aside resources such as technology, funding and manpower. Consumers must change their behaviour and mindsets too. Institutions also need to continue working with



relevant stakeholders and educate the general public on the importance of going green.

* * * * *

Notes taken by Lee Yoong Yoong, IPS Research Fellow.

