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Headline :	Government, senior business, and academic leaders address sustainable industrialization at 12th annual Ricoh Eco Action Day Industry Roundtable

Ricoh Asia Pacific (Ricoh), the Japanese multinational imaging and electronics company, brought together Government, senior business, and academic leaders to examine how the full potential of sustainable industrialisation and infrastructure development will contribute to Singapore's greener future during the 12th edition of the annual Eco Action Day campaign.

Entitled "Industry Innovation in the Year of Climate Action," this year's Eco Action Day Industry Roundtable focused on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (UN SDG) 9: to build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation, and foster innovation. Participants convened to discuss how companies can apply the principles of SDG 9 in a Singapore context.

The roundtable concluded the 2018 Eco Action Day campaign, in conjunction with the annual World Environment Day held every 5 June, which encourages corporations, schools, and individuals to pledge themselves to greener actions. Each pledge contributed to the Climate Action Pledges by the Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources (MEWR).

The Roundtable follows last year's focus on SDG 12 which tackled how companies in Singapore can apply circular economy principles and business models in practice.

Mr Kaz Goto, Managing Director of Ricoh Asia Pacific, said: "The challenges the world faces today range from climate change, globalization, and environmental degradation, to energy resource supply issues. The operating climate has changed over the years. At Ricoh, our operation continues to evolve as we align our commitment in excellence to improve the quality of living and drive sustainability."

As of 31 May 2018, 314 organisations, 16 schools and 1220 individuals have pledged their eco actions for a sustainable Singapore. The pledges are approximately 30% more than 2017, highlighting the increase in national awareness and alertness to take environmental action. The final number of pledges will be reported after 5 June.

Gracing the annual Industry Roundtable was Guest-of-Honour Dr Amy Khor, Senior Minister of State, MEWR & Ministry of Health. She noted, "The response from businesses in making pledges in support of the Year of Climate Action has been truly heartening and shows that the corporate world is as passionate as the public sector about creating a more sustainable Singapore."

Focus on sustainable industry, infrastructure and innovation

The topic of innovation in infrastructure development and sustainable industrialisation have become buzzwords to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. According to the UN, companies have to go beyond previous and current models, individual areas of expertise, separate locations and institutional frontiers.

In doing so, the full potential of infrastructure development and sustainable industrialisation can be unleashed to generate growth and employment, while preserving planetary boundaries.

Singapore as a model example

Singapore is often cited as a model example of how investment in industry, infrastructure and innovation has created one of the world's safest, most efficient and prosperous cities. But the rapid growth of these sectors has impacted the environment greatly, from energy and resource consumption to waste and greenhouse gas emissions.

"Singapore is further ahead than most countries towards achieving SDG 9—but there's still work to do," said Eco Action Day industry roundtable moderator Robin Hicks, Deputy Editor of Eco-Business. "Much depends on the government to ensure the right policy framework is in place to enable businesses to flourish, and on businesses to innovate to push their industries in the right direction."

Hicks added: "Eco Action Day is about finding the ideas that will enable Singapore to create more sustainable, resilient and inclusive industries and infrastructure over the next 12 years."

The panel consisted of J.D. Kasamoto, General Manager of Service and Environment Division of Ricoh Asia Pacific, Crystynna Ewe, APJ Regional Director Global Takeback of Dell, Maggie Lee, Corporate Partnership Strategist of WWF and Professor Seeram Ramakrishna, Chair of Circular Economy Taskforce of National University of Singapore.

The following points were raised during this year's roundtable discussion:

Industry Innovation

- Both the private sector and government need to work hand in hand to achieve industry innovation and infrastructure development.
- Upstream processes in manufacturing are important to ensure that products are designed to be recycled to reduce waste.
- With the Internet of Things (IoT), the average lifecycle of products is extended. Corporations can consider shifting towards being service providers, instead of manufacturing with obsolescence and increasing the amount of waste generated
- Within companies, leaders and management need to ensure their sustainability goals are communicated throughout the company, driving green innovation.

Managing end-of-life

- As environmental awareness is increasing, information needs to be more comprehensive to increase their participation.
- Products must be designed with recycling in mind. Materials for products can be standardised to facilitate the recycling process.
- Regulations by the government need to be enforced and not just implemented.

Driving the circular economy

- The circular economy concept should be implemented by all industries, accelerated by collaboration between businesses.
- Those who champion green initiatives and push the frontiers with regards to sustainability, should be rewarded as they set the standards for their industry.
- As Governments create legislations that provide conditions for circular economy practices, individuals and corporations should embrace the principles of the circular economy.
- In addition to produce responsibility, members of corporations should start with being ambassadors and advocates of sustainability practices.
- Manufacturers and producers should be more responsible of where their materials are sourced from and where they go to make sure waste is reduced.

What the future will look like

- In the age of hyper consumerism, if SDG 9 is neglected, the amount of waste the society generates will be unsustainable.
- For us to realise what the future will look like, it pays to revisit past processes and learn from them.
- Corporations, Government and society must have the next generation in mind to be able to build the best and most liveable city.

Eco Action Day has gained the support of many public and private sector organisations since 2007. This year's partners include MEWR, the National Environment Agency (NEA), Mitsubishi Electric, the Singapore Environment Council, Keppel Land, Keppel REIT, Deloitte and Singapore Pools, among others.