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Is the circular economy key to a prosperous Singapore?

At the Eco Action Day event in Singapore last month, youth participants and industry veterans alike agreed that the circular economy isn't only good for the environment, but is also a practical and profitable idea.

Eco Action Day Circular Economy Industry Roundtable 2017

Video: Eco Action Day

By **Ping Manongdo**
Thursday 27 July 2017

A zero-waste and sustainable Singapore is possible, and it does not have to be at the expense of the economy.

This was the key message delivered by Amy Khor, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources & Ministry of Health at this year's Eco Action Day in Singapore, held on June 1 to commemorate World Environment Day.



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Now in its 11th year, Eco Action Day is Singapore's largest business-led environmental initiative. It features an ongoing online campaign that solicits pledges from organisations, schools, and individuals to "Green the Red Dot" and get involved in positive actions for the environment. To date, the campaign has gathered over 1,200 pledges.

This year's Eco Action Day also featured an inaugural roundtable event, themed "Towards A Circular Singapore," which was co-organised by electronics and office equipment firm Ricoh Asia Pacific and Eco-Business, and brought together more than 100 guests from the corporate, government, civil society, and academic sectors.

At the roundtable, speakers including Kazuhisa Goto, managing director, Ricoh Asia Pacific and Dawina Khaira, senior communications executive for the Sustainable Singapore Blueprint, discussed ways to shift Singapore away from traditional "take, make, waste" ways of doing business and towards a more resource-efficient, circular economy.

Eco Action Day 2017 also featured the Circular Economy Challenge, which sought out innovative solutions that will improve sustainable consumption and production patterns in Singapore.

Three winning ideas from the Challenge's youth participants were announced at the roundtable event, and the teams were given cash prizes to support their projects.

The winning ideas included a proposal to upcycle durian husks into take-away containers for durians, a cradle-to-cradle leasing design for a fitness company, and a way to use egg shells to enhance the flexibility of bioplastics.

The success of Singapore's Eco Action Day has led Ricoh to expand the campaign into Asia Pacific, where nine other Ricoh sales companies will participate in a Global Eco Action next year. They are Australia, Hong Kong, India, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Catch the highlights of this year's Eco Action Day Singapore in this video.

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