

Roundtable

2019-05-31



Singapore, 30 May 2019 – Ricoh Asia Pacific (Rico), the Japanese multinational imaging electronics company, held its third Eco Action Day Roundtable today at the Ricoh Printing Innovation Centre, bringing together more than 60 government, senior business and academic leaders to address topics on sustainable waste management and recycling via a circular economy.

The title of this year's roundtable was "Recycling: The Road to Zero Waste?". Speakers and participants reimagined the future of recycling in Singapore and discussed potential solutions and actions to advance Goal 13 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs) – climate action.

Mr Yuji Hiruma, Director & Senior General Manager of Digital Workplace Marketing Division in Ricoh Asia Pacific, said: "Despite years of driving awareness and action on the importance of recycling, Singapore's domestic recycling rate remains flat at 22% in 2018, up from 21% in 2017. This is why in the Year Towards Zero Waste, we want to initiate conversations on sustainability and environmentalism, and to share actionable outcomes to advance the recycling practice and sustainable waste management."

The following speakers are involved in this year's roundtable discussion:

- Guest of Honour, Mr Tan Meng Dui, CEO of National Environment Agency
- Mr Anirban Mukherjee, Director Global Packaging of Asia Pacific, Johnson & Johnson Consumer
- Mr Mohit Grover, Executive Director of Deloitte Singapore
- Ms Pek Hai Lin, Manager of Zero Waste Singapore
- Mr Tan Szue Hann, Managing Director of Miniwiz
- Moderator, Mr Robin Hicks, Deputy Editor of Eco-Business

Mr Tan Meng Dui said: “We have designated 2019 as the Year Towards Zero Waste, to rally everyone to care for our environment and treasure our resources. To achieve our goal of becoming a zero waste nation cannot be solely a government-driven effort, but a collective one involving the Public, Private and People partnership. NEA will continue to provide the policy, regulatory and legislative framework to support our adoption of the circular economy. Individuals and businesses can also play their part to build a strong 3R culture and adopt a zero-waste mind-set in all that they do. This will help conserve our precious resources, and extend the lifespan of Semakau Landfill for as long as possible.”

Mr Robin Hicks said: “The amount of waste generated annually in Singapore has risen 40-fold since the 1970s, but recycling rates have not kept pace. Today’s discussion raised many excellent ideas for how Singapore can gradually shift towards becoming a true zero waste nation where incineration is a last resort, and we hope participants in today’s session will take these solutions back to their homes, organisations and communities and put them into action.”

The key points raised during this year’s roundtable discussion include:

- The role of manufacturers: More manufacturers are incorporating plastic and upcycled material into their products to showcase their sustainability credentials and create a point of differentiation in the market. What are the difficulties involved in upcycling? Is it feasible? Why aren’t we seeing higher recycling rates? How can manufacturers innovate to minimize unnecessary packaging?
- Social behaviour: Is the recycling message still useful? The right to repair movement in Europe is growing – are we seeing a similar trend in Singapore? How can the messaging around second-hand, upcycled items be changed and made attractive? Many consumers are still recycling wrong – what more can be done? Is there more room for targeted education around necessary packaging?
- Effective policymaking: Singapore has announced it will implement a policy of Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging. Does it go far enough to hold producers responsible for creating packaging waste? What kind of incentives and legislation is needed to get companies to pay attention to waste and recycling?
- Designing for a circular economy: What is the role of designers, architects and engineers in designing cradle-to-grave products and service? Is there such a thing as multiple-use packaging? What are the most successful case studies of industries with high recycling rates? Is there a business case to designing for repair, refurbishment and reuse?
- Business models and innovation: What are the new business models that involve and incentivize recycling? Can the informal sector (e.g. karang guni men, waste sorters) be empowered to take part in formalized recycling? Reverse vending machines, digital QR codes – how can we increase adoption rates of these new solutions?

The discussion points can be found in [Annex A](#).

Real Steps Taken to Support the Ricoh Eco Action Day Campaign

The roundtable concludes the 13th annual Eco Action Day campaign, held in conjunction with World Environment Day every June 5. Eco Action Day encourages organisations, schools, and individuals to pledge towards taking greener actions at www.ecoaction.sg. Each pledge received is included in the Climate Action Pledges by the Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources. Ricoh will also match the carbon savings from pledges made by each organisation and school with the same amount of natural gas carbon credits generated from an electricity plant on Jurong Island. The final number of pledges will be announced after June 5.

Beyond the pledge movement, Ricoh will go one step further and collaborate with the North West and South West Community Development Councils, and local tertiary and international schools to distribute and plant seeds to cultivate sustainable production and consumption, reduce the reliance on imports, and minimise our environmental footprint.

“In support of the Eco Action Day campaign, Ricoh believes in driving sustainability for the future and have strong plans to support this commitment,” said Mr J.D. Kasamoto, General Manager, Service & Environment Division, Ricoh Asia Pacific, who also presented at the Eco Action Day Roundtable. “These include reducing carbon emissions via investments in electric vehicles, utilizing more renewable energy in our offices, and using more recycled materials by reducing input of new resources in product manufacturing.”

“We are also making headway in environmental research at our Eco Business Development Centre in Japan. It has embarked on several research initiatives in resource conservation and energy creation. This has, for example, led to the development of a dye-sensitised solar cell, which enables high-power generation performance and efficiency under weak lighting conditions. Through such investments and R&D, we want to contribute to a better tomorrow in the communities around the globe that we are privileged to serve,” he concluded.

Support from Public and Private Organizations

Eco Action Day's focus on recycling this year is in line with the Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources designating 2019 as the Year Towards Zero Waste. Singapore's domestic recycling rate remains low, at 22% in 2018, significantly below countries such as Germany, Austria and South Korea.

A new Resource Sustainability bill and Zero Waste Masterplan is set to roll out in the second half of 2019 to raise recycling rates to 70% and domestic recycling rates to 30% by 2030. The bill also seeks to raise awareness of waste issues in Singapore, rally Singaporeans to treasure natural resources, and build a strong 3R (Reduce, Reuse and Recycle) culture. This paves the way for the businesses and society to move towards a circular economy and a zero-waste nation.

Eco Action Day has been supported by multiple public and private sector organisations since its inception in 2007. This year's partners include the Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources, National Environment Agency, PacificLight Power, Mitsubishi Electric, Singapore Pools, the Singapore Environment Council, and Deloitte, among others.

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About Eco Action Day

Eco Action Day is a national public awareness campaign organised by Ricoh since 2007, in partnership with key NGO, government, and private sector partners in Singapore. It is held on 5 June every year, to commemorate the United Nations Environment Programme's World Environment Day, which seeks to raise global awareness on the need to take positive action for the environment. Every year, Ricoh, along with various supporting partners, engages its employees, customers, corporate neighbours and government organizations and the wider public to take steps to reduce their impact on the environment.

To date, more than 1,400 organisations, including multinational corporations, government agencies, private companies, and tertiary institutions have participated in Eco Action Day.

For further information, please visit www.ecoaction.sg/

About Ricoh

Ricoh is empowering digital workplaces using innovative technologies and services enabling individuals to work smarter. For more than 80 years, Ricoh has been driving innovation and is a leading provider of document management solutions, IT services, commercial and industrial printing, digital cameras, and industrial systems.

Headquartered in Tokyo, Ricoh Group operates in approximately 200 countries and regions. In the financial year ended March 2019, Ricoh Group had worldwide sales of 2,013 billion yen (approx. 18.1 billion USD).

For further information, please visit www.ricoh.com.

About World Environment Day

World Environment Day (WED) is the biggest annual event for positive environmental action and takes place every 5 June. Since it began in 1972, global citizens have organised many events as they celebrate, engaging millions across the globe through events on the ground in over 70 countries. Every year, participants, young and old, organise many events. These include neighbourhood clean-ups, action against wildlife crime, replanting forests, art exhibits, concerts, dance recitals, recycling drives, social media campaigns, all themed around caring for the planet.

WED has grown to become one of the main vehicles through which the UN encourages positive action for the environment. Through WED, the UN Environment Programme enables everyone to realise not only the responsibility to care for the Earth, but also reminds one and all of their individual power to become agents of change. Every action counts, and when multiplied by a global chorus, becomes exponential in its impact.

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