

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SMEs Turn Green to Stay Competitive

Singapore, 26 January 2010 - "What sets your company apart from the competition?" Many enterprises are constantly asking themselves this question. Small and medium enterprises or SMEs feel the intensity of competition more so than the multi-national companies (MNCs) as they are part of an entire value-chain in business where suppliers like themselves are aplenty. In Singapore, 99 percent of companies are SMEs. (Source: Singapore Department of Statistics)

Many SMEs, especially those in the manufacturing sector, are recognising that they can become the preferred partner of bigger corporations if they adopted eco-friendly and sustainable practices.

"SMEs are undoubtedly a part of the manufacturing process of a completed product, and they know that many bigger corporations they supply parts to pride themselves for green manufacturing practices. Clearly, Lenovo or Fujitsu will not work with suppliers who do not have green manufacturing practices, or risk losing credibility over their claim that their manufacturing supply chain is environmentally-friendly. Another example would be Walmart. They work with suppliers to make their products more sustainable and would choose one that already practices sustainability in their work processes. Therefore, to be chosen by corporations over the many other SME suppliers, SMEs need to ensure their own work processes are eco-friendly as well," said Mr Howard Shaw, Executive Director of the Singapore Environment Council that administers Singapore's only holistic environmental award – The Singapore Environmental Achievement Awards (SEAA).

The SEAA recognises the outstanding achievements of organisations with excellent environmental management practices. In recognition of the environmental efforts by local SMEs, SEC and the Singapore Manufacturers' Federation (SMa) introduced a SME category for manufacturers based in Singapore under the SEAA scheme in November 2009. With this new category, the SMEs formerly overshadowed by the larger enterprises have a higher chance to be awarded the SEAA.

Lending weight to the call of being green, Mr Renny Yeo, President of Singapore Manufacturer's Federation says, "Green business practices are here to stay. We either adopt it and do well or become obsolete without it." Mr Yeo added, "It is increasingly important for our manufacturers to adopt green business practices as a means to not only boost their corporate social responsibility profiles, but also to attain long-term sustainability and gain competitive edge in a growing market of environmentally-conscious consumers. And we see the SEAA as a great way

to reward our SME manufacturers and inspire other SMEs to do likewise in embarking towards long term sustainability.”

The SEAA will be hosted and presented as part of the Singapore Green Summit, a gala event akin to the Oscars in the Green community. Deadline for the application for the SEAA is 25 March 2010. Interviews with shortlisted applicants and site visits take place in May, before the award presentation ceremony in June.

Those interested to find out more about the SEAA scheme can attend a seminar, “Achieving Environmental Excellence in Manufacturing for SMEs”, on 28 January 2010 at SPRING Building, Level 8 from 3.00 – 5.00pm. The seminar is jointly organised by SEC, SMa and the Enterprise Development Centre at SMa (EDC@SMa). You may call 6337 6062 to register for this free seminar.

About Singapore Environment Council

Established in 1995, the Singapore Environment Council (SEC) is an independently managed, non-government organisation that nurtures, facilitates and co-ordinates environmental causes in Singapore. SEC's work is founded on three pillars of action – Firstly, partnership with the people, private and public sectors of Singaporean society, to nurture a culture aligned with sustainable development concepts. Secondly, SEC rewards environmental excellence through awards schemes and product endorsement programmes, such as the Singapore Green Labelling Scheme. Thirdly, the SEC collaborates with partners to develop and implement training and learning programmes to build competencies in environmental sustainability within companies, thus keeping our business leaders ahead of the curve.

About Singapore Manufacturers' Federation (SMa)

Established since 1932, SMa's mission is to represent the interest of the Singapore manufacturing community and to drive its competitiveness and sustainable growth through serving industry-specific needs.

SMa is supported by 11 industry groups to serve diverse industry-specific needs, as well as five Centres of Excellence to offer a holistic approach towards improving competitiveness, upgrading skills and capitalizing on new technologies to grow market share. Current membership is more than 2,600 corporations ranging from MNCs to SMEs. SMa carries out a myriad of activities to enhance the competitive edge of our members.

For more information, visit

SEC: www.sec.org.sg



SMA: www.smafederation.org.sg



For media enquiries, please contact

Mr Howard Shaw
Executive Director
Singapore Environment Council
DID: (65) 6337 6062
M: (65) 9636 0400
Email: howard@sec.org.sg

Ms Michele Sit
Communications Executive
Singapore Environment Council
DID: (65) 6337 6062
M: (65) 9794 6340
E-mail: michele@sec.org.sg

Ms Gillian Lim
Senior Executive, Corporate Communications
Singapore Manufacturers' Federation
DID: (65) 6826 3053
M: (65) 9459 5050
Email: gillianlim@smafederation.org.sg