

SECLITE

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE SINGAPORE ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL

EARTH TO SINGAPORE: THE YEAR OF CLIMATE ACTION

Here's a snapshot of what you can look forward to in 2018!



LESS MEAT, LESS HEAT

Nature lover Angeline Tan
shares how you can get started
on a green diet!

INSIDE THE ISSUE

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Plastic's Not Fantastic

We all have a role to play in reducing plastic use.



Singapore
Environment
Council

EARTH TO SINGAPORE: THE YEAR OF CLIMATE ACTION



SINGAPORE HAS DESIGNATED 2018 AS THE YEAR OF CLIMATE ACTION, AIMED AT RAISING AWARENESS OF CLIMATE CHANGE.

BUT WHAT DOES THIS ENTAIL AND HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

HERE'S A SNAPSHOT OF WHAT WE CAN EXPECT TO SEE DURING THE YEAR OF CLIMATE ACTION:

- Singapore has announced a **carbon tax**, which will be applied on facilities producing 25,000 tonnes or more of greenhouse gas emissions annually. The tax will start at \$5/tCO₂e, from 2019 to 2023.
- Singapore will host a **Special ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Climate Change** in July, an important meeting for ASEAN to show leadership on climate action.
- The Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources (MEWR) has launched a **Climate Action Blog** at <https://climateaction.sg>, which serves as a resource portal for those looking to cut their carbon footprint.
- SEC is working on *Phase 2* of the **SEC Green Map** mobile application, first launched last December. At a later stage, users will be able to calculate their own carbon footprint and be rewarded for reducing their carbon consumption through a series of activities.
- SEC is organising training seminars, hands-on learning trails, and upcycling workshops to empower organisations, students and individuals to contribute towards a cleaner, more sustainable Singapore. To find out more, drop us an email at training@sec.org.sg.

HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

- Make simple changes to your lifestyle to reduce your carbon footprint. Check out the [Climate Action Blog](#) for tips to get started.
- Show your support as an individual, organisation or educational institution by taking the [Climate Action pledge](#) to fight climate change.
- Download the SEC Green Map app, available on **iOS** and **Android**, to help you lead a greener lifestyle. Use the app to locate the nearest recycling points and discover eco-friendly eateries and shops!
- Be recognised for your company or school's green efforts by participating in SEC's **Singapore Environmental Achievement Awards** (for companies) and **School Green Awards** (for schools).
- Choose eco-labelled products that have been sustainably produced. The **Singapore Green Label** is one such eco-label that confirms a product's green credentials.



Sources: Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources, National Climate Change Secretariat, *The Straits Times*, Nature Society (Singapore)

GREENING THE RED DOT



Ever wondered what the Singapore of tomorrow will look like? We're thinking green, clean and full of life – but that's only if we take action now to ensure Singapore remains sustainable.

In celebration of World Environment Day on June 5, Ricoh Asia Pacific is looking to encourage awareness and action for the environment through the Eco Action Day!

Eco Action Day is an annual nationwide campaign led by Ricoh Asia Pacific in Singapore. The theme, "Green the Red Dot, Join the Movement", calls on participants from **organisations**, **schools** and **individuals** to join the national campaign to green Singapore. By committing to actions that will reduce energy and resource consumption, we can minimise carbon emissions and contribute to a greener Singapore.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ECO ACTION DAY 2018



ECO ACTION DAY PLEDGE

Be part of the green movement, make your pledge at www.ecoaction.sg today!

Ricoh Asia Pacific featured the inaugural Eco Action Day industry roundtable discussion in 2017. The industry roundtable included senior business, government and academic leaders, such as (from left) Ms Jessica Cheam from Eco-Business; Dr Amy Khor, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources; Mr J.D. Kasamoto from Ricoh Asia Pacific; Mr Jeff Turner from DSM; and Mr Veerappan Swaminathan from Sustainable Living Lab.

Ms Masayo shared the Eco Action Day campaign with Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Tharman Shanmugaratnam, during the Clean & Green Singapore Carnival 2017.



"We are grateful that the Eco Action Day continues to grow in its 12th year. We are excited to unveil different voices that will be shared during the discussion about industry innovation this year," said Ms Masayo Hada, Deputy Senior Manager, Regional Environmental Management Group of Ricoh Asia Pacific Pte Ltd.

ECO ACTION DAY INDUSTRY ROUNDTABLE 2018: INDUSTRY INNOVATION IN THE YEAR OF CLIMATE ACTION

On May 31, business, government and civic society leaders will converge for the annual Eco Action Day Industry Roundtable.

This year, the Roundtable explores how the United Nations' most important Sustainable Development Goal – Goal 9, industry, infrastructure and innovation – can be tackled in Singapore's context. In addition, the Roundtable will discuss how organisations can better manage the lifecycle of products, and how we can drive a circular economy to replace today's take-make-waste approach.

Visit this [link](#) for more on the Industry Roundtable.

PLASTIC'S NOT FANTASTIC

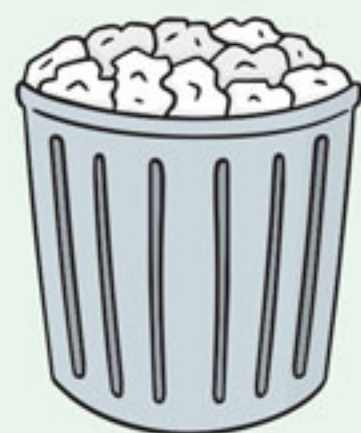
It can sometimes go unnoticed, but every day many of us are contributing to plastic waste.

A single plastic bottle or container won't melt the polar icecaps, but if the world continues to use plastic at our current rate, we would produce more than 300 million tonnes of plastic every year!



HOW MUCH PLASTIC WASTE DOES THE WORLD PRODUCE?

- More than **300 million tonnes of plastic** every year
- Including **billions of plastic bottles** and **five billion plastic bags**
- **Eight million metric tonnes of plastic** end up in our oceans every year



WHY IS EXCESSIVE USE OF PLASTIC BAD?

- Produces greenhouse gas emissions when manufactured, where crude oil has to be processed, and when it is incinerated. This contributes to climate change.
- The manufacturing process consumes large amounts of energy.



PLASTIC WASTE IN SINGAPORE

- In 2016, Singapore threw away **822,000 tonnes of plastic**
- Only **seven per cent** was recycled
- The Semakau Landfill is expected to be filled up by **2035**
- Singapore produced **557,000 tonnes of packaging waste** in 2017

SINGAPORE ENVIRONMENTAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Contribute to Singapore's zero waste journey by taking part in the Singapore Environmental Achievement Awards (SEAA) at www.sec.org.sg/seaa.

The SEAA is Singapore's leading environmental award, recognising and promoting sustainable practices in the private and public sectors.

INDUSTRY HAS A KEY ROLE TO PLAY

Industry has a key role to play in reducing plastic waste. There is critical need for innovations in recovery and treatment technologies, and development of environmentally-friendly substitutes and product designs that better facilitate reuse or recycling of plastic.

To drive a reduction in plastic waste, the Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources has outlined **plans to reduce packaging waste**. By **2021**, the Ministry seeks to mandate that businesses report on the type and amount of packaging they put on the market and their plans for reduction.

SEC is also playing our part. Through the **Singapore Environmental Achievement Awards**, SEC seeks to emphasise the need for innovative solutions to reduce plastic waste, and facilitate the sharing of best practices among companies in dealing with plastic waste.

THE RISE OF GREEN CONSUMERISM— IS SINGAPORE READY?

Besides companies, consumers also play an important role in reducing plastic waste here.

According to a **2015 Nielsen report**, Singapore consumers are increasingly concerned about the sustainability credentials of the products they buy. Millennials in particular, expressed willingness to seek and pay more for sustainable offerings.

With the rise of green consumerism, companies can better engage and encourage consumers to reduce use of plastics and other materials through incentive schemes, product labels and other initiatives.

A little help goes a long way – SEC has been working with retailers and NGOs to provide shoppers with reusable bags, encouraging them to use less single-use plastic bags.

With more companies on board, your combined green efforts will certainly help to support sustainable waste management in Singapore and lead us towards a zero-waste nation.

Sources: Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources, National Environment Agency, The Straits Times, Swedish Chamber of Commerce Singapore, The Guardian, Science, Nielsen Corporation

With the help of SEC's Earth Helpers, we work with retailers and NGOs to provide shoppers with reusable bags, encouraging them to use less single-use plastic bags.



LESS MEAT, LESS HEAT



In our fight to protect the environment, less is more. This applies not just to our consumption of resources, but also our food choices – the less meat we consume, the smaller our carbon footprint.

A **2016 study** by scientists at the Oxford Martin School found that shifting to a mostly vegetarian diet, or simply cutting down on meat consumption, would make a large dent in greenhouse gases. Plus, it could make people healthier too.

But if you love meat, it doesn't mean you have to completely give up steak or chicken. Cutting down on the amount of meat you eat can also reduce your carbon footprint.

And if you're looking to try a vegetarian diet, there are plenty of eateries in Singapore that serve delicious, plant-based food. VeganBurg, for instance, is a vegetarian burger joint that offers your favourite comfort food with none of the guilt.



POSTCARD

VEGANBURG – 100% PLANT-BASED LOVE

The world's first 100% plant-based burger joint, established right here in Singapore serves food that does not contain any animal products, including milk and eggs. Since its launch in October 2010, the burger joint has grown popular among vegans and non-vegans alike.

The restaurant is also committed to minimising its impact on the environment. It offers eco-friendly packaging and compostable takeaway cutlery. VeganBurg is also the first non-chain restaurant in the world to be RSP0-certified, having switched from soybean oil to sustainable palm oil in 2017.

"We used to think that a plant-based diet was impossible. We have always respected people's diet choices. VeganBurg was established to bring us back to our roots of consuming a natural diet consisting of plant-based ingredients,"
- VeganBurg founder Mr Alex Tan.

Check out VeganBurg's menu here: veganburg.oddle.me



Q. WHEN DID YOU BECOME A VEGETARIAN, AND WHY?

When I was 12, my aunt brought me to a wet market in Malaysia. Butchers there slaughtered chickens on the spot, and I was shocked to hear the cries of a poor chicken. From that point on, I decided to avoid eating chicken.

In university, I came across a video featuring Gary Yourofsky, an animal-rights activist from America who spoke about animal cruelty in the meat industry. I remembered clearly that he said, "If you know that being a vegetarian is the right choice, why don't you just do it?" That was when I decided to go vegetarian – I've been one for almost seven years now.

Q. WHAT KINDS OF FOOD DO YOU AVOID?

No fish, no meat. I don't eat seafood either. Whenever choices are available, I would always choose a vegetarian diet. But if I am travelling or eating with family, I wouldn't be so fussy about it. For example, if the dish contains meat, I would eat the vegetables at the side.

Q. IS IT DIFFICULT TO FIND EATERIES THAT OFFER VEGETARIAN FOOD IN SINGAPORE?

It's actually quite easy to find vegetarian food options in Singapore. Almost every food court has a vegetarian stall. Even if there isn't, you can always approach stalls that offer vegetarian options.

Q. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BENEFITS OF BEING A VEGETARIAN?

Everything we do is often out of habit, so it feels good to be taking control of my diet. Food is the simplest, yet most important choice we make every day.

Also, since I've embarked on a plant-based diet, I rarely get pimples on my face. Though it could be because I'm past puberty. **laughs**

Q. WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO SOMEONE WHO WANTS TO GO VEGETARIAN, BUT DOESN'T KNOW WHERE TO BEGIN?

Start small. Reduce the portion of meat in your meals gradually so you give yourself time to change your diet. Habits are cultivated, so if you make big changes immediately it's going to be difficult.

Set a goal. Cut the current portion of meat on your plate by half. Eating more vegetables makes you feel good because it's healthier and better for the environment, and at the same time you can still satisfy your cravings for meat.

Get friends to join you. It's important to get support for the lifestyle choices you make.

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO GO VEGETARIAN?

WE SPOKE TO ANGELINE TAN, AN ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEER AT SEC, WHO SHARES MORE ABOUT THE VEGETARIAN LIFESTYLE.

We welcome feedback, general enquiries and corporate partnerships. Please contact us at:

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