

SECLITE

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE SINGAPORE ENVIRONMENT COUNCIL

The costliest bag in the world
isn't made of leather



820 million supermarket plastic bags
used in Singapore each year could
cost us our precious environment.

Use One Less Plastic

**ECO SHOPS
TO VISIT THIS
FESTIVE SEASON**

**SEC'S ONE
LESS PLASTIC
CAMPAIGN**

**ENTER
SINGAPORE'S
WILD SIDE**



Singapore
Environment
Council

EDITOR'S NOTE



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As we welcome 2019, its time to reflect on key activities from the last year.

This being the Year of Climate Action, we've seen many individuals and organisations step up their efforts to drive towards a sustainable Singapore. More companies in Singapore have announced green initiatives, like reducing plastic bag use or doing away with packaging altogether. Many individuals are also becoming more environmentally aware, especially among younger consumers.

With sustainability gaining momentum among Singaporeans, the trick is to narrow the gap between awareness and action. People must feel confident and empowered that they can make a difference to climate change.

We believe that every individual can play a part, by simply respecting our environment and using our resources in the right way.

There are many ways to care for Mother Nature – using both sides of a paper instead of just one; walking to the nearest hawker centre instead of getting a ride; bringing your own reusable cup, cutlery and container in place of disposable ones.

In this issue of SECLITE, we uncover different ways to lead a greener lifestyle. Discover how you can apply Mother Nature's lessons in the workplace, and definitely don't miss these eco-certified shops the next time you visit the mall!

We hope that these stories will inspire readers to take action for the benefit of our environment. Here's to a greener, more successful 2019!

BY JOYCE YEO

MANAGER, MARKETING COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH

Please contact us at:
1 Kay Siang Road, #07-01
Singapore 248922
Tel: 6337 6062

 Singapore Environment Council
 singapore-environment-council-sec-/
 SECSingapore
 secsingapore

 www.sec.org.sg
 info@sec.org.sg

USE ONE LESS PLASTIC



The Singapore Environment Council (SEC) and DBS Bank jointly launched the 'One Less Plastic' national campaign on 12 December 2018, to encourage the use of reusable bags among supermarket shoppers.

The campaign has made history as the first environmental initiative to be supported by the four leading supermarket chains – Dairy Farm Singapore Group, NTUC FairPrice, Prime Group and Sheng Siong.



Mr Chong Wee Chong (Group Vice President, Prime Group), Mr Lim Hock Chee (Chief Executive Officer, Sheng Siong Group), Mr Seah Kiang Peng (Chief Executive Officer, NTUC FairPrice) and Mr David Goh (Managing Director, Cold Storage and Giant) joining forces to encourage shoppers to use one less plastic.



Dr Amy Khor, assisted by Ms Isabella Huang-Loh (Chairman, Singapore Environment Council) rejecting plastic bags by flipping the panel of the mechanism

Singaporeans take 820 million plastic bags from supermarkets each year. That's an average of three bags per person every visit, with 14% of the population using six or more! You can do your part to reduce your use of plastic bags by bringing your own reusable bag or saying no when you don't need one.

Held in conjunction was the Eco Appreciation Awards Ceremony 2019, to acknowledge the 199 offices, shops and food establishments certified by SEC, including 14 organisations who have been with SEC for seven years. The 199 that achieved certification represents a 13% growth from the previous year. Cumulatively, SEC has now certified more than 8.2 million square metres of office space and reached out to 173,000 staff and employees.



The reveal of the limited edition One Less Plastic Reusable Bag

- Don't have a reusable bag of your own? Get a free limited edition reusable bag when you spend min. \$50 at participating supermarkets during roadshow times!
- \$3,000 worth of prizes to be won in our grand draw! Stand a chance when you participate in our online survey and upload a photo of yourself using our reusable bag.

Learn how to use One Less Plastic now! Visit sec.org.sg/seaa/dont-waste-reduce-lah.

RECOGNISING THE GREENEST COMPANIES IN ASIA

Congratulations to all companies which clinched awards at the SEAA!



Guests were treated to a special musical performance by Fei Yue Family Service Centre's Ukelele ensemble.



The Magical Mask Changer made his mystical appearance at the event, to perform the ancient Chinese dramatic art of 'Bian Lian'.

Fourteen companies and organisations from across Asia were honoured at the 21st annual Singapore Environmental Achievement Awards (SEAA) for their sustainable business practices. Among the awardees this year were technology firm HP PPS Asia Pacific Pte Ltd, which received the top honour – the SEC-CDL Outstanding Environmental Achievement Award – and Khoo Teck Puat Hospital.

The SEAA winners underwent a robust and thorough assessment by an expert panel, focusing on their ability to achieve breakthroughs in environmental performance through leadership, innovation, procedures and staff training.

This year, as part of the Year of Climate Action 2018, the SEAA was held in conjunction with the annual SEC Conference Day. This year's conference was themed "RE-economy: Creating A New Plastics Economy". The conference, organised in collaboration with strategic partner Deloitte & Touche Enterprise Risk Services Pte Ltd, sought to raise awareness of responsible green consumerism, with greater focus on reducing plastic waste.

Key event highlights included a workshop, and two panel discussions on the consumer and producer's role in reducing plastic use, drawing insights from SEC's report on "Consumer Plastic and Plastic Resource Ecosystem in Singapore".

Here are the highlights from SEAA 2018!



"THE SEAA HAS BEEN AROUND FOR MORE THAN TWO DECADES FOR A GOOD REASON, WE STRIVE TO BE INCLUSIVE – WE RECOGNISE INITIATIVES BY THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS, SMES, START-UP COMPANIES. AND WE ALSO ENCOURAGE INNOVATION. AS AN NGO, SEC IS REWARDING THE EFFORTS OF SEAA APPLICANTS AS AN INDEPENDENT ASSESSOR."

**SAID MS ISABELLA HUANG-LOH,
CHAIRMAN OF SEC**

SEAA 2018

AWARD WINNERS

SEC-SETSCO SINGAPORE ENVIRONMENTAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD (MANUFACTURING)
Merit Winner: **PACIFIC LIGHT POWER PTE LTD**

SEC-STATS ASIA PACIFIC SINGAPORE ENVIRONMENTAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD (SERVICES)
Winner: **SINGAPORE TELECOMMUNICATIONS LIMITED (SINGTEL)**
Merit Winner: **SWISSÔTEL MERCHANT COURT, SINGAPORE**

SEC SINGAPORE ENVIRONMENTAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD (PUBLIC SECTOR)
Winner: **KHOO TECK PUAT HOSPITAL**
Merit Winner: **SINGAPORE MANAGEMENT UNIVERSITY**

SEC-MPA SINGAPORE ENVIRONMENTAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD (MARITIME)
Winner: **PSA CORPORATION LTD AND PACC OFFSHORE SERVICES HOLDINGS LTD (POSH)**

SEC-CITIC TELECOM SINGAPORE ENVIRONMENTAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS (REGIONAL)
Winner: **HP PPS ASIA PACIFIC PTE LTD**
Merit Winner: **UNILEVER ASIA PRIVATE LIMITED AND ORIENT OVERSEAS CONTAINER LINE LIMITED**

SEC-SENOKO ENERGY GREEN INNOVATION AWARD
Winner: **CARRIER SINGAPORE PTE LTD AND RENEWFIBRE ASIA PRIVATE LIMITED**
Merit Winner: **VANCE CHEMICALS PTE LTD AND MAGORTHERM GLOBAL TRADING PTE LTD**

SEC-CDL OUTSTANDING ENVIRONMENTAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
Winner: **HP PPS ASIA PACIFIC**



The first panel discussion addressed Singapore's low recycling rate, discussing possible ideas to close the waste loop.



"BUSINESSES PLAY A VITAL ROLE IN SINGAPORE'S SUSTAINABILITY JOURNEY. THEY ARE ABLE TO INFLUENCE SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH THEIR WIDE NETWORK OF EMPLOYEES, STAKEHOLDERS AND CONSUMERS. BY PRIORITISING WASTE MINIMISATION, WATER AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY, THEY CAN CREATE NEW ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES, WHICH SUPPORT A CIRCULAR ECONOMY. THIS WILL NOT ONLY BENEFIT THE COMPANIES' BOTTOM-LINE BUT ALSO ENSURE SINGAPORE REMAINS SUSTAINABLE FOR OUR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS."

SAID MR MASAGOS ZULKIFLI, MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND WATER RESOURCES



A second expert panel discussed the future of plastics and the possibility of establishing a new plastics economy in Singapore.

GOING GREEN BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Participating schools proudly displayed a range of green projects – from indoor plant holders to environmental video games.



Youths imagine a green Singapore where people and wildlife live in harmony.

Every youth has the power to create positive social change that will transform the future.

This is why the SEC-StarHub School Green Awards (SGA) strives to enable young people to put their green ideas into action. The SGA serves as a platform for students to develop and showcase innovative solutions to environmental challenges.

This year, more than 400,000 participating students and teachers from a record 437 schools reached out to over 500,000 members of the public with their green message.

THROUGH THE SEC-STARHUB SCHOOL GREEN AWARDS (SGA), SEC HAS ENGAGED 1 MILLION STUDENTS, TEACHERS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.



OVER 400,000 STUDENTS AND TEACHERS FROM 437 SCHOOLS REACHED



OVER 500,000 MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ENVIRONMENTALLY ENGAGED



MORE THAN 40,000 KG OF E-WASTE COLLECTED, EQUIVALENT TO 4 SBS BUSES



Y-O-Y INCREASE IN WATER CONSERVED TO FILL 77 OLYMPIC-SIZED SWIMMING POOLS (2016 TO 2018)



Y-O-Y INCREASE IN ENERGY CONSERVED TO POWER 23,946 4-ROOM HDB FLATS FOR A MONTH (2016 TO 2018)

Here are the highlights School Green Day 2018, where SGA-participating schools displayed their green projects to guests, including Minister for Education Mr Ong Ye Kung!



Fancy a game of environmental snakes and ladders?



Smile! Education Minister Mr Ong Ye Kung, who was Guest-of-Honour at the event, enjoyed interacting (and taking selfies) with students.



A big THANK YOU to all schools, partners and volunteers for your contributions to SGA 2018! See you next year!

GREEN UP YOUR ORGANISATION

The case for organisations going green has been building steadily in recent years. This can be attributed to factors, such as consumer trends, cost reductions and employee morale. Buzzwords like renewable energy and sustainable infrastructure have been making headlines but, such innovations may not be in the interests or capacity of many businesses. There is however, room to turn over a greener leaf in any industry.

Information on green practices that can be adopted by organisations is widely available but, how can you institutionalise them in your company? This article will discuss a systemic approach on how you can guide your company down a greener path.

1. MAKE A CASE FOR GOING GREEN

Highlight the benefits of going green to your management in a concise proposal. These include tangible benefits, like cost savings, and intangible ones, like stronger branding. Management support is key to removing barriers to your change and securing resources.

3. SET YOUR GREEN GOALS

Less water wastage? Less electricity use? Quantifiable objectives should be set to serve as the cornerstone to the implementation of environmental policies. Ensure that all stakeholders are aligned before proceeding forward.s.

5. CRAFT YOUR ACTION PLAN

Employ initiatives that tackle both hardware, such as using energy saving bulbs instead of conventional ones, and heart-ware, like switching off monitors when not in use. Make sure these are clearly communicated throughout your organisation. Start with small goals and move on to larger ones to build momentum!

7. GET CERTIFIED!

Be recognised for your environmental stewardship! Certification not only adds to the branding of your organisation but, allows you o example for others to follow. **Eco-Office Plus** evaluates both the hardware and heart-ware of your organisation throughout a comprehensive assessment.

2. ASSEMBLE A GREEN COMMITTEE

Form an interdepartmental coalition to run environmental initiatives throughout your organisation. A diverse team will be able to better address department-specific challenges and streamline communication. Going green is faster when everyone's on board!

4. DETERMINE YOUR ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Get educated on environmental management standards such as ISO 14001. Your organisation's environmental policies should be aligned with these standards and your objectives.

6. SUSTAIN YOUR GREEN EFFORT

Continually monitor the performance of your environmental initiatives and gradually modify them to achieve your objectives. Keep the momentum going and institute a long-lasting



Get certified now! Email, info@sec.org.sg.

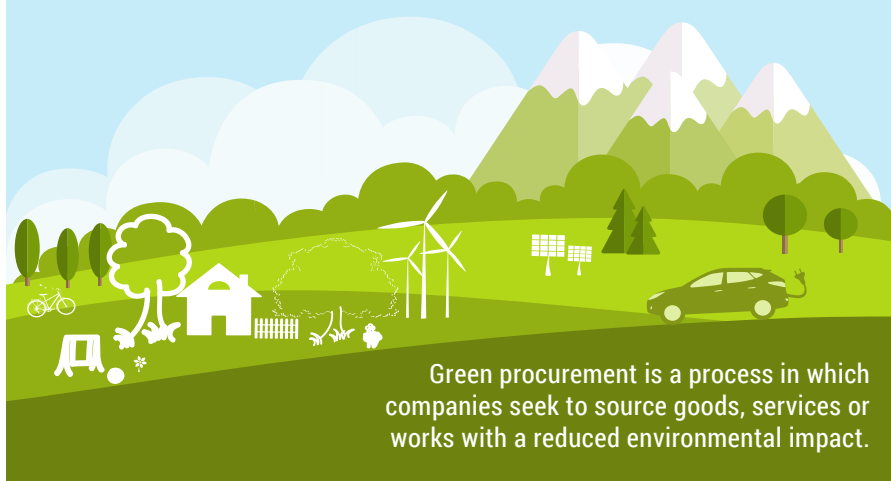


MAKING A BUSINESS CASE FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Businesses don't have to compromise profitability for an eco-friendly restructuring of their current practices. In fact, most would benefit from the transition.

If you often feel ensnared between environmental responsibilities and overspending your budget, **green procurement** can be a cost-effective option that is growing in both popularity and availability.

WHAT IS GREEN PROCUREMENT?



Green procurement is a process in which companies seek to source goods, services or works with a reduced environmental impact.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

Green procurement can play a leading role in resource waste reduction, helping you to better manage resources and improve efficiency. For example, when purchasing IT equipment you could either go for short-term cost savings or buy the most efficient, green option and enjoy long-term savings.

Also, most customers now expect businesses to act in an ethical and responsible manner. A global study by Nielsen in 2015 showed that millennials and Generation Z youths are willing to pay more for products and services from companies committed to positive environmental impact. Companies which apply ethical green business practices build a strong brand for themselves.

Start building green credentials by talking to SEC about our **Singapore Green Labelling Scheme (SGLS)**! With 3,600 certified products from 770 companies worldwide, the SGLS can be a helpful source for businesses looking to procure green products.

Check out our brand new website at www.sec.org.sg/sxls!

DID YOU KNOW?

Since 2015, the **Singapore Government** has adopted the requirement to only procure printing paper that carries SEC's Singapore Green Label. The Singapore Green Label ensures that paper products certified under the scheme are sourced from suppliers that practise sustainable land and forest management.

The SGLS has achieved accreditation to **ISO 17065**, the international benchmark for product certification, under its Paints and Surface Coatings category. This means that the scheme's processes are rigorous and trustworthy. SEC is also recognised under the **BCA Green Mark Scheme** as an approved certification body for green products.

In partnership with PUB, Singapore's national water agency, SEC will be rolling out new certification criteria for **water saving devices** – such as water jets, commercial dishwashers and washing machines – under its SGLS scheme. Do keep a look out!



ENTER SINGAPORE'S WILD SIDE

Most of us are familiar with Singapore's "wild" side, a collection of sleek night clubs teeming with patrons partaking in all manner of revelry- A brief, albeit sweet release from the monotony of the work week.

Look past the bright lights and modern cityscape and you will find the real, wild side of Singapore. Just off Upper Bukit Timah Road and a short walk from Beauty World MRT is Hindhede Nature Park, a quaint green patch set to give your lungs welcome relief from stale office air. Stepping in, you will soon find that Singapore has more wildlife than just mynahs and monkeys. This article will take you on a journey to discover Singapore's hidden fauna and flora.

FAUNA

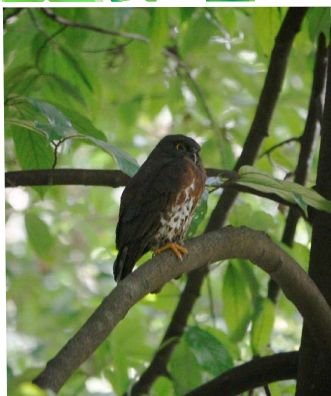
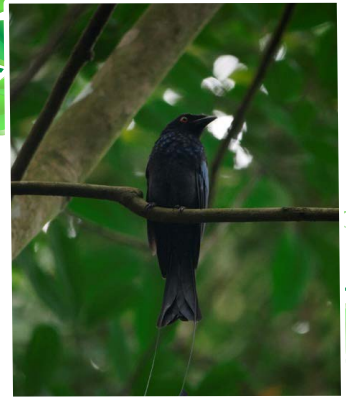


MALAYAN COLUGO

Also known as the Malayan Flying Lemur, the Colugo is one of Hindhede's more numerous residents. Commonly mistaken for odd shaped bumps on tree trunks, these nocturnal creatures spend most of the day stationary. Around dusk, they pry themselves from their barky homes to feast on the abundant flora in the neighbourhood. Going against the mammalian stereotype of walking, the Colugo can glide up to a distance of 100m! Their secret to flight lies in the large excess of leathery skin and incredibly light and thin skeletons. Females can glide even while carrying a Joey! How's that for girl power?

GREATER RACKET - TAILED DRONGO

Few Singaporean birds can match the flamboyance of this smooth, ebony plumed song bird. A pair of slender tendrils extend from its tail, each ending in eye-like bulbs that would not look out of place on the headdress of an ancient Chinese general. Although its colour scheme sparsely differs from the common crow, the disparity between their calls is akin to night and day. While the characteristic "caw" of the crow is commonly met with disdain, the Greater Racket-Tailed Drongo has an incredible range and a great aptitude for mimicry. It has even been known to imitate the calls of birds-of-prey, stealing food from other species in the insuring panic! It is truly the crafty who thrive in the wild.



BROWN HAWK OWL

Equal parts cute and deadly, these nocturnal birds-of-prey are known to feed on flying insects and small mammals, like bats or rodents. Commonly found perched on branches in the lush canopy of Hindhede, their huge yellow eyes enable them to locate prey in the verdant clutter of their jungle habitat. Their sharp claws and agility enable them to perform amazing feats, like snatching unsuspecting prey mid-air! Creatures of comfort, these owls are known to perch at the same spot each night. Contrasting their predatory nature, their calls resemble hollow mellow "woop"s. Guess you can't judge a book by its cover!

Not forgetting our leafier friends, Hindhede is chloro-filled to the brim with flora! Both beautiful and functional, each tree is a vital pillar of the ecosystem.

FLORA

FICUS FISTULOSA

Its tongue-twister of a name belies its status as a common roadside tree, a green buffer to the tar-paved veins of Singapore. As part of the fig family, the fruits of the *Ficus Fistulosa* serve as food to local biodiversity, like the common plantain squirrel! These trees do not bear fruit at the same time thus, providing a year-round reliable supply of food. Among its other human purposes, the leaves of the tree can be eaten as a salad and have even been used as a remedy to treat headaches!



COMMON PULAI

Able to grow up to 40 metres in height, the branches of the Common Pulai grow in a pagoda-like configuration, providing ample shade to all beneath it. Its creamy white flowers are pleasant scents but, possess a peppery fragrance that some might find overpowering. Certain individuals have historical significance and are listed as Heritage Trees in Singapore. The latex of the tree can be used to treat abscesses and boils while its timber is commonly used for furniture.

ALBIZIA

Introduced from Indonesia, the Albizia is the one of the world's fastest growing trees. Sadly, while these trees provide refuge to local wildlife outside of nature reserves, they are deemed dangerous due to their weak branches and shallow roots. They were thrust into the spotlight when a tree collapsed onto private property, flattening a fence among other forms of damage. As such, most of the species were swiftly removed from roadsides islandwide. Albizia woodlands nonetheless remain throughout the island, their unique flowers and towering stature serving to beautify the urban landscape.



We have barely scratched the surface of the true wild side of Singapore, with numerous other nature reserves beckoning the explorer in you to pay a visit. Not sure where to start?

Take your organisation on one of SEC's Biodiversity Trails to get off the screen and into the green!

Email us at info@sec.org.sg to find out more now!

ECO SHOPS TO VISIT THIS FESTIVE SEASON

'Tis the season to be green – did you know that you can help the environment by shopping responsibly? Here are five eco shops you definitely shouldn't miss this festive season!

GROCERIES



REPROVISIONS

Located in Jurong Point, this zero-waste grocery store serves healthy foods such as superfoods, nuts and dried fruits, as well as licorice candies and handmade chocolates. Homemakers planning for a family dinner should definitely check this store out.



UNPACKT

Need groceries for your festive meal? Singapore's first zero-waste grocery store, Unpackt sells a variety of food and daily lifestyle products from olive oil to baked apple chips. All items sold in the store are packaged-free, so do bring along your own containers when you visit!

FASHION



AMADO GUDEK

Looking for a fancy gift for your spouse or friend? Amado Gudek offers sustainable jewellery designed and handcrafted in Singapore using eco-friendly bioresin and eco materials. For instance, their 'Iridescent creatures' collection features beautiful jewellery made with recycled Nespresso's capsules.



THE GREEN COLLECTIVE

Singapore's first green lifestyle pop-up, more than a dozen homegrown eco brands have teamed up to launch a multi-brand concept store in KINEX Mall. If you're in need of inspiration for gifts, check out this store's handcrafted jewellery, reusable cutlery sets and straws amongst other eco-friendly gems.

FOR CHILDREN



THE FIRST GREEN STORE

Inculcate environmental consciousness in your children by bringing them to this one-stop shop for eco stationery. Likely Christmas gifts for kids include natural and renewable beeswax crayons and 'sprout pencils' that come with seeds that can be planted.

Follow in the footsteps of these eco brands by checking out SEC's Eco-Shop programme!

Project: Eco-Shop is a joint initiative between SEC and SMRT Corporation Ltd. It guides retailers to fit out their shops in an environmentally-sustainable manner and adopt eco-friendly practices.

Shops that achieve a satisfactory rating are certified with an Eco-Shop Label, a strong sign of their commitment to being green. Retailers are also able to reduce their energy consumption in the long run.

For more details, visit www.sec.org.sg/ecoshop.



LOW CARBON GURUS

If a bond between humans is known as a relationship, our relationship with the earth is our carbon footprint. This refers to the amount of greenhouse gases, the primary cause of climate change, our activities release into the atmosphere. Even daily actions, like sleeping in the air conditioning, have an impact on the environment! With temperatures set to rise by 1.5 degrees Celsius between 2030 and 2052, there's no better time than now to take action! But how do we begin? We approached SEC's low carbon gurus, Jeryl and Travis to find out how they reduce their carbon footprints at home and in the office.



AT HOME

GET PEDALLING

My house is too far a walk yet too long a wait using public transport. I decided to bike over one day and haven't stopped since! It's faster than waiting for the bus and I get to enjoy the scenery. If you normally take a bus to the MRT Station, try cycling instead. You'll save money and the earth.

BE LESS CARNIVOROUS

I go meatless once a week. A vegetarian diet has half the carbon footprint of one with meat. Vegetables are full of antioxidants and other nutrients that can prevent cancer. If you're worried about protein, lentils and soya beans have more than enough.

USE ONE LESS PLASTIC

Single use plastics production creates a large amount of emissions. Using your own reusables and saying no to a straw or take away container can go a long way in reducing your carbon footprint. **EcoLifeSG for Individuals** helps me keep track of this!



IN THE OFFICE

SWITCH IT OFF

I make it a point to switch off the lights and air conditioning during lunch and after work. Unless someone is still working. This decreases both my office's electricity bill and carbon footprint.

REUSE TO REDUCE

We keep a set of communal cups, plates and other utensils in the pantry to avoid the usage of disposables. We even stock take away containers for anyone wants to eat-in!

PAPER HAS MANY USES

We make it a point to print on both sides. Paper that's only printed on one-side can eventually be used as rough paper. Shredded paper can also be used as packing material, preventing the usage of foam and bubble wrap. **EcoLifeSG for Organisations** helps my company keep track of our usage.



ind.ecolifesg.com

INDIVIDUALS

Take on fun challenges to track and reduce your carbon footprint. Get **EcoLifeSG for Individuals!**



org.ecolifesg.com

ORGANISATIONS

Reduce your company's carbon footprint and costs! Get an account via bit.ly/EcoLifeSGOrg now!

ENVIRONMENTAL BASELINE STUDIES & ENGINEERING SOLUTIONS



STATS Asia Pacific is a specialist in testing and technical consultancy with a belief that understanding the environmental impact of projects is critical. STATS Asia Pacific works hand-in-hand with the Singapore Environment Council to administer the Singapore Green Labelling Scheme, using highly advanced instrumentation to ensure that standards are met.

STATS provides Environmental Baseline Studies to help their clients perform due diligence and understand the potential issues and liabilities when developing or acquiring a new site. This involves an assessment of water, soil and air of the area. Inspection includes investigation of unusual odours, chemical or toxic gas emissions, drainage, noise, solid waste handling and others that may harm biodiversity. The samples are then analysed at their laboratories for any toxic chemicals that could affect the environmental quality, as well as the integral structure of the future buildings.

Additionally, STATS provides strategic, practical, cost effective and timely solutions to Geotechnical & Environmental issues in the form of cost savings to clients by combining the synergies and overlap between these two disciplines. Using the results from lab analysis, their engineers are able to provide complete, effective solutions as well as, advice for any of the environmental issues regarding the site.



A GREENER SOLUTION STARTS FROM WITHIN

The concept of going green have to be a company-wide concerted effort. It is not just merely having one or two initiatives, but years of continuous initiatives starting from within. At Setsco Services Pte Ltd (SETSCO), we have actively sought to reduce our carbon footprint and in the past four years, reduced our electricity consumption by 10%. To better improve our internal operating processes, SETSCO successfully obtained the ISO 50001 certification on Electrical Energy Management of Laboratory operations – a globally accepted framework for managing energy efficiency and improving environmental performance.

On an external front, we have embarked on numerous 'Green' activities throughout the years. These include the annual cleaning of Tanah Merah beach by SETSCO volunteers in conjunction with Eco Action Day, where 1,200kg in total of waste materials have been successfully removed in recent years. SETSCO has also encouraged staff to plant tree saplings into their unused pots and containers in an effort to recycle and at the same time green their work stations.