Singapore unveils latest plans for addressing climate change

President Tony Tan Keng Yam has announced the release of Singapore's Climate Action Plan at the joint opening ceremony of the World Cities Summit, Singapore International Water Week and CleanEnviro Summit Singapore this evening.

Take Action Today: For A Carbon-efficient Singapore

The Climate Action Plan is explained in two documents. The first document entitled "Take Action Today: For A Carbon-efficient Singapore" spells out the key strategies that Singapore would be taking to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to fulfill the pledge it made in support of the Paris Agreement. Singapore has set a goal of reducing its greenhouse gas emissions intensity by 36% compared to 2005 levels by 2030. Singapore is also working towards stabilising its emissions with the aim of peaking around 2030. These are ambitious targets, given Singapore's limited options for renewable energy.

Improving energy efficiency will continue to be Singapore's key strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and plans have been made to expand the scope of current initiatives across all sectors, namely the power generation, industry, buildings, transport, household, waste and water sectors.

On industrial energy efficiency, a study commissioned by the National Climate Change Secretariat (NCCS) projected that 20% energy savings could be achieved by 2030 compared to business-as-usual levels. Significant opportunities were identified in the petroleum, petrochemical, and semiconductor sub-sectors.

Besides improving energy efficiency, Singapore will also invest in cutting edge low carbon technologies and scale up low carbon solutions for deployment in Singapore. For instance, our national water agency PUB is testing new technologies, such as electrochemical desalting, with the aim of halving the energy used in the seawater desalination process. The National Environment Agency (NEA) is developing new Waste-to-Energy plants that optimise resource and energy recovery. The Building and Construction Authority (BCA), Energy Market Authority (EMA), Housing and Development Board (HDB), Economic Development Board (EDB), NEA and PUB have also developed various programmes to increase solar energy adoption in Singapore. Our plan is to raise the adoption of solar energy to 350 MWp by 2020, compared to 60 MWp today.

A Climate-resilient Singapore: For A Sustainable Future

Singapore is a low-lying, densely populated tropical island state. We are vulnerable to the impacts of climate change such as sea-level rise, higher temperatures and more pronounced dry seasons, as well as more intense rainfall. Some of these may cause daily inconveniences, whilst others could be more severe. The second document entitled "A Climate-resilient Singapore: For A Sustainable Future" explains how Singapore may be affected by climate change and the Whole-of-Government strategy to prepare for them.

The government has already started to strengthen Singapore's defence against climate change. At

the same time, given that climate science and projections continue to evolve, the government will continue to review our adaptation plans to ensure that we put in place optimal solutions to protect Singapore and Singaporeans. Some of the key initiatives are listed below:

- To reduce the impact of sea level rise, seawalls and rock slopes have been built near coastal areas. Selected roads, such as a stretch of Changi Coast Road and Nicoll Drive, have been raised to mitigate coastal erosion and seawater inundation. BCA is also in the process of conducting a detailed Coastal Adaptation Study to enable us to better protect our coastal areas in the long term.

- To mitigate the possibility of flooding due to intense rainfall, PUB has adopted a comprehensive, system-wide approach (known as the “Source-Pathway-Receptor” approach). Measures include the widening and deepening of drains, on-site detention tanks as well as the raising of platform levels and flood barriers.

- To prepare Singaporeans for hotter weather, NEA and Ministry of Health (MOH) are developing a heat stress information system to help the public to better plan and manage outdoor activities. NEA already has in place a nation-wide programme to fight dengue, which may become more prevalent.

- To strengthen our food supply resilience as climate change could cause crop failure and supply disruptions, Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority of Singapore (AVA) pursues a diversification strategy and aims to minimise potential food supply disruptions by importing food from different regions.

- To better understand the impact of higher temperatures and strong winds on buildings and building attachments, BCA and the HDB are conducting studies that will recommend appropriate adaptation measures.

- To strengthen the resilience of our critical infrastructure such as power stations, telecommunication and transport infrastructure against localised flooding and temperature changes, EMA, the Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore (IDA), Land Transport Authority (LTA), Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore (CAAS) and Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) are also in the midst of reviews.

Call to Action: Individuals, Community and Businesses

“With the release of the Climate Action Plan, we hope that more people will understand Singapore’s comprehensive strategy to address climate change, and more importantly how they can play a part. Our goal of building a more carbon-efficient and climate-resilient Singapore can only be achieved when the community and businesses work together with the government in making climate-friendly habits and practices a way of life,” said Deputy Prime Minister Teo Chee Hean, Chairman of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Climate Change.

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