

Qatar Sustainable Assessment System wins international award of Excellence for outstanding contribution to sustainable development

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The Qatar Sustainability Assessment System "QSAS" that was launched by BARWA and Qatari Diar Research Institute (BQDRI), which focuses on new knowledge in sustainability and its application, has won the Excellence award for outstanding contribution to sustainable development at the 2009 International Real Estate Financial Summit in London.

QSAS was recognized among some of the leading companies in the financial and real estate sectors and was among 28 other award winners.

The ceremony, held at the Radisson SAS Portman Square Hotel in London, was attended by CEOs and representatives from international finance and real estate companies representing more than 24 countries across the world. Dr. Yousef Al-Horr, Chairman and Managing Director of BQDRI, received the QSAS prize from Ms. Liz Peace, CEO of the British Property Federation.

The award nomination was handled by a judging committee comprising international VIPs working in the financial and real estate sectors. QSAS was recognized by the committee as outstanding, and above any other nominated system and company.

The selection criteria included:

1. The system expansion strategy to include a wider geographic area or to be adopted by other companies or countries in the region
2. The size of achievements realized by the company which has developed the system
3. The system development strategy to ensure specialized activities
4. The social role played by the selected company

Commenting on receiving the prize, Dr. Al Horr said:

"It is a great honour to win such a prize after considerable growth and important achievements. We have developed QSAS over three years, and it has been introduced as the Middle East's first integrated and performance-based Green Building Assessment rating system. So, QSAS is distinguished from other systems as it corresponds to the environment and needs of this region, when other practiced methods depend on imported systems that were developed to address different environmental climates."

Dr. Al Horr added: "The sustainability concept continues to grow. We at BQDRI strategically support the people and employees working in the real estate sector by empowering them about the concepts of sustainability. We are delighted with the prize which comes in recognition of our ongoing contribution to develop this sector."

By participating in such an event and winning the Excellence award, BARWA and Qatari Diar Research Institute confirms its full commitment and ability to support the accomplishment of the objectives of Qatar Vision 2030. This is based on two things: developing the human asset to play a major role in achieving a developed and sustainable environment, and leading Qatar's real estate sector with new concepts for

sustainable development derived from QSAS.

The initiative of both BARWA and Qatari Diar came in response to the invitation of HH Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Emir of Qatar, calling for the participation of various sectors to introduce initiatives to help create a better environment.

In his speech to the general debate of the UN General Assembly last month, HH said: "One such pressing crisis is that of finding energy alternatives. Another similarly vital question is that of the climate change and its impact on the environment and life on this planet."

Dr. Al Horr said: "Our participation in knowledge dissemination and moving from theory to application aims to further provide real estate and finance professionals with the latest advancements in sustainability development or green building. This provides the opportunity to showcase QSAS and its role in developing the concept of sustainability both in Qatar and across the region. This will deal with local issues such as desertification, and water scarcity."

He continued: "The participation of BARWA and Qatari Diar Research Institute in such events is part of the essence of Qatar Vision 2030. With the environment, being a major element of this vision, the Institute is fully committed to supporting Qatar's plans to protect it.

The careful balance between economic and social needs and the conditions of preserving the environment is a national duty that identifies our strategic options, in this regard. The QSAS initiative will be more influential when supported through legislation which will contribute to transforming the sustainability concept from being optional to becoming mandatory."

The draft to be presented before the Land Summit in Copenhagen next month includes recommendations of the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) directed at the whole world. This encourages all countries to develop policies which reduce the negative carbon emissions of buildings and developing indicators and metrics to report on emissions from buildings. QSAS is ahead of all suggested solutions, which is an unprecedented step forward for the region to contribute to developing right solutions for the climate change problem.

The BARWA and Qatari Diar Research Institute launched QSAS at the Global City Forum held in April 2009 in Abu Dhabi. The Institute confirms its commitment to continue playing its role in positioning Qatar as a capital of sustainable development in the Middle East and to take the initiative in dealing with the regional and local energy efficiency policies. This includes reducing negative carbon emissions on the environment.

BQDRI will organize several QSAS technical workshops from 22 to 24 November, in collaboration with experts from T.C. Chan Center for Building Simulation and Energy Studies at the University of Pennsylvania (USA). The training will provide participants with the latest information on green building principles and practices, as well as their method of implementation in Qatar (QSAS Analysis Tools), in terms of green views, water, energy, building systems and lighting.

All participants, especially "QSAS - Certified Green Professional" will undergo training on procedures and the use of measuring tools, as well as practical advice on directing the consultants successfully through the different stages of the assessment. Participants passing the exams will become QSAS - Certified Green Professional.

(AME Info)