

Banks told to take lead in green drive

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Financial institutions should take the initiative to help save the environment and be driven by green values in conducting banking activities, Doha Bank Group CEO R Seetharaman has urged.

"Banks, just as any other business, leave a carbon footprint on the environment through consumption of fossil fuel and forest reserves in many of its activities," he stated at the first Doha Green Conference, which began yesterday.

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"Reducing that carbon footprint has to be given prominence by banks while taking proactive measures to lead the community to follow us in helping the environment," Seetharaman said.

"Doha Bank, as a forward-thinking and socially responsible bank, is on the forefront of environmental advocacy against global warming and climate change, local air and water pollution, waste management and loss of biodiversity," he stated.

The bank supports environmental sustainability and education by reaching out on both the public and private sectors to act together on domestic and global environmental issues, key challenges and sustainable development.

"We, at Doha Bank, have taken many internal initiatives to make our processes more streamlined and efficient, reduce energy consumption, reduce paper usage by avoiding hardcopies in non essential items, and increase staff awareness and motivation to be more environment friendly," he added.

Doha Bank is a major sponsor of the two-day conference which focuses on sustainable buildings, water and renewable energy.

The conference covers market transformation towards sustainability, setting new Qatar specific sustainable building code, green building case studies, the importance of marine environment for urban development, sustainable water management, renewable energy and recycling strategies.

The event is organised by Sesam Business Consultants in collaboration with the Friends of Environment Centre (FEC) and Unesco.

FEC chairman Dr Saif al-Hajri, Unesco Arab Region's ecological sciences adviser Dr Benno Boer and Saleh Sourour, of the National Commission, were among those present.

(Gulf Times)