

Benefits from green buildings outweigh costs

30 October 2008

Dubai: The long term benefits of green buildings outweigh the initial investment in terms of costs, industry experts said on Wednesday.

A green building can reduce energy consumption by 30 per cent, reduce carbon emissions by 35 per cent and lead to a 40 per cent water saving, said Mario Seneviratne director of Green Technologies FZCO and secretary to the board of the World Green Council.

"The important thing is we are saving on resources, we are saving on energy, we are reducing carbon emissions. This is the idea behind sustainable buildings," he told delegates at Green Buildings Middle East.

The costs involved in erecting a green building are outweighed by the benefits, he said.

In India, the cost of developing a green building exceeded the original cost of the building by between 12 and 20 per cent while in the US, which is a "transformed market", the cost of erecting a green building means an increase of between 6 and 8 per cent.

"So basically in the transformed market whatever technology you use, whatever means you use to make a green building, there is hardly any difference in costs between a normal, good quality building and a green building," he said.

Seneviratne said research proves that scholars attending school in green buildings performed 20 per cent better than those functioning in normal buildings.

Office workers in green buildings were between 2 and 16 per cent more productive and retail outlets displayed a slight increase in sales.

According to Mike Cairney from EC Harris International there was a need for developers to think about the long term benefits of opting for green buildings.

The first stage of new green building regulations due to be handed over to **Dubai's Executive Council** next January 1 is set to lead the world in sustainability.

The new regulations, when finalised, mean all new and existing buildings will be more energy and water conservative and be healthier for those living and working inside.

{zawya}