

**CONCLUSION –  
BUILDING OUR  
FUTURE TOGETHER**



Five million people now call Singapore home, nearly three times the number in 1960. Since then, we have cleared squatter colonies and slums in our city. In their place, we built a modern city, wired and connected to the world. We established new industries, created good jobs, greened our city, cleaned up our rivers, improved public health and built a world-class public transport system. We enjoy a high standard of living today because the earlier generation of Singaporeans consciously sought to safeguard our clean and green city while developing our economy.

Singapore today, with its gleaming skyscrapers and cosmopolitan people, may seem a world apart from its humble origins. But our resource constraints remain. Our land supply is limited. We have to import energy, water and food. With a small domestic market, we have to

continually make ourselves relevant to the global economy if we want to grow and create good jobs.

The current generation of Singaporeans will have to find creative ways to keep our economy growing and thriving, while acting as stewards of the environment, both for today, and for future generations to come.

We will have to do this in the face of new and increasingly difficult challenges. Singapore is now in the midst of a global economic crisis. The crisis is a timely reminder that we cannot take economic growth for granted. Faced with the pressures to cut costs, save jobs and jump start the economy, we may be tempted to set aside our environmental sustainability goals as luxuries that we cannot afford at this time. But doing so will be too short sighted.

Just as we did 40 years ago, we must give equal priority to maintaining a good living environment even as we seek to boost our economy and combat unemployment. There is now greater urgency to do so. There will be greater competition for land, energy and water, as our economy and population grow further. It will also be more difficult to maintain our air quality, public cleanliness and a sense of space and comfort as our city becomes more densely built in the future. The challenges of climate change require all nations, including Singapore, to make an effort to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases.

This Blueprint contains ideas from stakeholders in the public, private and people sectors on how to develop Singapore in a more environmentally sustainable way. Going forward, we have to do more in a few areas.

First, we have to enhance our resource efficiency because rising demand for resources is likely to outpace supply growth in the long run. It is also the most practical and effective way for Singapore to help address global climate change. Business and community leaders we consulted said that we should pursue energy efficiency as aggressively as we did in finding solutions to overcome our water dependency.

Second, we will need to keep pollution under control and make Singapore an even cleaner and greener city to live in, as our city becomes more densely populated. A high quality living environment will also give Singapore an edge in the global competition for local and foreign capital and talent in the years to come.

Third, we have to invest more in technology to find new solutions to overcome our resource constraints. Cities around the world face the same challenges of achieving growth while reducing the negative impact of growth on the environment. As we innovate to overcome our challenges, we can in turn contribute to solving the world's most pressing problems and create new job opportunities for our residents.

Implementing these plans will require us to take a long term view to our development, and commit to invest in environmental sustainability in both good times and bad. Some measures in this blueprint, such as helping households to reduce electricity and water consumption, will yield immediate savings. Yet, others may require us to incur upfront costs to put in place new systems and processes or to invest in testing new technologies to enhance resource efficiency.

We will take a pragmatic approach. We will not put aside our plans just because we incur some costs in the short term to implement these plans. On the contrary, we will set clear goals and track our progress. However, we will implement the plans in a way that avoids sharp cost increases for businesses, households and commuters in a time of economic hardship. As a start, the government will invest \$1 billion over five years to support the implementation of the plans in this Blueprint. Part of this sum will go towards helping businesses reduce the upfront costs of investing in resource efficient buildings, systems and processes. By doing so, we are also helping them improve their cost competitiveness over the medium term.

The government's efforts alone are inadequate. We need a "whole of nation" effort to make Singapore a more sustainable city. The private sector will have to act in environmentally responsible ways, even as they seek to exploit business opportunities and create much-needed jobs. Citizens and individuals will have to be prepared to make personal adjustments to their lifestyles.

The time to act is now. By working hand in hand today, we can bring about a second transformation of Singapore – into a high value, innovation powered economy within a city of gardens and water. Above all, we can build a future Singapore that we all aspire to – a liveable, lively, and well-loved home – as our gift to our children and future generations of Singaporeans.