

**SPEECH BY MR MASAGOS ZULKIFLI, MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND WATER  
RESOURCES,  
AT THE SEMBCORP MARINE'S GREEN WAVE ENVIRONMENTAL CARE PROJECT FOR SCHOOLS  
AWARD PRESENTATION CEREMONY 2015  
ON FRIDAY, 26 FEBRUARY 2016, AT MARINA MANDARIN SINGAPORE**

Mr Wong Weng Sun,  
President and CEO, Sembcorp Marine

Students,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1 A very good morning to you. It is my pleasure to join you today.

2 I would like to start by sharing a quote by Mahatma Gandhi, "Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs, but not every man's greed". The moment people start to see the need to care for our Earth, is the moment we take a step towards saving and preserving the environment for the next generation. Hence, it is indeed my pleasure to congratulate our award winners here today, and acknowledge their initiatives and innovative outlook towards sustainable practices to protect our environment.

3 Our students have great potential and passion to make progress in caring for our environment. You have always shown to be bright talents, breaking new grounds and pushing new frontiers.

4 Beyond your promising nature, I am heartened by your pursuit of interests beyond the classroom. The number of projects submitted, specifically 234 of them, does not just shed light to the many environmental issues we have to address. It shows that our youths, more than 850 of you, have the ideas, inspiration, and inventions to address them. More importantly, it shows that you see the need to address them. The rising "green consciousness" at such a young age is truly inspiring, and you have shown how youths can lead the way forward.

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**Environmental Challenges and What Youths Can Do**

5 Many of mankind's previous exploitation of the Earth's resources can be felt today. For one, our Earth is getting warmer, and we are literally feeling the heat. January 2016 was the hottest January that Singapore has ever experienced on record, due to the El Nino phenomenon. Climate change and shifts in weather patterns are also a threat to our sustainability, and we are going to experience higher frequency of hot weather and more intense rainfall. Climate change is something that we cannot change immediately, but if everyone in the world cooperates, we can try to mitigate some of the problems caused by it, and hopefully to overcome them. The adoption of the COP 21 Paris Agreement last December by 195 nations, is a step in the right direction.

6 While it may sound daunting, our youths have shown that they are aware about it and are committed to doing something about it. This rising green consciousness and commitment, together with your energy and dynamism, gives hope that there will be solutions towards our sustainability.

## **Sustainable Singapore Blueprint 2015 – An Active and Gracious Community**

7 I am also encouraged to see the collaborative, community spirit coming alive in this competition. The Sustainable Singapore Blueprint 2015, or SSB for short, outlines our national vision to create a more sustainable and liveable Singapore to support our diverse needs, and build a better home and environment for our future generations. One of the themes of the SSB is An Active and Gracious Community, where we place the people at the heart of this collective effort to make Singapore a cleaner and greener home. We have the engineers to come up with some solutions, and the enthusiasts to see some projects through. However, we need the effort of everyone in building a home that will last for future generations to come.

8 For example, we can always place more litter and recycling bins around to make it easier to recycle and keep our surroundings clean. However, if no one shares the same values of cleanliness and sustainability, any amount of improving infrastructure will be useless. The space that we live in is a shared one, and so is the responsibility of taking care of it.

## **Green Wave Programme**

9 Hence, it is my pleasure to commend the Green Wave programme as it is a meaningful programme that not just brings the community together, it also encourages innovative development towards our nation's long term environment sustainability. I would like to thank Sembcorp Marine and its partners, BP Shipping and Shell, for organising this platform for our youths to gain an appreciation of the environmental challenges and explore ways to overcome them. I would also like to show my appreciation to the other partners across the educational, environmental, public and private sectors for your expertise and guidance in assessing the projects and for your commitment to this meaningful cause.

10 Some hold the view that modernisation is nature's enemy, that advancing technology and urbanisation have greatly harmed the environment, but it need not be so. Our award winners have shown how technology can be an enabler of sustainability and can go hand-in-hand to make it work for the good of us.

11 I would like to mention two such projects. The first prize winners for the Secondary level category, ACS (Independent), have gone beyond the textbook and created a digital software that educates fellow students about water conservation. They have also tapped on digital and social media platforms to widen its reach and get the community involved.

12 I also found our first prize-winning project from the Primary School level very interesting. Our Kuo Chuan Presbyterian Primary School students had invented a non-drip tap to help senior citizens conserve water. It is a simple tool that prevents leakages and waste of water. A very ingenious solution that fixes a common problem and it does not even require any electricity. That is what being innovative means to me.

13 I am told that this is the first time that we will be presenting awards to two teams from Indonesia since this competition was expanded to include regional tertiary institutions since 2013. I am very encouraged by this because it shows that the environment belongs to every one of us, whether we are from Singapore or the region, or other parts of the world, we all have the same responsibility in protecting our environment, and to keep it sustainable for generations to come.

## **Conclusion**

14 Once again, I would like to congratulate all the award winners and participants. You have inspired me that our youths are willing to use their heads, hearts, and hands to make good work for our environment. Thank you.

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