

National Development Minister Desmond Lee (at left) at the Kent Ridge Ministerial Forum with Economic Development Board managing director Chng Kai Fong yesterday.  
ST PHOTO: ARIFFIN JAMAR



# S'poreans urged to adopt sustainability as a core value

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## Efforts to tackle climate crisis require deep shift in Singapore's culture, says minister

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**Justin Ong**  
Political Correspondent

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Singaporeans must adopt sustainability as a core value if the country is to realise its commitment to tackling the climate crisis, said National Development Minister Desmond Lee yesterday.

The efforts require the people to make sustainability a part of what it means to be Singaporean, to

match the resolve and deep shift in Singapore's culture needed to make it work, he added.

"Just as multiculturalism is one of our defining traits, so too should sustainability be so ingrained in us in our future generations that it informs our actions and decisions, and the kind of society that we strive to be," he said at the Kent Ridge Ministerial Forum, an annual flagship event of the National University of Singapore Students' Political Association.

Describing the climate crisis as one of the biggest challenges faced by Singapore, he pointed to the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report which warned of the dangers of global warming.

"We've seen heavy rains and flash floods lately. And as a low-lying island, many parts of our country would literally be underwater when sea levels rise," he added.

Mr Lee gave an overview of the Green Plan 2030 launched this year, spanning efforts to transform Singapore into a "city in nature", using cleaner energy sources in transport, cutting energy consumption and creating

green jobs.

He noted all these initiatives involve trade-offs like a carbon tax, set at \$5 per tonne of greenhouse gas emissions. "Companies could pass on some of these costs to consumers, for example, through higher prices," he said.

Mr Lee also took part in a closed-door dialogue moderated by Economic Development Board managing director Chng Kai Fong, and stressed that the Government could not fight on its own this "defining fight of our times, and for generations to come".

He called on young Singaporeans to join the nation's sustainability drive, through their chosen fields of work or by signing up to various youth-centred initiatives.

"We all need to take action, in our own ways," he said. "Going beyond ideas and discussion – as valuable and important as these are – to roll up our sleeves, get to work, experiment with different solutions, figure out the ground issues and how we can overcome them."

"And who better to take this action than young people like yourselves," he added. "Not just when it comes to sustainability, but also in tackling all the other challenges coming Singapore's way."

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[justino@sph.com.sg](mailto:justino@sph.com.sg)