

Green Building Index Malaysia

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Greenhouse gasses and ozone depletion became household words perhaps following the Earth Summit in Rio, 1992. Rio was to be the environmental summit to end all summits. It was brought to attention that something had to be done, failing which the world would end up devouring and destroying itself. It was a call to action not a proposal for options. Many initiatives came out from the summit and the myriad of other NGO-led meetings and gatherings that year including Local Agenda 21, the role of community and self help.

Green building ratings began to be developed in the 1990s with BREEAM (UK, 1990) and later LEED (USA) being the better known ones. This was the result of the realization that buildings and the built environment contributed significantly to green house gas emissions and thus they needed to be re-designed to reduce its negative impact to the environment. The notion of buildings being 'machines for living' is proven true as buildings do last a long time and over that lifetime they do play a part in adding to the destruction of the environment. Green-rating tools were conceived to be able to assist architects, designers, builders, Government bodies, building owners, developers and end users to understand the impact of each design choice and solution. By so doing, the final built product would perform better in its location whilst also reducing its harmful impact on the surroundings.

Green-rating tools by its nature and role is thus very dependent upon location and environment and thus climate. A quick survey of existing

Green-Rating tools available in the world today will show all of them concentrated within the temperate climate zones. Some better known ones include Japan's CASBEE and Australia's GREENSTAR. At this moment the only Green-Rating Tool operating in the tropical climate is Singapore's GREENMARK. GREENMARK was first launched in 2005. In April 2008, it became mandatory for all new buildings or works on existing buildings exceeding 2,000 sqm in floor area to achieve a minimum GREENMARK Certified rating in Singapore. Whilst GREENMARK's operational parameters are within a tropical climate, its scoring priorities are very much customized for the current state of the country where a lot of priority is given to energy and water efficiency scores. In addition, its public transport network is also already in place and thus little priority is given in the ratings. Malaysia differs markedly in these areas and others and thus understandably our rating priorities

should be like-wise customized to suit – both to our climate and also the current state of our country's development and existing resources.

PAM's leadership role in driving the development of the Green Building Index Malaysia.

PAM's Architects have over the years been developing and working more and more towards a more sustainable and green architecture. In 2008, the need for a localized Green Building rating tool became more evident especially in the light of increasing demand from building end-users for Green-rated buildings that would not overly and adversely contribute to the destruction of the environment. This was also inline with the objectives of many companies today where good corporate social responsibility (CSR) calls for them to only support environment-friendly initiatives including their office premises.



Pusat Tenaga Malaysia - Zero Energy Office (ZEO) building

In August 2008, PAM Council endorsed and approved the formation of the new Sustainability Committee that was tasked primarily to develop and setup the Green Building Index Malaysia and the accompanying Panel for certifying and accreditation of Green rated buildings. A target deadline of April 2009 was set to launch this Green rating.

In-line with the goal, the Committee has since undertaken the following:

1. Initiated discussion and presentation of the proposal to all the stakeholders of the building industry via the members of the Building Industry Presidents Council (BIPC). This was done in August 2008 and full support was obtained from members of the BIPC (REHDA, MBAM, ACEM, ISM, etc).

2. August 2008 - Invited the Association of Consulting Engineers of Malaysia (ACEM) to jointly work with PAM. Presidents of PAM and ACEM met and agreed on the joint co-operation with ACEM. Ir. TL Chen and Ir. HP Looi were invited to join the Committee.

3. September/October 2008 – carried out comparative studies on better known green-rating models such as BREEAM, LEED, GREENMARK and GREENSTAR to establish criteria.

4. October 2008 – Visited Singapore to study BCA's GREENMARK and discussions with BCA Singapore as well as Singapore Institute of Architects (SIA)

5. Early November 2008 – ARCASIA Sustainability Meeting in Busan, South Korea to network and exchange information with regional Asian countries.

6. Mid-November 2008 – Study visit to Green Building Council of Australia's GREENSTAR. Site visits to GREENSTAR rated buildings – CH2, 500 Collins Street, The Gauge @ Victoria Harbour, Automotive Excellence College, Chadstone Shopping Centre New Wing and Aurora, Epping North by VicUrban.

7. Discussions and technical exchange with Prof. Emeritus Allan Rodger (University of Melbourne) and Prof. Roger Fay (University of Tasmania). Prof. Roger Fay co-authored the NABERS rating tool currently in use by New South Wales government.

8. December 2008 – Final drafting of both the Residential and Non-Residential rating tools. Name of tools established as Green Building Index Malaysia. Drafting of the Residential tool is headed by Ar Chan Seong Aun and the Non-Residential tool by Ir TL Chen.

9. The Green Building Index Malaysia (GBI Malaysia) was




Council House 2 (CH2) building, Melbourne, Australia

introduced on January 3, 2009 at the Green Design Forum held at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre. Keynote speaker was the Minister of Climate Change and Water, Australia, the Hon. Senator Penny Wong. Other speakers were Ar Chan Seong Aun and Ir. TL Chen who presented the salient points on GBI Malaysia. The website greenbuildingindex.org was also launched to disseminate information.

10. On January 16, 2009, PAM Council approved the setting up of the GBI Malaysia assessment and accreditation framework including the terms of reference for the GBI Accreditation Panel (GBI AP), GBI Certifiers and GBI Facilitators. GBI Malaysia will be managed by Greenbuildingindex Sdn. Bhd.

11. On January 16, 2009, PAM Council also approved the one-year joint-cooperation to field test the GBI tools with tertiary higher education institutions. University of Tasmania (UTAS), University Putra Malaysia (UPM) and University Sains Malaysia (USM) were selected. A further overseas university will be added at a later date.

12. From January through to April 2009, GBI Malaysia will commence assessment and accreditation of several pilot projects.

13. GBI Malaysia will be officially launched in April 2009. 

Source: www.skyscraperlife.com



The Gauge building, Victoria Harbour, Australia