

BQDRI and Projacs International sign MOU to support the implementation of sustainability

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Barwa and Qatari Diar Research Institute (BQDRI), and Projacs International, the pioneer Arab company, specialized in Project/Construction Management & Training fields, announced their signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for building strong cooperation and partnership which aim to support the implementation of sustainability practices through adopting the Qatar Sustainability Assessment System (QSAS).

The signing ceremony was made at a press conference held alongside Meed Green building & Sustainability Conference at the Address Hotel, Dubai Marina (Dubai - U.A.E.) between BQDRI Chairman & Managing Director, Dr. Youssef Mohammed Al-Horr, and Deputy CEO of Projacs International Company, Mr. Ashraf Al-Garf; and attended by senior officials from the two companies.

This MoU will help in building a strong cooperation and strategic relationship between the two companies, promoting QSAS and encouraging other companies and real estate developers to adopt it.

BQDRI seeks to attract leading organizations and institutions to cooperate in delivering consultancy services, training and educational programs directly related to sustainability and its practices.

Relying on its widespread offices and deep knowledge and experience in the market, Projacs International, in association with BQDRI, will promote QSAS to different real estate companies, equivalent to what Barwa Real Estate and Qatari Diar did, aiming to preserve the environment and adopt green building practices in new projects.

Commenting on the MoU, Dr. Youssef Al-Horr said:

"This memorandum with Projacs International will open new horizons of business and development to achieve our objectives. I am confident that our partnership with companies like Projacs International will add great value to what BQDRI has done. This cooperation will encourage the adoption and implementation of QSAS in Qatar and abroad, especially as Projacs International has a strong regional and global presence, as well as deep knowledge in the real estate markets."

"We work to establish qualitative initiatives to lead the real estate development sector in Qatar and the region, and to encourage all building professionals and engineers in Qatar by providing them with suitable tools and practices for developing and implementing the concept of sustainability," Dr. Al-Horr added.

Representing Projacs International, Eng. Ashraf Al-Garf said: "The MoU with BQDRI represents a qualitative step for the real estate sector in Qatar and the region. Our partnership will allow us to provide the highest level of professional Project Management services. Our existence in a large number of countries will help in introducing QSAS to the world and adopting it as one of the leading global assessment systems which meets the needs of the region. Projacs International; through its various and diversified services in management, training and development; will help in providing additional means to improve the awareness in QSAS."

Barwa and Qatari Diar Research Institute (BQDRI) first introduced QSAS as the "Middle East's first performance-based Green Building Design Rating System" at the Global City Sustainable Urban Development Forum in Abu Dhabi in April 2009. BQDRI confirms its commitment in continuing this march and supporting Qatar's role as "the capital of sustainable development in the Middle East", allowing Qatar to take the lead in addressing regional and national energy efficiency policies, reducing carbon emissions, minimizing ecological impacts, and ensuring high indoor environmental quality.

Following Barwa and Qatari Diar's announcement of adopting QSAS in Doha last week, BQDRI and its partners demonstrate their full commitment and ability in contributing to accomplish the objectives of Qatar National Vision 2030, in terms of sustainable development. By leading the Qatari real estate sector in accordance to the concepts of sustainability development; BQDRI, Barwa Real Estate, Qatari Diar and Projacs International are the first to implement green building concepts based on QSAS which was classified as the "Middle East's first integrated and performance-based Green Building Rating System".

It is worth mentioning that both Barwa and Qatari Diar have announced adopting QSAS in all future projects in a press conference held last week. Lusail's CEO (Qatari Diar) and Barwa's President of Developments in Qatar assured that the adoption of QSAS comes to take the lead in following the modern global trends in real estate industry, taking into consideration the compliance of these initiatives with the legislation of Qatar. Besides, they asked consultancy offices to hurry and train their employees on QSAS and green building standards.

Established in Kuwait in 1984, Projacs International has gained a reputation for providing the highest level of professional Project Management services initially in the Arabian Gulf and later throughout the Middle East, North America, Asia, and Europe. Projacs International's corporate headquarters is located in Bahrain, while Middle Eastern and international operations are also conducted in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar, Iraq, Yemen, Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Sudan, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Spain, Germany, Bulgaria, Bosnia Herzegovina, Guinea, Pakistan, Oman, USA and Canada.

"Today, Projacs International conducts local and international management seminars and conferences covering a wide range of topics and subjects that will support introducing QSAS to the world. Projacs International trainers, considered authorities in their field and practitioners at the same time with experience in the Middle East and internationally, will establish a strong base in training engineers and professionals on how to implement QSAS. Projacs International is now the most qualified and successful training and development companies in the Gulf Region, the Middle East, as well as other parts of the world. The majority of Projacs International courses are accredited by professional institutes and international universities," Al-Garf stated.

Demonstrating the importance of QSAS and its growing reputation in the region, Dr. Al-Horr was invited to be a Keynote Speaker at Meed Conference for Green Buildings and Sustainability held in Dubai from 17 to 19 November. Dr. Al-Horr will focus in his speech on QSAS and its goals in preserving the environment and its adoption of sustainability and green building standards.

"Developing QSAS based on local needs while leveraging best practices is a definite advantage, especially for regions where environmental, economic, social, and cultural conditions are unlike other areas in the world, factors such as desertification, scarcity of water, pedestrian connectivity, and cultural heritage/identity are either omitted or unsuitably addressed.

Among other primary QSAS advantages is learning from established global best practices, all categories, criteria, and measurements are defined to be performance-based and quantifiable, a flexible scoring method which has overcome the limitations of

other international rating systems, and complete control over the development, customization, and future modifications or expansion of the QSAS rating system. QSAS differs in its foundation essence from the other systems in the region based on imported global systems" Dr. Al-Horr commented.

"Barwa & Qatari Diar's adoption of QSAS will allow both real estate conglomerates to implement an advanced and integrated concept of green building sustainability, and to take the lead in addressing regional and national environmental challenges. According to this, I ask consultancy offices to train their employees in implementing QSAS principles, in compliance with Barwa's directions to implement sustainability principles in all of its future projects." added Dr. Al-Horr

"BQDRI is fully committed in supporting Qatar's actions to protect the natural environment. The accurate balance between economic and social needs and the conditions of preserving the environment, which we consider as a national duty determining our strategic options in this field, makes the environment more important, especially when we support QSAS through legislation and contribute in transforming the sustainability concept from optional implementation to mandatory,"

concluded Dr. Al-Horr.

QSAS has already gained an Excellence Award of "Outstanding Contribution to Sustainable development in the real estate" at the International Real Estate Finance Summit 2009 held on the 4th and 5th October in London - United Kingdom. The forum was attended by leaders of real estate industry and financial services, as well as political and business figures. QSAS award was received by Dr. Al-Horr from Mrs. Liz Peace, CEO of British Property Federation.

In compliance with Barwa and Qatari Diar's adoption of green building principles, BQDRI announces QSAS workshops from 22 to 24 November, in cooperation with experts and researchers from T.C. Chan Center for Building Simulation and Energy Studies at the University of Pennsylvania. The training and developing workshop will focus on encouraging professionals, consultants and engineers from the real estate industry to be more creative when designing and constructing sustainable buildings which have less environmental impact and address the needs of sustainability in Qatar and the region. The workshop will provide participants with the latest information on green building principles and practices, as well as their method of implementation in Qatar, in terms of green views, water, energy, building systems and lightening.

(AME Info)