

Barwa and Qatari Diar adopt QSAS and implement Green Building principles in their future projects

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Barwa Real Estate Company (Barwa) and Qatari Diar Real Estate Investment Company (Qatari Diar), two of the leading real estate companies in Qatar, have announced their implementation of green building principles by adopting the Qatar Sustainability Assessment System (QSAS) to implement green buildings principles in all of their future projects.

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QSAS was developed in cooperation with T.C. Chan Center for Building Simulation and Energy Studies at the University of Pennsylvania (USA). This was announced in a joint press conference for the two companies held yesterday, at Barwa Knowledge Building, D-Ring Road.

Barwa and Qatari Diar demonstrate through this announcement their full commitment and ability to contribute towards accomplishing the objectives of Qatar Vision 2030, in terms of sustainable development and to lead the Qatari sustainable real estate sector according to the most advanced sustainable development concepts of QSAS, which was introduced as the 'Middle East's first integrated and performance-based Green Building Assessment Rating System.'

On the environmental level, through the foundation of the Barwa and Qatari Diar Research Institute (BQDRI), establishing QSAS and organizing QSAS training workshops, Barwa and Qatari Diar are supporting the policy of HH the Emir in enhancing the role of the private sector to achieve the goals of Qatar Vision 2030.

Commenting on the agreement, Dr. Youssef Al-Horr, Chairman & MD of BQDRI, said:

"As part of our commitment to Qatar Vision 2030, we analyzed the real estate industry on the basis of sustainable development and we concluded the need of this sector for an assessment system based on the needs of Qatar and the region, since all other solutions are totally imported and don't go along with the society, culture, climate and various environmental conditions which exist in the region. QSAS offers a lot of advantages which are not available in any other imported system. For instance, QSAS responds to urgent issues such as preserving the architectural identity of Qatar and the region, and enhancing the creative solutions to address other challenges like water scarcity and lack of non-hydrocarbon raw materials. Besides, this system determined the types of plants

which are suitable to the Gulf environment, and are distinguished by low consumption of water as well as providing the suitable greening and other environmental issues."

Dr. Al-Horr called on offices of local and global consultancy companies to take the initiative to train and qualify their staff on the latest implementations of green building design, as well as adopting professional practices which meet the environmental, cultural and social needs and priorities of the State of Qatar.

Commenting on Qatari Diar's adoption to QSAS and implementing green building principles, Eng. Mohammed Al Hedfa, CEO of Lusail Real Estate Development Company said, "Our adoption to QSAS comes within the framework of Qatari Diar's awareness to lead initiatives which keep pace with modern global trends in the real estate industry, taking into consideration the needs of our country and our legislation."

"I ask the consultancy offices, especially those who provide services to future Qatari Diar projects, to train their staff immediately in QSAS principles, in compliance with our adoption to the assessment and in awareness of implementing green building principles," Al-Hedfa added.

Representing Barwa Real Estate Company, Eng. Majed Al Bader, President of Local Development said, "Our adoption of QSAS will allow Barwa to implement an advanced and integrated concept of green building sustainability, and to take the lead in addressing regional and national energy efficiency policies, reducing carbon emissions, minimizing ecological impacts, and ensuring high indoor environmental quality to all tenants of Barwa commercial and residential projects. By developing our projects according to QSAS which meets the highest international standards, Barwa will provide a symbol to the region. According to this, I ask the consultancy offices to train their employees on implementing QSAS principles, in compliance with Barwa's directions to implement sustainability principles in all of its future projects."

Dr Al-Horr added, "We at Barwa and Qatari Diar Research Institute are committed to Qatar Vision 2030 and the goals of sustainable development. We work to create qualitative initiatives to lead the real estate development sector in Qatar and the region and to encourage all building sector professionals and engineers in Qatar by providing them with suitable tools and practices for developing and implementing the concept of sustainability."

"There are four major basics for the national vision for comprehensive development 2030: human, social, economic and environmental. Regarding this last basic, the environmental one, Barwa and Qatari Diar Research Institute 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 that contributes in transforming the sustainability concept from optional implementation to mandatory," added Dr. Al-Horr.

The recommendations of the United Nations Environmental Program, directed to all countries of the world, encourages all developed countries to support the emerging nations by offering policies which reduce the carbon releases of buildings, and developing assessments and systems to evaluate these releases and record how this goal is accomplished.

In his speech to the United Nations General Assembly last month, UN Secretary General Ban Ki Mon urged world leaders to reach an agreement at the Copenhagen Summit on Climate Change in December 2009.

"The leaders must work to push the negotiations forward to reach an agreement in Copenhagen, this is very essential for the future of humanity. I urge the leaders of the world to act on the basis of their responsibility toward the world and to address the global challenges," he added.

Barwa and Qatari Diar Research Institute developed QSAS in co-operation with T.C. Chan Center for Building Simulation and Energy Studies at the University of Pennsylvania (USA), to create sustainable urban environments which reduce environmental impacts and meet regional needs, as well as preserve the unique Qatari environment.

QSAS will allow Barwa and Qatari Diar to take the lead in addressing regional and national energy efficiency policies, reducing carbon emissions, minimizing ecological impacts, and ensuring high indoor environmental quality. As leaders in the real estate industry, and through developing the system which coincides with international standards and accomplish the goals of sustainability in meeting the needs of the region, Barwa and Qatari Diar will be symbols for companies in the region and the world to follow.

Dr. Al-Horr assured on the importance of adopting QSAS for Qatar's construction projects, just as Barwa and Qatari Diar are doing, since QSAS meets the needs and environment of Qatar and the region, unlike many other systems being used in the region. Dr. Al-Horr also urged the real estate officials to rush in training and qualifying their staff on QSAS, by attending the workshops which Barwa and Qatari Diar Research Institute will deliver during November, in cooperation with experts from T.C. Chan centre at Pennsylvania University (USA).

Barwa and Qatari Diar Research Institute first introduced QSAS as the Middle East's first performance-based Green Building Assessment Rating System at the Global City Sustainable Urban Development Forum in Abu Dhabi in April 2009.

Barwa and Qatari Diar Research Institute's development of QSAS focuses on the local needs and implements the best practices taking into consideration the social, economic, environmental and cultural conditions which are different from other parts of the world. Issues such as desertification, scarcity of water and the cultural identity were approached in a way which suits Qatar and the region.

Among other QSAS advantages is that the system learns and benefits from other global sustainability rating systems, using the best assessments determined according to performance, integrity, flexibility of the assessment system to overcome the weak points in other international systems, in addition to have full control over the development, operations, and future amendments of QSAS.

"QSAS differs in its foundation essence, which adapts with the needs of the region, from the other systems in the region based on imported global systems, and this is an important step to develop and implement the sustainability concept in Qatar and the region, to meet the local needs such as desertification, scarcity of water and preserving cultural identity. Thus, QSAS is the source of securing the architectural identity of Qatar and the region," Dr. Al-Horr added.

(AME Info)