

Economic Downturn Could Make Firms Promote Green Solutions

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DUBAI - The global economic downturn could prompt companies to consider cost-saving environment-friendly business solutions, an Abu Dhabi-based developer said on Monday.

Faisal Al Kamali, head of infrastructure and project services for Al Raha Beach developer Aldar Properties, said his company decided to use district cooling systems because the long-term costs are cheaper than traditional stand-alone cooling.

In a district cooling system, one large plant funnels chilled water through pipes to several buildings.

The process is more energy efficient than a centralised cooling system in each building.

"I think this financial crisis will open the eyes of people around the world to using more economical options because everything now is about cost saving," he said on the sidelines of the District Cooling Summit in Dubai on Monday.

Al Raha Beach will have space for 120,000 residents, so Aldar is using it as a case study for its other developments.

At the summit's opening ceremony, **Dubai Electric and Water Authority** CEO Saeed Al Tayer called for immediate implementation of last year's regulations on district cooling.

In September, Shaikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai and Chairman of the Dubai Executive Council, decreed that all district cooling companies use alternatives to the potable desalinated water in their cooling facilities.

Power consumption has increased dramatically in Dubai, putting pressure on water and energy resources, Al Tayer said in his speech.

While district cooling is electrically efficient, it requires large amounts of water.

The Executive Council decree says companies should use treated sewage effluent and condensation from the cooling plants rather than drinkable water.

"Saving these precious resources and protecting the environment should not be mere wishful thinking because for the world it is simply essential for survival in the long term, while for Dubai it is also essential for the sustainable development even in the medium term," Al Tayer said.

Al Kamali said pipelines will run directly from an **Abu Dhabi Electric and Water Authority** sewage treatment plant to the development's cooling system. "We are not trying to use potable water because of the scarcity," he said.

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