

Qatar Green Building Council and Solar-Institut Jülich Groundbreaking Research to Reduce Qatar's Carbon Footprint

Doha, 15 April 2014 - Qatar Green Building Council (QGBC), a member of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, and Solar-Institut Jülich (SIJ) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to work together on a ground-breaking environmentally sustainable housing project.

The two parties pledged to ensure that the highest standards of precision and accuracy are applied when recording valuable scientific energy and water data for the Qatar Case Study Passivhaus, Baytna Project. The research will be used in long-term efforts to help reduce Qatar's carbon footprint. The housing project in Qatar, led by QGBC, involves two fully insulated and airtight villas which will be monitored for energy use efficiency and sustainability.

Eng. Meshal Al Shamari, Director of Qatar Green Building Council, said: "QGBC is proud to partner with German Solar-Institut Jülich (SIJ). We are extremely grateful to SIJ and the generosity and progressive approach of the German Federal Government which will be funding SIJ's involvement in the Passivhaus Project. Their contribution will allow us to ensure that the knowledge gained from the project will be exact, and thus truly useful to the industry experts and academics who are researching sustainability in Qatar."

Dr Alex Amato, QGBC Head of Sustainability, stated: "SIJ will bring their extensive expertise and experience to assist QGBC which will greatly benefit the project. As part of the key deliverables outlined in the MoU, SIJ will support QGBC with the initial configuration and operation of the metering and monitoring systems located in the state-of-the-art villas. SIJ will also provide QGBC with comprehensive electronic documentation of the monitoring system and further assist in data evaluation by undertaking dynamic building simulations using QGBC's energy model."

This environmentally-sustainable housing project, now led by QGBC, promises to deliver an ultra-low operational energy regime, due to the building's super-insulated and airtight envelope. This greatly reduces the need for space cooling, reducing energy consumption and subsequent carbon dioxide emissions. If these principles are applied extensively to the new and existing building stock, then Qatar's carbon footprint can be significantly reduced.

Commenting on SIJ's role, Dr Joachim Götsche, Head of the Energy Efficiency Department at Solar-Institut Jülich said: "We are extremely fortunate to be active participants in Qatar's innovative Passivhaus project. As part of our role, we will be responsible for monitoring the systems of the two villas efficiently and ensuring the operations are accurate. This will allow our team to prepare an analysis that will demonstrate energy consumption, air quality and thermal comfort. It will be interesting to transfer our knowledge and experiences taken from a central European climate and compare them to the information we attain from this research in Qatar's hot climate."

It is also envisaged that the Qatar Environment and Energy Research Institute (QEERI) will take part in the research phase of the Qatar Case Study Passivhaus Project, which will initially focus on analysing the energy efficiency aspect of the villas.

Speaking of QEERI's potential participation, Dr Monem Beitelmal, Senior Research Scientist said: "We are very excited in launching a program that supports energy efficiency in the built environment. This program, inspired by the Qatar Case Study Passivhaus Project, organised by QGBC, will add valuable educational and research knowledge and serve as an excellent test model."

Those collaborating on the project, will continue to conduct many more energy and water efficiency experiments, and will look to widely disseminate the results of the low carbon and water efficient technologies being implemented. As long-term partners, all three organisations stated that they wish to collaborate on future research connected to the Passivhaus project. Dr Joachim added, "In collaborating with QGBC, QEERI and other research partners, we are committed to finding solutions that will help alleviate the global environmental challenges for the greater good of society."

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About Qatar Green Building Council

Qatar Green Building Council (QGBC) is a non-profit, membership-driven organization providing leadership and encouraging collaboration in conducting environmentally sustainable practices for green building design and development in Qatar. QGBC also aims to support the overall health and sustainability of the environment, the people, and economic security in Qatar for generations to come. The council, a member of Qatar Foundation, was formally established in 2009 by a decree signed by H.H. Sheikha Moza Bint Nasser and is helping Qatar on its journey to establish a post-hydrocarbon, knowledge economy and progressive society. Through QGBC, Qatar will join a network of 80 different countries that run active national green building councils under the umbrella of the World Green Building Council.

QGBC's members include, representatives from government, real estate developers, investors, facilities managers, consultants, constructors, manufacturers & suppliers, oil & gas, professional firms, financial services, telecom/technology, academia, NGOs & media.

QGBC is setting up operations from its HQ, organizing awareness events, knowledge seminars, training, forums and networking sessions with the like-minded. To learn more visit www.qatargbc.org.

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