

## **QGBC celebrates volunteers and previews season ahead**

*Remarkable year thanks to dedicated volunteers*

Doha, Qatar (23 June 2013) – Qatar Green Building Council (QGBC), the organisation that advocates sustainability in the built environment, honoured its volunteers at an end of season appreciation ceremony marking nine months of achievement.

Held at the Qatar National Convention Centre, the annual appreciation dinner brought together members and volunteers, whose hours of dedication has helped raise the profile of sustainability within Qatar's real estate and design and construction sectors.

"I am extremely proud of what we have achieved this year and our volunteers are at the heart of that success. Volunteers have organised community events, encouraged new members to join and made valuable connections amongst green building experts. Our volunteers have channelled their considerable knowledge of the industry to promote awareness and build a culture of sustainability in Qatar," said Eng. Meshal Al-Shamari, director, QGBC.

Over the past nine months, QGBC has made significant headway in furthering its cause through activities, projects, and interest groups. The Green Hotels Interest Group (GHIG) launched in September 2012, followed by a seminar examining green infrastructure in Qatar and a two-day workshop on building refurbishment in October 2012. In November and December 2012, QGBC actively participated in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change's 18<sup>th</sup> session of the Conference of the Parties (COP18), held in Doha.

Volunteers and members continued to drive the QGBC agenda forward into 2013 with a multitude of training workshops, interest group events, Earth Hour celebrations, a No Paper Day campaign, a slew of MoU signings, and more.

In the coming season, starting in September 2013, QGBC's interest groups have earmarked specific months to focus on a particular issue within sustainable building through events and activities. September will launch the Green Infrastructure Guide, while the landmark Baytna project – a joint initiative by QGBC, Barwa Real Estate and Kahramaa – is expected to welcome trial tenants to Qatar's first Passivhaus by the end of the year.

QGBC's vision of a sustainable Qatar is implemented through a network of dynamic and growing interest groups, including: Solid Waste Interest Group (SWiG), Water Interest Group (WiG), Green Infrastructure Interest Group (GliG), Energy Interest Group (EiG), Green Hotels Interest Group (GHIG), Green Schools Interest Group (GSiG), Healthy Building Management Interest Group (HBMiG), and Building Rating Systems Interest Group (BRSiG).

"QGBC plays a key role in bringing together like-minded stakeholders across Qatar that share an interest in making Qatar a more sustainable place to live. QGBC creates realistic yet ambitious goals

for tackling issues such as resource efficiency, recycling, hotel operations, and carbon footprint reduction. Increasingly, we are also identifying ways to work with the government and are keen to share our knowledge, working collaboratively to meet the goals of the Qatar National Vision 2030," said Dr Neil Kirkpatrick, Sustainability Lead, Central Planning Office, and member of the GHIG and SWIG.

Diala Khairallah, marketing manager at Green Division and a member of the GSIG, said, "What QGBC's interest groups do particularly well is facilitate regular networking among green industry peers that might have otherwise not had the opportunity to meet. I am proud to be part of this platform for sharing ideas and launching initiatives that promote sustainability. Qatar needs this kind of movement to spur its green development, namely to recondition human behaviour with respect to issues like energy use - an undeniable accelerator for green building efficiency."

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**About Qatar Green Business 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](http://www.qatargbc.org).

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