

SMEs to develop eco-park in China

First time such a project driven by private sector and Chinese govt

By **CHEN HUIFEN**

[SINGAPORE] A group of Singapore-based small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) has found itself in the frontline to help Hangzhou develop a multi-billion-dollar eco-park, making it the first major project in China that is initiated by the private sector here.

Homegrown Cleantech Partners Pte Ltd (CTP) – which is a consortium of local firms – is set to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) tomorrow with Hangzhou's municipal government to jointly master-plan, develop and promote the Hangzhou-Singapore Eco-Park (HSEP).

Estimated to cost some US\$1.5 billion to US\$2 billion, the five-sq-km HSEP will be located in the Hangzhou-Qianjiang Economic Development Zone.

It will have commercial, retail and residential segments, service apartments and clean technology-based light industrial areas.

"This is really the first big step by a group of SMEs, formed in a period of four to six weeks," said Michael Heng, president and CEO of Energycorp-Global Pte Ltd, one of the key drivers behind CTP.

"To me, it represents the next level of SME develop-

ment for Singapore, coming on the heels of the government's announcement last week that Singapore is coming out of recession. And I hope this will not be the only one."

The HSEP will be a platform for Singapore and Singapore-based companies to showcase and deploy their innovations in clean technologies. It aims to have at least half of its energy use derived from renewable sources and will be utilising green strategies for water management, waste and by-product exchanges, transportation and green buildings to enhance the competitiveness of businesses located within the park.

The development of the park will be carried out in two phases. The first phase will involve a 500 mu site (about 35ha) with a total estimated gross floor area of 860,000 sq m.

It is zoned for commercial and retail use, as well as service apartments. This will be followed by the development of residential and light industrial zones in phase 2.

The MOU will be inked by Hangzhou's vice-secretary-general Xu Bao Jin and CTP's chairman Patrick Teo. Mr Xu is also the chairman of the Hangzhou-Qianjiang Economic Development Area management committee.

Although Singapore has been working with the Chinese government on several other commercial projects, including the ongoing Tianjin Eco-city, the HSEP is the first driven by non-government-linked companies, and a group of SMEs at that.

The pact also provides hope that Singapore SMEs can work together and fly in overseas markets – just as private enterprises in other places such as Japan, South Korea and Taiwan have always been lauded for having strong cohesiveness and collaborative ties when launching into foreign lands.

"I think by weathering the (recent) crisis, we have become a more united people," added Mr Heng. "I think that has also happened to Singapore companies. We are now more willing to see each other as partners, to want to work together, even out there in China. And maybe, Africa one day, or Eastern Europe, and so on."

CTP consists of more than 30 Singapore-based SMEs with interest in the clean-technology sector. They include waste-recycling firm IUT Global, photovoltaic solar systems integrator Phoenix Solar SG, green engineering company EnviPure and concentrator photovoltaic cell maker ARB Technologies.

CTP's role is to aggregate the interests and resources of the SMEs in the sustainable development industry, to secure opportunities in the region.

It has appointed venture accelerator Cleantech Ventures Asia as its managing company. Cleantech Ventures Asia is part of The Crefin Group, a boutique corporate advisory practice founded by former merchant banker Patrick Teo.

The grouping of SMEs came together following a business mission trip to Tianjin and Hangzhou in September.

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China
Eco-Park
Development
Project