

## Green Buildings are ‘on the Up’

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Green buildings have been on the up and up across Malaysia. Need proof? Some 40% of new buildings in the country are being designed and constructed with various degrees of eco-friendliness.

So says CK Tang, honorary secretary of the Malaysian Green Building Confederation. “Green building is cheaper than conventional building as we can save up to 10% of energy consumption,” he has been quoted as saying. (What he meant is that over their lifetimes green buildings can help their owners save up on energy and water costs, which is true enough.)

Green buildings can become self-contained islands of sustainability. Photo Credit: [asiangreenbuildings.com](http://asiangreenbuildings.com)

Time to celebrate? Not quite just yet.

As we noted before, Malaysia’s government has been providing tax incentives and other benefits for home owners, companies and developers who incorporate energy-saving and recycling technologies into their buildings. Yet that alone has not yet worked wonders as many home owners and construction companies have yet to come around to building green. Malaysians at large must embrace a different set of attitudes if the country is to become a place where certifiably green buildings dominate.

To be sure, there have been noteworthy developments such as ecofriendly condos and a sport center in Penang. The Green Building Index, which has been setting standards for sustainable construction across the land since 2008, seeks to help developers, construction companies and investors adopt environmentally sustainable ways to build. The aim is to increase the efficiency of resource use while reducing buildings’ impacts on the surrounding environment during their lifecycles.

Overall, the green building sector is certainly on the way up in Malaysia. Nonetheless, many construction companies still lag behind their counterparts in neighboring Singapore when it comes to building truly green. New green technologies, building methods and construction materials can be costly. As a result, often developers and buyers alike continue to prize short-term financial gains over long-term ones.

This must change.