

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Reuse and reduce for good: Singapore's first EcoBank launched**

***Launched by CDL and Eco-Business in support of the 50 For 50 initiative, EcoBank aims to increase awareness on waste reduction and sustainable consumption and raise funds to support disadvantaged women and children in Singapore.***

Singapore, 29 December 2015 – To mark the arrival of 2016 and to help Singaporeans celebrate festivities more sustainably, leading eco-developer City Developments Limited (CDL) and sustainability firm Eco-Business are launching a new national initiative – EcoBank – that aims to collect pre-loved items to raise funds for disadvantaged and vulnerable women, as well as their children, in Singapore.

Organised in support of Phase 2 of the 50 For 50 programme, a youth-led initiative to raise funds for lesser-known charities in Singapore, EcoBank will feature a collection drive from now till 13 January for pre-loved clothing, toys and books from the public.

Capping the campaign will be the EcoBank Bazaar held on 16 and 17 January at City Square Mall – Singapore's first Eco-Mall – where carefully curated items will be sold to the public to raise funds for the Singapore Council of Women's Organisations (SCWO).

EcoBank will increase public awareness of waste reduction and sustainable consumption in Singapore through posters, advertising and social media activities by encouraging the public to extend the lease of daily items they no longer need by donating them, or to buy pre-loved items at the Bazaar to reduce waste and raise money for charity.

This initiative is aligned with Singapore's vision of becoming a zero waste nation by 2030 under the Sustainable Singapore Blueprint 2015. The blueprint, launched by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong in 2014, outlines a S\$1.5 billion effort for Singapore to become a smart, eco-friendly city with a 'zero-waste' culture.

EcoBank complements Singapore's sustainable development strategy to reduce energy use, increase recycling rates and change public behaviour, among others.

Jessica Cheam, Founder and Editor, Eco-Business, said: "EcoBank is a ground-up initiative that fulfils two objectives at the same time. One is driving the message of sustainable consumption – buy only what you need, and extending the lifespans of items; and the other is raising funds and awareness for the activities of SCWO on the great work they do. We are very excited to be working on this project with CDL, 50 For 50 and SCWO."

Esther An, CDL's Chief Sustainability Officer, said: "With economic and population growth, the amount of waste disposed in Singapore has increased tremendously. It is high time to rethink our consumption habits to reduce waste as relying on our only landfill is not a long-term solution. As an extension of CDL's commitment to environmental sustainability, we are glad to work with Eco-Business and like-minded NGOs to inspire the community to 'Reduce and Reuse for Good' through EcoBank."

As part of phase 2 in support of the 50 For 50 project, CDL will also be making a S\$10,000 pledge to the SCWO Service Fund as co-organiser of the EcoBank initiative.

This contribution and the funds raised from the sale will be matched by the Singapore government under the Community Chest's dollar-for-dollar Care & Share movement. The organisers are aiming for EcoBank to raise at least S\$40,000 for SCWO.

Care & Share is a national fund-raising and volunteerism movement led by Community Chest for the social service sector, in celebration of SG50 this year. The matched amount will go towards building the capabilities and capacities of the social service sector.

Malathi Das, President of SCWO, said: "This is a very meaningful collaboration, especially with its underlying message to reduce waste in today's disposable world. By raising funds for charity through encouraging us to recycle and up-cycle, we are reinforcing a life lesson to use things to their maximum potential as long as they can make a useful contribution.

We are indeed happy and grateful to be the beneficiary of this wonderful eco-friendly charity initiative. Our heartfelt thanks go to CDL, Eco-Business and 50 For 50 for their tireless efforts to fund raise through this thoughtful bazaar selling pre-loved items, which parallels our own New2U Thrift shop initiative."

Money raised will support the activities of SCWO including Star Shelter, a refuge and crisis centre for women and children who are victims of family violence.

Apart from providing meals and lodging, the Star Shelter also provides trauma and crisis counselling and case management. Through the "Rebuild" programme, it also provides a one-time financial aid to assist victims to pay for transport expenses while looking for employment, as well as a no-interest home loan, which enables victims to set up new homes.

The Fund also sponsors programmes that assist women in need such as volunteer-run legal clinics, a maintenance support centre, and the Women's Register, a platform for mentoring, networking, education and inspiration for the younger women.

It also runs programmes such as the IT Hub, Board Agender which promotes gender balanced business, as well as Singapore Women's Hall of Fame, which celebrates the outstanding women who have made or are making an impact on our nation.

The EcoBank collection drive kicked off on December 26 and will end on January 13. Donors can bring their pre-loved clothes, toys and books to City Square Mall and selected CDL buildings (Republic Plaza, City House, Fuji Xerox Towers, Manulife Centre, Central Mall Office Tower, Quayside Isle), where designated collection bins will be set up.

Any unsold items will be donated to the SCWO's New2U Thrift Shop at its headquarters at Waterloo Street.

Cheryl Chong, Co-Founder of 50 For 50, said: "After a successful phase 1, 50 For 50 phase 2 has a stronger focus on sustainable projects with specific actionable items that help meet the needs of charity organisations as well as raise awareness."

50 For 50, a youth-led initiative which started in October 2014, completed a successful phase 1 which raised S\$3.6 million in just three months for 50 charities in all causes. Phase 2 is a curated list of 50 independent projects led by 50 project leads.

To participate in EcoBank and to learn more about the event, please visit the event's site: <http://www.eco-business.com/ecobank/>

More details on the event's opening ceremony will be sent out to media next week.

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**For media enquiries and to arrange any interviews, please contact:**

Jean Chua  
Deputy Editor, Eco-Business  
Email: jean@eco-business.com  
Tel: +65 6250 2335

Eunice Yang  
Senior Manager, Corporate Communications, CDL  
Email: eunicey@cdl.com.sg  
Tel: +65 6428 9330

**About EcoBank**

EcoBank is a national campaign organised by Eco-Business and CDL under the 50 For 50 initiative to increase awareness on sustainable consumption. Held on January 16 and 17, 2016, the event will raise funds for the Singapore Council of Women's Organisations to support disadvantaged and vulnerable women, as well as their children, in Singapore. The organisers aim for this national initiative to be an annual affair.

**About 50 For 50**

50 For 50 (<http://50for50.sg>), is a youth-led initiative that started in October 2014 that activates youths to raise awareness and funds for lesser-known charities in Singapore. Collectively, the group raised S\$3.6 million dollars through creative ways, in just 3 months in 2014.

**About CDL**

City Developments Limited (CDL) has been Singapore's property pioneer since 1963. It is a Singapore listed international property and hotel conglomerate involved in real estate development and investment, hotel ownership and management, facilities management and the provision of hospitality solutions. As a socially responsible corporation, CDL is fully committed towards environmental sustainability and has been taking the lead in shaping Singapore's built environment since the 1990s.

**About Eco-Business**

Eco-Business is the leading media company serving Asia Pacific's sustainable development, clean tech and responsible business community. Its platforms include the award-winning Eco-Business.com site, quality custom publications, and high-impact bespoke events catered to deepen discussions on sustainability. Its aim is to build a strong and sustainable social enterprise that helps Asia Pacific's businesses along an environmentally and socially responsible, low-carbon path.

**About the Singapore Council of Women's Organisations**

The Singapore Council of Women's Organisations (SCWO) is the National Coordinating body of women's organisations in Singapore. Its 58 Member organisations represent more than 500,000 women in Singapore. Incorporated in March 1980, the SCWO, having been founded by women, seeks to unite the various women's organisations, clubs, committees, groups and women leaders together, working in accordance with its various aims and objectives. SCWO seeks to co-ordinate these associations into a national movement and to act on their behalf in matters for which it is authorised by its members. It seeks to promote the ideals of 'Equal Space, Equal Voice and Equal Worth' for women in Singapore.