

## British Chamber of Commerce Singapore Hosts Successful Inaugural Sustainability Dialogue, Paving the Way for a Greener Future

**Friday, September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024:** The British Chamber of Commerce Singapore (BritCham) hosted its highly anticipated Sustainability Dialogue on September 4<sup>th</sup>, presented by Title Partner Barclays Private Bank, hosted at the Pan Pacific Singapore and supported by Silver Partner The Carbon Trust. This inaugural event brought together leading business figures, government representatives, and sustainability professionals to foster action-driven discussions on the green economy and explore collaborative opportunities between the UK and Singapore.

The event, held against the backdrop of the UK-Singapore Green Economy Framework (GEF) and the recent hosting of the Earthshot Prize in Singapore, served as a vital platform to showcase sustainable practices, technological innovations, and green economy commercial opportunities. With the goals of increasing action, encouraging public-private collaboration and enhancing bilateral cooperation, the Sustainability Dialogue highlighted the critical importance of policy alignment and private sector leadership in achieving net-zero ambitions.

In his remarks as the Guest of Honour<sup>1</sup>, **Alvin Tan, Minister of State, Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth & Ministry of Trade and Industry, Republic of Singapore**, commented on how the global climate has changed since the Chamber was founded 70 years ago as the UK Manufacturer's Representatives Association: *"1954 is a very different time from 2024. In 1954, the average annual temperature globally was approximately 11.6 degrees Celsius. By 2023, it had risen to 13.1 degrees Celsius. In 1954, the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, such as hurricanes, droughts and heavy rainfall were less common and generally less severe. By 2024, climate change has led to more frequent and intense storms, as well as prolonged droughts in certain areas, exacerbated by phenomena like El Niño and La Niña. That is why it is important that we do something about this. And that's why I'm grateful that the British Chamber has kicked off today's inaugural Sustainability Dialogue."*

### Key Highlights:

The event commenced with opening remarks and keynote speeches by Haslam Preston, President of BritCham Singapore, His Excellency Nik Mehta OBE, British High Commissioner to Singapore, and Minister of State Alvin Tan.

In the session "Strengthening UK-Singapore Ties: The Green Economy Framework in Action", policy leaders outlined the progress and ambitions of the GEF. Speakers included Carsten Bermig, Head of Climate Energy

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<sup>1</sup> Speech in full: <https://www.mti.gov.sg/Newsroom/Speeches/2024/09/Speech-by-MOS-Alvin-Tan-at-British-Chamber-of-Commerce-Singapore-Sustainability-Dialogue>

& Nature Team at the British High Commission, and Lai Shu Ying, Director of the Europe and Central Asia Division at Singapore's Ministry for Trade and Industry.

Sarah Cragg, Head of APAC for the Earthshot Prize, presented on the role of eco-innovation in transforming industries globally, further highlighting the synergy between sustainability and commercial success.

A series of panels addressed critical topics such as the importance of green skills development, the risks of greenwashing, and the potential of green hydrogen and carbon markets. These sessions provided insights into both the challenges and opportunities for businesses in the transition to sustainable practices.

Participants had the opportunity to network with industry leaders and experts, fostering relationships that will drive long-term sustainability collaborations.

**David Kelly, Executive Director of the British Chamber of Commerce Singapore**, noted: “The Sustainability Dialogue marks a key milestone for the Chamber as we continue to build momentum toward a greener future. By bringing together key stakeholders, we hope to create a lasting impact and provide businesses with the tools and networks they need to succeed in the green economy.”

The event also served as a catalyst for future initiatives, with BritCham announcing plans to host additional Sustainability Dialogues, roundtable discussions, and industry-specific projects.

**Evonne Tan, Managing Director, Head of Barclays Private Bank Singapore** stated: “At Barclays Private Bank, where we manage wealth for our clients, we see ourselves as stewards of capital and we believe that it is our duty to not only manage wealth but to do so in a way that benefits society and the environment.”

**Prannoy Chowdhury, Associate Director, Southeast Asia for the Carbon Trust**, stated: “The transition to a Net Zero or low carbon economy represents a paradigm shift in business operations. Decarbonisation and ESG reporting are now strategic imperatives rather than mere compliance. This shift can create substantial value or pose severe risks to an organisation, with stakeholders increasingly expecting these efforts.”

**Lau Xin Yi, Sustainable Finance Lead, Southeast Asia for the Carbon Trust**, stated: “At the Carbon Trust, we advise governments and corporates on how they can make carbon markets and sustainable finance work for them as they navigate the increasingly complex, but urgent decarbonisation challenges. We are pleased to be a partner for this event and contributing our expertise to deepen these discussions.”

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**Notes to the Editor:**

Highlighted photos from the event:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1pHWsz5P8EZJsfpa7B6T4om467t450N2k>

Full agenda: <https://britchamsingapore.glueup.com/event/116379/>

Attendees: 160+

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### About the British Chamber of Commerce Singapore (BritCham):

The British Chamber of Commerce Singapore (BritCham) is an independent not-for-profit membership organisation supporting approximately 3,500 members from 350 member organisations, part of the British Chambers of Commerce Global Network and a leading member of the Britain in South East Asia network (BiSEA). Our members vary from startups and SMEs to global MNCs, spanning all sectors and industries. Approximately two-thirds of the network in Singapore are British nationals or those employed by an organisation headquartered in the UK.

The Chamber is a registered Society, led by an Executive Team, overseen by an elected Board of members and operating under a published Constitution. Our mission is to drive British business growth in Singapore, create opportunities for our members, facilitate industry knowledge sharing, and support exporters from the UK. This is achieved by working alongside Government, our partners and our engaged members to deliver services, committee participation, activities and opportunities throughout the year.

Within our services to the British business community, we focus on five broad themes - the [Future of Trade](#) (creating jobs and boosting economic growth in Singapore), the [Future of Work](#) (supporting talent and the enhancement of people to support business growth), [Diversity & Inclusion](#) (ensuring that rich and diverse workforces are working together to support business innovation and growth), [Education & Learning](#) (focusing on quality education and future skills that businesses will require), and sustainability through our [Road to Net Zero campaign](#) (encouraging businesses to do their part for a world that we all want to live in in the future). We also maintain a [Covid-19 Information Hub](#) resource.

For more information on the Chamber, our advocacy and our areas of focus, visit [www.britcham.org.sg](http://www.britcham.org.sg).

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