

SUNREF India Housing Programme – Outreach Programme on Green Housing

NHB and AFD push competitive funding for green affordable housing

Kolkata, December 10, 2021: India's apex housing finance institution, the National Housing Bank (NHB), the French Development Agency (AFD), and the European Union (EU) today reiterated their common commitment to allocation of resources for promotion of green and affordable housing projects through the 'SUNREF India Housing Programme'.

The programme, backed by a credit line of €100 million from the AFD, enables banks, housing finance companies (HFCs) and home buyers to fund green and affordable housing projects and allied investments.

As a part of this initiative, an event was held in Kolkata to highlight the importance of green affordable housing. It was attended by representatives of banks, HFCs, real estate developers, government agencies, as well as green-building experts, architects, and green material producers. Officials of the NHB and the AFD underlined the many benefits – environmental, economic, and social – of green housing at the event.

Mr Rahul Bhawe, Executive Director, NHB, said, "The SUNREF India Housing Programme's concessional funding and other capacity building initiatives toward green housing will accelerate the use of environment-friendly strategies and technologies in housing. Additionally, there is a grant of €12 million from the EU, including a technical assistance grant of €3 million, for promotion of the programme in India, and €1 million to support spends on green label certification by project developers."

The SUNREF India Housing Programme is in line with India's commitment under the Paris Agreement, the COP26 consensus to address climate change in developing countries, and the EU's global priorities to work towards a low carbon-emission pathway.

In this context, affordable green housing adds a layer, ensuring that the buildings are environment friendly and resource-efficient throughout their lifecycle. In fact, the housing sector has huge potential for significant reduction of greenhouse gas emission vis-à-vis other major emitting sectors, such as agriculture, energy, and transport.

Alisee Pernet, Head – Energy and Climate Finance, AFD, said, "The construction sector is a major consumer of energy, and has massive adverse impact on the environment, including climate change. But only 1% of buildings in India conform to green building norms. Thus, there is huge potential to undertake new development differently, with integration of green approach."

For the record, by 2025, SUNREF India Housing Programme would have benefited 4,200 households, of which at least half would be from economically weaker sections.

The holding of the event in Kolkata is also significant because the city has seen a rapid increase in green-rated residential buildings over the past few years, said **Mr Vishal Goyal, General Manager, NHB.**

The vote of thanks was given by Shri Vikram Deva, AGM, Regional Office Kolkata.