

SUNREF India – Outreach Programme on Green Housing

NHB, AFD and EU create awareness for green affordable housing

Bengaluru, February 28, 2022

After the success of Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata events; SUNREF (Sustainable Use of Natural Resources and Energy Finance) Housing India programme held its 3rd regional promotional event in Bengaluru, Karnataka, to highlight the importance of green affordable housing and present its key features to the 80-housing market key stakeholders present at the event.

Aimed at scaling up green affordable housing projects in India, SUNREF Housing India programme was launched by the French Development Agency (Agence Française de Développement, AFD) in partnership with the National Housing Bank (NHB) in July 2017. This project is co-funded by the European Union (EU). More specifically, it consists of an innovative credit line of €100 million from AFD which enables banks, housing finance companies (HFCs) to fund green and affordable housing projects and allied investments. This financing is reinforced by a €9 million investment grant and €3 million technical assistance grant, both provided by the EU, to soften the interest rates offered to HFCs and implement promotional and capacity building activities – making this project an ambitious and first-of-a-kind programme.

The event in Bengaluru was attended by representatives of banks, housing finance companies (HFCs), real estate developers, government agencies, green-building experts, architects and green material producers from states of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.

The speakers at the event, included senior officials of AFD, EU Delegation in India, National Housing Bank (NHB), Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) and Green Rating for Integrated Habitat Assessment (GRIHA).

Mr. V Vaideswaran, Executive Director, NHB, said, *“It is very much appropriate in having this 3rd Regional Promotional Event of SUNREF India Programme organized at Bengaluru city which has seen high population growth and rapid urbanization. Given the size of the residential mortgage market in India it is felt that this is the opportune time to change and adapt to the new ecosystem being created in the residential construction space”.*

SUNREF India Housing Programme has provided refinance to 4400 households so far, of which half are from economically weaker sections. NHB’s efforts on enhancing the green affordable housing in the Country is in line with the Government of India’s priorities to support climate change.

The EU and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India are cooperating closely under the partnership on Smart and Sustainable Urbanisation. Talking about the importance of green building in reducing carbon emissions and achieving sustainability goals, **Ms. Kamilla Kristensen Rai, Counsellor, Delegation of the European Union to India**, said, *“The EU and India are both working closely on Green transition, in which innovation in housing is an important pillar. We are glad to be partner with SUNREF India, which is helping to build a green ecosystem in the Country. We believe that Green tools and solutions that are suitable to local context can lead to environment friendly, energy efficient as well as affordable housing.”*

Ms. Isaure DE Belleville, Green and Climate Finance Portfolio Manager, AFD, said, *“A major emitting sector, housing construction consumes energy on a large scale. The country has a housing shortage, but the ongoing housing construction have long-term adverse impacts on the environment, including climate change. Only 1% of the buildings in India conform to green building norms. Thus, there is huge potential to integrate green approach in the sector.”* AFD is pleased to collaborate with NHB to create awareness and deepen the green affordable housing sector in the country.

Mr. R Malathesha, Superintending Engineer, Rajiv Gandhi Housing Corporation Limited said, *“Constructing of green buildings that consumes less energy is crucial. It will help control the depletion of natural resources and sustain the environment. The SUNREF India Programme is an important initiative towards controlling the negative impacts of real estate construction thereby making a step towards conserving our ecosystem”.*

Bengaluru and other metros in south India have been witnessing a growth in green-rated residential buildings over the past decades. It is in this backdrop, that the event was organised in the city, and aimed at raising awareness on the importance and potentialities of green affordable housing. Participants were presented with green certification systems as well as illustrative case studies.

“There are millions of residential buildings that offer tremendous opportunities to enhance energy and water efficiency, further reduce the overall maintenance costs. SUNREF is a platform that brings together the senior stakeholders related to green housing sector at one forum to exchange views and work towards growth of the green housing in the Country as a goal”, said **Mr. Vishal Goyal, General Manager, NHB**.

Mr. Peeyush Pandey, AGM-Regional Office (NHB), Bengaluru, delivered the vote of thanks.

About the European Union

The EU, which consists of 27 countries, has the world's second largest economy and its third largest population, after China and India. Though richly diverse, the countries that make up the EU (its 'Member States') are all committed to the same basic values: peace, democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights. By creating a frontier-free single market and a single currency (the euro) which has been adopted by 19 Member States, the EU has given a significant boost to trade and employment.

EU-India relations: The EU and India are marking 60 years of diplomatic ties in 2022. For 60 years, the EU and India have worked together to reduce poverty, prevent disasters, expand trade, secure global public goods, enhance security around the world and promote joint research in energy, health, agriculture and many other fields of mutual interest.

About AFD

AFD is an inclusive public financial institution and the main actor in France's development policy. It makes commitments to projects that genuinely improve the everyday lives of people, in developing and emerging countries and in the French overseas territories. AFD works in many sectors – energy, health, biodiversity, water, digital technologies, training – and supports the transition to a safer, more equitable and more sustainable world: a world in common. Its action is fully in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). More information at: <https://www.afd.fr/en>

Through its network of 85 agencies, AFD operates in 115 countries and is currently supporting over 4,000 development projects. In 2018, it earmarked EUR 11.4bn to finance these projects.

About SUNREF

SUNREF is one of the innovative tools developed by AFD to promote the emergence of “green” finance tailored to the needs of economic actors in countries in transition. It aims to allow local financial institutions to take action to fight against climate change.

SUNREF helps develop the practices of financial actors via financial support and technical assistance to facilitate access to green energy and promote the sustainable management of natural resources. The ultimate goal: ensure the development of a low-carbon economy and allow economic actors to adapt to this transformation. More information at: <https://www.sunref.org/en/>

About NHB

National Housing Bank (NHB) was set up on 9 July 1988 under the National Housing Bank Act, 1987. NHB has been established with an objective to operate as a principal agency to promote housing finance institutions both at local and regional levels and to provide financial and other support incidental to such institutions and for matters connected therewith. More information at: <https://nhb.org.in/>