

Green Buildings: A Path to Sustainable Society

India

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Background Information

The market for green buildings is booming in India due to the high demand for eco-friendly buildings. According to industry analysts, by 2015, the value of the green building sector will be more than \$50 billion (Relph, Mridu Khuller, 2012).

In India, many policy initiatives have been developed for the promotion of green buildings, both at the national as well as local level. One such policy initiative is that of the Surat Municipal Corporation (local self government which came into being under the provisions of the Bombay Provincial Municipality), which promotes the development of green buildings. This policy iterates that developers are entitled to certain concession fees based upon the development of a green building which maximizes the use of natural resources. They will also get more floor space index (FSI) along with subsidies on plants for the green spaces planning in the new schemes.

Quick facts

Topic	Promotion of Green Buildings
Keywords	Green Buildings, Energy Conservation Building Code (ECBC)
Location	Surat, India
Implementing agency	Surat Municipal Corporation

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Surat, which is the fourth fastest growing city in the world, has at least 10 such innovative projects of environment-friendly buildings lined up. The design of these buildings includes creation of water bodies and green canopy along with roof-top solar energy panels along with water recycling facilities. Furthermore, Surat is moving towards becoming the first city in India to have a green building council. The council would ensure that the development of new buildings in the city follows a green building code. According to the Times of India, "the future constructions would have openings for sun light to filter in. They could even have ground floor and basement totally dedicated to plants treating impurities, while the terraces will be covered with vegetation ensuring better oxygen content".

Although there has been an initiative towards the development of green building policies, the matter is still at an early stage of acceptance and faces numerous challenges, as listed below:

Implementation of Energy Conservation Building Code (ECBC):

- The Energy Conservation Building Code is voluntary. It should be mandatory so that its implementation is smoother. A similar approach of enforcement and implementation could be adopted for other mandatory building codes.

Lack of seriousness and leadership:

- A strong leadership is required to promote the added-value and benefits related to the development of green buildings.

Lack of experienced workforce:

- Additional training should be provided to the workforce in order to promote sustainable infrastructure.

Addressing the economic perspective:

- Consumers need to be convinced of the benefits of green buildings via direct improvements such as cost savings or improved product performance. (Aggarwal, Shailesh, 2013).

In sum, in order to promote the development of eco-friendly buildings, the government should focus on the development and implementation of green policies for sustainable infrastructure.

References

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