

SAINT-GOBAIN STUDY REVEALS 7 IN 10 MALAYSIANS SAY SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION IS A PRIORITY

The 2026 Sustainable Construction Barometer was published by Saint-Gobain's Sustainable Construction Observatory

KUALA LUMPUR , MALAYSIA, April 29, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The 2026 Sustainable Construction Barometer, published by Saint-Gobain's Sustainable Construction Observatory, reveals a striking paradox in Malaysia's built environment sector: public expectation and appetite for sustainable construction are running ahead of the industry. Malaysia was included for the first time in the qualitative international study that captures the perceptions of 30,000 citizens and 4,800 construction-sector stakeholders (including local government representatives and built environment professionals, students and association members) across 30 countries.

Citizen Buy-In: Everyday Malaysians Are Ahead of Industry Stakeholders

Public desire for sustainable construction in Malaysia is strong, with 7 in 10 (71%) calling it a priority - surpassing the global average of 63%. In contrast, this interest is not mirrored among Malaysian industry stakeholders, with only 55% sharing the same view, trailing not only local citizen sentiments but also their global counterparts (65%). While just over half of stakeholders say sustainable construction should be prioritised, 63% envision it creating equal or more value than traditional construction, in terms of economic profitability and overall environmental, social, and heritage benefits.

Despite the gaps, both Malaysian stakeholders and citizens agree on what could help close this divide — raising awareness and strengthening cross-sector collaboration between all parties, citizens and stakeholders alike, are seen as key accelerators in driving sustainable construction in the country. Based on the findings, architects and building engineers are viewed as the most important stakeholders in driving advances.

"In Malaysia's rapidly urbanising landscape, climate resilience, quality housing, and inclusive growth are becoming increasingly interconnected, making sustainability a rising priority for its citizens. Public expectations can become a transforming force to encourage clearer policies, reinforce the need for stronger alignment and increase collaboration across the ecosystem. Strengthening awareness and shared understanding will be key to translating intent into action, spurring developers, contractors, policymakers, financiers, and manufacturers to find solutions

that balance environmental ambition with social and economic realities,” said Lynette Siow, Chief Executive Officer of Saint-Gobain Malaysia and Singapore.

Sustainable construction: an established concept, but unevenly understood

While everyday Malaysians express a strong demand for sustainable buildings, the findings also reveal clear gaps in understanding, with only 29% saying they are closely familiar with what it entails. The top three most selected definitions of sustainable construction are as follows: construction with the ability to withstand natural and climatic hazards such as extreme temperatures and heavy rains (35%); evolutive construction capable of adapting to new uses (34%); and construction that promotes the well-being and health of occupants (32%).

Naturally, awareness and understanding of sustainable construction amongst local stakeholders remains high (87%), although the study uncovered a glaring 13% that said they have never even heard of the concept.

Against the backdrop of strong public support for sustainable construction, this presents an opportunity to accelerate a shift in Malaysia’s built environment by deepening stakeholder and public awareness and transforming existing citizen support into action. This is further reinforced by the findings, with over one-third of citizens (37%) and stakeholders (41%) identifying that raising public awareness is key to accelerating the development of sustainable construction. Furthermore, 40% of citizens and 45% of stakeholders think that driving stronger awareness and collaboration among stakeholders is important in driving change.

Lynette added, “In Malaysia, sustainable construction is increasingly understood through the lens of everyday impact. Guided by our purpose of ‘Making the World a Better Home’, we are committed to supporting the industry in the country and around the world, by enabling smarter material choices, fostering collective responsibility, and delivering solutions that build not only greener buildings, but stronger, more resilient communities for generations to come.”

The full 4th Sustainable Construction Barometer is available for download [here](#).

Methodology

The 2026 Sustainable Construction Barometer study was carried out between 16 October and 14 November 2025 among a sample of 4,800 individuals, which includes construction-sector stakeholders from local government representatives and built environment professionals, to students and association members, and 30,000 citizens (1,000 individuals per country) across 30 countries.

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