

Keyword: global-warming

Headline: Raising the bar for 'green' buildings in the Philippines

Byline: Charles E. Buban

Published Date: 08:21 PM September 23, 2011

Section: business

Word Count: 918

Content:

THE CERAMIC frit pattern of the glass curtain wall was inspired by bamboo and flowing water.

THE CERAMIC frit pattern of the glass curtain wall was inspired by bamboo and flowing water.

If the world wants to do something about global warming then we need to change more than just how we live: We also need to improve our work places since these buildings are not just where we work, play and rest—they are where we invest most of our financial and natural capital.

Considering that buildings are one of the largest users of energy—more than 30 percent of an area's total energy use, more than 65 percent of an area's electricity consumption and 12 percent of an area's potable water consumption—it is safe to say that they have a significant contribution to the continuous warming of our planet.

"It therefore stands to reason that if we really are serious about protecting the environment and ultimately ourselves, then we must build green now, and retrofit current structures with greener functionality," suggested Architect Miguel Guerrero III, cochair of the 8th Green Forum held during the recent Construction Show Manila.

#### Challenging builders

He said the Philippines is still in a stage where it is still establishing itself, challenging builders to set up more sustainable buildings as well as renovate the older ones, in ways that would reverse unhealthy trends.

"We are proud that here in the Philippines, one group took the challenge of raising the bar for green high-rise buildings. Bridgebury Realty Corp., an affiliate of the Zuellig Group, is finishing the Zuellig building—which is more than just a green building—is the first building in the Philippines that has been awarded with a precertification at Gold level under the Leadership for Energy and Environmental Design Core and Shell (LEED-CS) program of the United States' Green Building Council," Guerrero announced.

The 33-story office tower, the first premium office building constructed in Makati since the construction boom of 2000, will be ready for tenancy by February 2012. By then, it will be Metro Manila's premier business address in the Makati City central business district.

"Located at the intersection of Makati Avenue and Paseo de Roxas, the Zuellig Building brings together a superb location, world-class design and green technologies. It will provide organizations that value the Triple Bottom Line—People, Planet and Profit," explained Mihai Craciun of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP New York, one of the world's leading architecture, urban design, engineering and interior architecture firms.

Remarkable

This is not the first time that SOM designed landmark structures like the Zuellig Building: Its previous designs have become icons of modern architecture, such as the Sears Tower (the tallest in the world for over 20 years) and Burj Khalifa (currently the world's tallest).

"Zuellig Building may not be the highest but its features are state-of-the-art. Most recognizable is the building's double-paned, low-emissivity (low-E) glass system that minimizes solar heat gain and energy loss while maximizing penetration of natural light, allowing for 90 percent of interior spaces to have daylight," Craciun said.

He said the tower gains its identity from the ceramic frit pattern of the glass curtain wall that was inspired by bamboo and flowing water.

ZUELLIG building, which is more than just a green building, is the first high-rise office in the Philippines that has been awarded with a precertification at Gold level under the LEED Core and Shell.

"This is a distinctive texture that refers to local organic motifs and serves to supplement the shading capabilities of the building envelope," Craciun explained.

The building, which stands on a generously spaced 8,285-sq-m site offers a landscaped 2,500-sq-m private garden and driveway that flow seamlessly to the lobby area.

"Dining al fresco may be enjoyed in the open-air green terraces on the 2nd floor of the retail pavilion and a sky garden has been installed in the 32nd floor," Craciun described.

#### Environment-friendly measures

He added that aside from following LEED standards of pollution prevention during construction, the following environment-friendly measures are also taken:

Easy access to public transportation, maximization of open space, and the reduction of heat islands by the use of extensive landscaping;

Installation of CO2 sensors that modulate outside airflow according to the estimated number of occupants to bring superior indoor air quality at all times;

Setting up of variable speed drives for chilled water pumps to reduce energy consumption during off-peak hours;

Water is conserved by capturing rain and condensate water;

The building also has premium drainage and irrigation systems;

Daylight dimming system that reduces the output of electric lighting based on the intensity of daylight;

Centralized paper recycling facility that will be available to all tenants.

"The Zuellig Building is ideal for organizations that are committed to sustainability and social responsibility and adopt best practices in creating workplaces that are environmentally responsible and resource-efficient," explained Lilibeth Ducut-Abais, GreenAP secretariat.

Together with SOM, Zuellig building also got the services of WV Coscolluela & Associates, Leighton Asia General Contractor (Australia's largest project development and contracting company) and Meinhardt Engineering Consultants.

Subscribe to our daily newsletter

By providing an email address. I agree to the Terms of Use and acknowledge that I have read the Privacy Policy.

She said that on the hierarchy of human needs, shelter is second only to food and with a green building like the Zuellig's results in improved occupant health and comfort (primarily due to indoor air quality measures and day lighting), which in turn leads to higher productivity, less absenteeism and reduced insurance costs and liability risk.