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# DiGi CEO: Clear direction on green corporate incentives needed

## Kathleen Tan

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Corporations are now keener to address climate change compared to pre-Copenhagen but the government needs to be clearer on environmental-friendly incentives, tax relief and regulations.

Before the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen last year, companies were "a little blur" as to who would drive climate change, and that there were a lot of expectations on governments to lead the change, said DiGi.Com Bhd CEO Johan Dannelind at an industry dialogue here yesterday.

"Now, it's very clear that businesses around the world want to step up their commitments. A study showed that 50% of global companies think they have to take a bigger responsibility than the governments, and it's important that the companies are stepping up," he told participants at a dialogue on *Challenge for Climate Action: Is the Industry Really Serious?*

He said according to a 2010 survey conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers, over 90% of corporates wanted stimulus, incentives and tax relief.

Dannelind said when DiGi wanted to buy environmental-friendly cars for internal use, it was difficult to find out about tax incentives as the car dealers were unsure on the

matter. More clarity and visibility for industry players from the

government would encourage a stronger appetite for investment, he noted.

"The speech from Securities Commission Malaysia chairman Tan Sri Zarinah Anwar last week was very inspiring as it set very high ambitions for corporate Malaysia to act (on climate change) as a hygiene factor because demand just keep going higher and higher. The challenge will not slow down but the country needs to step up," he said.

Forest Research Institute Malaysia senior research officer Dr Gary Theseira concurred, adding communication was critical to creating engagement among the various stakeholders to tackle the climate change issue.

"Governments and businesses have to inform consumers, as well as find out what the public thinks about government policies, tax incentives and regulations. The more information is shared, the faster people are engaged and more things get done," said Theseira.

Other dialogue panelists included Partners of Community Organisations (Pacos) programme head Adrian Lasimbang and Malaysian Youth Climate Justice Network founder Khairun Nisa Mo-

hamed Zabidi.

The dialogue was organised in conjunction with DiGi's "Challenge for Change" competition finale held yesterday.

Norwegian Crown Prince Haakon VII and Crown Princess Mette-Marit graced the event by presenting awards to the winning teams.

Also present at the awards ceremony were Norwegian Minister of Trade and Industry Trond Giske and Telenor Group executive vice-president, Telenor Asia regional head and DiGi.com Bhd chairman Sigve Brekke.

Prince Haakon said that the development of new technologies was a key factor in fighting climate change and preserving the environment, but equally important was making such technologies available to all levels of society.

The winning teams were Team D'Regen from Universiti Sains Malaysia and Team Feng from Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, which took home RM50,000 and RM20,000 respectively, while RM5,000 was awarded to each of the six finalists.

The "Challenge for Change" competition was launched last year in line with DiGi's Deep Green corporate responsibility programme, which aims to reduce the telco's carbon footprint by 50% by 2011.



Prince Haakon: Making new technologies available to all levels of society is equally important in fighting climate change. Photo by Suhaimi Yusuf.