

Shipping and solar players, agritech entrepreneur win top honours at 2026 Sustainability Impact Awards

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SHIPPING company Berge Bulk, solar power specialist Clean Kinetics and agritech entrepreneur Susan Chong clinched top honours at this year's edition of the Sustainability Impact Awards.

They were among 16 individuals and enterprises recognised on Wednesday (Sep 23) night for their outstanding contributions to sustainable development, and driving innovations for the environment and social inclusion.

Now in its fourth year, the awards ceremony was held at Shangri-La Singapore, with National Research Foundation (NRF) chairman Heng Swee Keat as guest of honour.

The Sustainability Impact Awards is jointly organised by *The Business Times* and UOB, with National University of Singapore's Centre for Governance and Sustainability as knowledge partner.

The award recipients "illustrate a principle central to Singapore's development: No organisation has all the answers", said Heng in his speech at the event.

"(The) government, enterprises, researchers, investors and the wider community each bring distinct perspectives and capabilities. By

working together, we can strengthen ideas and translate them into action at greater scale," added the former deputy prime minister.

Berge Bulk was named the Impact Enterprise of the Year in the large enterprise category for its decarbonisation efforts in the hard-to-abate shipping sector.

The company became carbon neutral in 2025 through retrofit solutions, energy-saving technology and voluntary carbon credits.

Its wind propulsion initiative slashed daily fuel use by up to six tonnes and prevented nearly 19 tonnes of daily carbon dioxide emissions on board the Berge Olympus.

Berge Bulk CEO James Marshall in his acceptance speech said that the company is "being very ambitious" with plans to try out new fuels and do carbon capture.

Three other large enterprises – DP Architects, IHH Healthcare, and Lendlease & LReit – received the Impact Enterprise Excellence Award for their sustainability initiatives.

Among small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), Clean Kinetics clinched the Impact Enterprise of the Year for expanding clean energy and sustainable mobility across South-east Asia and the Middle East.

The company has installed 17.6



From left: Clean Kinetics' Wilson Lee, Greenphyto's Susan Chong and Berge Bulk's James Marshall receive the top awards at the Sustainability Impact Awards. PHOTO: TAY CHU YI, BT

megawatt peak (MWp) of solar capacity across 31 schools in Singapore, avoiding 8,800 tonnes of CO2.

It also pioneered Jordan's first electric school-bus fleet for 10,000 students and supported the development of Bhutan's 500 MWp utility-scale solar farm.

Clean Kinetics' chief engineer-

ing officer Wilson Lee in his acceptance speech noted that the size of a company does not determine its impact.

"A small company with a committed team, strong partners, and the courage to take action can make a real difference," he said.

The Impact Enterprise Excellence Award was presented to

three other SMEs: SaladStop! Group, Stolz Engineering and Unravel Carbon.

Impact leaders, special recognition awardees

Chong, the CEO of agritech company Greenphyto, was named the Impact Leader of the Year under the individual category.

She is behind the world's tallest indoor vertical farm, which was 14 years in the making and unveiled in January this year.

Chong was also recognised for her social contributions via the Circular Community Programme, which has distributed some 116,000 vegetable packs to more than 104,000 families and local organisations.

In her acceptance speech, Chong noted that a key challenge is nurturing the next generation of farmers.

"Farming has always been associated with poverty, but why is that so? Today, all the people who make the money from farming are the distributors, not the farmers," she said.

Her company is thus leveraging technology to upskill the next generation of farmers to improve their quality of life.

Two other individuals won the Impact Leader Excellence Award: UOL Group CEO Liam Wee Sin and Ng Kian Swan of the National University Health System (NUHS).

Ng is NUHS' chief operating officer for group facilities management, security and emergency planning. He also chairs its energy and water taskforce.

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This year's ceremony also included a new Special Recognition Award, given to enterprises that go beyond business-as-usual practices to make a meaningful difference to the environment and the wider ecosystem.

The Special Recognition Award was presented to two SMEs: Ampotech and KosmodeHealth Singapore.

Three large enterprises also clinched the award: Delta Electronics Int'l (Singapore), the Housing & Development Board, and ST Engineering's commercial aerospace business.

There was a 40 per cent increase in entries for this year's Sustainability Impact Awards, noted BT editor Chen Huifen, adding that this reflects an "impressive leap in quality, sector diversity and holistic impact".

"From hard-to-abate industries to pioneering SMEs and visionary leaders, this year's winners exemplify true sustainability leadership," she said.

UOB CEO Wee Ee Cheong said that the awardees "remind us that sustainability is not defined by ambition alone, but by the actions we take and the impact we create".

In his speech, NRF chairman Heng cited climate change as a key

challenge for Singapore, noting that the Republic has designated 2026 as the year of climate adaptation.

He emphasised the importance of research. For instance, urban solutions and sustainability is one of the key pillars of Singapore's Research, Innovation and Enterprise 2030 Plan (RIE2030).

This includes the S\$800 million Decarbonisation Grand Challenge, to advance low-carbon technologies for Singapore's industry and power sectors.

Separately, the heat resilience research and development programme under RIE2030 will allocate S\$40 million to study the effects of rising temperatures.

"This ability to anticipate challenges and turn them into opportunities has long been part of Singapore's development story," said Heng.

"With limited land, few natural resources and a small domestic market, we have often had to think differently, find new solutions and chart our own path forward."



Guest of honour Heng Swee Keat, National Research Foundation chairman, said the award recipients "illustrate a principle central to Singapore's development: No organisation has all the answers".

PHOTO: YEN MENG JIIN, BT