

UAE and Bahrain plan low cost water production

UAE and Bahrain UAE are investing in and are looking at technologies to produce water at lower cost.

UAE Minister of Environment and Water Dr Rashid Ahmad bin Fahad and Bahrain's Minister of Works and Minister in Charge of Electricity and Water Fahmi bin Ali Al Jowder revealed this while speaking at the joint opening of the Singapore International Water Week, World Cities Summit and East Asia Summit Conference on Liveable Cities.

The event is being attended in Singapore by 5,000 delegates from more than 60 countries.

Governor of Saline Water Conversion Corporation in Saudi Arabia Fahid Al Shareef said one of the challenges faced by cities today is the increasing water leakage from distribution networks.

Home to 11 of the world's 20 mega cities, Asia accounts for the largest urban population with the fastest growth.

Lee Hsien Loong, Prime Minister of Singapore, said companies can use Singapore as a "living laboratory" to experiment and adapt urban solutions.

Loong admitted that the challenge of sustainable development is a complex and diverse issue.

Quoting a United Nations report last year, Singapore's Minister for the Environment and Water Resources Dr. Yaacob Ebrahim said 2008 is the first time in history when more of the world's population lives in cities than in rural areas.

"The world's urban population will grow by an average of 1.6 million every ten days until 2030. By then, nearly two-thirds of the world's population will be living in cities," Ebrahim said.