

INTERVIEW | ANTÓNIO TRINDADE, CESL ASIA CEO

'We could produce energy here much more efficiently'

Catarina Pinto

AHEAD of the Macao International Environmental Co-operation Forum & Exhibition (MIECF), which kicks off today, the CEO of CESL Asia, António Trindade, said that in addition to finding environmentally friendly solutions to improve Macau's transportation system, there's also a need to start producing energy locally. In an interview with The Times, Mr Trindade stressed that this process should be conducted by local companies.

Macao Daily Times (MDT) – The Chief Executive delivered his 2015 Policy Address this week, and in doing so mentioned a few measures to tackle environmental issues, namely the launch of a study to introduce eco-vehicles. Is this enough?

António Trindade (AT) – The measures mentioned by the Chief Executive indicate that they're on the right track. The transportation issue is one of Macau's major problems. In any case, we still need to use vehicles. And the quality of vehicles is very important, it's almost obvious that we cannot use the vehicles from ten years ago to move people and goods at the scale that Macau does today within the SAR's small space. In a tourist city, it is not acceptable; it creates too much pollution, creates too much congestion, and it doesn't provide the capacity because there's a limit – you need more space.



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When we talk about eco-vehicles, I am sure the Chief Executive is not only referring to electrical vehicles. There are many choices. We need to understand what the best option is for Macau. Because the best option for other cities might not apply here.

MDT – What do you think the Secretary for Transport and Public Works should prioritize in terms of environmental protection?

AT – Environmental infrastructure is crucial. The treatment of water and solid waste is reaching its limit. The waste water treatment systems in Macau

are well below capacity and urgently need adjustment to be in line with the current situation.

Transportation is another environmental issue, because it reduces people's quality of life, and lowers the quality of experience for tourists. And there is too much direct air pollution. So we need an urgent solution for this.

Another problem is energy. Macau does not have energy, and the use of energy is high. I think it's time to think about consumption. There are more efficient ways to do this, and this is definitely one of the major areas for improvement, where local businesses like

CESL Asia have an opportunity to grow and to be significantly relevant.

MDT – There's a next wave of Cotai resorts taking shape. If these issues are not tackled, could we expect pollution problems to rise?

AT – Pollution will always increase because pollution is a result of human life and economic activity. But we can have less pollution, and improve our quality of life. In Macau, everything we do stays here; the waste we make here is not going very far away, so whatever we do here, we will feel and smell. We have to come up with solutions, because without that, Macau cannot develop. Everything that goes to waste can actually be very valuable.

MDT – What kind of new technologies or renewable energies could be used in Macau?

AT – Better energy also depends on the consumer: turn on, turn off; the right temperature;

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the right light. People in their daily lives have the power to make it 50 percent better. In terms of technologies for renewable energies, there are a lot of things we could do in Macau. One of the things we can do is decentralize energy production and distribution. This means that instead of having a remote entity producing electricity, we could do it locally and much more efficiently. Because nobody can guarantee us that there will be electricity in Macau tomorrow. If there's a problem somewhere outside Macau, we might not have electricity here, so we could produce locally. CESL Asia is already doing this and local companies have to be called to lead this process.

Why must every resort have their own energy center, or air conditioning system and water heaters? Why can't we do it a better way?

Some of the technologies we have today, they're still not aimed at Macau's situation: we don't have a lot of sun; the wind is very erratic. There's still a lot to be done, such as better consumption, better management of the existing facilities, and the decentralization of distribution, which definitely a local company like CESL Asia is ready to do. It makes sense economically and environmentally. But there has to be a government will.

MDT – What is CESL Asia focusing on in this year's MIECF?

AT – Like always, we are showcasing our services and abilities. Everybody knows we are an environmental company, we run public infrastructure, and we help the government develop. We help some of the resorts to become environmentally friendly. We run energy facilities, and we are now running a laundry business. We are not leaders; we follow the market. That's why we say 'how to grow a city' in our trademark.