

ENVIRONMENT

Future is green, say academics

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Waste management and green production processes will play a major role in doing business in the near future, say leading academics.

Prinya Thaewanarumitkul, a law professor and vice-rector for student affairs at Thammasat University, said countries across the world should figure out how to lower the use of natural resources, not only energy but also other materials.

The global population has nearly doubled to 7 billion in only two decades, resulting in the growing consumption of natural resources.

"Each country should ensure the sustainable development of its economy and society, or else natural resources will run out," Prof Prinya told a seminar hosted by the SET-listed IRPC Plc yesterday.

He said demand for waste management will come from developing countries.

"The global population will top 10 billion people in the next 40 years, and how we manage waste and allocate natural resources will be critical," he said.

Surat Horachaikul, an assistant professor with Chulalongkorn University's international relations department, said recycling will enjoy good growth potential, while home appliances will consume less energy.

Challenges could become business opportunities, he said.

Siwat Pongpiachan, an associate professor of disaster prevention and management at the National Institute of Development Administration, said carbon dioxide emissions will increase due to increases in population and consumption of goods.

Private companies should work closely together and support state agencies and universities in terms of disaster prevention and protection, he said.

IRPC president Atikom Terbsiri said the company's business will focus more on environmentally friendly products in line with global trends.

In May, IRPC announced a plan to develop an ecological industrial estate on 8,000 rai at two sites in Rayong.

The eco-friendly complex will produce less waste and fewer emissions while improving safety and energy savings.