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Green movement 'not happening fast enough'

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SINGAPORE – While many would say that the green movement to cut carbon dioxide emissions and reduce its amount in the atmosphere is gaining steam, Pulitzer Prize winning author Thomas L Friedman (picture) thinks otherwise.

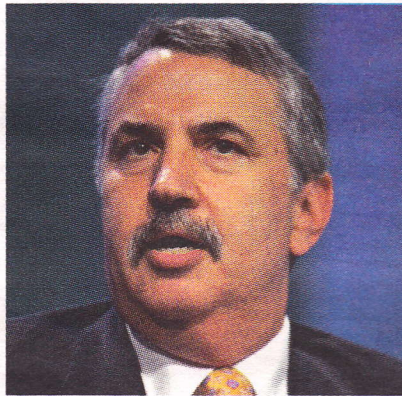
In fact, the 57-year-old *New York Times* columnist believes what we are seeing now is more of a “party” than anything else.

Speaking to 1,000 people at the National University of Singapore’s University Cultural Centre Hall yesterday, he said a truly “green revolution” can only be arrived at when all involved realise it is time to either “change or die”.

He added: “You know it’s a real revolution when the word ‘green’ disappears completely.

“There will be no green buildings for example – there will just be a building that you can’t build unless you use the highest levels of energy efficiency and sustainability.”

As a journalist, Mr Friedman has reported on the Middle East conflict,



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the end of the Cold War, the United States domestic politics and foreign policy and the worldwide impact of the terrorist threat.

But in his 2008 book, *Hot, Flat, and Crowded: Why We Need a Green Revolution – and How It Can Renew America*, Mr Friedman has been exploring the parallels between the climate crisis and the global economic crisis.

Explaining the motivation behind the book, Mr Friedman said it has become obvious that for a variety of reasons the US has lost its “groove” in recent years.

The book, he added, was his own

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Pulitzer Prize winning author
Thomas L Friedman

contribution towards how “we can get our groove back” as a country.

So does he think that his words have had any resonance with American lawmakers?

Mr Friedman said: “I do believe it’s getting there but it’s not happening fast enough. I remain a die-hard optimist as we’re moving in the right direction but it’s nowhere at the speed, scale and scope that we need.”

America could also learn from China in the area of clean technology, he said.

“The biggest thing that happened in the world was when China decided to go green. To my fellow Americans, I say watch out: Not only will we be importing toys but also the next generation of clean technology as well,” said Mr Friedman.