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creating green communities for a better tomorrow



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The first luxury, convertible
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Zayed International Prize for the Environment

Together for a green century



Chairman's Message



**Prof. Mohammed
bin Fahad**
Executive Editor

At a time of unprecedented global challenges, driven by shifts in climate and geopolitical events, the need of the hour is collaborative action to shape a more prosperous future for all of humanity. The World Governments Summit (WGS), held annually in Dubai, is a testament to this vision, a tangible manifestation of the UAE's commitment to fostering global collaboration and steering the world to a safer, sustainable future.

At this dynamic platform every year, innovative solutions are forged, partnerships are built, and the very future of governance is debated and redefined. The annual event is a testament to the foresight and leadership of HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, whose unwavering commitment to progress and his belief in the power of human ingenuity has elevated Dubai as a global hub for innovation and collaboration.

The leadership of the UAE, guided by the principles of the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, has long recognized the importance of dialogue and cooperation in addressing the complex issues facing our world. From climate change and sustainable development to technological disruption and social inequality, these challenges transcend national borders and demand a collective response.

The WGS provides precisely that. It offers a unique opportunity for governments to share best practices, learn from each other's successes and failures, and collaborate on initiatives that can have a real and lasting impact on the lives of billions.

At the Zayed International Foundation for the Environment, we are deeply invested in the outcomes of this annual summit. Our mission is to promote sustainable development and environmental stewardship, and we believe such global events are critical to driving positive change. Let us work together, guided by collaboration, innovation, and a shared commitment to humanity, to create a brighter future for all.

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World Governments Summit 2025: Dubai accelerates cooperation to tackle global challenges

More than 30 heads of state and government, 400 ministers, and thousands of industry leaders, experts, and policymakers joined discussions on the future of governance, global challenges, and innovative solutions

The World Governments Summit 2025 (WGS) concluded its three-day run in Dubai on February 13 under the theme "Shaping Future Governments," drawing broad regional and international participation.

This year's Summit explored major global transformations, focusing on the resulting opportunities and challenges across various sectors and key issues. Through inclusive dialogues, the Summit sought to foster the development of shared strategies and visions for enhanced government performance and stronger international cooperation, ultimately accelerating development and prosperity worldwide.

Under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, the World Governments Summit 2025 emphasised the valuable and pivotal role of the UAE in anticipating the future to address global challenges and achieve sustainable development. The summit also reinforced the necessity of enhancing international cooperation to exchange innovative ideas and visions regarding the future of governance and improving the quality of life.

The 2025 summit witnessed the participation of world leaders, including the presidents of Indonesia, Poland, Sri Lanka, and Colombia, alongside the prime ministers of Kuwait, Armenia, Pakistan, Kenya, Libya, Georgia, and Bangladesh. The event also welcomed more than 400 ministers and 80 plus international, regional

and intergovernmental organisations to discuss the future of governance, technology, sustainability, other global challenges and their innovative solutions.

During the summit, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum attended a keynote session titled 'A Conversation with the Managing Director of IMF', hosted by Kristalina Georgieva, IMF Managing Director that revolved

The three-day summit in Dubai concluded with a focus on global transformations, opportunities, and challenges across key sectors



bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence; and H.H. Sheikh Maktoum bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, First Deputy Ruler of Dubai, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance.

Kristalina Georgieva acknowledged the uncertainty surrounding current trade policies and their potential economic implications, particularly in light of recent tariff measures, affirming that many policy elements are yet to unfold, including tax, public spending, reforms, immigration, deregulation, AI, and crypto, while the reaction of consumers, businesses, and countries remains to be seen.

around the expected growth of the global economy, the transformative impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on employment opportunities, and the importance of international cooperation in an increasingly complex economic landscape.

The session convened in the presence of His Highness Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Vice President and Deputy Prime Minister of the UAE, and Chairman of the Presidential Court; H.H. Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi; H.H. Sheikh Hamdan

Despite these uncertainties, the IMF projects global growth at 3.3% for the year, reflecting remarkable resilience despite recent shocks. However, Georgieva pointed to underlying concerns such as diverging economic fortunes between regions and the integration of transformational technologies into national policies. As the global economy undergoes significant transformations, she outlined three essential principles for economic success: deregulate, digitalise, and diversify, highlighting the importance of fostering a clear space for private initiatives, embracing technological transformations and digitalising economies, while ensuring reliance on various sectors to drive the future.



The concluding day of the summit featured keynote speeches by heads of state and government, including a speech by Prabowo Subianto, President of the Republic of Indonesia; a speech by José Ramos-Horta, President of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste; a dialogue with Muhammad Yunus, Chief Adviser of the interim government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh; a keynote speech by Pedro Alliana Rodríguez, Vice President of Paraguay; and a keynote speech by Louise Araneta-Marcos, First Lady of the Philippines.

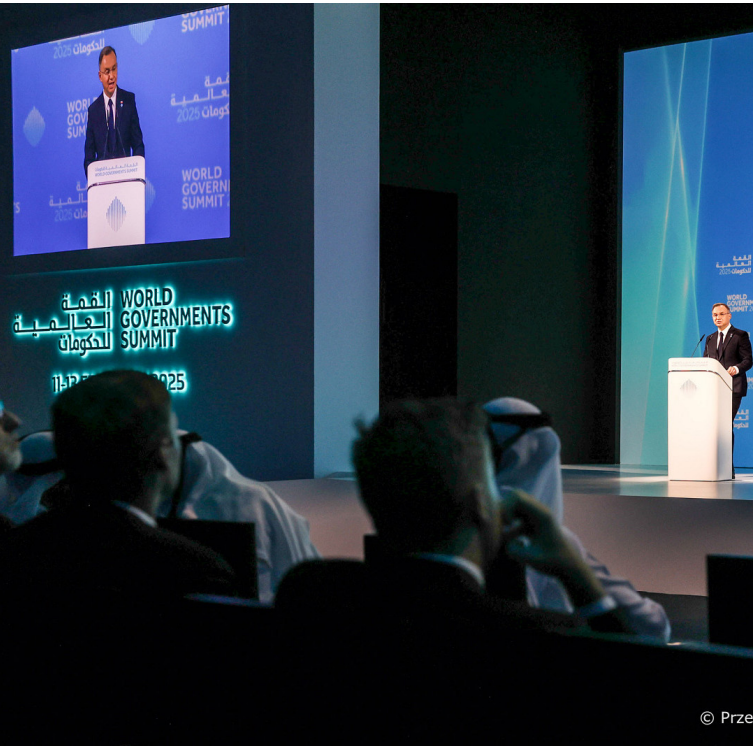
In a highly anticipated keynote address, tech visionary Elon Musk shared bold predictions on AI, space exploration, and the future of governance, and provided fresh insights into the role of disruptive innovation in shaping global policy. Omar Sultan AlOlama, UAE Minister of State for Artificial Intelligence, Digital Economy,

and Remote Work Applications, and Vice Chair of World Governments Summit was in conversation with Musk, who appeared virtually at WGS, in a plenary session titled 'Boring Cities, AI, and DOGE.'

The concluding day hosted sessions spotlighting pressing global issues with the dynamic agenda featuring world leaders, policymakers, and industry pioneers tackling critical global challenges.

At the fifth Global Health Forum, held in collaboration with the World Health Organisation, ministers from around the world discussed strategies for strengthening healthcare systems while experts explored the impact of AI and emerging technologies on medical innovation. The forum highlighted global health priorities and drove innovation to shape the future of healthcare

World leaders, ministers, and experts fostered shared strategies for enhanced government performance and stronger international cooperation



and community well-being.

The Global Government Regulatory Forum brought together justice ministers and other experts to debate the future of legislation in an era of rapid technological change. At the Climate Change Forum, scientists, policymakers, innovators and specialists gathered to address the urgent challenges posed by climate change.

The summit explored major global transformations and their associated opportunities and challenges across various sectors. Through comprehensive dialogues, it supported the development of joint strategies and visions to enhance government work and strengthen international cooperation, ultimately

aiming to accelerate development and prosperity worldwide.

Sessions during the three-day event explore strategies to enhance government transparency and efficiency, foster sustainable economic growth, develop urban resilience in the face of climate change, and ensure healthcare systems are equipped for evolving global challenges. Discussions also tackled the impact of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, quantum computing, and biotechnology, assessing how governments can harness these advancements while mitigating potential risks.

Several ministerial meetings, including 32 high-level ministerial gatherings were hosted at the event, bringing together government leaders from various sectors to exchange expertise and best practices. The Summit also published 30 strategic reports in partnership with its global knowledge partners.

Assessing a changing world

A key highlight at WGS 2025 was the TIME 100 AI gathering, which convened 100 of the world's most influential AI experts to discuss the transformative role of artificial intelligence in shaping the future. The private sector had a prominent presence, with global industry leaders from sectors such as technology, finance, energy, and media taking part in the discussions.

The summit celebrated excellence in governance through five awards. These include the Best Minister in the World Award, the Innovative Government Solutions Award, the Global Award for Best Government Applications, the Global Government Excellence Award, and the Best Teacher in the World Award.

Mohammed bin Rashid visits exhibition of top government innovation projects at World Governments Summit



WGS 2025

The Edge of Government exhibit included 10 distinguished innovations selected from more than 150 innovative projects around the world

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister, and Ruler of Dubai, accompanied by H.H. Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, viewed the top global government innovations during his visit to the 'Edge of Government' exhibit, held as part of the World Governments Summit 2025.

He was accompanied by H.H. Sheikh Ahmed bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Second Deputy Ruler of Dubai and Chairman of the Dubai Media Council; H.H. Sheikh Mansour bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Chairman of the Dubai Sports Council; Mohammad Al Gergawi, Minister of Cabinet Affairs and Chairman of the World Governments Summit; Omar Sultan Al Olama, Minister of State for Artificial Intelligence, Digital Economy, and Remote Work Applications; and Huda Al Hashimi, Deputy Minister of Cabinet Affairs for Strategic Affairs.

H.H. Sheikh Mohammed stressed that government innovation is the foundation for communities' quality of life and the main driver for creating a better future for the generations to come. He added that the UAE has since inception, laid the foundations of an outstanding experience based on innovation and future foresight. The UAE has since achieved unprecedented global achievements in various fields.

H.H. Sheikh Mohammed emphasised the responsibility of governments to champion and implement innovation across all sectors, integrating it into their operational approach and fostering a culture of innovation within society. This commitment, he noted, is crucial to supporting initiatives that enhance quality of life and secure a brighter future for generations to come.

H.H. Sheikh Mohammed praised the innovative projects and experiences showcased at the Edge of Government exhibit, stressing that celebrating global innovation experiences

through the World Governments Summit platform reflects the UAE's vision and its keenness to stimulate human and institutional creativity, and encourage governments, institutions and individuals to develop ideas and innovate solutions that advance their communities and countries.

Organised by the Mohammed bin Rashid Centre for Government Innovation and supported by the exhibit's exclusive partner First Abu Dhabi Bank (FAB), the Edge of Government exhibit, 'Butterfly Effect', offers an interactive, visual exploration of how present decisions shape the future of societies. The showcased innovations encourage visitors to think unconventionally and develop creative solutions to the world's most pressing challenges. Through its interactive experiences, the exhibition aims to disseminate knowledge and inspire innovative thinking.

The Edge of Government exhibit included 10 distinguished innovations selected from more than 150 innovative projects around the world, to reach the list of the best projects nominated for the Edge of Government Award, which honours the best innovation of creative governments, according to specific evaluation criteria including novelty, replicability, and impact.

The innovative projects represent 19 countries: USA, Kenya, Zambia, Uganda, Palau,



Italy, Australia, UK, India, China, Brazil, Indonesia, Mexico, Peru, Vietnam, the Republic of Korea, Cameroon, the Netherlands, and Poland.

The World Government Summit showcased the US-developed 'Digital Food Twin Model,' a groundbreaking approach to food security that uses satellite imagery and other data to simulate US food movement and pinpoint vulnerabilities to disruptions like extreme weather.

Launched in collaboration with NASA, the Helmets Labeling Crops initiative has revolutionised agricultural monitoring in several countries, including the USA, Kenya, Zambia, and Uganda. By equipping individuals with helmet-mounted GoPro cameras, the project cost-effectively gathers data to provide farmers with crucial information like optimal planting times and disease outbreak predictions, particularly in remote areas.

The Edge of Government exhibit presented an experience from Palau, a small island in the Pacific Ocean whose main source of income is tourism, which poses challenges to its ecosystem. The 'Palau Pledge,' the world's first immigration visa dedicated to environmental conservation,

obliges each visitor to sign a pledge, stamped in their passport, committing to follow a responsible tourism policy that protects the environment and respects local culture.

Italy's Edge of Government exhibit showcases 'Volontari SOS,' an innovative crisis response platform born from an unexpected source. When the Savio River flooded, the director of 'Rockin'1000,' a rock concert management platform, recognised parallels between coordinating volunteers during a crisis and managing large-scale concerts, and adapted the platform to offer a replicable, scalable, and adaptable model for other regions and countries facing future emergencies.

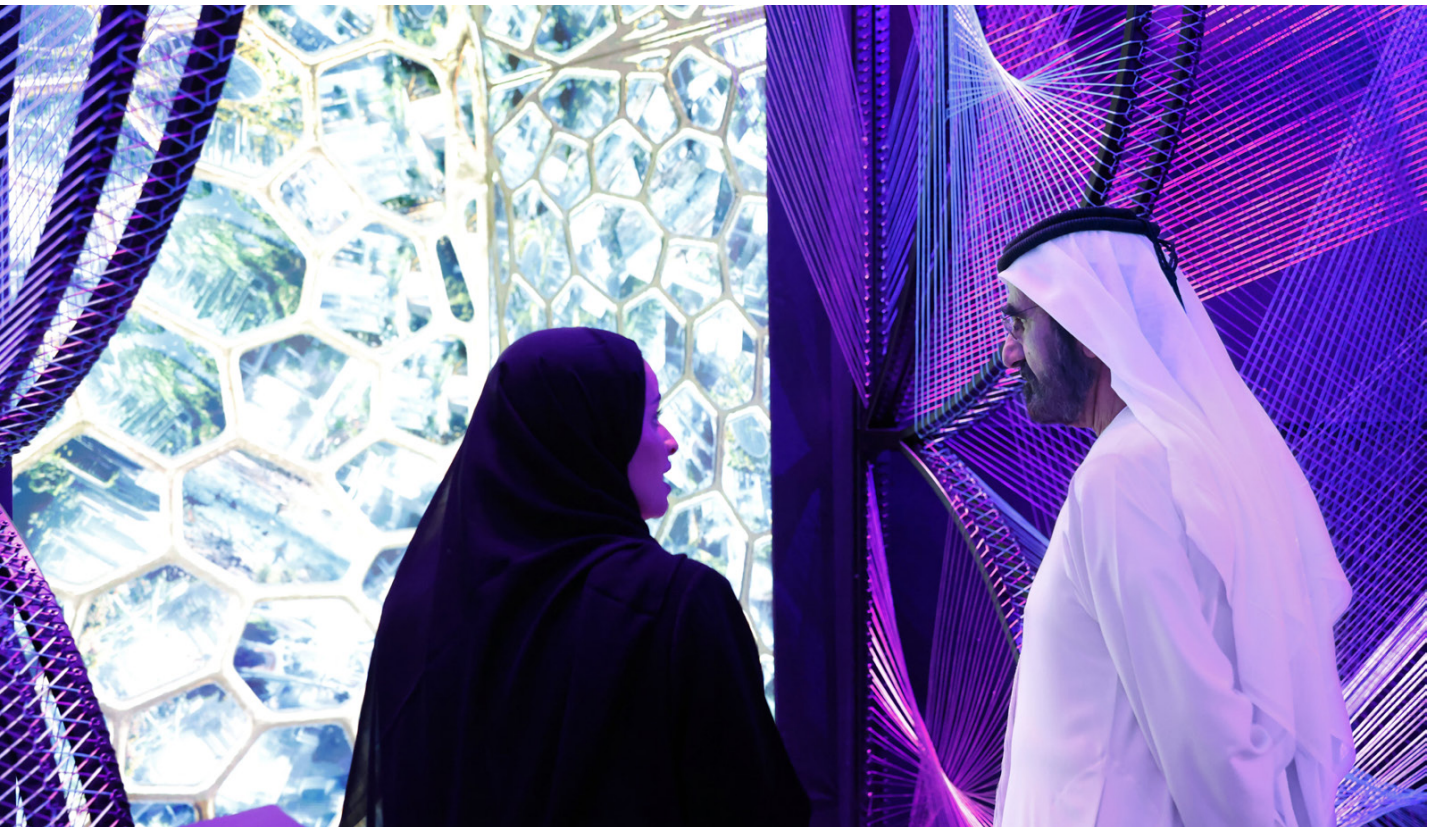
Australia's exhibit showcases 'Dragonfly Thinking,' a Canberra-based startup employing a unique approach to complex challenges. Inspired by the dragonfly's multifaceted vision, the company uses generative AI to provide policymakers with a comprehensive, 360-degree perspective. This methodology helps uncover hidden connections, simplify complex issues, and anticipate interconnected challenges. The Australian government is piloting this approach

through the National Resilience Project, where the Institute of Integrated Economic Research Australia is applying the 'dragonfly eye' concept to enhance resilience in areas like cybersecurity, climate change adaptation, supply chain risks, and economic stability.

The Fridgeconomics innovation analyses the global economy through an unlikely lens: the refrigerator. Implemented across multiple countries, including the UK, India, China, and Indonesia, the UK-based Trinetra Fund's 'rapid ethnography' analyzes refrigerator contents to uncover emerging consumer behaviors and trends. This approach delivers actionable insights in just 7-10 days, informing investment strategies.

The UK and South Korea showcase an innovative urban planning solution at the Edge of Government exhibition. Daegu, South Korea, partnered with Dark Matter Labs to create a flexible licensing system that reduces bureaucracy and enables on-demand space use. This revitalises vacant historic buildings by simplifying repurposing for pop-up shops, workshops, and events, boosting economic and social activity. The system leverages real-time IoT data, open data sharing, and decentralised governance. Following a successful Korean pilot, the UK is testing the model, with early data showing reduced costs, faster licensing, increased space utilisation, community engagement, and lower crime rates.

AUK-Cameroon initiative empowers communities





by leveraging AI-driven biotechnology. In 2016, Cameroon ratified the UN Nagoya Protocol, ensuring community participation in genetic surveying. This led to a partnership developing Africa's first benefit-sharing agreements for digital sequence information. This model allows bioindustries access to genetic data while ensuring communities benefit financially and scientifically through direct returns and per-sample fees.

The Netherlands showcases an innovative approach to social care: making the exception the norm. Addressing bureaucratic hurdles faced by vulnerable individuals, the 'Hacking Method' empowers local workers to bypass red tape and create customised support plans. A digital platform identifies exception cases, analyses obstacles, and pinpoints legal flexibilities.

In Poland, the Department of Water Protection

Research Team at Adam Mickiewicz University has discovered that oysters are able to sense contamination to the same degree and accuracy determined by legal water safety standards. This discovery has led to the development of an oyster-based bio-monitoring system for water quality, which provides continuous and immediate protection for water sources, treatment plants, and ecosystems.

The World Governments Summit 2025 convened over 30 heads of state and government, more than 80 international and regional organisations and 140 government delegations. Its agenda featured 21 global forums exploring major future trends and transformations, over 200 interactive sessions with more than 300 prominent speakers - including presidents, ministers, experts, thought leaders, and decision-makers - and over 30 ministerial meetings and roundtables attended by more than 400 ministers.



Omar Al Olama, Elon Musk launch 'Dubai Loop' to redefine transportation in Dubai

WGS 2025 V

H.E. Omar Sultan Al Olama, Minister of State for Artificial Intelligence, Digital Economy, and Remote Work Applications and Vice Chair of the World Governments Summit 2025 (WGS), and Elon Musk, CEO of Tesla, have announced the launch of the "Dubai Loop," an ambitious project aimed at implementing a fast and seamless transportation system across Dubai's most densely populated areas.

The announcement came during a video call at the WGS, where Musk presented his vision for the future of urban mobility. "Dubai Loop" is part of a larger plan to innovate the transport sector, utilising a network of advanced tunnels that will allow passengers to quickly travel across the city, avoiding traffic congestion.

Musk explained that the project would allow people to travel as if they were moving through a "wormhole" within Dubai, referring to the ability to move instantly between two points without long distances or traffic delays.

He also emphasised the advantages of tunnel systems over alternatives like flying cars, citing the practicality, safety, and efficiency of tunnels, which are protected from weather and noise, offering a smoother experience for passengers.

During the discussion with Al Olama, Musk spoke about improving government efficiency, pointing out that the biggest challenge lies in reducing bureaucracy and enhancing the technology used within government institutions.

The billionaire tech also talked about his AI chatbot 'Grok 3' which is in the final stages of development. "Grok 3 has very powerful reasoning capabilities, so in the tests that we've done thus far, Grok 3 is outperforming anything that's been released, that we're aware of, so that's a good sign," he added.

Climate Action Forum at WGS 2025 highlights the ocean's role in climate adaptation and mitigation

The forum underscored the critical role of oceans in climate and environmental sustainability and their role in forging adaptation and mitigation solutions

The Climate Action Forum, organised by the UAE's Ministry of Climate Change and Environment on day 3 of the World Governments Summit 2025, discussed ocean ecosystems and their role in climate adaptation and mitigation with a series of high-profile engagements and insightful panel discussions with global ocean experts, ministers, and environmentalists.

Under the theme "Oceans Sustainability", the forum underscored the critical role of oceans in climate and environmental sustainability and their role in forging adaptation and mitigation



solutions for a cleaner and greener future.

Dr. Amna bint Abdullah Al Dahak, Minister of Climate Change and Environment, opened the forum with a powerful speech underscoring the critical need for collaborative climate action to protect our oceans, highlighting that, "The UAE recognises that it is in our common interests to act, but more importantly, we believe that we have a common duty to act."

Al Dahak went on to highlight the UAE's commitment to nature-driven solutions, including expanding mangrove cover and designating

marine protected areas, as key strategies for mitigating climate change and preserving vital ecosystems, noting that such solutions hold the key to lowering emissions and providing a defense against the impacts of climate change.

Describing our oceans as humanity's "vital allies", the Minister stressed the interconnectedness of ocean health and global climate stability, urging international cooperation to address the

Panel discussions explored nature-based innovations, waste reduction, AI in ocean research, and actionable solutions for ocean sustainability



escalating threats of rising sea levels, ocean acidification, and pollution.

Al Dahak's address was followed by an insightful keynote speech by Hussain Mohamed Latheef, Vice President of the Maldives, who shared his invaluable perspective on the crucial intersection of ocean sustainability and climate resilience. He advocated for stronger international cooperation on climate action, particularly for small island states facing the most immediate threats from

rising sea levels and changing ocean conditions.

The forum was attended by high-ranking officials and experts from the UAE as well as from countries around the world. Among the most notable personalities present at the forum was HE. Dr. Anxious Jongwe Masuka, Minister of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development in Zimbabwe who won the Best Minister Award at World Governments Summit.

The forum hosted four panel discussions focusing on different aspects of the ocean ecosystem and how it impacted the climate discourse. The first panel discussion of the day entitled 'Innovating for Blue Tomorrow', focused on the UN Ocean Conference 2025 and the role of nature-based innovations, interventions and financing mechanisms that will drive a just, equitable transition in coastal countries. It proposed to lay the foundations of advancing joint multilateral opportunities, collaborative cross-sectoral mechanisms, and science-based decision making across dialogues.

This was followed by a very insightful discussion on 'Zero Waste Ocean'. The session brought attention to global challenges and opportunities to reduce waste generated in the oceans, highlighting global efforts to promote integrated waste management approaches and work towards sustainable development goals.

The speakers explored integrated waste management and sustainable ocean management

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solutions as well as satellite technology for ocean conservation and sustainable use. They also proposed innovative solutions to reduce the amount of waste that ends up in our oceans and how to promote global access to ocean cleanup technologies.

The third session of the day was on 'Deep Learning for Deep Seas: AI Innovations in Ocean Research' to explore the latest advancements in AI enabled technologies and methodologies for studying the ocean. It was interesting to see how new underwater vehicles such as autonomous underwater vehicles were revolutionizing ocean conservation. The session shed light on advanced sensors for monitoring ocean conditions, genetic analysis techniques for marine organisms, and sophisticated data analysis tools that help scientists gain deeper insights into complex ocean ecosystems and phenomena like the impacts of climate change. It explored how AI contributes to sustainable fisheries management and facilitates the creation of detailed models of marine ecosystems.

The fourth and the final session of the day tackled

'Ocean Sustainability and Climate Change' highlighting the global challenges and opportunities to mitigate the impacts of climate change and the major factors that may threaten the future of oceans and marine life.

The speakers shared their thoughts on how the MENA region could enhance sustainable oceans to fight climate change. They also proposed actionable solutions to the urgent challenges facing the oceans, combining sustainable practices, innovative financing, and effective governance.





Khor Kalba Mangrove Centre joins Wetlands Link International

CONSERVATION

As part of its ongoing efforts to preserve natural ecosystems, the Environment and Protected Areas Authority (EPAA) in Sharjah has announced the official inclusion of Khor Kalba Mangrove Centre in the Wetlands Link International (WLI) network, a specialised global network supporting environmental education centres focused on wetland conservation.

The Khor Kalba Mangrove Centre was granted this prestigious membership in recognition of its vital environmental role and continuous commitment to raising awareness about the importance of wetlands. Through diverse initiatives, educational programmes, and outreach activities, the centre has played a key role in promoting wetland conservation.

Additionally, the centre has actively supported the identity and objectives of the WLI network in its promotional and educational materials while fostering collaboration with other member centres worldwide.

The EPAA had previously succeeded in securing WLI membership for the Wasit Wetland Centre in February 2024.

Through this membership, the center will continue offering advanced educational and awareness programs, focusing on the role of wetlands in mitigating climate change and supporting biodiversity.

The WLI network is a global association of over 350 wetland education centers across six continents. Recognized by the Ramsar Convention, it operates under a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), serving as a key mechanism for supporting wetland education centers and Ramsar contracting parties. The network provides training, educational resources, and knowledge exchange platforms, facilitating the global dissemination of conservation practices through Communication, Education, Participation, and Awareness (CEPA) strategies for wetlands.

UAE signs 3 agreements to drive sustainable development in Asia, Africa

The UAE is supporting the revitalization of the Pasig River in the Philippines through a new environmental agreement

The UAE has signed three cooperation agreements aimed at driving sustainable development in Asia and Africa, with a special focus on environmental, social and economic areas in line with the UAE's humanitarian mission to contribute to the development of societies, promotion of happiness and formulating solutions to current and emerging challenges.

Two of the agreements were signed in the presence of Louise Araneta, First Lady of the Philippines, and Dr. Amna bint Abdullah Al Dahak, Minister of Climate Change and Environment.

The first agreement, signed with the Republic of the Philippines, focused on revitalising the "Pasig River," a significant waterway in Manila. The agreement was signed by Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga, the Philippines's Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, and Abdullah Al Qubaisi, Director-General of the



Clean Rivers Foundation. Al Dahak welcomed the agreement, highlighting the growing UAE-Philippines partnership, particularly in environmental protection and climate action. She noted the UAE leadership's commitment to collaborate on preserving river ecosystems, preventing water pollution, and mitigating its community impacts.

The second agreement outlined a strategic partnership between the Clean Rivers Foundation and the "Borealis and Systemiq" initiative. This partnership focuses on developing waste management infrastructure, recycling plastics, managing organic materials, capacity building, and reducing waste leakage into river systems and marine environments in Indonesia.

The agreement was signed by Deborah Bacchus, CEO of the Clean Rivers Foundation, and Benjamin Dixon, Partner at the "Systemiq and Borealis" initiative.

Al Qubaisi commented, "Guided by the UAE's water agenda and global environmental goals, Clean Rivers is honoured to partner with the Indonesian government on a transformative waste management project in Banyuwangi. Recognising water as a precious resource, Clean Rivers is committed to funding initiatives that promote circularity and sustainable innovation, enabling material recycling and reuse."

He expressed hope that this first regency-wide circular waste management system in Indonesia will inspire other regions and improve the lives of thousands of families reliant on rivers.

The third agreement between the Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan Foundation for Humanitarian Works, an affiliate of Erth Zayed Philanthropies, and the Tony Elumelu Foundation seeks to empower 1,000 entrepreneurs across the African continent through cooperation, financial support, and continuous training.

The partnership between the Clean Rivers Foundation and the "Borealis and Systemiq" initiative will develop waste management infrastructure and reduce waste leakage into Indonesian river systems



The goal is to promote entrepreneurship as a key driver of economic growth in Africa. The agreement was signed in the presence of Alia bint Abdulla Al Mazrouei, Minister of State for Entrepreneurship, by Mohammed Haji Al Khouri, Director-General of the Khalifa Foundation, and Tony Elumelu, Founder of the Tony Elumelu Foundation.

Al Khouri emphasised the UAE's foundational values, and said, "The agreement aims to empower African entrepreneurs, fostering socio-economic development and innovative solutions to community challenges, ultimately contributing to a sustainable global economy."

PwC Middle East spotlights government innovation with insights on healthcare, climate, trade

PwC Middle East presented four strategic papers addressing healthcare transformation, biodiversity protection, and enhanced international trade networks at WGS 2025

PwC Middle East has unveiled four strategic papers at the World Governments Summit (WGS) 2025, alongside its second edition of the Global Ministers Survey, delivering innovative solutions to transform healthcare systems, protect global biodiversity worth USD58 trillion, and enhance international trade networks.

Building on its decade-long partnership with WGS, PwC Middle East continues to drive government innovation through knowledge sharing and the prestigious Best Minister Award, recognising excellence in public service.

Now in its 12th year, WGS stands as a key global platform for government innovation, convening global leaders, representatives of international organisations, and industry pioneers. The 2025 edition brought together these stakeholders to enhance governance, harness emerging technologies, and drive sustainable progress for



improved quality of life worldwide.

Discussing PwC Middle East's partnership with WGS, Hani Ashkar, PwC Middle East Senior Partner, said: "Our 10-year partnership with the World Governments Summit has played a key role in achieving transformative results in modernising government services and spurring innovation across diverse sectors. Through the summit, we've helped shape forward-looking policies and build global partnerships that deliver lasting positive change for governments and communities regionally and globally"

PwC's Global Chairman, Mohamed Kande, led a fireside chat titled "Three Disruptions Transforming Society and Redefining Leadership" on the opening day of the summit. The discussion explored the critical intersection of government, private sector, and citizen collaboration in the Intelligent Age. The session delved into pivotal topics including the transformation of traditional industries, and the evolving relationship between digital advancement and physical world challenges, providing insights on building more inclusive and sustainable economies.

Unveiling four papers during the summit, starting with "Transitioning to Value-Based Care," which addresses the critical challenge of delivering efficient healthcare among growing populations and rising costs. The paper presents value-based care models as a solution for sustainable healthcare delivery, particularly in GCC countries.

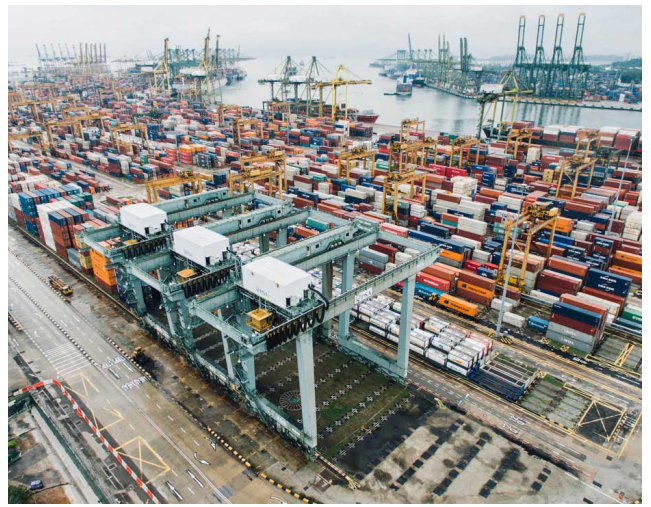
Under the Future of Climate Change & Environment theme, PwC Middle East presented two papers. "Can Financial Innovation Save The Planet's Biodiversity?" highlights how USD58 trillion of global GDP depends on nature and proposes solutions to address the USD700 billion annual biodiversity financing gap. "Building Resilience with Innovation to Tackle the Climate Emergency" explores how governments can leverage digital technologies and collaborative

The papers propose value-based care models, financial innovation for biodiversity, digital technologies for climate resilience, and strategies to secure the Middle East's trade advantage

approaches to address climate challenges.

The fourth paper, "How to Secure the Middle East's Global Trade and Logistics Advantage," examines the region's strategic position as a global trading hub, through which 12 per cent of global trade volumes pass via the Red Sea. It outlines recommendations for strengthening regional logistics capabilities amid recent global challenges.

Commenting on PwC's participation in the summit, Rami Nazer, EMEA Government & Public Sector Leader at PwC, stated: "We continue to build on trust as part of our mission, and this year, our thought leadership spans topics from value-based healthcare and biodiversity financing to climate resilience and regional trade advantages."





UICCA and UAE Ministry of Economy launch Circular Economy Cycle

This collaboration will foster a supportive ecosystem for climate-focused startups, driving sustainable economic growth in the UAE

UAE Independent Climate Change Accelerators (UICCA) and the UAE Ministry of Economy (MOEC) have signed an agreement to collaborate on advancing the circular economy.

The agreement establishes a strategic framework for supporting innovation and entrepreneurship through the Circular Economy Cycle of the UICCA Launchpad Programme and will drive sustainable economic growth by fostering a supportive ecosystem for climate-focused startups. Through this collaboration, the MOEC will facilitate investor engagement and enhance regulatory alignment to strengthen market access for green technologies.

Abdulla Al Saleh, Under-Secretary of the Foreign Trade and Industry Sector at the Ministry of Economy, and Zainab Aziz, General Counsel at UICCA signed the agreement in the presence of Sheikha Shamma bint Sultan bin Khalifa Al Nahyan, President and CEO of UICCA, and Abdullah bin Touq Al Marri, Minister of Economy,

and Chairman of the Circular Economy Council.

Outlining the importance of collaboration in advancing sustainability, Sheikha Shamma bint Sultan bin Khalifa Al Nahyan said, "Scaling circular economy solutions is a fundamental driver of the UAE's sustainable economic vision. By adopting circular economy principles, such as reducing waste, reusing materials, and promoting innovative design, the UAE is positioning itself as a global leader in sustainable development while fostering new economic opportunities and

The partnership accelerates efforts to implement the UAE Circular Economy Policy 2031, promoting recycling, resource efficiency, and new growth opportunities



enhancing long-term competitiveness.

"The launch of the Circular Economy Cycle within the UICCA Launchpad Programme represents a pivotal step in this journey, and empowers creative thinkers to address pressing environmental challenges, such as resource depletion and climate change, while delivering economic benefits through sustainable business models. By offering resources, mentorship, and collaboration opportunities, the programme accelerates the growth of innovations that align

with the UAE's ambitious sustainability goals.

"Our partnership with the Ministry of Economy reflects a shared vision to drive forward the circular economy agenda, creating a future where economic prosperity and environmental stewardship go hand in hand."

Abdulla bin Touq Al Marri said that the UAE's great strides in transitioning to a circular economy model is a key pillar of the sustainability and growth of its national economy. He elaborated that the collaboration would accelerate efforts



to implement the UAE Circular Economy Policy 2031, which consists of 22 policies for four key sectors: Manufacturing, Food, Infrastructure and Transportation. These will promote the adoption of the best technologies in recycling, enhance the efficiency of resource use and reduce waste, and create new growth opportunities based on innovation, knowledge and investment in new economic sectors.

Following this strategic partnership, UICCA announced that the Circular Economy Cycle of the Launchpad Programme will officially commence in May 2025. As a zero-equity, market-access-oriented programme, the accelerator is designed to support early-stage ventures developing solutions that eliminate or repurpose waste across key industries. Selected participants will gain access to tailored mentorship, investor engagement opportunities,

and a network of key industry stakeholders committed to advancing sustainability-focused innovation.





Aviation experts push for sustainable aviation fuel adoption at ICAO symposium

Aviation experts discussed efforts aimed at accelerating the adoption of clean energy in the aviation sector, with a strong emphasis on promoting sustainable aviation fuel (SAF). Their remarks were made during the 4th ICAO Global Implementation Support Symposium 2025 (GISS 2025) and the inaugural Global Sustainable Aviation Marketplace (GSAM 2025).

Fabrice Espinosa, Founder and CEO of the Asia Sustainable Aviation Fuel Association (ASAFA), emphasised the importance of regional collaboration in Asia to support the implementation of SAF in aviation. He outlined the association's focus on five key pillars: promoting a regional policy approach to ensure fair competition within the SAF industry, enhancing capacity building to meet market demands and achieve technological independence, advancing new technologies such as alcohol-to-jet and power-to-liquid innovations, increasing knowledge sharing within the region, and securing financing to support these initiatives.

He emphasised that these pillars are essential for achieving long-term sustainability and fostering the industry's growth in Asia.

Jane Hupe, Director in charge of the environment programme at the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), discussed the need for a comprehensive policy framework to accelerate the clean energy transition in aviation. She highlighted the importance of balancing the global framework adopted at the CAAF3 conference in the UAE in 2023, ensuring that all key elements are in place for a smooth transition. Hupe also stressed the critical need for capacity building, ensuring that all countries can engage in the clean energy transition.

Addressing the topic of financing, Hupe noted that adequate investment is crucial to support the transition and ensure that the aviation sector can continue to grow without unnecessary restrictions.

Expo City Dubai master plan pre-certified in globally recognised social, environmental sustainability systems



28

SUSTAINABILITY

The Expo City Dubai master plan has attained two pre-certifications of globally recognised social and environmental sustainability systems - a testament to its commitment to developing an innovation-driven, people-centric community, maximising social, environmental, and economic impact, and advancing international best practice in the region.

Expo City Dubai is now pre-certified Platinum - the highest possible rating - in LEED Cities and Communities standard, which focuses on inclusivity, economic development and environmental preservation. LEED is the most widely used global 'green' rating system for real

estate and the urban environment.

The city also achieved pre-certification for WELL Community - a standard that emphasises health and well-being and the leading international standard for a healthy built environment - and is targeting WELL Gold for its anticipated certification.

Expo City Dubai is the only urban centre in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region to achieve this combination of pre-certifications and is the first in the region to achieve WELL Community pre-certification. The achievements exemplify the city's commitment to creating a healthier, more sustainable and equitable

community for tenants, visitors and future residents and enhance its appeal to investors and developers.

The pre-certifications in LEED and WELL community standards underscore the opportunity offered by Expo City's forward-thinking, people- and environment-focused master plan that takes advantage of its prime location and world-class connectivity. The master plan features five districts designed as an efficient grid system to ensure navigation, circulation and accessibility, while a network of green and blue spaces – from parks and fields, to small sikkas and urban water features – will permeate throughout.

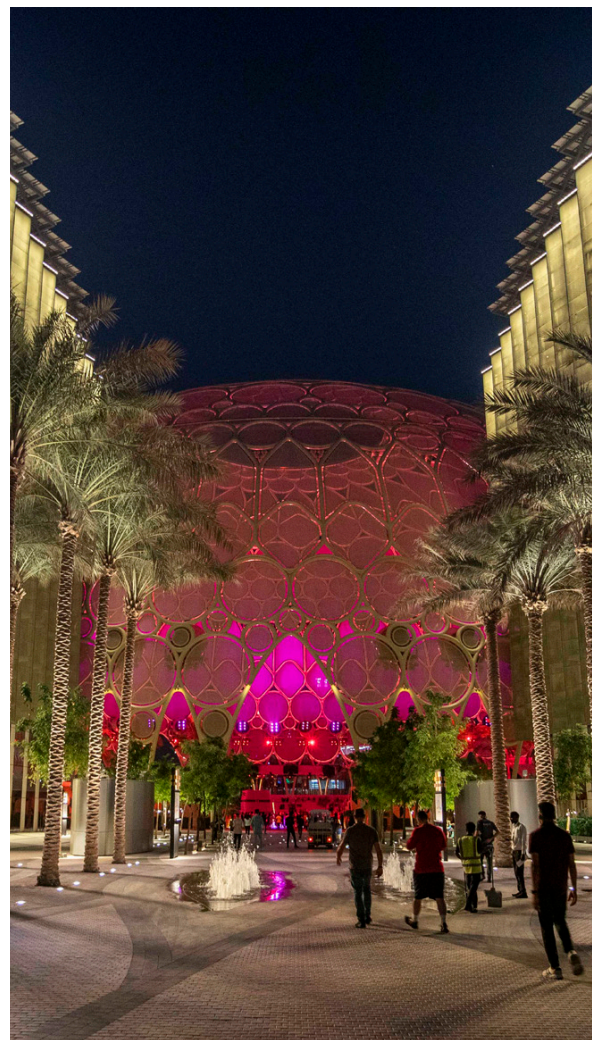
It contains specific targets across areas including: protecting and increasing biodiversity; reducing energy consumption and increasing the use of clean energy; reducing water consumption and increasing the use of alternative water sources; increasing the use of sustainable, lower carbon public transport options and creating spaces that encourage walking, cycling and micromobility; and facilitating economic opportunity and creating a quality work environment.

LEED Cities and Communities, managed by the US Green Building Council, addresses various factors that contribute to quality of life, including natural systems, energy, water, waste and transportation, as well as optimising the operational aspects of a city through its design. Pre-certification is granted based on Expo City's master plan information and associated data. Expo City Dubai, including Dubai Exhibition Centre and Expo Village, is already home to 123 LEED-certified buildings, and the master plan

LEED is the most widely used global 'green' rating system for real estate and the urban environment

further sets the target of LEED Gold as a minimum requirement for all buildings.

Meanwhile, the WELL Community standard, created by the International WELL Building Institute (IWBI) gives pre-certification to real estate projects that demonstrate a commitment to health and wellbeing across 10 areas: air, water, nourishment, light, movement, thermal comfort, sound, materials, mind and community.





Zayed International Airport secures 3 Pearl Estidama rating in construction

UAE NEWS

Zayed International Airport (AUH) has become one of the largest buildings in the UAE to be awarded the prestigious 3 Pearl Estidama rating for construction, a significant achievement that highlights Abu Dhabi Airports' commitment to sustainable development.

The recognition underscores Zayed International Airport's leadership in sustainable airport infrastructure and marks its successful transition from the 3 Pearl design-stage rating to construction stage certification.

The 3 Pearl Estidama rating highlights Zayed International Airport's commitment to reducing environmental impact, conserving natural resources, and fostering a healthy internal environment.

The airport's construction prioritised responsibly sourced materials, with more than 90 percent of steel and 80 percent of timber coming from certified sustainable sources. Additionally, the airport embraces circular economy principles, recycling more than 90% of steel and diverting 86% of construction waste from landfills.

Elena Sorlini, Managing Director and CEO at Abu Dhabi Airports, said, "This recognition reflects our dedication to providing world-class airport services that prioritise both efficiency and environmental responsibility."

Zayed International Airport's water-efficient fixtures exceed Estidama benchmarks by 45 percent. Policies aligned with its recently launched Sustainability Strategy target ambitious goals, including a 30 percent reduction in energy and potable water consumption, sourcing 5 percent of energy from renewable resources, diverting 40 percent of waste from landfills, and achieving a 10 percent reduction in overall waste volumes by 2030.

Additionally, the many reverse vending machines (RVMs) installed across the airport in November 2024 are incentivising passengers to recycle plastic bottles and aluminium cans. This reinforces the airport's commitment to sustainable practices that aim to minimise environmental impact and contribute to a more sustainable future for the region.



Tadweer Group launches region's first AI-Integrated Waste Management Platform

UAE NEWS

Tadweer Group, a leader in revolutionising waste and unlocking its value, has partnered with FAMS Technologies to launch the region's first AI-Integrated Waste Management Platform.

This platform represents a transformative shift in how waste is managed, bringing the power of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the Internet of Things (IoT) into every stage of the waste management process.

The platform also offers a fully integrated solution that streamlines the entire waste lifecycle—optimising operations, reducing environmental impact, and promoting greater efficiency.

The platform begins with AI-driven analytics to strategically plan waste collection, focusing on data-backed route optimization, vehicle deployment, and scheduling. This not only maximizes operational efficiency but also

reduces carbon emissions and ensures full compliance with environmental regulations. By accurately predicting waste generation patterns, resources can be aligned effectively, significantly saving costs and improving service delivery.

During waste collection, the platform provides real-time navigation support for drivers while enabling supervisors to oversee operations through advanced mobile tools. This ensures full transparency, accountability, and adaptability, allowing the system to quickly respond to any changes or disruptions.

Post-collection, the platform tracks waste as it moves through landfills and recycling centers, capturing real-time data on waste identification, landfill diversion rates, and recycling efficiency. These insights empower decision-makers to continuously refine strategies, enhance sustainability metrics, and reduce the overall environmental footprint.

BEEAH, Greenthesi to build Middle East's first PE film recycling facility in Sharjah

BEEAH, the region's sustainability and innovation pioneer, and Greenthesi, an Italian-owned global leader in industrial waste management and environmental services, have signed a landmark cooperation agreement to develop the Middle East's first polyethylene (PE) film recycling facility in Sharjah.

Under the agreement, the two organisations will establish the PE film recycling facility within BEEAH's integrated waste management complex in the Al Sajaa area of Sharjah. This facility will mark a significant step forward in sustainable waste management of PE film, a lightweight plastic commonly used in protective packaging and labels that is difficult to recycle and often ends up in natural environments. By converting PE film into a sustainable alternative to plywood, the facility will support the development of green infrastructure while preserving the environment, reducing landfill dependency, and enhancing resource efficiency.

Khaled Al Huraimel, Group CEO and Vice Chairman of BEEAH, underscored both companies' commitment to advancing circular economy practices and sustainability, stating, "Our collaboration with Greenthesi Group marks a pivotal step in tackling challenges that are yet to be solved in integrated waste management. By uniting our expertise on the PE film recycling facility in Sharjah, we will not only tackle the challenge of a hard-to-recycle waste and contribute to sustainable infrastructure, but we will also demonstrate a circularity solution that can serve as a model for tomorrow's zero-waste cities."

Simona Grossi, CEO of Greenthesi, added, "We are very proud to be able to dedicate a joint venture to the study, introduction and development of innovative technologies in the field of circular economy, making available our consolidated



The facility will convert hard-to-recycle PE film into a sustainable alternative to plywood, supporting green infrastructure development

BEEAH



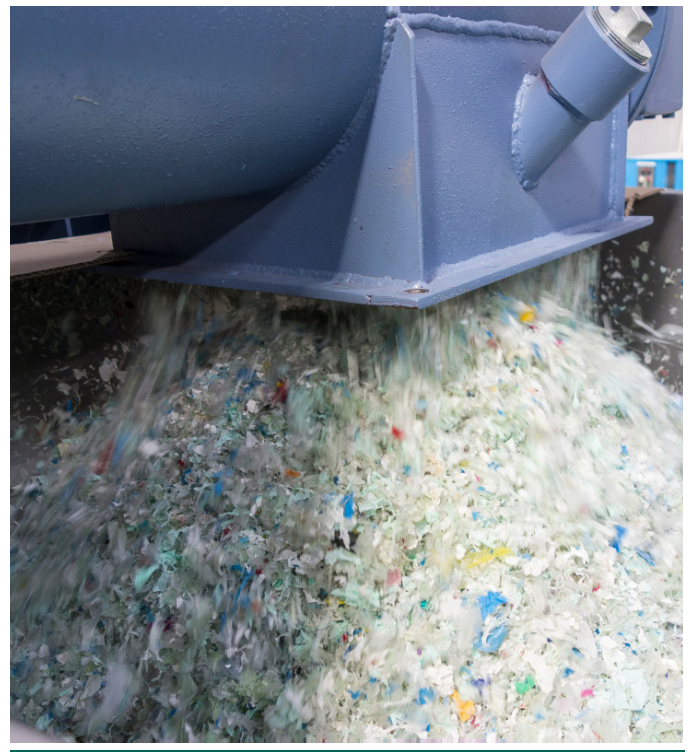
The plant will process over 7,000 tonnes of plastic waste annually, promoting a fully circular recycling system.

combined expertise through their B&A Waste Management joint venture, which has successfully conducted major industrial waste management projects across the UAE, including soil remediation. This new cooperation agreement on the PE film facility marks a significant step forward in their partnership and aligns with BEEAH's ambition to achieve zero waste cities.

experience in the context of a highly synergic collaboration with a leading operator in the Middle East in integrated waste management.”

The plant will process over 7,000 tonnes of plastic waste annually, converting hard-to-recycle PE films from municipal and commercial waste into durable, reusable boards. These boards, created through an advanced, chemical-free process, will serve as a sustainable alternative to plywood in construction projects. The recycled boards can be reused multiple times and, once their shelf life is complete, can be reprocessed into new boards, promoting a fully circular recycling system. This initiative provides a cost-effective, long-lasting solution for the industry, reinforcing BEEAH's leadership in resource recovery and innovation across the UAE and beyond.

BEEAH and Greenthesi will leverage their



Maserati GranCabrio Folgore: The first luxury, convertible electric car



Maserati GranCabrio Folgore is the first 100% electric convertible in the luxury segment market, and is the fastest

Maserati's race towards an electric future has led to the introduction of the GranCabrio Folgore, the first full-electric convertible in its segment to hit the market. The Gran Cabrio Folgore, with its top speed of 290 km/h, is also the fastest electric convertible on the road.

Following in the footsteps of the GranTurismo, the open-top variant also offers an electric motor, the Folgore version, which maintains all the brand's typical characteristics by combining luxury with performance, driving comfort with sportiness, refined power with a new electrified elegance and modern technology.

With a fabric roof that does not take up too much space when stored in the boot, GranCabrio was created to share the pleasure of open-air travel with four passengers.

The Folgore system is based on 800V technology and has been developed with cutting-edge technical solutions derived from Formula E



Iconic design

With undeniably unique and immediately recognisable lines, Maserati has created a sculpted technology: a pure shape suitable to cover best-in-class mechanics, emphasising the purity of its forms and its refined design cues.

Available in six colours, the classic proportions of the brand's cars have been maintained, with the long bonnet and the central body intersected by the four fenders; proportions even further highlighted in such a sporty model, just like the GranTurismo. The fabric roof maintains the clean line when closed and highlights the luxury of the passenger compartment when open, maintaining the cleanliness of the lines.

The tyres have been specifically tested and developed to achieve the best performance in terms of handling and comfort.

Interior

The GranCabrio trim level is bold and sophisticated; it fully embodies the spirit of Maserati by combining traditional Italian artisanship with the use of noble materials that perfectly define the elegance of the design, which can be breathed in throughout the passenger compartment.

The uniqueness of the materials, stitching and processes used in the car are an expression of engineered craftsmanship. Everything is devoted to functionality: the interior design is inspired by the concept of a pure, contemporary and emotive design, with room for new technology.

ECONYL® for Folgore

GranCabrio Folgore proposes the use of sustainable materials such as ECONYL®, a new element with a unique aesthetic; a regenerated nylon produced by recovering nylon waste – such as fishing nets from the seas and aquaculture,





fabric waste and carpets destined for landfill – and transforming it into quality virgin nylon yarns for the fashion and interior industries, an example of the material’s potentially infinite circularity.

Engineering

Built with technologies developed specifically for the project, the body makes extensive use of lightweight materials such as aluminium and magnesium, together with high-performance steel for the most critical functions. Over 65% of the car is made of aluminium. This multi-material approach required new manufacturing processes to be created, resulting in a minor increase in the weight of the GranCabrio.

The braking system is closely derived from the MC20’s: the aim is to offer the best performance and resistance during high-speed driving, combined with comfort in everyday use.

Power source

GranCabrio Folgore is the first luxury full-electric convertible on the market. In terms of components, the GranCabrio Folgore is driven by three motors, one in the front and two in the rear, for a total installed power of over 1200 hp. Specially designed for exclusive use by Maserati, they reach higher levels of power density (9.2 kW/kg) and are driven by silicon carbide (SiC) inverters derived from Formula E. This solution makes it possible to precisely control the flow of energy to the motors with the concrete advantage of reducing the power loss typical of more traditional inverters.

Each motor can be controlled independently of the others via the Vehicle Domain Control Module (VDCM). The GranCabrio Folgore can therefore be driven solely in RWD or in AWD.

The technical architecture of the GranCabrio is the result of an innovative project that makes extensive use of lightweight materials such as aluminium and magnesium, together with high-performance steel



Vehicle Domain Control Module

A veritable orchestral conductor, the Vehicle Domain Control Module (VDCM) is the car's "master controller. It steers all the fundamental dynamics systems, with driver interaction via the drive mode selector on the right side of the steering wheel.

This high-tech solution provides 360° control of the car by integrating information and operating on all the vehicle's main systems, for maximum performance and the best driving experience in all conditions.

Digital cockpit

The interior of the GranCabrio is a perfect mix of

luxury and technology and includes a dual touchscreen. 12.3" central display and 8.8" Comfort display, both ergonomically positioned to facilitate access to the controls and to avoid any hindrance to the legs.

Wireless Apple CarPlay, Android Auto and Baidu CarLife integrate your smartphone experience in seconds. Users can connect up to two phones.

The 12.2" digital dashboard is a benchmark in terms of intuitiveness, ease of configuration, and irresistible graphics. A rare feature in the segment, the heads-up display minimises driver distractions by projecting key information such as speed, maps, and directions onto the windscreen.

UAE achieves landmark scientific achievement in Antarctica

The UAE demonstrates its commitment to science-based solutions with its successful Antarctic expedition

The UAE welcomed the return of members of the first joint expedition with the Bulgarian Antarctic Research Institute, after successfully completing their inaugural scientific mission to Antarctica, carried out in collaboration with the Bulgarian Antarctic Research Institute.

This pioneering achievement reflects the UAE's steadfast commitment to advancing global scientific research, strengthening international partnerships in the fields of meteorology and climate science, and actively contributing to global efforts to address climate challenges.

The expedition saw two UAE experts, specialising in meteorology and seismic monitoring, undertake a challenging scientific journey to one of the harshest environments on Earth, where their mission included the installation of two advanced weather and seismic monitoring stations to collect vital data on atmospheric and seismic activities in Antarctica.

These stations are expected to significantly enhance the accuracy of numerical models for weather forecasts and seismic monitoring, advancing the scientific understanding of environmental conditions in this critical region.

The experts underwent intensive and lengthy pre-expedition medical examinations, including rigorous physical tests to ensure their full readiness to face the extreme conditions in Antarctica. Despite the freezing temperatures, harsh winds, and complete isolation, the team managed to conduct crucial research on climate

change, install advanced devices to monitor atmospheric phenomena, study the effects of ice melting on sea level rise, and collect atmospheric data to examine the impact of polar climate on global weather patterns.

In addition to collecting vital scientific data, the entire mission was documented using the latest virtual reality technologies, providing an interactive experience that allows viewers to

Advanced weather and seismic monitoring stations are now providing crucial data on atmospheric and seismic activities



National Center of Meteorology and President of the World Meteorological Organisation, and Emirates Polar Program Steering Committee member, praised the success of this mission, stating, "This scientific expedition to Antarctica marks a major step forward in enhancing the UAE's leadership in the global research fields of meteorology and climate science. Our collaboration with the Bulgarian Antarctic Research Institute reflects our commitment to enhancing international scientific cooperation and developing innovative solutions to address climate challenges. The success of our team in installing weather and seismic monitoring stations in such a remote and difficult environment demonstrates the expertise and competence of our national workforce. The data collected during this mission will greatly assist in improving the accuracy of weather forecasts and enhancing our capacity to confront climate change."

follow the details of the mission, including the installation of two key stations: a weather station for measuring climate data and a seismic monitoring station for tracking seismic activities. This experience highlights the significance of the discoveries made and showcases the challenges the team faced in a harsh environment and how they overcame them, further enhancing our understanding of climate change and natural phenomena in the polar region.

Dr. Abdullah Al Mandous, Director-General of the

The UAE's investment in such ambitious research expeditions affirms its role as a key player in global efforts to combat climate change, and its ongoing commitment to developing science-based solutions to ensure a sustainable future for future generations.

This scientific expedition represents a crucial step toward achieving the UAE's strategic goals of expanding international scientific collaboration and effectively contributing to global efforts to enhance climate change adaptation. By leading



such ambitious projects, and the formation of the newly launched Emirates Polar Programme, the UAE continues to strengthen its commitment to environmental sustainability and its drive to play a pivotal role in scientific research aimed at understanding and addressing climate change globally.

The UAE also continues to enhance its position as a major supporter of innovation in meteorology and climate science, contributing to the development of effective solutions for environmental challenges. These efforts also reflect close coordination between local and international institutions to achieve sustainable development goals.

Partnership in scientific research

The UAE and New Zealand have signed a Memorandum of Arrangement (MoA) marking the beginning of a landmark collaboration in Antarctic scientific research. The agreement underscores the nations' shared commitment to environmental conservation in Antarctica.

The MoA between the Emirates Polar Programme and Antarctica New Zealand aims to strengthen joint efforts in Antarctic scientific research, foster academic exchange and enhance capacity building. The memorandum focuses on collaborative projects that contribute to a deeper understanding of the Antarctic ecosystem,

Emirates Polar Programme and Antarctica New Zealand aim to strengthen joint efforts in Antarctic scientific research, foster academic exchange and enhance capacity building



climate change impacts, and the preservation of the unique environment.

The Emirates Polar Programme, established to advance the UAE's position in the field of polar science, will benefit from this partnership through enhanced research opportunities and knowledge exchange. The programme focuses on participating in international missions to Antarctica and the Arctic, supporting global climate action, and contributing to the understanding of the polar environment. Through these endeavors, the UAE demonstrates its

commitment to global scientific cooperation and environmental stewardship in polar regions.

This strategic collaboration reflects the growing global recognition of the importance of scientific collaboration and environmental stewardship in Antarctica. The UAE and New Zealand, through this partnership, are demonstrating their leadership in addressing critical environmental challenges and contributing to a more sustainable future for the planet.



Xposure's 4th Conservation Summit highlights the vital role of migration in ecosystem health

The Conservation Summit sparked meaningful conversations and inspired actionable solutions to protect the planet's most vulnerable ecosystems



The 9th annual Xposure International Photography Festival, a global celebration of the world's best visual storytellers, hosted the 4th edition of its Conservation Summit on 24th February.

Themed 'Migration and Ecosystem Impact', the summit, part of Xposure 2025, united photographers, conservationists, scientists, and advocates who turned the spotlight on the indispensable role of migration in maintaining ecological balance, biodiversity, and species survival across air, land, and sea.

Through compelling talks accompanied by powerful imagery, the festival

examined the resilience of species whose survival depends on migration and the challenges they face due to climate change, habitat destruction, and human activities.

Dr. Amna bint Abdullah Al Dahak Al Shamsi, Minister of Climate Change and Environment, praised the festival's significant role in making photography and the arts one of the most important tools for finding solutions to various challenges, including those related to the environment and nature, which serve as a source of inspiration for artists and photographers worldwide.

The Minister noted, "The hosting of a conservation summit as part of Xposure is a remarkable addition to the UAE's efforts in

raising awareness about living organisms, particularly those at risk of extinction, to support their conservation and highlight the role of migration in sustaining ecosystems. At the heart of the summit are three insightful talks and presentations that explore migration across different ecosystems.

In "**The Global Life of Shorebirds**", internationally acclaimed photographer, cinematographer, and conservationist **Gerrit Vyn** offered a captivating look into the extraordinary migrations of shorebirds—some of which complete the longest non-stop flights known in the avian world. Each fall, these remarkable birds depart their Arctic breeding grounds—



where they perform elaborate courtship displays and raise the next generation—to embark on migrations spanning thousands of miles to wintering areas as far as Tierra del Fuego and New Zealand. Along the way, they complete the longest non-stop flights known in the avian world.

In his presentation, Gerrit explored their lives, ecology, and the critical importance of wetland stopover habitats where these birds rest and refuel during their arduous journeys. He highlighted these imperiled species' conservation challenges and shared insights into their breathtaking resilience.



Environmental storyteller and conservationist **Jaime Rojo** presented “**Saving the Monarchs**”, an in-depth look at the alarming decline of monarch butterflies, whose numbers have dropped by 90 percent in the past 30 years. In his talk, the renowned Spanish photographer examined the impact of deforestation, industrial agriculture, and climate change on these pollinators, while highlighting

conservation efforts spanning North America, from citizen scientists in Ontario to Indigenous groups in Michoacán.

His latest project celebrates the stunning congregations of monarch butterflies in Mexico, a visually enchanting phenomenon that has inspired him for years. Through his lens, Rojo invites viewers to appreciate the intricate relationship between nature and human responsibility, making his work both visually arresting and profoundly impactful.

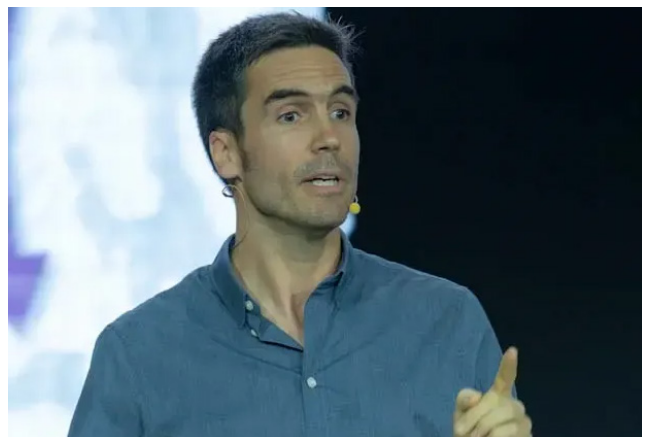


© Gerrit Vyn



In “**The Bigger Picture: Conservation Implications of Ocean Migrations**”, marine conservationist and environmental photojournalist **Ralph Pace** explored how ocean migrations sustain marine ecosystems and play a crucial role in climate mitigation. Ocean migrations not only prove to be some of the most impressive and longest on the planet, but they may be the most important. In a time when the world is heating and environments are degrading, marine species migrations may be the most vital ally in our fight to ameliorate the effects of climate change, from shoring up our coastlines to fertilizing our oceans.

Xposure 2025 offered an unparalleled opportunity to engage with global changemakers working on the frontlines of environmental preservation. The Conservation



Summit serves as a vital platform for sparking meaningful conversations and inspiring actionable solutions to protect the planet’s most vulnerable ecosystems.



UAE partnership graduates first cohort of sustainability leaders, bolsters climate action expertise

UAE NEWS

Dubai hosted the graduation ceremony for the first cohort of the Executive Diploma in Sustainability Programme on February 25. This flagship programme is the first of several specialised programmes planned under a collaborative partnership between the UAE Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, the DIFC Academy, the American University in Cairo, and the University Leadership Council.

The graduation ceremony, attended by Mohammad Al Gergawi, Minister of Cabinet Affairs, celebrated a diverse cohort of participants, including government employees, private sector managers, entrepreneurs, and recent graduates, all working in fields crucial to the success of the UAE's climate priorities.

The Executive Diploma in Sustainability programme, offered by the American University in Cairo (AUC), covers four main models encompassing various topics, including sustainability and water, the food and energy nexus from a global perspective, energy resource management and the green economy, green entrepreneurship, and the circular economy.

The programme also addressed wastewater treatment and desalination, the use of modern technologies in agriculture and aquaculture, and included several interactive field visits providing valuable real-world experience.

Upon receiving accreditation for its Executive Diploma in Sustainability programme in the UAE, the American University in Cairo aligned the curriculum with the nation's strategic objectives and its need for enhanced human capacity to effectively address climate change challenges.

The programme equips participants with a holistic understanding of effective climate action strategies through the study of current environmental challenges, sustainable development principles, the evolving sustainable development goals landscape, environmental awareness, renewable energy, and climate change mitigation. This comprehensive knowledge empowers participants to promote sustainable resource management and create lasting positive change across diverse industries and communities.



New hope for Arabian Leopard as conservation efforts intensify

CONSERVATION

International Arabian Leopard Day (February 10th) shone a spotlight on the critically endangered Arabian Leopard (*Panthera Pardus Nimr*), a flagship species of the Arabian Peninsula's unique biodiversity. Threatened by habitat loss, poaching, and prey depletion, wild populations are now limited to Oman and Yemen.

Despite its "Critically Depleted" status, a recent IUCN assessment highlights the Arabian Leopard's high potential for recovery with dedicated conservation efforts. This has spurred a global response, including the UN's designation of February 10th as a day of awareness.

In Sharjah, the Environment and Protected Areas Authority (EPAA) announced a significant milestone: the birth of a new Arabian Leopard at its Breeding Centre for Endangered Arabian Wildlife. This specialized center focuses on breeding, reintroduction, and habitat restoration, providing crucial support for the species' survival.

"The center's efforts are crucial in supporting the

conservation of the Arabian leopard by providing an ideal environment for its survival, offering veterinary care, and expanding knowledge on its biology," said Hana Saif Al Suwaidi, Chairperson of the EPAA.

Building on these efforts, the EPAA, in partnership with the IUCN SSC Cat Specialist Group, hosted a major conservation conference in October 2024. Experts from across the region and international organizations refined the Arabian Leopard Conservation Strategy, extending to 2030. This strategy emphasizes an integrated approach combining in-situ and ex-situ conservation, including a robust breeding program and habitat preparation.

A key outcome of the conference was the establishment of the Arabian Leopard Working Group, a permanent body to oversee the implementation of the conservation strategy, coordinate research, and maintain momentum for the species' recovery.



Goyang-si, South Korea: Asia's Green Gem

Goyang's dedication to preserving its natural environment makes it a model for sustainable urban development and a must-visit destination

The northern Seoul suburb of Goyang, Gyeonggi-do Province, has been named Asia's top eco-friendly city to live in for the second year in a row in 2024. The city secured the 14th position among 100 major cities worldwide in the "2023 Global Destination Sustainability Index" (GDS-I).

The index, released by the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) and other organizations, places Goyang at the forefront of non-European cities in terms of sustainability.

Cities were ranked according to a comprehensive set of 69 indicators, including air pollution levels, recycling rates, the number of bicycle paths, and the percentage of hotel rooms with eco-certifications. Goyang's exceptional management of travel destinations was a

From its vast green spaces to its citizen-led carbon reduction initiatives, Goyang offers a replicable model for urban sustainability



notable strength highlighted in the report. The BBC lauded Goyang's efforts to transform into an eco-friendly urban area. The city's commitment to sustainability is evident in its 68 parks and a well-established bicycle-sharing system.

91.8 percent of Korea's population resides in cities, making the impact of urbanization more serious than in many other countries. Goyang City, one of the new cities built in the early 1990s, has recognized this problem and established a climate change response plan in 2019.

The city organized the "Goyang Citizens Solidarity for Carbon Neutrality" and the "Carbon Neutrality Implementation Committee," which carried out response projects with citizen participation, and

developed a carbon neutrality model that is most suitable for the city with nearly no industrial facilities.

Goyang City is also a low-emission city with per capita emission of 6.4 tons as of 2017, which is less than half of the nation's average per capita emission of 13.8 tons. Goyang City established a climate response plan based on these local characteristics and greenhouse gas inventory.

It aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 15.6% by 2030 from 2017 and declared the intention to reach net-zero emissions by 2050. Furthermore, the city has ensured a consistent and continuous decarbonation process by enacting and revising related ordinances.



Goyang Janghang Wetlands

Goyang City is a large municipality with a population of 1.08 million and an eco-city with outstanding environmental conditions. Situated near the mouth of the Hangang River, the city has 78 streams, with about 55 percent of its land being green. In particular, Goyang Janghang Wetlands, registered as a Ramsar Wetland, is an internationally famous habitat for about 30,000 migratory birds and an ecological site that absorbs carbon emissions.

Janghang Wetland in the city center that spans over an area of 7.49 sq km is a national wetland protection zone. Pretty erect willows also captivate the eyes as this is the largest colony of erect willows in Korea. This wetland also boasts brown sesamid crabs that share their habitat with willow trees. Tens of thousands of migratory birds come and stay here every year, and hundreds

of different species of animals and plants enjoy the wetland, which has successfully preserved its natural beauty.

Janghang Wetland remains healthy due to its national protection status and ongoing conservation efforts. An important ecological process in the Site is the symbiotic relationship between the woody plants such as Korean willow and the benthic organisms such as mud crabs: the complex root networks of the willows provide shelter, while the benthic communities cultivate and cycle material promoting healthy roots for the willows.

The Site hosts threatened species including the critically endangered yellow-breasted bunting, and the endangered black-faced spoonbill and narrow-ridged finless porpoise. Two species also meet the requirement for Ramsar Criterion 6, which requires greater than 1% of the waterbird

Praised for its commitment to sustainability, citizen participation and innovative carbon reduction strategies, Goyang boasts 68 parks and a thriving bicycle-sharing system



the city developed policy projects such as “urban ecosystem” that uses effluent groundwater and rainwater and “green zones for vulnerable people” to improve water circulation in the city and transform a gray urban space into a green one. In addition, Goyang City made patent registration for the technology it developed to protect the intellectual property rights of its leading projects and disseminate them across the public sector.

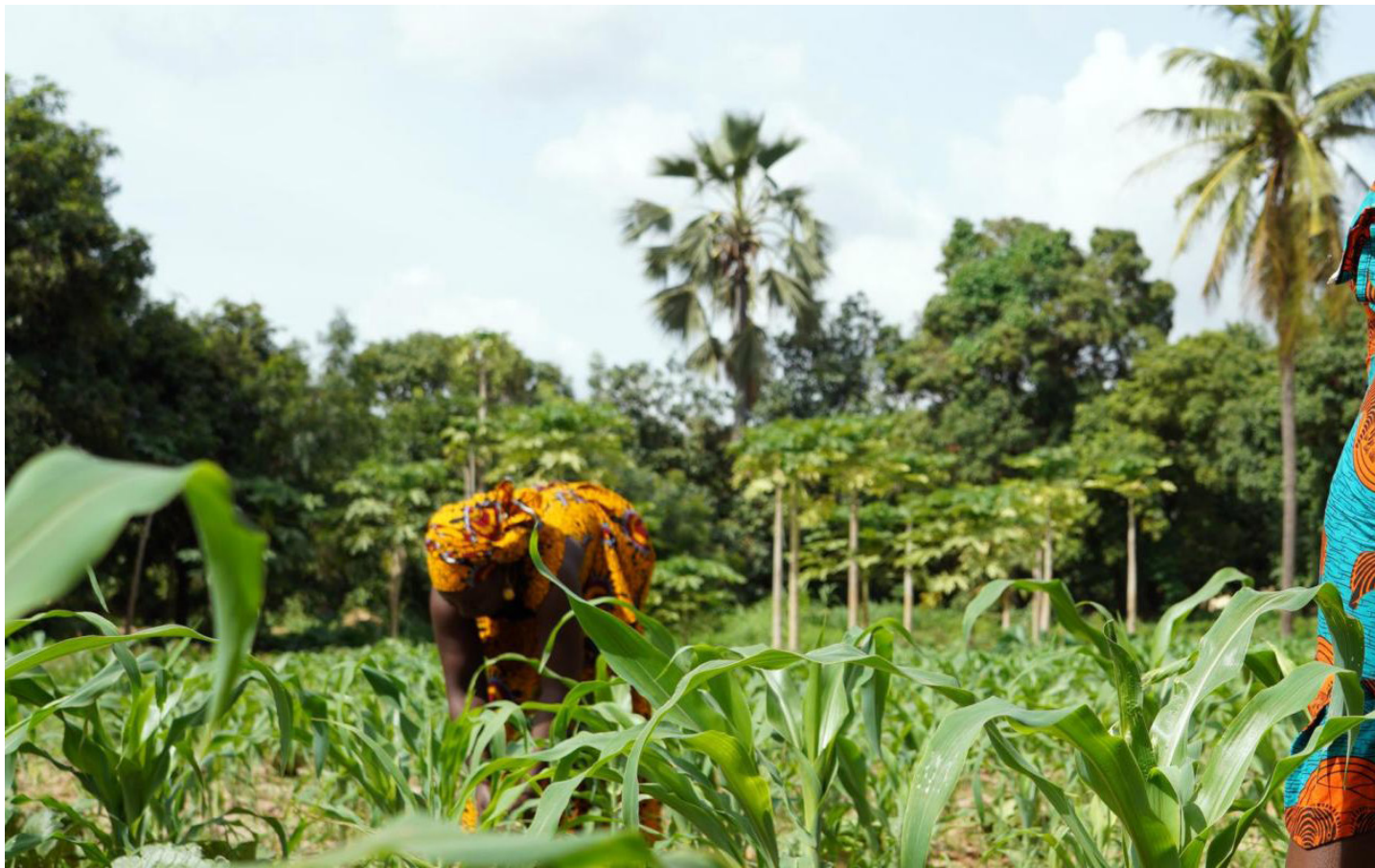
Goyang City encouraged the participation of citizens in developing the carbon neutrality model. Since the activities of citizens are major sources of carbon emissions for a city with few industrial facilities, residents’ cooperation is essential. By drawing diverse organizations and residents’ autonomy councils, the city ensured the participation of citizens in response to climate change. Various events, such as green workshops, the Goyang Environmental Film Festival, the Goyang Climate Environment School, and car-free streets, were held.

biogeographical population documented within the Site: the white-naped crane (*Grus vipio*) and the black-faced spoonbill.

Goyang City also prioritized expanding carbon absorption sources. As the first city in the nation to adopt both a pledge to plant 1.05 million trees and the Goyang Tree Rights Declaration, it established a fundamental principle for public tree management and laid the groundwork for an eco-friendly city that fosters harmony between people and nature. These initiatives not only contribute to creating a more pleasant living environment but also help capture and store carbon dioxide within the city.

Through collaboration with research institutes,





FAO calls for bold action to transform agrifood systems at UN Biodiversity Conference

The degradation of ecosystems threatens the livelihoods of billions, underscoring the urgent need for transformative action in agrifood systems

More than 150 countries convened in Rome for the resumed session of the 16th United Nations Biodiversity Conference (COP16.2), where the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) called for bold action to transform agrifood systems and support global biodiversity goals. At the event, FAO emphasized that agrifood systems must work in harmony with biodiversity to ensure a sustainable future for both people and the planet.

The event built on the momentum generated last October at COP16 in Cali, Colombia, where FAO, the Government of Colombia, and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Secretariat launched the Agri-NBSAPs Support Initiative. The Initiative aims to assist governments in integrating agrifood systems into National



Integrating agrifood systems into national biodiversity strategies is crucial for unlocking funding and driving real change on the ground

Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and their implementation.

"The initiative provides us with a collective mechanism to help governments build capacity, identify and implement strategic levers across agrifood sectors to achieve their national biodiversity targets," said FAO Director-General QU Dongyu.

Qu was joined by Colombian officials María Susana Muhamad González, Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development and President of COP16, and Martha Carvajalino, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, as well as Astrid Schomaker, Executive Secretary of the CBD, and ministers from several countries, who reaffirmed their commitment to implementing the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), keeping agrifood systems front and center.

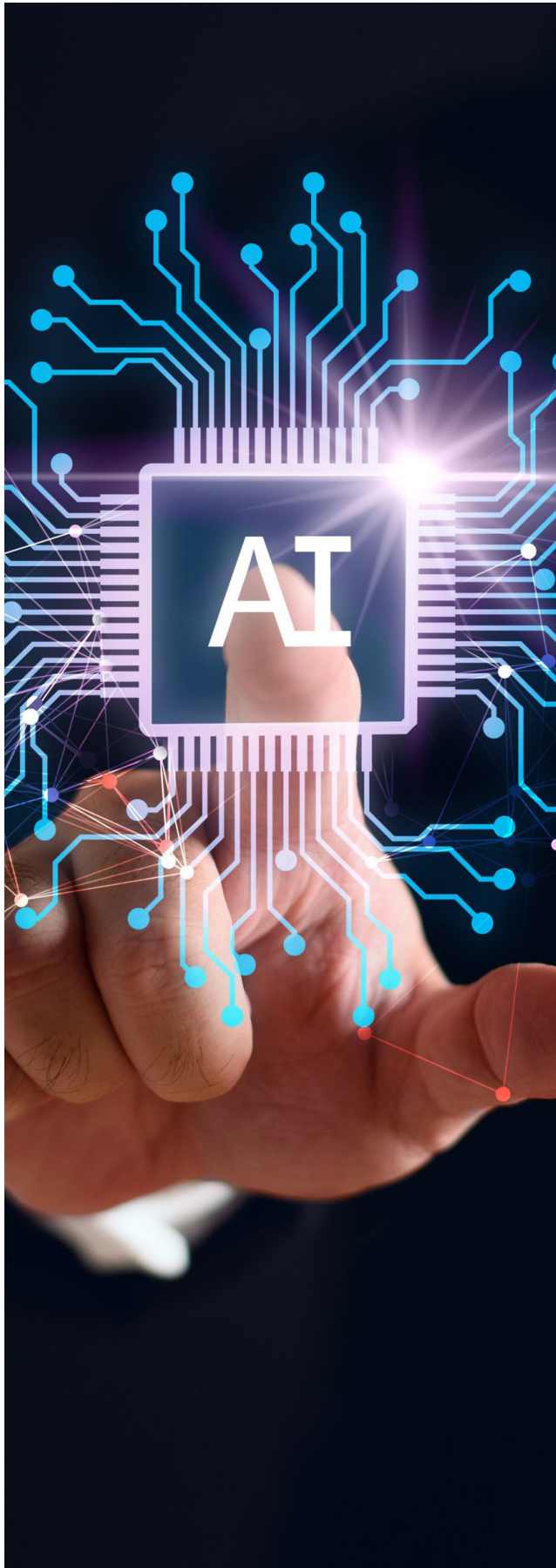
CBD Executive Secretary Schomaker said that biodiversity is fundamental to food security and nutrition, and that transforming agrifood systems is crucial for achieving both biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.

Biodiversity is essential for food production, providing key ecosystem services such as pollination, soil fertility, pest control, and climate regulation. The ongoing degradation of ecosystems poses significant risks, with an estimated 3 billion lives at stake, particularly among vulnerable populations. The loss of pollinators could have a huge negative impact on food security as up to 75 percent of the world's food crops depend at least, in part, on pollination.

The FAO Director-General emphasized the importance of implementing the KMGBF, adopted at COP15, to address these challenges. He explained that "biodiversity is also in the soil and in the water" and that it is critical "to look at biodiversity from a holistic, three-dimensional perspective".

He warned that financial investment remains a crucial factor in achieving biodiversity goals, and integrating agrifood systems into national biodiversity strategies and action plans can unlock funding opportunities through international mechanisms, public-private partnerships, and national budgets.

"It is critical to get farmers on board, for them to take ownership and be part of the partnership. Without the farmers, it is only political policy without implementation," he added.



New Coalition aims to put Artificial Intelligence on a more sustainable path

The AI Action Summit in Paris marked a turning point, placing ecological transition at the heart of international AI discussions

Over 100 partners, including 37 tech companies, 11 countries, and five international organizations, have joined forces under the Coalition for Environmentally Sustainable Artificial Intelligence (AI), aiming to ramp up global momentum to place AI on a more environmentally sustainable path. Spearheaded by France, the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the Coalition brings together stakeholders across the AI value chain for dialogue and ambitious collaborative initiatives.

The Coalition was announced at the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Action Summit in Paris, where Heads of State and Government, leaders of international organizations, CEOs, academics, artists, and members of civil society gathered to discuss support for AI innovation, adequate regulation, and respect for rights to ensure development of these technologies in the interests of all, including developing countries.

The Coalition will encourage AI initiatives for the

planet, including its role in decarbonizing economies, reducing pollution, preserving biodiversity, protecting the oceans, and ensuring humanity operates within planetary boundaries. It will use a collaborative approach – bringing together governments, academia, civil society, and the private sector – to focus on standardized methods and metrics for measuring AI's environmental impacts, comprehensive life cycle analysis frameworks for reporting and disclosure, and prioritization of research on sustainable AI.

The Coalition for Sustainable AI is an ambitious initiative that aims to decarbonize economies, reduce pollution, and ensure AI operates within planetary boundaries

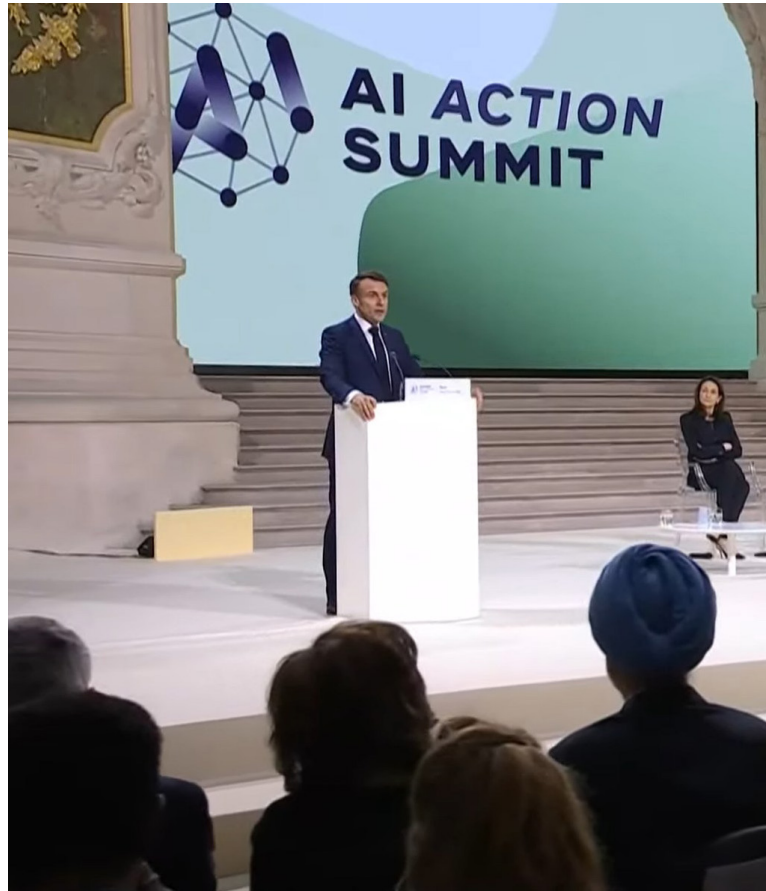
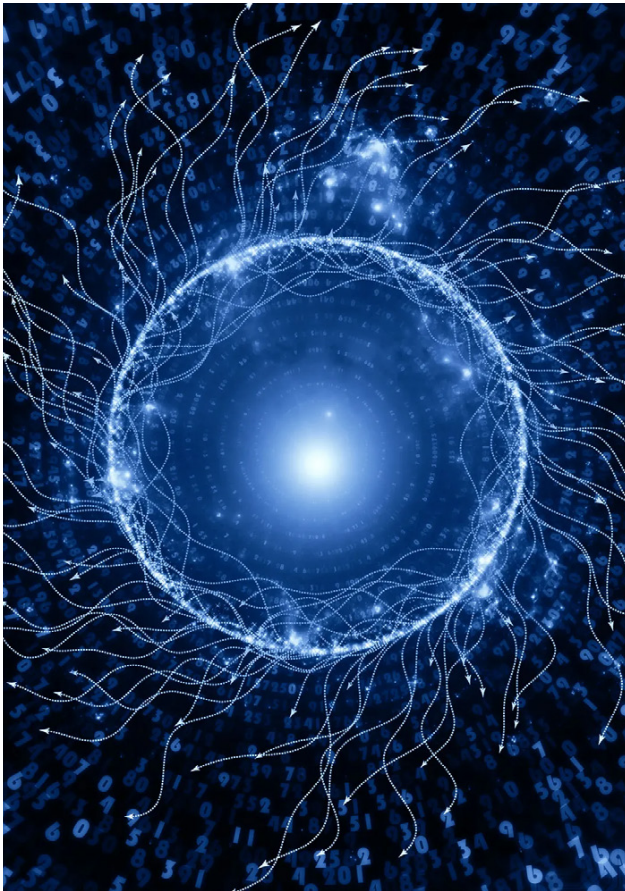


“We know that AI can be a force for climate action and energy efficiency. But we also know AI power-intensive systems are already placing an unsustainable strain on our planet,” UN Secretary-General António Guterres said in his remarks at the Summit. “So it is crucial to design AI algorithms and infrastructures that consume less energy and integrate AI into smart grids to optimize power use.”

While AI may help tackle some of the world's biggest environmental emergencies – for

instance, it is being used to map the destructive dredging of sand and chart emissions of methane, a potent greenhouse gas – a growing body of research cautions that there is a negative side to the explosion of AI and its associated infrastructure, including the electronic waste produced – and high levels of electricity and water consumed – by the proliferating data centres that house AI servers produce electronic waste.

From data centres to training models, AI must run



on sustainable energy that fuels a more sustainable future. The Coalition aims to build sustainable AI into the global discussion in much the same way AI security or AI ethics are studied.

"The AI Action Summit is a turning point: for the first time, the ecological transition has been at the core of the discussions in a international AI summit. I am very proud that France organized this first Forum for sustainable AI with 200 stakeholders present," said Agnès Pannier-Runacher, France's Minister of Ecological Transition, Energy, Climate and Risk Prevention. "Today, my Ministry, with ITU and UNEP, launched the Coalition for Sustainable AI - more than 90 members, including 37 companies, have joined this ambitious initiative on green AI and AI for green."

More than 190 countries have adopted non-binding recommendations on the ethical use of AI, which covers the environment. In addition, both the European Union and the United States of America have introduced legislation to temper

the environmental impact of AI. However, the policy landscape remains sparse.

A number of recent initiatives are working to build the knowledge base around AI and the environment: through the National Institute for Research in Digital Science and Technology (INRIA) and the French Ministry of Ecological Transition, a community of 36 scientists, companies, public institutions and international organizations have published a position paper identifying the challenges that must be overcome to maximize the positive effects of AI systems while limiting their environmental impact. The first hackathon combining AI and energy sobriety, the Frugal AI Challenge, also brought together more than 60 teams of data scientists around the unprecedented challenge of designing AI models related to environmental issues, including the detection of climate disinformation, analysis of regions at risk of fires, identification of illegal deforestation) while optimizing their energy efficiency. In addition, the first international working group on the use of generative AI to



More than 190 countries have adopted non-binding recommendations on the ethical use of AI, which covers the environment

They will inform investors, development banks and local authorities on the objective elements defining an energy-efficient data centre.

“The power of AI to solve complex global challenges is becoming ever clearer, but so too are its environmental impacts and the need for environmental guardrails to ensure the field grows sustainably,” said Golestan (Sally) Radwan, Chief Digital Officer for UNEP. “The new Coalition brings together critical stakeholders who have the power to work together and build systems that ensure the net effect of AI on the planet is positive as the technology continues to deploy rapidly.”

provide access to environmental knowledge aims to develop a best practice guide for the effective and ethical use of generative AI to provide access to environmental documents, while a multi-stakeholder Green Digital Action initiative, convened by ITU, has launched a new thematic pillar on green computing with a dedicated Sustainable AI working group.

In 2024, UNEP released an issue note that explores AI’s environmental footprint and considers how the technology can be rolled out sustainably; it followed a major UNEP report, Navigating New Horizons, which also examined AI’s promise and perils. In 2025, UNEP will publish a guide to encourage public and private purchases towards energy-efficient data centres. These guidelines will be based on international best practices and established global standards (EU Code of Conduct, Energy Star, ISO/IEC 30134, etc.).



Word Scramble

SCOMTOP
TAICEHL

ABLRAEDGEDBIO
RGCIANOC
AONRBC UNRTEAL

HSGUEOENRE
BECLEYALR
NGEYRE FENIFCIET

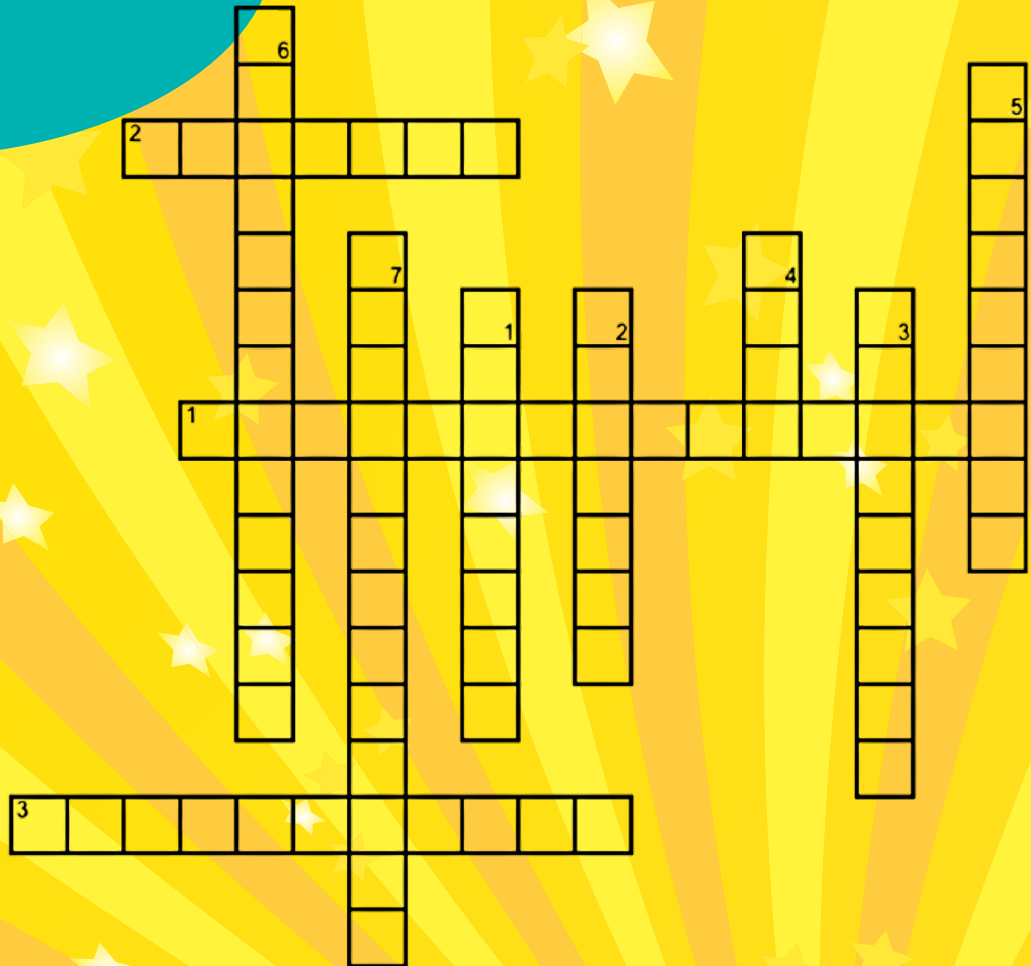
ANSWERS: 1) Organic, 2) Recyclable, 3) Carbon Neutral, 4) Greenhouse, 5) Biodegradable, 6) Energy Efficient, 7) Ethical, 8) Compost

Word Search

F	A	I	R	T	R	A	D	E	Y	N	L	A	H
T	N	E	M	N	O	R	I	V	N	E	T	O	N
R	S	N	H	E	A	L	T	H	Y	E	I	R	T
R	E	U	U	C	I	T	B	M	I	R	C	A	T
E	Y	C	S	Y	O	V	U	L	E	G	N	E	S
N	U	N	O	T	T	D	N	R	N	E	M	E	U
E	W	G	I	L	A	I	N	A	A	R	A	L	O
W	O	O	L	E	O	I	N	A	E	L	C	C	I
A	Z	R	A	O	T	G	N	U	S	O	S	Y	C
B	O	N	I	F	B	S	I	A	M	R	A	C	S
L	N	L	N	A	T	E	A	C	B	M	H	E	N
E	E	T	H	R	I	F	T	W	A	L	O	R	O
I	G	W	U	M	N	A	A	B	L	L	E	C	C
D	E	F	O	R	E	S	T	A	T	I	O	N	W

- RECYCLE
- CLEAN
- OZONE
- WASTE
- RENEWABLE
- NATURAL
- SUSTAINABLE
- CONSCIOUS
- HEALTHY
- COMMUNITY
- DEFORESTATION
- GREEN
- ECOLOGICAL
- ENVIRONMENT
- FARM
- THRIFT
- GLOBE
- FAIR TRADE

Crossword Puzzle



Across

1. A measure of the effect that human activities have on the climate
2. The study of the relationship of living things with each other and their environment
3. Turning off lights help conserve

Down

1. An area of land where large amounts of waste material (from homes) is buried under the earth
2. To keep safe from injury, harm or destruction

3. The release of discharge into the air of pollutant substances such as gas or smoke
4. A location where garbage and waste are taken and thrown without any environmental controls
5. A community of plants, animals and other living organisms in an area, who provide one another with all that they need to survive
6. Capable of being broken down or decomposed by natural biological processes
7. A gradual warming of the earth's surface temperature

ANSWERS: Across: 1) Carbon Footprint, 2) Ecology, 3) Electricity, Down: 1) Landfill, 2) Protect, 3) Emissions, 4) Dump, 5) Ecosystem, 6) Biodegradable, 7) Global Warming

★ WORD OF THE DAY:

FAST FASHION

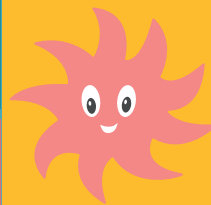
The term fast fashion has become more prominent in conversations surrounding fashion, sustainability, and environmental consciousness. The term refers to cheaply produced and priced garments that copy the latest Catwalk styles and get pumped quickly through stores in order to maximise on current trends.

The fast fashion model is so-called because it involves the rapid design, production, distribution, and marketing of clothing. This means that retailers are able to pull large quantities of greater product variety and allow consumers to get more fashion and product differentiation at a low price. The term was first used at the beginning of the 1990s, when Zara landed in New York. The term "fast fashion" was coined by *The New York Times* to describe Zara's mission to allow garments to go from the design stage to the stores in just 15 days.

Business Insider states that fashion production comprises 10% of total global carbon emissions, as much as the emissions generated by the European Union. The industry dries up water sources and pollutes rivers and streams, while 85% of all textiles go to dumps each year. Even washing clothes releases 500,000 tons of microfibres into the ocean each year, the equivalent of 50 billion plastic bottles.

The Quantis International 2018 report found that the three main drivers of the industry's global pollution impacts are dyeing and finishing (36%), yarn preparation (28%) and fibre production (15%). The report also established that fibre production has the largest impact on freshwater withdrawal (water diverted or withdrawn from a surface water or groundwater source) and ecosystem quality due to cotton cultivation, while the dyeing and finishing, yarn preparation and fibre production stages have the highest impacts on resource depletion, due to the energy-intensive processes.

According to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, emissions from textile manufacturing alone are projected to skyrocket by 60% by 2030.



WORLD WILDLIFE DAY - MAR 3

The United Nations World Wildlife Day (WWD), observed on March 3, is the day that the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) was signed in 1973.

In 2025, World Wildlife Day will be celebrated under the critical theme of "Wildlife Conservation Finance: Investing in People and Planet." Investing in wildlife is not an aspiration, it is a necessity! It is our collective responsibility towards a resilient future for both people and the planet. From the highland steppe to the coral reefs, wild animals and plants hold intrinsic value as part of the intricate web of life on Earth, sustaining ecosystems, regulating natural processes and supporting biodiversity.

Wildlife provides essential services that

support human livelihoods and the achievement of our Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Forests alone contain 60,000 different tree species, 80 per cent of the world's amphibian species, and 75 per cent of the world's bird species, while providing over 1.6 billion people with natural capital in the form of food (SDG 2: Zero Hunger), medicine (SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being), income (SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth) and more.

With more than 1 million species now estimated to be threatened with extinction and the intensifying triple planetary crisis, innovative finance for wildlife conservation has never been more urgent.

MAR
22

WORLD WATER DAY

Access to water is a human right. Yet, 2.2 billion live without safely managed drinking water services, with devastating impacts for their lives and wider society.

World Water Day celebrates water and inspires action to tackle the global water crisis. A core focus of World Water Day is to support the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6: water and sanitation for all by 2030.

The theme of World Water Day 2025 is 'Glacier Preservation'. Glaciers are critical to life – their meltwater is essential for drinking water, agriculture, industry, clean energy production and healthy ecosystems. Rapidly melting glaciers are causing uncertainty to water flows, with profound impacts on people and the planet. Global reductions in carbon emissions and local strategies to adapt to shrinking glaciers are essential.

Did you know?

- In 2023, glaciers lost more than 600 gigatons of water, the largest mass loss registered in 50 years.
- About 70% of Earth's freshwater exists as snow or ice.
- Nearly 2 billion people rely on water from



glaciers, snowmelt and mountain run-off for drinking, agriculture, and energy production.

- Increased glacier melting contributes significantly to global sea-level rise, with today's sea level about 20 cm higher than in 1900.
- Limiting global warming to 1.5°C could save glaciers in two-thirds of World Heritage sites.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

Things to Do...

- Use paper on both sides! _____
- Take shorter showers! _____
- Don't waste your food! _____
- Pick up trash from your surroundings! _____
- Switch off all lights when not in use! _____

COLOUR ME!





Chinese researchers develop new frost-resistant sand-control agent

INNOVATION

A Chinese research team has developed a chemical sand-fixation material suitable for use in cold desert regions, which is expected to serve as a new tool for sand control and desertification prevention in such areas, according to People's Daily Online.

The application of chemical materials to stabilise shifting sands is one of the primary methods of desertification control. This approach involves the use of adhesive chemical substances to bind loose sand particles together, thereby mitigating encroachment by wind-blown sand.

However, conventional chemical sand-fixation materials have been mainly designed for hot and arid regions. In colder, high-altitude or high-latitude desert regions, cooler temperatures often render traditional methods of sand control ineffective.

Researchers from the Northwest Institute of Eco-Environment and Resources (NIEER), under the Chinese Academy of Sciences, modified

cellulose acetate-based waterborne polyurethane sand-fixing agents by incorporating glycerol triglycidyl ether and glycerin to enhance frost resistance. Notably, cellulose acetate can be produced from the cellulose extracted from crop straw.

Experiments have demonstrated that this novel frost-resistant sand-fixation agent exhibits excellent degradability, with the primary volatile substances released during thermal degradation being water vapour, ammonia and carbon dioxide -- ensuring no environmental pollution.

In addition, under low-temperature conditions of minus 20 degrees Celsius, the consolidation strength of this sand-fixation agent remains stable, a critical feature necessary for high-altitude and high-latitude desert regions.

Field applications prove that this agent stabilises shifting sands and promotes plant growth, thus providing robust support for ecological restoration in desert areas.

UNESCO has mapped 4,500 species thanks to its pioneering eDNA programme

UNESCO's groundbreaking environmental DNA programme has mapped nearly 4,500 marine species across 21 World Heritage sites globally, providing new key data and a revolutionary method for stronger ocean protection in an era of rapid climate disruption.

This UNESCO programme revolutionizes the way we observe and monitor marine life and provides new opportunities to better understand and protect critical ecosystems in the 18,000 protected global marine areas.

Under its Recommendation on Open Science, UNESCO makes this technology freely accessible and calls on its Member States to support the scientific community for its large-scale use.

Climate disruption, including ocean warming, is forcing marine species away from their natural habitats and creating an urgent need to better understand and monitor their distribution. UNESCO has developed a new standardized eDNA sampling method to map ocean life.

Over the course of three years, marine experts and local scientists took 500 samples from 21 sites protected by UNESCO under the World Heritage Convention, detecting the presence of nearly 4,500 marine species – an impressive result that would previously have taken many years of survey work and cost millions of dollars. Nearly half of the identified species were fish, and also include 86 shark and ray species, 28 mammal species, and 3 turtle species. Among the findings were 120 species listed as vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered on the IUCN Red List.

The study also determined that many of these species will soon be confronted with temperatures exceeding their known tolerance limits. Based on the warmest future climate scenario, up to 100 percent of fish species in the tropical and subtropical sites studied would exceed their current thermal



UNESCO's eDNA programme marks the first standardised application of eDNA sampling to monitor the status of marine species



The eDNA programme provides new opportunities to better understand and protect critical ecosystems in the 18,000 protected global marine areas

Essential tool to achieve climate and biodiversity targets

UNESCO's initiative is a vital step toward achieving the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework's "30x30" goal of protecting 30 per cent of the world's terrestrial, inland water, and coastal and marine areas by 2030.

By combining cutting-edge science with citizen participation, UNESCO's technology provides a scalable and accessible model that can be applied to the more than 18,000 existing marine protected areas - and new ones that will be created - to address the urgent challenges facing the ocean today.

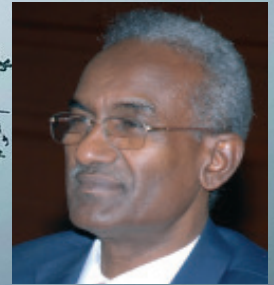
limits and be potentially endangered, while 10-50% of fish species in temperate oceans would exceed their current thermal limits.

Blueprint for marine biodiversity monitoring

UNESCO's eDNA programme marks the first standardised application of eDNA sampling to monitor the status of marine species among global biodiversity hotspots. With a single 1.5-liter water sample, eDNA techniques can reveal genetic traces of approximately 100 marine species on average.

Compared to other existing technologies, it is incredibly affordable, non-invasive and fast - reducing data-collection times from years to just months. This method is also extremely easy to implement, allowing local communities to participate in advancing knowledge alongside scientists.





Combating plastic pollution

Dr. Eisa M. Abdellatif

Chief Technical Advisor
Zayed International Foundation
for the Environment

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GREEN FLASH

The World Economic Forum's Global Risks Report 2025 ranks pollution among the top 10 long-term global threats. I believe that plastic is now the most dangerous pollutant on Mother Earth as it damages the life support systems on land and in the oceans and has devastating effects on human health.

Plastic waste introduces toxins and breaks critical links in food chains, impacting biodiversity and ecosystem functions. Plastic pollution poses a grave threat to marine life, and the accumulation of plastic on sea beds and shorelines alters habitats, affecting species dependent on these environments.

Microplastics that enter the marine food chain potentially reach humans through seafood consumption. Massive floating plastic accumulations, such as the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, highlight the severity of marine plastic pollution.

Many solutions to plastic pollution have been identified. These include: Reducing plastic production and consumption (e.g., banning single-use plastics); Improving waste management and recycling systems to prevent plastic from entering oceans; Innovative cleanup initiatives like ocean-cleaning technologies and biodegradable plastics; and Raising awareness and encouraging behavioral change.

In March 2022, the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) adopted a historic resolution to develop a legally binding treaty aimed at addressing

plastic pollution across its entire lifecycle, from production to disposal. This initiative led to the formation of an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) tasked with drafting the treaty by the end of 2024.

The INC has convened multiple sessions to negotiate the treaty's terms. The most recent of these in Busan, South Korea, concluded without a finalized agreement as nations disagreed over capping plastic production and financial support for developing nations.

New sessions, scheduled from August 5 to 14, 2025, in Geneva, Switzerland, aim to address unresolved matters, such as production limits, chemical management, and funding mechanisms.

Comprising over 100 countries, the treaty advocates for ambitious measures, including global targets to reduce plastic production. Major oil-producing countries have resisted production caps, emphasizing recycling and waste management over production restrictions. The urgency of the treaty is underscored by escalating plastic production, which surged from 2 million metric tons in 1950 to 400 million metric tons in 2024.

The upcoming Geneva session is pivotal for finalizing the treaty and establishing comprehensive strategies to effectively tackle plastic pollution on a global scale.

Emirates Appreciation Award For The Environment

Together for a
green home



THE FUTURE OF OUR WORLD
IS IN OUR HANDS.

ACT NOW!



Zayed International Foundation for the Environment