



A monthly publication issued by Zayed International Foundation for the Environment

creating green communities for a better tomorrow



collaboration on 'pathway to 1.5°C'

Hamdan bin Mohammed unveils Dubai Universal Blueprint for Artificial Intelligence



Landmark Dubai Reef is the world's largest marine reef development project COP28 President calls for ambitious new climate plans based on UAE Consensus





Emirates Appreciation Award For The Environment

Together for a green home





Chairman's Message



Prof. Mohammed bin Fahad Executive Editor

The World Future Energy Summit 2024, held in Abu Dhabi in April, not only underscored the urgency of global climate action but also highlighted the pivotal role of the UAE in championing sustainable initiatives on the world stage. Against the backdrop of unprecedented rains and water logging in several parts of the country, the Summit served as a poignant reminder of the pressing need for concerted efforts to combat climate change.

Building upon the momentum generated by COP28 in Dubai, where the UAE facilitated the establishment of a groundbreaking USD 700 million loss and damage fund, the country continues to demonstrate its unwavering commitment to addressing the challenges of climate change.

The UAE's leadership in spearheading sustainable finance as a catalyst for mobilizing resources for climate-related projects is commendable. The country's vision for a transition to renewable energy sources is also driving innovation and investment in sectors such as hydrogen production, utility-scale battery energy storage systems, and electric mobility. By hosting an event of the stature of WFES, the UAE has provided a platform for global stakeholders to exchange ideas, forge partnerships, and accelerate the adoption of sustainable technologies.

Water desalination, waste management, and renewable energy solutions showcased at the Summit underscore the UAE's commitment to addressing the interconnected challenges of climate change, water scarcity, and environmental degradation. In the region and beyond, the UAE is seen as a frontrunner in implementing innovative solutions to address environmental challenges. While the World Future Energy Summit 2024 has served as a platform to galvanize global efforts towards a sustainable future, the UAE has leveraged its resources, expertise, and strategic partnerships to drive meaningful progress and find sustainable solutions for a resilient future for generations to come.



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PUBLISHED BY



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World Future Energy Summit opens with collective call for collaboration on 'pathway to 1.5°C'

HH Sheikha Shamma bint Sultan bin Khalifa Al Nahyan, President and CEO of the UAE's Independent Climate Change Accelerators, warns "action cannot take place if we work in silos" W ith tempestuous Gulf rains acting as a timely reminder of the need for urgent climate action, the 16th edition of the World Future Energy Summit (WFES), hosted by Masdar, opened in Abu Dhabi on April 16 with calls for collaborative action to ensure average global temperatures do not exceed that of preindustrial times by more than 1.5°C.

Delivering a keynote speech to open the threeday event at Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC), Her Highness Sheikha Shamma bint Sultan bin Khalifa Al Nahyan, President and CEO of the UAE Independent Climate Change Accelerators (UICCA), commended the recent collaborative launch of the Roadmap to 1.5°C by the COP Presidencies Troika, which consists of the UAE and the next two COP hosts, Azerbaijan and Brazil.

Sheikha Shamma warned, however, that limiting global climate change to 1.5°C above pre-



industrial levels will "require unprecedented finance".

"We know that effective climate action cannot take place if we work in silos," said Sheikha Shamma. "Instead, we believe in the power of convening diverse voices to promote dialogue, knowledge exchange, and creative problemsolving. Forums such as WFES offer crucial opportunities for actors from different sectors to exchange views, sparking ideas and collaborative action.

As a solution, Sheikha Shamma highlighted the potential of "Blended Finance", which can be broadly defined as a combination of public concessional finance with public or private capital. The model is now recognised as a key mechanism to deliver the financial resources needed to fight climate change.

A new analysis by UICCA in cooperation with Convergence and HSBC into Blended Finance in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) found the financial model to be in its infancy, with a total committed financing of USD14.2 billion dollars. Such a figure represents seven per cent of global blended transactions, while climaterelated blended transactions amount to roughly USD 7 billion.

Also speaking as part of the opening keynote programme was Francesco La Camera, Director-General of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA). According to La Camera, priorities for the energy transition and immediate steps to accelerate progress towards tripling renewable power capacity to at least 11 terawatts (TW) by 2030 need to be explored.

Despite 2023 marking the largest surge in renewable power generation to date, IRENA's new capacity data shows the world is still falling short with last year's record 473 GW some distance off the almost 1,100 GW required annually.





"The energy transition is accelerating rapidly, but it clearly remains off track, with an unacceptable and uneven distribution of renewable growth that disproportionately affects the Global South," said La Camera.

"We need an urgent global course-correction to address this growing disparity, or we risk our collective climate goal to triple renewable power



capacity by 2030 becoming simply unattainable," he added.

Meanwhile, addressing the opening of the Green Hydrogen Summit, a Masdar-hosted event running as part of the World Future Energy Summit, the Rt Hon Boris Johnson, former Prime Minister of the UK, praised the UAE as "one of the world's great centres of technological innovation", before citing the country's hosting of COP28 last year as a "triumph" for reversing net-zero sceptics. *IRENA's latest capacity data shows the world is falling short of 1,100GW annual renewable power requirement, despite 2023 marking the largest surge of renewable power generation to date*



Following Johnson's keynote, Swiss explorer and clean technology pioneer Dr. Bertrand Piccard, Chairman of Climate Impulse, revealed his latest renewables-fuelled globetrotting expedition: circumnavigating the globe in an aircraft powered by green hydrogen.

The new flight, which Piccard hopes to complete in 2028, follows his historic 23-day journey around the world in a solar-powered aircraft in 2015 that started and concluded in Abu Dhabi.

While Dr. Piccard stressed his renewablepowered flying machine is not yet complete, he reiterated the importance of ambitious projects to curtail reluctancy surrounding what he dubbed the "limitless potential" of green hydrogen.

"We are at the edge of a new energy revolution," said Dr. Piccard. "People say we will never be able to produce enough clean energy, but the impossible does not exist in reality; it exists only in the mindset of people who believe the future is an extrapolation of the past.

"The future requires us to be disruptive and invent completely new ways to think. We need solutions and flagship projects that show what we can do. This is why the Green Hydrogen Summit is important, we must show what is possible."



Water Conference inaugurated at WFES 2024

UAE NEWS

A hmed Al Kaabi, Assistant Under-Secretary for Electricity, Water, and Future Energy at the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure (MoEI), inaugurated the Water Conference as part of the World Future Energy Summit (WFES) 2024 that brought together industry leaders, policymakers, and experts to explore the challenges and opportunities in the water sector.

Al Kaabi noted that the conference is an opportunity to highlight water-related challenges and ways to overcome them, given the importance of water as a basic human need and a major factor in driving sustainable growth.

He said, "The UAE is committed to helping achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 6 that declares the importance of achieving 'clean water and sanitation for all'. Water demand in the UAE is estimated to be 4.2 billion cubic metres annually. Given our geographical location in an arid area, groundwater is scarce. So, we rely mainly on non-traditional sources to produce fresh water for drinking purposes and various uses."

Al Kaabi added that a UN report has indicated that the UAE has achieved an average of 100 percent in providing safe drinking water and sanitation services. He added: "The country has also achieved 79 percent success in integrated water resources management, and we aim to improve this result in the coming years, by ensuring alignment and integration between the country's water, energy, environment, and food strategies."

He noted that in 2017, the Ministry unveiled the UAE Water Security Strategy 2036, which aims to ensure sustainable access to water during both normal and emergency conditions. The overall objectives of the strategy are to reduce total demand for water resources by 21 percent, increase the water productivity index to USD110 per cubic metre, reduce the water scarcity index by three degrees, and increase the reuse of treated water to 95 percent.





Globally in attracting related FDI

U Globally in Al Applications Readiness

T E C H N O L O G Y

Hamdan bin Mohammed launches Dubai Universal Blueprint for Artificial Intelligence

The new Blueprint aims to accelerate the integration of AI applications across diverse sectors, positioning Dubai as a trailblazer in embracing transformative technologies n line with the directives of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, to ensure that Dubai is the world's fastest, and most agile and future-ready city, H.H. Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai and Chairman of Dubai Executive Council, launched the Dubai Universal Blueprint for Artificial Intelligence, a yearly plan focused on harnessing the potential of technology to achieve qualityof-life focused outcomes.

Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed affirmed that Dubai's annual plan to accelerate the adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) applications embodies the vision and directives of the Ruler of Dubai to enhance the city's leadership as a global technology and innovation hub. The plan also reflects Dubai's commitment to leverage new artificial intelligence technologies to create a brighter future in all sectors.

Sheikh Hamdan said, "In 1999, Dubai commenced

its journey towards the future by launching its digital transformation venture, which has continued to achieve major milestones leading to the recent unveiling of the Dubai Digital Strategy last year. We have realised record-breaking accomplishments that have established Dubai as the premier hub for billion-dollar global enterprises in the technology and artificial intelligence sectors within the region."

He added, "In recent years, the evolution of AI has accelerated, presenting numerous opportunities

The plan's overarching goal is to cultivate an environment conducive to economic growth, technological innovation, and social wellbeing



for nations and governments adept at utilising it, while posing challenges to those unable to keep pace. This has necessitated swift and adaptive action plans responsive to rapid changes in technology and artificial intelligence."

He further said, "To enhance Dubai's global leadership, we are launching Dubai's Universal Blueprint for Artificial Intelligence to accelerate the adoption of AI applications, which will achieve the targets of the Dubai Economic Agenda D33 by contributing AED100 billion annually to Dubai's economy through the digital economy and increasing the economy's productivity by 50 percent through the adoption of innovative digital solutions."

Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed said, "Through the first phase of the plan for this year, we will work on appointing a Chief Artificial Intelligence Officer in every government entity in Dubai, launch AI and Web3 incubators as well as announce an AI Week in educational institutions. Land for data centres will be fast tracked, and a new commercial license for AI will be introduced."

He emphasised that the key goal of the plan is to





ensure the well-being of Dubai's citizens and residents. "We will annually review, update, and launch new projects to ensure that the plan keeps pace with all developments. Dubai is a city whose focus is humanity, and we will harness all our capabilities to make our society the happiest in the world," he said.

Dubai's annual plan for accelerating the adoption of Al applications and implementations serves as a roadmap for enhancing the well-being of its people by adopting Al across all sectors and areas crucial to the emirate's future. The plan aims to make Dubai the city that offers the most conducive environment for economic growth, the best city for technology utilisation, and the fastest in adopting advanced applications.

The plan aims to provide the best environment for artificial intelligence companies and global talent by enhancing competitiveness in facilitating business operations, supported by an advanced technological infrastructure, flexible legislative environment, and a supportive system that encourages the development of Al technologies and advanced technology-related industries. This will contribute to empowering companies in this sector to grow and expand the benefits of AI solutions in accelerating progress in various fields and contributing to building a better future for new generations.

The plan also aims to make Dubai a leader in the adoption of artificial intelligence in government operations. This will be achieved by implementing artificial intelligence tools in government projects and future initiatives, as well as supporting these entities in effectively adopting future technologies.

Further, this initiative seeks to position Dubai as the world's most prepared city for radical transformations across vital sectors. Moreover, it aims to enhance employee productivity, improve government performance, and deliver superior government services leveraging future technologies.

The annual Dubai plan also aims to accelerate the adoption of Al applications, transforming Dubai into a global hub for Al governance and legislation. This initiative involves providing necessary resources to attract innovators and leading technology companies.

It entails ongoing development of regulations and laws for AI utilisation across sectors. The plan has a strong focus on AI governance to





effectively harness advanced technological tools and employ them in developing vital sectors to enhance human and social well-being.

The plan also aims to create the best Al applications in strategic sectors by empowering government teams with essential Al skills and tools, introducing them to the latest practices and future opportunities.

This support will empower them to develop innovative applications based on these skills, facilitating the adoption of advanced technology tools to create services, products, and solutions, while also keeping pace with the rapid transformations across various spheres.

The first phase of Dubai's annual plan to accelerate the adoption of AI for this year includes the appointment of a Chief Executive Officer for Artificial Intelligence in each government entity in Dubai, who will spearhead specialised plans and programmes in the field of artificial intelligence and advanced technology. The broader goal is to enhance government performance by investing in the latest AI technology solutions and tools. The Dubai Center for Artificial Intelligence, which is part of the Dubai Future Foundation, will assess candidates for this role.

Furthermore, as part of the first phase, Dubai is set to inaugurate its AI and WEB3 Incubator. This initiative aims to establish the largest hub for AI and technology companies, with the objective of attracting innovators, startups, and AI frontrunners from across the globe, and supporting them in transforming their innovative concepts into success stories as well as facilitating their global expansion out of Dubai.

Additionally, the first phase of the plan involves





launching AI Week in educational institutions to integrate AI applications into the educational system to enhance the quality of educational outcomes. This also encompasses providing students with skills aligned with future market needs, educating school and university students about AI and coding, and introducing them to the latest tools and methods in this field.

Moreover, the first phase of the plan includes the launch of the Dubai Commercial Licence for Artificial Intelligence aimed at enhancing investments in the field of artificial intelligence, attracting specialised companies and talented individuals from all over the world to work in an enabling environment that supports companies in achieving more growth and development, and contributing to solidifying Dubai's position as the preferred business destination for technology and innovation companies. The first phase of the plan also includes allocating land for data centres to contribute to providing an environment conducive to attracting foreign investments and continuing to develop worldclass infrastructure to support the delivery of solutions that enhance Dubai's digital transformation journey.

The annual Dubai plan supports accelerating the adoption of artificial intelligence applications to achieve the objectives of the D33 Agenda, which seeks to generate an annual contribution of AED100 billion from digital transformation projects to the emirate's economy.

This aligns with the vision of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum to solidify Dubai's position as a global hub for the digital economy and a significant player in the global digital ecosystem. By launching the AI and WEB3 Incubator, Dubai aims to establish the largest hub for AI and technology companies



The plan also supports achieving other key objectives of the D33 agenda, including establishing Dubai as one of the world's top three urban economies and increasing economic productivity by 50 percent through innovation and the adoption of digital solutions. By prioritising an innovation-friendly environment, Dubai aims to build local talent and capabilities.

Dubai also prioritises the adoption of digital solutions to support the creation of a smart and advanced economy characterised by leadership, sustainability, knowledge-based growth, innovation, and future technological applications. This is to consolidate the city's competitiveness and position it as a leading global hub for the digital economy. Dubai's annual plan for accelerating the adoption of Al applications contributes to solidifying the city's status as a preferred destination for technology, innovation, and artificial intelligence companies.

The emirate is home to the headquarters of eight technology unicorns, which have leveraged the economic and investment opportunities provided by its technology sector and large-scale digital transformation projects, to grow and succeed.

Dubai ranks first globally in foreign direct investment in AI, first in the Middle East in technology entrepreneurship, and seventh globally in readiness for AI applications.



Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed launches landmark Dubai Reef project

The project's key drivers include enhancing biodiversity, safeguarding Dubai's coastal and marine habitats, supporting fish populations, and increasing ecosystem resilience is Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai and Chairman of The Executive Council of Dubai, has inaugurated the landmark Dubai Reef project with the launch of the pilot reef modules.

A sustainable initiative by Dubai Can, Dubai Reef is the world's largest marine reef development project and marks a pioneering step in Dubai's efforts to promote ecological sustainability. Working around a plan to deploy 20,000 purposebuilt reef modules of various sizes over a fouryear period, Dubai Reef marks a significant endeavour for the city that will span a staggering 600 square kilometres across Dubai's waters. The meticulously crafted design of the reef units will see them exceed 400,000 cubic metres in volume.

In line with the directives of H.H. Sheikh Hamdan and The Executive Council of Dubai, the Dubai



Reef project is a city-wide collaboration uniting key partners to support the wider strategic goals and ambitions of Dubai and the UAE, including the Dubai Economic Agenda (D33), the UAE's Green Agenda – 2030, and the UAE Net Zero 2050 strategy.

Sheikh Hamdan said: "The landmark Dubai Reef initiative is a testament to the vision of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai. Reef ecosystems are unique life sources and vital components in the protection of marine life. Dubai Can's Dubai Reef project will inject vitality into our coastal waters and contribute to global conservation efforts. The project's significant long-term environmental and socio-economic impacts will serve Dubai's commitment to ensuring a sustainable future for generations to come."

With an initial proof of concept championed by Ahmed Mohammed bin Thani and contractors HaejooX in 2021, the first modules have now been activated as part of the Dubai Reef pilot project. Working alongside the Dubai Department of Economy and Tourism (DET), the newly formed Dubai Environment and Climate Change Authority (DECCA) will be a critical partner in ensuring successful project delivery. As Director General of DECCA, His Excellency Bin Thani will continue to play a key role in supporting the Dubai Reef project and further strengthen the emirate's advocacy in the realm of environmental protection and climate action.

DP World; Dubai Chambers; Nakheel; the Ports, Customs and Free Zone Corporation; and Emirates join DET as strategic partners in the Dubai Reef project.

Ahmed Mohammed bin Thani, Director General of DECCA, said: "The Dubai Reef project will provide diverse environments to attract fish and marine life. In 2021, we partnered with leading reef



developer HaejooX to launch a two-year proof of concept, analysing the effectiveness of purposebuilt reefs in Dubai. The study used advanced technologies and utilised a three-dimensional scanning system to understand the quantities and types of fish present. Preliminary data showed an abundant expansion in marine life."



The Dubai Reef initiative is a strategic investment set to leave a lasting legacy in terms of protecting marine life and environmental sustainability. The project's key drivers include enhancing biodiversity, safeguarding Dubai's coastal and marine habitats, supporting fish populations, and increasing ecosystem resilience. The project will also encourage environmental stewardship, strengthen socio-economic prosperity and ecotourism, and preserve Dubai's marine heritage.

The project has won over renowned investor Ray

A sustainable initiative by Dubai Can, Dubai Reef is the world's largest marine reef development project



Dalio who is involved in various philanthropic initiatives and takes a keen interest in ocean exploration and conservation.

"I love the Dubai Reef project because it will be a remarkable contribution to the world's understanding of the benefits of ocean restoration and will make the Dubai environment healthier and provide an incredible recreation park," he said.

MoEI, Japan Cooperation Centre for Middle East explore developments in water desalination at WFES 2024

On the sidelines of the World Future Energy Summit (WFES) 2024, the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure (MoEI) in collaboration with Japan Cooperation Centre for the Middle East organised a joint session to explore the latest developments in the field, share experiences and best practices.

The session brought together companies specialised in water desalination from both sides, local and federal departments, electricity and water companies, the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi, Khalifa University, Sharjah University, New York University Abu Dhabi, and several Japanese companies and universities.

They explored ways to enhance cooperation between the two sides to improve energy efficiency, deploy renewable energy, and leverage the latest desalination technologies. Moreover, they highlighted the UAE's leading desalination projects and smart management technologies that support the Water Security Strategy 2036.

Ahmed Al Kaabi, Assistant Under-Secretary for the Electricity, Water, and Future Energy Sector at MoEl, commended the deep-rooted relations between the UAE and Japan and the shared vision and trust between the two sides. 'Earth Day raises responsible plastic use awareness, reinforces transition to a circular economy'

r. Amna bint Abdullah Al Dahak Al Shamsi, Minister of Climate Change and the Environment, emphasised Earth Day's importance as a key platform for raising awareness about reducing plastic use across society and economic sectors, reinforcing the UAE's transition to a circular economy.

Al Dahak said, "This year's Earth Day theme, 'Planet vs. Plastic,' raises awareness about the growing problem of plastic pollution in oceans, rivers, and the environment, posing a direct threat to human life and ecosystems. Over the past two decades, global plastic waste production has doubled. The UAE has enacted laws to restrict single-use plastic products and implemented policies to significantly reduce plastic pollution."

The Minister highlighted the UAE's Circular Economy Policy 2021-2031, aimed at promoting sustainable management and optimal use of natural resources. By adopting innovative consumption and production methods, the UAE aims to protect the well-being of both present and future generations.

She emphasised that MoCCE collaborates with various federal and government entities via the UAE's Circular Economy Council to amplify the private sector's involvement in advancing the circular economy. The Council also aims to strengthen the 'Scale 360' initiative, of which the UAE is the first signatory globally. Additionally, she outlined the reduction of plastic imports, production, and usage as key objectives for the Council and the Ministry in the coming years.

Al Dahak concluded, "Raising public awareness about responsible plastic use is fundamental to mitigating plastic pollution. It's part of our holistic approach to enhancing environmental consciousness and promoting eco-friendly practices throughout society. This effort is crucial to achieve climate and environmental sustainability goals and to pave the way for a resilient future for the UAE."





COP28 President urges governments to 'think bigger, act bolder' on national climate plans that are aligned with UAE Consensus

At the 15th Petersberg Climate Dialogue in Berlin, Germany, Dr. Sultan Al Jaber calls for ambitious new sustainability goals based on Dubai deal Speaking at the High-Level Segment of the annual Petersberg Climate Dialogue, attended by Chancellor Olaf Scholz, President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan and a number of Climate and Foreign Affairs Minister Ministers, Dr. Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber, Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology and COP28 President, urged governments to "think bigger, act bolder" on national climate plans.

The COP28 President highlighted how the UAE Consensus has emerged as the defining point of reference for global climate ambition and sustainable development since its inception in Dubai last year.

"The UAE Consensus represents a historic milestone in climate diplomacy precisely because it achieved cross-sectoral breakthroughs across the entire climate agenda," Dr. Al Jaber declared. "Together, we set a clear pathway for the energy transition, backed by the science, and focused on the north star of 1.5."

Dr. Al Jaber continued, "We locked in the first-

ever global renewable energy targets. We achieved firsts for nature, setting a 2030 deadline to end deforestation. We made breakthroughs in finance, ending a 30-year deadlock on loss and damage, and beginning to fill a fund that is critical for climate justice. We also included underrecognised sectors like food and health in the COP agenda for the first time. And we did all this against a backdrop of geopolitical tensions,



proving that multilateralism still works, and that unity can overcome polarisation. In short, we sent a message of hope, optimism and inclusivity that could not be more important today."

The COP Presidencies Troika - the groundbreaking initiative aims to enhance continuity between COP 28, COP29 and COP30 and drive implementation of the UAE Consensus – is pushing governments to be "more ambitious" in their next round of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), Dr. Al Jaber said.

He said that governments should set out economy-wide emission reduction plans and produce "well-funded" national adaption plans to protect nature and transform food systems.

"My message to governments is simple: think bigger, act bolder," Dr. Al Jaber told delegates. "Send a clear message early with your next NDC that puts green infrastructure at the centre of your development plans."

The COP28 President also advocated for "smart policies that push industries to step up and incentivise the private sector to invest." He said, "We are talking about a system-wide transformation that represents the biggest opportunity for socio-economic development since the first industrial revolution. The world will be a better place after this transformation. But it will not happen without significant investment and a level up in climate finance."

Dr. Al Jaber highlighted four key investment priorities: infrastructure, technology, people, and the Global South. On infrastructure, the world needs to invest at least USD6 trillion to meet the 2030 target of 11 terawatts of renewable energy capacity, Dr. Al Jaber stated, with a "similar level of investment" in outdated or nonexistent energy grids, especially in developing countries.

Artificial intelligence "can be a game-changer" by multiplying efficiencies and helping to solve the intermittency challenges posed by renewables, the President said, adding that it could also minimise water usage. "The faster we apply Al across energy and water-intensive sectors, the faster its benefits can be scaled," he declared.

All countries should also invest in their people, developing new skills for the new green economy, Dr. Al Jaber said, while reiterating the need to increase investment in the Global South. "Right now, over 120 developing countries attract less than 15 per cent of global clean tech investment," he said. "Multilateral Development Banks must make finance more available, accessible and affordable."





Dr. Al Jaber said the energy transition would take time and "will happen at different paces in different places." It must also be just, equitable and responsible, in line with the targets set out in the UAE Consensus.

During the Climate Dialogue, the COP Presidencies Troika also hosted a Majlis, a form of meeting rooted in longstanding Emirati traditions, to discuss the energy transition. Representing the first session of the Troika Ambition Series, in the event titled 'Majlis: Roadmap Mission to 1.5°C – Enabling Energy Transition Outcomes from the UAE Consensus' Dr. Al Jaber spoke alongside Mukhtar Babyev, COP29 President-Designate and Marina Silva, Environment Minister for Brazil, host of COP30. Together, the Troika are working across the UN system to push for more ambitious, early and UAE Consensus-aligned NDCs. The format and spirit of the Majlis, bringing people together on an equal footing, had "helped break the deadlock" at COP28, Dr. Al Jaber said, adding that "we want to use the same format to have an honest, transparent and practical dialogue around the energy transition."

Dr. Al Jaber asked participants to have a frank conversation about how to address the urgency of the climate situation, while "maintaining energy security and economic prosperity."

He said it was important the energy transition "leads to opportunity for all and holds back emissions, not progress." The COP28 President also met directly with Azerbaijan's President Aliyev, Germany's Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock and France's Minister for Foreign Affairs and Europe, Stéphane Séjourné.



Saudi Arabia, UNEP initiate campaigns against desertification for ecosystem restoration

WED 2024

www.vectore.com/orld/environment/Day (WED) 2024 host, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Nations Environment Programme, (UNEP) have launched campaigns to combat desertification, restore land and build drought resilience ahead of global WED celebrations on 5 June in the country's capital Riyadh.

Launching the global campaign, Elizabeth Mrema, Deputy Executive Director of UNEP, said: "We are the first generation to now fully understand the immense threats to the land – and might be the last one with a chance to reverse the course of destruction. Our priority now must be on restoring ecosystems – on replanting our forests, on rewetting our marshes, on reviving our soils."

Both campaigns will champion leadership in restoring land and put the spotlight on the Kingdom's commitments at home and across the region to combat climate change by regreening and rewilding huge swathes of arid and semi-arid lands. Saudi Arabia is leading the G20 Global Land Initiative and will also host the largest-ever UN conference (COP16) on land and drought in Riyadh from 2-13 December 2024.

In March 2019, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution declaring 2021–2030 the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. This World Environment Day aims to support accelerated progress on these commitments, with Saudi Arabia's campaign connecting with the theme of COP-16, 'Our Land, Our Future', and the 'We are #GenerationRestoration' slogan of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.

Globally, countries have pledged to restore one billion hectares of land – an area larger than China – by protecting 30% of land and sea for nature and restoring 30% of the planet's degraded ecosystems. Championing the 2030 Agenda, WED 2024 will build momentum for climate action by rallying support for vital ecosystems restoration work.





COP28 President receives inaugural 'Global Energy Transition Impact Award' from World Energy Council

The inaugural 'Global Energy Transition Impact Award' recognizes visionary leadership in advancing the energy transition and in uniting the world around the historic UAE Consensus OP28 President Dr. Sultan Al Jaber was recognized with an award by the World Energy Council for his leadership in advancing the energy transition through the delivery of the historic UAE Consensus.

Dr. Al Jaber received the 'Global Energy Transition Impact Award'- one of four inaugural World Energy Leadership Awards - at the Council's Centennial Dinner, ahead of the World Energy Congress. The award was given in honor of his work on the UAE Consensus, and for launching Net Zero energy transition alliances across multiple energy sectors.

The award is "really a recognition of the vision and commitment of the UAE's leadership" in promoting a responsible energy transition, the President said in his acceptance speech. "They rallied the world around climate change, and they were instrumental in achieving the UAE Consensus," he said.

"We are delighted to bestow the inaugural Global Energy Transition Impact Award to H.E. Dr. Sultan Ahmed Al-Jaber for achieving a historic COP28 agreement known as the UAE Consensus, and for the added achievements of launching Net Zero energy transition alliances involving multiple energy sectors," said Dr. Angela Wilkinson, Secretary General and CEO of the World Energy Council. "His personal commitment and persistence have set a new direction in world energy towards accelerating decarbonization



with justice and resilience, leaving a lasting and positive impact on both society and the environment."

Since COP28, the UAE Consensus has emerged as the defining point of reference for global climate action, giving clear direction to countries on how to keep 1.5°C within reach, while transforming agreements into tangible outcomes, and ensuring global implementation.

The groundbreaking agreement was "a truly historic moment for climate diplomacy," Dr. Al Jaber told delegates, delivering a series of "firsts" - including a commitment from all Parties to transition away from fossil fuels in energy systems, in a just, orderly and equitable manner, time-bound targets to triple global renewable energy capacity, and being the first COP to proactively engage industry, particularly the oil and gas sector.

At a time of geopolitical tension, "COP28 set a new standard for inclusivity," the President said. "We moved the world beyond self-interest for the common good and we set clear direction, guided by the science, for keeping our North Star of 1.5°C within reach. We now need to show that same solidarity in turning an unprecedented agreement into unprecedented action."

With this year's Congress marking 100 years since the first World Energy event, Dr. Al Jaber highlighted how the global energy mix has already seen considerable change, with wind and solar energy seeing an eight-fold expansion.

"The UAE has been at the forefront of this growth," said Al Jaber. "In fact, if you sail from here into the North Sea, you will meet a white wall of windmills that the UAE, through Masdar, has invested in. Projects like the London Array, Dudgeon, Dogger Bank and Baltic Eagle are helping make Europe a world leader in wind power."

Even so, hydrocarbons still represent 80 percent of today's energy mix, he pointed out, and with energy demand set to grow by almost a quarter in the next two decades the world will need to replace the daily equivalent of over 270 million barrels of oil, gas and coal.

"This is a massive political, social, economic, technological and engineering challenges at the same time," Dr. Al Jaber said. "And every stakeholder has a critical role to play."

The President reiterated calls for countries to adopt comprehensive, economy-wide emissionreduction targets in their upcoming Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), and for





industries to collaborate on decarbonizing both the demand and supply side of the current energy system.

"Tripling renewable energy capacity is just the beginning," Dr. Al Jaber noted. "We also need to expand nuclear, hydrogen, geothermal and other zero-carbon energies yet to be discovered or deployed."

The President also highlighted the need to maximize efficiency across the energy value chain, saying that the adoption of emerging technologies - especially artificial intelligence will "make a game-changing difference."

Dr. Al Jaber called for an "integrated approach" to the energy transition, connecting "the biggest industrial consumers with the biggest producers, technology companies, the financial community, civil society and policy makers," he said. "COP28 was a turning point in history," Dr. Al Jaber said. "It was the moment that the world got serious about the energy transition and got real about what the transition will actually take."

The energy transition will "take time, it will happen in different places at different paces," he said, "and we cannot simply unplug the current energy system before the new one is built."

"That said, if we make the right investments, we can launch new industries, new jobs and a new low carbon economic pathway," the President said in his concluding remarks, calling on "all stakeholders, government, private and civil society to unite around action that delivers real results. Action that follows the science to keep 1.5°C within reach. And action that advances human progress."



UAE NEWS

bu Dhabi Future Energy Company "Masdar", one of the world's largest clean energy companies, and Emirates Global Aluminium (EGA), the largest 'premium aluminium' producer in the world, have agreed to work together on aluminium decarbonisation and low-carbon aluminium growth opportunities.

Masdar and EGA will explore the joint development of renewable energy projects, with potential battery storage and green hydrogen production and storage, to support the decarbonisation of EGA's existing operations in the UAE, and any future operations in the country.

The two companies will also work together internationally to find opportunities through which Masdar will support EGA to power new aluminium production facilities with renewable energy sources.

Masdar, the UAE's flagship clean energy company, develops and operates utility-scale renewable energy projects around the world.

Aluminium production is energy-intensive, and generating the electricity required using fossil fuels accounts for about 60 percent of the global aluminium industry's greenhouse gas emissions.

Abdulnasser Bin Kalban, CEO of EGA, said, "Aluminium plays a key role in decarbonisation economy-wide, which is why demand for this metal has the potential to grow by as much as 80 percent by 2050. Fulfilling this potential depends on how sustainably aluminium is made.

"EGA's alliance with Masdar, another UAE industrial champion and a global leader in clean energy, should unlock opportunities to decarbonise our existing operations including further expanding our production of CelestiAL solar aluminium, and secure low-carbon growth."

EGA produces one in every 25 tonnes of aluminium made worldwide. The company's metal is the biggest made-in-the-UAE export after oil and gas and is shipped to more than 50 countries.



Future of emobility and smart cities explored at World Future Energy Summit

The annual World Future Energy Summit in Abu Dhabi is the world's leading business event for future energy, cleantech, and sustainability A fascinating series of potential blueprints for future-proofed policies and solutions relating to emobility and smart cities were explored on the concluding day of the 16th World Future Energy Summit (WFES), hosted by Masdar, as thousands of sustainability, energy, transport, and urban planning professionals descended on Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC) for the three-day event's final leg.

Following two days of explorations relating to Green Finance and the Pathway to 1.5°C, the event's focus switched to eMobility and Smart Cities on the concluding day of the summit.

eMobility and Smart City Forums take top billing

In the dedicated eMobility Forum, a quartet of insightful sessions explored a panorama of critical industry topics, including how



autonomous transport is poised to significantly evolve city design and spotlight infrastructure resilience, the importance of enhancing stakeholder collaboration across the clean transport sector, and how the UAE is on-track to achieve 50 per cent new energy vehicle (NEV) sales by 2030.

In the opening panel session, forum attendees heard how the UAE is leading the global aerial autonomous vehicles movement, with tests currently being conducted in Dubai and Abu Dhabi that are set to prelude a major exercise to map the Emirates' skies – a core step in creating dedicated sky routes or aerial roads for the nextgeneration of flying autonomous transport solutions.

Naveen Ahmed, Advisor and Transaction Coordinator, Private Financing Advisory Network, gave a presentation based on a study commissioned by the Pakistan Private Sector Energy Project, supported by USAID and implemented by Private Financing Advisory Network (PFAN), United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) and Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership (REEEP). It focused on the indigenisation of the EV value chain in Pakistan's two- and three-wheeler transport segment, which account for around 86 per cent of the country's total vehicular fleet.

The study outlines investment opportunities in the EV ecosystem generally, and verticals along the entire supply chain, such as material supply, retrofitting, battery manufacturing, EV manufacturing, infrastructure, IT services and mobility as a service.

Speaking at the dedicated Smart City Forum, Chris Wan, Associate Director of Sustainability and CSR at Masdar City, stressed how a peoplefirst approach to sustainable master planning is poised to evolve the design, infrastructure, and

Fifty per cent of cars on UAE roads will be electric by 2050



functionality of future cities and urban communities.

"When it comes to sustainable master planning, Masdar, as an investment company, is doing our best to demonstrate that environmental sustainability is also profitable," said Wan.

Referencing how building science is ushering in transformative health benefits for residents and businesses, Wan added: "If we look at health benefits, we have CO2 sensors in our buildings, and we regulate the injection of fresh air into workplaces and communal areas. We also have other innovations, such as anti-glare window





panelling. The feedback we have received from occupants of our buildings is that they feel more energetic, report fewer headaches due to reduced glare, and don't feel the post-lunch slump as much, which all lead to increased staff wellbeing and better productivity. There is a clear financial impact that comes with these benefits."

UAE startups shine in dedicated zones

This year's Summit hosted numerous dedicated areas championing innovation across the startup ecosystem, including the Green Hydrogen Innovation Zone, the Masdar Innovation Zone, and the Climate Innovations Exchange (CLIX) initiative – a curated platform for 22 female-led, run, or founded startups and SMEs to demonstrate their game-changing products and solutions to the investors and the wider industry. UAE-based startup Food to Fertiliser highlighted a range of custom machines that use patented dehydration technology to convert food and other organic waste into nutrient-rich fertiliser. With one-third of all food produced globally currently going to waste, Food to Fertiliser sought investment for an initial manufacturing run of its new Food Cycler product.

"While our commercial machines range from 15 to 1,500 kgs in capacity, the Food Cycler has a fivekilo capacity, which is ideal for home use," said Harris Qureshi, Co-Founder, and GCC Director at Food to Fertiliser. "On average, our dehydration technology saves 1.9 kg of CO2 for every kilogram of food diverted from landfill. This reduces food waste, creates valuable fertiliser stock, reduces greenhouse emissions, and contributes to a healthier environment."



UAE NEWS

The Dubai Supreme Council of Energy (DSCE) has launched the Dubai Demand Side Management Recognition Programme, a unique platform to recognise and honour the exemplary efforts of organisations and individuals who contribute to enhancing the future of Dubai through responsible practices in energy and water efficiency, circular economy, innovation, and exceptional contributions that promote a sustainable environment.

Each category represents a pivotal aspect of Dubai's journey towards reducing energy use, from innovative green building initiatives to pioneering innovations in efficient cooling.

"Through the Demand Side Management Recognition Programme, DSCE aims to improve the use of energy, water, and fuel and develop exceptional contributions in energy efficiency, water use, sustainability, and the circular economy," said Saeed Mohammed Al Tayer, Vice Chairman of DSCE. Ahmed Buti Al Muhairbi, Secretary-General of DSCE, noted that the programme confirms the Emirate's commitment to the Demand Side Management Strategy, which aims to reduce energy and water consumption by 30% by 2030, in addition to its positive impact on reducing fuel consumption.

The programme highlights Dubai's efforts and commitment towards sustainability and recognises pioneering initiatives in green buildings, efficient cooling, and much more.

The response to the program was remarkable and DSCE received more than 86 entries from the public and private sectors.

A committee of experts will review the entries to evaluate their impact and align them with the Demand Side Management Strategy, and the programme winners will be announced in May 2024.





Massive investment needed for climateresilient infrastructure: OECD report

The report, titled "Infrastructure for a Climate-Resilient Future," underscores the growing pressure on infrastructure worldwide due to extreme weather events such as heatwaves, floods, wildfires, and droughts Record global temperatures around 1.4 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial averages led to more heatwaves and floods, longer wildfire seasons and widespread droughts in 2023. A new report by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) details the growing pressure of such climatic events on infrastructure in all sectors, from electricity, communication and transport networks to water and waste treatment, with developing countries often particularly hard hit.

'The Infrastructure for a Climate-Resilient Future' report released during the OECD Infrastructure Forum in April, recommends governments to systematically factor climate resilience into infrastructure planning and decision-making, including by prioritising sustainable projects, to help reduce societal and economic vulnerability and avoid long-term costs. Climate-resilience measures can also protect investment returns, ensure business continuity and support continued economic growth and development. At COP28, countries committed to increase the resilience of infrastructure by 2030. Regional and local governments play an essential role, being responsible for 69 percent of climate-significant public investment in OECD countries.

The investments needed to seize these opportunities are significant. According to OECD, World Bank and UN Environment analysis, an annual investment of USD 6.9 trillion in infrastructure will be necessary by 2030 to ensure infrastructure investment is compatible risks from climate change," said OECD Secretary-General Mathias Cormann.

Developing countries are significantly more exposed to climate-related disasters, especially least developed countries and Small Island Development States, between 10 and 30 times more than OECD countries. They face important resource shortages and higher financing costs, hindering their ability to build quality infrastructure. In order to address their challenges, the report shows the need for new



with the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement. In parallel, infrastructure assets make up an important share of the economic damages with the economic losses from disasters increasing sevenfold between the 1970s and the 2010s from an average USD 198 billion to USD 1.6 trillion.

"The right type of infrastructure investment can help enhance the quality of growth, by supporting climate action while protecting biodiversity and reducing pollution and enhancing resilience to forms of international partnerships and enhanced mobilisation of resources by development banks.

Besides financial resource needs, the report also points to the effectiveness of nature-based solutions in providing cost-effective measures to protect infrastructure assets and services.

The report provides policymakers and stakeholders with important considerations and tools to support change towards more climateresilient infrastructure.





Moving from "commitment to action" critical to driving energy transition: IRENA Director-General

SDG 7 calls for ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all Renewable energy, if supported by governments, can "truly change the landscape" in terms of achieving equitable access to affordable and clean energy, but only if they can move from "commitment to action", according to the Director-General of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA).

Renewable energy is generally defined as any energy source that is continuously replenished. It includes solar and wind power as well as bioenergy (organic matter burned as fuel) and hydroelectric power. Ensuring access to affordable reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all people, wherever they are in the world, is the aim of Sustainable Development Goal 7 (SDG 7).

Speaking to media ahead of the special meeting on transitioning to sustainable sources of energy, held at the UN Headquarters in New York as part of the first-ever Sustainability Week, IRENA chief Francesco La Camera said, "There are no difficulties in persuading governments to adopt renewable energy, but from the commitments to the action, there is always something lagging.

"What is important in relation to the countries, with our members, is to support them in finding the right way to translate commitment into action. I think this is the challenge we face: how can we move to tripling renewable installation capacity by 2030? Now what is at stake is how we can really achieve this goal."

Asked about how to ensure that countries commit

'Rewriting the landscape of international cooperation can drive the renewable energy transition in developing economies'



and take action, the IRENA Director-General explained that, since all the countries have already made commitments, one of the key steps is "to rewrite the way international cooperation works", where "all different entities involved must make an effort".

"For example, at IRENA, we have been working with President William Ruto of Kenya to forge a partnership to accelerate the renewable energy deployment in Africa," La Camera noted. The Accelerated Partnership for Renewables in Africa (APRA) initiative was launched during the first Africa Climate Summit in Nairobi last year, he continued, highlighting the signing of a joint statement by APRA leaders at COP28 to drive the renewable energy transition as a strategic solution to energy access, security and green growth in Africa.

"We now have seven African countries, including Kenya, as well as developed countries such as Denmark, Germany, the US, and we also have the UAE involved. This is an example of how we are trying to rewrite the landscape of international cooperation. We are building the plan and





supporting these countries in creating their own plans for fostering renewables. Together we transform to a new international cooperation mechanism to turn their plans into reality."

About the notable differences in approaches, commitments and reactions between developing and developed countries when it comes to the energy transition, Francesco La Camera said, "The developed world has to change the system. But developing countries can leap forward and transition directly to a new energy system as there is a lack of real energy systems. The main difference lies in the status of the energy system in these different parts of the world, which is reflected largely in the existing inequality.

"The other aspect is that the developed countries may have the tools, instruments and financial resources to drive the changes. The developing world needs support in many aspects. Countries require financial and technological support to exchange experiences and technology. These are barriers that need to be overcome today to speed up the transition, especially in Africa."

"In this respect, Africa is probably the most important powerhouse in the world for renewable energy and green hydrogen [a clean and renewable energy carrier]. But, Africa lacks the infrastructure to make this potential beneficial to its people, which would also benefit the world. Infrastructure such as ports, pipelines and civil infrastructure are decisive and crucial," said the IRENA chief.

"One example that impressed me was Mauritius, where our support for solar panel installation in private houses, private buildings and public buildings has been truly transforming the landscape, giving a big push for achieving SDG 7."

La Camera added, "To speed up the transition, we need to overcome some structural barriers that exist today. Infrastructure is the first barrier to overcome. Without efficient electricity and without providing storage interconnectivity, flexibility and balancing the grids, we cannot progress. Modernising and building infrastructure where it is absent is the top priority."

Asked about how normal citizens can contribute to the energy transition, the IRENA Director-General said, "We are striving to be more efficient in all our choices, but what is more important is the legal environment where everyone feels compelled to take action. We cannot only call for the moral imperatives."

Society also makes an easier and simpler environment for people to make the right choices in terms of efficiency and energy conservation, he said, in conclusion.



NYUAD, Dolphin Energy sign agreement to boost sustainability, climate change research

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UAE NEWS

A unique national capacity-building fellowship model offering outstanding Emirati graduates the opportunity to gain experience in a cutting-edge academic research environment was established through an agreement with Dolphin Energy to sponsor NYUAD's Kawader Research Assistantship Programme.

Maryam Al-Memari, a Research Assistant at NYU Abu Dhabi, has been named the inaugural Dolphin Energy Fellow. Al-Memari works as a research assistant in NYUAD's Centre for Interacting Urban Networks under the supervision of Associate Professor of Biology John Burt.

Her multifaceted research encompasses testing eco-friendly antifouling coatings to reduce marine pollution and examining historical trends of desalination and their environmental impacts in the Arabian region. Additionally, she examines the implications of coastal development in GCC and the perspectives of regional female reef scientists on bridging gender gaps in the field.

جامعية نيويورك ابوظي

😤 NYU ABU DHABI

NYUAD Vice Chancellor Mariët Westermann said, "We are proud to announce Al-Memari as the outstanding first Dolphin Energy Fellow. Her interest in finding pragmatic, workable solutions to some of our biggest challenges inspires everyone working with her."

"By investing in the next generation of Emirati researchers, we aim to recognise and empower outstanding individuals whose work helps catalyse significant progress and innovations across these priority research areas for the UAE and the wider region and actively contribute to a more sustainable future for our communities," said CEO of Dolphin Energy, Obaid Abdulla Al Dhaheri.

The fellowship is a three-year, individually tailored, intensive programme designed for Emirati early career researchers considering a graduate degree or a career in research.





UAE, Indonesia partner to reduce waste leakage into oceans and rivers

The initiative reflects the UAE and Indonesia's shared commitment to achieving cleaner oceans and empowering riverine communities he Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MOCCAE) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Investment of the Republic of Indonesia, to support the country in reducing plastic waste leakage into the oceans.

The formal signing ceremony took place on the sidelines of The AVPN Global Conference 2024 in Abu Dhabi in the presence of Dr. Amna bint Abdullah Al Dahak Al Shamsi, Minister of Climate Change and the Environment, and Suhail bin Mohammed Al Mazrouei, Minister of Energy and Infrastructure.

The MoU was signed by Mohammed Saeed Sultan Al Nuaimi, Under-Secretary of MOCCAE, and Nani Hendiarti, Deputy Coordinating Minister for Forestry and Environmental Management, Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Investment of the Republic of Indonesia.

The MoU builds on collaborative work between the two countries to deploy nature-based

solutions to combat climate change challenges, including the Mangrove Alliance for Climate (MAC) and the MBZ-JKW International Mangrove Research Center.

This agreement will set a framework for cooperation between the UAE and Indonesia to address the urgent environmental challenge of plastic waste leakage into the oceans around Indonesia. During the event, Clean Rivers – a global non-profit based in Abu Dhabi, dedicated



to addressing the challenge of river plastic pollution – was launched. It will serve as an official implementing partner of the MoU.

Al Nuaimi said, "I am proud of the collaborative spirit the UAE and Indonesia show in overcoming this huge challenge. Our two great countries have already made fantastic progress in deploying nature-based solutions to combat climate change.

"Our work together on the Mangrove Alliance for Climate (MAC) and the MBZ-JKW International

Clean Rivers – a global nonprofit based in Abu Dhabi, will serve as an official implementing partner of the MoU

Mangrove Research Center gives me great hope that this cooperation will be another of our success stories. The importance of this cooperation stems from the establishment of a joint commitment to the conservation of vital marine ecosystems between the two countries".

He stressed that plastic pollution is one of the biggest threats and environmental pollutants and spreads in the oceans, rivers and environment, which has an adverse impact on people's lives, pointing out that cooperation between the UAE and Indonesia opens the door for more efforts to preserve the environment and nature.





Al Nuaimi expressed his support for the launch of the Clean Rivers, which will play an important role in supporting global efforts in the plastic waste leakage into rivers and oceans in Indonesia and around the world.

The UAE and Indonesia will cooperate on a number of vital areas, including capacity building, increasing stakeholder awareness, and the design and delivery of economically sustainable circular waste systems. The MoU will also facilitate the productive exchange of information and best The cooperation between the UAE and Indonesia opens the door for more efforts to preserve the environment and nature



practices focusing on reducing the influx of plastic pollution into the ocean and expediting river clean-ups in Indonesia. The MoU also provides for the exchange of data, information, recommendations and best practices between the two parties.

This significant moment also highlights the launch of Clean Rivers' work to deliver transformative programmes that tackle plastic pollution in Indonesia. By acting as the catalyst for the creation of circular economies, Clean Rivers will help manage plastic waste, drive behavioural change and kindle local innovation.

To achieve this, Clean Rivers has committed up to

USD20 million to initiatives in Indonesia that will prevent 300,000 tonnes of plastic waste from entering the ocean every year.

Clean Rivers will work in partnership with governments, local communities and private enterprises to drive comprehensive solutions to address the long- and short-term impacts of plastic pollution in rivers.

This work will be undertaken with the specific objective of supporting the socioeconomic development of communities that live alongside some of the world's most polluted waterways, such as in Indonesia.



SkyPower, ZETDC sign PPAs for Zimbabwe's largest solar project

t the 2024 World Future Energy Summit (WFES) in Abu Dhabi, SkyPower and the Zimbabwe Electricity Transmission and Distribution Company (ZETDC) signed Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs), marking a significant milestone in the development of the largest solar project in the history of Zimbabwe. The agreements pave the way for the commencement of the Green Giant project, set to deliver 500 MW of solar power, capable of energizing approximately 2 million households.

Emmerson Mnangagwa, President of Zimbabwe, had previously stated: "My presidential commitment is to enhance our energy sustainability through renewable energy by collaborating with world-class companies like SkyPower. Today's signing is a landmark achievement for our nation, setting a robust foundation for our sustainable future."

The signing ceremony was witnessed by eminent personalities including Edgar Moyo, Minister of

Energy of Zimbabwe, Lovemore Mazemo, Ambassador of Zimbabwe to the UAE, Abel Gurupira, Managing Director of the Zimbabwe Electricity Transmission and Distribution Company, Mazambani Edington Tapera, Chairman of ZERA.

Kerry Adler, President & CEO of SkyPower, highlighted the project's importance, "This partnership exemplifies our dedication to promoting sustainable energy development globally. Upon completion, this project will stand as a testament to Zimbabwe's commitment to renewable energy and economic growth."

This initiative is expected to boost Zimbabwe's economy significantly by creating thousands of jobs and fostering infrastructure development. It is aligned with global efforts towards achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals and enhancing the quality of life for millions of Zimbabweans.





Pilot of first solar flight wants to start first hydrogen flight from Abu Dhabi

Betrand Piccard's hydrogen plane named "Climate Impulse" with two pilots onboard aims to be a beacon of hope in the fight against climate change Betrand Piccard, known for his 2015-2016 historic round-the-world trip aboard a solar plane that took off and landed in Abu Dhabi, is setting his sights on a new recordbreaking endeavour.

In an exclusive interview during the World Future Energy Summit in Abu Dhabi, Piccard said he wants to embark on the first-ever nonstop hydrogen-powered flight around the globe in 2028 with Abu Dhabi as the starting point.

"I want to fly around the world nonstop in a green hydrogen-powered airplane," said the Swiss adventurer and explorer. "It's not only about flying clean; it's about demonstrating what is possible in a world where many feel disheartened about the future. There are solutions, there are potentials, and we just have to action them."

Piccard's hydrogen plane named "Climate Impulse" with two pilots onboard aims to be a beacon of hope in the fight against climate change while showcasing the possibilities of clean technology. After two years of meticulous design, construction of the hydrogen-powered aircraft is underway in western France, he said.

"We have until 2025 to build it, 2026 and 2027 for testing, and hopefully in 2028, we can embark on the ultimate flight around the world nonstop," Piccard outlined. The aircraft will feature a revolutionary propulsion system, utilising hydrogen fuel cells to generate electricity for propulsion.

In 2016, Bertrand Piccard and André Borschberg,

was never to transport passengers. "Solar Impulse was an energy project to show that with clean technologies and renewable energies, you can achieve goals that nobody thought possible, like flying around the world without fuel."

However, the hydrogen flight is not just a symbolic gesture. "It's a practical step towards decarbonising the aviation industry," Piccard emphasised.

In addition to the groundbreaking flight, Piccard



founders of Solar Impulse Foundation, took turns as pilots to complete the first circumnavigation of the globe of the solar plane named Solar Impulse-2 (SI2) in Abu Dhabi, supported by Masdar, Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company.

They flew 40,000 km, setting 8 world records. SI2 became the first solar airplane ever to fly through the night, between two continents, and across the US. This successful mission inspired Piccard to start the next endeavour from the UAE capital. He explained that his goal with the solar plane and his team are innovating in hydrogen infrastructure, developing mobile refuelling stations to support the widespread adoption of hydrogen-powered aircraft in future.

As preparations for the historic flight continue, Piccard remains unwavering in his commitment to driving positive change. "If we show the solutions that are economically profitable to protect the environment, we create action, excitement, and enthusiasm," he asserted. "That's the future we're working towards."



TAIPEI: A techhub goes green

Taipei City is known for its extensive bike lane network and its use of renewable energy sources such as solar power

W ith a focus on green space preservation, sustainable transportation, and energy efficiency, Taipei City, located on the island of Taiwan, has long been committed to sustainability.

Most notably, both its 2030 municipal governance guidelines and the City Government's Strategic Map are built on the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

BREER

Yet, Taipei City went a step further when it announced its intention to reduce its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 30 percent by 2030 and achieve net-zero emissions by 2050, as well as starting to publish an annual Voluntary Local Review (VLR) to share its progress towards the SDGs.

As the leading city of excellence, Taipei proposes

To counter its high population density, Taipei is working to promote sustainable living through initiatives such as urban farming and community gardens



pragmatic solutions to problems, and in 2023, Taipei City returned to the original intention of "leaving no one behind" through Local Voluntary Review Reports. The goal was to create a "sustainable and inclusive capital of hope," starting from urban regeneration and humanistic transportation to happy parenting and elderly care, as well as the results of urban exchanges and international cooperation, expanded to 16 SDGs to show citizens the sustainable governance of the city government team.

As a subtropical coastal city with a high-tech economy, Taipei is facing up to the challenge of a changing climate with innovation and crosssector collaboration, looking to become a green city of the future.

Trees and transport

Launched in 2016, the Taipei City Clean Air Action Plan has been guiding the implementation of low emission, green transportation. The city has designated three transportation hubs and six tourist hotspots as Air Quality Maintenance Zones, the first of its kind on the island. Additionally, the city recently announced a threeyear electric scooter incentive scheme and is expected to establish a fleet of 3,500 electric municipal buses by 2030.

To reduce the urban heat island effect, Taipei City developed the Taipei Street Trees 15-Year Vision Plan. The plan focuses on planting new trees and shrubbery to connect green spaces, as well as strengthening the maintenance of existing trees, especially along streets.

Circularity and renewable energy

To stimulate its economy and give it a 'circular push', Taipei City launched the Subsidies &







Incentives for the Taipei Industry, which aims at facilitating the circular upgrade and transformation of small and medium-sized enterprises. Complementing these incentives, industrial exchange platforms and startup labs are expected to advance Taipei's long-term capacity for innovation in the circular economy.

Aware that reliable and affordable energy is essential for a healthy economy, Taipei City is already laying the foundation for its 100 percent renewable energy transition. Through the Solar Taipei Program, the city is promoting the installation of photovoltaic systems through public-private partnerships, with a goal of 66MW by 2030.

Complementing this, Taipei is introducing smart micro-grid systems that integrate photovoltaic systems and energy storage equipment in social housing, campuses, and government agencies. This push for a clean and inclusive energy transition already produced a 19.8 kW civic power plant at Guandu Junior High School in 2020.

Green buildings

With an economy focused on high-tech services (sector primarily based in office buildings), most of Taipei's emissions (74%) come from buildings. To deal with this, the city is employing innovative solutions and strong regulatory standards on green buildings and public space.

The city uses green walls and roofs to counter the urban heat island effect and special permeable pavements to keep the streets cool and limit surface runoff from storms.

It's also compulsory for all new builds to meet high standards for green building design.

Despite both its economy and population being remarkably stable, the city is still at risk from climate change



The city government has also kicked off a threeyear Energy Saving Action Plan for Residential and Commercial Sectors, focused on replacing old inefficient air-conditioners and other energyguzzling appliances in schools, communal housing and service businesses. The aim is to achieve total energy savings of 250 million kWh, equivalent to carbon dioxide emissions of 132,000 metric tons. This is the equivalent of taking 28,000 cars off the road for a year.

Saving every drop

Taipei experiences droughts and water shortages around every two years. In response, the city has taken a pragmatic approach to minimise water waste both through infrastructure improvements



and public behaviour change. Between 2015 and 2017 the city underwent a project to replace old lead pipes and fix leaks.

The city has also used public engagement campaigns to encourage citizens to conserve water supplies and avoid waste. As a result, the average household water consumption was cut by some 15% between 2014 and 2006.

With Taipei's pragmatic approach to climate resilience, which includes a mix of business-city collaboration, strong regulation, citizen engagement and public investment in infrastructure, the city has secured its place as a green city of the future.



European Union launches 'EU-GCC Green Transition Project' at WFES 2024

The project aims to create a joint platform to exchange best practices and expertise between the EU and the GCC stakeholders n a significant step forward for clean energy and climate action, the European Union (EU) launched the EU-GCC Cooperation on Green Transition project. The event took place at the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) pavilion during the 2024 World Future Energy Summit (WFES) in Abu Dhabi.

The project aims to create a joint platform to exchange best practices and expertise between the EU and the GCC stakeholders, promoting and adopting policies and technologies that support the GCC's green transition, and fostering a collaborative business environment between EU green tech companies and their counterparts in the Gulf region.

The launch of the project signifies a turning point in the global transition towards a clean energy future, marking a critical commitment to collaboration and sets a powerful example for the international community, paving the way for



more sustainable and prosperous future for all.

Collaboration for a Sustainable Future

The launch event featured keynote addresses from distinguished speakers, including Lucie Berger, Ambassador of the European Union to the United Arab Emirates, Lukasz Kolinski, Head of Unit Renewables and Energy System Integration at the European Commission, and Tarig Ahmed, Regional Programme Officer -MENA Region at IRENA. The speakers underscored the significance of international collaboration in addressing global sustainability challenges and highlighted the transformative potential of the EU-GCC Cooperation on the Green Transition Project.

In her opening speech, Ambassador Lucie Berger emphasised the project's significance in the collective fight against climate change, highlighting the essential role of businesses from both the EU and the GCC countries in implementing the global targets of tripling renewable energy and doubling energy efficiency.

Lukasz Kolinski said, "Collaboration between the EU and GCC on green transition is essential for achieving our climate goals. This initiative will drive innovation, create new opportunities, and contribute to a more sustainable future."

A Catalyst for Change

A key event highlight, echoing this year's theme of the IRENA General Assembly, was the roundtable discussion titled "Outcome COP28: of Infrastructure, Policies and Skills for Tripling Renewables and Accelerating the Energy Transition." The discussion focused on how the EU and GCC can work together to develop robust infrastructure for significantly increasing renewable energy in the region, implement effective clean energy policies and equip their workforce with the necessary skills for the evolving energy landscape.

'The initiative will drive innovation, create new opportunities, and contribute to a more sustainable future'



Additionally, the discussion explored avenues for knowledge sharing, technology transfer, and joint project development, paving the way for a more sustainable future.

The EU-GCC Cooperation on Green Transition Project is poised to catalyse change. By fostering deeper collaboration, the project aims to increase the deployment of renewable energy sources significantly, stimulate environmental protection efforts, enhance economic growth and diversification, and strengthen resilience in the face of climate change impacts.





RENEWABLE ENERGY

EWEC announces partners to develop 1.5 gigawatt solar project in Abu Dhabi

Masdar, EDF Renewables, and Korean Western Power Company sign agreement with EWEC WEC (Emirates Water and Electricity Company), a leading company in the integrated coordination of planning, purchasing and supply of water and electricity across the UAE, has announced the award for its 1.5 gigawatt (AC) Al Ajban Solar PV Independent Power Project. The development of the utilityscale solar power plant was awarded to an international consortium of EDF Renewables and Korea Western Power Company (Kowepo), and Masdar as the local shareholder. Following the award the project's Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) was signed between EWEC and stakeholders.

The signing took place at the World Future Energy Summit in the presence of HE Dr. Sultan Al Jaber, UAE Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology, Chairman of Masdar and COP28 President; Hamad Al Hammadi, Chairman of EWEC; and Luc Rémont, Chairman and CEO of EDF Group. The agreement was signed by Othman Al Ali, CEO of EWEC; Mohamed Jameel Al-Ramahi, Masdar CEO; Beatrice Buffon, VicePresident in Charge of the International Division and CEO of EDF Renewables; and Park, Hyung Duck, CEO of KOWEPO.

EWEC awarded the Al Ajban Solar PV contract after a comprehensive procurement process. The PPA is structured as an energy purchase agreement whereby EWEC will pay only for the net electrical energy supplied by the plant.

Under the terms of the PPA, the consortium will design, finance, build and operate the plant, which will be located in Al Ajban, 70 km north-east of

setting for the historic UAE Consensus achieved at COP28 and it is fitting that this latest ambitious solar power project will make our nation home to four of the largest single-site plants on the planet. The UAE is leading by example and matching words with actions in the global effort to triple renewable energy capacity by 2030, and keep the ambition of 1.5°C within reach."

Hamad Al Hammadi, Chairman of EWEC, said: "This agreement stands as a testament to the successfulecosystem of world-leading renewable



Abu Dhabi. Once commercially operational in Q3 2026, Al Ajban Solar PV will make the UAE home to four of the world's largest single-site solar power plants, with three of them located in the emirate of Abu Dhabi. The project will generate enough electricity to power 160,000 households across the UAE and is expected to reduce Abu Dhabi's carbon emissions by 2.4 million metric tonnes per year.

HE Dr. Sultan Al Jaber, UAE Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology, Chairman of Masdar and COP28 President, said: "The UAE was the projects in the UAE, reflecting the country's commitment to accelerating the decarbonisation of the energy sector. We take pride in supporting this ambition by procuring renewable technologies and utility-scale solar PV projects, helping to set the pace for global sustainability initiatives and meet the targets set during COP28."

Othman Al Ali, Chief Executive Officer of EWEC, said, "Aligned with our strategic approach to decarbonising the energy sector and long-term energy security, EWEC is setting a global



benchmark for utility-scale renewable energy projects that accelerate energy transition and sustainability objectives. Our focus extends beyond the immediate benefits, and our advanced techno-economic analysis demonstrates the vital role that solar power plays in meeting both current and future energy demand of Abu Dhabi and the UAE."

Mohamed Jameel Al-Ramahi, Masdar Chief Executive Officer, said: "Building on the country's position as a global leader in the adoption of solar technologies, Al Ajban Solar PV is set to be Renewable energy is a key strategic approach for EWEC to accelerate the energy transition and decarbonisation of the energy sector in the UAE



a world-class project upon completion and will further support the UAE's Net Zero by 2050 strategic initiative and the global drive to triple renewable energy capacity by 2030 set out in the UAE Consensus."

Renewable energy is crucial for Abu Dhabi's energy transition and sustainability strategy, serving as a catalyst in realising the goals of the UAE Energy Strategy 2050 and the UAE Net Zero by 2050 strategic initiative. The project's financial close is expected by Q3 2024.

By 2030, EWEC is aiming to provide more than 50 per cent of Abu Dhabi's electricity from renewable and clean energy sources, with its latest forecasts

recommending the addition of 1.4GW of new solar PV per year between 2027-2037.





he United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has launched a call for nominations for the annual Champions of the Earth award - the UN's highest environmental honour, which recognizes outstanding leaders from government, civil society, and the private sector for their transformative impact on the environment.

This year, UNEP encourages nominations of individuals and organizations developing and implementing sustainable policies and solutions to restore land, enhance drought resilience, and combat desertification.

Since the award's inception in 2005, Champions of the Earth has recognized 116 laureates, including 27 world leaders, 70 individuals and 19 organizations. In 2023, UNEP received a record 2,500 nominations for the award.

As we approach the halfway mark of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, urgent action is needed to protect and revive ecosystems.

Restoration improves livelihoods, reduces poverty, builds resilience to extreme weather and slows the climate crisis. World Environment Day on 5 June 2024 will focus on land restoration, desertification and drought resilience.

Restoring and reviving nature is critical to improving human and planetary health. Leaders from all sectors and regions are actively working to address the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity and nature loss, and pollution and waste. The Champions of the Earth thus remind us that environmental sustainability is key to achieving sustainable development.

Individuals, organizations and government entities may be nominated under the categories of Policy Leadership, Inspiration and Action, Entrepreneurial Vision, and Science and Innovation. Nominations are open until 12 May 2024 and the Champions of the Earth will be announced in late 2024.





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АИЗМЕРЗ: 1) ЕИУІ ВООМЕИТ 2) ИАТИРЕ 3) SOCIETY 4) RESERVOIR 5) DROUGHT 6) WILDLIFE

Ε	R	Е	U	S	Е	W	Υ	R	Ε	V	G	R	Ν	WORLD
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S	S	E	Ρ	0	Ρ	U	L	Α	Τ	I	0	Ν	S	STOTEM
														POPULATION







5

Across

- 2. Toxin secreted by some animals.
- 4. The life giving gas.
- 6. A common, colourless liquid.
- 7. The overflowing or excess of water causes.
- 9. An area of land where large amounts of waste material is buried underneath the earth.
- 10. Hard shelled reptile.

Down

1. To keep save from injury, harm or destruction.

2

6

3

4

1

- 3. A large collection of trees.
- 5. A type of fossil fuel.
- 8. The planet on which we live.

ANSWERS: 1) PROTECT 2) VENOM 3) FOREST 4) OXYGEN 5) COAL 6) WATER 7) FLOODS 8) EARTH 9) LANDFILL 10TURTLE



GREEN TRANSPORTATION

Scientists already know that fossil fuels like oil and natural gas won't last forever. Also, most climate change scientists agree that fossil fuel use is contributing to global warming at a faster rate than normal. Many countries and communities are working on reducing their "Carbon footprint." This measures how carbon dioxide is released into the earth's atmosphere due to human energy use like driving cars that run on fossil fuels.

Common Types of Green Transportation

Electric Vehicles – From trucks to cars to even bicycles, these vehicles run on electricity. Also called EVs, most electric vehicles operate by storing electric power in batteries. A downside to electric cars is that not all communities have charging stations readily available.

Solar Vehicles – Solar vehicles are powered by the energy of the sun. They often use solar panels mounted directly onto the vehicle that stores that energy like a battery does. There is still an environmental impact to solar vehicles: the raw materials to make the solar cells and panels that power them.

High-Speed Rail – High-speed rail features trains that travel on special tracks at much faster speeds than traditional trains. Highspeed rail is more eco-friendly because it often uses little to no fossil fuels.

Biofuel Vehicles – Unlike fossil fuels, which come from very old plants, biofuel is made from plant materials more recently harvested for use. Common examples are ethanol, often made from sugarcane or corn, and biodiesel, commonly made from palm oil. A downside to this fuel source is the large amount of energy expended in harvesting the plants to make them.

Hybrid Vehicles – The word "hybrid" means "Combination," and hybrid vehicles run on two



or more types of power systems. For example, many electric Cars are actually hybrid Cars that run on both electric power and gasoline. The environmental impact for each hybrid vehicle differs depending on what fuel sources are used.

• •

WORLD BEE DAY MAY 20

Bees and other pollinators, such as butterflies, bats and hummingbirds, are increasingly under threat from human activities.

Pollination is, however, a fundamental process for the survival of our ecosystems. Nearly 90% of the world's wild flowering plant species depend, entirely, or at least in part, on animal pollination, along with more than 75% of the world's food crops and 35% of global agricultural land. Not only do pollinators contribute directly to food security, but they are key to conserving biodiversity.

To raise awareness of the importance of pollinators, the threats they face and their contribution to sustainable development, the UN designated 20 May as World Bee Day.

The goal is to strengthen measures aimed at protecting bees and other pollinators, which would significantly contribute to solving problems related to the global food supply and eliminate hunger in developing countries. We all depend on pollinators and it is, therefore, Crucial to monitor their decline and halt the loss of biodiversity.

In recognition of the pivotal role that youth Can play in addressing Challenges bees and other pollinators are facing, World Bee Day 2024 focuses on the theme "Bee engaged with Youth." This theme highlights the importance of involving young people in beekeeping and pollinator conservation efforts, recognizing them as the future stewards of our environment.



MAY 22

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

As the global Community is Called to reexamine our relationship to the natural world, one thing is Certain: despite all our technological advances we are Completely dependent on healthy and Vibrant ecosystems for our water, food, medicines, Clothes, fuel, shelter and energy, just to name a few. This involves respecting, protecting, and repairing our biological wealth. The theme of the International Day for Biological Diversity is 'from agreement to action: build back biodiversity'.

Biological diversity resources are the pillars upon which we build civilizations. Fish provide 20 per cent of animal protein to about 3 billion people. Over 80 per cent of the human diet is provided by plants. As many as 80 per cent of people living in rural areas in developing countries rely on traditional plant-based medicines for basic healthCare.

But loss of biodiversity threatens all, including our health. It has been proven that biodiversity loss could expand zoonoses diseases transmitted from animals to humanswhile, on the other hand, if we keep biodiversity intact, it offers excellent tools to fight against pandemics.

There is a growing recognition that biological diversity is a global asset of tremendous value to future generations, especially as several species are being significantly reduced by human activities. Given the important need for public education and awareness about this issue, the UN decided to celebrate the International Day for Biological Diversity annually.

> WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

Things to Do...

Walk to places!





Volunteer for a clean-up drive!

Turn off taps when not in use!

COLOUR ME!



Sharjah Safari welcomes birth of second African elephant

UAE NEWS

he Environment and Protected Areas Authority (EPAA) in Sharjah has announced the birth of the second African savanna elephant at Sharjah Safari project, the largest of its kind in the world outside of Africa.

Named "Tarthooth", after a wild plant that emerges with the rainfall, this calf joins Samra, who was born in 2023.

Hana Saif Al Suwaidi, Chairperson of EPAA, highlighted that with the recording of the second birth of an African savannah elephant, Sharjah Safari aims to consolidate its qualitative successes in breeding and adding many animals in various environments of its sections, which vary between birds, reptiles, mammals, among others. This includes the elephants, in addition to the births of African giraffes, the Scimitar oryx, and breeding the rare Madagascar Paratilapia fish.

African savanna elephants are considered the largest land animals in the world, with their numbers continuously decreasing.

Compared to forest elephants, savanna elephants are distinguished by their larger size, ranging from 4 to 5 meters in height and weighing between 4 and 7 tonnes.

They have notably outward-curving tusks and are predominantly found in the southern plains of the Sahara desert in Africa.

They live in savanna regions, have a lifespan of up to 50 years, a gestation period of 22 months, consume up to 150 kg of food daily, and differ from African forest elephants, which are smaller, have almost straight tusks, and inhabit the forests of central and West Africa. Their large ears are filled with blood vessels to help dispel excess heat.

Inaugurated in 2022, Sharjah Safari encompasses 12 different environments inspired by various regions across Africa, covering an area of 8 sq kms and representing the wildlife and terrain of the actual areas in the African continent.





Al Hefaiyah Mountain Conservation Centre witnesses first Arabian Tahr birth in Sharjah he Environment and Protected Areas Authority in Sharjah (EPAA) announced the birth of the first Arabian Tahr at Al Hefaiyah Mountain Conservation Centre. This event marks a pivotal moment in the conservation efforts of the Arabian Tahr project being implemented by the centre in its newly expanded facilities.

The project aligns with EPAA's overarching vision and goals to bolster biodiversity conservation efforts. By creating an ideal natural habitat, the centre has not only facilitated the breeding of the Arabian Tahr but also transformed the Hajar mountains into a sanctuary for over 30 different types of mountain wildlife.

Hana Saif Al Suwaidi, Chairperson of the Environment and Protected Areas Authority lauded the dedicated efforts of the team at Al Hefaiyah Mountain Conservation Centre. She noted that their work significantly contributes to Sharjah's environmental conservation strategies, reinforcing its commitment to biodiversity preservation on local, regional, and international scales. The initiative also supports Sharjah's environmental strategies concerning natural life and promotes the reproduction of endangered species.

The Arabian Tahr is a diurnal animal and lives in small groups. These animals have a lifespan ranging from 8 to 16 years and weigh between 15 to 40 kilograms. They predominantly inhabit rugged mountain slopes near permanent water sources. The Tahr's diet consists of water, grass, small shrubs, leaves and wild fruits.

National Aquarium Abu Dhabi houses two African manatees

The National Aquarium Abu Dhabi welcomed two African manatees to their new home, becoming the first ambassadors of their species in the region.

African manatees are extremely rare and only a few facilities around the world can host them. The National Aquarium, which was designed according to the highest international standards, can offer the manatees an environment like their natural habitat in Africa.

The initiative also reflects a broader commitment to supporting marine conservation efforts and an appreciation for the marvels of aquatic life.

The two male manatees were transferred from their previous home in Seoul, South Korea, accompanied by a team of specialists. This reflects the aquarium's commitment to adhering to international safety standards and implementing the required medical and safety protocols. To ensure their welfare at every stage of the journey, the manatees were closely monitored throughout their journey.

In addition to their role as ambassadors for their species and symbols for key conservation efforts, the two African manatees are poised to become beloved icons, captivating the hearts of visitors with their gentle nature and fascinating behaviour. Their presence will offer a unique opportunity for the public to connect with them on a personal



level, fostering a deeper appreciation for marine life and the importance of conservation.

In line with its broader mission to promote marine conservation and raise awareness about vulnerable species, the National Aquarium Abu Dhabi has contributed to the African Aquatic Conservation Fund to support projects that focus on preserving manatees in West Africa. Additionally, the aquarium will sell hand-made items crafted by African artisans, with a portion of the proceeds managed through the Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund, in African partnership with the Aquatic Conservation Fund, being used to help conserve the species in their natural environment.



Nuclear energy's role in reaching climate targets recognised by G7

'New reactor designs including advanced and small modular reactors - could bring in the future additional benefits such as improved safety and sustainability' he Group of Seven (G7) nations have committed to support the use of nuclear energy in those countries that opt to use it, says a communique released at the end of the G7 Ministerial Meeting on Climate, Energy and Environment in Turin, Italy.

"Those countries that opt to use nuclear energy or support its use recognise its potential as a clean/zero-emissions energy source that can reduce dependence on fossil fuels to address the climate crises and improve global energy security," the document states.

"These countries recognise nuclear energy as a source of baseload power, providing grid stability and flexibility, and optimising use of grid capacity, while countries that do not use nuclear energy or do not support its use prefer other options to achieve the same goals, taking into account their assessment of associated risks and costs of nuclear energy."



The ministers noted the declaration issued by 25 countries during the COP28 climate conference in Dubai in December last year, setting a goal to triple global nuclear generating capacity by 2050.

The ministers also said that new reactor designs - including advanced and small modular reactors - "could bring in the future additional benefits such as improved safety and sustainability, reduced cost of production, reduced project risk, waste management improvement, better social acceptance, opportunities for industry by providing at the same time energy, high temperature heat, hydrogen".

They committed to support multilateral efforts to strengthen the resilience of nuclear supply chains and to continue the cooperation for building a robust nuclear supply chain in the framework of G7 and of the Nuclear Energy Working Group established in Sapporo.

The ministers noted that they would promote research and development initiatives on innovative nuclear power technologies "for those countries that opt to use nuclear energy or support its use".

The communique added that the G7 will "promote the responsible deployment of nuclear energy technologies including for advanced and small modular reactors, including microreactors, and work collectively to share national best practices, including for responsible waste management, enable greater access to project financing tools, sectorial collaboration, support designing procedures licensing and strengthening coordination on development of commercial projects among interested G7 members and third markets".

The ministers said: "We underscore the importance for all countries and their respective people of upholding the highest standards of safety, security, and safeguards and nonThe G7 is an informal forum that brings together Italy, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, the UK, and the USA



proliferation, particularly as more countries adopt nuclear power as part of their energy mix."

The ministers' statement came following a call by the nuclear industry for G7 governments to embrace nuclear deployment as a strategic priority, by maximising use of existing nuclear power plants and setting clear plans for further deployment that would fulfil the targets they set at COP28, to triple global nuclear capacity.





New initiative aims to curb the toxic impacts of agriculture

Ecuador, India, Kenya, Laos, Philippines, Uruguay, and Vietnam have joined forces to reduce the environmental impact of the agricultural sector The governments of Ecuador, India, Kenya, Laos, Philippines, Uruguay, and Vietnam have come together to launch a USD379 million initiative to combat pollution from the use of pesticides and plastics in agriculture.

Chemicals play a crucial role in farming, with nearly 4 billion tons of pesticides and 12 billion kg of agricultural plastics used every year.

Despite their benefits for food yields, these chemicals pose significant risks to human health and the environment. As many as 11,000 people die from the toxic effects of pesticides annually, and chemical residues can degrade ecosystems, diminishing soil health and farmers' resilience to climate change. The open burning of agricultural plastics also contributes to an air pollution crisis that causes one in nine deaths worldwide.

Highly hazardous pesticides and mismanaged agricultural plastics release toxic persistent organic pollutants (POPs) – chemicals which don't break down in the environment and are generally cheaper than sustainable alternatives.

The Financing Agrochemical Reduction and Management Programme – or FARM – led by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) with financial support from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), seeks to change that, elaborating the business case for banks and policy-makers to reorient policy and financial resources towards farmers to help them adopt low- and non-chemical alternatives to toxic agrochemicals and facilitate a transition towards better practices.

The five-year programme is projected to prevent

and also boosts yields and profits," said Anil Sookdeo, Chemicals Coordinator at the GEF.

To do this, the FARM programme will support government regulation to phase out POPs containing agrochemicals and agri-plastics and adopt better management standards to improve the availability of effective pest control, production alternatives.

"Food productivity and safety is reliant on identifyingbetterpractices and safer alternatives to highly hazardous pesticides," Sheila Aggarwal-



over 51,000 tons of hazardous pesticides and over 20,000 tons of plastic waste from being released, while avoiding 35,000 tons of carbon dioxide emissions and protecting over 3 million hectares of land from degradation as farms and farmers convert to low-chemical and nonchemical alternatives.

"Our current agricultural system relies on harmful chemicals. FARM's powerful alternative model empowers farmers with the knowledge and resources to transition to sustainable practices Khan, Director of UNEP's Industry and Economy Division, said. "Adoption is key to scaling these alternatives through a strong, coordinated response to the pollution crisis."

The FARM launch event convened representatives from all seven countries, with over 100 partners and stakeholders directly involved in the programme, including public and private banks, policy makers, farmer cooperatives, agrochemical and plastic manufacturers, civil society, academia, and retailers.



Uniting for climate resilience

In a world marked by the increasing possibility of extreme weather events, the one truth that stands out is that investing in climate mitigation is becoming an urgent need for countries worldwide, no matter how big or small the country is, or how developed or poor its economy is.

We are increasingly seeing that what used to be a once-in-a-century event is now happening every decade or so, and extreme weather conditions that once occurred every 10 years, are becoming more frequent.

Since the start of the year, heavy rainfall has ravaged countries across Asia, Africa, and South America. The effects of a warmer climate on these recent weather events, both in their severity and frequency, have been profound.

During the last two years, over 40 million people, mainly in countries that contribute least to global warming, were forced either permanently or temporarily from their homes by disasters.

The economic ramifications of climate change are far-reaching. Global losses from extreme

Dr. Eisa M. Abdelllatif Chief Technical Advisor Zayed Intl. Foundation for the Environment Founding Chairperson of Bi'ati Organization

weather events driven by significant earthquakes and relentless severe convective storms in the United States and Europe, reached USD 380 billion in damages worldwide, according to the 2024 Climate and Catastrophe Insight report published earlier this year. Weather-related factors were responsible for 95 percent of the 66 natural disasters in 2023 that caused damages of at least USD 1 billion.

New analysis shows climate change could cut global GDP by 19 per cent by 2050. These damages are six times larger than the mitigation costs needed to limit global warming to two degrees. Investments in resilient infrastructure and innovative technologies are therefore imperative to confront the escalating risks posed by climate change.

As we confront the realities of a warming planet, we must heed the lessons of recent disasters and redouble our efforts to build a more sustainable future. The time for action is now, with a greater focus on the human role, as the cost of inaction will lead to catastrophic consequences.



Zayed International Prize for the Environment

Together for a green century

THE FUTURE OF OUR WORLD IS IN OUR HANDS. ACT NOW!





Zayed International Foundation for the Environment