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creating green communities for a better tomorrow



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Together for a
green home





Chairman's Message



Prof. Mohammed bin Fahad
Executive Editor

With the launch of the 'Plant the Emirates' programme, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, has sowed the seeds for a sustainable and food-secure future. The programme reflects a profound commitment to enhancing the UAE's agricultural sector and to embedding the values of sustainability and self-reliance in the national ethos.

Plant the Emirates is more than a project; it is a legacy of green commitment that honors the founding vision of Sheikh Zayed, whose relentless commitment to greening and cultivating the UAE's desert landscapes have laid the foundation for a national identity closely tied to environmental stewardship and agricultural innovation. Today, Plant the Emirates continues that legacy, but with a modernized approach—one that embraces smart agriculture, integrates technology, and envisions partnerships between the public and private sectors to enhance food security across the nation.

At the Zayed International Foundation for the Environment, we are studying the feasibility of planting desert areas using water harvesting, soil reclamation and tissue culture techniques to contribute to the implementation of this great national project, Plant the Emirates.

The significance of this program extends to economic and environmental resilience. In an era where climate change disrupts global food supplies, developing a robust, sustainable agricultural sector is not just an option—it's a necessity. By promoting smart agricultural practices and resilient crop varieties, Plant the Emirates seeks to address this vulnerability, turning agriculture into a sustainable pillar of the national economy.

Public and private sector collaboration will further spur innovation, encourage sustainable investments, and broaden the impact of these initiatives. As the UAE takes bold steps toward a greener future, it is also planting seeds of resilience, hope, and unity—an enduring legacy for the UAE and a model for the world.

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Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid launches 'Plant the Emirates' project to boost food security, sustainable agriculture

Special Cabinet meeting in Al Marmoom, Dubai, also approved National Agricultural Centre

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, launched the "Plant the Emirates" national programme.

The programme comprises several initiatives that align with the UAE's vision to advance agricultural development and boost sustainable national food security.

The announcement was made during a UAE Cabinet meeting at Al Marmoom, Dubai. The meeting was attended by His Highness Sheikh Mansour Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Vice President, Deputy Prime Minister, and Chairman of the Presidential Court; HH Sheikh Hamdan Bin Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai, Deputy Prime Minister, and Minister of Defense; and Lt. General Sheikh Saif Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister, and Minister of the Interior.

To mark the event, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed said, "Today we launched a national

programme to revitalise and boost the agricultural sector in the UAE, during a Cabinet meeting at Al Marmoom farms.”

He added that the national programme, "Plant the Emirates," intends to perpetuate the legacy of Zayed and his commitment to cultivating, greening, and developing the agricultural sector in the UAE. The programme seeks to embed a culture of agriculture in homes, schools, and the hearts of future generations across the UAE.

The National Agriculture Centre is set to offer technical support, promote local produce, and boost sector growth



The Plant the Emirates programme aligns with the UAE’s broader vision of sustainability, food security, and agricultural development, and includes several key initiatives designed to encourage the adoption of smart agricultural practices and foster public-private sector partnerships.

Sheikh Mohammed also said, “The Plant the Emirates” programme aims to enhance the country’s food security, advance the development of agricultural technologies, establish new

collaborative partnerships with the private sector and expand the green space in the country.

National Agricultural Centre

As part of the programme, the Cabinet has approved establishment of the National Agricultural Centre, which is anticipated to serve as a pivotal driver of the sector in the forthcoming period through providing technical and technological support, facilitate the formation of partnerships, establish new initiatives and institutions, and offer product support.”



Over the next five years (2025-2030), the centre aims to raise the number of productive farms by 20 per cent, increase the number of organic farms by 25 per cent, and foster the adoption of climate-smart solutions across 30 per cent of farms.

Additionally, the centre will work to reduce agricultural waste by 50 per cent and increase the use of local agricultural products in the UAE's hospitality sector by 25 per cent.

"Agriculture in the UAE is Sheikh Zayed's legacy. It is a pillar of security, sustainability, and prosperity for this cherished land. We call on everyone to join this national project with ideas, initiatives, and by spreading the culture of agriculture. The seeds we plant today will flourish for generations to come," Sheikh Mohammed said.

Driving sustainable practices

The Plant the Emirates programme supports the

UAE's vision to advance agriculture development and achieve sustainable national food security. It aims to encourage local community members to practice domestic agriculture by cultivating key agricultural products at home, expand green spaces in the country, support environment protection efforts, and make the UAE agricultural products a synonym for quality and high nutritional value.

The programme also coincides with the "Year of Sustainability 2024" and supports enhancing the environment sustainability ecosystem through enhancing local products' effective contribution to reducing the carbon footprint, through the promotion of fresh, locally produced agricultural products.

The national programme partners with all federal and local government entities, municipalities' teams, private sector organisations, and community members. The programme is launching

Plant the Emirates seeks to increase green spaces, promote environmental protection efforts, and encourage domestic agriculture



national campaigns, events, exhibitions and seasonal markets to display and market crops and agricultural products under a unified identity. It will also organise volunteer programmes and competitions for students and the public, launch the World's Coolest Winter campaign under the slogan of "Green Tourism", and offer advisory and specialised programmes and services for farmers and the private sector. The programme will hold events that encourage smart agricultural practices and the use of groundbreaking agriculture technologies and trends.

Additionally, he emphasised the necessity of promoting agricultural awareness and investing in the future by nurturing the present, with the aim of ensuring a sustainable and prosperous tomorrow.

Other key decisions

The UAE Cabinet also reviewed progress on several other important initiatives during the same meeting.

Among them was the Biodiversity Sites Project, aimed at identifying key biodiversity sites within the UAE and adding them to the global biodiversity sites database. Nine key biodiversity sites, including the Arabian Oryx Sanctuary and the Marawah Marine Biosphere Reserve, have been recognised for their importance to the region's natural heritage.

The cabinet was briefed on the UAE Circular Economy Agenda 2031, a strategic initiative that supports sustainable practices, such as the use of recycled materials in the consumer goods



sector and the development of biofuels from food waste.

FAO commends launch of 'Plant the Emirates' national programme

The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) has expressed strong support for the UAE's newly launched "Plant the Emirates" national programme.

"The 'Plant the Emirates' initiative is a vital step toward ensuring food security and promoting sustainable agricultural practices in the region," said Kayan Akram Jaff, Head of Mission of the Food and Agriculture Organization Subregional Office for the Gulf Cooperation Council and Yemen, which is based in the UAE. "We commend the UAE's leadership for its commitment to fostering a resilient agricultural sector that not

only feeds its people but also contributes to global sustainability efforts. We eagerly anticipate the positive outcomes this initiative will yield."

Jaff emphasised that the ambitious targets for the newly launched National Agricultural Center reflect the UAE's commitment to enhancing agricultural productivity and ensuring sustainable food security.

The "Plant the Emirates" programme emphasises the importance of local food production to reduce reliance on imports while fostering environmental sustainability. By involving a wide range of stakeholders - from government agencies to local communities - the initiative seeks to create a unified approach to agricultural development that can serve as a model for other nations.



MoCCAЕ showcases women's vital role in UAE agriculture at graduation event

UAE NEWS

The UAE Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MoCCAЕ) in collaboration with The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) held a graduation ceremony to mark the completion of the Farmer Field Schools program, highlighting the significant achievements of women in the UAE's agriculture sector.

This initiative focused on the management of the Red Palm Weevil (RPW) and the cultivation of date palms. It featured five Farmer Field Schools from across Abu Dhabi, Ras Al Khaimah, and Fujairah.

A total of 48 participants, including eight women farm owners and managers participating for the first time, were empowered with essential skills and knowledge, marking a significant advancement in female participation in agricultural management.

The Farmer Field School programme exemplifies the UAE's dedication to fostering sustainable agricultural practices and empowering its

farmers to ensure food security.

By providing hands-on training and practical solutions, local farmers are now better equipped to identify, monitor, and manage the red palm weevil, ultimately contributing to the resilience of the date palm industry in the region.

Thaer Yaseen, FAO Senior Plant Protection Officer, who leads the RPW project, remarked, "This program highlights that through collaboration and shared knowledge, we can effectively combat this pest and safeguard our date palm resources."

Key achievements of the programme include increased awareness and knowledge of the Red Palm Weevil and its impact on date palm cultivation, improved agricultural practices leading to enhanced yields and healthier date palms, and strengthened engagement and collaboration among farmers, fostering empowerment and resilience.



COP28 President calls on Parties to implement the UAE Consensus

In his address to delegates at Pre-COP in Baku, Dr. Sultan Al Jaber said the UAE Consensus represents the defining roadmap for achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement and Parties should come together again to deliver on its outcomes at COP29

COP28 President Dr. Sultan Al Jaber called on nations to once again “unite, act and deliver” at COP29 in Baku to build on the mandate of last year’s historic UAE Consensus, which represents the “road back to Paris.”

The UAE Consensus “represents the defining roadmap for achieving the ambition of the Paris Agreement,” Dr. Al Jaber said in an address at the opening session of Pre-COP. “As we gather against a backdrop of continuing geopolitical conflict, let us again find common cause across every pillar of the climate agenda. What we delivered in Dubai, let us build on in Baku. Let us once again unite, act and deliver.”

Pre-COP, taking place this week in Baku, is a preparatory meeting of ministers and negotiators ahead of COP29, being held in the Azerbaijan capital next month. While Dr. Al Jaber acknowledged that many issues remain unresolved, finance will be a key priority, he told delegates.

“Finance was a cornerstone of the UAE

Consensus,” he said. “We established a “triple A” framework for making finance more available, accessible and affordable.”

The New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) on Climate Finance, which is scheduled to be adopted at COP29, “must provide the means to implement the UAE Consensus” and “the quantum we agree on should meet the size of the challenge,” the COP28 President said.

“We must ensure that funds target the most

them now,” he said.

Mitigation and adaptation are equally important, Dr. Al Jaber told delegates, calling on Parties to meet the agreed goal of doubling adaptation finance and to embed fully-funded strategies in their National Adaptation Plans (NAPs).

The UAE Framework on Global Climate Resilience, adopted at COP28, “connects the dots between sectors to protect nature, lives and livelihoods” and provides “a practical plan that all Parties



vulnerable first to help them build climate resilience and recover from climate impacts,” he told delegates.

“And all previous pledges must be met, all future promises honored,” he emphasised.

Dr. Al Jaber also urged delegates to finalize negotiations on Article 6 of the Paris Agreement - which focuses on the development of carbon markets - without delay. “We need robust, high-integrity carbon markets that drive investments in both mitigation and adaptation - and we need

should follow,” he said.

On mitigation, “let’s not reinvent the wheel,” Dr. Al Jaber said, calling on Parties “to follow through on what we all signed up to” at COP28. “The UAE Consensus is the road back to Paris,” he said.

The next round of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), which must be submitted by February, “must align with these agreements to keep 1.5 within reach,” Dr. Al Jaber said. “They must be economy wide, they must cover all GHGs, and they must seize the opportunity of climate



action as a driver of sustainable economic growth.”

The world could achieve two-thirds of Paris-aligned targets just by implementing the UAE Consensus goal of tripling renewable energy capacity and doubling energy efficiency improvements, the COP28 President said, citing analysis by the International Energy Agency (IEA).

The world is set to add more than 5,500GW of renewable energy capacity by 2030, according to a report released recently by the IEA. This is almost three times as much as was added from 2017 to 2023.

However, Dr. Al Jaber noted, the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) has calculated that meeting the goal of tripling capacity this decade will require tripling investment to USD 1.5 trillion annually.

“These investments are worth making, because the goals of the UAE Consensus make climate sense and economic sense,” he said. “In fact, the UAE Consensus just makes common sense.”

The COP Presidencies Troika - the collaboration between the Presidencies of COP28, COP29 and COP30 - will continue to advocate for UAE Consensus across multilateral platforms, including the G7 and G20, Dr. Al Jaber said.

The COP28 President also spoke at an event organized by the COP Presidencies Troika, where he said the body will continue to promote international cooperation and drive ambition in the next round of NDCs.

“We need to collaborate to ensure that every NDC has the highest ambition possible, is balanced across every pillar of the climate agenda and has

The COP Presidencies Troika - the collaboration between the Presidencies of COP28, COP29 and COP30 - will continue to advocate for the UAE Consensus across multilateral platforms, including the G7 and G20



means of implementation at its core,” Dr. Al Jaber said, calling on Parties to share best practices, enable the transfer of technologies, and promote investment across sectors and the Global South.

The next round of NDCs are “not only crucial for keeping 1.5°C within reach, they represent a massive opportunity for socioeconomic development, in line with the science and aligned to Paris,” he said.

“Through enhanced international cooperation, we can ensure that equity is embedded in climate progress and that we leave no one behind,” said Dr. Al Jaber.

Food Tech Valley, Badia Farms to launch innovative hybrid farming models

Food Tech Valley, a UAE-government-led initiative aimed at building a sustainable food ecosystem, has announced a 27-year strategic agreement with Badia Farms to implement hybrid models for growing premium fruits and vegetables throughout the year.

The agreement was signed between Rashed Mohammad, Chief Real Estate Officer of Wasl, and Omar Al Jundi, Founder and CEO of Badia Farms. Badia Farms will employ hybrid growing models across a 236,000 sq. ft. plot, using both vertical and horizontal farming techniques.

These sustainable methods utilise 90 percent less water than traditional farming and are powered by clean energy sources. Badia’s produce is grown in a controlled indoor environment without pesticides, ensuring fresh, nutritious products that meet the highest quality standards.

This strategic partnership marks a crucial advancement towards the UAE and Dubai’s vision for a sustainable and innovative food ecosystem. Food Tech Valley, with its focus on cutting-edge technologies and collaborative projects, is attracting industry leaders and progressing towards enhanced food security.

As the UAE anticipates increased demand and aims to reduce its reliance on imports, such partnerships are essential in fulfilling the nation’s ambitious goals outlined in the National Food Security Strategy 2051.



Dubai Reef completes work on first 1,000 purpose-built reef modules

The modules aim to establish a vibrant marine habitat for reef fish and aquatic fauna such as hard and soft corals, sea anemones, sponges and mollusks

Dubai Reef, a sustainable initiative by Dubai Can and the world's largest purpose-built reef development, has successfully reached another major milestone with the fabrication of the initial 1,000 purpose-built reef modules. This marks a significant step in its journey towards enhancing marine biodiversity and promoting ecological sustainability in Dubai's waters.

Launched by H.H. Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, and Chairman of Dubai Executive Council, the Dubai Reef project involves the deployment of 20,000 purpose-built reef modules of various sizes over a three-year period. The pilot stage was inaugurated by Sheikh Hamdan in April 2024, and the deployment of the first 1,000 reef modules is set to start in the last week of November 2024.

The Dubai Reef project will see numerous purpose-built reef module types deployed at

various depths across four clusters. The modules vary in dimensions to create various habitats for different fish species, with the height ranging from 1.60 metres to 6.5 metres, and are to be deployed in depths from 15 metres to 25 metres. The reef modules aim to establish a vibrant marine habitat for reef fish and aquatic fauna such as hard and soft corals, sea anemones, sponges, and molluscs.

The reef project marks a significant step in Dubai's journey towards enhancing marine biodiversity and promoting ecological sustainability in the emirate's waters



The construction of the Dubai Reef modules began in August 2024, with the pouring of the Arab Marine Pyramid module type. Fabricated by HaejooX on a site powered by biofuels, the materials used ensure durability and promote and support marine life—a process that adheres to sustainability and environmentally friendly practices.

Ahmed Mohammed bin Thani, Director General of Dubai Environment and Climate Change Authority (DECCA), said, “The successful fabrication of the first 1,000 reef modules is a significant achievement, and we are excited to see the project take shape. Dubai Reef is a shining

example of what can be achieved through collaboration and innovation. We are proud to continue serving as one of the key strategic partners of this project, which aligns with our mission to ensure environmental protection, preserve the quality and natural balance of the environment, and maintain Dubai’s natural resources.”

Sheikh Dr. Saeed bin Ahmed bin Khalifa Al Maktoum, Executive Director of the Dubai Maritime Authority (DMA) at the Ports, Customs, and Free Zone Corporation (PCFC), expressed pride in the efforts made by DMA and PCFC to support leading environmental initiatives, such



as Dubai Reef, which reflects Dubai's future-looking vision while supporting marine biodiversity. He said, "The progress we have seen so far is the result of the unwavering commitment to create an integrated marine ecosystem supporting Dubai's blue economy. We are progressing according to schedule, with the ultimate goal of fostering a balanced and sustainable marine ecosystem, elevating Dubai as a leader in the marine sector."

Yusuf Lootah, CEO of Corporate Strategy and Performance, who heads the Dubai Can sustainable initiatives and Dubai Reef project in the Dubai Department of Economy and Tourism (DET), added, "The delivery of the first 1,000 reef modules marks an important milestone that demonstrates Dubai's commitment to developing a vibrant and resilient habitat for our marine ecosystem. The capability to fabricate and deliver consistent numbers of modules will ensure reliable production throughout the project's lifecycle, enabling us to meet our overarching goals."

Spanning 600 square kilometres of Dubai's

waters, Dubai Reef is the second major project under the pioneering Dubai Can sustainability initiative launched by Sheikh Hamdan and is aligned with the ambitious goals of the Dubai Economic Agenda, D33, to further consolidate Dubai's position as a leading global city for business and leisure.

A citywide collaboration from across the public and private sectors, Dubai Reef's strategic partners include Dubai Department of Economy and Tourism (DET), Dubai Environment and Climate Change Authority (DECCA), DP World, Dubai Chambers, Nakheel, Ports, Customs and Free Zone Corporation (PCFC), and Emirates.





28th IRENA Council convenes in Abu Dhabi ahead of COP29

UAE NEWS

The International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) convened its 28th Council meeting in Abu Dhabi on October 24, ahead of the 29th Conference of the Parties (COP29) to discuss critical topics related to the energy transition, including progress towards tripling renewable energy capacity and doubling energy efficiency by 2030, as outlined in the Outcome of the First Global Stocktake.

A recently published IRENA report, *Delivering on the UAE Consensus: Tracking Progress Toward Tripling Renewable Energy Capacity and Doubling Energy Efficiency by 2030*, in collaboration with COP28 and COP29 Presidencies, the Government of Brazil (host of COP30), the Ministry of Energy of Azerbaijan and the Global Renewables Alliance (GRA), confirms that current national plans are projected to deliver only half of the required growth in renewable power by 2030 to limit rising global temperatures to 1.5°C.

IRENA Council Chair Dr. Gloria Magombo Secretary

for Energy and Power Development, Zimbabwe stated: “The alarming gap between the current global trajectory of the renewables-based energy transition and our collective climate targets underscore the urgency of IRENA’s mission.”

The 28th IRENA Council also engaged in discussions on national experiences in energy transition, challenges and opportunities to enhance the mobilisation of finance towards renewables, and innovative technologies and partnerships essential for the energy transformation of small island economies.

The two-day meetings also collaboratively considered the implementation of the Agency’s work programme and budget.

IRENA recently launched ‘#3xRenewables for the planet and its people’, a global campaign designed to drive action and collaboration towards tripling renewable energy capacity by 2030.

First regional centre of excellence for food security to be established in UAE

The Regional Centre of Excellence for Transforming Food Systems will drive innovation and strategic transformation in food systems across the region

The Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MoCCA), in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), hosted an interactive workshop in Dubai.

A key outcome of the event was the announcement of the UAE as host of the first Regional Centre of Excellence for Transforming Food Systems, a pivotal development that will drive innovation and strategic transformation in food systems across the region.

The event focused on enhancing cooperation between FAO and the UAE, particularly in advancing the UAE's initiatives for sustainable national food security. It also sought to address various challenges in this area, aligning with the strategic objectives of the FAO Subregional Office for the Gulf Cooperation Council States and Yemen.



The workshop brought together officials from FAO, MoCCA, alongside local authorities, academic institutions, and private sector entities specialised in food and agriculture. Participants clarified expectations between the Ministry and FAO regarding the structure and overarching mission of the FAO Subregional Office, fostering a mutual understanding of priorities and aspirations. Discussions centred on the mechanisms and resources necessary for effective collaboration, identifying key areas for partnership.

Dr. Mohammed Salman Al Hamadi, Assistant Undersecretary for Food Diversity at the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment emphasised

MoCCA and FAO reaffirmed their commitment to developing a clear roadmap for collaboration in food security and agricultural practices

UAE, providing comprehensive support to local farmers and enhancing the role of smart technologies to increase local agricultural production while improving its quality and competitiveness.

He affirmed that the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations will play a vital role in supporting the national programme, expressing confidence in the ongoing collaboration with the organisation and the shared commitment to advancing the agricultural sector in cooperation with all relevant stakeholders in the country. He stressed the importance of identifying challenges, finding practical solutions, and moving forward with their implementation on the ground.

Kayan Akram Jaff, Head of Mission, FAO Subregional Office for the Gulf Cooperation Council States and Yemen, emphasised, "FAO is dedicated to supporting the UAE in addressing food security challenges. Our partnership will focus on strategic initiatives that align with our mutual objectives and the priorities of the UAE."

MoCCA and FAO reaffirmed their commitment to developing a clear roadmap for collaboration in food security and agricultural practices, as underscored during the discussions. This strategic partnership aims to enhance food security in the region while advancing the foreseen mission of the FAO Subregional Office.

that enhancing the country's food security relies on supporting a robust food and agricultural sector enabled by modern, climate-smart technologies.

He highlighted the launch of the UAE's national programme "Plant the Emirates" and the "National Agricultural Centre" as significant and effective initiatives that bring together all stakeholders to explore solutions to agricultural challenges in the





Sharjah Waste to Energy facility processes 500,000 tonnes of waste since 2023

Since it began operations in 2023, the plant has successfully abated 750,000 tonnes of CO2 emissions and recovered 2,000 tonnes of metal

BEAAH, the Middle East's sustainability pioneer; Masdar, the UAE's clean energy powerhouse; and Veolia Near & Middle East, leader in low carbon energy production, recently celebrated the historic milestone of successfully processing 500,000 tonnes of waste at the Sharjah Waste to Energy facility since it began operations in 2023.

This signifies a huge leap forward in fulfilling ambitions to achieve zero-waste to landfill in the emirate of Sharjah.

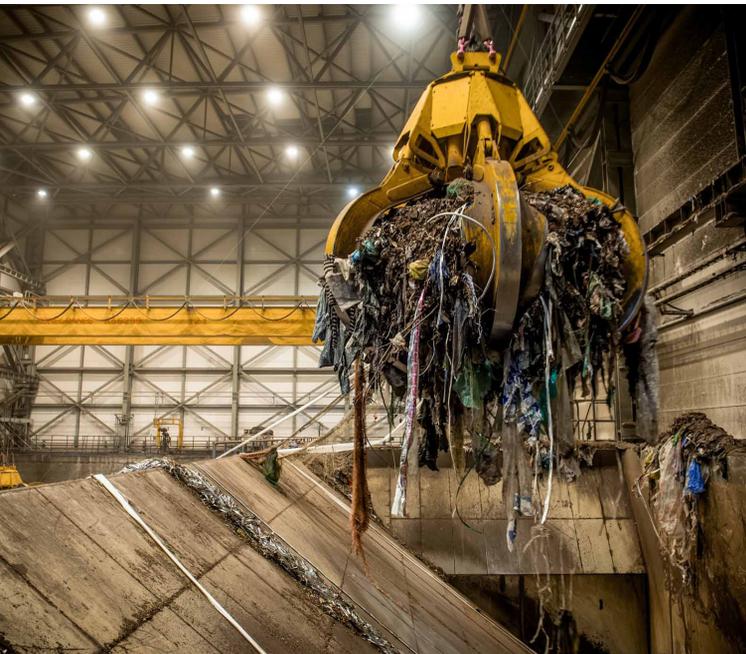
As a result of the 500,000 tonnes milestone, the Sharjah Waste to Energy facility has also successfully abated 750,000 tonnes of CO2 emissions, recovered 2,000 tonnes of metal since it began operations and exported 300,000,000 kWh of electricity to the public grid through a power purchase agreement with SEWA, aligning with clean energy targets within the emirate.

Khaled Al Huraimel, Group CEO and Vice Chairman of BEEAH, said, "This milestone a big

step towards achieving total landfill diversion in Sharjah, growing further from the current rate of 90 percent. It is a demonstration of an environmentally and commercially sustainable model for waste-to-energy innovation, increasing landfill diversion by processing hard to recycle waste, producing low carbon power and displacing significant amounts of emissions."

Mohamed Jameel Al Ramahi, CEO of Masdar, said, "By converting waste into valuable energy, we're not only reducing our reliance on traditional fuels

The plant has exported 300,000,000 kWh of electricity to the public grid through a power purchase agreement with SEWA, aligning with clean energy targets within Sharjah



but also creating a more circular economy for the benefit of both our communities and the environment."

Philippe Bourdeaux, Executive Vice President Africa & Middle East, Veolia, said, "Our holistic approach to waste management not only maximizes resource recovery but also contributes to recycling and a circular economy."

The waste-to-energy plant, established in 2017 as a joint venture between BEEAH and Masdar, is the region's first of its kind at a commercial-

scale. This state-of-the-art facility can produce 30 megawatts (MW) of low carbon energy, enough to power up to 28,000 homes and offset up to 450,000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions per year. An operation and maintenance joint venture was formed with Veolia in 2022.

The plant is equipped with cutting-edge technology to ensure both high efficiency and minimal environmental impact. It includes a CNIM boiler with a unique four-pass system and a Martin grate with a 5-run design which ensures optimal combustion control. The LAB flue gas treatment system further minimizes emissions, supporting the facility's role to reduce environmental impact.

The milestone at the Sharjah Waste to Energy facility aligns with the clean energy targets outlined under the UAE Energy Strategy 2050, and with the UAE Environment Policy's goal of driving the transformation of waste-related challenges into development opportunities.





UAE to co-host the 2026 UN Water Conference in partnership with Senegal

The 2026 UN Water Conference will shift the global water dialogue and highlight innovations and shared solutions in regions that are most water-stressed

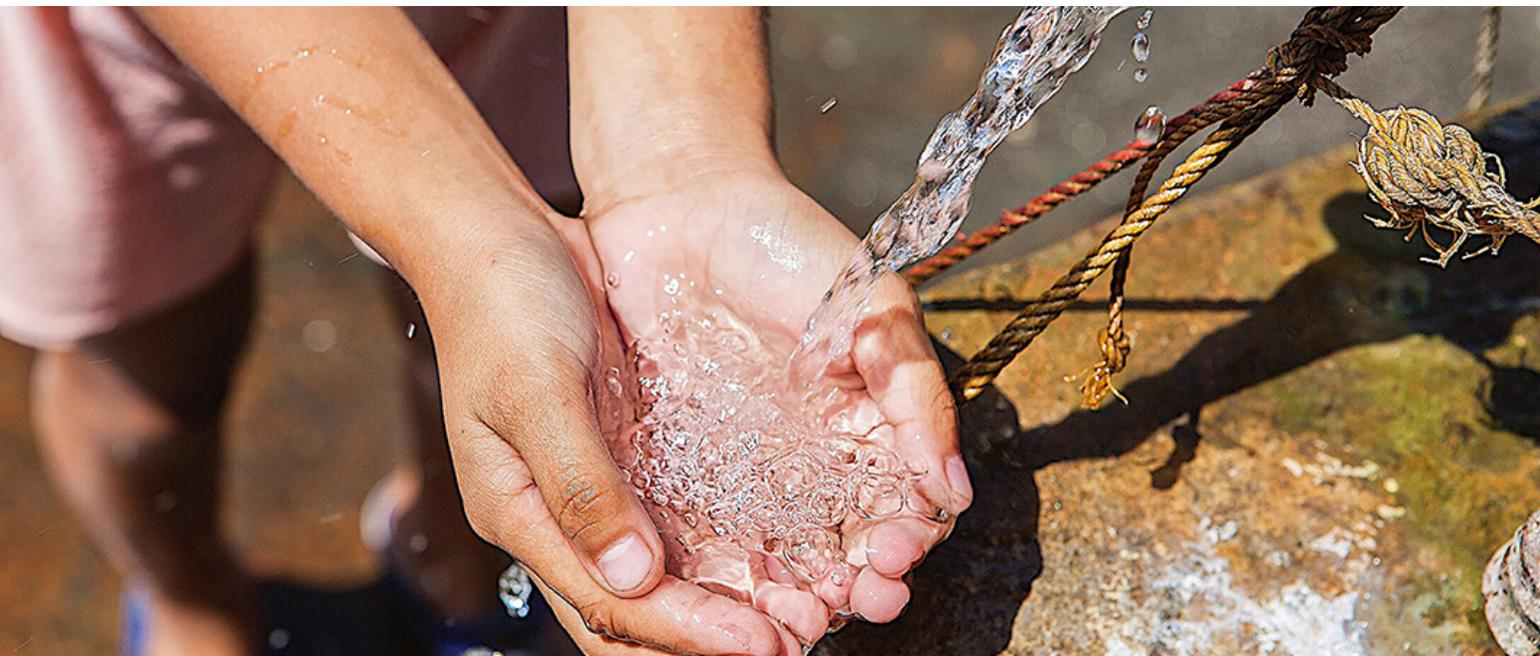
Ahead of COP29 in Baku, the 79th UN General Assembly adopted a resolution confirming the United Arab Emirates and Senegal as co-hosts of the next UN Water Conference, to be held in the UAE in December 2026. The global convening will accelerate action on the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG6), seeking to drive progress on clean water, sanitation, sustainable water management, and building global resilience for all.

Co-hosted by two nations from the Global South, the 2026 Water Conference will shift the global water dialogue and highlight innovations and shared solutions in regions that are most water-stressed. UN research estimates that half of the world's population live without basic sanitation while a quarter are without safe drinking water. Globally, 80 percent of the population faces serious threats to their water supply.

In both Senegal and the UAE, safeguarding water resources is central to ensuring economic

growth, driving sustainable development, and safeguarding lives and livelihoods to build a more sustainable future. Recognising the importance of international collaboration in co-creating innovative solutions to encourage universal availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation, the 2026 UN Water Conference will reaffirm internationally agreed water-related goals and global targets, including those captured within the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals Agenda.

Globally, 80 percent of the population faces serious threats to their water supply



The UAE's arid environment has historically shaped its relationship with water, fostering resilience, resourcefulness, and an acute understanding of the scarcity of this resource, with strong commitments to scaling innovations and global partnerships, as highlighted by Abdulla Balalaa, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for Energy and Sustainable Affairs.

"Water is our life force, and water resiliency is vital to achieving all Sustainable Development Goals. As we prepare to co-host the 2026 UN

Water Conference in partnership with Senegal, we are drawing from the knowledge of our ancestors, robust research and innovation being applied across the UAE, and our global partnerships to co-create a more optimistic and sustainable water future- where clean water and sanitation are universally accessible."

Concerted investment in future-proofing water systems across the UAE includes more than 140 desalination plants, with initiatives such as the Taweelah Reverse Osmosis (RO) facility in Abu



Dhabi, and the Hassyan seawater desalination project. Utilising low-carbon technologies and renewable energy sources, such as solar power, they strengthen the production of desalinated water and improve livelihoods for all.

In addition, the UAE Water Security Strategy 2036 constitutes a transferable roadmap for achieving sustainable water access through the safe reuse of 95 percent of treated water and the supply of over 75 percent of drinking water through reverse osmosis technology.

The UAE's commitments to transforming water systems at scale to build global resilience for all include initiatives such as Clean Rivers, a non-profit based in Abu Dhabi launched in 2023, dedicated to reducing plastic waste from entering the world's oceans through river systems.

Through partnerships, Clean Rivers is supporting projects like a new UN Development Programme that will remove 5,000 tonnes of plastic from six riverine areas across Indonesia over the next three years.

Another significant effort to scale innovation for water-stressed communities is the Mohamed Bin Zayed Water Initiative (MBZWI), launched in 2024, which is committed to raising the

importance of water scarcity on the global agenda. As its first major initiative, MBZWI partnered with XPRIZE, with an investment of USD150 million, launching the XPrize Water Scarcity competition, a USD119 million, five-year global competition that will accelerate innovations on water scarcity solutions and promote transformative desalination technologies to ensure equitable and sustainable access to clean water worldwide.

International cooperation is vital to accelerating action to address water scarcity, reinforced by the Freshwater Challenge launched at the 2023 Water Conference and championed by the COP28 Presidency. At COP28, 38 new nations committed to protecting and restoring 30 percent of degraded freshwater ecosystems by 2030.

The 2026 UN Water Conference will build on this momentum, reinforcing the UAE's commitment to global water resiliency and sustainable development.

As COP29 approaches, the UAE remains steadfast in ambitiously accelerating global action on water through innovation, investment in technology and data-driven solutions, and international cooperation.



AgraME 2024 showcases latest innovations in food security, resilience, regenerative practices

UAE NEWS

Dawoud Al Hajri, Director-General of Dubai Municipality, and Dr. Mohammed Salman Al Hammadi, Assistant Under-Secretary for the Food Diversity Sector at the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, inaugurated AgraME 2024, the Middle East's longest-running agriculture, animal, and aquaculture farming exhibition, at Dubai World Trade Centre.

Ahmed Khalil, Portfolio Director of AgraME, said, "The objective of the event is to highlight practices that can improve soil health, water conservation, and biodiversity. By adopting regenerative methods, the UAE can enhance its agricultural resilience, mitigate the effects of climate change, and support long-term food security in the region."

For the first time, AgraME hosted the Regenerative Agriculture Middle East Conference, which held a panel discussion on "Investing in Regenerative Agriculture" focusing on the growing importance of regenerative

agriculture in the Middle East, delving into the region's specific needs, challenges, and opportunities. Panellists discussed the technologies driving regenerative practices, such as soil restoration, water-efficient farming, and carbon sequestration, which are key to addressing the region's environmental constraints.

AgraME 2024 is more than just an exhibition; it provides a dynamic platform for advancing food security, resilience, and regenerative practices. The event hosted 6,000 decision-makers from over 180 countries, along with more than 150 exhibitors showcasing innovations in crop farming, horticulture, and agricultural technology. The 2024 edition was an even larger showcase of regional and international exhibitors making strides not only in agriculture but also in sustainable and regenerative practices, aquaculture and fisheries, water management and irrigation, smart farming, animal husbandry, and livestock welfare.

Expo City Dubai partners with RICS for Whole Life Carbon Assessment

Expo City Dubai becomes the first developer in the UAE to adopt RICS' Whole Life Carbon Assessment (WLCA)

Expo City Dubai and the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) have advanced their professional cooperation through a strategic agreement that sees Expo City become the first developer in the UAE to incorporate RICS' award-winning Whole Life Carbon Assessment (WLCA).

The WLCA standard enables consistent and accurate carbon measurement in the built environment by supporting comprehensive and consistent decision-making. The collaboration with RICS will also cultivate a more sustainable built environment sector across the UAE.

The two organisations will be hosting training and development sessions, workshops and further courses centred around the framework, designed to upskill industry professionals.

The agreement was signed by Ahmed Al Khatib, Chief Development and Delivery Officer, Expo



City Dubai, and Belinda Howell, Executive Director, Middle East & Africa, RICS with representatives from the Emirates Green Building Council also in attendance.

The strategic collaboration follows the announcement of Expo City Dubai's new master plan. Spanning 3.5 sqkm, Expo City Dubai will be home to around 35,000 residents and 40,000 professionals as it develops into a global centre for businesses, investors, homeowners and visitors who share its vision of a brighter, more connected and sustainable future.

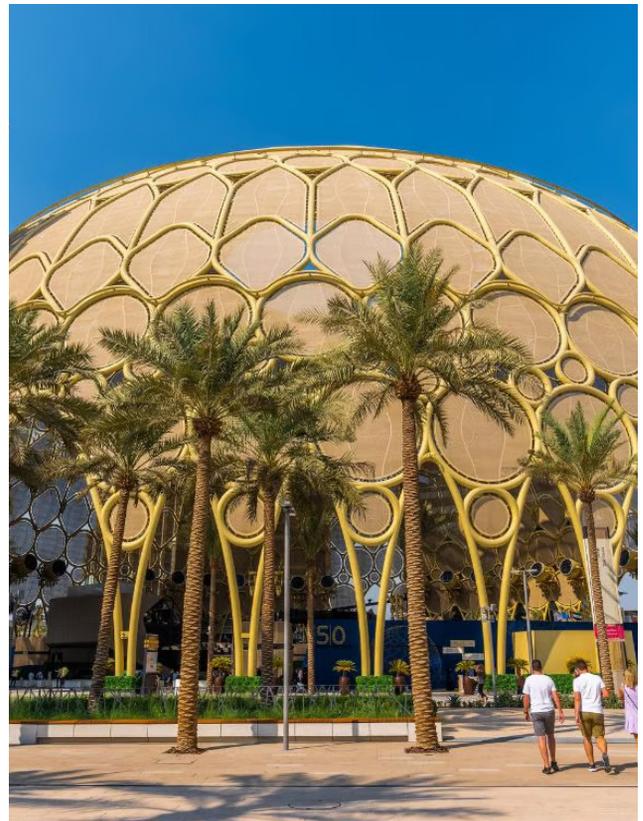
Ahmed Al Khatib said, "Expo City Dubai has a significant role to play in Dubai's long-term prosperity and we have always been committed to meeting that need responsibly, with a decarbonisation roadmap and sustainability initiatives that ensure we work with - not against - our environment. Our partnership with RICS enables that commitment, and the training and development opportunities reflect our belief in the importance of knowledge-sharing for the benefit of the whole of the built environment sector in the UAE, supporting the nation's journey to net zero by 2050."

Tina Paillet, President of RICS, stated, "This partnership signifies the growing collaboration between RICS as a global professional body and Expo City Dubai, a world leading development. Together, we look to serve as a beacon for advanced sustainability practices and technologies in the built environment."

Expo City Dubai is named as one of five hubs in the 2040 Dubai Urban Master Plan and plays a crucial role in delivering the Dubai Economic Agenda D33 which seeks to double the size of the emirate's economy by 2033.

One of the catalysts of this growth is the accelerated development of the Dubai South area, as the emirate continues to position itself

The WLCA standard ensures precise carbon measurement, aiding consistent decision-making for a sustainable built environment in the UAE



as a leading global hub for trade, investment, business and tourism.

The new master plan establishes the city as the lynchpin between vital enablers of Dubai's economic aspirations across critical sectors including trade and logistics, technology and innovation, tourism, business and events.



UAE officials highlight commitment to clean energy transition on World Energy Day

World Energy Day aims to provide safe and sustainable energy for all by identifying the need to develop national policies that embody the global energy perspective

Energy sector leaders and officials in the UAE emphasised that World Energy Day, observed annually on 22nd October, serves as a call for collective action and global cooperation, while also providing an opportunity to celebrate the nation's achievements in the energy sector.

The World Energy Day initiative was endorsed by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai, and officially adopted by 54 countries worldwide, along with representatives from the UN, the Arab League and the African Union, at the World Energy Forum 2012 in Dubai.

The World Energy Day aims to provide safe and sustainable energy for all by identifying the need to develop national policies that embody the global energy perspective. It also seeks to set policies related to the implementation and development of mechanisms and frameworks for exchanging expertise on a global level.

It also helps raise awareness about preserving

natural resources and protecting the environment by highlighting the sustainability of energy and water, reducing the carbon footprint, promoting the use of renewable energy and supporting the transition towards a green economy.

Diversifying energy sources, increasing the share of clean and renewable energy, and encouraging



investments in related sectors are among the UAE's top national priorities. The country has launched several energy strategies, including the UAE Energy Strategy 2050, which aims to triple the contribution of renewable energy and invest AED150 to AED200 billion by 2030 to meet the country's rising demand for energy as a result of a rapidly growing economy.

The UAE Energy Strategy 2050 aims to triple the contribution of renewable energy and invest AED150 to AED200 billion by 2030 to meet the country's rising demand for energy

H.H. Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, Chairman of the Dubai Supreme Council of Energy, said, "World Energy Day serves as a call for collective action and cooperation between nations to support the efforts to expand the use of clean and renewable energy, innovate smart mechanisms and solutions that enhance efficiency, and reduce carbon emissions from the energy sector. It also highlights the importance of advancing clean energy technologies, including green hydrogen, to accelerate the shift towards a more sustainable future."

Suhail Mohamed Al Mazrouei, Minister of Energy and Infrastructure, said, "The UAE takes confident steps to achieve its clean energy targets, guided by the UAE Energy Strategy 2050 that has set a target of tripling renewables capacity by 2030. Today, we have six gigawatts of renewables and 5.6 GW of nuclear energy. That makes our grid one of the cleanest worldwide."

"The UAE's approach is based on striking the right balance between economic growth and environmental protection through reducing dependence on fossil fuels and increasing the deployment of clean energy. Mega national ventures, such as the Barakah nuclear plant and the Mohammed bin Rashid Solar Complex, make the UAE a leading global model for a robust energy transition," he noted.

Arabian Leopard Conference in Sharjah adopts updated conservation strategy

The conference highlighted international and regional efforts to conserve the critically endangered Arabian Leopard, one of the rarest species in the Arabian Peninsula

The Arabian Leopard Conservation Strategy Conference, organised by the Environment and Protected Areas Authority (EPAA) at Sharjah Safari over the course of three days in October, addressed the urgent challenges facing the critically endangered Arabian Leopard and creating a collaborative framework to ensure its survival.

The conference, which brought together a select group of experts, researchers, and policymakers in Arabian Leopard conservation, featured a series of in-depth discussions on enhancing the conservation strategy for the Arabian Leopard across the Arabian Peninsula, particularly in range states, and assessed current programmes aimed at conserving and reintroducing this unique species into its natural habitats.

The conference culminated with the adoption of the updated Arabian Leopard Conservation Strategy, originally developed in 2010.



Participants reviewed the current status of the Arabian Leopard in range states, including the UAE, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen, identifying priority areas for regional cooperation and joint action. Additionally, they agreed on key activities to be implemented in these countries. The updated strategy aims to bolster the species' future and offer practical solutions to ensure its sustainable presence in the wild.

Speaking at the event, Hana Saif Al Suwaidi, Chairperson of the Environment and Protected Areas Authority (EPAA) in Sharjah, called for urgent and comprehensive action, noting that the status of the Arabian Leopard in the Arabian Peninsula is now more critical than it was in 2010. Notably, significant leopard populations exist in Oman's Dhofar region and potentially in Yemen, though confirmation remains uncertain. The discussions also underscored the growing genetic threats to the Arabian Leopard, particularly inbreeding due to the small and isolated populations. The conference concluded that protecting the remaining wild populations alone is insufficient, necessitating a broader approach that includes enhancing populations and reintroducing the leopard into its natural habitat.

Regarding reintroduction efforts, the final statement stressed the need to focus on returning the Arabian Leopard to its historical range through key actions, including engaging local communities in targeted areas, improving degraded habitats affected by overgrazing, and increasing the natural prey population to support the leopard's sustenance and reduce human-wildlife conflicts.

The conference identified short-term priorities for range states, with Sharjah, UAE, taking the lead as the initiator and coordinator of the breeding programme, playing a central role in this effort. All range states will collaborate on establishing an international joint breeding programme.

Representatives from the natural range countries of the Arabian Leopard, including Oman, Yemen, and Saudi Arabia, participated at the conference alongside global experts and speakers



Yemen, considered a potential hotspot for the largest wild leopard populations, requires national surveys and intensified research efforts to combat poaching and protect leopards. Oman, home to the most stable known population, will continue its efforts to expand the leopard's range and share its expertise with other range states. Saudi Arabia, holding the largest share of the Arabian leopard's historical range, will focus on preparing suitable habitats and building capacities to implement effective reintroduction projects.



17 UAE corporates publish declaration to adopt, promote electric vehicle ecosystem

Corporate signatories declare intent to deploy 20,000 Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEVs) in commercial fleets by 2040 and call for collaboration across the domestic EV ecosystem in the short term

Corporate signatories of the 'Road2.0 powered by UACA' initiative have published a declaration of their intent to adopt and promote zero emission vehicles (vehicles operating without producing tailpipe emissions), in a first-of-its-kind showcase of the robust corporate demand for EVs in the UAE.

The declaration serves as a call to action for the EV Ecosystem, inviting stakeholders to join forces in order to mobilise the swift uptake of EVs across commercial fleets.

Road2.0 is powered by UACA – the UAE Alliance for Climate Action, which is convened by environmental charity and NGO Emirates Nature-WWF. It is the leading initiative focusing on decarbonising commercial transport in the UAE, endorsed by the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure (MoEI). In addition, UACA is endorsed by the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MOCCA).

Supported by talabat and Unilever, Road2.0 is currently led by 17 signatories that are

pioneering efforts to test and scale commercial EVs within their fleet, aiming to potentially achieve 30 percent decarbonisation of signatories' UAE road transport fleet by 2030, and 100 percent by 2040.

The collaborative endeavour demonstrates strong corporate leadership in support of the UAE's Net Zero by 2050 Strategic Initiative and the UAE's Demand Side Management Programme (Green Mobility Strategy).

Road2.0 aims to accelerate decarbonization across the commercial transport sector, in support of UAE's Net Zero 2050 targets



Road2.0 signatories represent diverse economic sectors in the UAE spanning logistics, retail, food and beverage, groceries, fast moving consumer goods and sustainability, amongst others.

The declaration commends the significant momentum and progress towards green mobility and outlines additional shifts required to address specific operational needs and commercial EV targets. By the end of this year, Road2.0 signatories will have put 90 Commercial EVs on UAE roads. Collectively, Road2.0 signatories aim

to procure up to 6,000 Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEVs) by 2030, potentially scaling to 20,000 ZEVs by 2040. They seek a variety of vehicles ranging from refrigerated and ambient vehicles, two-wheelers, light-medium duty trucks, passenger buses and vehicles to meet demand.

The full list of Road2.0 signatories currently includes Advanced Media Trading, Aramex, Arla, Chalhoub Group, Ehfaaz, Enviroserve, Farnek, Kibsons, Landmark Group, Majid Al Futtaim, Nestlé, Positive Zero, RNZ Group, Schneider



Electric, talabat, Unilever and Yes Full Circle Solutions.

Sharif Al Olama, Under-Secretary for Energy and Petroleum Affairs at MoEI, said, “The domestic EV market is expanding rapidly, powered by huge strides in infrastructure across the country and more entities making the switch towards lower carbon transportation solutions.

“Road2.0 reinforces our steadfast belief that when government and business are synchronised, we form a powerful force for driving economic growth, fostering innovation, and addressing societal and environmental challenges. The move is in line with the Ministry’s mission of supporting the shift to green mobility and contributing to the country’s goal of increasing the share of EVs to 50 percent of total vehicles in the UAE by 2050.”

Mohammad Saeed Al Nuaimi, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, said, “Road2.0 marks a significant step in our journey towards a cleaner and greener future. Underscoring the power of collaboration, it

highlights the importance of public-private partnership in driving action towards a low-carbon economy.”

Laila Mostafa Abdullatif, Director-General of Emirates Nature-WWF, commented, “We have a unique opportunity not only to chart the future of green transport in the UAE, but also to accelerate a market-wide transition to zero emission vehicles. Road2.0 signatories are committed to potentially achieving 30 percent decarbonisation of commercial road transport fleets by 2030, and 100 percent by 2040.

“This commitment has already been demonstrated as Road2.0 signatories will have deployed 90 commercial ZEVs on UAE roads by end of 2024. We invite more corporates to take this pledge and look forward to working closely with partners across the EV ecosystem, including Original Equipment Manufacturers, Distributors, Leasing Companies and Third-Party Logistics Providers to advance the implementation of commercial EVs at scale.”



UAE to exceed its renewable capacity ambitions for 2030, IEA report confirms

UAE NEWS

The UAE is expected to exceed its renewable energy capacity ambitions for 2030, the International Energy Agency (IEA) confirmed.

According to the IEA's Renewables 2024 report, "MENA countries' combined ambition is to reach 201 GW of renewable capacity by 2030". While the main-case forecast falls 26 percent short of this ambition, not all countries will miss their announced ambitions. Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Algeria are responsible for nearly 60 percent of the region's total ambition, and although the outlook is more optimistic than last year in these markets, the IEA forecast indicated that installed capacity still falls short of their 2030 ambitions.

Growth in the region could be 60 percent (152 GW) higher than in the main case – nearing the realisation of the 2030 ambition – if countries meet three key challenges. The first is faster action implementation. Opening tenders, selecting winners and signing PPAs often takes

more than one year, so hastening the process would get more projects online sooner.

The second challenge is to improve the regulatory and policy environment for distributed solar PV by implementing reforms to allow self-consumption and introduce remuneration for excess electricity generation, the report went on to say.

"Finally, more growth," the report went on to say, "would occur with greater industrial electrification and with the removal of barriers to new market entrants to allow for more widespread use of corporate PPAs."

Meanwhile, Solar PV capacity in the Middle East and North Africa is expected to grow 84 GW by 2030, with more than half coming from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Overall, installed solar PV capacity in the region is expected to increase more than fourfold between 2024 and 2030, expanding its share in the power mix from 2 percent to over 8 percent.

Mariam Almheiri leads UAE delegation at Hamburg Sustainability Conference

The Hamburg Sustainability Conference is a new initiative to build global solutions for the social-ecological transformation our planet desperately needs

On behalf of President His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Mariam Almheiri, Head of the International Affairs Office at the Presidential Court, led the United Arab Emirates' delegation to the Hamburg Sustainability Conference (HSC). The HSC was inaugurated by Germany's Federal Chancellor, Olaf Scholz.

Almheiri's participation, with representatives from the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MoCCA) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), underscores the UAE's commitment to global collaboration on pressing sustainability, energy and humanitarian challenges.

Almheiri said, "The Hamburg Sustainability Conference brings together the diverse voices and perspectives needed to drive systemic change and achieve the SDGs."



“The ethos behind HSC reflects the outlook of the UAE itself – it isn't just about identifying problems; it's about showcasing solutions. It's about sharing innovative ideas, scaling up successful initiatives and inspiring bold action, all of which were key features behind the UAE's approach at COP28 last year, and the milestone breakthroughs made, not least the UAE Consensus itself.”

She continued, “Meaningful dialogue is at the heart of progress, and the UAE delegation is focused on how we can foster the open and constructive conversations that are essential for forging a path towards a more sustainable and equitable future.”

In addition to her attendance at the High-Level Panel Discussion, Mariam Almheiri held a series of strategic side meetings with key German officials in her capacity as Envoy of the Minister of Foreign Affairs to Germany, including Dr. Peter Tschentscher, President of the Senate and First Mayor of the Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg; Svenja Schulze, Federal Minister for Economic Co-operation and Development; and Niels Annen, Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development (BMZ) and Member of the Bundestag (SPD).

The discussions with key German officials centred around COP28 legacy, the UAE Consensus and building upon the successes of COP28 and advancing the implementation of the UAE Consensus. Talks also focused on International Co-operation and Mangrove Conservation and progress of the UAE and Germany's Green Coast Initiative, aimed at protecting and restoring mangrove trees in Africa.

On Day 2 of the Conference, she joined influential German business leaders, including representatives from Bayer, Airbus and Nordic Investment Bank, for a Business Luncheon,

Building upon the successes of COP28 and advancing the implementation of the UAE Consensus were among the key topics of discussion with German officials



exploring greater economic, investment and business integration between the UAE and the German private sector.

With a focus on transforming challenges into opportunities, the event consisted of three Forums – Reshaping International Financial Architecture, Unleashing Investments for SDGs and Leveraging Transformation – as well as five Hubs with SDG-based topics that change annually.

The HSC 2024 Hubs were: Resilient Food Systems, Responsible AI & Digitalisation, Green Energy & Net Zero, Empowering Societies and Future Cities.



EAD delegation explores Dutch innovations in climate monitoring, AI, waste management

The EAD delegation engaged in multiple sustainability-focused forums and met with government officials, industry leaders, and sustainability experts from various sectors

A high-level delegation from the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi (EAD), the Middle East's largest environmental regulator, has concluded a successful week-long knowledge exchange tour of the Netherlands to explore opportunities for collaboration and discuss the latest innovations and best practices in environment and sustainability with industry stakeholders in Amsterdam and The Hague. The delegation also attended key sustainability events and the World Summit AI, the world's most prestigious event exploring how AI can be used equitably, inclusively, and safely.

The EAD delegation attended multiple sustainability-focused events in the Netherlands from 7th to 14th October and met with government officials, C-Suite executives, and sustainability officers across various industries to share insights on topics such as decarbonisation and the energy transition, including low-carbon solutions like green hydrogen. They also debated the challenges of developing policies for hard-to-abate sectors.

At the World Summit AI, the EAD team participated in discussions on the significant impact of AI, including what it means to be human in the age of AI and whether it is possible to democratise this advanced technology. The summit highlighted AI's role in disrupting sectors and examined the ethical and human-centric aspects of AI's impact on governments and sustainability.



In a separate stakeholder meeting, the EAD delegation met with representatives of TNO, an independent research organisation in the Netherlands that focuses on transforming scientific knowledge into practical applications for industry and society. As EAD leverages advanced technologies to monitor air pollution, including tracking particulate matter and nitrogen oxides (NOx), TNO's water purification

technologies help mitigate contaminants such as microplastics and harmful chemicals. These insights can help EAD implement more informed initiatives contributing to the Abu Dhabi Climate Change Strategy (2023-2027).

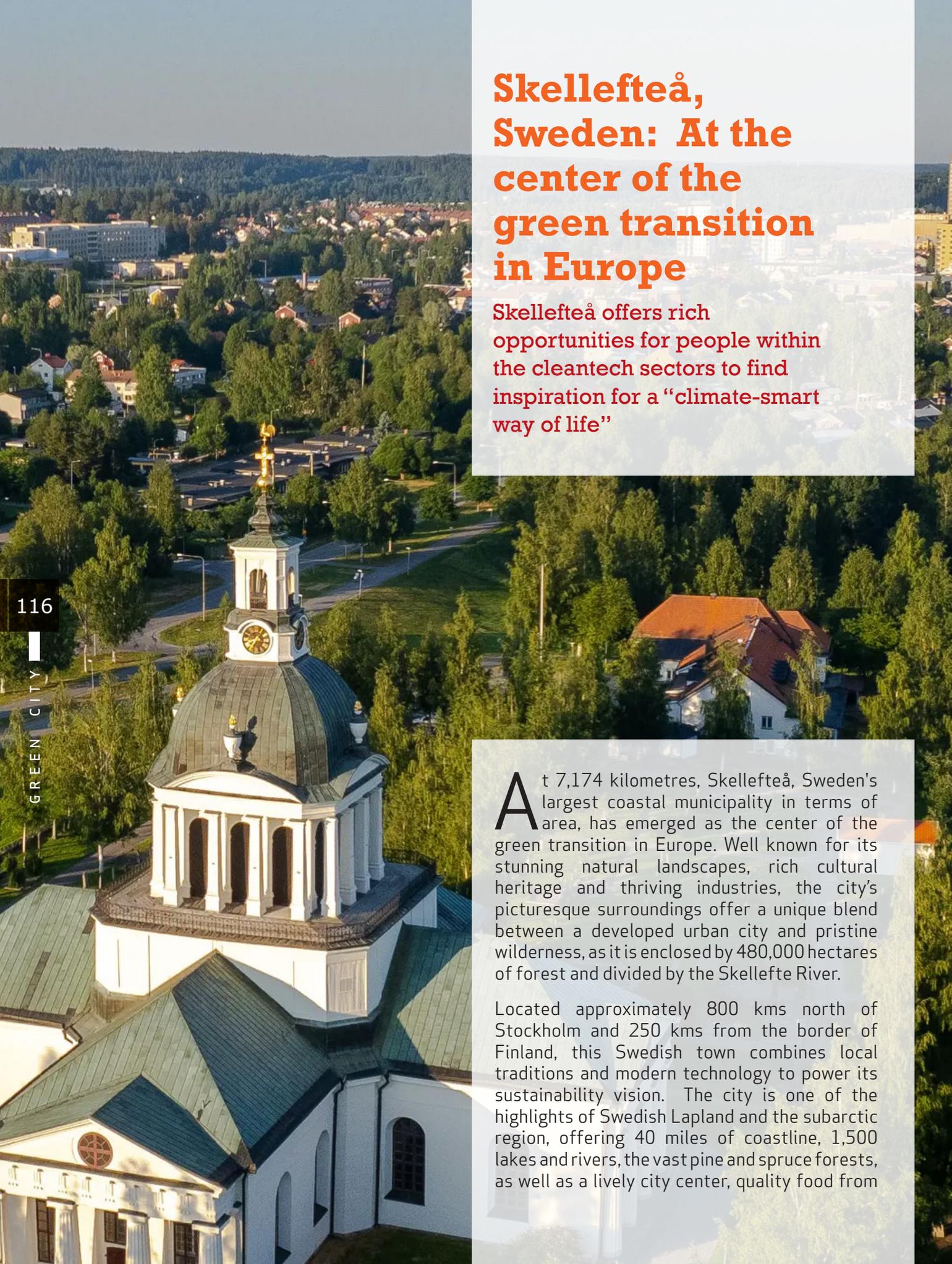
The EAD team also met with officials from Rijkswaterstaat, the Dutch Government's Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, to compare best practices in air and water quality monitoring and management in Abu Dhabi and Amsterdam. The discussions focused on developing techniques to build resilience in coastal areas, which is relevant to both countries.

The delegation also interacted with Deltares, an independent Dutch research institute focused on water and subsurface systems, which provides innovative solutions in water management, climate adaptation, and flood protection. They attended a presentation on advanced models for water treatment and wastewater management that optimise water usage and safety.

Shaikha Salem Al Dhaheri, Secretary-General of the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi, said, "By engaging with Dutch experts and understanding first-hand their advanced water and air monitoring technologies, waste management practices, and AI-driven innovations, we are now equipped with valuable insights that can be adapted to our unique environmental context in Abu Dhabi.

"We also shared some of our key achievements in these areas with Dutch environmentalists, helping to bolster Abu Dhabi's reputation as an environmental hub."

This visit to the Netherlands marks the first in a series of roadshows the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi is undertaking to stay updated on best-in-class and emerging technology solutions in the dynamic field and ensure future readiness.



Skellefteå, Sweden: At the center of the green transition in Europe

Skellefteå offers rich opportunities for people within the cleantech sectors to find inspiration for a “climate-smart way of life”

116

GREEN CITY

At 7,174 kilometres, Skellefteå, Sweden's largest coastal municipality in terms of area, has emerged as the center of the green transition in Europe. Well known for its stunning natural landscapes, rich cultural heritage and thriving industries, the city's picturesque surroundings offer a unique blend between a developed urban city and pristine wilderness, as it is enclosed by 480,000 hectares of forest and divided by the Skellefte River.

Located approximately 800 kms north of Stockholm and 250 kms from the border of Finland, this Swedish town combines local traditions and modern technology to power its sustainability vision. The city is one of the highlights of Swedish Lapland and the subarctic region, offering 40 miles of coastline, 1,500 lakes and rivers, the vast pine and spruce forests, as well as a lively city center, quality food from

Sustainability is a natural part of everything built in Sweden's largest coastal municipality



local farms, and breathtaking tours of the countryside.

Skellefteå is a town with several green credentials and opportunities for visitors to take part in a sustainable lifestyle. Skellefteå airport is one of the world's first fossil-free airports. The town is powered by an energy system that provides 100 percent renewable energy from hydropower and wind.

The municipality is home to the new 60 GWh Northvolt battery factory, one of Europe's largest battery factories that designs, manufactures, and assembles green lithium-ion batteries in-house.

Pioneering a sustainable model for battery

manufacturing, Northvolt Ett is built using the most innovative technologies in Europe. With access to large sources of renewable power, in particular hydroelectricity, the plant aims to produce the world's greenest batteries carrying minimal carbon footprint, with a target of 10kg CO₂e/kWh by 2030, representing a 90 percent lower carbon footprint compared to the comparable industry reference. Cautious of the need for a responsible approach to the sourcing of raw materials, Northvolt also aims to develop a circular model through in-house battery recycling, targeting 50% of recycled materials for battery cell production by 2030.

Skellefteå also houses the Green Flight Academy, Skellefteå Kraft (which provides the town with the 100 per cent renewable energy), and the Boliden's Rönnskär smelter (which recycles around 120,000 tonnes of electronic material yearly). The town's renewable energy sources are controlled by an intelligent energy network that ensures energy is directed or stored according to demand.

A key attraction here is the 75-metre-tall Sara Cultural Centre, one of the world's tallest wooden buildings, and a symbol of Skellefteå's dedication to sustainable and renewable development. This 20-storey climate-smart and carbon-neutral wooden building offers a variety of cultural experiences and events, and includes a hotel, restaurants, and a library. Largely produced locally from the forest tract, solar cells and efficient energy use further contribute to minimizing the house's climate footprint. Skellefteå is a pioneer in wood research and wooden house construction, and the handling and processing of wood has placed Skellefteå at the forefront in this sector.



The city's commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship is evident in its renewable energy initiatives and eco-friendly practices. Skellefteå is at the forefront of renewable energy production, harnessing the power of wind, hydro, and biomass to meet its energy needs while reducing its carbon footprint.

The city has emerged as a trailblazer in green initiatives, setting ambitious environmental targets and spearheading initiatives to combat climate change. Through projects like "Climate Neutral Cities 2030," Skellefteå has committed to becoming an exemplary city of sustainability, engaging residents, particularly young adults, in shaping its green agenda.

To become a more sustainable and attractive city by 2050, the city has prioritized eco-friendly transportation options, with extensive bike lanes and public transit networks that encourage

residents to embrace sustainable modes of travel. The municipality operates 44 buses, 65 run on HVO, 40 on biogas from the town's local biogas plant, and six are electric.

Skellefteå's new industrial neighbourhood, Site East, was nominated for the Sweden Green Building Award in November 2021. With high sustainability goals, Skellefteå Site East was well-planned right from the start, where a sustainability program listed a long list of initiatives that would make it possible to achieve the goals. If the project had been carried out in the traditional way, the climate footprint could have reached almost 7,000 tonnes of CO₂ equivalents, but thanks to the climate-smart design, it led to savings of just over 4,000 tonnes of CO₂.

Skellefteå Site East is a development project for new industrial plots that Skanska runs on behalf



The municipality operates 120 buses, 65 run on HVO, 40 on biogas from the town's local biogas plant, and six are electric



of Skellefteå Municipality. Conditions are created to meet the demand for new and sustainable industrial land in Skellefteå, especially for companies in energy-intensive industries to establish themselves here and contribute to strengthening Skellefteå's development and business life.

Meanwhile, Skellefteå Science City, founded in 2015, is the emblem of innovation and sustainable growth in the heart of northern Sweden. Tasked with transforming Skellefteå into a leading hub for green initiatives and advanced technologies, they've championed pivotal projects across sectors like energy, AI, E-mobility, and gaming.

In collaboration with SISP, the Swedish industry

association, Skellefteå Science City promotes the growth of knowledge-rich companies while fostering a dynamic innovation ecosystem through the Triple Helix model.

For Skellefteå to meet the challenges of the future, the Municipality has a population target of 90,000 inhabitants in 2030, along with the vision of "a sustainable place for a better everyday life". To help meet the demands of its increasing population, Skellefteå's public housing company, Skellefteåbostäder, will build nearly 750 energy-efficient and affordable homes. The new homes will contribute to the supply of skills in Skellefteå under the ongoing social transformation, as over half will house students and other new residents.



Year of Sustainability announces line-up of on-ground events

The Year of Sustainability - under its tagline "Plan To Action" - has announced a series of on-ground events and activities for the public with a focus on four key areas: green transportation, water and energy reduction, responsible consumption and planting wisely.

Rauda Al Falasi, Deputy Project Lead at the Year of Sustainability, said, "Our efforts at the Year of Sustainability are focused on driving lasting, impactful change by encouraging actionable steps.

Both individuals and entities play crucial roles in shaping a more sustainable future for our nation, and we want to target challenges to sustainability both, through small daily actions, and larger organisational commitments to achieve a ripple effect."

Upcoming events and activities

Duroor Nights: Combining the ancient Duroor system with modern celestial exploration, participants will gather together on a moonless night - a key requirement to observe the stars

and planets and experience the Cosmic Cube. It will have two editions: an indoor session organised by AISadeem in Abu Dhabi and an outdoor desert camping session organised by the Sharjah Academy for Astronomy, Space Sciences, and Technology.

From Farm to Haseer: An immersive, hands-on experience centred on sustainability through local farming and traditional crafts. With one of the Year of Sustainability's key focus areas this year being planting wisely, participants will engage in various activities, including farm tours, interactive workshops, butter-making and cooking with locally-sourced ingredients, planting herbs and community discussions.

Mangrove Champions: This includes hosting a series of mangrove planting and cleanup events across the UAE, as they play a key role in reducing carbon emissions and protecting coastlines from erosion and extreme disasters such as flooding.



DEWA plants 4,500 mangrove trees at Jebel Ali Marine Sanctuary

Saeed Mohammed Al Tayer, MD & CEO of Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA), participated in a campaign to plant mangrove trees at the Jebel Ali Marine Sanctuary.

Al Tayer was accompanied by DEWA's Executive Vice Presidents, Vice Presidents and senior officials from some of DEWA's subsidiaries. DEWA organised the campaign in collaboration with the Emirates Marine Environmental Group to plant 4,500 mangrove trees. Employees from DEWA as well as DEWA Academy students, also participated in the campaign.

"In line with the directives of the wise leadership and the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030, including clean water and sanitation, climate action, life below water and life on land, and as part of our social responsibility, we continue to support biodiversity and the protection of natural land and marine habitats. We have launched environmental awareness campaigns, which aim to engage members of

society in the efforts to preserve precious natural resources, plant more trees and improve the quality of water. We support the national initiative to plant 100 million mangrove trees in the UAE by 2030, and promote the sustainability of mangrove forests, which are a key nature-based solution to combat climate change and protect the coastal ecosystems," said Al Tayer.

In 2023, DEWA planted more than 5,500 mangrove trees at the Jebel Ali Marine Sanctuary, with the participation of 1,000 DEWA employees and their families, as well as employees from some of DEWA's subsidiaries, and students from DEWA Academy. Participants contributed 2,080 volunteering hours. Their happiness about the campaigns has reached 92.9 percent. DEWA has removed 3,100 kilograms of waste and collected eight tonnes of algae and seaweed from the shores of the reserve that will be used for scientific research in studies of marine environments.

Word Scramble

ESDSERT

ELNADPASC

RCYLCEE

CIATEML

NARNEDGE

VICOLP

SNUITSA

EGYENRER

ANSWERS: 1) POLICY 2) DESERTS 3) GREENERY 4) LANDSCAPE 5) RECYCLE 6) CLIMATE 7) ENDANGER 8) SUSTAIN

Word Search

I	T	C	A	E	P	C	E	M	G	I	E	C	C
C	Y	T	L	C	V	C	R	C	L	E	C	M	M
G	Y	I	I	E	E	E	C	M	C	E	C	R	E
E	G	G	E	C	S	R	C	L	C	R	R	R	N
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E	C	C	O	S	C	I	T	S	A	L	P	O	G
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FREETRADE

CLIMATE

REUSE

CYCLING

ENERGY

VEGANISM

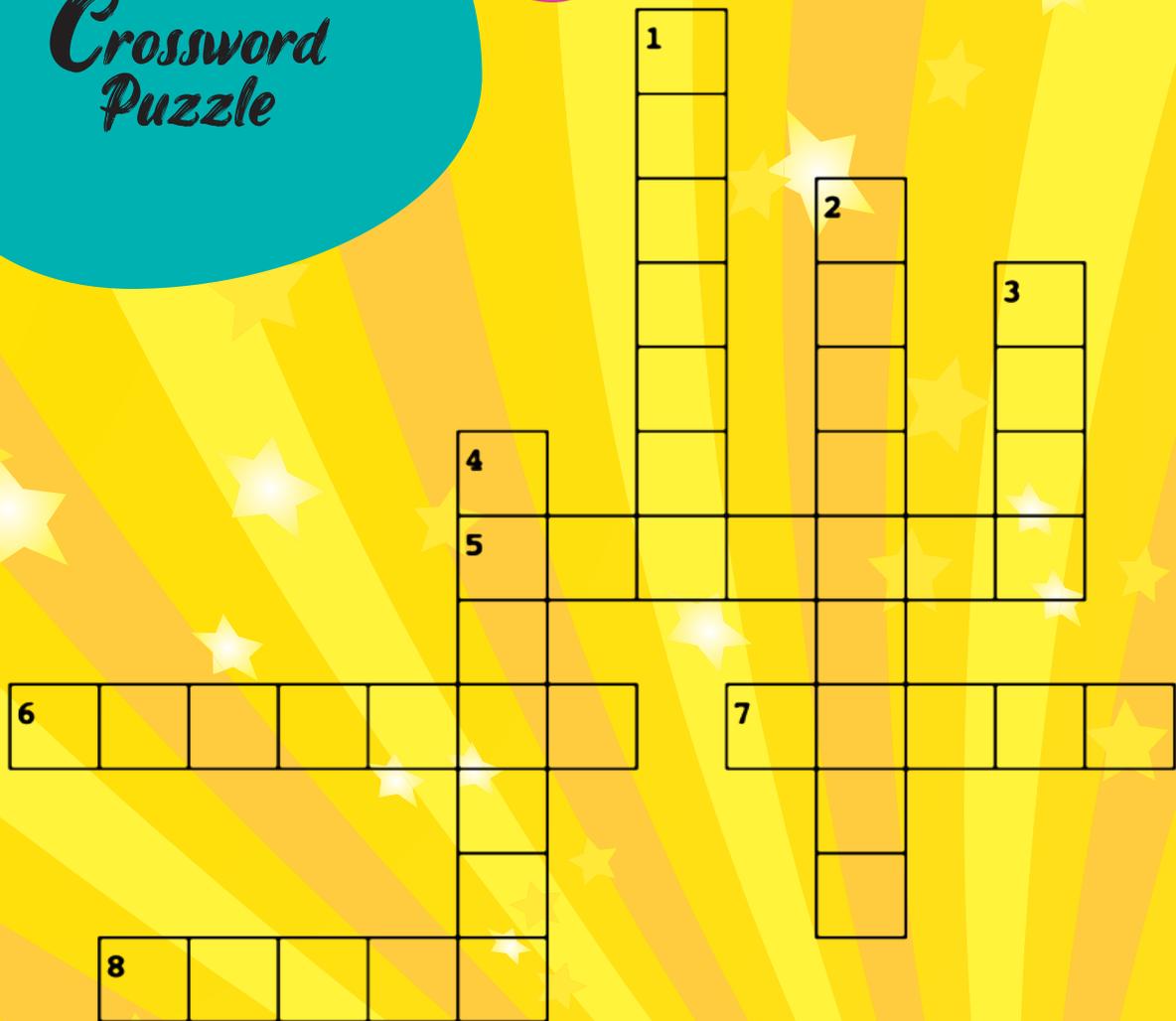
PLASTICS

TURTLES

ECONOMIC

RECYCLE

Crossword Puzzle



Across

5. Having no living representative
6. Marine reptiles
7. Not throw out
8. Tall plants

Down

1. Keep from danger
2. One raising a hand
3. Loose soil
4. Arid expanses

ANSWERS: 1) PROTECT 2) VOLUNTEER 3) DIRT 4) DESERTS 5) EXTINCT 6) TURTLES 7) REUSE 8) TREES

★ WORD OF THE DAY:

REFORESTATION

Reforestation, the conversion of previously forested land back to forest. Reforestation is an essential part of the ecological restoration of wild forests and is also used for more heavily managed lands, such as those used for paper production or timber. While a reforested area may not be as biologically productive or biodiverse as the original forest, reforestation has a number of economic and ecological benefits and holds significant promise as an important tool in the fight against anthropogenic climate change. The term reforestation is sometimes confused with afforestation, which applies to the planting of forests on lands that have historically lacked tree cover.

Urban reforestation

It consists of planting tree species in urban environments. It tends to be used to increase shady areas, protect against heat, improve air quality by trying to capture the excess CO₂ from traffic, and transform the urban landscape. Urban reforestation actions include restoring urban forests after a natural disaster.

Rural reforestation

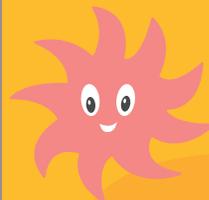
It refers to the large-scale planting of trees to restore deforested areas. It can have a variety of aims such as preserving species native to the areas, fertilizing the soil, and protecting against erosion. It also includes the recovery of forested areas destroyed by a natural disaster.

While any degraded forest or deforested area is theoretically a potential site for reforestation, it is not always feasible or judicious. Continued land-use changes, inaccessibility, or a region's volatility can pose challenges to a reforestation attempt. Although significant deforestation continues in many tropical forests, some estimates hold that Australia, Canada, China, Russia, and the United States have the most land readily available for reforestation. There are many once-forested landscapes that hold potential for workable reforestation activity.



These include:

- postburn landscapes
- pastures that are not native grasslands
- shrublands
- large open areas within a forest
- croplands with challenging or degraded soils
- floodplains
- streamsides
- protected areas
- migration corridors for wildlife, and urban areas.



WORLD JELLYFISH DAY - Nov 03

Each year on November 3rd, World Jellyfish Day is celebrated to raise awareness about jellyfish, their ecological importance, and the challenges they face in today's oceans.

Jellyfish are often seen as simple – and even bothersome – creatures. World Jellyfish Day presents an opportunity to educate people about their complex life cycles, unique adaptations, and surprising resilience. The goal is to shift perspectives and promote respect for these ancient animals.

Jellyfish are some of the oldest known multicellular organisms on Earth. They have existed in our oceans for over 500 million

years – predating dinosaurs by at least 250 million years.

Jellyfish have survived through several mass extinction events, adapting and thriving through shifts in climate and ocean chemistry that have occurred over millions of years. Their simple body structure, lack of a brain, and ability to reproduce in various ways contribute to their longevity and success in diverse ocean conditions.

Despite their resilience, jellyfish still face significant threats from both human activities and natural changes in their environment. These include: pollution, climate change, overfishing, habitat loss, ocean acidification and more.

Nov
26

WORLD SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT DAY

Transport is vital for promoting connectivity, trade, economic growth and employment. Yet it is also implicated as a significant source of green-house gas emissions. Resolving these trade-offs is essential to achieving sustainable transport and, through that, sustainable development.

Recognizing the important role of safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all in supporting sustainable economic growth, improving the social welfare of people and enhancing international cooperation and trade among countries, the General Assembly decided to declare 26 November as World Sustainable Transport Day.

It also noted the importance of cooperation in enhancing transport connectivity by developing quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, exchanging best practices to optimize the development of interconnected highways, roads, streets, railways, waterways, airways, and by encouraging transport infrastructure construction and operations to minimize consumption of energy, land and other resources.



This day will be marked by holding events aimed at enhancing the knowledge of the public on sustainable transport issues, in particular enhancing intermodal transport connectivity, promoting environmentally friendly transportation, developing socially inclusive transport infrastructure and other aspects of transport sustainability.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

Things to Do...

- Reuse both sides of paper
- Reuse plastic bags
- Recycle cans and plastic bottles
- Use public transportation
- Switch off all lights when not in use!

COLOUR ME!





Emirates Environmental Group launches 23rd edition of 'Clean UAE' campaign on December 5

UAE NEWS

The Emirates Environmental Group (EEG) has announced the launch of the 23rd edition of its highly impactful annual campaign the "Clean UAE", set to kick off on 5th December, under the patronage of the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment.

The campaign presents a unique opportunity for sponsors, public and private sector organisations, academia and individuals to contribute meaningfully to environmental protection while showcasing their commitment to sustainability.

Habiba Al Mar'ashi, Founder and Chairperson of EEG, called on all segments of society to actively participate in the "Clean UAE" campaign, emphasizing that it enhances the culture of preserving natural habitats, promoting recycling initiatives, and encouraging the use of recyclable materials in local industries to preserve natural resources and reduce the burden on them, as well as reducing the percentage of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

By partnering with the "Clean UAE" campaign, companies can align themselves with a cause that promotes sustainability, raises awareness of pollution's harmful effects, and directly engages communities in volunteer activities.

The "Clean UAE" campaign's primary objectives include increasing public awareness on the environmental and health risks of pollution, fostering a spirit of volunteerism and inspiring communities to support national sustainability initiatives.

Launching such sustainability-focused programmes highlight the importance of directing the behaviour of individuals and society to support activities that contribute to sustainability on the national level and adopt positive practices, through continuous participation in cleaning touristic and public places to be able to highlight the beauty of the natural and urban environment in the UAE.

World must act faster to protect 30% of the planet by 2030: UN

Conservationists have analysed progress towards the '30 by 30' target as the first official assessment of international efforts to protect nature

The international community has made some headway on pledges to protect 30 percent of the Earth by 2030 but progress must accelerate, the official progress report from the UN Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has found.

The new *'Protected Planet Report 2024'* reveals that 17.6 percent of land and inland waters and 8.4 percent of the ocean and coastal areas globally are within documented protected and conserved areas.

The increase in coverage since 2020, equivalent to more than twice the size of Colombia, is to be celebrated. But it is a rise of less than 0.5 percentage points in both realms. This leaves a land area roughly the size of Brazil and Australia combined, and at sea an area larger than the Indian Ocean, to be designated by 2030 in order



to meet the global target. Over the next six years the global network will need to be urgently expanded by a further 12.4 percent on land and 21.6 percent in the ocean.

Governments have committed to ensuring that these areas are effective, well-located, connected, equitably governed and uphold human rights. While progress has been made on all elements that can be meaningfully tracked, the new data suggests that the world is falling short on the quality as well as the coverage of protected and conserved areas.



Protected and conserved areas are vital places for both nature and people. They play a critical role in halting and reversing biodiversity loss. They also provide important cultural, spiritual and economic benefits, supplying ecosystem services that help to safeguard the planet for the future of humanity. In December 2022, Parties to

New report has found that 51 countries and territories have already exceeded the goal of designating 30 percent of land as protected or conserved areas, while 31 countries and territories have done so at sea

the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) agreed to conserve 30 percent of Earth's land and seas by 2030. This commitment is referred to as Target 3 and is one of 4 goals and 23 targets to tackle the global nature crisis under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

With this target, CBD Parties committed to conserving nature through protected and conserved areas, including those that allow for the sustainable use of resources, recognising Indigenous and traditional territories.

The *'Protected Planet Report 2024'* is the first official evaluation of global progress on all elements of Target 3 since the Framework was adopted in 2022.

The report finds that:

- Protected and conserved areas must almost double in area on land and more than triple in the ocean for the 30 percent target to be reached by 2030.
- Strongest progress since 2020 has been in the ocean, but most of this has been in national waters. In areas beyond national jurisdiction, coverage remains very low, accounting for less than 11 percent of the total area covered by marine and coastal protected areas. This is despite the fact that the high seas cover 61 percent of the ocean.
- Data is insufficient to fully measure and



understand the effectiveness of protected and conserved areas. Less than 5 percent of the world's land is covered by protected areas where management effectiveness has been assessed. The figure is 1.3 percent for the marine realm.

- Protected and conserved areas are not always established in the places that most need conserving. Only one-fifth of areas identified as the most important for biodiversity are fully protected. A further one-third of these important areas fall outside of protected and conserved areas entirely.
- Biodiversity is not fully represented within

protected and conserved areas. Although one-quarter of ecological regions already have 30 percent coverage, some still have none, meaning species and ecosystems are unevenly conserved.

- Only 8.5 percent of the world's land is well-connected as well as protected.
- There is little evidence that protected and conserved areas are equitably governed. Governance assessments have been reported for only 0.2 percent of coverage on land and less than 0.01 percent at sea. Less than 4 percent of coverage is governed by Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

In the next six years, the global network will urgently need to be expanded by 12.4 percent on land and 21.6 percent in the ocean

- Beyond protected and conserved areas, Indigenous and traditional territories cover at least an additional 13.6 percent of global terrestrial areas.

“It is essential that protected and conserved areas reach the 30 percent target by 2030, but it is equally important that these areas are effective and that they do not negatively impact the people who live in and around them, who are often their most valuable custodians. Today’s landmark report shows some progress has been made in the past four years, but we are not moving nearly far or fast enough,” said Inger Andersen, Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP).

“Great efforts are being made at the national level and we are seeing some progress. 51 countries and territories have already exceeded 30 percent coverage on land, and 31 countries and territories at sea. These achievements demonstrate that we still have time to make good on the shortfalls and make protected and conserved areas the enormous resource for people and nature that they should be,” she added.

The *‘Protected Planet Report 2024’* was prepared by experts at UNEP-WCMC in collaboration with IUCN and its World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA). It uses the latest official data reported by governments and other stakeholders to the Protected Planet Initiative. It also features expert contributions from other indicator custodians and institutions.

The report provides an important baseline between the previous internationally agreed 10-



year targets on protected areas and 2030.

World in the dark on effectiveness, equity and rights

The previous global evaluation of protected and conserved areas, in 2021, highlighted the need to strengthen the effectiveness of protected and conserved areas, and ensure that they are governed equitably.

Target 3 also requires progress on these issues, and states that action on protected and conserved areas should respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.



Three years later, this report finds that there is not enough data to assess whether protected and conserved areas are working for people and nature. The elements of the target where data is most deficient are those relating to whether these areas have positive biodiversity outcomes, are governed fairly for local people, and uphold the rights of women, Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

Meaningful measurements of effectiveness, equitable governance and recognition of rights is currently lacking, and greater efforts are required.

Together, these findings suggest that insufficient attention is being given to ensuring protected and conserved areas are equitably governed and to recognising the contributions of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

Huge challenge for 2030, but still within reach

There is significant reason for optimism. In 2022, Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity agreed to develop a consistent approach to tracking progress that may help focus attention on all elements of Target 3. They also enshrined clear safeguards for human rights within the Global Biodiversity Framework. These shifts in approach could be revolutionary, allowing for systems of protected and conserved areas that truly work for both people and nature.

The Protected Planet Report 2024's findings have a number of implications that may guide countries in making the urgent changes needed to achieve Target 3.

First, accelerated progress on increasing the

UN report finds that 17.6 percent of land and inland waters and 8.4 percent of the ocean and coastal areas globally are now within documented protected and conserved regions



coverage of protected and conserved areas must be accompanied by equivalent efforts to ensure these areas are well-connected and in the right places.

Secondly, there is a clear need to give appropriate recognition and support to Indigenous and traditional territories.

Third, commitments must be met to provide international financing to developing countries, to fund the expansion of protected and conserved areas. Under the Global Biodiversity Framework countries committed to increase investment in biodiversity from all sources to at least USD 200 billion per year by 2030.

Finally, data must be made available promptly at the global level, including on aspects of the Target 3 that cannot yet be fully assessed.

The report acknowledges that fully implementing all aspects of Target 3 will be a challenge for all countries. But it also carries huge rewards, while it remains within reach.



FAO's call for agrifood systems transformation resounds at UN Biodiversity COP16 in Colombia

Through several events and new publications, FAO put the spotlight on agrifood systems as biodiversity solutions

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) concluded its impactful participation in the 2024 UN Biodiversity Conference (CBD COP16) in Cali, Colombia, where its central message—agrifood systems play a critical role in achieving biodiversity goals—reverberated throughout the two-week event, held from October 21 to November 1, 2024.

The conference, themed "Peace with Nature", marked a pivotal moment in the global endeavor to safeguard biodiversity and address the interconnected challenges of biodiversity loss, climate change, and sustainable development.

The FAO delegation, led by Director of Cabinet Godfrey Magwenzi, actively engaged in numerous events and discussions, emphasizing the importance of agrifood systems solutions in delivering on the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF). FAO's



consistent message throughout the conference was clear: transforming agrifood systems is not just an option but a necessity for achieving a sustainable and biodiverse planet.

According to its hosts, COP16 saw record breaking attendance with almost 8 000 people a day in the Blue Zone, reserved for official negotiators and delegations, while as of 28 October more than 527,000 people had visited the Green Zone, a space to encourage the participation of civil society, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and all those interested in the protection and conservation of biological diversity.

Key messages amplified

FAO's presence at COP16 underscored its commitment to building resilient agrifood systems that contribute to the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of biodiversity, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and improved food security and nutrition. To effectively address these challenges, solutions need to be prioritized across multilateral environmental agreements, receive increased financial and technical support, and be fully integrated into national planning processes. This requires scaling up agrifood systems solutions through enabling policies, innovation, and technologies that reach smallholder farmers and producers, ensuring an equitable, inclusive, and gender-responsive transformation.

Spotlight on thematic days including Food Day

FAO co-hosted Food Day together with the CBD Secretariat, Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development and Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Colombia, shining a spotlight on the intricate link between biodiversity and food security underlining how biodiversity is the foundation of food security and nutrition. The event served as a platform to

Currently, one out of every 11 people in the world is experiencing hunger, and projections show that 585 million people will be chronically undernourished by 2030



explore practical and scalable solutions for transforming agrifood systems to support biodiversity and put food producers at the center of discussions.

In line with the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, FAO also co-organized Restoration Day, focusing on the urgent actions needed to achieve Target 2 of the KMGBF, which aims to bring 30 percent of degraded ecosystems under effective restoration. FAO also actively participated in Forests and Water Day, emphasizing the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of forests and water-related ecosystems for the successful implementation of the KMGBF.



UAE, Indian state of Rajasthan to explore 60 GW renewable energy project

UAE NEWS

The UAE has signed an investment memorandum with the Indian state of Rajasthan to explore the development of a 60 GW project. The agreement will look at solar, wind and hybrid energy opportunities in the Western district of Rajasthan.

Mohamed Hassan Alsuwaidi, UAE Minister of Investment, and Shri Ajitabh Sharma, Principal Secretary of Industries in the Government of Rajasthan, were the official signatories on the memorandum. The historic agreement aims to bring in best-in-class renewable energy technologies to build a long-term plant serving critical energy needs in the state.

Mohamed Alsuwaidi said, "Meeting tomorrow's energy needs through sustainable and renewable methods is essential. The UAE remains at the forefront of an ambitious diversification agenda, with energy transition as a key pillar. This project highlights our unwavering commitment to advancing clean energy solutions. Rajasthan, with

its favourable climate and vast landmass, offers the ideal environment for this initiative, serving as a testing ground for innovative technologies that will shape the future of energy."

Lal Sharma said, "India is committed to a sustainable energy future, and partnerships like this one with the UAE playing a crucial role in achieving our goals. By leveraging Rajasthan's natural advantages, this project will not only accelerate our energy transition but also serve as a model for innovation in renewable energy."

Both nations have outlined ambitious clean energy goals in recent years. As part of the UAE's Energy Strategy 2050, the country plans to invest over USD163 billion by 2050 to have 50 percent of its energy mix come from clean sources the same year. Under the USD2.4 billion National Green Hydrogen Mission, India seeks to position itself as a global leader in green hydrogen production, usage, and export by 2030.



UAE, Singapore strengthen collaboration on water technology, governance

UAE NEWS

On the sidelines of a pre-COP29 event, Abdulla Balalaa, UAE Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for Energy and Sustainability Affairs, held a bilateral meeting with Grace Fu, Minister for Sustainability and the Environment of Singapore, to discuss water management and governance, as well as areas of mutual interest in preparation for the upcoming UAE-Senegal Water Conference in 2026.

Fu highlighted Singapore's long-standing investments in water management, emphasising the city-state's advances in drainage, desalination, and water reuse, and stressed that water conservation in Singapore is supported by the absence of subsidies, ensuring efficient usage by the population.

Technology, including biomimicry, also plays a vital role in maximising the efficiency of both water usage and the energy required for desalination.

With the UAE having previously launched the

"Mohammed bin Zayed Water Initiative", which aims to raise awareness on the severity of the global water scarcity crisis, while developing innovative technological solutions to address it, Balalaa also discussed the UAE's upcoming technology challenge for membrane development.

The meeting also explored broader water governance issues, particularly in Southeast Asia, with Fu emphasising the need for strong governance to address water losses, infrastructure gaps, and the impact of climate change on water management, especially in agriculture and coastal areas.

She highlighted that governance and policy must complement technological solutions to mitigate water challenges across the region.

Additionally, Singapore invited the UAE to participate in the 2025 edition of Singapore International Water Week, a biannual event dedicated to water innovation and solutions.



UAE plays pivotal role in enhancing food security, sustainability: FAO

Kian Akram Al Jaf, Head of Mission of the Sub-Regional Office for the Gulf Cooperation Council and Yemen at the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), highlighted the UAE's pivotal role in enhancing food security, through the launch of the first Regional Centre of Excellence for Transforming Food Systems.

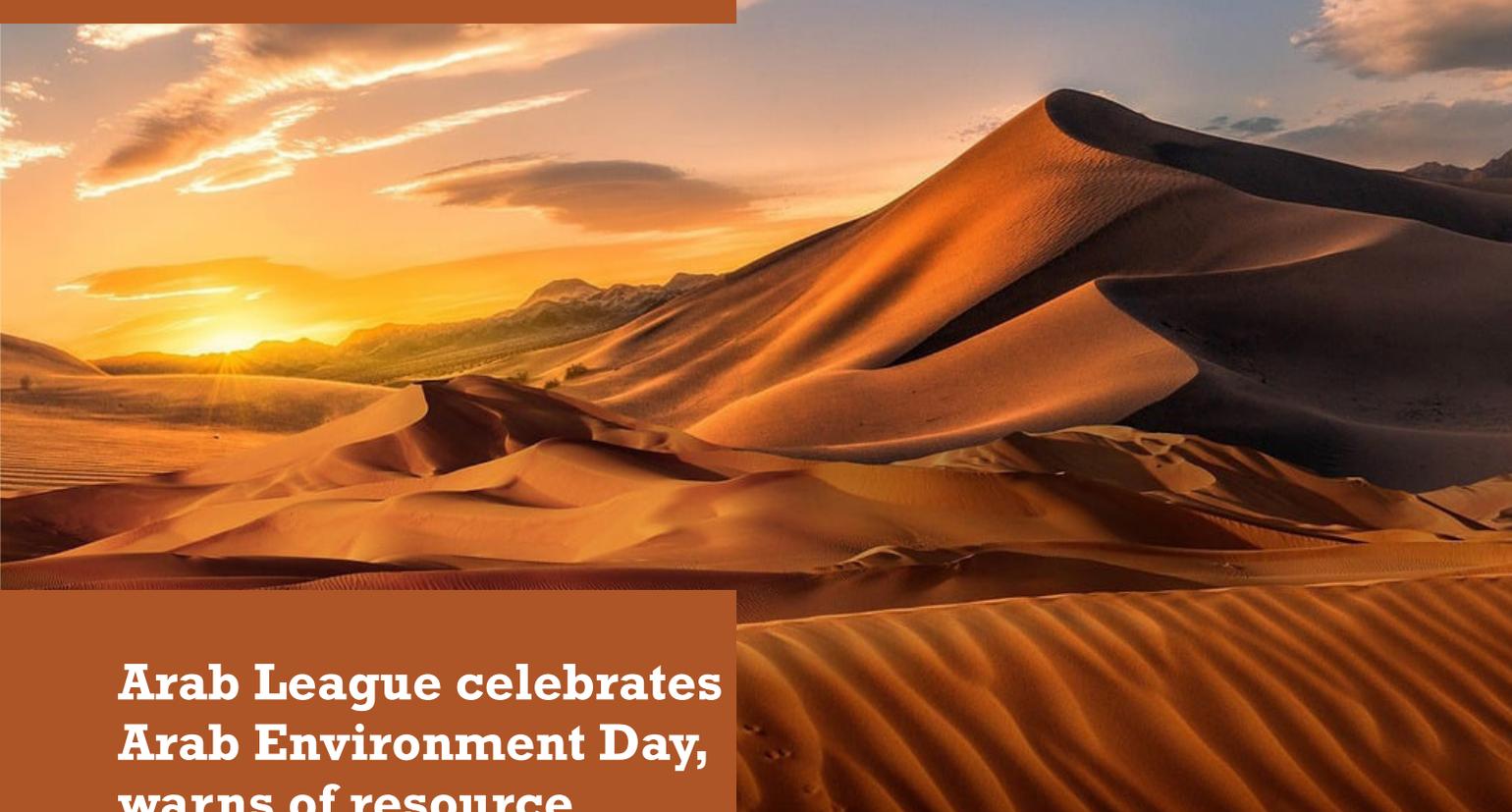
The centre, launched in collaboration with the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MoCCA) and FAO, is expected to play a pivotal role in driving innovation and strategic transformation in the region's food systems.

During his participation in the Dubai International Food Safety Conference, Al Jaf said that MoCCA and Dubai Municipality are key partners in promoting sustainable agriculture and reducing food waste. "These partnerships reflect the UAE's commitment to enhancing food security and achieving sustainability, thereby contributing to creating a conducive environment for long-term food security."

Al Jaf also underscored FAO's support for the UAE's National Food Security Strategy 2051, aimed at positioning the country as a global leader in this field by enhancing food system sustainability, increasing local production, ensuring food safety.

He added that FAO collaborates with the UAE on capacity-building programmes and data analysis to enhance food security measures and align with international best practices. "This emphasises the importance of global cooperation in addressing global challenges related to food security, including climate change, conflicts, and economic crises, as 733 million people worldwide are facing hunger," he said.

He highlighted the importance of sustainable food systems and lauded Dubai's efforts in promoting sustainable agriculture and reducing food waste, aligning with the country's commitment to enhancing food security and achieving sustainability.



Arab League celebrates Arab Environment Day, warns of resource depletion

ENVIRONMENT

The Arab League has cautioned about the negative impact of persistent natural resource depletion and land degradation on food security and stability in the region. According to the Arab League, 90 percent of Arab countries' land is classified as dry or extremely dry, making it highly susceptible to desertification.

During the Arab Environment Day celebration, held at the Arab League's headquarters in Cairo, Ambassador Dr. Ali bin Ibrahim Al Maliki, Assistant Secretary-General and Head of the Economic Affairs Sector at the Arab League, underscored the necessity for regional collaboration to address these issues, with a focus on compliance with environmental treaties and sustainable development initiatives.

The event, held under the theme, "Land Restoration for Enhanced Resilience", discussed efforts to combat desertification, improve resilience to drought, and implement sustainable environmental practices.

Al Maliki also noted that the Arab Council of Ministers Responsible for Environmental Affairs has introduced several programmes to fulfill the objectives of the Arab Declaration on Environment and Development. These include initiatives targeting desertification, industrial pollution, and the promotion of a green and circular economy across the region.

Additionally, the Arab League has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with China to establish the China-Arab International Research Centre for Drought, Desertification, and Land Degradation. The partnership aims to leverage China's expertise in desertification control to enhance the region's capacity for sustainable land management. The upcoming 35th meeting of the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment will convene on the same day in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, to discuss further strategies for combating environmental challenges across the Arab region.



Dr. Eisa M. Abdellatif
Chief Technical Advisor
Zayed International Foundation
for the Environment

The future of climate action: Reflections from COP29

66

GREEN FLASH

The recent election results in the US have raised concerns about the future of clean energy investments and their impact on global climate progress. There's uncertainty about how these changes might affect the gains made in deploying technologies like wind and solar power in recent years. This shift has generated considerable discussion within the global climate community and sparked debate about the path forward for international climate action.

I was fortunate to attend COP29 last month in the beautiful city of Baku, Azerbaijan. Many attendees expressed concern about potential shifts in the US climate policy and its impact on the Paris Agreement.

There's a strong hope in the international community for continued collaboration to maintain momentum towards climate goals.

The Zayed International Foundation for the Environment and the UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) forged a partnership in Baku to empower youth, women, and grassroots organizations in the Global South. This collaboration will recognize and support their innovative contributions to environmental sustainability and development. South-South cooperation is poised to become a vital driver of progress in enabling

developing countries to facilitate knowledge exchange, scale effective climate solutions, and promote inclusive climate action to ensure a just global transition.

We aim to contribute meaningfully to combating climate change and desertification by moving towards a wiser and more progressive perception of life. This requires paying more attention to the human dimension of vital climate action.

There have been significant investments in the technology side (hardware and software) of climate action, driving progress in clean energy and sustainable transport. Yet, more effort is needed to empower people in their daily life practices and consumption patterns. This requires substantial investment in education, awareness campaigns, and training programs for leaders at all levels to unlock even greater emissions reductions.

An environmentally conscious population is key to driving responsible consumption and environment-friendly practices and will also drive impactful policy change.

Let us join hands to make this a reality.



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