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creating green communities for a better tomorrow

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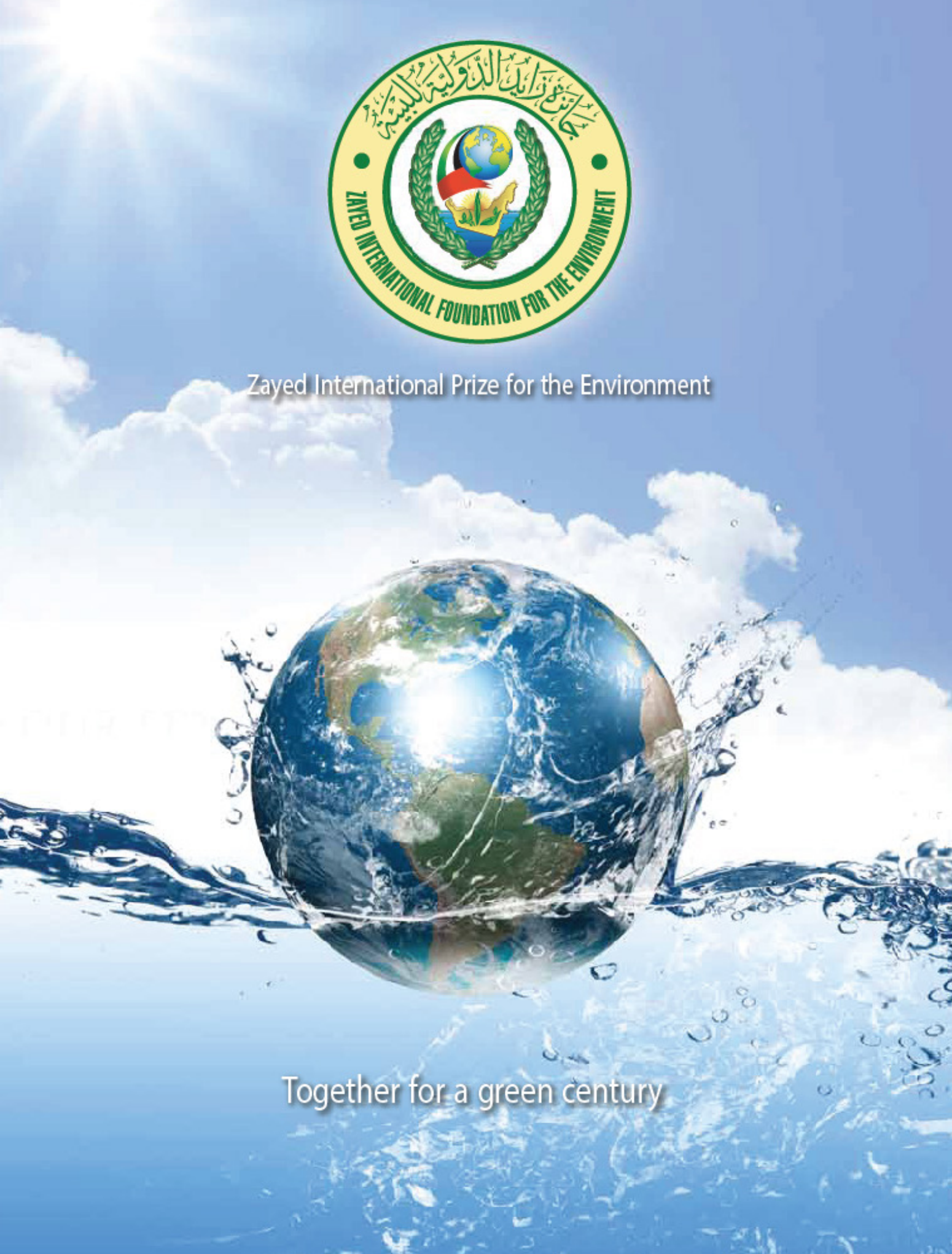
Kona Electric N Line: Sporty and stylish


جائزة زايد الدولية للبيئة
ZAYED INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
Zayed International Prize for the Environment
Together for a green century

Chairman's Message

Prof. Mohammed bin Fahad
Executive Editor

The 2025 World Environment Day theme, Beat Plastic Pollution, is an urgent plea for humanity to address one of the most critical environmental challenges of our time. Once hailed as a symbol of modern convenience, plastic is now a major pollutant, choking our oceans, contaminating our soil, and threatening the very ecosystems that sustain us.

The scale of this challenge is daunting, and what we need is a whole-of-lifecycle approach that targets all stages from production and demand to waste management to forge a truly sustainable plastics economy.

In the UAE, our visionary leadership's unwavering commitment to tackling plastic pollution led to the nation's phased single-use plastic ban, aligning economic progress with environmental stewardship. This has yielded remarkable results, demonstrating that a future less reliant on single-use plastics is not only possible but achievable.

A key driver of this profound transformation is the UAE's Circular Economy Policy 2031, which focuses on a regenerative system and a shift towards a waste-free future by promoting recycling, material reuse, and reduced dependency on raw resources. This unlocks new opportunities for innovation, economic diversification, and cutting-edge solutions in recycling, upcycling, and alternative materials.

The UAE's pioneering spirit is a legacy deeply rooted in the foresight of our founding father, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, whose profound respect for the environment continues to guide our path. This has shaped the country's comprehensive national strategy that also supports nature conservation, safeguards endangered species, and expands protected areas.

No single nation can conquer the plastic pollution crisis alone. The global community must unite and collaborate to forge integrated strategies to achieve significant environmental benefits. At the Zayed International Foundation for the Environment, we remain steadfast in our commitment to raise awareness and drive action with global partners to ensure a safe and sustainable future for generations to come.

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UAE President champions innovation for a sustainable future on World Environment Day

His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan meets with youth and entrepreneurs, reviews innovative sustainability initiatives and environmental proposals

UAE President His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan reviewed a number of environmental initiatives and pioneering ideas that contribute to strengthening the UAE's efforts to promote sustainability and preserve natural resources by encouraging innovation in this area.

This came during His Highness' reception at Qasr Al Bahr in Abu Dhabi on World Environment Day,

wherein His Highness received a group of entrepreneurs, youth, and officials who are working to implement innovative initiatives and ideas in the environmental conservation and sustainability fields.

His Highness listened to an explanation by the leaders of these initiatives regarding their importance, the possibilities of developing and implementing them on a large scale, and the results they have achieved.

His Highness praised the importance of such innovative solutions in raising awareness of the need to preserve environmental resources with the aim of building a more sustainable and prosperous future. He noted that initiatives by environmental leaders, whether in the UAE or worldwide, are a source of inspiration in advancing efforts to protect the environment from the challenges it faces.

His Highness stressed that the UAE is keen to benefit from all contributions and initiatives in this regard while fostering greater understanding of the role of individuals and communities in addressing climate change.

His Highness underscored that preserving the environment and its resources is a collective responsibility, both at the community level and globally.

His Highness remarked that the UAE continues to cooperate with international partners to achieve objectives in this field and further activate the historic UAE Consensus, which resulted from the 28th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28), through effective programmes and initiatives that will shape a better future for all people worldwide.

UAE pledges decisive action to #BeatPlasticPollution

The UAE joined the global community in marking World Environment Day on June 5, observed this year under the theme 'Beat Plastic Pollution'.

The UAE's participation highlights its call for concerted international efforts to address plastic waste, while promoting resource efficiency, biodiversity protection, and a shift towards a circular economy and sustainable development. The occasion aligns with the UAE's advanced steps to curb plastic pollution and limit

its production. The Ministry of Climate Change and Environment has launched a comprehensive programme to monitor plastic waste in the UAE's marine and coastal environments, conducting scientific studies and applying their findings to enhance efforts in reducing plastic waste.

In support of this drive, the government has issued a decision governing the use of single-use products, including a complete ban on all single-use plastic bags by 2024, and other types of single-use bags by 2026.

On World Environment Day, the UAE reaffirmed its commitment to developing and implementing policies, strategies, legislation and programmes aimed at building a sustainable future that balances economic and social growth with environmental protection.

The country continues to strengthen its sustainability principles through pioneering initiatives and innovative solutions that protect natural resources, enhance biodiversity, and promote environmentally responsible practices, in line with national goals to achieve climate neutrality by 2050.

Dr. Amna bint Abdullah Al Dahak, Minister of Climate Change and Environment, said that the UAE is continuing its pioneering efforts to reduce plastic pollution at the national and global levels.

In a statement marking World Environment Day,

The WED 2025 theme, #BeatPlasticPollution, calls for making deliberate changes and choices across the plastic value chain to eliminate the use of unnecessary, avoidable, and problematic plastic products

Dr. Al Dahak reaffirmed the UAE's commitment to protecting its precious environment, inspired by the vision of the Founding Father, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, who recognised the link between a healthy environment and a thriving society.

"The UAE remains steadfast in its dedication to safeguarding our natural heritage. We envision a future with thriving ecosystems and protected life both on land and in the sea – a legacy we build together as a community," she added.

"This year, World Environment Day calls for collective action to tackle plastic pollution, a challenge that demands our immediate attention and unified efforts. In response to this pressing issue, the UAE is implementing a comprehensive system to ensure proper and effective management of plastic products," she said.

Starting 1st January 2026, Dr. Al Dahak clarified, the UAE will implement a comprehensive ban on the import, production, and trade of single-use plastic products.

This builds upon the phased approach initiated in 2024 with the ban on plastic bags. This decisive action underscores our resolve and commitment to environmental stewardship, driving us towards a future where waste and pollution are designed out of our systems.

She emphasised that as part of the UAE's global efforts to reduce plastic waste, the Clean Rivers, one of Erth Zayed Philanthropies' initiatives, tackles plastic pollution in river systems by empowering communities and driving innovative solutions to create plastic-free waterways.

The Minister of Climate Change and Environment explained that the UAE's Circular Economy Policy is a key driver of this transformation, optimising resource use in critical sectors such as green infrastructure, transportation, manufacturing, and responsible food production and consumption.

"The policy prioritises reducing plastic waste and promoting innovative solutions for sustainable packaging and recycling. Furthermore, we are resolutely committed to managing hazardous waste and aggressively reducing plastic waste at every level," she further said.

"Each of us, as responsible members of our community, can play a leading role in realising our nation's vision by joining the mission to eliminate unnecessary plastic from our daily lives," Dr. Al Dahak stressed. "Let us become active agents of change, leading a powerful movement towards thriving communities, and a vibrant, resilient environment. Let us protect the land and the sea that are so integral to our lives, for ourselves, our loved ones, and for generations to come."

Dr. Al Dahak concluded by calling for renewed focus on the ecosystems that sustain life, noting that this year's theme, Beat Plastic Pollution, is a call to action for every member of the community. "Together, we can build a brighter, greener future for all," she added.

Community engagement

Dr. Abdullah Humaid Al Jarwan, Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Department of Energy (DoE), affirmed that community engagement and cross-sector collaboration between public and private entities are fundamental to achieving long-term environmental goals.

In a statement, he said: "The Department of Energy is confidently advancing the UAE's Net Zero by 2050 Strategy through a clear roadmap focused on accelerating the transition to clean energy and reducing carbon emissions. Our efforts include developing stringent greenhouse gas emissions standards, fostering innovation across all energy domains — including artificial intelligence — and expanding projects related to energy and water efficiency. This approach enhances the resilience of the energy sector and strikes a balance between economic growth and environmental preservation."

He added: "The Year of Community 2025 presents an important opportunity to instil the values of environmental sustainability among individuals and institutions. At the Department of Energy, we believe that community engagement and cross-sector collaboration between public and private entities are fundamental to achieving long-term environmental goals. Through awareness initiatives, impactful partnerships, and the promotion of sustainable behaviours, we are embedding an environmental culture that contributes to building a safe and clean future for generations to come."

UAE to build world's first net-zero mosque using hydrogen steel

Aldar has announced it will become the first developer in the Middle East and North Africa region to implement hydrogen-based steel rebar in a development project.

Supplied by EMSTEEL Group, the low-emission steel will significantly reduce carbon emissions during the construction of Abu Dhabi's first net-zero carbon mosque in Sustainable City Yas Island. This innovative rebar can slash carbon emissions by up to 95% compared to conventional steel, which ranks among the top contributors to embodied carbon in the built environment.

The mosque, with a 1,595 sqm floor area and capacity for over 850 worshippers, aims to achieve LEED Zero Carbon certification, reaching net zero carbon emissions in production and energy use through clean energy deployment, low carbon materials- including hydrogen-based steel produced via low-emissions processes.

The partnership between Aldar and EMSTEEL aims to champion innovation within the sector and will create demand for sustainable materials in the region, generating mutual value by recirculating the benefits within the UAE economy as part of the National In-Country Value (ICV) programme. Steel is the second largest contributor to embodied carbon in the construction sector, following concrete, accounting for up to 20 per cent of a building's total emissions.

The partnership was inaugurated during Make it in the Emirates 2025– an event dedicated to the UAE's rapidly expanding industrial and manufacturing sectors – in the presence of Talal Al Dhiyebi, Group Chief Executive Officer at Aldar, and Eng. Saeed Ghumran Al Remeithi, Group Chief Executive Officer at EMSTEEL.

Salwa Al Maflahi, Executive Director, Sustainability and Community Outreach at Aldar, said: "The low emissions hydrogen-based rebar is more than a material innovation—it's a catalyst for reshaping our industry. As we transition to low-carbon construction, green steel enables us to reduce embodied carbon at scale, without compromising structural integrity or design ambition. Our partnership with EMSTEEL marks a bold step forward in accelerating the decarbonisation of our supply chain and delivering on our net-zero ambitions."

WED 2025

Zayed International Foundation for the Environment calls for urgent national and global action to end plastic pollution

The rising tide of plastic debris damages fragile ecosystems, stokes climate change, and can result in human exposure to harmful chemicals

On the occasion of World Environment Day, held this year under the theme "Beat Plastic Pollution", the Zayed International Foundation for the Environment reaffirms its commitment to actively participating in national and international efforts to curb plastic pollution and mitigate its devastating impact on human health and the planet's ecosystems.

In a statement marking this event, Professor Mohamed Ahmed Bin Fahad, Chairman of the Foundation, emphasized that although plastic plays an essential role in our daily lives, it has become a serious environmental threat.

The world now produces around 430 million tons of plastic annually, with approximately 40% of it designed for single use, only to end up as waste. Over 10 million tons of these reach the oceans every year.

He highlighted that micro- and nano-plastics

have now permeated every corner of the planet, and alarmingly, have even been detected inside the human body, posing a direct threat to public health.

The Foundation praised the historic initiative led by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to develop a legally binding international agreement aimed at combating plastic pollution, including in the marine environment.

It stressed the importance of ensuring the agreement has strong, enforceable impacts on the environmental policies of both developed and developing countries.

The Zayed International Foundation for the Environment calls for the implementation of the following urgent measures at the national level:

- Reducing excessive use of single-use plastic bags and cheap plastic products
- Updating environmental legislation to align with international conventions
- Encouraging private sector investment in sustainable plastic alternatives
- Enhancing awareness campaigns in schools and the media
- Supporting civil society initiatives to educate the public on plastic risks and promote alternatives
- Promoting recycling initiatives, especially among small businesses active in waste collection and processing
- Launching youth and community-led cleanup campaigns for beaches and public parks
- Establishing partnerships with international organizations to support recycling programs, training, and technical/logistical support
- Integrating environmental topics into educational curricula and media programs

Professor Bin Fahad concluded by stressing that ending plastic pollution is no longer a choice—it is a necessity to ensure a safe and sustainable future for generations to come. He called on all stakeholders to unite under the slogan: "Together for a planet free from Plastic Pollution."

> *Plastic pollution is a driver of the triple planetary crisis of climate change, nature and biodiversity loss, and pollution and waste*

Did you know?

- There could be more plastic than fish in the sea by 2050.
- 91% of the world's plastic waste is not recycled
- Half of all plastic is used just once
- More plastic waste is mismanaged and littered (22%) than is collected for recycling (15%)
- Almost 2/3 of plastic waste comes from applications with lifespans of less than 5 years, including packaging (40%), consumer products (12%), and textiles (11%)
- Roughly 85% of single-use plastic packaging ends up in landfills or as unregulated waste
- More than 100,000 marine mammals are killed by ocean plastic waste entanglement or ingestion each year
- Global plastic production now exceeds 400m tonnes and is forecast to reach approximately 1 billion tonnes by 2050

Global and UAE artists unite for environmental awareness at Zayed International Foundation's inaugural 'Art and Environment' exhibition

First edition of the exhibition concludes at the Historica art gallery in Dubai, inspiring environmental awareness and action

The Zayed International Foundation for the Environment's inaugural 'Art and Environment' exhibition, held at the Historica art gallery in Oud Metha, Dubai, has concluded after a week-long run, welcoming over 182 art enthusiasts and children from various schools and educational institutions across the UAE.

Held in collaboration with Dubai Police, the Dubai Police Academy, and Hemaya Schools, the exhibition, which ran from May 24 - May 31, solidified the Foundation's role as a catalyst for environmental action and successfully fulfilled its mission of carrying forward the message of environmental sustainability and inspiring the next generation of changemakers through the power of art.

Under the theme 'Art and the Environment – Sustainable Impact on People and the Earth', the carefully curated art exhibition showcased the work of four international artists, namely Morocco-based contemporary artist Noureddine Tabete, Daouda Ndiaye, a multi-talented artist from Senegal, Noureddine Ghazi, a self-taught

contemporary artist from Morocco, and Chen Zhaochen, a talented artist and calligraphy master from China. Additionally, six students from Hemaya School participated in the exhibition, showcasing eight artworks.

The event served as a dynamic platform for dialogue, innovation, and community engagement, sparking critical conversations about pressing environmental issues and igniting a passion for finding creative solutions. The exhibition helped foster a deeper understanding of critical environmental issues and successfully translated the complex challenges facing our planet through compelling and thought-provoking artworks.

Dr. Hamdan Khalifa Al Shaer, Deputy Chairman of the Higher Committee of the Zayed International Foundation, formally inaugurated the exhibition for art and environmental advocacy on May 24 on behalf of Prof. Mohamed Ahmed bin Fahad, Chairman of the Higher Committee of the Zayed International Foundation for the Environment.

The inaugural event featured a vibrant celebration featuring captivating musical performances from the Hemaya Schools, guided by Captain Mohammed Ahmad Bin Shafia. The event also witnessed enthusiastic participation from students representing SP Jain School of Global Management and Ajman University. The young and exceptionally talented artist, Amira Rashid Jassim Al Ali, captivated the audience with her violin performance, demonstrating the power of

> Dr. Bin Fahad: "This exhibition embodies our unwavering belief in the power of art to transcend boundaries and ignite a collective responsibility towards our planet."

art forms to convey profound environmental messages.

The first edition of the 'Art and Environment' exhibition delved into five crucial themes that resonate deeply within the UAE and globally: land repair, desertification, water conservation, the vital role of women in sustainable development, and Dubai's pioneering initiatives to combat climate change.

Each of the five themes was carefully translated into a distinct visual language employing the use of vibrant colors and textures, light and dark shades, calligraphy, fingerprints, and more. While muted tones and stark imagery depicted the loss of fertile land, flowing lines emphasized the preciousness and fragility of our water resources. These themes reflect the UAE's commitment to the national Green Agenda 2030 and its dedication to a sustainable future.

Eng. Salma Moustaid, Partnerships and Operations Director at Zayed International Foundation for the Environment and General Coordinator of the Art and Environment Exhibition, expertly led the exhibition's technical committee. Each of the diverse artists hailing

from Morocco, Senegal, and China brought their unique perspective and artistic style to the themes of environment and sustainability, ensuring a rich tapestry of perspectives and further amplifying the exhibition's global impact.

Dr. Eisa M. Abdellatif, Chief Technical Advisor, and Dr. Saji Ittoop Thomas, Technical Advisor, Zayed International Foundation for the Environment, were also present at the event.

The Zayed International Foundation had announced the launch of the "Environmental Art 2025" exhibition at a press conference held at the Dubai Police Academy Officers Club on May 19. During the press conference, Dr. Mohamed Ahmed bin Fahad announced the signing of three Memoranda of Understanding with SP Jain School of Global Management, Hunza Global Ventures, a company specializing in sustainable water solutions, and Historica art gallery, for future collaborations and expanding the reach of the Foundation's environmental initiatives.

Dr. Bin Fahad emphasized that the exhibition arrives at a pivotal moment, amidst significant economic and political shifts, coupled with a growing intellectual renaissance and heightened environmental consciousness. He lauded the UAE's unwavering commitment, under the visionary leadership of President His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, to champion sustainable solutions through the country's Green Agenda 2030.

"This exhibition embodies our unwavering belief in the power of art to transcend boundaries and ignite a collective responsibility towards our planet. It serves as a powerful reminder that environmental awareness is not merely a scientific endeavor, but a deeply human one. We envision this exhibition as a catalyst for global collaboration, fostering innovative solutions and inspiring a shared commitment to a sustainable future for all," he said.

Dr. Mohamed bin Fahad underscored the exhibition's role as a powerful instrument of "soft power," capable of fostering widespread environmental awareness through the universal language of art. Highlighting the exhibition's commitment to education and understanding, he announced the publication of a documentary

book that serves as an invaluable resource, providing a detailed exploration of the scientific and artistic context behind each artwork. It delves into the intricate relationship between the art and the UAE's environment, examining the influence of the desert climate, atmosphere, soil, and water resources. Dr. Bin Fahad emphasized that this comprehensive approach ensures the exhibition not only inspires through beauty but also educates through knowledge, effectively disseminating environmental solutions through expressive artistic forms.

Eng. Salma Moustaid, said: "The first edition of the 'Art and Environment' exhibition has been a powerful tool for raising awareness and driving change. By creatively highlighting critical issues such as desertification, pollution, and biodiversity loss, we can inspire individuals and communities to take action. This exhibition represents a new paradigm in environmental awareness, placing creativity at the heart of the movement and empowering individuals to become active participants in shaping a more sustainable world."

The exhibition concluded with an awards ceremony for partners and volunteers. Dr. Hamdan Khalifa Al Shaer handed out certificates of appreciation to teachers and students representing Hemaya Schools; Professors Christopher Abraham, Dr. Nada Sayerh, and students from the SP Jain School of Global Management; Dr. Dalia Hafiz and students from Ajman University; Breath Creativity; and World Art Dubai.

Mehmet Ozaslan, Manager of Historica, said: "Historica is deeply honored to partner with the Zayed International Foundation for the Environment in hosting this extraordinary exhibition. We witnessed firsthand the transformative power of art to engage audiences, spark dialogue, and inspire a collective commitment to environmental stewardship. We believe that art plays a crucial role in shaping a more sustainable future, and we are proud to have been a part of this important initiative." He further expressed his keen interest in the next edition of the exhibition, which, he added, will "be larger in size, include more art forms, and see greater local and international participation."

CONFERENCE

UAE bolsters sustainability of agriculture with national initiatives

Inaugural Emirates Agriculture Conference and Exhibition in Al Ain concludes with commitment to empowering farmers and driving entrepreneurship for sustainable agriculture

The inaugural Emirates Agriculture Conference and Exhibition in Al Ain has concluded, marking a significant step forward in the UAE's commitment to sustainable agriculture and food security. The event reinforced the important role of innovation and entrepreneurship in strengthening the agricultural sector and empowering farmers to contribute to the UAE's sustainable food security.

Held from May 28 to 31, 2025, the event showcased the latest innovations, fostered collaboration, and highlighted the nation's dedication to empowering local farmers and building a resilient agricultural sector. The inaugural event saw wide participation of Emirati farmers, federal and government entities in agriculture, as well as youth, academics, innovators, entrepreneurs, and the community.

His Highness Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Vice President, Deputy Prime Minister, and Chairman of the Presidential Court, and H.H.

Sheikh Hazza bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Ruler's Representative in Al Ain Region, inaugurated the Emirates Agriculture Conference and Exhibition, underscoring the event's importance to the nation's strategic goals.

Their Highnesses toured the exhibition, exploring cutting-edge technologies in smart and vertical farming, and visited the National Agricultural Museum, a testament to the UAE's agricultural evolution. They also visited exhibits showcasing national companies and specialized farms, highlighting solutions for overcoming climate challenges in the desert environment. The "Farmers' Exhibition," "Youth Zone," "Agritech Zone," "Universities Zone," "Community Zone," "Companies Zone," "Start-up Zone," and

"Government Entities Zone" provided a comprehensive overview of the agricultural landscape.

H.H. Sheikh Mansour emphasized the event's significance in strengthening the national

The sessions highlighted accelerating entrepreneurship in the agriculture, financing projects and supporting local products

agricultural framework and driving sustainable development and food security. He highlighted the strategic imperative of supporting Emirati farmers through modern technologies to ensure the long-term sustainability of the sector.

H.H. Sheikh Hazza affirmed Al Ain's role in the national agricultural landscape, emphasizing the need for public-private collaboration to invest in smart agricultural technologies, expand local output, and achieve food self-sufficiency, aligning with the National Food Security Strategy 2051.

Dr. Amna bint Abdullah Al Dahak, Minister of Climate Change and Environment, delivered a keynote address, celebrating the 4,000-year agricultural heritage of Al Ain and the visionary foundations laid by the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. She reiterated the commitment to supporting Emirati farmers through partnerships, knowledge accessibility, and platforms to showcase their products and expertise.

The event featured 22 government entities, 40 private companies, four national universities, and 20 innovative agricultural start-ups, with over 1,000 students in attendance. The conference program included over 75 speakers, panel discussions, and presentations, along with nearly 35 workshops.

Strategic MoUs

The Ministry of Climate Change and Environment

(MOCCAE) solidified its commitment to sustainable food security and local agriculture by signing several strategic Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) during the event.

- **MOCCAE and Silal:** The MoU focuses on building a safe, sustainable food system by creating a data-driven food strategy that combines local, regional, and international data to ensure a sustainable and fair food future based on scientific principles.
- **National Agriculture Centre and Lulu Retail:** The MoU aims to strengthen local agriculture by providing dedicated retail space for local products and establishing direct purchasing channels. This ensures accredited farmers can reach consumers with high-quality produce.
- **MOCCAE and Barakat:** The MoU is focused on enhancing environmental sustainability through initiatives like the '100-Mile Initiative', which reduces the farmer-consumer distance, upcycles food waste into animal feed, and utilises highly biodegradable plastic for its bottles, and the 'Food Waste Recycling Initiative', aimed at converting food waste into animal feed.
- **National Agriculture Center and Khalifa University of Science and Technology:** The MoU covers the Access Programme of the Agricultural Innovation Centre to empower innovators in food and agriculture by providing

them with the necessary resources and supporting them with funding and mentorship.

- **MOCCAE and the Mohamed Bin Zayed University of Artificial Intelligence (MBZUAI):** The MoU aims to create a laboratory for artificial intelligence innovation, research, and analysis to boost collaboration in research, advanced technologies, and skill development.
- **MOCCAE and University of Sharjah, Khalifa University of Science and Technology, the University of Khorfakkan, and the University of Al Dhaid:** The MoU for collaborating on agricultural research, joint projects, and capacity building aims to support the development of research projects and capabilities in the UAE's food security.
- **MOCCAE and the Islamic Development Bank Group:** The two parties signed an amendment to the agreement regarding the International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA).

These MoUs demonstrate MOCCAE's commitment to working with partners to promote environmental sustainability, improve food security, and boost the national economy.

National Agriculture Centre unveiled

Mohammed Saeed Al Nuaimi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MOCCAE), announced the commencement of operation of the National Agriculture Centre, a key initiative of the 'Plant the Emirates' National Programme. The Centre aims to achieve ambitious goals and provide comprehensive support to

Emirati farmers, boost the country's agricultural production, enhance the quality of produce, and improve the competitiveness of UAE-grown food in local and national markets. This includes achieving a 20% increase in productive farms, a 25% growth in organic farms, expanding the share of climate-smart agriculture to 30%, and reducing agricultural waste by 50%.

The National Agriculture Centre will oversee the implementation of programs to support innovative projects, promote innovation, technology, and modern farming practices, and

empower farmers with specialized training and advisory services in developing their projects and marketing their products.

Sultan Salem Al Shamsi has been appointed as the Director of the National Agriculture Centre, which will operate under the auspices of the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment. Al Shamsi's extensive 26-year career includes experience in a wide range of sectors, from agricultural value chains and integrated operations management to project management, institutional transformation, agricultural technology, government relations, and agricultural finance.

In his opening speech at the event, Al Nuaimi emphasised the vision of the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan in establishing a strong and sustainable agricultural sector in the country. He affirmed that Sheikh Zayed understood the importance of agriculture as a promising sector capable of laying a solid foundation for the nation. The UAE's Founding Father, therefore, prioritised the sector, providing financial support amounting to millions of dirhams, which was invested in building an integrated infrastructure to support agriculture.

"Sheikh Zayed's legacy lies in laying the foundation for a strong and promising agricultural sector, one that future generations can build upon. The UAE's rapid agricultural expansion today, and the ease with which major companies establish both traditional and modern farms, is a direct result of the reliable infrastructure he initiated. The country's farming ecosystem thrives thanks to a skilled workforce, who inherited their agricultural expertise, and well-established research centres dedicated to agricultural experimentation," he added.

Emirates Youth Council for Agriculture

The Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MOCCAE), in collaboration with the Federal Youth Authority, launched the Emirates Youth Council for Agriculture, empowering young Emiratis to contribute to agricultural innovation, sustainability, and national food security.

Dr. Amna bint Abdullah Al Dahak, Minister of Climate Change and Environment, emphasized the council's pivotal role in enhancing youth engagement in the agricultural sector. Sana bint Mohammed Suhail, Minister of Family, noted the initiative supports national values by promoting youth involvement in a strategic sector.

Dr. Sultan bin Saif Al Neyadi, Minister of State for Youth Affairs, stressed the UAE's commitment to youth empowerment, aligning with the National

Youth Agenda 2031.

The council brings together young experts from across the UAE to support youth-led research, smart agricultural practices, and community awareness campaigns.

Academic institutions: Catalysts for agricultural advancement

The Emirates Agriculture Conference and Exhibition highlighted the crucial role of research centers and universities in advancing the UAE's agricultural sector.

A panel discussion on "Empowering Innovation & Scientific Research for Sustainable Solutions" examined how innovation and scientific research can address challenges in the agricultural sector.

Panelists emphasized the need to bridge the gap between academic research and practical applications of technology, highlighting the transformative potential of technologies like AI, remote sensing, and smart robotics.

The conference also featured panels on 'Aquaculture – A Key Sector in Boosting Local Food Production' where panelists explored the sector's strategic role in strengthening food security and highlighted its potential for increasing local production of high-quality fish protein. The session on 'Farm Waste Recycling – A Key Step Towards Sustainable Development', focused on promoting a circular economy and presented the latest solutions and technologies for transforming agricultural waste into valuable economic resources.

Aisha Al Ateqi, Executive Director of the Mohamed bin Zayed Water Initiative, announced the "Al Miyah Challenge for Agriculture," a global competition in partnership with the Abu Dhabi Agriculture and Food Safety Authority, Aspire, and Silal. With a prize pool of AED 8 million, the Challenge seeks groundbreaking technologies that slash agricultural water consumption while maintaining or boosting crop yields.

In her keynote address, Dr. Lucy Wallace, Director of Global Relationships at the European Institute of Technology for Food Innovation, highlighted the need to bridge market skill gaps through continuous training to prepare the workforce for current and future agrifood need. The 2025 exhibition was held as part of the UAE's Plant the Emirates national programme.

‘UAE is deeply committed to safeguarding its rich biodiversity’

The International Day for Biological Diversity was observed on May 22 under the theme, ‘Harmony with Nature and Sustainable Development’

Dr. Amna bint Abdullah Al Dahak, Minister of Climate Change and Environment, reaffirmed the UAE's commitment to preserving our natural ecosystems and safeguarding life on land and in water.

In a statement on the International Day for Biological Diversity, marked annually on 22nd May, Dr. Al Dahak said that this year's theme, ‘Harmony with Nature and Sustainable Development’, underscores the essential balance between progress and the conservation of natural resources and biodiversity, particularly in addressing climate challenges.

She added, “We recognise that protecting biodiversity and championing nature-based solutions are not simply environmental add-ons; they are the essential foundation upon which all our efforts to combat climate change and achieve lasting sustainability must be built.”

Dr. Al Dahak emphasised that the UAE is deeply committed to safeguarding its rich biodiversity. The country has embraced biodiversity as a cornerstone of its sustainability efforts, reflected in the designation of 49 protected areas, encompassing over 15 percent of the nation's territory, which preserves its desert, mountains, and the marine environment, providing critical habitats for endangered species.

"Our success in bringing the majestic Arabian Oryx back from the brink of extinction stands as a testament to our dedication to wildlife conservation. Furthermore, we are leveraging technology to enhance our conservation strategies, from using drones to combat desertification to pioneering research in marine life preservation," she further said.

> *According to the UN, three-quarters of the land-based environment and about 66 per cent of the marine environment have been significantly altered by human actions*

Beyond our borders, Dr. Al Dahak stated, the UAE champions international collaboration, exemplified by its partnership with Indonesia to launch the Mangrove Alliance for Climate (MAC). "As part of this alliance, we are also investing in cutting-edge research, as demonstrated by the groundbreaking of the Mohamed bin Zayed-Joko Widodo International Mangrove Research Centre on the island of Bali, in collaboration with the Republic of Indonesia."

"Here in the UAE, we are actively engaging stakeholders across multiple sectors to boost our local agriculture and safeguard the country's rich biodiversity," the minister explained, adding that the Emirates Agriculture Conference and Exhibition, taking place from 28th to 31st May, offers an opportunity to turn goals into tangible actions.

"In addition to our focus on supporting farmers and increasing the local production of strategic crops, we will place special emphasis on the development of our livestock and fisheries, key pillars in strengthening both biodiversity and sustainable food security," she added.

"I invite you to join us at this important event to explore innovative strategies that ensure a better future for both nature and humanity. Let us build a lasting legacy that future generations will be proud to carry forward," Dr. Al Dahak concluded.

UAE leads dialogue on long-term development efforts at Copenhagen Climate Ministerial

Abdulla Balalaa represented the COP28 Presidency in the Troika High-Level Dialogue on Long-Term Development Planning, co-chaired by the COP28, COP29, and COP30 Presidencies

Abdulla Balalaa, Assistant Foreign Minister for Energy and Sustainability, led the UAE delegation to the Copenhagen Climate Ministerial, alongside ministers and climate leaders from around the world, to advance COP28's outputs and set the course for COP30. Held from 7–8 May, the meeting was an important milestone, marking 10 years since the adoption of the Paris Agreement and the halfway point through the critical decade to keep the 1.5°C goal within reach.

Balalaa represented the COP28 Presidency in the Troika High-Level Dialogue on Long-Term Development Planning, co-chaired by the COP28, COP29, and COP30 Presidencies. The session explored how Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) can serve as strategic instruments for sustainable development, investment mobilization, and institutional resilience.

"As the initiators of the Troika Roadmap to Mission 1.5, the UAE firmly believes that NDCs must move beyond pledges. They must serve as national development blueprints – integrating investment, inclusion, and resilience," said Balalaa during his intervention.

On the sidelines of the meeting, Balalaa held several bilateral meetings with key partners, including the Minister of Climate Change of the

Kingdom of Norway, the Deputy Danish Minister of Energy, Climate, and Utilities, and Denmark's Minister of Environment and Gender Equality. He also held meetings with CEOs of private sector water and renewable energy companies such as Vestas, the pioneer company in wind turbines, Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners (CIP), and AVK, one of the largest holding companies in water solutions.

In these engagements, Balalaa reaffirmed the UAE's commitment to leading the implementation of the Baku Climate Unity Pact, which includes initializing the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD) and advancing the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG).

> **This participation reflects the UAE's ongoing diplomatic efforts to build international support for global climate action**

Furthermore, the UAE emphasized its role as a climate finance pioneer, referencing its USD 100 million contributions to both the FRLD and the Global Flaring and Methane Reduction (GFMR) Fund, as well as the launch of the USD 30 billion ALTÉRRA platform to unlock transformational finance and catalyze private sector engagement.

In addition, Balalaa highlighted the UAE's commitment to sustainable development through its co-hosting of the United Nations Water Conference 2026 (UNWC) alongside Senegal. This pivotal event will link water security, climate resilience, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with the goals of the Paris Agreement. The UAE views water action as inseparable from climate action and remains committed to driving global cooperation for a resilient and sustainable future for generations to come.

This participation reflects the UAE's ongoing diplomatic efforts to build international support for global climate action, following the signing of the historic "UAE Consensus," reached at COP28 in Dubai in 2023. These endeavours aim to accelerate progress across adaptation, energy transition, and resilience in the lead-up to COP30, which will be held in Belém, Brazil, in November.

UAE's FoodTech Challenge unveils 42 trailblazing worldwide semifinalists

From lab-grown 'real' cow milk and regenerative seaweed farming to AI-powered crop monitoring, 42 innovative startups have been named semifinalists in the third FoodTech Challenge

The FoodTech Challenge (FTC) has shortlisted 42 innovative early-stage startups for their tech-driven solutions that have the potential to transform global food systems.

Organised by the International Affairs Office at the UAE Presidential Court and Tamkeen and delivered in partnership with the Gates Foundation, ne'ma, the UAE's Food Loss and Waste Initiative, and Silal, a leading UAE agri-food company, the third iteration of FTC offers its biggest cash prize to date. The competition was announced at the Clinton Global Initiative Annual Meeting in 2024.

Later this year, four winners will receive a share of USD2 million in cash grants. In addition to funding, each winner will benefit from go-to-market support and access to a global network, empowering them to deploy their solutions in the UAE and scale across the Global South.

Judges received more than 1,200 entries from 113 countries, an 80 percent increase in

applications over the previous edition. Submissions feature groundbreaking solutions, from lab-grown dairy products and regenerative seaweed farming to AI-powered crop monitoring and biodegradable hydrogels.

Startups from the UAE accounted for 16 percent of the semifinalist cohort, while 40 percent have at least one female co-founder, and 33 percent are led or co-led by youth entrepreneurs.

The cohort includes startups from the US, UK,

Israel, India, Malaysia, Uganda, Brazil, Kenya, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Tunisia, Norway, Morocco, South Africa, Germany, France, Indonesia, and Australia.

The shortlisted companies offer innovative solutions in key areas such as smart packaging technologies, urban farming, and AI-powered analytics while 45 percent of the solutions are focused on reducing food loss and waste.

In the next phase of the competition, selected startups will participate in a series of interviews and pitches, ultimately leading to the selection of a final top 10 shortlist.

The judges for the third edition of the FTC include Mariam Almheiri, Head of the International Affairs Office at the Presidential Court of the UAE and Co-Chair of FTC; Rima Al Mokarrab, Chair of Tamkeen and Co-Chair of FTC; HRH Prince Khaled bin Alwaleed bin Talal Al Saud, Founder and CEO of KBW Ventures; representatives from the Gates Foundation, the ne'ma initiative, Silal, and international organisations focused on development and agricultural research.

Launched under the UAE's National Food Security Strategy 2051, FTC leverages the country's arid, resource-scarce environment as a launchpad for scalable innovations. With an estimated two billion more people to feed by 2050, the competition is anchored in the UAE's broader vision to enhance food security by identifying and supporting solutions related to the food-water-energy nexus, halving food loss and waste, and accelerating global solutions.

Winners of previous editions have achieved notable success, with iyris (formerly Red Sea Farms) raising over USD34 million since its win and scaling its technologies across Silal farms in Abu Dhabi, and Orbisk, which completed an 8.3 million Euro funding round in December 2024. To date, FTC winners have raised a total of USD60 million for their solutions following their participation in the challenge.

Dubai Culture bridges UAE and Japan through architecture symposium at Expo 2025 Osaka

The Pillars of Arish: Architecture in Transition' symposium explored the intersection of heritage, innovation, and sustainability in UAE architecture

The Dubai Culture and Arts Authority (Dubai Culture) wrapped up the 'Pillars of Arish: Architecture in Transition' symposium, organised in partnership with the UAE Pavilion at Expo 2025 Osaka-Kansai, in Japan, by spotlighting the UAE's evolving architectural narrative on a global stage.

Aligned with the UAE Pavilion's theme, 'From

The Pillars of Arish: Architecture in Transition' symposium explored the intersection of heritage, innovation, and sustainability in UAE architecture

Earth to Ether', which sets out the UAE's vision for humanity's future, this first-of-its-kind curated symposium explored architecture in the UAE, focusing on local design practices, material innovation, and regional exchange between the UAE, Japan, and other nations. Discussions also addressed the significance of traditional knowledge in shaping the urban landscape, with particular emphasis on Arish structures and context-sensitive solutions.

In her opening remarks, Hala Badri, Director-General of Dubai Culture, described the UAE Pavilion as a powerful reflection of the country's ambition and enduring commitment to heritage as a driver of innovation. She noted how this spirit comes to life through the pavilion's layout, which integrates local practices, such as using arish (palm fronds), into a contemporary setting.

She said, "By organising the symposium at Expo 2025, our goal was to highlight Emirati cultural identity and demonstrate Dubai's vibrant and supportive ecosystem for the cultural and creative industries and emerging entrepreneurs. The event also elevated local talent globally by spotlighting their ideas and ambitious visions that advance the design and architecture sector."

The symposium was curated by Salem AlSuwaidi,

Founder of SWALIF Collective and Co-founder of MamarLab, and Rashed AlMulla, Founder of MABNAI and Co-founder of MamarLab. It featured 10 talks and panels, spanning heritage, sustainability, and design. Notable sessions included 'Cultural Convergence: The Impact of Japanese Architecture on Gulf Regional Identity,' exploring ARCHIDENTITY's research on the evolution of Japanese modernism from the 1940s to the 1970s and its influence on Middle Eastern aesthetics. 'Connecting Threads: Modern Heritage's Connection to the Vernacular and Contemporary' examined how modern buildings in the UAE draw inspiration from vernacular traditions.

The session, 'Shaping a Practice: Challenges & Opportunities in Architectural Enterprises,' shed light on the UAE's dynamic landscape and the strategies deployed by architects to establish and sustain resilient design studios amidst market pressures, evolving urban agendas, and increasing client expectations. 'Harnessing a Site: How to Navigate through Constructing in a Site-sensitive Context' offered insights into how architectural practice can be enriched by grounding aesthetics in contextual analysis, material discipline, and cultural and environmental narratives. Meanwhile, 'UAE Design Education: Pedagogies in Design Learning' explored how initiatives, such as LIMASS, led by Lina Ahmad and Marco Sosa at Zayed University, are reshaping sustainability using traditional systems and locally sourced resources.

The symposium also included the session 'East-To-East: Japanese Architecture in Emirati Contexts,' which positioned architecture as a medium for cultural synergy, bringing together the works of Takehashi Muruyama with those of Emirati architects Ahmed Bukhash and Ahmed Al Ali to reflect on how Japanese principles influence projects in the UAE. 'From Arish to Villas' traced the transformation of housing in the UAE, from palm-frond arish homes to modern villas, illustrating how shifts in cultural values, materials used, and environmental adaptation have changed the way people build.

The session 'Falaj: Of Water Comes Life' highlighted the ingenious design and community-based management of the aflaj irrigation systems, positioning them as environmentally friendly solutions that have supported agriculture and settlement across the region for centuries. In 'Pioneering a Pavilion: Innovative Solutions to Grand Spaces,' participants explored how principles of sustainability and the circular economy are being applied to redefine large-scale projects in the UAE by

using locally available materials.

Finally, 'Reshaping Historical Districts in Dubai: Challenges and Opportunities' presented Dubai Culture's experience in reviving heritage sites, notably the Al Shindagha Museum, the UAE's largest heritage museum, by documenting oral histories and transforming traditional districts into vibrant cultural destinations.

As part of Expo 2025 Osaka, the Dubai Culture delegation visited international pavilions, including those of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, France, the Nordic countries (Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Iceland, Faroe Islands, Greenland, and Åland), South Korea, Germany, Oman, Singapore, and the Women's Pavilion, among others, to explore projects and creative concepts reflecting each country's future vision.

Dubai Culture also organised a comprehensive tour for 12 UAE-based architects and creative professionals, including visits to significant landmarks and cultural sites in Osaka and its neighbouring cities. Highlights of the tour included the National Museum of Art, the Asahi Broadcasting Corp. headquarters, the Umeda Sky Building by Hiroshi Hara, teamLab Botanical Gardens, and several works by architect Tadao Ando, such as his exhibition at Grand Green Osaka, the Kyoto Garden of Fine Arts, the Hyogo Prefectural Museum of Art, the Honpukuji Water Temple, and the Yumebutai Complex.

The delegates who participated were: Ahmad Bukhash, Founder of Archidentity and designer of 'The Good Place' Pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai; Fatima AlSuwaidi, Head of the Cultural Heritage Legislation and Policy Section, Ministry of Culture; Ahmed Al Ali, Founder of X-Architects; Fatima AlZaabi, Co-founder of D04 Studios; Abdalla AlMulla, Founder of MULA Design Studio; Lina Ahmed, Associate Professor of Sustainable Design at Zayed University; Laith AlSheyadi, Urban Planner at the Oman Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning; Reem Al Qamzi, Founder of R.Qticets Studio; Rakan Lootah, Founder of Rakan Lootah Studio; and Noora AlAwar, Co-founder of D04 Studios; Hamad AlMutawa, Architect at Köda; and Mohammad Salem AlShafiei, Engineer at the Dubai Roads and Transport Authority.

Framing architecture as a powerful narrative tool for identity, cooperation, and human progress, the symposium fostered global cultural exchange through dialogue and design

UAE launches first National Food Loss, Waste Baseline Study

UAE launches first National Food Loss, Waste Baseline Study

ne'ma- the National Food Loss and Waste Initiative- has launched the country's first National Baseline Study to measure actual food loss and waste.

This first-of-its-kind study, which involves 3,000 participants, marks a pivotal milestone in national efforts to halve food loss and waste by 2030. The pioneering 18-month study will measure actual food loss and waste across the entire food value chain, through the participation of households, businesses, and public sector entities, across all seven Emirates. The study's findings will be unveiled by ne'ma during the first half of 2026.

Insights from the study will be used to establish national food loss and food waste indices and inform evidence-based intervention strategies. The study also lays the foundation for systemic change and strengthens national efforts to ensure food security and sustainability.

The study is the result of a coordinated national effort, bringing together strategic partners including the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MOCCAE), Abu Dhabi Agriculture and Food Safety Authority (ADAFSA), Tadweer Group, Dubai Municipality, Dubai Environment and Climate Change Authority (DECCA), and Aldar, with additional support from the local municipalities and authorities, the Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Centre (FCSC) and local statistics centres across the UAE.

A key milestone in this journey will take place during September 2025, in a focused two-week data collection field survey coupled with actual measurement of food waste at the household level. Participants across all seven Emirates will take part in shaping a more sustainable future by contributing valuable insights and data on how food is lost and wasted.

The data gathered will be rigorously analysed to develop national food loss and waste indices, which will create a clear baseline that reflects where the UAE stands today so that we can monitor our food loss and waste reduction progress.

Khuloud Hassan Al Nuwais, Chief Sustainability Officer of Emirates Foundation and ne'ma Committee Secretary General, said, "Tackling food loss and waste requires national collaboration, and alignment to create a unified approach and methodology for measuring actual food waste across the supply chain. The UAE's first National Baseline Study will provide an accurate, data-driven picture of where and how food is lost or wasted. This will enable the UAE to track progress against reduction targets."

The UAE Food Loss and Waste Baseline Study's final report will be shared nationally and internationally, contributing to global knowledge sharing on food loss and waste reduction. In doing so, the UAE reinforces its leadership in advancing the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and promoting sustainable food systems nationally and worldwide.

The UAE Food Loss and Waste Baseline Study represents a critical step in advancing the nation's sustainability goals

UAE's MBRSC, Firefly Aerospace partner to deploy Rashid 2 Rover to far side of the moon

The Rashid 2 Rover will join Blue Ghost Mission 2 in 2026, which will be Firefly Aerospace's second lunar mission

His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, and President of MBRSC, witnessed the signing of a strategic agreement between the Mohammed Bin Rashid Space Centre (MBRSC) and Firefly Aerospace, under which the latter will provide the lunar lander to deploy the Rashid 2 Rover under the Emirates Lunar Mission to the far side of the moon.

The Rashid 2 Rover will join Blue Ghost Mission 2, in 2026, which will be Firefly Aerospace's second lunar mission, alongside payloads from Australia, the European Space Agency (ESA), and NASA.

H.H. Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum said, "The UAE's mission to explore the far side of the Moon places our nation among a select group of countries advancing the frontiers of lunar exploration.

"Our objective is not only to reach new destinations in space, but to generate meaningful knowledge that contributes to humanity's understanding of the universe."

"We are committed to shaping a sustainable space industry ecosystem that fosters innovation, facilitates international knowledge exchange, and supports the continued growth of the UAE's scientific and technological leadership. Through

missions like these, the UAE is set to further strengthen its position in the global space sector as a major player in expanding the horizons of discovery," His Highness added.

Hamad Obaid AlMansoori, Chairman, MBRSC, said, "The signing of this strategic agreement reflects our nation's commitment to investing in long-term scientific advancement, building advanced national capabilities, and forging impactful global partnerships.

"The Emirates Lunar Mission is driven by a desire to contribute to humanity's collective understanding of the Moon, and to support the development of future lunar infrastructure and deep space initiatives."

Jason Kim, CEO of Firefly Aerospace, said, "On the heels of Firefly's flawless moon landing and operations, our team is looking forward to collaborating with the United Arab Emirates on this groundbreaking mission to the far side of the moon.

"We're honoured to support the international space community with our versatile Blue Ghost and Elytra spacecraft that can stack together to provide unique access to both lunar orbit and the lunar surface."

MBRSC has outlined a set of ambitious scientific goals for the Rashid 2 Rover, which will demonstrate lunar surface mobility on the far side of the moon, where terrain and communication pose greater challenges than the near side.

As part of the mission, the rover will undergo the material adhesion determination experiment, using various materials on its wheels to evaluate their durability against lunar dust. The findings can inform the design of future technologies such as spacesuits, habitats, and other critical infrastructure.

Equipped with multiple cameras and scientific probes, the Rashid 2 Rover will study the moon's plasma environment, geology, and thermal conditions.

It will also investigate the properties of lunar soil, surface structure temperatures, and the lunar photoelectron sheath to support future in-situ resource utilisation and advance further exploration of deep space.

The Emirates Lunar Mission forms a pivotal part of the broader space exploration strategy under the UAE's National Space Programme, which prioritises the advancement of scientific knowledge, the empowerment of future generations, and the strengthening of international cooperation.

Kona Electric N Line electrifies the road with sportiness and style

Featuring a more dynamic road presence, a futuristic look, and a larger living space for all your adventures, Kona Electric N Line is a bold, upscaled SUV that is very much at home on city streets and country roads

Hyundai has made its best-selling electric vehicle appear even sportier with Kona Electric N Line, the first Hyundai EV to receive the sporty treatment. This expands the brand's customer-centric approach to delivering a wide range of options for drivers wanting to make the switch to all-electric mobility.

The Kona Electric N Line showcases a sporty and dynamic design, maintaining the car's impressive performance and range. Customers who appreciate both style and sustainability – as well as the best-in-class interior space offered by the upscaled all-new Kona – can now further individualise Hyundai's top-selling SUV.

N Line-specific design elements

Key features of the Kona Electric N Line include unique bumpers on both the front and rear, stylish side skirts, and a set of dedicated 19-

Sleekly sculpted, the KONA Electric's clean, distinctive front end and aerodynamic flowing lines highlight the futuristic styling

inch wheels, designed to emphasise the sporty appearance of the model. The dedicated front bumper design underlines the confident poise that permeates the KONA Electric N Line. Bold horizontal lines structure the rear – from the spoiler at the top to the Seamless Horizon Lamp and the wing-shaped bumper, which is unique to the N-Line. The exterior is further adorned with exclusive N Line badging, underscoring the model's bold look.

Inside the cabin, the Kona Electric N Line boasts sport seats with N Line logo and red contrast stitching, creating an immersive and dynamic driving environment. Additional red details on the steering wheel and dashboard contribute to the N Line's unique interior aesthetics. The N Line trim is finished with a unique N Line cloth, whilst the N Line S trim is equipped with an Alcantara® & Leather combination, providing a luxurious grip feel from 57% recycled polyester. The focus is on providing a captivating driving experience without compromising on comfort and functionality.

The KONA Electric is setting new standards in the subcompact SUV segment with its impressive range of state-of-the-art smart tech. Drivers can enjoy the latest connectivity and clever convenience features backed up by cutting-edge safety and driver-assistance systems. An elegantly curved panoramic display features two integrated screens for a high-tech experience and intuitive usage: a 12.3" infotainment touch screen and a 12.3" digital cluster.

Hyundai's e-Active Sound Design and the BOSE audio system produce a virtual driving sound tailored to the cabin considering variables such

as speed, torque and acceleration.

The KONA Electric takes connectivity to the next level with Hyundai's new generation infotainment system called ccNC (Connected Car Navigation Cockpit), providing advanced graphics and perfect unity among the displays. ccNC introduces the latest Bluelink version including full Over The Air (OTA) software updates. For more convenience, KONA Electric can be locked, unlocked, and started through Hyundai Digital Key 2 Touch via smartphones or Apple Watch.

For added peace of mind, the KONA Electric has been equipped with the latest Hyundai Smart Sense – the brand's cutting-edge Advanced Driver Assistance Systems. For the first time, it also features Highway Driving Assist 2.0 – a combination of Lane Following Assist and Navigation Based Smart Cruise Control – it utilises sensors and map data to enable autonomous driving, automatically adjusting speed and overtaking cars in front of you when cruise control is set.

The Kona Electric N Line, which hit European roads in spring 2024, features the launch colour Serenity White Pearl with a two-tone Abyss Black Pearl roof, setting the stage for a bold and stylish entrance into the all-electric SUV segment.

In a breakthrough move, Hyundai has ensured that the N Line treatment extends to every powertrain variant of the all-new Kona, making the Kona N Line a versatile and exciting option for a wide range of customers. Whether opting for combustion engine, hybrid, or all-electric, drivers can now enjoy the sporty and distinctive N Line features, setting a new standard for Hyundai's commitment to innovation and sustainability.

The carefully matched components of the KONA Electric's powertrain have been engineered to enhance fast charging and improve driving range

Smart tech for an electric mobility lifestyle

The KONA Electric is equipped with a wide array of clever comfort features and cutting-edge smart tech that is as unique as it is a pleasure to use. It also supports an electric mobility lifestyle with its innovative V2L function, which lets you freely use or charge any electric devices, such as electric bicycles, scooters or camping equipment – while on the move or on location.

Next level electric performance

The carefully matched components of the KONA Electric's powertrain have been engineered to provide excellent driving characteristics, fast charging and excellent driving range. Its innovative EV features include i-PEDAL driving mode, battery pre-conditioning and Regenerative Braking System 2.0. Depending on your mobility needs and performance wants, you can pick your power and preferred range: the 48.4 kWh battery with up to 234 miles driving range. Or the 65.4 kWh version that delivers a range of up to 319 miles on a single charge.

The KONA Electric delivers sporty acceleration: going from 0 to 62 mph in just 7.8 seconds in the 17" wheel version equipped with the long-range 65.4 kWh battery.

The KONA Electric is designed and engineered to lead the competition with its many outstanding EV features. These include the i-Pedal to adjust the level of regenerative braking with paddle shifters mounted on the steering wheel – using the motor to slow the car and charge the battery. KONA Electric also automatically adapts the battery temperature while travelling to ensure optimal charging conditions when reaching the charging point via navigation.

UAE wins presidency of the General Assembly of UN-Habitat

The UN-Habitat General Assembly, composed of 193 member states, is the programme's highest decision-making body

The UAE has achieved a new diplomatic milestone by winning, for the first time, the presidency of the General Assembly of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and securing membership in its Executive Board.

This well-deserved and unprecedented achievement was shared with the Kingdom of Malaysia, following a highly competitive election during the Assembly meetings held in Nairobi, Kenya.

This international recognition reaffirms the UAE's leading role in supporting sustainable urban development, housing initiatives, and advancing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The UN-Habitat General Assembly, composed of 193 member states, is the programme's highest decision-making body. It is responsible for

guiding global policies aimed at improving living conditions in cities and enhancing the quality of life in urban communities.

Suhail Mohamed Al Mazrouei, Minister of Energy and Infrastructure, expressed his pride and honour in this international achievement, which adds to the UAE's distinguished record of successes.

Al Mazrouei said, "This remarkable achievement reflects the vision and directives of the UAE's wise leadership, which has made housing and urban development a strategic priority, recognising it as a fundamental pillar for social stability and quality of life. The leadership has directed efforts toward providing an integrated housing environment that ensures well-being and dignity for all citizens and residents.

"It has also launched numerous national initiatives and programs that have contributed to developing a modern housing system and offering innovative and sustainable solutions to meet the needs of various segments of society."

He added, "The Sheikh Zayed Housing Programme is a prominent example of this integrated national vision. Since its establishment in 1999, the programme has successfully enhanced family stability, met the demand for government housing, and provided decent housing for Emirati citizens.

"Through this victory, the UAE reaffirms its commitment to continue contributing to global housing and urban planning efforts. The country will work to deepen cooperation with all 193 member states of the General Assembly, with the goal of developing sustainable, inclusive cities that are capable of meeting future challenges."

He affirmed that the UAE will leverage this leadership role to support the implementation of Goal 11 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, which focuses on "making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable."

The international recognition reaffirms the UAE's leading role in supporting sustainable urban development, housing initiatives, and advancing the UN SDGs

He also pointed out that the joint presidency with Malaysia and membership in the UN-Habitat Executive Board will open new avenues for strengthening dialogue among member states and for exchanging the best international experiences and practices.

He stressed that the UAE will lead joint efforts to promote innovation in urban housing and present pioneering models for addressing the challenges of rapid urban growth and climate change.

UAE enhances coral reef protection through innovative programmes

Coral reefs offer a vital ecosystem, acting as a haven, food source, and shelter for marine life, and supporting fish populations

The UAE is bolstering its commitment to marine conservation through ambitious environmental initiatives focused on safeguarding and expanding its vital coral reef ecosystems to ensure biodiversity and sustainability.

Coral reefs provide a haven, food, and protection for marine life, support fish stocks, protect coastlines from erosion, bolster commercial fishing, and support recreational and tourism activities.

In line with its commitment to nature-based solutions, the UAE has recently announced ambitious reef cultivation projects to enhance ecological resilience and biodiversity.

In Abu Dhabi, H.H. Sheikh Hamdan bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Ruler's Representative in the Al Dhafra Region and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD), has directed the cultivation of over 4 million

coral colonies by 2030, covering more than 900 hectares—an initiative described as the world's largest of its kind.

Earlier this month, EAD also announced the launch of the "Abu Dhabi Coral Garden initiative," the largest of its kind in the Middle East. This project, which will be implemented between 2025 and 2030, aims to deploy 40,000 eco-friendly reef structures across 1,200 sq kms of coastal and deep-sea areas.

These artificial reefs are projected to attract marine life at three times the rate of natural

reefs, potentially yielding over five million kilograms of fish annually.

Several artificial reef modules will also be implanted with live coral reef fragments raised in the coral reef nursery of Abu Dhabi. The fragments are selected from the highly resilient coral

> *EAD's project to cultivate over 4 million coral colonies by 2030 builds on the success of restoring one million coral colonies since 2021, which achieved a 95 per cent survival rate*

species that are tolerant to high marine water temperatures. This will support the coral reefs' growth, reproduction, and help restore the natural marine ecosystem.

Other emirates are following suit. Sharjah recently began a pilot project in Khorfakkan using artificial reef caves to support fish habitats, while Dubai rolled out the first phase of its DUBAI REEF, which will see 20,000 reef modules deployed across 600 square kilometres of marine territory over three years.

The Ministry of Climate Change and Environment plays a central role in coral restoration efforts in coordination with relevant authorities in each emirate. This includes a research initiative focused on cultivating 24 resilient coral species and a comprehensive national reef mapping project that has identified 210 sites supporting over 55 species of hard corals.

Previous successful initiatives include the establishment of coral gardens in Ras Al Khaimah, Umm Al Qaiwain, and Ajman, alongside an ongoing long-term collaboration with Fujairah Adventures aimed at planting 1.5 million coral reef colonies along the eastern coast.

4 million coral colonies

EAD's coral rehabilitation project to restore more than four million coral colonies in more than 900 hectares, makes it the largest coral rehabilitation project in the world.

EAD's coral rehabilitation project successfully reached the target of one million colonies, following restoration in eight different sites, covering over 300 hectares This has led to an increase in Abu Dhabi's coral coverage as the restored coral areas have seen over 95 per cent success rate.

The restored sites are already showing signs of recovery, as life is starting to form around them, with more than 50 per cent increase in fish biomass and diversity.

Furthermore, exceptionally and atypical of corals, those in the nursery and across restored areas continued to grow even during the summer, which indicates their ability and high resistance to withstand severe climatic conditions.

The scope of the coral restoration project included the development of coral nurseries that help mitigate the adverse impact of both natural and anthropogenic pressures on coral reefs arising from coastal development and climate change, including the immediate threat of rising seawater temperatures.

The first phase of the project included an evaluation, which highlighted resilient reefs and potential donor sites, and identified nursery sites

By installing 40,000 eco-friendly artificial corals of various designs and sizes, the Abu Dhabi Coral Garden initiative aims to support the growth of marine organisms across 1,200 sq kms

to ensure a protected growth environment. This is based on different criteria such as water quality, currents, depth, and temperature.

This was followed by the establishment of several underwater nurseries to nurture and grow corals collected from suitable reefs, with a production capacity of up to one million coral colonies.

In the second phase, the nursery stock was harvested and transported to various sites for rehabilitation and to restore the integrated coral ecosystem. The third phase includes the completion of nursery stock harvesting and site restoration through coral translocation to degraded areas.

Dr. Shaikha Salem Al Dhaheri, Secretary-General of EAD, said that despite the Arabian Gulf's harsh environmental conditions, coral reefs can adapt and provide habitats for a variety of marine species in the region. They are highly flexible, enabling them to adapt and withstand the hottest seas, distinguishing them from other types of coral reefs around the world.

She emphasised that the project is a nature-based solution to address the effects of climate change and rising temperatures on the seabed, will increase the emirate's total coral reef area and rehabilitate affected sites. This is part of efforts to preserve this important ecosystem and one of the most diversified marine habitats."

The EAD Secretary-General reiterated the agency's commitment to continue to monitor and rehabilitate coral reefs to enhance the emirate's marine ecosystems and help mitigate the effects of climate change, in line with the objectives of the Abu Dhabi Climate Change Strategy.

Ahmed Al Hashemi, Executive Director of Terrestrial and Marine Biodiversity Sector at EAD, said, "Our aim is to increase the resilience of coral reefs in the emirate of Abu Dhabi in the face of climate change by selecting the most heat-tolerant coral species."

Corals are key for supporting the local fish stock, acting as a home to diverse fish species, across different life stages, helping boost fish stocks.

Nicosia, Cyprus: A model of urban sustainability

From linear parks to smart mobility, Cyprus's capital city is reconnecting with nature and redefining Sustainable City Living

Nicosia, the capital city of the Republic of Cyprus, lies roughly in the centre of the island in the Mesaoria Plain, flanked by the northern range of Kyrenia Mountains with its distinctive 'Pentadaktylos' – the five-finger mountain.

The capital has two distinct faces: the old, original part of the city, surrounded by sturdy Venetian walls over 400 years old, and a busy modern metropolis, which has an estimated population of 419,561 inhabitants, together with the suburbs. As the country's capital, Nicosia is the financial and business center of Cyprus.

The city of Nicosia's green city credentials come from its several urban sustainability initiatives and environmental efforts aimed at improving the quality of life and reducing environmental impact.

Green Mobility

Nicosia is set for a major urban transformation with the launch of an ambitious €192 million sustainable mobility plan aimed at reshaping the city's transport network by 2030. The initiative seeks to

By 2030, Nicosia's entire bus fleet is expected to be fully electric

reduce the capital's dependence on cars, currently responsible for over 85 per cent of all journeys, while promoting eco-friendly alternatives such as public transport, cycling, and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure.

Supported by the EU, the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) serves as the backbone of its mobility strategy. The vision of the SUMP is the creation of a sustainable city by 2030.

Approved by the Environmental Authority, the plan envisions Nicosia as a "15-minute connected multicore city," where residents can access key services within a short walk, bike ride, or public transport trip. With inflation adjustments, the total investment is expected to surpass €201 million, while projected societal benefits, including residual infrastructure value, are estimated at €453 million over six years.

Public transport usage in Nicosia currently stands at just 2-4%, with walking and cycling accounting for another 4%. The new strategy aims to curb issues arising from excessive private car use, including congestion, air pollution, noise, traffic accidents, and illegal parking. Aligned with Cyprus's updated National Energy and Climate Plan, the initiative aims for a 30% reduction in petrol-powered private cars and diesel buses, replacing them with electric alternatives. By 2030, the city's entire bus fleet is expected to be fully electric.

Some of the city's major transformative projects include:

- Controlled parking zones with premium rates
- Old GSP stadium redevelopment
- 13 new cycling routes, including university connections
- 20 public transport enhancements, including new circular routes

Green Infrastructure Initiatives

Nicosia's green infrastructure efforts are central to its strategy to become a more sustainable, resilient, and livable city. Green infrastructure involves integrating natural and semi-natural systems into the urban fabric to provide ecological, social, and economic benefits. These efforts are particularly important in Nicosia, which faces challenges such as urban heat, air pollution, and limited rainfall.

The Pedios River Linear Park is one of the flagship

green infrastructure projects in Nicosia. It is a prime example of how urban nature can be reintegrated into a modern city to benefit both people and the environment.

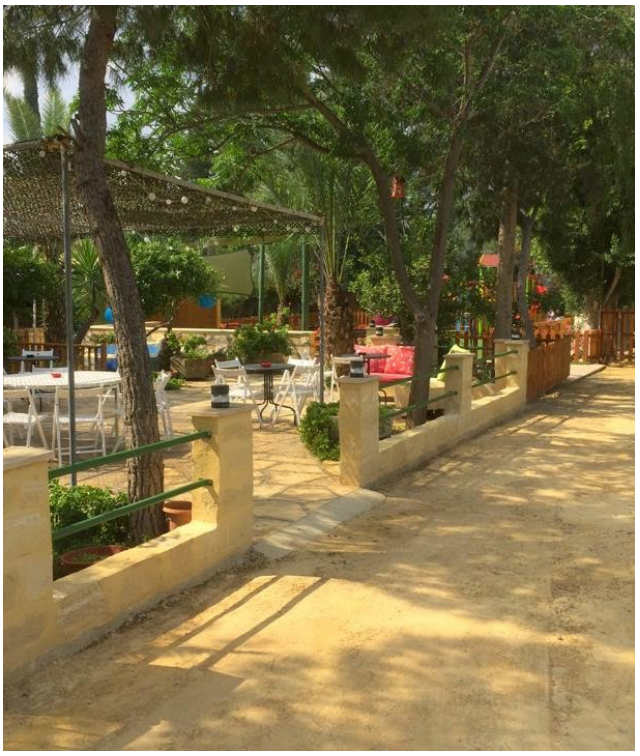
The park stretches along the Pedieos River, the longest river in Cyprus, and spans both the Nicosia Municipality and parts of surrounding suburban areas like Strovolos and Lakatamia. It functions not only as a recreational space but also as a multifunctional ecological corridor, addressing issues of urban mobility, climate resilience, and biodiversity conservation.

The park's development began in the early 2000s and has evolved in phases. The landscape design preserves the natural flow of the river where possible and integrates walking and cycling paths that extend over 14 kilometers, offering a safe, continuous route through a densely built urban environment. It has become especially popular with joggers, cyclists, and families, thanks to its shaded paths and connection to residential neighborhoods.

A defining feature of the park is its role as a green lung for the city. Nicosia, which experiences long hot summers and limited rainfall, faces challenges like the urban heat island effect. The Pedieos Linear Park helps to mitigate this by maintaining a cooler microclimate along its corridor. The presence of trees, vegetation, and water improves local air quality and creates more hospitable urban conditions during heat waves.

From an ecological standpoint, the park supports urban biodiversity by preserving natural riverbanks and planting native and drought-resistant species. It provides habitats for various birds, insects, and small mammals, contributing

By promoting urban greening, Nicosia is creating more eco-friendly spaces, increasing biodiversity, and improving air quality in the city

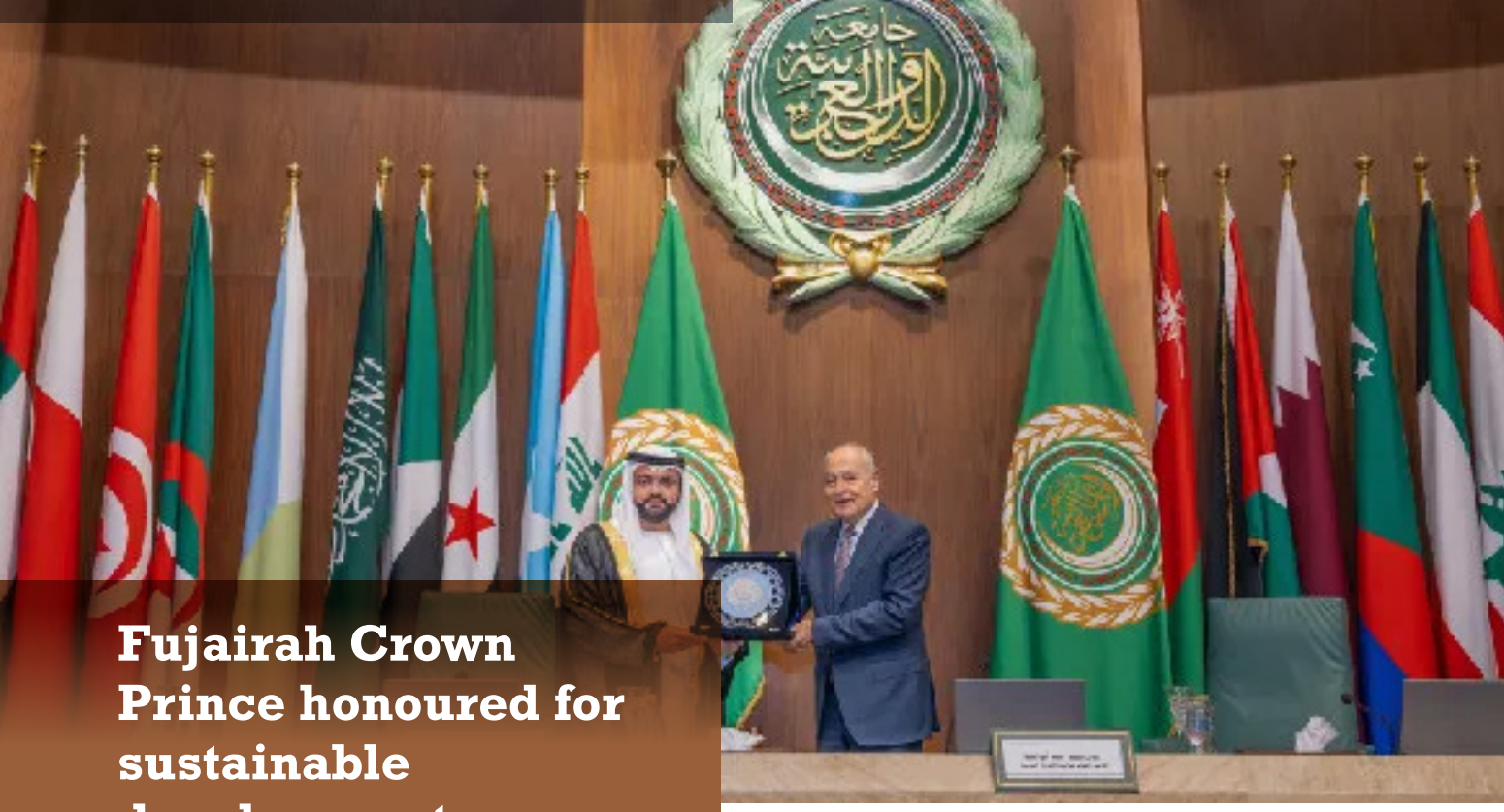


to ecological connectivity across the urban landscape. Flood control is another critical function. The park's layout incorporates elements of nature-based water management, such as vegetated swales and permeable paths that absorb rainwater, reducing runoff and the risk of flash flooding during seasonal storms.

Energy Efficiency

To mitigate climate change and promote sustainable energy, Nicosia has been working to improve its renewable energy infrastructure. Solar energy, in particular, has been a focus due to Cyprus's abundant sunshine. The installation of solar panels on public buildings, schools, and homes is incentivized through government grants and subsidies, encouraging residents and businesses to produce clean energy. The city is also exploring the adoption of other renewable sources such as wind and geothermal energy.

Energy efficiency is another cornerstone of Nicosia's sustainability agenda. The municipal authorities have initiated programs to retrofit public buildings with energy-saving technologies, including LED lighting, better insulation, and energy-efficient heating and cooling systems. This extends to the encouragement of energy efficiency within private sector developments, with initiatives in place to support the construction of buildings that meet high energy performance standards.



Fujairah Crown Prince honoured for sustainable development leadership

The League of Arab States has recognized H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Hamad Al Sharqi, Crown Prince of Fujairah, with the prestigious Leading Arab Personality Award in Sustainable Development at the Arab Sustainability Day 2025 ceremony in Cairo. The event, themed "Raising Awareness of the Importance of Sustainability in the Arab Region," underscored the growing urgency of sustainable practices in the face of regional challenges.

League Secretary-General Ahmed Aboul Gheit emphasized the importance of balancing economic, social, and environmental dimensions for sustainable progress. Ambassador Dr. Nada Al-Ajezi highlighted Arab Sustainability Day's role as a platform for sharing knowledge and best practices in achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

In his keynote speech, H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Hamad Al Sharqi stressed the collective responsibility to implement environmental best practices and achieve sustainable development goals. He affirmed the UAE's commitment to environmental sustainability as a core pillar of its national development strategies, driving stability, empowering communities, and supporting economic growth.

He further emphasized the directives of H.H. Sheikh Hamad bin Mohammed Al Sharqi, Ruler of Fujairah, highlighting environmental sustainability as central to Fujairah's vision, particularly in key sectors like mining, oil, and marine conservation.

The Fujairah Crown Prince lauded the Arab League's efforts in organizing Arab Sustainability Day, recognizing it as a pivotal event for addressing environmental issues and fostering strategic partnerships. During the event, H.H. witnessed the signing of several cooperation agreements between the Government of Fujairah and the League of Arab States.

Mohammed Al Yamahi, President of the Arab Parliament; Ahmed Hamdan Al Zeyoudi, Director of the Crown Prince of Fujairah's Office; Hamdan Karam Al Kaabi, Director of the Private Office of the Crown Prince of Fujairah; and Engineer Aseela Al Mualla, Director of the Fujairah Environment Authority, attended the event

Abu Dhabi disperses 6.5 million native seeds using drones

As part of its continued drive to adopt cutting-edge technologies that support biodiversity in Abu Dhabi, the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD) has completed its 2025 native seed dispersal programme in nature reserves. The initiative, conducted in partnership with UK-based environmental restoration company Dendra, used custom-designed drones to carry out aerial seeding.

A dedicated team carried out assessments of vegetation cover, taking into account soil characteristics and their suitability for the native plant species selected under the programme.

Ahmed Al Hashmi, Executive Director of the Terrestrial and Marine Biodiversity Sector at EAD, stated that the drone-based seeding operations covered a total of 320 hectares, many of which were seeded for the first time.

A total of 6.5 million seeds from native species were dispersed, including Samar *(Vachellia tortilis)*, Moringa *(Moringa peregrina)*, Rumex *(Rumex limoniastrum)*, Cleome pallida, Desert cotton *(Aerva javanica)* and Panicum *(Panicum turgidum)* in the mountainous slopes and wadi habitats of Jebel Hafit National Park.

In the sand dunes ecosystems of Qasr Al Sarab Nature Reserve, seeds of Fire Bush *(Calligonum polygonoides)*, Rimth *(Haloxylon salicornicum)*, Tricholaena *(Tricholaena teneriffae)*, Panicum *(Panicum turgidum)*, and Agriophyllum *(Agriophyllum minus)* were distributed.

The use of drones facilitates dispersal over extensive areas in significantly less time compared to traditional manual seeding methods and supports operations in remote and difficult-to-access terrains and fragile ecosystems.

EAD will continue to monitor the designated areas to assess vegetation response over time, employing AI-powered sensors and advanced monitoring technologies to track the growth of shrubs and native plants.

Word Scramble

LYOIPC

ALDPCESNA

SAWL

EILUDMSD

AUOTSNMT

TRLUSET

OCEYSTI

TUAREN

ANSWERS: 1) MUDSLIDE 2) MOUNTAINS 3) LANDSCAPE 4) TURTLES 5) SOCIETY 6) LAWS 7) NATURE 8) POLICY

Word Search

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

LEGAL

VEHICLES

RAIN

SOIL

WILDLIFE

COMMUNITY

DESERTS

REUSABLE

RESOURCES

VOLUNTEERING

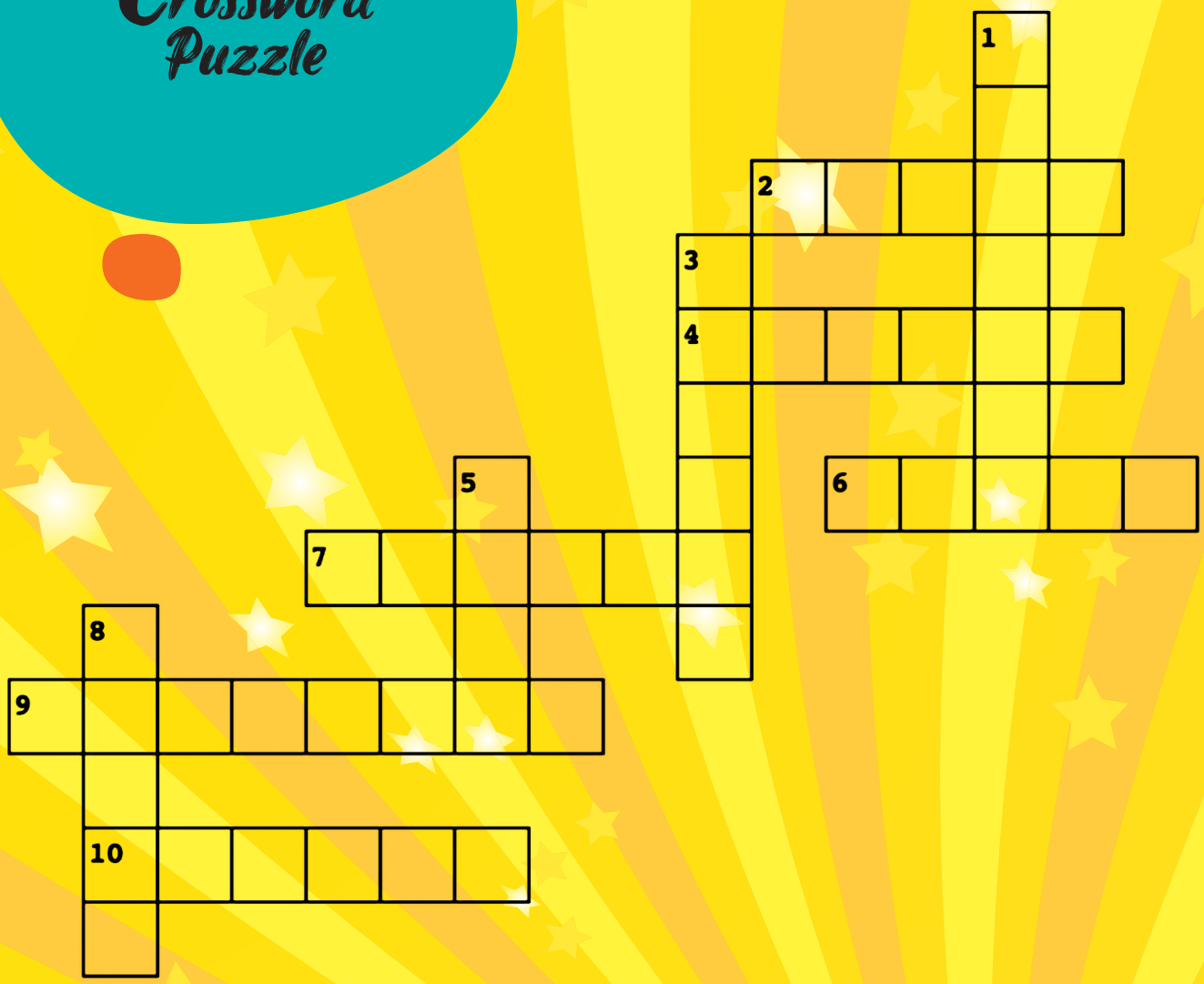
VEGANISM

CORALS

FACTORIES

POLLUTANTS

Crossword Puzzle



Across

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

Down

1. To keep save from injury, harm or destruction
3. A large collection of trees
5. A type of fossil fuel
8. The planet on which we live

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

WORD OF THE DAY:

PERMAFROST

Permafrost is any ground that remains completely frozen—32°F (0°C) or colder—for at least two years straight. These permanently frozen grounds are most common in regions with high mountains and in Earth's higher latitudes—near the North and South Poles.

Permafrost covers large regions of the Earth. Almost a quarter of the land area in the Northern Hemisphere has permafrost underneath. Although the ground is frozen, permafrost regions are not always covered in snow.

Permafrost is made of a combination of soil, rocks and sand that are held together by ice. The soil and ice in permafrost stay frozen all year long. Near the surface, permafrost soils also contain large quantities of organic carbon—a material leftover from dead plants that couldn't decompose, or rot away, due to the cold. Lower permafrost layers contain soils made mostly of minerals.

A layer of soil on top of permafrost does not stay frozen all year. This layer, called the active layer, thaws during the warm summer months and freezes again in the fall. In colder regions, the ground rarely thaws—even in the summer. There, the active layer is very thin—only 4 to 6 inches (10 to 15 centimeters). In warmer permafrost regions, the active layer can be several meters thick.

As Earth's climate warms, the permafrost is thawing. That means the ice inside the permafrost melts, leaving behind water and soil. Thawing permafrost can have dramatic impacts on our planet and the things living on it. For example:

- Many northern villages are built on permafrost. When permafrost is frozen, it's harder than concrete. However, thawing permafrost can destroy houses, roads and other infrastructure.
- When permafrost is frozen, plant material in the soil—called organic carbon—can't decompose, or rot away. As permafrost thaws, microbes begin decomposing this material. This process releases greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide and methane to the atmosphere.
- When permafrost thaws, so do ancient bacteria and viruses in the ice and soil. These newly-unfrozen microbes could make humans and animals very sick. Scientists have discovered microbes more than 400,000 years old in thawed permafrost.

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY - JUNE 05

Led by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and held annually since 1973, the World Environment Day has grown to be the largest global platform for environmental outreach.

The Republic of Korea will host World Environment Day 2025 with a focus on ending plastic pollution globally. Ridding the planet of plastic pollution is an important contribution to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, including those on climate action, sustainable production and consumption, protection of seas and oceans and repairing ecosystems and retaining biodiversity.

Plastic pollution exacerbates the deadly impacts of the triple planetary crisis: the crisis of climate change, the crisis of nature, land

and biodiversity loss, and the crisis of pollution and waste. Globally, an estimated 11 million tonnes of plastic waste leak into aquatic ecosystems each year, while microplastics accumulate in the soil from sewage and landfills, due to the use of plastics in agricultural products. The annual social and environmental cost of plastic pollution ranges between USD 300 billion and USD 600 billion.

The 2025 World Environment Day will spotlight the growing scientific evidence on the impacts of plastic pollution and drive momentum to refuse, reduce, reuse, recycle, and rethink plastics use. This year's World Environment Day observance comes as countries make progress towards securing a global treaty to end plastic pollution, including in the marine environment.

June 08 World Oceans Day

Since its inception in 2008, United Nations World Oceans Day has celebrated the ocean in recognition of its importance as the sustainer of all life on earth. As the challenges to the ocean continue to grow, so does the need to understand them and to mobilize globally. On 8 June 2025, United Nations World Oceans Day will open the UN Ocean Conference in Nice, France (9 – 13 June, 2025).

The theme for the 2025 World Ocean Day is Wonder: Sustaining What Sustains Us. The ocean is the world's greatest wonder, a seemingly endless source of sustenance, potential, wisdom, and awe. From the marine life that contributes to oxygen, medicines and food, to its natural infrastructures that sequester carbon and buffer shores, every diverse element of the ocean supports humanity in a multitude of ways. But instead of acting with appreciation and amazement towards the ocean, the world has acted with ignorance and greed. Despite countless warnings, we have knowingly depleted its abundance, polluted its depths, and

devastated the ecosystems that we depend on as well as those were yet to discover.

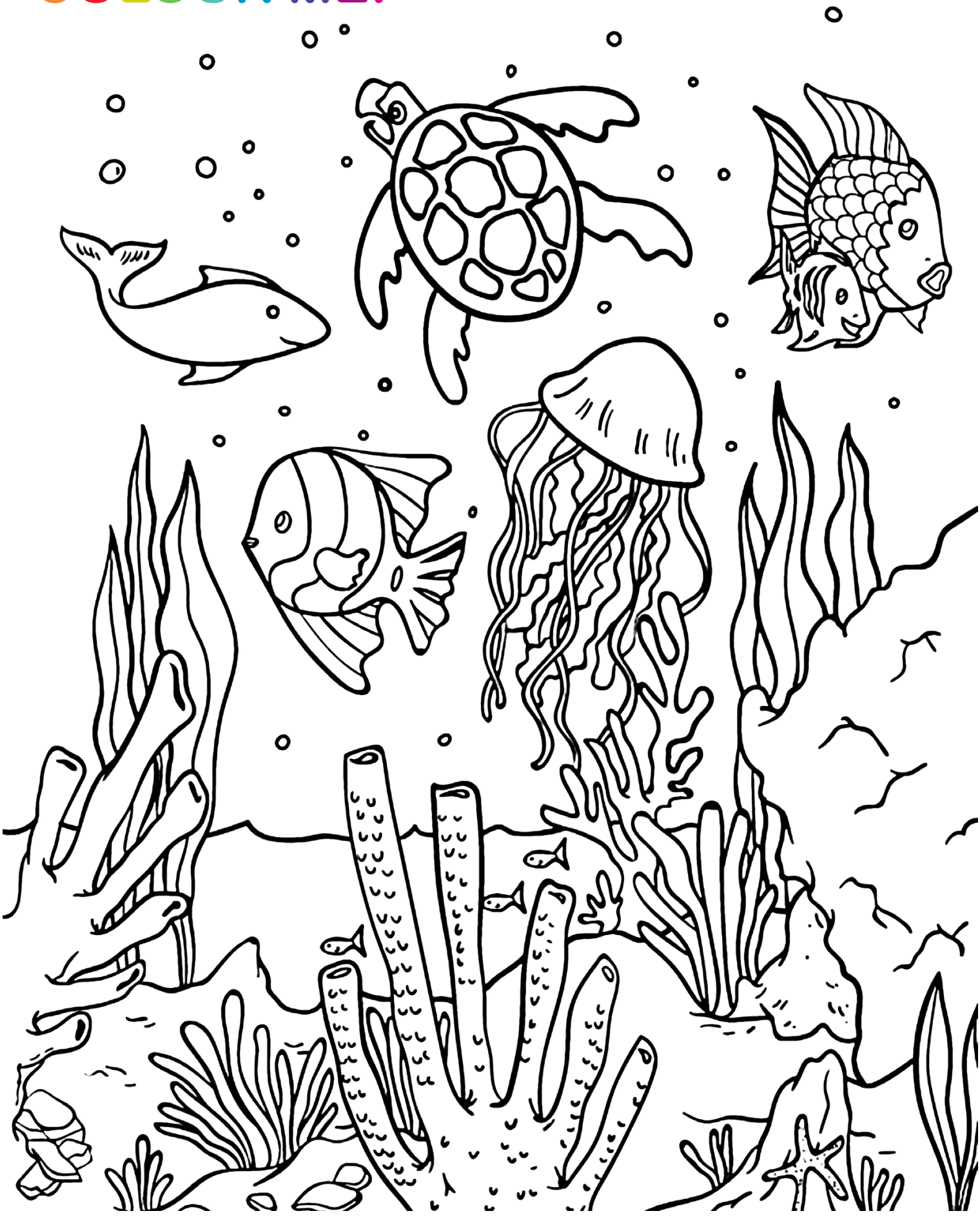
The 2025 World Oceans Day celebrates the ocean's essential wonder and calls on decision-makers to honor the ocean's wonder when determining its fate. Because if the warnings haven't motivated us to protect the ocean, its wonder is what will.

What can you do to help?

Things to Do...

- [x] Volunteer for a cleanup drive
- [x] Carry reusable bags
- [x] Carry a water bottle
- [x] Switch off all lights when not in use
- [x] Use hand-made products

COLOUR ME!



UAE launches Middle East's first Earth Observation satellite manufacturing hub

The Abu Dhabi Investment Office (ADIO) has announced the launch of the Middle East's first dedicated commercial Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) satellite manufacturing facility. The project is delivered in partnership with Space42, the UAE's AI-powered space technology company.

The facility, to be named Space42 Space Systems, will localise the design, assembly, and testing of SAR satellites used for Earth Observation (EO), securing independent access to space-based intelligence for Abu Dhabi.

This marks the first time such capabilities will be developed locally for commercial use, enabling the UAE to produce advanced EO satellites independently and strengthening its sovereign space infrastructure.

Revealed during the "Make it in the Emirates" 2025, the project advances ADIO's mission to drive strategic investment into priority sectors, enhancing Abu Dhabi's knowledge economy and supporting its transformation into a global hub for advanced manufacturing.

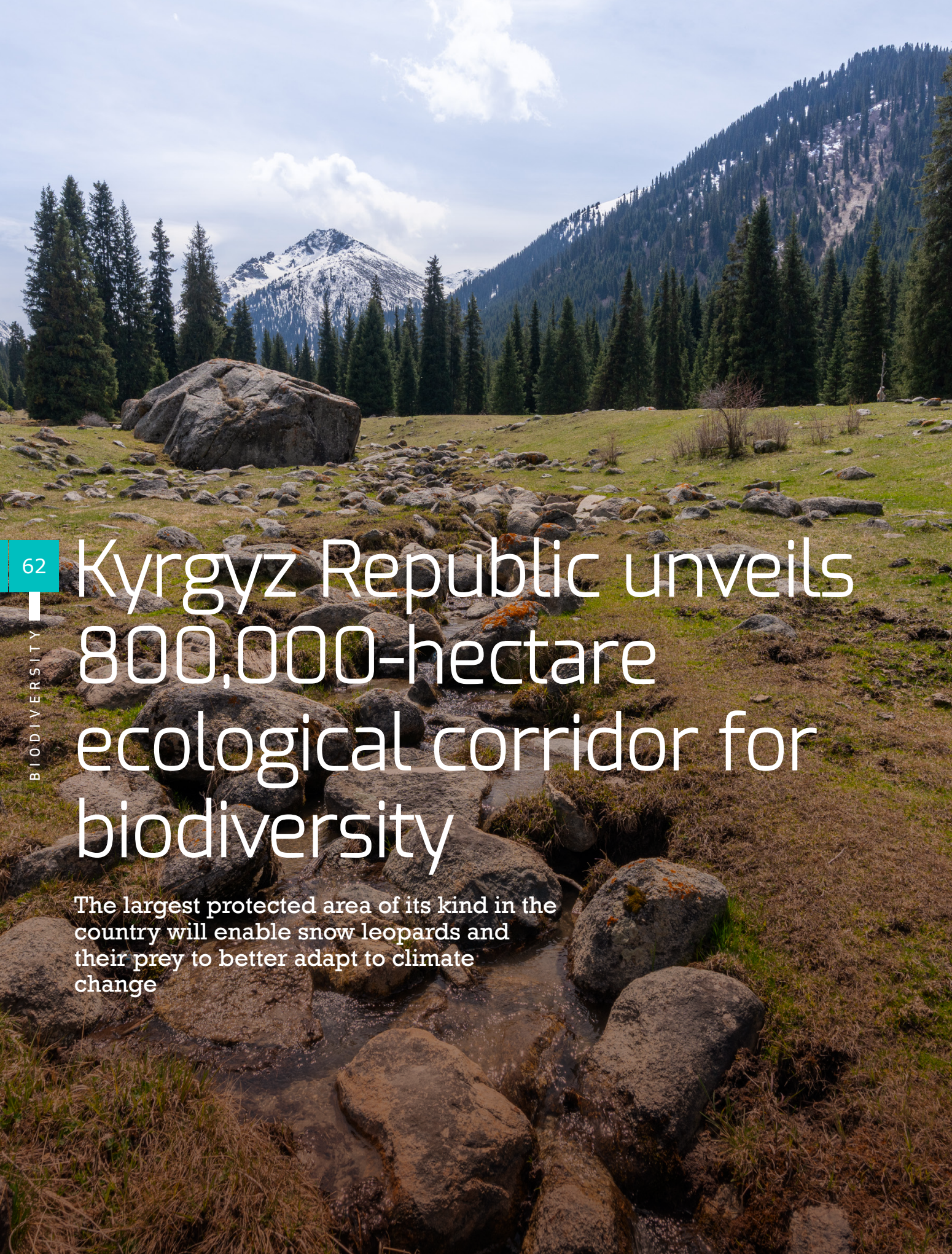
Space42 Space Systems will deliver a sustainable economic impact and create high-skilled jobs in the advanced industries sector, including a significant number of roles for UAE nationals, reflecting Abu Dhabi's commitment to cultivating a highly skilled local talent base.

Operated by Space42, Space42 Space Systems will oversee the full manufacturing lifecycle, from system design to launch readiness. It advances the company's goal of building sovereign Earth Observation capabilities while anchoring a space ecosystem that can scale globally from Abu Dhabi.

SAR satellites, capable of capturing high resolution imagery in all weather and light conditions, are vital for national security, environmental monitoring and disaster response. Until now, production of these systems has remained largely concentrated in a handful of international markets.

Through this pioneering facility, Abu Dhabi will, for the first time, assemble, integrate and test commercial SAR satellites, positioning the emirate at the forefront of the global space economy and reinforcing its status as a centre of excellence for space innovation.

The project will be implemented by Space42, established to operate the facility using best in-class technology in systems integration, advanced testing and launch preparation. The new modular facility will manage the complete Assembly, Integration and Testing (AIT) lifecycle, from system design to launch preparation.



Kyrgyz Republic unveils 800,000-hectare ecological corridor for biodiversity

The largest protected area of its kind in the country will enable snow leopards and their prey to better adapt to climate change

Grazing density will be reduced by almost one quarter, in agreement with local herders, to help restore pastures and allow wildlife to graze

A new ecological corridor of around 800,000 hectares, or 8,000 kms, has been announced by the Kyrgyz Republic today. The corridor is set to link up existing conservation areas and complete a protected area spanning a total of over 1,2 million hectares, in a landmark move for biodiversity.

The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) supported the Kyrgyz government by providing ecological modelling to help define the corridor's borders. The area will connect the Khan-Tengri National Park and Naryn Nature Reserve, passing through several other conservation areas along the way.

The corridor aims to safeguard migration and dispersal routes for key mountain wildlife species under pressure from changing habitat conditions due to overgrazing and climate change. The species include snow leopards, which are listed as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, and its prey species, such as the Asiatic ibex and the argali sheep.

This ecological corridor is the biggest to be created under the Kyrgyz Republic's Law on Specially Protected Natural Areas. Ecological corridors balance conservation goals with sustainable land use. While they are legally part of the protected area system, the corridors allow activities like seasonal grazing with some limitations, ecotourism, and reforestation, provided they do not harm biodiversity or disrupt ecological processes such as wildlife migration.

Previously, over 65,000 sheep grazed in the corridor area during summer months. With the corridor's introduction, grazing planning and the rotation of livestock herds will be adapted to reduce this figure by 15,000, leaving mountain pastures more time to recover and providing grazing opportunities for wildlife. The redistribution process, coordinated with local herders and community leaders, aims to protect livelihoods while environmental goals are met.

"The establishment of this corridor marks a major milestone in conservation for Central Asia and can serve as a model for the region," said UNEP's Europe Office Director, Arnold Kreilhuber. "By creating a network of connected landscapes, the Kyrgyz Republic is leading the way in preserving not only iconic species like the snow leopard, but also safeguarding the nature that people's livelihoods depend on."

"This is a collaborative effort to conserve our ecosystems without excluding the people who rely on them," said Mirslav Amankulov, Deputy Minister of Natural Resources, Environment and Technical Supervision of the Kyrgyz Republic. "There are no permanent settlements within the corridor, and we've worked closely with herders to ensure fair access to alternative pastureland."

The corridor was established following a modelling study conducted by Humboldt University in Berlin and the National Academy of Sciences of the Kyrgyz Republic under a UNEP-led project. The modeled ecological corridor outlines were presented at community roundtables and received unanimous support from local authorities and scientific institutions.

The ecological corridor could become a model for Central Asia

Looking ahead, the country plans to integrate ecological corridors into other sectoral planning and policy - such as national pasture development plans and hunting regulations - to support biodiversity conservation. Monitoring systems, including biomass assessments, will help to oversee pasture use and track ecological health.

"Ecological corridors are a crucial way to ensure that, despite the changing climate, ecosystems can continue to provide essential services that people and nature rely on — from clean water and fertile soils to climate resilience and room for migration," said Johan Robinson, Officer in Charge for UNEP's Biodiversity and Land Branch, Ecosystems Division. "The Kyrgyz Republic is choosing a more sustainable future for both nature and communities".

To enhance climate-smart conservation in Central Asia, the possibility of establishing transboundary ecological corridors extending beyond the Kyrgyz Republic is being considered.

This announcement coincided with the International Day for Biological Diversity on May 22, highlighting the Kyrgyz Republic's commitment to global efforts in preserving the planet's natural heritage.

Support for the ecological corridor was provided through the UNEP-led 'Central Asian Mammals and Climate Adaptation' (CAMCA) project, funded by the International Climate Initiative of the German government, in collaboration with the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), WWF USA, and two Kyrgyz NGO's, CAMP Alatoo and Ilbirs Foundation. The project aims to enhance the conservation of flagship migratory mammal species of Central Asia through climate change-informed management and decision-making.

Abu Dhabi hosts first regional seagrass scientific workshop

The Yas SeaWorld Research and Rescue Centre, the largest facility of its kind in the region, recently hosted the first Arabian Regional Scientific Seagrass Workshop in partnership with the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD), the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) – Dugong MOU Secretariat, and with the participation of Professor Emma Jackson, President of the World Seagrass Association.

The workshop brought together marine researchers and environmental experts from the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Jordan and Oman to highlight the vital ecological role of seagrass in Arabian coastal ecosystems. Discussions focused on the current state of regional research and strategies to improve conservation efforts.

Seagrass meadows, marine flowering plants found in coastal waters, offer critical ecosystem services including oxygen production, sediment stabilisation, blue carbon storage, and essential habitat for marine life such as dugongs and sea turtles. Abu Dhabi's coastline hosts nearly four per cent of the world's seagrass, supporting one of the largest populations of dugongs, which feed almost exclusively on seagrass.

However, seagrass ecosystems are in global decline, losing an estimated 110 kms annually since 1980 due to threats such as coastal development and marine heatwaves. The workshop addressed urgent knowledge gaps and promoted data-driven conservation, fostering regional collaboration to protect these habitats.

Ahmed Al Hashmi, Executive Director of the Terrestrial and Marine Biodiversity Sector at EAD, said the agency is working with partners to develop tools, including artificial intelligence and advanced monitoring, to better protect seagrass meadows and enhance biodiversity resilience in the Arab region.

Dr Elise Marquis, Director of the Yas SeaWorld Research and Rescue Centre, emphasised the role of seagrass in supporting marine biodiversity and storing blue carbon. She noted the workshop's importance in building collaborative scientific networks and driving forward a new era of seagrass research and conservation in the region.

The CMS Secretariat highlighted the 2030 Seagrass Breakthrough Initiative, launched during COP28, as a global effort to protect seagrass habitats critical to migratory species such as dugongs and sea turtles.

Beat Plastic Pollution

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

This is the theme of World Environment Day 2025, which is timely because plastic pollution has reached a critical stage, threatening the sustainability of all life on Earth.

The world now produces over 400 million tons of plastic annually. Of these, only ~9% are recycled, and around 22% are scattered in air, water, and soil or end up in poorly managed landfills. This threatens animal and plant life, affecting biodiversity. Plastic lifecycle also contributes ~1.8 Gt CO_2 eq annually, which is ~3.4% of GHG emissions.

As for human health, it is the micro- and nano-plastic particles infiltrating air, water, soil, and even human blood and placental tissue that are a major concern. This is the invisible threat to all forms of life. Plastic particles are now part of indoor and outdoor dust, released from textiles, degraded plastic surfaces, and traffic-related abrasion. Waterborne microplastics are found in both tap and bottled water, bypassing standard filtration systems.

Plastic pollution in oceans and seas is now much more serious than oil pollution, with over 11 Mt of plastic waste entering the marine environment annually. Microplastics have also entered the food chain and are found in seafood, in crops irrigated with polluted water, and in salt and starches.

While inhaled nanoparticles can inflame lung tissue and contribute to chronic respiratory conditions, additives like bisphenol A and phthalates mimic hormones, impacting reproductive health. Ingested plastics cause gastrointestinal damage and can further cause cellular toxicity when nano plastics enter cells and disrupt normal cellular function.

Global action is urgently needed to tackle plastic pollution. The UN has showcased Jeju City of South Korea as a leading example because:

- Jeju has implemented mandatory, multi-category waste separation, achieving over 73% plastic recycling—well above global averages.
- Since 2018, the region has cut per-capita plastic bag use by 67%.
- Waste-to-energy technologies are applied for non-recyclables, especially in tourism-heavy areas.
- Jeju City aims to become plastic-free by 2040, showcasing a practical pathway from policy to outcome.

How can we help?

- Refuse single-use plastics—straws, bags, and deli containers
- Reuse bottles, bags, lunch ware, and packaging
- Recycle correctly—follow local sorting protocols
- Volunteer for plastic cleanup campaigns in your neighborhood
- Advocate and educate—spread awareness, urge policymakers and businesses to commit

Let us join hands to purify the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the food we eat. Ending plastic pollution would preserve our health and sustain life on Earth.

Emirates Appreciation Award For The Environment

Together for a green home

THE FUTURE OF OUR WORLD
IS IN OUR HANDS.

ACT NOW!

مؤسسة زايد الدولية للبيئة

Zayed International Foundation for the Environment