

National Committee
on Sustainable Development Goals



اللجنة الوطنية
لأهداف التنمية المستدامة



UAE

AND THE 2030 AGENDA FOR
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



Foreword

It is my pleasure to share with you this special edition of the Annual Report. 2023 was an exceptional year for the UAE as it was the Year of Sustainability, under the theme 'Today for Tomorrow', as per the declaration of H. H. Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates.

The annual report between your hands brings together only a glimpse of the efforts of the members of the UAE National Committee on the SDGs. Featured in this report is a special section on COP 28, where the global community convened in the UAE last November, at a critical moment of reflection and acceleration of global transformative climate action.

H.E. Abdulla Nasser Lootah

Deputy Minister of Cabinet Affairs for Competitiveness and Experience Exchange
Chair of the UAE National Committee on the SDGs





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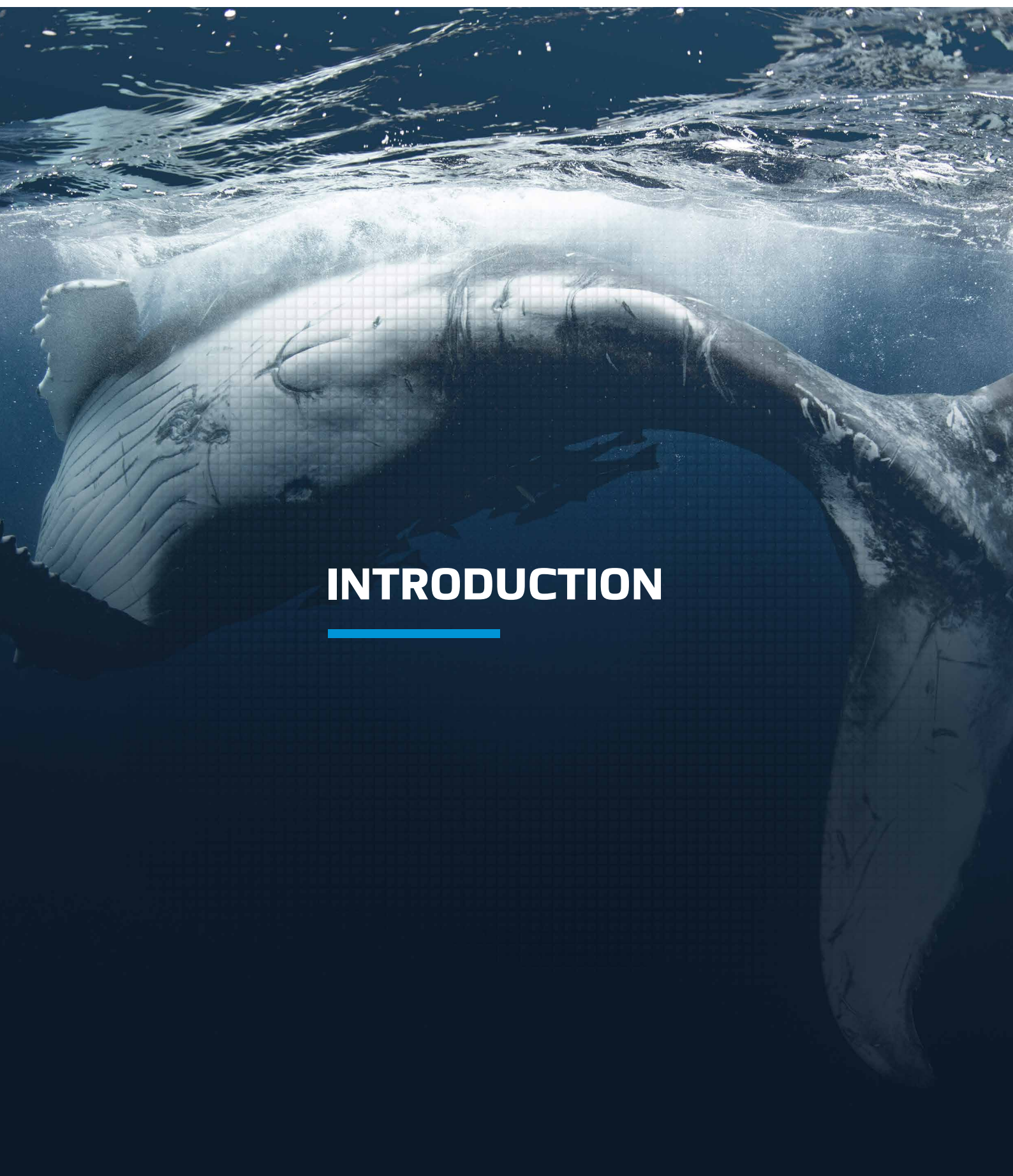
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INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION

UAE'S ROLE IN THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The process to develop the SDGs was launched by the United Nations (UN) Conference on Sustainable Development ('Rio+20') in June 2012. The idea of the SDGs was first proposed in 2011 by Colombia and Guatemala. In the run-up to Rio+20, the SDGs were championed by other countries, including Peru and the UAE. The negotiating process on the SDGs was first carried out in an Open Working Group (OWG) of the UN General Assembly (UNGA), which met 13 times in 2013–2014 and in which the UAE held a seat. The UAE participated in the OWG representing the Asia-Pacific region via a seat shared with Cyprus and Singapore. The UAE provided substantive input on issues such as energy, education, global partnership, health, water, and women's empowerment. The UAE also represented the Arab Group in these negotiations. The SDGs were finalized in August 2015, after eight sessions of intergovernmental negotiations.

At the UN Sustainable Development Summit in September 2015, which formally adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the UAE highlighted access to clean energy, alongside sufficient and affordable food, quality education and healthcare, sustainable economic growth, healthy ecosystems and increased resource efficiencies, as issues that resonate strongly with the country. The UAE also pledged to 'leave no one behind' and 'shift the world onto a sustainable and resilient path'¹. Further, the UAE's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, H.H. Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, participated in the UN Secretary General's High-Level Panel on Global Sustainability (GSP), which produced a report titled 'Resilient People, Resilient Planet' as a key input to the Rio+20 Summit. H.E. Dr. Sultan bin Ahmed Sultan Al Jaber, Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology, and H.E. Reem bint Ebrahim Al Hashimy, Minister of State for International Cooperation, also represent the UAE on the Leadership Council of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN)².

¹ Permanent Mission of the UAE to the UN, 'Statement by H.E. Sheikha Lubna bint Khalid Al Qassimi', 26 September 2015

² Sustainable Development Solutions Network Leadership Council: <https://www.unsdsn.org/leadership-council>





UAE'S NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

National Committee on SDGs was formed by decree of the UAE Cabinet. His Excellency Abdulla Nasser Lootah, Deputy Minister of Cabinet Affairs for Competitiveness and Knowledge Exchange, chairs the National Committee. The committee, which includes 9 federal entities, is responsible for the national implementation of the SDGs, monitoring and reporting of progress towards targets, and stakeholder engagement to facilitate integrated implementation and information exchange to drive sustainable development in the UAE.



Members of the National Committee have a variety of sector specific and cross cutting roles to implement the SDGs. Portfolio agencies, such as the Ministries of Education, Health and Energy coordinate the implementation of SDGs that most closely correspond to their core business, however they also support lead agencies for other SDGs.

SDG targets are also mapped to federal agencies that are not part of the National Committee. For instance, the Ministry of Justice advances targets in SDG 16 (Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions) working closely with the Ministry of Interior.

Other organizations whose core business overlaps with the SDGs are invited to be observers to the proceedings of the National Committee depending on the topics of discussion. These organizations include federal government entities that have a significant supporting role in the implementation of SDGs, think tanks and representatives of local government.

Over the years, the National Committee has also established supporting councils, including the UAE Private Sector Advisory Council, the SDG Young Leaders Programme, and the Global Councils on SDGs (Term 1 and 2) to further accelerate the national and international implementation of the global goals



REVIEW OF THE SDGS IN THE UAE

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: INVESTING IN PEOPLE

Inclusive Society: Leaving No One Behind

Welfare and Social Protection

The principle of "leaving no one behind" is central to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Aligned with the 2030 Agenda, the UAE prioritizes social welfare and protection through a comprehensive system contributing directly to SDG 1 (No Poverty). This system extends to vulnerable populations, including Emiratis with low income, widows, divorced women, People of Determination (people with disabilities), the elderly, orphans, and children. The focus on social protection aligns with the understanding that it is a key element for promoting human development, political stability, inclusive growth, and poverty reduction, all of which are crucial for achieving the broader SDGs.

Policy & Initiatives

- General Pension and Social Security Authority issued the new Federal Decree Law No. 57 of 2023 on Pension and Social Security which aims to enhance the flexibility of the pension and social security services in the UAE and to mitigate any gaps in services and policies provided to the UAE nationals working in the government and the private sectors³.
- Al Zakat Fund reported 208 million dirhams expenditures during the year 2023. These funds, distributed through 18 projects aligned with the sharia principles of zakat, have directly benefited 10,716 eligible families⁴, contributing to poverty reduction efforts.
- The UAE restructured its social welfare program in 2022 for low-income citizens, allocating a budget of AED 28 billion under the management of the Ministry of Community Development (MOCD). New allowances for housing, unemployed citizens over 45, and unemployed job seekers are also covered, while existing allowances for family members were increased. Additionally, the program incorporates inflation adjustments through food, electricity and water, and fuel subsidies⁵.
- Recognizing the financial burden of wedding expenses for some citizens, the MOCD offers targeted support through marriage grants and organization of mass weddings⁶. These initiatives contribute to strengthening social stability and promoting marital unions. The MOCD has organized a series of mass weddings, including a pioneering virtual mass wedding for 100 Emirati couples, leveraging video communication technology during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

³ <https://gpssa.gov.ae/en/Pages/NewsDetail.aspx?newsId=492#/#/>

⁴ <https://www.zakatfund.gov.ae/zfp/web/news/newsdetails.aspx?nId=2151>

⁵ <https://www.mocd.gov.ae/en/media-centre/news/4/7/2022/president-restructures-social-welfare-programme-of-low-income-citizens.aspx>

⁶ <https://www.mocd.gov.ae/en/about-mocd/initiatives/الاعراس-الجماعية-2018/4/8.aspx>





Inclusion for All

Ensuring social, economic, and political inclusion of all, regardless of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, or economic, is paramount for achieving the SDGs. The UAE prioritizes social, economic, and political inclusion for all. Recognizing that achieving the SDGs, particularly **SDG 5 (Gender Equalities)** and **SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities)**, requires addressing inequalities, the nation actively pursues inclusive development through policies, initiatives, and partnerships. This aligns with the "We Are the UAE" vision, which emphasizes a collaborative and inclusive society. Various policies, strategies, and initiatives have been established to address these goals.

Policy & Initiatives

People of Determination

- In 2021, the UAE cabinet adopted the National Autism Policy that seeks to improve the health and well-being of people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and support caregivers⁷. The policy also focuses on upgrading the skills of personal working in ASD centers and raising the efficiency of the services offered. The UAE Government has launched and implemented several initiatives and programs for the benefit of people with ASD, including an autism guide for parents.
- In the education sector, the Ministry of Education (MOE) is strengthening inclusive education systems for People of Determination through a comprehensive approach. Through a network of partners, policies and initiatives, it fosters a unified national framework for inclusive education spanning from early childhood to higher education. These efforts include implementing key policy developments like standardized assessments and service enhancements such as specialized support centers.
- In 2018, the National Policy for Empowering People of Determination was launched by MOCD aiming at creating an inclusive society by providing accessible services and facilities. The policy identifies 6 pillars addressing healthcare, rehabilitation, inclusive education, vocational training and employment, accessible infrastructure, social protection, and integration into public life, culture, and sports. To aid in implementing the policy, the UAE government designated a "Service Officer for the Determined Ones" in each government entity, create an advisory council to guide implementation, and shift public attitudes toward disability by referring to people with special needs or disabilities as 'the determined ones'⁸.
- Established in 2017, the People of Determination Advisory Council brings together representatives of the federal government (ministries and authorities), associations, entities, and families of People of Determination. This collaborative body fosters the inclusion of People of Determination in shaping national development initiatives, aligning with the UAE's commitment to empowering this community⁹.

⁷ <https://www.mocd.gov.ae/en/media-centre/news/4/4/2022/ministry-of-community-development-launches-initiatives-that-enhance-inclusion-of-people-with-autism.aspx>

⁸ <https://uaecabinet.ae/en/details/news/details-of-national-policy-for-empowering-people-with-disabilities-unveiled>

⁹ <https://www.mocd.gov.ae/en/media-centre/news/29/10/2017/the-advisory-council-for-the-people-of-determination-policy-is-motivated-by-stakeholders-and-follows-up-the-opportunities-and-challenges.aspx>



- To improve social inclusion and wellbeing for vulnerable populations, the Ministry of Interior (MOI) launched the Smart Safety Bracelet initiative in 2023. This program equips individuals with chronic illnesses, disabilities, and the elderly with a smart bracelet that monitors vital signs and tracks their location. This system empowers families to monitor their loved ones' health and well-being, facilitates a faster emergency response, and fosters social inclusion by promoting safe participation in society.
- Since 2018, the MOCD has operated an online recruitment service to empower People of Determination in their job search. This platform connects individuals with suitable vacancies and provides support in resume writing, interviewing, and workplace integration. Employers also receive resources for inclusive interviews and managing diverse workforces¹⁰.
- Aligned with the National Policy for Empowering People of Determination, the MOCD introduced mobile unit services, providing 20 different services for People of Determination in their homes. The MOCD has issued over 27,000 People of Determination cards (as of 2020), launched the unified classification system for People of Determination, and hosted the "Determination Retreat" with key UAE leaders to gather ideas for improving services. Furthermore, the Ministry adopted the Emirates Code for Qualified Buildings to create inclusive spaces and launched the "Emirates Early Intervention Program" to support parents in addressing their children's disabilities and developmental delays at early stages¹¹.

Strong and Cohesive Families

- The Family Protection Policy, launched in 2019, aims to protect women, children, the elderly, and People of Determination from abuse and exploitation by family members. It offers a comprehensive framework to combat all forms of domestic violence—physical, verbal, psychological, sexual, economic, and neglect-based—using laws, regulations, protection measures, awareness campaigns, staff training, and research. Key initiatives include a national family protection database, specialized university programs, a standardized national complaint system, and standardized preventative measures¹².
- In 2018, the National Family Policy was launched to empower the Emirati family. The policy focuses on providing health care, education, housing, financial and family stability, human rights, security and safety, and expanding access to social services¹³.

Senior Citizens

- The UAE Federal Law No. 9 of 2019 on the Rights of Senior Emiratis aims to ensure that senior citizens enjoy fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution and have proper access to information and services related to their rights, including the right to access psychological, social and health services¹⁴.

¹⁰ <https://www.mocd.gov.ae/en/services/apply-job-for-disabled.aspx>

¹¹ [https://fcsc.gov.ae/en-us/Lists/D Reports/Attachments/65/UAE and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development-Excellence in Implementation.pdf](https://fcsc.gov.ae/en-us/Lists/D%20Reports/Attachments/65/UAE%20and%20the%202030%20Agenda%20for%20Sustainable%20Development-Excellence%20in%20Implementation.pdf)

¹² <https://uaecabinet.ae/en/details/news/uae-cabinet-adopts-the-family-protection-policy>

¹³ <https://www.mocd.gov.ae/en/media-centre/news/25/3/2018>

¹⁴ <https://www.uaelegislation.gov.ae/en/legislations/1481/download>





- In 2018, the National Policy for Senior Citizens was launched. It outlines four strategic goals, with seven key pillars and 26 initiatives focused on improving quality of life, promoting social participation, and fostering civic engagement for senior citizens. Specific areas of focus include healthcare, with initiatives like caregiver training and improved access to services; community engagement, through intergenerational dialogue and technology skill-building; civic participation, by encouraging retired citizens to share their expertise; and infrastructure and transportation, through the creation of spaces accessible to the elderly¹⁵.

Gender Equality

- In 2022, the UAE Government and 20+ key local and multinational companies launched the SDG 5 Pledge to Accelerate Women's Leadership in the UAE Private Sector, an initiative through which signatories work together to increase the representation of women in middle and senior managerial roles in the UAE to 30% by 2025¹⁶.
- The UAE established the UAE Gender Balance Council in 2015 which is composed of key members from the UAE Cabinet, including representation from the Prime Minister's Office, and oversees the review of legislation, policy, and partnerships to sustainably advance gender balance in the UAE.
- The UAE Gender Balance Council Strategy 2026 sets ambitious goals to achieve gender equality across all sectors by 2026. This strategy focuses on four key pillars: boosting women's economic participation and leadership, ensuring equal access to healthcare and support systems, strengthening legal protections for women, and establishing the UAE as a global leader in promoting gender balance through international partnerships¹⁷.
- Emirati women must occupy 50 % of the Federal National Council's (Parliament) seats, 20 seats for men and 20 for women¹⁸.
- The UAE issued a Cabinet resolution on mandatory representation of women in the boards of federal entities and institutions 2012¹⁹.
- In 2017, the Gender Balance Council launched the Gender Balance Guide: Action for UAE Organizations²⁰. Drawing on international best practices and OECD recommendations, the guide supports UAE organizations in creating gender-sensitive environments that empower participation across all sectors. It encompasses five key action areas: commitment and oversight, integrating gender into policies and programs, promoting gender-sensitive engagement of personnel, improving gender balance in leadership, and gender-sensitive communication. By implementing these recommendations, organizations in the UAE can create a more inclusive environment for all.
- In April 2018, the UAE Cabinet approved the 'Law on Equal Wages and Salaries for Men and Women' to empower women economically and ensure they have equal opportunities.

¹⁵ <https://uaecabinet.ae/en/details/news/uae-cabinet-approves-the-national-policy-for-senior-emiratis>

¹⁶ <https://fsc.gov.ae/en-us/Lists/D Reports/Attachments/65/UAE and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development-Excellence in Implementation.pdf>

¹⁷ <https://www.gbc.gov.ae/strategy.html>

¹⁸ https://www.gbc.gov.ae/assets/uploads/gbc_women_in_parliament_2019.pdf

¹⁹ https://www.gbc.gov.ae/assets/uploads/gbc_women_on_board_2019.pdf

²⁰ https://www.gbc.gov.ae/assets/uploads/gbc_gender_guide_en_2019.pdf



Youth Inclusion

Investing in young people is paramount for achieving a sustainable future. Their energy, innovative ideas, and sense of ownership are vital for tackling global challenges. Recognizing this potential, the UAE actively empowers its youth through initiatives and programs designed to cultivate the leaders of tomorrow.

This section emphasizes youth as a cross-cutting theme that intersects with multiple SDGs. By engaging young minds, the UAE fosters progress towards goals like SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions).

Policy & Initiatives

- The National Youth Agenda 2031 outlines an ambitious strategy to empower young Emiratis as regional and global leaders, ultimately contributing to the nation's economic and social progress²¹. The agenda focuses on five key goals: fostering youth's role in national economic growth, cultivating responsible and value-driven community engagement, promoting global leadership and technological proficiency, ensuring high health and quality of life, and strengthening national identity. To achieve these goals, the agenda sets specific objectives including qualifying young Emiratis for global positions, enhancing career prospects, establishing the UAE as a leader in youth well-being, and bolstering national consciousness. Notably, the agenda aims to launch initiatives like the "National Charter for Youth" and the "Honorary Medal for Elite Youth," while doubling investments in youth-focused projects and future skills development. This comprehensive approach underscores the UAE's commitment to nurturing its young people as the driving force for a prosperous future.
- In 2016, the UAE Government appointed the Minister of State for Youth Affairs. Following that, in 2018, Federal Youth Authority (FYA) was established. It was an initiative intended to connect youth with government and decision making. This paved the way for developing youth-centered policies, across both the public and private sectors. The FYA has also launched 13 Youth Hubs which are collaborative work and convening spaces that connect young people throughout the UAE with worldclass resources and host workshops meant to empower the youth²².
- The 'Youth Circles' are another tool for empowering youth providing two-way dialogues directly between youth and government, private sector and global leaders²³.

²¹ <https://agenda.youth.gov.ae/en>

²² <https://hub.youth.gov.ae/en>

²³ <https://councils.youth.gov.ae/en>





Secure And Sustainable Food Systems

Food Security and Food Waste Management

The UAE achieved a significant milestone in food security, ranking first in the Middle East and North Africa region in the 2022 Global Food Security Index (GFSI)²⁴. This is particularly notable, since the UAE imports more than 80% of its food supplies due to its capacity to purchase food on the international market. To address this dependence, the UAE established a dedicated Food Security Office in 2017, led by a Minister of State, a move that was considered a regional first. The UAE then embarked on strengthening its multifaceted approach to food security which encompasses policy and strategy development, partnerships with international organizations, improving domestic food systems, supporting local farms and agriculture, and investing in research and development.

However, food waste remains a significant challenge for the UAE. Roughly, third of the food prepared in the country goes to waste, costing a staggering 6 billion AED²⁵. Recognizing the interconnectedness of food security and food waste, this section sheds light on both challenges, while listing some of the most recent efforts from the UAE contributing to **SDG 2 (Zero Hunger)** and **SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production)**, with a focus on combating and managing food waste.

Policy & Initiatives

Managing Food Waste

- Recognizing the environmental impact of food waste, the UAE launched Ne'ma in 2023, a national initiative aiming to halve food waste by 2030²⁶. The initiative is a partnership between the MOCCA and Emirates Foundation and it tackles waste across the entire food value chain. Ne'ma employs a multi-faceted approach, including establishing a national baseline, identifying behavioral causes of waste, developing legislation, and incentivizing technological solutions. It fosters community awareness through campaigns and promotes best practices by documenting successes. Strategic partnerships across government, private sector, NGOs, and educational institutions enable Ne'ma to actively reduce food loss and waste from farm to table. Currently, the initiative is setting a national baseline to guide future efforts.
- Innovation in food waste management is key to sustainable food systems. Infinite Roots, a project in collaboration with the Ministry of Industry and Advanced Technology (MOIAT), exemplifies this approach by leveraging fungal mycelium, cultivated in fermentation tanks, to create nutritious food products. This sustainable process minimizes water, land, and time requirements while reducing CO₂ emissions compared to traditional methods. By transforming mycelium into versatile food options tailored to local preferences, Infinite Roots

²⁴ https://impact.economist.com/sustainability/project/food-security-index?utm_medium=cpc.adword.pd&utm_source=google&ppccampaignID=18151738051&ppcadID=&utm_campaign=a.22brand.pmax&utm_content=conversion.direct-response.anonymous&gad_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAjwyo60BhBiEiwAHmVLJTs_W_pShSqNX8a7iwFd41IunfaPD2iJSmtP2CQzIzWxe5a6A0lPJhoCyEQAvD_BwE&gclid=aw.ds

²⁵ <https://www.nema.ae/assets/one-pager.pdf>

²⁶ <https://www.nema.ae/>



contributes to food security and dietary needs. Furthermore, this technology's focus on reduced resource consumption and decentralized production aligns with the UAE's National Food Security Strategy 2051, potentially solidifying the country's position as a regional and global hub for food innovation.

- In 2018, the UAE launched the Food Waste Pledge, a national initiative which encourages commercial kitchens in the hospitality sector in the UAE to reduce food waste²⁷.

Enhancing Food Security

- The National Food Security Strategy 2051, launched in 2018, outlines a comprehensive roadmap to achieve zero hunger. This strategy focuses on developing a sustainable food production system through modern technologies and bolstering local production²⁸. It defines a national food basket based on consumption patterns, production capacity, and nutritional needs. Key initiatives include facilitating global food trade, diversifying import sources, and identifying alternative supply chains.
- The Emirates Council for Food Security (ECSF), established in 2020, coordinates national food security efforts and supports the National Food Security Strategy. This council, comprised of various government entities and partners, plays a crucial role by monitoring strategy implementation, proposing food security-related regulations and policies, revising food legislation, building food security databases, assessing food security risks, and tracking the UAE's performance on the Global Food Security Index²⁹.
- In 2020, the UAE Cabinet approved the National System for Sustainable Agriculture (NSSA) to augment the National Food Security Strategy's goals and objectives. The system set goals for increasing self-sufficiency from the targeted crops by 5% and increasing the average farm income by 10% annually.
- Launched in 2017 by the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiatives, the UAE Food Bank combats food insecurity and waste. Working with local authorities and charities, it establishes a network for rescuing excess fresh food from hotels, restaurants, and supermarkets for efficient distribution to those in need. This initiative aims to minimize food waste, expand its reach to underprivileged populations, promote social responsibility through partnerships, and foster a culture of sustainability through public awareness campaigns.
- In 2020, the Food Security Research Platform was launched by the MOCCA to foster knowledge exchange and collaboration in the pursuit of sustainable food systems. This online portal allows researchers to share findings and publications across eight key themes, including agricultural biotechnology, alternative food sources, and novel farming techniques. Targeting both public and private institutions, the platform serves as a one-stop shop for research data, investor information in the food and agriculture sector, and alignment with the National Food Security Strategy³⁰.
- The FoodTech Challenge, launched in 2019 by the MOCCA, is a global competition that seeks to develop innovative solutions for food production and management in the UAE³¹.

²⁷ <https://foodwastepledge.ae/>

²⁸ https://foodsecurity.gov.ae/en/download_report/jgSIGpzpofgXCw2VSCSC9hvhmAdDNPoc5I1TWqAW.pdf

²⁹ <https://foodsecurity.gov.ae/en/about>

³⁰ <https://foodsecurity.gov.ae/foodresearchplatform/en>

³¹ <https://www.foodtechchallenge.com/>





Health And Wellbeing in the UAE: A Comprehensive Approach

Proactive and Quality Healthcare

The UAE's multifaceted approach to health and wellbeing ensures quality healthcare services for its population. This is achieved through a combination of a government-funded public health system and a rapidly developing private sector, both overseen by federal and emirate-level regulatory bodies.

The significant financial commitment reflected in the recent AED 4.8 billion allocation to healthcare (7.6% of the total general budget) further demonstrates the UAE's dedication to this goal³². By focusing on preventative measures and mental health, fostering innovation in healthcare delivery, and strengthening its healthcare workforce, the UAE strives to deliver optimal health outcomes for all its citizens. This section highlights some of the UAE's recent efforts in advancing **SDG 3 (Good Health and Wellbeing)**.

Policy & Initiatives

Mental Health

The National Policy for the Promotion of Mental Health, launched in 2017 by the Ministry of Health and Prevention (MOHAP) in collaboration with stakeholders, is operationalized through a 2019-2026 implementation plan. The policy outlines five key objectives: raising mental health awareness, developing comprehensive mental health services, fostering multi-sectoral collaboration, prioritizing prevention, and strengthening research and information systems.

- Since the launch of the National Policy for the Promotion of Mental Health³³, the UAE has seen increased efforts to integrate mental health services into primary healthcare. Over 5,000 patients benefited from mental health services provided by primary healthcare providers between 2020-2021.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, the adoption of remote healthcare significantly facilitated the delivery of health services, including mental health support. A dedicated hotline for psychological counseling was launched, serving patients and their families. This momentum for digital healthcare has been sustained post-pandemic. In 2023, over 30,000 individuals benefitted from remotely delivered mental health services.
- Users of mental healthcare services reported high levels of satisfaction, reaching 98% in the UAE between 2020 and 2023.
- Home-based mental health services reached more than 5000 users between 2020 and 2022.
- There is a positive trend related to enhancing the number of mental health practitioners for every 100,000 people. The increase was 7.03 for the years 2020 - 2022.

³² [https://mof.gov.ae/uae-approves-federal-general-budget-2023-2026-with-total-estimated-expenditures-of-aed-252-3-billion/#:~:text=AED%204.8%20billion%20\(7.6%25%20of,were%20allocated%20to%20the%20pensions](https://mof.gov.ae/uae-approves-federal-general-budget-2023-2026-with-total-estimated-expenditures-of-aed-252-3-billion/#:~:text=AED%204.8%20billion%20(7.6%25%20of,were%20allocated%20to%20the%20pensions)

³³ <https://mohap.gov.ae/app content/legislations/php-law-en-68/mobile/index.html>



Public Health & Preventative Measures

- Recognizing the importance of healthy living for a high quality of life, the MOHAP established a National Policy for Promoting Healthy Lifestyles in 2022. This policy aims to create a society that embraces healthy habits through a multi-sectoral approach. It focuses on three key areas: promoting healthy eating, encouraging physical activity, and implementing tobacco control measures.
- The UAE prioritizes women's health, as evident in the National Policy for Improving Women's Health, led by MOHAP, which develops a multi-sectoral framework to address women's specific healthcare needs across preventive, curative, and rehabilitative services³⁴. The policy focuses on advocacy, promoting maternal and reproductive health, disease prevention, mental health, healthy aging, and addressing violence against women.
- In 2022, the MOHAP launched the National Nutrition Strategy 2030, aiming to establish sustainable food systems and promote healthy nutrition for all ages. This strategy aligns with the UAE's vision for a healthier population, food security, and a sustainable, high-quality life. It outlines a comprehensive plan for developing a healthy food system through sustainable practices and collaboration with a wide range of partners³⁵.
- In 2019, the MOHAP orchestrated its first breast cancer awareness and prevention campaign, targeting all women over 40, especially those who have not been screened for at least two years, under the slogan 'Scan Today, Not Tomorrow'. Multiple breast cancer awareness campaigns were launched in the subsequent years.
- In 2016, the National Program for Donation and Transplantation of Human Organs and Tissue 'Hayat' established a national organ and tissue donation framework, following international best practices. The program regulates donation and transplantation processes, prioritizes patient care for those with organ deficiencies, and aims to improve community health, safety, and quality of life³⁶.
- In 2023, the MOHAP launched the National Prediabetes and Diabetes Screening campaign. The campaign works in aligns with achieving the National Indicator of reducing the prevalence of diabetes in the country. The MOHAP collaborates with its strategic partners to provide immediate post-screening access to physician consultations, lifestyle coaching, and treatment options to employees in both the public and private sectors.³⁷
- The National Policy on Vaccinations³⁸, approved by the UAE Cabinet in 2020, combats communicable diseases and safeguards public health. This policy, led by the MOHAP, coordinates immunization stakeholders, promotes healthy behaviors, and ensures high-quality vaccination services nationwide. It emphasizes vaccine accessibility, quality, and awareness, while supporting research and innovation.

³⁴ <https://uaehpl.demo.fi.ae/admin/Attachment/Download?id=be5c7f6a-100e-4f22-a59e-262d1a4d9a2c&response=download>

³⁵ <https://mohap.gov.ae/en/media-center/news/4/3/2022/mohap-who-organize-workshop-to-develop-national-nutrition-strategy-2022-2030>

³⁶ <https://mohap.gov.ae/assets/43e8b9b7/national-centre-for-regulating-donation-and-transplantation-of-human-organs-and-tissue.aspx>

³⁷ <https://mohap.gov.ae/en/media-center/news/5/10/2023/mohap-first-nationwide-diabetes-screening-campaign>

³⁸ <https://mohap.gov.ae/app/content/legislations/php-law-en-113/mobile/index.html>





The Future of Public Health

- The Emirates' National Genome Strategy, launched in 2023, establishes a comprehensive framework for genomic research and medicine. This ten-year plan aims to improve public health by developing personalized, preventive, and precision medicine solutions for chronic, genetic, and rare diseases. The strategy rests on five key pillars: a robust legal framework, secure data infrastructure, advanced research capabilities, public health-aligned applications, and strategic partnerships. The Emirates Genome Council oversees implementation, collaborating with research, technology, and medical institutions across the UAE.³⁹
- The Emirati Genome Program, a foundational national project within the strategy, spearheads efforts in advancing preventive and personalized healthcare through collaboration with these same institutions. It aims to do so by exploring the genetic makeup (the complete set of genes) of Emiratis, using cutting-edge DNA sequencing and artificial intelligence technologies to generate quality and comprehensive genomic data about Emiratis.

Healthcare Workforce Development

- The 'National Initiative to Enhance the Attractiveness of the Nursing Profession' was launched in 2021 by the MOHAP based on three strategic axes: academic education, motivation and promotion.
- The National Strategy for Nursing and Midwifery (2026)⁴⁰, unveiled in 2021, aims to strengthen the profession in the UAE. The strategy aligns with national health priorities by focusing on workforce planning, high-quality care, and evidence-based practices. To achieve this, it prioritizes attracting Emirati citizens, promoting nursing education, and fostering leadership development.

Digital Wellbeing & Safety

The UAE has attained an impressive score of 96.4 out of 100 in the ICT Development Index (IDI) 2023, surpassing the global average of 72.8. This underscores the nation's robust digital infrastructure and connectivity⁴¹. Furthermore, the percentage of individuals using the internet in the UAE reached 100% in 2021, underscoring the importance of emphasizing digital wellbeing and safety initiatives in tandem with technological progress. Promoting digital safety and wellbeing not only contributes to advancing SDG 3 (Good Health and Wellbeing) by improving the collective welfare of the UAE's population, but also contributes to SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) by fostering a more inclusive and equitable digital space, where everyone can participate safely and securely.

³⁹ <https://genome.gov.ae/>

⁴⁰ <https://mohap.gov.ae/assets/23e4572f/national-strategy-for-nursing-and-midwifery-en.aspx>

⁴¹ <https://www.itu.int/itu-d/reports/statistics/IDI2023/>



Policy & Initiatives

- In 2021, the UAE Cabinet approved the National Policy for Quality of Digital Life to foster a safe and positive digital environment for its citizens. This policy rests on four key pillars: digital capacities, building awareness and responsible internet use; digital behavior, promoting positive online values and conduct; digital content, encouraging responsible consumption of online content; and digital communication, safeguarding users from online threats. Encompassing eleven initiatives, this policy strives to cultivate a healthy digital community with a positive online identity within the UAE⁴².
- Complementing the UAE's National Policy for Quality of Digital Life are four strategic initiatives that reinforce its goals. The Digital Life Quality Knowledge Platform empowers citizens, particularly parents, educators, and vulnerable populations, with digital literacy skills⁴³. The Positive Digital Citizenship Values and Behaviors Code promotes tolerance and positive online behavior, fostering a safe digital community. Integrating digital citizenship education into school curriculums, from kindergarten to grade 12, is addressed by the Digital Life Quality Approach Initiative. Finally, the Sannif initiative equips parents with tools to understand and assess the impact of electronic games on their children⁴⁴.
- In 2020, the UAE Cabinet approved the establishment of the UAE Council for Digital Wellbeing⁴⁵ to promote responsible technology use and citizens' digital safety. It develops and monitors policies and programs, fostering ethical online behavior and a healthy balance between time spent on digital mediums and other life activities. Additionally, the council raises digital literacy across all societal segments and reviews legislation to enhance the quality of digital life in the UAE. Notably, one of the first initiatives established a support line staffed by experts to offer practical advice on everyday digital issues for all family members.
- The "Child Digital Safety" program, launched in 2018 by the MOI and the National Program for Happiness and Wellbeing, targets children, students, parents, and educators with educational resources, training workshops, and support platforms to promote responsible online behavior and safeguard children from online threats.

Pioneering and Inclusive Education

As a key driver of sustainable development, the UAE prioritizes investment in education. The 2023 federal budget allocated AED 9.8 billion (15.5% of the total budget) to public and university education programs, exemplifying this commitment. The UAE strengthens its education system through strategies focused on improving teaching methods, student learning experiences, and curriculum development. Initiatives like smart learning programs, revised teacher training and evaluation processes, and bilingual education contribute to a more effective and future-oriented educational landscape. This section highlights some of the UAE's efforts in the education sector that contribute to SDG 4 (Quality Education).

⁴² <https://u.ae/en/about-the-uae/strategies-initiatives-and-awards/policies/government-services-and-digital-transformation/national-policy-for-quality-of-digital-life>

⁴³ <https://www.digitalwellbeing.ae/en>

⁴⁴ <https://www.digitalwellbeing.ae/en/sannif-online-games-classification>

⁴⁵ <https://www.digitalwellbeing.ae/en/the-council>





Policy & Initiatives

- The MOE is strengthening inclusive education for People of Determination through a comprehensive project that fosters stakeholder collaboration and utilizes a unified national framework. This initiative aims to deliver high-quality, inclusive education from early childhood to higher education. Key policy developments include the 2010 General Rules for Special Education Programs and the 2020 Inclusive Education Policy. Additionally, the ministry adopted standardized assessments for People of Determination in higher education in 2023. Service enhancements encompass 14 Special Education Support Centers nationwide, specialized educators, modern assistive technologies, innovative teaching and assessment systems, and virtual education services during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, integrating data of People of Determination in electronic systems facilitated planning for their inclusion and service provision. Local efforts complement national ones, including Dubai's 2017 Inclusive Education Policy and Zayed Higher Organization for People of Determination projects. Collectively, these efforts contribute to ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- Focusing on youth empowerment, the MOE launched an Entrepreneurship Accelerator Program to equip aspiring high school and university students with the skills and resources to become successful entrepreneurs. Through workshops, mentorship, and a dedicated training platform offering internships across established companies and startups, participants gain essential business knowledge and industry-specific experience. This program empowers young Emiratis to translate their ideas into thriving ventures and become active contributors to a dynamic entrepreneurial landscape. The project's achievements include delivering 400 training hours and connecting students with 1000 training opportunities in the private sector. This initiative also established a platform offering support services, with five startups already receiving specialized training and mentorship through this initiative. This initiative fosters a new generation of business leaders, equipping them with the tools to translate their ideas into reality and drive economic growth in the UAE.
- Following the announcement of 2016 "the Year of Reading"⁴⁶, the Cabinet issued directives to prepare an integrated National Literacy Strategy and a framework to produce a reading generation and establish the UAE as the capital of cultural and knowledge content. The strategy aims to make reading a habit for 50 percent of Emirati adults and 80 percent of Emirati school students⁴⁷.
- The UAE has nearly eradicated of illiteracy. This achievement stems from a comprehensive approach, including mandatory schooling from age 6 to 18, enforced by the Federal Law No. 11 of 1972 and subsequent Ministerial Decrees⁴⁸. Legal requirements further emphasize parental commitment to their children's education.

⁴⁶ 2016 was declared as the "Year of Reading" by HH Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE, to cultivate a culture of reading in the country.

⁴⁷ <https://uaecabinet.ae/en/details/news/khalifa-directs-national-reading-law-mohammed-approves-strategy-ten-year-national-reading-strategy-is-backed-by-a-dh100-million-fund>

⁴⁸ <https://uaelegislation.gov.ae/en/legislations/1565>



PROSPERITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The UAE prioritizes economic growth within its national visions and strategies, aiming for diversification, sustainability, and global competitiveness. The “We the UAE 2031” vision emphasizes the importance of a competitive, value-adding and diversified economy, fostered by an environment that incentivizes innovation and embraces research and development.

This section explores recent policies and initiatives that contribute to achieving **SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth)** and **SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure)**.

Policy & Initiatives

Protecting Worker Rights and Ensuring Fair Labor Practices

- The Wage Protection System (WPS) is an electronic system that allows timely and secure salary transfer for private sector employees. The WPS covers all institutions registered with the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization (MOHRE) across various businesses and industries. In January 2022, the MOHRE expanded the categories of workers covered by the WPS to include domestic workers⁴⁹. This system provides private sector companies with a reliable database to manage employee salary files and allows MOHRE to monitor wage payments and ensure all employees receive their dues.
- The UAE introduced the Federal Decree-Law No. 33 of 2021 on the Regulation of Labor Relations in the Private Sector⁵⁰, also known as the ‘UAE Labor Law’ to regulate relations in the private sector. The law became effective on 2 February 2022, repealing the previous Federal Law No. 8 of 1980. The new law introduces several work models such as full-time, part-time, temporary and flexible. The law expands leave entitlements and tackles issues like harassment, bullying, and abuse. It prohibits forced labor and discrimination, ensuring equal treatment for all employees. Additionally, it outlines employer obligations towards their workforce.
- MOHRE has issued a guide to inform workers in the private sector of their rights and obligations as stipulated in Federal Decree-Law No. 33 of 2021 regulating labor relations and the resolutions implementing it. The guide, published in seven languages, including Arabic, English, Urdu, Bengali, Chinese, Hindi and Malayalam, raises workers’ awareness of their rights and obligations during the period before arriving in the UAE and after arriving in the country and performing their job, in addition to a set of instructions after the termination of employment.

⁴⁹ <https://www.mohre.gov.ae/handlers/download.ashx?YXNzZXQ9NzUoOA%3D%3D>

⁵⁰ <https://www.mohre.gov.ae/assets/download/c93e7702/federal-decree-law-no-33-of-2021-eng.aspx>





Enhancing Emirati Participation in the Workforce

- In 2019, the UAE launched the 'UAE Jobs Bank' in line with the Cabinet's decision obligating all government establishments and the private sector to prioritize recruitment of Emiratis in 160 targeted professions. The UAE Jobs Bank is an innovative gateway for directly connecting Emiratis with government and semi-government agencies and the private sector⁵¹.
- In 2019, MOHRE implemented 'Taameen' which is an employee insurance policy as an alternative to depositing bank guarantee previously required when hiring new staff.
- To enhance the participation of Emirati nationals in the private sector⁵², the UAE Cabinet adopted resolutions and an incentive package under the NAFIS program which aims to improve Emirati workforce competitiveness and facilitate their employment in the private sector. The package offers significant benefits to companies that recruit and train Emirati citizens, including reduced fees, salary support during training, and contributions to pension plans. This initiative is expected to create over 12,000 new job opportunities annually for UAE citizens across all economic sectors.
- The MOHRE's unemployment insurance system offers financial support to laid-off employees in the UAE, helping them maintain their living standards while searching for new jobs. This program promotes a more stable work environment and fosters a competitive labor market.

Competitive and Attractive Economy

- Launched in July 2022 by the Ministry of Economy, the UAE's NextGen FDI initiative streamlines entry for new digital businesses⁵³. Partnering with entities like ADGM, DIFC, and Dubai Internet City, it offers rapid incorporation, licensing, visas, and financial incentives. This strategy aims to attract foreign investment, foster a knowledge economy, and diversify the UAE's economic landscape by attracting startups, multinationals, and various tech-enabled businesses (AgriTech, FinTech, HealthTech, TransTech, software development). Since its inception, NextGen FDI has onboarded over 80 companies, boosting the UAE's innovation ecosystem, talent pool, and job creation. This aligns with the UAE's economic diversification goals and development of a sustainable, inclusive digital economy.
- The Ministry of Finance (MOF) launched a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) initiative to leverage public and private sector strengths. This program equips federal entities with frameworks and tools to establish partnerships, ultimately delivering exceptional public services and infrastructure. Targeting increased efficiency, alternative funding, shared risks, improved quality, and faster completion, PPPs maximize public benefit through improved facilities and services at lower costs, contributing to broader economic development. The project actively promotes PPPs by conducting feasibility studies that identify and develop mutually beneficial collaborations for shared goals.

⁵¹ [https://fsc.gov.ae/en-us/Lists/D Reports/Attachments/65/UAE and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development-Excellence in Implementation.pdf](https://fsc.gov.ae/en-us/Lists/D%20Reports/Attachments/65/UAE%20and%20the%202030%20Agenda%20for%20Sustainable%20Development-Excellence%20in%20Implementation.pdf)

⁵² <https://nafis.gov.ae/>

⁵³ <https://www.moec.gov.ae/en/nextgenfdi>



- Started in October 2022, the Scale Up Platform is a one-stop online portal designed to propel high-growth SMEs ("future unicorns")⁵⁴. The platform was developed by the Ministry of Economy in partnership with the National Corporate Social Responsibility Fund to provide access to products and services across five key areas: digital transformation, global expansion, operational support, export promotion, and funding. Over 300 SMEs have benefitted from workshops, investor connections, and discounted export rates. Collaboration with eight diverse partners (Astrolabs, Flat6labs, UPS, etc.) ensures access to a wide range of expertise. The program achieved positive results, including funding secured by companies, increased staff numbers for some, and profit growth for others. The user-friendly Entrepreneurial Nation platform complements Scale Up by simplifying program and service access, further accelerating participating businesses' success and growth potential.
- The UAE, aiming for a future-proof economy, amended its Commercial Companies Law (Decree-Law No. 26 of 2020)⁵⁵. This landmark change allows full foreign ownership of mainland companies, eliminating the prior 51% Emirati ownership requirement. This move is expected to attract significant foreign investment, creating jobs, boosting productivity, and fostering technology transfer and knowledge exchange. Ultimately, it aims to create a more flexible and sustainable economic model, propelling the growth of a future-oriented UAE.
- The Unified e-Portal for Self-employment of Skilled Personnel⁵⁶ established in 2018 aims to connect talented national skills with different programs and services in the private and public sectors. The portal is also a platform for companies to use to hire national talent.

⁵⁴ <https://www.moec.gov.ae/en/scale-up>

⁵⁵ <https://u.ae/-/media/Documents-2022/FederalLawNo26of2020onAmendingCertainProvisionsofFederalLawNo2of2015regardingCommercialCompaniesEN20.pdf>

⁵⁶ <https://www.mohre.gov.ae/en/eparticipate/consultations.aspx?cid=2934>





SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Water Security and Water Management

The MENA region is one of the water scarce regions in the world. A report by the World Bank highlighted that by the end of this decade, the amount of water available per capita annually will fall below the absolute water scarcity threshold of 500 cubic meters per person, per year⁵⁷. Due to scarce natural freshwater resources and growing demands from urbanization and population growth, the UAE prioritizes water security as a national imperative.

In response to these challenges, the UAE has implemented a multifaceted approach to address water security challenges. These efforts contribute toward advancing **SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation)** on multiple fronts, including investments in desalination technologies, promoting water conservation practices, and enhancing decision making through data-based approaches.

Policy and Initiatives

- In December 2023, the MOEI and the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD) collaborated on a milestone initiative to enhance water security and promote sustainable water management practices. This project resulted in the first-ever hydrogeological map and geo-database of the UAE, offering a centralized platform for vital water resource data. The initiative aims to produce detailed hydrological maps alongside technical reports, encompassing factors like location, quantity, quality, and extraction levels of groundwater and surface water. This comprehensive data analysis will be instrumental in identifying areas of water stress and informing sustainable water management strategies for the future⁵⁸.
- The MOEI has launched the Dam Flood Warning System project to bolster national infrastructure resilience against climate change-induced floods. This real-time system leverages data from monitoring stations and artificial intelligence to predict flood events, including their speed, height, and volume. The information is then disseminated to relevant authorities, including the MOI and the National Emergency, Crisis and Disaster Management Authority, enabling proactive response measures. The project has successfully completed its pilot phase, established data exchange protocols with key stakeholders, and integrated with existing infrastructure management systems. Notably, the system has already been used to effectively manage flood events during recent UAE rainfall seasons.

⁵⁷ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2023/04/27/water-scarcity-in-mena-requires-bold-actions-says-world-bank-report>

⁵⁸ <https://www.moei.gov.ae/en/media-center/news/10/12/2023/ministry-of-energy-and-infrastructure-and-environment-agency-abu-dhabi-launch-hydrogeological-map>



- The UAE is developing three new water desalination projects. They will be developed in Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Umm Al Quwain with a combined capacity of 420 million imperial gallons of water per day. Once commissioned in 2024, the projects will increase the total installed water desalination capacity of the country and help to overcome the challenges of water scarcity in the future through the UAE Water Security Strategy 2036⁵⁹.
- These projects are supported by a long-term vision for water security. In September 2017, the MOEI unveiled the UAE Water Security Strategy 2036 which represents a roadmap for achieving water security. Developed collaboratively with over 30 entities, the strategy aims to enhance water security planning and risk management, through tools such as the national water risk register, an integrated hydraulic water network model, and an emergency impact simulator. Developed from a national perspective, the 20-year plan addresses various aspects of the country's water supply chain and includes the participation of all water authorities. The strategy also addresses challenges related to the resilience of the water system in dealing with extreme emergencies, the water-energy nexus and the high carbon footprint of desalination plants⁶⁰.

Secure, Diverse, and Sustainable Energy Sector

Recognizing the energy sector's dual role as an engine of development and a contributor to climate change, the UAE prioritizes both accessibility and sustainability. Electricity services are readily available and affordable, powering economic activity and public services. However, the UAE is addressing the need for diversification and emissions reduction. The sector is actively focusing on diversifying energy sources, improving energy efficiency, and mitigating negative environmental impact. These policies and projects contribute to **SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy)** by ensuring affordable and accessible energy services, while also increasing the use of renewable energy sources like solar and wind power to transition towards a more sustainable future.

Policy and Initiatives

Planning for a Sustainable Energy Sector

- Launched in 2023, the National Hydrogen Strategy 2050 outlines a roadmap for establishing the nation as a global leader in low-carbon hydrogen production by 2031. This ambitious strategy focuses on ten key enablers to foster domestic demand, develop a supportive regulatory framework, and strengthen regional collaboration. By leveraging its abundant solar and natural gas resources alongside carbon capture and storage capabilities, the UAE aims to scale up hydrogen production to 1.4 million tons per annum by 2031, reaching 15 million tons by 2050. This strategy not only positions the UAE as a major hydrogen supplier but also contributes to its net-zero emissions target by 2050, specifically targeting a 25% reduction in emissions from hard-to-abate sectors by 2031 and complete elimination by 2050⁶¹.

⁵⁹ [https://fcsc.gov.ae/en-us/Lists/D Reports/Attachments/65/UAE and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development-Excellence in Implementation.pdf](https://fcsc.gov.ae/en-us/Lists/D%20Reports/Attachments/65/UAE%20and%20the%202030%20Agenda%20for%20Sustainable%20Development-Excellence%20in%20Implementation.pdf)

⁶⁰ <https://u.ae/en/about-the-uae/strategies-initiatives-and-awards/strategies-plans-and-visions/environment-and-energy/the-uae-water-security-strategy-2036>

⁶¹ <https://u.ae/-/media/Documents-2nd-half-2023/UAE-National-Hydrogen-Strategy-2023.pdf>





- The UAE Energy Strategy 2050 launched by the MOEI in 2017 serves as a unified roadmap for the nation's energy sector. Updated in 2023⁶², the strategy establishes ambitious goals for 2030 and a net-zero emissions target by 2050. The strategy prioritizes the deployment of renewable and nuclear energy sources, alongside promoting energy efficiency, clean energy research and development, and increased domestic clean energy capacity. To achieve these goals, the strategy focuses on tripling the contribution of renewable energy by 2030, boosting clean energy investment, and achieving a 42-45% increase in energy efficiency. Furthermore, the updated strategy aims to eliminate the use of clean coal, create 50,000 green jobs, and generate significant financial savings by 2030.
- In response to a need for a national framework to manage energy and water security, the MOEI launched the National Water and Energy Demand Management Program in 2021. This multi-stakeholder program aligns with the UAE Energy Strategy 2050 and Water Security Strategy 2036, aiming to achieve significant energy and water savings by 2050. Through initiatives targeting sectors including transportation, industry, construction, and agriculture, the program seeks to reduce energy demand by 40%, increase the clean energy share to 50%, and achieve a 95% treated water reuse rate. Furthermore, a comprehensive national awareness campaign aims to promote behavioral changes for sustainable consumption. Initial program implementation has yielded promising results, including water savings of 315 million cubic meters in the built environment sector, exceeding the target for the first year.
- As part of the National Water and Energy Demand Management Program, the MOEI launched in 2022 a database to monitor energy and water consumption in UAE government buildings. This project helps gauge energy and water consumption in government buildings and identify buildings with the highest consumption rates to develop rationalization programs minimizing consumption, carbon emissions and operating costs⁶³.

Scaling Renewables and Diversifying Energy Mix

- Across the UAE, several large-scale solar power projects have been launched:
 - The Al Dhafra Solar PV plant, inaugurated in November 2023, aims to be the world's largest single-site solar power plant with a capacity of 2GW, displacing 2.4 million tons of carbon dioxide annually⁶⁴.
 - The Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Solar Park, launched in 2012 under Dubai's Clean Energy Strategy 2050, exemplifies the emirate's commitment to renewable energy. This world's largest single-site solar park, built in phases with a planned capacity of 5,000 MW by 2030, will significantly increase Dubai's clean energy share - reaching 7% by 2020, 25% by 2030, and a targeted 75% by 2050. The park currently utilizes multiple phases with capacities ranging from 13 MW to 1,000 MW, with the final phase aiming for 5,000 MW upon completion. This ambitious project reduces Dubai's carbon footprint (estimated 15,000 tons annually)⁶⁵.
 - Commissioned in 2013, Shams is a 100 MW solar power plant located in the Western Region of Abu Dhabi. It was one of the first operational utility-scale concentrated solar power plant in the MENA region⁶⁶.

⁶² <https://www.moei.gov.ae/en/media-center/news/4/7/2023/minister-of-energy-and-infrastructure-reveals-details-of-the-updated-uae-energy-strategy-2050-and>

⁶³ <https://www.moei.gov.ae/en/media-center/news/10/4/2022/database-launched-to-monitor-energy-and-water-consumption-in-uae-government-buildings>

⁶⁴ <https://masdar.ae/en/renewables/our-projects/al-dhafra-solar-pv>

⁶⁵ <https://www.mbrsic.ae/en/about/mohammed-bin-rashid-al-maktoum-solar-park/>

⁶⁶ <https://shampower.ae/>



- Launched in 2023, the UAE Wind Program, a 103.5-megawatt clean energy project inaugurated by Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company (Masdar)⁶⁷, is a step in the nation's energy transition. This project introduces large-scale wind power to the UAE's grid for the first time, diversifying the energy mix and reducing reliance on fossil fuels. By leveraging advancements in wind turbine technology and capitalizing on a unique nighttime wind phenomenon, the project harnesses low wind speeds for utility-scale power generation. It is expected to generate enough clean energy to power over 23,000 homes annually and displace 120,000 tons of carbon dioxide emissions⁶⁹.
- The UAE Peaceful Nuclear Energy Program aims to diversify the country's energy mix and reduce its reliance on hydrocarbons⁶⁸. The program prioritizes safety, transparency, and security, adhering to the strictest international standards. The Federal Authority for Nuclear Regulation (FANR) serves as the independent regulatory body, overseeing all aspects of nuclear power in the UAE, from licensing to decommissioning. For program implementation, the Emirates Nuclear Energy Corporation (ENEC) was established in 2009. The UAE has also fostered international cooperation through agreements with countries including Argentina, Japan, Russia, and the United States, further solidifying its efforts toward the peaceful use of nuclear energy as outlined in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of nuclear weapons. The milestone project of the program is the Barakah Nuclear Power Plant, currently under construction with four units. Unit 1 and Unit 2 are already operational, and Unit 3 is in the commissioning phase. Upon full operation, the Barakah plant is projected to generate up to 25% of the UAE's electricity needs while significantly reducing carbon emissions.

Energy Management and Energy Efficiency

- In 2022, a public-private partnership project was launched by the MOEI to optimize energy and water consumption in federal buildings in the UAE. This initiative leverages energy service companies to retrofit 422 buildings, aiming for a 12% reduction in energy consumption and a 23% reduction in water consumption by 2050. The project prioritizes high-consumption buildings like healthcare and educational facilities nationwide. A dedicated monitoring platform tracks progress, and a national policy regulates the energy services market, supporting investments in infrastructure-level solutions. A high-level committee and technical team are exploring private sector partnerships to finance building retrofits, further advancing the SDG, while also generating cost savings that can be redirected towards public service development. This project, with a pilot of 10 buildings demonstrating a 25% reduction in energy and water use, encourages the adoption of technology and cooperation between the government and private sectors in the field of energy and water conservation.

⁶⁷ <https://masdar.ae/en/renewables/our-projects/uae-wind-program>

⁶⁸ <https://www.enec.gov.ae/doc/the-uae-peaceful-nuclear-energy-program-in-brief-eng-6440373b61a45.pdf>

⁶⁹ <https://www.enec.gov.ae/barakah-plant/>





Transforming Consumption and Production Patterns

In the UAE, a growing population and affluent lifestyle are driving up consumption rates, making it crucial to address waste generation and resource depletion. Waste management in the UAE is coordinated through local authorities. Primarily, waste is handled through recycling and converting waste to energy and resources. Some of the UAE's most recent efforts are closely aligned with SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) through the establishment of nationwide frameworks for waste management and recycling, and a focus on promoting a circular economy.

Policy and Initiatives

- In 2023, the MOCCAЕ launched the National Waste Management Agenda (2023-2026), a comprehensive framework promoting a circular economy approach to waste management in the UAE. This agenda prioritizes three strategic directions: 1) Waste Reduction and Avoidance, encouraging responsible consumption and production practices; 2) Waste Treatment and Resource Recovery, fostering technological advancements for sorting, reuse, recycling, and treatment; and 3) Safe Waste Disposal, ensuring environmentally sound landfill management, integrating AI and technology. Furthermore, the agenda emphasizes R&D and innovation capabilities to continually support these circular economy practices. The MOCCAЕ, in collaboration with relevant entities, has begun implementing projects outlined in the action plans, including initiatives such as extended producer responsibility (EPR) and biological waste treatment, with the goal of establishing a sustainable and comprehensive waste management system for the nation.
- In 2023, the UAE Cabinet adopted a resolution for Integrated Management of Recyclable Materials which establishes a licensing framework for facilities involved in the collection, recycling, and export of recyclables. This policy expands the scope of recyclable materials to include used tires, electronic waste, plastic waste, used cooking oils, and aluminum dross, all of which must be directed to UAE recycling facilities⁷⁰.
- In 2019, the MOCCAЕ established the National Sustainable Consumption and Production Plan Framework as part of the Green Agenda 2030. This framework prioritizes sustainable resource use and a circular economy by encouraging cleaner production methods in key sectors like construction, mining, wholesale and retail, and transportation. It further promotes sustainable consumption patterns in housing, food, transportation, and textiles to reduce environmental impact while ensuring basic needs are met⁷¹.
- The Ministry of Climate Change and Environment's Solid Municipal Waste Treatment and Alternative Fuel Production Project in Ajman and Umm Al Quwain offers a comprehensive solution for sustainable waste management. The project diverts municipal solid waste from landfills by converting it into Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) for use as an alternative energy source in cement production, replacing coal. This approach promotes a circular economy by

⁷⁰ <https://uaelegislation.gov.ae/ar/legislations/2342>

⁷¹ <https://www.moccae.gov.ae/assets/bb4a98d4/uae-national-sustainable-production-and-consumption-plan-2030-2019-framework.aspx>



transforming waste into a valuable resource, conserving land resources, and minimizing methane emissions. The operational facility processes 1,000 tons of municipal waste daily, generating approximately 700–800 tons of RDF, contributing significantly to the UAE's environmental sustainability goals.

- In January 2021, the UAE launched its Circular Economy Policy – an ambitious policy which strives to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns are mainstreamed in the UAE through the elimination or minimization of waste and pollution, efficiently using resources, and regenerating the environment.⁷²
- Launched in 2015, the UAE's Green Agenda 2030 outlines a long-term strategy for sustainable development and a green economy. This ambitious plan, encompassing five strategic objectives – competitive knowledge economy, social development, sustainable environment, clean energy, and green living – aims to achieve significant economic growth (4–5% GDP increase and AED 24–25 billion export increase) while reducing the nation's environmental footprint (emissions below 100 kilowatt-hours) by 2030. Various programs and initiatives are being implemented under the Green Agenda to achieve these ambitious goals⁷³.

Livable, Smart, and Sustainable Cities

The UAE is experiencing rapid urbanization, with 88% of its population residing in urban areas⁷⁴. These cities offer a multitude of opportunities for education, employment, innovation, and growth, acting as hubs of diversity and cultural identity. However, urban expansion also presents challenges, with growing populations straining infrastructure and potentially leading to environmental pollution. Recognizing this, the UAE prioritizes fostering sustainable cities in line with SGD 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities). This is achieved through a range of policies and initiatives targeting various sectors. Examples of recent efforts are highlighted in this section.

Policy and Initiatives

Livable, Smart, and Sustainable Cities

- In 2023, the MOEI launched the digital Urban Map Platform to foster collaboration by harmonizing national and local plans, while empowering government agencies with centralized access to information on key development projects. The platform functions as a national infrastructure observatory, featuring a suite of indicators for monitoring critical projects in real-time. It aims to elevate quality of life, strengthen the UAE's global competitiveness, and attract investors by facilitating transparent data-driven infrastructure development. Users benefit from national dashboards, visualizations for key urban indicators, and analytical tools. The platform also provides information on investment opportunities and regulations for public-private partnerships, promoting sustainable urban growth.

⁷² <https://u.ae/-/media/Documents-2nd-half-2023/UAE-Circular-Economy-Policy-Eng.pdf>

⁷³ <https://www.moccae.gov.ae/assets/download/dbcb99d6/The%20UAE%20Green%20Agenda%20Programs%20-%20English.pdf.aspx>

⁷⁴ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.URB.TOTL.IN.ZS?locations=AE>





- In collaboration with the Modern Heritage Technical Committee (established in 2020) and local authorities across the UAE, the Ministry of Culture launched a project to preserve and celebrate the UAE's modern architectural heritage (post-1960s)⁷⁵. Launched in 2022, this project aims to raise public awareness and empower communities to participate in safeguarding these structures as a vital component of national and community memory. The Technical Committee plays a key role by providing technical advice and developing national strategies for managing, preserving, and promoting modern heritage. Leveraging this expertise, a framework was established to identify valuable sites (focusing on 1960-1990), encompassing their characteristics, time periods, and cultural significance. A public nomination process attracted submissions from both authorities and the public, resulting in the selection of 10 sites for inclusion in the first edition of the National Register of Modern Architectural Heritage. This systematic approach highlights the UAE's commitment to preserving its recent architectural past and fostering public engagement with its cultural treasures.
- Aligned with the UAE's vision of citizen well-being and sustainable communities, the MOEI, in collaboration with local authorities, established national standards and guidelines for green and open spaces. The initiative is informed by global best practices for classifying open and green spaces however, it considers the UAE's unique environment. Key objectives include increasing public beach access by 20% by 2042 and planting 100 million mangrove trees by 2030. Recognizing the limitations of applying universal definitions due to climate and administrative differences, the project reviewed global approaches before developing a UAE-specific definition for green and open spaces. Utilizing Geographic Information System (GIS) integrated data, the project has mapped these spaces and identified urban areas based on existing policies and population data. The policy framework has been disseminated to stakeholders, and performance indicators ensure ongoing monitoring.

Sustainable Transportation

- In 2023, the MOEI adopted the transformative "Global Electric Vehicle Market" project, aiming to bolster domestic electric vehicle (EV) adoption and position the country as a global leader in the EV and hybrid car market. The project seeks to ensure the availability of maintenance, training, and new technologies required for EVs, increase EV sales, expand the EV market, establish comprehensive service centers, and encourage national SMEs to participate. To support the Global EV Market transformational project, the MOEI signed several partnerships to incentivize owning EVs, facilitate investment in the UAE network of electric vehicle charging stations, and install them across federal buildings and roads and the MOEI's truck rest stops. Several achievements have been made, including:
 - Issuing a national guide for EV charging station installation: This guide standardizes specifications and installation methods for charging stations, ensuring consistency and safety across the country.

⁷⁵ <https://mcy.gov.ae/en/modern-architectural-heritage/>



- Developing a national EV policy⁷⁶: This policy outlines the UAE's vision for EV adoption, including infrastructure requirements, integration with energy and transportation authorities, vehicle registration processes, and circular economy considerations. To incentivize EV adoption, the policy offers a package of incentives in collaboration with strategic partners.
- Establishing a national EV charging network platform: This platform has facilitated a 44% increase in the number of EV charging stations nationwide, reaching 914 public stations by the end of 2023. Additionally, charging stations have been installed at border crossings to support regional EV travel.
- Founding the first EV battery recycling facility⁷⁷: This facility aligns with the UAE's commitment to circular economy principles and ensures responsible battery management.
- Creating a mobile app for the EV charging network: This app provides users with real-time information on nearby charging stations, enabling convenient charging access.
- Opening the UAE market to EV manufacturers: The UAE has partnered with and signed memoranda of understanding with 10 EV manufacturers, exceeding the initial target of 5 companies. This initiative aims to expand EV options for consumers and support the country's transition to a sustainable transportation future.
- As a result of these efforts, the UAE has achieved a 10% increase in EV sales by the end of 2023, bringing the proportion of EVs in the country to 1.1% and hybrid vehicles to 1.9% of the total vehicle fleet.

Protecting the Environment and Biodiversity

The UAE has a diverse array of ecosystems, encompassing vibrant coral reefs, flourishing mangrove forests, and vast stretches of sand dunes. These ecosystems provide critical habitat for a multitude of species, including vulnerable and endangered creatures like the Arabian leopard, Arabian Oryx, green turtle, and dugong. However, these vital natural resources face mounting challenges, including unsustainable practices, destruction of natural habitats, sea and land pollution, and invasive species.

The UAE tackles biodiversity loss, resource depletion, and unsustainable practices through a multifaceted approach. This includes designating protected areas, developing policies and laws, launching wildlife protection initiatives, and promoting public environmental awareness. These efforts directly contribute to **SDGs 14 (Life Below Water)** and **SDG 15 (Life on Land)**. This section dives into recent examples.

Policy and Initiatives

Marine Life and Sustainable Fisheries

- In 2022, the UAE established the Mangrove Alliance for Climate (MAC), an international partnership proposing nature-based solutions to mitigate

⁷⁶ <https://www.moei.gov.ae/en/media-center/news/13/7/2023/minister-of-energy-and-infrastructure-outlines-details-of-national-electric-vehicles-policy#:~:text=The%20National%20Electric%20Vehicles%20Policy%20aims%20to%20establish%20a%20network,UAE's%20competitiveness%20in%20related%20indices>

⁷⁷ <https://www.moei.gov.ae/en/media-center/news/5/12/2023/beeah-group-and-lohum-establish-nations-first-recycling-plant-for-end-of-life-batteries-from>





climate change. Recognizing mangroves' role in mitigating and adapting to climate change and enhancing biodiversity, the initiative aims to scale up and accelerate the conservation, restoration, and planting of mangrove ecosystems. The initiative members, including the UAE, create momentum and mobilize public and private sectors through philanthropy to boost mangrove preservation and planting as active carbon sinks⁷⁸.

- Recognizing the dual challenge of preserving its fishing heritage and ensuring sustainable fish stocks, the UAE launched the National Framework Statement for Sustainable Fisheries (2019-2030). This framework aims to achieve sustainable fisheries through implementing management measures tailored to the current state of fish populations, alongside efforts to rehabilitate fisheries habitats⁷⁹.
- The UAE has significantly increased its mangrove-planting target in its second Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement, from 30 million to 100 million by 2030. This initiative strengthens the UAE's blue carbon ecosystems and reflects a commitment to working collaboratively with non-governmental organizations and the private sector to ensure the long-term sustainability of these vital mangrove forests⁸⁰.
- The UAE has established a network of marine protected areas, safeguarding 12.01% of its marine and coastal territories. These 16 federally protected areas play a critical role in preserving marine biodiversity and align with UAE Vision 2021's sustainability goals. They are further recognized internationally with designations including 5 Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs), 6 Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar sites), and 1 UNESCO Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Reserve⁸¹.
- The UAE National Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks (2018- 2021) was launched as a response mechanism to conserve the UAE's sharks and rays⁸².
- The MOCCAEE launched the National Plan of Action for the Conservation of Marine Turtles in the UAE (2018-2021) to protect these animals and their habitat. Improving the understanding of marine turtle ecology and enhancing the population of marine turtles through research, monitoring, and information exchange are integral components of the initiative. Additionally, it aims to raise awareness and encourage public participation in conservation activities⁸³.
- To tackle fish stock depletion, the UAE developed Federal Law No. 23 of 1999 concerning the exploitation, protection, and development of aquatic resources, subsequently amended in 2016 by Federal Law No. 7, which establishes the legal framework. This framework is further bolstered by ministerial resolutions that regulate fishing practices and prevent overexploitation.

Terrestrial Life

- From 2021 to 2022, the MOCCAEE launched a project for the identification of Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) within the UAE to safeguard biodiversity and ecological stability. KBAs, rich in flora and fauna, support diverse ecosystems and vital environmental services. This initiative maps KBA boundaries to focus conservation efforts on critical areas to reverse biodiversity loss. The project successfully identified a total of nine KBAs across Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah,

⁷⁸ <https://mangrovealliance4climate.org/>

⁷⁹ [https://www.moccae.gov.ae/assets/download/749e9268/UAE%20National%20Framework%20Statement%20for%20Sustainable%20Fisheries%20\(2019-2030\)%20English.pdf.aspx](https://www.moccae.gov.ae/assets/download/749e9268/UAE%20National%20Framework%20Statement%20for%20Sustainable%20Fisheries%20(2019-2030)%20English.pdf.aspx)

⁸⁰ <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/NDC/2023-07/Third%20Update%20of%20Second%20NDC%20for%20the%20UAE.v15.pdf>

⁸¹ <https://u.ae/en/about-the-uae/leaving-no-one-behind/14lifebelowwater>

⁸² [https://www.moccae.gov.ae/assets/download/cf59d1f/National Plan of Sharks Brochure Online_ENG.PDF.aspx](https://www.moccae.gov.ae/assets/download/cf59d1f/National%20Plan%20of%20Sharks%20Brochure%20Online%20ENG.PDF.aspx)

⁸³ <https://u.ae/-/media/Information-and-services/Env-and-energy/NPOA-for-the-conservation-of-marine-turtle-FINAL.pdf>



Ras Al Khaimah, and Umm Al Quwain, encompassing 13,660.4 km². These designations represent the UAE's first KBAs and prioritize the conservation of marine turtles, the Arabian oryx, and the Arabian sand gazelle.

- Realizing the importance of fostering a culture of environmental responsibility, the UAE prioritizes youth education through the National Environmental Education and Awareness Strategy (2015-2021), recognizing the importance of fostering a culture of environmental responsibility. Aligned with international standards, this strategy equips youth with the knowledge to navigate a sustainable future. It promotes responsible behavior towards natural resources, ultimately strengthening the UAE's commitment to environmental protection⁸⁴.
- Launched in 2019, the Important Bird Areas (IBA) Project, a collaboration between the MOCCA and BirdLife International, aims to identify, monitor, and protect critical sites for bird conservation. Due to its important geographical location for millions of migratory birds from Europe, Africa, and Asia, the UAE provides habitat for a remarkable 435 bird species, including migratory birds, regional, and international seabirds, and even rare species and subspecies unique to the country. The project has successfully identified and updated the designation of 30 Important Bird Areas within the UAE⁸⁵.
- In 2022, the MOCCA unveiled the UAE National Red List, a comprehensive assessment of the extinction risk for over 1,167 species within the country. This project assesses a diverse range of species, including native mammals, reptiles, amphibians, birds, plants, bony fish, cartilaginous fish, and corals. Distribution maps for endangered species are underway to inform targeted conservation efforts. As a collaborative project involving local authorities, academics, the private sector, and NGOs, it provides valuable data for stakeholders across sectors⁸⁶.
- Deeply rooted in its cultural identity, the UAE actively conserves its desert landscapes and terrestrial ecosystems. This commitment is reflected in Federal Law No. 24 of 1999, which promotes environmental protection, responsible resource management, and biodiversity conservation⁸⁷.

Fighting Pollution and Environmental Safety

- Plastic pollution is one of the greatest threats to the environment. Across the UAE, several laws and initiatives have been launched to combat this issue, including:
 - A ban on single-use plastic bags announced in Abu Dhabi effective June 2022. This decision aligns with the emirate's integrated single-use plastic policy introduced in 2020⁸⁸, which supports the UAE's vision for sustainable living in Abu Dhabi. The policy aims to gradually reduce consumption of single-use plastic products, including cups, stirrers, lids, and cutlery, and encourage the use of reusable alternatives. Additionally, with a plan to phase out single-use Styrofoam cups, plates, and food containers by 2024.
 - Dubai announced a complete ban on all single-use plastic bags starting June 1, 2024, following a 25-fils levy implemented in July 2022 on such bags across restaurants, pharmacies, and e-commerce deliveries⁸⁹. This escalation reflects Dubai's commitment to a multi-phased strategy to tackle

⁸⁴ <https://www.moccae.gov.ae/assets/b4a14e05/national-environmental-education-and-awareness-strategy-2015-2021-en.aspx>

⁸⁵ <https://www.moccae.gov.ae/assets/download/7fceb8a1/bird-area.aspx>

⁸⁶ <https://www.moccae.gov.ae/en/media-center/news/4/3/2022/ministry-of-climate-change-and-environment-unveils-national-red-list-of-threatened-species.aspx#page=1>

⁸⁷ <https://www.iea.org/policies/12299-uae-federal-law-no-24-of-1999-on-the-protection-and-development-of-the-environment>

⁸⁸ <https://www.ead.gov.ae/-/media/Project/EAD/EAD/Documents/KnowledgeHub/LawsandPolicies/en/SINGLEUSEPLASTICPOLICY313.pdf>

⁸⁹ <https://tec.gov.ae/en/news-details?news=1120509>

⁹⁰ <https://www.dm.gov.ae/2024/03/28/dubai-municipality-issues-guidance-for-businesses-on-single-use-plastics-ban/>





plastic pollution. In the coming years, the emirate plans to progressively ban a wider range of single-use plastics, including stirrers, Styrofoam containers, cutlery, plates, and cups, with the bans coming into effect between January 2025 and 2026⁹⁰.

- In 2022, the UAE adopted the National Invasive Species Strategy and Action Plan (NISSAP) to combat the risks of invasive alien species (IAS) on local environment and communities. The strategy aims to raise public awareness, enhance management capacity, prevent the introduction and spread of IAS, effectively manage established priority species, and foster cooperation at national, regional, and international levels. Defining IAS as any non-native plant, animal, or organism that can cause economic or environmental harm, or negatively impact human health, NISSAP has identified 24 invasive species of fauna and flora and their pathways within the country, with technical support from the International Union for Conservation of Nature⁹¹.
- Sea dumping and marine activities lead to adverse environmental impacts; therefore, the UAE has implemented integrated management principles and laws that prohibit the disposal of pollutants, waste, and oil sludge from ships, aircraft, or other sources into the marine environment. Federal Law No. 24 of 1999 specifically addresses these concerns⁹², while Federal Law No. 23 of 1999 and its associated Ministerial Decree No. 302 of 2001 further emphasize the UAE's commitment to the sustainable management of its marine resources⁹³.
- Enacted in 2022, Federal Law No. 9 safeguards human health and the environment from the risks of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and their products. The Law regulates the development, production, transfer, or circulation of GMOs. It also prohibits the release or introduction of GMOs or their products into the local environment⁹⁴.
- To combat wildlife poaching and trafficking, the UAE leverages its security and customs authorities to strictly regulate and monitor land, air, and sea borders. Stringent laws govern the import and export of wild flora and fauna⁹⁵. In collaboration with other authorities, the MOCCAEE employs advanced technologies at border crossings to detect illegal wildlife shipments. Furthermore, the UAE fosters cooperation with international governmental and non-governmental organizations, harnessing their expertise to strengthen its national wildlife trafficking strategy.

Climate Change: Accelerated Action Towards Solutions

Facing the challenges of climate change, the United Arab Emirates has emerged as a regional leader in sustainability efforts. From ratifying the Paris Agreement to setting ambitious Net Zero goals, the UAE demonstrates a strong commitment to combating climate change and ensuring its long-term growth. Recognizing the far-reaching economic, social, and environmental impacts of climate change, the UAE has implemented various policies focused on green energy, sustainable development, and adaptation strategies. This proactive approach positions the UAE as a key player in the global fight against climate change.

⁹¹ <https://www.moccae.gov.ae/assets/download/68de596f/The%20UAE%20National%20Invasive%20Species%20Strategy%20and%20Action%20Plan%202022%20-%202026.pdf.aspx?view=true>

⁹² <https://www.iea.org/policies/12299-uae-federal-law-no-24-of-1999-on-the-protection-and-development-of-the-environment>

⁹³ https://www.moccae.gov.ae/assets/download/e3fe253e/law23_e.pdf.aspx?view=true

⁹⁴ <https://uaelegislation.gov.ae/en/legislations/1448/download>

⁹⁵ <https://www.moccae.gov.ae/assets/download/5ac97a0/L11-02%20Eng.pdf.aspx?view=true>



In 2023, the UAE played a pivotal role in advancing global climate action by hosting COP28, the 28th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. The summit yielded significant outcomes, including the historic "UAE Consensus" agreement, which urges a global transition away from fossil fuels and sets ambitious targets for renewable energy and energy efficiency by 2030.

This section examines some of the latest efforts contributing to **SDG 13 (Climate Action)**.

Policy & Initiatives

Cop28 Initiatives

- The UAE hosted COP28 in 2023 which concentrated and accelerated climate action at a national level. Various initiatives and events from a diverse array of government entities were launched, including:
 - The UAE's Greening Curriculum initiative⁹⁶, part of the Green Education Partnership, integrates climate education across all 28 curricula in the UAE. This ensures that students gain a foundation in sustainable development. The MOE supports teachers with resources, including the 5–10-minute Environmental Sustainability Toolkit modules that seamlessly integrate with existing lessons. Furthermore, the Big Green Lesson program empowers students through six targeted lessons on SDGs, COP28, and environmental sustainability⁹⁷. These initiatives serve as a launchpad for fostering environmental awareness and positive change, with the Big Green Lesson reaching over 62,711 students to date and inspiring them to translate pledges into action projects.
 - The MOEI launched the EARTH Platform⁹⁸, a digital dashboard that monitors and assesses progress towards net-zero activities across five critical domains: economy (supporting food security and industry), adaptation (protecting infrastructure and livelihoods), transition (to sustainable energy and transport), and health (addressing climate impacts on social and environmental determinants). The EARTH Platform connects these pillars with SDGs and enables measurement of progress towards future objectives.
 - In collaboration with WTO, ICC, UNCTAD, and WEF, the Ministry of Economy launched the "Sustainable Trade Forum" at COP28⁹⁹. This event aimed to facilitate dialogues between public, academic, and private sector stakeholders on the nexus of trade and environmental sustainability. The forum convened 300 CEOs from the global trading community to engage in high-level discussions on themes including trade policy, energy transitions, sustainable finance, technological advancements, green skills development, and responsible global value chains. This multi-faceted approach underscores the forum's goal of leveraging the expertise and influence of the global trading community to accelerate progress towards a sustainable future through actionable trade policies that support sustainability and contribute to combating climate change.

⁹⁶ <https://www.moe.gov.ae/En/MediaCenter/News/Pages/MOECOP28.aspx>

⁹⁷ <https://erthzayed.com/greening-curriculum/>

⁹⁸ <https://www.moei.gov.ae/en/media-center/news/11/12/2023/ministry-of-energy-and-infrastructure-launches-earth-platform-at-cop28>

⁹⁹ <https://www.cop28.com/en/schedule/the-sustainable-trade-summit-strengthening-sustainable-supply-chain-resilience>





Enhancing Climate Resilience and Sustainability

- In 2023, the UAE National Adaptation Plan Roadmap was published by the MOCCAЕ¹⁰⁰. The plan utilizes a three-pronged process to deliver actionable outcomes for policymakers, businesses, and the wider community. First, it identifies climate trends and their impacts on food security, ecosystems, economy, health, water, tourism, trade, infrastructure, and energy. This analysis informs priority actions to address challenges like water scarcity, extreme weather events, and health risks. Finally, the plan fosters collaboration across sectors to tackle these issues, seize opportunities, leverage existing knowledge, integrate adaptation into policies, raise awareness, incentivize action, and monitor progress.
- In 2023, the UAE announced the third update on the second Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC). In the updated NDC, the new reduction target for 2030 aims to reduce net greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the previously targeted figure of 208 MtCO_{2e}, as announced in the Updated Second NDC (2022), to 182 MtCO_{2e}. The nationally determined contributions represent the country's commitments to reduce emissions by 2030 as per the UNFCCC¹⁰¹.
- The Net Zero 2050 Strategic Initiative, launched by the MOCCAЕ in 2021¹⁰², outlines ambitious plans for six key sectors – power, industry, transport, buildings, waste, and agriculture – to achieve net zero emissions. This transition, driven by efficiency, renewables, sustainable transport, green buildings, nature-based solutions, and carbon capture, is expected to generate 200,000 jobs, contribute 3% to GDP growth, and enhance export opportunities. The initiatives identify enablers like climate finance, R&D, and upskilling programs. The MOCCAЕ oversees implementation, coordinating efforts with over 45 stakeholders.
- Led by MOCCAЕ, the National Strategy to Combat Desertification (2022 – 2030) outlines a comprehensive framework for tackling land degradation, drought, and desertification by 2030. The strategy focuses on three key areas: increasing land productivity by 40%, restoring at least 80% of degraded lands, and enhancing water resource management through improved efficiency and increased use of treated water (60% increase). The strategy is built upon five pillars – protecting ecosystems and improving degraded lands, adapting to climate change impacts on desertification-affected ecosystems, raising awareness and building national capacity to combat desertification, adopting modern technologies and scientific research, and fostering national, regional, and international partnerships. The strategy includes a combination of 33 short- and long-term initiatives¹⁰³.
- In response to the need for boosting the UAE's infrastructure resilience against climate change and disasters, the MOEI developed the Dam Flood Warning System Project. This initiative leverages advanced technologies to predict floods proactively. The system employs a network of 10 modern monitoring stations across 16 dams in key wadis, utilizing real-time flow data, AI analysis, and surface water monitoring to determine flood speed, height, and volume. This critical information is then shared with relevant stakeholders, including emergency response agencies, via a unified data exchange mechanism. The

¹⁰⁰ https://www.moccae.gov.ae/assets/download/e6100ac6/NAP%20Roadmap%20for%20the%20UAE_Updated%20Acknowledgments_05122023.pdf.aspx?view=true

¹⁰¹ <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/NDC/2023-07/Third%20Update%20of%20Second%20NDC%20for%20the%20UAE.v15.pdf>

¹⁰² <https://masdar.ae/en/news/newsroom/uae-announces-net-zero-by-2050-strategic-initiative>

¹⁰³ <https://www.moccae.gov.ae/assets/download/286b94b2/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AA%D9%8A%D8%AC%D9%8A%D8%A9%20%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%88%D8%B7%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9%20%D9%84%D9%85%D9%83%D8%A7%D9%81%D8%AD%D8%A9%20%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D8%B5%D8%AD%D8%B1.pdf.aspx>



project has successfully completed its first phase, undergoing pilot testing with stakeholder feedback incorporated for continuous improvement. Notably, the system has already been actively used in collaboration with partners during recent UAE rainfall events, demonstrating its real-world effectiveness in safeguarding lives and property.

- In 2019, the MOCCAIE developed the National Air Emission Inventory¹⁰⁴ to update the GHG inventory of air pollutants from primary sectors: the energy sector, the transportation sector, the building and construction sector, the Industrial Processes and Product Use (IPPU), agriculture sector, waste sector, and livestock sector. The study improves understanding and monitoring of air pollutants, their sources, and rates, while informing the development of data-driven air quality plans.
- The UAE's National Climate Change Plan (2017–2050) outlines a comprehensive framework to address climate change. It prioritizes managing greenhouse gas emissions alongside economic growth, while minimizing climate risks and boosting adaptation capacity. This approach aims to achieve a climate-resilient green economy driven by economic diversification and innovation. The plan establishes a national emissions management system, implements science-based adaptation programs, and fosters private sector participation through incentives and regulations¹⁰⁵.

Together for a Greener Future

- The Climate Change Research Network (CCRN) was launched by the MOCCAIE to foster a community of researchers and industry experts designed to facilitate the dissemination of climate knowledge and advance the development of research collaborations. The network was launched in January of 2021 and has been growing steadily to align the research agenda of the country, provide risk assessments and advance data sharing and research in the UAE¹⁰⁶.
- In 2022, the MOCCAIE launched the UAE Climate-Responsible Companies Pledge to bolster private sector involvement in the country's decarbonization efforts aligned with the "Net Zero by 2050 Strategic Initiative." This initiative fosters collaboration between businesses, NGOs, and international organizations, supported by Emirates Nature-WWF. Signatories pledge to transparently measure emissions, develop science-based reduction plans, and integrate climate action into core operations. Attracting companies from key sectors like cement, aluminum, and steel, the pledge highlights the private sector's growing commitment to tackling climate change alongside the UAE¹⁰⁷.

¹⁰⁴ <https://www.moccae.gov.ae/assets/download/fazf8dd4/Air%20Emissions%20Inventory%20Report.pdf.aspx>

¹⁰⁵ <https://www.moccae.gov.ae/assets/download/d3d90eba/National%20Climate%20Change%20Plan.pdf.aspx?view=true>

¹⁰⁶ <https://www.moccae.gov.ae/en/climate-change-research-network-about.aspx>

¹⁰⁷ <https://www.moccae.gov.ae/en/media-center/news/29/8/2022/uae-climate-responsible-companies-pledge-to-boost-private-sectors-contribution-to-uae-net-zero-by-2050-strategic-initiative.aspx#page=1>





GOVERNANCE AND GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP

Peace, Justice, and Effective Governance for Sustainable Development

Building a peaceful, just, and inclusive society is a cornerstone of sustainable development. The UAE's commitment to achieving SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) is demonstratable through its multifaceted approach that combines legal frameworks, technological advancements, financial transparency, and robust civil registration systems. This section explores some of the UAE's impactful initiatives and contributions to a safer, more stable, and equitable future.

Policy & Initiatives

- The Ministry of Interior's "Facial Recognition" Project strengthens security in banking Services was launched in 2023; this initiative utilizes facial recognition technology for user verification during financial transactions, aiming to reduce digital fraud and impersonation and cultivate a secure digital environment for the UAE's financial sector. Following a comprehensive analysis of existing banking procedures and system upgrades, a pilot stage ensured optimal functionality. The project has led to its increased adoption by financial institutions for verifying user identities during account opening and other banking services. This has resulted in a 20% reduction in fraud and identity theft, along with positive effects on combating security breaches and fake account openings.
- In 2023, the Ministry of Interior launched the "Cybercrime Platform" project aiming to enhance digital quality of life and cybersecurity in the UAE. This initiative integrates with existing security systems, allowing individuals to report cybercrimes, provide information, and access advisory services. It streamlines reporting, expedites investigations, and fosters a safer digital environment. Achievements include a comprehensive strategy for analyzing cybercrime trends, leading to consistent investigation and legal processes across emirates. Additionally, a unified electronic platform with artificial intelligence was developed to improve investigation accuracy and efficiency. A public awareness campaign further supported the project's success, reducing reporting times and increasing cybersecurity awareness among internet users.
- The MOF, the UAE's fiscal and economic policy authority, designed, prepared, and implemented federal tax policies and legislation. This included the Excise Tax Law, Value Added Tax Law, and Corporate Tax Law, along with their regulations. These measures aim to strengthen financial planning, ensure public financial sustainability, safeguard the UAE's international financial and economic interests, foster economic balance and guide behavior, stimulate investment, and generate sustainable government revenue streams. Future tax legislation plans in the UAE will focus on developing the tax system to enhance its effectiveness and meet the economy's changing needs.



- The MOF launched a project to consolidate financial data across the UAE in collaboration with local government departments. This initiative prepares and publishes unified national-level government finance reports adhering to the standards of IMF's 2014 Government Finance Statistics Manual (GFSM). These reports encompass revenue, expenditure, assets, liabilities, and government spending by job classification. This data empowers analysis of public finances, assessment of government policy impact, sound fiscal planning and monitoring, and oversight of economic policies. Ultimately, it enhances transparency in government spending and its contribution to the national economy. The project has already published historical data (2018-2022) that contains job classification details and expected to conclude in 2024.
- Regarding birth and death registration, the Federal Law No. 18 of 2009 stipulates that birth and death registrations are mandatory and must be complied with. This is aiding with avoiding human trafficking and issues related to identity theft.
- The UAE Penal Code (Articles 234-239) lays out strict anti-bribery and corruption provisions for public officials. These regulations prohibit soliciting or accepting bribes to expedite processes or influence decisions. The UAE Accountability Authority, the country's supreme audit institution, further safeguards public funds by ensuring their lawful allocation and expenditure.

Collaborative Action for Sustainable Development

The UAE's approach to **SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals)** focuses on advancing sustainable development through collaboration and humanitarian efforts. The UAE's foreign assistance aligns with the SDGs by prioritizing poverty eradication, infrastructure development, and women's empowerment, fostering partnerships with developing countries, international organizations, and the private sector. This section focuses on some of these efforts.

Policy & Initiatives

- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) steers the UAE international development cooperation. The UAE Foreign Assistance Policy (2017-2021) played a significant role in providing strategic directions on the UAE's support for developing countries, aligning with the SDGs to eradicate poverty, promote peace, empower women, improve infrastructure, and enhance governance. The policy emphasizes several key areas:
 - Humanitarian Assistance: The UAE as a global aid hub, prioritizes emergency response, including for neglected crises, solidifying its role as a global aid hub. It also focuses on building resilience in developing countries to manage future crises better.
 - Private Sector Engagement: The policy recognizes private sector's development potential, and encourages trade, investment, and contributions in partner countries.



- Collaborative Partnerships: The policy acknowledges the crucial role of local and international partners, including recipient nations, donor countries, NGOs, and the private sector. This collaborative spirit is vital for achieving the SDGs.
- On April 11, 2022, the UAE Cabinet adopted a decree on the regulatory framework and governance of UAE aid. The decree aims to ensure that UAE aid interventions are implemented in line with international best practices and standards. The UAE's foreign aid aims to alleviate poverty, improve lives, promote regional stability, and strengthen international relations. It prioritizes needs-based humanitarian assistance, delinked from political agendas, earning the UAE respect within the international community. The policy focuses on areas where the UAE significantly impacts women's empowerment, infrastructure development, and technical cooperation for improved governance.
- The MOF has launched a project to revitalize development organizations and funds, forging stronger multi-sectoral and innovative partnerships with international and regional financial institutions. This collaboration is focused on implementing joint development projects that target priority SDGs in developing and least developed countries, particularly poverty eradication, hunger elimination, climate action, and clean energy. The UAE has committed up to US\$200 million in concessional financing to the Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust (PRGT) to support these low-income nations. By leveraging resources and expertise from sustainable international institutions, the project aims to maximize the impact of services and projects through knowledge sharing, technology dissemination, and technical assistance. Notable achievements of the project include financing initiatives, strengthening partnerships (e.g., Islamic Development Bank, World Bank) to tackle poverty and food security, and facilitating knowledge transfer through hosting international organizations¹⁰⁸.
- The Dubai International Humanitarian City (IHC), founded in 2003 by H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, brings together UN organizations, NGOs, and nonprofits (around 80 members) with over 500 international personnel. Strategically located near Dubai's major airport and port, IHC offers efficient logistics for humanitarian aid (e.g., 10-minute sea-to-air transfers). The IHC has grown from 30,000 to 135,000 square meters, continually expanding its services and partnerships¹⁰⁹. Future generations of aid workers are being prepared through collaboration with academia.
- Organized under the umbrella of Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Global Initiatives (MBRGI), the 'Hope Makers' initiative is the largest of its kind in the Arab world. It honors individuals and institutions for their philanthropic efforts to improve lives and celebrates humanitarian projects and initiatives that address various community challenges across different fields¹¹⁰.

¹⁰⁸ <https://mof.gov.ae/uae-allocates-us200-million-to-boost-growth-in-low-income-countries-and-reduce-poverty/>

¹⁰⁹ <https://dubaihumanitarian.ae/>

¹¹⁰ <https://arabhopemakers.com/en/aboutus/>



- The Country Partnerships for Development Program tailors its activities to each country's specific needs, as outlined in their national priorities and development plans. This supports many areas, including health, education, and access to renewable energy. At a global level, the policy focuses on three thematic areas: Empowerment and Protection of Women, Transport and Urban Infrastructure, and technical cooperation to enhance Government Effectiveness. These themes represent areas of strength in the UAE's development. The UAE Technical Assistance Program further supports the country and global program, serving as a central vehicle for knowledge exchange with partner countries. Through this program, the UAE shares lessons from its development experiences and expert missions provide training and seeks to learn its partners' perspectives on global challenges.
- The Government Exchange Experience Programme (GEEP) stands as a flagship initiative by the United Arab Emirates Government, under the visionary leadership of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai. GEEP represents the UAE's commitment to building international connections and supporting sustainable development across the world. GEEP, founded on the UAE's substantial achievements in government excellence and economic growth, provides a dynamic platform for knowledge sharing and advancement across diverse government sectors. By embracing best practices and continuous innovation, GEEP cooperation models in sculpting a robust framework for governments around the globe, aligning perfectly with SDG 17 which emphasizes the importance of partnerships for achieving broad-scale goals. GEEP operates through a series of structured workstreams which include Government Services, Government Excellence, Government Accelerators, and several others, each tailored to enhance governance and accelerate progress towards global objectives. 55

GEEP's methodology is a blend of direct interactions, such as leadership sessions, working group, policy designing workshops, field visits, and digital engagements, including online sessions, ensuring a comprehensive learning and exchange environment. This model not only breaks geographical barriers but also fosters economic, societal, and cultural openness, contributing to a collaborative international community. The UAE, through GEEP, actively extends its legislative and policy frameworks which continuously evolved to promote sustainable national development and share its rich reservoir of knowledge with the world. This initiative offers an action driven opportunity to countries aiming to enhance their governmental operations and achieve holistic development.



By engaging with GEEP, governments worldwide can leverage the UAE's pioneering experiences in areas such as the Government Excellence Model, Government Competitiveness, and the innovative One Million Coders program. Such partnerships are invaluable for realizing shared objectives and enhancing the quality of life on a global scale, making GEEP an essential endeavor for future-focused government collaboration.

- GEEP has demonstrated significant global impact and tangible outcomes in enhancing government efficiency and cooperation across borders, which includes the following results and impact:
 - Global Participation and Impact: GEEP has successfully engaged with more than 35+ countries, showcasing the universal appeal and effectiveness of the UAE's governmental expertise. This wide participation underscores GEEP's role as a cornerstone in international governmental collaboration and development.
 - Extensive Scope of Workstreams: GEEP offered more than 100 diverse workstreams, covering a broad spectrum of governmental functions from service delivery to innovation and competitiveness. Each workstream is designed to address specific aspects of public administration, ensuring targeted and impactful interventions.
 - Initiatives and Projects: A total of 400+ initiatives have been implemented under the umbrella of GEEP in the partnered countries. These initiatives span various domains of governance and public sector modernization, contributing to a comprehensive upliftment of administrative competencies among participating countries.
 - Training and Development: GEEP has provided over 30+ million training hours, a testament to its commitment to capacity building and continuous learning. This extensive training has equipped government officials with the skills needed to drive change and foster development within their respective governments.
 - Workshops and Direct Engagements: More than 3500 workshops were conducted, facilitating direct experience exchange and engagement among government officials. These workshops serve as a platform for interactive learning and shared experiences, enhancing the practical understanding of the principles and practices discussed.
 - Trainee Engagement: GEEP has trained more than 3.2 million individuals, highlighting its extensive reach and profound impact on enhancing the capabilities of government personnel. This large number of trainees reflects the high demand and relevance of the training provided, contributing significantly to the global enhancement of public administration skills.



COP28

COP28: Important Facts & Key Outcomes

Overview

From November 30th to December 13th, 2023, the United Arab Emirates hosted the 28th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Over the two weeks at COP28, over 100,000 people attended various events in the blue zone – 156 Heads of State and Government, 22 leaders of international organizations, over 780 ministers, 500 mayors, over 50,000 students and thousands of other key stakeholders, including parliamentarians, youth, businesses, philanthropies, civil society, and Indigenous Peoples. In the Green Zone, over 500,000 people attended numerous events hosted by the Presidency and by various partners.

A major deliverable of COP28 is the UAE Consensus which has, at its core, the first Global Stocktake (GST), setting out the ambitious actions needed to keep 1.5°C within reach. What sets the UAE Consensus apart from previous outcomes is that it includes an unprecedented reference to transitioning away from all fossil fuels in energy systems, in a just, orderly and equitable manner in this critical decade to enable the world to reach net zero emissions by 2050, in keeping with the science.

Additionally, Parties were encouraged to accelerate “ambitious, economy-wide emission reduction targets” in their next nationally determined contributions. Regarding energy-related targets, COP28 offers a new, specific target on tripling renewables and doubling energy efficiency by 2030, promising scaling up of renewables and clean energy technologies.

As climate change impacts unfold globally, particularly hitting the poorest and least prepared nations the hardest, COP28 highlighted the need to significantly scale adaptation finance beyond doubling, to meet urgent and evolving needs. To do so and to achieved other climate goals, COP28 builds momentum towards reform of the global financial architecture, recognizing the role of credit rating agencies for the first time, and calling for the scaling up of concessional and grant finance.



COP28 Key Negotiated Outcomes

At COP28, countries came together to deliver the 'UAE Consensus' - the most ambitious and comprehensive set of negotiated outcomes to come out of the UNFCCC process since COP21.

Transitioning away from Fossil Fuels

A key component of the UAE Consensus is the decision on the GST to assess progress since Paris and put forward a plan to close implementation gaps by 2030. In a landmark agreement to bring a sectoral approach to the COP process, it calls on Parties to transition away from fossil fuels and to triple renewables and double energy efficiency globally by 2030. The decision also recognizes the need to peak global emissions by 2025, taking into account different national starting points, and encourages countries to submit economy-wide Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). It also includes recognition of the crucial need to significantly scale up adaptation finance beyond doubling to meet urgent and evolving needs, and a clear call for countries to deliver National Adaptation Plans by 2025 and implement them by 2030. Finally, recognizing the crucial role finance has to play in delivering ambition, the GST decision builds momentum behind a new global climate finance architecture in support of the post-2025 climate goal to be delivered at COP29.

Scaling Climate Adaptation

Even if all emissions stop today, accelerated adaptation is still needed to respond to the devastating climate impacts already being experienced. In line with the mandate to develop an impactful Global Goal for Adaptation promised as part of the Paris Agreement, COP28 delivered the Emirates Framework for Global Climate Resilience. The framework is a step change that will put adaptation focus and action on a par with mitigation by galvanizing not just governments, but also all non-party stakeholders to speed up and scale up action for adaptation. It defines how to do this through:

- targets for a universal set of themes essential for sustainable development and human wellbeing (food, water, health, shelter, livelihoods, nature, biodiversity and culture); and,
- targets on how to approach adaptation at local to national levels.

The framework also calls for regional and international cooperation, including for the first time asking to also look at the need to look at the transboundary nature of climate impacts.

Loss and Damage Fund

From Day One, countries came together to truly innovate the COP process, with the fund for loss and damage promised at COP27 being adopted on the very first day of COP28. The new fund, to be hosted by the World Bank for an initial period of four years, will allocate resources based on the available evidence and with a minimum percentage allocated to least developed countries and Small Islands Developing States.



In demonstrating the spirit of international solidarity, 19 countries made commitments totaling \$792 million towards the fund and funding arrangements related to loss and damage, including \$100 million from the UAE.

Just Transition Work Program

Accelerating the normal pace of negotiations, COP28 also delivered a Just Transition Work Program, only established at COP27. This five-year program, which starts immediately, will drive ambitious, equitable implementation across all pillars of the Paris Agreement. Continuing the Presidency's commitment to inclusion, it includes references to labor rights and social protection as part of adaptation, for the first time in the UNFCCC process.

Mitigation Work Program

COP28 also delivered on a Mitigation Work Program, which was established at COP26, that effectively showcases opportunities and barriers to closing the ambition and implementation gap.

Presidency Youth Climate Champion

A COP28 Presidency-led initiative saw Parties agree that all future COP Presidencies should appoint a Presidency Youth Climate Champion, to help facilitate the engagement of children and youth in climate action, including in the UNFCCC process. This was the first time a Presidency has delivered this type of initiative under the Paris Agreement and will help to ensure that youth have an enhanced, high-level voice at every future COP.

Global Decarbonization Accelerator (GDA)

In the context of achieving a just, equitable, and orderly energy transition, the COP28 Presidency, in collaboration with various partners, established the Global Decarbonization Accelerator (GDA). This comprehensive, cross-sectoral initiative aims to expedite emissions reductions and facilitate the development of a future-oriented energy system. It aims to do so through three main pillars:

Methane and other Non-CO₂ Gasses

The COP28 Presidency, in partnership with the United States and China, convened a high-level Summit on Methane and Other Non-CO₂ Greenhouse Gases (GHG) during the early stages of COP28. This Summit, followed by a subsequent in-depth technical session, yielded significant outcomes. Notably, it secured \$1.2 billion in international financial support to facilitate the reduction of methane and non-CO₂ GHG emissions across various sectors. Additionally, the Summit called for whole-of-economy NDCs that encompass all GHG emissions. A productive discussion was held between national governments, international oil companies, and relevant stakeholders regarding effective pathways towards achieving zero methane emissions by 2030. The World Bank further strengthened its commitment by extending support to fifteen countries implementing national programs aiming to reduce methane emissions from rice production, livestock, and waste management by up to ten million tons over the next five to seven years.





Decarbonizing the Energy System of Today

The Oil & Gas Decarbonization Charter, endorsed by companies representing 40% of global production, outlined a pathway towards net-zero emissions by 2050. Additionally, discussions on financing and policy frameworks for a just energy transition resulted in the establishment of the Coal Transition Accelerator and the expansion of the Powering Past Coal Alliance. Furthermore, efforts to decarbonize heavy industries and transport yielded concrete results with the Industrial Transition Accelerator gaining traction and new initiatives like the Buildings and Cement Breakthroughs aiming to achieve construction sector decarbonization by 2030. Finally, the launch of the Waste to Zero coalition by the UAE further emphasized the focus on circular economies and waste reduction strategies.

Building the Energy System of the Future

The COP28 conference prioritized building a future energy system focused on renewables. 132 countries endorsed the Global Renewables and Energy Efficiency Pledge, committing to a threefold increase in renewable energy and a doubling of annual energy efficiency improvements by 2030. To support implementation, \$5 billion was secured, with a focus on deploying renewables in developing nations. An inaugural ministerial meeting further solidified these goals, bringing together government representatives from across the globe, including the Global South and Indigenous Peoples. Additionally, the High-Level Champions and International Renewable Energy Agency launched the Utilities for Zero Alliance, uniting 31 partners, including major utilities and power companies, in a commitment to advancing electrification, grid modernization, and clean energy deployment – all aimed at achieving the 2030 Breakthroughs goals. Progress was also made on diverse initiatives, including facilitating renewable hydrogen trade, reducing cooling emissions, promoting electric cooking, and developing carbon management strategies.

Focusing on Nature, People, Lives, and Livelihoods

Food and Water

COP28 prioritized food security. The COP28 UAE Declaration on Sustainable Agriculture was endorsed by 159 countries, aiming to address food vulnerability and emissions. Businesses pledged significant investments in regenerative agriculture and climate-smart food innovation. Additionally, over 200 stakeholders united behind a Call to Action for transforming food systems, urging for time-bound global targets and respect for Indigenous knowledge. Water security also received attention, with new funding for water scarcity solutions and a commitment from multilateral development banks to double their water portfolios.

Health, Relief, Recovery, Peace

COP28 introduced health and disaster relief to the climate agenda. The COP28 UAE Declaration on Climate and Health was endorsed by 144 countries, securing initial funding for climate-health solutions. The first climate-health ministerial discussed issues like air pollution and mental health and called for stronger health considerations within global climate goals. Furthermore, the COP28 UAE Declaration on Climate, Relief, Recovery, and Peace brought together governments and organizations to address gaps in climate response for vulnerable communities. A new Charter on disaster risk finance was signed to encourage pre-disaster resource allocation.



Nature

COP28 witnessed a significant increase in political will for prioritizing nature in climate action. Forest-rich and ocean-rich countries announced landmark investment plans that address both the Paris Agreement and the new Global Biodiversity Framework. Financial commitments of \$2.7 billion and potentially up to \$1 trillion for Amazon rainforest preservation were announced. A dedicated day on Nature, Land Use, and Ocean focused on mangroves, oceans, and implementing the 30x30 target for land and sea protection. The Mangrove Breakthrough Financial Roadmap secured financial support for large-scale mangrove restoration.

COP28: Mobilizing for an Inclusive COP

There was a great emphasis in COP28 on inclusion. Throughout the first week of COP28, engagements responded to the Presidency's strong call for inclusivity and solidarity in climate action, highlighting the key roles of civil society, women, youth, local leaders, faith-based communities, Indigenous Peoples, companies, and those on the frontline of climate change, who are an integral part of the solution.

Youth and Children:

COP28 prioritized youth engagement. The World Climate Action Summit showcased the voices of children and youth through statements and dialogues. The first cohort of international and UAE youth climate delegates graduated from capacity-building programs. A Global Education Solutions Accelerator was launched, and significant investments were made in climate-resilient schools and incorporating climate education into national plans.

Gender Equality:

Gender equality was a key theme. The COP28 Gender-Responsive Just Transitions & Climate Action Partnership was endorsed by 78 countries, aiming to ensure better financial flows for women and girls and equal opportunities in the green transition. A Global Call to Action urged world leaders to drive progress on gender-responsive climate commitments through improved data collection and use.

Indigenous Peoples:

Indigenous Peoples Day highlighted their role in environmental stewardship. Events like the COP28 Indigenous Peoples Dialogue and the International Indigenous Youth Forum addressed how their knowledge is crucial for conservation and adaptation. The Podong Indigenous Peoples Initiative was launched to provide direct funding to Indigenous communities.

Multilevel Action:

COP28 witnessed a historic presence of subnational leaders and businesses. The Coalition of High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships (CHAMP) Pledge was endorsed, committing countries to partner with local governments on climate action plans. Over \$500 million was mobilized for urban climate action. The Business and Philanthropy Climate Forum emphasized the private sector's role in mobilizing resources for climate solutions. The Net Zero Mobilization Charter encouraged businesses to set ambitious net-zero targets and transition plans.





COP28 Pledges and Declarations:

- The Global Renewables and Energy Efficiency Pledge has been endorsed by 132 countries.
- The COP28 UAE Declaration on Agriculture, Food, & Climate has received endorsements from 159 countries.
- The COP28 UAE Declaration on Climate and Health has been endorsed by 144 countries. The COP28 UAE Declaration on Climate Finance has been endorsed by 13 countries.
- The Global Cooling Pledge has been endorsed by 66 countries.
- The COP28 UAE Declaration on Climate Relief, Recovery & Peace has been endorsed by 79 countries and 40 organizations.
- The COP28 UAE Declaration on Hydrogen and Derivates has been endorsed by 37 countries.
- The COP28 UAE Declaration on Gender-Responsive Just Transitions has been endorsed by 78 countries.
- The Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships (CHAMP) Pledge has been endorsed by 69 countries.
- The Oil and Gas Decarbonization Charter has been endorsed by 52 companies, representing 40 percent of global oil production.
- The Industrial Transition Accelerator has been endorsed by 35 companies and six industry associations, including World Steel Association, International Aluminum Institute, Global Renewable Alliance, Global Cement and Concrete Association, Oil and Gas Climate Initiative, International Air Transport Association.

COP28 Financial Pledges and Contributions:

- Loss and Damage: \$792 million
- Green Climate Fund: \$3.5 billion (increasing second replenishment to \$12.8 billion) Adaptation Fund: \$134 million (increasing total to \$188 million)
- Least Developed Countries Fund: \$129.3 million
- Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF): \$31 million Renewable Energy: \$5 billion
- Cooling: \$49 million
- Clean Cooking: \$30 million Technology: \$568 million
- Methane: \$1.2 billion
- Climate Finance: \$30 billion from UAE, \$200 million in Special Drawing Rights, and \$31.6 billion from Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs)
- Food: \$3.1 billion Nature: \$2.7 billion Health: \$2.9 billion Water: \$150 million Gender: \$2.8 million
- Relief, Recovery and Peace: \$2.2 billion Local Climate Action: \$467 million

A Way Forward

To build upon the COP28 outcomes and deliver on the UAE Consensus, multilateral efforts are crucial to translate high-ambition decisions into real-world action by 2030. This can be achieved through continued coordination among stakeholders, setting interim targets to strengthen NDCs by 2025, and collaborating with global entities to ensure the long-term implementation of initiatives launched at COP28. Such collaborative efforts, coupled with robust accountability mechanisms, will be essential to maintain momentum and keep the 1.5°C goal within reach.



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