

Press Release

Within the Framework of the Abu Dhabi Mangrove Initiative, **The Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi Signs Agreement with Jubail Island Investment Company to Establish the Jubail Mangrove Innovation Centre to Protect Coastal Ecosystems and Preserve Mangroves**

Abu Dhabi, October 3, 2023: Within the framework of the Abu Dhabi Mangrove Initiative, the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD) signed an agreement with the Jubail Island Investment Company (JIIC) to enhance their joint efforts to preserve mangrove and coastal ecosystems to ensure their future sustainability.

The agreement was signed by His Excellency Ahmed Al Hashmi, Executive Director of Terrestrial and Marine Biodiversity Sector at EAD, and Engineer Abdulla Saeed Al Shamsi, Corporate Director of JIIC, in the presence of Her Excellency Dr. Shaikha Salem Al Dhaheri - Secretary General of EAD, and Mr. Mounir Haidar, Managing Director of JIIC, at the signing ceremony held at EAD's headquarters in Al Mamoura building.

In February 2022, the Abu Dhabi government launched the Abu Dhabi Mangrove Initiative to develop innovative solutions to rehabilitate and restore mangroves. The initiative also helps to mitigate the effects of climate change and encourages community members to get involved in preserving the environment. As part of the initiative, an advanced nursery and innovation centre for mangrove research and rehabilitation will be established in Abu Dhabi at Jubail Island which will serve as a centre for future mangrove science and research.

This agreement between EAD and JIIC also seeks to place all local mangrove rehabilitation projects under the umbrella of the Abu Dhabi Mangrove Initiative to ensure effective coordination and better results. Furthermore, the aim of the cooperation is to establish and operate the Jubail Mangroves Innovation Centre under the Abu Dhabi Mangrove Initiative which will result in tangible outcomes for mangrove and coastal ecosystems research, restoration and conservation which can be sustained into the future.

The signing of the MoU took place as the UAE prepares to host COP 28, and unites EAD's efforts with its strategic partners to fight climate change in order to achieve the UAE's targets and promote nature-based solutions to climate change. The agreement will also support global efforts to achieve all climate change mitigation pledges and commitments, as well as multi-level state efforts in the UAE as it works to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. This is in line with the UAE's 10 key principles to promote sustainable development, green economic progress and ensure a better future for all over the next 50 years.

Her Excellency Dr. Shaikha Salem Al Dhaheri, said: "The signing of this agreement is in line with the vision of His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE, and his

emphasis on the importance of consolidating sustainability efforts and protecting the country's natural capital. These efforts are summed up by his declaration that the year 2023 is the 'Year of Sustainability' to promote that very commitment.”

She added: “This agreement supports the Agency's efforts to enhance climate action, ensure the sustainability of the marine environment and its natural habitats, and protect mangroves – one of the most productive coastal ecosystems in the world. Mangroves provide a variety of environmental and economic services and are ideal nature-based solutions to help us meet the challenge of climate change with their ability to absorb greenhouse gases. They can store and sequester carbon up to four times higher than the trees in the Amazon rainforest.”

Mr. Mounir Haidar, Managing Director of JIIC, said: “We are proud of this partnership with the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi and what we have achieved in enhancing biodiversity and supporting wildlife throughout Jubail Island, which is a sustainable and pioneering environmental destination in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. Since the beginning of the island’s development, we have embarked on strategic partnerships and launched several initiatives with both public and private institutions. **The most important of which is the initiative to plant one million mangrove trees in Jubail Island.**”

He added: “Sustainable development is considered the focus of the JIIC's strategy through ongoing efforts to preserve the nature of the island, raise awareness regarding the environment’s importance, and ensure its sustainability for future generations.”

According to the agreement, EAD will lead the process of developing, designing and implementing the action plan related to the Jubail Mangrove Innovation Centre and the Abu Dhabi Mangrove Initiative and provide scientific supervision for all activities related to the mangrove restoration in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. This is in addition to setting priorities and action plans related to educational and awareness initiatives within the framework of the initiative.

The Agency will also be responsible for establishing partnerships to support local and global mangrove research and providing expertise and administrative supervision for the implementation of the Abu Dhabi Mangrove Initiative action plan. This is in addition to coordinating with partners from federal agencies and international partners, as well as encouraging innovation in mangrove preservation and restoration through local and international cooperation.

The Agency will oversee the management of the nursery and visitor centre which will be established by JIIC in the new Jubail Mangrove Innovation Centre, and review and approve all requests for mangrove plantation and the collection of mangrove seeds or materials in Abu Dhabi.

Meanwhile, JIIC will build and establish the Jubail Mangrove Innovation Centre, which includes a nursery, visitor centre and offices for the initiative. JIIC will host educational tours, field visits and events related to the initiative, in coordination with EAD.

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About Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD)

Established in 1996, the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD) is committed to protecting and enhancing air quality, groundwater as well as the biodiversity of our desert and marine ecosystem. By partnering with other government entities, the private sector, NGOs and global environmental agencies, we embrace international best practice, innovation and hard work to institute effective policy measures. We seek to raise environmental awareness, facilitate sustainable development and ensure environmental issues remain one of the top priorities of our national agenda.

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About Jubail Island

The Jubail Island development will be an idyllic collection of villages located between Yas Island and Saadiyat Island and will become Abu Dhabi's leading sanctuary designed to appeal to wellness and nature enthusiasts, positioned amid the rich biodiversity of the mangroves.

The luxury project will offer wholesome F&B outlets and a wide range of facilities, including a beach club, a business centre, a sports centre, schools, supermarkets, nurseries, a community club, specialised clinics and other commercial establishments.

For more information, please visit <https://www.jubailisland.ae/>

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