



مجموعة أبوظبي للاستدامة
ABU DHABI SUSTAINABILITY GROUP

SUSTAINABILITY eJOURNAL

QUARTER 4, 2022

"As a sector, we carry much of the responsibility to drive the energy transition. Doing the right thing does not conflict with doing good business. They are mutually reinforcing aims"

Jasim Husain Thabet,
GCEO and MD of Taqa

An interview with
Craig Bennett,
the CEO of the
UK Wildlife
Trusts about the
importance of
nature for people,
profit and planet.



ADSG SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS LEADERSHIP AWARDS 2023

COMING SOON

BEST SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE

BEST SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

BEST SUSTAINABILITY COMMUNICATION PROGRAMME

SUSTAINABILITY MANAGER OF THE YEAR

SUSTAINABILITY LEADER OF THE YEAR

BEST ENERGY

MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE

RECOGNISING SUSTAINABILITY LEADERSHIP IN THE REGION

#ADSGAwards2023

EDITORS NOTE

Dear Readers,

Welcome to this issue, quarter four of 2022, where I am delighted to bring you so many updates and achievements of the members of the Abu Dhabi Sustainability Group.

Our feature interview with Mr Jasim Husain Thabet , Taqa CEO highlights how the energy sector is driving sustainability forward.

We are also sharing how UAE banks are striving towards net zero with valuable insights from ADSG member First Abu Dhabi Bank.

We bring you exciting updates from the UAE COP28 team and much, much more.

Needless to say the drive towards a sustainable economy and lifestyle is transforming our every

day lives. Implementing sustainability means that Companies in Abu Dhabi, as well as individuals have to apply sustainability considerations in their everyday decision-making. As we continue to ask ourselves every day, how can we as businesses in Abu Dhabi deliver on the promises and play a key role in transitioning the world to net zero whilst creating a sustainable economy, and supporting our community.

I hope you will enjoy this issue as much as we have enjoyed building the content with our partners and members. Thanking you and looking forward to hearing from you.

SANDRA ANANI
DIRECTOR,
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The opinions and views expressed in the ADSG Sustainability e-Journal do not necessarily reflect the ADSG's policy or position.

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GLOBAL REPORTING INITIATIVE (GRI) CERTIFIED TRAINING COURSE FOR NON-FINANCIAL REPORTING

16TH - 17TH NOVEMBER 2022

ADSG is pleased to invite you to attend its Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) certified training course for non-financial reporting. It will be a full 2-day virtual training course on the 16th-17th November for a total of 16 hours. The training will be held virtually in partnership with EY through Microsoft Teams platform. Please note that you will need to attend the two days fully to be eligible for the Certificate of Attendance from the GRI.

The GRI (Global Reporting Initiative) is the independent, international organization that helps organizations take responsibility for their Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) impacts. It is one of the most widely and commonly used frameworks for sustainability reporting, providing a global common language to communicate the ESG impacts, risks and opportunities across organizations in order to lead more responsible businesses.

Sustainability reports are also considered as tools for building transparent and trustworthy relationships with stakeholders through disclosing the ESG commitments and the progress made against these commitments year on year.

This training includes:

- Introduce the sustainable development concept
- Provide a brief overview of sustainability reporting and its significance
- Explain the latest trends and developments on sustainability reporting standards
- Describe the GRI reporting process and the development of the GRI Standards
 - Explain the GRI Standards, their structure, and how to use them
- Provide an understanding of principles for defining report contents and enhance quality of the sustainability report such as materiality assessment, stakeholder inclusiveness
- Help participants comprehend the methodology used in information gathering and sustainability report writing according to GRI Standards

We look forward to welcoming you or delegates. To attend, please confirm the names and number of participants attending via email to mohammed.aldhaheeri@ead.gov.ae.



WELCOME NOTE FROM ADSG DIRECTOR

It is with great pleasure to welcome you to the quarter four issue of the ADSG Sustainability e-Journal for 2022. This year has presented new, as well as familiar, challenges within the sphere of sustainability, but it is only when a challenge presents itself that we are able to devise solutions. There is also much to be thankful of and important progress being made on the ground in Abu Dhabi and regionally.

Firstly, I would like to thank ADSG members for their continued commitment to best practice and collaboration. This issue wouldn't be possible without your engagement, and I hope that the ADSG e-Journal serves as a value knowledge sharing tool and source of inspiration. As you will read, ADSG members are continuing to take actions to diversify the economy, decarbonise crucial sectors and innovate technical solutions and new ways of working to facilitate the UAE's Net Zero by 2050 goal - we can Make it Happen.

I would also like to thank Sandra Anani and Sustainability to Action (STA) for editing this issue and curating important content from partners who share our goal of economic, environmental and social sustainability. The ADSG have recently had the pleasure of working with the Energy Institute as part of the Carbon Management Flagship programme, which has resulted in twelve member

organisations signing the Carbon Management Charter and five organisations successfully completing certified training. Further to the workshops held this year, a final questions and answers webinar will take place and a full programme report issued this year.

In other news, we look forward to hosting a virtual GRI training workshop across the 16th and 17th of November and to sharing the 2022 ADSG Sustainability In Practice Report (SIPR), which will be published later this month. Meanwhile, we will be closely following the events and outcomes of the 2022 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP27) in Egypt, as well as preparations for COP28 in Abu Dhabi.

Best wishes,

HUDA AL HOUQANI,
ADSG DIRECTOR



INTERVIEW WITH JASIM HUSAIN THABET

JASIM HUSAIN THABET, TAQA'S GROUP CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND MANAGING DIRECTOR



Interview with Jasim Husain Thabet, TAQA's Group Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director

1. TAQA has undergone huge growth since its inception in 1998, during this time the concept of sustainability has been significantly developed and defined. What does Sustainability mean within the context of utilities today?

Sustainability has become a central part of the global energy and utilities industry. As a sector, we carry much of the responsibility to drive the energy transition and in many respects, we are ahead of the curve when it comes to the adoption of sustainable best practices, processes, and green technologies. It is also the case that many of the industry's leading players have committed themselves to a net-zero carbon goal.

For the last few years, utilities providers around the world have had to balance the importance of advancing the innovation agenda and implementing sustainable technologies, with the importance of energy security, managed consumer costs and reliable production and supply.

Despite this, falling renewable energy costs, along with expanding government regulations and increased stakeholder demand for sustainable practices is accelerating the industry's ability to embrace sustainability and drive a low-carbon transition.

In 2021, TAQA announced its 2030 growth strategy

which put sustainable and profitable growth at the heart of the business along with a clear focus on playing a key role in acceleration of the energy transition. This translates into a clear intention for the organization to establish itself as a champion for low carbon power and water.

As part of our ongoing strategy, we have dedicated our efforts to expanding our asset portfolio with the development of new renewables and highly efficient water desalination facilities. At the same time, we will continue to enhance efficiency across our networks and distribution business, while also investing in the growth of the UAE Regulated Asset Base.

2. TAQA recently joined The UN Global Compact Initiative and the International Renewable Energy Agency's (IRENA) Alliance for Decarbonization, how do you anticipate that these milestone memberships will impact your operations?

In addition to completing an annual Communication on Progress (COP) submission, which aims to demonstrate TAQA's progress in driving the 10 Principles of the UN Global Compact, the Group will accelerate the decarbonization of its asset base, while also reinforcing its commitment to ESG principles.

As part of these efforts, TAQA has invested heavily in renewables, both in the UAE and with the acquisition of a major stake in Masdar will do so across the world. It has also forged several key partnerships to drive

sustainability across key industries in the UAE.

In line with our 2030 growth strategy announced last year, the Group is moving forward with its strategic objective of expanding the share of renewables within our generation portfolio to bring it to at least 30% by 2030. We already have Noor Abu Dhabi, one of the largest single site solar plants in the world, which will be followed by the 2GW Al Dhafra Solar PV IPP under construction. That plant will not only be twice the size of the Noor facility but is one of the lowest cost and will provide enough energy to supply 160,000 homes in Abu Dhabi.

The organization has made important steps towards achieving its net-zero ambitions by 2050, notably with the recent launch of a comprehensive 2030 Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Strategy. Under the strategy, TAQA has committed to a 25% reduction of scope 1 and 2 emissions by 2030 across the Group, including a 33% reduction of UAE portfolio emissions compared to the 2019 baseline.

At the same time, our membership as part of IRENA's Alliance for Decarbonization has opened new avenues for us to collaborate and exchange critical knowledge related to industrial decarbonization across the global energy and industrial community. Working together, alliance members will join forces to advance country-specific net-zero goals, while also driving the decarbonization of industrial value chains, particularly within hard to abate sectors.

Additionally, as part of our role as a founding member of the alliance, TAQA is leveraging its long-standing experience as a leading utilities provider and global expertise to support industrial partners and national efforts to achieve their respective emission reduction goals.

3. What opportunities do you see when engaging with the global utilities community, particularly around implementing climate positive change?

There is great opportunity to be found in engaging in collaborative endeavors, which could include everything from knowledge-sharing activities to the formation of industry associations, supporting research and development, hosting industry-specific events, as well as cultivating talent.

Evolution in the industry, such as the increasing adoption of renewable resources and the continued digitalization of the industry, have

made it increasingly apparent that members of the global utilities community can no longer afford to operate independently if we are to drive change on the scale required. The sector is moving incredibly quickly responding to both short term needs while pivoting to address the long-term challenges and opportunities of a digitalized, decarbonized future. TAQA's own World Utilities Congress, held in Abu Dhabi, offers an annual platform for the industry to come together, share knowledge and establish new avenues of cooperation to advance sector development

At the same time, industry partnerships and memberships in international associations and alliances, such as IRENA's Alliance for Decarbonization and the UN's Global Compact Initiative, will also become essential to help align and accelerate global efforts to achieve decarbonization and to facilitate the energy transition.

4. How can more organisations learn about and take action on the most material, environmental, social and governance aspects of their business?

Understanding societal impact should be front and center of today's business decision making. Every company, regardless of sector should be working towards delivering value and benefits to its entire stakeholder community – beyond just its immediate shareholder base.

ESG and the UN Global Compact principles capture the need to put societal outcomes at the heart of decision making and we have seen numerous forward-thinking enterprises embrace ESG principles and implement comprehensive strategies that align with these values. As many already know, organizations that successfully incorporate ESG

practices often find themselves reaping a host of benefits, including top-line growth, reduced costs, lower volatility, fewer regulatory restrictions and access to lower cost finance. They also tend to see enhanced levels of employee productivity and retention, and typically attract higher-caliber talent into their ranks.

Doing the right thing does not conflict with doing good business. They are mutually reinforcing aims. Our purpose driven approach is a thread that runs throughout the corporate strategy. We have embraced ESG throughout our governance structure, establishing several Sustainability Committees at the Board and Executive Management levels, as well as introducing an HQ corporate sustainability team and ESG Management Office.

This year, we introduced a new ESG strategy focused on six core material topics, which comprised climate change, water and effluents, occupational health and safety, diversity and equal opportunity, local community engagement, and corporate governance.

Other key areas of focus include contributing to Abu Dhabi's transformation as a green hydrogen hub, expanding our renewable energy and reverse osmosis capabilities, as well as setting out our plan to reduce our own global carbon footprint by 25% by 2030 on route to our goal of reaching net zero by 2050.

5. Clearly you are very busy, what do you enjoy doing in your free time?

I am passionate about what we are trying to achieve at TAQA, but in my free time I love to spend time with my family and I am a very keen golfer and frequently spend time on playing on the internationally renowned golf courses in across the UAE.





DESTINATION EARTH, VIA COP 28 DUBAI

Floods, heat waves, drought, wildfires, storm surge. Year after year the impacts of climate change are becoming only more severe, more frequent, and more commonplace, with billions of people affected annually.

The science is clear: there is an urgent need to accelerate action on the Paris Agreement, the landmark agreement to tackle climate change that countries adopted in 2015.

Since Paris, the annual United Nations' Conference of the Parties, or COP, has seen progress on raising ambition, on nationally led climate targets (the so-called Nationally Determined Contributions), on climate finance, and on both mitigation and adaptation.

Yet, it is widely accepted that this progress remains insufficient in both speed and scale.

This renewed sense of urgency will follow world leaders to Sharm el Sheikh, in Egypt, for COP27 in November, where particular emphasis has been placed on supporting developing countries who are already feeling the impacts. The Global Goal on Adaptation will be front and center at COP27.

This will be followed by COP28 UAE, in 2023, where the emphasis will be on carrying forward progress,

particularly around the three primary pillars of the Paris Agreement: mitigation, adaptation, and finance, or means of implementation. COP28 UAE will also see the conclusion of the Global Stocktake, a sort of 'report card' on the Paris Agreement.

Mandated by the Paris Agreement, the Global Stocktake is a year-long process of review intended to assess where the world is on climate targets. It is hoped that, equipped with this detailed information, COP28 UAE will be able to catalyze climate action and ambition, particularly important ahead of the next round of climate targets, due in 2025.

Along with raising ambition, COP28 UAE will give government and non-government partners the chance to announce new, more immediate actions, as well as to convene partnerships and coalitions to accelerate action, particularly around key areas, such as energy, adaptation, forests, nature-based solutions, and climate finance.

As host, the Government of the UAE and its designated COP-President will be mandated with overseeing the negotiation process, for both the Global Stocktake as well as the Global Goal on Adaptation, and ensuring the meaningful participation of both state and non-

state actors. This will be particularly important when it comes to mapping out a post-Stocktake path forward.

For the UAE, a global hub of energy and industry, COP28 UAE will be an opportunity to showcase the power of innovation in tackling climate challenges. This will include strong calls to accelerate a practical, sensible energy transition that paves the way to net zero emissions. The UAE, a world leader in both conventional and renewable energies, is championing the energy transition as a means to guarantee energy security, reduce emissions, and ensure economic prosperity for all in parallel.

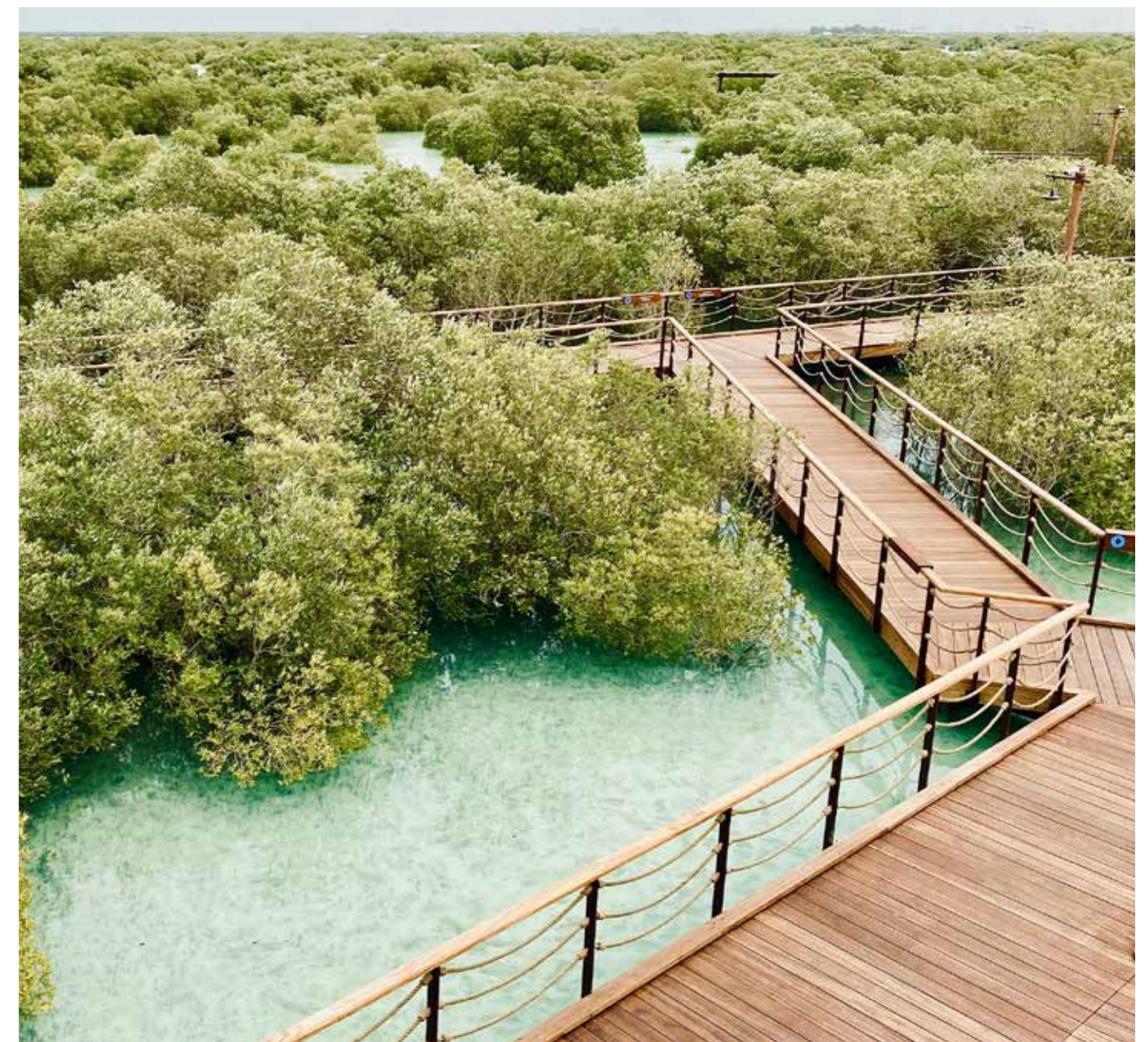
Along with the COP President, COP28 UAE, a priority for the country's leadership, will receive whole-of-government support, including via a High-Level Climate Action Champion and a Youth Climate Champion, who will ensure meaningful participation from states and non-state actors,

including cities, civil society, indigenous peoples, and women and youth.

With an expected 40,000 delegates from 197 Parties to the UNFCCC, as well as thousands of civil society organizations, companies, and media partners, COP28 UAE will be a pivotal moment for the international community to raise ambition and accelerate action for the decade ahead.

The Government of the UAE has already indicated that COP28 UAE, set to take place in November 2023 at Expo City Dubai, will be a fully inclusive and transparent summit, offering all stakeholders a chance to meaningfully partake in a dialogue about the path forward.

For more information about COP28 UAE please contact office@climateenvoy.gov.ae



DOLPHIN ENERGY DECARBONIZATION PROGRAM



In response to the need for climate action and address the issue of climate change, oil and gas companies around the world have made pledges to decarbonize and set long term Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emission reduction targets.

Decarbonization is also on the agenda of many governments, including the United Arab Emirates. The country has launched UAE Net Zero by 2050, a strategic initiative that will achieve net-zero GHG emissions by 2050. In so doing, the Emirates will become the first country across the Middle East and North Africa to meet this target.

Dolphin Energy's commitment to decarbonization started in 2012 and is aligned to government climate action plans and those of its shareholders and stakeholders. The company's decarbonization roadmap focuses on five pillars which will take its commitment beyond 2035. These are:

- Develop a low carbon culture
- Measure, set targets and act for lower emissions on existing assets
- Develop a low carbon approach for new projects
- Embrace new technologies
- Engage all stakeholders, partners, and contractors (to ensure that third parties follow the same commitment as Dolphin Energy)

Over the last decade and more, the company has launched many projects and initiatives. Some of these projects are already complete, some are in progress, while others are still under study and consideration.

In 2022, Dolphin Energy's decarbonization program has focused on carbon footprint reduction, GHG emissions accounting and savings,

and energy efficiency initiatives. The company also updated its internal policies to ensure that they capture the requirements to reduce our carbon footprint - the policies are the HSE&S Policy, the GHG Policy, and the Sustainability Policy.

Furthermore in 2022, Dolphin Energy established a Decarbonization Taskforce which comprises a multi discipline team of employees from its upstream and downstream workforce. The focus of the Decarbonization Taskforce is on reducing Scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions (Scope 1 are direct emissions from what we own - e.g., burning fuel from combustion sources and Scope 2 are indirect emissions that we can control - e.g., electricity from the grid).

The Taskforce's role is to identify all projects that fall under the definition of decarbonization which are either complete, in the pipeline, or carry the potential for consideration in the future. Emission reduction projects could include initiatives that have become operational (e.g., installation of new equipment or instigation of new operational practices) or commitments that have been made (e.g., initiatives proposed or under study which are yet to become fully operational). Further, these initiatives can include activities related to energy efficiency, reductions in fugitive emissions, low carbon energy purchase, low carbon energy installation, reductions in process emissions, or others.

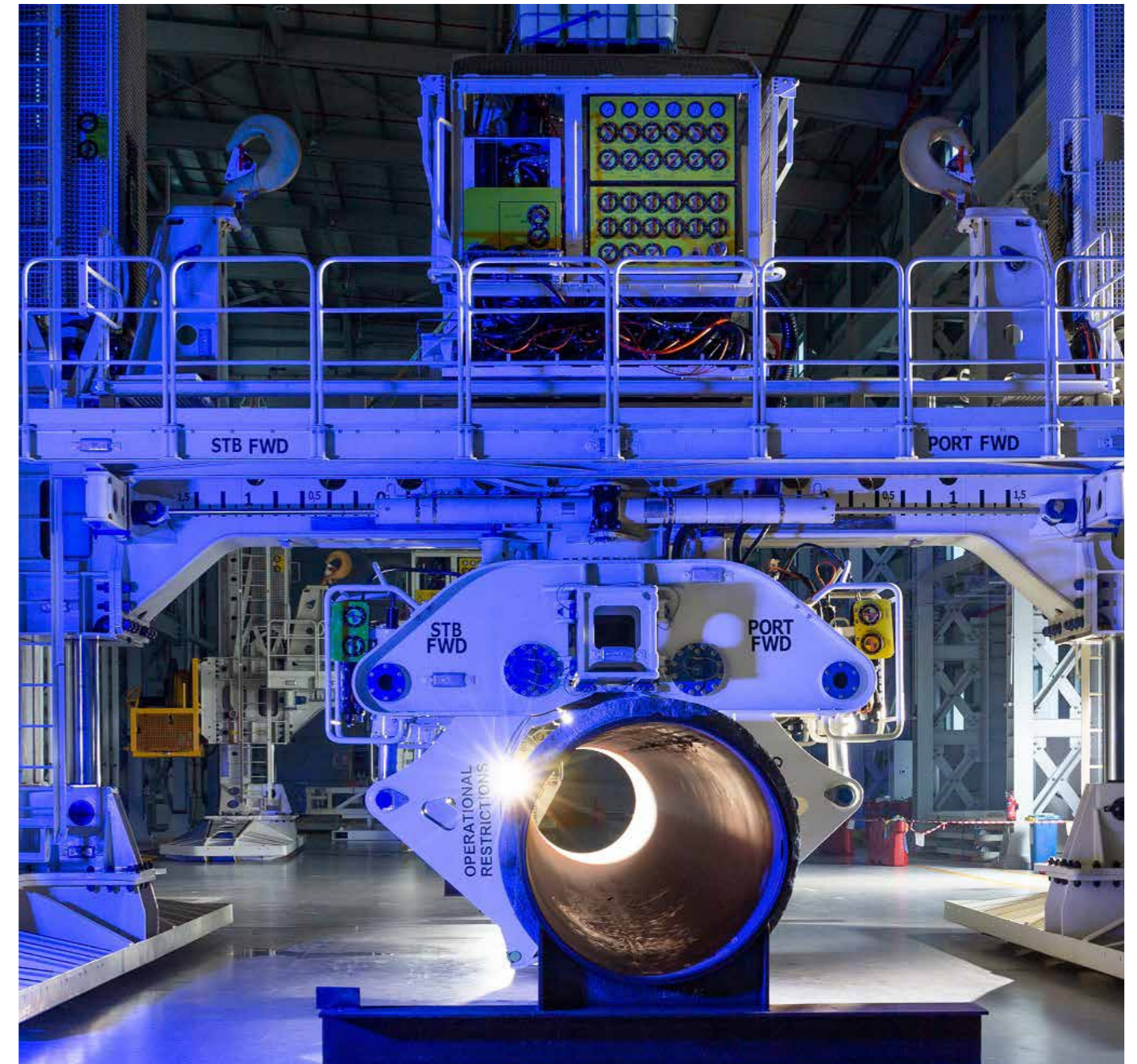
Another aspect of the Taskforce's role is to account for all the company GHG savings, work to establish an internal GHG emission target, and set Key Performance Indicators to track target achievement. Since Dolphin Energy started tracking GHG emissions from

its inception to date, GHG emissions have reduced by 15%, thanks to several energy efficiency initiatives and flaring reduction projects.

In terms of raising employee awareness across the company on our decarbonization efforts, we have launched a year-long Carbon Footprint Reduction campaign in all areas where we operate to drive employee engagement.



"From our inception, our vision has focused on being a leading and reliable supplier of clean energy. Climate protection has always been at the forefront of our commitments and adopting decarbonization strategies is an extension of those obligations. Furthermore, decarbonization is an opportunity to advance our sustainability journey. It encourages us to reduce our carbon footprint as individuals and as an organization, and contributes to the global movement that aims to combat climate change," commented Mr. Obaid Abdulla Al Dhaheeri, CEO, Dolphin Energy Limited.



The Dolphin Gas Project of Dolphin Energy Limited is a major regional strategic energy initiative. Since July 2007, the company has been producing, processing and supplying substantial quantities of natural gas from offshore Qatar to the United Arab Emirates.

Production reached full throughput of 2 billion standard cubic feet of

natural gas per day (scf/day) in February, 2008. Supplies to Oman started in October of the same year.

From its inception, Dolphin Energy has been committed to being a responsible corporate citizen across its operations and activities. This commitment developed and was formalized with the company's inaugural sustainability report, published in 2009.

Details of its 13th report were issued in 2022, highlighting Dolphin Energy's continued efforts to minimize environmental impacts, create economic opportunities and increase community engagement. This commitment is

complemented by a sustainability management plan and policy, which has been integrated into the company's corporate strategy, helping manage sustainability issues that are material to Dolphin Energy's stakeholders.

Dolphin Energy Limited is owned 51 percent by Mubadala Investment Company, on behalf of the Government of Abu Dhabi - and 24.5 percent each by TotalEnergies of France and Occidental Petroleum of the USA.

Detailed information about Dolphin Energy can be found on www.dolphinenergy.com

TADWEER'S COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARD ABU DHABI'S NATURAL CAPITAL FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS IS ALREADY PAYING DIVIDEND

The Abu Dhabi Waste Management Centre (Tadweer) has been on a journey of transformation whilst continuously working towards the development of a sustainable waste management system to serve the Emirate.

In accordance with its vision to develop a more sustainable waste management and pest control system, Tadweer reached a major milestone in 2021 when it significantly improved the level of diverse services provided to its community.

Various areas saw vast improvement including waste transport and treatment plants, reduction of disease vectors infestation, raising awareness, signing agreements, digital transformation, enhanced waste sector monitoring, occupational health and safety management, and business continuity.

His Excellency Falah Mohammed Al Ahababi, Chairman of Tadweer, said: "We are proud of the promising achievements by the Centre during 2021. These achievements reflect our commitment to supporting the national efforts, which aims to conserve natural resources and create an informed society that contributes to reducing waste production, as well as turning waste into a contributor to Abu Dhabi's economy. The Centre operates in line with the highest international standards and practises through promoting joint cooperation, and launching initiatives and projects that invest in financial, human, and technical resources, in order to achieve a circular economy and sustainable development."

His Excellency Dr. Salem Khalfan Al Kaabi, Director General of Tadweer, said: "The milestones and major strides achieved by the Centre over the past year came as a result of our hard work and commitment to providing outstanding services and supporting the growth of various sectors. Tadweer aims to build integrated waste management systems, combat threats to public health, and provide valuable services for the customers and the community. This year, the Centre continues its efforts to explore more innovative waste management solutions and optimise the use of waste management, in line with its commitment to being a

major contributor to creating a safe, healthy, and sustainable environment in Abu Dhabi, which contributes to the sustainable development of the emirate."

WASTE TREATMENT AND RECYCLING PLANTS

Tadweer's achievements in 2021 included the launch of the commercial operation for three medical and hazardous waste treatment facilities in Abu Dhabi, and the fallen livestock incinerator for Abu Dhabi and Al Dhafra, which deals with any animal that has died for reasons other than human consumption.

Both operations are part of the Centre's efforts to ensure safe and proper disposal of all kinds of waste to the highest international and local standards.

Tadweer processed around 108,000 tonnes of medical and hazardous waste and disposed of around 8,000 tonnes of fallen livestock. The Centre also produced about 2.7 million tonnes of recycled aggregate from demolition and construction waste, and about 37,000 tonnes of organic fertiliser from agricultural and animal waste, in line with the emirate's vision to achieve its environmental objectives through proper waste management and recycling.

NUMBER OF CENTRES FOR COLLECTING RECYCLABLE MATERIAL (WASTE MINES)

Last year, Tadweer provided 9 new centres for collecting recyclable material (waste mines), reaching a total of 17 centres in Abu Dhabi (Abu Dhabi City, Abu Dhabi mainland, Al Ain City, Al Dhafra Region). This comes as part of Tadweer's commitment in encouraging the community to contribute towards waste segregation at source as well as its commitment towards maintaining a safe and sustainable environment.

Tadweer has also established and developed technical guidelines for the development of the municipal solid waste collection and transportation infrastructure in Abu Dhabi.

PEST CONTROL

By increasing the number of smart mosquito traps from 200 to 640 in Abu

Dhabi, the Centre has successfully decreased the number of disease-carrying pests by 56%. Increased public awareness of Tadweer as well as increased urbanisation, led to 103,922 requests for pest control services, an increase of 25,000 when compared to the 78,484 requests in 2020. These requests varied from disease-carrying pest control services and loose animals to annoying and dangerous pests.

ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH, AND SAFETY

After an external audit conducted by the National Emergency Crisis and Disaster Management Authority (NCEMA) and the Abu Dhabi Emergencies, Crises and Disasters Management Centre (ADCMC), Tadweer reported a compatibility rate of 96.05% with the third version of the National Standard for Business Continuity Management System.

Furthermore, Tadweer achieved a compatibility rate of 95% of its occupational safety and health management system with the requirements of the Abu Dhabi Occupational Safety and Health System in 2021, using the new methodology that was developed.

These results came after the completion of the project for the development of the Occupational Safety and Health Management System (OSHMS). Tadweer also completed an employee training plan for environment, health, safety, and crucially, for business continuity, recording a total of 3,300 training hours in the waste sector during last year.

Dealing with the impact of COVID-19 Tadweer completed 80% of the projects and initiatives for dealing with the impact of COVID-19, according to the Centre's approved operational plan, completing 1,200 inspection procedures of the COVID-19 precautionary measures. The Centre also participated in the national sterilisation campaign by allocating and operating spray vehicles over 227 days. 972 staff members were involved in the campaign daily, recording an average of 10 working hours per day, and an estimated total of 1.7 million hours throughout the campaign.

During the first half of 2022 Tadweer succeeded to:



DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

As part of Tadweer's ongoing efforts in digital transformation and in line with the national plan in this field, Tadweer now provides a range of electronic services, including all recycling services on the Unified Digital Platform (TAMM), providing a digital access feature using digital IDs, linking with the SADAD Payment System and the Abu Dhabi Department of Health through digital documentation services. The digital innovations also means that Tadweer can provide a dashboard to help reduce waste production, and a new version of the licensing and tariff system.

The digital transformation offers a unified electronic platform between companies working in the field of public health pest control and stakeholders, such as concerned facilities, in addition to the electronic tracking system for pest control vehicles, through which the Centre has successfully monitored around 4,875 vehicles.

WASTE SECTOR CONTROL

Over the past year, the Centre has monitored more than 14,000 instances of random disposal of sewage waste, around 25,000 cases of waste transport vehicles exit outside the boundaries of Abu Dhabi, and more than 764,000 cases of authorised access to official stations.

PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

Over the past year, and inline with our commitment to raise environmental awareness, Tadweer has organised 108 awareness sessions in Abu Dhabi, including field visits to educational institutions and various government entities, which have benefited more than 240,000 people in Abu Dhabi, Al Ain and Al Dhafra. Tadweer recognises the importance of public engagement in correct waste management practices and using the right ways to manage waste and preserve the environment.

It is part of Tadweer's aspirations to support changing public behaviour towards proactive and collaborative

waste management to safeguard our natural capital for future generations.

Initiatives for the governance of operational projects In 2021, the Centre launched initiatives for the governance of operational and future projects to raise efficiency of performance, developed new standard operating procedures for the project management process, and signed two memorandums of understanding (MoUs) with government entities.

The improvements in governance and across operations will enable Tadweer to engage better with clients, customers and the public in order to provide improved services to meet the growing needs of the Emirate and to support a more sustainable future for the economy, our community and our natural capital.

For more information please contact: Info@tadweer.gov.ae



MASDAR CITY – ABU DHABI’S CENTER FOR INNOVATIVE SUSTAINABILITY SOLUTIONS

Almost 15 years ago, Masdar announced a pioneering project to address the crucial role that cities can play in mitigating climate change and addressing the challenges of urban development. Masdar City was created to be a ‘greenprint’ for sustainable urban development and a place that would play an integral role in advancing the global green transition.

Since its inception in 2008, Masdar City’s story has evolved from providing a vision of pioneering sustainable urban development to becoming established as a leading center for research and development (R&D) in innovative sustainability solutions.

Today, Masdar City’s Free Zone is home to more than 1,000 organizations, ranging from multinationals and government entities to home-grown start-ups. Many of these are developing advanced technologies in the key industries of clean energy, space, agri-tech, mobility, health, green building, and artificial intelligence.

The transformative work of these companies, in addition to projects piloted by Masdar City itself, highlight the essential role that innovation and R&D plays in furthering

progressive global climate action. This work has never been more relevant as the UAE prepares to host the 28th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 28) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 2023 – an unprecedented opportunity to also highlight the economic potential of climate action, both in the UAE and globally.

As the first country in the GCC to ratify the Paris Agreement and via initiatives such as Net Zero by 2050 and the National Innovation Strategy, the UAE has been actively inviting the world to collaborate in creating opportunities for sustainable socio-economic development. As the UAE’s pioneering sustainable urban development project and a R&D hub for sustainability-focused businesses, Masdar City is a symbol of this commitment.

Masdar City’s work across the key sustainability industries has actively contributed to the UAE’s climate agenda. Despite challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic over the past two years, the city has continued to grow, establishing new sustainability-focused business initiatives, welcoming new tenants, and facilitating

more innovative R&D projects to play a leading role in shaping the conversation around a sustainable future.

SUSTAINABILITY PIONEERS

One example of the notable contributions Masdar City has made to address critical sustainability challenges is its transportation strategy. Focused on putting pedestrians first and emphasizing sustainable, public transportation, the city has introduced the Middle East and North Africa’s first autonomous shuttle service, NAVYA; the first electric Eco-Bus in the region; and the world’s first Personal Rapid Transit System (PRT), which has carried more than 2 million passengers to date.

The city also contains one of the largest clusters of low-carbon buildings in the world, all of which are mandated to achieve a minimum 3-Pearl rating under the Estidama Pearl Building Rating System. Buildings in the city are designed to reduce energy by at least 40 percent compared to ASHRAE standards and reduce water consumption by at least 40 percent in accordance with Estidama Pearl Building Rating System baselines.

The city’s sustainable building mandate also caters to the growing investor appetite for ‘responsible’ investment opportunities. In 2020, Masdar City established the Masdar Green Real Estate Investment

Trust (REIT) – the first of its kind in the region, offering an attractive opportunity for professional investors through private placement to invest in a unique portfolio of stable, income-producing sustainable real estate assets. This REIT also provides a vehicle through which third-party, sustainable developers can monetize their assets, attracting both real estate developers to Masdar City, as well as aspiring local and international sustainability-focused investors.

Public realm design and construction is also carried out according to the ethos of sustainability. Masdar City recently completed the award-winning, Masdar Central Park project, which aims to provide an innovative, sustainably designed and developed, public open space that caters to the growing needs of the community.

AN ECOSYSTEM FOR INNOVATION

Masdar City is home to the only planned and approved R&D cluster in Abu Dhabi and as such, provides a dynamic ecosystem of education, R&D, innovation and technology through which organizations are facilitated to test new technologies and build partnerships locally and globally.

Over the past decade, the city has developed and hosted a number of R&D initiatives and created a pro-innovation environment for entities of all sizes.

One of these projects includes Azelio’s cutting-edge distributed and scalable Thermal Energy Storage-Power on Demand (TES.POD), an innovative R&D project that will demonstrate 24/7 affordable clean energy utilization. Based in Masdar City and run by Sweden’s Azelio, Khalifa University of Science and Technology, and Masdar, the Azelio storage system is used with solar photovoltaic (PV) panels and enables renewable and cost-efficient electricity 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Influential organizations have chosen Masdar City as their base. These include the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), international think tank the Global CCS Institute, the UAE Space Agency, the regional headquarters of Siemens Energy, G42 Healthcare, the Advanced Technology Research Council, several Fortune 500 companies, and hundreds of entrepreneurs. It is also home to the region’s first sustainability-focused start-up accelerator, the Catalyst, and the Mohamad bin Zayed University of Artificial Intelligence, the world’s first graduate-level, research-based artificial intelligence (AI) university.

As we move forward to COP28, Masdar City will continue to actively contribute to the UAE’s progressive climate agenda and further its development as the home for world-class pioneering work in innovative sustainability solutions.



THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY - ABU DHABI AWARDED LEED CERTIFICATE FOR SUSTAINABLE BUILDINGS



The Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi (EAD) announced today that it was awarded the (LEED (O+M)) version 4.1 Certificate by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC). The Green Building Classification System is considered the most widely used in the world.

The Agency was awarded in recognition of its outstanding efforts in managing sustainable, healthy and environmentally friendly buildings and its application of sustainability standards in three of its facilities.

The Agency received the LEED

Platinum certification for its leadership in the application of energy and environmental protection systems in Operation and Maintenance for its headquarters, as well as Al Wathba Wetland Reserve. The EAD offices based in Al Ain were certified LEED Gold for their application of energy and environmental protection systems in Operation and Maintenance.

The USGBC also acknowledged EAD for its sustainable facility management and leadership in energy and environmental design, while commending it for fulfilling the

necessary certification criteria.

These include managing indoor environmental quality, including factors such as air quality, green cleaning materials, pest management and zero tobacco smoke presence. The Agency is also deemed energy efficient due to reductions in electricity use and GHG emission intensity, chilled water consumption, and the numbers for refrigerants used in the three facilities.

Among the notable achievements were EAD's use of low-emission vehicles in its Transport Division, water efficiency measures such as efficient sanitary fixtures and low water consumption intensity, as well as its sustainable procurement policy for daily office consumables, positive facility management and renovation policy, and the presence of office waste segregation and recycling.

As such, EAD's office buildings performed well, and the building operation data for the 2020-21 period demonstrated that the Agency lived up to the LEED certificate standards.

Her Excellency Dr. Shaikha Salem Al



Dhaheer, Secretary General of EAD, said: "At EAD we like to lead by example. If we are going to urge stakeholders to conserve the environment in Abu Dhabi, then we need to be doing the same. Therefore, we have worked very hard to ensure that all our physical assets are sustainable and green so that we can be a credible and accountable organisation. We were duly rewarded for these efforts, and I am very proud of my team for continuously implementing the environmentally sustainable practices so that we earned LEED certification and be acknowledged by such a respected international entity."

Fatima Mohamed Al Marzooqi, Director of Facility Management and Administration Division at EAD, added: "Even though the LEED certification journey was a long process as we

had to pro-actively implement certain policies and ensure that our assets are physically fitted with environmentally-friendly equipment, we were able to achieve our goal. We are among the few entities in Abu Dhabi to have received the LEED certificate and it is an honour to be alongside other buildings that match the criteria such as the ADNOC headquarter buildings, the Siemens building in Masdar City, Masdar headquarters and the IRENA building, also in Masdar."

This certification is in line with EAD's strategic priority on "Leadership in corporate environmental sustainability" which aims to reduce the Agency's environmental footprint, improve efficiency, and raise awareness about sustainability.

Receiving the LEED certificate involved

two phases. The first one was the 12-month feasibility, gap assessment and measures implementation, followed by an 18-month second phase of performance monitoring and certification.

The Agency partnered with Global Energy and Environmental Engineering Service (GE3S), a consultancy firm that assisted EAD in its accreditation. GE3S helped assess the gaps in the EAD facilities against the LEED performance standards, and identified mitigation measures needed to improve the building's performance. The consultancy firm also prepared all the plans, procedures, analysis and documentation that needed to be submitted to USGBC to obtain the LEED certification.

INTERVIEW WITH CRAIG BENNETT

Craig Bennett
CEO
Wildlife Trusts



A tete a tete with Craig Bennett, CEO Wildlife Trusts, where we glean information about nature conservation, leadership and learn about the work The Wildlife Trusts are focusing on. We were delighted to have an interview with Craig and to learn more from him as he has several other leadership roles in sustainability including Honorary Professor in Sustainability and Innovation at Alliance Manchester Business School, Senior Associate of The Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership, and a Policy Fellow of The Centre for Science and Policy at The University of Cambridge. Sandra Anani interviewed Craig in late October 2022.

Sandra: You recently attended the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Leaders Forum in Jeju, how was it and what were the outcomes?

Craig: It was amazing actually! I worry about my carbon footprint and impact so if I'm traveling long distance I have to make sure that the travel is necessary. The meeting was valuable in terms of meeting with some of the most senior leaders from across IUCN that were there; NGOs, funders, governments, ministers and business as well. And it was a relatively small meeting, with 300 - 400 attendees but that was good because it made much richer and in depth dialogue. The Forum had a great agenda, covering extensive topics with a focus on a nature-positive future. Readers can learn more clicking on the link here: <https://www.iucn.org/>

Sandra: I would like chat about COP27 what are your thoughts? What are your hopes? What are your fears?

Craig: Well the hopes are clear. We had COP26 in Glasgow last year, although I think that was seen as a pretty useful meeting where there was real renewed focus and attention from world leaders on the need to scale up action. We didn't get to where we needed to do in terms of pledges to get to 1.5 degrees. The countries of the world left Glasgow, November last year, saying they will have to redouble their efforts and come back with better commitments, stronger commitments at the meeting for COP27 in Egypt and sadly one way or another it looks like that's not going to happen.

Obviously the war in Ukraine, the cost of living crisis

and so on has made things a lot more difficult and in addition, we haven't had quite the renewed political will that I think is necessary to drive this agenda and so I think there's a real concern that we're not going to get the revised and more ambitious commitments that are needed at COP27. What that does do is make it all the more important to start planning for COP28 which is of course in the United Arab Emirates a year later and so I think there's a real sense now (I think there has been for a while) that actually NGOs are looking to COP28 in the UAE as the place where we can really see perhaps another step forward in progress.

Sandra: In your role, you champion the environment and nature. Species are becoming extinct at a catastrophic rate because of our behaviours and our unsustainable consumption patterns, in the context of nature what does sustainability mean from your perspective?

Craig: Very simply what the scientists tell us is that we've already eroded so much of nature that it's already very degraded and certainly within some countries including the UK, for example and most of western Europe, simple concepts of conservation, in other words keeping what we've already got is not enough, we've actually got to put nature in recovery. In the context of sustainability that means having an agenda that's nature positive and which was theme of the forum in Jeju for example. How can we make sure that business and governments and societies and our global economy is nature positive so we actually rebuild the nature we've lost? This is crucial not just so that we've got nice birds and bees to look at but fundamental to our very survival. Nature underpins our future wellbeing, our food production, our economy and our ability to access clean air, water and so on. So we have to make sure that nature is in recovery locally and globally.

Sandra: Asking you the obvious; how important is sustainability for you personally? Did that play a role in your career choice to take on the role of CEO at the Wildlife Trusts?

Craig: Yes, I'd say that's my mission in life really and I can't even say where it came from, since childhood and certainly by the time I became a teenager it was my driving mission really. It was my life goal to do everything I could to try and deliver sustainability as best we can so that's been the focus for the whole of my career and I believe that fundamentally learning to live fairly within environmental limits on this planet, learning to live here as if we mean to stay, that is the next stage



of human progress, it's as simple as that. There's no next step of human progress unless we can do it sustainably. So for me it's all entwined in making sure that humanity can survive and can continue to progress.

Sandra: Leading on from that impassioned view and outlook, can you tell us a little bit about your organisation The Wildlife Trusts? Can you tell us a little bit about purpose at the Wildlife Trusts?

Craig: We are 112 years old as an organisation. We were first started as the Society for the Protection of Nature Reserves and some historians think that our founder Charles Rothschild actually invented the concept of nature reserves in many respects. We are a federated charity, which means that we are a grouping of 46 individual Wildlife Trusts across the UK; we're working together in a federation and I'm Chief Executive of the federation.

Collectively our scale is huge, overall we have more nature reserves than there are McDonalds restaurants in the UK, in fact a thousand more. We estimate that 60 percent of the British population live within three miles of one of our reserves. We're actually the UK's 5th largest land owner. We have around 3,000 staff, 940,000 members which is many, many, many times bigger than any political party in the UK, in fact about twice the size of the largest political party in the UK.

We have an annual collective turnover of around £200M, which puts us in one of the world's largest conservation organisations. It's also worth mentioning that we're one of the five founding members of IUCN, way back in the 1940s and 1950s of which we are very proud. One of the things I'm doing at the moment is looking at how we can build those international connections again.

Sandra: What challenges do you face when you are doing your outreach?

Craig: Goodness, so many! The first thing to say I learned early on in my career is that there's no such thing as the 'general public'. People often say 'This is what people will think' or 'This is what people will respond to' and so on but of course there is not one 'public', there are many different audience segments. I think one of the things that's really important to do in any kind of work on engagement is to think about the specific audience or sets of audiences you're trying to reach. One set of messages or one approach might work well for one given section of audience and another approach or set of messages might work better for another. Thinking very carefully about that audience will be important. I also think you've got to be able to set out and tell the truth about how serious the circumstances are around the climate and nature crisis but you've also got to give hope about the changes that are necessary to try to counter the problems so actually getting the balance of those is going to be important.

In terms of regulation and policy frameworks I think that is essential, I'm quite positive about the role that business can play, for example, in helping solve some of these problems but actually in the context of a well regulated business and a well regulated marketplace to enable that to happen. Regulation is discussed as if it's something that business doesn't like but actually in my experience of talking to particularly the most enlightened business leaders they welcome well put together regulation that says very clearly; this is the outcome that society wants, this'll give you the confidence and certainty with what needs to be achieved and then it gives business the confidence to invest in, for example, new environmental technologies and renewable energy or into energy efficiency or green technologies, and so on. As long as governments can set long term policy frameworks and regulatory frameworks to bring about the change that's needed then

A WALK IN THE WILDLIFE, WITH THE CEO OF THE WILDLIFE TRUSTS

business can respond and invest to produce those outcomes and I sometimes find it very odd that in some parts of the world there's this rather odd debate about regulation because if it's done right it can be both good for business and good for the environment.

On balance, certainly in the UK we talk too much about whether we should or shouldn't have regulation and we don't talk enough about how we can put together well thought through, well-crafted regulation.

Sandra: You mentioned making a compelling argument for organisations and especially leaders who are well-enlightened on the real need to balance their social, economic and environmental impacts, so how can more organisations learn about this and take action and how can they start to make an impact on real material issues for their business?

Craig: I think it's incumbent on every organisation, every business, every not-for-profit, every government organisation to make sure that they develop and maintain a deep understanding of sustainability issues because they are going to be one of the most dominating issues within the context we operate in for the 21st century, and in doing so then recognising that they have implications for every single aspect of the business in terms of the products or services that are offered, in terms of the skills and expertise needed by employees, in terms of how you reward those employees, in terms of your internal and external communications, in terms of how you engage with stakeholders about how you attract investment, around how you interact with public authorities and public policy and ultimately also about what kind of business models you're going to need for the future. So if you think about that list it's absolutely every single aspect of the business that would be affected by these issues right down to whether the business exists or not long term and whether it has the right business model and business strategy that makes it fit for the future. It's hard to think of any other issue that competes in importance with all of that.

The answer to the question about what's the right thing to do, the issues are always evolving in a sense, so actually one of the important things

here is to constantly stay on top of it and constantly keep trying to be proactive and reactive to change in context.

Sandra: What do you think organisations can do in the Gulf to positively impact nature and linking it to purpose and how can those companies accelerate the adoption of a nature-friendly purpose?

Craig: I think perhaps the most important role that organisations in the Gulf can play is to help the world and humanity address climate change because obviously the Gulf has astonishing fossil fuel resources but it also has astonishing renewable energy resources and extraordinary abilities around innovation in renewable energy, in energy efficiency technologies and so on. If you just look at whether it's Masdar or many other places around the Gulf region there's absolutely world leading areas of research and expertise into new energy efficiency technologies, renewable energies. And surely one of the most exciting aspects for the Gulf is that it helps the world move into a net zero future and it has the ability to do that and actually benefit from that and Gulf organisations and companies leading to wrap that up with the adoption of a nature positive purpose is to see how those can link together when you look at renewable technologies, for example in the marine environment - how can those be done in a way that actually delivers nature positive, how can we deliver renewable energy technologies on land in a way that creates more space for nature? There's a lot of thinking going on around that and that's a very exciting prospect. How can we use water a lot more efficiently than we have done to date and again the Gulf region is in a brilliant place for developing those kind of technologies and that's all very nature friendly. I think the potential there is absolutely huge and the Gulf region is perfectly place to deliver that.

Sandra: How does innovation fit with sustainability?

Craig: Fundamentally if we're going to learn to live fairly within environmental limits (9-10 billion people on this planet one day) we're going to need to innovate. But the important and exciting thing there is not just innovate around technology, much as we're going to have to do that but

innovate around systems, innovate around business models, around societal models, around models of democracy and governance, models around communication and so on. We need innovation in every sphere of life to just make sure that we can do things better, which ultimately means do things more sustainably.

Innovation is absolutely crucial to this and one of the biggest challenges to innovation, time and again, is not actually so much whether we can think or imagine something different, it's about how we can move on. Say goodbye to the old incumbent technologies or the old incumbent ways of doing things or moving on from the old business models or the old ways of doing things. As humans often we find it harder to let go of the old things than to embrace new so innovation is just as much about saying goodbye and thank you to the old as it is embracing the new.

Sandra: How important is sustainability reporting and why is it relevant?

Craig: Sustainability reporting is crucial, I mean you only have to ask yourself the question in any business if you didn't have financial reporting, if you didn't have financial accounts where would you be? It'd be pretty hard to be anywhere and in the same way, in any organisation if you're serious about your aims on sustainability you need sustainability reporting otherwise you won't be anywhere. In exactly the same way, producing your financial accounts is not an end, it's a means to an end and in the same way with sustainability reporting it is a means to an end, it is not the end. I think there's been a problem that some times over the last couple of decades producing a sustainability report has always been seen to be the end rather than just the means and so I think actually being really clear that it's just a means, it's just a tool, actually what's really important is to be clear what your sustainability strategy is, what you're trying to achieve, where you're trying to get to and then reporting is a tool to help you on that journey.

Sandra: There's been a lot in the news recently about greenwashing, do you have any words of wisdom to share with us about this?

Craig: Don't do it! For someone like

me that's been around the block a few times it's very, very easy to spot greenwashing early on and any organisation, any company that says 'look how wonderful we are x, y and z' that always raises suspicion. Actually the companies that say 'look we're really committed to this but we've got all these problems we've got to figure out and we're still trying to figure this out and we're still trying to do this', those are the ones where you think 'ok they've probably got it'. So being careful not to show off too much and to show off your green credentials but actually be honest about the fact that it's a big journey and it doesn't happen overnight, that's the way to gain trust I would say.

Sandra: The Wildlife Trusts have various goals that you aim to achieve, which SDGs are you supporting through your work directly?

Craig: The SDGs on climate and nature but I would also say around community engagement, around water, around development - albeit in a UK context but we believe that a lot of our work is often helping some of the poorest people (albeit in a rich country like the UK) actually we're helping some of the poorest communities, whether that's through tourism economy or whether that's through reducing flood risk and so on. Climate resilience is there, agriculture as well, feeding people - it's often forgotten that there's no such thing as food security if nature's in decline so if we're going to have a secure supply of food in the future we need a flourishing nature so that's important as well.

To put it simply the SDGs to do with food, water, health, life, climate, nature, economy and equity as well are all incredibly important.

Sandra: I've been reading about loss and damage and how can that get onto the COP agendas. What are your views?

Craig: I think it's an incredibly important issue. We've always known that the poorest nations globally suffer the most from climate change, have done to date and will do especially in the future. The people that have had the least to do with causing climate change in the first place are the people that suffer most from it and there's certainly, sadly an awful lot of climate change already locked into the system that won't change and so actually providing compensation, providing support for communities around the world that are on the front line of the climate crisis is not only the right and fair thing to do but it's also what's needed to unlock the potential for people to be able to be part of the solution and help drive the change that we need. So I think it's an

absolutely crucial debate.

I think it's worth saying, although you can understand why some of the world's richest industrialised countries are quite resistant to that topic in one sense, I think they will realise that if we're going to make any progress on this issue the sooner the world's richest countries realise how important it is and how justified it is and start acting on it the sooner we will get the progress we need in climate change.

Sandra: How is the Wildlife Trusts working towards net zero?

Craig: We've adopted a target across Wildlife Trusts of trying to get to Net Zero by 2030. That's challenging but we think that's right given how much we care about these issues and our stance on it. In the scheme of things, our emissions are obviously tiny compared to UK emissions and so on but that's not the point - it's important that we do everything we can to address this. Interestingly enough one of the biggest challenges for us is around conservation grazing on our land because of the emissions associated with cattle and conservation grazing because historically in nature there would've been bison and big herbivores before humans were in the UK. There would've been big herbivores roaming around that would've knocked down the odd tree and things and kept areas open and that would've been crucial to our ecosystem. We don't have big herbivores anymore except where as the Wildlife Trusts we're trying to reintroduce them and so we try and mimic that with highland cows and rare breeds of cattle now which is the next best thing and that's

crucially important for conservation purposes but then you've got the emissions associated with that so that's something we have to think very carefully about. We're always thinking about making sure we're not having more grazing (in other words more cows) than we need to deliver on conservation purposes and we're constantly looking at ways in which we can reduce those emissions. As is true for every organisation there's particular areas which are quite challenging but that's not a reason to run away from it, it's a reason to lean into it and work out how to solve it.

Sandra: What is one characteristic that every leader should possess?

Craig: I would say an ability to listen and empathise. If you can't listen and you can't empathise you end up disconnected from the people you're trying to lead and so you can't do it. It's quite fun to say because it counters that vision people have of leaders standing up and doing big speeches, which I can do but actually the other side is that you've got to listen and empathise.

Sandra: On behalf of our readers, may I ask you to share with us what book you are reading?

Craig: This lovely book : A World in the Making. This is a beautiful nature book describing past environments so people who enjoy watching Jurassic Park might enjoy this. It's brilliantly researched and it's describing what the natural environment was like 200 million years ago or what it was like 100million years ago in a particular location so it travels around the Earth and describes it and it's quite an extraordinary piece of work.

Craig Bennett Chief Executive, The Wildlife Trusts

Craig is Chief Executive of The Wildlife Trusts. He has been described as "one of the country's top environmental campaigners", by The Guardian as "the very model of a modern eco-general" and, in 2021, was included in The Sunday Times Green Power List of the UK's top 20 environmentalists.

The Wildlife Trusts are one of the largest landowners in the UK with more than 870,000 members and 35,000 volunteers. They are working in the heart of local communities to help nature recover and to ensure that is nature is part of everyone's lives. Since becoming chief executive in 2020, Craig has spearheaded plans to protect 30% of UK land and sea for nature by 2030. Craig was formerly CEO of Friends of the Earth where he refocused the organisation

to empower communities to take action on the climate and ecological crises, resulting in a step change in the scale and impact of the movement, with over 200 new Friends of the Earth community groups set up during his tenure. He also led the organisation to numerous campaign victories including on bees, fracking and against the expansion of Heathrow Airport.

Earlier in his career, Craig was Deputy Director at The University of Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership (CISL), and Director of The Prince of Wales's Corporate Leaders Group on Climate Change (from 2007 to 2010) which he transformed into one of the most progressive business voices on the international climate change agenda.

UAE BANKS CAN HELP SET THE PACE IN THE RACE TO NET-ZERO

Around one year ago, the UAE became the first country in the MENA region to commit to achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. The announcement was no less significant even in a nation that lives by the motto 'impossible is possible'.

Since then, the UAE has been making swift and significant forward strides to meet this ambitious objective, with around USD160 billion set to be invested in clean and renewable energy projects to ensure the country meets its target. What's clear, is that a mission of this magnitude will require engagement from all aspects of the economy – and UAE's banks are poised to play a deep enabling role.

Net-zero is a far-reaching and all-encompassing plan that banks will be charged with helping bring to life. Perhaps overlooked at first glance is that banks uniquely touch every aspect of the economy and interact with almost every person. They are well positioned to lead the change and finance the future direction of energy supply, buildings, transportation, waste, water and food over the next 30 years.

To go about this, banks have begun leveraging and offering a vast range of innovative financing and advisory services to help their clients transition towards the climate-neutral economy. In doing so, they will play a decisive role in efforts to combat the worst of the consequences of climate change. Crucially, they will also be setting an important precedent for other industries to follow. They will become the standard bearers in the march towards the green economy of tomorrow.

Importantly, we must also recognise that the race to net-zero is a huge undertaking. Banks have an opportunity to become pacesetters, through their interactions with broad stakeholder groups they can frame the narrative but also define the rules of engagement. They will be able to work proactively and in parallel with customers, clients, regulators, government, and their peers to bring about the realisation of the net-zero ambitions.

A big part of this will be listening to customers, understanding their unique requirements and helping them meet their specific ESG requirements. And this won't be

confined purely to corporate and investment banking activities, it will be broader, more impactful and likely include policy advocacy. Banks will become the partners of the UAE government by helping the country deliver on its climate pledge.

One sphere where this will surely play out is in the energy transition, in particular the discourse around the energy trilemma. The 'classic energy trilemma' is defined by Abu Dhabi's Department of Energy (DoE) as the need to drive the development of a cleaner energy mix, ensuring reliable and secure supply to meet demand, and enabling an energy value chain that is economically viable.

In the pursuit of a sustainable energy future, governments can often be confronted with this trilemma. In my view, banks are well placed to address the issue as they understand the interplay between the dynamic processes in the trilemma. They can devise solutions and facilitate investment that bind both policy and ambition together.

While the depth of the UAE's energy assets has always been a fundamental strength of the country's economy, so too has the breadth of its finance sector. And the two working in partnership alongside the country's major energy users will be key to the race to net zero.

At First Abu Dhabi Bank (FAB) we have a strong track record of climate action



Shargiil Bashir is the Chief Sustainability Officer at First Abu Dhabi Bank (FAB). In this role, Shargiil is responsible for developing, leading, and implementing the bank's ESG strategy and initiatives. He was among the main drivers behind FAB joining the UN convened Net-Zero Banking Alliance as the first bank in

through our innovative sustainable financing solutions and advisory services. The bank has facilitated USD 39 billion in sustainable financing, and we have a target of an additional USD 75 billion for the period 2022-2030.

FAB aligns with the UAE's vision to promote sustainable economic growth and with the UAE Net-Zero by 2050 initiative. In October 2021, we became the first UAE and GCC bank to join the Net-Zero Banking Alliance (NZBA), reinforcing our status as a pacesetter for climate action in the financial sector.

As we look ahead, FAB will continue to lead through proactive engagement and partnerships with customers, clients, and the UAE government and regulators, to enable them to move faster towards achieving their climate goals.

With these clear goals in sight, FAB will support the UAE and global agenda on climate and clean energy, ensuring broader alignment with the Paris agreement and United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

By prioritising sustainability, we feel that we are instilling an ecological mindset across the economy that will form part of the UAE's capacity to turn challenge into opportunity. A mindset which sees impediments to action as opportunities to advance action.

By Shargiil Bashir, Chief Sustainability Officer – First Abu Dhabi Bank (FAB)

the UAE and GCC to make a net-zero commitment by 2050.

He is a seasoned banker and experienced leader with over 20 years of experience. He has led various aspects of Corporate Governance, Strategy, Risk Management, Risk Assurance, and Sustainability throughout multiple countries.

Before joining FAB in November 2020, Shargiil held various senior leadership positions at Danske Bank, based in Denmark.

Shargiil holds a Bachelor of Business Administration and an Executive MBA from the Copenhagen Business School in Denmark – and has completed Executive Education at INSEAD in France.

COP27: A CALL FOR ACTION

Implementation! The COP27 Presidency Highlights that this year's conference is a forum for delivering on promises.

The 27th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP27), will take place from 6 to 18 November in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt. Over the past twelve months media outlets and climate commentators have speculated on the focus of this year's conference and dubbed COP27 'African COP', 'COP of Implementation' and 'Technical COP' in anticipation. In the meantime, further instances of devastating climate-related disasters and geopolitical events have pushed the issues of energy and food supplies and loss and damage to the top of the global agenda.

The agenda

Events are scheduled across eleven thematic days (Finance, Science, Youth and Future Generations, Decarbonisation, Adaptation, Agriculture and Food Systems, Gender, Water, Energy, Action for Climate Empowerment and Civil Society, Biodiversity) following the World Leaders Summit on the 7th and 8th of November.

Delegates will be attending with their own national concerns and priorities, of which energy will rank highly for the majority. Soaring costs and unstable markets are culminating in a global energy crisis, and the war in Ukraine has transformed the issue to one of supply, as opposed to decarbonisation and transformation. The immediacy of the problem places a huge responsibility on COP27 discussions, which could prove crucial in determining how governments respond at a pivotal moment. Global energy-related CO2 emissions increased by 6% in 2021 compared to 2020 – the largest year-on-year increase in history in absolute terms; any step backwards towards a reliance on fossil fuels arguably poses an existential threat.

What can we expect?

The Vision & Mission for COP27 outlines conference goals within the customary themes of Mitigation, Adaptation, Finance and Collaboration and with an emphasis on attendees uniting to keep the Paris Agreement 1.5 target alive and to demonstrate implementation of the Glasgow Pact and progress on the Global Goal on Adaptation (to enhance work on



adaptation with the aim of building adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability to climate change).

'Just transition' remains a priority for developing countries with focus on developed nations to fulfil their pledges and commitments, particularly the goal of mobilising \$100 billion per year for climate action in developing countries. A key focus of discussions will be the adequacy and predictability of climate finance and the need for enhanced transparency of finance flows and facilitated access to meet the needs of developing countries and build trust between developed and developing countries.

COP27 will include dedicated sessions addressing the challenges, opportunities and solutions specific to the host continent. The COP27 Presidency hopes that this year's conference will see the world truly unite to take concerted, collaborative and impactful action. With the Paris Rulebook finalised, the onus will ultimately be on nations to capture, assess and demonstrate progress; discussions will include the additional provisions and mobilisation of

finance, but the overarching focus will be on implementation of pre-existing goals and Nationally Determined Contributions.

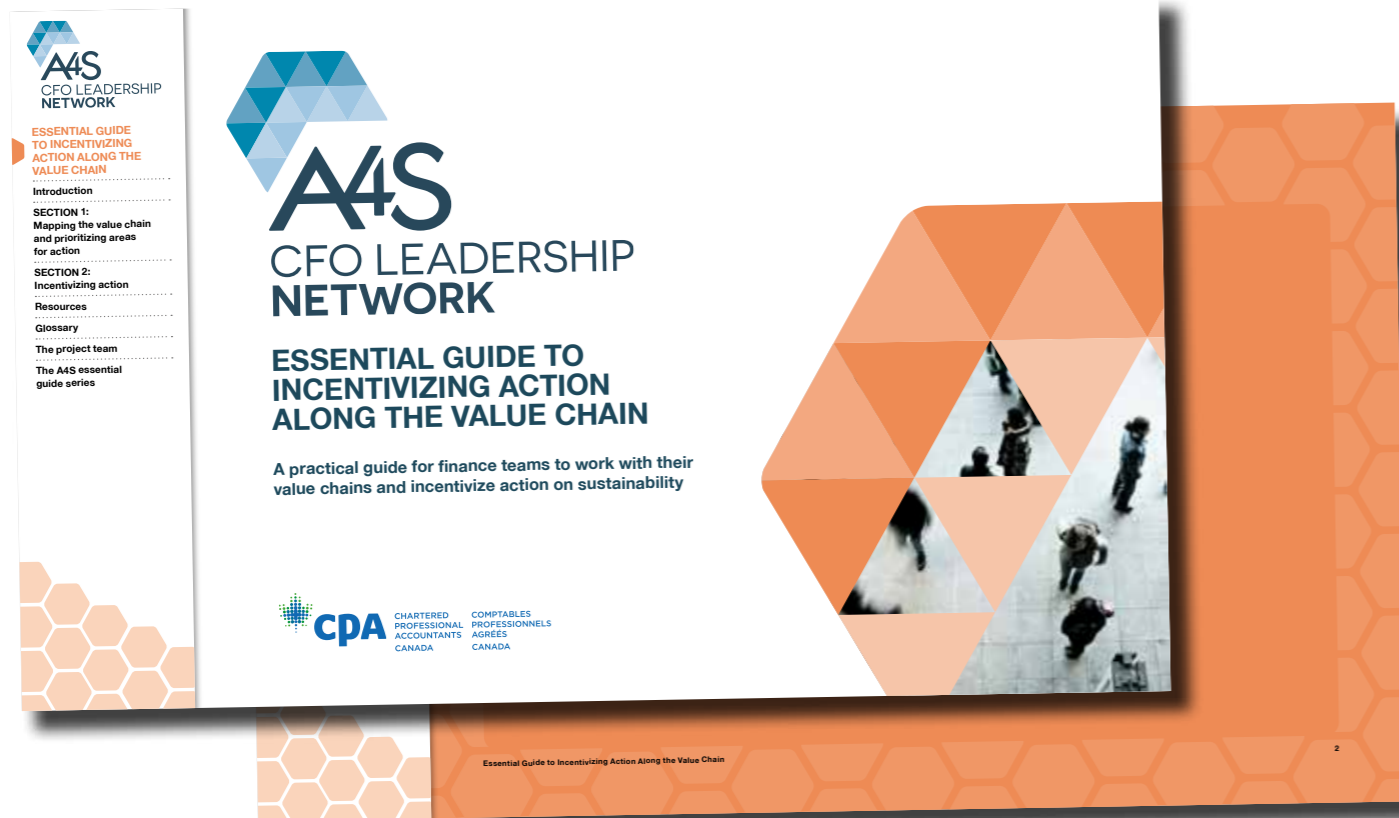
What can we hope?

Whilst there are concerns that the current threats to energy and food supplies will dominate COP27 discussions, it can be argued that the energy crisis has prompted rapid reappraisals of energy policies and pushed decarbonisation up the agenda.

COP27 has been curated to prioritise the concerns of developing and climate-vulnerable nations and to maximise engagement with civil society, in particular the youth. Amplifying the voice of those who face the biggest consequences and represent tomorrow's leaders promises to future-focus discussions and outcomes.

Finance will be headlining the COP27 action agenda and it is expected that negotiations will result in further developments and definition around the mechanisms for governing carbon markets and carbon credit trading.

A4S LAUNCHES NEW ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO INCENTIVIZING ACTION ALONG THE VALUE CHAIN



A4S has launched the next in its series of Essential guides for finance teams. The A4S Essential Guide to Incentivizing Action Along the Value Chain has been developed to help finance professionals map their value chain, identify their key stakeholders, assess risks and opportunities for decision makers and understand the right levers to use to support action.

A typical company's value chain creates far greater social and environmental impacts than its own operations alone, with many organizations' supply chains accounting for more than 80% of their greenhouse-gas emissions. There does, however, still remain a widespread lack of understanding of the sustainability risks and opportunities within value chains, of how to incentivize action and how this can support both business and sustainability goals.

Finance professionals have a vital role to play in working with the whole value chain. Using their access to data and analytics to facilitate communication and engagement, finance teams can utilize multiple levers to support change including direct financial levers, knowledge sharing, joint initiatives and leading the business case for change.

By working collaboratively with their suppliers, customers, partners and key stakeholders, companies can create a much bigger impact than acting alone, as well as reaping the benefits of increased security of income and market opportunities.

The new Essential Guide from A4S provides a framework for finance teams to work along their full value chain. The guide has been developed by finance teams for finance teams, under the direction of CFOs within the A4S CFO Leadership Network. It includes practical examples and guidance for finance teams to unlock the full potential of their value chains

to accelerate their sustainability efforts.

The framework helps finance professionals to map their value chain, identify who their organization's stakeholders are, assess risks and opportunities for decision makers and understand the right levers to use to support action.

The A4S Essential Guide to Incentivizing Action Along the Value Chain is available from the A4S website and has been developed by the Canadian Chapter of the A4S CFO Leadership Network, supported by CPA Canada

About A4S

Accounting for Sustainability (A4S) was established by HM King Charles III in 2004, when he was The Prince of Wales, "to help ensure that we are not battling to meet 21st century challenges with, at best, 20th century decision making and reporting systems."

Our aim is to transform finance to make sustainable business, business as usual. A4S aims to inspire action by finance leaders to drive a fundamental shift towards resilient business models and

a sustainable economy. To do this, A4S has three core aims that underpin everything we do:

- Inspire finance leaders to adopt sustainable and resilient business models
- Transform financial decision making to enable an integrated approach, reflective of the opportunities and risks posed by environmental and social issues
- Scale up action across the global finance and accounting community



THE ABU DHABI SUSTAINABILITY GROUP SUSTAINABILITY IN PRACTICE REPORT

The Abu Dhabi Sustainability Group (ADSG) announces the publication of The Abu Dhabi Sustainability Group Sustainability in Practice Report (SIPR).

The 2022 SIPR provides an analysis of selected ADSG member sustainability reports published for the years 2019 and 2020 with a view to providing a bird's eye view of collective sustainability impacts to date of the ADSG membership. The report takes into consideration the recommendations from Sustainability in Practice: From Vision to Action (2014), as well as the issues identified as material by members. In keeping with previous reports and in alignment with the GRI Universal Standards, this report is focused on four key factors: Economy, Environment, Social and Governance.

The data analysed identifies a forward-thinking approach to corporate and public finance amongst ADSG members; one that is led by investment in people as much as traditional assets, and within the context of regional economy that is predicted to see an exponential growth of green finance and sustainability-linked debt issuance.

ESG considerations have been further established as best practice and firmly entered the vernacular of investors and stakeholders as essential disclosures that demonstrate an organisation has the leadership, foresight and comprehensive strategy to mitigate risks and future-proof business.

The Abu Dhabi Sustainability Group Sustainability in Practice Report, January 2022 ADSG members are measuring and disclosing more data across the key GRI Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) standards. In particular, metrics allow for the 2022 SIPR to highlight the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on business as usual. The 2022 SIPR notes that the pandemic has reinforced ADSG Members' increasing investment in CSR and employee training and welfare. What's more, the report finds that members are appraising their supply chains and engaging with stakeholders to align with their visions and values.

The ADSG looks forward to sharing the complete findings of its 2022 SIPR with members upon its publication on later this month.

HELPING FARMS REDUCE GREENHOUSE GASES



One third of the land space of planet Earth is used for animal agriculture. The global deforestation rate for that purpose is growing at an alarming rate, equivalent to the land size of the UAE every year. This industry is responsible for about 14% of all greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) according to UN Food & Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Headquartered in Dubai, Graze-it is a company that builds and operates vertical farms, and sells hydroponic fodder (livestock feed) to livestock farmers via a subscription model,

guaranteeing quality, volume and a competitive price.

Graze-it's mission from day one has been to disrupt the feed value chain to achieve a lower carbon footprint and better animal welfare. Substituting a large portion of imported conventional livestock feed with locally produced hydroponic fodder can decrease deforestation and reduce the GHG related to milk production by up to 40%.

"Our seed-to-germination farming process has a minimal CO2 emission compared to traditional livestock feed agriculture, which accounts for around 20% of the GHG related to milk production. By growing locally, we remove the huge carbon footprint of feed transportation. Moreover, the superior digestibility and nutritional quality of our produce diminishes cows' methane emissions by 15% to

20%. Both combined can allow us to avoid close to 40% of GHG associated to milk production" – Said Alexandre Allegue, CEO and Founder of Graze-it.

Graze-it's solution is aligned with the UAE's food security priorities and sustainable future goals.

On the sustainability front, our hydroponic vertical farms consume 90% less water than conventional agriculture, allowing us to grow water intensive crops without consuming scarce water resources.

Our produce, called fodder, is 100% natural, fresh and pesticide-free. Its high digestibility and other nutritional benefits improve animals' health and well-being, leading to an increase in milk productivity by up to 20%. We are proud to say that our production process generates ZERO waste, in comparison to the 15% losses that are



Alexandre Allegue has spent 15 years of his career starting and growing ventures across Europe, Middle East and Africa.

As an advocate for sustainability, Alexandre accumulated a wealth of experiences in the space of renewable energies (Manufacturing, Contracting, Development/IPP, and Investments), with some of the most prominent players in the region such as Acwa Power.

He is currently CEO of Graze it, a recently launched venture tackling food security challenges in the Middle East. Alexandre holds the position of MESIA's board Vice

President (Middle East Solar Industry Association) and sits as Executive Chairman of Pawame, a social impact company that he has founded to provide all Sub Saharan communities affordable access to solar power and financial services.

Alexandre is a fellow Alumni of Harvard Business School, ESIA Engineering School, as well as ESSEC Business school.

Graze it Tech Ltd Is incorporated as a Private Company under the Companies Law, DIFC Law No. 5 of 2018, under the Registered Number 5635



common in traditional farming (such as corn silage harvest).

The food security benefit of our solution is also paramount, as we offer a domestic production and control of fodder, decreasing supply and volatility risks. We also minimize fluctuations on the feed price and ensure long-term storage security by building strong partnerships with domestic seed suppliers.

We have witnessed in 2022 an increase of milk prices up to 40% in the UAE, mainly due to the spikes of livestock feed prices on the market. Our model will allow the farmers and

consumers to protect themselves from such fluctuation.

Graze-it is expanding its activity as a supplier of fodder-as-a-service in Saudi Arabia, UAE and Oman. We use the latest state-of-the-art controlled environment agriculture technologies in a modular fashion to scale without affecting our yield nor our production quality.

We have been working for the last year with technical partners cumulating solid track record in this space, in adapting our solution to our local market. Our model will eventually allow us to displace hundreds of

millions of metric tons per year of livestock feed imports to the region, expanding from cattle to other ruminant segments such as camels, horses, sheep, etc.

Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/sep/13/meat-greenhouses-gases-food-production-study>

More about Graze-it <https://youtu.be/77NXKTxp8hc>
www.graze-it.com

Stay in touch with the ADSG on the move and keep up to date on the latest news and activities.

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