

A FORUM FOR EDUCATORS OF SUSTAINABILITY

MULTAQANA



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Welcome to Multaqana!

The Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD) has just completed the 8th edition of the Sustainable Schools Initiative (2017-2019), through which we encouraged and enabled thousands of students in 135 schools to focus on environmental issues and identify innovative solutions for them throughout 15 months. We could not have done it without your efforts – thank you!

The numbers this edition are impressive. 87,127 students were inspired through 3,754 field trips and over 963 projects were undertaken by the school Eco-clubs. The biggest accomplishment, however, was achieved by students participating in the Environmental Audit category of the initiative. They increased the percentage of shared transportation at their schools from 73% to 78% and reduced water consumption from 55 to 47 liters/per capita /day. They also decreased the amount of waste generated from 7 to 2 kgs /per capita / day. The participants' achievements exceeded all our expectations. Read page 2 to know more about the achievements of the participating schools.

We are proud of all the achievements made by the Sustainable Schools. With your support, we are optimistic that we will be able to achieve wonderful things for Abu Dhabi's environment.

We look forward to your continued enthusiasm, hard work and participation in the years to come.

Best wishes,
The Sustainable Schools Initiative Team
Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi

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Key sustainable practices achieved by the participating schools during the 8th edition of SSI:

- 67% turned their waste into organic compost
- More than 92% of the paper, plastic and metal waste generated was recycled
- 88% managed to partially recycle their electronic waste
- 65% reused and recycled their white and grey wastewater
- 60% used electricity-saving tools and techniques
- 19% started using renewable energy in their school
- On average, 78% of participating students shared transportation
- 85% started planting native trees to increase their school's green areas
- 97% decreased water usage
- 93% reduced bottled water usage

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Eco-clubs Win Big!

Eco-clubs give students a chance to participate in the environmental projects and activities. They represent a platform where students can encourage their parents, neighbours and others to enhance their positive environmental behavior. Besides, the eco-club enables the students to understand the environmental concepts widely within their curriculum. Many students are members in the eco-clubs. They have distinguished projects locally and internationally in environmental conservation and enhancing sustainability.

This year, Raha Islam, Chairperson of the eco-club at Shaikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Bangladish Islamia Private School, won the Jane Goodall PhD scholarship which will help her attain a Bachelors degree in the International Programme for Sustainable Development at at Chang jung Christian university



Zayed Sustainability Prize Workshops

One of our priorities at EAD is to build the schools' capacities to reach the highest standards in the field of sustainable development in Abu Dhabi. To achieve this goal, we organised three workshops to encourage participation in the Zayed Sustainability Prize. 75 teachers attended the workshops from 50 schools.

The Zayed Sustainability Prize, an evolution of the Zayed Future Energy Prize, is the UAE's pioneering global prize in sustainability and a tribute to the legacy of the late founding father of the UAE, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan.

Established in 2008, this annual prize recognises and rewards the achievements of those who are driving impactful, innovative and inspiring sustainability solutions across five distinct categories: Health, Food, Energy, Water and Global High Schools.



Sustainable Schools Award Ceremony

EAD, under the patronage of BP, celebrated the achievements of schools at the 8th edition of its Sustainable Schools Initiative (SSI) Awards, where a total of 33 government and private schools were awarded for their contributions towards promoting environmental sustainability in their schools and communities.

This edition covered 2017 – 2019, with 402 participations, where 48 of them were shortlisted and 24 winners were announced from 5 categories:

Lead School: This prize is awarded to schools that adopt sustainable principles and make them an integral part of their daily practices. During this edition, they were selected as lead schools to face a new challenge where they had to adopt new schools joining the SSI and help them achieve best sustainable practices.

Best Green Audit: This prize is awarded to schools that conduct their own environmental impact assessments. Not only did they measure their water usage, air quality, energy and waste, they also identified solutions to reduce their environmental footprint.

Best School for Community Outreach: This prize is awarded as a recognition to the students' efforts to enhance social awareness and make a positive change in their environment.

Best Environmental Educator: This prize is awarded to teachers who gain new skills and transfer the knowledge to their classes. The winning schools managed to successfully integrate sustainable concepts into their curriculum.

Best Outdoor Education: This prize is awarded to the schools that are able to link their students with the environment and enhance their field skills and experiences.

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And the winners were:

Best Lead School:

	Governmental Schools	Private Schools
1st Place	Al Khatm School	Al Bateen Scientific Private School
2nd Place	Al Taleea School	Bright Riders School
3rd Place	Qatr El Nada School	Abu Dhabi Indian School

Best Green Audit School:

	Government Schools	Private Schools
1st Place	Um Al Arab School	Saint Joseph Private School
2nd Place	Al Nukhba School	Al Ikhlas Private School

Best School for Community Outreach:

	Government Schools	Private Schools
1st Place	Um Al Arab School	Sunraise English Private School
2nd Place	Al Shawamekh School	Al Manhal International Private School
3rd Place	Al Shawamekh School	Private International English School

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Best Environmental Educator

	Government Schools	Private Schools
1 st Place	Um Al Arab School	Al Manahil Private School
2 nd Place	Al Shawamekh School	Abu Dhabi International Private School

Best Outdoor Education::

	Government Schools	Private Schools
1 st Place	Al Shawamekh School	Al Yasat School
2 nd Place	Al Marfaa School	Al Rawafid School

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Sustainability Stars' Success Stories 2017 – 2019

Lead School

Private Schools: Al Bateen Scientific Private School

This school achieved magnificent results in enhancing their school's environmental performance. The average of shared transportation students reached 80% and the green areas reached 37%. It recycles all its waste monthly and cooperates with lead schools in the SSI.

In addition, they transformed from an 'adopted' school, where they received guidance from another school, to a lead school with a planning, implementation and review strategy adopting four schools (Al Manhal School, Al Dhabianya Private School, Al Dhabianya Governmental School and Al Bashayer Private School).

Thanks to their guidance, these four schools managed to implement the four components of the SSI (The Green Audit, The Eco Club, Field Trips and Training the Trainers). Al Manhal School even managed to win Best Community Outreach.



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Sustainability Stars' Success Stories 2017 – 2019

Bright Riders Private School

This school participated in the SSI in 2013. It managed, in only a few years, to win in the best environmental educator and the best community outreach categories in the same year. In 2017, the school moved from an 'adopted' school to a lead school. The school's water consumption became 3 liters/person/day, due to the awareness efforts and better management of grey water. Shared transportation increased to 3482 people and their green areas reached 35932 sq. meters.

This school supervises two other schools in the Lead School Category (Al Shuhob School and Abu Dhabi International Private School). It also organised workshops on the initiative components implementation mechanism, set common plans with the adopted schools, followed up the performance periodically and conducted field visits. In addition to amend and enhance the reports submitted to EAD. Due to these distinguished efforts, the school managed to implement four components of the initiative, and Abu Dhabi International Private School qualified to win the best environmental educator award.



Sustainability Stars' Success Stories 2017 – 2019

Abu Dhabi Indian School

This school is considered an SSI pioneer. They were one of the first to participate in 2009. Today, the school is a full-on sustainable school. Water consumption rate has decreased by 17.7 – 20 liters per day. Shared transportation has increased from 89% to 93%. In addition, their electricity bill decreased from AED 17648.19 to AED 10511.97 in a year's time. This achievement reduced costs by AED 7,135.22 monthly.

The school adopted four schools (Al Shorooq English Private School, Dunes International Private School, Al Nahda National School-Boys, and Emirates Future International School). The school organised training courses for them and helped them edit their reports to ensure they meet the initiative's evaluation criteria. In addition, they helped the schools adopt new initiatives such as implementing an aquaculture project, recycling organic waste and turning it into compost as well as connecting schools with entities to recycle plastic, paper, metal and electronic waste. All these efforts helped decrease the environmental footprint of the adopted schools.



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Sustainability Stars' Success Stories 2017 – 2019

Government Schools: Al Khatm School

This school joined the SSI in 2013, and despite being new, it has achieved the required standards of sustainability in just two years. It has now moved from being an 'adopted school' to a lead school. This school has been able to reduce its water consumption by 15%, reduce indoor air pollution by 20%, increase local vegetation by 20%, reduce energy consumption by 20% and reduce its waste by 30%.

This ambitious school adopted two schools (Al Ikhlas and Al Shawamekh), and within two years, they achieved more than expected. The school implemented the four components of the initiative, measured their environmental impact and increased environmental awareness among the school community. They also managed to be the best in the green audit, the integration of sustainability concepts, and community awareness categories. In addition, during the coming academic year, Al Ikhlas School has qualified to participate in the category of lead schools and to transfer their knowledge to the new schools to be ready for the initiative.



Sustainability Stars' Success Stories 2017 – 2019

Al Taleeaa School

Al Taleeaa School is one of the leading schools in the lead school category. Since joining the SSI, it has achieved a lot. The school's ambition is to promote sustainability principles locally, nationally and internationally.

This was the first school to establish a center for environmental education. This project contributes to the development of the 21st century skills of the students. It also integrated the environmental concepts into the curriculum through activating the lessons at the center and the use of educational aids to support the environmental field, and implement scientific research through the components of the initiative of sustainable schools.

This school has adopted six other schools and has been communicating with them through field visits and meetings. The school also organised workshops for these schools on how to implement the components of the initiative, provided them with models of operational plans, and organised joint projects to enhance sustainability. As a result, the schools have been able to implement the components of the initiative in addition to complete distinguished projects such as the management of agricultural waste, giving water surplus to birds for drinking, linking environmental concepts to the curriculum and implement them in their daily lives.



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Sustainability Stars' Success Stories 2017 – 2019

Qatr El Nada School

This school is one of the schools that has adopted the principles of sustainability since 2009. This leading school has increased its green area to 2475 square meters with different types of native plants, providing 50% of irrigation water through the replacement of traditional irrigation systems with environment-friendly irrigation. The school's grey water is also recycled at a rate of 400 liters. It also recycles all waste generated and promotes community awareness to reduce waste production. Energy consumption has been reduced by 5% and the school used solar panels and awareness campaigns to achieve this. It also provided 14 buses to increase the rate of shared transportation.



This school has adopted 8 schools in Al Dhafra Region and through its workshops, and periodic meeting, the schools have successfully implemented the innovative components of the initiative. It accomplished outstanding projects including safe disposal of marine waste to minimize negative footprint. It also used field trips as part of the learning process. The efforts of this outstanding school helped 3 of its 'adopted' schools to win in the environmental auditing, community awareness and field trips categories.



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Sustainability Stars' Success Stories 2017 – 2019

Green Audit - Private Schools

Saint Joseph Private School

This school, consisting of 1205, managed to reduce its water consumption per capita/day from 14.9 liters to 8.84 liters. They also recycled the grey water (1204 liters) then used it to irrigate their green areas. They also reduced bottled water from 18 to 6 liters by encouraging the use of reusable bottles. The school managed to raise the average of shared transportation to 916 people. The team increased the green area to 368.25 square meters using environmentally friendly technologies, and organic compost is produced inside the school by using food waste. They also used environmentally friendly lights and reduced energy from 407197.9 megajoules to 318676.6 megajoules.

Al Ikhlas Private School

The school, with a capacity of 1550 people, began participating in the SSI in 2015. They have reused water leaking from their ACs to irrigate plants. Most notably, the school managed to recycle up to 240,000 liters of water. In addition, it replaced plastic water bottles with drinking fountains, helping to reduce the number of water bottles consumed daily from 1000 to 500 bottles. Although its energy consumption is 44.5 megajoules, i.e less than the ideal consumption rate of 90 megajoules, the team managed to raise awareness on energy consumption inside the school from 39% to 72%. The team succeeded in increasing green spaces from 11% to 25% by using native plants. As for the element of air, the school carried out a range of campaigns aiming at raising awareness on shared transportation, for example, "Let's walk together to reduce fuel consumption and pollution" and "Towards clear air" campaigns. It should be noted that such campaigns have raised shared transportation to 61% (940 people). In order to better manage waste, the school recycled all kinds of waste either internally or by hiring a recycling company. Moreover, the team launched a campaign calling for recycling of plastic waste, aluminum cans and electronic devices.

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Government Schools

Umm Al Arab School

This school, with its total capacity of 2325 persons, exceeded all expectations through its strict application of the green audit component. The school managed to reduce their daily per capita water consumption rate from 48 to 26.2 liters. They replaced their leaky irrigation system with a new and sustainable one, leading to the reduction of their daily water consumption rate from 590,000 to only 9000 liters. On the other hand, the school conducted awareness campaigns to encourage the reduction of water consumption, which reduced the number of bottles sold to 116 bottles. The school has also used the remaining bottled water to irrigate the plants and expand their green spaces. The students' even encouraged their parents to install water-saving devices to save water at home.

As for the element of air, the school worked on raising awareness of the community members on the necessity of using shared transportation provided by the school. These efforts increased the number of people using shared transportation from 1996 to 2172 people, and reduced carbon emissions from 2299091 kgs to 2103810 kg. The school also increased their green spaces from 5354 to 6097 square meters and used green pesticides and fertilizers. They also inaugurated their organic park, which promotes botanical and fauna diversity and an increased number of plant and animal species (26 plants and 20 animals' species.) Although the school's lights automatically switch off when not in use, the school launched campaigns aiming at reducing energy consumption both inside and outside the building. This contributed to a reduction in per capita energy consumption from 55.9 to 45.2 megajoules. The school also managed to segregate and recycle all paper, plastic, agricultural, medical, electronic and food waste. The school team strived to raise students' awareness about the concept of rejecting the accumulation of waste, reducing waste production, waste recycling, waste reusing etc. In the course of the campaign, students helped cleaners to clean classes so they could realize how much waste is produced. All these efforts contributed to reducing per capita waste production from 6.9 to 2.18 k.

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Al Nukhba School

The team working at this school made every effort to complete the green audit process. Despite the fact that their water consumption per capita is 13.5 liters daily, i.e. less than the optimum consumption rate, equivalent to 25 liters daily, the team succeeded to replace plastic water bottles with vertical healthy drinking fountains and hence bottle consumption reduced to 8 bottles daily. The school as such managed to save about AED 20,000 per year. With the aim of improving energy consumption, the school made use of solar energy, where the computer lab now operates completely on solar energy leading to a per capita energy consumption equal to 24 megajoules, i.e less than the ideal consumption rate of 90 megajoules a day. The school expanded its green spaces using native plants, besides using eco-friendly irrigation systems, not to mention excluding any use of artificial pesticides. All these efforts increased their green spaces to 13403 square metres. The school also succeeded in increasing shared transportation use to 620 persons, i.e. 82% of its total capacity.

Seeking to reduce waste in Al Mirfa, the team carried out a campaign that targeted the local community to encourage them to recycle paper, plastic and electronic waste. They managed to collect and recycle 6000 kgs of paper, which means they rescued 111 trees from being cut down. 420 kilograms of plastic wastes were also collected and recycled and they reduced per capita waste production to 35 grams per day.



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Third: Best School for Community Outreach

Private Schools: Sunrise English Private School

At this school, 200 people participated in their Eco club. Internally, the Eco club launched a campaign to collect and recycle metal waste. They also increased green spaces through adopting aquaponics, and allocating spaces for organic agriculture. The team also worked on food waste recycling and composting. Plastics are not allowed inside the school including plastic water bottles, bags and plastic lunch boxes.

The school also raised awareness among community members on ecological issues such as overfishing. They promoted EAD's "Choose Wisely" campaign and encouraged people to purchase and consume in a sustainable way.

Al Manhal International Private School

This school focused on water, biodiversity, energy and waste. Its Eco club helped reduce plastic water bottles consumption from 489 to 280 bottles per day. Moreover, plastic water bottles were replaced with school drinking fountains or reusable bottles. Despite the lack of spaces suitable for agriculture purposes, the team expanded its green spaces on the roof. They also maintained a system for segregating and recycling all waste inside the school.

On the external level, the Eco club provided the community surrounding the school with a clear understanding of two central issues. First, they tackled overfishing by targeting 50 families and inviting them to change their fish consumption habits and opt for sustainable fish. This helped raise the awareness of 35 families who implemented the learning outcomes of the project.

The second project conducted was a campaign entitled "We are on the same road" that encouraged families to increase shared transportation use and reduce carbon emissions. Thanks to their efforts, 59 families responded positively to the campaign.

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The International English Private School

Over 575 school members participated in the school's Eco club. The school focused on its external community projects, mainly on waste. It collected and recycled 25 kgs of waste, 700 kgs of electronic waste, and 7860 kgs of paper waste.

Internally, the school increased green spaces so today it covers 17.66 % of the total space. As part of the school's efforts to maintain air quality, 1,674 persons out of 2024 now use shared transportation increasing the percentage to 83%.



Government Schools: Umm Al Arab School

This school worked hard to promote environmental awareness at the individual and community levels. Their Eco club, made up of 132 members, targeted 55 families in Al Falah in Abu Dhabi, helping them reduce their energy and water consumption by 20%. The team followed a certain approach that implied conducting a survey to measure the level of awareness and hence analyze data, develop a plan for enhancing awareness. As a result, the amount of energy saved was 6790 kilowatts and the amount resulted from the yearly rationalization was 2478678 kilowatts. Concerning water, the amount of saved water reached 83120 liters.

As part of its internal projects, the project of "My Organic garden" was implemented, which has been contributed to increase green spaces at school to 778 square metres and increase plant species to include 19 species. In addition, the project of sustainable class was also implemented. This class worked on solar energy, leading to save about 20 kilowatts a day or in other words 400 kilowatts during the school year.



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Al Shomoukh School

This school is located in the coastal region of Al Mirfa in the Al Dhafra region. Thanks to a simple survey conducted by the students themselves about the environmental challenges in their community, the school took notice of the existence of a marine waste problem in the area. The school immediately adopted the issue of collecting and recycling this marine waste as its own project. The school operated in an organised way to solve the challenge, working closely with Al Mirfa Fishermen Association, Al Mirfa Municipality and other schools in the region.

The school first raised the awareness of the rest of the student population before moving on to local fishermen, families and other schools. When the school met with local fishermen they helped raise their awareness about marine waste and made them more aware of their impact on the ecological system. With support from Al Mirfa Municipality, the school published posters and delivered lectures at schools. Furthermore, the school collected and recycled 300 kg of waste from the beach. It also engaged divers to clear 3 tons of waste from the seabed. Their efforts expanded to regular collection and recycling of waste from fishermen. All these efforts led to a remarkable reduction of marine waste, which was documented by another survey by the students.

As part of its internal efforts to foster sustainability within the school building, green spaces were increased to up to 8576 square metres using aquaponics technology. The school also marked environmental occasions such as Planting Week, World Water Day, Arab Agriculture Day, National Environment Day and Earth Hour in a creative way in order to increase awareness among students on environmental issues. These activities helped raise student awareness from 62% in 2017 to 80% in 2019.



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Al Shawamekh School

In line with the country's efforts to conserve the Houbara Bustard, this school targeted falconers in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, aiming at increasing their awareness about the international laws to reduce overhunting of the Houbara.

The school targeted 25 falconers through several channels, such as lectures and posters. To engage the broader community, awareness campaigns were conducted through school buses and public buses. As a result, awareness increased from 20% to 25% during one school year.

The school also partnered with the International Fund for Houbara Conservation and organised workshops, lectures and rolled out a competition, which led to an increase in internal awareness from 23% to 26%.



Four: Best Environmental Educator

Private Schools: Al Manahil Private School

Teachers of this school were keen to attend all the training courses in the training of trainer's component organised by EAD. Topics included the Dugong and how to integrate 21st century skills to protect the planet. The teachers who participated in these courses shared the lessons learnt with other teachers. and 888 students benefitted from the activities and work papers which were implemented through various school subjects

In addition, the school administration continuously supported teachers to participate in the workshops and to include them in their lessons.



Abu Dhabi International Private School – Mohamed bin Zayed

This school participated in the Training of Trainers component and in workshops organised by other entities in different fields such as Waste, Falcons, Houbara, 21st century skills to change the world and Dugongs.

The knowledge gained from the training courses was shared with other teachers at the same school and other schools. The topics were integrated into the curriculum and benefitted 2,561 students in 105 classes.



Government Schools: Umm Al Arab School

This school made exceptional efforts to implement the Training of the Trainers component. Teachers participated in 50 training courses, organised by EAD and other entities.

The topics were integrated into the curriculum, and these efforts led to the capacity building of 184 teachers and 2,568 students in subjects such as Biology, Physics, languages, Chemistry, Civics, Art, Music and Math. The school also went above and beyond and organised workshops for parents to share knowledge to achieve sustainability in the broader community.



Al Shawamekh School

This school's teachers participated in 34 training courses, organised by EAD and other governmental entities. The school also organised workshops, in cooperation with the lead schools in SSI.

Education outcomes were linked to the subjects through a smart education website . Through this online system, students take lessons and the education outcomes are followed up through it. 1,400 students benefitted from this system.



Best School in Field Trips

Private Schools: Al Yasat Private School

This school inspired more than 1000 students through 14 field trips. They visited the Abu Dhabi Falcon Hospital, Umm Al Emarat Park, Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week, Masdar, Abu Dhabi Science Festival and Dubai Aquarium

The trips focused on water, energy, waste, air quality, biodiversity and climate change. These trips have now been adopted as part of the school's methodology and these topics were integrated into the curriculum.



Al Rawafid School

This school inspired 410 students through 6 field trips. They visited the Abu Dhabi Falcon Hospital, Al Sumalia Island, Shams I, Masdar, Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week, and a hydroponic farm.

The trips focused on energy, water, waste, biodiversity, and air quality. These topics were integrated into the curriculum.



Government Schools: Al Shawamekh School

This school inspired 922 students through 58 field trips. During these trips, they focused on air quality, waste, environmental conservation, renewable energy, and water conservation.

These topics were integrated into the curriculum, especially in Biology, Civics, Science and Art.

Al Marfaa School

This school inspired 580 students through 28 field trips. They visited various locations to contact with nature. In addition to the statistics submitted by the school, they integrated the field trip outcomes into the curriculum. The school developed a report on each trip and focused on the negative and positive points, outcomes and even included their suggestions, where applicable.



Zayed's Antarctic Lights

In 2018, EAD premiered its award-winning documentary, Zayed's Antarctic Lights, at VOX cinemas at Yas Mall. It follows Team Zayed – 3 EAD employees - as they travelled to Antarctica in the Year of Zayed to learn about climate change and Antarctica's magnificent biodiversity from polar explorer Sir Robert Swan. The documentary follows them on the adventure of their lives as they find out why we need to protect Antarctica, how global warming is affecting this sleeping giant of climate change – and what this means for the UAE, biodiversity, and coastal communities all over the world.

This documentary won third place in the New York Festivals TV & Film Awards.

To watch the documentary, click the below link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4jaR1tGZoMo>



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Eco Tourism in UAE

According to the United Nations, eco-tourism is defined as a type of sustainable tourism that contributes to conserve the natural and cultural heritage. Over the last two decades, the concept of eco-tourism has developed significantly, because it targeted tourists who seek trips highlighting the importance of conserving the environment as much as possible.



Below is a link to the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment's UAE Natural Wonders project, which promotes ecotourism in the UAE at 43 sites.

<https://www.moccae.gov.ae/assets/a5591d36/%D9%83%D9%86%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B7%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%B9%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AA.aspx>



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How to Green Your Summer Holiday

This Summer, if you plan to travel abroad, here are some tips to have a more environmentally-friendly holiday:

- If possible, travel to a destination close-by. Air transportation contributes to Climate Change.
- Pack light and take only what you really need.
- Choose environmentally-friendly accommodation
- Respect local environments (reduce waste and increase recycling)
- Use public transportation as much as possible.
- Choose your souvenirs carefully. Do not purchase ones made from endangered plants or animals.
- Choose environmentally-friendly activities or those that don't harm wildlife or consume a lot of energy.

Tips to sustain your building during the summer holiday

This Summer, share these maintenance tips with the maintenance team at your school:

- Switch off/ reduce the AC's temperature when not in use.
- Switch off all water taps when not in use.
- Use this opportunity to clean out your fridge.
- Continue your organic composting activities.

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Education for Sustainability

We look forward receiving your feedback about our quarterly newsletter.

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