

MULTAQANA

A FORUM FOR EDUCATORS OF SUSTAINABILITY

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Welcome to the latest issue of Multakana!

2015 was a very distinguished year for us in EAD and for our marsh to achieve sustainability through education. We started the first quarter of the year by organizing training workshops for more than 288 teachers from the schools participating in the SSI, on many educational topics, such as using modern technologies to limit resource consumption and enhance positive behavior, on Dugong and establish the concept of education through action. We worked to link the initiative with the international expert Maria Van Der Hoven – Executive Director of the International Energy Agency, to take procedures to face Climate Change. During the second quarter, we organized “Eco - Club Summit” for the second consecutive year to continue the marsh we started in 2014, which provides a platform for private and governmental students in Abu Dhabi and their peers from many other countries to exchange knowledge and innovative ideas, successful experiments and express their opinions and hopes to achieve growth and sustainability. This summit was attended by more than 400 students from 120 schools. We recognized 24 schools for their efforts and initiatives to decrease environmental footprint and present the best practices in sustainability within the four components of the initiative “green auditing, Eco clubs, training of the trainer and field trips”.

In the third quarter, we launched our educational series for school teachers, such as biodiversity, towards a sustainable world for primary stage teachers. In the last quarter, we trained more than 360 on how to conduct green audit, and establish eco clubs, we have also organized many workshops to integrate environmental issues in the curricula.

We managed to achieve many successes during this year, and we will continue work and progress steadily towards achieving our objectives, maintain the achievements and ensure enhancing Abu Dhabi and UAE leadership in environmental sustainability for present and future generations, we hope that all the schools and teachers continue their hard work towards sustainability.

We will leave you to enjoy this edition, and to share it with the largest number of your friends and family to inform them on our initiative, and help them realize the importance of environmental education in sustainable development.

Sustainable Schools Team
Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi

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Article

Sustainable Schools initiative & United Nations Environment Programme

The team of environmental education and training unit in the UNEP explained to what extent the SSI matches the international action program of education for sustainability, which was approved by the General Assembly resolution A / RES / 69211 in December 19, 2014.

The team also stressed that SSI is an innovative program that can be repeated and applied all over the world, after knowing the scope of participation of teachers and students in measuring environmental effects in the school buildings and the social awareness projects , as well as integrating environmental issues into school curricula and field trips.

The teamwork also recommended to share findings and experiences of the initiative with the concerned parties nationally or internationally.

SSI Schools' most prominent sustainability practices

- 55% of all registered schools compost their organic waste
- Over 82% of registered schools recycle their paper, plastic and metal waste
- 81% of registered schools undertake partial recycling of E-waste
- 60% of registered schools reuse or recycle their white and grey waste water
- 55.6% of registered schools use energy efficient equipment and technologies
- 15% of registered schools have initiated the use of renewable energy
- On average, 73% of all students in SSI schools use shared transport.
- 79% of schools have started growing native plants for enhancing the green area in their schools
- 94% of all registered schools have reduced their water use to varying degree
- 88% of registered schools have reduced their bottled water usage

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Article

Sustainable Schools Initiative Trainings & Workshops

Within the Sustainable School Initiative, the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi organized workshops on green auditing, to measure the environmental impacts inside the school buildings, take the necessary steps to handle them, and manage the environmental resources properly. Participants in this training reached 187 teachers.

We have also organized workshops on the way to establish and manage environmental clubs and communicate with society to make a change. Participants in this training reached 78 teachers.

We have also trained 100 teachers within the Training of the Trainers component. Topics varied between the application of thinking systems, link them with education for sustainability, Climate Change and using modern electronic technologies (C-ROADS) to enhance the awareness of teachers on the challenges facing this planet and the borders facing the decision makers to face this case ([click here to watch the Educational Panel achievements to face Climate Change](#)).

During the last training of the first trimester for the primary school teachers on education for sustainability, we focused on learning from life and experiences, encourage discovery and knowledge, enhance the abilities to solve problems, think critically and enable continuous self – education for students.

Schools already started to implement the gained knowledge through workshops and trainings at schools. We are looking forward to knowing the results.

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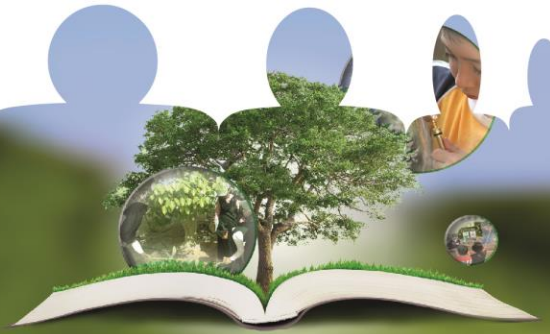


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Sustainable Schools Initiative Trainings & Workshops



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Participation and Learning

Qatar AL Nada School Conference

We invited all Western Region's schools to participate in Sustainable School Initiative, to support them in implementing the initiative and know more about the projects of leading schools in four components: green audit in five topics (water, air, energy, soil and waste). Projects adopted by the school to achieve the best results by reducing water consumption inside the school building from 65 to 25 liters a day per person through continuous awareness to school team , in addition to recycling grey and white water to reuse them in the gardens, reduce energy usage via using environmentally friendly bulbs at schools. How did the school team work to increase the green distance by using indigenous plants and natural fertilizers and avoid using artificial pesticides and use sustainable irrigation systems.

The school displayed its projects in the eco clubs component and the methodology used in enhancing the awareness of the targeted members of the society on environmental issues we face in Abu Dhabi, and also presented its experience in integrating environmental concepts, where, the teachers and students by implementing ten workshops on water issues, Climate Change and Waste. The school also presented their innovative ways used through the various educational tools, and continue follow up to change students' irresponsible behavior to a positive trend towards protecting the environment.

Last but not least, the school displayed to the adopted schools a presentation on the field trips component and how did the school realize and work to implement the approach of linking the students with the environmental issues, and know the suitable solutions to them through field trips and how to link them with the curricula because this enhances students' understanding to the environmental concepts and increase the chances to use their senses and memorize what they have learnt.

[Click here to know more or our leading schools and their achievements.](#)

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Know more about the natural treasures in Abu Dhabi Al Wathba Wetland Reserve

What is it?

Al Wathba Wetland Reserve is a complex of surface water bodies, both natural and man made, around 40km southeast of central Abu Dhabi, just past Mussfah.

Al Wathba Wetland Reserve was established in 1988 by the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. It was the first place in the Emirate to be designated for protection by law and was declared a Ramsar site in 2013. This means that the site has been recognized by the [Convention on Wetlands of International Importance](#) and joins a list of over 2,000 other internationally recognized wetlands around the world.

Al Wathba Wetland Reserve covers a total area of five square kilometers, comprising wetlands, sabkhas (salt flats), fossilized sands and dunes.

Despite its relatively small size, it simply teems with life. You will discover an amazing diversity here, including several endangered species who have made this their home and found shelter, protection and nourishment. The presence of so many different habitats and types of vegetation within one compact area has attracted many different forms of life. More than 250 species of birds have been spotted, along with an abundance of aquatic life, as well as 37 plant species. Al Wathba also features a rich variety of dragon flies and damsel flies. But its greatest and most spectacular attraction is, of course, its flamingo population. When these migratory birds fly in to spend autumn until spring here, as many as 4,000 can be counted. Even when the majority return to Central Asia for the summer months, they still leave behind a resident population which can be seen all year round. In July 2013, the Greater flamingo colony successfully hatched 231 chicks at Al Wathba. Since Al Wathba Wetland is an ecologically sensitive area, our visiting hours and days must be limited. The reserve is open for the public on Thursdays and Saturdays from 8.00am to 2.00pm.

How Schools can visit the AL Wathba Wetland Reserve

Schools can organise group field trips to the reserves on Tuesdays by contacting us at sustainableschools@ead.ae.

Necessary Tools and requirements to be brought by the students

A bottle of water – notebook and pens – wear comfortable clothes and shoes – a hat, suntan – sunglasses – first aid box – a camera

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Al Wathba Wetland Reserve Photos



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Know the natural resources of Abu Dhabi Abu Dhabi Forests

What is it?

Forests are planted in Abu Dhabi to prevent desertification. Forests are an important habitat for many indigenous plants such as Ghaf, Sidr, Sant trees in addition to being a home to many threatened animals such as Arabian Oryx. Forests are beautiful landscape and the quality of life inside and around Abu Dhabi.

Forests locations

Al Kabsheya Forest, Al Wadeyhi, Khub Dahs, Al Falaheya 1-2	Madinat Zayed, Liwa, WR
Al Markheya Forest, Al Shabhana	Ghayathi, Sila'a WR
Ghanoot Forest 1-2	Abu Dhabi City
Seeh al Salam Forest – Salamat nursery	Al Ain City
Baynunah forest, Baynunah palace	Baynunah , WR

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Facts on some plants in the forests

Ghaf and Acacia trees: these plants are habitats for many species, in addition to the economic value and the benefits for the inhabitants in their neighborhood. These trees are an evidence on the high value of the desert, but they are threatened because of the continuous violations and urban expansion.

Ghaf tree

The fruits, flowers and leaves are rich in protein; one that plays such an integral part of the food chain of many species. The Ghaf is a drought – tolerant, evergreen tree which is, possibly, the sturdiest plant of the harsh desert environment in the UAE. The Ghaf's seeds sprout when the rain falls, and many of them are eaten by the animals because they are easily digested. The tree reproduces through the side roots. The presence of Ghaf in an area indicates that there is water underground. The tree taps water stored deep in the sand, its roots penetrating as deep as 30 meters to access it. It is also considered a unique environmental system in the desert. It supports mammals, reptiles, scorpions, rodents, insects and birds. It also fertilizes the soil and organizes nitrogen in the air.

Acacia

The Acacia tree takes on the umbrella shape, which helps in collecting dew water drops and absorbs humidity from the atmosphere. The tree is found in the rocky areas and the north eastern parts of UAE. It is distinguished with its fragrant white flowers, and its ability to tolerate the harsh desert environment such as high temperature and poor soil. Besides, it provides shade and its leaves afford forage for camels and goats.

Many parts of the tree are eaten including the roots, gum and sprouts. It is also a main source of delicious bee honey, which is considered a part of the UAE tradition .

Other flora species:

Palm trees: It is a perennial tree, with light yellow flowers, dates fruits, and dry leaves which are used for ceilings and fences. The trunks are used for construction and tissues are vital for making ropes. This plant has also medical uses, especially for internal medicine and eyelids inflammation.

How Schools can visit the forests?

Schools can organize group field trips to the forests on Tuesday and Wednesday through communicating with us via the following email:

sustainableschools@ead.ae

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Abu Dhabi Forests Photos



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What's Next ?

2nd Sustainable Schools initiatives Cleanup Campaign Theme: Together for a clean, Green & sustainable UAE

This Cleanup campaign is organised to commemorate the UAE's 19th National Environment Day

Venue :

AT Al Wathba wetland reserve

Date and Day: Wednesday, Feb 10, 2016

Time : 8:00 - 11:00 Am



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For any queries or information,
contact us at: sustainable-schools@ead.ae
Or visit our [Website](#)



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