

VOLUME XIV ISSUE 12

DECEMBER 1, 2024 | NEWSLETTER

A LETTER FROM EGBC FAMILY

Dear EGBC Members and Sustainability Advocates,

As we move forward in an era where sustainability is no longer optional but essential, it is important to reflect on the challenges and opportunities shaping the architecture and construction industry, particularly in the Middle East. The region's unique context, marked by rapid growth and innovation, positions us to be at the forefront of sustainable building practices. However, this journey is not without its hurdles.

One of the most significant challenges we face is education. There is a critical need to ensure that all stakeholders—policymakers, regulatory authorities, clients, and end-users—fully understand the long- and short-term benefits of sustainable design. Creating awareness is essential to drive the adoption of green practices across all levels. Compounding this challenge is the transient nature of the population in this region, with many residents staying for only a few years. This constant turnover makes it difficult to embed a lasting culture of sustainability and to encourage active participation in eco-friendly initiatives.

Another common misconception is that sustainability is costly and impacts profitability. Many still view it as a passing trend or marketing tool, rather than a fundamental approach to responsible development. It is crucial to change this mindset and highlight that sustainability not only benefits the environment but also drives economic value through cost savings, increased property value, and reduced maintenance expenses.

On a global scale, innovation is helping to address these challenges. Technologies such as Building-Integrated Photovoltaics (BIPV), energy-efficient cooling systems, greywater recycling, smart lighting controls, automated waste collection, and modular construction are revolutionizing the way we build. These solutions help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, conserve resources, and minimize waste, making them essential tools in the fight against climate change. By adopting these practices, we can create buildings that are not only energy-efficient but also resilient and adaptable to future challenges.

The Middle East has made significant strides in supporting sustainable architecture and urban planning. Initiatives like Estdama in Abu Dhabi, Al Safat in Dubai, and the Saudi Green Initiative are paving the way for greener developments. Incentivizing the use of local materials and adhering to net-zero building standards, as exemplified by projects like DEWA's headquarters, are crucial steps in this journey. Collaboration with agencies such as the Urban Planning Council (UPC) further strengthens the region's commitment to sustainable growth.

Collaboration across sectors—government, private companies, and non-profits—is vital to achieving sustainability goals. Each sector brings unique strengths to the table. By working together, we can create a holistic environment where design, technology, and sustainable practices align to build balanced, forward-thinking communities. This collective effort fosters innovation and ensures that sustainability is embedded at every stage of development.

Looking ahead, I am optimistic about the future of sustainable design. The concept of a circular economy, where materials are reused and recycled, is gaining traction and holds immense potential. Sustainable design will increasingly become a symbol of innovation and progress, setting trends that inspire global change. The integration of automation and artificial intelligence to create intelligent, smart neighborhoods is particularly exciting, as it offers endless possibilities for enhancing the quality of life while minimizing environmental impact.

To all professionals and organizations involved with EGBC, I encourage you to stay firm and committed to the cause. Your dedication to sustainability is essential in shaping the future of the built environment. Remember that sustainable buildings not only protect our planet but also offer tangible economic benefits. By embracing innovation and adopting intelligent systems, we can create a world that is both smart and sustainable.

Together, let's continue to lead the way in building a greener, more resilient future.

SANJEEV COELHO

Emirates Green Building Council Board Member

EMIRATESGBC NEWS AND UPDATES

Acknowledging Sustainability: 2024 MENA Green Building Awards Gala



The **MENA Green Building Awards** recently Acknowledged an incredible ceremony and gala dinner, where we recognized and honored the achievements of sustainable leaders across the region. The event was filled with excitement as the shortlisted nominees and winners were announced, showcasing their remarkable contributions to green building practices. This year's awards highlighted innovation, excellence, and the

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NEW MEMBERS

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UPCOMING EVENTS

- 19 DEC** Annual General Meeting
- 20 DEC** End of Year Gathering Women Network

As the winter season sets in, there are simple yet effective ways to stay sustainable while keeping your home warm and energy-efficient. Here are a few green tips to help reduce energy consumption and lower your environmental impact during the colder months:

- Layer up with warm clothing instead of increasing the heat.
- Seal drafts around windows and doors to prevent heat loss.
- Use energy-efficient heaters or programmable thermostats.
- Maintain a comfortable temperature while minimizing energy waste.
- Take advantage of natural sunlight by opening curtains during the day to warm up

impact of sustainable projects shaping the future of the MENA region.

For a glimpse of the event and to relive the celebrations, you can watch the ceremony video [here](#).

In Conversation with Dr. Sadek Owainati: Pioneering Sustainability in the MENA Region

We are excited to present an enlightening interview series with Dr. Sadek Owainati, Co-Founder and Honorary Board Member of the Emirates Green Building Council, Founding Chair of the MENA Green Building Council Network, and sponsor of the prestigious Dr. Owainati Student Excellence Award.

This series will span multiple issues, offering an in-depth look at his impactful contributions and visionary insights.

PART (5)

- **Future Directions:** What are your aspirations for the future of EGBC? In what ways do you envision the council evolving to meet the growing demands of sustainability and green building practices in the UAE?

EGBC has gained excellent experience throughout its journey during the last 18 years and proved its ability to succeed by responding to changing circumstances and by adapting suitable restructuring. Despite the many challenges it faced in its journey, its vision and pioneering role enabled EGBC to adapt with resilience has been exemplary and inspiring to many. The council continues to successfully achieve its objectives on many fronts, thanks to the collaborative approach and cooperation of its members, who are genuine friends of the environment and to the green building movement. EGBC's commitment to the noble cause of promoting awareness through its current training, technical workshops and publications is remarkable. It is noteworthy to highlight the excellent role by EGBC's management and staff.

I anticipate EGBC will continue to grow its membership and encourage all sectors involved within the construction industry to join hands and eventually help establish technical bases in each Emirate.

More active cooperation with universities and technical colleges operating in the UAE presents an opportunity for EGBC to establish an innovation hub to foster research and development in green building technologies. The council would thus create opportunities for research and promote the use of cutting-edge technologies such as smart building systems in cooperation through sponsorships with competing private sectors in the field to demonstrate the benefits with cost analysis and feasibility studies.

Paying special attention to enhancing the efficiency of existing buildings can be extended in cooperation with the private sector and the academia. EGBC can take the role of a facilitator and coordinator in such retrofitting programs by encouraging financial institutions to participate in such projects and create favorable financing for green upgrades to existing buildings. Producing specific case studies for selected buildings would present excellent opportunity to encourage other building owners to follow.

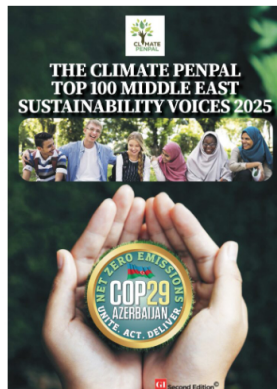
EGBC can provide resources and support to smaller builders and homeowners to adopt sustainable practices. Such an approach can be very beneficial at community level with active participation by EGBC members and staff.

Implementing a comprehensive system in cooperation with major consulting engineering offices for tracking and reporting the sustainability of buildings can become a major activity over the years.

Involvement of EGBC with WorldGBC, and in cooperation with other GBCs especially through MENA network, has already produced excellent results and this is to be celebrated. Continuous participation in global sustainability forums is essential to keep ahead of the latest developments and innovations.

By addressing these aspirations and continuously evolving, EGBC can continue to play a pivotal role in advancing sustainability and green building practices in the UAE.

Honoring Our Members Among the Top 100 Sustainability Voices of 2025



As COP29 in Baku sets the stage for future climate action, the newly released report highlights the **TOP 100 Sustainability Voices** in the Middle East leading impactful change. This list honors those making significant strides in sustainability across both private and public sectors, showcasing collaboration and innovation as they address global decarbonization challenges. Among these influential voices is Abuallatif AlBitawi, CEO of Emirates Green Building Council, along with other notable leaders from our member network.

[Read the report now to discover the changemakers shaping the future of sustainability in 2025!](#)

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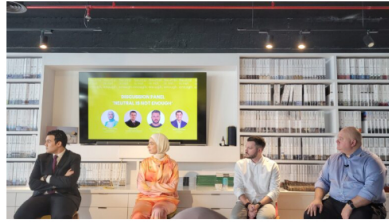
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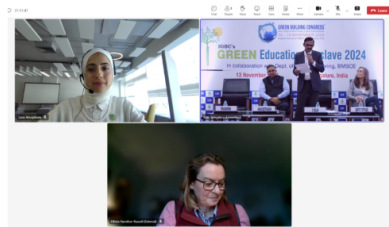
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EmiratesGBC Showcases Sustainability Insights at Dubai Design Week



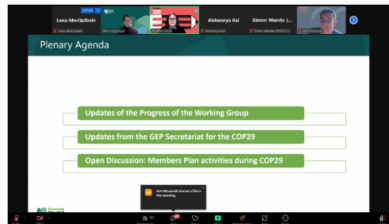
EmiratesGBC participated in Dubai Design Week by taking part in the Neutral is Not Enough event organized by its members Shaw Contract. During the event, EmiratesGBC presented on their take on Neutral is not enough by sharing their UAE Sustainable Built Environment Blueprint Report, and by sharing about their newly opened Sustainability Lounge. Following that, EmiratesGBC sat in a panel discussion to deep dive into enablers that can support the built environment in its transition towards more sustainability.

Empowering Youth for a Sustainable Future at the IndiaGBC Congress 2024



EmiratesGBC participated in the IndiaGBC Congress, specifically in the Green Education Conclave, 2024, by presenting for the youth on the sustainable built environment market trends of the UAE and what skills are needed for youth to support in the journey towards Net Zero by 2050.

Greening Education Partnership hosted by UNESCO



EmiratesGBC as a partner to the Greening Education Partnership (GEP) hosted by UNESCO, actively participated in the working group meeting for the School Pillar to share with the attendees about the Sustainable School Guidance Booklet which the EmiratesGBC has been working on heavily in collaboration with its members and partners. The booklet, to be officially launched during COP30, will provide guidance into stakeholders on how to build, retrofit, operate, and finance a sustainable school. Starting from the UAE, the booklet is to become a global resource to support in the transition, especially through several consultation sessions with the support of GEP

EmiratesGBC CEO Facilitates Round Table at RAK Energy Summit

At the RAK Energy Summit, EmiratesGBC's CEO facilitated a dynamic round table discussion on the topic, **"Why District Cooling is Essential for Progress in the Northern Emirates – The Key Players, the Challenges, and the Opportunities."** The session brought together representatives from government entities, developers, and district cooling providers to explore the pivotal role of district cooling in advancing sustainability and energy efficiency in the region.

EmiratesGBC Highlights IAQ and Energy Efficiency in UAE Sustainability Efforts

The Emirates Green Building Council (EmiratesGBC) was honored to participate in a panel discussion and technical seminar on **"Enhancing Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) and Energy Efficiency: Exploring ASHRAE Standard 62.1 in the UAE,"** organized by the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure.

During the event, EmiratesGBC emphasized its pivotal role in fostering collaboration between the public and private sectors to advance IAQ as a vital aspect of sustainable building practices. The Council highlighted the essential link between improving indoor air quality and achieving the UAE's sustainability goals, reinforcing

essential link between improving indoor air quality and achieving the UAE's sustainability goals, reinforcing the importance of IAQ in creating healthier, more energy-efficient environments.

Through this engagement, EmiratesGBC reaffirmed its commitment to driving progress in the built environment and supporting the nation's vision for a greener future.

EmiratesGBC Collaborates with Climate Neutral Real Estate Consortium to Advance Climate-Neutral Leadership



Emirates Green Building Council (EmiratesGBC) recently partnered with the Climate Neutral Real Estate Consortium to drive innovation and advance climate-neutral leadership in the built environment. This collaboration aligned with the core missions of both organizations, reflecting a shared commitment to sustainability and progressive practices.

The partnership focused on key areas, including the development of **near-zero and net-zero buildings and communities**, enhancing **resilience in both new constructions and retrofits**, and promoting **research and education in sustainability** within the built environment.

The intention to collaborate was officially announced at **Liveable Cities X / Big 5 Global**, marking a significant milestone in fostering sustainable innovation.

EmiratesGBC Highlights Zero-Carbon HVAC Innovations at Big 5 Global Panel



Emirates Green Building Council (EmiratesGBC) participated in a panel discussion at **Big 5 Global**, focusing on the transformative role of zero-carbon HVAC systems in advancing energy efficiency and sustainability in buildings.

The discussion underscored the critical importance of HVAC systems in sustainable building design, addressing challenges in adoption and emphasizing the role of technology and collaboration in achieving zero-carbon solutions. Panelists highlighted innovative strategies to decarbonize buildings, optimize energy use, and balance economic and environmental goals, reflecting EmiratesGBC's commitment to driving sustainability in the built environment.

Accelerating Net Zero: EmiratesGBC at the Big 5 Panel Discussion



Emirates Green Building Council (EmiratesGBC) actively contributed to a pivotal panel discussion at the Big 5 Global event, alongside representatives from Masdar City and the Arab Green Solutions Initiative (AGSI). The session, titled **"Accelerating the UAE Net Zero 2050 Vision: The Future of Sustainable Building Materials in Construction & Built Environment,"** delved into strategies for advancing sustainability within the construction sector.

EmiratesGBC 2023 Annual Report Now Published

We are proud to announce the release of the **2023 Emirates Green Building Council Annual Report**, showcasing a year of remarkable progress and impact. The report highlights our initiatives, collaborations, and achievements in advancing sustainable building practices across the UAE. It also provides insights into our efforts to support national climate goals, promote energy efficiency, and foster green innovation in the built environment.

We invite you to explore the report and reflect on the collective accomplishments that continue to drive the sustainability movement.

 **Read the full report here:** [2023 EmiratesGBC Annual Report](#)

Emirates Green Building Council Launches Sustainability Lounge



The **Sustainability Lounge** is a vibrant co-working space designed to foster collaboration, innovation, and sustainability within the EmiratesGBC community. It's the ideal venue for members to engage in workshops, training sessions, and networking events, surrounded by a community passionate about green building and environmental stewardship. The Lounge is not just a workspace; it's a hub for inspiration and professional growth, where members can connect, share ideas, and work towards a greener future.

For more details, visit our [Sustainability Lounge webpage](#).

UPCOMING EMIRATESGBC EVENTS

Annual General Meeting

This is an opportunity to reflect on the Council's progress in 2024 and strengthen our collective vision for the future. The registration link and agenda had been sent to members via email

We look forward to reconnecting and engaging with you.

End of Year Gathering Women Network



Emirates Green Building Council is excited to host the **Women Network Year-End Gathering**, an event designed to reflect on the successes and insights gained from the 2024 mentorship program while gathering valuable feedback from participants. The gathering will feature engaging, creative, and collaborative activities aimed at shaping the 2025 agenda. It also provides an excellent opportunity to foster connections and strengthen networks within the sustainability community

PREVIOUS EMIRATESGBC EVENTS

EmiratesGBC reinforces region's green building movement with 2024 MENA Green Building Awards

hosted an award ceremony for the winners of the 12th edition of the MENA Green Building Awards 2024. Held at JW Marriott Marina Dubai, the gala honored private and public sector entities as well as green building and sustainability practitioners, making a significant impact on sustainable development across the MENA region.

Attended by over 200 industry stakeholders, award winners and sustainability enthusiasts from academia, private and public sectors, the event celebrated excellence and best practices in built environment across design, construction and operations covering 16 categories in the MENA region. This year saw a significant rise in the number of attendees as well as applications with an outstanding 85 entries from a record 8 countries (UAE, Jordan, Egypt, Qatar, Kuwait, Morocco, Saudi Arabia and Algeria) overseen by a panel of 42 expert judges.

The winners of the 2024 MENA Green Building Awards are:

1. Most Sustainable Building Project of the Year: **Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Center for Entrepreneurship**

- **Net Zero Building Project of the Year:** Ghar Woods Forest Experience Center by Majid ALFuttaim
- **Existing Sustainable Building Project of the Year:** Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi by Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi
- **Sustainable Design Project of the Year:** Athlon by Aldar
- **Healthy Spaces Project of the Year:** Little Explorers in City Centre Mirdif by Majid ALFuttaim
- **Sustainable Retrofit Project of the Year:** Aldar Portfolio Energy Retrofit by grfn and Aldar
- **Sustainable Contractor of the Year:** Nael General Contracting LLC
- **Sustainable Facility Management Organization of the Year:** Emaar Facilities Management
- **Sustainable Developer of the Year:** Aldar
- **Sustainable Consultant of the Year:** DAR ALHANDASAH CONSULTANTS SHAIR AND PARTNERS
- **Sustainable Building Product of the Year – Indoor Air Quality:** Tiles and Sanitarywares Products by RAK Ceramics
- **Sustainable Building Product of the Year – Energy Management:** EcoStruxure Power Monitoring Expert: Transforming Energy Sustainability into Reality! by Schneider Electric
- **Sustainable Building Product of the Year – Water Management:** The Filter Pot by Building Services Products
- **Sustainable Building Material of the Year – Construction Material:** Hydro CIRCAL by TECHNAL (Hydro Building Systems Middle East)
- **Sustainable Building Material of the Year – Construction Material:** Smart Wall Masonry Panel EIFS System by Smart Insulation Finishing Systems
- **Sustainable Building Research Award:** Eco Seawall Panels: Redefining Sustainable Coastlines by AD Ports Group
- **Sustainability Training Initiative of the Year:** Suppliers Upskilling program by Aldar
- **Doctor Owainati Students Excellence Award:** Mohamed Farmaan Abdul Khader from Rochester Institute of Technology, Dubai for his paper, Performance Assessment of Buoyant Shrouded Wind Turbines: A Computational Study

GREEN KEY



Green Key

The Green Key programme is a leading standard of excellence in the field of environmental responsibility and sustainable operation within the tourism industry. It is operated internationally under the management of the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) with Head Offices in Copenhagen, Denmark. FEE has national member organisations in more than 70 countries worldwide where Emirates Green Building Council is the national operator in the United Arab Emirates.

EMIRATESGBC TRAINING

Pan Arab Certified Energy Management Professionals (PA-CEMP) Training Program

We are delighted to announce the official launch of the Pan Arab Certified Energy Management Professionals (PA-CEMP) training program by Emirates Green Building Council! This initiative underscores our commitment to advancing sustainability and energy efficiency practices in the Arab region. Developed in collaboration with the League of Arab States Energy Department and endorsed by the Executive Bureau of the Arab Ministerial Council of Electricity, PA-CEMP is a professional certification program tailored for Energy Managers in the Arab region. The program, managed by the Regional Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (RCREEE), aims to assist energy efficiency policy makers and program administrators in planning and implementing comprehensive Energy Efficiency programs and measures. Key highlights of PA-CEMP include comprehensive technical content developed by industry leaders, hands-on learning sessions to apply theoretical concepts in real-world scenarios, and a prestigious certification upon successful completion. This certification will enhance the professional profile and credibility of energy management professionals, equipping them with the latest technologies and energy essentials to drive sustainable practices across the region.

To have more information and you missed the online introductory webinar you can watch it through this [link](#)

Details for the upcoming cohort will be released soon.

INDUSTRY EVENTS

Shaping Greener Economies at 2nd Annual Future Sustainability Forum 24

In a world facing unprecedented environmental challenges, Future Sustainability Forum serves as a beacon of hope, uniting diverse perspectives and expertise to chart a path towards greener economies and a more resilient planet. Building on the highly successful launch last year, the 2nd edition of Future Sustainability Forum, organized by Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC), encapsulates UAE's recent focus on accomplishing Net-Zero goals by 2050. The Forum brings together visionaries, innovators, and change-makers from across the globe to collaborate, inspire, and drive meaningful action towards a more sustainable future.

Under the theme "Shaping Greener Economies", the Forum explores the intersection of sustainability, innovation, blended finance and collective action. From renewable energy and circular economy practices to climate resilience and social equity, conferences will delve into the multifaceted aspects of sustainability, recognizing the interconnectedness of environmental, economic, and social well-being.

Don't miss out on the opportunity to connect with Global Sustainability leaders at the 2nd Annual Future Sustainability Forum, happening on 4-5 December 2024 at Madinat Jumeirah, Dubai.

Let's shape Greener economies together! 🌱

1. Want to Sponsor? <https://bit.ly/45GmSv5>
2. Book Tickets: <https://bit.ly/3xkwfnu>
3. Know More: <https://bit.ly/3xte5Qr>

MEMBERS & PARTNERS

Member Opportunities!

We want to feature your success stories. Please share with us your accomplishments in relation to the green building industry and allow us to feature you in our newsletter.

For more information, please contact reema.aburuqaa@emiratesgbc.org.

EmiratesGBC Women Network Monthly Spotlight!

Maryam Chahwan

Senior Consultant – Environment SUS & ENV – DUB



AtkinsRéalis

1. Who You Are:

- Beyond your professional role, tell us a bit about yourself. What drives and inspires you personally? Whether it's hobbies, interests, or values, we'd love to learn more about the person behind the professional achievements.

I'm Maryam Chahwan, originally from Egypt, born and raised in the UAE. I hold a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering and a master's degree in environmental management. Beyond my professional expertise, I am a proud mother of two boys, and I draw much of my motivation and inspiration from my family. Outside of work, I have a strong passion for coffee, often exploring new coffee spots to discover unique blends. I am also interested in modest fashion styling, makeup artistry, and hairstyling, which allow me to creatively express myself. These diverse passions help drive my creativity and provide balance, helping me navigate both my professional responsibilities and the joys of motherhood.

2. Career Journey and Achievements:

- ● ● Can you share a brief overview of your career journey in the field of sustainability? What achievements or projects are you most proud of in advancing sustainable practices?
- My career began in 2016 within the aviation industry, starting as an Environmental Engineer, where I supervised environmental practices throughout the construction phases of Dubai International Airport and Al Maktoum International Airport. Following this, I joined AtkinsRéalis as a member of the Strategic Advisory team, supporting the environmental discipline. In this role, I've contributed to projects focusing on integrating environmental management into business strategies and operations. I am particularly proud of developing strategies and frameworks that helped organizations reduce their environmental impact while enhancing operational efficiency. These experiences have reinforced my commitment to advancing environmental management across both corporate and operational sectors.

3. Challenges and Triumphs:

- ● ● As a woman in the sustainability sector, have you faced any specific challenges, and how did you overcome them? On the flip side, what triumphs or successes have been particularly meaningful in your career?

When I started my career back in 2016, I was the only female on site. This was a challenge for me, however, it eventually turned into an opportunity. With time, I was able to overcome this challenge by staying focused on producing high-quality work, building strong relationships, and continuously developing my expertise. One of my most meaningful successes was leading environmental initiatives and campaigns for the project, where I was able to drive sustainable practices that had a lasting impact. Being recognized for these contributions has reinforced my belief in the power of resilience, collaboration, and the importance of diverse perspectives in driving environment management and sustainability forward.

4. Impact and Advice:

- ● ● How do you see your role contributing to the broader goals of sustainability? Additionally, what advice would you offer to other women aspiring to make a difference in the field of

sustainability?

My current role as a Senior Environment Consultant with AtkinsRéalis allows me to drive impactful change by integrating environmental management into strategic operations, ensuring long-term sustainability and environment goals are achieved. I contribute by developing frameworks that reduce environmental impact while enhancing efficiency across industries. For women aspiring to make a difference, my advice is to stay resilient and continuously build your expertise. Embrace challenges as opportunities for growth, foster strong networks, and champion diverse perspectives. Sustainability thrives when we bring together innovative ideas and inclusive leadership to address complex environmental challenges.

EmiratesGBC Technical Programs

Members of the **Emirates Green Building Council** can join in any of our technical programs with this [link](#), to advance their knowledge on the program's relevant topics, contribute to its growth, and sponsor its events. We are working on several ideas related to our programs: Coalition for Green Schools, Better Places for People, Net Zero Center of Excellence, Energy Efficiency, Green Key and Benchmarking Program.

Kindly send us an email to office@emiratesgbc.org to inquire about any of the mentioned technical programs.

EmiratesGBC Sustainability Lounge is now available for meetings and workshops!

If you are interested in using the EmiratesGBC Sustainability Lounge for a workshop or a meeting, kindly get in touch with us at 04-3468244 or send us an email to office@emiratesgbc.org. The office room is fully equipped with AV and provides a pleasant environment for focused meetings or training workshops.

LOCAL NEWS

UAE students win prestigious environmental contest at COP29 in Baku

Three Year 12 students from a school in Abu Dhabi made the UAE proud by winning a prestigious environmental competition at COP29 in Baku with their innovative waste management solution. The students from Cambridge High School in the UAE capital claimed the prestigious Oxford Said Burjeel Holdings Climate Change Challenge award.

[Read More](#) →

REGIONAL NEWS

Saudi Arabia joins international partnership initiative to boost hydrogen economy

The Ministry of Energy announced that Saudi Arabia has joined the International Partnership for the Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Economy (IPHE) initiative, reinforcing its commitment to global efforts in advancing the sector. This move underscores Saudi Arabia's leadership in promoting sustainability and developing innovative solutions in the realm of clean energy.

[Read More](#) →

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

COP29 UN Climate Conference Agrees to Triple Finance to Developing Countries, Protecting Lives and Livelihoods

The UN Climate Change Conference (COP29) closed with a new finance goal to help countries to protect their people and economies against climate disasters, and share in the vast benefits of the clean energy boom.

[Read More](#) →

