

EEG EDU NEWS

Together for a Better Environment®



مجموعة عمل الإمارات للبيئة
EMIRATES ENVIRONMENTAL
GROUP



January 2021
Issue 01

2021

A Blessed New Year

Upcoming Events

One Roof, One Communi-Tree

OROC

21st Jan - 21st May 2021

ONE ROOT, ONE COMMUNI-TREE PHASE 1

Linking the diverse Waste Management Programme with, "For Our Emirates We Plant"

Can Collection Day

25th February 2021

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Habiba Al Mar'ashi

A new world order - This is not a hypothesis but a reality that 2020 threw at us and pushed a narrative on how businesses should be re-looked at and re-shaped in the upcoming decade. Who would have thought that a microscopic spiked protein molecule called the CORONAVIRUS could wreak havoc of this intensity and throw the global economy into a tailspin.

But then as they say, 'The show must go on', and this is the motto with which EEG marched ahead relentlessly in 2020 and survived these unprecedented times with positive spirit and courage. 2020 has been a milestone year for the organisation, as we have completed 30 years of traversing a journey towards a more sustainable future for all in our beloved country and the wider region.

Rounding up our accomplishments in 2020, I feel proud to share that, EEG has contributed to a greener UAE through its plethora of projects, campaigns, initiatives and outreach programmes. Through our Recycling Programmes, which are strongly regarded as one of the most effective implementation platforms for environmental action in the UAE, we managed to successfully collect significant amounts of recyclable materials throughout the year and send them for proper recycling. We also managed to connect the recycling programme with our very special urban afforestation programme.

As it is for every year, this year too, concluded with three of our flagship community action programmes; the 19th cycle of the annual "Clean Up UAE" Campaign, the "Green December" campaign and "For Our Emirates We Plant" campaign.

Organised in association with Dubai Municipality and Saih Al Salam Protected Area Management, the "Clean Up UAE" Campaign, held under the patronage of the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, registered thousands of participants.

This was followed by our unique "For Our Emirates We Plant" programme, held under the Patronage of H.E. Engr. Sheikh Salem bin Sultan bin Saqr Al-Qasimi, Chairman of the Civil Aviation Authority and

member of the Government of Ras Al-Khaimah Executive Council in Ras Al Khaimah. EEG concluded the final recycling project of the year, which was mainly conducted for its student members - the "Green December". This recycling & waste management project aims to encourage and inspire students to inculcate the habit of recycling as a daily practice.

It is EEG's constant endeavor to work towards embedding the UN SDGs into our strategies and actions, so that we create awareness and nurture a responsible generation, for them to be the torchbearers of our environmentally friendly mission.

We set ambitious targets and through dedicated efforts of my team and your commitment to protect and preserve the environment, we are delighted to see our goals being brought to fruition in 2020.

There is frightening news that has emerged, of a new strain of COVID-19 in certain countries in Europe over the last few weeks, which is claimed to be more deadly. Amidst the many challenges staring at our faces, we need to move on and EEG is committed to keeping 'sustainability' as its focus.

We will continue to roll out our projects and programmes in 2021 with the same passion and rigour, whether physically or virtually.

The first month of the New Year will kick off with the much awaited Environmental Drawing Competition for the student community and the One Root One Communi-Tree campaign for all the sectors.

I would like to conclude my note by conveying my heartfelt gratitude to members, partners, volunteers, supporters and well-wishers for their commitment and dedication with EEG for the whole of 2020. We owe our success to your exceptional contribution to strive for a sustainable tomorrow. So let us all join 'Together for a better environment'.

Season's greetings! I wish everyone a sustainable and healthy 2021!



Global Food Systems Summit Dialogue

The UN Secretary-General will convene the Food Systems Summit in 2021 to launch bold new actions towards SDG 12, responsible consumption and production. The speakers from diverse field of expertise will focus on five action tracks

Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all

Shift to sustainable consumption patterns

Boost nature-positive production

Advance equitable livelihoods

Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

EEG participated in December in the virtual dialogues that were organised to build discussions and set the tone for the Summit.

1) EEG Chairperson attended on 1st December joined the 1st dialogue of the series hosted by the Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General and the Co-Leads of the One Planet Network's Sustainable Food Systems Programme.

It aimed at gathering the experiences and inputs of ground level initiatives contributing towards sustainable consumption and production. Some of the key areas of discussions included:

- Farmers and food producers lead the way to sustainable and equitable food systems by participating in the formulation of policies that impact them.

2) Organised by UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, on 16th December EEG Chairperson attended the virtual session on advancing equitable livelihoods in food systems.

In 2021, the global efforts need to be aimed at securing nutrition for everyone, generating equitable livelihoods and mitigating climate change. The expert speakers from the field of food systems, population trends and rural development addressed the key areas on:

- Small and medium enterprises are drivers of sustainable local food systems, creating employment and providing healthy & nutritious foods to local consumers.
- Agriculture and land use strategies drive the promotion of agrobiodiversity and stimulate local food productions in a way that provides sustainable livelihoods and healthy diets for all.
- Innovative governance and incentives at all levels foster cross-sectoral collaboration across policy areas (like biodiversity, climate change, health, trade, etc.)
- Responsible and accessible investments on sustainable and equitable food systems by financial institutions and private investors are the norm.

- Impact of COVID-19 on livelihoods especially the developing countries
- Systemic implications of population movement—and disruptions to this movement—on food system livelihoods
- Examples of agricultural and non-agricultural technologies or tools that can be utilised in rural settings to ensure sustainable productivity

Please click to watch the video,

<https://www.facebook.com/joinundesa/videos/913802139156722/>

2nd Food Systems MSGM Mechanisms

December A side event on Food Systems multi-stakeholder governance mechanisms (MSGM) in-line with the 3rd Global Conference of the Sustainable Food Systems Programme was held virtually on 2nd December.

It was co-organised by UNEP, WWF, Hivos-RUAF, Rikolto, Bioverse Alliance and International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), with the support from the German Government. EEG joined this interesting discussion, wherein the results and experiences of 3 multi-stakeholder governance mechanisms (MSGM) were brought into light.

In the opening session, UNEP representative for food systems talked about establishing a holistic approach and inclusiveness of multi-stakeholders as a way forward to deal with serious global challenges and build governance structures for sustainable food systems. Whereas,

the One Planet Network SFS Programme consultant emphasised on awareness and knowledge sharing on multi-stakeholder mechanisms (MSMs) as important to create innovations on sustainable strategies.

Several case studies were shared from different countries. The speakers discussed the role that their initiatives played in helping cities and countries to promote sustainable food systems approaches, especially under the COVID-19 situation.

These case studies will also be a part of Education Learning Tool on MSGM that will strengthen the common vision for inclusive collaborations.

The event also raised the political importance of sustainable food systems among public and private sector leaders.

8th Regional Consultation West Asia

December EEG Chairperson on 8th December participated virtually in the West Asia Regional Major Groups and Stakeholders Consultation meeting. It was themed on 'Strengthening actions for nature to achieve the SDGs' and facilitated discussions regarding the UNEA-5, scheduled for February 2021.

With the main focus on the mid-term strategy and programme of work, the Regional Director and Representative of UNEP West Asia and Programme Manager at UNEP Governance Affairs (Civil Society Unit) led the course of the consultation. These regional consultations are being hosted by UNEP since 2002 to identify and advance the priorities towards environment and sustainable development. EEG has been actively engaged in these consultations.

The triple planetary crisis caused by humans and as explained in the meeting includes climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution due to unsustainable production and consumption patterns. The group discussed the need for three key thematic programmes - Act for Climate, Act for Nature and Act for Chemical Pollution, which will strengthen science and policy for environmental governance, finance and economic transformation, and digital transformation. Collective action and transformational strategies are required to achieve impactful results towards green. The consultation meeting was concluded on the reminder note that 'the world cannot go back to business as usual after COVID-19'.

Watch the video for UNEP's transformation journey,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w8uEWcdQRJo&feature=youtu.be>



8th EEG Attends Informal Consultation on UNEA-5

December

EEG attended on 8th December, the open-ended informal consultation to discuss the formulation of the draft statement of the virtual session of UNEA-5 in February 2021. Due to the pandemic, it was decided (in October 2020) that there would be a short, virtual Assembly in February 2021 and a longer, more substantial in-person Assembly in February 2022. However, it was found in the last few months that there were differing views among Member States and stakeholders regarding the best course of action for a concluding message from the virtual session of UNEA-5 (February 2021). This meeting was convened by the President of UNEA-5 who proposed the following:

1. Defer consultations on the zero draft ministerial declaration on the overarching theme of UNEA-5: Strengthening actions for nature to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals for the time being; and
2. Identify other broad political messages specifically for the first part of UNEA-5 (February 2020)

In the meeting, the Member States were provided with a platform to provide their feedback and guidance on this proposal. Despite the pandemic creating considerable challenges globally, it was reiterated that multilateral and intergovernmental work must continue. Member States were requested to be flexible and look upon the virtual session of UNEA-5 in February 2021 as an opportunity to show their continued commitment and dedication to the environmental dimension of global sustainable development. During the meeting, several Member States subscribed to the agreement that substantive work and negotiations of resolutions must be deferred until the resuming session of UNEA-5 in February 2022. Others believed that a low-profile, and merely administrative UNEA-5 in February 2021 will not be effective. In fact, they believe that abandoning the ministerial voice of the global environmental authority at a time it is most needed will be detrimental to the global environmental agenda. It was also suggested that if a consensus on this issue was not possible, the President could develop a President's Message instead of a Ministerial Declaration. One Member State highlighted three key aspects in which UNEP has an important role:

1. To ensure that the post-COVID recovery is green, just and resilient and aligned with the environment and climate agenda
2. Improve governance in addressing marine pollution and continue efforts to advance the adoption of a new post-2020 international governance framework on chemicals and waste management
3. Setting a global environmental agenda by building synergies between different environmental agreements

The President concluded the meeting by saying that we need to remind the world of the importance of Nairobi as the global environmental hub and strongly reiterated that environmental challenges cannot be ignored just because of the pandemic.

Thus, considering the concerns of Member States, the President said that the Ministerial Declaration of UNEA-5 will be deferred until the second session in February 2022. The message, thus, for February 2021 will be simple: recognise the pandemic and the environmental crisis.

9th GISD Deals call 2020

December

EEG Chairperson was invited to join the final GISD deals call of 2020 which was held on 9th December on a virtual platform. The session saw Women's World Banking present their second fund targeting financial inclusion for low-income women. The underlying principle and strategy of WWB is an uplifting and financial inclusion of under privileged women. Their aim is to invest in financial institutions in emerging markets that are untapped and have a potential for substantial ROI opportunity. The group addresses SDG no 1- No Poverty; SDG no 5- Gender Equality, and SDG no 8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth.

10th GPML Webinar on Upcoming Digital Platform

December

EEG attended on the 10th December, a webinar organised under the aegis of the Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML) titled - "Towards a GPML Digital Platform".

This webinar provided a high-level overview of the upcoming GPML Digital Platform as well as opportunities to discuss multi-stakeholder functionalities. Launched at Rio+20, the GPML is a voluntary stakeholder platform that plays a critical role in bringing together a diverse group of stakeholders to work on addressing Marine Litter and Plastic Pollution. Objectives of the GPML Digital Platform:

1. Integrate data and information from multiple sources
2. Connect stakeholders
3. Identify gaps and priority actions
4. Coordinate and guide action based on the best available knowledge
5. Facilitate target setting and measuring progress

From the get-go, an interesting feature about the Digital Platform that was highlighted was the integration of Sam - an IBM AI Virtual Assistant who is equipped to answer questions regarding marine litter and microplastics (this was demonstrated in great detail).

Other important tools of the Digital Platform included a Plastic flow Model, Interactive Dashboard for Stocktaking, Environmentally Sound

Technologies, Policy Toolkits and Technical Inventory. Each of these will be populated with information and case studies from across the globe, providing greater opportunities for knowledge sharing and collaboration. Next, was an overview on Global Marine Litter Tracking Simulations, which answered the overarching questions - "Where does the marine plastic waste go once released into the ocean?" and "Where does the marine plastic waste found on the coast come from?" The speaker explained that the GPML utilises tracking simulations that include the following three components:

1. Particle seeding that represents realistically the input of the mismanaged plastic wastes (MPW) into the ocean
2. High-resolution global ocean circulation and wind data
3. State of the art Lagrangian analysis tool (Ocean Parcels)

This was demonstrated through an interactive map that showed how particles from Asia ended up in the Pacific and vice versa. Finally, attendees were also invited to join the GPML and be a part of the growing community to coordinate actions on a regular basis.

EEG would like to congratulate the GPML and look forward to contributing to and utilising the unique features of the Digital Platform in the future.



10th UN75 Dialogues-Youth in Action

December

EEG attended on 10th December the, 'UN75 Dialogues: Youth in Action'- a series of webinars aiming to address Arab youth's needs, expectations and ambitions, and hence the achievement of the SDGs. The webinar was organised by the office of United Nations in the United Arab Emirates, UNFPA Arab states and MBC AL AMAL. Today, 30 % of Arab population is between the ages 15 to 29. Regions where the youth are empowered thrive. The online webinar meeting was facilitated by UN representative and Arab Youth Activists. Youth were encouraged to pursue their dreams and not be afraid of failures. Challenges being faced by youth today such as political instability, unemployment, health and access to resources were acknowledged. Examples of young leaders who stand as role models were put forth. Youth activists with diverse experiences in business startups and charity investments were invited to share their experiences to encourage youth to open startups and raise their voice through different platforms. Online platforms especially the Arab Youth Centre and UN Volunteering websites were highlighted as platforms through which Arab youth can benefit. 'Regional Youth Platform', a platform yet to be launched for showcasing opportunities for youth and where youth can interact with each other was also discussed. The role of youth in volunteerism was amongst the topics discussed such as the participation of one young activist in the creation of The UN Youth Charter for Arab youth. The charter is still in development stages. The Charter aims to cover all major dimensions that concern youth: Challenges youth face, rights, freedom, youth in conflict zones, youth with disabilities, employment policies, security and education in the Arab region. Towards the end, in the question and answer session, the youth were again encouraged to be proactive, search or create opportunities, raise their voice and be politically involved in decision making.

10th EEG Attends Second Geneva Dialogues

December

EEG attended the second session of the Geneva Beat Plastic Pollution Dialogues via a virtual platform for the topic of "Plastics, Climate and Air Pollution". The session focused on climate and air pollution. Six keynote speakers from Government, Private entities and Academia gave their perspectives on the topic with examples of their legislations, activities, research. The first two speakers were the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Fiji and United Kingdom to the United Nations Office and other international organisations in Geneva. They shared the action each country has taken to solve growing plastic problem in their respective countries. The highlights were that, UK is aiming for at least a 68% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by the end of the decade, compared to 1990 levels. On the other hand, Fiji is working on 2050 Today initiative by the Swiss government, focusing on reducing its footprint and is also trying to grow the conversation around addressing sustainable plastics trade.

Three speakers from Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL) and two researchers at University of Strathclyde elaborated their research on the topic. The 1st speaker stated that fracking of gas, oil and unburnable coal has made natural gas really cheap. Furthermore, petrochemicals are the leading driver for oil growth demand. His highlighted message to take away was that every step of plastic production has emissions and plastic pollution is a growing threat to Earth's climate. Researchers at University of Strathclyde studied the remote area and atmospheric transport of plastic over the past few years. In their study, the nano-plastic particles and its prevalence in the atmosphere, they found up to 5,700 micro plastics per m³ in mega cities and also discovered micro plastic everywhere including arctic snow and ice to high above mountain air in Everest. To conclude the dialogue, the head of Climate & Clean Air Coalition (CCAC) shared their initiative on Air Pollution and mentioned that plastic pollution issues across the globe need to be studied more closely and addressed immediately. Forging partnerships are the key drivers to change. EEG is thankful for the invitation to the dialogues. The session was interesting and extremely informative. For complete summary of the session, please visit the site: <https://www.genevaenvironmentnetwork.org/events/geneva-beat-plastic-pollution-dialogues-plastics-and-climate-and-air-pollution/>

12th The 19th cycle of the Annual "Clean Up UAE" Campaign

December

Emirates Environmental Group (EEG), the leading NGO devoted to protecting the environment through the means of education, action programmes and community involvement, concluded one of its flagship events, the 19th annual "Clean Up UAE" campaign, held under the patronage of the UAE Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MOCCA). Originally planned for two weeks in the last month of the year, the campaign had to be shortened due to the pandemic and was held on 12th December. This year, the campaign was organised in association with Dubai Municipality and Saih Al Salam Protected Area Management; the event saw the participation of His Excellency the Acting Undersecretary of Ministry of Climate Change and Environment. A total of 5,254 participants from different nationalities, gender and age groups joined the cleanup at the Al Marmoum Protected area - Al Qudra lakes, other locations that were opened for the cleanup were; Dubai Industrial City and Al Ruwais, Khalifa Port, the Industrial City in Abu Dhabi, covering an area of more than 23 km and collecting nearly 13 tonnes of waste across the 8 locations. The Co-Founder and Chairperson of EEG, said: "At Emirates Environmental Group, our aim is to support the UAE government with its larger goals and objectives of sustainability. Apart from this, we also work towards creating awareness for the public and private sector towards the existing sustainability issues in the region. We would like to thank everyone for their efforts and contribution towards the 19th annual edition of this initiative. It is important that we as a society consciously come together to work towards a better tomorrow for everyone."

His Excellency the acting Undersecretary of the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment said: "Protecting the environment and sustaining its natural resources and biodiversity are strategic priorities for MOCCA. In this context, we work to ensure a safe and sustainable future for everyone through driving effective environmental action that integrates legislation with on-the-ground programmes and initiatives. In line with the directives of the wise UAE leadership, we are keen to involve the community in environmental protection efforts, therefore we are proud to support the Clean Up UAE, and applaud the work of EEG." Shoemart came on board as the main sponsor while McDonald's UAE and Dabur International co-sponsored the event. Dubai Investments and Dubai tourism joined the campaign as support sponsors. Several other entities also joined and provided logistical support for the campaign. Asdaa BCW were the official Communications Partner of the campaign and provided the required PR support to the campaign. The event was given excellent exposure in media in English, Hindi and Arabic. Radio stations included were Al Murad Group, Al Rabia, Channel 4, Radio 4 and Gold 4; television channels included Al Dafrah TV, ZEE TV, Fujairah TV and ZEE Aflam, and print media included Gulf News Al Khaleej and Rysha Media. A video of the cleanup is available here - [we.tl/t-yGmYGtEOyc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=we.tl/t-yGmYGtEOyc)



13th 75th Anniversary of the UN

December EEG Chairperson attended on 13th December the 75th anniversary of the United Nations that came officially into existence on 24th October 1945. The invitation was extended by Her Excellency the United Nations Resident Coordinator. Abiding by the UAE Government COVID-19 restrictions, the meet was held in an open area on Al Saadiyat Island in Abu Dhabi over sunset by the sea. The diamond jubilee celebration comes at a time when the world is grappling with great disruption and unprecedented health crisis due to covid-19. But this is also a reminder to humanity that challenging times should be accepted as an opportunity to turn the tables through positive transformation.

14th Business Councils and Business Groups

December EEG Chairperson joined the 4th and final Roundtable Discussion Webinar 2020 organised by Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry on 14th December. The Vice President, International Relations of the Chamber started the discussion by sharing the important updates of the last quarter of 2020. The CEO of Dubai Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (DTCM) gave the insightful presentation on the activities of Dubai that ensures a progressive path moving forward. He gave a walkthrough of 3 phase campaign to explain the strategies adopted amid COVID-19. From June till December 2020, it also held Global Umbrella Influencer Programmes through relevant and credible influencer content to minimise the perception gaps and raise confidence for the potential tourists. DTCM continues to leverage its content, highlight Dubai's progress and leverage

further developments in moving beyond the pandemic. The Chief Economist for Asia Pacific, Middle East and Africa MasterCard's Economic Institute shared the global and UAE's macro-economic development in the recent month. He explained the unprecedented slowdown since the World War 2 and based on the research data showed that due to existing infrastructure and economic capacity, the UAE is least vulnerable. However, he stated that Dubai was the hardest hit Emirate and return of international tourism and migrant workers are crucial for the overall economic recovery. Please click for the presentations, <https://austrianbc.ae/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Dubai-Tourism-presentation-141220.pdf> <https://austrianbc.ae/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Economic-Institutes-Mastercard-December-2020.pdf>

14th Giving Back to Nature

December Julius Baer Middle East Ltd. Dubai, a leading Swiss wealth management group celebrated their 130 years of successful journey on 14th December. Emirates Environmental Group was delighted to be a part of this milestone by helping them in planting 130 native trees, including the Ghaf. This added to the overall figures of EEG's "For our Emirates We Plant" campaign for 2020. Julius Baer puts itself at par with global trends on sustainability and impact investment. It has therefore embarked on strengthening its sustainability mission and strategy, by dedicating a global Corporate Sustainability & Responsible Investment (CS&RI) team to align with the sustainable development approaches. Please click to read more, <https://www.juliusbaer.com/en/insights/responsible-investing/sustainability-at-julius-baer-the-road-ahead-1/>

15th EEG Attends Webinar on Key Findings of Emissions Gap Report 2020

December On the 9th December 2020, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) launched its Emissions Gaps Report 2020, which is an annual update of global emissions pathways and progress towards achieving national mitigation pledges and the Paris Agreement goals as well as the resulting 'emissions gap'. On the 14th and 15th of December, EEG was invited to attend a webinar on the key findings as well as a Planet Unplugged event for the Report. With 51 expert authors and an illustrious Steering Committee guiding them, this Report was the 11th of its series in the UNEP repertoire.

What is the emissions gap? The gap between estimated future global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions if countries implement their climate mitigation pledges and the global emission levels from least-cost pathways that are aligned with achieving the temperature goals of the Paris Agreement. Thus, this difference between "where we are likely to be and where we need to be" is known as the 'emissions gap'. A panel consisting of the authors provided a short summary of their respective chapters, highlighting the following key findings:

1. Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions continued to rise in 2019 for a third year in a row
2. Fossil carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions dominated the total GHG emissions
3. It was estimated that CO₂ emissions could decrease by about 7 % in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, atmospheric concentrations of GHGs continue to rise.
4. Despite a short-term reduction in global emissions due to the pandemic, there would be no significant contribution to emissions reduction goals by 2030. This will only be possible if countries incorporate decarbonisation as part of their economic recovery.

5. According to UNEP, the rising number of nations committing to net-zero emissions goals by around mid-century is highly encouraging. However, these need to be urgently translated into strong policies and action.
6. It is estimated that the G20 members will overachieve their modest 2020 Cancun Pledges, but are not on the right track to achieve their respective NDC commitments. The breakdown is as following: Countries on track to achieve their 2030 NDC commitments: 9; Countries not on track to achieve their NDC commitments: 5; Countries that have insufficient information to determine status: 2.
7. Current NDCs remain seriously inadequate to achieve the climate goals of the Paris Agreement and would lead to a temperature increase of at least 3°C by the end of the century.
8. The COVID-19 recovery packages by governments are unprecedented: roughly US\$12 trillion globally, or 12 % of global gross domestic product (GDP) in 2020.
9. Domestic and international shipping and aviation currently account for around 5 % of global CO₂ emissions and are projected to increase significantly. International emissions from shipping and aviation are not covered under the NDCs and, based on current trends, are projected to consume between 60 and 220 % of allowable CO₂ emissions by 2050.
10. Lifestyle changes are a prerequisite for sustaining reductions in GHG emissions and for bridging the emissions gap. Around two thirds of global emissions are linked to the private household activities according to consumption-based accounting.

EEG would like to congratulate UNEP and the authors on this extraordinary report. We hope countries across the globe remain committed and determined to meet their NDCs, while on the road to recovery.



16th Advancing Equitable Livelihoods in Food Systems

December

EEG Chairperson was invited to attend a virtual dialogue on food systems and food security on 16th December. This was part of the UN DESA Global Policy Dialogue Series and a UN Food Systems Summit Dialogue.

Poverty and food security continue to be major challenges for humanity and in this regard, to support the United Nation's efforts to eradicate hunger and make food available to everyone, UN DESA held this virtual session in the context of rural development and demographic change. The event was attended by internationally reputed thought leaders in the field of food systems, population trends and rural development.

The meet was dynamic and highlighted three key areas of discussions; the impact of covid-19 on food systems and availability to people especially in developing countries; examples of agricultural and non-agricultural technologies that can be used in rural areas for sustainable productivity and implications of people movement on food systems.

17th GUD Annual Meeting

December

In her capacity as a Vice Chair of the Global Urban Development (GUD), EEG Chairperson attended on 17th December the Annual Meeting of Global Urban Development. Some of the key agenda pointers covered in the meeting were:

- 1) to review the progress made by GUD during 2020, especially on two major initiatives (Sustainable Innovation Zones and Sustainable Innovation Communities; and Dubai International Housing Symposium, 3D printed affordable housing with recycled construction waste, and Dubai Expo 2020)
- 2) to re-elect the Board
- 3) to engage in strategic planning for 2021.

To know about GUD, please visit their website: <https://www.globalurban.org/>

20th "For Our Emirates We Plant"

December

Emirates Environmental Group hosted the annual "For Our Emirates We Plant" tree planting campaign 2020 in two locations; the 1st one was held in the morning in the Emirate of Ras Al Khaimah under the patronage and presence of H.E. Engr. Sheikh Salem Bin Sultan Bin Saqr Al-Qasimi, Chairman of the Department of Civil Aviation - Ras Al Khaimah and a member of the Executive Council of the Government of Ras Al Khaimah. The tree planting took place in Skheibar in the Al Minaia area whereby 1,000 Sidr saplings were planted. The 2nd event was conducted in the afternoon in association with the management of Saih Al Salam and Dubai Municipality. It oversaw the planting of 1,000 Miswak trees at Al Qudra Lakes area in the Emirate of Dubai.

"For Our Emirates We Plant" is one of the most innovative projects of EEG that exceptionally integrates EEG's Waste Management & Recycling Campaigns with the urban afforestation programme across the country, targeting all the Emirates. EEG has seamlessly blended its recycling programmes and projects with the annual tree planting programme. It was a delight to see participants involve themselves in this campaign with great enthusiasm and fervor. The pandemic did not deter these committed individuals from participating, for the preservation of environment. There was a sense of accomplishment that one could see amongst these environmental enthusiasts, at having contributed to a great cause. In appreciation of their dedicated work to protect the environment, EEG honours them annually with a chance to plant a native tree in their names. This year, "For our Emirates We Plant" project saw the participation of 92 companies, 36 schools and 240 families.

Upon the conclusion of this event, EEG has planted 2,100,789 indigenous trees across the different Emirates since 2007, which has helped in the sequestration of 12,388 Metric Tonnes of CO₂ emissions annually.



Green December Campaign

EEG concluded the final recycling project of the year which was mainly conducted for its student members - "Green December". This waste management project is exclusively rolled out for student members. The aim of this campaign is to encourage and inspire students to inculcate the habit of recycling items as a daily practice. The collections saw paper lead the way with a whopping 8,395 kg. In other recyclable items, 501 kg plastic, 57 kg aluminum cans, 320 kg glass, 200 pieces mobile phones and 53 pieces toner cartridges were collected, thus overwhelmingly surpassing the targets set. EEG congratulates the students who managed to score the highest collections and secure for themselves a complementary membership with EEG for the year 2021. Welcomes on board and we look forward to your active engagement in our projects and programmes during the coming year.



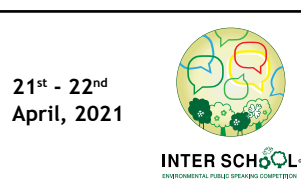
Russel Group University Dubai Campus Opening Soon

The University of Birmingham, an establishment by Queen Victoria in 1900 is one of the top ranked universities in the world and a prestigious member of Russell Group of UK universities. Its quality of education is recognised with the highest rating of Gold in the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), a UK government initiative. Officially licensed by the UAE's Ministry of Education through the Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA) and listed in the Global Top 100 for graduate employment outcomes, the University has announced the opening of its new, flagship Russel Group University campus in Dubai Academic City in September 2021. It will be an academic home for up to 2,900 students, a community for Birmingham alumni in the region and hub for community outreach and engagement activities. Congratulating the University for a new campus set to offer world-leading and research-oriented education, EEG Chairperson spoke about the new sustainability opportunities that this campus will bring to the youth in the UAE. "Emirates Environmental Group believes in the transformative change that empowered youth can bring to the world. It is my delight to join hands with University of Birmingham and look forward to arm them with effective tools to contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Goals", she said in her featuring video message on 15th December. The unique architecture of the campus has also rooted sustainable practices to promote environmental sustainability and to deliver a modern campus that is capable of adapting to changes in technology, learning and climate. This data and innovative technology will be integrated with the curriculum across various subject disciplines, and utilised by industry partners through research projects, consultancy opportunities and student internships.

RIT's 2nd Advisory Board Meeting

Rochester Institute of Technology invited EEG Chairperson on 21st December for its virtual 2nd Advisory Board Meeting. The members discussed the key highlights of the achievements and challenges in the last 8 months of 2020. Since its foundation in 1829, RIT continues to shape the future of the youth through creativity and innovation. As an engaged, intellectual and socially-conscious community, it is leveraging the power of technology, arts, and design for the greater good with wide range of academic opportunities to its students, including a leading research programme. In the board meeting, RIT introduced the two new programmes on City Sciences and Data Analytics under the research department. Additionally, as a mandate part of RIT Dubai's Coop Programme for the undergraduate students to complete internship, successful rate of completion was observed. The advisory board will therefore, further enhance the internship opportunities for the students to provide relevant and advanced skills and knowledge.

Upcoming Educational Programme



Local News

UAE to Raise Clean Energy Use to 50% by 2050

The UAE Government has taken sustainable development goal no 7 - Affordable and Clean Energy, very seriously and is leaving no stone unturned to make this happen through strict policies and awareness programmes to implement them. The Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MOCCA) officially launched the country's Environmental Policy on 16th December with the aim to raise the use of clean energy in UAE to 50% by 2050. The policy was approved by the Cabinet in late November this year. It stands on eight main pillars: Climate change; environmental protection; air quality; food safety and security; sustainable local crop production; sustainable local livestock production; integrated waste management; and environmentally sound chemicals management. "Each pillar identifies a host of initiatives aimed at achieving its goals," said H.E. Dr Abdullah Belhaif Al Nuaimi, Minister of Climate Change and Environment. The policies were developed in cooperation with strategic partners after a thorough review of the environmental situation in the country. Please click to read more, <https://www.khaleejtimes.com/news/uae-to-raise-clean-energy-use-to-50-by-2050-under-environment-policy>

International News

Climate Emergency Declared by UN Secretary General

"Can anybody still deny that we are facing a dramatic emergency?," said the UN Secretary General who also declared an authoritative warning about the future of the planet at the Climate Ambition Summit on 12th December. The world has completed five years of Paris Agreement on climate change with no significant progress. The UN Secretary General on this occasion strongly called every country to declare climate emergency till it achieves carbon neutrality. We are indeed at the brim of another crisis and without any ignorance, every country needs to be firm on their climate actions for the sake of future generations. The Summit was co-convened by the UN, the UK COP Presidency and France, in partnership with Chile and Italy to bring leaders together to make new commitments towards the Paris Agreement. Britain, co-hosting the summit, made one of the clearest new commitments, announcing it would stop direct government support for overseas fossil fuel projects. Additionally, many member states renewed their pledges for faster action. Argentina, Barbados, Canada, Colombia, Iceland and Peru were among 15 countries who shifted from "incremental" to "major" increases in their emissions pledges. Watch the speech in the link below, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oDRP_garcRO





UN Secretary General delivers Major Address on the State of the Planet

UNEP NEWS

The UN Secretary-General delivered a major address on 2nd December, on the state of the planet, the message being very clear that our planet is in a serious climate crisis and biodiversity loss. He highlighted the urgency to reverse the situation and take corrective measures before the planet breaks down. The speech was delivered at Columbia University in New York. He urged that with humanity waging war on nature, nature is retorting with dire consequences. It is critical to work in harmony with nature and transform the world for better living conditions. While many countries have committed to carbon neutrality, the pace needs to pick up full steam, thus enabling the transformation to net zero emissions by 2050. He emphasised on the need to work in solidarity to tread on a path towards a safer, sustainable and equitable future. Please click to read more, <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/un-secretary-general-speaks-state-planet>



The 59th GEF Council Meeting

UNCCD NEWS

“Land restoration benefits people and nature. A restoration economy will create millions of green jobs and enhance humanity’s resilience to future shocks and stresses. Revitalising terrestrial ecosystems, such as farmlands, grasslands, forests and wetlands rebuilds their ability to store carbon and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Done well, it can also protect habitat for biodiversity, build soil fertility and reduce water scarcity”, said the UNCCD Executive Secretary at the 59th Global Environment Facility (GEF) Council Meeting. He further highlighted that the G-20 leaders have launched the Global Initiative on Reducing Land Degradation and Enhancing Conservation of Terrestrial Habitats to prevent, halt, and reverse land degradation. The G-20 initiative shows an unprecedented resolve by the world’s largest economies to conserve the terrestrial environment, and is expected to focus on capacity building, engaging the private sector and civil society. A study of all the global initiatives to restore degrading land shows that close to one billion of the two billion hectares of land that is degraded can be restored. “Building on existing initiatives, we share the ambition to achieve a 50% reduction of degraded land by 2040, on a voluntary basis” states the Leaders’ Declaration issued in November 2020. Please click to read more, <https://www.unccd.int/news-events/59th-gef-council-meeting-remarks-unccd-executive-secretary>

IUCN World Conservation Congress to be held from 3rd to 11th September in 2021

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the French government will be holding the IUCN World Conservation Congress from 3rd to 11th September in 2021 in Marseille. Biodiversity ensures natural sustainability for all life on the planet. The wide variety of species on earth whether animals, plants, microscopic organisms are vital to keep the biodiversity alive.

The loss of biodiversity is the loss for humans and economic well-being. And this correlated link has been accentuated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The IUCN Congress will be a key reminder for conserving biodiversity and will highlight the need to focus on outlining new guidelines for biodiversity. The Congress that is held every 4 years, gives IUCN’s 1,400 Member organisations, to collaboratively discuss and find solutions to the pressing issue of nature conservation.

Please click to read more, <https://www.iucn.org/news/secretariat/202012/iucn-world-conservation-congress-be-held-3-11-september-2021-marseille>

EEG MEMBERS’ UPDATE

EEG Welcomed 1 renewed academic member, 11 new student members & 15 renewed student members in the month of December 2020

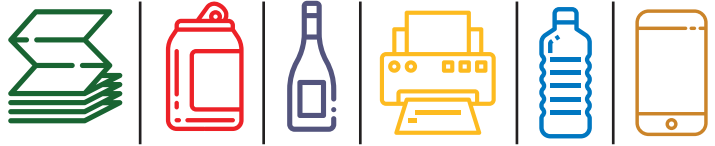
ACADEMIC MEMBERSHIP

Cambridge International School	Renewal		
STUDENT MEMBERSHIP			
Aditya Petwal	New	Aritra Ghosh	Renewal
Amanah Khan	New	Kavyashree	Renewal
Archana Praveen	New	Laksana Karthikkeyan	Renewal
Archita Amol Panicker	New	Nia Treeza Tony	Renewal
Faraz Mohamed	New	Pranav Viswanath Iyer	Renewal
Krishnaveni	New	Prisha Thakkar	Renewal
Mahasen Khalid Moudallali	New	Rathan Ramakrishna	Renewal
Melvin Sharees	New	Reet Oberoi	Renewal
Merlin Sharees	New	Sanat Malhotra	Renewal
Rathan Ramakrsihna	New	Shivani Adduri	Renewal
Sanmith Shetty	New	Sibani Malhotra	Renewal
Aashika Singh	Renewal	Trisha Sayani	Renewal
Aniruddh Krovvidi	Renewal	Uttkarsh Singh	Renewal



The collection of materials for recycling in the month of December resulted in the following benefits:

- » GHG Reductions 350 (MTCO₂)
- » Saving of 2,313 Million BTU of Energy
- » Saving of 515 m³ of Landfill Space
- » Saving of 1,672 trees from being felled
- » Saving of 885 Gallons of Gasoline



PAPER COLLECTION CAMPAIGN	School	Quantity (kg)	Families	Quantity (kg)
EEG has collected 87,030 kg of Paper from 225 participants during the month of December 2020, an increase of 21% compared to November 2020. We encourage our participants to be actively involved in our Campaigns in the year 2021 so as to enable us to work towards our target. The Top Collectors were	Heriot Watt University Dubai Campus	2,710	Nia Treeza Tony	4,740
	Delhi Private School Sharjah	1,170	Deep Shah	1,000
	The Millennium School	833	Madiha Javed	950
CAN COLLECTION CAMPAIGN	School	Quantity (kg)	Families	Quantity (kg)
EEG has collected 184 kg of Aluminum Cans from 16 participants during the month of December 2020, a decrease of 95% compared to November 2020. The top collectors for the month were:	Our Own High School - Al Warqaa (Boys)	12	Trisha Nikhilkumar Sayani	56
	-	-	Varun Pabreja	44
	-	-	-	-
PLASTIC COLLECTION CAMPAIGN	School	Quantity (kg)	Families	Quantity (kg)
EEG has collected 5,276 kg of Plastic from 114 participants during the month of December 2020 a decrease of 21% compared to November 2020. We encourage our participants to reduce the amount of plastic ending in landfills by increasing their collections in the year 2021. The top collectors for the month were:	The British School Al Khubairat	180	Nia Treeza Tony	283
	Sheikhah Bint Saeed School	140	Fatima Abdullah Mohammed Abdulla Al Dhanhani	120
	Delhi Private School Sharjah	90	Prisha Thakkar	101
TONER COLLECTION CAMPAIGN	School	Quantity (kg)	Families	Quantity (kg)
EEG has collected 191 pcs of Toners from 7 participant during the month of December 2020, an increase of 19% compared to November 2020. We encourage our participants to be active in the year 2021. The Top collectors were:	-	-	Nityashri Sankaran	60
	-	-	Rathan Ramakrishna	53
	-	-	Akshita Bhatia	11
GLASS COLLECTION CAMPAIGN	School	Quantity (Kg)	Families	Quantity (Kg)
EEG has collected 4,663 kg of Glass Bottles from 45 participants during the month of December 2020, an increase of 72% compared to November 2020. We encourage our participants to collect more in the year 2021. The Top collectors were:	New York University Saadiyat Island Abu Dhabi	2,600	Aashika Singh	140
	American University of Sharjah	125	Jacian Bernard Rego, Jane Benedicta Rego & Sahasra Magesh Kumar (Tie)	50
	-	-	Hassan Abdullah Hassan	40
MOBILE COLLECTION CAMPAIGN	School	Quantity (Kg)	Families	Quantity (Kg)
EEG has collected 235 pcs of Mobile Phones from 5 participants during the month of December 2020, a decrease of 86% compared to November 2020. We encourage our participants to be active in the year 2021. The Top collectors were:	-	-	Shivani Adduri	150
	-	-	Aditya Manoj	50
	-	-	Ahmad Shaeel Akhtar	30

