

EEG EDU NEWS

Together for a Better Environment®



مجموعة عمل الإمارات للبيئة
EMIRATES ENVIRONMENTAL
GROUP



March 2021
Issue 03



21st ANNUAL INTER-SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC SPEAKING COMPETITION

21st-22nd
APRIL

UPCOMING EVENTS

CLICK ON THE ISSUE

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"

Material	Quantity	Material	Quantity
Paper	500 kg	Plastic	200 kg
Aluminum	100 kg	Steel	200 kg
Cardboard	50 kg	Other	100 kg
Textiles	25 kg	Other	100 kg
Other	25 kg	Other	100 kg
Other	25 kg	Other	100 kg
Other	25 kg	Other	100 kg

Your phones can restore Nature!
GREEN CALL PROJECT

Join EEG's
Green Call Project
21st March - 21st April 2021
Help our Environment by recycling your old mobile phones.
Exchange old Mobile Phones, Tablets or Tablets for an opportunity to plant a tree sapling in December.

35 phones = 35 trees
75 phones = 75 trees
150 phones = 150 trees

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REACH OUT TO EEG FOR MORE DETAILS



BRING YOUR RECYCLABLES:
Every SATURDAY, 9:00AM to 4:00PM
Villa No. JMR. 68, Jumeirah 1, between old Dubai Zoo & Beach Centre.
For more info, call EEG at 04 344 8622, or email eege@emirates.net.ae - www.eeg-uae.org



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Habiba Al Mar'ashi

The second month of the year 2021 has already come and gone. Despite the fact that the pandemic is raging through globally, EEG's office was filled with busyness, exciting news and eventful days. Just as the nation is striving to vaccinate the majority of the population, here at EEG, we are taking the extra effort and going the extra mile to encourage and urge the people towards environmental sustainability. Other than our continued attendance, participation and contribution on numerous platforms and webinars, we successfully conducted the First Panel Discussion of the year 2021 and the annual Can Collection Day campaign.

To progress forward and accomplish the goals of sustainability, it is vital to forge great partnerships and co-operate on projects, discussions and campaigns. To actively involve and understand the progress, EEG a founding member of the Emirates Green Building Council attended and was very much present at the launch of the Councils Women's Network on **4th February**; the month also held a deep appreciation at EEG as the nation celebrated the 24th National Environmental Day on 4th February under the theme "Green Recovery". On this momentous day, EEG was proud to speak at Environmental Center for Arab Cities Virtual Symposium. EEG appreciates the efforts of the Environment Department of Dubai Municipality for organising and hosting this event and inviting me to share my insights on carbon footprint and its impact on climate change.

As the pandemic shifted the general public's focus to online communications and platforms, we have also adapted to this evolving technologically progressing world. EEG joined several virtual forums of the UN food Systems Summit (UNFSS) on 1st and 4th **February**. The forums opened the platform to dialogues and to receive meaningful insights and feedback from a field of experts. These Action Tracks addressed the challenges encountered by individuals in the food systems and discussed ideas and solution towards sustainable consumption patterns. On 18th and 19th of **February**, EEG also attended two webinars organised by the Consumers International and UNEP for the global launch of three key messages to improve consumer information on plastic packaging. I do urge you to read more under EEG news about these webinars as this could influence your future decisions.

While we do take pride in participating in these external webinars and give our suggestions, we are delighted to let you know that EEG

hosted its first virtual panel discussion of the year on **21st February**. The discussion touched on a crucial topic, the interrelation between sustainability and the healthcare system. The panel comprised of professionals working in the field of healthcare, facilities management, and academia. The pandemic has allowed us to assess our global healthcare systems and many are now realising its shortcomings. The diversity of the panelists' work allowed the audience to receive and share insights based on different perspectives.

Discouraging and discussing only get us so much in terms of progress. The only true way to make towards progress is through community and action oriented projects and programmes. It is with a happy heart, I am announcing to you that, EEG hosted its 25th Annual Can Collection Day on **25th February**. A Silver Jubilee worthy achievement for EEG's first recycling collection campaign that has its root in 1997. A total of 1,500 kg of Aluminium Cans was collected on the day. A big thank you to all of those who participated and helped make EEG's Can Collection Day a success. The organising team comprising of EEG staff and Volunteers from member companies and supporting government entities worked hard to spread the word and secure participation. EEG also participated in consecutive radio interviews with 6 radio channels to spread awareness about EEG's Can Collection Day and shed light on the environmental and economic value of waste recycling.

February was a month full of enthusiasm and progress. The registrations are coming in fast for the Environmental Drawing Competition that we rolled out in January and I call upon all schools to encourage their students to release their passion for the environment and join the competition. Our next big event is the Inter School Public Speaking Competition (ISEPSC) which is scheduled to take place in April. We need to do our best to motivate the students towards education and learning in this pandemic. To know more, please read the inside pages and do visit our social media platform for more information.

As for our Community Programmes; the first phase of "One Root, One Communi-tree" (OROC) project is also progressing magnificently with many participants already achieving their targets and are eligible to plant trees under their names! We have so much news to share, but I will conclude my note by saying that, only with this tremendous effort and your continued support can we truly progress. Working together, as unison is the only way to advance towards a better environment.



UN Food Systems Summit 2021

In the month of February, the UN Food Systems Summit 2021 organised a series of virtual public forums called Action Tracks devised to receive meaningful insights and feedback by field experts, activists to concerned individuals.

1) Action Track 4 - Advance Equitable Livelihoods

On 1st February, EEG a member of the SFS Programme attended the 4th action track titled “Advance Equitable livelihoods” addressing the challenges encountered by individuals in the food system that are particularly underprivileged in terms of their gender, cultural and monetary background. The event highlighted the importance of approaching issues of climate change and hunger crisis simultaneously due to their interdependent nature.

The dire need for a robust food system was exceptionally evident in 2020 as the pandemic put the under nourished and under paid at great risk. After multiple revisions and inputs from global experts, the Action Track Team composed 12 “Game-changing categories” for a holistic approach to combat discrepancies in the food system: such as Institutionalising rights, Building social dialogue and empowerment of concerned parties, Strengthening the agency through education of the subject, Ensure compliance with laws and regulations, Development and reform of policy, Overall advocacy, Business, innovation and technology, Equitable investment, Data management, Child focused interventions, Livelihood support and diversification, and Social protection schemes

The interaction segment called for experts to weigh in on important topics in the wider discussion of food systems such as women empowerment which can be elevated through access to markets, savings and reproductive rights to name a few.

2) Action Track 2 - Shifting to Sustainable Consumption Public Forum

On 3rd February, EEG attended another public forum which was organised by the United Nations Food System Summit (UNFSS) in which ideas and solutions were presented to reach a healthy and sustainable food system. Members from different organisations collaborated with the public to present ideas. These were defended in short structured debates with inclusion of questions from the audience. In this forum the first solution for a healthier diet was to focus on institutions as many people take in their main meal at their place of work. Be it school, university, government, corporate or any other type of institution. This needs to be multiplied and also used for educational purposes to establish a culture of healthy eating. The inclusion of sustainability as a major factor in national dietary guides taking into consideration countries’ circumstances was the other issue discussed. These guidelines are to function as a foundation to base future policies on.

Lastly in order to reduce food waste, the 50/50/30 plan was presented. The goal is to get 50 countries to commit to achieve 50% waste reduction by 2030. With a clear goal and proper measurements, this will provide an example of where the waste is produced and what measures will be effective. With the help of the audience, questions and flaws were discussed and the forum ended with an appeal to all participants to send in their ideas for the UNFSS2021.

3) Food Systems Summit process - online survey on game-changing solutions

On 4th February, EEG took part in an online survey that was connected to the 3rd Global Conference of the SFS Programme (Sustainable Food Systems). The Sustainable Food Systems (SFS) Programme is a multi-stakeholder partnership focused on catalysing more sustainable food consumption and production patterns. It was launched in October 2015 to promote SCP (Sustainable Consumption and Production, also Sustainable Development Goal 12) patterns in the area of food and agriculture. It is co-led by Switzerland, Costa Rica and WWF, with the support of a Multi-stakeholder Advisory Committee (MAC) with 20 members from five different stakeholder clusters, including government agencies, civil society organisations, research and technical institutions, UN agencies and other international organisations, and the private sector. Furthermore, the SFS Programme currently has over 150 partners from all stakeholder groups around the globe. The Programme promotes a holistic approach, taking into account the interconnections and trade-offs between all elements and actors in food systems.

The aim of the survey was to collect ideas on potential “game-changing solutions” through a series of short online surveys. On the basis of the ideas collected, a “solutions menu” is to be developed as one of the key outcomes of the Food Systems Summit. The survey responses were to be tied to the conclusions of the 3rd global conference of the SFS Programme, which contains 25 recommendations on accelerating sustainable food systems transformation through multi-stakeholder collaboration, science, holistic policies, investment, consumers and public procurement.

OECD Engagements

EEG joined a couple of engagements with OECD:

1) OECD: Unleashing Sustainable Investments

On 2nd February, the OECD session on the topic of Unleashing sustainable investments: Insights from the Global Investors for Sustainable Development (GISD) report. The session included a panel discussion and presentations by multiple speakers. Invited were the Director of Finance for Sustainable Development Office at UN, the Vice Chairman of Corporate Investment banking, Global Head of sustainable finance at Standard Chartered and the head of power and infrastructure at Capital Markets Investec Bank. It was held with cooperation with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).

The report stated 64 issues, which needed to be addressed, if the SDGs are to succeed. The opening statement made it clear, that the SDGs can only succeed with the contribution of large financial investments. On the other hand, they also provide an opportunity for investors to see long term returns. Over the past years, the investments have reached an all-time high. Yet they are still not enough. The goal was to search for opportunities for private and public investors to work together to reduce inequality, poverty and rebuild a better, more sustainable future. The consensus was on 3 major points. To inform and capitalise on investment opportunities, to standardise the process of investing in projects furthering the SDGs and to democratise investment, meaning to focus on developing markets.

The SDGs need investments of trillions of dollars to be achieved. The OECD predicts that around US\$ 2.5 trillion per year until 2030 are necessary to combat global warming. However, it calculated also US\$ 10 trillion of investment opportunities in only 3 of the SDGs alone. In order to move the capitals in the right directions, there have to be multiple bureaucratic barriers to be alleviated, both on private and public sector sides. The panel discussed the need for standardised systems and fewer regulations in order to effectively move capital from the developed countries over to the emerging markets.

The last point was on where investment was most impactful and how to incentivise investors to move their focus to developing countries. Green bonds, products and opportunities linked to the SDGs need to be created in these regions to move investments. For private investors, the goal has to shift from short term to long term returns which benefit them and the SDGs.



2) Mobilising Institutional Investors for Climate Finance

The OECD hosted a session on mobilising institutional investors for climate finance during the Blended Finance & Impact Week 2021. EEG Chairperson attended on 4th February a session which discussed the immediate need to scale up climate-related investments in developing countries. As the COVID-19 crisis is further increasing climate investment gaps, the need to mobilise institutional investors has exponentially increased as a result. Positively, institutional investors are making bolder commitments to climate change and are looking for ways to tap into new investment opportunities that could deliver high returns. However, the issue is that developing countries are still facing numerous challenges in attracting climate finance to development projects.

The discussion highlighted the key bottlenecks faced by institutional investors when investing in developing countries on climate driven projects. Panelists mentioned various hurdles faced by investors such as transaction costs, fiscal policy regulations, political stability, market transparency, currency and few others. Moreover, panelists also shared best practices and examples of successful climate investments that could be replicated across various developing countries. Interestingly, the panelists agreed on the need for more innovation in finance for development projects.

3rd February Radio Interview with DED RAK

Nearing EEG's annual Can Collection Day, EEG Chairperson was interviewed by the Ras Al Khaimah Department of Economic Development on the Al Eqtisadiyah show on 3rd February. The topic of the interview was the importance of waste recycling and its environmental and economic value. During this interview, EEG Chairperson highlighted the common mission of the UAE and EEG in preserving the environment through proper waste management and recycling campaigns and projects. She spoke about how EEG aims to reach out to all sectors of the society in the UAE. EEG Chairperson also spoke about several types of materials that EEG collects such as glass, plastic, aluminum, paper, toner and e-waste as well as the process of recycling after collection. Furthermore, the importance of recycling aluminum was stressed upon as we neared the annual Can Collection Day. A final message to the listeners focused on the environmental value that is gained from recycling and also the economic and social value it adds to our communities.

4th February Virtual Symposium for National Environment Day 2021

EEG chairperson was invited to speak at a virtual symposium on National Environment Day 2021 hosted by Environment Department of Dubai Municipality and the Environmental Center for Arab Cities. Under the seminar's slogan of 'Green Recovery' EEG chairperson gave a presentation titled "Carbon Footprint & Its Impact on Climate Change" she shared important information about the understanding of carbon footprint and its impact on climate change. She shed light on how carbon footprint is a part of the Ecological footprint and an essential indicator of environmental sustainability. Moreover, she emphasized on how Gulf countries face more challenging situations as the economies are highly dependent on gas, oil and petrochemical industries. Valuable insights on ways to curb carbon emissions were also shared by the chairperson. Lastly, the presentation elaborated on progress made by the UAE to curb emissions through its various initiatives and programmes.

4th February EmiratesGBC Women's Network Launch

EEG attended on 4th February the launch of the Emirates Green Building Council's Women's Network (EWN). The network aims to support the UAE tackle UN SDG 5, Gender Equality, which calls for the full participation of women and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of political and economic decision-making. The EmiratesGBC, which works to advance green building principles for sustainable development in the UAE, now aims to empower women in the construction industry as well.

The platform is dedicated to knowledge-sharing, networking and mentoring as well as celebrating positive female role models in the industry. The launch began with an introduction by Sheikha Shamma bint Sultan bin Khalifa Al Nahyan, Honorary President, EmiratesGBC & CEO of Alliances for Global Sustainability. She highlighted women's role in advancing sustainability and the need for the EWN platform to support an ethos where women and men can work in collaboration and support each other to progress. The session also hosted a series of panelists for a discussion based on gender equality and its position in the construction industry, the government sector, legislations in the UAE and the wider MENA region. The lack of women in the construction industry was highlighted at the beginning of the discussion.

The panelists mentioned that this is not due to barriers but maybe the low attractiveness of jobs within the industry. It was agreed upon by the panelists that the UAE has been a leader in promoting gender equality. The government has executed several legislations that showcase its intention to empower women in the UAE. Additionally, the discussions included how gender equality not only affects women, but men as well. Gender equality requires the support of women and men if it is to progress.

4th February Snapshot Survey for UNEP's 50th Anniversary

The year 2022 will mark the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP). The decision to establish UNEP was taken in Stockholm during the first UN meeting at which civil society organisations had the right to address the Member States directly. Since then, the civil society has played a key role in the development of UNEP's strategies and outputs and in their reach and impact.



The UNEP Executive Director is preparing the commemoration of this anniversary “making use of contributions from relevant stakeholders.” UNEP developed a strategy for UNEP@50 to be adopted at the first session of UNEA 5 which took place in February 2021. The current draft strategy calls for UNEP to undertake broad outreach efforts to strengthen the active engagement of civil society and the general public, accredited NGOs and major groups and stakeholders in the commemoration activities, with a view to empower them to influence and feel ownership for UNEP@50.

As a first step UNEP conducted a Snapshot Survey that EEG participated in on 4th February to gather initial insights on a range of issues, which will initiate discussions on civil society input towards UNEP@50.

5th February *GISD meeting discusses sector-based sustainability rating metrics*

EEG attended an online platform of the second Task Team session of the Global Investors for Sustainable Development (GISD) to discuss the status of the work process related to its sustainable reporting and integrated metrics project. The focus of the Alliance is to deliver concrete solutions to scale-up long-term finance and investment in sustainable development. GISD’s work is supported by a Strategy Group appointed by the CEOs and by United Nations system partners coordinated by UN DESA.

There were several discussion points on the agenda: Overview of the metrics project, Rationale & objective, Sectoral coverage, Next steps - timeline, milestones, resources and the IFRS Foundation Roundtable. GISD members leading a sector provided an overview of the 8 sectors covered and shared initial reflections on their approach. Institutional partners including UNEP FI and UNGC offered their support to the sector leads.

The outcomes of the meeting were the following:

- Participants are to recommend sector-specific metrics for corporate disclosure that investors can use to align portfolios with sustainable development
- UNEP FI will provide the main metrics per industry from the main standard setters and UNGC will come back with suggestions on how to link this work with its CFO task-force.
- Recommendations from the desk research will be wrapped up in the first quarter. The second quarter will focus on consultations with standard setters and other companies.
- At the initiative of the World Bank, a roundtable is being organised mid-March that will brief GISD members on the results of the IFRS’s consultation, and form a consolidated alliance position on the topic.

Fifth Session of the UN Environment Assembly

EEG participated in several preparations in the sidelines of UNEA-5:

1) EEG Participates in GMGSF Consultation Process

In preparation of the virtual Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (GMGSF) from the 9th to 11th of February, EEG participated in a consultation session on the main message and joint statement of GMGSF to UNEA 5.1. In this regard, EEG provided its recommendations to the zero draft of the statement as well as completed a survey on the main building blocks to this statement.

Zero Draft

The zero draft of the statement was developed with the following parameters in mind:

1. Inclusion of regional statements so all regions are adequately covered
2. Avoiding long-winding, general descriptions of environmental issues
3. Thematic blocks developed according to issues included in the agendas of UNEA 5.1 and UNEA 5.2

The main aim of EEG’s recommendations to the zero draft was to include global reports and initiatives such as the IPBES and the Montevideo Environmental Law Programme as well as the avoidance of any regional disparities.

Survey

The survey offered EEG a platform to include themes that it believes UNEP must include as part of the GMGSF as well as UNEA. EEG added the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and the Montevideo Programme as these will be of utmost importance in the upcoming decade i.e. 2021 - 2030. EEG also recommended that the allocated consultation time at GMGSF be used for the following:

1. Recognising emerging environmental issues
2. Discussing the post-COVID recovery and how members and stakeholders can participate
3. Encouraging member states to recognise where they stand in terms of their NDCs
4. Facilitating partnerships and collaborations

2) Meeting with the UNEA President

EEG participated on 16th February, in a virtual meeting with the UNEA President that was held to discuss and reflect on the results and feedback on the Global Major Groups and Stakeholder Forum (GMGSF) meeting. Concerns such as lack of participation, access to content and status on policy reform were raised by co-facilitators of different groups. Solutions like holding separate meetings with the CPR team and discussing concerns with UNEP were suggested. The meeting concluded with a consensus of working towards eliminating these issues.



3) Book presentation for UNEPs 50th anniversary

As part of the 5th United Nations Environmental Assembly (UNEA), a book, 'The untold History of UNEP' by Director of the Center for Governance and Sustainability and Associate Professor at University of Massachusetts Boston, McCormack Graduate School was presented on **17th February**. EEG was present at this launch and the following discussion.

The book represents the author's desire to create a memory for all the people who worked hard on creating an organisation, with an ambitious mandate that finds multilateral solutions to combat environmental problems. It depicts the beginning of the idea, through the inception of UNEP until the present day and what challenges it faced and how they were overcome.

Multiple people were invited to give their opinions and insights into the history of UNEP and its potential future. The former Director in the Division of Environmental Policy Implementation at UNEP shared how difficult it was to establish a headquarter of UNEP in Kenya. The president of UNEA 5 stressed the urgency of the current problems and the Executive Director of UNEP congratulated the author for her outstanding work. While UNEP has been growing stronger, there is still a lot of work to be done. It has to keep on modernising and working to provide the world with a solution for the 3 major crises: Climate change, loss of biodiversity and pollution.

4) Building a global vision to tackle plastic pollution

During the preparations for UNEA-5, EEG on **17th February** took part in the UN webinar 'Ocean Action for Sustainability'. With distinguished guests representing governments from Europe and Africa, UNEP, NGOs and activists, the issues of ocean pollution, overfishing and the impact of climate change were discussed.

Plastic is a relatively new product, but in the short time that humans have been using it, it has become one of the greatest problems. Without a holistic, circular approach, our mountains of waste will only continue to grow. Multiple ideas for recycling plastic were brought forth but without producers taking responsibility and the world agreeing to a multilateral legal framework; it will be hard to combat this issue. The Flip-flop project, a Dhow made entirely out of plastic and Flip-flops, sails around the world to raise awareness of the huge problem our lifestyle is causing. "Humans wage a suicidal war against nature" said the UN secretary General's special Envoy for the ocean. With overfishing and pollution we are destroying the foundations on which we live and this crisis is not just an ecological one but also a humanitarian one. The newly coined Marine-Gross-Product is estimated at approximately USD 2.5 trillion. Blue economy is nothing new, but we need to strive to make it sustainable.

5) The Value-Chain Approach to action on Sustainable Consumption and Production

In advance of the 5th United Nations Environment Assembly, EEG attended on **19th February** the Value-Chain Approach to action on Sustainable Consumption and Production organised by the Task Group of the International Resource Panel and the One Planet network. The session discussed means to strengthen the science policy interface on sustainable consumption and production (SCP). The approach organises information and data to shape impactful action, making it a practical interface between science on natural resources and action on SCP. By being specific and by engaging all stakeholders, the approach generates solutions that are actionable at various levels by different actors.

The Task Group shared findings from its newly released report about the application of the Value Chain Approach to three critical sectors: food, construction and textiles. The report is a response to UNEA-4 resolution on SCP. The Value-Chain Approach anchors natural-resource use and environmental impacts within the socio-economic reality of production and consumption by drawing on diverse bodies of knowledge. It applies the natural sciences to map resource use and environmental impacts along the value chains of high-impact economic sectors. Then integrates a range of social sciences such as political economy, sociology and anthropology to understand the socio-economic systems within which resource use takes place.

The Value-Chain Approach is the product of the IRP and the One Planet Network Task Group, an 18-month collaboration that was formed in response to the resolution on sustainable consumption and production at the 4th UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-4), it composed of experts on natural-resource use from the IRP and practitioners on sustainable consumption and production from across the One Planet network.

6) The 5th Open-ended meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives & the 5th session of UN Environment Assembly

Emirates Environmental Group participated virtually from the **15th till 17th February** in UNEP's 5th Open-ended meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives held from their Headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya. The meetings purpose were to draft the administrative and budgetary programmes, including the implementation of previously adopted Assembly resolutions and the mid-term strategies for 2022-2025 Budget and Contributions to the meetings of the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

The final decision on the adoption of this draft occurred at the United Nations Environmental Assembly the following week. It was stressed out how Covid-19 pandemic has negatively impacted the progress and work of multilateral organisations towards the SDGs. Despite the meeting being plagued with technical difficulties, a fruitful discussion did take place. There were many points of contention and the members argued long and strongly for their positions. In the spirit of cooperation, the members agreed after day 3 to adopt the drafts to be discussed and decided on at UNEA-5. It was stated that in times of multiple crises that the world is currently facing, UNEA wants to give a strong message, that the world is moving forward while facing these challenges.

After much preparation, the 5th session of UN Environment Assembly held their virtual meeting from 22 to February 23 which the EEG also attended. The goal of the meeting was to adopt administrative and budgetary decision such as the extension of trust funds and the medium-term strategy (MTS) worked out in the OECPR. The recognition of immediate action to combat the three great crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution was echoed by every participant. With the financial stimuli for a recovery and the reminder that business as usual will lead to more of these disasters in the future, there is a will to build back better, greener and more resilient. The countries echoed these sentiments and expressed their support for UNEP and UNEA. The MTS included among others, the manner in which the Executive Director could allocate the budget, the request for UNEP to hire more geographically diverse staff and to finalise the implementation of its mandate from resolution 73/333 to prepare a declaration for the UN high-level meeting. These working documents drafted in the OECPR were unanimously agreed upon. The UNEA will hold its second meeting in person in February 2022.



Meeting with AHK and Germany's Consul General

On 15th & 24th February, EEG held a couple of meetings with the German Emirati Joint Council for Industry and Commerce (AHK) and Germany's Consul General to re-connect and re-establish effective partnerships between the two entities. The collaboration between the two entities began in 2013 and has been ongoing since; EEG is delighted to have been collaborating with AHK in different initiatives of mutual interest and is looking forward to more in the near future. The meeting touched on several issues;

- The German Emirati Joint Council for Industry and Commerce (AHK) to actively participate with EEG in its current programmes and play an active role in \ engaging German companies and community in the UAE in these programmes.
- EEG to reciprocate to join future AHK events and meetings such as the Business Breakfast and Roundtables.

Webinars on Consumer Information on Plastic Packaging

On the 18th and 19th of February, EEG attended two webinars organised by the Consumers International and the UN Environment Programme for the global launch of three key messages to improve consumer information on plastic packaging. The webinars also focused on illuminating discussions by speakers from businesses, governments, standard-setting bodies and labelling organisations from across the globe.

The main focus of the first day of the webinars was the report - "Can I Recycle This? A Global Mapping and Assessment of Standards, Labels and Claims on Plastic Packaging" which is the output of the Consumer Information Programme of the One Planet Network. The main findings of the report are as follows:

1. Businesses should follow the Guidelines for Providing Product Sustainability Information (UN Environment and ITC 2017) in their plastic packaging communications
2. Definitions about the content and reusability of plastic packaging need to be harmonised at a global level
3. Standards, labels, and claims need to better reflect actual conditions
4. The use of the 'chasing arrows' symbol should be restricted to indicating recyclability
5. Informative and verified recycling labels should be adopted and their proper use enforced.

21st February 1st Panel Discussion – Healthcare and Sustainability: The Interrelation

EEG hosted its 1st panel discussion of the year on 21st February under the title of Sustainability and Healthcare: The Interrelation. Moderated by Dr. Mansoor Habib, Consultant for Family Medicine & Occupational Health and Head of Sustainability & Wellbeing at Emirates Integrated Telecommunication Company "du", three distinguished speakers gave insight into the current development and future of the healthcare system with regards to sustainability.

EEG chairperson expressed in her opening remarks that "With the surge in consumption of materials such as masks, sanitisers and medical equipment leading to their improper disposal and has posed a risk and a burden to the environment.

The pandemic has also brought to light the incompetency of recycling and waste management systems globally and the cost which we continue to pay for undermining the importance of these systems".

She said that in order to raise awareness on the topic and to encourage interactions between members of the UAE society, and to relate this global environmental issue to regional and local situations, EEG has organised this Panel discussion to stimulate these polarising conversations and bring to life mechanisms such as waste minimisation of consumption of resources and recycling drives that help elevate the situation.

EEG invited Dr. Ibrahim Mohammed Inuwa, Associate Dean and Professor for Anatomy at Mohammad bin Rashid University, Mr.



Francisco Ramalheira, Director of Business Development and Marketing of ENOVA and Dr. Satish Kosuri, an experienced Doctor who is currently lending his expertise with Aster volunteer's mobile medical services.

It was made clear, that through all the negatives that the pandemic has brought, it did change the awareness and thinking in the healthcare sector. New ways of monitoring health in the population have been implemented and waste disposal has become a major topic to be tackled.

The true future lies however in the education of next generations. Already, they are aware of these issues and with the implementation of topics such as biodiversity and sustainability in the curriculum they should improve and innovate on these current foundations.



22nd Global Alliance on Circular Economy and Resource Efficiency (GACERE) Launch

February

EEG attended a virtual launch event of the Global Alliance on Circular Economy and Resource Efficiency (GACERE). GACERE aims to provide a global stimulus for initiatives related to the circular economy transition, resource efficiency and sustainable consumption and production. The event was hosted by the European Commission on behalf of the European Union (EU) and by UNEP in liaison with UNIDO.

The keynote speaker, the Director-General and Directorate-General for Environment of European Commission, shed light on the reason behind setting up a global alliance. Transitioning to a circular economy and beginning to use resources more efficiently, sustainable consumption, production and development will be achieved hence preserving our beloved environment. The United Nations Under-Secretary General and Executive Director of UNEP additionally stated the 3 planetary crises that call for a circular economy and resource efficiency: climate change, nature and biodiversity lost and pollution. Key driver to these crises are unsustainable consumption and productions consequently threatening our health, prosperity and planet itself. Lastly, an emphasis was placed on the need for coordinated efforts between the GSD Alliance, the G20, G7 and major financial system bodies which would further encourage public sector alignment with the SDGs and scale sustainable finance.

25th Celebrating the 25th Can Collection Day

February

Till this day, we have yet to overcome the challenges and difficult circumstances under the shadow of COVID-19 pandemic. However, that did not stop EEG's annual Can Collection Day to be successfully assembled on the **25th of February**. While implementing and maintaining precautionary safety measures intact, EEG was able to smoothly go forward with the campaign at three sites, i.e. Zabeel Park, Al Barsha Pond Park and Al Mamzar Park in Dubai. Participants from other emirates directly deposited their collections at the EEG office or were collected from them by the EEG team. The programme saw the participation of over 200 entities from all over the UAE who worked hand in hand to ensure the success of this campaign, they represented academic institutions, government entities, corporations, numerous hotels and families. A total of 1,500 kg of Aluminium Cans were collected effectively for recycling, saving 36 m3 of landfill space, mitigating 23 MTCO2 emissions and energy saving of 341 million BTU. The group urges all sectors of the society to continue their contributions by depositing aluminium cans to help achieve the target set for the year 2021, which is to collect 20,000 kg for a greener and cleaner environment. "The commitment and determination of the UAE society to contribute to the cause of sustainability was seen through the increase in the number of participants over the years and through significant number of entities that participated this year in spite of the pandemic restrictions", said Mrs. Al Mar'ashi. EEG is grateful for the continuous support of its co-sponsor, Emirates Global Aluminium (EGA) as well as Dubai Municipality and Dubai Tourism for outreach and venue support. Logistic support from other entities who did not hesitate to join the programme includes AF Construction L.L.C. McDonalds UAE and Tristar. Lucky Group came on board as the recycling partner, whereas Al Murad Group & Gulf News played significant active roles as media partners.

The programme supports a handful of UN SDGs:



25th SDG Good Practices Application

February

In the five years since the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) were adopted in 2015, many governments, UN entities, international and regional organisations and stakeholders have gained in-depth knowledge and expertise and taken innovative steps towards implementing this ambitious global framework. On **25th February**, EEG participated in the 2nd Open Call for SDG Good Practices, Success Stories and Lessons Learned in the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The purpose of the call was to shed light on examples of good practices, including those that could be replicated by others across the globe. Many inspiring breakthroughs and success stories are showing results and impacts all over the world, and several good practices can be replicated and scaled up to address existing gaps and constraints. Bringing this global expertise to scale will be critical to support recovery efforts from the COVID-19 pandemic and to accelerate progress towards the Decade of Action to deliver the SDGs.

Participating in IUCN E-Voting Process

In February 2021, EEG participated in IUCN's electronic vote on selected items on the agenda of the IUCN Congress 2020. The voting process was open from the **27th of January** till the **10th of February 2021**.

EEG was tasked with providing its votes on the following proposals:

1. IUCN Programme 2021 - 2024
2. IUCN Financial Plan 2021 - 2024
3. Audited Financial Statements 2016 - 2019
4. Appointment of External Auditors
5. Membership Dues Guide

EEG was also provided with draft mandates on the following commissions:

- Commission on Education and Communication (CEC)
- Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM)
- Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP)
- Species Survival Commission (SSC)
- World Commission on Environmental Law (WCEL)
- World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA)

The decisions adopted during the e-vote became effective on **10th February 2021**, the date of the closing of the vote.



GEMS Modern Academy Local Advisory Body Meeting

EEG Chairperson as a member of the Local Advisory Body (LAB) of GEMS Modern Academy, attended a meeting on 4th February. The meeting included discussions on updates at the school with regards to student welfare, teacher professional development, parent development and development plans for children of determination. EEG Chairperson joined discussions on the importance of integrating sustainability reporting to identify, prioritise and solve the material issues that the school is facing. The meeting proceeded with winners of the CBL 21-2020 sharing their project with the LAB members. The members concluded the meeting with several action plans set in place and also successfully introduced a new Chairperson for the LAB.

UN News



Combating Desertification in the Arab world

While the UN held its 5 sessions of the Environmental Assembly, Egypt invited stakeholders from NGOs, governments, academic institutions and the private sector to the Second Arab Land Conference from February 24-22. The conference was held in Cairo under the patronage of the Egyptian Minister of Housing, Utilities and Urban Communities, and organised by the Housing and Building National Research Centre (HBRC) represented by the Urban Training and Studies Institute (UTI) in partnership with UN-Habitat, the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN), the World Bank (WB) and the Dubai Land Department and in Collaboration with the UN Conference to Combat Desertification. Discussed were subjects such as displaced People's access to land for durable solutions, Capacity Development Progress in North Africa and land as a human right.

UNCCD
NEWS



Climate change court cases rise, the adaptation gap and more

Covid19- and its impacts were addressed in the letter by UNEP's executive director in his annual report. The UNEP released its Gap report, which shows the difference between the calculated necessary changes to combat climate change and the current development in those areas. The UNEP can show success during 2020 in multiple areas of achieving the goals of the Paris climate change accord. Court cases against violations of environmental protection regulations are getting more frequent and UNEP is helping communities to receive compensation through legal systems. In Kenya, the support over years by UNEP has helped a community to obtain a judgement for 13\$ million in compensation. Additionally, UNEP supported over 50 countries with adaptation plans to climate change and created the AGRI3fund to mobilise 1\$ billion in finance for nature and climate-positive agriculture and forestry. Extensive data on biodiversity was collected to further environmental protection programmes and almost all countries are now part of the Basel convention. This convention bounds its members to control their plastic waste management more tightly in addition to the control of hazardous waste.

UNEP
NEWS

EEG MEMBERS UPDATE

EEG Welcomed 2 renewed academic members, 6 new student members & 12 renewed student members in the month of February 2021

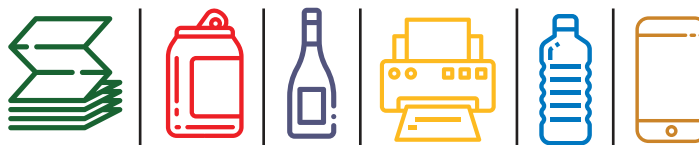
ACADEMIC MEMBERSHIP

Gems Modern Academy	Renewal	Mayoor Private School LLC	Renewal
STUDENT MEMBERSHIP			
Abhay Dinesh	New	Aditya Mallya	Renewal
Aditi Mahesh Parab	New	Ananya Sharma	Renewal
Rithvik Singh	New	Daniel Paul Mascarenhas	Renewal
Riti Dinesh	New	Lavanya Kasturia	Renewal
Shreya Goel	New	Misha Anand	Renewal
Ashay Jain	New	Nolan Peter Mascarenhas	Renewal
Sreelekshmi Subhash	Renewal	Saif Abdul Jalil Al Saad	Renewal
Vandana Subramanian	Renewal	Samreen Ratheesan	Renewal
Saheer Vidya Kumar	Renewal	Shradha H. Shenoy	Renewal



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

- » **GHG Reduction 220 (MTCO₂)**
- » **Saving of 1,747 Million BTU of Energy**
- » **Saving of 411 m³ of Landfill Space**
- » **Saving of 1,252 trees from being felled**
- » **Saving of 1,922 Gallons of Gasoline**



PAPER COLLECTION CAMPAIGN	Schools	Quantity (kg)	Individuals	Quantity (kg)
"EEG has collected 48,076 kg of Paper from 174 participants during the month of February 2021, a decrease of 6% compared to January 2021. We urge our participants to be actively involved in our Campaigns in the year 2021 to enable us to achieve our targets. The Top Collectors were:	Our Own High School - Al Warqaa (Boys)	3,695	Kriti Kamath	1,122
	American School of Dubai, Al Barsha	650	Anishka Sunil	560
	Gems Modern Academy	600	Lacksana Karthikeyan	540
CAN COLLECTION CAMPAIGN	Schools	Quantity (kg)	Individuals	Quantity (kg)
EEG collected 1,631 kg of Aluminum Cans from 91 participants during the month of February 2021, an increase of 1,673% compared to January 2021. The top collectors for the month were:	New York University Saadiyat Island Abu Dhabi	35	Madhav Manoj Vachali	18
	Our Own High School - Al Warqaa (Boys)	12	Madiha Javed	16
	-	-	-	-
PLASTIC COLLECTION CAMPAIGN	Schools	Quantity (kg)	Individuals	Quantity (kg)
EEG has collected 4,971 kg of Plastic from 121 participants during the month of February 2021 a decrease of 9% compared to January 2021. 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:	Gems World Academy	150	Fatima Abdullah Mohammed Abdulla Al Dhanhani	80
	Dubai Women's College	84	Anishka Sunil	55
	American School of Dubai, Al Barsha	60	Hassan Abdullah Hassan	50
TONER COLLECTION CAMPAIGN	Schools	Quantity (kg)	Individuals	Quantity (kg)
EEG collected 227 pcs of Toners from 11 participants during the month of February 2021, an increase of 1% compared to January 2021. We encourage our participants to be more active in the year 2021. The Top collectors were:	-	-	Charvi Amit Khandelwal	76
	-	-	-	-
GLASS COLLECTION CAMPAIGN	Schools	Quantity (Kg)	Individuals	Quantity (Kg)
EEG has collected 3,244 kg of Glass Bottles from 34 participants during the month of February 2021, a decrease of 81% compared to January 2021. We thank our participants and encourage them to continue collecting in the year 2021. The Top collectors were:	American University of Sharjah	150	Saher Vidya Kumar	119
	-	-	Hind Mahmood Rasheed	104
	-	-	Aashika Singh	70
MOBILE COLLECTION CAMPAIGN				
EEG collected 529 pcs of Mobile Phones from 3 participants during the month of February 2021, an increase of 4,308% compared to January 2021. We urge our participants to support us and be active in the collection of this valuable material in the year 2021.				

