

TODAY FOR  
TOMORROW

YEAR OF SUSTAINABILITY

# Sustainable Conservation

Sustainability Guide  
2nd Edition

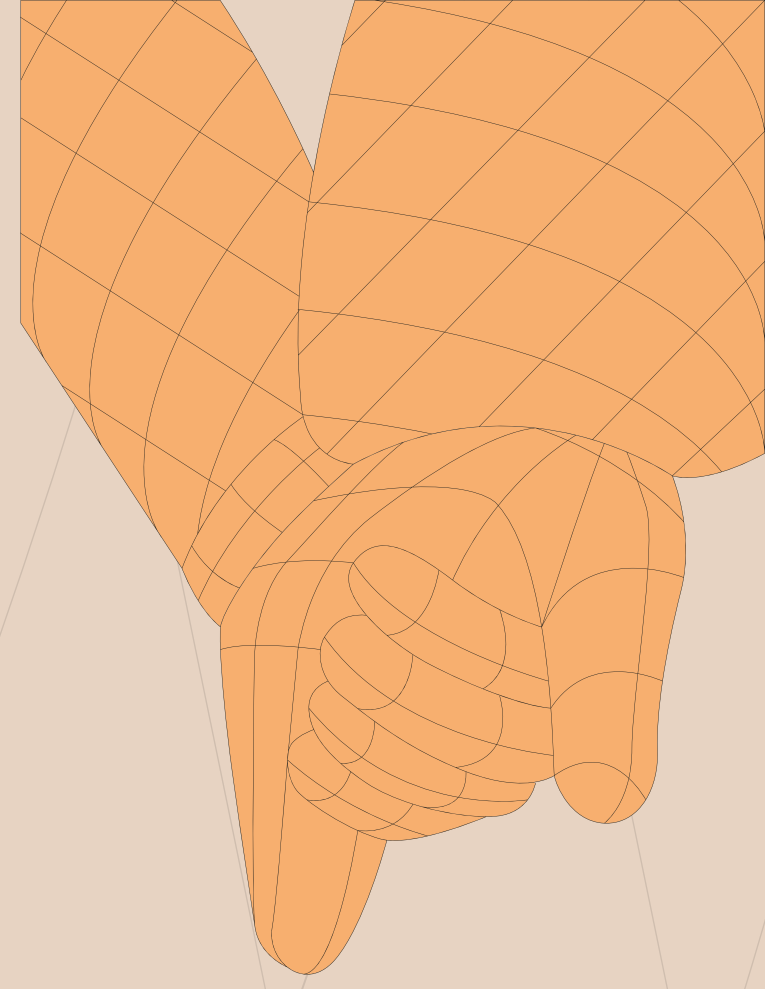
A practical guide to  
protect and preserve our land,  
resources and each other



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## Overview

Welcome to the second edition of the Sustainability Guide. In the first issue, we delved into the importance of responsible consumption and making conscious decisions that ensure a more sustainable future for generations to come. Today, we will continue our journey by exploring conservation and discovering the steps we can collectively take to reduce our ecological footprint and safeguard our environment, health, and the future of our land.

Conservation plays a vital role in preserving our natural resources and protecting the delicate balance of our ecosystems. By embracing conservation practices, we can significantly mitigate climate change, protect biodiversity, and promote overall sustainability.

In this edition, we will uncover practical tips and expert insights on minimising our environmental impact, from reducing energy consumption, managing waste, promoting sustainable transportation, and adopting eco-friendly practices. We power our information with the brilliant insights from Ali Alshimmari, Habiba Al Marashi and Omar Al Braiki.

So join us on this exploration of conservation and discover the transformative steps we can take to protect our environment, preserve our health, and safeguard our land.

**Let's make every action count!**

## About the Year of Sustainability

His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates, announced that 2023 will be the 'Year of Sustainability'. The year will run until December 2023 and aims to promote the nation's deeply-rooted value of sustainability in order to encourage sustainable behaviour change and work towards a more sustainable and thriving UAE. It will draw on the UAE's heritage to inspire sustainable practices and collective action, bringing together everyone that calls the UAE home.

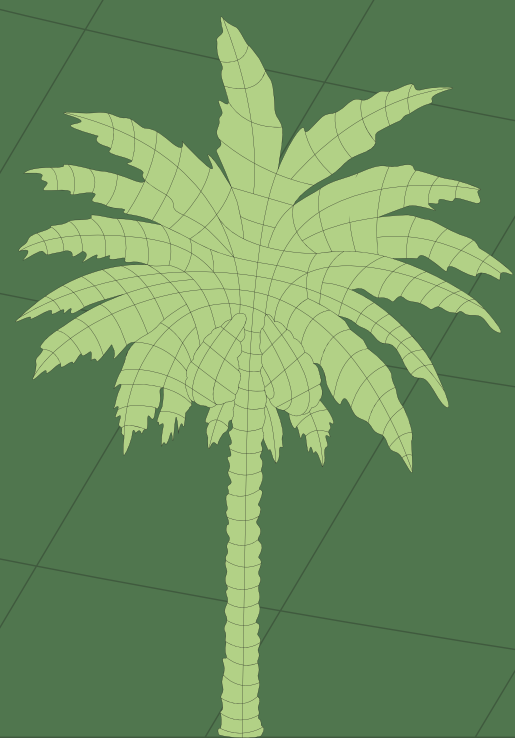
### *Why do we need to adopt sustainable practices?*

Sustainability is vital for protecting our environment, preserving our natural resources, and ensuring our well-being and a better future for all. Our actions, both big and small, have the power to make a real impact and create a healthier, more sustainable world.

### *How can I start?*

Getting started on your sustainability journey can seem overwhelming, but small steps can lead to significant change. This guide will provide tips and tricks to easily incorporate sustainable practices into your daily life.

You can take many simple actions to make a positive impact at home or in the office. From reducing energy and water usage to reducing waste and choosing environmentally-friendly products, the guide provides practical and achievable solutions to start your sustainability journey [1].





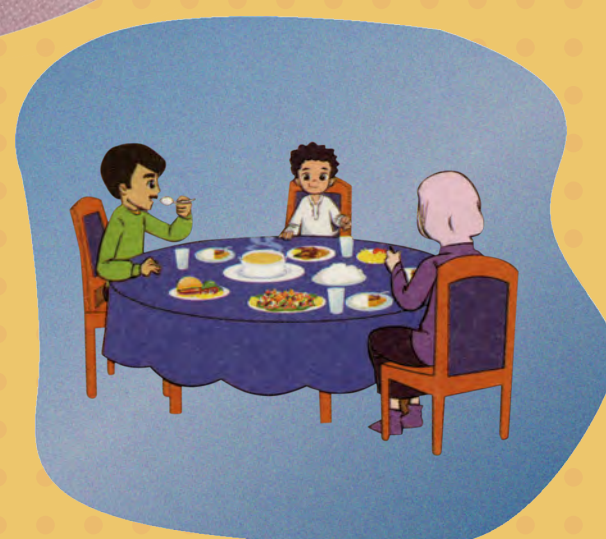
## Tips and Tricks for a Zero Waste Lifestyle

This section will explore various aspects of living a zero-waste lifestyle. What does that mean for you, us and our environment? How can we revive our heritage and values of conservation into everyday practices?

Together, we examine topics such as single-use plastic detox, the impact of waste on us and the environment, and practical techniques for managing recyclables and biodegradables. By adopting these practices, we can take charge of our actions, minimise waste, and positively impact ourselves and the environment.

### Imagine a typical day in our life:

We grab a quick coffee on our way to work, sipping it through a plastic straw. At lunchtime, we order a meal in a plastic container with plastic utensils. Then, we return from work to stop by the grocery store and buy several items, most of which come in plastic bags or wrapped in plastic packaging. Sound familiar?





## The Great *Single-use* Plastic Detox

These seemingly harmless actions are part of a larger issue: the everyday use of single-use plastic. These products are designed to be used briefly and then discarded, adding to the growing problem of plastic waste and its detrimental environmental impact.

But here is the good news: we have the power to make a change. One such alternative is biodegradable plastic – a safe and eco-friendly option that can pave the way for a greener future [2]. The transition towards a more sustainable future starts with understanding the consequences of our actions on us and our environment.

### On Us



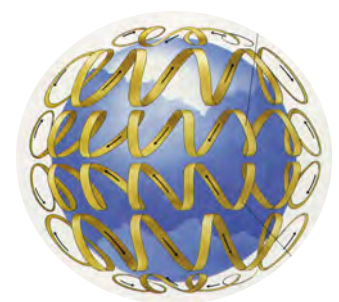
#### **Healthier bodies and minds**

By opting for reusable alternatives, we minimise our exposure to harmful chemicals in plastic products. Many plastics contain substances like BPA and phthalates, potentially posing health risks.



#### **Cost Savings**

While single-use plastic items may seem cheaper in the short term, the cumulative expenses of repeatedly purchasing these products can quickly add up. In contrast, investing in durable and reusable alternatives can help save money in the long run [1].

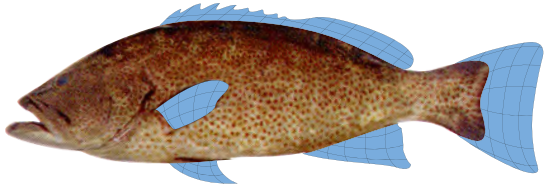


#### **Environmental Consciousness**

Choosing not to use single-use plastic aligns with a sustainable lifestyle and inspires others to follow suit, cultivating a sense of responsibility and becoming agents of positive change.



On our Environment



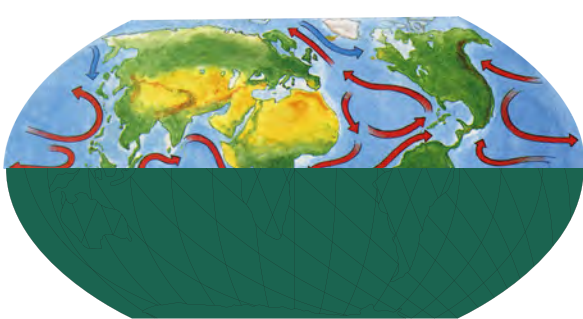
**Saves our lives**

Microplastics, which are tiny particles of plastic, have the potential to pollute drinking water sources, accumulate in the food chain, and release toxic chemicals that can pose health risks, including certain cancers. These microplastics can enter water bodies and contaminate water supplies, threatening human health. They can be ingested by marine organisms and accumulate in the food chain, ultimately reaching humans through seafood consumption [3].



**Saves energy**

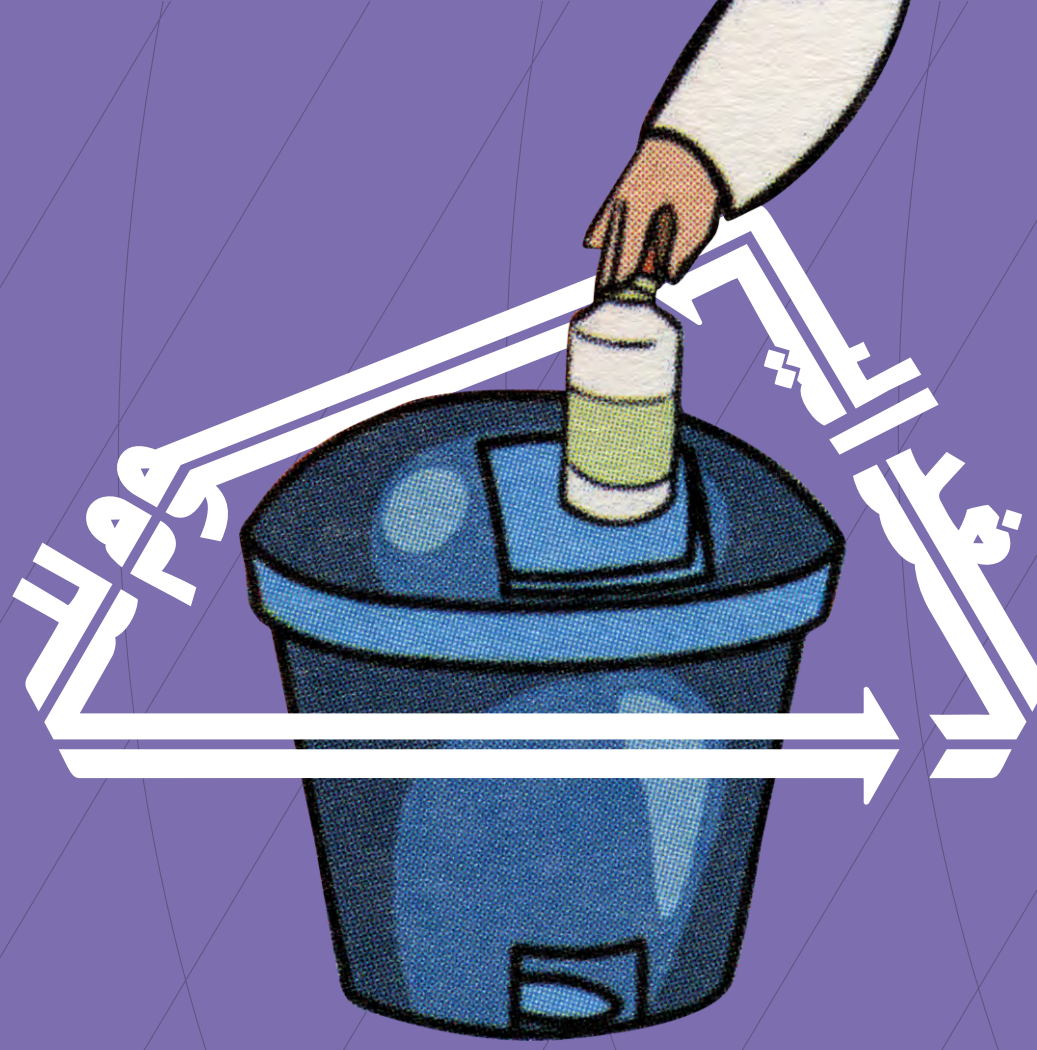
Reducing single-use plastic helps minimise pollution, conserve resources, and mitigate environmental impacts and leads to significant energy savings. By reducing the demand for single-use plastic, energy-intensive manufacturing, transportation, recycling, and waste management processes are reduced [1].



**Prevents pollution**

When we reduce reliance on new raw materials, the UAE can minimise environmental pollution. Emphasising the use of recycled materials and adopting circular economy practices can help conserve resources and reduce the environmental impact of production processes [1].

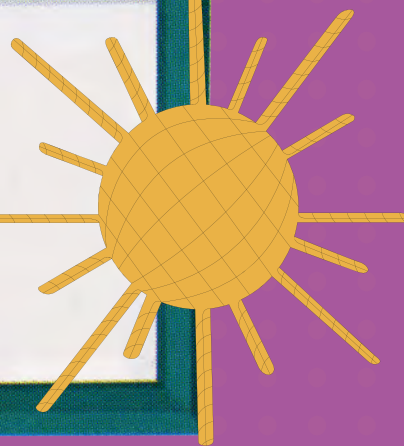




## Recyclables & Biodegradables

Embracing a sustainable future doesn't mean eliminating all plastic. Biodegradable plastic and other alternatives are available to answer the growing problem of single-use plastic. This safe and effective alternative reduces environmental impact. By choosing biodegradable plastics, we can protect our ecosystems and create a cleaner, greener present and future [4].

*Below are some fantastic alternatives to consider:*



### **Reusable Fabric Bags:**

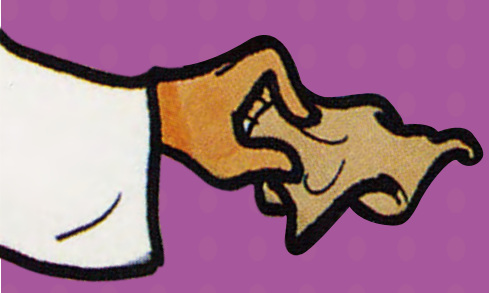
They can be used repeatedly, reducing the need for single-use plastic bags. They can be repurposed for various purposes, adding a touch of fun and practicality to our everyday life.

### **Multi-use Cups and Lids, Paper Cups and Lids, or Recycled Plastic Cups and Lids:**

Opt for durable and reusable options, or choose paper cups and lids from sustainable sources.







**Wooden, Recycled, or Multi-use**

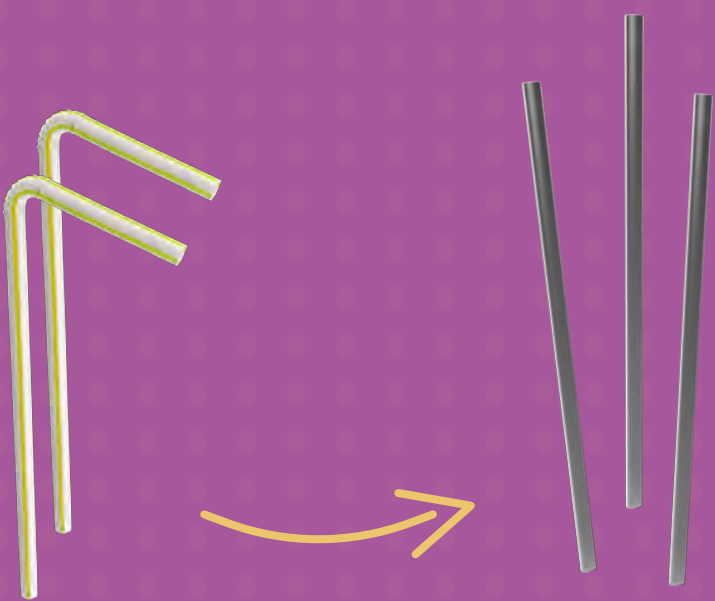


**Cutlery:**

Instead of disposable plastic cutlery, choose eco-friendly options made from wood or recycled materials. Multi-use cutlery sets can be washed and reused.

**Plates:**

Consider using plates crafted from sustainable wood or recycled materials. Multi-use plates can be washed and reused.

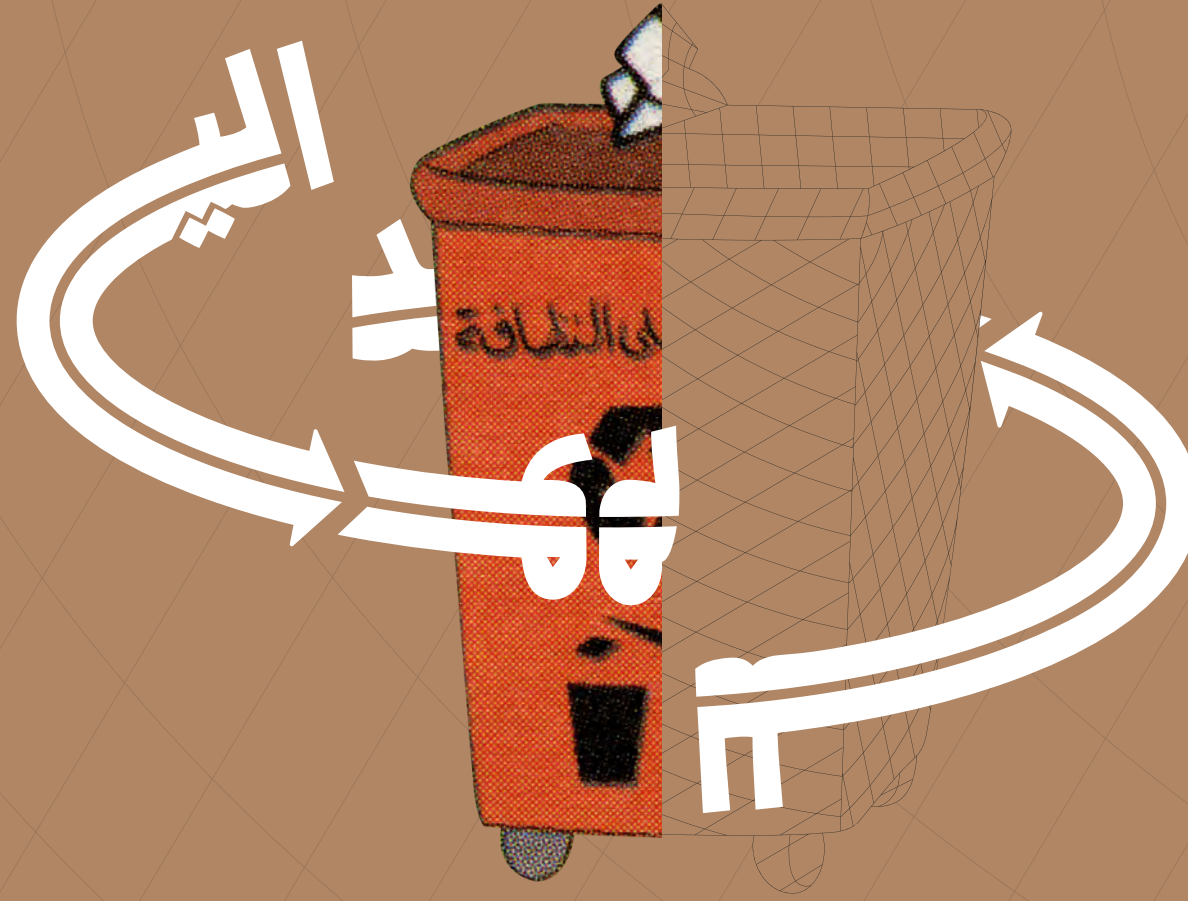


**Straws:**

Replace single-use plastic straws with eco-friendly alternatives, such as wood, metal or recycled materials.

Together, we can discover the power and joy of intention. So let us embrace these sustainable alternatives championed by many local businesses. Our choices support our environment and local economy, creating a brighter future for both.





## Divide, Segregate and Conquer

Habiba Al Marashi, member of The Sustainability Experts Network, highlights the UAE's commitment to eliminating the practice of sending waste to landfills by 2050 [5]. Aligned with this vision, the UAE has implemented a national colour code for segregated waste bins, facilitating effective waste management.

By actively participating in waste segregation through this colour-coded system, we can contribute to the UAE's ambitious waste reduction goals, fostering a cleaner and more sustainable environment for present and future generations.



### Designated waste bins

#### GREEN



Recyclable waste

#### BLACK



Non-recyclable general waste

#### RED

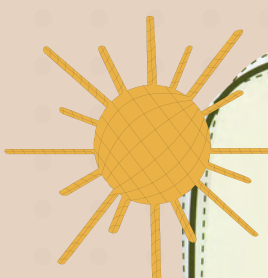


Hazardous municipal waste

#### BROWN



Food and organic waste



You can print and cut-out the colored waste bins to reference at home, school and office, to raise awareness amongst your family members and colleagues on how to segregate waste correctly.

## On Us

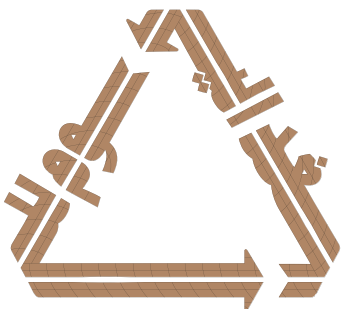
**Reduced Health Risks**

Unorganised solid waste can pose significant health risks from direct contact with contaminants or exposure to contaminated mediums [7]. Implementing effective waste segregation practices can mitigate such risks, ensuring a healthier living environment for individuals and communities.

**Enhanced Waste Management Efficiency**

According to Ali Al Shimmari from The Sustainability Experts Network, waste segregation at the household level contributes to a more efficient and effective waste management process. By properly segregating waste, each type can undergo appropriate processing and disposal, ensuring an optimized waste management system [8].

## On our Environment

**Reduced Environmental Impact**

According to Ali Al Shimmari, Diverting waste from landfills through recycling, segregation and composting significantly reduces the environmental impact. It conserves natural resources and minimises energy consumption [10].

**Mitigated GHG Emissions & Enhanced Environmental Quality**

Improperly managed unsegregated waste in landfills can significantly increase greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, particularly methane gas. This, in turn, contributes to soil and water quality degradation in the surrounding areas [10].

**Reduced Carbon Emissions & Economic Advancement**

Habiba Al Marashi asserts that diverting waste to recycling or composting facilities instead of landfills leads to a notable reduction in carbon emissions. This practice enables collected materials to reenter the production line, thereby boosting production capacity and bolstering the economic strength of local recycling facilities [8].



## Ride Right: Green Mobility for a Green Future

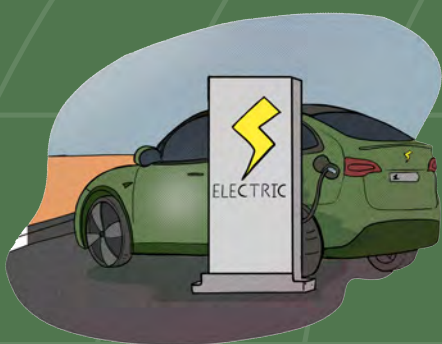
With the growing need to address environmental concerns and create a sustainable future, it is essential to prioritise greener alternatives in transportation. When we think of Green Mobility, we must consider how we can collectively reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality, and enhance the overall quality of life through actions we can take today.

In line with this vision, the Dubai's Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) has set ambitious targets to increase the public transport share from 15% to over 30% by 2030, reflecting a strong commitment to sustainable transportation practices [10].

### What does Green mobility actually mean?

When we often speak of green mobility, we are usually referring to the concept of adopting transportation practices and modes that are environmentally friendly and have a reduced impact on the planet. It is an effective umbrella term under which we can explore many sustainable alternatives to conventional, high-emission modes of transportation.

### Aspects of Green Mobility



#### *Low or Zero Emissions*

Green mobility focuses on reducing carbon emissions and air pollutants associated with transportation. We can achieve this using electric, hybrid, or alternative fuels [12].

#### *Sustainable Transportation Modes*

It encourages using sustainable modes of transportation such as walking, cycling, and public transport.

#### *Efficient Use of Resources*

Green mobility optimises fuel and infrastructure such as ride-sharing, and efficient route planning to minimise energy consumption and traffic congestion.

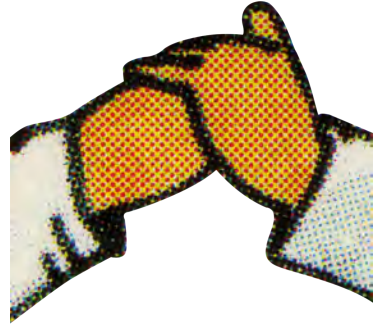


**On Us**



**Promotes an active lifestyle**

Public transport often involves walking or cycling to and from transit stops, which promotes physical activity and helps combat sedentary lifestyles [13].



**Connects us to our community**

Public transport and ride sharing allow us to connect and engage with our communities. It enables us to come together and share common spaces, fostering a sense of community.



**Budget-friendly**

Transport authorities across the UAE recognise the importance of providing accessible and affordable public transport to the public. They have implemented low-cost public transport options, including an extensive bus service in every Emirate [14].



**Reduce noise pollution**

Public transport reduces noise pollution, positively impacting our well-being [15]. According to Omar Al Braiki, our communities enjoy a quieter and more peaceful environment, leading to decreased stress levels, improved sleep patterns, and a pleasant atmosphere.

**On our Environment**



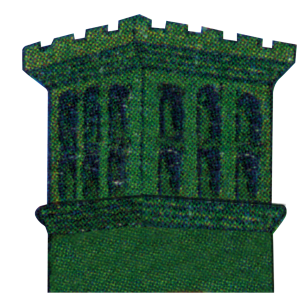
**Resource conservation**

Green mobility and public transport reduce the demand for fossil fuels. It conserves valuable non-renewable resources minimising the associated extraction and refining processes.



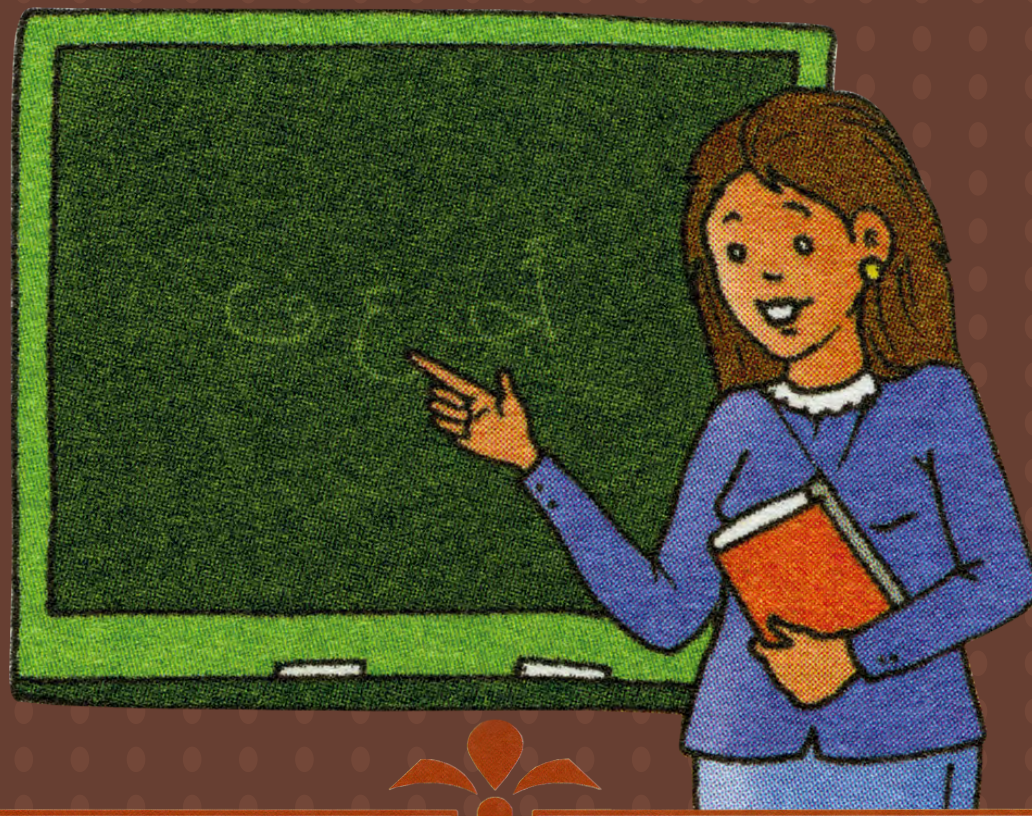
**Reduction of air pollution**

Public transport systems, such as buses, can transport many passengers at once, significantly reducing the number of individual vehicles on the road. This collective mode of transportation leads to lower emissions of greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide, and harmful pollutants like nitrogen oxides.



**Greener Cities**

Public transport networks require less land for infrastructure than individual vehicles, preserving natural habitats, green spaces, and agricultural land while minimising the need for extensive road networks and parking lots.



## About Our Experts



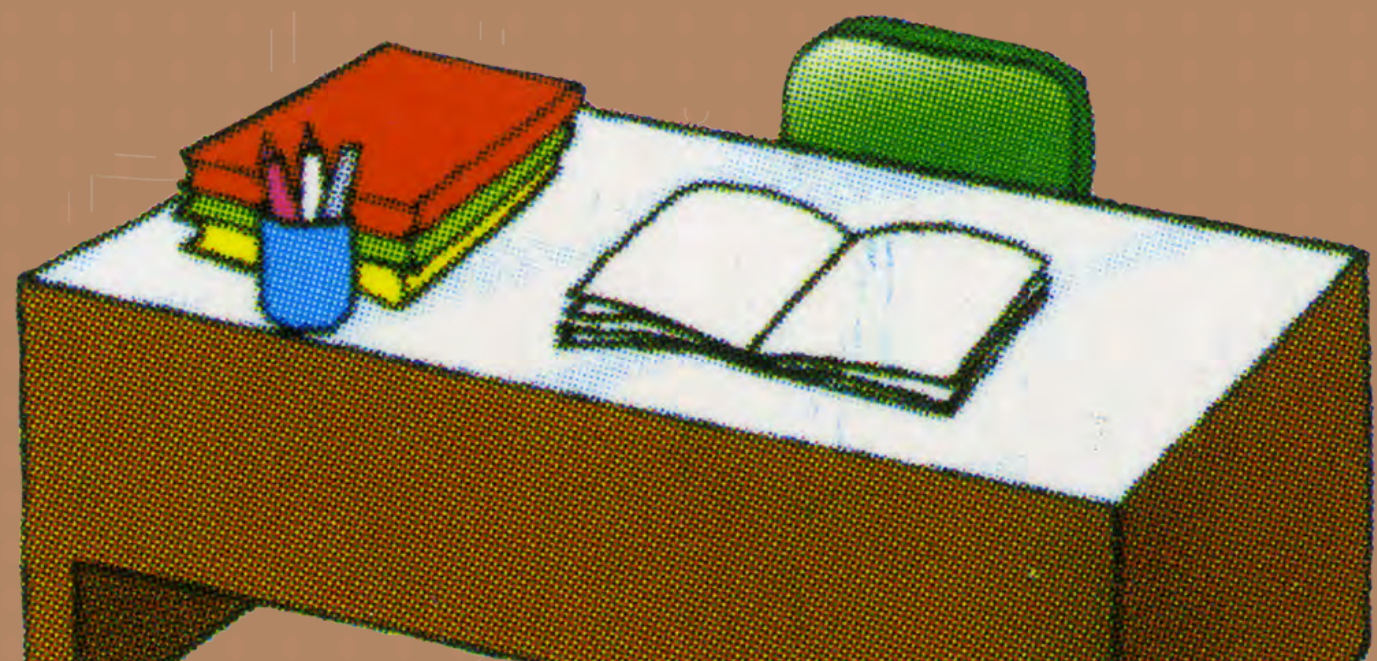
Omar is an environmentalist with several years of experience working at the Environment Agency Abu Dhabi. Omar was awarded a fellowship at Yale Jackson School of Global Affairs. Between 2020 and 2022 he served as a board of trustees member at the Anwar Gargash Diplomatic Academy, and in 2018 Omar served as the UAE youth delegate to the UN in New York. He currently serves as the Head of Negotiations at the office of the UAE special envoy for climate change and is one of the experts forming the Sustainability Experts Network as part of the UAE Year of Sustainability initiative.

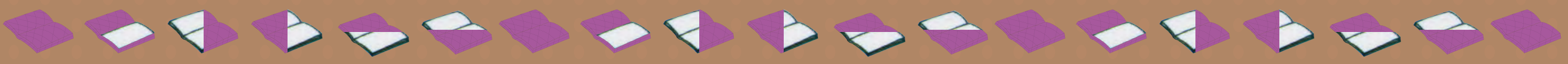


Habiba Almarashi is the Co-founder and Chairperson of the first environmental NGO in the UAE known as the Emirates Environmental Group (EEG) in 1991. She has been recognised for her environmental work and campaigns for three decades and sits on the boards of several UN and international bodies. She established the Arabia CSR Network in 2004, a pioneering multi-stakeholder platform for the MENA region. She co-founded the Emirates Green Building Council in 2006 and served as its Treasurer and Board Member. Habiba is a firm believer that environmental sustainability is rooted in Emirati traditions, and she joins a group of experts forming the Sustainability Experts Network as part of the Year of Sustainability.



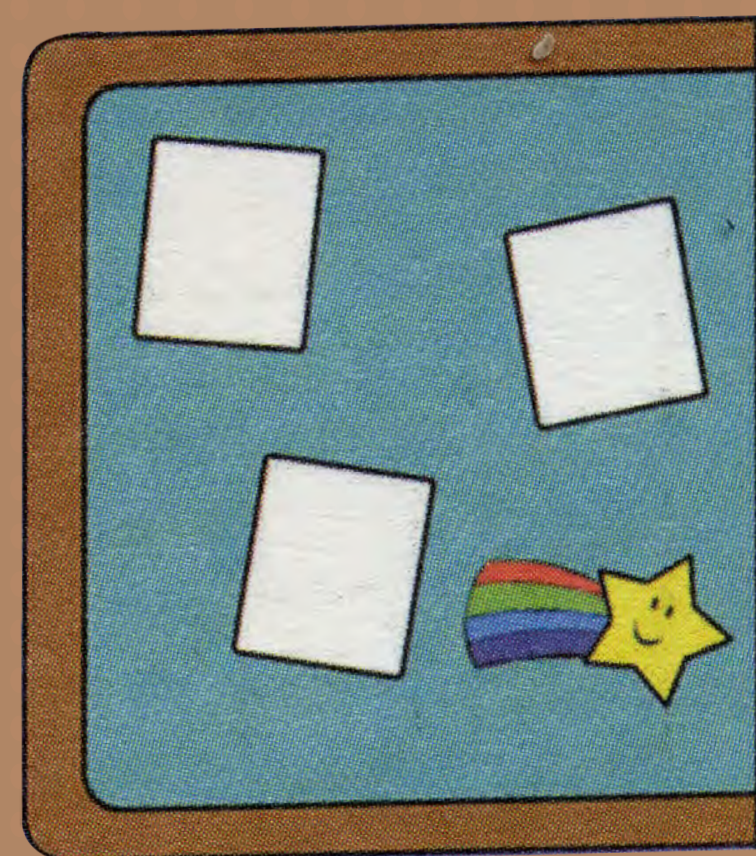
Ali Alshimmari developed an integrated approach to the UAE Hydrogen Strategy that focuses on ensuring a more sustainable, affordable and inclusive energy sector. He is part of the UAE COP28 delegation as a negotiator. Ali's expertise led him to being selected as one of the several experts forming the Sustainability Experts Network as part of the UAE's Year of Sustainability initiative, which aims to promote sustainable practices across the country. Ali serves as the asset manager and Chairman of the Youth Council at Abu Dhabi National Energy Company (TAQA), and has also participated in the National Experts Program in the Energy and Economy sector.





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SUSTAINABILITY

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