

How Did Abu Dhabi Mark World Environment Day 2024?

Abu Dhabi authorities have marked World Environment Day 2024 with the launch of several initiatives geared towards restoring vegetation and enhancing sustainability across the emirate. The Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD) announced the raft of projects under the banner ‘Land Restoration, Desertification and Drought Resilience’.

Suffering as it does from an inhospitable climate, the Emirati terrain needs all the help it can get in order to ensure it not only survives but thrives for future generations. That’s why programmes such as tree tagging and land management practices are so important in increasing the fertility of the region and encouraging biodiversity as much as possible.

Preserving ecosystems

According to Dr Shaikha Salem Al Dhaheri, secretary general of the EAD, the Agency is aligning itself with the best practices and standards set out by the United Nations, so as to ensure it is doing everything it can to preserve ecosystems and promote natural regeneration in the area.

“We are proactively taking steps to restore degraded land, promote sustainable grazing practices, and enhance resilience to desertification and drought, which not only enhances rangeland productivity but also supports wildlife and improves overall ecosystem health and resilience,” [explained Dr Al Dhaheri](#), speaking to Middle East Economy.

By working with community leaders and interested stakeholders, the EAD have reached practical solutions in not only safeguarding local objectives, but also safeguarding the natural environments in which human activity takes place. Sustainable land management, for example, is instrumental in preserving the biodiversity of wild plant species in the region, which play a variety of vital roles in the Abu Dhabi ecosystem.

Programmes with concrete objectives

Rather than just paying lip service to the ideas of sustainability and natural restoration, the EAD has used the impetus caused by World Environment Day to announce several key programmes with concrete objectives attached to them. For example, it has set a goal of tagging approximately 100,000 native trees in the emirate, with a view to better monitoring their health and managing their population.

Meanwhile, it has also optimised the use of water as a resource in protected areas, thus conserving the supply as much as possible while still restoring some 1,500 hectares of critical vegetation cover. This is doubly important, since it saves significant amounts of water

(in notoriously short supply throughout the Middle East) while still promoting the goals and objectives of the programme.

Elsewhere, the EAD also recently opened the doors of its Plant Genetic Resources Centre. Devoted to preserving and documenting the seeds and tissues of a wide variety of wild plant species found in the area, the Centre is the first facility of its kind in the emirate. Initiatives like these, working alongside new technologies such as drones and sophisticated monitoring stations, are allowing the EAD to gain a better understanding of the wildlife under its remit and thus preserve it more effectively.