

## Can Abu Dhabi Be a Climate Tech Hub?

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Abu Dhabi is seeking to position itself as a major promoter of climate-minded technology. The UAE has traditionally built its significant economic muscle from the vast reserves of fossil fuels found within its territory, and even today oil production contributes almost half (46%) of its economic output.

Nonetheless, authorities in the country in general and its capital in particular are looking to invest a substantial chunk of that income into technological solutions to the climate crisis. In April this year, the tech ecosystem Hub71 announced it was launching its inaugural programme aimed at encouraging the development of decarbonisation tech, with a view to placing itself as a global hub of the industry for years to come.

### Hub71 – the home of climate tech?

Hub71 is a dedicated technological ecosystem aimed at fostering excellence in the tech start-up sphere. To date, it has onboarded more than 260 start-ups, providing them with the guidance and investment they need to get off the ground and facilitating market access for the partners most appropriate to their business interests.

The announcement of the Hub71 ClimateTech programme is an exciting development in the ecosystem's evolution, since it will encourage entrepreneurs and fledgling businesses with an emphasis on sustainability to sign up. At present, approximately 10% of Hub71's onboarded start-ups can be classified as focusing on climate, but the number of applications for its latest cohort which specialise in this area has already doubled.

### Reshaping the Emirati economy

There is no doubting that the UAE is heavily reliant on fossil fuels for its economic might and that is not likely to change significantly in the near future. However, the country's authorities are intent on reducing their carbon footprint and improving their environmental credentials as much as possible, which is why sustainability has become such an important buzzword in the UAE in recent years.

For example, some of the climate start-ups involved in Hub71's new programme include one which provides real-time recommendations on curbing emissions to oil and gas plant engineers, as well as another dedicated towards the reduction of gas flaring at the production stage. "The climate agenda is very important to the leadership of the UAE," [explained Ahmad Ali Alwan](#), CEO of Hub71. "There's a lot of support for innovative solutions and a focus on developing solutions that are actually commercial."

## Harnessing the power of hydrogen

Another Hub71 start-up showing strong potential is Graphmatech, a spin-off of Uppsala University in Sweden. The company use graphene to reduce leakage from the hydrogen industry by up to 85%, which not only prevents global warming and enhances efficiency, but also potentially prevents the occurrence of a major disaster onsite.

Green hydrogen, which generates energy from renewable- and nuclear-powered electricity and produces water rather than carbon dioxide as its principal waste product, is being targeted as a key method of decarbonising heavy industry, long-distance transport and other sectors which have traditionally relied on fossil fuels.