

August 2016 | Vol 2 | Issue 17

AL SIDRAH

MISSION

Uniqueness in providing, monitoring and environmental awareness services through the application of laws and regulations and investing relationship with partners and conduct studies and research that contribute to the protection of our natural resources.

VISION

Protection of the environment & sustainability of resources.

EPDA is celebrating World Ozone Day 2016

Participate in the “Crazy Hat” contest on September 15 and 16, 2016 in RAK Mall

For details and participation, please visit our Instagram account ([epdarak](#))

Join us and express your interest in preserving the environment by creating a funny hat

THURSDAY SEP 15, 2016 6:00-9:00 pm Hats display & public voting	FRIDAY SEP 16, 2016 5:00-9:00 pm Hat parade & judging
---	---

For more information, please visit [epdarak](#) on instagram

EPDA to launch marine patrol

EPDA plans to launch three new marine patrols in the coming months to prevent overfishing & malpractices in fishing, and monitor the implementation of UAE laws that prohibits fishing of some fish species during defined periods each year. These patrols will also monitor the fishing tools, as well as the size and type of fish caught. This initiative is aimed to support the implementation of the decisions by the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment to work towards preserving the marine environment and promoting its sustainability. Additionally, EPDA has also decided to carry out inspection visits to prevent the uses of water scooters and water bikes in all creeks in RAK after monitoring its negative impacts on the mangroves within these marine environments.





EPDA opens restaurant for port workers in Ras Al Khaimah

Aiming to provide adequate facilities within EPDA accommodations in the different ports in Ras Al Khaimah, a contract was signed between EPDA and Arab Indo Catering Service to serve a wide range of cuisines to the port workers residing there. The restaurant located in the Ras Al Khaimah port will deliver food to the other three ports in Ghalila, A Jeer, and Al Jazeera Al Hamra. The official opening of the restaurant was attended by a number of fishermen to experience the variety of food provided by the restaurant.



EPDA installs fishing information boards in Ras Al Khaimah ports

In continuing with EPDA’s efforts in preserving the marine environment, information boards citing the ‘do’s and don’ts in fishing for fishermen are being installed in all ports in Ras Al Khaimah. This initiative also aims to prevent the hunting and gathering of marine species in these areas. 21 boards will be spread over the nine ports, and this includes Khor Al Jeer ,Khor Shaam Khor Ghalila, Khor Khwair, Khor Maered, Khor Ras Al Khaimah - Kuwait Street, Khor Dhan , Khor Al Jazeera Al Hamra and Khor Al Mzahmi.

Passionate about the sea and fishing

Fishing is a traditional craft passed on from one generation to another, and despite the risks and challenges faced in the practice of this profession, the passion for the sea and the profession is not in wane among the local Emirati population. EPDA was keen to learn more about this passion and profession from the local fisherman, and hence visited Saleh Ahmed Mohammed Hnbloh Al Shehhi, a 54 year old Emirati from Al Rams, for a chat with him and benefit from his experience and knowledge about fishing in the UAE.



EPDA: Thank you for offering to share your experiences with us. Since when did you start your fishing journey?

Saleh: I took up this profession when I was 7 years old. Those days I used to accompany my father when he went on his fishing trips. I studied till Grade five, but then I used to be distracted from my studies because I wanted to go fishing. When I was 12 years old I opted out of school, and with my elder brother, I decided to

take up fishing as a means of earning my living.

EPDA – At which port do you work, and are you aware of any locations in and around this port where fishing is prohibited?

Saleh: I am mainly associated with Al Rams port. With regards areas that are prohibited from fishing, I believe it is important to support any decision made to preserve the marine environment.

The creek area near Al Rams port is where fishing is banned, and I understand that part is being transformed into a protected area to encourage fish breeding.

EPDA - How many boats do you own...and how many people work for you?

Saleh: I have two boats, and three workers.

EPDA – How frequently do you go on fishing trips?

Saleh: We go out into the sea only once a day. In the past it used to be right after ‘Fajr’ prayers or after ‘Maghreb’ prayers. These days we go during the day, anytime in the morning or evening.

EPDA - How do you compensate your workers for the work they do?

Saleh: From the money I make after selling the fish, I take out the oil and fuel expenses; then the profit is divided into half between me and my workers on a monthly basis.

EPDA - How do you train your workers to help them do their jobs efficiently?

Saleh: My workers are regularly involved in net-making and installing ‘Allikh’, a different type of net used in fishing. Additionally, I ensure they are aware and

updated of the fishing laws and regulations in the UAE.

EPDA - What preparations do you carry out before embarking on a fishing trip?

Saleh: These days, we ensure we have enough petrol and a compass - the two fundamental materials- with us before going out on any fishing trip. But in the past, we used find our way in the sea with the help of the positions of **four stars** – these are **Yah, Sohail, the Sundown star and Al Matla**. In addition, we always carry lighting equipment, searchlights, a life jacket, fire extinguisher, and first-aid.

EPDA - What tasks do you need to carry out once a fishing trip has been completed?

Saleh: Once we are back from a fishing trip, we need to do a number of things. We first wash the fish with sea water...not mineral water; this helps preserve the fish longer. After that we check our fishing equipment for any damages to any of them. If there are any damages, I request my workers to repair them. Then we wash the boat, shut down the engine, and disconnect the electricity. Finally, we moor the boat in the place that has been reserved for us.

EPDA - What types of nets do you use for fishing?

Saleh: We work with different types of nets. Nets are classified according to the number of eyes or holes in each arm slot of the net. So when we say deca yarn or septuplet yarn, it means one arm slot has 10 or 7 or 8 eyes. The upper rope in the net is made up of nylon and has floats, while the bottom rope is made of cotton so that it absorbs water and falls to the bottom.

EPDA - How has the fishing profession changed today from what it was in the past?

Saleh: In the past, the tools that we used for fishing were made of natural materials like coir ropes, which was not harmful to the marine environment because they contained no chemicals. And in case these ropes fell into the sea, the fish benefitted from them because algae grew on them, or coral formation took place, and this helped them in breeding



EPDA - What are your thoughts on the present fishing laws in the UAE?

Saleh: I respect the fishing laws of the UAE and always abide by them; I am also very supportive of the laws issued by UAE Ministry of Climate Change and Environment. I think these laws help protect the fishes and sustain the fishing industry for our future generations.

EPDA – Worldwide, there is a major concern about overfishing. In the UAE, fish like hamour are said to be declining in their population. What steps do you think should be taken by fishermen as well as consumers to control the fish population?

Saleh: Trawler fishing is the main reason for the decline in hamour population. Also, fishermen must not keep or sell any hamour that are small in size. Hamour stays alive out of water for a longer period than other fish, so they must put back the small ones into the sea. In addition, authorities must prevent fishing of hamour between June and December because that is the breeding period for hamour.



EPDA- EPDA has provided accommodation for fishermen along with storage space for their fishing equipment. How beneficial has this arrangement been for you and your workers?

Saleh: It is extremely helpful that fishermen workers are looked after by the government. Besides the accommodation, the store helps them keep their fishing gear in safe conditions and also away from theft. I am waiting for the completion of the barracks near Al Rams port.

Vision

Protection of the environment and the sustainability of its resources

Mission

Excellence in providing monitoring services , raising of environmental awareness , and promoting the concept of environmental citizenship, through the application of environmental laws and regulations, and investing in relationships with our partners, and conducting studies and research that contributes to the protection of our natural resources

Institutional values

- Team work
- Internal communication
- Continuous improvement
- Transparency
- Quality

Strategic goals

- Strengthening of the policies and legislation and environmental studies and research
- Strengthening environmental monitoring to improve the quality of life and reduce pollution levels
- Increasing environmental awareness and encouraging environmentally responsible actions
- Providing protection and sustainable management of biodiversity and natural resources
- Improving customer service and excelling in service delivery
- Strengthening the relationship with partners and the community
- Developing of institutional support services and strengthening a culture of innovation and institutional innovation.

Surface fishing using beach seines to be regulated by UAE MOCCA

In line with the UAE Vision 2021, a decision by the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MOCCA) to promote food safety, sustainability of domestic production and conservation of the marine environment, regulates surface fishing using beach seines. This Ministerial Decree No.471 for the year 2016 reflects the ministry's aim to regulate professional fishing to preserve, develop and ensure the sustainability of fish stocks, and enhance food security by protecting fish stocks from depletion. According to the ministry, banning surface fishing during a specific period of time supports the preservation, development and sustainability of fish stocks by allowing them time to lay eggs and set off migration.



Celebrating Emirati traditions and culture with dates

A fruit that symbolizes Emirati perseverance in the past, a source of wealth in the present, and a guarantee of prosperity for the future was celebrated once again at the 12th edition of Liwa Date Festival held in Liwa, Abu Dhabi in July 2016. This annual gathering to celebrate the date harvest, Emirati heritage & culture, and the agricultural riches of Abu Dhabi, in line with the guidance of the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan (May God bless his soul), supports the efforts of Abu Dhabi to raise the equity of Liwa on the international tourism map. Besides showcasing some of the different varieties of dates and aspects related to its farming, the other key highlights of this festival were the Traditional Market, a Children's Village, Photography competition, and an array of activities portraying the culture and tradition of the UAE along with attractive prizes.

In 2015, Al Ain and Liwa oases were officially recognized as agricultural heritage sites by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).



"Al Safat" rating system to assess green buildings in Dubai

Dubai Municipality launched the 'Al Safat' system that will assess green buildings in the emirate, and will be applied to all types of residential, commercial and industrial buildings and other facilities. The 'Safat' rating system will focus on the life cycle of the building and aspects crucial to it — increased efficiency, reduced energy and water consumption, use of environment-friendly materials, renewable energy characteristics, alternative energy sources and construction design, and improve the general health of the population and their safety- through smart applications and innovations .

Al Safat is divided into four categories- Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum. All building owners, investors and developers must mandatorily implement the standards of the bronze category, while they are encouraged to apply additional qualifying elements to enhance their rating and benefits to the occupants and environment.

Safat in Arabic means date palm fronds and refers to the traditional Arabic system of using palm fronds as roofing to keep the interior cool. It was a symbol of construction and also represents the local environment because all parts of the palm tree were utilized for various purposes.

Environment Agency in Abu Dhabi assesses the genetic diversity of gazelles

Environment Agency in Abu Dhabi (EAD) implemented a pioneering project on assessing the genetic diversity of gazelles within the forests managed by the Agency. This unique project is considered first of its kind for this particular species within the natural and historic distribution of this antelope in the Arabian Peninsula.

This project was undertaken due to the fact that this species constitutes the largest percentage (around 70%) of the total animal populations in Abu Dhabi forests, and also because of the importance of this species in the natural heritage of the UAE.

From the outcomes of this study, EAD will now be able to develop programmes and plans for the management and sustainability of wildlife populations inside the forests and protected areas. The concern is that crossbreeding among the antelope species could lead to genetic variations that make the species susceptible to diseases or other genetically-determined risks.

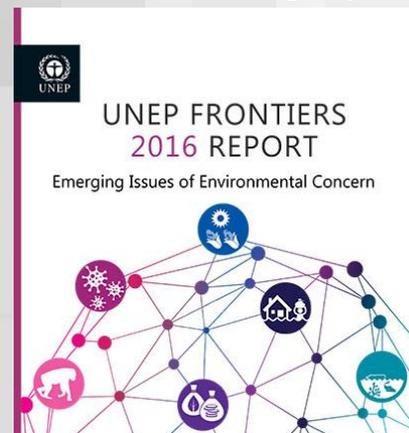
Additionally, this project, which started two years ago, will now move on to assess other animals such as mountain gazelles and the Arabian Oryx.

The UNEP Frontiers 2016 report - Emerging Issues of Environmental Concern

The UNEP Frontiers 2016 report is an extension and advancement of UNEP's Year Book Series signaling environmental issues and solutions for effective and timely responses. In this report, some issues emerge as a result of new scientific findings and understanding of interactions between environmental, social and economic systems; others are persistent issues for which new approaches and technologies have emerged to equip decision-makers and managers with more practical solutions and tools. Some issues which could be local, and relatively small-scale issues today, have a potential to become an issue of regional or global concern if not addressed early.

The UNEP Frontiers 2016 edition presents **six emerging issues**.

1. It highlights the **crucial role for the financial sector** in promoting sustainable development by investing in new low-carbon, resource efficient and environmentally sound assets, and shifting capital away from traditional assets that have high impacts on the environment.
2. It illustrates how the **emergence and re-emergence of zoonotic diseases** increases with the intensification of human activities surrounding and encroaching into natural habitats, enabling pathogens in wildlife reservoirs to spill over to livestock and humans.
3. The **growing presence of plastic pollution in the aquatic environment**, particularly in form of microplastics, poses a major risk to human health through consumption of contaminated food.
4. Changes in climatic patterns leading to **prolonged drought and high temperatures** can trigger biophysical reactions in plants leading to an **accumulation of chemical compounds toxic to animal and human health**.
5. The issue of **loss and damage to ecosystems and human systems** due to changing climate has risen to global attention in recent years, and the report presents a **range of risk management tools** needed to avoid harm.
6. **Illegal trade in wildlife** continues to pose a serious threat to ecosystems and wildlife populations, **attracts criminal networks** throughout the supply chain, and also **exposes humans to zoonotic diseases** associated with the traded species.



Morocco bans plastic bags in total

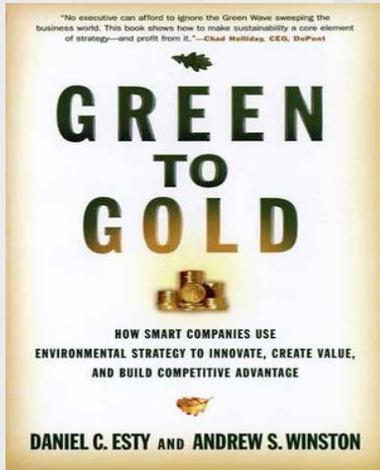
In July 2016, Morocco began the first days without plastic bags after activating the law issued by the government and approved by parliament that prevents the sale and promotion of the use of plastic bags to preserve the environment. However, it is said that the provision of an alternative for 'greener' bags has increased expenses among the Moroccans consumers. Moroccan residents now complain about the price of canvas bags that starts from one AED compared to the plastic bags that were given free in the supermarkets. This total ban of plastic bags is the second move by Morocco after preventing of the sale of non-biodegradable plastic bags in 2010.

Iraq's marshlands on the UNESCO list of world heritage sites

UNESCO has named Iraqi marshlands that were ravaged in the last decade as a World Heritage Site. The area named is made up of seven sites: three archaeological sites and four wetland marsh areas in southern Iraq. According to UNESCO, the archaeological cities of Uruk and Ur and the Tell Eridu archaeological site form part of the remains of the Sumerian cities and settlements that developed in southern Mesopotamia between the 4th and the 3rd millennium BCE. The Ahwar of Southern Iraq — also known as the Iraqi Marshlands — are unique, as one of the world's largest inland delta systems, in an extremely hot and arid environment. These marshlands are home to rare species of birds such as the ibis, and it's also a break and stop point for thousands of birds migrating between Siberia and Africa. Many dams and canals that were built earlier have now been demolished, allowing waters from the Tigris and Euphrates rivers to flood back, fish and fowl to return and humans to settle once again.



Book Review



Green to Gold: How smart companies use environmental strategy to Innovate, Create Value, and Build Competitive Advantage.

Daniel C. Esty, Andrew S. Winston

This is a useful guide for forward-thinking business leaders who see the Green Wave coming and want to profit from it. This book explores what every executive must know to manage the environmental challenges facing society and business. Based on the authors' years of experience and hundreds of interviews with corporate leaders around the world, *Green to Gold* shows how companies generate lasting value, cutting costs, reducing risk, increasing revenues, and creating strong brands, by building environmental thinking into their business strategies.

Green to Gold is written for executives at every level and for businesses of all kinds and sizes. Esty and Winston guide leaders through a complex new world of resource shortfalls, regulatory restrictions, and growing pressure from customers and other stakeholders to strive for sustainability. With a sharp focus on execution, Esty and Winston offer a thoughtful, pragmatic, and inspiring road map that companies can use to cope with environmental pressures and responsibilities while sparking innovation that will drive long-term growth

Interesting Environmental Facts

- ✓ Plastic bags and other plastic garbage thrown into the ocean kill as many as 1,000,000 sea creatures every year.
- ✓ Every time you open the refrigerator door, up to 30 percent of the cold air can escape.
- ✓ The amount of wood and paper we throw away each year is enough to heat 50,000,000 homes for 20 years.



Let's Green our summer

- Think before you turn on your air conditioning to the super-cool level. Do you really need it? Try keeping the temperature at 24 degrees. Whenever possible, especially in the evenings, turn on the ceiling or portable fans. And if you must use air conditioning because you're in a particularly hot and humid area, try upgrading to an Energy Star-rated unit and keep doors and windows closed at all times.
- Drink lots of water, but avoid wasting this precious resource. Our body needs to be heavily hydrated in the hot summer months. Any left-over water, unused for days, can be used to water plants or given to pets.
- If possible, plant some native plants in your garden. These will not require too much water, and when they grow they help to keep your house cool. But remember to water plants only early morning or after sunset to avoid loss due to evaporation.



Contact us:
Tel: 07-2333371, Fax: 07-2333789, E-mail: info@epda.rak.ae

