

Newsletter

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Crazy Hat Contest



EPDA celebrated **International Day for Protection of Ozone 2016** by organising a **Crazy Hat Contest** that aimed to encourage the community to continue paying attention to the important issue of restoring the ozone layer and protecting the planet from the harmful impacts of this depletion.

This event was held at **RAK Mall** in Ras Al Khaimah on **September 15 and 16, 2016**, and included participants displaying hats designed to highlight the causes and impacts of ozone depletion, and the solutions to lower the harmful impacts. Mall visitors had the opportunity to view the display of some fascinating hat designs talking of saving the ozone layer, vote for their favourite hat, and enjoy a colourful parade of the contestants wearing their hats.

Additionally, these creatively designed hats made out of recycled materials were judged by an elite panel comprising officials from the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, RAK Media Office and EPDA. The theme for this year's International Ozone Day was Ozone and climate: Restored by a world united.

A total of 27 hats were displayed, and more than 350 mall visitors voted for their favourite hat.



Judges choice –First winner - Ms. Roufida Al Zayat (Al Rashad Private British School, RAK)

My idea of the hat was to show the problems arising from the misuse of natural resources and how its impacts on our planet – this is what I showed as the sad face on the globe. I also had a bandage over the ball, which represented the effect of the ozone hole. The existence of forms and symbols of factories and buildings, and the symbol of the flame in different colors, all these symbolize the effect of increasing carbon emissions due to industrialisation, resulting in global warming and an expansion of the ozone hole. The leaves and twigs in the old trees (dead) shows the suffering of nature and natural resource depletion. In the end, the word (SAVE ME) was put to indicate that our Earth is calling us to preserve the remaining natural resources so that our future generations have a safe place to live.

EPDA Vision

Protection of the environment and the sustainability of its resources.

EPDA Mission

Excellence in providing, monitoring and environmental awareness services and promote the concept of environmental citizenship, through the application of environmental laws and regulations and investment in relationship with our partners and conduct studies and research that contribute to the protection of our natural resources”

Judges choice – Second winner – Rohan Kapur (Delhi Private School, Sharjah)

"My hat was made of recycled materials such as Plastic Bottle caps, CDs, buttons, and tattered pieces of cloth, and it tried to convey the importance of the integration of the 3Rs in our daily life. When the 3 Rs are religiously followed by everyone, there will be rapid decrease in the production of the harmful CFCs, which has been the primary cause for the destruction of ozone in the Earth's atmosphere. This reduction would therefore contribute greatly to preserving the ozone layer, which would heal itself over time. All in all, it was a great learning experience for me, and I was also enlightened on the benefits of the ozone layer and the various ways of preserving it. "



Popular choice – Ms. Siva Durga (Leaders Private School, Sharjah)

"What my hat tried to convey is that ozone hole will heal back to health only when there is a collective effort from all. And this is a dream which must become a reality.

I would rather buy aerosol sprays which don't use CFC'S and HCFC'S.

When motor vehicle air conditioner need servicing, I would make sure that the refrigerants are properly recycled before disposal. If I am able to convince my family and friends to do the same, I am sure we will be able to realise the dream."



EPDA Participates with Ministry of Climate Change and Environment in a stock enhancement initiative

EPDA coordinated with the Marine Environment Research Department of the UAE Ministry of Climate Change and Environment in UAQ to release 79,000 Shaam (Acanthopagrus datnia) fingerlings with an average body weight of 3.61 grams in the Al Rams Creek on September 8, 2016 as a stock enhancement initiative in Ras Al Khaimah.



UAE participates in Global Green Growth Week in South Korea

A UAE delegation headed by Dr. Thani Al Zeyoudi, Minister of Climate Change and Environment, successfully participated in the Global Green Growth Week (GGRW) that was hosted by the Green Growth Institute (GGI) in the Republic of Korea from Sep 5 – 9 , 2016. This event had around 1200 participants from more than 50 countries representing governments, private sector, and civil society, whose main focus was on how to reorient growth to be more pro-poor, inclusive, and sustainable, and come up with innovative solutions to sustainability challenges.

Dr. Al Zeyoudi emphasised the critical role that businesses play in driving green growth forward as innovators and investors and the important role of governments in providing an enabling environment for businesses to thrive in the global green economy. He also revealed that the UAE has set itself an ambitious target: to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and transform itself into a knowledge-based, diversified, and innovation-driven economy. Dr Al Zeyoudi also stressed on UAE's commitment to continue sharing knowledge and experiences with other countries seeking green growth opportunities in the MENA region and around the world.



Artificial reefs help increase in marine life off Barakah coastline

A recent underwater survey of Gulf waters revealed an abundance of marine life off the Barakah coastline in Abu Dhabi where the nuclear energy plant is under construction. This has been attributed to an artificial reef that was created there two years ago.

According to Emirates Nuclear Energy Corporation (ENEC) AND Nawah Energy Company, more than 63 marine species were identified in the breakwater habitat, and nearly 35 species using the artificial reef habitat. The breakwater structures comprise quarry rock and concrete, and have a combined length of approximately 15kms. The artificial reef is located 3.8kms from the shoreline and built of waste – moulded concrete that offers a favourable habitat for numerous marine species.

In the breakwaters, the marine organisms include a variety of algae species, invertebrates, fish species, and one marine mammal. Popular among the fish species is the orange-spotted grouper or hamour. The near-threatened Indian Ocean humpback dolphin and the critically endangered Hawksbill Turtle also find this a favourable habitat.

Rainforest in the desert

The Green Planet – in the City Walk retail area in Jumeirah – is an artificial indoor rainforest recreated in an enclosed ecosystem or bio-dome. This enchanting world of a tropical forest will showcase a rich biodiversity of over 3000 plants and animals, and has been built around the desire to contribute to environmental consciousness in the region.

The Green Planet is said to have been designed with sustainability in mind, having received the Leed (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification and is fully compliant with the Dubai Municipality green building regulations and specifications. It aims to inspire a person of all ages and nationalities to learn about and care more for every single plant and animal that inhabits the Earth.

The humidity inside the huge dome is kept at 70% so that the environment is perfect for rainforest animals and plants to flourish. It is also home to the 'largest indoor, man-made and life-sustaining tree in the world. This tree covers the entire height of the indoor dome is fake, but real plants have been planted all over it and they will creep and grow across it. Thus, in a few years' time, the tree will look much greener than what it is now.

Some of the most colourful birds on the planet can be seen flying from one branch to the other throughout the forest.

It is believed that such highly personalised encounters with plants and animals will motivate children to learn fascinating facts, while at the same time instilling respect for the intricacy and fragility of the environment.

Also included under the roof of the bio-dome will be exhibitions and displays encouraging visitors to learn about tropical ecosystems.

In short, the Green Planet is an ecology museum where visitors can learn something important about nature, and the way nature works.



Scientists recycle fish scales into green energy

Raw fish scales as a source of biodegradable energy harvester – this has been developed by a team of researchers at the Jadavpur University, India, – which could be tapped as a sustainable green energy source for next generation self-powered implantable medical devices. It also has the potential for personal portable electronics with reduced e-waste elements, say the researchers.

Fish scales that are usually thrown away, contain collagen fibres that are capable of generating an electric charge in response to mechanical stress. The recycling of fish by-products into a nanogenerator is a promising solution for the development of value-added products and also to reduce e-waste, say the researchers. Mechanical body movements, machine and sound vibrations, and wind flow are abundant in living organisms, and these can activate the nanogenerator to produce electric charge.

Snow leopards' return lifts hope in Afghanistan

A unique conservation effort in one of the remote corners of Afghanistan has helped bring the elusive snow leopard back from the brink and given hope to one of the poorest and most isolated communities on earth. The numbers of the snow leopards had gone down drastically in recent decades mainly due to hunting and killing by farmers to protect their livestock. But a seven-year conservation programme and a newly declared national park has helped these cats slowly increase their numbers. Now their populations counts at 140 in the Wakhan National Park established in 2014 across 1 million square hectares.

According to specialists from the Wildlife Conservation Society in New York, the current number of snow leopards is healthy, and it also indicates that other species like Siberian ibex and golden marmot- the leopards' main prey – are also doing well.

Scientists have monitored and maintained a network of cameras and traps for more than a year to collect images of these animals. Also, cages were built with meshed roofs to protect the sheep, goats and cows that are the backbone of the local economy. A presidential decree was also issued a few years ago banning all hunting countrywide.

IUCN conference resolves to ban ivory trade completely

Representatives from countries who met at the Conference of the International Federation for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in Hawaii in September 2016 called for a ban on all ivory markets in the world, as well as a ban on domestic trade in ivory, to preserve what remains of elephants and rhinos on planet Earth.

Despite opposition from a number of countries, this resolution was passed on the final day of the Conference that brought together around 8000 people in Honolulu, the capital of Hawaii, for 10 days, that included conservation experts and scholars, activists and political officials.

Wildlife experts believe that ivory markets are the primary drivers for the illegal hunting that has been eliminating elephants and rhinos from the world, and protecting these animals in the forests of Africa can begin by banning markets practicing this illegal trade. Although the USA and China are the largest importers of ivory, they have agreed to ban ivory markets in their respective countries. Recent statistics published from Africa show that the number of elephants fell by 30 percent between 2007 and 2014.





Quote from the Late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan - God's mercy be upon him

"From the outset, the United Arab Emirates has considered environmental protection a major objective of its development policy. Thus a number of necessary legislations have been issued to address the problems of desertification, have a larger green cover, develop water resources, protect biodiversity, and conserve the marine environment by lowering pollution and improving fish stocks."

Let's Protect our Beach and Land



1. Enjoy your time in the open, but do not forget to take back your waste or throw them in the designated bins.
2. It would be best to carry reusable water bottles with you! That will help reduce plastic waste.
3. We know cigarette smoking is hazardous to health; but if you chose to still smoke, please do not throw away the butts in the open.
4. As you enjoy your delicious hot food, ensure you carry it in food grade containers.
5. Do your barbeques only in designated areas, and put off all fire before you leave the place.



Book review

The End of Nature is a book written by Bill McKibben, published in 1989. It has been called the first book on global warming written for a general audience. McKibben had thought that simply stating the problem would provoke people to action. He describes nature as a force previously independent of human beings, but which is now directly affected by the actions of people. He argues that the survival of the planet is dependent on a fundamental, philosophical shift in the way we relate to nature. The book addresses such core issues as the greenhouse effect, acid rain, and the depletion of the ozone layer, and also has an invaluable appendix of facts and figures that surveys the progress of the environmental movement. This book's impassioned plea for a renewed thinking of the way humans live is considered a ground-breaking work in environmental studies.

