



**COP28  
UAE**



WORLD GREEN ECONOMY  
ORGANIZATION

REPORT OF THE

WORLD GREEN  
ECONOMY ORGANIZATION  
ACTIVITIES AT

**COP28**



# WGEO Members and Partners at COP28

## Members

### FOUNDING



### STRATEGIC



### AFFILIATE



## Partners

### GREEN TECH



### GREEN FINANCE



### GREEN RETAIL



### GREEN CHAMPIONS



### GREEN LEADERS



### GREEN INFLUENCERS





**WORLD GREEN ECONOMY  
ORGANIZATION**

---

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART I	<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>P. 01</b>
PART II	<b>WGEO Pavilion Agenda</b>	<b>P. 02</b>
PART III	<b>WGEO Activities Report</b>	<b>P. 04</b>
PART IV	<b>WGEO Members &amp; Partners Awards Ceremony</b>	<b>P. 54</b>



WORLD GREEN ECONOMY  
ORGANIZATION

جناح  
PAVILION

**WGEO**

WORLD GREEN  
ECONOMY ORGANIZATION

## Executive Summary

The WGEO COP28 Report serves as a comprehensive repository of invaluable insights from sessions that intricately explored innovative strategies for climate change adaptation, robust climate finance mechanisms, and broader sustainability themes. Aligned with COP28's thematic days, the early panel discussions set the conference tone by delving into innovative adaptation approaches and engaging in crucial dialogue on climate finance mechanisms. As the summit progressed, sessions focused on real-world data analytics, catalyzing gender equity in climate finance, and exploring solutions for hard-to-abate sectors, among other topics. The report encapsulates key takeaways, emphasizing the urgent imperative of achieving Net Zero and highlighting the transformative role of aluminum recycling and Artificial Intelligence (AI). Success stories, such as China's 20% energy savings through AI-powered electricity grid management, underscore the transformative impact of responsible AI applications.

In conjunction, the report integrates valuable insights from panel discussions surrounding sustainability in the GCC retail industry, initiatives by the Dubai Supreme Council of Energy to advance Net Zero, successful climate projects led by young change-makers, and strategies for reducing single-use plastics in the retail sector. The focus extends to the critical importance of green and digital skills, vertical farming, reforestation, and mangrove restoration in addressing the multifaceted challenges of climate change. Noteworthy announcements include the Cairo International Center's efforts in capacity building, the research paper collaboration with HSBC, LSE, Accenture, and the UNFCCC entitled "Just Transition in Emerging Markets", and topics covered at the WGEO pavilion, such as Amazon's gender equity initiative and UNDP's capacity-building program

This report stands as an indispensable resource, offering nuanced perspectives for policymakers, industry leaders, and stakeholders deeply committed to sustainable development. It provides actionable insights into transformative capacities, challenges, opportunities, and collaborative approaches that are vital for effective climate action in our dynamically evolving global landscape.



# WGEO Pavilion Agenda

---

Date	COP28 Thematic Days	COP28 Theme/WGEO Programmatic Day Customized slogan of the day	Sessions
30 NOV	Opening Day	<b>Circularity &amp; Green Retail Day</b> Promoting sustainable consumption and production for a greener global economy	<b>WGEO</b> –The Rule of Circular Business Models in Maximizing Efficiency and Enhancing Resource Sustainability
01 DEC	World Climate Action Summit	<b>Climate Action Global Partnerships Day</b> Leaving no one behind: leveraging global partnerships for a just transition for all	<b>Amazon</b> – Space for Sustainability: Contribution of Space Based Capabilities to Sustainability Research and Climate Science
02 DEC	World Climate Action Summit	<b>Green Supply Chain Day</b> Accelerating the global green economy Through sustainable supply chains and Business management	<b>WGEO</b> – Minimizing Industry Carbon Footprint through the Mapping of Green Supply Chain <b>Schneider Electric</b> – Sustainable Pathways – Fostering Innovation & Investment for a Greener Tomorrow <b>Landmark</b> – Sustainable Fashion <b>WGEO</b> – Sustainable Procurement: Navigating Policies and Practices
03 DEC	Health / Relief, Recovery And Peace	<b>Health, Green Recovery &amp; Adaptation Day</b> Building back better: green economic recovery and developing community resilience/ adaptive capacities	<b>WGEO</b> – The Role of North-South Cooperation in Accelerating Climate Action through Climate Finance and Knowledge Transfer <b>Amazon</b> – U.S. Corporate Climate Action: Bold Commitments and Transformational Actions <b>WGEO</b> – Exploring Innovative Adaptation Approaches: The Rising Role of Artificial Intelligence in Advancing Climate Change Adaptation <b>WGEO</b> – Climate Finance for Adaptation: A Discussion on Climate Finance Mechanisms
04 DEC	Finance/trade/ Gender Equality/ Accountability	<b>Sustainable Finance &amp; Gender Equality Day</b> From conceptualization to materialization: mobilizing green finance to advance a green economy transition	<b>Presentation</b> – Real-world application of data analytics in tracking and measuring the progress of climate commitments <b>Amazon</b> – Catalyzing Gender Equity in Climate Finance: Investing in Women-Led Climate Solutions in Emerging Markets <b>UNDP</b> – Launch of UNDP’s Initiative on High Integrity Carbon Markets
05 DEC	Energy And Industry / Just Transition / Indigenous Peoples	<b>Decarbonization &amp; Just Transition Day</b> Harnessing the power of industry for green solutions: fostering a green transition through catalyzing on green investments and carbon trading	<b>Amazon</b> – Accelerating Decarbonization Solutions for Transportation <b>Amazon</b> – Accelerating Logistics Decarbonization and Green Corporate Fleets <b>UNDP</b> – Capacity Building for Climate Action and sustaining <b>Peace</b> – Dialogue on Lessons Learnt and the Way Forward <b>DNV</b> – Research Publication on the Lean and Green Report
06 DEC	Multilevel Action, Urbanization And Built Environment/ Transport	<b>Urbanization &amp; Green Transport Day</b> Transforming tomorrow’s cities: greening urban landscapes to drive forward sustainable green economies	<b>Emirates Global Aluminium</b> – Solutions for Hard to Abate Sectors: Use of Aluminum for Recycling <b>UNECE</b> – Joint High-level Ministerial Panel-Trees in Dry Cities: Luxury or a Fundamental Climate SDG Solution? <b>Talabat</b> – Government-Business Collaboration for Technological Solutions to Climate Change
08 DEC	Youth, Children, Education And Skills	<b>Youth Empowerment and Green Skills Day</b> Empowering the next generation for sustainable climate action and integration in the green economy	<b>UNDP</b> – NDCs/NAPs in the Arab States and Africa, focusing on water <b>Al Shaya Group</b> – Resilience: Charting a Sustainable Path in the GCC Retail Industry <b>Dubai Supreme Council of Energy</b> – Advancing Net Zero: Raising Awareness, Educating, and Advocating Towards Net Zero in the UAE <b>WGEO</b> – Successful Climate Initiatives by Young Change Makers <b>Al Shaya Group</b> – Beyond Single-Use: The Rise of Reusable Carrier Bags and Customer Loyalty in Retail <b>Al Shaya Group</b> – Green Gold: Recycling Suppliers Transforming Retail Waste into Profit <b>WGEO</b> – Empowering the Next Generation to Drive Positive Change Through Green and Digital Skills
09 DEC	Nature, Land Use, And Oceans	<b>Nature-based Solutions &amp; Water Resilience Day</b> Harmony in habitats: nurturing nature’s diversity & harnessing solutions for a climate and water resilient world	<b>PepsiCo</b> – Fireside Chat and Breakfast Networking <b>Vertical Future</b> – How Farming Systems can Adapt to, Mitigate and Manage the Effects of Climate Change and Supply Chain Insecurity <b>Fireside Chat:</b> Preserving Earth’s Climate through Forests: The Role of Reforestation and Afforestation in Climate Mitigation <b>Fireside Chat:</b> Sustainable Coastal Resilience and Ecosystem Restoration. UAE Mangrove Restoration a Case in Point <b>HSBC-WGEO</b> – Publications: Just Transition in Emerging Markets: a Case Study of India, Egypt and South Africa
10 DEC	Food, Agriculture And Water	<b>Food Security, Smart Agriculture &amp; Water Management Day</b> Advancing the nexus of food, agriculture, and water for optimum management and use	<b>Vertical Future</b> – Responding to a Global Water Crisis: How Food Systems Can Adapt in an Era of Water Scarcity <b>EcoCentric</b> – Online Ordering Trends and Environmental Challenges in the UAE <b>Majid Al Futtaim</b> – The journey to sustainable consumption, a conquest or a collaborative mission?
11 DEC	Final Negotiations	<b>Green Tourism &amp; Climate Digital Technologies Day</b> Eco-innovations for a green economy: fostering green tourism and climate digital solutions	<b>Dragon Oil</b> – Zero Flaring & Zero Leaks <b>Global Alliance on Green Economy (GAGE)</b> <b>WGEO Members and Partners Award Ceremony</b>





# WGEO Activities During COP28 Report

---

# DAY 02

DECEMBER 1, 2023

## Space for Sustainability: Contribution of Space-Based Capabilities to Sustainability Research and Climate Science

### Speakers

#### Aarti Holla-Maini

Director of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA)

#### H.E. Salem Butti Salem Al Qubaisi

Director General of the UAE Space Agency

#### David Roth

Director of International Public Policy, Amazon

#### Lloyd Whitman

Senior Director of the GeoTech Center, Atlantic Council

#### Andrew Zolli

Chief Impact Officer, Planet

### Abstract

This event would bring together satellite operators and a representative of the UN organization responsible for space to discuss the contribution of Space-Based Capabilities to Sustainability Research and Climate Science. The event would be a 45-minute panel discussion that would focus on the contribution of space-based capabilities, such as global connectivity services and Earth remote sensing technologies, to sustainability research and climate science that is happening around the world. The proposed panelists are Aarti Holla-Maini, Director of the UN Office of Space Affairs (UNOOSA); David Roth, Director of International Public Policy, Amazon; and Will Marshall, co-founder and CEO, of Planet.

### Key Takeaways

Space capabilities are essential assets to monitor climate change precisely. Data collected from space provide key indicators measuring the impact of climate change on Earth, from rising seas to ice melting or deforestation. Space capabilities enable solutions through partnerships between public agencies, international organizations, and private companies. Ensuring they are embedded by design into policymaking can transform them into powerful drivers of sustainable development.

Through always-extending constellations of satellites, space provides tremendous amounts of useful data. Space tools measure all the core variables such as Biomass, Water, and Carbon ... 32 out of the current fifty-five essential climate variables are now monitored from space, and 26 of them can only be measured from space.

Space capabilities also enable solving a wide variety of climate issues. Daily tracking from space of illegal road progression in the Amazon Forest provides the Brazilian environmental police with a real-time localization system, allowing them to conduct targeted raids, destroy equipment, impose fines, and sharply reduce the deforestation rate. On the same pattern, Peru, succeeded in quelling illegal fishing by making it mandatory to embark satellite devices onboard and declare catches in real-time. These are practical examples of how permanent Earth screening brings the world into an era of "radical climate transparency" and opens new sustainable policymaking opportunities.

Space capabilities are not only expanding our field of view inward toward Earth. Study of the galaxy, the solar system, and other planets helps better understand climate variations on Earth. Understanding how greenhouse gases rendered Venus uninhabitable or how rock dust from asteroids' collision can cover the sunlight and spark an Ice Age on Earth are key scientific findings while future discoveries about Mars's atmosphere or the origin of water can drastically change ways of living.

However, democratizing, sharing, analyzing, and interpreting all the data extracted from space is a formidable challenge. It must be faced by initiating meaningful dialogues at venues such as the COP, building bridges toward other tech solutions like AI and machine learning, and engaging the youth.



# DAY 03

DECEMBER 2, 2023

## Minimizing Industry Carbon Footprint through the Mapping of Green Supply Chain

### Speakers

#### Dharashree Panda

Head of Sustainability, Landmark

#### Dragos Fundulea

Principal, Roland Berger

### MODERATOR

#### Karim Refaat

Chairman & CEO, The Ngage Group

### Abstract

Reducing the carbon footprint of the industrial sector through green supply chain management is an essential tactic in combating climate change and achieving sustainability. Industry carbon footprint alludes to the amount of greenhouse gas emissions that are caused by industrial activities, such as manufacturing, transportation, and distribution of products. Green Supply Chain Management (GSCM) is a way of minimizing the environmental impact of the entire supply chain, from raw material extraction to product delivery and disposal. This session seeks to introduce the concept and benefits of GSCM, and provide a practical framework for mapping the green supply chain of an industry. During the workshop, representatives from the industrial sector will learn how to use various methods and tools to assess the environmental performance and carbon footprint of their respective supply chain.

### Key Takeaways

The World Climate Action Summit and Green Supply Chain Day at the WGEO Pavilion in the Blue Zone, B2, Building 18, on the third day of COP28 was a dynamic event that engaged in vital conversations for a greener future. Focusing on accelerating the global green economy through sustainable supply chains and business management, it featured three panels and a presentation highlighting innovative solutions and pathways to sustainability.

The first panel discussed “Minimizing Industry Carbon Footprint through the Mapping of Green Supply Chain,” emphasizing the role of green supply chain management in reducing industries’ carbon footprint. The second panel, “Sustainable Pathways – Fostering Innovation and Investment for a Greener Tomorrow,” explored solutions for a sustainable future, emphasizing innovation and investment as key drivers. The third segment focused on fashion sustainability, showcasing a vision for Sustainable Fashion by Landmark Group. The final panel addressed “Sustainable Procurement: Navigating Policies and Practices, offering insights into sustainable procurement complexities”. Throughout the day, participants engaged in discussions, fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing.

The event underscored the importance of collective action in advancing a greener economy and the imperative of prioritizing sustainability in business strategies and supply chain management. Overall, the day marked a significant milestone in advancing the global climate agenda, emphasizing the potential for collective action to ensure a more sustainable future. Events like these serve as beacons of innovation and collaboration, guiding towards a greener, more resilient global economy.



# DAY 04

DECEMBER 3, 2023

## Exploring innovative adaptation approaches: the rising role of artificial intelligence in advancing climate change adaptation

### Speakers

**Ezzeddine Jradi**

Chief Transformation and Business  
Excellence Officer, Emicool

**Prof Saifur Rahman**

Director, Virginia Tech

**Ovias Sarmad**

Former Deputy Executive Secretary, UNFCCC

**MODERATOR****Darren Perrin**

Director, Roland Berger

### Abstract

Artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly becoming a key player in the realm of climate change adaptation, revolutionizing how we tackle the challenges posed by a changing environment. By leveraging machine learning algorithms in areas such as climate modeling and sustainable resource management, AI empowers us to develop adaptive strategies. AI can be applied to the various domains that are relevant for climate adaptation such as energy, agriculture, water, health, etc. In light of that, this panel session aimed to explore the solutions that AI offers such as: improving climate predictions, enhancing disaster management, and supporting climate adaptation planning. The session also addressed the challenges and risks of using AI for climate adaptation, such as ethical, social, and environmental implications. In addition, the panel discussion highlighted the necessity of cross-sectoral and interdisciplinary cooperation between AI and climate communities.



## Key Takeaways

Artificial Intelligence (AI) plays a significant role in advancing climate change adaptation, with applications in crucial sectors such as agriculture and education. Its adaptive capabilities contribute to addressing environmental challenges, enhancing resilience, providing timely and essential information to government policymakers, enabling proactive decision-making. This foresight is particularly valuable in preparing for potential disasters and minimizing their impact on communities and infrastructure.

Real-world success stories showcase AI's effectiveness in optimizing traffic management in densely populated megacities like India and Singapore. By ensuring efficient traffic flow, AI contributes to reducing congestion and minimizing the environmental impact associated with vehicular emissions. China stands out as a major player in AI applications, notably in managing electricity flow within the grid based on demand rather than traditional wiring convergence. This approach has resulted in a substantial 20% energy saving in grid operations, showcasing the transformative impact of AI on energy efficiency.

In the corporate landscape, AI proves essential for predictability. By enabling companies to predict changes in customer behavior, AI empowers strategic decision making across various realms, including adaptation, mitigation, and the implementation of sustainable practices. Data is a foundational element in AI applications. It plays a crucial role in modeling transitions to new features or functionalities, ensuring that AI systems are well-informed and capable of providing accurate predictions and recommendations. While both mitigation and adaptation are essential strategies in addressing climate change, prioritizing mitigation provides a pathway to allocate time for effective adaptation. AI-driven mitigation efforts lay the groundwork for a more sustainable and resilient future.



# DAY 04

DECEMBER 3, 2023

## Climate Finance for Adaptation: A Discussion on Climate Finance Mechanisms

### Speakers

#### Raphael Lebel

Head of Sustainable Finance Observatory,  
Institut de la Finance Durable

#### Amir Sharifi

Chief Investment Officer, Hy24

#### Sherif ElKholi

Partner and Head of Middle East and  
Africa Infrastructure, Actis

#### MODERATOR

#### Darren Perrin

Director, Roland Berger

### Abstract

Climate finance plays a crucial role in the urgent pursuit of sustainable development and resilience against the impacts of climate change. This session delved into the intricate web of financial mechanisms designed to support communities, nations, and ecosystems in adapting to the changing climate. As the landscape of climate finance is multifaceted, with various mechanisms aiming to address the diverse needs of vulnerable regions, this session navigated through financial instruments, such as the Green Climate Fund, the Adaptation Fund, and the Climate Investment Funds (CIF), evaluating their efficacy and impact. At its core, the panel discussion emphasized the importance of mobilizing funds for adaptation efforts, highlighting that vulnerable communities often bear the consequences of climate-related challenges. In addition, the session explored the role of public and private sectors, as well as international collaborations, in financing adaptation projects that build resilience and safeguard livelihoods. Due to the escalating impacts of climate change, climate finance is becoming a moral obligation as well as an economic strategy.





## Key Takeaways

A yearly investment of \$4 trillion is imperative by 2030 to align with Net Zero targets, constituting five times the current deployment, and half of this allocation should be directed towards the emerging markets economy. The United Nations advocates for mobilizing \$7 trillion annually to finance the 17 Sustainable Development Goals within 15 years as we notice that progress after eight years significantly lags behind the initial yearly plan of \$105 billion and 90% of this funding is allocated to mitigation, with only 10% focused on adaptation efforts.

Climate transition financing, ranging between 4 to 7% of the yearly global GDP of \$100 billion, is deemed manageable yet pivotal. Emerging markets bear the brunt of climate change impacts, with only 20% of the required capital flowing into these markets. Bridging this gap requires a concerted effort involving governments, regulators, multinationals, development financial institutions and the private sector to mobilize necessary capital for climate mitigation, adaptation and resilience. Indeed major capital pools, such as insurance companies and pension funds often avoid investing in energy transition assets due to perceived high risks.

International financial institutions need to play a more impactful role in terms of Key Performance Indicators to ensure more financial additionality, bridging the gap in public sector investments. There is also a need to reinvent public-private schemes. The critical next step involves securing financial commitments from the G7, providing necessary funding to address the impact of climate change in the developing world. Despite a 30% increase in green economy investments since COP21 the pace remains slow. To meet urgent demands of climate action, a threefold increase in annual investments is imperative.



# DAY 05

DECEMBER 4, 2023

## Real-world application of data analytics in tracking and measuring the progress of climate commitments

### Presenter

**Oliver Marchand**

Head of Climate Risk Research, MSCI

### Abstract

This session discussed the complex landscape of climate data and its integration into financial markets. MSCI, is a leading financial data provider that focuses on creating indexes that measure the performance of markets, with a significant emphasis on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors. The presenter introduced the concept of Implied Temperature Rise (ITR) as a key metric, explaining its relevance and popularity within the financial industry. A detailed explanation of the ITR calculation is presented, demonstrating its application to a large dataset of 10,000 companies, including the MSCI All Country World Index.



### Key Takeaways

Two years ago in Glasgow, the Glasgow Financial Alliance for Net Zero (GFANZ) was established, focusing on various matrices. This alliance has endorsed the implied temperature rise as a metric to assess progress.

An analysis indicates that, over the next decade, companies, particularly in the G20 countries, will likely decarbonize at a faster pace than their respective countries. Comparing indices with a company's decarbonization plan that extends to 2030 reveals that countries exhibit a slightly longer time horizon commitment than the companies themselves.

The management of climate change impact and risk in the financial industry has evolved into a complex science. Assessing a firm's historical state involves aggregating carbon emissions over the past decade, while understanding the current state requires evaluating the carbon intensity today. Furthermore, exploring the future requires researching a company's targets and likely trajectory of carbon emissions.

Expanding beyond companies, the MSCI Sustainability Institute's initiative is introduced to assess implied temperature rise for countries. The discussion included different approaches to allocating carbon budgets among nations, considering factors such as per capita emissions and fair share distribution. In conclusion, the session offered valuable insights into the evolving landscape of climate metrics in finance, shedding light on the alignment of companies and countries with global climate objectives



# DAY 05

DECEMBER 4, 2023

## Catalyzing Gender Equity in Climate Finance: Investing in Women-Led Climate Solutions in Emerging Markets

### Speakers

#### **Patty O'Hayer**

Global Head Communications & Government Affairs, Reckitt

#### **Monique Vledder**

Practice Manager for the Global Health, Nutrition and Population Unit, World Bank

#### **Najada Kumbuli**

Vice President, Head of Investments, Visa Foundation

#### **Laura Lane**

Executive Vice President (EVP) and Chief Corporate Affairs and Sustainability Officer, UPS

#### **Admiral Rachel Levine**

Assistant Secretary for Health for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

#### **Her Excellency Toyin Saraki**

Founder & President, Wellbeing Foundation Africa

#### **MODERATOR**

#### **Gillian Caldwell**

Chief Climate Officer and Deputy Assistant Administrator, USAID

#### **David Shukman**

Science Editor turned Independent Consultant, BBC News

### Abstract

The panel discussion explored the dynamic intersection of climate action, gender inequality, and the ground-breaking initiative, the Climate Gender Equity Fund (CJF). With a commitment to achieving net-zero carbon by 2040, speakers underscored the collaborative efforts required for climate goals and highlighted the disproportionate impact of climate change on women and girls. The CJF emerges as a pivotal response to systemic barriers faced by women climate entrepreneurs, aiming to remove obstacles to venture capital access and provide context-specific solutions. 2x Global's role as the grant manager emphasized its focus on unlocking gender-smart capital at scale and deploying funds with a gender lens. The CJF is positioned as a catalytic force, leading the way in gender and climate finance integration, showcasing the power of collaboration and public-private partnerships. The first funding window, launched in mid-2023, is introduced, emphasizing the fund's role in mitigating barriers and providing critical support for women entrepreneurs in the climate sector. Overall, the discussion highlights the urgency of gender-responsive climate finance and the potential transformative impact of the CJF in advancing this crucial agenda.



## Key Takeaways

A link is established between climate action and gender inequality, highlighting the impact of the pandemic on gender issues, as well as recognizing the fact that women and girls are disproportionately impacted by climate change and their role as change agents in communities. Therefore there is an urgent need for gender-responsive climate finance, with a call to address the gender gap in funding and investment in women entrepreneurs, which leads into subsequently introducing the Climate Gender Equity Fund (CJF) and 2x Global as a response to systemic barriers faced by women in accessing climate finance. Those barriers faced by women climate entrepreneurs, including limited access to venture capital and fundamental barriers like land rights ownership must be identified.

The description of the first funding window of CJF, targeting fund managers and network organizations, deliberately focused on Africa to address the unique challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in the region. Accordingly, the first three grantees are introduced: Clean Technology Hub in Nigeria, W Hub in South Africa, and Mcha Ventures in Kenya, with a commitment to supporting various aspects of the value chain.

The growing impact of climate change is straining public health globally, which includes storms, hurricanes, and wildfires leading to increased cases of diseases. Marginalized communities, including African-American, Hispanic, Latino, American Indian, and Alaskan native communities, face higher health risks due to toxic pollution, underinvestment in infrastructure, and unequal distribution of environmental burdens disproportionately affecting low-income communities. Despite the toll of the COVID-19 pandemic, it emphasized the fundamental truth of the interconnectedness of communities globally, which ultimately leads to calls for a spirit of community on a global scale to face the challenges of climate change and its health impacts.



# DAY 06

DECEMBER 5, 2023

## Capacity Building for Climate Action and Sustaining Peace – Dialogue on Lessons Learnt and the Way Forward

### Speakers

#### Jamila Youssef Ibrahim Matar

Director of Energy Department, League of Arab States

#### Maged K. Mahmoud

Technical Director, Regional Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (RCREEE)

#### Nasser Saidi

President, Nasser Saidi & Associates

#### Kishan Khoday

Regional Coordinator & Team Leader at United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

#### Tarig Ahmed

Regional Programme Officer – MENA Region at International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)

### Abstract

The panel discussion focused on the crucial theme of capacity development for climate action and sustaining peace. Acknowledging the urgency of reaching Net Zero and delivering on climate action, the session underscored the significance of investments in building the necessary capacities. The dialogue, led by UNDP, triple CPA, and the COP27 presidency, aimed to draw lessons from experiences and share insights on effective ways to strengthen prevention, peace-building, and overall capacity. Ambassador Ahmed Abdel-Latif, Director General of the Cairo International Center, emphasizes the importance of capacity building in the context of climate and peace. He discussed the paradigm shift needed to promote holistic responses that address adaptation, peace-building, resilience, and development simultaneously. The training program, “Climate Programming for Sustaining Peace”, designed in partnership with the African Union Commission, is highlighted as a groundbreaking effort to inform policymakers in Africa about climate risks across various sectors. The discussion concludes with a focus on UNDP’s role as a major implementer of climate change and peace-building programs. The CRISP Initiative, brought to the COP for the first time, is highlighted for its contribution to sustaining peace. UNDP’s mobilization of over \$424 million in climate change adaptation underscored the commitment to reducing risks from climate-induced disasters and supporting vulnerable communities.



## Key Takeaways

The need for strong leadership, vision and capacity at national and regional levels to address the challenges posed by climate change and its relationship with conflict were emphasized. Participants also highlighted the urgency of achieving Net Zero and delivering on climate action. They stressed that significant investments are required to strengthen prevention, peace- building, and critical capacities to make a meaningful impact on climate and security.

The description of the first funding window of CJF, targeting fund managers and network organizations, deliberately focused on Africa to address the unique challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in the region. Accordingly, the first three grantees are introduced: Clean Technology Hub in Nigeria, W Hub in South Africa, and Mcha Ventures in Kenya, with a commitment to supporting various aspects of the value chain.

The growing impact of climate change is straining public health globally, which includes storms, hurricanes, and wildfires leading to increased cases of diseases. Marginalized communities, including African-American, Hispanic, Latino, American Indian, and Alaskan native communities, face higher health risks due to toxic pollution, underinvestment in infrastructure, and unequal distribution of environmental burdens disproportionately affecting low-income communities. Despite the toll of the COVID-19 pandemic, it emphasized the fundamental truth of the interconnectedness of communities globally, which ultimately leads to calls for a spirit of community on a global scale to face the challenges of climate change and its health impacts.



## Solutions for Hard to Abate Sectors: Use of Aluminum for Recycling

### Speakers

#### Jonas Debrabandere

Project Manager, Roland Berger Belgium

#### Thierry Dezenclos

CEO, Veolia

#### Ibrahim Abdul Majid Al Ali

Strategic Planning & Policies Department  
Director, Abu Dhabi Waste Management Company,  
Tadweer Waste Management

#### Maarten Labberton

Director Packaging Group, European Aluminum  
Association

#### David Van Heuverswyn

Director, Every Can Counts Europe

#### MODERATOR

#### Filippo Ghizzoni

Roland Berger Middle East

### Abstract

This panel session addressed the pressing issue of aluminum recycling and its significance in mitigating challenges posed by hard-to-abate sectors. The discussion commenced by underscoring the global surge in aluminum can consumption, accentuating its environmental impact with un-recycled aluminum contributing to substantial CO2 emissions. Projections hint at a notable increase in can consumption by 2030, emphasizing the urgency of sustainable solutions. The discussion contrasted infrastructure light systems prevalent in certain regions, relying on street pickers, with more advanced systems in developed nations. This divergence underscores variations in recovery rates and recycling practices. The panel aimed to unravel opportunities in aluminum recycling, exploring ongoing initiatives and strategies to boost recycling rates. An essential aspect of the discussion revolved around the intersection of aluminum recycling with decarbonization efforts. Participants delved into technological solutions to enhance recycling processes and reduce environmental impact.





## Key Takeaways

Aluminum possesses the potential to be a truly circular product, as its atomic structure remains unchanged through recycling, allowing it to be recycled 10–50 times. Additionally, unlike materials such as plastic and paper, aluminum maintains a positive scrap value, creating a perpetual incentive for recycling. Emirates Global Aluminum (EGA) anticipates a surge in global demand for aluminum. It also aims for recycled aluminum to constitute 60% by 2030 and 70% by 2040 as part of their decarbonization journey.

Effective sorting is crucial for successful recycling; emphasizing the need for improved techniques from the generation point, changing consumer habits and encouraging early sorting, and the integration of technical innovation and human behavioral change are all crucial for an efficient recycling process. A lack of sorting, awareness, and innovation in the waste supply chain necessitate a comprehensive framework for the sector's improvement.

Circular economy councils/EPR systems, though initiated, face challenges, including the duration of implementation, the need for alignment between environmental actions and cost considerations. Consumers play a pivotal role, which underscores the importance of awareness campaigns educating consumers on the sustainability of aluminum, their role in the supply chain in aiding collection, and the importance of using recycling bins. Legislation, such as EPR systems, packaging directives, and recycling targets, needs enforcement mechanisms for effectiveness. Key factors contributing to success of the recycling process include strong partnerships between entities, governmental support, engagement with key players in the industry, investment in technological innovation, and supportive policy making.



# DAY 07

DECEMBER 6, 2023

## Joint High-level Ministerial Panel – Trees in Dry Cities: Luxury or a Fundamental Climate SDG Solution?

### Speakers

#### **H.E. Saeed Mohammed Al Tayer**

MD & CEO Dubai Electricity & Water Authority - DEWA

#### **Tatiana Molcean**

UN Under-Secretary-General/Executive Secretary, UNECE

#### **H.E. Muawieh Radaideh**

Minister of Environment, Jordan

#### **H.E. Aziz Abdukhakimov**

Minister of Ecology, Environmental Protection and Climate Change, Uzbekistan

#### **Adalberto Maluf**

National Secretary for Urban Environment and Environmental Quality, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, Brazil

#### **Claudio Barbaro**

Undersecretary of State, Ministry of the Environment and Energy Security, Italy

#### **Nouzha Bouchareb**

Former Minister of National Territorial Planning, Urban Planning, Housing and Urban Policy, Kingdom of Morocco

#### **Aly Abousabaa**

Regional Director, Central and West Asia and North Africa (CGIAR)

#### **Xenya Scanlon**

Chief of Communications, External Relations and Partnerships, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

#### **Ricardo Rio**

Mayor of Braga, Portugal

#### **Christine Peterson**

Co-founder and Former President, Foresight Institute

#### **Hon. Pedro Roque**

Co-Founder and CEO, Papayya

#### **Stephen O'Driscoll**

Development Director, H&H Development LLC

#### **Daouda Ben Oumar Ndiaye**

Manager of Climate Change and Environment Islamic Development Bank Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

#### **World Green Economy Organization**

#### **Assembly of the Mediterranean**

#### **MODERATOR**

#### **United Nations Economic Commission for Europe**

#### **World Green Economy Organization**

## Abstract

With a focus on the adverse impacts of climate change, extreme heat, and urbanization pressure, the panel discussion underscored the vulnerability of populations in these areas. The panel challenged the perception of trees as a luxury in such environments, emphasizing their necessity for building resilient urban spaces. The discussion highlighted the numerous benefits of urban trees, from temperature reduction and flood resilience to economic advantages like supporting local businesses and reducing public health expenditures. Building on the UNIS-initiated Trees in Cities Challenge, where over 80 cities pledged to plant 13 million trees, the panel stressed on the importance of scaling up efforts on a national and global level. It called for increased support to local governments, encompassing both technological assistance and funding, not only for initial planting but also for sustained maintenance



## Key Takeaways

The rehabilitation of streets, roads, and squares competes for limited fiscal space in cities, but successful urban upgrade projects, as seen in Athens, demonstrate the effective integration of nature-based solutions.

Parliaments, exemplified by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM), play a crucial role in supporting trees in dry cities. PAM has been involved in joint projects with the UN, focusing on environmental policies and the necessity of border ratification of international agreements. Climate change disproportionately affects the Mediterranean, with rising temperatures and extended wildfires. Promoting urban forestry is seen as crucial for mitigation and adaptation strategies, contributing to sustainable urban management, and advancing sustainable development goals. International parliamentary cooperation, demonstrated through PAM's collaborations with UN organizations, emphasizes the role of parliaments in analyzing, debating, and approving multilateral environmental agreements.



# DAY 07

DECEMBER 6, 2023

## Government-Business Collaboration For Technological Solutions To Climate Change

### Speakers

#### Abdullah Al Busaidi

Communications and Information Technology,  
Sultanate of Oman

#### Waleed Faisal Albassam

Director of the Studies Directorate,  
Prime Minister's Office, Kingdom of Bahrain

#### May Youssef

Regional Director of Public Affairs & Interim  
Director of Communication, talabat

#### MODERATOR

#### Raji Unnikrishnan

Editor and Manager Public Relations,  
Go Alive Media House

### Abstract

The historical evolution of complex urban centers in Mesopotamia's drylands, shaped by the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, sets the stage for an exploration of contemporary challenges faced by dry cities globally. The conversation delved into the complexities of planting and maintaining trees in dry cities, addressing limited water resources and emphasizing the need for careful tree species selection. The panel also shifts the narrative towards opportunities, advocating for nature-based solutions, particularly the proven effectiveness of urban trees. The discussion concluded by emphasizing the imperative of collective action in ensuring the continuity and sustainability of urban tree initiatives amid the evolving challenges posed by climate change and rapid urban development.



## Key Takeaways

Projects with low initial costs but significant maintenance expenses pose challenges for traditional national investment financing. Encouraging cities to engage in nature-based projects requires a focus on the green aspects of projects from the start.

Global partnerships, exemplified by collaborations with the World Bank's City Climate Finance Gap Fund, are crucial. Successful models in places like Santa Maria and Colombia are earmarked for replication on a global scale, emphasizing the need for speed and scale. Technical assistance advisory facilities, such as Jaspers, provide free co-partnership advisory services to help regions develop sustainable urban plans.

Engaging in mission adaptation with the European Commission and organizing road shows are strategic approaches to encourage regions to build up their project portfolios. Aggregating these projects into framework loans facilitates financial support. The cooperation with NGOs, forest forums, and UNECE reinforces the value of partnerships in addressing global challenges.



# DAY 08

DECEMBER 8, 2023

## Adaptation in water resources as a pathway to sustainable development

### Speakers

#### Thomas Laurent

Deputy Director for Climate Change,  
Ministry of Environment, Kenya

#### Saddam Waheed

Chief Engineer, Ministry of Water Resources,  
Iraq

#### Ahmed Mohamed Hassan

Director of Hydrometeorology Department,  
Ministry of Energy and Water Resources, Somalia

#### MODERATOR

#### Rohini Kohli

Senior Technical Advisor, Adaptation Policy  
and Planning, UNDP

### Abstract

Water is the primary medium through which climate change affects ecosystems, livelihoods, and development. However, water resources management is often neglected or overlooked in climate change adaptation strategies. The panel discussion primarily used the example of Africa, where water availability has halved due to droughts, which has led to a decrease in nutrition levels and an increase in displacement levels.



### Key Takeaways

Countries still do not have common metrics and indicators globally which can make it very difficult to benchmark. Therefore, a Global Adaptation Framework that takes into account global targets, global metrics, and global indicators is required.

Successful water adaptation requires aligning a country's national water adaptation strategies to their NAPs so that there is no mismatch between goals. The importance of working cross-sectoral when dealing with water adaptation since water is integrated within most sectors and ministries in African countries. This requires establishing the right institutions on a national level and sub-national level, ensuring that these institutions are performing towards water adaptation through capacity building measures and verifying effective coordination for climate change planning among institutions.

For oil dependent economies, such as Iraq, water scarcity is a huge issue since each gallon of oil needs one and a half gallon of water to extract. Hence, it is not just a sustainable development challenge, but also an economic challenge. Awareness is key in the pursuit of efficient water adaptation. Citizens in all countries know that they are climate change, but don't know how to effectively preserve water.

The panelists were invited to portray the environmental challenges, such as floods and droughts, hindering their potential for economic growth and development. Ultimately, this panel session explored the challenges and opportunities of integrating water resources management into climate change adaptation, with a focus on how countries are integrating their water management strategies within their National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). For example, in Africa, 51 countries have submitted their NAPS with 43 prioritizing water investments. By accelerating water adaptation, countries harness the potential of water as a catalyst to economic growth and sustainable development.



# DAY 08

DECEMBER 8, 2023

## Panel Retail Resilience: Charting a Sustainable Path in the GCC Retail Industry

### Speakers

#### Seneca Cottom

Head of Sustainability, Alshaya Group

#### Laetitia Magentie

Head of CSR & Sustainability, Apparel Group

#### Florence Bulte

Chief Sustainability Officer, Chalhoub Group

#### MODERATOR

#### Samia Al Duaij

ESG Associate, Meras Consulting

### Abstract

The retail industry in the GCC region faces multiple challenges, such as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the shift to e-commerce, the need for digital transformation, and the growing demand for sustainability. This panel discussed how retailers can overcome these challenges and chart a sustainable path for the future. Among the topics discussed was the idea of enhancing the resilience and efficiency of the retail supply chain, by adopting agile and flexible practices, leveraging data and analytics, and collaborating with suppliers and partners. More specifically, the panel explored use of AI in efforts towards minimizing the retail industry's carbon footprint. Moreover, the panelists delved into how to leverage the opportunities and potential of the GCC retail market, by understanding the consumer preferences and behavior, and offering them sustainable products that they would actually purchase. Through integrating environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors into the retail business model, the industry can offer sustainable products as well as engage with customers and stakeholders.





## Key Takeways

The GCC region can always expect regulations coming their way since regulations are usually first implemented in the US and Europe and then make their way into the region. Waste management can be used as a tool in income generation, through exploring how to use waste to feed livestock and then using these livestock in operations and recycling waste and selling it in its other forms.

Consumers will only learn about the importance of sustainability if they are incentivized to make better choices. It is the responsibility of retailers to teach consumers about sustainability but to also offer them products.

AI is one of the potential solutions towards sustainability as it helps track and monitor progress and carbon emissions. One of the innovative strategies that has been introduced in the sector is the idea of rental clothing for events rather than purchasing clothes for every single event. In doing so, producers are starting to prioritize the environment over profits.

Collaboration among market players is key in the fight towards a sustainable future since the topic goes beyond competition. The UAE is one of the top countries in terms of sustainable retail due to the government working closely with the private sector



# DAY 08

DECEMBER 8, 2023

## Advancing Net Zero: Raising Awareness, Educating, and Advocating Towards Net Zero in the UAE

### Speakers

#### Faisal Ali Al Rashid

Chairman of Advancing Net Zero Volunteering Team and Senior Director at Dubai Supreme Council of Energy

#### Sayeeduddin Mohammed

Senior Director at Dubai Supreme Council of Energy

#### Farah Naz

Board Member at Advancing Net Zero Volunteering Team and Director of ESG and Innovation Middle East and Africa at AECOM

#### Mustapha Aanzi

CCO at IBECE Energy

### MODERATOR

#### Majd Fayyad

DSM Strategy & Policy Lead, Dubai Supreme Council of Energy

### Abstract

This panel discussion, hosted by the Dubai Supreme Council of Energy, delved into the ambitious journey towards achieving net zero emissions in the UAE. The session brought together a group of experts, policymakers, and industry leaders all associated with the Advancing Net Zero Volunteering Team in the DSCE. The team serves as a platform to promote social responsibility and inspire younger generations for climate change. The session starts off with a recognition of the current energy landscape in the UAE and the pivotal role of renewable energy, technological innovations, and sustainable practices. Among the discussed topics were the role of public awareness in achieving net zero emissions and advocating for policy reforms that support sustainable energy transitions. Overall, the panelists define critical steps in mobilizing collective efforts to realize the vision of a net zero future for the UAE.



## Key Takeaways

In the public sector, the Advancing Net Zero Volunteering Team in the DSCE has grown tremendously in terms of dealing with energy management and circularity since 2010. One of the main solutions towards net zero is raising awareness and education level among the public through releasing reports and running surveys. In the UAE, working side-by-side with the government also enhances the public sector.

The main challenges of transitioning to solar panels are the availability of space - the solution could be to install on rooftops; the regulations as to the different locations where panels can be installed; the capacity of these solar panels; even if Dubai has the most aggressive retrofit program, the decarbonization due to the requirement of several sources of finance from governments and institutions. 70% of electricity consumption in buildings in the UAE is due to cooling. Experts agreed that district cooling is an option to reduce electricity consumption but needs to be laid down on the right ground.

During a survey which was run by the DSCE, one key finding was that all citizens understood what the Net Zero goal is and claimed that they were ready to shift towards sustainable practices. Another finding in the same survey was that 40% of the participants wanted a net zero transition by 2040 but they expressed the concern that achieving it might not be possible. This shows that there's a lot of optimism, because even if citizens do not think it is possible, they are still willing to transition to sustainable practices.



# DAY 08

DECEMBER 8, 2023

## Successful Climate Initiatives by Young Change Makers

### Speakers

#### Raphael Lebel

Deputy DG, IFD/ Paris Europlace

#### Timothee Mace Dubois

Head of Institutional Affairs, Schneider Electric

#### Kevin Chalhoub

Founder & CEO, EV Lab

#### MODERATOR

#### Karim Refaat

Chairman & CEO, The N Gage Group

### Abstract

The climate crisis is one of the most urgent and complex challenges of our time, requiring innovation and collective action from all sectors of society. The younger generations have a vital role to play in driving climate action and shaping a sustainable future as they are the most affected. This panel showcased some of the inspiring and impactful initiatives led by young change makers from different regions and backgrounds. All panelists stressed on the role of technology in the fight towards combating climate change, with a particular emphasis on the use of artificial intelligence (AI). Moreover, the session explored the opportunities and challenges faced by young climate leaders, and how they can overcome them. Through showcasing the success stories of these young change makers, the panel aimed to not only inform and inspire, but also to stimulate a collective commitment between generations to a sustainable future.



## Key Takeaways

In terms of technology, a prevalent misconception suggests that it is inherently polluting, leading to a cautious approach in its utilization. Contrary to this belief, technology serves as a crucial component in steering us toward a Net Zero future. It is imperative for younger generations to challenge existing systems, particularly in the realm of green projects, rather than succumbing to them. The thematic day of “Youth, Children, Education and Skills” during COP28 raises concerns, as education and skills are not exclusive to the youth but are universal necessities.

Acknowledging that emissions predominantly stem from the transportation industry, there is a pressing need to prioritize the transition to electric vehicles (EVs), an initiative in which Dubai stands as a leading proponent. The rapid advancement of EVs serves as an encouraging factor for individuals to embrace this sustainable mode of transportation. Programs fostering youth empowerment within organizations, where individuals can volunteer for climate change initiatives, represent a pivotal solution.

The disproportionate ratio between the younger generations on the streets advocating change and those in political spheres underscores the necessity of integrating young voices into politics. To effectively induce change, the active participation of young individuals in political arenas is crucial. A pragmatic approach to policy making entails adopting an emissions first strategy, involving the identification and targeted mitigation of sectors and countries that contribute most significantly to emissions.



# DAY 08

DECEMBER 8, 2023

## Beyond Single-Use: The Rise of Reusable Carrier Bags and Customer Loyalty in Retail

### Speakers

#### Seneca Cottom

Head of Sustainability, Alshaya Group

#### Monique Maissan

Founder & CEO, Waste2Wear

#### Derek Mak

Founder & CEO, 99 Bridges

#### MODERATOR

#### Samia Al Duaij

ESG Associate, Meras Consulting

### Abstract

The impact of single use plastic bags on our environment cannot be overstated. These bags have profound implications, from clogging waterways to harming wildlife and contributing to the alarming rise in plastic pollution. This panel session delved into the environmental consequences of single-use plastic examining how the adoption of reusable carrier bags can mitigate the environmental challenges caused by them. Moreover, the panelists examined the challenges and opportunities associated with implementing reusable bag programs, such as cost implications, consumer convenience, and regulatory considerations. Throughout the session, the speakers highlighted case studies of innovative strategies that could be implemented to steer away from single-use plastic bags and towards reusable bags. The main goal behind this session was to highlight retailers' role in helping customers reduce plastic waste through eliminating the use of single use plastic bags.



## Key Takeaways

The world currently consumes a staggering 5 trillion single-use plastic bags annually, with the primary concern being that each bag takes over 1000 years to decompose. While the global movement to ban single-use plastic bags gains momentum, progress in the MENA region has been relatively gradual. Notably, the UAE has emerged as a leader in the region, swiftly reducing the use of single-use plastic bags, thanks to a receptive customer base. This proactive stance has influenced other GCC countries to implement similar measures.

Transitioning to reusable bags presents an opportunity for companies to align with their Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) goals, concurrently enhancing their brand image while contributing positively to the environment. However, merely eliminating single-use plastic bags is insufficient; society must cultivate a broader culture of reuse beyond bags. Without a fundamental shift towards a 'reuse' mindset, we risk addressing one problem while neglecting another.

Encouraging customers to adopt reusable bags requires incentives. Implementing scannable reusable bags, where customers receive coupons or discounts after a certain number of uses, serves as a viable method. Additionally, training retail staff to inquire about customers' bag needs is a crucial initial step in reducing single-use plastic bag usage. This simple act contributes to an automatic reduction in the number of bags required.

Legislation in the UAE and other regional countries is evolving to accommodate Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) rules, plastic taxes, product passports, and other regulations. These measures aim to facilitate the transition to reusable bags and underscore the commitment to sustainable practices in the broader context of environmental responsibility



# DAY 08

DECEMBER 8, 2023

## Green Gold: Recycling Suppliers Transforming Retail Waste into Profit

### Speakers

#### Seneca Cottom

Head of Sustainability, Alshaya Group

#### André Willenbrecht

Head of Logistics, SOEX

#### Waleed Esbeitah

Managing Partner, Tadwire Recycling

#### Aliyu Ali

Co-founder & CEO, Efhaaz Recycling

### MODERATOR

#### Monir Salem Bou Ghanem

Policy Advisor, Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi (EAD)

### Abstract

The retail sector generates a large amount of waste, from packaging materials to unsold products, which has negative impacts on the environment. However, there are innovative solutions that can turn this waste into profit, by transforming it into new products, materials, or energy. This panel discussed how recycling suppliers can help retailers achieve this circular economy vision. The panelists focused on how to overcome the barriers and challenges of recycling retail waste, such as regulatory, technical, or financial issues, and how to leverage the opportunities and incentives available. The primary focus of the panel was on how recycling suppliers are leading the charge in transforming retail waste, traditionally seen as an operational cost, into a source of revenue and innovation. Finally, the session explored the role of consumer awareness and behavior in supporting sustainable practices, and the regulatory landscape influencing waste management strategies.





## Key Takeaways

Large corporations consistently require the services of recycling suppliers to manage their excess production and alleviate the burden of waste recycling. These suppliers play a crucial role not only in handling unwanted surplus but also in dealing with broken items that would otherwise be deemed useless. By partnering with recycling suppliers, these materials are recycled, extending their product lifespan, contributing to the recycling process, and generating profits.

Despite the vital role recycling suppliers play, awareness remains a challenge, prompting the need for regulatory support to highlight the existence and importance of this business model. Implementing systems that enforce fines on consumers for improper waste disposal at home is deemed essential to instigate behavioral change, as without consequences, there may be no incentive for customers to modify their habits.

Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) companies, being significant contributors to waste generation, bear the responsibility of initiating change. It is imperative for them to be accountable for their waste and actively participate in reversing environmentally harmful behaviors. In the retail industry, education and regulation emerge as pivotal factors when engaging with customers and businesses. Educating individuals about the value of waste and the potential consequences of neglecting proper waste management is essential, while regulations, whether positive or negative reinforcements, are crucial in encouraging the adoption of effective waste management practices.

Given the sheer volume of waste produced by large conglomerates, collaboration among recycling suppliers becomes essential. Specialization in handling specific types of waste, such as textiles or shoes, allows these suppliers to efficiently manage the diverse waste streams generated by large corporations.



# DAY 08

DECEMBER 8, 2023

## Empowering the Next Generation to Drive Positive Change Through Green and Digital Skills

### Speakers

#### Eesa M Al Bastaki

President, University of Dubai

#### Raya Makawi

Regional Leader, Middle East & Africa, Sustainability, Global Social Responsibility, 3M

#### Christopher Lilholm

Head of Global Key Customer Management, Supply Chain & Product Assurance, DNV

#### Balaji Nagabhushan

Group Chief Administrative Officer, Tristar

### MODERATOR

#### Karim Refaat

Chairman & CEO, The N Gage Group

### Abstract

To address climate challenges, there is a need for a paradigm shift towards a more resilient, green, and digital future. However, this shift requires new skills and competencies that enable individuals and organizations to adapt, innovate, and collaborate across sectors and boundaries. This panel session explored how green and digital skills can foster innovation, creativity, collaboration, and resilience among young people. The panelists also discussed the best practices and strategies to integrate green and digital skills into education, training, and employment policies and programs. Another critical aspect of the discussion addressed the challenges and barriers in making green and digital education accessible to the youth from a very early stage in their lives. In essence, the session aimed to emphasize the importance of building a future where green and digital skills are not just valued but are integral to global progress.



## Key Takeaways

Initiating sustainability education from early childhood is paramount, embedding eco-conscious values that can become intrinsic to future generations. To drive meaningful change, a collaborative effort between the government, private sector, and non-profit organizations is essential. This collective approach should provide resources, funding, and opportunities for young individuals to cultivate green skills, ensuring they graduate equipped with sustainable practices that can be applied in any business setting.

Recognizing the pivotal role of employees in business processes, it is crucial that university graduates are well-versed in sustainability measures. Beyond merely teaching the youth about sustainability, the focus should be on fostering lifelong learning, emphasizing the enduring importance of eco-conscious practices.

The University of Dubai exemplifies an integrated approach by aligning majors with the goals of the Dubai Chambers, ensuring that educational curricula are in harmony with the country's economic development. Acknowledging the youth's affinity for technology, leveraging technological tools becomes imperative to effectively communicate the significance of circular practices.

When engaging with youth, a strategic approach involves education, active engagement through internships and mentorship, and empowerment, allowing them to lead with intention and purpose. It is essential to recognize the diversity among the youth, understanding that not all possess the same skills. Tailoring education to individual strengths fosters a more inclusive and effective approach, acknowledging the diverse talents within the youth population.



# DAY 09

DECEMBER 9, 2023

## Harmony in Habitats: Nurturing Nature's Diversity and Harnessing Solutions for a Climate and Water Resilient World. How Farming Systems Can Adapt to, Mitigate and Manage the Effects of Climate Change and Supply Chain Insecurity

### Speakers

#### Jamie Burrows

Founder & CEO, Vertical Future

#### Professor Gideon Henderson

Chief Scientific Advisor to the UK  
Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

### MODERATOR

#### Mark Pickering

Chief Commercial Officer, Vertical Future

### Abstract

In the face of escalating climate change impacts and growing concerns over supply chain vulnerabilities, the transformation of traditional farming practices has become an urgent priority. This panel addressed this pressing issue, with a specific focus on the transition to vertical farming systems. This innovative approach not only promises a reduction in land and water usage but also offers resilience against the unpredictable shifts in climate and supply chains. The session provided in-depth discussions about the key challenges and achievements in the realm of vertical farming, the technological advancements driving this transformation, the environmental benefits, and the economic viability of vertical farming in both urban and rural settings.



## Key Takeaways

Vertical farming has emerged as a pivotal solution to address climate change and mitigate supply chain issues in agriculture, marking its presence for 10-15 years and currently experiencing its third wave characterized by rapid growth and substantial investments. The panel discussion underscored the challenges faced by early adopters of vertical farming, notably financial pressures from venture capital and private equity funding that often demand short-term returns. Success in vertical farming hinges on long-term investment and data-driven approaches, exemplified by the incorporation of advanced technologies in highly automated farms.

Vertical farming boasts various advantages, including water and energy efficiency, reduced food miles, and the elimination of pesticides in controlled environments. However, its viability is dependent on geography, influenced by factors like capital expenditure and crop types. The panel also emphasized the government's role, highlighting the importance of policy support and funding for vertical farming and related technologies. Initiatives such as the UK government's Farm Innovation programs and grants reflect active involvement in supporting agricultural technology.

Insights from the panelists, such as Jamie Burrows discussing projects like increasing spinach yield with ancient seed varieties and exploring high-protein crops like Amaranth, showcased innovative approaches. Gideon highlighted the UK's post-Brexit legislative changes enabling gene editing in crops, pointing to the potential for improved consumer-oriented products. The consensus among the panelists emphasized the need for a paradigm shift in farming practices, advocating for the integration of systems like aquaculture and vertical farming.

Furthermore, the discussion touched on the role of behavioral science in shaping consumer habits towards sustainable consumption and waste reduction. A key takeaway highlighted the intersection of agriculture with technology, showcasing how vertical farming utilizes data and automation to enhance productivity and efficiency, indicating a transformative direction for the future of farming.



# DAY 09

DECEMBER 9, 2023

## Preserving Earth's Climate Through Forests: The Role of Reforestation and Afforestation in Climate Mitigation

### Speakers

**Rokiatou Traoré**  
Founder, Herou Alliance

**MODERATOR**  
**Karim Haggag**  
Roland Berger

### Abstract

The urgent need to combat climate change has brought into sharp focus the critical role that forests play in our planet's health. The panel discussion titled "Preserving Earth's Climate Through Forests: The Role of Reforestation and Afforestation in Climate Mitigation" aimed to explore the significant impact that reforestation and afforestation can have in mitigating climate change. The keynote speaker, Rokiatou Traoré, Founder of the Herou Alliance, led the discussion. Her work and experience in promoting sustainable forestry practices provide valuable insights into how reforestation and afforestation can be effectively implemented as tools for climate mitigation. The panel delved into the nuances of these practices, differentiating between reforestation the replanting of forests where they have been depleted and afforestation, which involves planting trees in areas that have not been previously forested.



## Key Takeaways

During the discussion, Rokiatou Traoré shed light on the commendable environmental contributions of Herou Alliance's initiatives in Mali. The focus of these initiatives centers around the cultivation of Moringa trees, renowned for their resilience in harsh climates and rapid growth. Traoré's efforts play a crucial role in combating deforestation and climate change, given the Moringa trees' remarkable ability to absorb significantly more carbon dioxide than other tree species. Beyond environmental benefits, these initiatives actively engage and uplift local communities, offering livelihood opportunities, especially for women and youth. Furthermore, the nutritional advantages of Moringa contribute to addressing malnutrition, showcasing a holistic approach that intertwines environmental sustainability with community well-being.



# DAY 09

DECEMBER 9, 2023

## Sustainable Coastal Resilience and Ecosystem Restoration: UAE Mangrove Restoration a Case in Point

### Speakers

**Georges T. Ibrahim**

General Manager, Dendra Systems

**MODERATOR**

**Raji Unnikrishnan**

Editor and Manager Public Relations, Go Alive Media House Co.

### Abstract

As coastal regions worldwide face escalating threats from climate change, such as rising sea levels and increased storm intensity, the need for effective and sustainable coastal management strategies has become imperative. The UAE has been at the lead in coastal ecosystem rehabilitation, with over 150 square kilometers of mangroves planted in the last decade, resulting in a 30% increase in coastal biodiversity and a significant improvement in carbon sequestration. The UAE's mangrove restoration initiative serves as a model of how ecological restoration can enhance coastal resilience, biodiversity conservation, and carbon sequestration. This panel session discussed the ecological importance of mangroves in coastal ecosystems highlighting their role in mitigating climate change effects. Moreover, the session provided insights into the successful elements of the UAE's approach, which can be adapted and applied to other coastal restoration projects globally.





## Key Takeways

To ensure the successful implementation of mangrove restoration, a comprehensive understanding of the ecosystem is imperative. This involves identifying the specific requirements of the ecosystem and strategically selecting areas with the highest potential for successful planting, eschewing a “spray and pray” approach for a more thoughtful and targeted methodology. Harnessing the power of AI and machine learning emerges as a crucial tool in enhancing coastal resilience by pinpointing optimal seeding areas.

While many countries engage in mangrove restoration, the UAE distinguishes itself through meticulous monitoring throughout the process, enabling timely interventions when necessary. The UAE’s success is underscored by the initial goal of spreading 100,000 mangrove seeds daily, achieved with remarkable efficiency using only eight individuals and four drones. The plan is now to scale up these efforts for broader impact.

Several factors contribute to the UAE’s leadership in mangrove restoration, including a vigilant regulatory body that consistently monitors and safeguards the ecosystem with strict and comprehensive regulations. Leveraging technology and AI in the restoration process sets the UAE apart, ensuring a more controlled and effective approach compared to haphazard manual methods.

Logistical challenges in mangrove restoration, particularly in hard-to-reach areas, are addressed through innovative solutions such as drone technology. Drones prove invaluable in accessing areas inaccessible by foot, overcoming logistical obstacles and expanding the scope of restoration efforts.

The panelist’s advice resonates with the need to embrace sustainable measures and practices, akin to the methods employed by our ancestors. This echoes a holistic approach to mangrove restoration, emphasizing the importance of harmonizing modern technology with traditional wisdom for enduring environmental impact.



# DAY 09

DECEMBER 9, 2023

## WGEO Publication: Just Transition in Emerging Markets: a Case Study of India, Egypt and South Africa

### Speakers

#### Nick Robins

Professor in Practice – Sustainable Finance

#### Mauricio Bermudez Neubauer

Managing Director, Accenture

### MODERATOR

#### Naveen Raza

Net-Zero Transition and Partnerships, HSBC

### Abstract

The concept of a "just transition" has gained significant traction in discussions on global climate policy, particularly in the context of emerging markets. As these nations struggle with the challenges of fostering economic growth while responding to climate change, the notion of a just transition offers a framework for progressing toward a sustainable future. This panel discussion looked into the various aspects of a just transition in emerging markets, exploring themes such as the challenges and opportunities in the transition, and the role of government policies in facilitating this transition. The session presented case studies from different emerging markets, India, Egypt, and South Africa, showcasing successes, lessons learned, and ongoing challenges in implementing just transition strategies. Most importantly, the panelists both stressed on the importance of considering all stakeholders involved in a just transition



## Key Takeaways

The looming threat of climate change stands to jeopardize 72 million jobs by 2030, creating a ripple effect that extends to employment, GDP, and all facets of the economy. Amid discussions about the Just Transition, often centered around technology, finance, and skills, there's a crucial oversight the primary factor is people. The transition must be inherently fair, acknowledging and addressing the risks and opportunities within each community undergoing the shift.

African countries, grappling with the transition, face significant obstacles, notably a lack of access to finance exacerbated by increasing debt burdens. Technology emerges as a facilitator for a just transition, enabling upskilling through access to computers and smartphones. Moreover, data collection and sourcing play a pivotal role in measuring and monitoring the Just Transition's progress.

At the heart of this transition is the concept of 'Climate Justice,' emphasizing that more people in the global south suffer from climate change than in other parts of the world. Looking ahead, green skills are not just advantageous but will become ordinary, essential skills for all citizens. While educational systems strive to impart these skills, there is a pressing need for accelerated progress in this direction



# DAY 10

DECEMBER 10, 2023

## Responding to a Global Water Crisis: How Food Systems Can Adapt in an Era of Water Scarcity

### Speakers

#### James Burrows

Founder & CEO, Vertical Futures

#### Mark Pickering

COO, Vertical Futures

### Abstract

Water stands as a cornerstone for agricultural production and, by extension, global food security. According to insights from the World Bank, an astonishing 70% of all water is devoted to farming activities, with certain developing countries reaching an even more staggering figure of 95%. In the face of escalating water scarcity emerging as a looming existential threat for numerous nations, this panel discussion delved into the transformative potential of vertical farming. This agricultural innovation not only promises enhanced water efficiency but does so while upholding principles of productivity, equity, and environmental sustainability. The discourse within the panel also scrutinized the intricate interplay of productivity, equity considerations, and environmental consciousness. While highlighting the promises and potential benefits, the panel candidly addressed the challenges impeding the widespread adoption and impact amplification of vertical farming models, ranging from technological hurdles to economic considerations and systemic constraints. In essence, the panel aimed to dissect the complexities surrounding water use in agriculture, emphasizing vertical farming as a promising solution while advocating for a collective, multidimensional effort to overcome hurdles and drive positive change in the realm of global food production.



## Key Takeaways

Staple crops such as maize, rice, and wheat exhibit concentrated cultivation in only five countries, notably India and China, all of which are highly susceptible to water scarcity. Beyond the inherently water-intensive nature of agriculture, a significant portion of global greenhouse gas emissions, one-third, emanates from current food systems, exacerbating the climate crisis and creating a feedback loop that compromises food security.

The financial implications are dire, with three trillion dollars' worth of business at risk due to climate change-induced water scarcity and extreme weather events like floods and droughts. The MENA region faces an even more acute issue of water scarcity, with water withdrawal surpassing the global average at 83%, compared to 70% globally.



# DAY 10

DECEMBER 10, 2023

## Online Ordering Trends and Environmental Challenges in the UAE

### Speakers

#### Farid Dallal

CEO, Motoboy Sustainable Delivery Service

#### MODERATOR

#### Sarah Lalla

Co-founder, Ecocentric

### Abstract

The expanding realm of online shopping has given rise to numerous environmental challenges. The convenience associated with this trend is counterbalanced by various environmental repercussions, notably the heightened greenhouse gas emissions linked to delivery vehicles. Additionally, the excessive utilization of single-use plastics is permeating every facet of the ecosystem at an unsustainable rate. Accordingly, this session discussed two of the innovative business models that are being implemented on the UAE soil: Motoboy and Ecocentric which seek to promote a more sustainable means of operations for online food delivery, a market which is anticipated to expand to USD 1.8 billion in the UAE alone, making it a ripe market that can have a major positive impact if rewired to serve the betterment of the planet rather than its detriment.



## Key Takeaways

Sustainable businesses commonly face initial resistance from both consumers and employees, as seen in the food delivery industry. However, overcoming apprehensions is possible, as evidenced by the transition to electric bikes, driven by the acknowledgment of health benefits over hazards associated with regular motorbikes. Promoting sustainable alternatives requires raising consumer awareness, a challenge exacerbated by low climate literacy.

Additionally, infrastructure readiness for sustainable mobility and overall inaccessibility to alternative solutions pose hurdles that need addressing to normalize sustainable habits among consumers. A key solution involves providing access to electric charging and swapping stations to encourage increased supply and usage of electric vehicles, particularly in case of malfunctions.

The Motoboy model's initial success can be attributed to riders incurring no additional fuel costs and working under safer conditions compared to fuel-powered bikes. Data analytics and advanced software play a pivotal role in sustainable mobility models, aiding in measuring CO2 emissions, identifying environmentally friendly scenarios, and detecting vehicle malfunctions. Both business owners concur that the substantial benefits and profits from sustainable businesses, including their own, will manifest in the long term.



# DAY 10

DECEMBER 10, 2023

## The Journey to Sustainable Consumption, A Conquest Or A Collaborative Mission?

### Speakers

#### Omar Katanani

Head of Sustainability, Majid Al Futtaim Retail

#### Sharon Bligh

Director of Health and Sustainability,  
The Consumer Goods Forum

#### Hanne Søndergaard

Chief Sustainability Officer, Arla Foods

#### MODERATOR

#### Doireann Breathnach

High Level Climate Champions Consumer  
Goods & Retail Lead

### Abstract

This session was designed to critically explore the notion of sustainable consumption, assessing whether it is best characterized as an individual conquest or a collaborative mission. The session started with a keynote speech from the Senior VP of Sustainability at MAF. The keynote shed light on some of the initiatives that Carrefour are implementing. Among these initiatives is the Carrefour 'Choose Better' campaign through which Carrefour intends to engage and educate about sustainability. Moreover, Carrefour launched a 'War on Waste' campaign to save 20,000 tonnes of food waste. Following the keynote, the panel session dived into the different aspects of transitioning towards more sustainable consumption habits, underscoring the interplay between individual actions, community initiatives, corporate strategies, and governmental policies. The key topics of the session included the economic frameworks that both encourage and hinder sustainable practices, and the potential of technological innovations to support eco-friendly consumption. The objective of the panel was to culminate actionable strategies that can be adopted by the different stakeholders involved





## Key Takeaways

MAF, a conglomerate spanning 15 countries across the Middle East, Africa, and Asia, is deeply committed to achieving Net Positive status in water and carbon by the year 2040. To foster sustainable consumption, retailers need to align with consumer preferences, employing strategies such as increasing the percentage of healthier food products in customer baskets, boosting sales of nutritious items, and encouraging shoppers to adopt healthier behavior patterns.

The implementation of Traffic Light Labeling, a system informing customers about the nutritional content and sustainability of products, stands as a tangible step in this direction. The UAE, with its notable track record, serves as a model for sustainable consumption, with over 50% of private label products sourced locally and 70% from the communities in which they operate.

Recognizing the pivotal role of farmers, there is a call for incentivizing them to produce sustainable products, emphasizing the need for a collaborative effort across the entire supply chain. Encouragingly, the UAE's private label sourcing practices demonstrate the feasibility of local and community-centric approaches to sustainability.

To ensure the success of redirecting consumers toward sustainable choices, fostering collaboration between retailers and manufacturers becomes imperative. This collaboration should extend across all stages of production, distribution, and selling, requiring significant capacity building to enhance the collective impact of the retail sector on sustainable consumption.



## Zero Flaring and Zero Leaks

### Speakers

**Ali Al Jarwan**  
CEO, Dragon Oil

### Abstract

This session focused on the pioneering efforts of Dragon Oil in establishing and maintaining environmentally responsible practices in the oil industry. This session delved into the company's commitment to achieving zero flaring and zero leaks in its operations, a significant step towards reducing the environmental impact of oil extraction and processing.

As a leading player in the oil sector, Dragon Oil has recognized the imperative need to address the twin challenges of gas flaring and pipeline leaks. Gas flaring, the burning of natural gas associated with oil extraction, contributes significantly to carbon emissions, while pipeline leaks pose risks to both the environment and operational safety. The speaker explored the strategies implemented by Dragon Oil to combat these issues, highlighting the innovative technologies and operational protocols they have adopted.



### Key Takeaways

The UAE is unwavering in its commitment to enhancing the performance of its oil and gas sector while concurrently advancing alternative energy sources. This dedication is exemplified by the operation of three nuclear points and numerous solar centers in Abu Dhabi, Dubai, and Sharjah. The leadership in the UAE is actively pursuing green initiatives, involving the planting of more trees and amplifying government efforts toward environmental sustainability.

In Iraq, Dragon Oil is undertaking a project to significantly increase production by the end of 2024, emphasizing responsible energy production by focusing on controlling emissions and leaks for zero-emission, zero-leak operations. Gas is prioritized as a more environmentally friendly option due to its higher energy efficiency. In Turkmenistan, Dragon Oil is implementing two systems, high pressure and low pressure, to efficiently manage water usage and production.

With a robust emergency protocol in place, particularly for its extensive sub-sea pipes spanning 1500 km, Dragon Oil emphasizes responsible production and pollution prevention, particularly in oceanic environments. Key performance indicators and measurable efforts are being implemented to achieve zero flaring and zero leaks.

Recognizing the continued economic importance of oil and gas, the speaker suggests that oil companies should enhance visibility around their innovative and environmentally friendly practices. This proactive approach aligns with the overarching goal of fostering responsible energy production and environmental stewardship in the industry



# WGEO Members and Partners Awards Ceremony

---





**COP<sup>28</sup>**  
**UAE**



**WORLD GREEN ECONOMY  
ORGANIZATION**

**WGEO Headquarters  
Dubai, UAE**

**[info@worldgreeneconomy.org](mailto:info@worldgreeneconomy.org) | [www.worldgreeneconomy.org](http://www.worldgreeneconomy.org)**