

Saudi Arabia's Uruq Bani Ma'arid Protected Area Added to UNESCO World Heritage List

RIYADH, SAUDI ARABIA, September 20, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Saudi Arabia's Uruq Bani Ma'arid Protected Area has achieved a significant milestone by being included in the UNESCO World Heritage List. This recognition highlights the Kingdom's commitment to environmental preservation and showcases its rich natural heritage.

Located in the Empty Quarter desert, the Uruq Bani Ma'arid Protected Area is a breathtaking sand desert boasting the world's largest complex linear dunes. It is home to diverse flora and fauna, as well as exceptional natural phenomena. Situated at the intersection of the world's largest sand sea and the Arabian Peninsula's second longest mountain chain, it houses the most abundant biological and natural diversity in the Empty Quarter.

Despite the harsh climate, the area thrives as a robust ecosystem, providing a habitat for numerous plant and animal species, including the critically endangered Arabian Oryx. The reserve plays a crucial role in facilitating the natural reproduction and adaptation of these species. Ongoing discoveries of new species by experts at the National Center for Wildlife highlight the reserve's continuous environmental and biological development.

The nomination was developed through a collaborative effort by the Saudi National Center for



Saudi Arabia's Uruq Bani Ma'arid Protected Area.
Photo credit: National Center for Wildlife



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Wildlife and the Heritage Commission of the Ministry of Culture, highlighting the strong partnership between the natural and cultural heritage authorities in Saudi Arabia. The evaluation process emphasized transparency and effective management of natural resources. Encompassing an extensive area of 12,765 square kilometers, the Uruq Bani Ma'arid Protected Area is the only significant sand desert in tropical Asia and the largest continuous sand sea globally.

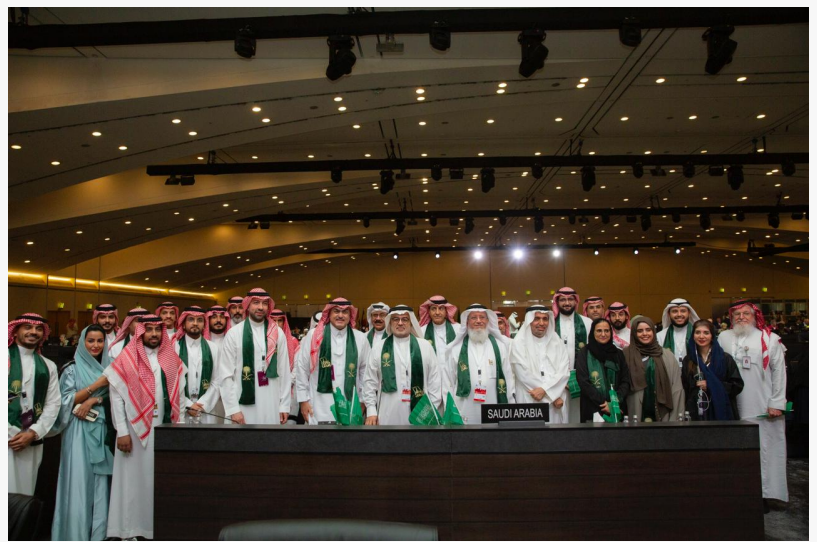


Photo credit: National Center for Wildlife

The reserve's diverse ecosystems provide essential habitats for endemic plant species such as Al-Ghadha, Athumum, Acacia, Banana, Harmal, Tarf, and Ushr trees. It is also home to endangered animals that have adapted to survive in one of the harshest environments on the planet, including the world's only free herd of Arabian Oryx, as well as the wolf, sand cat, sand fox, and striped hyena.

Dr. Mohammed Qurban, CEO of the National Center for Wildlife, reaffirmed Saudi Arabia's dedication to safeguarding natural wonders for future generations. He expressed, "Today marks a significant milestone in our journey towards conserving and protecting our precious natural heritage. The inclusion of the 'Uruq Bani Ma'arid Protected Area' in the prestigious UNESCO World Heritage List is not just a recognition of its outstanding universal value but also a testament to our unwavering commitment to biodiversity conservation. This achievement highlights the importance of collaborative efforts and underscores Saudi Arabia's dedication to safeguarding our natural wonders for future generations."

The inclusion of the Uruq Bani Ma'arid Protected Area in the UNESCO World Heritage List showcases Saudi Arabia's unwavering commitment to environmental preservation and highlights its exceptional natural heritage. This recognition will not only raise global awareness of the area's remarkable beauty and significance but also inspire further conservation efforts within the country and beyond.

About the National Center for Wildlife (NCW):

The National Center for Wildlife (NCW) in Saudi Arabia is dedicated to the conservation and protection of wildlife in the Kingdom. It plays a crucial role in preserving the rich biodiversity of Saudi Arabia and promoting sustainable practices for the benefit of both wildlife and society. NCW's mission is to conserve, protect, and manage wildlife resources in Saudi Arabia through research, education, and community engagement. By fostering an understanding of the importance of wildlife conservation, NCW aims to ensure the long-term survival of diverse

species and their habitats.

To learn more about the National Center for Wildlife, please visit [https://
https://www.ncw.gov.sa/en/pages/default.aspx](https://www.ncw.gov.sa/en/pages/default.aspx) and the NCW account on Twitter @NCW_center

UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE ANNOUNCEMENT:

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