

'Blooming Futures' report highlights UAE's potential in pioneering a Regenerative, Nature-Inspired Economy transformation

A landmark report by Greenpeace MENA, Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi, and SEE Institute outlines a roadmap for the UAE to lead in the regenerative economy.

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[Blooming Futures: Supporting the UAE's Journey Toward a Wellbeing Economy](#) stands as one of the first regional publications to translate biomimicry, the commons, and the wellbeing economy into a detailed implementation plan for policymakers, planners, academics, industry, and civil society in the MENA region.

The report, launched by [Greenpeace MENA](#) in collaboration with Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi and the SEE Institute, and authored by Greenpeace MENA Wellbeing Economy Award-winning researchers Najla Almatrooshi and Nicole Weber, both graduates of the Sociology and Philosophy Department at Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi, positions the UAE as a potential global leader in reimagining prosperity beyond GDP. By offering a blueprint for embedding biomimicry (learning from nature's resilience) and commons-based governance into the UAE's development model and industry practice, the report offers nature-inspired, community-centered pathways toward a regenerative wellbeing economy. This landmark publication lays out a visionary roadmap to build a thriving, resilient future centered on a powerful dual strategy: embracing biomimicry and revitalizing commons-based stewardship rooted in Emirati and Islamic heritage and traditions.

During the launching event at The Sustainable City in Dubai, Ghiwa Nakat, Executive Director of Greenpeace MENA, stated, "The UAE has long been a place where bold visions take shape. In just a few decades, it has turned ambition into tangible outcomes—placing wellbeing, quality of life, and sustainability at the heart of national planning. What we need now is the next leap: to learn from the most experienced teacher we have—nature. Through biomimicry, we can design as deserts conserve water, as mangroves protect shorelines, and as coral reefs build strength through cooperation. And through commons-based governance, we can manage what we share—water, air, soil, and knowledge—with care and accountability. When these approaches come together, we don't just decarbonize—we redesign. We move from extraction to regeneration, from short-term gain to long-term flourishing—shaping a regenerative economy that strengthens social cohesion, secures lasting prosperity, and sets a global model for wellbeing-led development."

"We have already seen that ambitious policies can deliver both environmental and social transformation. The UAE has the cultural heritage, as well as the financial and institutional capacity, to lead this shift. By building on the important groundwork already laid through Vision 2031, Vision 2071, and the UAE Net Zero by 2050 initiatives—and by scaling biomimicry-inspired projects such as Al Bahr Towers, Masdar City, and The Sustainable City—the nation can set a model for the wider region and beyond. By embedding nature's intelligence into policy, planning, and innovation, the UAE can pioneer a resilient, equitable, and regenerative future for the MENA region and the world," concluded Ghiwa Nakat, Executive Director of Greenpeace MENA.

Dr. Clio Chaveneau, Head of SAFIR Institute, Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi, stated, "It has been an honor for Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi to contribute to this important publication to the nation's sustainable prosperity. We are proud to have trained and supported the two talented student researchers whose work underpins the Blooming Futures report. This initiative exemplifies our commitment to advancing culturally grounded scholarship that bridges academic insight and real-world impact.

Dr. Jacinta D.Silva, Director of Research, Living Lab and International Partnerships, SEE Institute, "Blooming Futures reflects the UAE's growing leadership in reimagining prosperity through the lens of wellbeing, regeneration, and shared value. This report demonstrates how science, systems thinking, and community values can unite to shape a wellbeing economy for the UAE. At SEE Institute, we are honored to contribute to this national journey toward flourishing communities and a sustainable future."

Najla Al Matrooshi, Report Co-Author, Ajman Youth Council Member, highlighted "Blooming Futures emerges from a belief that wellbeing is not a luxury of the few, but the collective rhythm of a society in harmony with its environment. This report is an invitation to rethink growth not as acceleration, but as cultivation; not as dominance, but as care. It reflects a generation that dares to imagine prosperity beyond extraction, grounded instead in empathy, knowledge, and coexistence. I hope it becomes both a mirror and a map, reflecting where we stand, and guiding us toward the futures we still have the power to shape."

Nicole Weber, Report Co-author, Graduate Student at Sorbonne University, stated, "Sometimes, the most transformative progress begins with a shift in perspective. The UAE has the opportunity to lead by example by showing that true innovation lies not only in cutting-edge technology, but in re-integrating principles of biomimicry and the commons. By embracing authenticity and nature-based intelligence, we can redefine what sustainable leadership looks like for the region and beyond."

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Annex A) Key Findings & Recommendations from Blooming Futures Report:

1) Key Findings

- Historic Opportunity: The UAE is positioned to become a global pioneer in economic transformation rooted in ecological resilience, social cohesion, and shared prosperity.
- Regenerative Economy Potential: By redefining prosperity through nature-inspired resilience and wellbeing, the UAE can achieve a secure, fully regenerative economy, offering a blueprint for the world.
- Case Studies Demonstrate Feasibility: Flagship sustainable and biomimicry-inspired projects in the UAE show that cities, economies, and institutions can thrive in scarcity while actively regenerating ecosystems.
- Nature as a Model: Desert ecosystems, coral reefs, mangroves, and sabkhas illustrate how scarcity can be transformed into abundance through cooperation, diversity, and adaptability.
- Collaborative Advantage: Shifting from a mindset of competitive advantage to collaborative advantage enables an economy that functions like an ecosystem, where prosperity emerges from interdependence and shared resilience.
- Knowledge Commons: Building a national knowledge commons that combines modern science with ancestral ecological wisdom—including cooperation, amana (trusteeship), and shura (collaborative governance)—can strengthen policy and practice.
- Broader Measures of Success: Economic progress should be measured alongside ecological vitality, social cohesion, and community wellbeing, not just GDP.
- Systemic Barriers: Current obstacles include regulations favoring efficiency over empathy, financial models prioritizing short-term returns, and urban planning that defaults to environmentally and socially inefficient sprawl.

2) Key Recommendations

- Mainstream Biomimicry and Commons Principles: Integrate these approaches into national policy, urban planning codes, and development frameworks.
- Innovative Financial Instruments: Develop wellbeing-focused sukuk and green waqf endowments to align prosperity with environmental and social outcomes.
- Capacity Building & Knowledge Sharing: Establish knowledge commons and education reforms that blend traditional ecological wisdom with modern science.
- Measure What Matters: Co-create a National Wellbeing Index tracking ecological health, social cohesion, and community wellbeing alongside GDP.
- Promote Collaborative Advantage: Encourage policies and initiatives that foster interdependence, shared stewardship, and ecosystem-based economic functioning.
- Replicate and Scale Successful Projects: Use flagship sustainable projects as models to inform broader national implementation strategies

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