

# Discussions on global climate challenges, hidden wealth and start-up innovations take centre stage at Big 5 Global

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EINPresswire.com/ -- The penultimate day of Big 5 Global brought with it a sharp focus on climate change challenges as experts from around the globe gathered inside Dubai World Trade Centre to discuss and debate some of the most pressing issues facing the heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration (HVACR) industries.

On the final afternoon of a two-day HVACR Talks, engineers and climate authorities gathered to confront persistent issues, including retrofitting aging buildings, adapting to rising sea levels and advancing toward net-zero carbon cities.

Frank Mills, a lecturer with the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers (ASHRE), opened the event with insights on the RAMSES initiative, a research programme that guides cities through climate adaptation. He outlined how urban areas can manage extreme heat and flooding while still reducing emissions and planning for sustainable growth, especially given that most buildings that will exist in 2050 are already standing.

Mills also pointed to rising risks in coastal regions such as Hat Yai, Thailand, Miami and Florida,



Final day of LiveableCitiesX Summit



Start-up City Pitch Competition

stressing that reaching net-zero goes far beyond improving energy performance in individual buildings. His core message was that real progress in the built environment will require coordinated action across transport, food, manufacturing and urban planning.

Final day of LiveableCitiesX Summit highlights importance of sustainable planning

Delivering a keynote speech on the final afternoon of the two-day LiveableCitiesX Summit, His Excellency

Abdulaziz Ibrahim Ali Al Nuaimi, Assistant Undersecretary for the Commercial Affairs Regulatory Sector at the UAE Ministry of Economy and Tourism, emphasized the importance of urban competitiveness and focusing on execution, resilience and human productivity.

Al Nuaimi explained that cities such as those within the UAE are leading by investing in infrastructure, while their high rankings in global indices reflect effective systems. Human productivity is also treated as a priority in the country, he said, with the Emirates ranking first in global entrepreneurship and attracting significant foreign direct investment.

His Excellency Abdullah Ahmed Al Saleh, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Economy and Tourism, said: "Sectors such as tourism, logistics, manufacturing and financial services have emerged as key growth drivers, reflecting our successful transition towards a knowledge-based economy. Events such as Big 5 Global contribute to further strengthening this momentum by attracting global business leaders to the UAE and driving business tourism nationwide."

Also speaking on the summit's final day, Dag Detter, Principal, Detter & Co., discussed the need for cities to focus on leveraging "hidden wealth" to benefit both city and citizen. Singapore, before its boom, now earns more than 20% of its revenues from assets, including real estate, he said.

Cities often own property worth the same amount as its economic output, but do not recognize the value, said Detter, providing an example of a Rio de Janeiro public school that sits on one of most expensive streets in Latin America facing Copacabana Beach. "If they moved that school and built a hotel, they could probably build 30 schools and give the children a much better education," he added. "It would be a win-win for all."

Drawing on more than a millennium of experience managing its unique delta geography, The Netherlands has emerged as a global leader in water management innovation. In an address



The penultimate day of Big 5 Global

titled The Netherlands – Waterproof, His Excellency Gerard Steeghs, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the UAE, discussed how cities in the region can benefit from Dutch expertise and cutting-edge technologies developed through centuries of practical experience.

“The Netherlands has a long tradition of working with partners on resilient urban development,” said Steeghs. “Today’s dialogue showed strong potential for joint solutions in water management, materials and smarter building practices that support sustainable growth across the region.”

Start-up City Talks highlights how an autonomous future is an essential tool, not a promising concept

As part of Start Up City Talks, Nikhil Choudhary, General Partner at Nirman Ventures, delivered a session titled Future of Robotics within Traditional Industries in which he examined how robotics and AI are fundamentally reshaping the construction landscape.

“Across traditional industries, including construction, we’re witnessing robotics move from a promising concept to an essential tool,” said Choudhary. “The real driver isn’t novelty, it’s necessity. Looking ahead, Choudhary gave some personal insights as to what he believes autonomous system integration will look like: “Over the next five years, we expect far wider deployment of autonomous systems, from drones to humanoid robots, on construction sites, especially for repetitive and lower-skill functions where efficiency and safety gains are immediate. As AI advances, the workforce impact will be transformational rather than replacement-led. Robots will take on tasks humans shouldn’t be doing, while people focus on higher-value work that machines cannot replicate.”

Taking first place in this year's edition of the Start-up City Pitch Competition was Dubai-based Opteam, whose AI-driven solutions deliver efficiency and reliability by streamlining processes, optimizing resource utilization and automating data-driven strategies. Co-founder and CEO Ahmed Hegazy, taking away a \$25,000 bespoke marketing package to help boost his company’s profile, said it was a “great feeling” to win among such a strong field of incredible start-ups. “Winning at Big 5 Global is a validating moment that shows investors and attendees the true value of our product,” he added.

The third day sees continued partnership agreements

Strategic partnerships announcements continued today at Big 5 Global as AHI Carrier, the regional leader in HVAC solutions and The Saudi Kuwaiti Company (TSKU) announced the signing of a partnership agreement. The strategic partnership appoints TSKU as the dealer for Toshiba VRF (Variable Refrigerant Flow) systems in Kuwait, marking a significant step in expanding local market coverage and service excellence.

Afaf Kontar, CEO at AHI Carrier, said the partnership “represents our commitment to delivering world-class HVAC solutions with strong local support”. He added: “By combining Toshiba's industry-leading VRF technology with TSKU's established market presence and technical

capabilities, we are well-positioned to serve Kuwait's growing construction sector with the speed, reliability and service excellence that major projects demand. We look forward to supporting TSKU with comprehensive training and resources to ensure every project exceeds customer expectations."

Josine Heijmans, Senior Vice President, dmg events, said: "As we enter the final day of Big 5 Global, it's been fantastic to see the event's energy and impact. The busy aisles and packed halls so far have been a testament to the innovation and collaboration driving the industry forward. We would also like to congratulate all the participants in the Start-up City Pitch Competition for their hard work and engagement. It's inspiring to see firsthand the technologies that will shape the future of the construction and building sectors."

The final day of Big 5 Global takes place on Thursday, 27 November, at Dubai World Trade Centre, welcoming industry professionals from 10am to 5pm. Registration remains open on-site.

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About Big 5 Global

With a 45-year legacy, Big 5 Global is the largest and most influential building and construction event in the Middle East, Africa and South Asia and the annual meeting hub for the global construction industry. Taking place from 24 - 27 November 2025, at the Dubai World Trade Centre, Big 5 Global attracts more than 85,000 global attendees from over 165 countries and 2,800 exhibitors to UAE covering the full construction and urban development cycle across dedicated sectors and nine specialized events enabling industry professionals to source worldwide building solutions for every stage of construction: Heavy, Totally Concrete, Marble & Stone World, Urban Design & Landscape, Windows, Doors & Facades, HVACR World, LiveableCitiesX, GeoWorld and Future FM.

For more information and to register, visit: [www.big5global.com](http://www.big5global.com)

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