



Learning from existing projects: the Al Basama Al Beeiya (Ecological Footprint) Initiative in the UAE

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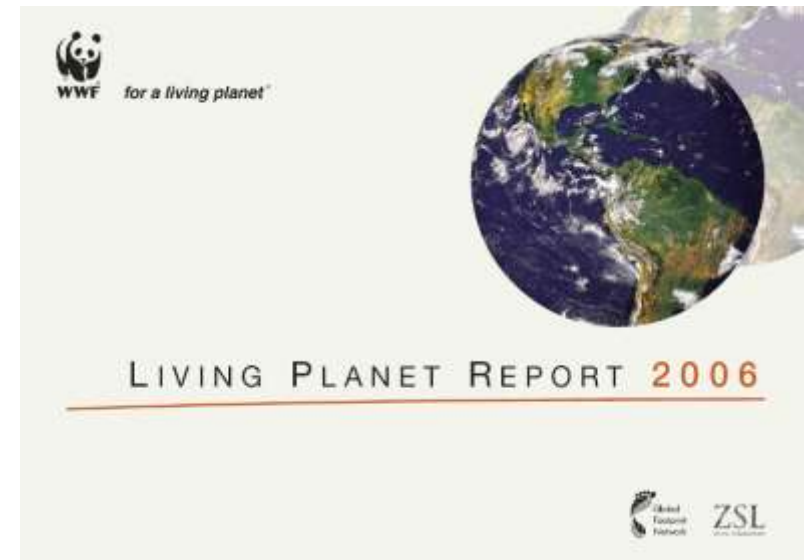


Global Footprint Network
Advancing the Science of Sustainability



Why the UAE started the Al Basama Al Beeiya (Ecological Footprint) Initiative?

- UAE interest in understanding and measuring sustainability began at the World Economic Forum in Davos (Switzerland) in 2006, where the Environmental Performance Index was presented (UAE ranked as 47th out of 133 countries).
- This interest was reinforced with the launch of the Living Planet Report 2006 which ranked UAE as the country with the highest per capita Ecological Footprint amongst over 150 countries.





The publishing of the report lead to several questions:

- What is the Ecological Footprint?
- Why is the UAE placed highest in the chart?
- What kind of data goes into the Footprint calculation?
- Can we compare UAE, a desert country, with other temperate and tropical countries with abundant natural resources?
- We must be up there because we are an oil producing country...



But it also lead to the acknowledgement that:

- Robust environmental and other data for the UAE were needed.
- Regardless of the ranking, the UAE needs to look seriously at understanding its consumption patterns and devising strategic policies towards that end.





- **AI Basama AI Beeiya Initiative launched in October 2007**
- Aims of the initiative:
 - Data review ➡ Building of a strong and reliable database
 - Methodology ➡ Contribute to international research
 - in the verification of national data (UAE)
 - strengthening the global calculation methods
 - Incorporate bio-geographical / local context
 - Building own expertise/ capacity in the process
 - Recommend and assist in policy development ➡ resource use and data management.
 - Relationship building



Al Basama Al Beeiya (Ecological Footprint Initiative) is the UAE's national effort to ensure a sustainable future by measuring and understanding the impact of our ways of living on planet earth

Partners of the Initiative:

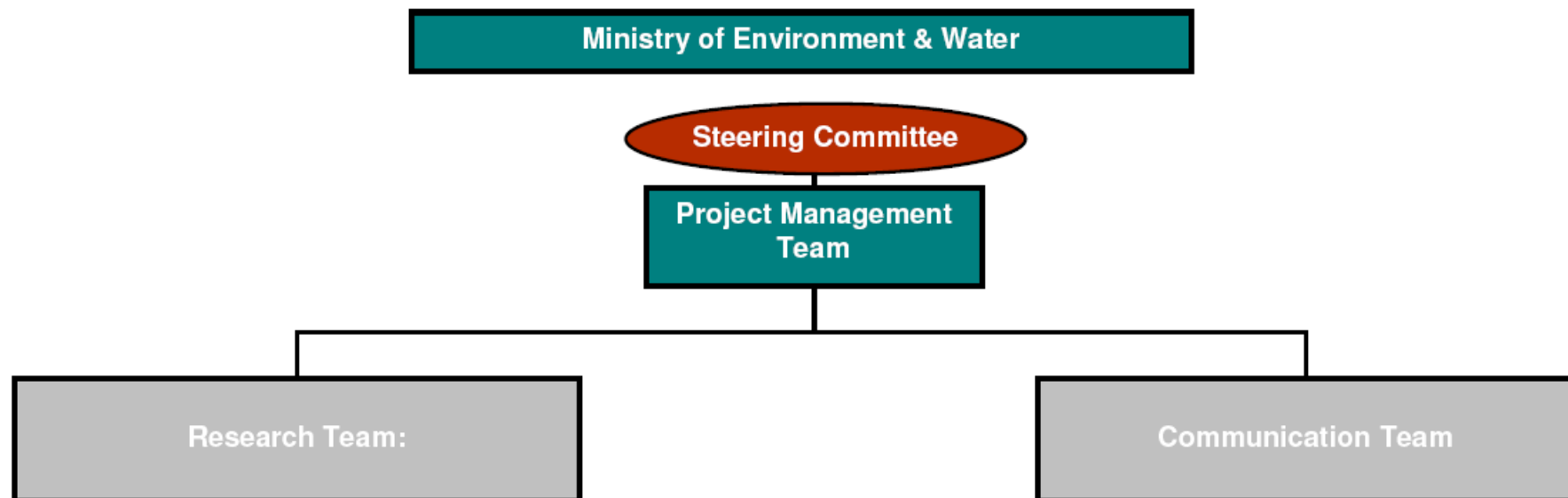
- Ministry of Environment & Water
- Abu-Dhabi Global Environmental Data Initiative
- Emirates Wildlife Society (EWS-WWF)
- Global Footprint Network

Success of the project is the ability to work with organizations / institutions across the country





Governance Structure



- ▶ This Working Group will review the national data accounts
- ▶ This Working Group will work on methodological improvement and nation-specific research.

- ▶ This Working Group coordinates and assists in the implementation of the communications strategy



Phase I – Research:

Activities:

- Review of population and energy data used in the calculation
- Understanding of the methodology behind the carbon Footprint component
- Contribution to Living Planet Report 2008

- The two-year Initiative has contributed to a more robust representation of the UAE Footprint.
- It also provided **a more educated understanding of the trends leading UAE to this value.**



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Outcomes:

- UAE has high per capita GDP and high standard of living
- It is an arid country and relies on natural resources from outside its borders to sustain its population (global responsibility)
- Maintaining a high standard of living despite the harsh arid climate is particularly energy demanding
- Options for a resource conscious lifestyle did not exist



Phase I – Communication:

Activities:

- Streamlining definitions & understanding – Capacity building
- Stakeholders engagement
- Media engagement
- Web-site
- Ministerial council in Nairobi
- Environmental awareness - Energy Campaign

ENVIRONMENT

"The change required is mainly in the lifestyle. It can't happen in two years."
— HAMDAN AL SHAER

Target-driven Strategy Vital to Shrink UAE's Footprint

Global environment report card finds country takes world's heaviest ecological toll

Key Findings

UAE — The United Arab Emirates made target-driven policies to reduce its ecological footprint after it ranked the highest per capita in a global environment report card issued on Wednesday, according to officials and environmentalists.

The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Living Planet Report 2008, which evaluated a country's impact on the planet by accounting for factors such as water emissions and resource consumption, found the average UAE resident needs 9.3 global hectares to support the lifestyle, or about 4.3 planet earths.

This is the highest per capita ecological footprint worldwide and comes after the country's top ranking last year.

Mubarak, Minister of Environment and Water for Ras Al Khaima said the country was taking initiatives to curb impact on the environment.

"The UAE is taking the right steps to reduce its carbon footprint through initiatives like the Masdar, development of green building codes, public transport, hybrid vehicles and Masdar by 2016. WTA, development of a zero gas flaring policy by ADNOC and carbon capture and storage initiative by ADNOC and

Masdar. Public awareness campaigns and education programmes will also need to be developed," the official said.

Furthermore, reduction in demand of natural resources and improvement of efficiency across all sectors - recycling, saving energy efficiency etc. and diversification of energy supply by using more low-carbon technologies are some of the areas that we believe will influence our carbon footprint," he suggested.

Dubai Municipality's Director of Environment Hamdan Al Shaer pointed out that the country only demanded 0.25 per cent of global resources.

However, he said any significant reduction in the per capita ranking in time for the 2010 Living Planet Report could only be reduced through policies which set targets.

"The change required is mainly in the lifestyle. It can't happen in two years. It takes steady regulations with stakeholders to reduce the footprint," Hamdan said.

"We need to make a Masdar - for we need to make people use the Metro, too."

Rasid Al Mubarak, Managing Director of Emirates Wildlife Society (EWS), cautioned that the ranking had to be considered in the context of UAE's rapid development which had provided economic growth and a high-end lifestyle for its residents.

"The rights for residents to live more sustainably have not come on time yet," Al Mubarak said.

"You've got Masdar and the Metro and green buildings... but we need additional initiatives that individuals, the private sector and government can take up."

Al Hassan Al Shamsi, partner of EWI-WWF, was established after the 2008 report to verify the data and outline strategies to better inform policy in future.

Mubarak said the regulations, at the end of the first phase, recommended the establishment of a federal statistics database and a carbon emissions inventory.

The project would now concentrate on the country's carbon emis-

ions - 80 per cent of its ecological footprint, to provide policy and objectives for reducing emissions in different sectors.

— ecw@khalifa.com

Largest Footprints

Global hectares

Country	Global Hectares
USA	9.3
UAE	9.3
Canada	8.8
Australia	8.2
China	7.8

KT Credits: Rafid Juman



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Further recommendation from Phase I:

- To have a UAE 2008 **Footprint Position Statement**
- Support the creation of a **National Statistical Bureau**
- Creation of a **CO₂ emissions inventory**, locally generated and yearly updated
- Continue **capacity building, awareness and education**



Phase II – Research and communication

- Data review
- Understanding methodology
- Capacity building
 - Identified as key to the long term goal of institutionalize the Ecological Footprint as sustainability metric beyond the life of the Initiative
- Communication



Phase II – Research and communication

- Policy and application
 - The Initiative will work to the end of providing policy advice based on Footprint results
 - An in-depth sector breakdown analysis has been performed and it will highlight areas that require environmental policies to be established
- During **Phase III**, the Footprint will then be used for scenario analysis to test the effectiveness of policies in place and to help develop new policy



Measuring community pressures on resources using the Footprint

- Calgary, Canada- Impact of city development using Footprint
- EPA Victoria, Australia- Footprint as engagement & resource accounting tool
- London, UK- hot spots identified for Footprint reduction
- Cardiff, UK- Footprint in sustainability outreach
- Marin County, USA- identify hot spots, set reduction targets, measure success
- State of Utah, USA- communication tool on sustainability & decision-making
- BedZed, UK- demonstrated the possibility of living within means of one planet





Thank you !!!

For more information please contact:

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