

Introduction

ESTIDAMA

Estidama, which means ‘sustainability’ in Arabic, is the initiative which will transform Abu Dhabi into a model of sustainable urbanisation. Its aim is to create more sustainable communities, cities and global enterprises and to balance the four pillars of Estidama: environmental, economic, cultural and social.

Figure 1: The Four Pillars of Estidama



The aspirations of Estidama are incorporated into Plan 2030 and other Urban Planning Council (UPC) policies such as the Development Code. Estidama began in 2008 and is the first program of its kind that is tailored to the Middle East region. In the immediate term, Estidama is focused on the rapidly changing built environment. It is in this area that the UPC is making significant strides to influence projects under design, development or construction within the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. One of Estidama’s key initiatives is the **Pearl Rating System**.

THE PEARL RATING SYSTEM FOR ESTIDAMA

The Pearl Rating System for Estidama aims to address the sustainability of a given development throughout its lifecycle from design through construction to operation. The Pearl Rating System provides design guidance and detailed requirements for rating a project’s potential performance in relation to the four pillars of Estidama.

The Pearl Rating System is organised into seven categories that are fundamental to more sustainable development. These form the heart of the Pearl Rating System:

- **Integrated Development Process:** Encouraging cross-disciplinary teamwork to deliver environmental and quality management throughout the life of the project.
- **Natural Systems:** Conserving, preserving and restoring the region’s critical natural environments and habitats.
- **Liveable Spaces:** Improving the quality and connectivity of outdoor spaces.
- **Precious Water:** Reducing water demand and encouraging efficient distribution and the reuse and recycling of water.
- **Resourceful Energy:** Targeting energy conservation through energy efficiency, improved awareness, monitoring and reporting and renewable sources.
- **Stewarding Materials:** Ensuring consideration of the ‘whole-of-life’ cycle when selecting and specifying materials.
- **Innovating Practice:** encouraging innovation in building design and construction to facilitate market and industry transformation.