# [***Ministry of Climate Change and Environment's Sixth National Dialogue for Climate Ambition Encourages Entities to Maximize Potential of Nature-based Climate Change Solutions***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66S2-H431-F11P-X3D1-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

Dubai-UAE: The Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MOCCAE) hosted the sixth National Dialogue for Climate Ambition (NDCA) that explored the role of nature-based solutions in climate change mitigation and adaptation. Held under the theme 'Promoting the creation and implementation of innovative and sustainable nature-based solutions', the event took place at Anantara Eastern ***Mangroves*** Abu Dhabi Hotel.

The session convened around 50 representatives of relevant public and private sector entities. Federal government authorities included the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Economy, the Office of the UAE's Special Envoy for Climate Change, Federal Authority for Nuclear Regulation (FANR), the General Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA), and Emirates Green Building Council. Meanwhile, the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD), the Abu Dhabi Department of Energy, and Dubai Municipality represented local government. Among other entities in attendance were Emirates Nature-WWF, Zayed International Foundation for the Environment, and International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA). The event also drew the participation of several local and international companies – Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC), Mubadala, ADQ, TAQA, the Emirates Nuclear Energy Corporation (ENEC), Essa Al-Ghurair, Aldar, Farnek Services, HSBC, Boehringer Ingelheim, and Distant Imagery.

The sixth instalment in the series highlighted the UAE's efforts to leverage ***blue carbon*** ecosystems, such as ***mangrove*** forests, saltmarshes, and seagrass meadows, to address climate change. Her Excellency Mariam bint Mohammed Almheiri, Minister of Climate Change and Environment, praised the outstanding work of EAD in this regard.

She added: "***Mangrove*** forests offer significant climate change mitigation and adaptation co-benefits. They protect our coasts from rising sea levels and storm surges, and provide critical habitats for biodiversity. They also serve as effective carbon sinks. To strengthen our ***blue carbon*** ecosystems, we proactively work to expand our ***mangrove*** cover. In December 2020, we submitted our second Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement that included planting an additional 30 million ***mangroves*** by 2030. And less than a year later, at the 26th UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow in November 2021, we announced an increase in our ***mangrove***-planting target to 100 million by 2030."

The UAE is home to more than 63 million ***mangroves*** that form forests spanning 183 square kilometers and capture 43,000 tons of CO2 annually. The new target, captured in the country's updated second NDC, will bring up its total ***mangrove*** forest area to 483 square kilometers and increase the CO2 sequestration rate to 115,000 tons per year.

Her Excellency said: "We aim to work closely with NGOs and the private sector to fulfil our commitment to safeguarding the sustainability of our ***mangrove*** forests."

During the event, Steven Lutz, Senior Program Officer and ***Blue Carbon*** Lead at GRID-Arendal, a Norwegian foundation and partner of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), offered an in-depth insight into ways of using ocean-based solutions to capture CO2. Oceans absorb around one-third of human-generated emissions, and marine life, such as whales, fish, and sea turtles, plays a key role in this process.

For instance, an average great whale sequesters an estimated 33 tons of carbon when it dies and sinks to the ocean floor. Meanwhile, phytoplankton, whose productivity is enhanced by whales, captures 37 billion tons of CO2 per year. Essentially, one whale is worth a thousand trees in terms of carbon absorption. Combined with other economic benefits, researchers estimate the value of each great whale to amount to US$2 million. Lutz pointed out the difference in the carbon sequestration capacity of a living ocean versus a depleted one, emphasizing the importance of conserving ocean ecosystems and reversing the overfishing crisis.

The agenda also featured an introduction of the National Carbon Sequestration Project, a presentation on EAD's efforts, and briefs on projects aimed at transforming captured CO2 and mineralizing it into rock. In addition, the participants finalized the 100 Million ***Mangroves*** Plantation Plan, the implementation mechanism for the latest ***mangrove***-planting target.

NDCA is a series of sector-specific assemblies aimed at raising sectoral climate ambitions and informing the UAE's roadmap to net zero by 2050.

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