**Press Release**

**Driving positive urban development: Leading urban changemakers head to Expo City Dubai for inaugural Sustainable Cities in Action Forum**

**Download accompanying assets** [**here**](https://expocitydubai-my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/sandy_barqawi_expocitydubai_ae/ErIgCweGPqZHtlRow6-sFhEBRYsO81FkMze3EsvvE3Ik9A?e=VXsctq)

**DUBAI, 5 March 2024 – Leading urban changemakers are gathering at the two-day inaugural Sustainable Cities in Action Forum 2024, which kicks off on Tuesday at Expo City Dubai, to** **share** innovations and solutions and explore ways to catalyse positive urban development **across the Middle East, Africa and South Asia.**

**From 5-6 March, the forum welcomes** city leaders, developers, architects, designers and urban planners, non-governmental organisations, financial institutions, SME (small and medium enterprise) networks and international trade delegations to explore heat resilience and climate mitigation and adaptation strategies, in a shared mission to enable more prosperous, equitable, low carbon and climate-resilient cities.

**The event’s agenda is informed directly by the outcomes of COP28, also hosted at Expo City, and aligns with the city’s mandate to** become a destination for organisations focused on sustainability and meaningful partnerships, and a centre for initiatives that preserve and sustain the planet.

**Her Excellency Reem Al Hashimy, UAE Minister of State for International Cooperation and CEO of Expo City Dubai Authority** opened the forum, before being joined by **Her Excellency Razan Al Mubarak, UN Climate Change High-Level Champion for COP28** to reflect on the outcomes of the climate summit and the role of cities in catalysing climate action.

The **event will also introduce Expo City’s new Urban Lab – a collaborative initiative that invites innovators, technology pioneers to bring their ideas for sustainable urban living and trial them in a real-world environment.**

**Speakers include** renowned sustainable city leader and **Mayor of Chefchaouen, Mohamed Sefiani; Dr Folayinka Dania, Chief Resilience Officer for Lagos State, who spearheads the resilience strategy for one of the world’s fastest growing megacities; Bushra Afreen, Chief Heat Officer, Dhaka North,** Asia's first Chief Heat Officer who will address extreme heat in her city and share key lessons to build heat resilience; and **James Delaney, Founder and Managing Director, BlockWorks, who pioneered the use of Minecraft as a design tool.**

**Practical workshops with high-level strategic partners, such as the Indian National Institute of Urban Affairs, the Kenya Green Building Council Society and the Advancing Net Zero Volunteering Team**, will focus on climate action plans, ESG-compliant supply chains, sustainable procurement and the decarbonisation of communities and the built environment.

**In this spirit, the** UAE Sustainable Built Environment Blueprint Report – a collaborative project between the UAE’s leading developers, the Emirates Green Building Council and Expo City Dubai – will be launched at the forum. Introduced at COP28, the highly anticipated Blueprint outlines challenges, opportunities and key enablers to advance sustainability in the built environment and reach the sector’s decarbonisation goals.

Delegates will also see first-hand how Expo City is working to preserve the planet with ‘Live the City’ tours that highlight its flagship sustainability initiatives. The UAE’s SME community will be on hand to **showcase** proven solutions for more sustainable city living, while exhibitions and event materials are provided by **Abu Dhabi-based Desert Board, which manufactures eco-friendly** nature-based wooden boards, made from upcycled palm fronds.

**A full agenda, including n**etworking sessions, **exhibitions and** opportunities to understand how businesses**, start-ups, innovators, institutes and creatives** can integrate into the city’s evolving innovation ecosystem, **is available** [here](https://ecdmarcomms.typeform.com/agenda)**. The forum will run from 0900-1800 on 5-6 March at The Nexus in the Opportunity District. A two-day delegate pass is priced at AED 500 and can be purchased from** [expocitydubai.com](https://www.expocitydubai.com/en/things-to-do/events-and-workshops/sustainable-cities-in-action-forum-2024/)**.**

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**About Expo City Dubai**

* An inclusive innovation-driven, people-centric city of the future and one of five hubs on the Dubai 2040 Urban Master Plan, Expo City Dubai is committed to maximising its positive social, environmental and economic impact
  + Designed as a blueprint for sustainable urban living, its roadmap to achieving net zero by 2050 and its broader decarbonisation targets raise the bar on responsible urban development
  + Its ecosystem supports cross-sector collaboration and provides a springboard for businesses of all sizes to scale and grow, enhancing Dubai’s position as a global centre of trade and reinforcing the UAE’s development and diversification ambitions
  + Its residential communities redefine urban living, exemplifying best practice in innovative, environment-friendly design with a focus on wellbeing and happiness
  + An incubator for innovation, it is a testbed for solutions and a platform for groundbreaking ideas that benefit both people and the planet
  + Packed with educational, cultural and entertainment offerings and a go-to destination for globally significant events, it celebrates human creativity and ingenuity and inspires future generations
* The legacy of Expo 2020 Dubai, Expo City Dubai connects businesses, government, organisations, educational institutions, residents and visitors, working together to drive progress and create a better, more equitable, more sustainable future for all

**For media enquiries, please contact** [**press.office@expocitydubai.ae**](mailto:press.office@expocitydubai.ae)

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