

# World Future Energy Summit 2025 Shines Light on Middle East's Sustainable Cities Leadership

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[/EINPresswire.com/](https://www.einpresswire.com/) -- The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) is emerging at the forefront of sustainable city adoption, led by visionary initiatives, most notably in the UAE and Saudi Arabia. As the region's urban populations rise—with 60 per cent projected to live in these urban areas by 2030 – countries in the MENA region are responding with transformative investments in smart, sustainable urban development.

The UAE is spearheading this drive with forward-thinking projects such as Masdar City, a hub for clean technologies and sustainable design, and Zayed International Airport, which integrates smart infrastructure to enhance efficiency. Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia's giga projects are redefining the urban landscape with smart, eco-friendly innovations.

Mohamed Al Breiki, Executive Director of Sustainable Development at Masdar City, stated: "Masdar City has been pioneering sustainable urban development for over 15 years, embodying the UAE's commitment to a net-zero future. Through several net-zero energy developments and innovative projects such as Masdar City Square and The Link, we showcase our dedication to innovation and sustainability. The Masdar City Free Zone provides a seamless environment for diverse business activities, while its high-impact industry clusters promote collaboration and innovation across key



industries like AI, renewable energy, life sciences, Agri-tech, space technology, and smart mobility. We are proud to empower businesses and innovators to shape the future of sustainable cities, turning bold ideas into impactful solutions.”

These advancements will take centre stage at World Future Energy Summit 2025, hosted by Masdar to run at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC) from January 14-16 as part of Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week 2025 (ADSW). The Summit will highlight the region’s progress in transformative urban development and the power of smart cities in its dedicated Sustainable Cities conference and exhibition.

The conference is held against a backdrop of unparalleled regionwide investment in smart cities. Research house Frost & Sullivan says the UAE and Saudi Arabia will invest a staggering US\$50 billion in smart city projects by 2025 as the region looks for innovative solutions to better manage energy resources.

The UAE capital Abu Dhabi stands out as a regional beacon of innovation, characterised by its industry-leading Estidama Pearl Rating system and building design methodology, which is part of Abu Dhabi’s Economic Vision 2030. It is recognised among the Top 10 Smart Cities in the 2024 Smart City Index — the only Middle Eastern city on the list. In Dubai, the smart city agenda is advancing with the latest development, Dubai Walk, a visionary initiative to transform the city into a pedestrian-friendly destination with an integrated network of walkways aimed at increasing pedestrian mobility to 25 per cent by 2040.

Masdar City and key clean energy flagship projects such as Noor Abu Dhabi and the Barakah Nuclear Power Plant will be in the spotlight at the Sustainable Cities conference, which will closely examine ESG-driven urban development. The city targets an energy use intensity reduction equivalent to removing 807 gasoline-powered vehicles from the roads annually, annual water savings equivalent to filling 17 Olympic swimming pools, and 57 per cent of operational waste recycled.

Delegates will also gain insights into the headway being made in achieving the sustainability aspects of Saudi Arabia’s Vision 2030. As a response to the Kingdom’s fast urbanisation, the country’s overarching strategy has laid out specific objectives to usher in smart cities. Seventeen cities, representing 72 per cent of the population, were selected to undertake smart urban projects with initiatives now under way in Riyadh, Yanbu industrial city, Makkah, Jeddah, Medina, Al-Ahsa, and the 26,500 square meter eco-friendly smart city NEOM which is envisioned to be devoid of cars and carbon emissions and powered by clean energy.

Oman and Qatar are also developing their own smart urban centres. Lusail City in Qatar will feature GSAS-rated buildings, green landscapes, waste collection, sewage treatment, and district cooling with smart services supported by a command-and-control centre while Oman is planning the Sultan Haitham City, a 14.8 square kilometre data-driven urban hub for 100,000 residents outside Muscat. The city aligns with Oman Vision 2040, focusing on sustainability with waste-to-

energy plants, solar facilities, and shade-providing structures.

Leen AlSebai, General Manager of RX Middle East and Head of the World Future Energy Summit, commented: "The Sustainable Cities Conference will focus on progress being made while driving the innovation and partnerships necessary for future-ready urban environments. It will deep dive into the increasing adoption, throughout the region and beyond into the adoption of smart technologies for energy optimisation, waste management, and climate-resilient designs."

The conference brings together government leaders, urban planners, technology innovators, sustainability experts, mobility pioneers, and private sector innovators to discuss the transformation of cities through smart, sustainable practices and technologies and the role of public-private sector partnerships in attaining goals.

Specialised panel discussions will focus on community resilience to protect against extreme events, the prioritisation of quality of life, and the use of AI for cognitive buildings in future communities. Speakers include: Dr Ioannis Spanos, Vice President of Sustainability, Expo City Dubai; Camilo Cerro, Professor of Architecture and Interior Design, American University of Sharjah; Dima Al Srouri, Urban Planning Expert, Office of The Chairman & Commissioner General of Saudi Arabia's Supreme Committee for Urban Planning; Farah Naz, Director of ESG and Innovation, Aecom; Mario Saab, Head of Sustainability MENA, Cundall; Dr Jacinta Dsilva, Director of Research, Living Lab and International Partnerships, SEE Institute; Rami Zaatari, Sustainability and Public Policy Advisor – Scottish Local Governments, University of Glasgow; and Ismail Ozenc, Associate Vice President, Siemens Advanta Consulting.

Qasim Al Harasi, Head Section of Planning Greater Muscat, Oman's Ministry of Housing & Urban Planning, will also share Muscat's new high-tech approach to master planning.

Sustainable Cities is one of seven vertical conference streams at the World Future Energy Summit 2025 which, combined, will drill down into the entire energy eco-system and give visitors, delegates, and exhibitors in-depth insights into the latest developments impacting; Solar & Clean Energy, Water, EcoWASTE, Green Finance, eMobility and Pathways to 1.5C.

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