Sustainability Strategy and Planning in Abu Dhabi
An International Perspective from ERM

AN INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

• The world’s leading provider of environmental, health and safety, risk and social consulting services

• Have worked closely with approximately 50% of the Global Fortune 500 companies in the past 5 years

• Deliver innovative solutions for business and selected government clients, helping to understand and manage sustainability challenges

• High level of experience in Integrated Reporting across numerous sectors

140 Offices in 40 Countries
Approximately 4,000 staff

Projects in more than 170 countries
Established in 2008 - ADSG is a membership organisation whose mission is to encourage co-responsibility in Abu Dhabi to ensure that government entities, business and not for profit organisations are all partners in working towards achieving the goal of economic, environmental and social sustainability.

ADSG Values:
- Responsibility
- Accountability
- Transparency
Member organisations have a diverse range of interests that include:

- Oil & Gas
- Aviation
- Telecommunications
- Property & Construction
- Transport
- Urban Development
- Utilities
- Tourism

**ADSG Member Services**

1. **Improving Knowledge**
   through a portal, a newsletter, publications and seminars

2. **Developing Capabilities**
   through training, one-on-one support, and benchmarking

3. **Sharing Experience**
   through forums and meetings

4. **Facilitating Advocacy**
   through flagship programs

5. **Building Networks**
   through partnerships with local and international organizations

6. **Expanding the Member Network**
   through outreach activities

7. **Reporting Performance**
   through the group's various forums and an annual report
May 2008
Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD) launches its first Sustainability Report. H.E. Mohammed Al Bowardi, Secretary General of the AD Executive Council and Managing Director of EAD calls for the establishment of the ADSG. Representative organizations from some of the most important sectors for the Emirate sustainability: Energy, Industry, Transport, Tourism, Health, Oil and Gas, Construction and Building are invited to join the ADSG.

June 2008
On June 30th the ADSG is established where 15 founding members sign the ADSG Declaration committing to adopt sustainability management and reporting practices.

November 2008
The ADSG General Secretariat is established with two permanent members: the General Secretariat of the Abu Dhabi Executive Council and the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi, and five elected members: ADCCI, ADWEA, Aldar, Dolphin Energy, and Emirates Foundation.

March 2009
The ADSG Charter is approved by the founding members stating the mission, goals, governance and members’ rights and duties. The ADSG action plan 2009 is approved. Training activities are initiated with three workshops: sustainability management, reporting and stakeholder management.

May 2009
One-on-One technical support starts to provide assistance to members to document their business cases for sustainability.

June 2009
EAD sets up a sustainability unit to provide strategic and operational support to the ADSG General Secretariat and its members. EAD issues its second sustainability report. Sorouh issues its first sustainability report.

June-December 2009
The ADSG approves the membership criteria and membership process. The ADSG approves the range of products and services to be delivered to members. ADCCI issues its first sustainability report. Masdar City, Urban Planning Council (UPC) and Aramex join the ADSG.

January-March 2010
The ADSG action plan 2010 is approved. Training activities continue with a workshop on Sustainability reporting. Etihad Airways and Mubadala Development Company join the ADSG.

April-June 2010
Training activities continue with a workshop on Transparency in the Value Chain. Quarterly meetings are open to guest speakers. Four flagship programs are launched. Khalifa Fund joins the ADSG. ADSG leads a Delegation of 13 members to the GRI Global Conference on Sustainability and Transparency held in Amsterdam. The ADSG Portal and the ADSG newsletter are launched. 15 founding members issue their sustainability reports.
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2011-2013 - MOVING FROM REPORTING TO ACTION

Knowledge Dissemination
- Awareness Index
- Toolbox
- Seminars

Capacity Building
- Sustainability Institute
- Sustainability Scorecard (ADSG common indicators)
- Benchmarking

Experience Sharing
- Abu Dhabi Annual Sustainability Forum

Advocacy
- Key Sustainability Issues (reporting, procurement, ICT, Waste, Labor Practices, Education)

Networking
- Strategic Local and International Partnerships Focused around Key Sustainability Issues

Membership
- Recruitment Support

Performance Management
- Autonomous not-for-profit organisation
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**ADSG Strategy 2011-2013**

**Goal 1:**
Raise awareness and understanding of sustainability management and reporting principles and practices

**Goal 2:**
Facilitate the adoption of sustainability management and reporting practices

**Goal 3:**
Provide a forum for experience sharing and learning about sustainability management and reporting practices

**Goal 4:**
Support sustainability initiatives within the Emirate of Abu Dhabi

**Goal 5:**
Create opportunities for international cooperation and recognition

**Goal 6:**
Build an excellent, autonomous and sustainable organisation

- Portal
- Newsletter
- Publications
- Seminars
- Training meetings
- Training programs
- Training of trainers
- One-on-one support
- Mentoring
- Benchmarking
- External assurance
- Awards
- GS meetings
- Forum quarterly meetings
- CEO/MD meetings
- Abu Dhabi Annual Sustainability Forum
- Flagship programs
- Campaigns
- Affiliations
- Partnerships
- Conferences
- Members
- Strategy
- Action plan
- Budget
- MOUs
- Products and services
- Annual Report
Fifteen founding members published their first sustainability reports in accordance with the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI).

Ten of those reports were published by government entities making Abu Dhabi the world leader in the number of sustainability reports released by the public sector in accordance with GRI guidelines.

Production of a consolidated GRI index for member organisations which will provide an overview of GRI reporting in Abu Dhabi as a whole.

Collaboration with INSEAD to produce a Case Study on the ADSG which is awaiting publication - the case study is being used in Abu Dhabi as part of high level executive training programmes.
WHO
ADNOC is one of the world’s top 10 oil and gas companies. Abu Dhabi has oil reserves estimated at over 92 billion barrels, is considered to have the fourth largest national reserves in the world and oversees oil production of more than 2.5 million barrels a day.

WHAT
ERM was commissioned to assist Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC), to produce its first Sustainability Report.

HOW
ERM’s Middle East based team has been working to provide sustainability performance reporting training for ADNOC staff through a series of presentations and workshops. The ERM team has also assisted in reviewing and updating an ADNOC Code of Practice that sets the framework for sustainability reporting by the company, in accordance with the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI).
ADSG members are showing increasing interest in Integrated Reporting.

ARAMEX, was the first member organisation of the ADSG to publish an integrated report and a number of other member organisations are looking to do the same in the coming years.

ADSG members recently supported a stakeholder workshop on IR hosted by the Pearl Initiative, a private-sector-led not-for-profit organisation, set up to improve transparency, accountability and business practices in the Arab world.

1. Intrinsic ambiguity of the concept of sustainability.
2. Sustainability is still seen as an environmental issue only.
3. Challenges in making decisions that appropriately balance a diverse group of stakeholders.
4. The voluntary approach to operating the group is seen by most members as critical to its success.
5. The number of sustainability management reports is reducing but those who persevere with report publication are producing higher quality reports.
6. Organisations who persevere with report publications are inclined to anchor sustainability at board level and ensure it runs through all aspects of operations.
7. All organisations have initiatives running which relate to sustainability issues perceived by them to be material.
8. Similarity with Australia → Institutional frameworks aren’t being set up to deal with sustainability issues, which by nature cross political boundaries, and require a much longer time horizon than catered for by today’s performance management systems.