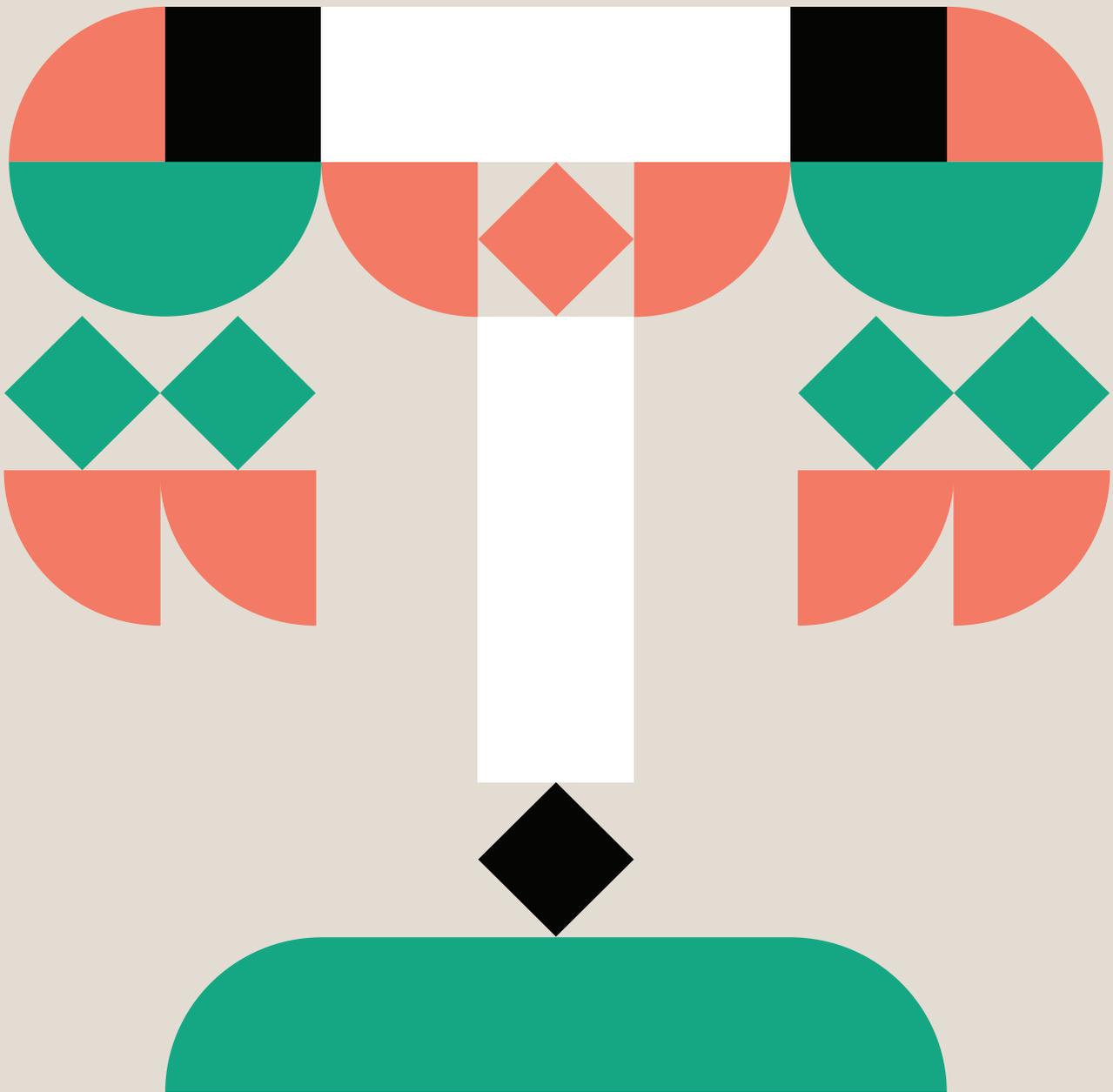




# Leisure & Entertainment Attractions

## SUSTAINABILITY GUIDELINES

Practical Guide to Implementing Sustainable Practices



# FOREWORD

The guidelines have been developed to provide best practice recommendations for sustainability initiatives in key sustainability areas. These are recommendations, and the sector is responsible for assessing the feasibility of adopting each initiative and making progress in developing its individual sustainability strategy and policy.





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# 1. Introduction

The world is changing, and so are the needs of tourists and travellers. Sustainability has become a significant concern for many. According to Booking.com in the published Sustainable Travel report 2022<sup>1</sup>, 71% of global travellers want to travel more sustainably. In addition, the United Nations World Tourism Organisation's (UNWTO) vision for the 2030 Agenda firmly positions the need for sustainable tourism. Harnessing tourism's contribution to sustainability will be instrumental in fulfilling this vision.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has joined the global move towards sustainability. Key examples include: the UAE strategy for Domestic Tourism, the UAE circular economy policy and the UAE Net Zero 2050 initiative, as shown in Figure 1. There are many national and local sustainability strategies and initiatives driving the change towards the countries' sustainable development.



## World

### UN World Tourism Organization Vision - 2030 Agenda



UN World Tourism Organisation aligned to 17 SDGs.

<sup>1</sup> Booking.com, "Sustainable Travel Report ". 2022 ([www.globalnews.booking.com](http://www.globalnews.booking.com))

Some of those are:

				
Good Health and well-being	Quality Education	Affordable clean energy	Climate Action	Partnerships for the goals

**1.8 B**

of average annual growth of international tourist arrivals is expected in Middle East until 2030

**5%**

of average annual growth of international tourist arrivals is expected in Middle East until 2030

**2020**

tourist arrivals decreased by %74 while market recovered by %120 in 2021



# United Arab Emirates



## UAE Net Zero Initiative

Launched in 2020 with an aim to unify local and federal efforts to harness the UAE's tourism resources:  
 - Building capabilities, developing policies, plan and programme based partnerships.



## UAE Circular Economy Policy

2021: UAE framework for determining the approach to achieving sustainable governance: Promotion of environmental, adoption of clean methods and reduction of environmental stress.



## UAE Strategy for Domestic Tourism

2021: UAE sector entities to update their sustainability approach: Investment AED600 Billion in clean and renewable energy sources expected by 2050.

Figure 1: World and UAE trends towards sustainability and eco-tourism

# 2. Sustainability in the Abu Dhabi Tourism Industry

As the UAE moves towards sustainability, it is imperative to establish and promote Abu Dhabi's leading position as a global destination in eco-tourism and sustainable tourism.

As the regulator of the tourism industry, the Department of Culture and Tourism (DCT) is committed to providing a sustainable and responsible tourism industry which is tailored to the regional climate, culture, and available resources. The tourism industry is instrumental in supporting the evolution of Abu Dhabi into a world-class destination.

DCT Abu Dhabi has established a comprehensive sustainability framework for the tourism industry (Figure 2) based on the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This is a long-term and forward-looking framework aiming to manage the economic, social, and environmental impacts of the tourism industry. It is built upon six destination principles for sustainable development. These have formed the basis for the development of the Sustainable Tourism Guidelines.



## Sustainability Framework & Implementation Plan Abu Dhabi Tourism Sector

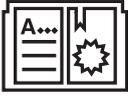
Principle	Initiative		
 Transparent Destination	 Capacity Building	 Sustainable Tourism Award	
 Sustainable Destination	 Sector Commitment	 Sustainable Guidelines	 Event Impact Management
 Unique Destination	 Eco-tourism Marketing	 Local Experience App	
 Safe, Accessible Destination	 Experience for tourists with disabilities	 Improving Site Accessibility	 Tourists Site Connectivity
 Inclusive Destination	 Stakeholder Engagement	 Marketing for residents	
 Adaptive, Diverse Destination	 Low-Season Marketing	 Climate Change Assessment	

Figure 2: DCT sustainability framework

As a result, the **Leisure and Entertainment Attractions Sustainability Guidelines** have been developed, which aim to enhance knowledge and encourage the implementation of sustainability practices and procedures into the day-to-day operational activities across the value chain. The guidelines are the foundation that will shape the future of the tourism industry, Entertainment Attractions sector and establish Abu Dhabi as a leader in sustainable tourism. The guidelines are aligned with the key sustainability areas that are related to the tourism industry.

# 3. Context and Objectives

The guidelines have been developed to help the sector players in defining their sustainability roadmaps. It outlines initiatives and best practices for the leisure, entertainment, and attractions sector, including water parks, theme parks and zoos and aquariums (collectively referred to as 'Entertainment Attractions' henceforth) and equips them with a goal-based sustainability approach.

Table 1 Definitions

<b>Water Parks</b>	This type of attraction features water plays areas such as swimming pools, water slides, water playgrounds and lazy rivers. It is a place where visitors can go to float, bathe, swim, and play.
<b>Theme Parks</b>	This type of attraction features rides and games, often with other entertainment features, shops, and dining. The structures and attractions may be based around a central theme and also feature multiple areas with different themes. This attraction can be indoor or outdoor.
<b>Zoos &amp; Aquariums</b>	These types of attractions feature animals, fish and aquatic life and plants that are housed within enclosures/tanks and kept for public exhibit, biological study and sometimes breeding. These attractions can sometimes offer additional entertainment features for visitors.

As per the 2022 Sustainable Travel report<sup>2</sup>, 81% of global travellers confirm that sustainable travel is important to them, while 57% of travellers would prefer staying in an accommodation with a sustainability certification. Keeping in tune with these global perceptions of sustainability, it is recommended that Entertainment Attractions use these guidelines to benefit from successful business practices and contribute to Abu Dhabi's vision of a sustainable tourist destination.

The **Leisure and Entertainment Attractions Sustainability Guideline** is a non-binding set of recommendations and initiatives aiming to improve responsible tourism development. It is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) criteria, and other leading sector initiatives to provide Entertainment Attractions of Abu Dhabi a roadmap towards achieving a more sustainable and inclusive business while providing the tourists with an enriching local and authentic Abu Dhabi experience.

To develop this document, 18 different guidelines from global leaders were assessed and benchmarked, including GSTC Criteria, Green Key, Green Globe, and UNWTO. Standards from Dubai Sustainable Tourism were also studied for more understanding of the Middle East region. These guidelines and standards were studied to understand the sustainability requirements in the global tourism industry and evaluate gaps and opportunities for sustainability in the Abu Dhabi Tourism industry. A survey with different players, including Leisure and Entertainment Attractions, Hotels Establishments, Cultural and Heritage Sites, Events, F&B, and Travel Agencies, and Tours Operators, was conducted in January 2022 by DCT to understand the current sustainability practice implemented within their operation as a baseline. These studies helped in understanding the gaps and opportunities of how these players can facilitate sustainability practices across Abu Dhabi as a tourism destination.

To develop the Sustainability Guidelines, the following key steps were undertaken to understand the current state of sustainability in the tourism industry in Abu Dhabi. This is shown in Figure 3.

<sup>2</sup> Booking.com, "Sustainable Travel Report ". 2022 (www.globalnews.booking.com)

1.	<b>Benchmarking and Research</b>	Research was conducted on the selected sustainability policies, guidelines and certifications from around the world. Key sustainability conclusions and best practice were drawn from this exercise.
2.	<b>Sector Stakeholder Selection</b>	6 sector stakeholder categories for selection were developed based on the targeted sectors: Leisure and entertainment food and beverage establishments, events, hotel establishments, culture and heritage sites, and travel and tour operators.
3.	<b>Survey Development</b>	A survey was developed to gain an understanding of the current state of sustainability of Leisure and Entertainment Attractions sector in the tourism industry in Abu Dhabi.
4.	<b>Workshops &amp; Survey Launch</b>	Operators from the Leisure and Entertainment sector were invited to participate in different workshops and fill in the survey.
5.	<b>Survey Analysis</b>	A total of 24 tourism industry stakeholders participated in the survey. Results from the survey were analysed, and the main challenges and opportunities were identified.
6.	<b>Guideline Development</b>	The findings from the benchmarking, surveys and workshops were used as the foundation for the development of the 6 sector-specific guidelines.

Figure 3: Guideline development process

Key sustainability elements, challenges and opportunities related to sustainable growth and development were identified through the process of surveying selected Entertainment Attractions. The survey was structured around the key findings from the benchmarking exercise, whereby an assortment of guidelines was benchmarked against the following criteria, including voluntary versus mandatory guidelines, international and national guidelines, other applicable guidelines and certification schemes and key sustainability elements (e.g., energy management, water management, carbon emissions etc.). The survey results show that 80% of the surveyed Entertainment Attractions in Abu Dhabi consider sustainability to be important.

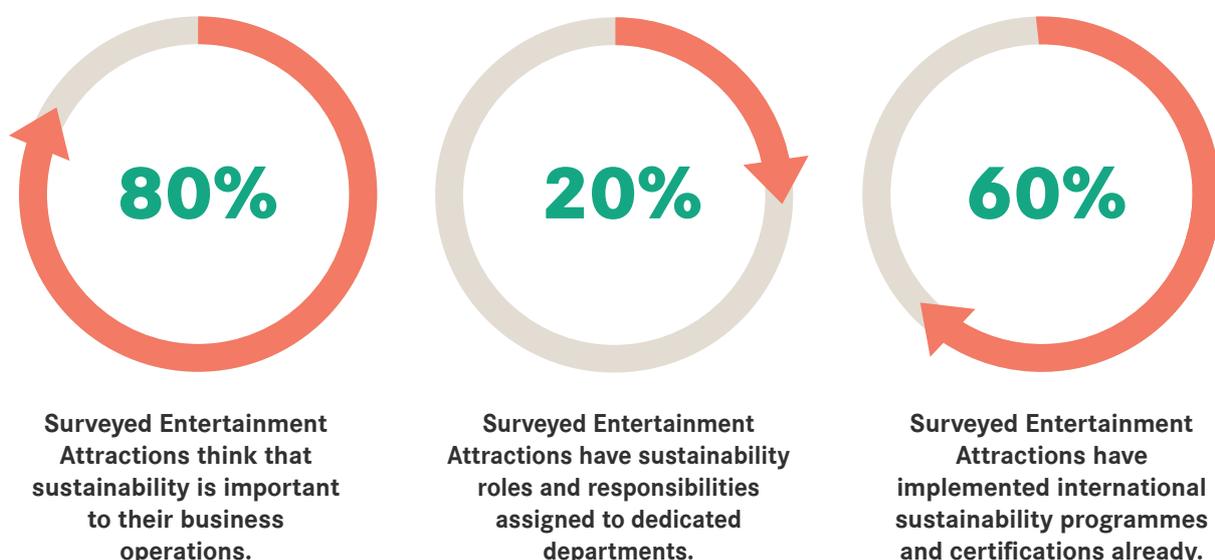


Figure 4: Key Survey Findings

Based on the data of the survey conducted for Leisure and Entertainment Attractions, the results indicate that there is a crucial need for solutions to support them in their journey towards sustainability. The most important focus areas were environmental risk management, controlling carbon emissions, protecting and preserving biodiversity, prioritising the health and safety of visitors and employees, adopting sustainable procurement, and enhancing energy, water, and waste management.

The results highlight the challenges towards implementing sustainable practices that are related to sustainability awareness and expertise, sustainability monitoring, high utility bills, access to sustainable goods, and guest sustainability awareness. These findings can be considered as baseline aspects and initiatives that currently exist within the sector, which emphasises the need for the sector to improve the sustainability status of the tourism industry.

The focus areas, challenges, and opportunities gathered from responses aided the development of the guideline (shown in Figure 5). The aim of the guideline is to encourage Entertainment Attractions to be more self-sustainable and emerge as a pioneer in Abu Dhabi's journey to become a sustainable destination.

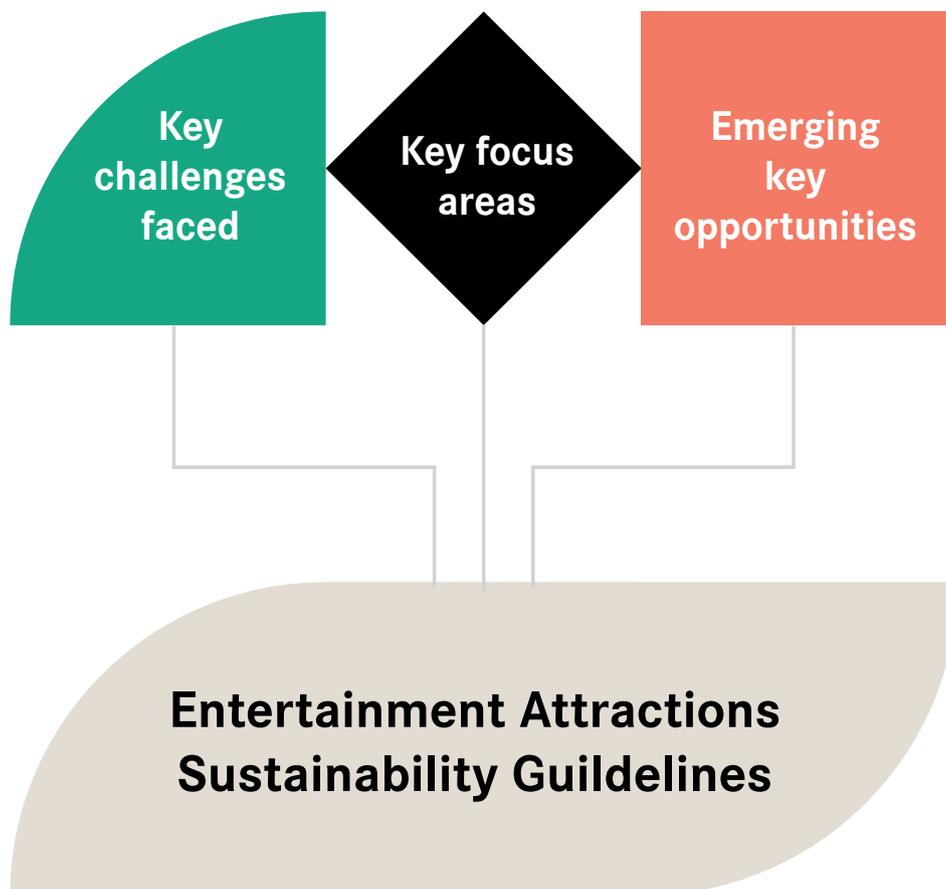


Figure 5: Survey Analysis

# 4. How to Use This Guideline?

This section of the guidelines will provide clear steps on how to ensure a successful implementation of the sustainability strategy through the day-to-day operations to contribute towards sustainable development. A summary of the steps is presented in Figure 6, and it is recommended to follow steps 1-5 annually to ensure that the sustainability strategy remains relevant, robust, and aligned with the Entertainment Attraction's current sustainability progress.

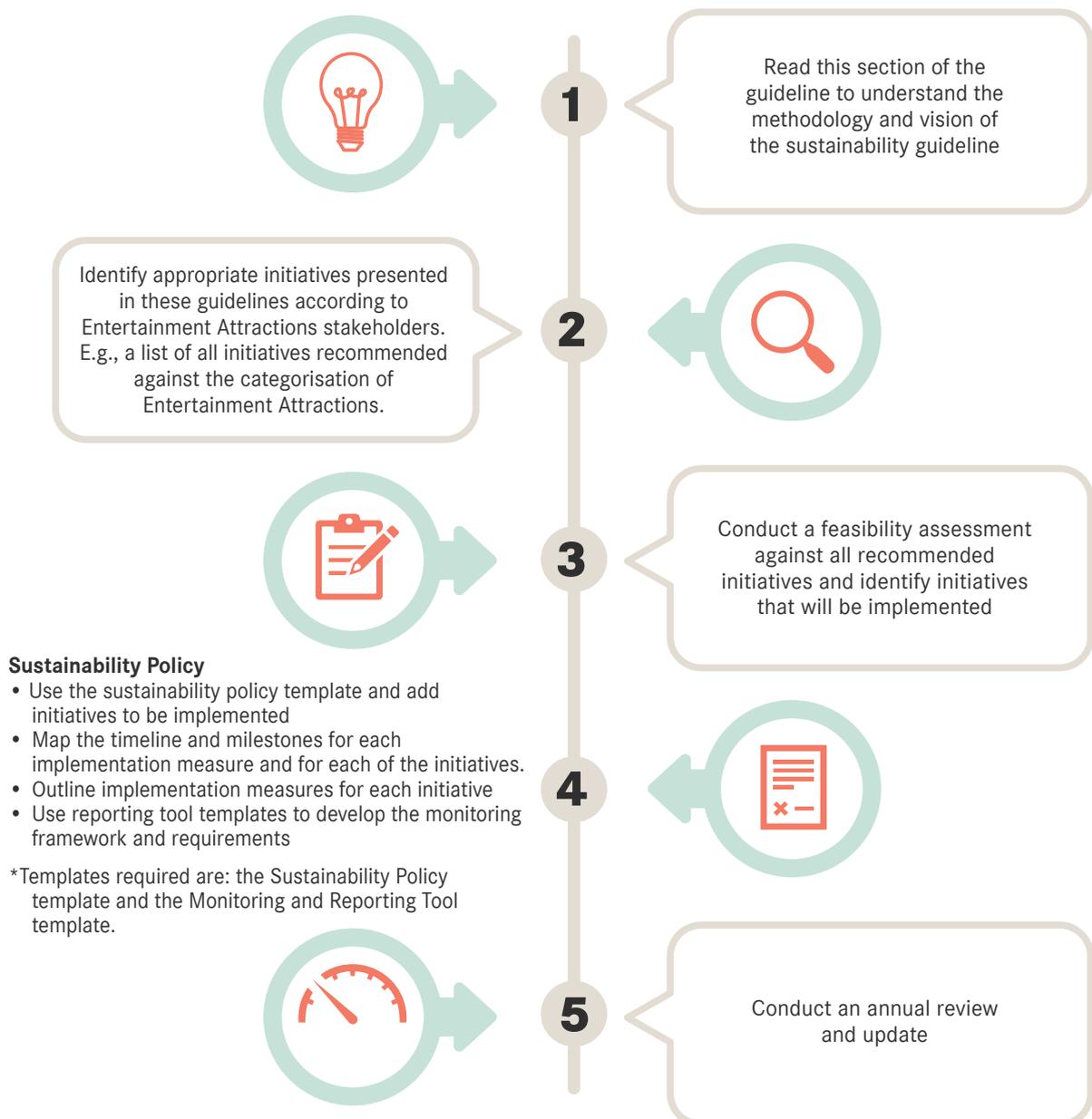


Figure 6: Steps to use the guideline

# 5. Sustainability Categories and Key Initiatives

There are five different sustainability categories, Energy and Environment, Sustainable and Local Procurement, Social and Culture, People, and Risk and Resilience Management, which are defined in Table 2.

Table 2: Sustainability Categories

Sustainability Category	Definition
<b>A. Energy and Environment</b>	Sustainable energy and environment management initiatives to provide solutions for sustainable energy, water and waste management, environment protection, and carbon management.
<b>B. Sustainable and Local Procurement</b>	Sustainable procurement initiatives that give preference to local and environmentally friendly goods.
<b>C. Social and Culture</b>	Initiatives to promote the social and cultural heritage of Abu Dhabi through the tourism industry.
<b>D. People</b>	Initiatives focussing on empowerment of employees in the tourism industry.
<b>E. Resilience and Risk Management</b>	Initiatives focussing on identifying and managing the risks associated with the Leisure and Entertainment Attractions sector in the tourism industry.

## Key initiatives under each sustainability category

The key initiatives presented in Figure 7 were comprehensively identified and developed, ensuring alignment with Abu Dhabi's sustainability pillars and agenda. This guideline covers holistic sustainability development and specific measures for environmental and social pillars whilst considering under each applicable category the key vision for Emiratization, financial stability and growth and governance (including data collection, monitoring, and reporting). Initiatives have been carefully tailored based on the Entertainment attraction classification. This document provides guidance on implementing the suggested initiatives based on the classification and is designed to provide cost-effective solutions that can help induce a positive impact on the overall sustainability performance.



**A. Energy and Environment**



Energy Management



Water Management System



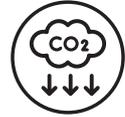
Waste Management System



Green and Sustainable Transportation



Environmental Protection



Carbon Management



**B. Sustainable and Local Procurement**



Sourcing of Local, Sustainable Goods



**C. Social and Culture**



Promoting local Heritage, Culture and Art



Promoting Sustainability with Visitors and Local Community



Engaging in Educational Programmes



Improving Accessibility



**D. People**



Staff Empowerment



Diversity and Inclusion



**E. Resilience & Risk Management**



Health and Safety

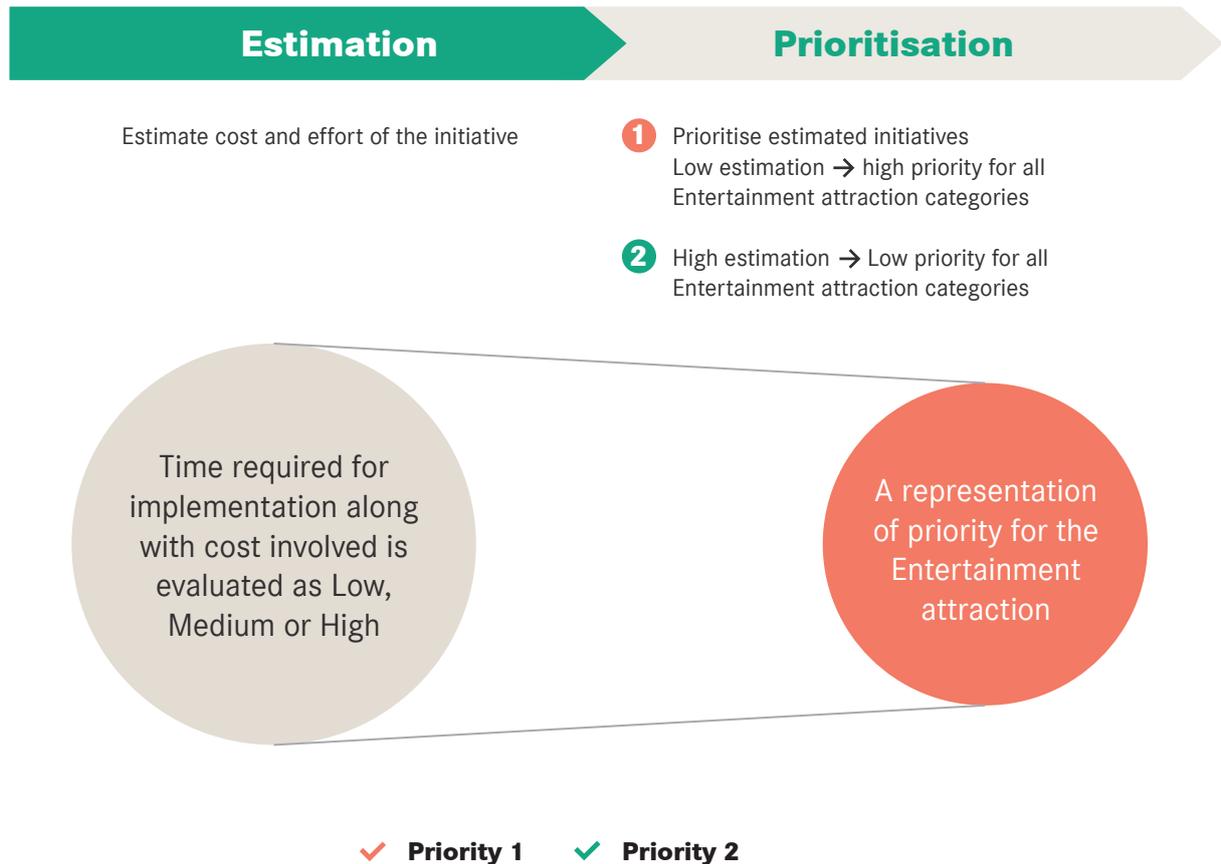


Risk Mitigation and Resilience

Figure 7 Sustainability initiatives

The following sections will provide further detail on the above-mentioned key sustainability measures and describes the opportunities and benefits that result from the implementation of these practices. It should be highlighted that some of the initiatives appear to be easier for new establishments (e.g., installing Emirates Authority for Standardization and Metrology (ESMA) 4- or 5-star rated products). However, these are applicable to Entertainment Attractions that are installing new or replacing old products within the establishment.

# 6. Estimation and Prioritisation Process



## Entertainment Attraction

Time	Cost	Water Parks	Theme Parks	Zoos and Aquariums
LOW	LOW	✓	✓	✓
LOW	MEDIUM	✓	✓	✓
MEDIUM	LOW	✓	✓	✓
LOW	HIGH	✓	✓	✓
HIGH	LOW	✓	✓	✓
MEDIUM	MEDIUM	✓	✓	✓
MEDIUM	HIGH	✓	✓	✓
HIGH	MEDIUM	✓	✓	✓
HIGH	HIGH	✓	✓	✓

Figure 8: Initiative priority mapping for Entertainment Attractions categories

To determine if an initiative is Priority 1 or Priority 2:

- **Estimation:** Cost and effort of each initiative was estimated as Low, Medium or High.
- **Prioritisation:** A priority matrix was developed based on a cumulative score from the Estimation stage, and based on the matrix, priorities were assigned for each Entertainment Attraction category.

For further understanding of the cost and effort estimation of each initiative, please refer to ***Annexure document for the Leisure and Entertainment Attractions guidelines.***

The recommended sustainability initiatives are categorised into two categories, “Priority 1” and “Priority 2”. It must be emphasised that the sustainability guidelines are not mandated and aim to present a framework on how the industries can progress on their sustainability journey. The two categories are defined below:

- |                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| ✓ <b>Priority 1</b>     | All Entertainment Attractions identified in orange should aim to target and implement the identified initiatives.  |
| ✓ <b>Priority 2</b>     | Where the Entertainment Attraction has been identified in dark green, it is encouraged that the stakeholder investigates the feasibility of implementing the initiative to surpass expectations. |
| ✗ <b>Not Applicable</b> |  |

All Entertainment Attractions should aim to target Priority 1 initiatives marked in ✓ for implementation as per their category. Whereas the initiatives marked in ✓ are encouraged to be considered for implementation and assess their feasibility to surpass expectations.

To calculate the estimations on time and costs, several assumptions were applied considering the uniqueness of Abu Dhabi, Al Ain and Al Dhafra Areas.

1. Entertainment venue size is 150,000 sqm<sup>3</sup>.
2. 700,000 visitors per year.

<sup>3</sup> Based on AESG research: Average taken from Sheikh Zayed Mosque, Sheikh Zayed National Museum, Warner Bros. World and Louvre Abu Dhabi

# 7 Sustainability Initiatives Prioritisation



## A. Energy and Environment.



### A.1 Energy Management

#### How can Entertainment Attractions achieve energy and environmental sustainability?

Water parks, theme parks and zoos and aquariums have a high energy consumption due to the nature of their operations. This is supported by the key findings from the survey that was conducted, whereby 60% of the interviewed stakeholders stated that they faced high utility bills. There is a remarkable opportunity to substantially reduce the consumption of energy through the implementation of conservation measures and through energy efficiency initiatives.

#### Initiatives applicable to Entertainment Attractions

#### Sustainability Initiatives

#### Entertainment Attractions Categories

Sustainability Initiatives		Water Parks	Theme Parks	Zoos and Aquariums
<b>1.</b>	<b>1. Install efficient lighting solutions.</b>			
	1.1. Wherever applicable, install LED lights depending on the desired brightness. (A 9W LED is equivalent to a 45 W incandescent bulb output).	✓	✓	✓
	1.2. Install motion sensors and timers for lighting, both indoors and outdoors. For indoors, in regularly occupied spaces (e.g., office area and reception), install motion and daylight sensors. For outdoors lighting, (non-entertainment lighting) put the lighting on timers or on a schedule. For both indoors and outdoors lighting for entertainment, ensure that all lighting is switched off when the attraction is not in use.	✓	✓	✓
<b>2.</b>	<b>2. Conduct energy efficiency awareness campaign.</b>			
	2.1. Conduct an annual training for staff on energy efficiency (e.g., running washers and dryers only when full, etc.).	✓	✓	✓
	2.2. Create training materials such as guidebook and leaflets, which can focus on such topics as how much energy can be saved by using energy efficient lighting.	✓	✓	✓
	2.3. Place energy usage signage throughout the attraction (e.g., turn off lights, switch off chargers after usage, etc.).	✓	✓	✓
	2.4. Utilise digital tools such as eTEACHER to increase efficiency in energy management and highlight energy consumption reduction areas.	✓	✓	✓

3. 3. Enhance cooling efficiency.	Water Parks	Theme Parks	Zoos and Aquariums
3.1. Install efficient chillers.	✓	✓	✓
3.2. Install temperature control of central cooling and ventilation.	✓	✓	✓
3.3. Ensure the thermostat is set to and is maintained at optimum temperatures for visitors. For theme parks, zoos, and aquariums, this will be within 18-23 degrees. For water parks (especially queuing areas), it is recommended that all cooling equipment is set between 18-20 degrees in summer months and 20-23 degrees in winter months.	✓	✓	✓
3.4. Inspect ductwork and windows for leakage bi-annually.	✓	✓	✓
3.5. Install a digital management solution that monitors energy consumptions.	✓	✓	✓
4. 4. Purchase efficient appliances and equipment, such as ESMA 5- and 4-star appliances.	Water Parks	Theme Parks	Zoos and Aquariums
4.1. AC split units.	✓	✓	✓
4.2. Televisions, screens, electronic wayfaring.	✓	✓	✓
5. 5. Purchase more efficient appliances in the market, based on their catalogue rating and Entertainment Attractions design specifications.	Water Parks	Theme Parks	Zoos and Aquariums
5.1. Large AC systems and outdoor cooling equipment.	✓	✓	✓
5.2. Vacuum cleaners, floor polishers, and landscape equipment.	✓	✓	✓
5.3. Projectors, screens.	✓	✓	✓
5.4. Water cooler.	✓	✓	✓
5.5. Computers.	✓	✓	✓
5.6. Sound systems.	✓	✓	✓
5.7. Use variable frequency drives (VFC) pumps in water parks to control energy consumption.	✓	✗	✗
6. 6. Invest in renewable energy solutions.	Water Parks	Theme Parks	Zoos and Aquariums
6.1. Install solar water heaters.	✓	✓	✓
6.2. Install solar PV wherever possible such as rooftops and garden areas or incorporate into shading devices.	✓	✓	✓
6.3. Purchase renewable energy certificates from Emirates Water and Electric Company (EWEC).	✓	✓	✓

[Note: Please refer to Annexe A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]

[Note: Please refer to Annexe B for monitoring KPIs]

\* ESMA expands its energy efficiency programme; Entertainment Attractions are advised to keep checking the updates for inclusion of more appliances.

**Benefits:**

- Installing efficient lighting systems including LED bulbs, daylight harvesting systems and motion sensors can save up to 1 million AED per year for an average of 150,000 sqm or 700,000 visitors per year entertainment (This was done considering 25 AED 90% efficiency LED bulbs combined with motion and daylight sensors with efficiencies of up to 40%)<sup>4</sup>.
- Providing sustainability training aims to achieve energy efficiency, cost saving, improve reputation, and increase awareness.
- Installing cooling systems equipped with efficient chillers and temperature control systems coupled with regular ductwork inspection can result in savings of up to 8,000 AED per month.
- Using ESMA rated appliances can save anywhere between 30% - 75%.
- Solar heaters and Solar PV systems can have a payback period of 5 years post-installation. These systems can cover a significant portion of the energy bill, depending on the size of the Solar array installation.
- Purchasing Renewable Energy Certificates can be accomplished to develop clean energy portfolio. This should be a consideration, especially when renewable energy installation is not feasible or when there are emissions that can be difficult to decarbonise and offset. It should be emphasised that this scheme operates as an auction, and price points cannot be disclosed in these guidelines.

**Local References:**

- Estidama Pearl rating system: Estidama is a building design methodology for constructing and operating sustainable buildings. Under Estidama, energy management is a key factor in obtaining the Pearl rating.
- Abu Dhabi Stock Exchange Guidance (ADX): ADX has developed guidance on the adoption of Environment, Social, and Governance (ESG) among its listed companies and investors alike. Entertainment Attractions can use the monitoring framework for the initiatives presented in these guidelines as part of ADX sustainability reporting.
- AD Environmental vision 2030: Achieving sustainable energy management will support the sustainable development of Abu Dhabi's economy.

<sup>4</sup> Based on AESG research: data from several online retailers and bulk suppliers to create market average. %.

<sup>5</sup> Based on AESG research: Study of ESMA-rated products to achieve an average.

<sup>6</sup> Based on AESG research: Scheme operates as an auction and price points cannot be disclosed in these guidelines.

**Tips:****ESMA energy efficiency standards:**

As part of the UAE Ministry of Industry and Advanced Technologies, ESMA (Emirates Standardization and Metrology Authority) issues the Energy Efficiency Labels for appliances. Entertainment Attractions should ensure that all appliances have high ESMA star rating (5 or 4 stars).

The list of the approved appliances can be found here: <https://moiat.gov.ae/en/>



## Clean Energy Certificates:

Clean Energy Certificates are an innovative programme that allows Abu Dhabi consumers to certify the source of their clean energy usage and empowers them to achieve their sustainability goals. EWEC owns and sells all Clean Energy Certificates for solar and nuclear-generated electricity in Abu Dhabi, supporting the UAE's climate change goals as part of the UAE Energy Strategy 2050.

### How can I purchase Clean Energy Certificates?

To track and verify clean energy consumption, please contact the EWEC Clean Energy Certificates team at: [CleanEnergyCertificates@ewec.ae](mailto:CleanEnergyCertificates@ewec.ae)

### Further Reading:

1. OneClick LCA [information](#) and [pricing](#)
2. [eTEACHER](#)



## A.2. Water Management System

Developing a water conservation plan and purchasing water-efficient appliances reduces both operating costs and overall environmental impacts. In the UAE, due to its geographical location, it is very important for the sector to conserve water wherever possible.

### Initiatives applicable to Entertainment Attractions

## Sustainability Initiatives

## Entertainment Attractions Categories

	Water Parks	Theme Parks	Zoos and Aquariums
<b>1. Ensure frequent water fitting maintenance and inspections.</b>			
1.1. Inspect pipes, faucets, drainage and other water fittings to ensure there's no water leakage. Schedule regular maintenance to ensure the efficiency of the systems is maintained. In water parks, ensure there are regular inspections and maintenance for the rides etc. For zoos and aquariums, ensure regular inspections and frequent maintenance of tanks, etc.	✓	✓	✓
<b>2. Conduct water efficiency awareness campaign.</b>			
2.1. Train staff in water efficiency and management annually.	✓	✓	✓
2.2. Create training materials such as guidebook and leaflets, which can focus topics such as water management and conservation.	✓	✓	✓
2.3. Post signage about water conservation with instructions on how to consume less water in bathroom facilities, shower rooms, F&B outlets, etc.	✓	✓	✓
2.4. Use digital tools to calculate water consumption (e.g., Estidama Water Consumption Calculator).	✓	✓	✓
<b>3. Install efficient and smart water fittings.</b>			
3.1. Install hand basin faucets with a flow rate of 1.5-2 l/min or less.	✓	✓	✓
3.2. Install toilet with flush rate at 2-4 lpf and bidet flow rate at 9.5 l/min or less.	✓	✓	✓
3.3. Install shower heads with a flow rate of a maximum of 9.5 l/min.	✓	✓	✓

4. Smart water consumption and conservation at water parks.	Water Parks	Theme Parks	Zoos and Aquariums
4.1. Design strategic shade integration to reduce water evaporation.	✓	✗	✗
4.2. Use deck materials that help mitigate heat absorption and associated evaporation.	✓	✗	✗
4.3. Install a filtration system to save water from backwashing and replacement in the pool.	✓	✗	✗
4.4. All pool water resources to be re-circulated, filtered, treated, and reused.	✓	✗	✗
4.5. All pool water systems to be separated to avoid cross-contamination.	✓	✗	✗
5. Provide sustainable water solutions.	Water Parks	Theme Parks	Zoos and Aquariums
6. 5.1. Provide visitors with filtered tap water for drinking instead of packaged water.	✓	✓	✓
Introduce a smart and efficient irrigation system for lawns and gardens (if applicable.)	Water Parks	Theme Parks	Zoos and Aquariums
6.1. Install drip irrigation system controlled by time sensors, and leak detection. This can get enhanced further by installing a smart system that reacts to real-time weather detection, automatic irrigation schedule, etc.	✓	✓	✓
6.2. Install subsurface irrigation system.	✓	✓	✓
6.3. Utilise recycled water for irrigation.	✓	✓	✓
6.4. Practice xeriscaping: use soil additives and native/adaptive trees, plants, shrubs, and artificial surfaces to conserve water.	✓	✓	✓

[Note: Please refer to Annexe A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]

[Note: Please refer to Annexe B for monitoring KPIs]

\* This initiative is applicable only if the property has a pool.

### Benefits:

- Regular inspections, monitoring, installation of efficient water fixtures, and fittings can lead to 20% savings on water (This was obtained using efficient/low flow appliances with efficiencies ranging from 10% to 20%)<sup>5</sup>.
- Smart and drip irrigation system can offer savings of around 100 AED for every 1,000 sqm of irrigable land (calculated using sector average irrigation rate of 20 L/sqm, system cost of around 600 AED with an efficiency of up to 60%, and the latest (ADDC, 2020) utility price of water<sup>6</sup> .
- Regular inspection reduces risks of scaling, corrosion, contamination, and other problems to your business which could rupture pipes, inhibit your water flow, or damage equipment that requires a certain water quality.

### UAE and Abu Dhabi Regulations:

- Estidama Pearl rating system: Estidama is a building design methodology for constructing and operating sustainable buildings. Under Estidama, water management is a key factor in obtaining the Pearl rating.
- ADX: If Entertainment Attractions are listed on the ADX, make sure that it follows ESG guidance. They can use the monitoring framework for the initiatives presented in these guidelines as part of ADX sustainability reporting for water management.

<sup>5</sup> Based on AESG's research: Efficient/low flow appliances with efficiencies ranging from %10 to %20.

<sup>6</sup> Based on AESG's research: Calculation based on industry average irrigation rate of 20 L/sqm, system cost of around 600 AED with an efficiency of up to %60 and the latest (ADDC, www.addc.ae, 2020) utility price of water.

**Local References:**

- AD Environmental vision 2030: Achieving sustainable water management will support the sustainable development of Abu Dhabi's economy.
- ESMA EESL programme certified products: all water fixtures and water consuming appliances must be approved by ESMA in order to operate in the UAE.

**Further Reading:**

1. [Estidama Water Consumption Calculator](#) – follow this link for further information and instructions on how to calculate indoor and outdoor water consumption and how to improve water consumption.



## A.3. Waste Management System

Entertainment Attractions are major consumers of resources, and they immensely contribute to the generation of waste. In the era of a green economy and green strategies in UAE, a robust waste management system<sup>7</sup> for the sectors would benefit not only the environment but also the sector itself. It is essential for the sector to have a waste management system that focuses on reducing waste, reusing useful materials, and recycling them.

### Initiatives applicable to Entertainment Attractions

Sustainability Initiatives	Entertainment Attractions Categories		
	Water Parks	Theme Parks	Zoos and Aquariums
<b>1. Design a waste management strategy and establish a waste disposal hierarchy.</b> 1.1. Encourage reducing, reusing, and recycling practices (targeting paper, plastic, and water).	✓	✓	✓
<b>2. Conduct waste management awareness campaign.</b> 2.1. Train staff annually on waste management and segregation, advantages of recycling and reuse, etc. 2.2. Create training materials such as guidebook and leaflets, which can focus on the importance of waste segregation, creative ideas for reusing waste, etc. 2.3. Put waste segregation signage on bins for recyclable materials, glass, paper/ cardboard, cans, plastic, organics, etc.	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓
<b>3. Eco-friendly alternatives to single-use plastic.</b> 3.1. Use non-plastic products such as fabrics and paper to replace plastic decorations (e.g., balloons).	✓	✓	✓
<b>4. Reduce and gradually eliminate the use of single-use plastic.</b> 4.1. Reduce the use of plastic cups and other items; instead, replace them with multi-use, recyclable or biodegradable ones 4.2. Use refillable soap and sanitiser dispensers.	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓

<sup>7</sup> COVID19- pandemic increased the use of single-use plastic and plastic-related items in the operations of Entertainment Attractions. These proposed measures should take place within wider COVID19- precautions.

5. Engage in creative recycling initiatives.	Water Parks	Theme Parks	Zoos and Aquariums
5.1. When designing common areas, consider using upcycled waste, for example, transforming waste into a décor item or furniture.	✓	✓	✓
5.2. Use upcycled waste to design interiors of common areas (e.g., transforming waste into a décor item or furniture).	✓	✓	✓
5.3. Coordinate with Tadweer on waste recycling and composting initiatives.	✓	✓	✓
6. Return and Reward.	Water Parks	Theme Parks	Zoos and Aquariums
6.1. Deposit-based recycling program. Work with F&B outlets to provide multi-use containers, crockery, cutlery, and glassware. Visitors will win redeem points when the items are returned, and a discount or offer can be provided to incentivise.	✓	✓	✓

[Note: Please refer to Annexe A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]

[Note: Please refer to Annexe B for monitoring KPIs]

### Benefits:

- Placing waste segregation bins will provide the option of recycling waste through the correct streams, which will lead to landfill diversion. Additionally, the waste can be sold for additional revenue or reused in a waste-to-value scheme.
- Installing water filling stations can save up to 95% on water costs (Based on: wholesale bottled water prices at 0.3AED/L and latest utility prices of water by ADDC in 2020)<sup>8</sup>.
- Switching to refillable amenities such as soap dispensers can offer savings of up to 92%. (Based on the price of the bottled soap estimated at 131/L, the price of refill soap estimated at 10.6/L).
- Proper waste removal helps improve air and water quality as well as reduces greenhouse gas emissions.
- Managing waste smartly will help conserve natural resources, including minerals, water, and wood.

### Local References:

- Estidama Pearl rating system: Estidama is a building design methodology for constructing and operating sustainable buildings. Under Estidama, waste management is a key factor that Entertainment Attractions can develop in order to obtain the Pearl rating.
- ADX: Entertainment Attractions can use the monitoring framework for the initiatives presented in these guidelines as part of ADX sustainability reporting for waste management.
- AD Environment Vision 2030: Achieving sustainable waste management will support the sustainable development of Abu Dhabi's economy.
- The UAE issued Cabinet Resolution No. (39) regarding the executive regulations of Federal Resolution No. (12) of 2018 on integrated waste management that seeks to regulate the waste management process and standardise the mechanisms and methods of waste disposal. It considers waste to energy, disposal of hazardous waste, wastewater treatment etc.

<sup>8</sup> Based on AESG's research: Studies were made using data from several online retailers and bulk suppliers to create market average.



## A.4. Green and Sustainable Transportation

Transportation remains one of the biggest emitters of Carbon Dioxide emissions in the UAE. For the Entertainment Attractions sector, managing transport emissions is crucial, as every visitor and member of staff relies on transportation to reach each site. Furthermore, on-site transportation is also a crucial element of day-to-day operations. Below are some of the key areas where the sector can become more sustainable.

### Initiatives applicable to Entertainment Attractions

#### Sustainability Initiatives

#### Entertainment Attractions Categories

1. Promote alternative use of transport.	Entertainment Attractions Categories		
	Water Parks	Theme Parks	Zoos and Aquariums
1.1. Promote the use of public transport and provide visitors with a map of public transport and directions on how to use them to get to the Entertainment Attractions.	✓	✓	✓
1.2. Utilise electric buggies, like golf carts, bicycles, and electric scooters, within the premise.	✓	✓	✓
2. Promote employee carpooling and use of public transport.	Water Parks	Theme Parks	Zoos and Aquariums
2.1. Encourage employees and staff to use public transportation.	✓	✓	✓
3. Install EV chargers in entertainment attraction parking areas.	Water Parks	Theme Parks	Zoos and Aquariums
3.1. Install EV chargers and electric vehicle spaces in the parking area.	✓	✓	✓

Note: Please refer to Annexe A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]  
[Note: Please refer to Annexe B for monitoring KPIs]

#### Benefits:

- Purchasing a six-car fleet of hybrid vehicles can save up to 80% on fuel costs (based on the average fuel cost in Abu Dhabi in the last 3 months, which is 3.7AED/L – to account for volatility – As well as average miles per gallon or MPG value for cars in the sector (24.2 mpg), average energy consumption per range figures of EVs at 0.2 kWh/km, ADDC's EV tariff of 0.3AED/kWh)<sup>9</sup>.
- Promoting the use of public transport, employee carpooling and individual use of green transportation will significantly reduce the carbon footprint across Scope 1 and Scope 3 (as transportation accounts for 49% of the tourism industry's emissions according to the World Travel & Tourism Council)<sup>10</sup>.
- Sustainable public transportation is 10 times safer per mile than driving a personal vehicle into the city. Commuters can also reduce their chance of being involved in a crash by more than 90% by using public transit<sup>11</sup>.

#### Local References:

- ADX: Use the monitoring framework for the initiatives presented in these guidelines as part of ADX sustainability reporting for sustainable transportation.
- AD Environment Vision 2030: Achieving sustainable transport management will support the sustainable development of Abu Dhabi's economy.
- Abu Dhabi sustainable transport mobility strategy.

<sup>9</sup> Based on AESG's research: The average fuel cost in Abu Dhabi in the last 3 months is 3.7AED/L – to account for volatility – As well as the average miles per gallon or MPG value for cars in the industry (24.2 mpg), average energy consumption per range figures of EVs at 0.2 kWh/km, ADDC's EV tariff of 0.3AED/kWh as well as an average of one 12km trip per day based on Moovit Transport Index, www.moovit.com

<sup>10</sup> World Travel & Tourism Council, "A Net Zero Roadmap for Travel and Tourism", 2021, (www.wttc.org)

<sup>11</sup> Environment, "8 Main Benefits of Sustainable Transportation", 2020, (www.environment.co)



## A.5. Environmental Protection

Protecting the local environment and native ecosystems is critical for the tourism industry in Abu Dhabi, given the large number of vulnerable plants, animal species and habitats<sup>12</sup>, for example, According to Environmental Agency Abu Dhabi (EAD) experts, Abu Dhabi contains 34 different types of hard corals and 17 different types of birds that are endangered. Abu Dhabi is home to 436 native plant species, including the national tree of the UAE, the ghaf<sup>13</sup>. The sector should ensure the protection of the local environment across all their operations and value chain.

### Initiatives applicable to Entertainment Attractions

1.	Sustainability Initiatives	Entertainment Attractions Categories		
		Water Parks	Theme Parks	Zoos and Aquariums
	<b>Ensure the protection of local flora and fauna.</b>			
	1.1. Ensure that no pollution or spillage in the local environment is caused during the retrofit activities of the Entertainment Attractions, especially in zoos.	✓	✓	✓
	1.2. Ensure that open areas are clean and no plastic or other waste is left behind to protect the environment and animals.	✓	✓	✓
2.	<b>Environmental Protection awareness campaign.</b>			
	2.1. Train staff about Environmental Protection on how to reduce environmental pollution, protecting animals from potential harm from pollution.	✗	✗	✓
	2.2. Provide information and training materials (e.g., guidebook and leaflets on flora and fauna protection, planting native trees of UAE, etc.)..	✓	✓	✓
	2.3. Distribute leaflets and place signages about littering and tampering, endangered species and plants protection notice, etc.	✓	✓	✓
3.	<b>Plant native trees and plants in the surrounding area to promote biodiversity.</b>			
	3.1. Plant native trees and plants (such as Ghaf Tree and White Saxaul) in the surrounding area to promote biodiversity.	✓	✓	✓
4.	<b>Develop a climate resilience action plan, which outlines measures on how to adapt to climate change issues.</b>			
	4.1. Can be conducted through a third-party, or alternatively, LEED has an established Climate Change Action Plan template.	✓	✓	✓

[Note: Please refer to Annex A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]

[Note: Please refer to Annex B for monitoring KPIs]

#### Benefits:

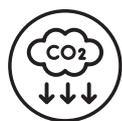
- Ensuring the protection of flora and fauna can be enhancing to Abu Dhabi's biodiversity. Planting native trees will preserve and enhance the biodiversity of Abu Dhabi.
- This is a long-term investment in the environment to keep it resilient and attract more visitors in the future.
- Planting trees has the direct effect of reducing atmospheric CO2 since each individual tree directly sequesters carbon from the atmosphere through photosynthesis.
- A balanced ecosystem results in rain and slows down climate change because large forests have the tendency to influence weather patterns and create their own microclimates, hence increasing tourism.

#### Further Reading:

1. Abu Dhabi's [native plant](#) species.
2. There are several other laws relating to environmental protection that Entertainment Attractions are expected to comply with; read [UAE legislation on environmental protection](#)

<sup>12</sup> Earth's Endangered Creatures, Endangered species ([www.earthsendangered.com](http://www.earthsendangered.com))

<sup>13</sup> Environment Agency Abu Dhabi, Discover our biodiversity ([www.ead.ae](http://www.ead.ae))



## A.6 Carbon Management

The global tourism industry accounts for around 8% of global carbon emissions<sup>14</sup> and this is set to increase. Tourism, like other industries, has a responsibility to manage its impact on the planet. Reducing the sector's carbon footprint contributes towards mitigating the devastating effects of climate change, which has a positive cascade effect on public health and the environment. Abu Dhabi's arid climate makes it vulnerable to extreme weather changes, such as an increase in temperature, which in turn leads to a reduction in the number of visitors travelling to Abu Dhabi. Carbon management has significant importance and investing in carbon management results in innovative and more environmental-friendly solutions that will boost planetary health.

### Initiatives applicable to Entertainment Attractions

1.	Sustainability Initiatives	Entertainment Attractions Categories		
		Water Parks	Theme Parks	Zoos and Aquariums
	<b>1. Calculate footprint by monitoring operations and outlining the emissions related to each operation.</b>			
	1.1. This can be done through digital tools (such as one Click LCA, and IES).	✓	✓	✓
	<b>2. Identify carbon hotspots in the operations.</b>			
	2.1. Emissions related to visitor arrivals, departures and pickups or sourcing of materials for day-to-day operations.	✓	✓	✓
	<b>3. Develop a pathway to Net-Zero.</b>			
	3.1. Identify carbon reduction measures.	✓	✓	✓
	3.2. Set carbon reduction targets.	✓	✓	✓
	3.3. Offset residual emissions.	✓	✓	✓

[Note: Please refer to Annexe A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]  
 [Note: Please refer to Annexe B for monitoring KPIs]

#### Benefits:

- Calculating a carbon footprint through a digital tool can identify GHG hotspots, thus enabling carbon emission reduction and reporting.
- With the rise of eco-tourism, carbon-conscious Entertainment Attractions would attract more visitors and potentially benefit from carbon taxes.
- Benefit from the establishment of long-term partnerships with local and government bodies that are working towards a net-zero economy.

#### Local References:

- UAE Net Zero 2050: The UAE has pledged to have net zero emissions by the year 2050. Entertainment Attractions can be aligned with this strategy by aiming to reduce their emissions.
- Whilst there are no laws mandating carbon reporting at the date of writing these guidelines, it is expected that there will be requirements in the future. Therefore, we recommend that Entertainment Attractions should establish procedures to report their carbon emissions.

#### Further reading:

1. [GHG protocol](#) – for further information and definitions of GHG Scope emissions and classifications and methods of calculation.

<sup>14</sup> Sustainable Hospitality Alliance, Our Work/climate action ([www.sustainablehospitalityalliance.org](http://www.sustainablehospitalityalliance.org))



## B. Sustainable and Local Procurement



### B.1 Sourcing of Local, Sustainable Goods

Sustainability should not be considered solely within the company itself, but must go beyond its boundaries, throughout the entire supply and value chain in which it operates and collaborates. Research has shown that customers are having increased consideration of the products they consume, including environmental and social sustainability<sup>15</sup>. The sector within can respond to this by applying the key procurement initiatives outlined below.

#### Initiatives applicable to Entertainment Attractions

Sustainability Initiatives		Entertainment Attractions Categories		
		Water Parks	Theme Parks	Zoos and Aquariums
1.	<b>Design a sustainable procurement plan and policy to support sustainable purchases.</b>			
	1.1. Create a requirements checklist for identifying sustainable suppliers (within the sustainable procurement strategy) and collaborate and partner with contractors that meet the sustainability criteria for radical maintenance work or infrastructural changes.	✓	✓	✓
2.	<b>Wherever possible, purchase products with less disposable packaging and opt to purchase products that are packaged more sustainably (reusable/recyclable cardboard packaging or recycled packaging).</b>			
	2.1. Avoid buying products with heavy outer plastic packaging.	✓	✓	✓
3.	<b>Purchase eco-friendly products that do not contain a high amount of hazardous chemicals.</b>			
	3.1. Partner with vendor to provide eco-friendly cleaning products (e.g., soap, floor cleaners, etc.) that do not contaminate water when it flows into sewage.	✓	✓	✓
4.	<b>Source environmentally friendly options.</b>			
	4.1. Partner with local suppliers to provide local merchandise for gift shops and/or provide traditional food for F&B outlets (wherever possible).	✓	✓	✓
	4.2. Where possible, purchase compostable or recyclable products, such as napkins, food containers and other packaging.	✓	✓	✓

[Note: Please refer to Annex A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]

[Note: Please refer to Annex B for monitoring KPIs]

<sup>15</sup> Deloitte, "Shifting sands: How consumer behaviour is embracing sustainability" (Available: [www2.deloitte.com](http://www2.deloitte.com) [accessed: 2022/08/22])

**Benefits:**

- Purchasing locally sourced products yield multiple benefits, such as support of local businesses, reduced emissions from product transport and reduced damage during transportation.
- Purchasing environmentally preferable options would reduce carbon emissions, waste, and encourage sustainable behaviour.
- When offering a seasonal menu with locally sourced ingredients, transportation requirements, food waste and spoilage are reduced. It also opens up an opportunity to partner with local farmers.
- Sourcing fresher produce will ensure higher quality products.
- Growing local varieties of food preserves local genetic diversity.

**Local References:**

- ADX: Entertainment Attractions can use the monitoring framework for the initiatives presented in these guidelines as part of ADX sustainability reporting for sustainable procurement.
- Supporting suppliers who are committed to the development of UAE Nationals.





## C. Social and Culture



### C.1 Promoting Local Heritage, Culture, and Art

Being the cultural heart of the UAE, Abu Dhabi has a rich history. Some historical settlements can be traced back as far as over 5000 years. Rapid urbanisation and modernisation have had a considerable impact on the culture and heritage of the Middle East. This has resulted in the need to place higher significance on celebrating and promoting the local heritage, culture and art. Highlighting the best the region has to offer, will not only create an authentic experience for the visitor but also bring benefits to the local community.

#### Initiatives applicable to Entertainment Attractions

#### Sustainability Initiatives

#### Entertainment Attractions Categories

	Water Parks	Theme Parks	Zoos and Aquariums
<b>1. Celebrate and support national events and holidays at the property.</b> 1.1. Plan celebrations of UAE National Day, Ramadan, Eid etc., Host events to celebrate the days or put an offer/deal on for the occasions. Offer/sell occasion merchandise to commemorate the event.	✓	✓	✓
<b>2. Play local music, serve local food and drinks, and put-up traditional decorations and arts, to promote local artists and artisans.</b> 2.1. Put up local decorations and crafts and play local music throughout and serve complimentary local snacks to visitors.	✓	✓	✓
<b>3. Promote cultural and heritage sites as tourist destinations.</b> 3.1. Provide leaflets and maps with information about the cultural and heritage sites in Abu Dhabi.	✓	✓	✓

[Note: Please refer to Annex A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]

[Note: Please refer to Annex B for monitoring KPIs]

#### Benefits:

- Raising awareness about the value and importance the cultural heritage of Abu Dhabi in contributing towards a sustainable future by maintaining and preserving the rich cultural heritage.
- Promoting local culture and heritage strengthens the relationship between the visitors and the local community.

#### Local References:

- UAE law on the preservation of cultural heritage.



## C.2 Promoting Sustainability with Visitors and Local Community

As more travellers seek unique and local experiences, it will be important to provide the visitors with an experience at the heart of these efforts through engagement with local communities, local artists, etc. It is important that Entertainment Attractions engage with the local community and visitors to facilitate the diffusion of knowledge covering sustainability initiatives and where these measures contribute towards the well-being of people and the planet.

### Initiatives applicable to Entertainment Attractions

Sustainability Initiatives	Entertainment Attractions Categories		
	Water Parks	Theme Parks	Zoos and Aquariums
<b>1. Partner with non-profit associations to organise fundraising events for local causes and charities.</b>			
1.1. Obtain the required license from a competent authority like the Ministry of Community and Development to organise a fund-raising event.	✓	✓	✓
<b>2. Organise events open to public that raise awareness about sustainable solutions in the sector.</b>			
2.1. Provide a space in the main entrance areas, throughout the attraction and on the website to showcase what sustainability initiatives have been implemented.	✓	✓	✓
2.2. Encourage visitors to participate in the sustainability initiatives by hosting competitions, offering prizes, etc.	✓	✓	✓
<b>3. Raise awareness of visitors on their role in mitigating climate change and contributing to environmental protection through simple practices.</b>			
3.1. Share a vision of a sustainable attraction and what they need to do to be a part of the sustainable change. Raise awareness through reusable leaflets and signage, promotional TV channels and other platforms.	✓	✓	✓
<b>4. Collaborate with local performers and artists for different occasions.</b>			
4.1. Collaborate with artists and artisans to showcase their crafts or a local musician to play music for the visitors.	✓	✓	✓
<b>5. Align with local initiatives and NPOs to design programmes to engage visitors and locals on sustainability.</b>			
5.1. Align with UAE Ministry of Climate Change and Environment to design programmes on climate change.	✓	✓	✓
5.2. Align with guidelines and seek support from Emirates Environmental Group for engaging visitors on sustainability initiatives.	✓	✓	✓
<b>6. Conduct a survey with visitors.</b>			
6.1. Conduct surveys with visitors to understand their satisfaction and expectations on sustainability initiatives.	✓	✓	✓
<b>7. Ensure integration of international programmes and certifications to attract tourists that prefer sustainable lodging options.</b>			
7.1. Ensure integration of international programmes like ISO 140001 Environmental Management System, Green Key, Green Globe, Earth Check, ISO 20121 Sustainable Events, ISO 50001 Energy Management System, SMPP, LEED.	✓	✓	✓
<b>8. Co-develop, and co-design products inspired by local crafts in collaboration with local artisans and artists.</b>			
8.1. Hire local artists and craftsman to decorate the attraction.	✓	✓	✓
8.2. Promote and sell local souvenirs by partnering with local artists and artisans.	✓	✓	✓

[Note: Please refer to Annexe A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]

[Note: Please refer to Annexe B for monitoring KPIs]

**Benefits:**

- Research from Booking.com has shown that visitors look for more sustainable options; hence by informing the visitors, guides and local community which sustainability initiatives have been implemented, the reputation of the site will benefit.
- Increased partnerships with local artists and artisans will result in exposure and recognition while generating additional revenue.
- Collecting visitors feedback would allow Entertainment Attractions to undergo continuous improvements and encourage recommendations and revisits.
- By raising awareness in local communities of environmental concerns, people will be encouraged to protect the environment and wildlife.



## C.3 Engaging in Educational Programmes

Today, younger generations are more aware and place a high significance on mitigating climate change and are aware and responsible for their environmental impacts. As such, today's youth are more conscious of how businesses are operating in a sustainable manner. Therefore, it is especially important for the tourism industry to raise awareness on sustainable practices within the Leisure and Entertainment Attractions sector with younger generation.

### Initiatives applicable to Entertainment Attractions

#### Sustainability Initiatives

#### Entertainment Attractions Categories

	Water Parks	Theme Parks	Zoos and Aquariums
<b>1. Engage with educational institutions to promote community, culture and heritage as a partnership.</b> 1.1. Partner with educational institutions to organise field trips. Zoos and aquariums can use this to educate about native species. All Entertainment Attractions could have a designated area that reflects traditional culture and heritage, local flora, and fauna, etc., with educational boards (where applicable).	✓	✓	✓
<b>2. Invite school students to the premises for educational tours on flora and fauna.</b> 2.1. Organise a tree plantation drive, a talk on Abu Dhabi's culture and history, annually.	✓	✓	✓
<b>Invite educational institutions to the attraction for educational tours on UAE ecology.</b> 3.1. Organise learning workshops and tours to highlight UAE native animals. Highlight the endangered species in the UAE.	✓	✓	✓
<b>Invite educational institutes to awareness and sustainability events.</b> 4.1. Organise activities for students such as tree plantation, gardening within the premises, etc. 4.2. Bring together educational institutions to the attraction to host sustainability awareness events with waste-free and sustainable activities.	✓	✓	✓

**Benefits:**

- Educating students and the local community on the local culture reinforces the importance of preserving Abu Dhabi's cultural heritage.
- Through educational programmes, tourists and the younger generation, including residents, will become more aware and enthusiastic about social sustainability in Abu Dhabi.
- Hosting workshops/classes on local art, craft, food, and cuisine can help build a stronger relationship with visitors, improve revisits, and recommendations.
- Promotes healthy lifestyles and assists in addressing many health issues students are going through.
- Environmental learning prepares students for future careers and prepares them with the required skills to become professionals in the sector.

**C.4 Improving Accessibility**

Despite the global population of People of Determination, the lack of awareness and information is one of the major obstacles visitors face whether they are a Person of Determination or a companion or family member. Universal access is a key factor in social sustainability to ensure the needs of People of Determination are addressed and fulfilled.

**Initiatives applicable to Entertainment Attractions****Sustainability Initiatives****Entertainment Attractions Categories**

1. Ensure provision of lactation room for women and gender-neutral baby changing stations.	Entertainment Attractions Categories			
	Water Parks	Theme Parks	Zoos and Aquariums	
1.1. Provide nursing mothers with a private lactation room and baby-changing stations should be gender-neutral.	✓	✓	✓	
2. Organise staff training on accessibility provisions for visitors bi-annually.	Entertainment Attractions Categories			
	Water Parks	Theme Parks	Zoos and Aquariums	
2.1. Train staff on how to support/provide assistance to a person of determination.	✓	✓	✓	
2.2. Provide behavioural and etiquette training to staff, for instance, on how to speak without using labels to a person of determination.	✓	✓	✓	
3. Improve provisions for People of Determination.	Entertainment Attractions Categories			
	Water Parks	Theme Parks	Zoos and Aquariums	
	3.1. Provide ramps on entrances for easier access (or wherever required, at any elevated spot).	✓	✓	✓
	3.2. Ensure information in raised text/number and braille on elevators, signages, etc.	✓	✓	✓
	3.3. Place a People of Determination priority sign and ensure that one of the elevators provides priority to, or is designed for, people of determination with a wider entrance and a lower door closing speed.	✓	✓	✓
	3.4. Ensure accessible parking spaces are marked with People of Determination priority sign and it should be closest to the main entrance.	✓	✓	✓
	3.5. Ensure visible and accessible signage and directions.	✓	✓	✓
	3.6. In accessible bathrooms, a fixed horizontal and vertical grab rail at the side of the toilet to assist in standing/sitting and a pull-cord alarm should be installed.	✓	✓	✓
3.7. Ensure there are enough pick-up and drop vehicles with a wide entrance and low-rise accessible seats.	✓	✓	✓	

4. Provide clear maps that include key destinations, accessibility infrastructure, continuous accessible paths of travel, and accessible bathroom locations.	Water Parks	Theme Parks	Zoos and Aquariums
4.1. This can be an in-app capability; have an accessibility key/legend on the site maps throughout the attraction and provide additional signage/wayfinding for accessible facilities/routes.	✓	✓	✓
4.2. Ensure outdoor and indoor paths have no breaks or gaps and are barrier-free.	✓	✓	✓

[Note: Please refer to Annexe A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]  
 [Note: Please refer to Annexe B for monitoring KPIs]

**Benefits:**

- Providing visitors with better accessibility, Entertainment Attractions would build a distinguished brand and encourage customer loyalty.
- Visitors would choose Entertainment Attractions with better accessibility facilities for their stay.
- Lactation rooms provide a private relaxing space for nursing mothers during their visit to the site.
- Provisions for people of determination, as well as staff training on the matter, would create independence for people of determination.
- Enables people with disabilities to move around independently and access day-to-day services and hence improve their trust in the business.

**Local References:**

- Entertainment Attractions must also comply with Abu Dhabi building code and the requirements set out in chapter 11 on building accessibility (and appendix E).
- UAE national policy for empowering people of determination.
- UAE people of determination protection from abuse policy.





## D. People



### D.1 Staff Empowerment

Securing a workforce for the future has long been a challenge for the tourism industry. Research has shown that lack of career progression is one of the main reasons people leave the sector, and although training and development cannot always combat this directly, investment in employees and a robust training and development strategy can go a long way.

#### Initiatives applicable to Entertainment Attractions

#### Sustainability Initiatives

#### Entertainment Attractions Categories

Sustainability Initiatives		Entertainment Attractions Categories		
		Water Parks	Theme Parks	Zoos and Aquariums
<b>1.</b>	<b>Conduct annual trainings for employees for their personal and professional development.</b>			
	1.1. Online and/ or in-person courses, management courses (e.g., time management courses).	✓	✓	✓
<b>2.</b>	<b>Provide career path and milestones for employee professional development and promotion.</b>			
	2.1. Set in place a structured review and development programme, including bi-annual "performance reviews" where development goals and objectives are set and performance reviewed against KPIs (e.g., receiving no complaints about housekeeping, 100% room cleaning rate etc.).	✓	✓	✓
<b>3.</b>	<b>Conduct a human rights awareness training for employees.</b>			
	3.1. Schedule human rights training on an annual or bi-annual basis and record the number of hours.	✓	✓	✓
<b>4.</b>	<b>Develop a policy for anti-harassment and discrimination and conduct trainings to promote a healthy working environment to increase efficiency, employee well-being, and work quality.</b>			
	4.1. Schedule harassment and discrimination on an annual or bi-annual basis and record the number of hours.	✓	✓	✓
<b>5.</b>	<b>Provide employee reporting channel to raise issues related to sustainability and develop a process to resolve these issues.</b>			
	5.1. Place an anonymous feedback box or provide a space in the company's intranet.	✓	✓	✓
<b>6.</b>	<b>Incentivise employees to perform on sustainability (by setting it as a KPI for employees) via appropriate tools like staff award system.</b>			
	6.1. Provide incentives for preferring public transport commute, waste segregation, reduction in water consumption, and being energy efficient, for example, running a full dishwasher and washing machine.	✓	✓	✓

[Note: Please refer to Annexe A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]

[Note: Please refer to Annexe B for monitoring KPIs]

**Benefits:**

- Employee engagement initiatives and programmes will contribute towards the improvement of staff performance, reduce absenteeism, and will increase the Entertainment Attractions’ ability to attract and retain talented employees.
- Developing an anti-harassment and anti-discriminatory policy will establish a safe working space for employees.
- Empowerment helps create a positive, open environment that leads to maximum productivity.
- Improves employee branding, so they act as brand ambassadors and present the company in the best light possible.
- Flattens the company’s hierarchy which eliminates micro-managing and the excess management layers to improve communication and increase transparency in the workforce.

**Local References:**

- All UAE employment [laws](#)
- Workers’ rights international agreements



## D.2 Diversity and Inclusion

According to research, tourists conform to different regional and cultural background and diversity of staff composition can lead to better problem-solving, higher occupancy and profits<sup>16</sup>. Employees at all levels are encouraged to participate in diversity training as it increases empathy, creates an inclusive workplace, and reduces discrimination among staff.

### Initiatives applicable to Entertainment Attractions

Sustainability Initiatives	Entertainment Attractions Categories		
	Water Parks	Theme Parks	Zoos and Aquariums
<b>1. Have a representative workforce of women, nationalities, and people of determination via hiring and retaining policies that encourage diversity.</b> 1.1. Work towards a diverse workforce across all levels, do not discriminate in the hiring process against race or people of determination and reflect this in a policy.	✓	✓	✓
<b>2. Encourage and train the local population, especially women, to join the tourism industry, Emiratization strategy</b> 2.1. When marketing for jobs, encourage women and all ethnicities to apply, target Emiratis, especially Emirati women through the job description.	✓	✓	✓
<b>3. Put policies are in place to ensure equal pay for equal work.</b> 3.1. Through an equality policy stipulate that regardless of gender, ethnicity, or ability, we will pay all employees equally for equal work and roles.	✓	✓	✓
<b>4. Encourage representation of women and people of determination in senior leadership and board.</b> 4.1. When hiring and promoting employees, ensure inclusion of women and people of determination in senior leadership and management.	✓	✓	✓

[Note: Please refer to Annexe A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]  
 [Note: Please refer to Annexe B for monitoring KPIs]

<sup>16</sup> McKinsey & Company, “Diversity wins: How inclusion matters”, 2020, ( www.mckinsey.com)

**Benefits:**

- A diverse and gender balanced workforce enables the Entertainment Attractions to have a wider talent pool with varied perspectives which improves productivity, company image and overall management.
- According to survey research, 66% of organisations believe that diversity enhances innovation<sup>17</sup>.
- According to research, a diverse team would make decisions 60% faster than non-diverse teams, and teams marked by age, gender, and geographic diversity made the right decision 87% of the time, compared to 58% for all-male teams<sup>18</sup>.

**Local References:**

- [Emiratisation programmes and initiatives in Abu Dhabi](#), including:
  - “Training for Work” initiative, launched by Human Resources Authority, aims to develop job seekers’ skills by providing training opportunities in government entities and companies.
  - Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation, aimed at providing more than 15,000 suitable jobs for Emiratis in the private sector by the end of 2018.
  - “Absher”, an initiative supervised by the Ministry of Presidential Affairs and implemented by the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation to encourage Emiratis to work in the private sector.
  - Khebraty programme, which aims to attract Emirati students who wish to explore the tourism sector and are able to work for 20 hours per week in a tourism company.
- [UAE law on equal wages for women and men](#)

<sup>17</sup> EW Group, “The benefits of diversity and inclusion in the workplace”, (www.theewgroup.com)

<sup>18</sup> EW Group, “The benefits of diversity and inclusion in the workplace”, (www.theewgroup.com)





# E. Resilience and Risk Management



## E.1 Health and Safety

Health and safety are important considerations for any workplace, as it's a high priority to keep both workers and visitors safe. To run an effective Entertainment Attractions business, it's important to have a health and safety checklist based on the below-mentioned initiatives to perform checks quickly and efficiently.

### Initiatives applicable to Entertainment Attractions

#### Sustainability Initiatives

#### Entertainment Attractions Categories

Sustainability Initiatives		Water Parks	Theme Parks	Zoos and Aquariums
<b>1.</b>	<b>Employee engagement and workshop to improve physical and mental health of employees.</b>			
	1.1. Organise health and well-being events/retreats.	✓	✓	✓
	1.2. Promote annual health check-ups for all employees.	✓	✓	✓
<b>2.</b>	<b>Provide medical assistance.</b>			
	2.1. Align with OSHAD COP4 and provide medical rooms, first aid kits and assistance like CPR (at least one staff could be trained in CPR).	✓	✓	✓
<b>3.</b>	<b>Develop a future pandemic/epidemic action plan.</b>			
	3.1. Develop a future pandemic/epidemic action plan that can be easily tailored to the instructions from Abu Dhabi Public Health Centre.	✓	✓	✓
<b>4.</b>	<b>Install sensors and periodically check noise, water, and air quality for visitors and employee safety.</b>			
	4.1. Ensure a quarterly quality check of the mentioned for safety.	✓	✓	✓
<b>5.</b>	<b>Enforce Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) and formaldehyde content limits.</b>			
	5.1. To improve indoor air quality purchase products with low VOC content that are used for paint/coatings, adhesives/sealants, cleaners, and fragrances. This would reduce VOC related health risks. Products must be stored in containment areas and disposed of correctly.	✓	✓	✓
<b>6.</b>	<b>Provide mental health counselling for employees.</b>			
	6.1. To ensure a safe and healthy workspace, provide employees with channels to reach out for individual counselling services	✓	✓	✓

[Note: Please refer to Annexe A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]

[Note: Please refer to Annexe B for monitoring KPIs]

**Benefits:**

- Providing health and safety support would reduce cost associated with accidents.
- Providing physical and mental health support to employees would improve employee well-being and business efficiency.
- Demonstrating commitment to sustainability and corporate social responsibility which includes health and safety dedication will attract investors to the company.
- Having a robust health and safety plan, keeps all staff aware of current legal requirements which improves the company's regulatory compliance and lowers the risk of being fined.

**Local References:**

- [UAE laws on health and safety at the workplace](#)
- [Electronic Public Health Pest Control Services](#)- DCT Abu Dhabi and Tadweer directs all tourism and Entertainment Attractions to use Pest Control E-contract system to ensure effective and safe public health.



## E.2 Risk Mitigation and Resilience

Risk management ensures that a business is prepared for any potential threats and Entertainment Attractions, this covers health and safety, as well as any global Entertainment Attractions (e.g., COVID 19-). Resilience refers to the development, preparedness and mitigation measures considered for scenarios such as climate change, pandemics, health and well-being and sustainable growth. It is important to provide benefits and empower the employee/staff across multiple financial and non-financial dimensions to create value and manage the risks and opportunities associated with economic, environmental, and social developments.

### Initiatives applicable to Entertainment Attractions

#### Sustainability Initiatives

#### Entertainment Attractions Categories

	Water Parks	Theme Parks	Zoos and Aquariums
<b>1. 1. Develop an ethics and anti-corruption policy.</b>			
1.1. Develop a policy on ethics and anti-corruption and make sure employees are informed.	✓	✓	✓
<b>2. 2. Identify risk and have management and escalation procedures, covering at least people, assets, community, and environment.</b>			
2.1. Conduct annual risk management policies reviews, involve stakeholders and, where applicable, utilise a third-party to conduct an assessment".	✓	✓	✓
<b>3. 3. Develop a risk register for the four categories (people, assets, community, and environment.) and a system to monitor performance on a regular basis.</b>			
3.1. Conduct an impact assessment on all four categories (hire a third-party if applicable) and develop a monitoring framework after involving all stakeholders.	✓	✓	✓
<b>4. 4. Invest in Artificial Intelligence, financial and climate-related models to better predict the future.</b>			
4.1. Hire a third-party assessment consultant to perform software analysis to highlight any potential future impacts. Regularly review.	✓	✓	✓

[Note: Please refer to Annexe A for higher level cost, effort, and responsibilities for each initiative]

[Note: Please refer to Annexe B for monitoring KPIs]

**Benefits:**

- Having an ethics and anti-corruption policy will lead to better staff engagement and enhanced reputation.
- A risk management strategy will help identify risks that are not apparent and protect the business from unforeseen liabilities.
- According to McKinsey's survey about the pandemic's impact on corporate resilience, a better risk governance model is key for efficient and effective decision-making and crisis management<sup>20</sup>.
- It builds an early-warning system in place so actions will be prompt and confident, which is an extra line of defence during a crisis.
- Having a resilience plan reduces stress within the organisation, and this, in turn, improves job satisfaction and productivity.

<sup>20</sup> McKinsey & Company, "From risk management to strategic resilience", 2022, ([www.mckinsey.com](http://www.mckinsey.com))



# 8. Conclusion

The purpose of the guidelines is to provide a roadmap and approach for the industries to contribute towards making tourism in Abu Dhabi more sustainable. By becoming a sustainable tourism destination, Abu Dhabi will maintain high levels of tourist satisfaction and ensures a meaningful experience for all visitors and tourists. In conjunction with raising tourist awareness about sustainability issues, tourists will also get an authentic local experience of UAE culture and heritage. Furthermore, sustainable practices create a positive impact on visitors and increase their likelihood of returning to the destination. Going green leads to better loyalty, word-of-mouth marketing and higher customer satisfaction.

Sustainable tourism can be achieved through applying the recommendations and sustainability initiatives presented in these guidelines. Each Entertainment Attraction shall use these guidelines and develop its own sustainability journey/roadmap towards the vision of making Abu Dhabi a sustainable destination. Moving forward, the Entertainment Attraction sector should refer to the Monitoring and Measuring templates provided in annexure B with these guidelines for supporting metrics and KPIs for suggested initiatives. The template would help monitor initiatives, analyse the gaps, and track progress towards the set targets to achieve sustainable excellence.

