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Speakers at the session of "Innovation: The Way to Sustainable Cities"

Knowledge Cities, Sustainable Cities

The second day of the Knowledge Summit witnessed sessions on how to build sustainable cities, promote sustainable tourism, and empower people of determination as active players in sustainable development. Also, a group of experts launched the "Cities for Knowledge Creation" initiative and selected Dubai as City of Knowledge for the year 2020.

The session "Innovation: The Way to Sustainable Cities" discussed ways to build symbiotic societies through new social design and the importance of changing the dynamics and engineering of societies to achieve abundance.

Moderated by Sally Mousa, a host at Pulse

95 – Sharjah, the session brought together Dr Mahmoud AlBurai, Managing Director of the Dubai Real Estate Institute, Prof. Jason Pomeroy, Founder of Jason Pomeroy Studios, Karim El-Jisr, Executive Director of the SEE Institute at The Sustainable City – Dubai and Steven Haggart, Founder of Australis.



The speakers discussed demographic and environmental challenges, political turmoil facing sustainability in many cities around the world, the UAE's vision of sustainability, achieving economic growth, and building prosperous, sustainable and happy societies.

In a session entitled "Empowering People of Determination to Be Key Players in Sustainable Development", mechanisms were discussed to provide an appropriate educational environment

"UAE has a pioneering experience in supporting people of determination, providing the necessary environment to enable them to play their role in society and enhance their capabilities, and solving the problems facing them, as well as concerted national efforts to invest in their capabilities." that meets the needs of this important group in society and to nurture and qualify them in line with international standards with a view to integrating them into society as elements capable of production.

Dr Noor Aldeen Atatreh, Chancellor at Al Ain University, reviewed the university's experience in integrating people of determination in the university and allocating their own classes, while providing them with all the necessary facilities.

He reviewed with attendees the pioneering experience of the UAE in supporting people of determination and providing the necessary environment to enable them to play their role in society, enhance their capabilities and solve the problems facing them as well as concerted national efforts to invest in their capabilities. Dr Atatreh said: "Only when we collaborate will we achieve sustainable development."

Knowledge cities

Under the aegis of the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Knowledge Foundation (MBRF), a group of high-profile experts in research and development (R&D) announced the "Cities for Knowledge Creation" initiative, in collaboration with global

Above:

Noor Aldeen Atatreh speaks at the session of "Empowering People of Determination to Be Key Players in Sustainable Development"



Right:

The Summit witnessed the launching of an innovative initiatives and knowledge platforms



assurance, tax, and consulting services provider PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC.

The experts selected Dubai as the City of Knowledge for the 2020 edition of the initiative. One city will be named every year at the Knowledge Summit in Dubai. The new initiative is in line with the Foundation's commitment to promote knowledge worldwide, launching a series of initiatives and knowledge reports.

Laurent Probst, a Partner at PwC - Luxembourg and a Global Network Leader of the Regional Innovation Ecosystem, said "Dubai is an international city and given the prominent initiatives the emirate implements in an effort to create knowledge, we launched this initiative in collaboration with the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Knowledge Foundation as well as our public and private-sector partners."

"Guided by the vision of H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE, Ruler of Dubai, the emirate is working to develop knowledge and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals," Probst added, calling on other countries to also put further focus and resources on knowledge.

Probst underlined the importance of the Knowledge Summit as a platform for discussing pressing knowledge related issues and focusing on elements such as innovation, sustainable development, eradicating poverty, and upskilling People of Determination. In 2020, Dubai will be the centre of the world's attention as it hosts the Expo 2020, he asserted.

Sustainable Tourism

In a session titled "Sustainable Tourism: From Alternative to Mainstream", the speakers discussed the implications of unfair tourism and the need for responsible alternatives. They also discussed the advantages of responsible tourism and its role in protecting environmental resources.

On the need to educate individuals from all over the world about the benefits of eco-tourism and responsible tourism on the ground, Dr. Kelly Bricker, the Director of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism and a Professor at the University of Utah, said "We are all looking forward to visiting sites that are full of natural beauty and a clean environment but if natural resources continue to be depleted as a result of the rise in the impact of the ecological footprint, this will necessarily affect the quality of air, water and food, and therefore our health in general."

The participants emphasized that providing a sustainable management system for tourism agencies has become an urgent necessity as they contribute to promoting environmental diversity on the planet. This will be achieved by focusing on four main axes of sustainability management, creating a global culture around responsible tourism, preserving environmental resources and explaining its socioeconomic benefits as a tool for poverty reduction.

The Summit also witnessed the launching of innovative initiatives and knowledge platforms, which aim to contribute to building sustainable knowledge societies and support young people.