



The State of Environmental Initiatives Among UAE Companies

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1. Executive Summary

The survey responses showed an advanced level of environmental awareness and motivation for action among all companies. The vast majority of companies have taken substantive steps toward reducing their environmental footprint and almost all expect to make further progress in the next two years. Nearly all respondents feel that their customers do care about their environmental performance and that they are becoming increasingly aware of environmental issues.

The survey shows UAE-based companies leading local branches of multinational companies [“multinational companies”] in their environmental awareness and implementation of actions taken toward reducing their environmental footprint. Specifically, a higher proportion of UAE-based companies are conscious of their responsibility to the environment. More UAE-based companies are willing to commit resources to environmental initiatives than multinationals and are leading by implementing a number of actions such as reducing power usage and creating environmental strategies for their organizations.

2. Study Design

In the month of April, associates from EcoVentures approached 40 UAE and 42 multinational companies in the UAE, the majority having over 100 employees, and carried out a 22-question survey. The respondents operate in a number of industry sectors such as FCMG, legal services, media, energy, manufacturing, finance, retail, hospitality and construction. The survey was administered either by phone or by email, depending on the preference of the respondent. The survey results were then tabulated and summarized.

3. Survey Respondents

Out of the 82 companies approached, 32 companies responded (a 39% response rate). Fourteen of the respondents were UAE-based companies and 18 were multinational companies. In most cases, the survey was answered by the Corporate Social Responsibility or Communications function. Companies were given the option of remaining anonymous, which approximately half of respondents chose to do. [A list of companies who were willing to be listed as having participated in the survey can be found in Table 1]

Table 1: Survey Respondents who have agreed to be mentioned

Company	Sector	UAE or Multinational
Aramex	Logistics	Multinational
Canon	Printing	Multinational
Crown Plaza Hotels & Resorts	Hospitality	Multinational
DLA PIPER	Legal Services	Multinational
DMG World Media	Media	Multinational
Enviromena	Solar Energy	UAE
Filance	IT	UAE
GE	Diversified	Multinational
Hyatt Regency	Leisure	Multinational
Johnson & Johnson	Medical/FMCG	Multinational
Al Futtaim	Diversified	UAE
Park Hyatt	Hospitality	Multinational
TAGA	Energy	UAE
Microsoft	IT	Multinational
Barclays	Financial Services	Multinational
HP	IT	Multinational

4. Survey Questions

Twenty-two questions were asked, covering different environmental initiatives and companies' perceptions of customer attitudes toward environmental issues and their performance. Table 2 lists the survey questions.

Table 2: Survey Questions

1. Does your company have an environmental committee?
2. If no, Are you planning on starting one in the next year?
3. If no, Are you planning on starting one in the next two years?
4. Does your company have an environmental strategy?
5. If no, Are you planning on starting one in the next year?
6. If no, Are you planning on starting one in the next two years?
7. Does your company release an annual sustainability report?
8. If no, Are you planning on releasing one in the next year?
9. If no, Are you planning on releasing one in the next two years?
10. Has your company calculated its carbon footprint?
11. If no, Are you planning on creating one in the next year?
12. If no, Are you planning on creating one in the next two years?
13. Has your company tried to reduce emissions or reduce energy usage?
14. If no, Do you think you will engage in such activities in the next year?
15. If no, Do you think you will engage in such activities in the next two years?
16. Do you think your customers are becoming more environmentally aware?
17. Do you think your customers care about your company's environmental performance?
18. Does your company feel that it has a responsibility not to harm the environment?
19. Do you have a budget for environmental initiatives?



20. If no, Do you think you'll get one in the next year?

21. If no, Do you think you'll get one in the next two years?

22. Please list some of the green initiatives your company has undertaken

5. Survey Results

Companies' feeling of responsibility not to harm the environment

94% of total responding companies answered that they feel that their company does have a responsibility not to harm the environment. This may explain the strong willingness to take concrete action among the entire group of respondents. However, 100% of UAE-based companies expressed feeling this responsibility while only 89% of multinational companies feel the same way.

Perception of customer attitudes toward environmental performance

Survey respondents overwhelmingly feel that their customers do care about their environmental performance, with 91% responding yes. All UAE-based companies (100%) feel that their customers care about environmental performance, while only 83% of multinational companies agreed. Further, 91% of the total respondents (100% of UAE and 83% of multinational) also feel that their customers are becoming increasingly environmentally aware.

Budget provision for environmental initiatives

100% of UAE-based companies report having a budget for environmental initiatives compared to only 78% of multinational companies. However, 89% of the multinational respondents expected to have an environmental budget within two years.

Respondents' progress on environmental initiatives

All respondents' have taken substantive steps to measure and reduce their impact on the environment, and all expect to increase action in this area over the next two years. The full survey results can be found in Table 3.

- **Establishing an environmental committee**
 - 64% of UAE-based companies and 83% of multinational companies report having an environmental committee. This difference could be due to different management and decision-making styles within UAE-based companies as compared to multinational firms.
 - However, all UAE-based companies and 89% of multinational companies expect to have environmental committees within two years.
- **Creating an environmental strategy**
 - 86% of UAE-based companies and 78% of multinational companies report having an environmental strategy.



- However, this is expected to increase to 100% of UAE-based companies and 89% of multinational companies within two years.
- **Releasing a sustainability report**
 - 36% of UAE-based companies and 44% of multinational companies report releasing an annual sustainability report.
 - However, this is expected to increase to 93% of UAE-based companies and 67% of multinational companies within two years.
- **Calculating the company's carbon footprint**
 - Only 28% of responding companies report having calculated their carbon footprint, with virtually no difference between UAE and multinational companies.
 - However, 71% of UAE-based companies and 61% of multinational companies report that they will calculate their carbon footprint within two years.
- **Reducing emissions or energy usage**
 - 93% of UAE-based companies and 78% of multinational companies report having attempted to reduce their firms' environmental footprint through conservation in energy usage.
 - However, within two years, 100% of UAE firms and 89% of multinational firms expect to implement energy-saving measures.
- **Reporting specific environmental initiatives**
 - 72% of respondents listed specific initiatives that they have implemented. Notable initiatives from companies who were willing to be named in this report include:
 - Al Futtaim: Reduced its use of air freight by 41%, launched 100% organic reusable bags at stores, recycles plastic hangers, bags and pre-retail waste
 - Barclays: Will offset emissions from global banking operations by the end of 2009
 - DLA Piper: Reduce/Reuse/Recycle Campaign, Travel Smart Campaign and Energy Saving Campaign
 - Hewlett-Packard: Installed energy-efficient compact fluorescent lightbulbs in office and motion-detectors on office lighting, began recycling water bottles

Table 3: Survey Results

	% of total respondents answering Yes
Does your company has an environmental committee?	75%
If no, Are you planning on starting one in the next year?	16%
If no, Are you planning on starting one in the next two years?	3%
Company plans on starting one in the next 24 months.	94%
Does your company have an environmental strategy?	81%
If no, Are you planning on starting one in the next year?	9%
If no, Are you planning on starting one in the next two years?	3%
Company plans on creating one in the next 24 months.	94%
Does your company release an annual sustainability report?	41%
If no, Are you planning on releasing one in the next year?	19%
If no, Are you planning on releasing one in the next two years?	19%
Company plans on releasing one in the next 24 months	78%
Has your company calculated its carbon footprint?	28%
If no, Are you planning on creating one in the next year?	28%
If no, Are you planning on creating one in the next two years?	9%
Company plans on calculating carbon footprint in the next 24 months	66%
Has your company tried to reduce emissions or reduce energy usage?	84%
If no, Do you think you will engage in such activities in the next year?	9%
If no, Do you think you will engage in such activities in the next two years?	0%
Company plans on reducing emissions or energy usage in the next 24 months	94%
Do you think your customers are becoming more environmentally aware?	91%
Do your customers care about your company's environmental performance?	91%
Does your company feel it has a responsibility not to harm the environment?	94%
Do you have a budget for environmental initiatives?	88%
If no, Do you think you'll get one in the next year?	6%
If no, Do you think you'll get one in the next two years?	0%
Company plans to have a budget in the next 24 months	94%

6. Conclusion

UAE and multinational companies have reported that they are increasingly aware of their environmental footprint and have taken action towards reducing this impact. They also expressed that they expect to make much more progress in the coming two years. Furthermore, UAE-based companies have shown an impressive leadership in environmental awareness and in some cases are ahead of multinational companies in terms of their reported environmental performance.



7. EcoVentures Company Profile

EcoVentures is the Middle East's premier emissions reduction firm. Based in the United Arab Emirates, we help companies across the Middle East and North Africa reduce their environmental impact by becoming CarbonNeutral®, offsetting their emissions, and replacing their use of fossil fuels. EcoVentures delivers sound consultancy, advisory and management services to public and private sector organizations in the Middle East and North Africa region, using global best practices and meeting internationally recognised standards. We specialize in the following areas:

Emissions Reduction Advisory
Alternative Fuels

Carbon Finance
Green building advisory

Our clients include Jumeirah Group, Dubai Holding, Emirates Foundation, The World Future Energy Summit, Enviromena Power Systems and events such as The Big 5 Exhibition and the Coldplay Viva La Vida Abu Dhabi concert.

As a for-profit business, we generate commercial benefits and enhance brand value by reducing our clients' environmental impact. We help answer for our clients the following questions:

- Do you know what your impact on the environment is and how to measure and manage it for top-line, bottom-line, brand and corporate reputation benefits?
- Do you understand how changes in environmental regulation will affect your costs and operating margins?
- Do your business processes integrate environmental risk into core strategies?
- Would you know how to react if you were held responsible for the environmental impact associated with the use of your products or services by your customer?
- Do you have the strategies to share the inevitable costs of environmental change with your supply chain partners and customers?
- Do you know how to derive commercial and brand value from following business processes that reduce your environmental impact?

EcoVentures partners with leading global environmental consultancies, service providers and agencies to bring together strong, innovative solutions that are adapted to meet the needs of local markets while still maintaining compliance with global certification and audit standards.



We are a Middle East partner of The CarbonNeutral Company, the worldwide pioneer in the provision of carbon management services, and the Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Management (“ECCM”), which offers a depth of experience in emissions assessment, carbon sequestration and carbon management systems as well as the strategic and policy expertise on climate change.

For more information about how EcoVentures can provide value to your organization, contact:

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8. The EcoVentures Team

Shezan Amiji

Shezan is the Founder and Managing Director of EcoVentures and is responsible for spearheading the establishment and growth of the business.

Prior to forming EcoVentures, Shezan started and ran 7DAYS newspaper in Dubai, of which he sold a majority stake to The Daily Mail Group. Previously, Shezan was also an investment banker at Goldman Sachs in New York and Standard Chartered in Singapore. Shezan has an MA (Oxon) from the University of Oxford and has an MBA from the Wharton School of Business, at the University of Pennsylvania.

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Armen Vartanian

Armen Vartanian, Director at EcoVentures, has been involved in venture capital and entrepreneurship his entire career. Prior to joining EcoVentures, Armen was a Vice President with Manara Capital, a Beirut-based investment company investing in public and private companies, including venture capital investments.

His experience with venture capital began at an early-stage fund at Cornell University, and continued at the Asia West Funds, a series of funds investing in US and European industrial and environmental technologies. Furthermore, Armen has founded and worked for several technology companies, including Office.com, Service-Planet.com, and SideTalk. He has a B.S. in civil engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and an MBA from the Johnson School at Cornell University.

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Jamie Phares

Jamie Phares is responsible for the sales and marketing strategies for EcoVentures. Jamie brings with her five years of marketing experience with Johnson & Johnson Medical in Dubai and General Mills in Minnesota, where she marketed brands such as Cheerios Cereal. Jamie also has experience in economic consulting and at an internet start-up called Away.com from 1999 to 2002.

Jamie has a BA in economics from the University of Pennsylvania and an MBA in finance and marketing from the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania.

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