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الإمارات العربية المتحدة  
وزارة التغير المناخي  
والبيئة



**EmiratesGBC**  
Annual Congress

**9<sup>th</sup> Annual EmiratesGBC Congress**  
**Building a Sustainable Future in Uncertain Times**

17<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020



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The Emirates Green Building Council held its 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Congress on 17-18 November, under the theme ‘Building a Sustainable Future in Uncertain Times’. This year’s event was hosted as a hybrid online/in-person event. Day one of the event was hosted entirely on the Zoom Webinar platform, while the second day was hosted at the Pullman Dubai Creekside City Centre Hotel, United Arab Emirates. The event was held under the patronage of the UAE Ministry of Climate Change & Environment for the fourth consecutive year.

The Congress theme was created in response to the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. Reflecting the global dialogue the pandemic has triggered about promoting sustainability and improving resiliency to environmental, economic and social variables. The Congress looked at the current market situation for green buildings in the region, and with a wide line up of international and national speakers, provided a platform for enriching discussion on building a sustainable future. The Congress explored the role of resiliency in the green building sector, which would increase the demand for innovation and solutions within the industry. It constituted presentations and panel discussions where the speakers and audience shared expertise on to continue building sustainability while considering the ongoing crisis.

### EmiratesGBC Congress - Day 1

The first day of the event commenced on Zoom with an in-house welcome by H.E. Ali Al Jassim, Chair of Emirates Green Building Council, and a special message given by H.H. Sheikha Shamma bint Sultan bin Khalifa Al Nahyan, Honorary President of Emirates Green Building Council and CEO of Alliances for Global Sustainability wherein she mentioned, “Through forums such as the Annual EmiratesGBC Congress, we have the opportunity to transition towards a more regenerative circular economy.”

### Panel Discussion: From Crisis to Recovery: Market Overview for the Green Building Sector

During this high-level session, the speakers discussed how COVID-19 has impacted the construction and building sectors. The current global market outlook and expected emerging trends from the global recovery of the pandemic were also discussed during this session. The speakers elaborated on what the global recovery would also mean for the green building sector in the MENA region.



**Panel: From Crisis to Recovery**

**Moderator:** Habiba Al Marashi, Emirates Green Building Council Board Member

**Speakers:**

1. Mhairi Garcia, Vice Chair of Clean Energy Business Council
2. Marc Weiss, Chairman & CEO of Global Urban Development
3. Christina Gamboa, CEO of World Green Building Council
4. Ibrahim Al Zu'bi, Chief Sustainability Officer of Majid Al Futtaim

“ Within the private sector, we must continue to play our part and ensure greater collaboration, innovation, and investment to support the sustainable development ambitions of our entire region. ”

**Ibrahim Al Zu'bi, Chief Sustainability Officer at Majid Al Futtaim**

**Panel Discussion: Circular Economy in the Built Environment**

This session discussed the role of circular economy in the building and construction sectors alongside the importance of taking a circular approach in recovery from COVID-19. The discussion was also based around how the industry can take a more holistic and life-cycle approach in their projects and activities when building a more sustainable future out of a period of uncertainty.



**Panel: Circular Economy in the Built Environment**

**Moderator:** Ioannis Spanos, Sustainability & Environmental Services at KEO Consultants

**Speakers:**

1. Dr. Christina Raab, Vice President of Cradle to Cradle Products Innovation Institute
2. Helen Burdett, Lead of Circular Economy and Innovation at World Economic Forum

## Panel Discussion: Healthy Buildings

The last session on Day 1 focused on the influence of the built environment on health and well-being and in turn the health considerations that are now shaping our building design, construction, and operation. The session reflected on the challenges and opportunities that COVID-19 has presented as people return to their daily activities across cities in the region.



### Panel: Healthy Buildings

**Moderator:** Farah Yassine, Vice Chair of Emirates Green Building Council & Associate Sustainability Lead for WSP Middle East

#### Speakers:

1. Ann Marie Aguilar, Senior Vice President of EMEA Region for International WELL Building Institute
2. Amira Ayoub, Architect & Sustainability Consultant
3. Emmanuel Normant, VP for Sustainable Development at Saint-Gobain
4. Dr. Samar Elfeky, Regional Officer for Community-Based Initiatives and Health of Older Population, WHO-Regional Office of Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMRO)

## EmiratesGBC Congress - Day 2

The second day of the Congress began at the Pullman Dubai Deira Creek with a welcome address by H.E. Ali Al Jassim, Chairman of Emirates Green Building Council. This was followed by several opening addresses by Ibrahim Al Zu'bi, Chief Sustainability Officer of Majid Al Futtaim, Dr. Amer bin Ahmed, Managing Director of GCC and India at Knauf and a video address by Eng. Aisha Mohamed Abdullah Al Abdooli, Director of Green Development & Environment Affairs from the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment in the UAE. Day 2 continued with several presentations from industry leaders and two panel discussions. The in-person event was livestreamed for the online audience.

“ We believe in the long-term benefits of sustainability. We connect with the cause that EmiratesGBC stands for. ”

## Presentations: Innovation and Solutions within the Green Building Industry

### Net Zero Building Case Study by Waleed Hashem, PMO Director at DEWA

Mr. Waleed Hashem introduced us to DEWA's new headquarters Al Shera'a Building, which is to be the tallest, largest, and smartest government net zero energy building in the world. The project aims to maximize sustainable design features, minimize energy generation, maximize energy generation, and achieve LEED Platinum, WELL building certification and Net Zero Energy status. The project is to be completed at the end of 2021.



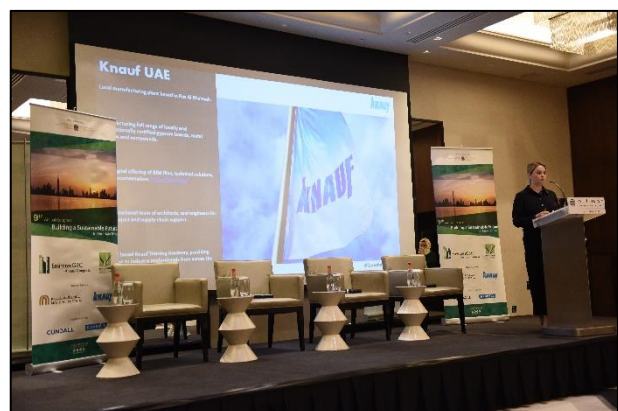
### Masdar City Case Study by Gonzalo Seminario, Design Manager at Masdar



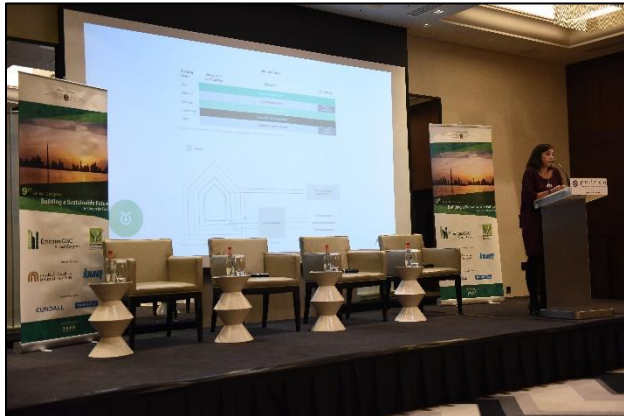
Mr. Gonzalo Seminario presented insightful information on Masdar City's design logic highlighting how it has been designed for evolution. Moreover, Masdar's design logic considers the social, economic, and environmental concerns that affect each project. Masdar has also incorporated an embodied carbon strategy which it aims to pursue in upcoming projects.

### Building for Resilience Case Study by Tertia Morgan, Technical Director at Knauf

Ms. Tertia Morgan explained that raising awareness on energy consumption and human impact on the environment has led to recent global mega trends across the construction sector, finally impacting the choice of what we build and how we build it. She also highlighted the importance of making smart and responsible choices about building materials.



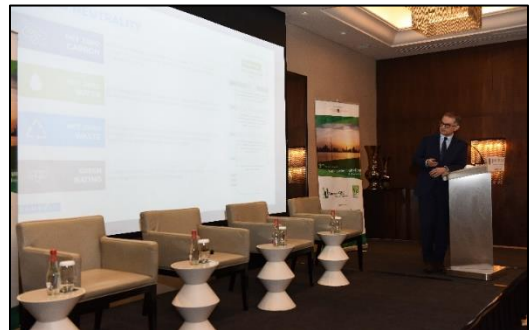
**Resilience Cities** by Mercedes Gargollo, Arup & Huda Shaka, Arup



Mercedes Gargollo from Arup presented on the capacity of cities to survive and thrive despite the unforeseen circumstances they are faced with. Cities rely on the operation of a complex web of infrastructure, institutions, and information systems to perform the essential functions every day. She mentions that “The resilience of a city depends on strengthening the individual systems that contribute to these functions in order to strengthen the city overall.”

**Carbon Neutrality in High Rise: Growing Importance of Embodied Carbon** by Ali Amir, Head of Specialties, Ramboll

Dr. Ali Amiri from Ramboll presented on carbon neutrality in high rise buildings. He also spoke about the importance of reducing embodied and operational carbon through efficient design measures, material selection and supplemented by renewable sources.



## Panel Discussion: Turning Climate Commitments into Action on Projects

In the current uncertain global situation, this session highlighted how climate action commitments can support organizations to thrive in uncertainty & recover from COVID-19. Discussions focused on private sector case studies and reflected on how existing climate commitments can be a tool for companies and how organizations in the region are achieving climate action.

### Panel: Turning Climate Commitments into Action

**Moderator:** Luka Lugaric, Project Manager at the Dubai Supreme Council of Energy

**Speakers:**

1. Richard Stratton, Managing Director of MENA at Cundall Johnson & Partners
2. Saeed Al Abbar, Managing Director of AESG
3. Yohaán Cama, Sustainability Manager of Multiplex Constructions – Middle East



## Panel Discussion: IEQ Considerations for Operating Safe and Healthy Buildings

In 2020, COVID-19 proved that indoor environmental quality, especially indoor air quality, is not any less important. In fact, an argument could be made that investing in good indoor environmental quality is crucial for economic development. This session will focus on how the different sectors in the building industry can make building not only safe for users, but to also impact their health

**Panel: IEQ Considerations for Operating Safe and Healthy Buildings**  
**Moderator:** Nada Chami, Business Development Manager at Saint-Gobain  
**Speakers:**

1. Eng. Maitha Ibrahim Bani Hammad, Electrical Engineer at Dubai Health Authority
2. Biyas Baby, Senior Energy Consultant at Farnek
3. Hassan Younes, President of ASHRAE UAE Falcon Chapter & Director of GRFN



positively. It will also reflect on the challenges and opportunities that those sectors might face when working towards better indoor environmental quality.

“ Sustainability is a key factor to a green economy in a post COVID-19 world. The responsibility lies in the hands of all the stakeholders in this industry to work together and bring in-country investment. **Sheikha Shamma bint Sultan bin Khalifa Al Nahyan, Honorary President of EmiratesGBC & CEO of Alliances for Global Sustainability** ”



## Special Thanks

EmiratesGBC would like to extend a special thanks our partners and sponsors who contributed to making the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual EmiratesGBC Congress a success.

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## Organized by



The Emirates Green Building Council was formed in 2006 with the goal of advancing green building principles for protecting environment and ensuring sustainability in the United Arab Emirates.

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