



## Press Release

# **International Center for Biosaline Agriculture Signs Cooperation Agreement with Conscious Planet Movement to Save Soil**

*HE Mariam bint Mohammed Almheiri witnesses the signing, highlights importance of preserving soil and the vital ecosystem services it provides*

**Abu Dhabi, UAE, 18 May 2022:** The International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA) and the Conscious Planet Movement to Save Soil (Conscious Planet) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to initiate cooperation in protecting food-producing agricultural soil in the UAE from degradation.

In the presence of Her Excellency Mariam bint Mohammed Almheiri, Minister of Climate Change and Environment, Prof. Khaled Amiri, a member of ICBA's Board of Directors, and global visionary Sadhguru, founder of Conscious Planet, signed the agreement during Sadhguru's visit to Jubail Mangrove Park in Abu Dhabi. After the signing, Sadhguru, Her Excellency, Prof. Khaled Amiri, and several VIP guests participated in mangrove planting, organized by the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD) in cooperation with Jubail Island within the framework of the Abu Dhabi Mangrove Initiative, which was launched recently and aims to enhance mangrove habitats as part of the UAE's blue carbon ecosystems.

The visit was part of Sadhguru's agenda during the UAE stop on his 'Journey to Save Soil' from London to the southern tip of India, spanning 100 days, 30,000 kilometers, and 27 countries. Through his solo motorcycle trip, he aims to address the soil crisis by bringing together people from around the world to stand up for soil health and supporting leaders in developing and implementing national policies to save soil. The UAE leg of Sadhguru's journey will culminate with a large-scale public event at Dubai World Trade Centre on May 20 that is expected to attract 10,000 people.

Highlighting the importance of the MoU, Her Excellency Mariam bint Mohammed Almheiri said: "The harsh environmental conditions in the UAE, including high temperatures, high evaporation rates, limited and irregular rainfall, and the fragile structure and low natural fertility of soil, are natural drivers of soil degradation. Desert accounts for more than 80 percent of our country's territory, which makes us all the more cautious to preserve our soil and the vital ecosystem services it provides. The collaboration with Conscious Planet is a new step in our ongoing efforts to safeguard our precious soil for the next generations."

Sadhguru said: "It is not the rain that brings greenery, it is the greenery that begets rain. Wherever there is sunlight, with a bit of effort, we can turn the land around into living and productive soils. The UAE, with its visionary and determined leadership, can and should make this possible. Looking forward to this exciting and far-reaching collaboration."

Dr. Tarifa Alzaabi, Acting Director General of ICBA, said: "We are delighted to form this partnership today to support the nation's efforts on sustainable use of natural resources. ICBA has extensively worked with partners in sustainable land management, soil management and rehabilitation globally and locally. In the UAE, we are particularly proud of the Emirates Soil Museum and the initiative on the mapping and classification of the UAE's soils according to the World Reference Base."



Under the terms of the MoU, ICBA and Conscious Planet will collaborate to raise public awareness about the importance of soil conservation, empower stakeholders, provide training, and facilitate knowledge exchange on the topic in the region. The two entities will also support each other's relevant initiatives.

Conscious Planet is a global campaign to inspire a conscious approach to saving the world's soil. Its aim is to activate the support of over 3.5 billion people and assist governments in formulating policies that will address soil health and make farming activity more soil-friendly to halt and reverse further soil degradation. The primary recommendation of the movement is for governments across the globe to adopt policies that will mandate a minimum of 3-6 percent organic content in all agricultural soil in their countries.

Partners of Conscious Planet include the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the UN World Food Programme India, and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The movement has also secured the support of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and the UN Development Programme (UNDP). For more information, please visit [www.savesoil.org](http://www.savesoil.org).

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