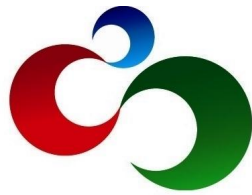


POLICY REPORTS

What is COP28 and How to Get Involved

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The U.S.-U.A.E. Business Council congratulates the U.A.E. government for its ongoing efforts towards hosting a successful COP in November. Dubbed by the U.A.E. government as the “COP for all,” COP28 promises to be the most inclusive and broadly represented COP since its inception. As such, it offers tremendous opportunities for active engagement by the private sector towards achieving the ambitious outcomes envisioned by the U.A.E. leadership for this COP. This paper seeks to offer insights as to how businesses can leverage opportunities made available by COP28 to further their climate change and sustainability agenda. Additionally, this document provides background on COP28, the COP leadership team, and ways to engage with COP28.

1. What is COP28?

The U.A.E. will host the 28th annual Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28) from 30 November to 12 December 2023 at Expo City Dubai. Held annually since the UN Climate Agreement of 1992, COP is a platform for governments to discuss and agree on policies and initiatives that limit global temperature rises, and on other initiatives aimed at climate mitigation and adapting to climate change. Previous iterations of COP have led to the 2010 establishment of the Green Climate Fund – a fund designed to assist developing countries in climate change adaptation and mitigation; and the 2015 Paris Agreement which was adopted to hold the increase in the global average temperature to below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and pursue efforts to limit it to below 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

COP27, which concluded in November of 2022 in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, notably put forward a mechanism for desperately needed climate change funding. Specifically, COP27 ended with an agreement to provide loss and damage funding to vulnerable countries, the first global recognition of the need for financing to respond to the increasingly devastating effects of climate change. COP27 also made the pivot towards tangibly implementing climate change pledges and holding private stakeholders accountable. COP28 will continue the discussion from Sharm El Sheikh, specifically integrating business and private sector stakeholders into the conversation more so than in any previous COP. As recent COPs have highlighted, the private sector has a key role to play in creating new technologies to mitigate and reverse the effects of climate change, and in committing to reduce and ultimately replace activities that contribute to the deterioration of the environment and global temperature rises. The U.A.E. government plans to include the private sector in the COP discussions in a meaningful and practical manner that leads to tangible, lifesaving climate change results.

In November 2021, the U.A.E. was selected to host COP28. His Highness Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, U.A.E. Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, said the U.A.E. would “commit ourselves as a nation to supporting the entire international community in accelerating our combined efforts to overcome the very real threat of climate change.” Moreover, he said the U.A.E. Net Zero by 2050 Strategic Initiative, announced earlier that year, showed the U.A.E.’s “unwavering commitment to promoting climate action.” The U.A.E. is designing COP28 as a COP where all parties, from government to private sector, will unite in response to a common threat to cooperate and share ideas. Moreover, the U.A.E. is firmly committed to

uniting the world around COP28, making it a “COP of solidarity, a COP of action, and a COP for all” according to H.E. Dr. Sultan Al Jaber, the COP 28 President-Designate.

2. Who is leading COP28?

In June 2022, U.A.E. Vice President His Highness Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Presidential Affairs, announced the formation of the U.A.E.’s National Higher Committee to oversee preparations for COP28. His Highness Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed serves as committee chairman, and His Excellency Dr. Sultan Al Jaber, Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology and the U.A.E.’s Special Envoy for Climate Change, is vice chairman.

In a letter dated 13 January 2023, the UNFCCC Secretariat announced that His Excellency Dr. Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber had been appointed to serve as COP28 President-Designate. H.E. Dr. Sultan Al Jaber also serves as the Minister for Industry and Advanced Technologies, Chairman of Masdar and Managing Director and Group CEO of the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC).

Despite some early criticism from climate activists of Dr. Al Jaber’s appointment, world leaders including U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry applauded the “terrific choice” because of his distinguished credentials in the private sector as well as in government in sectors relevant to the COP discussion. Given Dr. Al Jaber’s roles as a government minister as well as the CEO of one of the world’s largest oil and gas companies, his selection clearly highlighted the U.A.E. government’s intention to ensure that the private sector, particularly the oil and gas sector, had a seat at the table and could contribute constructively to climate mitigation discussions.

Through his appointment, the U.A.E. government also made it clear that a responsible, phased energy transition is critical to economic growth and long-term sustainable development. Dr. Al Jaber’s role as the Chairman and Managing Director of Masdar, the region’s most significant renewable energy company, also lends him credibility in leading discussions on renewable energy and sustainability. H.E. Sultan Al Jaber has a history of transformative energy leadership, including leading major sustainability initiatives at ADNOC and creating the U.A.E.’s green economy agenda. As a trusted advisor to President Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed, Dr. Al Jaber’s portfolio in the U.A.E. ecosystem continues to expand. In addition to his role as the President for COP28, Dr. Al Jaber has also been appointed to several government positions as well as to the Board of Directors of Mubadala Investment Company.

In addition to H.E. Dr. Sultan Al Jaber, other key figures in the U.A.E.’s COP 28 team are:

- **H.E. Shamma Al Mazrui**, U.A.E. Youth Climate Champion
- **H.E. Razan Al Mubarak**, UN Climate Change High-Level Champion



- **H.E. Mariam Almheiri**, U.A.E. Minister of Climate Change and Environment
- **H.E. Ambassador Majid Al Suwaidi**, COP28 Director General and Special Representative of COP28, and
- **Adnan Amin**, COP28 CEO.

Please see the Appendix for information about these COP28 leaders.

3. What is different about COP28?

The U.A.E. plans to leave its mark on the COP process by ensuring that COP28 is impactful on all fronts, including mitigation, adaptation, finance, and loss and damage. Previous iterations of COP have united governments in action around climate change, but the differentiator with COP28 is that the goal is to unite *everyone* in action. COP21 in 2015 which resulted in the Paris Agreement is often lauded as the most impactful COP. With the planned first Global Stocktake since Paris, COP28 is expected to make its profound mark in the climate action landscape. The U.A.E. government plans to distinguish this COP from previous ones through several critical agenda items. Following are a few key elements that highlight the differences:

- The U.A.E. has called for COP28 to be a “COP for all and a COP of action.” This COP will aim to integrate private sector stakeholders in discussions alongside government leaders. Additionally, public and private entities will make tangible commitments, announcements, and financial pledges at COP28.
- This year’s COP will feature much more industry participation than in previous COPs. The “Blue” and “Green” zones of COP28 will seamlessly integrate from a logistical standpoint, enabling industry participation in important conversations central to COP.
- COP28 will serve as the culmination of the first two-year Global Stocktake since the Paris agreement. COP28 will be the first comprehensive assessment of global progress to mitigate climate change under the Paris Agreement. The Global Stocktake is expected to show that the world is *off track* across the board.
- The inclusion of the oil and gas sector as well as stakeholders from the renewable energy sector will ensure private sector engagement in substantive discussions regarding responsible, phased energy transition.
- The Global South will be well represented at COP28. The U.A.E. recognizes that climate change is a global phenomenon, and that all voices must be brought to the table. Operationalizing “loss and damage” agreements from COP 27 will be key.
- Climate finance will be front and center in an effort to meet the need for funding the energy transition.
- Significant increases in renewable energy, hydrogen, oil and gas decarbonization, will take center stage.

4. What is the U.S.-U.A.E. Opportunity for Cooperation?



The Biden Administration has expressed strong support for the U.A.E.'s leadership of COP28 and has taken practical steps to advance the climate agenda in partnership with the U.A.E. Specifically, the United States and the U.A.E. have partnered on the AIM for Climate Initiative and the PACE Initiatives, which while independent of COP28, are outgrowths of the close cooperation between the U.S. and the U.A.E. in preparation for COP28.

- **AIM for Climate:** The Agriculture Innovation Mission for Climate (AIM for Climate / AIM4C) is a joint initiative by the United States and the United Arab Emirates. AIM for Climate seeks to address climate change and global hunger by uniting participants to significantly increase investment in, and other support for, climate-smart agriculture and food systems innovation over five years (2021 – 2025).
- **PACE – Partnership for Accelerating Clean Energy:** The U.S.-U.A.E. Partnership for Accelerating Clean Energy (PACE) is set to catalyze \$100 billion in financing, investment, and other support and to deploy 100 gigawatts of clean energy globally by 2035. PACE is built upon four pillars: 1) Clean Energy Innovation, Deployment and Supply Chains, 2) Carbon and Methane Management, 3) Nuclear Energy, and 4) Industrial and Transport Decarbonization. The United States and the U.A.E. have set up an expert group led by U.A.E. Co-Chair Dr. Sultan Al Jaber, and U.S. Co-Chair Amos Hochstein, U.S. Special Presidential Coordinator, to identify priority projects, remove potential hurdles, and measure PACE's progress. U.A.E. and U.S. officials announced in January \$20 billion will be allocated to fund 15 new GW of clean and renewable energy projects in the U.S. before 2035, led by Masdar and a consortium of U.S. private investors.

As a COP for action, initiatives like AIM for Climate and PACE serve as examples of meaningful action the two governments have taken and spearheaded to mitigate climate change and support sustainable development. The U.A.E. and U.S. governments are expected to make announcements regarding these initiatives and early outcomes from these efforts at COP28.

However, the collaboration between the two countries is not limited to the government level. The U.S. business community will be the strongest asset that the United States provides to the overall COP28 effort. Sustainable financing, carbon capture, efficiencies in hard to abate industries, sustainable fuels, carbon emission commitments, responsible energy transition, and more will be important aspects to the overall success of COP28. U.S. businesses are leaders in each of these sectors and have the opportunity to highlight and showcase their strengths, technologies, and commitments in these areas. The U.S.-U.A.E. Business Council is preparing its Plan of Action for participation in COP28. The Business Council welcomes ideas and recommendations from its member companies regarding efforts the Business Council should undertake to support the important work of the members at COP28.



5. How can the U.S. business community be involved?

The U.S. business community is essential to the success of COP28. The goal is to maximize private sector engagement, inclusion, accountability, and transparency. Below are key ways that the U.S. business community can support COP28, as outlined by the COP 28 team:

- **Speaking opportunities:** Participate in events to report climate action and commit to new ambition
- **Site visits:** Enable delegates to visit world-class, pro-climate sites in the U.A.E.
- **Entity-level commitments:** Commit to credible target-setting initiatives for individual entities – SBTi, Race to Zero, First Movers Coalition, etc.
- **Sectoral mobilization:** Rally peers and supply chains in key sectors around a quantifiable policy, technology, or financing COP28 outcome
- **Scaling up existing U.A.E. partnerships:** Bring new resources and partners to existing U.A.E.-based climate initiatives and align outcomes with COP 28 U.A.E.
- **International coalition membership:** Join major international coalitions that are already driving change in their sectors
- **Host pavilions:** Engage stakeholders via pavilions at COP28 U.A.E.
- **Youth delegate support:** Enable youth from around the globe to participate in COP28 U.A.E. and develop their careers (travel sponsorship, mentorship, workshops, training, etc.)
- **Traditional sponsorship:** Sponsor different physical and service components of COP28 U.A.E.
- **Secondment:** Provide technical expertise to the COP 28 U.A.E. team, and bring networks and knowledge from the COP process back into the U.A.E.

The U.A.E. COP28 team has asked the Business Council to help field and vet requests from industry to become involved. In the lead up to COP 28, the U.S.-U.A.E. Business Council will continue to engage the U.S. business community on the topic under the auspices of our Climate Change Working Group. The COP28 team can be reached at engagement@climateenvoy.gov.ae for general inquiries. For more information, please contact Graham Reitman at greitman@usuaebusiness.org.



Appendix A: COP28 leadership

	<p>H.E. Dr. Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber <i>President-Designate for COP28 UAE</i></p> <p>Dr. Sultan Al Jaber brings two decades of leadership experience in government, business, energy systems, and diplomacy. During his double tenure as Special Envoy for Climate Change (2010- 2016, 2020-present), Dr. Al Jaber has played a seminal role in shaping the country’s clean energy path, including as founding CEO and currently the Chairman of Masdar, Abu Dhabi’s pioneering renewable energy initiative, that has since become a leading global clean energy player. Dr. Al Jaber has also been an outcomes-focused participant at over 11 COPs, including the historic Paris COP21 in 2015. Upon joining Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) as its CEO, Dr. Al Jaber has spearheaded a \$15 billion decarbonization strategy and new low-carbon solutions business.</p>
	<p>H.E. Shamma Al Mazrui <i>U.A.E. Youth Climate Champion</i></p> <p>The Youth Climate Champion role is designed to amplify the work of youth-led and youth-focused organizations within the COP process. H.E. Shamma Al Mazrui, Minister of Community Development, will be the first-ever Youth Climate Champion with a Ministerial role. She will be responsible for engaging with youth globally in the lead-up to, and during, COP28 U.A.E. This will include working with local and global stakeholders to provide capacity-building opportunities for youth, as well as mechanisms to fund youth innovations in the field. H.E. Al Mazrui is also the Vice Chair of the Arab Youth Center, the Secretary General of the Education and Human Resources Council, Chairperson for Special Olympics UAE, and President of the National Center for Education Quality.</p>





H.E. Razan Al Mubarak

UN Climate Change High-Level Champion

As UN Climate Change High-Level Champion, H.E. Razan Al Mubarak will mobilize the private sector and civil society, along with driving efforts to address the climate and nature crises together. The role of the UN Climate Change High-Level Champion is focused on engaging state and non-state actors, including cities and sub-regional governments, indigenous peoples, civil society, and private sector partners. Al Mubarak will draw upon her experience as President of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Managing Director of the Environment Agency Abu Dhabi (EAD), and Managing Director of Emirates Nature-WWF to ensure progress on biodiversity, conservation, and nature-based solutions.



H.E. Mariam Almheiri

U.A.E. Minister of Climate Change and Environment

H.E. Mariam Almheiri will support the COP28 U.A.E. leadership team and continue to lead national progress on climate change, ensuring that the U.A.E. delivers on its climate targets set out by the Paris Agreement and its Net Zero by 2050 Strategic Initiative, along with promoting nature-based solutions (100 million mangroves by 2030). She will also spearhead the U.A.E.'s intention to drive new political visibility and outcomes on food systems transformation at COP28.



H.E. Majid Al-Suwaidi

Director General, COP28

H.E. Majid Al-Suwaidi serves as Director-General of COP28, helping to organize an ambitious and inclusive conference. Previously, he served as the U.A.E. Ambassador to Spain as well as Consul General of the U.A.E. in New York. An expert in international negotiations, he has led the U.A.E. Mission to the United Nations' (UN) engagement in matters covering a wide range of issues relating to economic growth and development.

Previously, Al-Suwaidi served as Lead Negotiator on Climate Change, Energy and Sustainability for the U.A.E. Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He worked closely with the Conference of Parties



	<p>to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to negotiate the landmark climate change agreement, which was adopted at the Paris Climate Conference (COP21) in 2015. He was also instrumental in the advancement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which set an international mandate to act on global sustainability issues.</p>
	<p>Hana AlHashimi <i>Lead Climate Negotiator for COP27 & COP28</i></p> <p>Before her appointment as the UAE's Lead Climate Negotiator for COP27 and COP28, Hana AlHashimi was a senior adviser in the Office of the President of the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly. She led on environment and climate action, sustainable energy, frontier technologies, and information and communications technologies (ICTs). She also served as the liaison with the Group of 77 and China. Her prior experience includes project development for sustainable energy accelerators at the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in Vienna, Austria, as well as management consulting for social businesses at Munich Advisors Group in Germany.</p>



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