



UAE WELLBEING ECONOMY AWARDS CEREMONY 2024/2025

The 2024/2025 UAE Wellbeing Economy Award is a collaborative initiative launched by Greenpeace Middle East and North Africa (MENA), Ajman University, and the UAE Universities Climate Network (UCN). This award seeks to recognize and promote innovative research that envisions a sustainable and inclusive future for the UAE.

The UAE: A trailblazer for Wellbeing Economy

The UAE has increasingly prioritized sustainability and wellbeing through initiatives like the UAE National Strategy for Wellbeing 2031, the National Program for Happiness and Wellbeing, and the creation of the world's first Minister of State for Happiness and Wellbeing in 2016. These government-led policies are designed to establish the country as a leader in quality of life and wellbeing. As a result, the UAE ranked 22nd in the 2024 World Happiness Report, rising four spots from 2023 and securing the highest position in the region.

As the host nation for COP28 and a regional leader in sustainability and wellbeing, the UAE presents a unique opportunity to explore alternative pathways for sustainable development.

UAE Wellbeing Economy Award background and objectives

The Wellbeing Economy Award aims to highlight sustainable development practices and engage stakeholders in envisioning a prosperous, inclusive, and resilient country.

In December 2024, Greenpeace MENA and Ajman University launched a call for submissions. The call was open to everyone based in the UAE, with a particular emphasis on students and independent researchers affiliated with UAE organizations, including both undergraduate and graduate students. We requested their valuable contributions to the Wellbeing Economy Award, through the submission of innovative research papers that explore the Wellbeing economy in the context of the UAE, moving beyond GDP and addressing the challenges and opportunities in the country's sustainable development journey.

The award encouraged exploration of several key thematic areas:

- **Future of Economies:** Redefining wellbeing and economic systems beyond GDP, focusing on holistic development and economic diversification.
- **Drawbacks of Luxury as a Wellbeing Indicator:** Challenging the conventional notion of luxury as an indicator of wellbeing, promoting social connection and sustainability.
- **Alternative Indicators to GDP:** Exploring measures of prosperity that capture social inclusivity, environmental sustainability, and equitable resource distribution.
- **Future of Energy:** Transitioning to renewable energy sources, enhancing energy efficiency, and promoting sustainable energy systems to mitigate climate change.

Awardee selection and process

The submitted papers underwent a rigorous and multi-stage selection process. Ajman University and Greenpeace MENA opened applications for qualified UAE-based judges, who demonstrated expertise in the four thematic areas and experience in evaluating similar awards. The selected judges, representing academia, government, NGOs, and the private sector, were tasked with scoring a designated number of submissions using a comprehensive assessment rubric aligned with the advertised selection criteria. Each submission was evaluated through a blind review process, with two judges independently scoring it.

In the next phase, the ten highest-scoring submissions were reviewed by a Grand Jury composed of representatives from Ajman University, Greenpeace MENA, and external experts. The top three submissions were selected to receive awards and present their research at the ceremony.



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Award Ceremony Agenda

- 9:00 AM** Guest Arrival and Registration
- 9:30 AM** Opening Remarks
Welcome and Introduction to the Wellbeing Economy Award
- 9:45 AM** Keynote Speeches
 - Dr. Karim Seghir – Chancellor, Ajman University
 - Ghiwa Nakat – Executive Director, Greenpeace MENA
- 10:15 AM** Announcements of Winners and Awards
- 11:00 AM** Presentations of Winners and Q&A
 - Winning Projects' Presentation
 - Audience Q&A session
- 12:00 PM** Coffee Break and Networking
- 12:30 PM** Panel Discussion: Pathways to a Wellbeing Economy
Shortlisted Projects' Discussions
- 1:30 PM** Certificates for Shortlisted Candidates and Judges
- 1:45 PM** Group Photos and Informal Networking
 - Group photo with all participants, organizers, and guests
 - Informal networking and wrap-up



April 10, 2025



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