



Building a Sustainable Future: DIFC's Path to Impact

DIFC's Sustainability Progress Report



Governor's Welcome Message

**His Excellency
Essa Kazim**
Governor of DIFC

I am proud to present DIFC's sustainability progress, initiatives, and ambitions, as outlined in this report. This marks a significant milestone in our journey towards a sustainable future, not only for DIFC, but also for the whole region.

At DIFC, sustainability is not just a commitment; it is one of our guiding principles. We are integrating sustainability factors into the very fabric of our operations, ensuring that it remains central to our vision for the future. From the launch of the DIFC's decarbonisation strategy to our leadership in sustainable finance, we are deeply committed to driving responsible growth and innovation.

Our DIFC Sustainable Finance Catalyst, launched at COP28, embodies our vision of transforming the financial landscape through innovation and sustainability. By unlocking capital for forward-thinking, sustainability-driven projects and businesses across the region, we are paving the way for a new era in finance. The Dubai Sustainable Finance Working Group (DSFWG) has been at the forefront of integrating ESG principles across the financial ecosystem, setting a new standard for responsible investment. These efforts are not just achievements but serve as the foundation for a dynamic, resilient, and low-carbon future, where innovation drives sustainable growth and global impact.

We recognise that our ambitions cannot be achieved in isolation. Collaboration and partnerships are key to accelerating meaningful change. We are grateful for the strong relationships we have forged with government entities, global organisations, and the wider community, all of whom have enabled us to push the boundaries of what is possible in sustainable development.

As we move forward, our focus remains clear: to position DIFC as a global hub for sustainability, innovation, and responsible investment.

This is just the beginning of our journey, and I am confident that with the dedication and support of all our stakeholders, we will continue to make significant strides towards a more sustainable and equitable future.





Chief Executive Officer's Message

Arif Amiri
Chief Executive Officer,
DIFC Authority

I am immensely proud to present DIFC's inaugural Sustainability Report of DIFC Authority. This report marks a significant milestone in our journey towards becoming a global leader in sustainability, an endeavour that is deeply aligned with the UAE's and Dubai's visionary goals.

At DIFC, sustainability is not a standalone initiative; it is a core value embedded in our strategic approach. Our sustainability strategy revolves around four key pillars: Sustainable Finance and Investment, Impactful Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Net Zero Centre, and Ethical Governance. These pillars represent our commitment to creating a sustainable and resilient future, not just for our organisation but for the entire community we serve.

Sustainable Finance and Investment are at the heart of our efforts. As a financial centre, we are advancing sustainable finance both locally and regionally, promoting sustainable finance practices within our ecosystem, and driving opportunities that align with global standards. Our leadership in FinTech, AI, and green and climate tech sectors is driving innovative financial solutions that are both sustainable and impactful.

In our pursuit of becoming a **Net Zero Financial Centre**, we are actively reducing our environmental footprint through the integration of green building practices, energy-efficient operations, and responsible resource management. Our ambitious goal of achieving net-zero emissions by 2045, ahead of the UAE's national target, is a testament to our commitment to environmental stewardship.

Ethical Governance is the foundation upon which DIFC is built. Upholding the highest standards of integrity, transparency, and compliance, we ensure that our operations are conducted with the utmost responsibility and accountability. Our robust governance framework not only safeguards our organisation but also sets a global benchmark.

DIFC's sustainability journey is intrinsically aligned with the UAE's and Dubai's multifaceted sustainability agendas, including the Dubai Clean Energy Strategy 2050, the UAE Green Agenda 2030, and the Dubai Economic Agenda D33, among others. By aligning our efforts with these national goals, and global goals, such as the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), we are contributing to a transformative path that ensures economic diversification, environmental stewardship, and sustainable growth.

In 2023, UAE hosted the 28th Conference of the Parties (COP28) which was a pivotal event for our region, the UAE hosted the 28th Conference of the Parties underscoring the critical importance of sustainability in shaping our future. As the world converged to address climate change, the UAE's leadership role in hosting this landmark conference highlighted our commitment to sustainable development. For DIFC, COP28 served as a powerful catalyst, driving our efforts to integrate sustainability into every facet of our operations.

Finally, I want to extend my gratitude to our partners, stakeholders, and the entire DIFC community for their unwavering support and commitment to our sustainability journey. Together, we are not only shaping the future of finance but also contributing to a more sustainable, inclusive, and prosperous world.



About this Report

In line with its ongoing commitment to sustainability and ESG enhancements and disclosures, Dubai International Financial Centre (hereafter referred to as “DIFC” or “the Centre”) presents its first Sustainability Report in reference to the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Standards. By referencing the GRI Standards, DIFC aims to set the foundations and blueprint of its ESG reporting practices to effectively communicate its sustainability ambitions and impact in a balanced manner.

In this report, DIFC provides a detailed account of its sustainability strategy, goals and strategy activation initiatives. The scope of DIFC’s ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) disclosures focuses on its current performance, focusing on the years 2022 and 2023. This report has not been assured by an external third party but has been reviewed and approved by DIFC’s management team and data owners.

Do you have questions regarding our ESG report? Contact us at sustainability@difc.com



About DIFC

DIFC is the leading global financial hub in the Middle East, Africa and South Asia (MEASA) region. Home to over 6,150 active registered companies, DIFC also offers a vibrant urban community filled with diverse dining, retail, and entertainment experiences. Here, the synergy between business and lifestyle creates a dynamic environment where innovation meets everyday living.

Organisational structure

DIFC, a financial free zone as defined in Federal Law No. 8 of 2004, was established by Federal Decree No. 35 of 2004 concerning the establishment of a financial free zone in the Emirate of Dubai, as part of Dubai's strategic vision to transform the Emirate into a hub for institutional finance and a gateway to attract capital and investments into the region. The following three independent bodies have been established in DIFC to achieve its purpose and objectives:

• **Dubai International Financial Centre Authority (DIFC Authority)** was established by virtue of Dubai Law No. 9 of 2004, as repealed and amended by Dubai Law No. 5 of 2021. The DIFC Authority is responsible for the strategy and overall public administration of DIFC. It is also the body charged with the development and administration of laws and regulations other than those relating to the regulation of financial services.

• **DIFC Investments Limited (DIFCI)**, is DIFCA's wholly owned subsidiary and assumes responsibility for all commercial dealings and financial matters, including property and investment portfolios. Financial transactions are consolidated and reported at the DIFCI level, illustrating the assets and cashflows involved. Furthermore, as the parent entity of DIFCI, DIFCA is open to allocating the cashflows generated from its public administrative services to provide additional support and security for sustainable financing endeavours.

• **Dubai Financial Services Authority (DFSA)** was established by virtue of Dubai Law No. 9 of 2004, as repealed and amended by Dubai Law No. 5 of 2021. The DFSA is the independent regulator of all financial services and related activities conducted in and from DIFC.

• **Dubai International Financial Centre Courts (DIFC Courts)** administers a unique English-language common law system offering swift, independent justice to settle local and international commercial or civil disputes. The Courts, based in Dubai, provide certainty through transparent, enforceable judgement from internationally recognised judges, who adhere to the highest global legal standards. The DIFC Courts are independent from, but complementary to, the UAE's Arabic-language civil law system – offering a choice that strengthens both processes while ensuring public access to world-class justice.

The Structure of the DIFC



The **Hawkamah** Institute for Corporate Governance is a fully owned entity of DIFC which was founded in 2006 through collaboration among international organisations such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the International Finance Corporation (IFC), and the World Bank, alongside regional entities including the Union of Arab Banks and the DIFC Authority. Recognising the need for a regional body to address corporate governance, Hawkamah has become a leader in this field in the MENA region. It plays a crucial role in promoting and implementing governance best practices through research, training, advisory, and advocacy programmes designed to improve governance standards across all sectors.

Business Activities

The Centre is home to a diverse array of financial and non-financial institutions. This dynamic ecosystem includes banks, insurance companies, wealth and asset managers, FinTech startups, legal firms, and technology companies. These entities are drawn to DIFC's robust legal and regulatory framework, state-of-the-art infrastructure, and unparalleled access to a global network, which collectively enables them to conduct their operations at the highest international standards.

World-Class Financial Centre

DIFC's significance reverberates across the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia (MEASA) region. It fulfils a crucial role as a link between regional markets and the global financial landscape. DIFC is the destination-of-choice for businesses seeking to access the diverse MEASA markets, as the Centre not only facilitates market entry but also serves as a launchpad for international expansion. Its role as a financial hub strengthens Dubai's position as a global financial capital.

Global Trade and Investment Hub

By providing robust financial infrastructure and streamlined processes, DIFC has strengthened its position to become the preferred choice for globally renowned wealth and asset management firms in the UAE. The Centre hosts over 400 wealth and asset management firms including 44 'billion-dollar club' hedge funds. DIFC's wealth and asset management community continues to grow at a remarkable pace, consistently outperforming the market and solidifying its position as the region's leading financial hub for this sector.

Vibrant FinTech and Innovation Ecosystem

Innovation is at the heart of DIFC's success. DIFC Innovation Hub, the largest innovation ecosystem in the region, brings together more than 1,100 growth-stage tech firms, established innovation companies, digital labs, venture capital firms, regulators and educational entities. It is also the home to the Dubai AI Campus, which aims to build the largest cluster of AI and technology companies in MENA. In addition, under the DIFC Sustainable Finance Catalyst, DIFC aims to grow its sustainability-driven start-up ecosystem 50x by 2030.

State-of-the-art platform for Knowledge Transfer

DIFC is not just a financial centre; it is a knowledge hub that encourages the exchange of ideas, expertise, and best practices between the Global South and the Global North. Through partnerships, collaborations, and educational initiatives, DIFC facilitates knowledge transfer that benefits economies, industries, and societies across borders.



DIFC's Sustainability Strategy

Dubai, under the visionary leadership of the UAE, has set forth an ambitious sustainability agenda, recognising the necessity of diversifying its economy, reducing its environmental footprint, and fostering sustainable growth. DIFC, as a vital contributor to Dubai's economic landscape, has taken up the responsibility to support and amplify these sustainability objectives.

In 2022, DIFC initiated the development of a comprehensive sustainability strategy to solidify its long-term ambitions in this critical area. Additionally, the strategy aims to align DIFC's previous sustainability initiatives, such as through the Dubai Sustainable Finance Working Group (DSFWG), with future ambitions under one cohesive framework.

Today, sustainability is deeply ingrained in DIFC's operations and is a fundamental aspect of its long-term vision. DIFC integrates sustainability as a core value that shapes the organisation's strategic approach to business.



DIFC's sustainability strategy revolves around four key impact areas:



Sustainable Finance and Investment

Advancing sustainable finance locally and regionally by promoting sustainable finance practices within its ecosystem and driving sustainable finance and investment opportunities.



Impactful Entrepreneurship and Sustainability-driven Innovation

Fostering innovation, particularly in the FinTech, AI, and green and climate tech sectors, is at the heart of DIFC's strategy to drive the adoption of sustainable financial solutions and products.



Net Zero Financial Centre

Actively reducing its environmental footprint through green building practices, energy-efficient operations, decarbonising its value chain, and responsible resource management.



Ethical Governance

Upholding the highest standards of integrity, transparency, security and anti-corruption measures, DIFC maintains a robust ethical governance framework.

In addition to the above, DIFC also places high importance on its social responsibility by focusing on its people and community. The Centre embeds key social metrics such as diversity, female empowerment, education, training, and transparency into its recruitment, development, and retention strategies. DIFC is also committed to enriching the lives of its community members through impactful social initiatives, ensuring it fosters a positive and inclusive environment.

Visions Alignment with the UAE and Dubai

DIFC's sustainability journey is closely aligned with the UAE's and Dubai's visions and sustainability agendas. The UAE, followed by Dubai, has embarked on a multifaceted sustainable development plan. Recognising the imperatives of economic diversification, environmental stewardship, and sustainable growth, the UAE has charted a transformative path aligned with global goals and standards such as COP28, the Paris Agreement and global Net-Zero guidelines. As a vital contributor to Dubai's economic landscape, DIFC aligns with multiple environmental and sustainability initiatives, namely the Dubai Clean Energy Strategy 2050, the UAE Green Agenda 2030, the Dubai Economic Agenda D33, the National Entrepreneurship Agenda 2031, and other initiatives directed towards green economy and sustainable development.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Alignment

Among the 17 SDGs, several resonate deeply with DIFC's mission and values, forming the cornerstone of its sustainability strategy. DIFC's alignment with SDGs is reflected most prominently in the following goals, where its actions and initiatives have the greatest potential to drive positive change:



DIFC actively contributes to SDG 8 by fostering economic growth, job creation, and decent work opportunities. As a financial centre, DIFC attracts international businesses, financial institutions, and startups, generating economic activity and job opportunities. DIFC's commitment to responsible finance and innovation further supports sustainable economic growth within its community and beyond.



Innovation is at the heart of DIFC's sustainability journey. It aligns closely with SDG 9 by promoting innovation, industry growth, and the development of sustainable infrastructure. DIFC's focus on FinTech and sustainable finance innovations bolsters industry development and enhances the infrastructure for responsible financial services.



DIFC's commitment to sustainable practices extends to creating a sustainable urban ecosystem within Dubai. By adopting green building practices, energy-efficient operations, and resource management, DIFC contributes to SDG 11's vision of sustainable and resilient cities. DIFC's emphasis on diversity and inclusion also fosters a vibrant and inclusive community within the urban landscape.



Partnership and collaboration are at the core of DIFC's sustainability strategy. DIFC actively seeks partnerships with financial institutions, regulators, governments, and international organisations to advance responsible finance and sustainability.

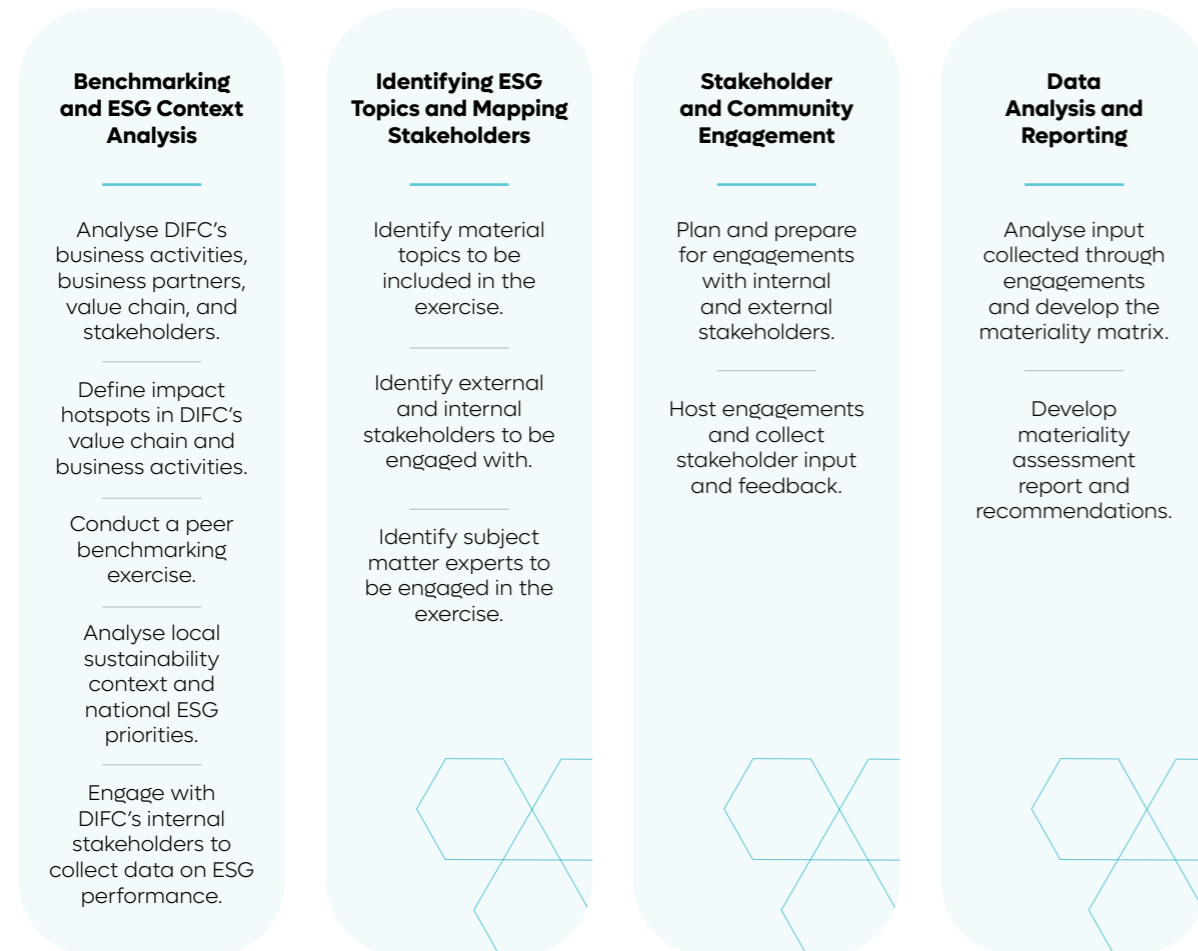


DIFC contributes to SDG 13 through different initiatives, commitments, and its alignment with other SDGs. The primary avenue through which DIFC acts on SDG 13 is its strategic pillar "Sustainable Finance and Investment". DIFC is committed to boosting sustainable finance, climate finance, building capacity in businesses, and professionals and driving discussions and collaborations to achieve its sustainability goals.

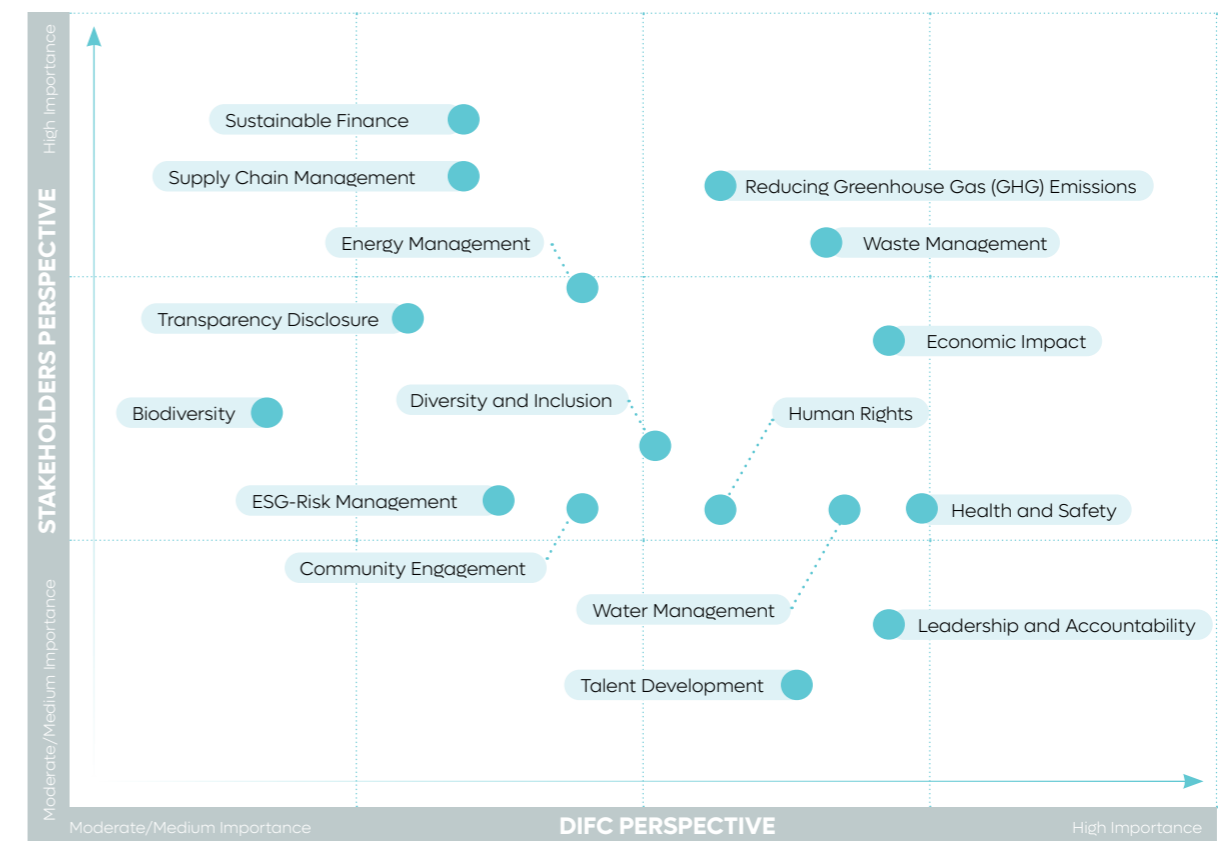
Materiality Assessment

As an essential step in guiding the development of its sustainability strategy, DIFC conducted a materiality assessment in 2022. This assessment, a cornerstone of DIFC's Sustainability Strategy and Framework, was meticulously tailored to identify sustainability issues that are materially significant to both DIFC and its stakeholders focusing on impact and collaboration.

The exercise aims to measure and evaluate DIFC's impact on its surrounding environment, society, and economy. DIFC partnered with an external expert consulting firm to conduct its materiality assessment. The exercise's methodology was built on the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) guidelines for conducting materiality assessments.



The initial step involved thorough engagements with the DIFC team and relevant departments to understand the company context, value chain, and stakeholders, as well as its role in the national economy. After gathering data from DIFC's business areas, external stakeholders, including subject matter experts, were consulted to assess and define DIFC's impact. The exercise identified the following topics to be most material:



Stakeholder Engagement

The Sustainability Lead, supported by the Strategy Team, is tasked with ensuring that all stakeholders are aligned with DIFC's sustainability goals, promoting a unified approach to achieving these objectives. Central to this role is fostering collaboration among stakeholders to effectively develop and implement sustainability initiatives. The Sustainability Lead is also responsible for maintaining transparency and holding all parties accountable for their contributions. By continuously gathering and analysing feedback from stakeholders, the DIFC's sustainability strategy is being refined and sustainability practices are continuously improved.

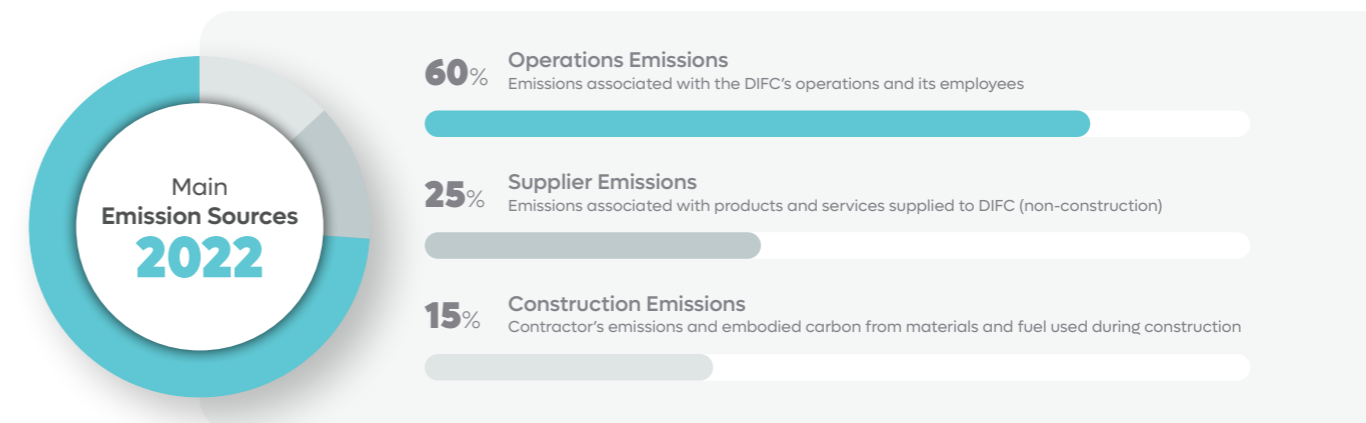
Key Stakeholder Groups

Stakeholder	Description	Engagement Methods
Internal Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DIFC management and employees 	<p>Workshops and Meetings: Organise regular sessions to discuss sustainability goals, progress, and challenges.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The sustainability and strategy teams are directly involved in implementing and supporting sustainability initiatives. 	<p>Surveys and Feedback Mechanisms: Conduct surveys and gather stakeholder input on sustainability initiatives. Analyse feedback to identify areas for improvement and adjust strategies accordingly.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other departments within DIFC that integrate sustainability practices into their operations. 	<p>Training and Capacity Building: Offer training programmes and workshops to enhance internal knowledge and skills in sustainability and encourage continuous learning to stay updated on best practices and technologies.</p>
External Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government bodies and regulators 	<p>Workshops and Meetings: Regularly engage stakeholders to discuss sustainability goals, align objectives, and develop collaborative solutions.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business partners and tenants 	<p>Partnerships: Form strategic partnerships to strengthen sustainability efforts and leverage resources.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investors and financial institutions 	<p>Public Reports: Publish an annual sustainability report detailing goals, initiatives, and performance to ensure transparency and accountability.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community groups. 	<p>Surveys and Feedback: Conduct surveys and gather stakeholder input to identify areas for improvement and refine sustainability strategies.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experts and consultants in sustainability and decarbonisation 	<p>Communication Channels: Maintain clear communication through newsletters, email updates, and social media to keep stakeholders informed and engaged.</p>

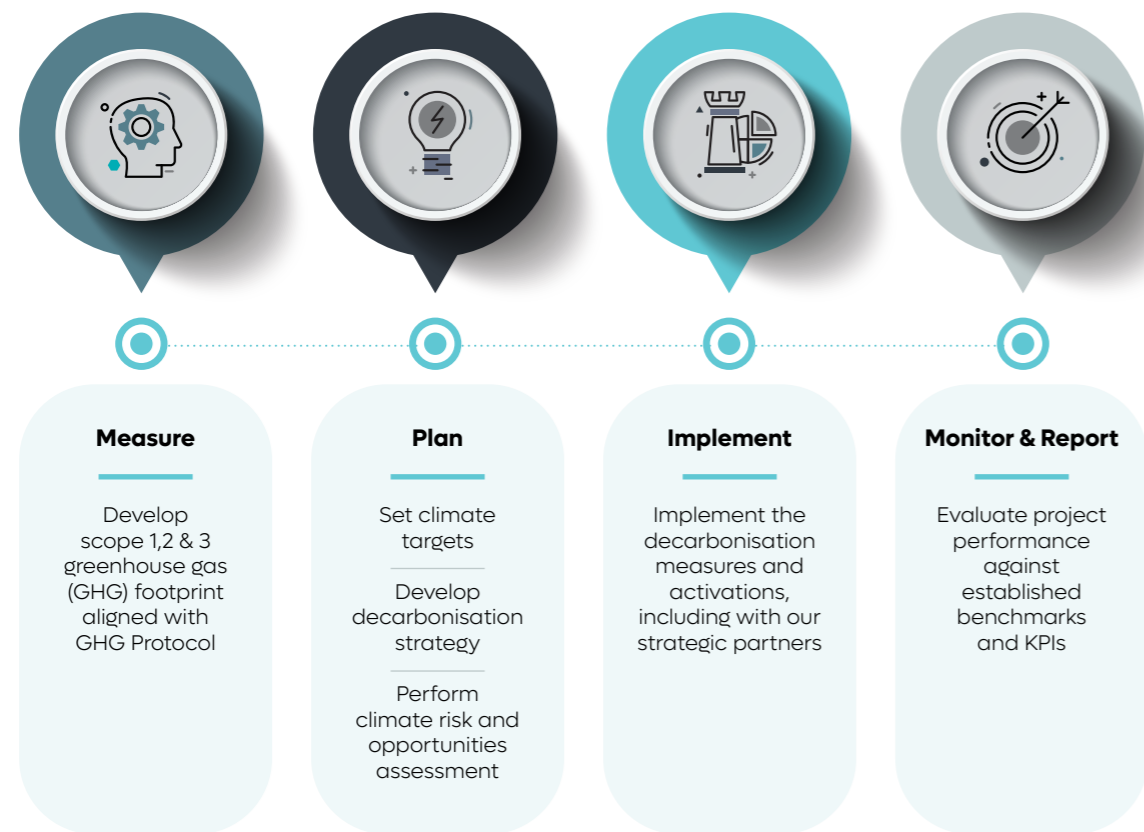
Net Zero Strategy

The UAE and Dubai have set ambitious targets to achieve Net Zero emissions by 2050. As a major financial hub in the country, DIFC has a key role to play in supporting this national vision. Consequently, DIFC has developed its own Decarbonisation Strategy which reinforces DIFC's position as a leader in the region and sets an example for other financial centres globally. The ultimate objective of the strategy is to reach net zero and address decarbonisation, as DIFC estimates its emissions could increase by 150 per cent by 2050 compared to its baseline which is the year 2022. This increase is due to construction activities that are planned between 2025 and 2045, as well as the expected growth of DIFC.

In its decarbonisation strategy, DIFC prioritises emission reduction in areas it has operational control over, including leased spaces. Additionally, the focus remains on the three key areas it has identified as its main emission sources in 2022. These are:



To shape its climate journey, DIFC has built a robust roadmap, which strategically guides the decarbonising efforts of its operations across the value chain, and it manages its climate risks using a four-step model:



DIFC's Planned Expansion

While 2022 marks the base year for the Centre's carbon accounting, it does not fully capture the typical scale of construction activities, particularly with the launch of the DIFC's expansion master plan. This major expansion aims to triple DIFC's footprint, adding 13mn sq.ft. of built space, including offices, co-working spaces, academic facilities, as well as residential and retail buildings. As this ambitious development progresses, it is expected that construction-related emissions will become the largest contributor to the Centre's overall carbon footprint. With the expansion project in mind, the DIFC team has carefully considered the additional emissions when modelling DIFC's optimal decarbonisation pathway.

Decarbonisation Activations and Initiatives

To achieve its Net Zero emissions, DIFC aims at deploying various Activation Initiatives by 2024/25 in the following areas:

Initiative	Description	Target/Impact
Deployment of on-site Renewable Energy	Incorporate renewable energy solutions into new building designs by prioritising the integration of on-site solar panels to enhance sustainability and reduce long-term energy costs.	1. 5MW of installed RE capacity by 2045 2. 100 per cent of green electricity consumed by 2030
Strategic Partnerships for a Low-carbon Economy	Consider available market options to tackle the remaining unabated emissions and to demonstrate DIFC's commitment towards transitioning to a sustainable, low-carbon economy.	Achieved by 2030
Shaping Sustainable Buildings	Collaborate with key industry players, regulators and policymakers to transform how we construct and build, driving innovation in energy efficiency, optimising material usage in project design, and minimising waste throughout the construction phase, all in pursuit of a more sustainable and resource-efficient future.	On-going, to accelerate industry decarbonisation and higher availability of green construction materials
Accelerating Innovation for Sustainable Building Designs	Champion innovative building designs and the adoption of sustainable, green construction materials to drive the transition towards environmentally responsible and forward-thinking infrastructure.	On-going, with at least one key partnership with a globally leading institution by 2026
Engagements for a Sustainable Value Chain	Implement supplier engagement programmes and encourage suppliers to disclose their emissions and set ambitious climate targets, fostering a collaborative approach to achieving shared sustainability goals.	1. 100 per cent of key suppliers aligning to DIFC sustainability requirements by 2030 2. 50 per cent of key suppliers disclosing emissions by 2028
Fulfilling our Community's Sustainability Expectations	Align DIFC's vision with the sustainability expectations of both current and prospective occupants, creating a shared commitment to a sustainable future.	On-going, with the target of positioning DIFC as a Sustainable Financial Hub
Enhancing Transparency and Accountability	Establish a streamlined GHG inventory and reporting process at both the DIFCA and district levels, ensuring comprehensive oversight, accountability and transparency in reducing carbon emissions.	Annual GHG inventory for DIFCA by 2025

Governance

Ethical governance is a cornerstone of DIFC's commitment to excellence and integrity and part of its key sustainability pillars. As a leading global financial centre, DIFC upholds the highest standards of transparency, accountability, and ethical conduct. To uphold these principles, DIFC has established three leadership layers, consisting of its most senior bodies: the Higher Board, the Board of Directors (BoD), and the Executive Committee. Each of these bodies has unique responsibilities to ensure the highest standards of oversight and governance in DIFC.

Overview of DIFC

Dubai International Financial Centre ("DIFC")

DIFC is a financial free zone as defined in Federal Law 8/ 2004 and was established by Federal Decree 35/ 2004 and Dubai Law 9/ 2004, as amended & repealed by Dubai Law 5/ 2021



DIFC President

- i) General supervision of the DIFC & DIFC Bodies,
- (ii) overseeing coordination among them for achievement of their strategies, policies, and objectives and
- (iii) ensuring cooperation among them and maintaining their independence



Higher Board

- (i) Approving the general strategy, policies, and plans of the DIFC presented by the Governor and
- (ii) receiving reports and following up on implementation



Governor

- (i) Preparing the general strategy, policies, and plans of DIFC and submitting these to the Higher Board for approval,
- (ii) supervising their implementation and submitting reports to the Higher Board
- (iii) proposing the overall organisational structure of DIFC to the Higher Board for approval



Overseen by the DIFCA Board

Responsible for public administration of DIFC & assist the Governor on strategy

Enactment & administration of laws and regulations (except relating to the regulation of financial services)



Overseen by the DFSA Board

The DFSA is the independent regulator of all financial services and related activities carried out in and from DIFC



Overseen by the Chief Justice & the Director of the Courts

Responsible for administering an English-language common law system in the DIFC

The DIFC Courts are independent from, but complementary to, the UAE's Arabic- language civil law system

The Higher Board

The Higher Board holds overarching responsibility for overseeing all facets of the Centre's operations. Their mandate includes ensuring adherence to international best practices and the realisation of the national objectives, including Dubai's Economic Agenda "D33".

Members

His Highness Sheikh Maktoum bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum | Deputy Ruler of Dubai, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance of the UAE

H.E Essa Kazim | Governor of DIFC

Abdulfattah Sharaf | Board Member

Chief Justice Wayne Martin | Board Member

Hesham Abdulla Al Qassim | Board Member

Fadel Abdulbaqi Al Ali | Board Member

Arshad Ghafur | Board Member

Board of Directors

DIFCA's BoD is tasked with supervising the entirety of the Centre's endeavours. From infrastructure development to financial management and client relations, their focus is on aligning activities with the strategic vision set forth by Dubai's leadership.

Members

H.E Essa Kazim | Chairman

Abdulla J M Kalban | Board Member

Hesham Abdulla Al Qassim | Board Member

Salem Al Sharhan | Board Member

Khalfan Belhoul | Board Member

Abdullah Salim Al Turifi Al Shamsi | Board Member

Dr. Ahmad Bin Hassan Al Shaikh | Board Member

Management Team

Driving forward the Centre's corporate vision and ambitions is the DIFC Management Team, operating on a comprehensive four-tiered strategy. Their objectives include upholding Dubai's status as a premier global financial hub while maintaining rigorous international standards and fostering a world-class physical, legal, and regulatory environment. Additionally, they focus on securing the financial viability of DIFC and its constituent companies, while facilitating client growth through streamlined business processes, service enhancements, and strengthened management frameworks.

Members

Arif Amiri,
Chief Executive Officer at DIFC Authority

Alya Al Zarouni,
Chief Operating Officer at DIFC Authority

Jacques Visser,
Chief Legal Officer at DIFC Authority

Saleh Al Akrabi,
Chief Real Estate Officer at DIFC Investments Ltd.

Salmaan Jaffery,
Chief Business Development Officer at DIFC Authority

Yazan Mohamad Al Nasser,
Chief Financial & Risk Officer at DIFC Authority

Madeya Alktebi,
Senior Vice President – Human Resources at DIFC Authority

Mahmoud Nsouli,
Senior Vice President - Marketing & Corporate Communications at DIFC Authority

Khalid Mohamed Al Zarouni,
Senior Vice President & Registrar of Companies – Regulatory at DIFC Authority

Jaber Humaid Al Suwaidi,
Senior Vice President & Registrar of Real Property – Regulatory at DIFC Authority

Beelall Ramdianee,
Senior Vice President of Internal Audit at DIFC Authority

Mohammad Yousuf Al Najjar,
Senior Vice President - Development and Projects - Property Development at DIFC Investments Ltd.

Code of Values and Ethics (CoVE)

To achieve its sustainability vision, DIFC has adopted the guiding principles of integrity, transparency, and simplicity. Upholding these values requires high standards of conduct from all businesses operating within the Centre, and DIFC expects its personnel to set a strong example by embodying these principles. The Centre's standards set in the CoVE apply to all employees and directors, ensuring these are consistently upheld in practice. Furthermore, the CoVE sets the principles for safeguarding and using information, managing conflict of interest, anti-fraud and corruption measures highlighting applicable laws, and consequences of non-compliance.

Ethics to Uphold	Non-tolerated Behaviours
Ethical and honest behaviour	Discrimination and harassment in the workplace or in the community
Prudence, care and diligence in carrying out our duties	Inhumane or undignified treatment of any individuals
Treatment of others with impartiality, fairness, respect and courtesy	The improper use of information, or of our position, in order to gain a personal advantage
Compliance with laws and with lawful and reasonable directions	Any activity that does not uphold the values and ethics of DIFC or that may adversely affect its reputation.
Maintenance of confidentiality	
Disclosure and avoidance of conflicts of interest (real or perceived)	
Impartiality and professionalism in our decision-making	

Sustainability Governance

At DIFC strong governance serves as the foundation for driving responsible growth, resilience, and ethical business practices. The governance framework is designed to ensure transparency, accountability, and strategic oversight, aligned with global sustainability standards. By integrating sustainability considerations into governance structures, DIFC fosters a culture of ethical leadership, compliance, and proactive risk management. A commitment to advancing sustainability initiatives drives the creation of long-term value for stakeholders, ensuring that sustainability principles are embedded into all facets of operations and strategic decision-making. The key functions that drive sustainability at DIFC are:

Function	Owner	Sustainability Responsibilities
DIFCA	DIFCA CEO	Allocate resources for sustainability and appoint the Sustainability Management Committee
Sustainability Management Committee	Committee Chairperson	Advise and oversee sustainability-related initiatives and ensure alignment on sustainability across the organisation
Strategy Department – Sustainability Function	Sustainability Lead	Manage all sustainability initiatives and coordinate sustainability endeavours across other functions
Enablers/Supporting Functions	Head of Departments	Execute sustainability initiatives and provide resources to the Sustainability team

DIFC's Sustainability Management Committee

DIFC is establishing a Sustainability Management Committee, which will begin operations in 2025, as part of its commitment to strong governance. This committee will focus on the execution of sustainability initiatives and will work to align strategic objectives and directions related to decarbonisation and climate-related risks. The Sustainability Lead of DIFC will act as the Secretary. Responsibilities include overseeing the delivery of key sustainability initiatives, ensuring progress is reported to the Sustainability Board Committee, and managing operational concerns that could impact the achievement of objectives. Additionally, the committee will raise requests from support functions and mediate decisions and differences of opinion to ensure effective action. Corporate sustainability at DIFC is primarily managed by the DIFC Sustainability Function, established under the Strategy Department. The Sustainability Lead is responsible for implementing and managing DIFC's corporate sustainability strategy and framework as well as the wider sustainability ecosystem engagement. This role also oversees the DIFC Sustainable Finance Catalyst, which engages the broader community to support sustainable finance, innovation ecosystems, and capacity building.

Key Responsibilities of the DIFC Sustainability Function



Sustainability Sector Development: To foster community engagement, the Sustainability Lead, supported by the Strategy team, drives DIFC-led sustainability events aimed at raising awareness and encouraging participation in sustainability initiatives. The role also supports regulatory engagement by collaborating closely with government bodies and regulators to support the development of sustainability regulations and policies. Additionally, the Sustainability Lead develops strategic partnerships that enhance DIFC's value proposition. Furthermore, the Sustainability Lead oversees DIFC's Sustainable Finance Catalyst, which promotes sustainable finance in line with international best practices.



Decarbonisation Strategy: The Sustainability Lead, supported by the Strategy team, is responsible for developing, monitoring, and reporting on DIFC's decarbonisation strategy, which includes a roadmap of key initiatives and milestones to reduce carbon emissions. This strategy is closely tied to the DIFC Sustainable Finance Catalyst, which promotes sustainable finance and low-carbon technologies. The strategy and roadmap implementation involves collaboration with relevant stakeholders across the organisation, including the Property Development and Property Management departments. A bi-monthly monitoring framework ensures alignment, with meetings led by the Sustainability Lead and Strategy team, alongside project owners and stakeholders, to review progress, meet milestones, and report updates to the Sustainability Management Committee.



Corporate Sustainability Integration: The Sustainability Lead manages the Sustainability Strategy to ensure alignment with corporate objectives. This involves incorporating sustainability practices across all DIFC operations and embedding them into the organisation's culture and day-to-day activities. Additionally, the Sustainability Lead, supported by the Strategy team, oversees the annual sustainability reporting and disclosures, ensuring transparency and accountability in DIFC's sustainability efforts.



Support for Capacity Building: Through close collaboration with DIFC Academy and knowledge providers, including the SDG Finance Academy and the Chartered Bankers Institute. The Sustainability function supports capacity-building on sustainability-related topics across the Centre.

Find out more about the DIFC Academy here: <https://academy.difc.ae/>



Compliance and Standards: Ensuring compliance with both local and international sustainability standards and regulations is a key responsibility of the Sustainability Lead. This includes continuously improving performance through benchmarking and adopting recognised carbon accounting and reporting standards. By doing so, DIFC maintains transparency and ensures that its sustainability practices meet the highest standards of accountability.

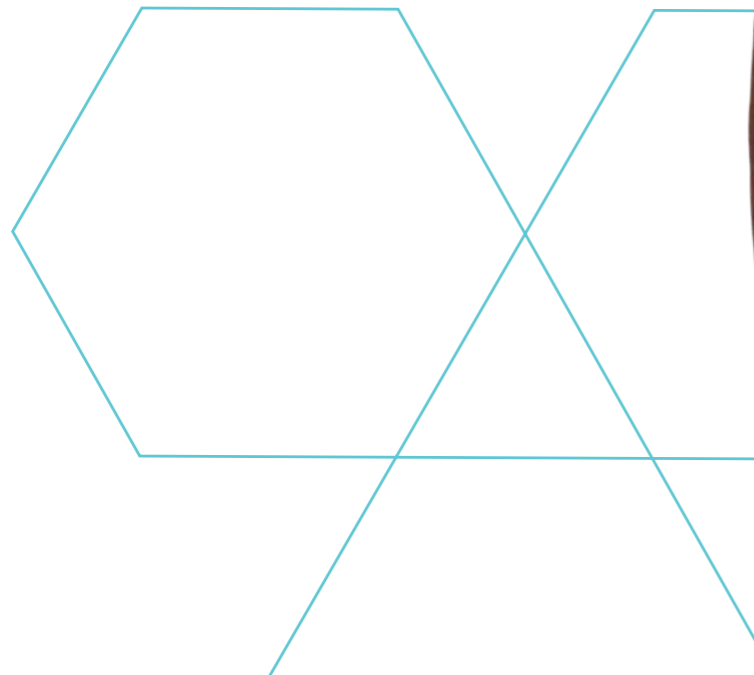
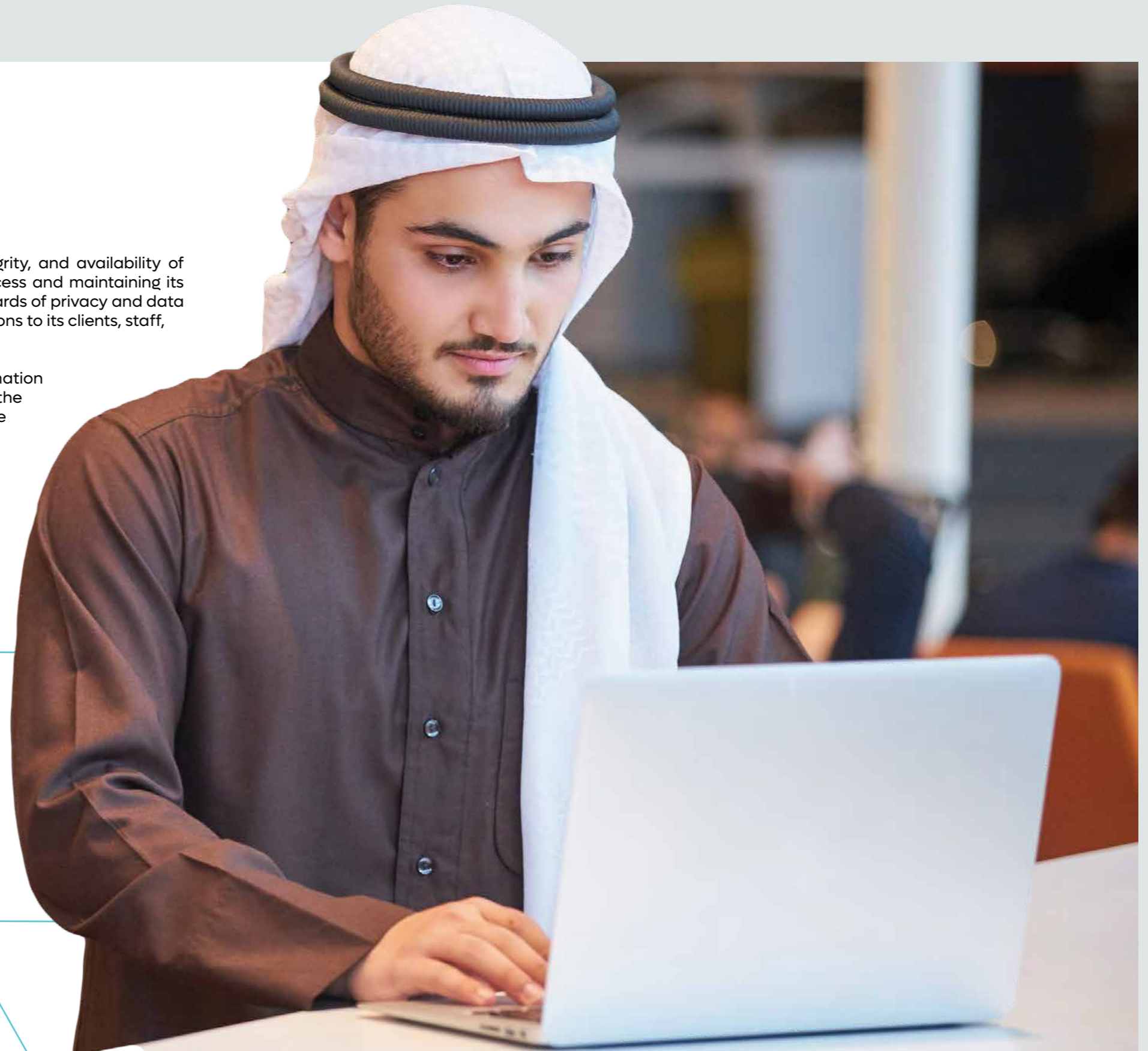


Impact Measurement: The Sustainability Lead is responsible for measuring and reporting the impact of sustainability initiatives on the environment, economy, and society. This data-driven approach helps to inform future strategies, allowing DIFC to regularly update its decarbonisation plan based on performance data and emerging best practices.

Cybersecurity

The Centre is committed to safeguarding the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of its information. Securing this data is crucial to DIFC's business success and maintaining its reputation as a global financial hub. DIFC upholds the highest standards of privacy and data protection to meet legal, regulatory, contractual, and ethical obligations to its clients, staff, and stakeholders.

To put its commitment into action, DIFC has implemented an Information Security Management System (ISMS), in accordance with the requirements of the international standard ISO/IEC 27001, to ensure that information security is managed systematically and effectively. The performance of the ISMS and its compliance with ISO/IEC 27001 is reviewed regularly by the management and independently audited by both internal and external assessors at least once each year. Through the information security risk management process, risks related to ISMS are systematically identified, analysed, evaluated, and treated to an acceptable level.



Data Protection

The DIFC Commissioner of Data Protection oversees compliance with the DIFC Data Protection Law, DIFC Law No. 5 of 2020. The Law regulates the collection, handling, and utilisation of personal data. The Law is designed to balance the legitimate needs of businesses and organisations that process personal data, while safeguarding individuals' privacy rights and providing recourse for any infringements. The DIFC Data Protection Law is aligned with robust, international standards, and as such the DIFC distinguishes itself as the only jurisdiction within the Middle East that is recognised by the United Kingdom as one of its priority partners in the Data Bridge initiative.

Regulation 10

Regulation 10 is ground-breaking as it is the first enacted regulation in the MEASA region on the processing of personal data via autonomous and semi-autonomous systems such as artificial intelligence (AI) or generative, machine learning technology. These regulations promote innovation and interoperability while implementing basic controls to safeguard personal data and ensure that notices are provided to the respective data subjects. A Regulation 10 Advisory Committee has been established to oversee the implementation and development of the regulations, as AI governance and use continues to evolve.

Regulation 6.2

Regulation 6.2 of the DIFC Data Protection Regulations was introduced to address unfair or deceptive practices. It ensures that entities that falsely claim certification of compliance or technological adherence to DIFC's legal and regulatory standards are flagged and investigated. This Regulation was enacted to foster an ethical, substantive, and sustainable business environment that is consistent with international data protection standards. It is modelled directly after the US Federal Trade Commission (FTC) Act's Section 5 requirements.

The full text of the DIFC Data Protection Law and Data Protection Regulations is accessible here: [DIFC Data Protection Policy](#)

Information on how the DIFC collects, processes and uses personal data is accessible on the website and users are encouraged to read and understand the stated information.

EDMRI

The Ethical Data Management and Risk Index (EDMRI) was established to ensure ethical engagement between data exporters in DIFC and importers in other jurisdictions. This index serves as a tool to assess privacy corruption risks, enabling exporters to conduct thorough due diligence before proceeding with data exportation. The EDMRI, along with accompanying guidance and FAQs, furnishes comprehensive information for stakeholders.

Industry Partnerships

DIFC actively participates in the Global Privacy Assembly, contributing to key initiatives such as the Global Frameworks and Standards Working Group and the Data Sharing for the Public Good Working Group. This involvement enhances DIFC's global profile among regulatory authorities, fostering valuable exchanges of best practices that ultimately benefit companies within the Centre.

Additionally, DIFC is engaged with the Global Privacy Enforcement Network (GPEN), including participation in the 2024 GPEN sweep, which focuses on addressing dark and deceptive design patterns on common websites. This engagement underscores DIFC's commitment to upholding high standards of privacy and data protection, reinforcing its leadership in promoting ethical practices in the digital space.

Finally, DIFC has been awarded Associate Membership in the Global Cross Border Privacy Rules Assembly. Only three other jurisdictions in the world have received this recognition. The Global Cross-Border Privacy Rules (CBPR) Forum will help DIFC businesses to build capacity for compliant, practical cross-border data trade with trust, which, from a wider perspective, is an essential component of sustainable, ethical trade relationships.

In October 2023, DIFC hosted the inaugural GCC conference dedicated to privacy practices in technology, risk management, and the future of AI—marking a significant milestone in the region. The event was launched by His Excellency Omar Sultan Al Olama, the Minister for the Office of State for AI, and drew substantial attendance and engagement. Topics ranged from Smart Cities and cooperation in privacy laws to AI regulation and advanced risk frameworks like National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and the Meta Open Loop policy accelerator.





Sustainable Finance

Economic Value Creation

The Centre now hosts over 6,100 active registered companies, marking a significant increase from 4,949 year-on-year, demonstrating a growth of 24 per cent. In the first six months of 2024 alone, 820 new companies joined DIFC, a record 24 per cent rise compared to the same period last year. Through its commitment to fostering a dynamic and well-regulated financial ecosystem, DIFC is ahead of its target to double its GDP contribution by 2030.

Emphasising DIFC's commitment to driving growth in FinTech and Innovation, the number of firms in these sectors surged from 811 to 1,081, reflecting a robust 33 per cent annual increase. DIFC-based companies continue to attract global talent, adding 4,647 new jobs over the past year. The total workforce now numbers 43,787, up 12 per cent from the first half of last year.

The Centre is now home to over 400 wealth and asset management firms, including more than 60 pure-play hedge funds, predominantly from the GCC, Europe, the UK, and the US. Assets Under Management in DIFC have soared from USD 444bn to USD 700bn, marking a substantial 58 percent increase. The number of funds marketed in or from DIFC has grown to 10,032, up from 7,641, a notable 31 per cent increase.

Additionally, the insurance and reinsurance sector has expanded to include 125 companies, up from 110, showing a growth of 14 per cent. Gross Written Premiums for the insurance sector in 2023 reached USD 2.6bn, up from USD 2.1bn in the previous year, indicating a 24 per cent increase.





Sustainable Finance Framework

Acting on its commitment to sustainable finance, DIFC established its Sustainable Finance Framework as the basis for issuing green, social or sustainability bonds, sukuk, loans and other debt instruments. DIFC stands as the first global financial centre in the region to publish such a framework, marking a significant milestone in its dedication to fostering climate action and sustainable development. Moreover, DIFC's Sustainable Finance Framework is aligned with various international standards, including the Social Bond Principles (SBP), Social Loan Principles (SLP), Green Bond Principles (GBP), Green Loan Principles (GLP), and Sustainability Bond Guidelines (SBG). These alignments underscore DIFC's commitment to adhering to globally recognised guidelines for sustainable finance, ensuring transparency, accountability, and credibility in its sustainability efforts.


DIFC will allocate an amount, at least equivalent to the net proceeds of the Sustainable Financing Instruments issued under the Framework, to finance and/or re-finance, in whole or in part, sustainable projects which meet the eligibility criteria of the following eligible green and/or social project categories ("Eligible Sustainable Projects").




Environmental Objective: Climate Change Mitigation

Project Category	Eligibility Criteria
 <p>Green Building</p>	<p>Investment in new or existing commercial or residential buildings that belong to the top 15 per cent in terms of energy efficiency of their local market or have received, or expect to receive, based on its design, construction and operational plans, certification according to third-party verified green building standards, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEED ("Gold" or above) • BREEAM ("Excellent" or above) • Estidama Pearl Building Rating System ("4 Pearl" and above) • Global Sustainability Assessment System (GSAS) ("4 stars" or above) <p>Where possible, the buildings will meet a minimum 30 per cent performance improvement against ASHRAE 90.1 in addition to the above standards.</p>
 <p>Renewable Energy</p>	<p>Generation or procurement of energy to power the company's operations from the following renewable sources: Solar (PV and Concentrated Solar Power with a minimum of 85 per cent of power generation derived from solar sources).</p>
 <p>Energy Efficiency</p>	<p>Investment in refurbishments/upgrade of buildings including energy-saving retrofit of cooling systems and/or energy optimisation measures that result in a minimum of 20 per cent energy savings compared to the existing baseline and replacement of lighting equipment with LED.</p>
 <p>Clean Transportation</p>	<p>Financing related to electric and low-carbon vehicles and associated infrastructure for public and passenger transportation. Non-electric vehicles will meet the following criteria: passenger and public transportation (under 50gCO₂/p-km up to 2025, and 0gCO₂/km thereafter). Investment in and expenditure related to construction, maintenance and renovation of charging infrastructure for electric vehicles.</p>

Environmental Objective: Sustainable Use and Protection of Water Resources

Project Category	Eligibility Criteria
 <p>Sustainable Water and Wastewater Management</p>	<p>Investment in technologies, projects and infrastructure for the collection, distribution, treatment, recycling or reuse of water, rainwater, or wastewater including the use of Treated Sewage Effluent (TSE) for irrigation and greywater reuse</p>

Environmental Objective: Climate Change Mitigation and Pollution Prevention and Control

Project Category	Eligibility Criteria
 <p>Pollution Prevention and Control</p>	<p>Investment in waste reduction, reuse, or recycling projects, including waste monitoring, collection and storage, categorisation, sorting and separation, and recycling to increase waste diversion and manage the overall life-cycle of waste.</p> <p>Recyclable waste includes paper, plastic, glass, cooking oil, and metal.</p>



Social Objective: Employment Generation

Project Category

Eligibility Criteria



Employment Generation, and programmes designed to prevent and/or alleviate unemployment stemming from socioeconomic crises (such provision and/or promotion could include SME financing and microfinance)

Investments and/or expenditures related to supporting entrepreneurs and startups, including providing funding to startups expected to facilitate employment generation and job creation through direct funding or indirect funding via startup-focused funds, and non-financial support through provision of accelerator/incubator programmes, subsidised licenses and courses.

Target Segments

Small and medium-sized enterprises, including startups



Socioeconomic Advancement and Empowerment

Expenditures related to providing capacity building for women professionals via female-focused career mentorship programmes (such as AccelerateHer programme).

Target Segments

Women Professionals at early stages of their career (6 months to 5 years career experience)

Furthermore, the Sustainable Finance Framework sets clear exclusion criteria where any expenditure related to the following activities will be excluded from the Eligible Green / Social Project Categories. This includes:

- Thermal coal power generation
- Lethal defence goods or weaponry
- Activities involving modern slavery, or forced labour
- Gambling, casinos and equivalent enterprises
- Adult Entertainment
- Fossil fuel, fossil fuel electric power generation projects, and energy efficiency improvement projects for fossil fuel-based electric power generation



To learn more about the project evaluation and selection process, governance model deployed, management of proceeds and impact assessment and reporting process, refer to [DIFC's Sustainable Finance Framework report](#).

DIFC had appointed S&P Global Ratings to review the relevance and strength of its sustainable finance framework. S&P Global Ratings issued 'strong' opinions on its process for project evaluation, selection, and reporting, highlighting its robustness and effectiveness. The Second Party Opinion (SPO) has also issued a Second Party Opinion on the Use of Proceeds and Framework Assessment, affirming the framework's alignment with international best practices. For further details refer to [S&P Global Ratings' opinion report](#).

S&P Global

Sustainable Finance Catalyst

Launched during COP28's Finance Day in 2023 and leveraging DIFC's status as the inaugural global sustainable finance hub in the MEASA region, the Sustainable Finance Catalyst initiative aims to increase sustainable finance issuances from Dubai to reach USD 100bn by 2030. It aims to enable sustainable finance issuances from Dubai notably by establishing a network of strategic partners to drive capacity building and expand its sustainability-driven startup ecosystem by 50x by 2030.

KNOWLEDGE	Launch AI-driven knowledge hub	DIFC	GEFI	دبي الرقمية DIGITAL DUBAI
FINANCE	Grow sustainable and Islamic finance	DIFC	Nasdaq	DFSA Dubai Financial Services Authority
TALENT	Build capacity and upskill	DIFC Academy	Chartered Banker	UNDP
INNOVATION	Foster sustainability-driven innovation	DIFC Innovation Hub	Climate Bonds	GLOBAL COUNCILS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Through the promotion of sustainable investment opportunities, DIFC has witnessed a notable increase in the number of firms listing ESG debt securities on Nasdaq Dubai, reflecting growing investor demand for socially responsible investment options. From 2022 to 2023, the cumulative issuance size of ESG debt listed on Nasdaq Dubai increased from USD 17.1bn to USD 27.1bn, while the number of ESG debt issuers grew from four to ten, with leading institutions such as Emirates NBD, DP World, and Government of Sharjah issuing on Nasdaq Dubai for the first time in 2023.

Dubai Future District Fund for Sustainability

The Dubai Future District Fund is the evergreen venture capital fund of funds of Dubai, anchored by the DIFC and the Dubai Future Foundation (DFF) with an initial AED 1bn in committed capital. The fund is dedicated to shaping the future of finance and economies with a focus on innovation and sustainability and is leading efforts in responsible investing. Notably, the Fund has pledged to allocate a significant portion of 20 per cent of its capital to help accelerate sustainable technology and innovation startups and scaleups.

This momentous announcement, made on COP28's Finance Day, underscores DIFC's recognition of the pivotal role that startups play in driving sustainable economic growth and addressing global challenges. It also reflects one of the core pillars of the DIFC Sustainable Finance Catalyst – Innovation, which is to solidify DIFC's position as the #1 Innovation Hub in MEASA with 3,000+ innovators shaping the Future of Finance, aiming to grow sustainability-driven startups 50x by 2030.

#1 ESG Sukuk Market

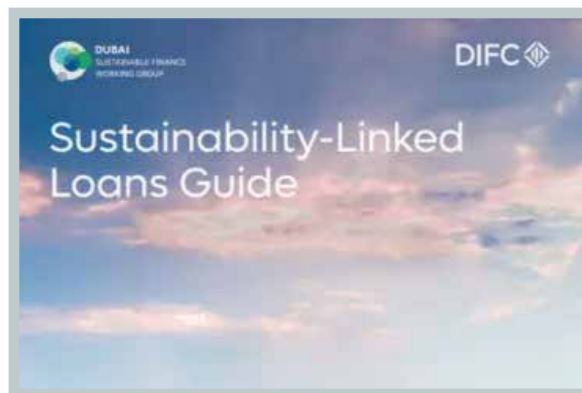
Nasdaq Dubai is the number one listed sukuk market in MEASA and second in the globe, with a total cumulative issuance size of USD 128bn in 2023. ESG-related issuances make up USD 27bn of this total, making it the largest ESG sukuk market in the world. 2023 marks a significant year for green issuances with a year-on-year growth of 138 per cent. Introduced during COP28's Finance Day in 2023 and leveraging DIFC's pioneering status as the foremost global sustainable finance hub in MEASA, the DIFC Sustainable Finance Catalyst emerges as a legacy initiative of COP28. With ambitious goals, it aims to escalate sustainable finance flows from Dubai to reach USD 100bn by 2030, facilitate the expansion of sustainable finance aided by the inaugural AI-driven sustainability knowledge hub, establish a network of strategic partners committed to nurturing one million sustainability leaders.

Sustainability Incentives



A forward-looking regulatory framework and incentives are crucial to facilitating sustainable finance initiatives and promoting an environment conducive to responsible business practices and ESG integration. The Dubai Financial Services Authority (DFSA) announced a groundbreaking initiative to promote sustainability within the financial sector. The DFSA will waive all regulatory fees for issuers seeking to list sustainability-related debt securities in the DIFC throughout 2024. This proactive move aims to incentivise sustainable finance activities, encouraging issuers to incorporate ESG considerations into their business strategies and capital-raising activities.

The fee waiver highlights the DFSA's commitment to driving positive change and positioning the DIFC as a leading hub for sustainable finance in the region. This initiative not only supports issuers in accessing capital markets for sustainable projects but also demonstrates the DFSA's dedication to advancing the broader sustainability agenda and aligning regulatory practices with global ESG priorities. Through such forward-looking measures, regulatory bodies like the DFSA play a crucial role in creating an ecosystem that promotes sustainable finance practices and fosters long-term value creation for businesses, investors, and society as a whole.



Thought Leadership

Dubai Sustainable Finance Working Group

In July 2019, Dubai Financial Market (DFM) jointly with DIFC, established the Dubai Sustainable Finance Working Group (DSFWG), which today includes 40+ active members and ten sub-working groups. Collectively, it operates as a change agent between high-level groups in the UAE and the rest of the world by focusing on policy, and the long-term sustainability ambitions of public and private sectors.

DSFWG's efforts align with the UAE's sustainable development goals of 2030. These are quality education, gender equality, decent work and economic growth, responsible consumption and production, climate action, and partnerships for these goals. Additionally, the working group's actions contribute to the UAE's commitment to achieving net zero emissions by 2050 and ensuring sustainable development.

In 2023, actionable deliverables of the DSFWG included the distribution of three, sectoral reports, which were published to help businesses in the UAE build resilience against the impact of climate change while supporting the economic movement towards net zero.

Refer to this [link](#) to read DSFWG publications



Partnerships and Advocacy

As a global financial hub, DIFC acknowledges its responsibility to contribute to global sustainability efforts.

Its active participation in COP28 stands as a testament to this dedication. In the spirit of collaboration, DIFC and the Global Ethical Finance Initiative (GEFI) brought the global finance community together to advance thought leadership and action relating to sustainable finance principles in the build-up to COP28. The 'Path to COP28' programme focused on the core work streams of delivering net zero, financing SDGs, and unlocking Islamic finance while delivering a full calendar of six summits, 16 SDG hive events, 11 roundtables, four podcasts and four trainings throughout the year.



Climate Bonds Initiative

MoU with Climate Bonds Initiative (CBI)

Under its partnership with the Sustainable Finance Catalyst initiative, DIFC signed an MoU with the Climate Bonds Initiative (CBI) including the establishment of a regional office to enhance market awareness and the development of Green Sukuk Standards (GSS). Driven in conjunction with the Dubai Sustainable Finance Working Group (DSFWG), the GSS is a form of standardisation covering water, bioenergy, low-carbon buildings, land transport, shipping, solar, wind and waste management.

Considered a viable mechanism to help increase the credibility of responsible Islamic investing, the partnership could equally prove effective in benchmarking tools for syndication and the development of asset and wealth management products. Forging an integral part of the Sustainable Finance Catalyst (SFC), both parties have also jointly developed a calendar of events focused on transition finance, leading to a "Transition Dialogue" side-event at this year's Future Sustainability Forum, taking place in Dubai for the second time on 4 - 5 December 2024.

Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Innovation is at the heart of DIFC's success. Consequently, DIFC aims to establish itself as the premier Innovation Hub in the MEASA region, with a target of engaging over 3,000 innovators to shape the future of finance and drive the growth of sustainability-focused startups by a factor of 50 by 2030. The DIFC Innovation Hub is the largest innovation community in the region dedicated to supporting startups and entrepreneurs in the UAE, fostering an environment that nurtures innovation and drives economic growth. Following the general sustainability direction of the UAE and DIFC, the Innovation Hub set a goal to attract and accelerate innovative social and environmental startups, fostering the application of FinTech to address sustainability challenges, including ESG data management and supporting financial inclusion.



Dubai AI Campus

DIFC is developing the 'Dubai AI Campus,' the largest hub for AI and tech companies in the MENA region, following directives from His Highness Sheikh Maktoum bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, First Deputy Ruler of Dubai, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance of the UAE, and President of DIFC.

Aiming to attract over USD 300mn in capital and create more than 3,000 jobs by 2028, the campus will focus on AI and Web3 applications in the financial services sector. It will house entrepreneurs, disruptors, and engineers passionate about emerging technologies.

The campus will provide cutting-edge physical and digital infrastructure, including R&D facilities, accelerator programmes, and collaborative workspaces, aimed at attracting and scaling AI companies. It will serve as a growth catalyst, drawing global innovators, startups, and industry leaders to build an AI-driven ecosystem in the region. AI and Web3 companies will benefit from dedicated licensing, a robust regulatory framework, and DIFC's unique soft infrastructure.

Dubai Fintech Summit

The second edition of the Dubai FinTech Summit (DFS) organised by DIFC, under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Maktoum bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, First Deputy Ruler of Dubai, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance of the UAE, and President of DIFC, concluded with resounding success. The summit saw the signing of more than 50 Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with global financial leaders, alongside significant announcements.

Held in 2024, the event attracted over 50 international associations, such as Africa FinTech Network, Business France, FinTech Philippines Association, European Blockchain Association, Global FinTech Alliance (GFA), and Women in Web3 Association, among others. It also drew the participation of over 1,000 investors, including more than 10 top executives from some of the world's largest banks, managing over USD 7trn in assets. Additionally, over 40 FinTech and blockchain unicorns with a combined market capitalisation exceeding USD 400bn were present at the summit. To learn more about the summit's achievements click [here](#).





Dubai AI & Web3 Festival

Under the directives of His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence of the UAE, Chairman of The Executive Council of Dubai, and Chairman of the Higher Committee for Future Technology and Digital Economy, the Dubai AI & Web3 Festival, organised by the Dubai AI Campus in strategic partnership with DIFC and the Minister of State for AI, successfully concluded in September 2024.

The two-day event attracted over 6,800 delegates from more than 100 countries, including government officials, business leaders, and AI and Web3 firms. Over 100 exhibitors showcased cutting-edge technologies. Arif Amiri, CEO of DIFC Authority, announced the launch of the first-ever Dubai AI Licence, designed to attract more companies to Dubai, building on the success of the DIFC Innovation Licence, which has already drawn over 1,100 businesses to the Centre. DIFC also introduced the 'AI as a Service' concept to help companies assess and implement AI strategies.

The event featured the inaugural Future Tech World Cup, where AI and Web3 companies competed to showcase industry-transforming innovations. Key discussions covered topics such as inclusion, decentralised intelligence, AI regulations, and the ethics of Generative AI. Several agreements were signed during the festival, including partnerships with Dubai Civil Defence, Visa, Zurich, and others, to advance AI and Web3 adoption.



Future Sustainability Forum

DIFC launched the inaugural Future Sustainability Forum, gathering over 1,000 industry leaders from 30 countries to explore climate financing solutions ahead of COP28. The two-day event brought together global decision-makers and innovators to discuss the financial sector's role in driving climate action.

Led by 50+ speakers, the first day's discussions focused on strategies for a just transition to a sustainable economy, aligning with the Paris Agreement and UN Sustainable Development Goals for 2030. The Forum's agenda aligned with COP28's 4-pillar plan: fast tracking an equitable and orderly energy transition; fixing climate finance; focusing on people, nature, lives and livelihoods; and fostering full inclusivity. An estimated USD 3.3–4.5trn is needed annually to achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. To support this, DIFC is driving the growth of the sustainable debt market, with Nasdaq Dubai now the largest ESG sukuk market globally, holding 64 per cent of dollar-denominated sustainable sukuk. Two MoUs signed at the Forum underscore Dubai's commitment to boosting climate finance and strengthening investment flows between the Global North and South.

The 2nd edition of the Future Sustainability Forum, to be held in December 2024, will build on the momentum from COP28, highlighting the UAE's ongoing efforts to achieve its Net-Zero 2050 goals. The forum will cover key topics such as breakthroughs in clean energy technologies, carbon capture, circular economy practices, and supportive policy frameworks for the private sector. Additionally, it will align with the UAE's broader initiatives to drive innovation in climate tech, reflecting its leadership in global sustainability efforts post-COP28.

Women in Tech

The "Women in Tech" accelerator programme, a collaboration between DIFC and Standard Chartered through the DIFC Innovation Hub, is designed to empower women entrepreneurs in technology and sustainability and close the gender gap in technology entrepreneurship.

Over three consecutive years, the programme has provided tailored workshops, mentorship from industry experts, and networking opportunities with potential investors and partners, to startups with at least one female co-founder. In its latest cohort in 2023, the programme awarded a total of USD 100,000 in equity-free seed capital to the top three female-led tech startups in the UAE.



Learn more here: <https://www.difc.ae/ecosystem>

AccelerateHer

AccelerateHER by DIFC Innovation Hub is an accelerator programme designed to empower and support female entrepreneurs and women in the financial sector. This programme focuses on providing mentorship, networking, and development opportunities to enhance the skills and business prospects of women entrepreneurs. So far it has accelerated 100+ women in the financial services industry and entrepreneurship.



Prototypes for Humanity

The Prototypes for Humanity 2023 initiative was presented during COP28, showcasing 100 groundbreaking inventions aimed at tackling environmental and social challenges. The winner was awarded USD 100,000 in prize money. Throughout the week-long event in Dubai's vibrant innovation ecosystem, global experts in ventures, innovation, research, and investments gathered to support university innovators in bringing their projects to life. Discussions focused on student-developed technologies addressing critical global issues across various industries, including energy, construction, healthcare, consumer goods, agriculture, soil, and water.

As the founding partner of Prototypes for Humanity, DIFC is committed to nurturing the next generation of entrepreneurs, particularly those focused on sustainable innovation.



Environmental Stewardship

The real estate and construction sectors, both in which DIFC operates, have a significant impact on the natural environment and the climate. DIFC recognises the role it plays in minimising this negative impact in its office operations and more importantly in the design, construction and management of existing and new properties.

As a first step to minimise its negative impact, DIFC is committed to enhancing its energy management practices. Acting on this commitment, the Centre conducted a comprehensive review of its current energy policy and action plan to identify areas for improvement. The commitment is underscored by the adoption of renewable energy sources, like solar panels, and energy-efficient technologies such as LED lighting.



Good to know:

The scope for environmental disclosures covers the following buildings: GD2, GD3, GD4, GD5, GB, GV1, GV2, GV3, GV4, GV5, GV6, GV7, GV8, GV10, GV11, GV basement/store, GB basement/ Store and GA. Those are the areas over which DIFC has operational control.

Energy Consumption

As part of its ongoing energy policy review, DIFC set clear goals and targets to enhance sustainability performance, with a focus on reducing energy consumption and lowering its carbon footprint. While these targets are still under development, initial measures have already shown promising results in reducing energy use. The commitment to sustainability is further strengthened by active engagement with stakeholders, including tenants, suppliers, and regulatory bodies. This collaboration has been essential in identifying opportunities for improvement and ensuring that energy management practices are effective and impactful.

Delta T, the difference in temperature between the supply and return chilled water in HVAC systems, is a critical factor in optimising energy efficiency. As part of DIFC's commitment to energy conservation, a predictive learning system is employed to closely manage Delta T, ensuring that cooling systems operate at peak efficiency and improve the overall performance of the building's HVAC systems. Thanks to its energy conservation efforts, the Centre reduced LPG consumption by 10.2 per cent, diesel by 11 per cent, and electricity by 2 per cent. These early results reflect the success of DIFC's initiatives, with ongoing efforts to enhance and scale these measures to meet the targets outlined in its decarbonisation strategy.



Energy Consumption	Unit	2022	2023	Reduction
LPG	m ³	333,990	299,769	10.2%
Diesel	liters	10,180	9,077	11%
Petrol	liters	315	488	-55%

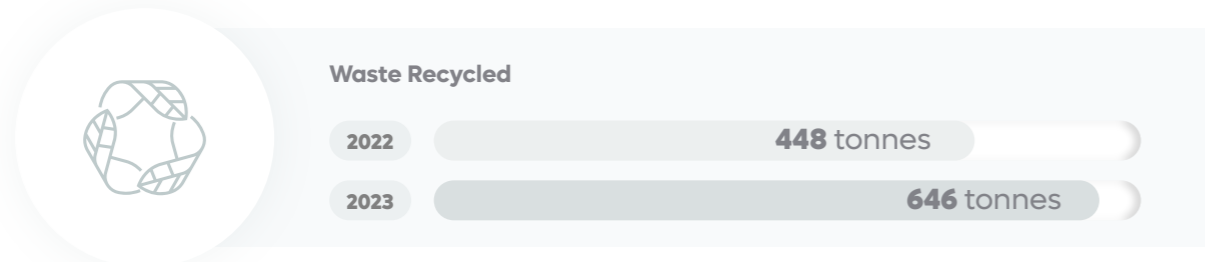
The petrol consumption is primarily attributed to the cleaning machines used by the facilities management service providers. The noticeable increase in consumption in 2023 can be explained by two key factors. Firstly, additional dewatering machines were utilised during the heavy rains in 2023 to manage water accumulation. Secondly, the commencement of operations in the Innovation One building contributed to a higher overall consumption as facilities management services expanded to accommodate the new activities.



Electricity Consumption	Unit	Source	2022	2023
Purchased electricity	KWh	DEWA	16,730,172	16,378,773
Renewable electricity	KWh	Solar Energy	0	0
Cooling consumption	KWh	Chilled Water	NA	NA

Waste Management

DIFC acknowledges that effective waste management is crucial for reducing landfill disposal, promoting recycling and reuse, and alleviating environmental pressures. To address this, DIFC has developed a multi-faceted, forward-thinking approach that begins with identifying both direct and indirect waste sources, particularly emphasising downstream activities, where waste is segregated at the source (such as paper, carton, glass bottles, used oil, thermocol, metals, and plastics). This approach integrates waste management with recycling efforts, collaborating with vendors renowned for their robust recycling practices to minimise landfill contributions and maximise material reuse. To ensure the effectiveness of this strategy, DIFC is exploring partnerships with vendors that adhere to Dubai's recycling and waste management standards. Furthermore, the Centre is considering setting specific targets, including increasing recycling rates, reducing per capita waste generation, and enhancing waste-to-energy conversion rates within DIFC.



DIFC Leads the Way in Waste Management and Recycling

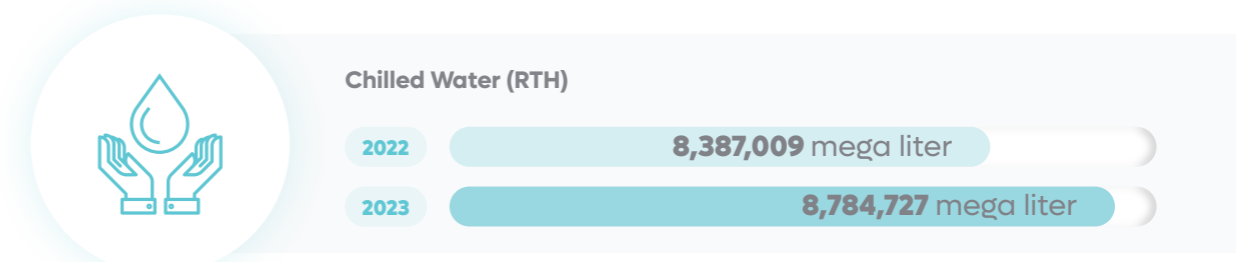
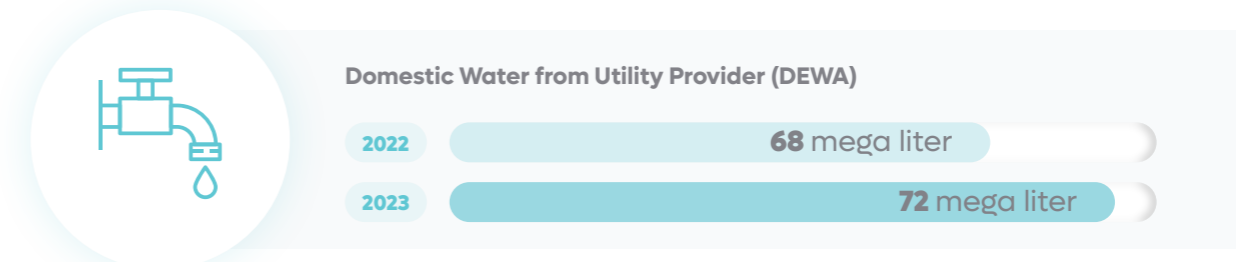
The DIFC is one of the few facilities in the UAE that manages waste collection, segregation, and recycling on-site. Central to this initiative is the DIFC Waste Recycling Centre, which has achieved a 30 per cent reduction in landfill waste from our owned buildings and substantially increased recycling rates. Our commitment to effective waste management not only supports a cleaner environment but also sets a high standard for other facilities in the region. The Energy Centre oversees these efforts, ensuring compliance with environmental regulations and promoting a cleaner, greener district.

During the reporting period, DIFC was actively exploring and identifying opportunities in waste management, recognising it as a material and important area of focus under its sustainability strategy.



Water Management

DIFC closely monitors water consumption and conducts thorough analyses to identify inefficiencies. Smart systems have been implemented to detect leaks and inefficiencies in real-time, allowing for prompt action and minimising water wastage. At Gate Avenue, a greywater recycling system repurposes water for irrigation and flushers, optimising the use of water resources. Additionally, TSE water is primarily used for landscaping. To further enhance water conservation, all taps across the facility have been upgraded to sensor-operated models equipped with water aerators, significantly reducing overall water consumption.



Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions

DIFC has prioritised decarbonisation efforts to support the UAE and Dubai Net Zero strategies and vision that align with the global direction towards sustainability and climate action. As a result, the newly established Sustainability function has prioritised decarbonisation efforts and the necessary action steps. A crucial first step in its decarbonisation efforts is the integration of periodic, accurate, and effective data collection and monitoring processes to track its environmental footprint. This data will enable DIFC to analyse and evaluate the effectiveness of its strategy and initiatives, allowing for informed decision-making to ensure the timely achievement of its decarbonisation goals.

Methodology

The organisational scope defines the criteria for determining which activities' emissions are included in the GHG inventory. It also outlines the reporting organisation's responsibility for these emissions and dictates how they are classified under Scope 1, Scope 2, or Scope 3.

DIFC's carbon footprint is based on the operational control consolidation approach, which includes all emissions from activities under DIFC's influence, even if they occur in assets not

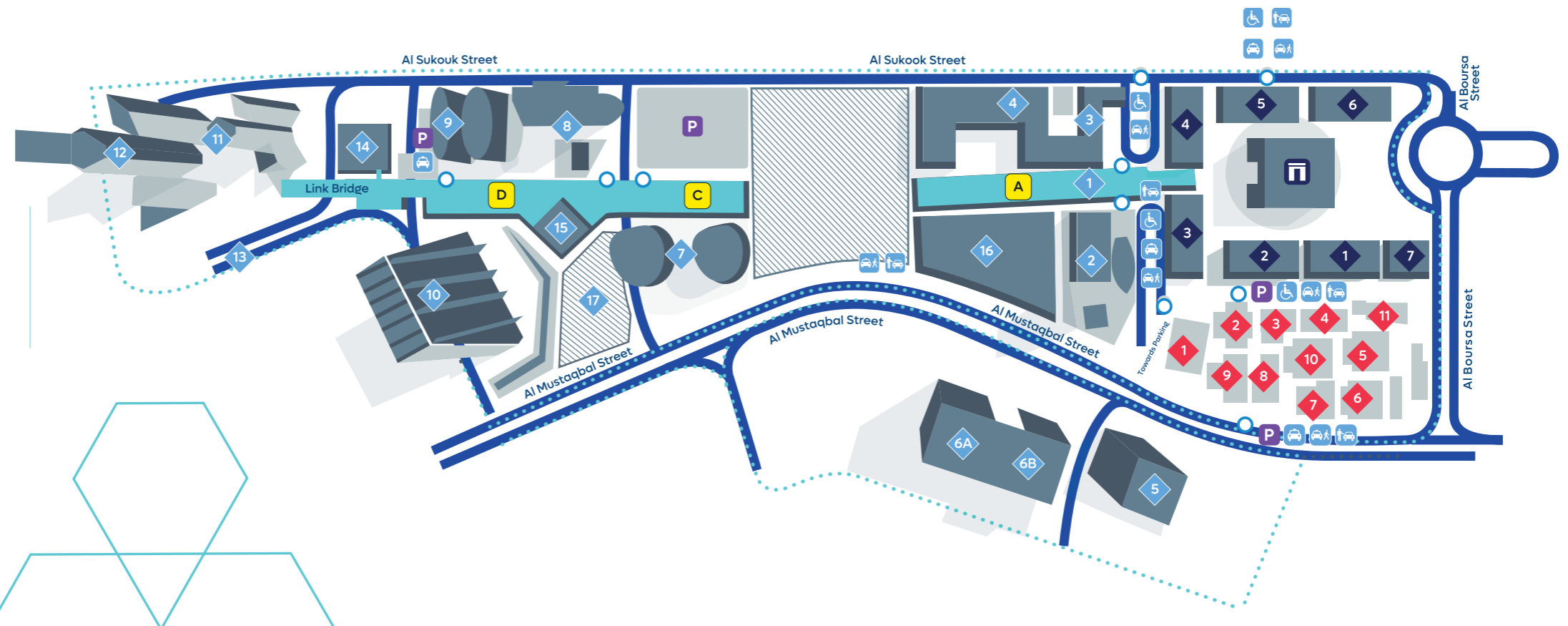
owned by DIFC. Scope 1 and 2 emissions cover activities within DIFC's control, while Scope 3 captures emissions from activities outside its direct control. For the financial year, 2022, baseline carbon footprint includes all 17 DIFC sites located in Dubai.

All 17 sites are fully included within DIFC's scope 1 and 2 emissions, even when parts of the floor area are leased to tenants. This is because the DIFC maintains direct ownership and control over the buildings' operations, making it best positioned to implement abatement measures. Additionally, the LPG consumption at Gate District 6 is accounted for in the footprint, as this building is connected to the common on-site LPG tank. No deliberate exclusions have been made.

Following the operational control consolidation approach, GHG emissions from DIFC's 76 Motor City residential apartments, which are leased to third parties, and the two 100 per cent owned subsidiaries—DIFC Global Limited and Art Dubai Ltd.—which do not operate within DIFC's 17 sites, are excluded from scope 1 and 2. Instead, they are included in Scope 3 under Category 13 (downstream leased assets) and Category 15 (investments), respectively.

For the financial year, 2022, baseline carbon footprint includes all 17 DIFC sites located in Dubai:

- | GATE DISTRICT | GATE VILLAGE | |
|-----------------------|--------------|------|
| The Gate | GV1 | GV6 |
| GD2 | GV2 | GV7 |
| GD3 | GV3 | GV8 |
| GD4 | GV4 | GV10 |
| GD5 | GV5 | GV11 |
| Gate Avenue | | |
| Truck Tunnel Entrance | | |



The annual emission data presented in this report covers the base year, being 2022:

	Scope 1	Scope 2	Scope 3
Definition	Direct greenhouse (GHG) emissions that occur from sources that are controlled or owned by DIFC.	Indirect GHG emissions stemming from the purchase of electricity and cooling. DIFC is using the location-based methodology for its calculations	Emissions from activities and assets not owned or controlled by DIFC but that are indirectly used or affected in the value chain. As defined by the Greenhouse Gas Protocol, there are 15 categories that could be sources of emissions.
Emission Sources	Emissions from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diesel combusted on-site for the operation and testing of backup generators • LPG combusted on-site used in restaurants for cooking • Petrol combusted in company-owned and controlled vehicles/ machines • Diesel combusted in company-owned and controlled vehicles/ machines 	Indirect emissions from electricity and chilled water consumption in fully owned buildings.	Include indirect emissions from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C1: Purchased goods and services • C2: Capital goods • C3: Fuel and energy-related activities not included in Scope 1 or Scope 2 • C5: Waste generated in operations • C6: Business travel • C7: Employee commute • C13: Downstream leased assets • C15: Investments

Activities excluded or not applicable

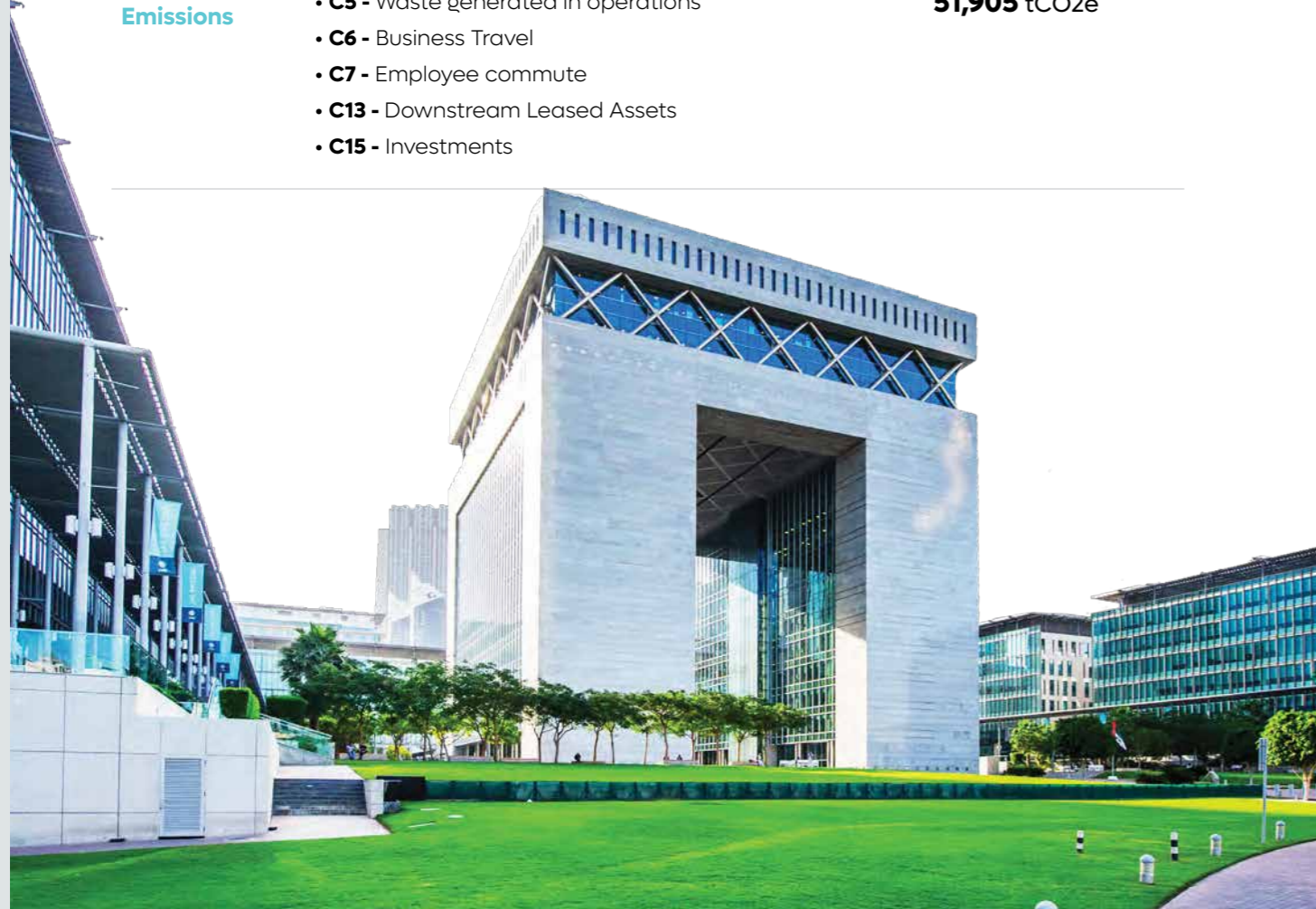
Scope 1: One source of emissions typically expected from an entity like DIFC is refrigerant usage. While this would usually be part of a property management company's scope 1 inventory, DIFC's cooling needs are met by district cooling services (i.e., chilled water). As a result, DIFC does not use refrigerants.

Scope 2: No activities are excluded from or not applicable to DIFC's scope 2 footprint.

Scope 3: The following categories are not applicable to DIFC:

- **C4:** Upstream transportation & distribution: These emissions mainly relate to subcontractors (e.g., construction, security, maintenance teams, cleaners) and are covered under categories 1 and 2 (purchased goods and services, and capital goods). Excluding category 4 prevents double counting.
- **C8:** Upstream leased assets: DIFC does not directly lease any assets to third parties. While machinery or fleets used in new building construction may be leased, they are operated by contractors. Therefore, scope 1 and 2 emissions from contractors are included in DIFC's scope 3 category 1 (purchased goods & services).
- **C9:** Downstream transportation & distribution: DIFC's only sales activities involve land sales to third parties during certain reporting years, which do not require transportation or distribution of products.
- **C10:** Processing of sold products: DIFC's sales activities are limited to land sales during certain years, with no processing involved.
- **C11:** Use of sold products: No emissions from land use change occurred during the reporting period, as no land sales to third parties took place, and therefore, no associated emissions were generated. Post-sale construction activities are outside DIFC's control. Additionally, embedded GHG emissions in the land are difficult to estimate and are considered insignificant, given the subsurface composition of the land (located in the UAE).
- **C12:** End-of-life treatment of sold products: There are no end-of-life treatment emissions associated with the land DIFC sells to third parties.
- **C14:** Franchises: DIFC does not operate as a franchisor.

Topic	Disclosure	Emissions in tCO2
Direct Emissions	Scope 1 Emissions	1,777 tCO2e
Indirect Emissions	Scope 2 Emissions - calculated using the location-based method	42,455 tCO2e
Value Chain Emissions	Scope 3 Emissions from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C1 - Purchased goods and services • C2 - Capital goods • C3 - Fuel- and energy-related activities • C5 - Waste generated in operations • C6 - Business Travel • C7 - Employee commute • C13 - Downstream Leased Assets • C15 - Investments 	51,905 tCO2e



LEED Certifications

Within DIFC's portfolio of buildings, 15 have been awarded LEED Certifications by the US Green Building Council (USGBC). The iconic 15-storey DIFC Gate Building, the gateway to the financial district, received the LEED Platinum Certification, the highest rating within the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) framework. This recognition was achieved by implementing several sustainable strategies, including energy efficiency, water conservation, waste management, transportation, and enhancing human experience. Additionally, 14 other structures within DIFC earned LEED Certification for excellence in green building practices.

Procurement Practices

A comprehensive transformation programme has been undertaken by the Procurement Department to align with best practices set by the Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply (CIPS), a globally recognised professional body for procurement and supply chain management. CIPS sets the standards for procurement excellence and provides guidance on ethical, efficient, and sustainable procurement practices. As part of this programme, sustainability-related considerations have been integrated into the procurement strategy, policy, and procedure.



Good to know:

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Certification is the globally recognised standard for green building and sustainability practices. Developed by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), LEED provides a framework for healthy, efficient, and cost-effective buildings. It encourages the implementation of practical and measurable strategies in the design, construction, and operation of new constructions, renovations, or existing buildings.

Achieving LEED certification is a mark of excellence, demonstrating a building's commitment to environmental responsibility, resource efficiency, and occupant well-being. By adhering to LEED standards, organisations reduce their environmental impact while achieving operational savings and providing healthier spaces for occupants.



Our People

DIFC's vision is to be a global financial hub that fosters the growth and development of financial services within the UAE by providing world-class infrastructure and business opportunities. Central to achieving this vision are the guiding principles of integrity, transparency, and simplicity. To ensure these principles are upheld, DIFC sets high standards of conduct and behaviour for all businesses operating within the Centre. Leading by example, DIFC not only reinforces these standards but also influences and inspires the broader business community within the Centre to align with its commitment to excellence.

DIFC's Employees in Numbers

Indicator 2023



Percentage of Emiratisation | **40%**



Employees receiving regular performance and career development review | **100%**

Employee Benefits

DIFC offers comprehensive benefits to all permanent employees, including medical and life insurance, annual airfare, and schooling allowances to support children's education costs. In compliance with Employment Law, GCC national employees receive pension benefits, while non-national employees are eligible for the DIFC Employee Workplace Savings (DEWS) Plan.

Parental Leave

Female employees who have completed their probation are entitled to 90 working days of maternity leave, depending on their length of service, with partial pay. This leave can be extended by using annual leave, up to a maximum limit based on service duration. Employees are permitted to attend antenatal appointments with prior notice. Pregnancy or adoption must be reported at least eight weeks before the expected due date, and maternity leave requests require a 21-day notice.

Paternity leave entitles male employees to five paid working days.

100%
DIFC's employees that took parental leave, returned to work and were still employed after 12 months.

In 2023, DIFC started its partnership with an innovative wellness platform designed to transform its approach to well-being.

All DIFC employees will gain exclusive access to tailored wellness data, enabling them to track progress, monitor health metrics, celebrate successes, and engage in revitalising activities to boost overall wellness.








Training and Education

DIFC is committed to fostering an environment of growth and ambition by providing employees with opportunities to upskill, develop new abilities, and access the training they need to thrive in their roles. To support this, DIFC implemented comprehensive policies, including a training request form that grants employees access to relevant training programmes, receive HR support, and benefit from training sponsorship and leave.

DIFC's e-learning platform serves as a centralised hub for organising and facilitating all training activities, ensuring that employees have the resources to meet their training needs and reach their full potential. In 2023, DIFC recorded an average of 13.2 training hours per employee.

Key Sustainability Topics for Capacity Building

	Skill Building for Women by Women
	AI Trust
	Generative AI and the World of Work
	Digital Forensics
	Computer & Internal Fraud Analysis

Whistleblower Policy

Whistleblowers are a key part of DIFC's ability to detect, identify, and escalate issues of misconduct. To ensure the effectiveness of this practice, comprehensive and robust procedures must be established to encourage and facilitate appropriate disclosures:

Process of Whistleblowing



Employees are encouraged to report concerns initially to their Line Manager, Head of Department, or the Human Resources Department. Alternatively, reports can be made internally via a secure email facility or by post. If an employee is uncomfortable with internal reporting, they can use a dedicated whistleblower disclosure process managed by an independent third-party service provider (Disclosure Officer).



The Disclosure Officer will review the report as defined under the Whistleblower Policy. If the Disclosure Coordinator, an independent employee in an executive/senior position responsible for assessing all disclosures, confirms that the reported issue has occurred, they will either refer the case to an investigator or handle it as a disciplinary matter.








Should the complaint involve the Disclosure Coordinator, it can be escalated directly to the Chairman of the Audit Committee, CEO, or Group CEO.

Health and Safety

As a leading financial centre, DIFC recognises that a robust approach to health and safety is not just a regulatory requirement but a fundamental aspect of maintaining a thriving business environment. Ensuring the safety and well-being of employees, clients, and visitors is critical to upholding the Centre's reputation, operational integrity and confidence among stakeholders.

All employers are obligated to maintain a safe and healthy work environment, in compliance with DIFC's Laws and Regulations, which mandates adherence to safety and occupational health standards. The welfare of DIFC's workforce and the broader community is a top priority. Hence, DIFC puts in place various health and safety policies, templates and forms which are accessible to all stakeholders on DIFC's [Website](#):

DIFC's Health and Safety Policies

-  **Evacuation Route Mapping for all buildings**
-  **Emergency Management Plan**
-  **Fire Warden Drill Report**
-  **Head Count List**
-  **Drill Feedback Form**








In its own operations, if unforeseen situations occur, such as extreme weather events or power failures that pose safety risks or disrupt operations, DIFC may temporarily close its facilities. Employees present in the office during such events must adhere to evacuation procedures. Should operations be officially halted, those affected will receive paid time off. In the case of public sector emergency closures, line managers will advise employees on whether to report to work or work from home the following day.

Employee Rights

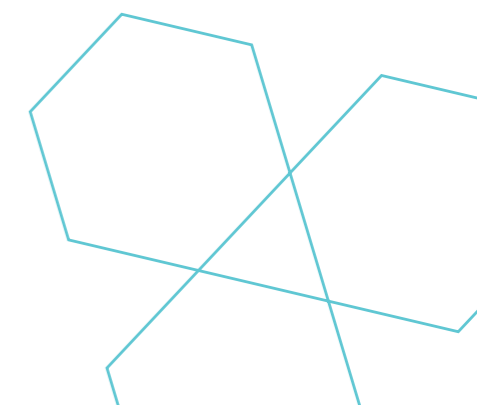
DIFC's Employment Law of 2019, was designed to establish employment standards for employees, promote the fair treatment of employees by employers, and foster employment practices that will contribute to the prosperity of DIFC. The Law applies to all businesses and their employees established in the Centre, including a body, authority, registry or entity established by or pursuant to the DIFC Founding Law. The Law was last updated in 2022 and is accessible to all stakeholders on DIFC's [Website](#).

The Law lays out the relationship between employers and employees, ensuring that the rights, responsibilities, and obligations of both parties are clearly defined and protected.

Key Areas Detailed in the Law

-  **Hiring Practices**
-  **Working Time and Leave**
-  **Time off Work**
-  **Health and Safety**
-  **Termination of Employment**
-  **Protection of Remuneration**
-  **Parental Leave**
-  **Employer's and Employee's Obligations**
-  **Non-Discrimination**

DIFC reserves the power to impose fines and penalties for any contraventions or violations of the Law.



Conscious Communities

DIFC is committed to embedding sustainability, social responsibility, and ethical practices into the core of its corporate culture and the community it serves. In 2023, DIFC organised and participated in multiple community events aimed at creating a positive impact on those working, living, and visiting the Centre. The objective is to establish an environment that is mindful of its impact on the world and actively promotes stewardship, social equity, and collective well-being.



Support Categories in 2023

Category	Event	Description
Economic Prosperity	Global Business Forums	DIFC organises various business forums including the Dubai FinTech Summit, Investor Days, AIM Summit, and many others to bring together industry leaders to discuss global business trends and opportunities, solidifying DIFC's status as a major financial and innovation hub.
	Art Nights	Art Nights is a biannual celebration where emerging and established artists showcase their works, enhancing community engagement with a mix of art exhibits, fashion pop-ups, and musical performances.
Culture	Cultural Awareness	DIFC also celebrates diverse cultural events like Chinese New Year and Diwali, reflecting its multicultural community and enhancing cultural understanding among its residents and visitors.
	UAE Flag Day	DIFC celebrated the nation's history and achievements by raising the UAE flag at the iconic Gate Building. Flag Day was initiated in 2013 by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, to honour the UAE's founding fathers.
	UAE National Day	In celebration of the 52nd UAE Union Day, DIFC curated a series of events, focusing on the nation's heritage, achievements, and future opportunities. The long weekend featured family-oriented workshops and engaging activities that highlighted the UAE's rich cultural heritage, inviting visitors to partake in the festivities.
Health and Well-being	Fitness Events	Including the Gate Avenue Fitness Hub and the Dubai Fitness Challenge, these events offer a variety of fitness activities and health-focused discussions, promoting an active and healthy lifestyle among participants.

DIFC's Way Forward

As DIFC continues to lead in sustainable finance and innovation, the future is defined by ambition, resilience, and collaboration. Building on achievements to date, bold goals are being set to accelerate progress. This forward-looking approach will strengthen DIFC's role as a global hub for sustainability while unlocking new opportunities for growth and impact across the region. In the coming years, the focus will be on the following areas:



Continuing the Commitment to Transparency and Improved Disclosure

DIFC will focus on integrating the International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB) sustainability disclosure standards, DIFC aims to ensure greater alignment between sustainability and financial disclosures. This integration will provide stakeholders with a more comprehensive understanding of the financial risks and opportunities posed by climate change and other ESG factors.



Improving Data Management

DIFC will focus on streamlining its sustainability data management systems, ensuring accurate, consistent, and timely collection of key sustainability metrics across the organisation. This will contribute to enhanced transparency and disclosure and enable monitoring of achievement of its decarbonisation targets.



Accelerating Decarbonisation Across the District

Aligned with its Decarbonisation Strategy, in the near future DIFC plans to scale up its efforts across the district. To accomplish this, the Centre will prioritise establishing a comprehensive baseline of carbon emissions across its operations and infrastructure. This will enable DIFC to identify key emission hotspots and develop targeted strategies for reducing emissions, ensuring progress towards its decarbonisation goals.





For more information

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