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Nakheel and EHS launch Dubai's first marine biology laboratory

Nakheel, one of the world's largest privately held real estate developers, and Environment Health & Safety, the regulatory arm of Trakhees - Ports, Customs & Free Zone Corporation, Dubai, today announced the official opening of Dubai's first specialized marine biology laboratory.



Designed to develop a long-term environmental monitoring programme for all of Nakheel's coastal projects specifically and other Dubai World projects in the future, the EHS Marine Environmental Laboratory follows on from the MOU signed between Nakheel and Environment Health & Safety (EHS) in July 2007 as part of its environmental monitoring programme for the waters of the Arabian Gulf.

The laboratory opens as part of the United Nations University - International Network on Water, Environment and Health's (UNU-INWEH) four year programme, 'Strategic Management of Marine Ecosystem in Nakheel Projects,' launched in December 2006.

The programme aims to design and implement a long-term monitoring and management program for the marine environments surrounding Nakheel's marine projects and to provide informed guidance on marine environmental management to Nakheel.

The laboratory will provide analytical capacity to support the marine field underwater activities for building the marine monitoring programme.

Amin Al Mulla, Chief Operating Officer for EHS said:

'The EHS Marine Environmental Laboratory is equipped with highly advanced marine biology equipment and will measure water quality parameters and undertake physical oceanography to complement and support the underwater field marine activities around Nakheel's iconic manmade islands. This is an exciting day for EHS - a milestone in our ongoing relationship with Nakheel that sets the standard for coastal development in the region. Both Nakheel and EHS staff will be trained and their capabilities enhanced by UNU-INWEH scientists on the operation of this sophisticated equipment and the handling of marine samples from the field'.

Abdulrahman Kalantar, Managing Director of Design and Development for Nakheel said:

'The Marine Environmental Laboratory is an important tool to verify the chemical, biological and physical health of Dubai's coastal waters. It is a significant milestone that confirms Nakheel's dedication to responsible and sustainable coastal development and it will ultimately harmonize our new launch of the Blue Communities Strategy. We value the scientific depth of UNU-INWEH research and look forward to a very long term working relationship with EHS authorities towards effective environmental monitoring of our coastal developments'.

Dr. Peter Sale, Assistant Director, UNU-INWEH, and lead scientists on the project, said: 'There is currently a remarkable trend and interest in man-made islands. Such major coastal or off-shore construction projects demand effective environmental management during and long after construction, and our partnership with Nakheel and EHS will enable us to build the capacity needed to undertake that critical management function. This new laboratory is a vital part of this collaboration and provides needed facilities to do the research and analysis that is required. We particularly look forward to the training opportunities that this lab will enable us to undertake for the Gulf region'.

Working from Nakheel's Environmental Department at the Nakheel Design Group, the UNU-INWEH marine scientists will operate the lab for the programme's duration, and will work closely with EHS and the Nakheel Environment Department to train staff on the latest ecological monitoring technology.

In addition to the laboratory space, EHS will also provide laboratory staff to sustain the analysis undertaken across all Nakheel marine developments.