

UAE President witnesses partnership announcement between Mohamed bin Zayed Water Initiative and XPRIZE

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His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates, today witnessed the announcement of a partnership between the Mohamed bin Zayed Water Initiative and XPRIZE, with an investment of \$150 million to launch the XPRIZE Water Scarcity competition, which has a total prize purse of \$119 million.

The five-year global competition aims to encourage innovators around the world to focus on transforming the reliability, affordability and sustainability of water desalination technologies.

The Mohamed bin Zayed Water Initiative is dedicated to raising the importance of water scarcity on the international agenda and accelerating the development, testing and deployment at scale of transformative and sustainable technological solutions to address the threats it poses to people, businesses and communities worldwide. Working with its partners, the initiative seeks to harness the power of targeted investment, accelerated technological innovation and expanded international cooperation to address this worsening challenge.

Commenting on the launch of the Mohamed bin Zayed Water Initiative and XPRIZE partnership announcement, His Highness Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Chairman of the Mohamed bin Zayed Water Initiative, said, “The solutions that currently exist to address the water scarcity crisis are not sufficient to prevent a range of unacceptable scenarios from occurring. New solutions are therefore urgently required, and the Mohamed bin Zayed Water Initiative is committed to collaborating with stakeholders from around the world to uncover these new ideas, to prove their viability, and to bring them to fruition as efficiently as possible.”

The partnership announcement ceremony, which took place at the historic Niqa Bin Ateej Water Tank, was attended by H.H. Sheikh Theyab bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Chairman of the Office of Development and Martyrs Families Affairs at the Presidential Court; Sheikh Mohammed bin Hamad bin Tahnoun Al Nahyan, Advisor for Special Affairs at the Presidential Court; Dr. Sultan bin Ahmed Al Jaber, Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology; Mohamed Hassan Alsuwaidi, Minister of Investment; Khaldoon Khalifa Al Mubarak, Chairman of the Executive Affairs Authority and Member of the Executive Council, and a number of sheikhs, ministers and senior officials.

Global water scarcity is a rapidly growing problem impacting people and communities around the world. Studies have shown that as many as four billion people experience water scarcity for at least one month per year. The drivers of increasing water scarcity are varied and include population growth and demographic change, infrastructure and governance challenges, as well as environmental pollution and climate change. Without effective action, global water scarcity is projected to have an array of devastating consequences, including loss of life and humanitarian crises, food

insecurity, mass migration, geopolitical instability, and potentially even armed conflict over water. Governments, the private sector, researchers, entrepreneurs, philanthropists, international organisations, and individuals all have a crucial role to play in overcoming the far-reaching consequences of water scarcity.

The establishment of the Mohamed bin Zayed Water Initiative is part of a wider UAE-led effort to address global water scarcity, which included the publication of a detailed discussion paper on the subject in September 2023, entitled “Ripple Effect: Water Scarcity – The Hidden Threat to Global Security and Prosperity.”

The discussion paper, which remains available for download from the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is a global call to action for a more decisive and coordinated international response to this worsening issue.

Peter H. Diamandis, MD, Founder and Executive Chairman of the Board, XPRIZE, said, “XPRIZE Water Scarcity is a global call to scientists, engineers and entrepreneurs to convert water scarcity into water abundance by using converging exponential technologies to address this critical global need. XPRIZE Water Scarcity, our largest competition to date, is a first of its kind focused on creating new desalination solutions to unlock Earth’s ocean water to clean water for all, in an equitable and sustainable fashion.”

The partnership with the XPRIZE Foundation – a global leader in designing, launching and implementing large-scale competitions to address the most pressing challenges facing humanity – aims to spur innovation by incentivising crowd-sourced, scientifically viable solutions to create a more equitable and abundant future for all.

Further information on the Mohamed bin Zayed Water Initiative can be found at www.mbzwi.ae.

More information on the XPRIZE Water Scarcity competition, including the full prize terms, is available at www.xprize.org/water.

<https://www.mohamedbinzayed.ae>