



Themed Harnessing Science for Sustainability:

ICBA Celebrates 25 Years of Innovation and Global Impact

Dubai, UAE, 18 December 2024:

The International Center for Biosaline Agriculture ([ICBA](#)) celebrated a major milestone today as it marked its 25th Jubilee at its headquarters in Dubai. The event welcomed high-profile dignitaries, including ministers, global sustainability leaders, and key stakeholders who have played pivotal roles in ICBA's transformative journey over the last quarter century. The event showcased ICBA's achievements over 25 years and highlighted the launch of its ambitious 2024-2034 Strategy and new identity.

Speaking at the 25th Jubilee Celebration, HE Dr. Amna bint Abdullah Al Dahak, UAE Minister of Climate Change and Environment said, "Research, innovation and collaboration are critical to developing and implementing resilient, sustainable agricultural practices to create lasting, positive change. ICBA's global center of excellence is instrumental in developing climate-smart solutions, and today, we look back on the research center's progress to date and set a course for the next 25 years of excellence."

"The UAE has long believed collaboration is crucial to transforming food and water systems for a sustainable future. The ICBA is a shining example of an organization that is embracing partnership. By drawing in experience and expertise from a wide range of experts across an international network, it takes a holistic approach to our biggest challenges."



Representing the Islamic Development Bank, H.E. Eng. Mohammad Jamal Al Saati, Special Advisor to the President, shared his thoughts on the enduring partnership: "As we commemorate ICBA's 25th anniversary, we acknowledge the significant contributions it has made to global food security and environmental sustainability. This joint investment between the UAE Government and IsDB has empowered ICBA to make a tangible difference in the lives of millions. The IsDB looks forward to ICBA achieving its goals within its new strategy, reaching financial sustainability and building more partnerships."

Dr. Shiekha Al Dhaheri, Secretary General of Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi stated: "As we commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the International Center for Biosaline Agriculture, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to this remarkable institution for its pioneering contributions to sustainable agriculture and environmental resilience. Over the past quarter-century, ICBA has become a global beacon of innovation, tackling critical challenges like water scarcity and soil degradation, and offering transformative solutions for arid and saline environments. Its legacy reflects a profound commitment to building a sustainable and food-secure future for communities worldwide.

She added: "The Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi is proud to reaffirm our commitment to supporting ICBA's mission and advancing shared goals of sustainability and environmental stewardship. Together, we will continue to champion innovative solutions for the challenges of tomorrow."

H.E. Razan Khalifa Al Mubarak, Chair of ICBA's Board of Directors, reflected on ICBA's transformative impact over the years: " Since its founding in 1999, ICBA has addressed critical challenges such as salinity, water scarcity, and climate change, particularly in arid and saline environments. This progress would not have been possible without the vision of the UAE's wise leadership and the support of our co-



founders—the UAE Government, the Islamic Development Bank, the OPEC Fund for International Development, and the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development.

H.E. Al Mubarak added: “Over the past 25 years, ICBA has grown into a global center of excellence, delivering innovative solutions that enhance food security, improve water sustainability, and build resilience in agriculture. Its work demonstrates the power of science and collaboration in tackling some of the world’s most pressing challenges.”

Dr. Tarifa Ajeif Alzaabi, Director General of ICBA, commented: “As we celebrate 25 years of achievements, we reflect on ICBA’s journey of resilience, innovation, and collaboration. Over the past quarter century, we have turned challenges such as salinity, water scarcity, and climate change into opportunities, empowering some of the world’s most vulnerable communities to thrive.”

Dr. Tarifa Ajeif Alzaabi, Director General of ICBA, commented: “As we celebrate 25 years of achievements, we reflect on ICBA’s journey of resilience, innovation, and collaboration. Over the past quarter century, we have turned challenges such as salinity, water scarcity, and climate change into opportunities, empowering some of the world’s most vulnerable communities to thrive.”

Dr. Alzaabi added: “Our new 2024-2034 Strategy builds on ICBA’s legacy of delivering innovative solutions for salinity management and climate adaptation. It strengthens our leadership in developing scalable approaches to prevent, manage, and recover from the impacts of salinity, while ensuring sustainable agricultural practices and resilient ecosystems. This strategy reaffirms our role as a global bridge, connecting rigorous scientific research with practical solutions that drive tangible impact and long-term progress.”



Her Excellency continued: “Our new identity reflects a bold, forward-looking vision designed to meet the evolving needs of our partners and the communities we serve. Moving ahead, we remain committed to fostering impactful partnerships, advancing innovation, and delivering scalable, science-driven solutions that address critical global challenges, including food security and climate resilience. Together, we will build a future defined by sustainability, resilience, and shared prosperity.”

A Bold Vision for the Future

The new strategy focuses on strengthening ICBA’s impact through science-driven solutions, fostering global partnerships, and expanding efforts to tackle food and water security challenges while enhancing climate resilience. It emphasizes innovative approaches to prevent, manage, and recover from the impacts of salinity, ensuring sustainable agricultural practices and resilient ecosystems in arid and saline environments.

The event unveils ICBA’s new identity, showcasing its forward-thinking vision and commitment to sustainable innovation. The refreshed logo symbolizes ICBA’s mission, with the droplet highlighting the critical importance of water, the blue section representing this vital resource, and the brown section signifying soil as the cornerstone of sustainable agriculture. At its center, a green leaf represents growth, renewal, and ICBA’s focus on climate-resilient crops, biodiversity, and food security.

Celebrating Achievements and Partnerships

The event celebrated ICBA’s 25-year journey with a short film showcasing its milestones and achievements, an appreciation ceremony, and the signing of future collaborative agreements. Key contributors, including founders, core donors, former



leadership, partners, and board members, were honored for their pivotal roles in shaping ICBA's success and advancing its mission over the years.

H.E. Dr. Amna bint Abdullah Al Dahak, UAE Minister of Climate Change and Environment, joined Dr. Tarifa Alzaabi, Director General of ICBA, in honoring individuals and organizations whose transformative contributions have been integral to ICBA's success and mission. The Minister was also recognized for her visionary leadership and commitment to advancing sustainable agriculture and fostering resilience in some of the world's most challenging environments.

A heartfelt tribute was also extended to H.E. Dr. Ahmed Mohammed Ali Al-Madani, the first president of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), acknowledging IsDB's enduring partnership and substantial contributions to ICBA's success.

The ceremony further recognized the dedication of ICBA's scientists and employees, whose innovative efforts and relentless commitment have been instrumental in driving the center's impact and fostering progress in arid and saline environments.

Guests also toured ICBA's research facilities and enjoyed a climate-resilient menu curated by Chef Luca, inspired by ICBA's sustainable agriculture practices. This segment underscored the event's emphasis on innovation, collaboration, and a shared vision for a sustainable future.

Celebrating Achievements and Looking Ahead

As ICBA marks 25 years of transformative impact, its new strategy and identity reaffirm its commitment to addressing global challenges through innovation and collaboration. By strengthening partnerships, advancing sustainable agricultural practices, and driving climate resilience, ICBA continues to pave the way for a future defined by food and water security, sustainability, and shared prosperity. This



milestone celebration underscores ICBA's enduring role as a global leader in empowering communities to thrive in the face of adversity.

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