

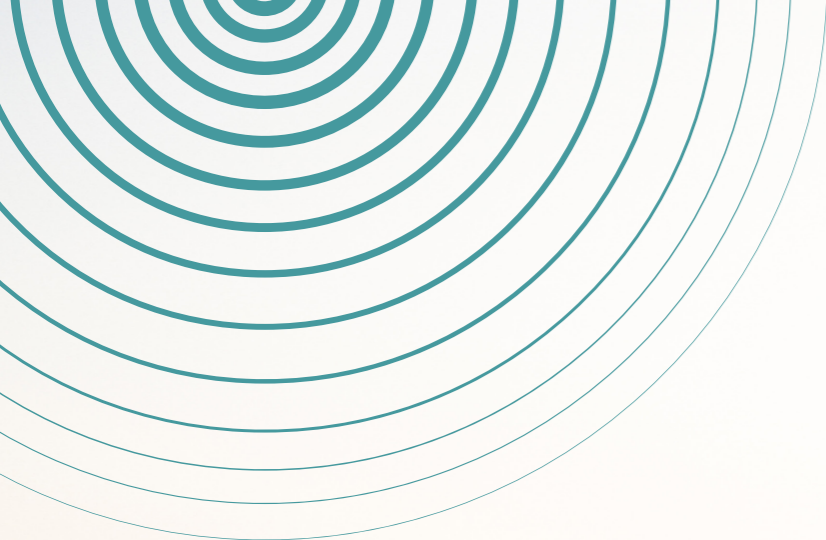


# LEADERS OF CHANGE

IMPACT REPORT Q2 2025

UAE'S MOVEMENT FOR NATURE





# ABOUT LEADERS OF CHANGE

## A nationwide movement for nature

	<p>Since <b>2021</b>, the movement has been a powerful act of <b>love for the planet</b></p>		<p>More than <b>10,000 Leaders of Change</b> have supported conservation</p>		<p>Giving more than <b>37,000 hours to nature</b></p>
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From participating in training sessions and coastal cleanups to hiking across national parks to plant native trees and install camera traps, many of you rolled up your sleeves and took action. In giving back to nature, you also gave to yourself, leaving recharged, inspired, and more deeply rooted in something bigger.

That connection – between people and planet – is also powering real science. Every time you tracked wildlife, monitored native trees, or surveyed a landscape, you added to a growing body of scientific research. Together, you’ve contributed **more than 100,000 data points**. This valuable data helps assess the state of natural ecosystems, supports global IUCN Red List efforts, and informs decision-making.

And in 2025 – **the UAE Year of Community** – you’re driving the momentum forward. Each action and moment of support sends ripples of change across the UAE, reshaping the future of our shared environment.



# PROGRESS AGAINST GOALS

## You are creating new ripples every day

As a Leader of Change, you're not just volunteering – you're inspiring change, raising awareness, and helping build a movement that grows stronger with every action.

This year, we set three ambitious goals for our Leaders of Change community. Here's how far you have taken us by mid-year:

### 1 YOU'VE DEDICATED THOUSANDS OF HOURS TO NATURE, HELPING US REACH 50% OF OUR 15,000 HOUR GOAL.

Every hour you spend in nature – spotting and recording unique species, protecting turtle nesting sites, planting native trees and more – helps advance citizen science, build practical skills, connect with like-minded changemakers, and contribute to national and global conservation goals.



### 2 YOU'VE CONTRIBUTED 14,708 DATA POINTS AS CITIZEN SCIENTISTS. THAT'S 30% OF OUR 40,000 DATA POINT GOAL!

Each observation you log powers real science. Your data helps assess the health of natural ecosystems, supports global IUCN Red List efforts, and guides decisions to protect species and habitats.



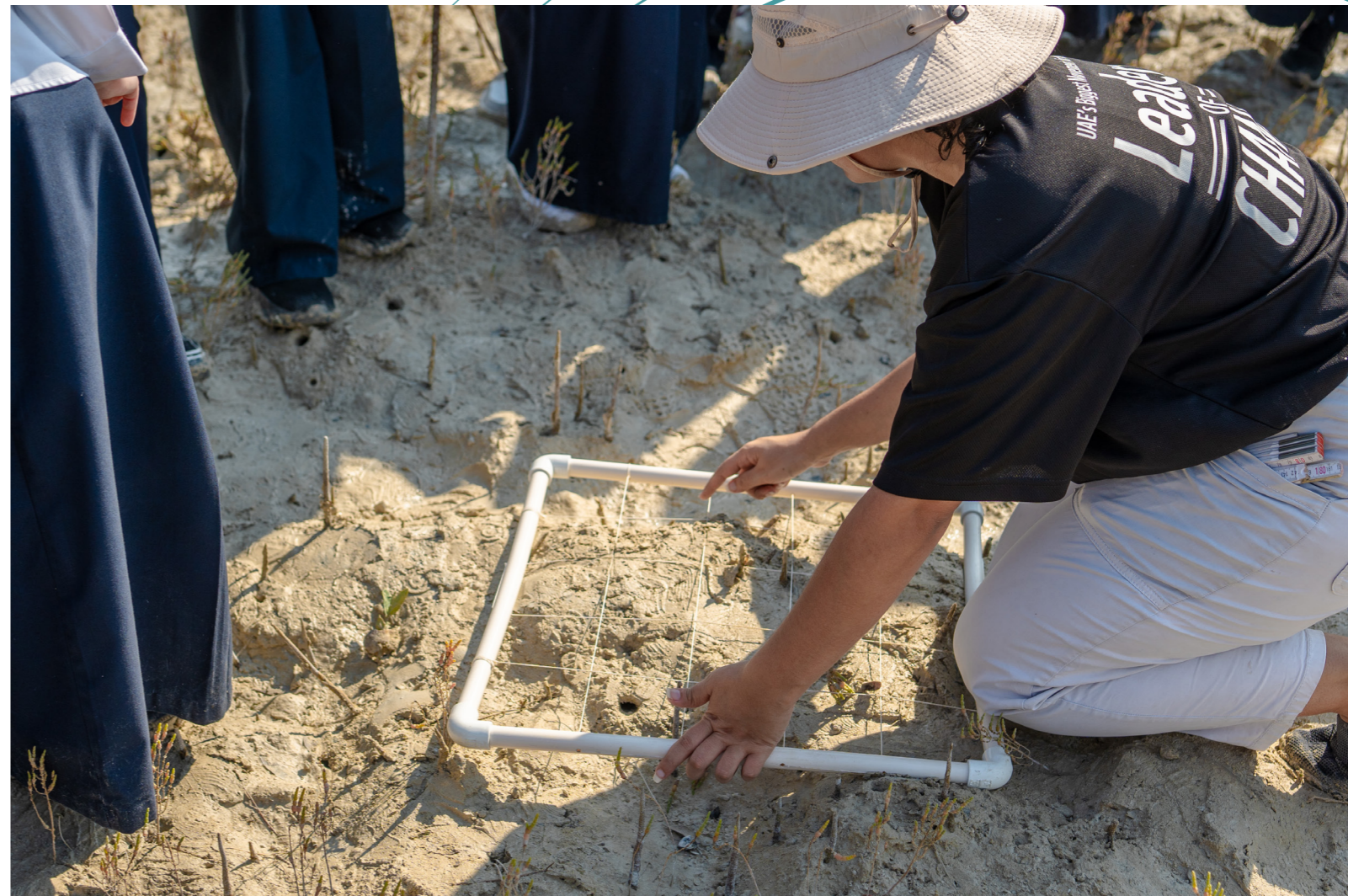
### 3 YOU'RE INSPIRING OTHERS TO JOIN THE MOVEMENT (OUR CURRENT NEPS SCORE IS 95, SURPASSING OUR GOAL OF 60+)

Even if you haven't had a chance to join us in person yet, your presence still matters. Your support strengthens this movement, drives conservation efforts across the country, and helps inspire others to take action.



Together, we are proving that meaningful change doesn't require everyone to do everything – it simply takes each of us doing what we can.

Whether you're planting trees, submitting data, spreading the word, or quietly cheering from the sidelines, you are part of something powerful.



# QUARTER 2 IMPACT

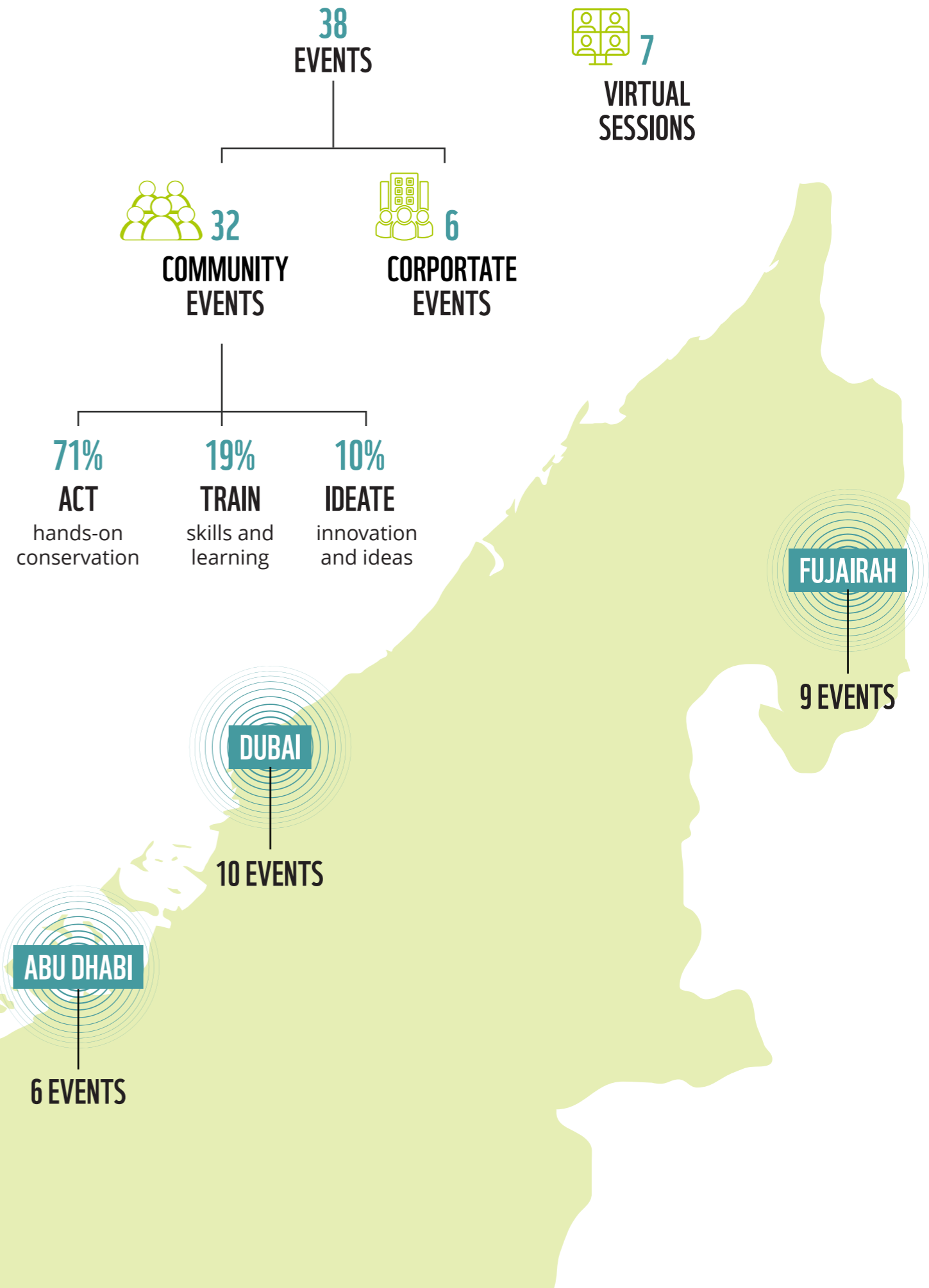
## In Quarter 2 of 2025, you showed up for nature

From the pristine beaches of Saadiyat Island to the rocky mountains of Ain Al Ghamour in Fujairah, the collective strength of our community is helping bring nature back to life.

Your membership powers this progress – whether you attend or not – helping restore ecosystems, support youth leaders and create impact across the country.



Every observation helps scientists monitor species, map habitats, and guide strategies to protect the UAE's precious ecosystems.



# YOU ARE REAL PEOPLE MAKING A REAL IMPACT

You are proving that a single morning spent in nature can spark ripples that last for months and years.

At Saadiyat Beach, one of the UAE's most beautiful and protected coastlines, mid-March to mid-June marks hawksbill turtle nesting season. Throughout these months, you gathered at dawn for **Turtle Patrols** – one of our most popular activities – scanning the sand for turtle tracks, new nests, and hatchlings.

For some, like **Nidhi Chimnani**, the Turtle Patrol will soon become an annual family tradition:

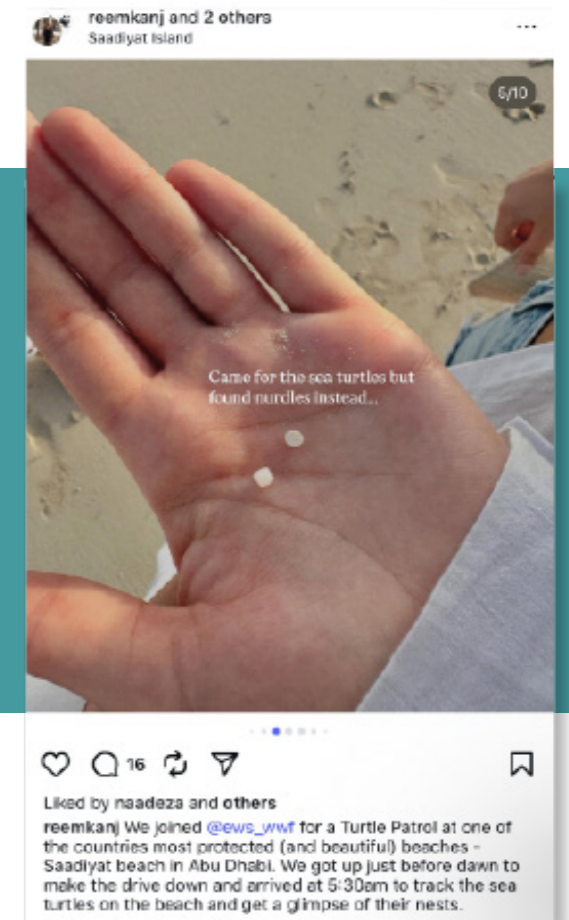
“ My son and I created wonderful new core memories at the Turtle Patrol. We've added the hawksbill turtle nesting season to our family calendar and look forward to joining next year, with more friends and family members. ”



Each patrol is different – some reveal fresh turtle activity, others the stark reality of plastic pollution along our coasts.

Sisters **Reem and Natalya Kanj** shared their experience on Instagram with a powerful call to action:

“ We didn't find any sea turtles, but what we did find was a heartbreaking amount of nurdles... teeny tiny pellets of plastic. These nurdles constitute the second most significant origin of microplastic debris discovered along coastlines. We want to welcome you to take it upon yourselves to become collectors, the next time you're on the beach, take a glass jar with you and start filling it up. ”



For **Rohail Akbar**, a familiar face at Leaders of Change events, the patrols inspired a renewed commitment:

“ I'll be more conscious about my use of plastic products. My understanding of nurdles and how plastics end up on beaches has been deepened. I'll also be a lot more careful if I encounter a turtle nest, and learned that it is best to contact a specialized/authorized person if there is a need to handle or intervene with a nesting site. ”



For **Emilse Soriano**, learning about sea turtles left a lasting impression:

“ I tend to be conscious about the use of plastic. But today, learning how delicate and difficult it is for turtles – the job of reproducing and how important they are – I’ll definitely make more effort and spread the word. ”



## YOU ARE DOCUMENTING THE UAE’S WILDLIFE – BUILDING A RECORD THAT INFORMS LOCAL CONSERVATION AND GLOBAL RESEARCH

Through the **City Nature Challenge**, you joined a global citizen science movement that encourages people to explore their cities, document wildlife, and share their findings with the world.

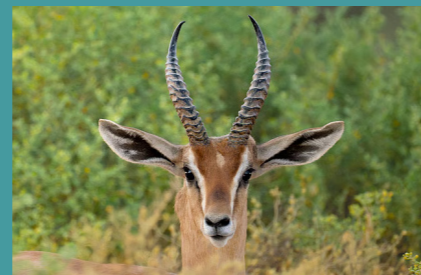
For four days in Dubai, Leaders of Change and residents stepped outside, looked closer, and uncovered the rich urban biodiversity around us. **More than 1,300 wild plants and animals were spotted**, showcasing the UAE’s unique biodiversity on a global stage. A special thanks to Terra, Expo City Dubai for bringing this inspiring initiative to the UAE.



**Cormobuthus arabicus & tiger beetle**  
Recorded by Dr. Andrew Gardner, Associate Head of Biodiversity Conservation, Emirates Nature-WWF



**Arabian red dwarf & Blue-spotted salmon Arab**  
Spotted by Georgina Pereira, Species Survival Manager, Terra, Expo City Dubai, and Leader of Change



**Arabian gazelle & Middle Eastern short-fingered gecko**  
Spotted by Rohail Akbar, Leader of Change

“ The data collected has real-world impact, ” explained **Arabella Willing**, Head of Conservation Outreach & Citizen Science at Emirates Nature-WWF.

Initiatives like these inspire people to become scientists in their own communities, while the information gathered helps track species, assess habitats, and shape conservation strategies.

For many of you, that sense of purpose made the experience deeply rewarding. **Desiree Balbon**, who joined a **Nature at Night event**, reflected:

“ I joined the night activity at Al Marmoom Reserve and found it meaningful. We clearly contributed by helping researchers update the iNaturalist database and uploading observations for the ongoing competition. ”



### YOUR STORY GOES GLOBAL!

Visitors from WWF offices across Asia Pacific joined a special Leaders of Change Nature at Night event during the AP25 Conference – experiencing how we harness the power of community to drive change.

## YOU ARE TURNING PASSION INTO PURPOSE – AND EMBARKING ON GREEN CAREERS

You served as citizen scientists, working alongside scientists to unveil the UAE’s wild side. Through **Camera Trap surveys**, you categorized images of desert and mountain species – including the Dhofar toad, Feulner’s semaphore gecko and bagworm moth – generating vital data to monitor populations and safeguard fragile habitats.

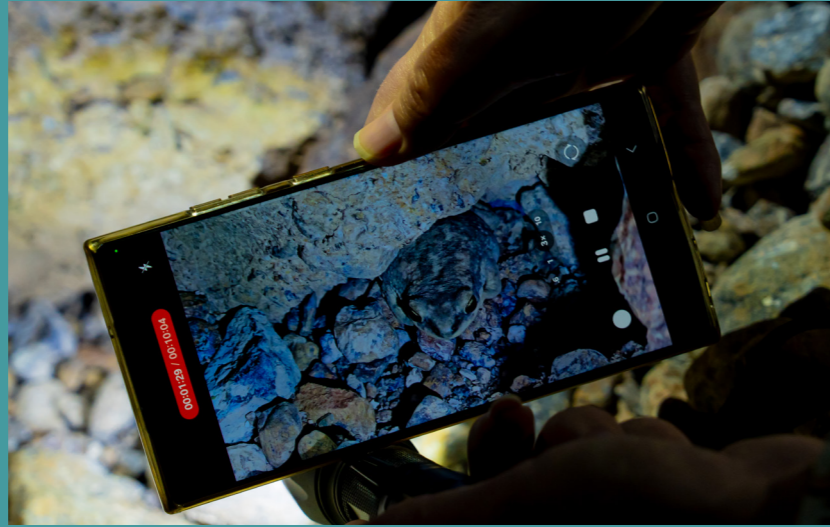
This quarter also marked the first Leaders of Change event at Ain Al Ghamour – a breathtaking site in Fujairah’s rugged mountains. Together with the Fujairah Environmental Authority, you are helping study and protect its unique habitats.

These experiences often uncover a side of the UAE that few have noticed before. As **Tahir Mohammed** shared:

“ I am more aware about the wildlife that exists within the UAE and how to protect it after attending Emirates Nature-WWF’s events... I didn’t [realize] we had as much wildlife in the UAE. ”

They can also spark new ways to contribute beyond the field, as **Deepta** shared:

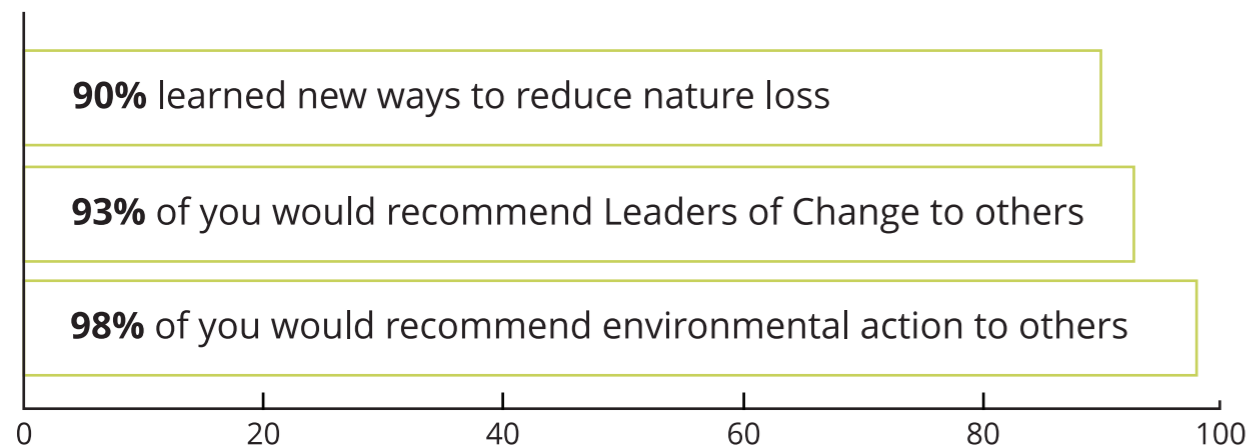
“ After participating in the Emirates Nature-WWF camera trap activity, I’ve become more aware of local wildlife and conservation needs. I plan to raise awareness through my photography, continue volunteering, and adopt more sustainable practices in daily life. ”



Often, these initial steps into conservation become pathways to green careers. After exploring different aspects of conservation through the Leaders of Change programme, **Iqtedar Ali** turned his passion for nature into a professional role at an environmental consultancy firm.

## YOU ARE CHERISHING THIS IMPACT

Giving back to nature is a rewarding experience. You shared that this experience is impactful, educational and deeply satisfying.



Most of you discovered our events through:

**39%**  
CORPORATE PARTNERS

**22%**  
LEADERS OF CHANGE WEBSITE

**10%**  
WORD OF MOUTH

## SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE!

Every shared moment – from conversations to social posts – inspires others to join the movement.

Tag **@ews\_wwf** and use the hashtag **#leadersofchange** on your socials!



## Your story is making waves

Your impact is echoing across the nation, inspiring thousands more to join the movement.



### AL ITTIHAD

Highlighted how members of the public, like you, are helping protect biodiversity on International Day for Biological Diversity (reach 750,000)



### THE NATIONAL

Showcased the growing momentum for conservation (reach 3.6 million)



### KHALEEJ TIMES

Celebrated the fascinating wildlife discoveries you documented during the City Nature Challenge (reach 3.9 million)



### @JAEYEAROF

Featured Leaders of Change on TikTok, showing why this community matters and inviting others to join during the Year of Community (reach 54,000 followers)



### WAM ARABIC

Spotlighted the programme on World Environment Day (reach 370,000+)

## LOOKING AHEAD, THE SECOND HALF OF 2025 IS FILLED WITH OPPORTUNITIES TO CREATE MORE RIPPLES.

- The Leaders of Change summer series **'Sprint for Change'** launched in June, with exciting citizen science activities and community impact challenges taking place.
- Events are expanding to new sites across the UAE – from coastal habitats to the rugged mountains of Ain Al Ghamour in Fujairah – with more to follow!



# THANK YOU FOR LEADING THE CHANGE!



Emirates Nature-WWF is an environmental NGO established to conserve the United Arab Emirates' natural heritage and build a future where people and nature thrive. The organization was founded in 2001 by our Honorary Founder and President, H.H. Sheikh Hamdan bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Ruler's Representative in the Al Dhafra Region and Chairman of the Governing Board of the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi, inspired by the legacy of the late Sheikh Zayed. For two decades, Emirates Nature-WWF has been a prominent and active partner in designing, implementing and scaling up science-driven conservation across the MENA region. We work in association with WWF, one of the world's largest and most respected independent conservation organizations. As a charity with a federal mandate, Emirates Nature-WWF places local communities at the heart of every initiative. Through the Leaders of Change programme, we engage civil society, government entities and businesses in hands-on conservation, supporting the UAE's sustainability agenda. With roots firmly planted in the UAE, Emirates Nature-WWF also operates as a global platform that catalyzes action for climate resilience and environmental protection, delivering lasting impact for both people and planet.

For more information about Leaders of Change, please visit [leadersofchange.ae](https://leadersofchange.ae)