



Annual Report 2025





His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik



Amur falcon (*Falco amurensis*), Torsten Pröhl

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Pubescent Carpenter bee (*Xylocopa pubescens*), Hussam Al Harrasi

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President's Message

Dear Members and Partners,

The Environment Society of Oman's Annual Report provides an opportunity to review the organisation's performance, assess its contribution to national priorities, and reaffirm its strategic direction. In 2025, as ESO marks 21 years of service, the organisation stands on a solid foundation built through consistent commitment to environmental protection, credible science, and community engagement.

Under the wise leadership of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, environmental sustainability has become an integral pillar of Oman Vision 2040. Within this national context, ESO continues to serve as a trusted civil society partner, supporting the protection of Oman's natural heritage while promoting responsible environmental stewardship across society.

During the year, ESO strengthened its impact through targeted research, conservation initiatives, and education programmes addressing key environmental priorities. Engagement expanded beyond Muscat to include the governorates of Al Sharqiyah and Dhofar, reinforcing ESO's role as a national organisation with local relevance. Programmes focused on climate awareness, plastic pollution, sustainability practices, and the protection of endangered sea turtles on Masirah Island, delivered in close collaboration with communities, institutions, and corporate partners.

Education and youth engagement remain central to ESO's long-term strategy. The continued growth of the Namat Competition, now in its fifth edition, reflects increasing national commitment to environmental education at the school level. In 2025, this approach was further advanced through the launch of the Green Campus Competition, which extended sustainability leadership to the tertiary education sector and encouraged higher education institutions to integrate environmental responsibility into their operations and culture.

Biodiversity conservation remains a strategic priority. This year, ESO made measurable progress in strengthening the scientific basis for protecting the frankincense tree, one of Oman's most significant natural and cultural assets. Enhanced surveys, improved methodologies, and capacity-building efforts contributed to a more robust understanding of population status, supporting informed, long-term conservation planning.

Financial sustainability remains an ongoing challenge for civil society organisations. In response, ESO pursued diversified resource mobilisation through initiatives such as Strides for Nature and the ESO Charity Ball, which provided essential support for core programmes. In parallel, ESO updated its corporate membership framework to better align with evolving ESG expectations, strengthening partnerships and reinforcing accountability and value creation.

The Board recognises that ESO's achievements are the result of collective effort. I extend sincere appreciation to our donors, members, government counterparts, corporate partners, and volunteers for their continued trust and support. I also acknowledge the dedication of the ESO team, whose professionalism and commitment underpin the organisation's credibility and impact.

Looking ahead, ESO will continue to focus on governance, partnerships, and measurable outcomes to ensure its work remains aligned with national priorities and responsive to emerging environmental challenges. With clear strategic direction and strong collaboration, ESO is well-positioned to contribute meaningfully to a sustainable future for Oman.

Dr Amor Al Matani
President



Arabian Eagle Owl (*Bubo arabicus*), Sooraj Jayaraj

Introduction



As we present the Environment Society of Oman's Annual Report for 2025, I am reminded that conservation is not only measured in milestones achieved, but in persistence — in showing up year after year for nature, for communities, and for future generations, even when conditions are challenging.

This year marked an important moment in ESO's journey. As we move beyond two decades of service, 2025 was a year of both progress and reflection. Across marine and terrestrial ecosystems, our teams continued to deliver science-based conservation, meaningful community engagement, and nationally relevant dialogue on sustainability and climate action. At the same time, we navigated funding uncertainties that required adaptability and resilience.

From the nesting beaches of Masirah Island to the coral reefs surrounding Muscat, from the frankincense landscapes of Dhofar to classrooms and campuses across the Sultanate, ESO's work this year reaffirmed a simple truth: conservation succeeds when science, policy, and people move together. Whether through long-term research programmes, targeted capacity building, or public awareness initiatives, our focus remained on creating impact that is locally grounded.

One of the defining features of 2025 was the strength of collaboration, exemplified by progress toward the Conservation Management Plan for the endangered Arabian Sea humpback whale. Working closely with government authorities, regional partners, and international entities, ESO supported the drafting of a management plan for endorsement by the Convention of Migratory Species and the International Whaling Commission to protect this globally significant population, reinforcing Oman's leadership in regional and international marine conservation.

As a member of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), ESO participated in the IUCN World Conservation Congress this year, contributing to global dialogue and exchanging knowledge with conservation practitioners, scientists, policymakers, and civil society leaders from around the world. Being in a room filled with advocates for nature is both humbling and energizing, and it reinforces the shared responsibility and collective momentum needed to address today's environmental challenges. These global perspectives directly inform ESO's work in Oman, ensuring it remains aligned with international best practice while responding to national priorities.

Education and community engagement remained central to our approach throughout the year. Through schools, universities, public dialogues, and hands-on outreach, we continued to invest in empowering individuals and communities to play an active role in protecting the environment. Inspiring environmental stewardship across generations is essential to achieving lasting conservation outcomes.

I am deeply grateful to ESO's dedicated team, whose professionalism and commitment underpin every achievement outlined in this report. I also extend my sincere thanks to our Board, members, volunteers, donors, and partners for their trust and continued support. Your belief in ESO enables us to sustain our work and strengthen our impact.

Looking ahead, ESO remains committed to aligning its efforts with Oman Vision 2040 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals while remaining grounded in evidence, partnership, and community. Protecting Oman's natural heritage requires sustained collaboration, informed decision-making, and shared responsibility. Together, we can ensure that Oman's biodiversity continues to thrive for generations to come.

Suaad Al Harthi
Executive Director



Pharaoh Eagle-Owl (*Bubo ascalaphus*), Ahmed Al Washahi

Supporting Oman's Vision 2040 and UN Sustainable Development Goals

2025 Year in Numbers

Under the wise leadership of His Majesty Sultan Haitham Al Said, Oman's Vision 2040 provides a robust foundation for a development agenda that emphasizes the importance of safeguarding our nation's exceptional natural resources. At ESO, we are steadfast in advocating for national initiatives that foster sustainable development while mitigating or eliminating actions harmful to Oman's environment and rich biodiversity.



ESO Strategy

Guided by our [Five-Year Strategic Plan \(2023-2027\)](#), ESO remains committed to protecting Oman's natural heritage for future generations.

Vision: To play a leading role in the conservation of Oman's natural heritage.

Mission: To protect and conserve Oman's natural heritage and influence environmentally sustainable behavior through education, awareness, and conservation initiatives.

Our strategic priorities are defined as **Partnership, Conservation, Fundraising, Internal Capabilities** and **People and Culture**, with key objectives and performance indicators set in order to respond to the overarching goal of protecting Oman's environment.

Our Programmes:

				
Research threatened species	Build capacity within the environmental sector	Conserve Oman's natural heritage for future generations	Educate and raise awareness of communities on the importance of adopting sustainable lifestyles	Advocate for environmental sustainability

Alignment to UN Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were set up in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly to provide a blueprint for achieving a better and more sustainable future for all. While we contribute to all 17 SDGs, our work at ESO mostly aligns to the following global goals:

12 Months of sea turtle survey work	24 Participated in Coral Reef Monitoring Training Workshop	14 Collaborations with international organisations
30 Tons of Abandoned Lost or Discarded Fishing Gear (ALDFG) removed, contributing to a total of 855 tons of ALDFG removed to date	8 Houses & 1 Mosque retrofitted with wildlife-certified lighting fixtures on Masirah Island	
301 Attendees at Oman Climate Dialogue	6 Female loggerhead turtles rescued	Education Namat 126 Schools registered 10 Governorates
25 km of nesting beaches cleaned	20 Lappet-faced vulture nests monitored	7 Nationwide winners 600+ More than 600 students reached
8 Coral reef monitoring sites	1 Field survey on frankincense in Dhofar	Green Campus 62 Registrations 4 Governorates 16 Universities and colleges 3 Winners
Membership and Social Media		
36,583 Total followers across all platforms	242 Individual Members	32 Public Events
6,333 Engaged in Environmental awareness	27 Corporate Members	54 Volunteers supported our events or initiatives

ESO Board



Honourable Dr Amor Al Matani



Ms Rumaitha Al Busaidi



Mrs Amira Al Yarubi



Mr Abdulaziz Al Abdali



Mrs Nashwa Al Rawahy



Dr Ali Akaak



Mr Essam Al Sheibany



Dr Mohammed Al Kalbani



Mr Nasser Al Maskari



Mr Omar Al Riyami

President

Honourable Dr Amor Al Matani is a respected Omani leader known for his commitment to sustainability, social impact, and human development. He holds a BEng (Hons) in Instrumentation and Control Engineering from Teesside University (UK), an MBA from Newcastle University, and a PhD in Sustainability from Brunel University London. After beginning his career with Petroleum Development Oman in upstream operations and commissioning, Dr Al Matani served in several executive roles within the Ministry of Health and later as Director-General for Sur Industrial Estate under the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayen). In 2002, he joined Oman LNG, where he rose to the position of Deputy CEO and Chief HR Executive Officer. Since 2020, he has led the Oman LNG Development Foundation as CEO, driving impactful initiatives that advance social investment and sustainable growth across the Sultanate. Elected as President of the Environment Society of Oman, Dr Al Matani continues to champion environmental stewardship and community-driven sustainability. He also serves on several academic boards and chairs the Board of Trustees for Oman LNG's HAS International School. In recognition of his national contributions, he was appointed as a Member of the Oman State Council in 2023. Dr Al Matani remains deeply committed to shaping a more sustainable, inclusive, and resilient Oman through leadership, collaboration, and innovation.

Vice President

Ms Rumaitha Al Busaidi is a scientist and environmental advocate working on sustainable solutions to climate change. Her 2021 TED talk examining women as the key to our climate future has garnered more than a million views. Rumaitha currently serves as Business Development Manager at Hydrom, the orchestrator of green hydrogen development in Oman. Nationally, she actively works with the government on sustainable diversification and energy transition strategies. Internationally, she has advised the Biden administration on developing a climate resilience standard for US foreign aid, the government of Greenland on creating a framework for local sustainable tourism, and the Arab League on empowering Arab youth in climate change negotiations spaces. Her work in climate change has been recognized by the United Nations, the EU, and NATO. Rumaitha was most recently named in Reuters's climate hot list and subsequently recognized in their 'Top 25 Women in Climate Change' list and was listed on the BBC list of 100 inspiring and influential women from around the world in 2023.

Director

Mrs Amira Al Yarubi is the Director of the Oman Vision 2040 Office at the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, where she leads national efforts in strategic planning, sustainability integration, and cross-sectoral collaboration. She holds a 2019 IEMA Environmental

Management Certification and is a Certified Lead Auditor in Environmental Management Systems, a Sustainability Practitioner, and a Certified Facilitator by the Royal Academy of Management. Amira began her career as a CSR Specialist at the Information Technology Authority before joining the Ministry's QHSE team, where she managed the Environment Management System and led initiatives promoting waste reduction and environmentally responsible practices. As an active member of the Environment Society of Oman, she has served as a mentor in the Eco-thon and continues to advocate for sustainability through her social media platforms. Amira represents Oman internationally as part of the Omani Pavilion at the UN Climate Change Conferences (COP29 and COP30), contributing to national climate diplomacy and global environmental dialogue. Beyond her professional achievements, she is a devoted mother committed to raising environmentally conscious children by teaching them climate responsibility and engaging them in initiatives such as clean-up campaigns.

Treasurer

Mr Abdulaziz Al Abdali has over 15 years of finance experience and currently serves as Group Manager for Finance Operations at Fisheries Development Oman SAOC (FDO). Besides his position in FDO, Abdulaziz works as part time Chief Financial Officer in Aquatic Investment Excellence LLC. He also holds positions as Board of Director and Chairman of the Audit Committee at International Seafood Company SAOC (Simak) and Board Member at Fanar International Fisheries LLC. Abdulaziz's expertise spans strategic finance planning, governance, budget management and team leadership. He holds a bachelor's degree in accounting from Arab Open University, Muscat. Outside of his finance career, Abdulaziz actively engages in marine conservation efforts through his sea touring and water sports company in Muscat.

Secretary

Mrs Nashwa Al Rawahy is a Director at HMR Consultants, a leading Omani environmental and engineering consultancy headquartered in Muscat, with regional offices in the UAE. With over 15 years of experience, Nashwa has established herself as a leading professional in her field. She is a proud alumna of George Washington University in the US, where she earned both her Bachelor and Master of Science degrees in Environmental and Civil Engineering. Her career has been defined by a commitment to solving complex environmental challenges through innovative and sustainable approaches, always adhering to regulatory standards and international best practices. Nashwa's diverse project portfolio includes environmental and social impact assessments and related technical studies, sustainability strategy development and ESG reporting, life cycle assessments, energy efficiency, and climate change management. Her expertise spans a range of industries, including green hydrogen and its derivatives, renewable energy, oil and gas, manufacturing, power and water, and urban master planning. Nashwa's position on the board is driven by her deep-seated commitment to environmental stewardship and a desire to leverage her knowledge and experience to further ESO's mission.

Board Member

Dr Ali Akaak is an experienced academic and professional in business and tourism management. He currently serves as the Head of the Continuing Education and Community Service Department at the University of Technology and Applied Sciences in Salalah. Dr Akaak holds a doctorate in Tourism Management and Development from the University of Exeter Business School, UK, and brings over 20 years of expertise in academic and administrative roles across public and private universities. He has published and presented extensively on sustainability, strategic planning, destination management, tourism development, labor unions, and social entrepreneurship at local and international conferences. Dr Akaak is an active member of several professional local and international organizations, including the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Dhofar), the Oman American Business Council, the Omani Society of Human Resources Management, the World Tourism Association for Cultural and Heritage, and the Green Destination Organization.

Board Member

Mr Essam Al Sheibany is an accomplished professional with extensive expertise of 31+ years in the oil and gas industry. Proficient in setting up and efficiently managing the operation of refineries and petrochemical divisions, Mr Al Sheibany has held various senior positions and is currently working as Group Vice President QHSSE and Sustainability of ASYAD, where he is in charge of developing, implementing, and managing enterprise-wide quality, health and safety, security and environmental programmes, policies, and procedures, sustainability frameworks and ESG financing, decarbonization, energy optimization and net zero plans.

Board Member

Dr Mohammed Al Kalbani holds a PhD in Environmental Sustainability from the University of Aberdeen, UK, as well as an MSc and BSc in Environmental Engineering Sciences and Management. He has worked as a research assistant at Sultan Qaboos University, and most recently as Director of the Department of Sustainable Development at the Environment Authority. Dr Al Kalbani regularly participates in research projects related to integrated environmental assessment, environmental preservation, biodiversity conservation, climate change, environmental management, and legislation. He has published several papers and participated in the 4th - 6th Global Environmental Outlook Reports for UNEP and the Arab Environmental Outlook Report for the Arab League. He has presented papers at international conferences, symposiums, and workshops. Serving on ESO's board since 2017, Dr Al Kalbani has represented ESO internationally and has worked on the organisation's Green Schools Campaign, Eco-thon, Inter-College Environmental Speaking Competition, research and conservation projects and community outreach programmes.

Board Member

Mr Nasser Al Maskari is a committed advocate for sustainable development in Oman, deeply committed to environmental, safety, and health causes, while actively supporting Omani civil societies. His educational journey includes an MSc in Environmental Studies within the field of Marine Sciences from Sultan Qaboos University (2006). He also holds a BSc in Fisheries Science from the same institution (1996). Mr Al Maskari's professional journey traverses both the public and private sectors. During his tenure at the Ministry of Regional Municipalities, Environment, and Water Resources (MRME&WR) from 1997 to 2006, he held significant roles, including Head of Permits Section and Director of Planning for the Nature Conservation Department. In 2006, Nasser embarked on a corporate career, joining Occidental Mukhaizna LLC (OXY) as an Environmental Compliance Specialist. Over the years, Mr Al Maskari has shouldered progressively senior positions, culminating in his current role as Corporate Social Responsibility Manager at Occidental Oman (OXY). Mr Al Maskari is dedicated to fostering collaboration between governmental and private sectors, raising public awareness on critical issues, and actively supporting the objectives of Omani civil societies. As a founding member of ESO, he has left a lasting impact on environmental causes and sustainable practices.

Board Member

Mr Omar Al Riyami holds a master's degree in environmental Impact Assessment and Management from the University of Manchester, UK, and a bachelor's degree in marine science and Fisheries from Sultan Qaboos University, Oman. With almost two decades of experience in Environmental Management and Sustainability, he has worked with leading organizations in Oman, including Petroleum Development Oman, OQ8, OQ, and the Environment Society of Oman. Omar currently serves as the Head of Sustainability at OQ Gas Networks, where he leads the integration of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles into the company's operations and drives sustainability performance. Mr Al Riyami has represented Oman internationally and made significant contributions to Oman's environmental and sustainability efforts. He participated in developing the Oman Environmental Strategy issued in 2022 and two years earlier, successfully oversaw the development of the 'Environment and Natural Resources' priority for the 10th Development Plan under the Oman Vision 2040 framework. He is currently leading the same priority for the 11th Development Plan, ensuring alignment with national sustainability objectives.



Old World Swallowtail (*Papilio machaon*), Noor Al Lawati



Masirah Field Team



1. **Suaad Al Harthi**
Executive Director
2. **Bashaar Zaitoon**
Administrative Manager
3. **Maïa Sarrouf Willson**
Research & Conservation Manager
4. **Said Al Jabri**
Public Relations Officer
5. **Hannan Al Muscati**
Partnership and Communication Manager
6. **Jawaher Al Ghafri**
Environmental Awareness & Education Program Specialist

7. **Atika Ahmed**
Accountant
8. **Ahmed Al Zadjali**
Communication & Membership Coordinator
9. **Fathiya Al Kindi**
Community Engagement & Advocacy Manager
10. **Mai Abumughli**
Communication & Events Coordinator
11. **Juma Al Araimi**
Masirah Field Coordinator

Masirah Field Team

1. **Taher Al Farsi**
Field Assistant
2. **Rashad Al Farsi**
Field Assistant
3. **Salim Al Farsi**
Field Assistant

Turtle Research and Conservation Programme

The global importance of Oman to the survival of sea turtles has been definitively established through research conducted within the Sultanate since the 1970s. Since 2008, ESO, in collaboration with the **Environment Authority** and senior international scientists, has played a lead research role in accelerating our knowledge and understanding of turtle biology, ecology and conservation needs, raising the international profile of Oman's turtles.

Masirah Island is one of the largest nesting rookeries for loggerhead turtles in the world. ESO research confirms that this population has suffered a [79% decline](#) since the late 1970s. The major threats that impact both habitat and population numbers are land-use disturbances, such as extensive coastal development, light pollution, and beach driving; and sea-based disturbances such as turtles being unintentionally caught in fishing nets (bycatch and ghost fishing).

Field Surveys and Data Analysis

ESO's turtle research and conservation programme has been funded since its inception in 2008 by the **US Fish and Wildlife Service - Marine Turtle Conservation Fund**. In January 2025, ESO lost this funding source, in accordance with the US President's Executive Order on financial assistance awards.

Work was immediately discontinued, however, basic field surveys of hawksbill, olive ridley (January-July) and loggerhead turtles (May-September) carried on with support from internal funds.

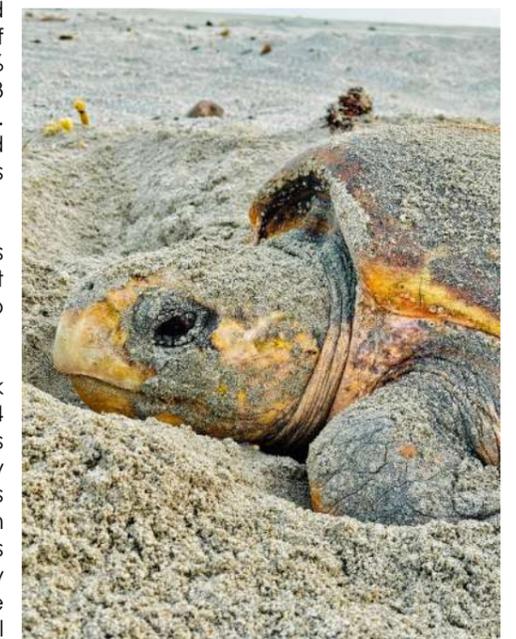
The team recruited and trained in 2022 continued to conduct annual surveys according to well-established protocols, with the core goal of completing track count surveys and nesting success data collection in support of long-term trend assessments. These surveys were held on both index beaches (high density nesting) and secondary or island-wide beaches to understand the distribution of nesting females. Additionally, stranding surveys of both cetaceans and turtles were conducted across the island. During field surveys, the team rescued 4 lost nesting females, likely as a result of light pollution, 2 turtles trapped on rocks or flipped over by waves, and numerous hatchlings entangled in fishing nets. The team reported the illegal take of 8 nesting green turtles.

Analysis of 2023-2024 loggerhead nesting data showed a shift of nesting density from previously preferred beaches at the north of the island to nesting beaches at the south of the island. A decline of the nesting success ratio by approximately 10% over the last three years was also noted across the island.

A review of green turtle nesting data was produced for data collected between 2009 and 2024. The report presents the most extensive review of green turtle nesting data collected since the beginning of the project on Masirah Island. Review of the spatial nesting data from all years shows approximately 90% of nesting occurs within selected index beaches between K23-K43 and K68-K83, with the former accounting for 73% of nesting. Approximately 70% of this nesting occurs between July and September with a peak in August. The ratio of nesting success has been steadily declining across index beaches from 2017 to 2024.

This ongoing nesting decline of green and loggerhead turtles raises significant conservation concerns, highlighting the urgent need for enhanced conservation and management efforts to mitigate threats and ensure the long-term survival of the species.

For hawksbill and olive ridley turtles, the annual mean track densities representing both species between 2016 and 2024 demonstrated an increasing trend. Track densities from surveys revealed 80% of nesting activity occurred between February and April. Nesting densities were highest on the nesting beaches around the south of the island. The mixed nesting of turtles on these beaches, the similarities of the tracks between olive ridleys and hawksbills and the variance of nesting efforts (particularly by olive ridleys) make the rookery (dedicated nesting area where female turtles lay their eggs) a challenge to monitor with a goal



of understanding the status of these two populations nesting on the island. From a monitoring perspective we recommend that these beaches continue to be monitored (including night and daytime track counts) with the project expanded to account for climate change related effects to the rookery.

The ESO team continues to support the field work on hatching success implemented by **Future Seas Global SPC**, in collaboration with the **Environment Authority** and **Ocean Ecology Network**.

Light Pollution Mitigation and Advocacy

Maximising the recruitment of loggerhead turtles (new individuals added to a population either by birth or maturation) has been identified as one of the most important conservation activities for addressing the loggerhead turtle population decline on Masirah. The Lighting Solutions Project was launched to address reduced turtle nesting on beaches due to the disturbance of adults and disorientation of hatchlings caused by artificial light sources from public infrastructure and private buildings. The project has been active since 2021 striving to mitigate the most serious light pollution areas on the island, and initiate dialogue with the authorities. Following the physical retrofitting of external lights in residential houses close to nesting areas in 2023/2024, additional retrofitting activities were conducted in February and March 2025 in 8 residences. 141 wildlife-friendly fixtures were installed, and an additional 70 bulbs were distributed to property owners as spare stock. Ongoing discussions with **Oman Tourism Development Company (OMRAN)** aim to integrate a turtle-friendly and sustainable tourism approach into their upcoming refurbishment plans for the **Masirah Island Resort** hotel.

What are turtle friendly lights? Turtle friendly lights minimise light pollution using shielded, warm amber coloured, low-intensity bulbs with a narrow spectral output. Lighting fixtures should also be directed away from beaches, avoid bright reflective surfaces, and be controlled by timers or motion sensors to prevent disorientation of nesting turtles and hatchlings. Coastal setbacks or buffer areas where certain developments are either prohibited or restricted from the Mean Sea Water Level (MSWL) are recommended for planning purposes.

ESO's continued advocacy has ensured certain streetlights close to nesting beaches on Masirah Island are switched off after 10 pm during the loggerhead nesting season. These include the streetlights located between the Royal Oman Police and Al Aiygah village, and those located in the south of the island at K75. This is the fourth year that this decision has been implemented, and it should be celebrated as a conservation success. Additionally, ornamental LED lights at various NAMA electrical substations on the island were also switched off. To support the local government, guidelines detailing lighting design, technical requirements, and regulations have been developed for the area by **Pendoley Environmental** and **Future Seas Global SPC**.



We would like to thank the **Wali of Masirah, Masirah Municipality, Environment Authority, Ocean Ecology Network, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and Future Seas Global SPC** for supporting turtle threat mitigation on Masirah.



Advocacy

Working closely with the **Environment Authority** and the **Wali's office on Masirah**, ESO and its collaborators have been highlighting conservation concerns and working with the community to develop solutions. In 2025, advocacy meetings were held with the Wali of Masirah, the Ministry of Agricultural, Fisheries Wealth and Water Resources, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning, the municipality and the Environment Authority to discuss turtle conservation in Masirah, specifically discussing a beach regeneration project. Lighting guidelines were also shared. ESO held meetings with the Ministry of Agricultural, Fisheries Wealth and Water Resources in both Muscat and Masirah to discuss light pollution concerns, particularly in relation to the fishermen's village on Masirah Island. The discussions focused on exploring ways to

integrate elements of the lighting guidelines into the upcoming development phase of the village such as reducing the number of lights, reorienting windows, and retrofitting existing fixtures with wildlife-certified lighting to help minimize light pollution along nesting beaches. The team then visited the site to assess the required adjustments and are in the process of exploring opportunities for implementing these lighting improvements. Some changes have already begun, such as reorienting windows facing key nesting beaches to reduce light spill. Additionally, ESO held meetings with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning to discuss the spatial strategy of Masirah Island and explore ways to adapt the plan in support of sea turtle conservation and the protection of other species.

As part of our continued outreach and educational engagement, ESO also delivered a presentation to geography students from the University of Mainz, highlighting the Society's various projects with a particular focus on sea turtle conservation efforts in Oman.

Abandoned Fishing Net Collection

Entanglement in derelict fishing nets is an overarching threat to all marine species, and, as observed regularly along Oman's beaches, turtles are not exempt. Numerous cases of female turtles digging nests with missing front or rear flippers, from injuries sustained by net entanglement have been observed by the ESO field team, showing their resilience to recover from a missing limb. Injuries, however, reduce a turtle's lifespan, making it harder to escape future entanglement incidents and more vulnerable to predation.

ESO's work on the collection and recycling of abandoned fishing nets aims to reduce wildlife entanglement on Masirah Island while. A 12-day net clean-up campaign took place in between the 19th and 30th of January 2025 and was implemented in partnership with **Future Seas Global SPC** and in collaboration with the **Environment Authority, be'ah, SUMA EcoVision LLC**, local labourers, **HE Wali of Masirah**, and the **Masirah Municipality**.

In total, 25 kilometres of nesting beaches were cleared of nets, with an estimated 30 tons of abandoned, lost, and discarded fishing gear (ALDFG) collected and transferred to a dumpsite. Other waste collected



included plastic baskets, crates, tyres, shoes, camping gear, furniture and electronic appliances. The exercise resulted in cleaner nesting beaches, increased community awareness about the importance of sustainable fishing gear disposal, and a broader understanding of the need for responsible waste management to protect marine environments.

Since 2017, ESO has removed an estimated total of 855 tons of ALDFG from Masirah's nesting beaches and continues to encourage the public to discard waste responsibly to safeguard our native wildlife and preserve the health of Oman's coastal ecosystems.

Collaborative Research on Diversification of Barnacles on Sea Turtles

A scientific team from The University of Georgia, USA visited Masirah Island in March 2025 to take samples of barnacles growing on the carapace of sea turtles. This effort is part of a global effort to study sea turtle barnacles in 21 sites around the world. Samples have been taken from Masirah Island and the field assistants received training on sample collection and protocol.



Publications

A collaborative paper was published recently, with data from Oman: *A global assessment of microplastic abundance and characteristics on marine turtle nesting beaches* (Botterell et al., 2025), found [here](#).

Whale and Dolphin Research and Conservation Programme

Oman's waters host 20 different species of whales and dolphins (cetaceans), including four species of great whales. ESO has engaged in cetacean research since 2004, with a particular focus on Oman's genetically isolated sub-population of Arabian Sea humpback whales. With fewer than 100 individuals remaining, the population was designated as Endangered on the IUCN Red List of threatened species in 2008. The conservation of this unique population across its regional range is critical to its survival.

ESO remains active as part of the **Arabian Sea Whale Network**, a network of large international NGOs, grass-roots environmental organizations and regional academic institutions that collaborate to conserve humpback whales and other cetaceans in the Arabian Sea. Online meetings continue to take place to discuss regional collaboration and updates, capacity building requirements and discuss updates and progress towards advancing the regional Conservation Management Plan (CMP).

Conservation Management Plan for the Arabian Sea Humpback Whale

A 'Conservation Management Plan for Arabian Sea Humpback Whales Workshop' was held by the **Environment Authority** and **Future Seas Global SPC**, supported by ESO, at Crowne Plaza Muscat, from 27-29 May 2025. Building on a 2022 workshop, the first day included updates on marine mammal research in Oman and India, the importance of regional agreements, and the objectives and benefits of a Conservation Management Plan (CMP). The second day focused on implementing urgent management and mitigation actions in Oman through government policies and industry efforts, highlighting the Gulf of Masirah Important Marine Mammal Area (IMMA) and discussing mitigation for shipping, oil, gas, and fishing industries. The third day involved closed talks between Omani and Indian delegations on a joint CMP under the International Whaling Commission (IWC) and Convention of Migratory Species (CMS).

The draft CMP incorporated outputs from the May workshop and was circulated in June 2025 for review and inputs from members of the Arabian Sea Whale Network and CMS focal points from Arabian Sea humpback whale range states. Following a final editorial review from the CMS Secretariat, the CMP document has been submitted for adoption by the CMS Conference of Parties in March 2026. Following a review by the IWC Scientific Committee in April 2026, it will hopefully be adopted by the IWC Commission

meeting in September 2026, for launch and implementation in early 2027.



Particularly Sensitive Sea Area

A collaboration was set up between **ESO**, **Future Seas Global SPC**, and the **Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology** on setting up Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA) under the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) along the Arabian Sea Coast of Oman. A PSSA is a marine area that requires special protection due to its ecological, cultural, socio-economic, or scientific significance. ESO participated in two national consultation sessions organised in January 2025. The final boundary of the PSSA will be proposed subsequent to discussion with national and regional shipping interests and affected Member States.

Whale Strandings

Arabian Sea Humpback Whale Stranding – February 2025

An Arabian Sea humpback whale was found stranded on the 25th of February 2025 in Soqrah, Wilayat Jazir, Dhofar. A team from the **Environment Authority** and **Future Seas Global SPC** travelled to examine the whale. Photographs of the dead whale's tail fluke were compared with photos of live whales in the Oman Humpback Whale Photo-identification catalogue, and was identified as Joshi, an individual first photographed in the Gulf of Masirah in November 2002. Joshi was satellite tagged in February 2014 by ESO and was last seen – and recorded singing – in healthy condition during the Environment Authority hosted humpback whale survey that was conducted in December 2023. Joshi was one of fewer than 100 Arabian Sea humpback whales remaining off the coast of Oman. Samples were collected from the stranding and have been delivered to Sultan Qaboos University for further analysis.



Blue Whale Calf Stranding – June 2025

A blue whale calf stranded and died off the coast of North Al Batinah in June 2025. A team of volunteers mobilised to take full set of measurements such as blubber thickness, tissue samples for genomics, and stomach, intestine and kidney samples for histology analysis. Eye and baleen plates were also taken. Milk was found in the intestine meaning the calf was separated from its mother shortly before it stranded. The whale was buried for potential recovery of the bones to be used for a museum display.

The **Environment Authority** were on hand leading the protocols, expert support was received from **Sultan Qaboos University** and **Future Seas Global SPC** with remote guidance provided by veterinarians from **Yas SeaWorld Research and Rescue Center** as part of the broader support from the **Global Stranding Network**. Additional network support and facilities were provided by **ESO**. The **Royal Oman Police** were on site managing the crowds and the removal process. The **Municipality** supported the disposal, and **SQU** are storing the samples and will begin some analysis work. This was an excellent showcase of government authorities, consultants an NGO and international partners all collaborating to support data collection and appropriate disposal.



Arabian Sea Humpback Whales Stranding – August 2025

An Arabian Sea humpback whale stranded on the coast of Al Ashkhara and another was reported floating at sea in August 2025. These accounts make at least 6 whales stranded in Oman in the past year and a half, which is an alarming figure. Initial investigations did not identify any obvious external signs of what could have caused the whale's death. However, previous studies in Oman and of other humpback whale populations around the world indicate that entanglement in fishing gear and ship strikes are the two most significant causes of injury and mortality to the species.



Publications

A collaborative paper was published recently, with data from Oman: Separating Historical Catches Among Pygmy Blue Whale Populations Using Recent Song Detections (Branch et al., 2025), found [here](#).

Coral Reef Conservation and Capacity Building Project

Coral reefs are crucial in supporting biodiversity, protecting shorelines, and coastal communities. These ecosystems are threatened globally by climate change, including increasing ocean temperatures and ocean acidification, which are further compounded by human induced threats. The coral reefs of the Arabian Gulf, Gulf of Oman, and the Arabian Sea are known for their unique biodiversity and the extreme environmental conditions they endure. The regional trend shows an estimated loss of 40% of live coral between 1996 and 2019 due to repeated bleaching events. 2024 marked the fourth global mass bleaching event since 1998 - the second in the past decade.



ESO launched a pilot coral reef monitoring initiative in 2024 to gain a better understanding of the status and resilience of coral reefs surrounding Muscat. In 2025, Suaad Al Harthi, ESO's Executive Director, was awarded the **National Geographic Society** Wayfinder Grant to support continued monitoring and capacity building to ensure the long-term sustainability of these critical ecosystems. Technical support for the project is provided by **New York University Abu Dhabi (NYUAD)** with the aims of assessing the health, recovery and resilience of coral reefs surrounding Muscat; as well as empowering female field scientists to take the lead in coral reef research and protection efforts.

The project began in April with a workshop organized in partnership with NYUAD, hosted at **Oman Sail – Sea Oman**, and was attended by environmentalists, dive center experts and academic researchers to strengthen reef monitoring capacity. The 4-day training workshop included both classroom and in the field training. Participants were familiarized with the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN) global report, foundations of reef monitoring, survey protocols and the benefits of a standardized regional protocol, data archiving and the use of AI driven tools such as ReefCloud and Mermaid to support analysis and reporting.

A total of 8 monitoring sites were established, including 4 sites within the Ad Dimaniyyat Islands Nature Reserve (DINR). Surveys were conducted pre- and post-summer and the data is currently being processed.

We thank the **Environment Authority, Oman Sail – SeaOman, Extra Divers, Ras Al Hamra Dive Club, The Lighthouse Consultancy, NYUAD** and all volunteer divers for supporting this initiative.



Red List of Ecosystems for Regional Coral Reefs

ESO participated in a workshop hosted by New York University – Abu Dhabi and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to facilitate a regional assessment of coral reefs of the ROPME Sea Area (Arabian Gulf, Sea of Oman, Arabian Sea) utilizing the IUCN Red List of Ecosystem (RLE) Assessment process. Participants were engaged through a series of online workshops and an in-person meeting to validate information on the eco-region boundaries and descriptions and contribute to a contextual model on threats, biotic and abiotic factors and the workshop. A draft of the first RLE of Coral Ecosystems for the ROPME sea area which would contribute to the first Global RLE for Coral Reefs providing a quantitative and evidence-based approach to the assessment of the risks of ecosystem collapse and understanding priorities to support conservation management.



Terrestrial Conservation Projects

Raptor Research and Conservation Programme

Sitting at the top of the food chain, raptors such as eagles, falcons, vultures, hawks, and owls are key indicators of the overall health of ecosystems. Providing numerous ecosystem services, these birds of prey eat millions of insects, which, if left unchecked, could threaten agriculture. Others consume animal carcasses, helping to prevent the spread of disease. Over the last few decades, human activities have contributed to the fragmentation and destruction of raptor habitats. The intensification of agriculture; electrocution and collision with power infrastructure; shooting, poisoning, and trapping; and reduced breeding success due to pesticides and other contaminants, are threatening raptors, leading to reduced population levels, and limited geographic ranges.

Lappet-faced Vulture Field Surveys

In 2025, ESO secured a small fund from the **Ornithological Society of the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia (OSME)** to complete lappet-faced vulture (LFV) (*Torgos tracheliotos*) field surveys in the Hajar Mountains. A total of 20 nests were visited in 2025, many of them containing an egg or a chick. Two vultures aged 100 days or more were ringed and fitted with satellite tracking devices. We thank the **Environment Authority** for providing permits for the surveys, and for **International Avian Research** for providing the satellite tracking devices. Thorough monitoring and detailed surveys are needed to understand the distribution of lappet-faced vulture nests in the Hajar Mountains and the causes behind nest failure.



Raptor Feeding Station at Hakbeet Landfill

Scavenging birds (mostly raptors in Oman) are considered "nature's waste managers," disposing of biological waste, impeding disease transmission, and reducing the release of greenhouse gases produced from rotting waste. Wanting to partner with and encourage these natural human waste managers, **Oman Environmental Services Holding Company (be'ah)**, Vultures and eagles that scavenge are considered "nature's waste managers", and partners with human waste managers who seek to dispose of waste safely.

be'ah has expressed interest in managing a feeding station for scavenging birds at landfills. This would contribute to threatened species conservation and harness the natural waste disposal ability of scavengers.

A raptor feeding station was set up for this purpose at Thumrait landfill in Dhofar governorate, and a partnership was set up between be'ah and ESO to monitor its use, with **The Industrialization Energy Services Company (TAQA)** responsible for operating the site and receiving training from ESO to monitor the birds. This pilot project, extending to mid-2026, aims to increase knowledge about the use of the station by scavengers (e.g., numbers and species composition of scavengers), and understanding the mechanics of operating the station. The site mainly attracts steppe eagles wintering in Oman from Central Asia.



Publications

Three peer-reviewed manuscripts spanning from Egyptian vulture (*Neophron percnopterus*) field work completed in previous years were published in 2025:

- Stability of a resident Egyptian Vulture *Neophron percnopterus* population on Masirah island, Oman (published in *Sandgrouse* and accessed through this [link](#)). The paper presents the results of repeat breeding Egyptian vulture surveys on Masirah Island, after a 12-year gap. The population remains stable following the partial closure of the rubbish dump on the island, and 58 occupied territories were recorded, along with the occurrence of polygynous trios.
- High occurrence of polygynous trios in a dense Egyptian Vulture *Neophron percnopterus* population (published in *Ringling & Migration* and accessed through this [link](#)). The paper discusses the presence of polygynous trios incubating eggs at nests on Masirah Island. Observations noted multiple trios and many non-breeding adults, suggesting habitat saturation and density-dependent natal dispersal in this dense vulture population.
- A peer-reviewed paper entitled "Nesting ecology and territory distribution of Lappet-faced Vulture *Torgos tracheliotos* in Oman" was published in Autumn 2025 edition of the *Sandgrouse* journal. The paper presents the results of the first formal survey of lappet-faced vultures in Oman, highlighting the relatively low breeding success of the species in surveyed territories. The findings highlight the urgent need for targeted conservation efforts to protect their habitats, and to introduce long-term monitoring to further understand the population's dynamics. The paper can be accessed on the [Sandgrouse - Ornithological Society of The Middle East the Caucasus and Central Asia website](#).



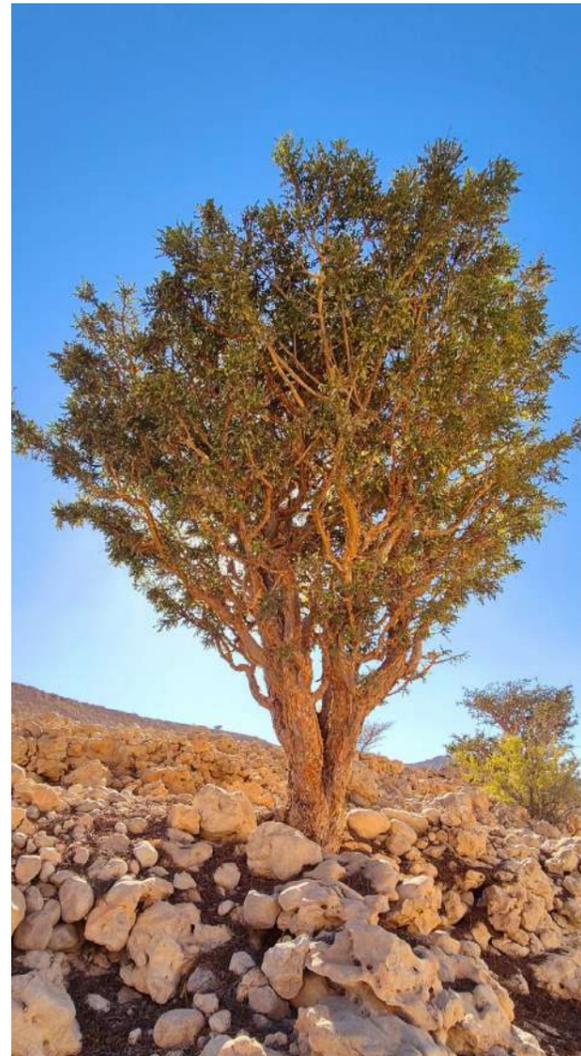
Frankincense Research and Conservation Programme

Frankincense, also known as luban, plays an integral part in the Omani heritage and culture and has been a key source of income for local communities for centuries. *Boswellia sacra*, the species of frankincense native to Oman, Yemen and Northern Somalia, holds a Near Threatened status on the IUCN Red List and only occurs in the Dhofar Governorate within the Sultanate.

Population Assessment of Frankincense Trees in Oman

Following up on field work initiated in 2023 with funding from **Shell Development Oman LLC** the team, including rangers from the **Environment Authority**, expanded field data collection in February 2025 in Dhofar. This included drone mapping, recording and evaluating population structure, level of regeneration, and presence and levels of threats such as grazing, resin harvesting, and insects. A total of 97 flights were conducted (43 flights in 2024 and 54 flights in 2025) covering an area of 125 square kilometers. A total of six detailed transects were also conducted to expand the set of data on population structure and regeneration collected in 2022. The project was successfully delivered in collaboration with **Environment Authority, Sustainable Forests, FairSource Botanicals LLC, and Mendel University in Brno**.

The drone data was used to construct digital elevation models and photo orthomosaics to determine the density and number of trees in each location, and the local distribution of individuals depending on slope and aspect. Modeling on the estimated number of trees is currently being finalized to be published in 2026.



Conservation of Wadi Dawkah Estate

One of the four "Land of Frankincense" UNESCO World Heritage Sites (in addition to Khor Rori, Al Baleed and Shisr), Wadi Dawkah spans 14 square kilometers (3,500 acres) and provides an important protected habitat to *Boswellia sacra* in Dhofar. In 2022, **Amouage** signed a partnership with Oman's Ministry of Heritage and Culture to develop the Wadi Dawkah site. Signing a Memorandum of Understanding with ESO in 2024, Amouage appointed a scientific advisory council, of which ESO is a part of, to guide research and the preservation of the site in 2025. In partnership with Amouage, ESO is currently undertaking baseline surveys of the site and will draft a sustainable management plan for Wadi Dawkah. An inaugural visit to Wadi Dawkah took place in October to kick-off the project and discuss project plans with the scientific advisory team.



Publication

The results of previous frankincense tree assessments were published in a 2025 scientific paper entitled "Rapid conservation assessment of *Boswellia sacra* in Oman reveals complex threat and population patterns," and can be accessed through the following [link](#). The results show that population structure and regeneration levels vary but no broad decline has been detected, and that threats vary in space and time, driven by socio-political and ecological factors. Any interventions, therefore, must address the full socio-ecological context to be effective.

Community Engagement

Oman Climate Dialogues

In April, ESO, in collaboration with **ASYAD Group** as the main sponsor and **Nama Water** as a supporting partner, launched the second edition of the Oman Climate Dialogues, a national initiative aimed at deepening the public's understanding of the climate crisis and Oman's ongoing journey toward net zero by 2050. Spanning several months and aimed to conclude in January 2026, the series brought together experts, academics, government officials, SMEs, and the general public, fostering knowledge exchange and collaboration toward sustainable solutions. A total of 3 panel discussions and 2 workshops have been organized. The panel discussions explored key national priorities, including energy efficiency, mobility and green transport, sustainable maritime transport, nature-based solutions emphasizing the importance of innovation, policy, and community engagement in achieving climate resilience. The first workshop titled Green Entrepreneurship, organized in collaboration with the **EU Delegation** to Oman and **Muscat University**, shed the light on how innovative, eco-conscious businesses can drive Oman's transition to a greener economy, and the crucial role youth have in shaping that future. The second workshop titled AI for Net Zero and hosted at **Modern College of Business and Science**, explored the role of AI and data-driven technologies in accelerating the transition to a low-carbon future. The 2025 events featured renowned local and international speakers, engaging a diverse audience and facilitating meaningful dialogue. All five events engaged a total of 300 participants and reinforced the need for collective, cross-sectoral efforts in addressing climate change. Looking ahead, ESO is excited to expand the scope of the next edition of the Oman Climate Dialogues, aiming to address broader topics and deepen its impact on the community.



Marine Turtle Awareness

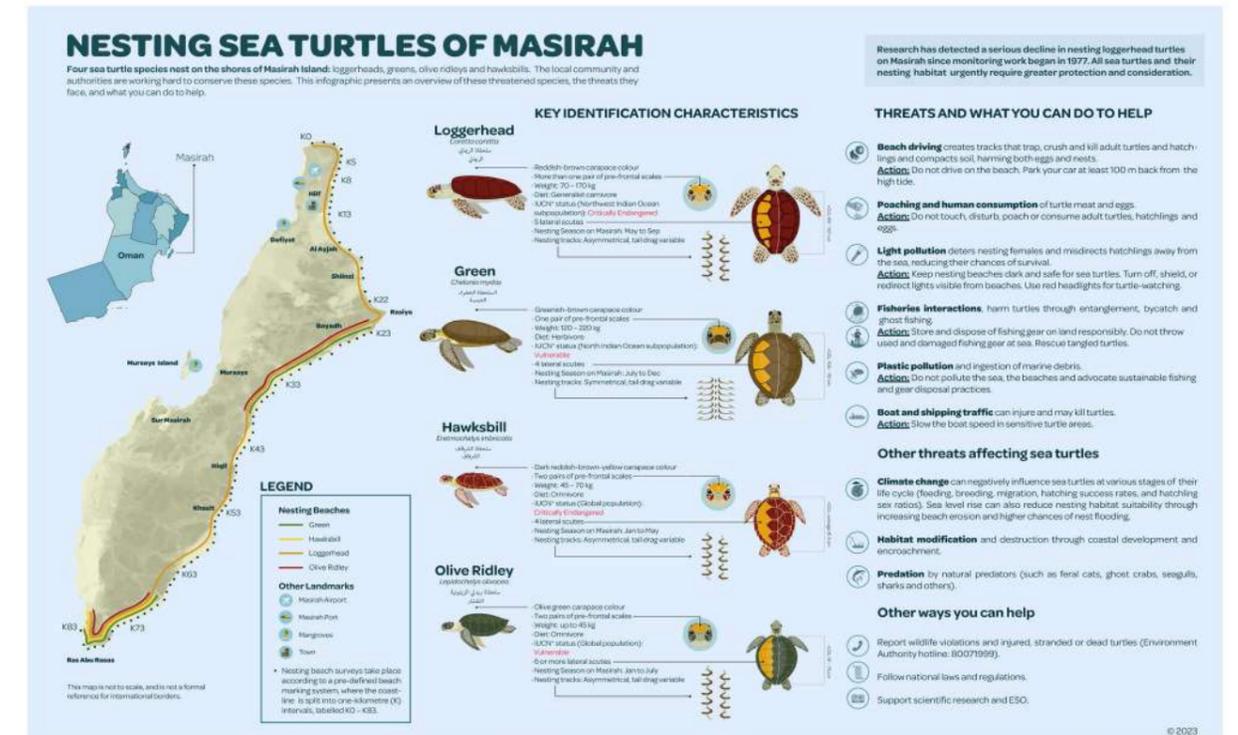
Turtle Mandoos

ESO developed the Turtle Mandoos program, an engaging, hands-on educational program designed to inspire school students, youth and the public to protect Oman's sea turtles. The program addresses the gap in locally tailored, interactive educational tools focused on marine biodiversity. In collaboration with the **Inwater Research Group**, a marine conservation NGO based in Florida, USA, ESO adapted IRG's successful International Sea Turtle Ambassadors Program to the Omani context. The initiative, locally named Turtle Mandoos, uses a "traveling trunk", a portable educational kit filled with interactive materials and realistic turtle models to bring marine conservation lessons directly to schools across Oman. Through guided workshops and practical activities, students explore sea turtle biology, behavior, and the threats these species face, such as plastic pollution, fishing gear entanglement, and light pollution. Students take on the role of marine biologists, using life-sized turtle models that replicate injuries caused by human interference to investigate real-world scenarios and develop problem-solving skills through inquiry-based learning. The first Turtle Mandoos workshop was successfully delivered to 33 Grade 4 students at The American School of Muscat (TASM), in celebration of Oman National Day with the aim to continue to reach out to schools across Oman in 2027. Special thanks to **T-50** for supporting this initiative.

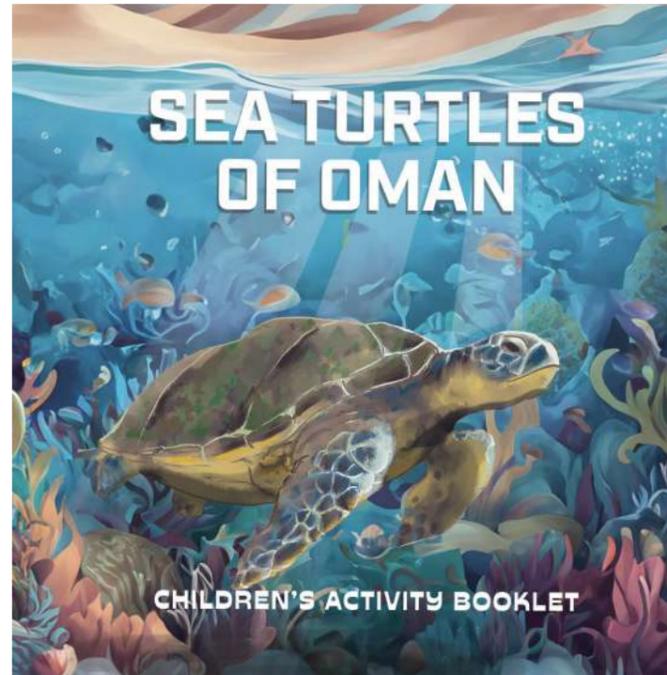


Sea Turtle Booklets

To enhance knowledge and understanding of marine turtles and their habitats, and to complement community engagement efforts, ESO produced three awareness materials targeting the general public. These resources,



available on ESO's website, include the 'Nesting Sea Turtles of Masirah' infographic ([Arabic](#) and [English](#)), the 'Sea Turtles of Oman Children's Activity Booklet' ([Arabic](#) and [English](#)), and the dual-language '[Nesting Sea Turtles of Oman](#)' booklet. These resources remain an integral part of community engagement activities and were distributed during school campaigns and public outreach events.



Coral Reef Awareness

In order to raise awareness on Oman's Coral Reefs a public talk was organized by ESO titled "Corals in a Changing Climate – Lessons from the Arabian Gulf" with Professor Jhon A. Burt, Co-Director of Mubadala ACCESS at New York University Abu Dhabi. Participants explored how coral reefs - essential to marine biodiversity and coastal economies - are under threat from climate change and learned how the resilient "super corals" of the Arabian Gulf offer valuable insights for global conservation efforts. Thank you to the **Environment Authority** for providing the venue and to everyone who engaged in this event.

Building on these outreach initiatives, ESO is developing a children's activity booklet highlighting Oman's corals, their importance, the threats they face, and ways to protect them. It is scheduled for publication early next year.

Oman Environment Day

Omani Environment Day, celebrated annually on January 8th, serves as a reminder of the importance of environmental awareness and collective national action. We were proud to see many organizations across the Sultanate join in this celebration and were delighted to be invited by **ARA Petroleum** to deliver a talk as part of their celebration. The session highlighted Oman's rich biodiversity, with a special focus on the sea turtles of Oman.



Climate Week

ESO participated in Oman's first Climate Week hosted by the **Environment Authority** in February. At a dedicated booth, ESO engaged with attendees and shared insights on its environmental conservation and sustainability initiatives. The event brought together global leaders, policymakers, and climate experts to advance collaborative solutions for climate change, with a focus on supporting decarbonization across the Middle East and North Africa. Through discussions, exhibitions, and interactive sessions, Climate Week reinforces Oman's commitment to international climate goals and its role as a regional hub for climate leadership and sustainable development.

Oman Sustainability Week

In May, ESO was proud to be an official supporter of Oman Sustainability Week. Our exhibition shared ESO's mission and activities with visitors. Additionally, the team delivered two presentations on ESO's Research and Conservation Efforts and Connection with Communities for Conservation. We would like to extend our appreciation to the team from **CONNECT Events** for including ESO in this impactful event and for supporting its sustainability goals.



Plastic Free July Campaign

As part of our continued commitment to environmental education and encouraging sustainable practices, our Plastic Free July Campaign took place in Dhofar this year, including a major field activation in Dhofar that reached over 1,000 visitors across Sahlout, Attin, Atthum, Dhariz, and Haffa Market. The campaign activities included distributing reusable bags, brochures, and ESO-branded keychains, supported by an active social media campaign. With coordination from ESO staff, members, and volunteers, the campaign successfully promoted practical steps to reduce single-use plastics and strengthened community engagement in environmental protection.



Plastic Free July Campaign

ESO, in collaboration with **Oman Sail** participated in the Oman Kite Festival organized by **Omran Group**. The participation aimed to raise awareness among children about Oman's sea turtles and marine conservation through an engaging, hands-on experience. The tent featured interactive and educational stations designed to introduce children to the turtle species found in Oman and the challenges they face. Through creative, play-based activities, children learned about the importance of protecting marine life and keeping beaches clean. This activation took place in Masirah Island and Al Ashkharah, engaging a total of 105 children and families through educational play that fostered curiosity and environmental stewardship.



Education Activities

Oman's youth are our most important environmental campaigners for a sustainable future. ESO delivers a range of nation-wide educational initiatives that target schools, colleges and universities, aiming to raise environmental awareness and promote the adoption of more sustainable behaviors.

Namat Schools Competition

The Namat Schools Competition, now in its fifth edition, continues to inspire government schools across Oman to take action toward sustainability. Designed for students from grades five to twelve, the competition serves as a collaborative platform that brings together students, teachers, parents, and local communities to create positive environmental change within schools and their surrounding areas. Sponsored by **Veolia Oman** and implemented in close collaboration with the **Ministry of Education (Oman National Commission for Education, Culture, and Science (ONCECS))**, the program challenges participants to reduce their ecological footprint through innovative and practical initiatives.



This year, a total of 126 schools registered from 10 governorates, with 124 schools qualifying to implement their environmental activities over a period of nearly six months. 78 final reports were successfully submitted and evaluated by judging panels in each governorate, and 13 schools were shortlisted for final field evaluations. The winners were announced during an award ceremony held on December 18 under the patronage of HE Dr Saif bin Abdullah bin Suleiman Al Hadabi, Undersecretary of Scientific Research and Innovation at the Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Innovation. The Namat Competition remains a driving force in cultivating environmental leadership, fostering innovation, and empowering students to lead sustainable change in their communities. The winning schools were:



1st Place – Sheikh Majid bin Khamis School, Al Dakhiliyah Governorate

Key achievements:

- Generated electricity from air-conditioning units using a smart system, integrated with solar energy to operate as a sustainable hybrid.
- Recycled, smart water management, and converted grey water into organic fertilizer for school crops.
- Introduced Code Majid, a digital system that reduced paper waste and tracks classrooms, labs, and maintenance tasks efficiently.



2nd Place – Al Hassan bin Ali School, North Al Batinah Governorate

Key achievements:

- Established an innovative agricultural nursery and scientific garden featuring a variety of plants and rare Omani species, provided students with hands-on learning that complements classroom theory.
- Introduced sustainable practices included vertical farming, modern irrigation, composting organic waste, and repurposing greywater for irrigation.
- Introduced digital initiatives, such as the Al Hassan Electronic System, reduced paper waste and streamlined administrative processes.



3rd Place – Azzan bin Qais School, Al Buraimi Governorate

Key achievements:

- Addressed long standing environmental challenges in the school, including sewage overflow, unpleasant odors, and limited green spaces.
- Replaced single-use water bottles with reusable alternatives and achieved adoption rates up to 100% in some classes.
- Established environmental awareness programs, community partnerships, and twinning with nearby schools, integrated sustainability into the curriculum and promoted eco-friendly practices.



Environmental Responsibility Excellence Award – Sumara School, Al Dakhiliyah Governorate and Baad School, North Al Sharqiyah Governorate

Key achievements:

- Transformed Sumara School's outdoor canopy into a smart, sustainable learning space, integrated environmental principles with cultural heritage.
- Repurposed wood to create circular outdoor seating, complemented by traditional Omani-style indoor seatings.
- Embedded sustainability concepts in the curriculum through experiential learning and student-led entrepreneurial projects, such as selling date products, seedlings, and crops.



Excellence in Sustainable Entrepreneurial Project Award – Ma'wulah bin Shams School, South Al Batinah Governorate

Key achievements:

- Addressed environmental challenges such as single-use plastics, excessive waste, and mismanaged food leftovers through practical, sustainable solutions.
- Implemented recycling and composting programs, extending the initiative to nearby villages under the "Eco-Village" concept.
- Repurposed greywater for irrigation, drought-tolerant plants are cultivated, and energy use is reduced through monitoring.



Environmental Innovation Excellence Award – Omama bint Hamzah School, North Al Batinah Governorate

Key achievements:

- Implemented a comprehensive sustainability project linking practical environmental initiatives with the curriculum, addressing water and energy conservation and waste management.
- Students engaged in hands-on projects including composting, vertical farming, greywater irrigation, biofuel generation, and eco-friendly pest control.
- Built an online platform "Batla" for plant sales and digital record-keeping, promoting a paperless school.

Green Campus Competition

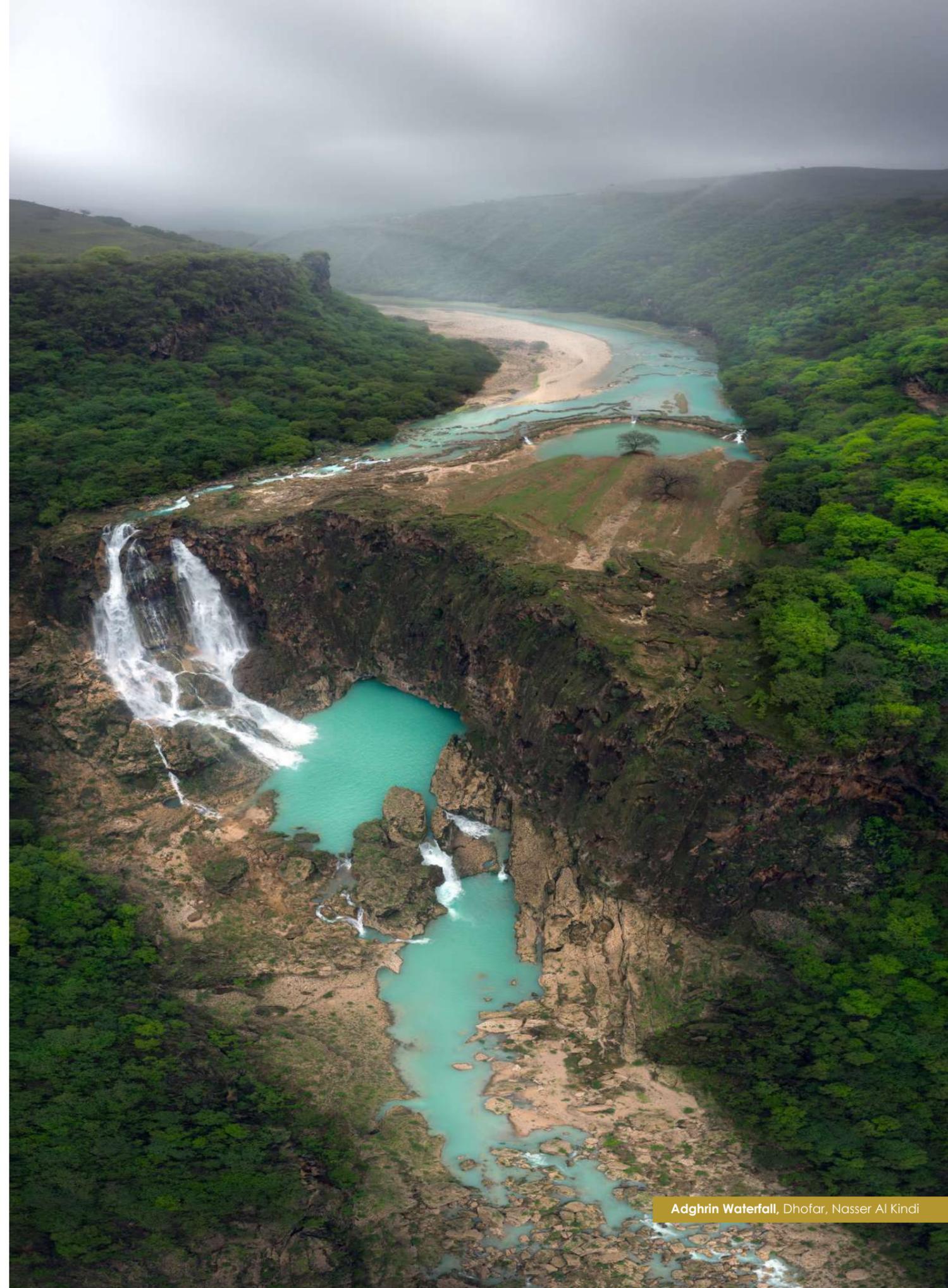
The Green Campus Competition is a national initiative aimed at promoting environmental awareness, innovation, and sustainable practices within higher education institutions across Oman. The 2024–2025 edition, themed "Target Net Zero," aligns with Oman's Vision 2040 and the National Strategy for Climate Change and Circular Economy, challenging students to design and implement actionable projects that reduce their campus carbon footprint. Participating teams focused on six key sub-themes: *Waste Reduction & Recycling, Energy Efficiency, Water Conservation, Carbon Offsetting, Sustainable Agriculture, and Awareness & Advocacy.*

The competition was officially launched in April, following an introductory press conference at **Kempinski Hotel Muscat** at the end of last year. A total of 62 applications were received from 16 universities and colleges across five governorates, with 20 teams shortlisted for the final stage. Participants received guidance throughout the process, including preparation for presentations evaluated by a panel of expert judges based on innovation, impact, effectiveness, community engagement, teamwork, and pitch quality. The top-performing teams, a total of 16 teams, were recognized during the award ceremony held on December 1 under the patronage of HH Sayyida Tania Al Said, emeritus board member of ESO. The winner was رواد الاستدامة (Ruwad Al Istidama), while second place went to Green Shift, third to EcoPlast. The winning team received a rolling trophy and a cash prize of OMR 1,000, while the second and third place teams were awarded OMR 800 and OMR 600, respectively. The initiative continues to nurture future sustainability leaders and embed eco-conscious practices across Oman's higher education sector.



2025 Sustainability Fair

ESO hosted the 2025 Sustainability Fair on February 25 at **Sheraton Oman**, taking over from the Oman American Business Council (OABC) as lead organizer. The event featured student-led sustainability projects from 11 private schools, with awards presented for Best Presentation, Most Innovative Idea, Most Practical Implementation, and Overall Winner. Special thanks to founder Marla Valdez for her continued support. We also thank **Marriot Business Group, Bauer Nimr, Five Elements, and Apex Publishing** for their valuable sponsorship and partnership.



Adghrin Waterfall, Dhofar, Nasser Al Kindi

Capacity Building Programme

Capacity Building Programme

Since 2010, ESO has successfully trained 18 young Omanis in conservation, community engagement, and NGO management, giving them the opportunity to pursue a career with ESO or take on environmental roles in the public or private sector. While some have continued on as staff members, many have gone on to work in both the public and private sectors, spreading their knowledge and experience. Many of these graduates are very active members and volunteers of ESO and continue to be environmental ambassadors for Oman.

In 2025, the Capacity Building Programme was sponsored by Veolia Oman, and Marafiq, with four Omanis being supported through the programme. Although graduates are trained in a specific area of NGO management, each are given exposure to the following areas:

- ESO Manage - NGO Management and Fundraising
- ESO Protect - Research and Conservation
- ESO Advocate - Education and Community Outreach



Rabab Al Lawati

Rabab Al Lawati holds a Bachelor of Science, majoring in Wildlife and Conservation Biology, from La Trobe University in Melbourne, Australia. She joined ESO as Conservation Outreach Coordinator in February 2021 and has since supported the organisation's field work, data management, reporting and engagement with stakeholders and local communities. In 2025, Rabab participated in underwater and in-classroom training delivered by New York University – Abu Dhabi, for monitoring Oman's Coral Reefs. She represented ESO at various national, regional and international events, including the 1st Arabian Regional Scientific Seagrass Workshop, the IUCN World Conservation Congress, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, and Birdlife International meetings. As Rabab moves on in July, she leaves a lasting impression on ESO. Her hard work and energy have advanced our research and conservation efforts, and we wish her all the best in her future career.



Jawaher Al Ghafri

Jawaher Al Ghafri, a graduate of Sur College of Applied Sciences with a bachelor's degree in communication studies, joined ESO as Education Coordinator in 2016. Jawaher now leads ESO's educational programmes, targeting students from schools, colleges, and universities across Oman. In 2019, Jawaher launched the *Namat Competition*, recognized as Oman's largest sustainability initiative for government schools. Now in its fifth year, the competition has reached over 600 schools nationwide, encouraging students to implement sustainability practices in waste, water, and energy management while fostering community engagement, creativity, and entrepreneurial skills. It's continued success has garnered enduring support from Veolia and the Ministry of Education. Expanding ESO's educational impact in 2025, Jawaher delivered the *Green Campus Initiative*, a competition focused on higher education institutions. This year, Jawaher participated in the 15th Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (COP-15) in the Republic of Zimbabwe and received the Origin Award - Social Change Champion Award.



Ahmed Al Zadjali

Ahmed Al Zadjali holds a bachelor's degree in marketing from Sultan Qaboos University. With a strong foundation built through multiple internships in communication, events, and marketing, along with a genuine passion for charitable work, Ahmed joined ESO in 2024 as the Communication and Membership Coordinator. Driven by a clear motivation to enhance communication efforts, particularly on social media, he also oversees membership activities and events. Ahmed has undergone on-the-job training to deepen his environmental knowledge and gain valuable insights from the team. This ensures that our communication efforts are not only impactful but also resonate meaningfully with external audiences. Ahmed has successfully increased ESO's social media engagement through compelling and impactful content. He played an integral role in the delivery of the Plastic Free July campaign and Strides for Nature – Charity Run. Additionally, he has spearheaded the social media efforts for several key ESO initiatives, including the Oman Climate Dialogues, the Namat Competition, and the Green Campus Initiative. In 2025, Ahmed also represented ESO at the Dubai Future Forum.

Internships



Sara Zaitoon

Sara Zaitoon completed an internship at ESO, supporting the Research and Conservation team on the Frankincense Research and Conservation Programme, and other administrative tasks.



Ali Abumughli

Ali Abumughli supported the Marketing and Fundraising team during his internship. He contributed to various IT tasks including organizing the ESO photo database and supporting the Kite Festival.



Sami Al Najjar

Sami Al Najjar completed an internship at ESO, supporting the Marketing and Fundraising team by following up with schools and restaurants to support our donation program. Sami also reviewed and evaluated our education program's Young Explorer initiative, making excellent suggestions for improvement.

Other Activities and Fundraisers

Strides for Nature



In celebration of World Cleanup Day on the 20th of September 2025, ESO's charity run drew over 400 participants united in their shared passion for protecting the Sultanate's stunning natural environment. Strides for Nature took place in partnership with Guinness World Record holder, **Fahad Al Abri**, on Shatti Al Qurum Beach. Fahad was a key player to the success of this event with his energetic community-led approach to encourage and inspire registrants. The 4km route was designed not only for runners to sprint along the shoreline, but also as a child-friendly hands-on cleanup drive for families to enjoy together. 40 volunteers were on hand to oversee safety and security, ensure smooth organization and support participants throughout the run.



The event was made possible through generous contributions from sponsors and in-kind support: Gold Sponsor, **National Bank of Oman (NBO)**, Silver Sponsors, **Al Ansari Trading and Enterprises** and **Al Mouj**, and in-kind supporters, **Artech**, **InterContinental Hotel**, **Mandarin Oriental**, and **Oasis Water**. We extend a heartfelt thank you to all sponsors, supporters, volunteers and participants who made this event a success.

Annual General Meeting

ESO held its Annual General Meeting on March 18, 2025, bringing together members, corporate partners, and the Board to review 2024 achievements and outline 2025 priorities. An Extraordinary General Meeting was also held, where members approved a revision to corporate membership fees—the first since 2008. ESO extends its thanks to the **Cultural Club** for their continued support in hosting the AGM.

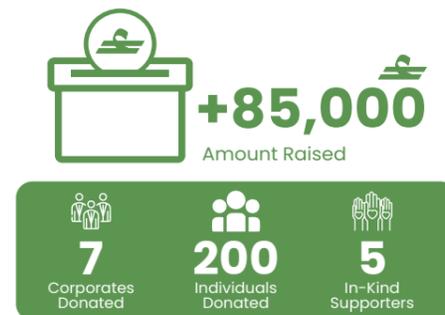


Conservation and Community: A Ramadan Reflection with ESO

In March, ESO hosted an exclusive Iftar gathering to highlight the powerful connection between conservation and community in building a more resilient Oman. The event brought together partners and supporters to reflect on shared environmental goals while enjoying a warm, collaborative atmosphere. We extend our sincere gratitude to **The Chedi Muscat** for generously providing the venue and Iftar meals, helping make the evening both memorable and meaningful.

ESO Charity Ball

ESO proudly hosted the fourteenth edition of the ESO Charity Ball with the support of **Shell Oman** as Pearl Sponsor, and Coral Sponsors **OMINVEST**, **Al Jenaibi International Automobiles LLC**, and **Alpha Fish**. Additional sponsorship was received from **44.01**. This event united over 200 corporate leaders, entrepreneurs, and friends of ESO who share our passion for making a tangible impact on environmental causes. It celebrated ESO's 20-year legacy of achievements in education, awareness, and conservation. Our heartfelt gratitude extends to everyone who contributed to the event's success, from sponsors and donors to auction contributors and in-kind supporters **Tunes**, **Mosaic Events**, **Towel-Take Solutions** and **African and Eastern**.



Oman Desert Marathon Night Race

As part of their commitment to the local community, the **Oman Desert Marathon (ODM)** organized a charity Night Race in November to support ESO and celebrate Oman's natural beauty. Participants had the opportunity to walk or run 5km under the canopy of the night sky and a portion of the race proceeds were donated to ESO.

International Schools & Universities

ESO actively engages with international schools, conducting sessions to foster environmental awareness and engagement with students. Participants this year included **Cheltenham Muscat**, **The International School of Muscat Downe House Muscat School** and **British School Muscat**. In a wonderful display of support, these educational institutions organized donation drives to contribute to ESO's mission. A special thank you to **The American International School Muscat (TAISM)** for hosting an *Under the Sea Glow Show* art installation created by PreK–Grade 8 students, their donation and support was highly appreciated.



Sohal surgeonfish (*Acanthurus sohal*),
Paul Flandinette

Other Activities and Fundraisers

Awards

The Origin Awards

ESO congratulates Jawaher Al Ghafri, Environmental Awareness and Education Specialist, on receiving the Social Champion Award at **The Origin Awards**. This recognition highlights her inspiring efforts to lead environmental awareness and education initiatives in Oman. The Origin Awards is a premier women's leadership forum and awards event in Oman, organized by **Muscat Media Group** and **Gulf Leaders Circle** to honor and empower women leaders from Oman, the GCC, and beyond.

Jawa'iz Basma 2025

Jawa'iz Basma 2025 celebrated individuals and organizations for their contributions to the country's social, environmental, and economic development in line with Oman Vision 2040. ESO was proud to receive the Environmental Advocacy and Action Initiative Award at the Jawa'iz Basma 2025. This recognition reflects the collective efforts of the ESO team, members and community in driving awareness and action to protect Oman's Environment. Organized by **Muscat Media Group** in partnership with **Shabiba** and **Gulf Leaders Circle**, the event recognized excellence in sustainability, environmental protection, youth engagement, and SME growth.



Grants, Donations and In-Kind Support

ESO would like to give special thanks to all those who have helped us achieve our goals in 2025. Our donors, sponsors, grant agencies and individual supporters who have supported us are listed below in alphabetical order:

- **Ahmed Al Wshahi, Amardeep Singh, Hussam Al Harrasi, Mohamed Mohsen Zoromba, Nasser Al Kindi, Noor Al Lawati, Oman in Focus, Paul Flandinette, Sooraj Jayaraj** and **Toresten Prohl**, for allowing us to use their imagery on ESO's platforms and materials
- **Ajit Khimji Group LLC** for contributing office space for ESO
- **Al Ansab Wetlands, Asyad Group, Barka Wild Animals Breeding Center, Cultural Club, Environment Authority, Modern College of Business and Science, Muscat University, and Oman Sail-Sea Oman** for hosting our 2025 membership events
- **Ali Al Rasbi** for his contributions to the Research & Conservation Department
- **Amouage** for sponsoring the Frankincense Research & Conservation Programme
- **Anantara Al Baleed Resort Salalah** for guest donations
- **AR Technology** for providing IT solutions for Stride for Nature
- **ASYAD Group** as main sponsor and **Nama Water** supporting partner for the Oman Climate Dialogue Series
- **Bauer Nimr, and Five Elements** for their sponsorship of the Sustainability Fair and the **Marriot Business Group, and Apex Publishing** for their in-kind support
- **be'ah** for sponsoring the Raptors Research & Conservation Programme
- **British School Muscat** for donations
- **Capitano Sea Tours** for providing sea tour vouchers for ESO team building and membership engagement activities
- **Downhouse Muscat** for donations
- **Eshraqa Foundation by KR** for sponsoring Massirah beach clean up
- **Europcar** for donating vehicles to support our field work
- **Good Outings International** for donations
- **Hud Hud Travel** for guest donations
- **International Avian Research** for supporting the Raptors Research & Conservation Programme
- **Marafiq** for supporting the Capacity Building Programme
- **Masirah Municipality** for supporting the Turtle Research & Conservation Programme
- **Mendel University** for supporting the Frankincense Research and Conservation Programme

- **Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries Wealth and Water Resources** for supporting our conservation projects
- **Mint and Coco** for donations through their 'Roar for a Cause' salad
- **Mohammed Al Busaidi** for providing an awareness session on snakes & scorpions
- **National Bank of Oman** for sponsoring Strides for Nature as Gold Sponsor, **Al Ansari** and **Al Mouj** for sponsoring as Silver Sponsors, **Artech, Intercontinental Hotel, Mandarin Oriental Hotel, Oasis Water, and Prunty** for supporting in-kind
- **National Finance** for sponsoring the Green Campus Initiative
- **National Geographic Society** for providing a grant for the Coral Reef Conservation and Capacity Building Project
- **New York University – Abu Dhabi** for providing technical support to the Coral Reef Conservation and Capacity building project, and **Extra Divers, Oman Sail – Sea Oman, Ras Al Hamra Dive Club** and **The Lighthouse Consultancy** for their support
- **Ocean Ecology Network** for supporting the Turtle Research and Conservation Programme
- **Oman Arab Bank** for supporting donations to ESO via their mobile banking app
- **Oman Desert Marathon** for donating 1 RO per participant from their Charity Night Run
- **Oman National Commission for Education, Culture, and Science** for joining our judging panel for the Namat Schools Competition
- **Oman Sail** for their contribution towards Kite Festival
- **Oman Tourism Investment Company** for donations
- **Omantel** for supporting donations to ESO from their customers via app and SMS services
- **Ornithological Society of the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia (OSME)** for sponsoring the Raptors Research & Conservation Programme
- **Pendoley Environmental** for supporting the Turtle Research and Conservation Programme lighting solutions initiatives
- **Reem Abdul Rehman** for contributing donations from the Honey Bees of Oman painting sale
- **Shell Development Oman LLC** for funding the Frankincense Research and Conservation Programme
- **Shell Oman, Ominvest, Alpha Fishco, Al Jenaibi International Automobile** and **44.01** for sponsoring ESO Charity Ball and **Tunes, Mosaic Events, Towel-Take Solutions** and **African and Eastern** for their in-kind support throughout the ball
- **Sohar International Bank** for supporting donations to ESO
- **Talabat** for enabling customer donations to ESO via their food delivery app
- **The American International School of Muscat** for donations through the art exhibition
- **The Chedi Muscat** for guest donations and providing venue for ESO Iftar charity
- **The Conscious Travel Foundation** for their generous donation
- **TMDone** for enabling customer donations to ESO via their food delivery app
- **US Fish and Wildlife Service – Marine Turtle Conservation Fund** for funding the Turtle Research and Conservation Programme (until 26 January 2025)
- **Veolia Oman** for sponsoring the ESO Capacity Building Programme and the Namat Schools Competition
- **Waterfront & Marina Services SAOC** for free berthing of the ESO boat

Tourism Donation Programme

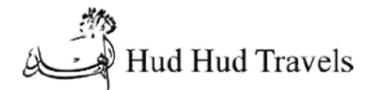
Oman's Visitors Giving Back

While tourism can exert significant pressure on the environment, it also holds the potential for positive change. Collaborating with hotels and tour operators, we present Oman's tourists with the opportunity to actively contribute to our conservation efforts. By doing so, they can play a vital role in safeguarding our endangered wildlife and preserving our precious natural heritage, giving back to Oman and its environment.

Where do donations go?

Donations play a crucial role in providing the essential funds required to administer our conservation projects, dedicated to safeguarding Oman's endangered biodiversity. These initiatives encompass the Arabian Sea humpback whale, loggerhead turtles, Egyptian and Lappet-faced vultures, and the preservation of frankincense trees. With your generous contributions, ESO can actively protect these imperilled species and equip future generations to do the same.

We aspire to inspire more hotels and tour operators to join this program, and we extend our heartfelt appreciation to the following establishments for offering their guests the opportunity to contribute to ESO's mission.



MANDARIN ORIENTAL
MUSCAT



منتج البليد - صلاحة
AL BALEED RESORT
SALALAH
BY ANANTARA

Local and International Highlights

Regional Workshop on the Assessment of Coastal Wetlands in the Arabian Peninsula

Amman, Jordan

The Regional Workshop on the Assessment of Coastal Wetlands in the Arabian Peninsula was held on 29–30 September 2025 under the patronage of Jordan's Minister of Environment and organized by **BirdLife International – Middle East** in partnership with the **Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature**. The workshop was attended by Ali Al Rasbi on behalf of ESO and brought together representatives from GCC countries, Yemen, Iraq, Jordan, and several regional and international organizations to review the current state of coastal wetlands and identify shared priorities for their protection and restoration.

Participants highlighted the critical role of coastal wetlands as natural assets that support biodiversity, store blue carbon, protect shorelines, and sustain local livelihoods. Discussions emphasized the urgent need for integrated coastal zone management, stronger regional collaboration, and improved data collection to halt degradation driven by urban expansion, pollution, and climate change. The workshop concluded with agreement to develop national reports and a joint regional action plan to guide the sustainable management and restoration of these vital ecosystems.

United Nations Multi-Stakeholder Platform for Protecting Biodiversity in the Arab Region

Beirut, Lebanon

Over the past year and a half, ESO has taken active part in the **United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)** regional project, the *Multi-Stakeholder Platform for Protecting Biodiversity in the Arab Region*. The platform enables collaboration on biodiversity conservation and supports developing bankable projects for biodiversity and climate finance in the Arab region. ESO was part of one of three thematic groups under this platform, the *Nature-based Solutions (NbS) for Climate Resilience Working Group*, convened by the American University of Beirut – Nature Conservation Center (AUB-NCC). Other thematic groups focused on renewable energy and biodiversity, and land degradation in arid agricultural ecosystems. As a culmination of those efforts, a workshop was held on the 17–18 September 2025 at the UN House in Beirut titled *Arab Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Biodiversity Finance for Climate Resilience* and was attended by Maia Sarrouf Willson.

15th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP15) to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands

Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe

Jawaher Al Ghafiri participated in the 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP15) to the **Ramsar Convention on Wetlands**, held in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe (23–31 July 2025). The conference convened representatives from the Convention's 172 Contracting Parties, as well as experts, civil society and technical partners, to strengthen international action on wetland conservation.

Prior to the plenary, Jawaher attended several pre-COP workshops that addressed national implementation, community engagement in wetland management, and integrating wetlands into climate adaptation strategies. The opening ceremony underscored the urgent need to restore and sustainably manage wetlands for biodiversity, water security and climate resilience.

Oman has three designated Ramsar sites: 1) Qurum Nature Reserve, 2) Al Ansab Wetland, and 3) Wetland Reserve in Al Wusta (which



includes the iconic Barr Al Hikman) which received official Ramsar accreditation during this event after being designated in 2023. These sites demonstrate Oman's active role in conserving wetlands and contributing to international wetland targets and climate resilience.

1st Arabian Regional Scientific Seagrass Workshop

Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

The **Yas Seaworld Research and Rescue Center** hosted the first Arabian Regional Scientific Seagrass Workshop in partnership with the **Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD)**, the **Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) – Dugong MOU Secretariat**, and with the participation of Professor Emma Jackson, President of the World Seagrass Association. The workshop brought together marine researchers and environmental experts from across the region and discussions focused on the current state of regional research and strategies to improve conservation efforts. The CMS Secretariat highlighted the 2030 Seagrass Breakthrough Initiative, launched during COP28, as a global effort to protect globally declining seagrass habitats critical to migratory species such as dugongs and sea turtles.

Rabab Al Lawati represented ESO, presenting details on Oman's seagrasses and acknowledging that there is a gap in active research on seagrasses in the country. The workshop addressed these urgent knowledge gaps and promoted data-driven conservation, while fostering regional collaboration to protect these habitats.



Blue Economy and Finance Forum

Monte Carlo, Monaco

The Blue Economy and Finance Forum (BEFF) was held at Monaco's Forum Grimaldi on June 7-8, 2025 as a special event ahead of the **United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3)**. The session was opened by HSH Prince Albert II, Sovereign Prince of Monaco. Understanding that the ocean is crucial for global trade, food security and the development of sustainable energy solutions and decarbonized maritime transport, the forum took place to address resource depletion, ocean acidification, protection of marine ecosystems, reducing overfishing and curbing ocean pollution.

By gathering experts, policymakers, investors and innovators from around the world, the Forum highlighted the critical role that sustainable investment, cutting-edge innovation, and forward-thinking policies play in ensuring the long-term health and prosperity of our oceans and economies alike. The BEFF served as a platform to exchange ideas and showcase the latest developments in the blue economy, with a clear focus on creating a resilient and thriving ocean ecosystem that benefits present and future generations. The forum was attended by Suaad Al Harthi, funded by the **Ministry of Transport, Communication and Information Technology** and the invitation was facilitated by the **MENA Oceans Network**.

United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3)

Nice, France

The Third **UN Ocean Conference** (UNOC3), co-hosted by France and Costa Rica under the theme *Accelerating Action and Mobilizing All Actors to Conserve and Sustainably Use the Ocean*, concluded successfully with over 14,000 delegates and observers, 75 Heads of State and Government, and more than 100,000 participants in civil society forums. The conference highlighted the urgent need to address escalating oceanic crises, from biodiversity loss and pollution to the impacts of climate change and overexploitation of marine resources. With strong political momentum and a unified call for multilateral cooperation, UNOC3 launched key initiatives, secured significant financial commitments, and laid the groundwork for transforming the human-ocean relationship.

With funding provided by the **Ministry of Transport, Communication and Information Technology**, UNOC3 was attended by Suaad Al Harthi under ESO's UN NGO accreditation. Suaad had the opportunity to showcase ESO efforts at both in the blue zone and the green zone of UNOC3 as a representative of ESO and the **MENA Oceans Network**. Through various interventions Suaad highlighted the critical role of civil society in driving ocean literacy: engaging schools, communities, and local stakeholders to support ocean conservation and contribute to regenerative blue economies. Suaad also contributed to a panel discussion on transboundary cooperation in which she emphasized the importance of long-term scientific research, sustainable funding, and leveraging global frameworks like International Whaling Commission and the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) to strengthen marine protection in our region.



International Union for Nature (IUCN) World Conservation Congress

Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

The **IUCN** World Conservation Congress convened nearly 10,000 participants from 189 countries including governments, NGOs, Indigenous leaders, youth, business, academia, and civil society, united to advance a just, nature-positive future. The Congress adopted the Abu Dhabi Action Plan, reaffirming nature as the foundation of well-being and prioritizing scaled resources for nature and climate action. The event included the release of the latest IUCN Red List of Threatened Species and the updated Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions. Notably, the global status of green sea turtles improved from Endangered to Least Concern on the Red List of Threatened Species. ESO representatives included Rumaitha Al Busaidi, Dr. Ali Akaak, Suaad Al Harthi, Maia Sarrouf Willson, Fathiya Al-Kindy and Rabab Al Lawati. ESO delivered two talks featuring Oman's raptors and loggerhead sea turtles.

At the Members' Assembly, members approved a 20-year Strategic Vision, the Programme for 2026–2029 and voted on council members and motions to guide global conservation policy and action.



Nudibranch (*Nembrotha purpureolineolata*), Paul Flandinette

Conferences, Lectures and Workshops

ESO is represented by volunteers, staff and board members at national, regional, and international conferences and workshops. Below is a list of those attended in 2025:

- 1st Arabian Regional Scientific Seagrass Workshop, Yas Seaworld Research and Rescue Centre and Environment Agency Abu Dhabi; Abu Dhabi
- Al Saleel Reserve Development Workshop, Environment Authority; North Al Sharqiyah
- Arab Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Biodiversity Finance for Climate Resilience, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (ESCWA); Beirut
- Assessment of Coastal Wetlands in the Arabian Peninsula, Birdlife Middle East, Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature and Ministry of Environment Jordan; Amman
- Birdlife International Brand Identity Training (Middle East – Partners), Birdlife International; Online
- Birdlife International Central Asian Flyway Webinars – Communication, Birdlife International; Online
- Birdlife International Central Asian Flyway Webinars – Ecosystem Services Training, Birdlife International; Online
- Birdlife International Central Asian Flyway Webinars – Policy, Birdlife International; Online
- Birdlife's Lunchtime Talk Series: Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Wildlife Poisoning (But Were Afraid to Ask), Birdlife International; Online
- Blue Economy and Finance Forum, United Nations; Monte Carlo
- Community Engagement Convening, National Geographic Society; Greensboro, North Carolina
- Dubai Future Forum, Museum of the Future; Dubai
- Estidama Bridges Podcast EP.1: Through the Lens of Nature, Estidama Events and the Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Oman; Muscat
- FAO Workshop on Country Programming Framework (CPF) for the Sultanate of Oman (2026-2030), Food and Agricultural Organization and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources; Oman
- Grants Solutions Training, United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS); Online
- Introducing the New DataZone; Middle East Partner Webinar, Birdlife Middle East; Online
- IUCN Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas Workshop, Environment Authority; Muscat
- IUCN Red List of Ecosystem for Regional Coral Reefs, New York University Abu Dhabi and IUCN; Abu Dhabi
- IUCN World Conservation Congress, International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN); Abu Dhabi
- July Without Plastic Awareness Workshop, Ministry of Heritage and Tourism; Muscat
- Key Biodiversity Areas Workshop, Environment Authority; Sur
- Maritime Ecological and Sustainability Movie Screening, The Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Oman; Muscat
- 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP15) to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (RAMSAR)
- Nature-Based Solutions for Climate Resilience Workshop, American University of Beirut; Amman
- Project Planning for Wildlife Conservation Training Course, WildTeam UK; Online
- Sharjah International Conservation Forum for Arabia's Biodiversity, Environment and Protected Areas Authority (EPAA) Sharjah; Sharjah
- Transnational Red Sea Center: The Role of AI and Deep Learning to Revolutionize Coral Reef Benthic Cover Assessment, Transnational Red Sea Center; Muscat
- United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3), United Nations; Nice

International Collaborations

- Arabian Sea Whale Network
- American University of Beirut
- BirdLife International – Middle East Regional Office
- Clear Blue Photo
- Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Abu Dhabi Office)
- European Union Commission
- Fair Source Botanicals LLC
- Fundación Cethus
- Happy Whale
- International Avian Research
- International Union for the Conservation of Nature – Regional Office for West Asia
- International Whaling Commission
- IUCN SSC Marine Turtle Specialist Group
- IUCN SSC Vulture Specialist Group
- Let's Do It World – World Clean-up Day
- Megaptera Marine Conservation
- MENA Oceans
- Mendel University in Brno
- National Geographic Society
- New York University Abu Dhabi
- Ocean Ecology Network
- Ornithological Society of the Middle East, the Caucasus and Central Asia
- Sustainable Forests
- United Nations Environment Programme – West Asia
- United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)
- University of Exeter, Centre for Ecology and Conservation
- Wild Me
- Wildlife Conservation Society
- World Shipping Council
- WWF – Earth Hour
- Earthwatch Europe



Acknowledgements

There are many people we wish to thank for their support, hard work and dedication to ESO.

First and foremost, special thanks go to ESO's Patron, HH Sayyid Tarik bin Shabib Al Said, who has always supported the Society and has been instrumental in its success. We also thank the ESO Board 2022-2024 for their voluntary commitment and dedication over this term.

A special thank you goes to ESO President, the Honourable Dr Amor Al Matani for his strategic vision and guidance.

We must acknowledge the continued support of our Emeriti Board members, HH Sayyida Tania Al Said, Sayyida Lamees Daar and Dr Mehdi Jaffar who continue to support and inspire us.

Thank you to HH Sayyida Tania Al Said, Sayyida Lamees Daar and Nashwa Al Rawahi for their guidance and support in the delivery of a successful Charity Ball which helped raise funds for our continued operations.

We acknowledge the commitment and dedication of Fahad Al Abri towards the delivery of Strides for Nature Charity Run in celebration of World Clean-up Day, raising environmental awareness and community support for nature conservation initiatives.

We thank **Ahmed Al Wshahi, Amardeep Singh, Hussam Al Harrasi, Mohamed Mohsen Zoromba, Nasser Al Kindi, Noor Al Lawati, Oman in Focus, Paul Flandinette, Sooraj Jayaraj** and **Toresten Prohl** who have allowed us the use of their beautiful images throughout this report.

Thank you to Rumaitha Al Busaidi and Amira Al Yarubi for volunteering their time in support of the Oman Climate Dialogues.

The Environment Authority, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries Wealth and Water Resources, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry of Transport, Communication and Information Technology continue to support ESO initiatives, and we thank them for their guidance and understanding of our work.

We thank Ajit Khmiji Group, who have given ESO free office space for many years and for their continued support.

We express our deep appreciation to Professor John Burt and the Burt Marine Lab Team at New York University Abu Dhabi for providing in-kind technical support and training to enable the Coral Reef Conservation project. We thank Moore for providing in-kind financial auditing and Dentons for providing legal advice as well as EY Oman for reviewing ESO's fundraising strategy.

We thank Europcar who provide staff vehicles for our field work and Waterfront & Marina Services SAOC who provide ESO with free berthing for the ESO boat.

None of ESO's work would be possible without the much-needed funding we receive from our corporate members, sponsors, and supporters. We thank all of them and hope that their generosity will continue for years to come.

We thank every one of our members for attending our events and dedicating their time and energy to supporting the conservation of Oman's environment.

Last but not least, we must also acknowledge the dedication of our staff who are the backbone of the Society and its work.

As we move forward, we remain committed to our vision of conserving Oman's environment and seek continued collaboration and support from all our valued partners and supporters.

Volunteer Acknowledgements

Volunteers are very important part of ESO's work, strengthening our organization's ability to deliver our mission to protect Oman's environment and wildlife. In particular, we would like to thank:

Abdulaziz Al Amri, for preparing a student-engagement video that was published on all ESO platforms.

Abdulnasser Al Sinani, Afshin Mohammed, Angela Hadfield, Antonia Vegh, Azzan Al Sinani, Elayne Looker, Jenan Al Asfoor, Juma Al Hamadani, Michele Pedrelli, Nasser Al Ruzeiqi, Neil Hadfield, Sameer Al Batashi, Sian Edwards, Sulaiman Al Majaini and **Zakariya Al Hasani** for supporting the coral reef monitoring initiative.

Ahmed Al Lawati, Saif Al Wadahi, Motaz Al Busaidi, Mohammed Al Shukaili, Mohanad Al Munthari, Salem Al Wahibi, Samir Al Fori, Ali Al Saidi, Abdullah Albusafi, Abdullah Al Husaini, Rashid Al Hinai, Issa Al Mahrami, Zakaria Al Qaidi, Abdulrahman Al Shamsi, Rushdi Al Hmdani, Mohammed Al yusfi, Mulham Al Hadidi, Said Al Ndabi, Hasan Al Issawi, Daim Al Qaidi, Faisal Al Rawahi, Athar Al Yarubi, Naif Al Amri, Jawaher Al Lawati, Said Al Balushi, Mubarak Al Balushi, Yusuf al Fori, Ruqaya Al Lawati, Khalid Al Hadidi, Said Al Hosani, Raed Al moot, Naema Al Balushi, Majdi Al Hadidi for volunteering in support of Strides for Nature.

Ali Abumughli, Hamood Al Rawahi, Israa Al Kindi and **Sara Zeitoun** for support the Oman Kite Festival.

Ali Al Rasbi, for supporting ESO's Research & Conservation Department.

Dr Ali Akaak for supporting community engagement initiatives in Dhofar.

Amira Al Yarubi, Khalid Al Huraibi and **Rumaitha Al Busaidy** for moderating panel discussions during the Oman Climate Dialogues Workshops.

Bhupender Manhas, Renu Manhas, Araghya Dev Manhas, and **Ipsa Manhas**, for participating in the Plastic Free July campaign in Salalah.

Fahad Al Abri for supporting Strides for Nature from inception to implementation.

Hawa Al Shuraiqi for supporting the Green Campus Competition and Namat Competition.

Sayyida Lamees Daar her dedication and support in the design and production of ESO's 2025 Annual Report.

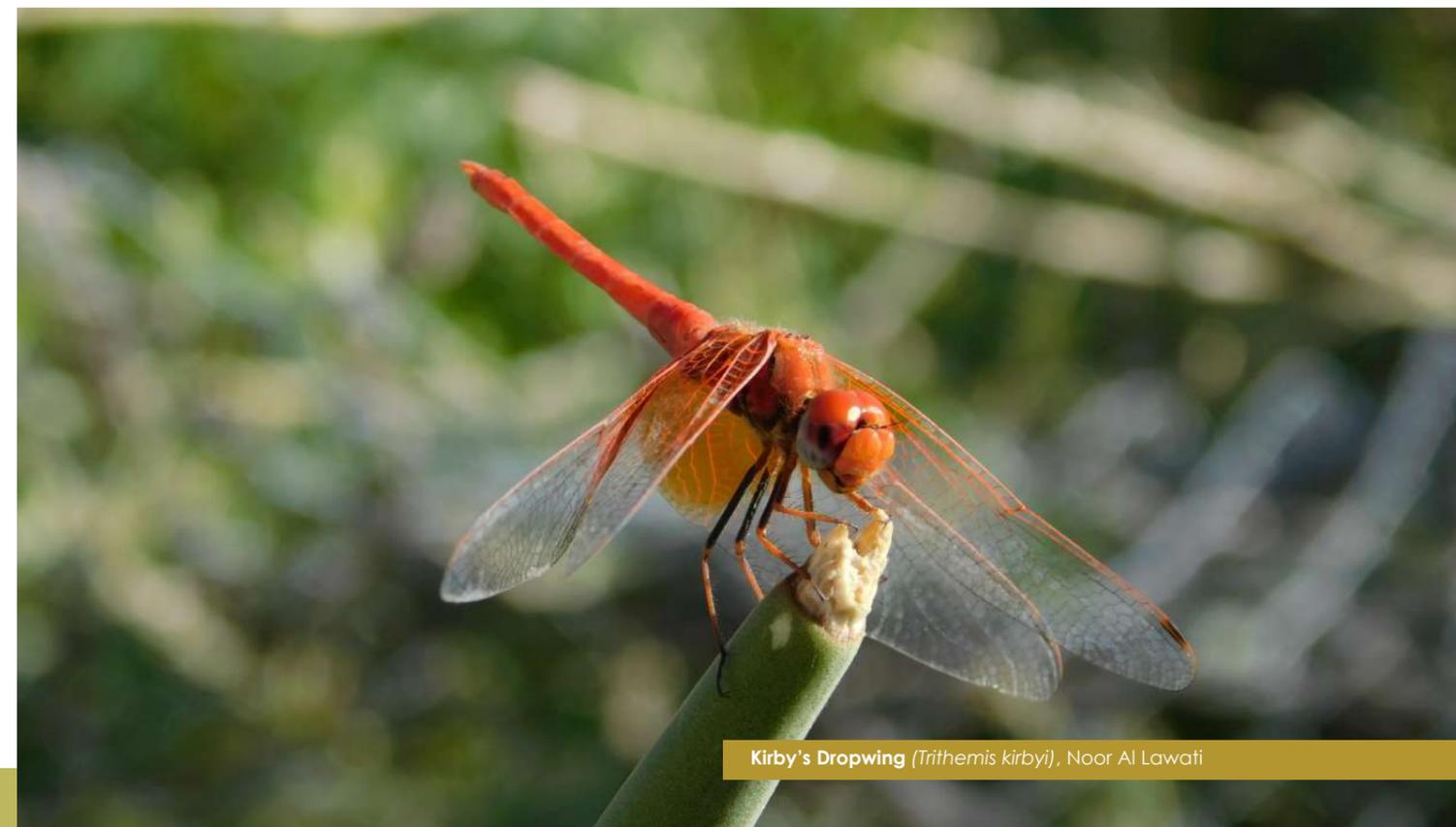
Marla Valdez and **Sofiya Zobairi** for supporting ESO during the Oman American Business Council Sustainability Fair

Ruqaya Al Lawati, Mubarak Al Balushi and **Shaima Al Balushi** for volunteering in support of Oman Desert Marathon Charity Night Run.

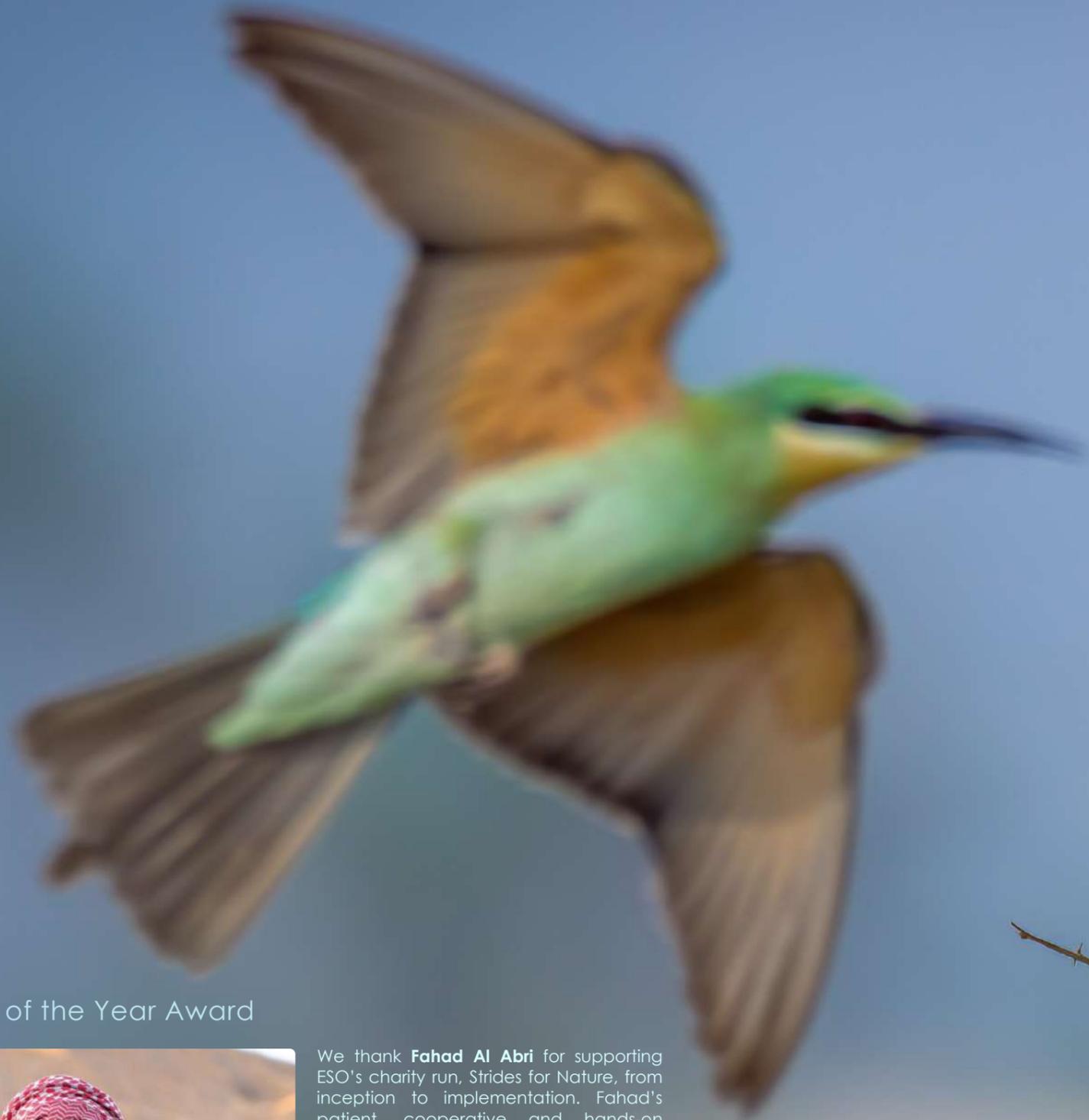
Sayyida Tania Al-Said, Sayyida Lamees Daar and **Nashwa Al Rawahi** for organizing the ESO Charity Ball generating income to sustain ESO operations.

We thank all volunteers who have supported ESO clean-up initiatives throughout the year and all volunteers who may not be mentioned and have helped ESO in any way in 2025. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer at ESO, please email us on admin@eso.org.om.

Thank you to everyone who supported the efforts of ESO in 2025. Without the support of our sponsors, members and volunteers none of the work we deliver would be possible.



Kirby's Dropwing (*Trithemis kirbyi*), Noor Al Lawati



Volunteer of the Year Award



We thank **Fahad Al Abri** for supporting ESO's charity run, Strides for Nature, from inception to implementation. Fahad's patient, cooperative and hands-on approach ensured smooth coordination throughout, while his encouraging presence motivated participants to complete the run with confidence and enthusiasm. In addition, Fahad generously volunteered his time to create promotional videos and posts across his social media platforms, and actively invited his network to join the event, significantly boosting its visibility, reach and community engagement. His commitment truly exemplified the spirit of collective action for environmental stewardship.

Membership

Corporate Membership

ESO is grateful for the support of all our Corporate Members

- Ajit Khimji Group of Companies
- Alizz Islamic Bank
- Amouage
- Bank Muscat
- Barka Desalination Company
- Cameron McKenna Nabarro Olswang (CMS)
- Dentons Muscat
- Europcar Oman
- EY Oman
- Mubashir
- Nama Water Services
- National Finance Company
- National Trading Company
- National University
- OCTAL Holding SAOC
- Oman Sail
- Omran Group
- OQ8
- OMNIVET
- Port of Duqm
- Sustainable City – Yiti
- Sohar Power
- Sohar International Bank
- TotalEnergies Renewables Development Middle East (Oman)
- Voltamp
- Wadi Noor Solar Company

Our Corporate Membership serves as a valuable gateway to fostering connections and collaborations with our partners. We are committed to continuously enhancing and adding value and privileges to this membership. Alongside the recognition received as corporate members, other benefits include providing specific guidelines to promote sustainable office practices, organizing eco-friendly events, and facilitating corporate clean-up initiatives. We also encourage joint campaigns to support environmental causes and look forward to launching more initiatives that strengthen this collaboration. This year, we partnered with Fifty Shades Greener, who generously provided a complimentary 90-minute sustainability awareness course, along with discounted rates for their Sustainability Reporting and ESG training programs.



Arabian Red Fox (*Vulpes vulpes Arabica*), Oman In Focus



Green Turtle (*Chelonia Mydas*), Mohamed Mohsen Zoromba

ESO Public Lectures and Membership Events

- February** **Membership Activity:** Breeding Center visit
- March** **Membership Event:** Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) and Annual General Meeting (AGM)
- April** **Public Talk:** "Corals in a Changing Climate: Lessons from the Arabian Gulf", delivered by Professor John A. Burt
- Public Panel Session:** Oman Climate Dialogues - Mobility and Green Transport
- Panelists: Haider Al Zaabi, Ziad Helou, Abdullah Al Busaidi and moderated by Amira Al Yarubi, ESO Board Member
- May** **Membership Activity:** Sunset Guided Kayak
- Public Panel Session:** Oman Climate Dialogues - Powering Energy Efficiency
- Panelists: Zainab Al Lawati, Dr. Abdulla Al Abri, Alan Freeman, and moderated by Rumaitha Al Busaidi, ESO Vice President
- June** **Public Talk:** "Saving Earth's Largest Fish: Global Whale Shark Research & Conservation", delivered by Dr. Simon Pierce
- July** **Membership Event:** Oman Kite Festival 2025: Beach and marina clean-ups, removing ghost nets from the seabed, awareness sessions on protecting marine life – with a spotlight on sea turtles, in collaboration with Oman Sail and Omran
- August** **Membership Event:** Plastic Free July Movement in Dhofar in 5 different locations, led by ESO staff with support from members
- September** **Movie Night:** Exclusive screening of Ocean by David Attenborough
- Public Panel Session:** Oman Climate - Sustainable Maritime Transport
- Panelists: Andrew Willson, Captain Arife Tugsan, Captain Khalil Al Hooti and moderated by Suaad Al Harthi, ESO Executive Director
- October** **Workshop:** Oman Climate Dialogues – Green Entrepreneurship
- Speakers: Florian Schmitt, Sharifa Al Kalbani, Atika Al Hinai, Sadiya Al Bakri and Nadeen Al Towaiya
 - Panelists: Michael Laermann, Atika Al Hinai, Sadiya Al Bakri, Dr Dina Belal and moderated by Khalid Al Haraibi
- November** **Workshop:** Oman Climate Dialogues - AI for Net Zero
- Speakers: Dr Nasser Al Fannah, Abdullah Al Shehi and Mahmood Al Mughairi
 - Panelists: Dr Haider Al Lawati, Ahmed Al Hasani, Dr Muhammed Qyyum and moderated by Suaad Al Harthi, ESO's Executive Director

Membership Benefits

We are thrilled to announce that all our 2024 partners have continued their collaboration with us in 2025, reaffirming their commitment to supporting our initiatives. This year, we've strengthened partnerships across diverse sectors, including beauty, veterinary care, hotels and resorts, activities and entertainment, car rentals, restaurants, and cafés, to offer our members an array of exclusive discounts and benefits. Our goal remains to enhance and expand these privileges, ensuring our members enjoy even greater value and experiences through their membership.

Beauty

Ayana Spa



Oman's first organic, green spa, inspired by nature, using only premium organic products that are safe for the body and the environment. Members can select from a choice of luxurious treatments from around the world to rejuvenate and beautify.

2nd Floor Al Sarooj Plaza, Muscat
Telephone: 2469 3435
email: info@ayanaspaspa.com
website: www.ayanaspaspa.com

TERMS & CONDITIONS

- 10% on facial services, hair services and massage services
- 10% - 20% on body waxing packages, massage and spa treatment packages and manicure & pedicure package
- Discount is applicable Sunday-Thursday on services above OMR 16

Me Time Ladies Salon



Me Time Salon is a project by Bint Al Jabry Trading. Our Salon is located in Al Khuwair with experienced staff who will ensure your needs are met. Our services include all beauty treatment from hair styling to spa treatments. Offer extends to member's +1. A member who comes in with a partner can enjoy the discounts in Me Time Ladies Salon or Me Time Men's Salon.

Booking Tel:
Naji (Hair Stylist) 95238483
Mimi (Beauty Expert) 94061217

TERMS & CONDITIONS

- 10% off any hair and facial services
- 20% off products
- 20 RO for 1 hour body massage
- 10 RO for 1 hour back and shoulders
- 10 RO for manicure & pedicure

Me Time Men's Salon



Me Time Salon is a project by Bint Al Jabry Trading. The salon is located in Al Khuwair with experienced staff. Offer extends to members +1. A member who comes in with a partner can enjoy the discounts in Me Time Ladies Salon or Me Time Men's Salon

Booking Tel: Iheb Kahloun (Hair Stylist) 79094423

TERMS & CONDITIONS

- 10% off any hair treatments and style
- 10% off 1 hour head & Shoulders massage
- 10% on face waxing
- 15 RO only for hair protein and straightener

Veterinary

Capital Veterinary Centre



Capital Veterinary Centre LLC "CVC" provides the highest level of veterinary care available in Oman. Services include, early-age neutering, ophthalmic surgery, orthopaedic surgery, dental and scaling and other dental procedures, x-rays, precaution vaccinations along with treatments of various illnesses and diseases. Additional services include pet grooming services accommodating pets whilst their owners are travelling. For more information visit www.vetoman.com

Tel: +968 24577551

TERMS & CONDITIONS

- On purchase of one eligible grooming service receive the second service of equal or lower value free.
- On purchase of one day boarding service, receive the second boarding day free.
- On purchase of one doctor consultation receive the second consultation free.
- 15% off dental and scaling under sedation, dog spay or castration (neutering) operation, DHPPL vaccine for dogs and Tricat vaccine for cats
- 20% off rabies vaccine for cats and dogs
- 25% off for stray animals for any service
- 30% off microchip for cats and dogs

Al Qurum Veterinary Clinic

Al Qurum Veterinary Clinic, where your pets get the best Pet-erinary care in Oman. Located in Madinat Sultan Qaboos or Azaiba.



Website: www.muscatvets.com
Email: info@muscatvets.com
MSQ Hospital 2460 7735
Azaiba Clinic 2412 1173

TERMS & CONDITIONS

- 10% discount on vaccinations, routine consultations and neutering
- Discount valid in both branches (Al Azaiba and MSQ)

Hotels & Resorts

Sama Properties:
Sama Heights (Jabel Al Akhdar), Sama Al Wasil (Ibra, Al Sharikiyah), Sama Ras Al Jinz, Sama Heritage



TERMS & CONDITIONS

- 15% discount on room rate which are on half board. This offer cannot be combined with any other promotions. Reservation must be made prior to arrival and a confirmation voucher along with membership card must be presented upon check in. Any extras will be an additional charge.

Turtle Beach Resort



A traditional Omani-style resort operating for more than 20 years, located in Ras Al Hadd area (world-famous breeding ground for the Green turtles). Turtle Beach Resort is a semi-island resort surrounded by sea.

For Reservation: info@tbroman.com
Mobile: +968 99007709

TERMS & CONDITIONS

- 15% discount on room rate which are half board
- Discount cannot be combined with any other promotions
- Reservations must be done prior to arrival

Activities & Entertainment

Wave Summit



Break your routine by joining our kayaking trips and enjoying spectacular views of Oman from a different angle

Contact Person: Bassam Al Jabri
Mobile: +96897471484

TERMS & CONDITIONS

- 20% discount for ESO members up to 5 times per person on any of 2 hours program
- Offer is not valid in full day trips
- Offer valid during weekdays only, from Sunday to Thursday

EuropCar



EuropCar is one of the world's leading and largest mobility services provider representing an extensive network in 140 countries. Ajit Khimji Group holds the franchise of Europcar in Oman since 1972. Being part of such a big and diverse group gives Europcar an access to all the resources required to successfully operate the car rental & leasing activities in Oman. Europcar is specialized in mobility services and provides a choice of alternatives to outright purchase. These include Short & Long-term rentals, Chauffeur & Transfer services, Flexi-Lease and International Reservations for your travel abroad.

Contact Person: Wassem Ahmed
Mobile: +968 9786 7424
Email: sales@eurpcaroman.net

TERMS & CONDITIONS

- 15% off the best available rate displayed on the website

Salam Space Yoga



Salam Space Yoga is a beautiful seaside studio that provides experiential knowledge through the use of accessible yogic tools to initiate, shape and sustain your regular yoga practice. We meet you where you are within your Yogic journey and provide customized pathways for you to reach your goals. Whether you are healing from a temporary condition, living with a chronic illness, or preparing the body and mind to become stronger and more resilient, you will be guided towards your goal, and services will be tailored to your individual needs. We are teachers who value daily

time spent practicing the methodologies of Yoga, which is why we offer you studio time as an important part of our scheduling. When students utilize it to practice outside of their guided class hours inner peace will abound.

TERMS & CONDITIONS

- 10% off on all classes and events booked in advance

Restaurants & Cafe's

Woodlands



Woodlands is a restaurant located in Oman, serving a selection of Indian food that delivers across Ruwi.

Contact Person: Bassam Al Jabri
Mobile: +96897471484

TERMS & CONDITIONS

- 10% off on food and soft beverages only (valid for dine-in/ takeaway and deliveries)

7 Sisters Café



7 Sisters Cafe is cozy and home like environment cafe a true story of seven sisters with a dream of spreading love and great taste through every sip and bite you take. it's the next trend in beverages (Bubble Tea). A unique Tea concept that is dedicated to make Tea a healthier, refreshing and lifestyle drinks. Also, we bring comfort home food to you.

Mobile: +96897471484

TERMS & CONDITIONS

- 10% off on any food and beverage



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