

From Commitment to Measurement: Carbon Footprint Centres and Sustainability Capacity in Arab Universities

AUKNCCF Roundtable at ICASF 2027 · Arab Universities Knowledge Network for Climate Change and Carbon Footprint · Hosted by Abu Dhabi University, established with ACSR / Association of Arab Universities

ABOUT THE ROUNDTABLE

This high-level roundtable brings together academia, industry and government to address the transition from institutional climate pledges to verified, data-driven measurement. It examines the case for dedicated campus Carbon Footprint Centres across Arab universities, the barriers of greenhouse-gas accounting, data access and institutional capacity, and the cross-sector models that unlock policy support, funding and technology adoption — alongside the impact of hosting such a centre on research output, campus operations, curriculum and international standing. It is the network's working session within the conference, held alongside the AUKNCCF-UNESCO MoU signing.

FOCUS

Measurement & Methodology

Institutional Capacity

AI & Digital Tools

Policy & Partnership

ROUNDTABLE OBJECTIVES



A Common Reporting Baseline

Agree a minimum common baseline for campus carbon-footprint reporting across member universities.



Carbon Footprint Centre Pilots

Identify 2-3 member universities to pilot campus Carbon Footprint Centres during 2027, with ADU expertise and network support.



Shared Network Services

Scope a methodology standard, faculty sustainability certification with an established awarding body, and a joint grant pipeline.

WHY THIS MATTERS

- Most Arab universities have declared sustainability commitments; far fewer can report a verified campus carbon footprint.
- AI, digital twins and open data can lower the cost and raise the credibility of campus carbon accounting and SDG reporting.
- ICASF 2027 is the one occasion when members, AARU/ACSR leadership and international partners are in the same room.
- The gap is capacity, not ambition: consistent methodology, usable data, trained people and an institutional mandate.
- A regional network can provide centrally what no single member should have to build alone.
- Outputs feed directly into the Steering Committee's first annual plan and a roundtable communiqué within two weeks.

ADVANCING THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Education, skills and future learning for sustainability.



Innovation, digital tools and low-cost measurement infrastructure.



Sustainable campuses and resilient communities.



Verified carbon accounting and climate action.



Partnership across universities, government and industry.

From Commitment to Measurement

13 JANUARY 2027 · 3:00 – 4:00 PM · ABU DHABI UNIVERSITY

Roundtable Programme

TIME	SESSION & LEAD
3:00 – 3:10 PM	Welcome and Network Update: Governance, Membership and 2027 Priorities H.E. Prof. Amr Ezzat Salamah — Secretary General, Association of Arab Universities; President of AUKNCCF Prof. Ghassan Aouad — Chancellor, Abu Dhabi University; Patron of AUKNCCF Prof. Sherine Farouk — Assistant Chancellor for Global Partnerships and Impact, ADU; Chairperson of AUKNCCF Prof. Randa Mahmoud Rizk Fakher — Secretary General, Arab Council for Social Responsibility; Executive Director of AUKNCCF
3:10 – 3:20 PM	Two Framing Interventions (5 minutes each): The Founding Vision; the UNESCO Perspective on Higher-Education Climate Capacity Mr. Salah Khaled — Director, UNESCO Regional Office Second framing speaker (TBC)
3:20 – 3:50 PM	Moderated Roundtable on the Three Guiding Questions Discussants, followed by member representatives Moderator: Dr. Rahaf Ajaj — Associate Professor of Environmental Health and Safety, Abu Dhabi University; Coordinator-General, AUKNCCF INVITED DISCUSSANTS ◆ Prof. Patrizia Lombardi — Vice Rector, Sustainable Campus and Living Lab, Politecnico di Torino ◆ Prof. Jian Zhang — Deputy Secretary General, GAUC; Tsinghua University ◆ Dr. Vishnu Juwono — Chair, UI GreenMetric World University Rankings ◆ Ms. Maya Haddad — Senior Sustainability Manager, Ajman University ◆ Dr. Dimitrios Dimitriou — Vice President, ESG & Sustainability, EMSTEEL Group ◆ Dr. Sanela Mrdakovic — Economic Advisor, Economic Policy & Studies Sector, Ministry of Economy and Tourism, UAE ◆ Mr. Mohammed Abdul Hai — Director, SAIF, Abu Dhabi University
3:50 – 4:00 PM	Commitments, Pilot Expressions of Interest and Closing Remarks Closing speaker (TBC)