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BEEAH, ISWA and Roland Berger partner to develop first certified global standard for recycling credits in support of UAE's COP28 ambitions

Using the blockchain, the new standard will authenticate and incentivise recycling activity globally, enabling organisations to receive recycling credits and meet sustainability targets

Munich/Sharjah, May 2023: Following a landmark signing during the United Nations Environment Program's Second Session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Plastic Pollution (INC-2) in Paris, BEEAH Group, the International Solid Waste Association (ISWA), and the management consultancy Roland Berger have entered a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to collaborate on a ground-breaking global standard for waste recycling that has been endorsed by the UAE Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MoCCaE). The MoU was signed by Firas Wahbeh, Chief Marketing Officer, BEEAH Group, Carlos RV Silva, President, ISWA, and Hani Tohme, Managing Partner at Roland Berger Dubai. The signing took place in the presence of His Excellency Essa Abdulrahman Al Hashmi, Assistant Undersecretary, Sustainable Communities Sector, UAE Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, and Rahma Alshamsi, Lead - Hard-to-Abate, Energy Transition Team, COP28 Committee, UAE Climate Envoy.

The platform will create a global market-based incentive scheme and standard measure for recycling recognition and rewards, which will bridge the gap between the global sustainability agenda and the private sector and push the transition towards a global circular economy. Developed using blockchain technology, the platform aims to facilitate collaboration between jurisdictions and enable transparency across the waste management value

chain.

The dedicated marketplace, to be revealed during the upcoming 28th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28), will connect waste producers and waste management providers to create a virtuous loop. Organisations which recycle waste with verified sustainable waste management providers receive Voluntary Recycling Credits (VRC). The use of the platform enables them to track the recycling activities in a transparent and standardized process and helps to realize their sustainability targets.

Khaled Al Huraimel, Group CEO of BEEAH Group, says: “BEEAH Group has been working relentlessly towards a zero-waste to landfill future, which we see as closely linked to fulfilling the UAE’s Net Zero by 2050 Strategic Initiative and broader sustainability agenda. We are proud to work with MoCCaE, ISWA and Roland Berger to develop the VRC platform, which will enable us to create new, sustainable efficiencies across businesses and industries when it comes to waste management. This new recycling standard will make positive impact for sustainability targets within the UAE and globally. While incentivising recycling and making large scale impact on creating a circular economy, we are also innovating to add new value to organisations that are managing their waste sustainably, enabling them to offset emissions and track their contributions to the national sustainability agenda.”

Known for its zero-waste strategies and sustainability-driven technologies, BEEAH Group’s integrated waste-management and clean energy strategies have set records for waste collection and landfill waste diversion in the Middle East. Recently, BEEAH Group increased landfill waste diversion rate in the emirate of Sharjah from 76% - through sustainable waste management and material recovery – to over 90% through the Sharjah waste-to-energy plant, a project of its joint venture with Masdar.

During COP26 in Glasgow, the UAE became the first nation in the Middle East to announce its Net Zero by 2050 Strategic Initiative. The following year, during COP27 in Sharm El Sheikh, the UAE also unveiled its pathway to achieve Net Zero by 2050. The VRC standard is being developed ahead of COP28 in Dubai to help drive the UAE’s climate ambitions and serve as a new global model to accelerate towards net-zero targets while creating a circular economy.

In March 2023, the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) highlighted that contributions from the waste management sector could result in the mitigation of 1.8 Gt (gigatonnes) of CO₂ emissions every year. This is possible through innovations across the waste management value chain and limiting the usage of resources to manufacture virgin materials such as plastic.

“There is a need to integrate action and to provide consistent solutions. Today, I am very happy to announce the launch of a new global initiative, promoted by the UAE and our partners, BEEAH and Roland Berger, linking the topics that are currently being discussed at INC-2 in Paris on plastics pollution with the climate change negotiations that will happen during COP28 in Dubai”, said Carlos RV Silva, President, ISWA.

Driven by MoCCaE’s strategies and vision for the UAE Net Zero by 2050 Strategic Initiative, the standard will bring together BEEAH Group’s expertise in waste management, sustainability and digitalisation, ISWA’s competencies and large-scale impact on the circular economy globally and Roland Berger’s leadership in developing circular economy solutions to mitigate climate change, enabling innovative technology and coalition.

Hani Tohme, Managing Partner at Roland Berger Dubai said: “For the first time in history, the waste management sector is offering a scalable solution to reduce carbon emissions, track material flows, and create a self-sustaining financing system to upgrade recycling infrastructure globally. This ambition is being promoted by an innovative coalition formed under the leadership of the UAE, bringing together all the necessary expertise to make a massive contribution to the Paris agreement. We look forward to putting waste management on the radar this year at COP28 and demonstrating the sector’s untapped potential to reduce emissions.”

The partnership is currently developing the standard’s framework and technology. The platform will be revealed at COP28 in Dubai between November 30 and December 12, 2023.

About BEEAH Group

BEEAH Group is the region’s leading sustainability and digitalisation expert, renowned for ground-breaking environmental innovations and smart solutions for

future-ready cities. Recognising sustainability and technology as the pillars of a modern economy, BEEAH Group has invested in a comprehensive, full-circle strategy for the future. BEEAH Group operates in the industries of waste management, renewable energy, technology, consulting, education, transport, real estate and healthcare. Raising the bar for the quality of life in the region, BEEAH Group businesses continue to set industry benchmarks in sustainable, smart solutions and help countries across the region create and execute their roadmap for a socially responsible future. The Group currently operates in the UAE, Egypt and KSA. BEEAH Group has also had success developing digital platforms for sustainability through its subsidiary, re.life, with the launch of the re.life market platform two years ago.

About ISWA – International Solid Waste Association

The International Solid Waste Association is a global, independent, and non-profit making association, working in the public interest to promote and develop sustainable waste and resource management, and a transition to a circular economy. ISWA membership is open to individuals and organisations from the scientific community, public institutions and public and private companies from all over the world working in the field or interested in waste management. As the only worldwide waste association with members in over 110 countries, ISWA allows you to network with professionals, companies and institutional representatives on a global scale. ISWA's unique mix of members spans the whole waste sector for the promotion and development of sustainable waste management across the world.

About Roland Berger

Roland Berger is the only management consultancy of European heritage with a strong international footprint. As an independent firm, solely owned by our Partners, we operate 51 offices in all major markets. Our 3000 employees offer a unique combination of an analytical approach and an empathic attitude. Driven by our values of entrepreneurship, excellence and empathy, we at Roland Berger are convinced that the world needs a new sustainable paradigm that takes the entire value cycle into account. Working in cross-competence teams across all relevant industries and business functions, we provide the best expertise to meet the profound challenges of today and tomorrow.

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