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## **Roland Berger recognized at Emirates Nature-WWF's COP28 "Citizen Science for Climate & Nature: Leaders of Change" Celebration**

Dubai, December 2023: Roland Berger was recognized by the leadership of Emirates Nature-WWF, at the "Citizen Science for Climate & Nature: Leaders of Change" event at COP28. The recognition is based on Roland Berger's pivotal role in developing the concept and economic case for the conservation of one of the last pristine coastal lagoons in the Northern Emirates of the UAE. This project is a landmark in assessing the economic value of biodiversity and the myriad ecosystem services provided by this unique environment, setting a precedent for nature-based solutions with a focus on sustainable and regenerative tourism.

The project, which has been a collaborative effort with Natureza Urbana, a renowned Brazilian eco-architecture firm, brings together global experts in environmental economics, conservation, and nature-based tourism. It underscores the importance of biodiversity and ecosystem services as critical tools in combating climate change and preventing ecological collapse.

The alarming decline of wildlife, as reported in the WWF Living Planet Report 2022, underscores the urgency of this project. According to the report, the world has witnessed a staggering 70% decline in wildlife since 1970, primarily due to unchecked economic development. Unfortunately, the current economic models, heavily driven by growth and profits, often overlook the real impacts on the natural world.

"To counter the biodiversity crisis, comprehensive changes across economic sectors are imperative. Governments and businesses must integrate the

valuation of biodiversity and ecosystem services into their decision-making frameworks,” said Hani Tohme, Managing Partner, Roland Berger Middle East. “This approach not only assesses the risks posed by business activities and projects on biodiversity but also quantifies the intrinsic value of biodiversity, revealing the true cost of these ventures,” he added.

COP28 presents a crucial platform to emphasize the vital role of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the global battle against climate change. It is the right place to bring together world leaders, environmental experts, and influential stakeholders to highlight how protecting and valuing our planet’s diverse ecosystems is not just an environmental issue, but a necessary strategy for climate resilience.

There is an urgency to integrate nature-based solutions into policy and economic frameworks, recognizing that the health of our ecosystems directly impacts climate stability, human well-being, and the sustainability of our global community.

“To reverse the biodiversity crisis, innovative financial strategies like biodiversity bonds, debt-for-nature swaps, and spatial financing, should integrate biodiversity valuation and ensure a balance between economic development and nature conservation,” said Karim Hagggar, PhD, Principal at Roland Berger Sustainability practice. “Financial institutions play a pivotal role in this endeavor, innovative funding mechanisms are crucial for promoting sustainable economic growth,” he added.

“Roland Berger’s significant contribution to this multi-partner project represents a beacon of hope in our efforts to combat climate change and preserve biodiversity. Their approach to valuing ecosystem services and biodiversity helps set a new standard for sustainable development. As the nature-climate crisis continues to grow more severe, innovative models are essential to showcase to businesses and governments worldwide that economic growth and environmental conservation can indeed coexist harmoniously,” commented Laila Mostafa Abdullatif, Director General of Emirates Nature-WWF.

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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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