



IUCN
World
Conservation
Congress
Abu Dhabi 2025

Source: Sergey Pesterev/Unsplash

PARTICIPANT'S
GUIDE

Practical Information

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Congress essentials

To do before departure

- ☐ Save the email with the QR Code to collect your badge
- ☐ Read this participant guide
- ☐ Make photocopies of your passport and visa(s) in case replacements are needed
- ☐ Download the IUCN Congress Mobile App

Checklist when packing

- ☐ Personal items
- ☐ Passport
- ☐ Travel adaptor (if required)
- ☐ Smartphone and headset
- ☐ Laptop and charger
- ☐ Light jacket or scarf (air-conditioned venue)
- ☐ Any prescribed medication (with copy of prescription if necessary)



Transport and venue access

To help you plan your arrival at the IUCN Congress smoothly, please take note of the following transport and access information:

Venue Location

Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC)

Al Khaleej Al Arabi Street, Al Rawdah
W59 01, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

Transfers from/to the Abu Dhabi Airport:

To facilitate your arrival in Abu Dhabi, IUCN's official partner GD+ will manage airport-hotel transfers for Congress participants at a preferential rate. This service ensures a smooth and reliable journey between the airport and your accommodation.

We recommend arranging your transfer in advance using the dedicated [Congress platform](#)

Transfers between the Congress official hotels and the venue:

Accommodation booked through the official [Congress platform](#) that is not within walking distance of the venue will be served by regular shuttle buses. Details on the shuttle frequency and timetables will be provided to the Congress hotels.

Getting around Abu Dhabi with Hafilat Cards

Hafilat Cards are available at the airport. Ask for the exact vending machine at the Abu Dhabi Destination Management booth at AUH, right after baggage claim.

The **Darb app provides** real-time public transport schedules and directions:

- For Google Play: [DARB – Apps on Google Play](#)
- For iOS: <https://apps.apple.com/ae/app/darb/id1509721720>

Getting around Abu Dhabi by Taxi, Uber and Careem

While participants are encouraged to use the official hotel shuttles and public transport wherever possible, taxis and ride-hailing apps such as Uber and Careem are widely available and commonly used across the UAE.

Rent a car

As an official supporter of the IUCN World Conservation Congress, **Shift Car rental** is offering **8% discount** on hybrid and electric vehicles' rentals available for rent from Abu Dhabi and Dubai airports. More information about Shift Car rental is [available here](#).

Kindly note: Wearing a seatbelt is mandatory, even if you sit in the back.

Registration & Badge Pick-up

To ensure a smooth arrival and avoid unnecessary queues at the registration desks, we strongly encourage all participants to **finalise their registration in advance and to bring the QR code confirmation** (received upon registration) to the venue.

Payment Information

- If you have paid by bank transfer but have not received a registration confirmation or invoice, please bring proof of payment or a bank transfer slip with you to the Congress.
- On-site payments can only be made by credit card. Please note that cheques and cash will not be accepted.

Badge Pick-Up Process

Confirmed Registrations:

- Have your QR code confirmation ready (on your smartphone or as a printout).
- Proceed to the self-printing badge desks in the registration area to print your name badge.

Pending Registrations:

If your registration is still pending, please go to the Registered Delegates counters in the registration area to complete the process.

Congress Hours of Operations

	Wed, Oct 8	Thu, Oct 9	Fri, Oct 10	Sat, Oct 11	Sun, Oct 12	Mon, Oct 13	Tue, Oct 14	Wed, Oct 15
Registration area (Hall 1)	08:00– 19:00	07:45– 19:30	07:45– 19:00	08:00– 19:00	08:00– 18:30	08:00– 18:00	08:00– 18:00	08:00– 17:30
Cloakroom	08:00– 19:30	07:45– 21:00	07:45– 21:00	08:00– 21:00	08:00– 21:00	08:00– 21:30	08:00– 21:30	08:00– 17:30
Exhibition hall		13:00– 19:00	10:30– 21:00	10:30– 21:00	10:30– 21:00	10:30 – 18:00		
Exhibition Hall for General Public only			10:30 – 13:00	10:30– 13:00	10:30– 13:00	10:30 – 18:00		

The venue

Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC)

Located in the heart of Abu Dhabi, ADNEC is the first and largest event centre in the region to be powered by clean energy.

To discover more about ADNEC, please visit the [ADNEC interactive map](#)



Prayer Rooms

Two prayer rooms are available, one for women and one for men on the Mezzanine, close to Capital Suite 7 and 8. A Multi-faith & meditation room is also available in Organiser Office 7.

Cloakroom

A cloakroom to store luggage will be in the registration area, Hall 1. Please refer to the hours of operation above for more information.

Mobile App

Scan the QR code below to install the Congress Mobile App on your device. For the full experience, you will need to register with your IUCN account. Through the app, you can:



- Access the full programme and speaker list
- Explore the venue map
- Follow live sessions and interact with panels via Slido
- Search for and connect with other participants
- Find key information, including emergency contacts and policies

The Virtual Platform

Access the virtual platform through the official IUCN Congress 2025 website. Log in with your IUCN Account linked to the email used during registration.

We encourage you to explore and become familiar with the platform before the official start of the Congress. It will be accessible a few days prior Congress.

Health, Safety and Security

Emergency Contacts

On-site at ADNEC: +97124064444 (24/7)

Outside ADNEC:

Police	999	Coastguard	996
Ambulance	998	Find and Rescue	995
Fire Department (Civil Defence)	997	Electricity failure	991

Abu Dhabi Police's **AD999** app: Report fires, request an ambulance, or call emergency services via the SOS button. The **AD999** app is available on [Google Play](#) and [App Store](#).

Embassies and Consulates

Information on different consulates present in the United Arab Emirates can be found here:

[Diplomatic & Consular Corps in UAE.](#)

Security at the Venue

- Your official personalised IUCN Congress badge is required for entry. Please wear it at all times. **Badges are non-transferable, and 40CHF will be charged to obtain a new one.**
- All participants are subject to security screening, including a metal detector scan. Bags and containers will be checked as a condition of entry.
- No person in possession of a prohibited item will be allowed entry. Items violating UAE laws will be handed over to law enforcement, and those in possession will be denied access.

Prohibited Items

The following are **not allowed** on the Congress site:

- Objects exceeding the dimensions of security tunnels
- Items likely to be used as a projectile, weapon or to endanger public, including:
 - Firearms and ammunition (including replicas)



- Sharp, blunt, or cutting objects
- Glass containers.
- Drones
- Chemical, toxic or infectious substances
- Flammable liquids, solids and gases, except lighters
- Fireworks, firecrackers, flares, fire starters, tear gas, etc.
- Illegal drugs
- Equipment that may interfere with the audiovisual systems, e.g., walkie-talkies, private Wi-Fi modems



Alcoholic & Spiritual Drinks



All Tools Types



Skating Boards/Shoes



Electrical Shocking
Devices



All Types of Weapons



Nail Accessories



Compressed Gas



Blades



Animals and Pets



Ammunition



Radioactive Materials



Corrosives



Fuel (Petrol & Gasoline)



Baseball Bats



Explosives



Toxic Liquids

Allowed:

- Water bottles (non-glass)
- Hydroalcoholic gels
- Lighter or matches

General rules:

- All vehicles entering the site will be scanned. Passengers do not need to exit the vehicle, but all people and goods will be checked.
- All bags must pass through security tunnels and may be searched at the entrance.
- Smoking is only permitted in designated areas.
- Anyone found with prohibited items will not be allowed entry.

Lost & found

- Lost items should be taken to the **ADNEC Security Office** (Level 1). To reclaim, complete a form and show photo ID. Items are kept for **6 months** before transfer to the police.
- Contact: **+971 2 406 4164 / 4158** (ext. 4164 / 4158).



Connection and electricity onsite

Internet and Wi-Fi

Free Wi-Fi is available throughout the venue. Please use the official network:

- *Network name: IUCN2025*
- *Password: No password required*

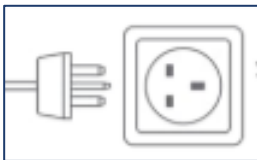
Note: Private Wi-Fi networks created from personal devices (mobile hotspots or wired connections with personal routers) are **not permitted**, to ensure optimal connectivity for all participants.

Charging stations

- Charging stations are available at multiple locations throughout the venue for smartphones, tablets, and laptops.
- Participants are encouraged to bring their own charging cables and power adapters.

Electricity

The venue is powered by clean energy from EWEC (Emirates Water and Electricity Company).
Electrical specifications in the UAE:



- **Voltage:** 230 V
- **Frequency:** 50 Hz
- **Plug type:** G (three rectangular pins)

Communications

Share the #IUCNcongress on social media

As a Congress participant, please share conservation content from the Congress on your social media channels by using the hashtag #IUCNcongress.

You can follow and interact with IUCN accounts on the following channels:

- <https://www.facebook.com/iucn.org/>
- https://www.instagram.com/iucn_congress
- <https://www.linkedin.com/company/iucn>
- <https://x.com/IUCN/>
- <https://www.tiktok.com/@iucnofficial>
- ✓ You can find videos, photos, and other promotional material for you to use on the [IUCN Congress 2025 digital toolkit on Trello](#).

If you are a member of the press, please visit <https://iucncongress2025.org/press> for detailed information.

General delegates and participants who are not part of the official accredited media, are welcome to use their smartphones and personal cameras:

- **General Photography and Videography:** Attendees are generally permitted to take photographs and videos for personal use on social media and non-commercial use.
- **Respect for Privacy:** It is crucial to respect the privacy of other attendees, speakers, and staff. Always ask for permission before taking close-up photos or videos of individuals. Be mindful of not disrupting sessions or events with your equipment.
- **Prohibited Items:** Large-size photography and videography equipment and accessories, including cameras with detachable lenses, tripods, flash devices, and lighting equipment.

Translation and Technical Information

Every session offering interpretation will be marked with an icon on the programme page. Interpretation will always be available in the three official languages of IUCN: French, Spanish, and English. Certain sessions will also include Arabic interpretation.

Dedicated smartphones and headsets will be provided on site. Alternatively, you may use your own smartphone; if so, please remember to bring your personal headset. Please note that this option is not compatible with rooms equipped exclusively with on-site interpretation.

IUCN Members and Commission members' services

The IUCN Members' Lounge is located in the Hive, next to Restaurant 76. This dedicated space is available for Members to network, hold informal discussions, or simply take a break. Small meeting rooms are also available within the Hive, and Member accreditation can be completed on site.

Discover the UAE through IUCN Congress Special Excursions

Explore the UAE's diverse landscapes with curated excursions highlighting biodiversity, cultural heritage, and conservation efforts. Activities include kayaking through mangroves and visiting traditional farming communities. [Learn more about excursions here.](#)

Banks, currency exchange and ATM

- Banks in Abu Dhabi are open from 08:00 to 15:00, Monday to Friday, and closed on weekends.
- Currency exchange is available at the airport, licensed offices, and most banks.



- ATMs are widely accessible in hotels, malls, and near event venues, including at the Congress (see venue map).

Credit cards

- In Abu Dhabi, **VISA** and **MasterCard** are widely accepted across most **hotels, restaurants, and shops**. However, **American Express (Amex)** cards have more limited acceptance and may not be accepted at all establishments.
- It is advisable to carry a **small amount of cash** (in **UAE Dirhams – AED**) for transactions at smaller vendors, souks, or taxis, as they may not accept cards.

Abu Dhabi: Respecting Local Laws & Culture

The capital of the UAE, Abu Dhabi, is a warm and welcoming city known for its friendly hospitality. For visitors new to the country, it is important to be considerate guests by learning about local laws and cultural norms.

According to the UAE Law Respect Culture Bureau, there are four common ways visitors repeatedly break the law or cause offence to locals:

- Dressing in a way that is offensive to the culture.
- Displaying affection in public.
- Taking photographs of people without their permission.
- Driving while under the influence of alcohol.

The following information will outline some of the laws and expectations that every visitor to the UAE needs to know about to ensure an enjoyable stay:

Religion

- Islam is the official religion of the UAE, and as such many laws and customs are shaped by teachings.
- For example, bringing pork products into the country is illegal.
- Anything pornographic (pictures, videos, social media, streaming, services) is prohibited.
- Freedom of religion is guaranteed under the law; however, proselytising is against the law and criticism or mocking of religion(s) can lead to prosecution.
- Visitors are allowed and encouraged to visit mosques outside of prayer times.
- More information about the [Federal Law by Decree concerning combating discrimination, hatred and extremism is available here](#).

Dress Code

- The UAE has no legal dress code and simply asks visitors to dress modestly.



- In public, at the mall, or at a conference, it is recommended to avoid wearing anything revealing, such as see-through materials, tank tops, shorts, vests and miniskirts. This is applicable to both men and women.
- At mosques in the UAE, women are required to cover their entire hair with a scarf and wear modest clothing that covers the whole body, including long sleeves and a dress or skirt reaching the ankles. Men should wear attire covering their shoulders and knees. At the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, a shopping area offers abayas and suitable garments if needed.
- At beaches and hotel swimming pools, swim wear is perfectly acceptable.
- Within the professional setting, women can wear skirts or dresses ensuring their arms and legs below the knee are covered. Make-up is common.
- Dress codes for professional events tend to be smart and formal.
- More information on [social responsibility is available here](#).

Alcohol

- Alcohol is a regulated product in the UAE and is only served in licensed hotels and clubs.
- It is a punishable offence to consume alcohol or be under its influence in a public place.
- The legal age for drinking alcohol is 18 in Abu Dhabi (hotels will only serve those over 21), 21 in Dubai and, in the Emirate of Sharjah, drinking alcohol is forbidden.
- Alcohol is not allowed to be brought into the country.
- More information about [restrictions on alcohol is available here](#).

Public behaviour

- Swearing or making rude gestures using fingers, hand or other gestures are considered obscene acts, and offenders can be jailed or deported.
- Public displays of affection, including kissing, holding hands or affectionate touching, are to be avoided.
- Visitors should be aware that relationships outside of heterosexual marriage are not recognised under UAE law.
- Avoid touching people of the opposite gender or standing too close to them when speaking.
- Handshakes are the standard form of greeting but be aware some Emiratis or Muslims may place their hand on their heart instead of shaking hands when meeting someone of the opposite gender.
- Kissing on the cheek is very common between friends, colleagues and associates.
- Avoid prolonged eye contact.
- The communication style is generally indirect, friendly, diplomatic and respectful of others' feelings and opinions.
- Stay away from contentious issues which may cast a negative light on the country, culture, politics or people.



- Do not point your feet at anyone and avoid giving/receiving things to people with your left hand.
- More information on [public behaviour is available here](#) and on [etiquette in general here](#).

Meeting behaviour

- Remain patient and always be polite as respect is an important value.
- If you are invited to a majlis, remove your shoes at the entrance. Males and females will probably be escorted to different sections.
- It is important to stand up for new guests and older or higher-ranking people.
- When greeting a member of the opposite gender who is Muslim, **do not offer to shake hands unless they extend their hand first**. Both men and women (more commonly women) may prefer not to shake hands with the opposite gender due to religious reasons.
- If you are sitting in front of an important guest, it is considered rude to cross your legs. Do not point with your finger. If you need to use a hand gesture, use the whole hand.

Photos

- Do not take photos of strangers even if they only appear in the background. This rule is particularly applicable if the royal family may appear in the picture.
- Taking photos of aircraft, government and military buildings is prohibited (look for signs).
- Be respectful when taking photos of yourself in front of posters or images of UAE rulers.

Online

- Do not share images or videos of others' online without their consent.
- Sharing social media posts or online reviews that criticise the UAE, its authorities, companies or citizens, is a crime under federal law.
- More information on the [online legislation is available here](#).

Medication & drugs

- Visitors must check the banned list of medicines to make sure they can travel with the medicines they need and what type of doctor's note may be required as evidence.
- There are strict penalties for possession of even a small amount of any illegal recreational drugs, from a minimum four-year jail sentence, up to the death penalty for trafficking.
- The legal age to smoke tobacco in the whole of the UAE is 18 years.
- [More information about medication & drugs here](#).

Smoking

- Smoking is only permitted in designated areas of the ADNEC.
- Smoking is permitted only in designated public areas across the UAE.

Sustainability Initiatives at the Congress

The IUCN Congress 2025 is committed to sustainability, guided by a dedicated policy and the ISO 20121:2024 standard. Key initiatives include:

- **Catering:** 70% vegetarian/vegan menus, local sourcing, food waste reduction and donation.
- **Water:** Free refills via air-to-water stations; reusable bottles provided.
- **Waste:** Clear recycling system; badge return encouraged.
- **Materials:** Avoid single-use plastics and printed handouts; choose sustainable gifts.
- **Tourism:** Support local, low-impact, and culturally respectful choices.

All participants are encouraged to support these efforts. For more information on the Congress Sustainability approach, visit [the Sustainable Congress webpage](#)

Contacts

Accommodation	congress.hotels@iucn-events.org
Excursions and transfers	iucn2025@gdplus.ae
Exhibition	eventpartnerships@iucn.org
Forum	congress.forum@iucn.org
General Information	congress@iucn.org
Media	congressmedia@iucn.org
Registration	congress.registration@iucn-events.org and
	+49 302 460 3114
Visa	congress.visa@iucn.org
Volunteers	congress.volunteers@iucn.org