



The Dunes Oasis

Abu Dhabi's Masdar City is a world-renowned project. The project has pioneered regional thinking in sustainable design. Masdar aims to be one of the most sustainable cities in the world. The city and its building plans are designed to facilitate energy generation and reduce electricity and water consumption. This proposal aims to create an **iconic** work of art that uses renewable energy and expresses the goals of Masdar city, reacting strongly to the **specificity** of the site and context.

The site is located in the middle of a **desert** landscape — where little precipitation occurs and living conditions are hostile for plant and animal life. Deserts lack of vegetation exposes the ground's unprotective surfaces to the process of denudation. Denudation "is the process of wearing away the earth, causing a general lowering and levelling out of the surface".

Sand dunes are Abu Dhabi's most extraordinary natural features, and these eye-catching land masses can be found throughout the desert. Sand dunes are formed as a result of the interaction between the wind and the soil, in the form of sand grains. Today, UAE natives and visitors enjoy these sand dunes in various ways, including dune driving, sliding, sand boarding, or sledding on the sand slopes.

For the inhabitants of the desert and the Bedouins who travel through Arabia's desert land, an **oasis** functions as a lifeline and a true source of livelihood. An oasis' location is of crucial importance for trade routes in Arabia, and Caravans factor its position into travel plans. An oasis is created by the presence of water, which gives way to human settlements and cultivated land — often date palm trees. An Oasis is maintained by the availability of freshwater on the surface or underwater. Further, Oases are supported by human intervention, which is informed by knowledge that is carried on within culture and passed down from generation to generation.

The Design of the Dunes Oasis

The dunes oasis attempts to incorporate four elements to create a unique land art within Masdar City: dunes, water, palm trees, and the union of the seven Arab Emirates.

• **Dunes:** The topography of the dunes is re-created and depicted by the formation of a network of walkways that create this unique park. The achieved terrain creates pedestrian walkways that form a unique sculpture park. It provides numerous **opportunities** for observation, walking, jogging, and skateboarding. This sculpture park provides a contrasting landscape to the flat surroundings and creates a **seamless transition** across the road linking the two parts of the site. These winding walkways create powerful architecture that **boosts perception and triggers awareness**, which contributes to the creation of a unique **spatial experience**.

• **Water:** Echoing the title of this competition, return to the source — water. A pool of water is created on the site. It's envisioned that this pool will be generated from **recycled**, treated water from the surrounding buildings. Part of this treated water shall be pumped to the site to create this modern oasis in the middle of Masdar city. It's projected that the newly-created, large water pool will attract local and **migrating birds**, which contributes to the enhancement of the local environment. Also, it is foreseen that the presence of this pool will greatly **lower temperatures** during the hot summer season, creating **cool breezes** around the site — especially within the site's walkways.

• **Palm trees:** The proposal places emphasis on the date palm tree. A major source of nutrition for locals, this tree is highly-valued in Arabia, and it's one of the main components of any desert oasis.

• **Seven Arab Emirates:** This proposal pays tribute to the union of the seven Arab Emirates that make up today's United Arab Emirates — a great nation that is taking the lead in development, **tolerance, and sustainability**. This land art provides **seven green islands** that represent each of the seven Emirates. And it's walkways are formed in the shape of **seven rings**, representing **unity and collaboration** between the seven unique emirates.

Environmental Impact Summary

The project simply calls for the provision of either a central water treatment plant or local waste treatment plants for each building within the city. Part of the treated water shall be pumped back to the proposed pool to create this water park — The Dunes Oasis.

It is envisioned that the placement of this large water body, in the middle of this urban site will enhance the climate, lower temperatures as well as attract residents and birds. If the project is implemented, certain factors must be taken into consideration, such as appropriate technology, system reliability, institutional support requirements, and other factors necessary to the continued support of the project.

