

Abu Dhabi unveils new buildings rating method

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Abu Dhabi Urban Planning Council (UPC), the agency responsible for the future of Abu Dhabi's urban environments, has unveiled a new buildings rating method designed to improve quality of buildings in the capital.

The new buildings rating method will allow developers in Abu Dhabi and their design teams to assess the performance of their proposed developments in light of rapidly evolving concepts for sustainability. Projects that demonstrate consistency with the rating method's criteria should be less resource-intense, offer higher comfort to tenants, better value and returns to investors and achieve faster overall design and construction processes through diminished corrections and construction errors.

In developing the new buildings rating method, the UPC worked closely with industry representatives and relevant stakeholders who provided advice, guidance and courtesy reviews in a collaborative attempt to ensure a consensual approach.

Falah Al Ahbabi, General Manager, UPC, said: "This is yet another forward and solid step towards achieving a higher level of sustainability as per the guiding principles of Plan Abu Dhabi 2030. Today we are laying down the framework that will help Abu Dhabi emerge as a major business centre and a cosmopolitan city, without losing sight of our main objective - attaining a high level of sustainability that preserves our environment, culture and the well-being of future generations."

The rating method will be an invaluable tool for designers, developers, government agencies and institutional investors and will be accompanied by a design guide that will provide helpful design techniques and information.

During an upcoming pilot process, experts will be working together with several stakeholders to evaluate the rating method criteria in line with a variety of active building types and design techniques in Abu Dhabi.

Saood Al Junabi, Director of Development Review and Urban Design, UPC, and senior spokesperson for Estidama initiative, said: "This is a structured method that strikes a balance between living systems, people and resource use benefits. As has always been the case, we were keen on engaging a number of industry and agency colleagues in developing the new buildings rating method. The Regulation and Supervision Bureau, Department of Municipal Affairs, Environment Agency of Abu Dhabi and Abu Dhabi Municipality have all been extremely helpful in providing counsel and guidance on specific technical issues.

"The rating method will help buildings reduce energy and water use, be healthier and more comfortable."

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