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PRESS RELEASE

Letter to COP28 President-Designate Dr. Sultan Al Jaber on Methane Emissions from the Waste Sector.

New York/Dubai, November 7, 2023: The Global WtERT Council with the University of Sharjah, host of WtERT Emirates, co-signed a letter to the COP28 President H.E. Dr. Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber calling for urgent action to divert waste from landfills, which are responsible for the release of huge amounts of methane emissions that contribute to global warming.

The letter was delivered by the Vice President of the Global WtERT Council, Mr. Yuri Schmitke, representing WtERT@ at the COP28, to the Secretary of the Presidential Office in Dubai on November 6, 2023.

The letter emphasizes the important role of waste reduction, reuse, recycling, composting, anaerobic digestion, and combustion with energy recovery as essential alternatives to landfilling in the first place.

The authors also warn of methane emissions from landfills, which, even with the most advanced biogas capture systems, leak 50 to 70 percent of the methane, according to NASA satellite imagery.

As an example of the commitment of the United Arab Emirates, the host country of COP28, to protect the environment with an alternative solution to managing non-recyclable residual waste, Sharjah is home to the first commercial-scale waste-to-energy plant in the Middle East, which represents a major achievement in low-carbon energy production with economic benefits.

Speaking at the launch of the WtE in Sharjah, H.E. Dr. Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber, Minister of Industry and Higher Technology and Chairman of Masdar and current COP28 President-elect, said:

"The deployment of the first commercial-scale waste-to-energy plant in the Middle East represents a landmark achievement in the UAE's sustainable economic growth trajectory. By turning waste into energy, this new plant exemplifies the economic benefits of sustainable energy production and a low-carbon development pathway. This technology reduces

waste and landfill use, creates valuable low-carbon energy, and introduces a new sustainable industry to our region. Today's event marks a key milestone in the UAE's sustainable development and demonstrates the economic impact of the UAE's Net Zero by 2050 Strategic Initiative. This is the type of practical innovation that the UAE is keen to promote along with domestic and international partners to support commercially viable climate solutions, particularly as the nation prepares to host COP 28 next year."

The letter mentioned the Chinese model of urban waste management, which contributes to slashing methane emissions from the waste sector, with the construction of several waste-to-energy plants that exceed the treatment capacity of Europe, Japan, and the US combined, which need to be inspired to support technologies to divert waste from landfills.

The authors also invite the COP President-elect to support the role of academia in overcoming the challenges of misinformation and lack of fact-checking data regarding the role of waste-to-energy technologies in supporting the sustainable development of waste management in a circular economy society.

[Download the full letter here.](#)

About Global WfERT Council Inc. "WfERT@"

Founded in 2002, the Global Waste-to-Energy Research and Technology Council, WfERT@, is the foremost Non-for-Profit research association on Waste-to-Energy (WfE) worldwide, founded by the Earth Engineering Center of Columbia University; it brings together engineers and scientists from industry, government and Universities from 26 countries across the globe to collaborate together to advance both the economic and environmental performance of Waste-to-Energy technologies and disseminate all research and findings to the general public. WfERT@ is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit association (EIN: 45-3842166) that prides itself on being a unique Industry-academia consortium to advance Waste-to-Energy technologies. For more information about the organization, visit wterf.org.

About The University of Sharjah "UOS"

The University of Sharjah was established in 1997 with the aim and vision to be an innovative world-class teaching, learning, and research institution providing a distinctive, inspirational, creative, and supportive environment. UOS is situated in University City, Sharjah, and is the largest university in the United Arab Emirates. In 2023, UOS was ranked 251-300 in THE World ranking, 43rd in THE Young University ranking, and 86th in GreenMetric World Sustainable University ranking. The education and research have evolved rapidly at UOS, with 14 colleges, 3 research institutes, and over 127 academic programs that are accredited locally and internationally. Research is at the forefront of UOS's mission, driven by a deep commitment to knowledge advancement, interdisciplinary collaboration, and societal progress, reinforcing its position as a leader in the region and beyond. For more details about UOS, visit www.sharjah.ac.ae