**Ford Conservation and Environmental Grants Award $50,000 To Worthy MENA Projects in 20th Edition of Philanthropic Programme**

* Three Egyptian, two Jordanian, and one Moroccan project shared the prize pool for projects relating to the natural environment, conservation engineering, environmental education, and a new special category of Beating Air Pollution
* Entries were accepted from ongoing and not-for-profit projects from Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, and Yemen
* Since its inception in 2000, the Ford Grants has supported 230 projects across MENA, with more than $1.8 million granted to date

**JEDDAH, KSA, February 12, 2020** – Ford Motor Company this week concluded the 20th edition of its Conservation and Environmental Grants programme, with $50,000 made available to successful entries from around the Middle East and North Africa region, including a special category grant for the most recent [World Environment Day](https://www.worldenvironmentday.global) theme, *Beating Air Pollution*.

The shortlisted projects focussed on one of three main areas – Environmental Education, Protection of the Natural Environment, or Conservation Engineering – with submissions accepted from Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, and Yemen.

In all, there were six winning entries this year, including the *Integrative Environmental Gardening in Aqaba* project, run by the National Agricultural Research Centre (NARC) in Jordan, which was deserving of $10,000 in the Natural Environment category. NARC will use the funds to cover planting and maintenance costs for 10,000 Moringa trees in the southern city over the coming six months.

“At Ford, we continue to work tirelessly to not just lower our footprint but also to develop innovations that make a positive contribution to society,” said Zeekson Ainabe, Government Relations, Ford Direct Markets.

“We also strive to play an active role in the communities where we serve our customers, through initiatives that help create an impact. And the Ford Conservation and Environmental Grants programme is one of many initiatives Ford has invested in to preserve our environment for future generations,” Ainabe continued.

Jordan again proved too good in the Conservation Engineering class, with agriculture and environmental scientist Tala Khreis putting forward the top prize-winning *Desert Fog Catcher* pilot programme. Using the allocated $12,000 grant, Khreis aims to improve the sustainable water supply for residents and farmers in the Bedouin town of Qatrana, with hopes of extending the project in the future to cater for further rural and desert villages.

To date, Jordan has received close to $300,000 to assist in 36 environmental and conservation programmes.

‘Nature Conservation Egypt’ pitched a project with designs on creating a game to identify the illegal killing of migratory birds; a unique and pioneering approach to Environmental Education deserving of a $12,000 Ford grant. *Empathy Through Play* is a card game, hoped to be in circulation within eight months, specifically addressing the autumnal migration of birds along the northern Mediterranean coast of Egypt, and the unfortunate, illegal, hunting of the same for food, sport, or commerce.

Two further Egyptian submissions received financial support for their winning Natural Environment projects.

Chris Poonian, a PhD candidate with more than 15 years of experience in interdisciplinary tropical marine resource management, plans to work closely with the Bedouin communities in South Sinai to develop sustainable management of coral reef fisheries, and displayed an unmatched standard of research in his grant application. Poonian earned the Best in Research $5,000 grant for showing use of research in finding, and implementing, solutions to a specific environmental issue.

And in his project, also in relation to South Sinai, environmental consultant Dr. Karim Omar scooped the Best in Community Engagement $5,000 grant. He intends to employ a community-based management for the preparation, recovery, and conservation of critically endangered plant species Rosa Arabica and Primula Boveana.

Morocco, in winning a $6,000 special category grant for the project that best displays a plan to tackle the complex issue of air pollution, brought the country’s overall Ford Conservation and Environmental Grants allocation to $95,000 since its inception twenty years ago. *The Green Cradle: Welcome to a Sound Environment* by ‘The Tiyadrine Association for Rural Women’ aims to plant 150 carob, olive, or quince trees for every new-born baby in the country. Ownership of the trees will transfer to the child on their tenth birthday, and by adulthood should offer financial stability from the sale of the trees’ fruit.

In its 20 years of existence, the Ford Grants programme has become one of the largest corporate initiatives of its kind in the region, created to empower individuals and non-profit groups that are donating their time and efforts to preserve the environmental well-being of their communities.

Since its inception, the Ford Motor Company Conservation and Environmental Grants programme has received support and recognition from various governmental and non-governmental environmental authorities from around the Middle East, including the World Wide Fund for Nature, and the Arab Forum for Environment and Development (AFED).

Recipients were chosen by an independent panel of judges consisting of academics and leaders from regional environmental organisations. The judges are seasoned environmentalists or academicians from the region carefully selected based on geographical coverage, age and gender equality. They looked for initiatives that demonstrate a well-defined sense of purpose, a commitment to maximising available resources, and a reputation for meeting objectives and delivering planned programmes and services.

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***About Ford Motor Company*** *Ford Motor Company is a global company based in Dearborn, Michigan. The company designs, manufactures, markets and services a full line of Ford cars, trucks, SUVs, electrified vehicles and Lincoln luxury vehicles, provides financial services through Ford Motor Credit Company and is pursuing leadership positions in electrification, autonomous vehicles and mobility solutions. Ford employs approximately 191,000 people worldwide. For more information regarding Ford, its products and Ford Motor Credit Company, please visit* [*www.corporate.ford.com*](http://www.corporate.ford.com)*.​​*

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| **Contacts:** | Rania Al-shurafaMENA CommunicationsFord Middle East & Africa |  | Yasser Al HebsiASDA’A BCW |
|  | 971-50-362-7791 |  | 966 560061480 |
|  | Rania.Shurafa@ford.com |  | yasser.alhebsi@bcw-global.com |