

Making a Difference Award: Abu Dhabi

Award is given to the government of Abu Dhabi for their Spatial Data Infrastructure initiative. The award is accepted by His Excellency Mohammed Ahmed Al Bowardi, Secretary-General Executive Council, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. Abu Dhabi is building a society based on sustainability principles. GIS helps them to make effective and practical decisions and supports their work in local government, utility networks, health, social and educational institutions, public safety, and biodiversity.

<http://video.esri.com/watch/31/making-a-difference-award-abu-dhabi>

Video Transcription

00:01 This morning, we're going to give an award to the government of Abu Dhabi. The Making a Difference Award. [unintelligible]

00:08 Let me show you a brief video first, which may explain some of the reasons why this award is being given to Abu Dhabi.

00:19 [Begin video]

00:21 Abu Dhabi's rapid progress and growth is guided by a broad vision to build a secure society...

00:28 ...and an open economy founded on the strongest principles of sustainability.

00:34 Achieving this ambitious vision requires comprehensive, accurate, and up-to-date geospatial information.

00:42 GIS technology can help us better understand the world around us...

00:47 ...and to make effective and practical decisions at all levels as we advance toward our vision.

00:53 The Abu Dhabi Spatial Data Infrastructure initiative provides a framework for the exchange and coordination of geospatial information...

01:03 ...among more than 40 government, academic, and private institutions.

01:08 Helping planners and decision makers to develop concepts and designs for our ambitious vision to build cities of the future.

01:17 Supporting our local governments as they manage landholdings.

01:22 Providing public utility companies with vital information to help them manage electricity, water, and telephone networks.

01:31 Supplying health, social, and educational institutions with data to help them respond...

01:38 ...to the ever-changing requirements of our communities...

01:41 ...such as providing ambulances and firefighters with the quickest routings to their

destinations.

01:48 Helping scientists provide the best plans for maintaining biological diversity...

01:53 ...and developing our natural resources in a sustainable way.

01:59 In the first two years, the Abu Dhabi Spatial Data Infrastructure has facilitated the exchange of geospatial data and expertise among its members...

02:09 ...to help all of us reach our vision for Abu Dhabi, building a sustainable future for our emirate.

02:24 [End video]

02:25 Yes.

02:33 The video's beautiful, and it gives a vision, but my sense of Abu Dhabi is much more than just the video.

02:40 These people, working together, have built a real infrastructure that works.

02:46 And the reason why I'm so impressed with it is that they're very humble.

02:52 They're very modest about their achievement, and they've come here, about 80 of them, to share this vision with you.

03:01 Tonight, we'll see a large exhibition of their work.

03:07 They're also a humble people, in the sense, and a giving people, in the sense of not simply sharing to show us exactly what they do, but they share around the world.

03:18 They were instrumental in much of the relief in Haiti. They do huge assistance in Africa and now Afghanistan.

03:29 This is a very special country, organization, group of people.

03:35 Receiving this year's award is His Excellency Mohammed Ahmed Al Bawardi, and just a moment about him.

03:45 He is the secretary general of the Executive Council. That's basically the managers of the country.

03:53 And he comes here, I asked him to come here, to share just a little bit of his vision and receive this award.

04:01 He is a special person, like almost no one I've ever met, because he has insight into nature...

04:10 ...how cities and people are connecting nature and connected with nature...

04:16 So His Excellency, could you please join me in getting this award and please acknowledge. [unintelligible]

04:30 You're very welcome. Thank you. Would you like to say something, Your Excellency?

04:43 Good morning, everyone. Thank you, Jack, for recognizing the achievements of Abu Dhabi.

04:53 We are honored with this award. My gratitude to all of you for sharing this moment with us.

05:11 We owe our achievement to people like you, who invented this [unintelligible] support tool such as the GIS...

05:21 ...which opened a new world of creativity and innovation for mankind.

05:30 I would like to share this metaphoric thought with you today.

05:36 When we started this project, we worked to design a system that is like the human body in its cohesiveness...

05:51 ...coordination, complexity, and its power of processing information.

06:01 We hear, we see, we smell, we taste, and we feel.

06:09 Our nervous system regulates, our brain manages, and our body reacts instantly.

06:22 Governments, departments, and organizations must perform like this miracle that we all know as a human body.

06:37 A total system that amazingly reacts automatically with millions of sensors and signals to balance and coordinate.

06:54 Our leadership has set a goal for us, to be one of the best-performing governments in the world.

07:07 With this devotion and dedication of our leadership to be the best, we cannot go wrong.

07:18 A leadership that believes that every one of us has a role.

07:26 Every one of us has a role to play, just like the human body.

07:33 Thank you very much.

07:48 I hope this week you have a chance to meet His Excellency. He's a remarkable man.

07:55 While his speech is very directed, his philosophy of seeing the body as an organic model for geography and the city...

08:06 ...understanding problems in this way, is just remarkable.

08:09 Thank you very much, Your Excellency. We're honored to have you here.