

# Swiss Ambassador promotes Swiss Environment Initiative

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PRESS RELEASE

The Swiss Ambassador to the UAE has thrown his support behind the Swiss Environment Initiative, which was launched by the Swiss Business Community on World Environment Day earlier this year.



Wolfgang Amadeus Bruelhart, with Markus Oberlin at the Ambassador's official residence in Abu Dhabi.

"Switzerland has worked very hard over many years to become one of the most environmentally friendly nations and we are taught from an early age to look for 'green' options whenever we can. Saving water is one of the most important issues today, and artificial grass can help do just this as it does not need watering," said Bruelhart. Six weeks ago, artificial grass was laid outside the Swiss Residence Abu Dhabi.

The artificial Five Star Grass is distributed exclusively throughout the UAE by Farnek Avireal, a leading UAE-based company advising building owners on how to dramatically cut their carbon emissions and utility bills.

"This product is very practical; not only does it offer a low maintenance solution in the summer when the heat naturally increases the amount of water needed to maintain a regular garden, but in turn cuts down on CO2 emissions generated by the oil used to power water treatment plants. And, of course, many people would like to have lower utility bills," said Markus Oberlin, General Manager of Farnek Avireal, adding that Five Star Grass also comes with a seven-year quality and colour guarantee.

According to the United Nations, the GCC countries are among the world's highest per capita water users with UAE residents topping the table by consuming an average of 550 litres a day each, 80% of which is produced by expensive desalination. Between them, Abu Dhabi and Dubai will be investing Dhs120bn over the next five years in power plants, desalination units and sewerage systems to meet future demand.

Being environmentally friendly is not just about conserving water; each square metre of natural grass produces more than 9 kilos of carbon dioxide (CO2) through irrigation and regular garden maintenance.

"In addition to this, artificial grass does not have the health issues brought on by insect colonies that plaque the natural variety, nor does it need regular maintenance; petrol-powered lawn mowers can cause as much pollution in one hour as 10 cars collectively," added Oberlin.

## Notes and media contacts

### About Swiss Environment Initiative

The Swiss Environment Initiative (SEI) is a continuous education programme that provides facts about pressing environmental topics of today. The initiative is devoted to protecting the environment through means of education and community involvement. A key objective of the initiative is to make benefit the UAE from Switzerland's long tradition as a country environmental conservation and leading cleantech know-how regarding resource efficiency.

SEI is actively encouraged and supported by UAE and Swiss government agencies and companies, including Osec (Switzerland Trade & Investment Promotion), Cleantech Switzerland, Switzerland Tourism, Swiss Business Council, Swiss Business Hub GCC, myClimate, Swiss International Air Lines, Green Destinations, Farnek Avireal, Orient Irrigation Services and Kempinski Hotel Mall of the Emirates Dubai.

**About Farnek Avireal**

Farnek Avireal is a joint venture company between Khalifa Juma Al Nabooda Group of the UAE and Avireal AG of Switzerland. With offices in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, the company has grown into one of the region's foremost property and facilities management outsourcing companies. With a skilled workforce of more than 1,500 people, Farnek Avireal maintains over 1,000 properties on behalf of international and regional companies, including the world's tallest tower Burj Khalifa.

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