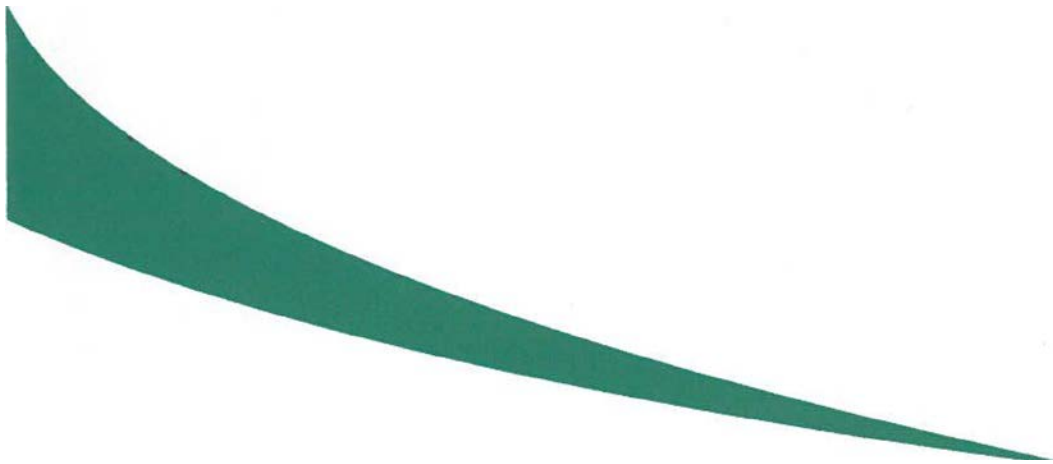


Technical Guidance Document for Scientific Research Permitting in Abu Dhabi Emirate

EAD-TMBS-TG-02



Purpose of This Guidance Document

The Environment Agency–Abu Dhabi (EAD), as the Competent Authority for environmental permitting in the environmental field in Abu Dhabi Emirate, details in this guideline the approval procedure and requirements for scientific research on the environment and biodiversity in Abu Dhabi Emirate.

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List of Abbreviations

CBD	The Convention on Biological Diversity
CITES	The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
EAD	Environment Agency Abu Dhabi
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
MOCCE	Ministry of Climate Change and Environment of the United Arab Emirates
NOC	No Objection Certificate
PER	Preliminary Environmental Review
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
ToR	Terms of Reference
UAE	United Arab Emirates

Definitions of Terms

Access: Permission, liberty, or ability to enter, approach, or pass to and from a place or to approach or communicate with a person or thing.

Applicant/Researcher: Any institution, business, agency, group, department or person wishing to apply for and carry out research activities on Abu Dhabi's environment, which may or may not include the collection of biological specimens.

Appropriate Behaviour: Behaviour of any individual that is characterized by respect for the sociocultural and ecological fabric of a location.

Area of Probable Impact: The extent of a physical area occupied by an environmental component that is likely to be impacted by at least one of the phases of the proposed project. The boundary of the area of probable impact is determined by measurements, previous studies, models, or best professional judgment and may vary by environmental component.

Benefit: To add positive value.

Biodiversity: The variability among living organisms from all sources, including, 'inter alia', terrestrial, marine, and other aquatic ecosystems, and the ecological complexes of which they are part: this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems.¹

Scientific Research: In the context of this TGD, refers to scientific investigations involving the physical environment (water, soil, air) and/or live or dead wild organisms or their habitats.

Bioprospecting: The exploration of biodiversity for commercially valuable genetic and biochemical resources². For example, searching for plant and animal species from which medicinal drugs and other commercially valuable compounds can be obtained.

Carbon Footprint: A cumulative measure of the impact a product, service, activity, company, individual or other entity has on the environment, in terms of the amount of greenhouse gases produced, and measured in units of carbon dioxide. These impacts usually result from energy consumption, pollution, and other sources.

Carrying capacity: The maximum number of people, or individuals of a particular species, that a given area of the environment can sustain without causing environmental, economic or socio-cultural stress or damage. Regarding field research and specimen collection or manipulation, carrying capacity is defined as the amount of visitors and amounts of specimens that can be collected from an area, a colony, without leading to a change in ecological character or an impact on local habitats or populations. The focus is on determining the level of use beyond which impacts exceed acceptable levels specified by evaluative standards. Carrying capacity includes both descriptive components (e.g., management parameters like the type and extent of use-related impacts) and evaluative components (e.g., value judgments about the acceptability of different levels of impacts).

Change in ecological character: The human-induced adverse alteration of any ecosystem component, process, and/or ecosystem benefit/service.

¹ The Convention on Biological Diversity, Convention Text, Article 2

² The Convention on Biological Diversity, Information Paper 7, 5th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties

Code of Conduct: Guidelines advising a user or a visitor on how to behave in an environmentally responsible manner. Recommended practices based on a system of self-regulation intended to promote environmentally and/or socio-culturally sustainable behaviour.

Collection: Gathering of any part of a living or dead wild organism.

Competent Authority: Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi.

Compliance: Fulfilment by a business, community, institution or individual of its obligations under an agreement.

Conservation: The management of human use of organisms or ecosystems to ensure that such use is sustainable.

Cultural Heritage: The ways of living developed by a community and passed on from generation to generation, including customs, practices, places, objects, artistic expressions and values. Cultural heritage encompasses material culture, in the form of objects, structures, sites, landscapes and natural environment shaped by cultural practices and traditions over time, as well as living (or expressive) culture as evidenced in forms such as music, crafts, performing arts, literature, oral tradition and language. The emphasis is on cultural continuity from the past, through the present and into the future, with the recognition that culture is organic and evolving.³

EAD: Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi.

Ethical: In the context of biodiversity research, ethical refers to any practice that complies with fundamental moral principles when designing, implementing and reporting on an activity. It implies protection and avoidance of harm and distress to any living being or to its environment. Ethics in research also implies honesty, accuracy and objectivity in the interpretation of information or data.

Environmental Impact: Positive or negative impact that occurs to an environmental component as a result of the proposed project. This impact can be directly or indirectly caused by the project's different phases (i.e., construction and operation).

Impact: The long-term environmental/biophysical, social, financial, and market-based changes that occur as a result of the maintained behavioural changes from the research program.

Licensed: An individual, business or organization that has been granted legal permission to do something. The license confers a right which the person or organization did not previously possess and represents a legal agreement which may contain restrictions as to how the license is employed.

Manipulation: In the context of Biodiversity Research, refers to the action of coming into direct contact with biodiversity and handling an organism for research purposes. Manipulation includes marking, capturing, tagging, chasing or any other action involving direct contact with an organism or an interference with its behaviour

Minimize: To reduce; to keep to a minimum.

Mitigation: Mitigating ecological impacts refers to actions that minimize or reduce project impacts.

Native Species: Plants, animals, or other living organisms that are found as part of local natural ecosystems.

³ Global Sustainable Tourism Council, <http://www.gstcouncil.org/en/resource-center/glossary.html>

NOC: An official document issued by EAD to the applicant and representing a legal authorization to conduct the specified activity under specific conditions and in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.

Protected Areas: A legally established land or water area under either public or private ownership that is regulated and managed to achieve specific conservation objectives.

Researcher: Investigator, scientist, student, fieldworker or experimenter trained and certified in scientific research in a specified discipline.

Solid Waste: Rubbish, debris, garbage, and other discarded solid materials resulting from the project that are not classified as hazardous waste.

Specimen: An individual animal, plant, invertebrate or other organism used as an example of its species or type for scientific study or display.

Sustainable Use: The use of components of biological diversity in a way and at a rate that does not lead to the long-term decline of biological diversity, thereby maintaining its potential to meet the needs and aspirations of present and future generations.⁴

Wild organism: Any mammal, plant, bird, fish, invertebrate, reptile, amphibian, mollusk, or crustacean found naturally in a wild state, whether indigenous to Abu Dhabi or not, and living or growing in the natural environment; not domesticated or cultivated.

⁴ The Convention on Biological Diversity, Convention Text, Article 2

1. INTRODUCTION

All forms of scientific research projects on the physical and biological environment in Abu Dhabi emirate must obtain an NOC from the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi (EAD) through completing and submitting an application form [available on EAD's website](#). All applications for a Scientific Research NOC will be reviewed on a case by case basis, following the review and assessment of a Scientific Research Project Application (Appendix A).

This requirement is pursuant to federal and local legislation⁵ and consistent with the provisions of the international Convention of Biological Diversity and its Nagoya protocol⁶. The Scientific Research NOC constitutes a form of pre-informed consent for allowing access to biological resources, according to the mutually agreed terms stated in the specific and general conditions of the NOC.

1.1 Why is EAD regulating scientific research activities?

Research on the environment and biodiversity is beneficial for the conservation and sustainable development of Abu Dhabi emirate. The requirement for a scientific research NOC is not intended to create obstruction to scientific research, but rather to ensure it takes into account national and international legislation in effect in the UAE. Scientific research contributes to increasing the knowledge of Abu Dhabi's ecosystems, species and natural resources and the information contributes to developing an environmental database and an inventory of biodiversity for the emirate.

EAD seeks to encourage collaborative scientific research while ensuring that the research and sampling activity is ethical, valid, and has no or minimal impact on the environment. The purpose of requiring that scientific research projects obtain an NOC from EAD, the competent authority for all environment related issues in the emirate of Abu Dhabi, is to provide a formal approval for scientific research activities conducted on the Emirate's environment and biodiversity. EAD's objective is to ensure that research activities are carried out without adversely affecting natural habitats and wildlife and with particular consideration for sensitive environments, critical natural habitats and globally or locally threatened species.

Permitting scientific research supports EAD in monitoring and managing the effects of activities in and outside of protected areas, balancing specimen collection demands of users, ensuring an ethical and precautionary standard for wildlife collection and manipulation, and an equitable access to genetic resources. It also assists the researcher by providing a formal approval for their field activities, helps in obtaining federal level authorisations when required, and helps identify collaboration opportunities with local and federal environmental agencies.

⁵ Federal Laws No.23 and No. 24 of 1999 require that research centres, scientific institutions, universities and other specialized parties shall coordinate with the authorities to study biodiversity without leading to its depletion and protect the moral, social and economic rights of the State. Any manipulation or collection of wild fauna and flora in the UAE must receive approval from the competent authorities. Abu Dhabi Emirate Law 16 of 2005 sets out EAD's mandate as the Competent Environmental Authority in Abu Dhabi Emirate mandated with implementing all Federal and Local environmental laws and with managing research, studies and programmes relating to environmental and wildlife affairs.

⁶ The UAE signed and ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2000 and acceded to its Nagoya Protocol in 2014. The CBD places the exploitation of biological resources and the responsibility of protecting them under the sovereign right of the country.

1.2 When is a Scientific Research NOC required?

Any institution, business, group or individual conducting research on the environment, including research on air, soil, water, wild organisms or their habitats by surveying, collecting and/or handling living or dead wild animal or plant specimens in Abu Dhabi Emirate for scientific research purposes must apply for a Scientific Research NOC from the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi.

This requirement applies to all forms of wild organisms (plants, mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fishes, and invertebrates) and at any life cycle stage (eggs, larvae, juveniles or adults).

This requirement does not apply to:

- Incidental live or dead wildlife sighting and recording (citizen science or voluntary reporting);
- Citizen science wildlife observation & recreation activities;
- Biological samples collected from domesticated animals or private captive wild animal collections for veterinary purposes;
- Samples collected for environmental baseline surveys, scientific research or monitoring required as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) or other environmental studies for development permitting, as required by EAD's Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Permitting of Development and Infrastructure Projects in Abu Dhabi.⁷
- Fish or invertebrate samples collected from fish or invertebrates farmed in private aquaculture facilities; and
- Incidental and/or non-invasive hobbyist⁸ or citizen science activities (e.g. bird watching; wildlife observation, etc.).

Separate and additional authorizations are required for:

- Any activity or research project that requires import or export of live animals (requires [health certificates from the MOCCE](#));
- Any research activity on wildlife and biodiversity that is carried out for the purpose of bioprospecting (MOCCE authorization); and
- Seeds or other plant material collected for establishment of nurseries and/or for commercial or non-commercial propagation (nurseries, gene banks and farms). This requires authorization from the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MOCCE)⁹.

⁷ EAD-EQ-PCE-SOP-02 available on <https://www.ead.ae/Documents/Business%20and%20Industry/EAD-EQ-PCE-SOP-02.pdf>

⁸ Abu Dhabi's biodiversity is rare and species are often living at the threshold of their tolerance. Many populations are still not fully studied or assessed. Therefore, collection of native wildlife (plant, animal, invertebrates) by hobbyists should take into consideration that many species may be rare or threatened, and should contact EAD to request further information on the species. If you are a hobbyist wishing to collect living specimens of plants and animals in Abu Dhabi, please write to customerservice@ead.ae specifying the details of your activity.

⁹ Pursuant to Federal Law 38 of the year 1992 Regarding the establishment of Nurseries and regulating of producing, importing and circulation of seedlings

2. SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH APPROVAL PROCEDURE

This section describes the requirements and procedures for obtaining a Scientific Research NOC from EAD.

2.1 How do I obtain a NOC for my research project?

To apply for and obtain a NOC to conduct research on the environment and biodiversity in Abu Dhabi, a scientific research project application form must be downloaded from the [EAD website](#), completed and submitted to EAD and sent to customerservice@ead.ae) along with all the required valid documentation.

Figure 1 outlines the steps for obtaining a NOC for Scientific Research:

Figure 1: Steps for obtaining a Scientific Research NOC from EAD

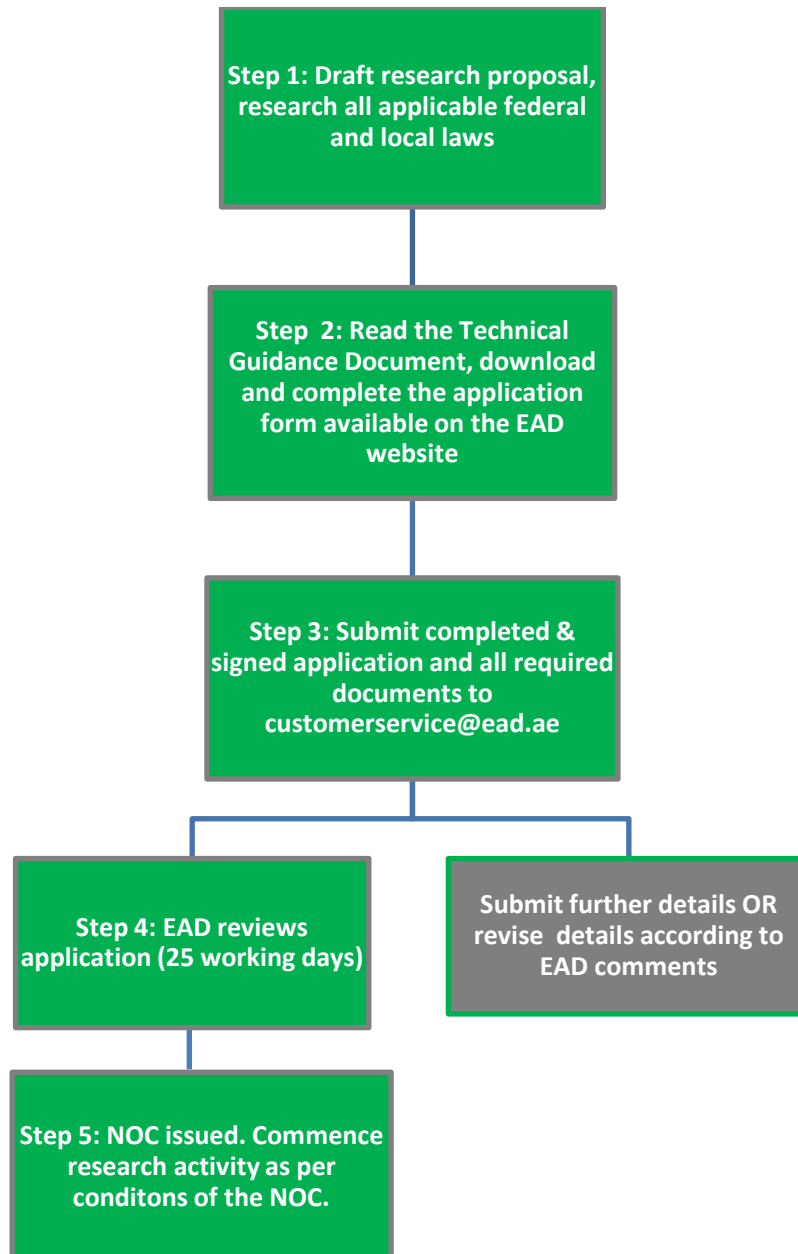


Table 1 outlines in detail the requirements for obtaining a Scientific Research NOC.

Table 1: Requirements for Obtaining a Scientific Research NOC.

Requirements for Obtaining a Scientific Research NOC
Phase 1: Draft Research Proposal and Determine Research Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Draft a research proposal or project proposal. ➤ Select and identify the access conditions in the proposed sampling area. ➤ It is the responsibility of the Applicant to obtain permission from land owners (if sampling in restricted or private land other than EAD nature reserves). ➤ Determine method and scale of sampling. ➤ Determine approximate number of visits to the area and prepare a detailed geo-referenced sampling plan and timeframe.
Phase 2: Scientific Research Project Application
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Complete and submit a Scientific Research Project Application (Appendix A) available on https://www.ead.ae/Pages/our-services/researchers.aspx ➤ In the case of Environmental Consultancy Offices registered with EAD, the ToR of the required environmental study serves as the application and shall be submitted under the usual development permitting procedures. The ToR must provide all the details relating to sampling purpose, species, methodology, season and location. ➤ Attach all required documents to the application, including evidence of permissions if the proposal includes access to a restricted/private area of land or sea.
Phase 3: Processing of the Application by EAD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ EAD will process complete applications within 25 working days and contact you if additional information is required. A meeting may be requested after the application is submitted. <p><i>Meetings with EAD do not constitute approval for the activity and are simply for providing guidance. EAD issues its decision in writing only, after receiving and assessing a complete Scientific Research Project Application.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A NOC with general and specific conditions will be issued for a maximum of one year or the specified length of the project. ➤ The research to be carried out is limited to the objectives stated in the application.

Phase 4: Renewing or Modifying a Scientific Research NOC

- If the sampling plan and sampling area change during the course of the project, the applicant must inform EAD in writing by providing a detailed description of the changes. EAD will then either cancel the existing NOC and require a new application (for significant changes to the project) or acknowledge receipt of the information and allow the project to proceed with the same NOC.
- After one year the applicant may renew the NOC by submitting a written request for renewal to customerservice@ead.ae. The applicant will be required to submit a progress report detailing the progress of the project and describing future plans or any changes to the plan from the initial application. If the project has been modified, then the applicant must provide the details of these modifications. The applicant may renew the NOC from two months prior to the expiry of the existing NOC.
- EAD may request that EAD staff members join the field research team.
- Applicants carrying out field activities in marine or terrestrial protected areas may be escorted and accompanied by EAD rangers throughout their sampling activities.
- EAD (or CICPA staff in marine and coastal areas) will verify compliance with all applicable laws and regulations and with the conditions of the NOC, including the submission of progress reports and a final report outlining the research findings.¹⁰

Once the application form is completed and submitted by the applicant it can be submitted to EAD through emailing customerservice@ead.ae with a completed application form. EAD will issue its decision within 25 working days of receiving a complete application. The approval will be valid for the duration of the research project or up to a maximum of one year, and can be renewed upon submission of a progress report.

A Scientific Research NOC gives an Applicant/Researcher:

- The right to access and carry out field research and collect specimens on publicly accessible lands and seas in Abu Dhabi Emirate, providing conditions are adhered to; and
- A formal relationship between the researcher, office or institution and EAD so that all applicants are aware of their obligations.

A Scientific Research NOC requires an Application/Researcher and/or the affiliated research institution/office to:

- Inform EAD of any changes to the field research or specimen collection activity prior to implementing these changes;
- Comply with ethical wildlife handling standards and Federal Law No. 16 of 2007 Concerning Animal Protection;
- Comply with all general and specific conditions provided in the NOC;

¹⁰ Non-compliant researchers and their corresponding institutions will be warned and asked to adhere to the conditions of their NOC. In case of continued non-compliance, they may not be able to renew an existing NOC and/or obtain a future NOC

- Cooperate with EAD and other authorities for the sharing of information and reporting of environmental violations;
- When applicable, provide training opportunities to and ensure involvement of Emirati students, trainees and researchers;
- Submit progress reports and final reports of the project to EAD within the timeframe specified in the conditions of the NOC; and
- Comply with all Federal and Local laws and regulations at all times (some key provisions of which are provided below for guidance).

Federal Law No. (24) of 1999 for the Protection and Development of the Environment states:

- *Article (68) - Research centers, scientific institutions, universities and other specialised parties shall, in coordination with the Agency, take interest in the issues of biological diversity, preservation of the indigenous species, conducting studies and research and proposing controls and procedures to be followed for the preservation and investment in such species without leading to their depletion and protecting the moral, social and economic lawful rights of the State.*

Federal Law No. (23) of 1999 concerning the Exploitation, Protection and Development of the Living Aquatic Resources states:

- *Article (28) - It is prohibited to capture sea turtles of all species sizes and ages, or collecting their eggs or tampering with their habitat and propagation places in the Fishing Waters. It is also impermissible to catch whales, sea cows and other sea mammals of all species and sizes or extraction oysters, sponges or coral reefs except for scientific research purposes and after obtaining a written permission from the Competent Authority.*
- *Article (41) - Ships allocated for scientific research, marine surveys ships, or other ships may not conduct any researches or explorations or taking samples or any studies in the fishing waters unless by a private permission from the Ministry and the approval of the competent authority.*

Federal Law No. (16) of 2007 concerning animal protection states:

- *Article (12) It shall be forbidden to use animals for scientific purposes before getting an authorisation from the competent administration or the competent authority*

Penalties for anyone causing by his or her action or negligence any damage or harm to man or safety of the environment may be applied as stated in Abu Dhabi Law 16 of 2005 Pertaining to the Reorganisation of the Environment Agency-Abu Dhabi:

- *Article (14) - It shall be prohibited for any establishment or any individual to carry out any activity that could negatively affect the lives of human beings and the safety of the environment before obtaining a license from the Agency. -The Agency inspectors may stop the activity of any establishment or prevent the use of any material, tool or device if they are used in such a manner that would endanger health and safety of man and environment. -Anyone causing by his or her action or negligence any damage or harm to man or the safety of the environment shall bear all charges and costs necessary for remedial or removal of such a damage.*

2.2 Environmental Research Key Principles and Criteria

EAD's approval conditions are based on the key principles of ethical environmental research and no net impact on the environment or biodiversity. These principles require any research activity to:¹¹

1. Have a low carbon footprint;
2. Not modify or leave any trace on the environment;
3. Have a clear benefit to environmental conservation and scientific research;
4. Be scientifically valid and justified and adhere to standard sampling protocols;
5. Have well defined field health and safety measures;
6. Be carried out by professional/ experienced individuals with a proven record of publication or expertise, OR trainees and students under the supervision of qualified staff;
7. Be ethical in any handling of live wildlife, taking all measures to avoid harm, pain and distress to living beings;
8. Adhere to ethical conduct in science, never fabricating or falsifying data, presenting erroneous results, or plagiarising;
9. Be limited to quantities necessary for validating results, avoiding excess and taking into consideration the carrying capacity of an area or resource;
10. Be limited to areas and species specified in the application approved by EAD;
11. Adhere to all conditions of the Scientific Research NOC issued by EAD;
12. Comply with the [Code of Conduct](#) specific to Abu Dhabi's Protected Areas, when carried out within an established, declared or proposed reserve;
13. Adhere to all rules and regulations related to private land and not enter private or restricted land or sea without prior permission;
14. Ensure no public nuisance or interference with perceived aesthetics from the research activity; and
15. Be respectful to resident communities, local customs and traditions at all times.

The following additional elements will be expected of Researchers:

- Research applications should be accurate, specific and transparent, clearly describing the intent of the activity and the selected sampling methodology;
- Research that offers local Emirati students training opportunities is encouraged;
- Researchers that receive logistical, administrative or technical support from EAD will be expected to share the raw data and full results of their study with EAD throughout and at the end of the project, and acknowledge EAD in all publications related to the study;
- Academic and research institutions with long term field research projects may request a longer-term collaboration with EAD through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). Institutions or groups with a MoU may be issued longer-term NOCs for their projects;
- Researchers are encouraged to meet with and consult with scientific staff at EAD if their project overlaps or contains common elements with past, ongoing or planned studies being carried out by EAD;
- Researchers should seek community involvement when possible, helping volunteers and particularly community groups and students to learn about, understand, and appreciate the diverse wildlife in Abu Dhabi;

¹¹ Ecological Society of America (ESA) Code of Ethics www.esa.org

- Researchers are responsible for ensuring that their operations are compatible with environmental protection and conservation, have no significant negative environmental impact, do not lead to a change in ecological character and utilize natural resources sustainably;
- Researchers are responsible for ensuring that all members of the research team adopt appropriate behaviour at all times, and remain sensitive to and considerate of local customs and traditions;
- Researchers should obtain permission from land owners when requesting to access and sample from privately owned land or areas under the jurisdiction of specific entities;
- Researchers should not film or take photographs in restricted or private areas without prior permission;
- Researchers should ensure that their activities leave no trace of their visit and cause no or negligible disturbance, distress or harm to wildlife;
- Researchers should strive to collaborate and share information that may benefit conservation, restoration and management efforts, and operate in harmony with each other and with local government partners and stakeholders;
- Researchers should share any report of environmental incidences or violations with EAD;
- Researchers should acknowledge local collaborators and contributors in any publications; and
- Researchers will not present themselves as spokespersons for the Abu Dhabi or UAE Government unless authorized to do so.

2.3 Checklist for Researchers

Table 2 summarizes the key requirements for applicants to obtain a Scientific Research NOC.

Table 2: Checklist for Researchers

Scientific Research NOC Application - Checklist	
Research and obtain all environmental regulations applicable to the species and to the proposed sampling sites	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Ensure that your proposed activity fits within the relevant legislation governing the area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal law No 23 of 1999 – exploitation, protection and development of the Living Aquatic Resources; • Federal Law No 24 of 1999 – protection and development of the environment; • Federal Law No 16 of 2007 – concerning animal protection; • Local Law No 16 of 2005 – reorganisation of the Abu Dhabi Environment Agency; • Emiri Decree (s) applicable to protected areas; and • International designation applicable to the site e.g. Ramsar Site, UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. <p>Visit EAD’s website to search all the legislation, rules, and the relevant Decrees: http://www.ead.ae/home/. Read any available environmental protection plans, regulations and codes of conduct prepared for the sites and species that are relevant to your project.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Research the location of your proposed research activity and existing and surrounding land use and cultural heritage features and native species present. Have enough information to justify your site selection and provide evidence of permission to operate in the area if the site is located in a private area or is under the jurisdiction of a specific entity. Visit the EAD Geoportal to assist with your research: http://enviroportal.ead.ae/. A good resource for researching the site is the Environmental Atlas of Abu Dhabi Emirate: https://www.environmentalatlas.ae/</p>

Prepare Research Proposal and Sampling Method

- Visit EAD's website or Geoportal and search for the habitats and features of your proposed activity's location: <http://www.ead.ae/home/> and <http://enviroportal.ead.ae/geoportal/catalog/main/home.page>
 You will need to be very clear on the type of activity you will be doing and how it will be done so that you can describe any and all adverse effects the activity may have on the protected land and species within it. A research proposal and detailed sampling protocol are required as part of your application to allow EAD to make a decision.
 If the activity you are proposing involves any building or deployment of any temporary or permanent structure of any kind you must provide all the plans for this specifying the measures taken to avoid, minimize and mitigate any impact of the construction or deployment on the key biodiversity features of the area. The plans should as well detail the removal/decommissioning of the structure at the end of the research project.
- Provide maps to orient reviewers on the distribution of the proposed activities and the area(s) of probable impact.
- Describe in your application the potential environmental impacts associated with all phases of your field research and the precautionary and minimization and mitigation measures planned (for both the project site and area of probable impact). This should include the significance (i.e., magnitude, duration of change, permanence, and reversibility) of the impact(s). This may include, for example, providing a waste management plan for disposal of all solid waste, disposal and handling of any chemicals, details on behaviour around encountered wildlife, projected noise levels, limitations on group size in sensitive habitats, etc.
- Prepare a detailed sampling protocol and timeline, identifying timeframes, number of staff/students, sampling seasons and roles and responsibilities.
- Identify any international or national scientific or academic organization affiliations relevant to the research activity you are applying for.

Researcher's Commitments (made by signing and submitting the application form)

- Commitment to maximizing the benefit and minimizing the environmental impact(s) of a proposed activity.
- Commitments to abide by the conditions of the NOC.
- Adherence to EAD regulations and procedures, adherence to Federal and Local laws at all times.

Submit Additional Required Documentation

- Attachment 1 - Site map (Jpeg and shape files) indicating sampling area, existing features and sampling locations

<input type="checkbox"/>	Attachment 2 - Letters of permission from private land owner (if applicable)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Attachment 3 - Research proposal approved by the affiliated research institution
<input type="checkbox"/>	Attachment 4 - Emirates ID or passport copies of all members of the research team, Business Visa copies for all visiting researchers.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Attachment 5 - CVs of all members of the research team and professional affiliations, list of past publications
<input type="checkbox"/>	Attachment 6 - If applicable, evidence of collaboration with a local institution (for international researchers).
General	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Include a list of abbreviations, definition of terms, and full references to sources of information in the research proposal.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensure that adequate and accurate information is provided, so that EAD can gain a clear and complete understanding of the research project, potential environmental impacts or issues for concern associated with the project.
<input type="checkbox"/>	For any questions or queries throughout the process, address an email to Customer Relations Division customerservice@ead.ae

2.4 Additional forms of authorisations that may be required

2.4.1 Import/Export of Biological Specimens

Consistent with the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), the import and export of wildlife is regulated at the federal level by the MOCCE. If your proposed research activity requires the import or export of biological specimens of CITES listed species, you will need to apply for an import/export certificate from the MOCCE by [visiting the MOCCE website](#).

Import or export of any live animals (CITES or non-CITES) also requires a [health certificate from the MOCCE](#).

EAD may request proof of a CITES permit in the course of monitoring research activities in Abu Dhabi if the research project involves CITES listed specimen import or export.

2.4.2 Bioprospecting and international transfer of specimens

The UAE ratified [the Nagoya Protocol](#) in 2014 and as such any exploitation or transfer of biological specimens outside the UAE's borders requires prior informed consent from the MOCCE in coordination with the local government authorities, and be carried out according to mutually agreed terms. Proposals for transporting any live or dead genetic material outside the country for taxonomic purposes or exploiting indigenous plants or animals or other genetic resources for commercial purposes must be submitted to the MOCCE for assessment and approval. The MOCCE assesses the proposal and coordinates with the relevant local authority prior to issuing the approval.

2.4.3 Requesting EAD Data

EAD has long term data relating to the environment of Abu Dhabi. Data that may serve the research project may be requested, by submitting a request through email to eimsupport@ead.ae and specifying the type, location, period & format of the data needed.

EAD must be acknowledged in all research projects that have used the data acquired from EAD. Additionally a draft of the publication must be shared with EAD, and a written approval obtained prior to having any publication published. Other conditions concerning authorships may be specified in the Data Usage Agreement, following the review and consideration of the data request.

2.4.4 Requesting EAD voucher specimens and tissue samples

EAD may provide or loan voucher specimens for scientific research or taxonomic purposes, upon the review of a voucher specimen request form. The provision of voucher specimens is subject to EAD's approval and review of the project's purpose, and other specific conditions states in the Scientific Research Collaboration Agreement. To request voucher specimens and tissue samples, the details of the requested material must be provided in Part 2 of the Research Project Application Form.

All non-processed voucher specimens must be returned to EAD by the date specified in the Scientific Research Collaboration Agreement. Vouchers are provided for non-commercial research purposes only. Permission for transporting any biological material outside the UAE must be obtained from the MOCCE.

EAD must be acknowledged in all research projects that have obtained EAD voucher specimens, and a draft of the publication must be shared with EAD prior to being published. Other conditions concerning authorships may be specified in the Scientific Research Collaboration Agreement, following the review and consideration of the request.

2.5 Specific Cases

Specific cases involving non-resident researchers, independent researchers, or species on the IUCN Red List require additional assessment and documentation as part of the application.

2.5.1 Visiting or Independent Researchers

Independent researchers not affiliated with a local UAE-based institution must submit academic credentials and/or evidence of past publications, experience & expertise, or submit evidence of collaboration with a local institution.

Visiting (non UAE resident) researchers must submit a copy of their mission/business visa as part of their application. They must be aware of all applicable federal and local regulations and are encouraged to collaborate with a local agency or UAE-based institution in order to conduct field research activities on the environment in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. The application should include evidence of this collaboration as well as the identification documents of both principal researchers, visiting researchers and local collaborators. Access to certain coastal and marine areas requiring a security permit from the Critical Infrastructure and Coastal Protection Authority (CICPA) is only possible for UAE nationals or residents.

2.5.2 Projects involving threatened species

For large scale or long-term projects, and for projects involving locally or globally threatened species or requiring sampling in protected areas, applicants are encouraged to request a meeting with EAD after submitting their application. This will allow EAD to communicate the specific requirements and conditions for their activity.

2.5.3 Projects requiring access to terrestrial or marine protected areas

Projects requiring access to designated, established or proposed terrestrial or marine protected areas under EAD's management require prior approval from EAD. The applicant must specify the areas they require access to in the application form as well as the desired dates and duration of access. Access to protected areas is granted under strict conditions and requires the presence of an EAD Ranger or Staff member throughout the visit. All research carried out in EAD's marine and terrestrial protected areas must involve EAD staff member(s) and must abide by the authorship and review conditions specified in the specific conditions of the NOC. All photos, video and data gathered from EAD-managed protected areas must be shared with EAD and obtain approval prior to being published in either print or digital format.

2.6 Environmental Consultancy Offices Exemption

Environmental consultancy offices registered with EAD that wish to collect specimens for ecological baseline surveys are exempted from the scientific research NOC application but must provide details of their sampling methodology and locations in the Terms of References (ToR) document for the required environmental study (Preliminary Environmental Review (PER), Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) or Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)). The ToR submitted to EAD prior to commencing any surveys will be assessed and reviewed by EAD. An approval of the ToR by EAD constitutes an approval to conduct the ecological survey and specimen collection (if applicable) for the duration of the survey. **Only environmental consultancy offices registered with EAD and with approved ToR are authorised to collect specimens as part of environmental studies in Abu Dhabi.**

2.7 Citizen Scientists Exemption

Volunteers, hobbyists, bird watchers, naturalists, community groups and citizen scientists that record their observations on the environment and on biodiversity in the Emirate without posing any disturbance to wildlife are not required to apply for a Scientific Research NOC. However, they are strongly encouraged to communicate the methods and results of their observations with EAD, either in writing, through the EAD collector app, or any other means. Research carried out by hobbyists and naturalists has significantly contributed to the advancement of scientific knowledge in the UAE and becomes truly impactful when shared with the relevant authorities mandated with developing environmental policies and regulations. Should any citizen science activities involve any specimen collection, EAD must be informed of the details in writing to determine whether a Scientific Research NOC is required.

REFERENCES

International

Convention on Biological Diversity, Conference of the Parties. Strategic Plan for Biodiversity (2011-2020) (Aichi, 2010).

Convention on Biological Diversity (2011), Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization

Crozier, G. K. D., & Schulte-Hostedde, A. I. (2015). Towards Improving the Ethics of Ecological Research. *Science and Engineering Ethics*, 21(3), 577–594.
<http://doi.org/10.1007/s11948-014-9558-4>

Ecological Society of America (2013), Code of Ethics

Federal

UAE National Biodiversity Action Plan (2014-2021)

Federal law no. (24) Of 1999 for the Protection and Development of the Environment.

Federal law no. (23) Of 1999 concerning Exploitation, Protection and Development of the Living Aquatic Resources in the State of United Arab Emirates

Emirate

EAD, (2013). Environment Vision 2030

EAD, (2014). Biodiversity Strategy for the Emirate of Abu Dhabi 2015-2020

Law no. (16) Of 2005 establishing EAD's organizational structure.

EAD, (2014) Code of Conduct for the Users of Mangrove National Park

APPENDIX A: Application Form for Scientific Research Projects

APPENDIX A:

Application Form Scientific Research NOC

All forms of scientific research projects on the physical and biological environment in Abu Dhabi emirate must obtain an NOC from the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi (EAD) by submitting a completed application form to customerservice@ead.ae. All applications for a Scientific Research NOC will be reviewed on a case by case basis, following the review and assessment of a completed Scientific Research NOC Application Form.

This requirement is pursuant to federal and local legislation¹² and consistent with the provisions of the international Convention of Biological Diversity and its Nagoya protocol¹³. The Scientific Research NOC constitutes a form of pre-informed consent for allowing access to biological resources, according to the mutually agreed terms stated in the specific and general conditions of the NOC.

The permitting of scientific research projects is a way that the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD) is able to monitor and manage any possible effects of research activities on the environment and on biodiversity, balance competing uses and demands of users and create a return to conservation and science.

Prior to completing the application form, kindly read the **Technical Guidance Document for Scientific Research Permitting in Abu Dhabi Emirate** (EAD-TMBS-TG-02) available on the EAD website <https://www.ead.ae/Pages/our-services/researchers.aspx>

This application form does not apply to:

1. Incidental live or dead wildlife sighting and recording;
2. Citizen science wildlife observation & recreation/hobbyist activities (i.e. bird watching); and
3. Ecological baseline surveys carried out by EAD registered environmental consultants as part of a development or industrial project permitting requirement.

Please complete the application form, providing all required information. Part 1 must be completed by all applicants. Part 2 should be filled only if assistance, data or biological material is being requested from EAD. Part 3 should be filled if any biological material will be collected from Abu Dhabi Emirate as part of the project. Part 4 should be read and signed by all applicants.

Contact details for EAD Customer Services in case of any questions or clarifications are: Tel: +971 (2) 445-4777; Fax: +971 (2) 446-3339

E-mail: customerservice@ead.ae

¹² Federal Laws No.23 and No. 24 of 1999 require that research centres, scientific institutions, universities and other specialized parties shall coordinate with the authorities to study biodiversity without leading to its depletion and protect the moral, social and economic rights of the State. Any manipulation or collection of wild fauna and flora in the UAE must receive approval from the competent authorities. Abu Dhabi Emirate Law 16 of 2005 sets out EAD's mandate as the Competent Environmental Authority in Abu Dhabi Emirate mandated with implementing all Federal and Local environmental laws and with managing research, studies and programmes relating to environmental and wildlife affairs.

¹³ The UAE signed and ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2000 and acceded to its Nagoya Protocol in 2014. The CBD places the exploitation of biological resources and the responsibility of protecting them under the sovereign right of the country.

Applicants will be advised if further information is required before this application can be processed. EAD will assess the application and issue an approval if they are satisfied that the application meets all the requirements. Applications will be processed within 25 working days from receipt of a complete application.

Once you are ready to submit your application, please review the checklist below to ensure that all the information necessary has been provided:

CHECK LIST

- Research proposal;
- Detailed sampling plan & protocol;
- Sampling location maps (shapefiles, JPEG, kmz);
- Evidence of qualifications, previous publications or experience;
- Written consultations with local stakeholders and land owners (if applicable);
- Residency visa copies for residents and Business visa copies for visiting researchers;
- Identification documents and CVs of research team;
- Other required authorisations or permits from other agencies when applicable (e.g. CITES permits, Export/Import permits, Civil Aviation Authority Drone permit); and
- A complete and signed Scientific Research NOC Application Form.

All efforts in putting together a detailed application are greatly appreciated and will allow EAD to effectively and efficiently process your application.

If an NOC is granted and, upon expiry, you wish to renew the NOC, you can apply for renewal with or without modification of the project upon submission of a progress report to customerservice@ead.ae

Please be reminded of the need to ensure no impact on the environment from your research activity. Penalties for anyone carrying out any damage or harm to man or the safety of the environment are stated in Abu Dhabi Law 16 of 2005:

- *Article (14) - It shall be prohibited for any establishment or any individual to carry out any activity that could negatively affect the lives of human beings and the safety of the environment before obtaining a license from the Agency. -The Agency inspectors may stop the activity of any establishment or prevent the use of any material, tool or device if they are used in such a manner that would endanger health and safety of man and environment. -Anyone causing by his or her action or negligence any damage or harm to man or the safety of the environment shall bear all charges and costs necessary for remedial or removal of such a damage.*

Office use only (tick appropriate):

Research Project only		Research Project & Specimen Collection		Research Focus Area		Research category	
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Application for Scientific Research NOC

Part 1: General Information *(applicable to all projects)*

PROJECT TITLE						
RESEARCHER¹⁴	Title					
	Full Name					
	ID/Passport Number					
	Institution or Company					
	Department					
	Postal address					
	Physical address					
	Tel	W:	Mobile:	Fax:		
e-mail						
SUPERVISOR¹⁵	Title					
	Full Name					
	ID/Passport Number					
	Institution					
	Department					
	Postal address					
	Physical address					
	Tel	W:	Cell:	Fax:		
e-mail						
CO-WORKERS¹⁶	Title					
	Full Name					

14 Non-resident individuals or research groups not affiliated with a local UAE-based institution must provide copies of their Business Visas. Tourist Visas are not acceptable for visitors aiming to conduct research in the UAE. All visiting researchers must be familiar with UAE environmental federal and local rules and regulations prior to commencing their activity. They are encouraged to obtain prior approval from EAD through a formal letter or collaborate with a local institution for research projects. They must provide all raw data collected in the country to EAD in the required format and acknowledge any local collaborators in their publications.

15 Most research projects for degree purposes will have an academic supervisor; however, some research for non-degree purposes may not have a supervisor, in which case it is not necessary to list a supervisor.

16 Co-workers are those who will assist with the analysis and write up of the research, and/or that may be involved with field work; all co-workers will be listed as 'nominees' on any collecting permits and can therefore collect and curate specimens/materials according to the NOC conditions. Note: Add additional rows if necessary.

COLLABORATORS:

If you are based outside the United Arab Emirates, please provide a copy of your business visa and give the contact details of the agency or person or institution with whom you are collaborating - N.B. this collaboration is **highly advisable** for all foreign-based applicants. Access to certain coastal and marine sites in Abu Dhabi requires a local collaborator/sponsor to enable you to obtain an authorisation from the Critical Infrastructure and Coastal Protection Authority (CICPA). If you do not have a local collaborator, you may request a collaboration agreement with the Environment Agency Abu Dhabi upon submitting this application.

Title			
Full Name			
Emirates ID Number			
Organisation			
Department			
Postal address			
Physical address			
Tel	W:	Cell:	Fax:
e-mail			

PROJECT LEVEL:

Undergraduate, Honours, MSc, PhD, Post-Doctoral, Research for non-degree purposes e.g. group field trips, contract research, follow-up investigation¹⁷, citizen science project, other (explain).

OBJECTIVE(S) & HYPOTHESIS:

List project objectives - be specific, concise (maximum 200 words) and provide in point form. Where a specific hypothesis is being tested then this should be stated. Projects addressing strategic research areas/questions identified by EAD will receive priority attention and potentially more support.

¹⁷ Supply previous NOC and/or project registration numbers.

RATIONALE:

Provide a background to and rationale for the project (maximum 1000 words). State the management/research problem or information deficit, and how the project will help solve the problem. Making reference to the literature indicate the extent to which the subject has already been researched.

METHODS:

Describe the data collection and analysis methods and equipment used, with particular attention to, and justification for, (1) the type of sampling proposed (will there will be any destructive sampling?) and (2) to the requirement for the placement of short - or long term structures/traps/markers etc. in the field. Methods must conform to acceptable scientific standards.

Protected areas are sanctuaries for wildlife and a strong motivation for research that is manipulative or that in any way disturbs wildlife will need to be provided. All research should use the least invasive methods possible. Where research is not dependant on protected areas then you may be encouraged to work outside protected areas.

NOTE: Part 2 of this form must be completed if any assistance, data or voucher specimens are requested from EAD. Part 3 of this form must be completed if any live or dead organisms are to be captured/marked/collected/exported.

KEY WORDS:

Provide a comprehensive list of key words in terms of: 1. broad subject area; 2. specific subject area; 3. taxa [common names and scientific names]; and 4. Locality/geographical scope.

STUDY AREA(S):

Indicate the geographical extent of the study area; specify all Abu Dhabi protected areas where research/collection will be conducted. EAD may engage with you to identify alternative protected areas or sites to conduct the research. You may provide this information by attaching/uploading a clearly labelled and georeferenced map (shapefiles, jpeg or kmz file)

STUDY SCHEDULE:

Initial starting date for the study:

Estimated date the entire study will be complete and when final report/thesis/publication will be provided:

FIELD SCHEDULE:

Proposed commencement date of field work:

Proposed completion date of field work:

REPORTING PROCESS:

Give brief details of the envisaged reporting process i.e. how will the project be reported (e.g. thesis, report, published paper or article).

ETHICS CLEARANCE (for projects involving animals):

Does your institution have an Ethics Committee? Y / N.

If yes, and if appropriate, has this research been supported by this committee? (Attach proof, explanation):

POSSIBLE SENSITIVITIES:

Are you aware of any social/cultural sensitivities or living cultural heritage issues that need to be considered? Briefly discuss these and describe how they are going to be addressed during the project.

Part 2:

Please complete this part only if you are requesting any assistance, data or voucher specimens from EAD. If you do not require any assistance, data or specimens, please skip to Part 3.

ASSISTANCE REQUESTED FROM EAD:

Please note that all projects will be categorised and those that address EAD strategic research areas/questions will receive priority. Please also note that your request(s) for assistance may not be granted or be only partially met – it is the responsibility of the applicant to check what has been approved in the final acceptance letter and NOC.

Entry to protected area:

List the protected areas for which you would like to apply for access (entry is not guaranteed and is at EAD's discretion, entry to marine and coastal sites may also require authorisation by the Critical Infrastructure and Coastal Protection Authority (CICPA)).

Manpower:

Please note that you will generally be required to be accompanied by a field ranger or other EAD staff when working in protected areas. Availability of staff is limited and this may become a limiting factor in conducting the research/sampling. Where staff is available you may be requested to offer training opportunities in return for being assisted and supported by EAD field staff.

Data:

Do you require data from EAD? Y / N

If yes, indicate your needs in detail (type, format, etc.):

NOTE: This does not guarantee that the data requested will be provided. When data is obtained from EAD, the source of the data must be acknowledged in the resulting publication and the draft must be submitted for EAD review prior to being published. Additional conditions governing data sharing will be specified in the Data Sharing Agreement. The provision of any EAD data requires that the Data Sharing Agreement be completed and signed before any data is provided to the applicant.

Biological Material Request:

Do you require any biological material (voucher specimens or tissue samples) from EAD collections (details in Annexe I)?

Y/ N

If yes, please indicate in detail your needs (type, form, quantity, other etc.):

Kindly provide details of what specimens you need, their type, form, quantity and their uses:

Will these specimens/tissue samples be transported outside the UAE? Y/N
If yes, please specify the destination and the purpose of the transfer:

*Will the sample/material be consumed, processed or modified? Y/N
If yes, please specify*

NOTE: The sharing of voucher specimens is governed by the conditions set out in the **Research Collaboration Agreement** and is specific to the strictly non-commercial uses of the associated research project. Voucher specimens must be returned to EAD in their original form. Transfer of any voucher specimens or tissue samples outside the country requires additional permission from the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment.

Part 3:

Please fill out this section only if your project involves specimen collection. If you will not be collecting biological specimens, please skip to Part 4.

COLLECTED TAXA, NUMBERS, ACTIVITIES & SITES:

What organisms do you want to observe/capture/sample/mark/collect, and approximately what number (and age and sex breakdown where appropriate) of each taxon are required to be captured/sampled/collected? Please complete table below, one row per taxon, add rows if necessary. In some cases only Genus, Family or Order can be listed; general bird ringers should list all species of birds. List each protected area and/or describe each area where each taxon will be collected.

If the research involves looking at invasive species then special care must be taken to ensure they are not encouraged to spread within the country. Specific conditions for handling the species will be included in the NOC.

If the work is being conducted on species listed on the IUCN Red List, CITES Appendix I or CMS Appendix I, then the applicant must provide further details and evidence that the sampling protocol is non detrimental to the species. Other species not included in these classifications may still require a non-detrimental study, if local EAD assessments have found that they are particularly rare or sensitive. This will be specified after receipt and review of the application form.

Taxon		Threat Status (IUCN Red List status, CITES, CMS)	Number (and age & sex where appropriate)	Type of Activity	Protected area(s)/ Area
Scientific name	Common name				

Types of activity: observe, collect; capture; capture & release; mark; mark & release; keep in captivity; export; transport; possess.

Note: In the case of 'collect' indicate whether complete organisms, or samples/parts thereof, will be taken; in the case of the latter indicate which part(s) e.g. blood, leaf, toe clipping etc.

JUSTIFICATION FOR COLLECTION:

Justify the number of samples required. Will this have any detrimental effect on the populations from which the specimens are taken? Please give evidence (e.g. references, data on population sizes and sustainable yields) in support of your statements wherever possible. Will the collection of specimens be biased towards any sex or age group?

If you propose to collect or capture and release animals, what methods and types of trap will you use and what measures will you take to prevent habitat destruction, death or injury, introduction of disease into wild populations, and/or any other undesirable effects?

BY-CATCH:

Will there be any by-catch? If so, what measures will be put in place to minimize and/or make maximum use of this by-catch? What taxa will the by-catch likely consist, and give an indication of the numbers of non-target organisms that may be involved.

CURATION:

Biological specimens collected as part of a research project may not be traded and must be lodged within a registered collection/established institution. When no equipped local institution is available, the specimens may be housed overseas provided that EAD is formally informed. The overseas institutions must provide an agreement letter stating that the UAE government may request that the specimens be repatriated at any time.

Please indicate where the specimens will be deposited, and **attach a letter from the relevant UAE or overseas institution confirming that they will accept specimens that will be submitted and agree to repatriating the specimens upon request by the UAE government (in the case of overseas institutions).**

Part 4:

ADDITIONAL AUTHORISATIONS REQUIRED:

EAD may request proof of these additional documents at the application stage and any subsequent stage of the program, if applicable:

- *Live Specimen Import or Export or parts thereof requires an export permit from the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MoCCE)*
- *CITES listed species require [CITES certificates to be issued from the MoCCE.](#)*
- *Any activities involving Drones requires the authorisation of the [United Arab Emirates Civil Aviation Authority](#)*
- *Activities in certain marine or coastal areas require [security permits by the Critical Infrastructure Coastal Protection Authority.](#)*
- *Activities in private islands or lands require written permission from the land owner's office.*
- *Activities in culturally and archaeologically significant sites will require prior review by [the Abu Dhabi Tourism and Culture Authority.](#)*

DECLARATION:

By submitting this document I (*name*) _____ declare that this application is accurate and complete; I understand that any proposed changes to the objectives, methods or timing of this study will require written approval from EAD; I understand that EAD may seek peer review of this proposal should this be deemed necessary. I understand that the project will be bound by the conditions stipulated by EAD in the NOC sent to me by EAD), including the provision of two copies of all progress reports/publications, I understand that I will be bound by all general and specific conditions stipulated in the NOC.

LIABILITY RELEASE STATEMENT:

By submitting this document I (name)release the Environment Agency-Abu Dhabi from all liability and its employees, officers, directors, volunteers and agents from any and all claims resulting in any injury (including paralysis and death), illness, damages, or economic or property loss I may suffer because of my participation in this activity, including travel to, from and during the activity.

Note: An NOC may be varied or revoked if the information given in this application contains inaccuracies.

Signature (Applicant)		Date	
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This application is made pursuant to:

- Federal law No 23 of 1999 – exploitation, protection and development of the Living Aquatic Resources’;
- Federal Law No 24 of 1999 – protection and development of the environment;
- Federal Law No 16 of 2007 – concerning animal protection;
- Emiri Decrees No 18 of 2001 and No 33 of 2005 (marine protected areas);
- Abu Dhabi Law No 16 of 2005 – reorganisation of the Abu Dhabi Environment Agency;
- Abu Dhabi Law No 22 of 2005-regulating wildlife hunting in Abu Dhabi Emirate;
- All International designation applicable to the site e.g. Ramsar Site, UNESCO Biosphere Reserve; and
- Federal Law number (11) of the year 2002 Concerning Regulating and Controlling the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna & Flora.

Contact details for further information
EAD Customer Services: customerservice@ead.ae

APPENDIX B: Regulations and Instructions for Users of Protected Areas

REGULATIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR USERS OF PROTECTED AREAS

1. Do not collect, remove or damage any material, living, non-living or dead such as (fossils, plants, animals, corals, shells, fishes, rocks, archeological and historical artifacts, etc.), from any part of the protected area.
2. Please use the garbage containers to dispose of trash. Do not dispose garbage on land or in the water. If a garbage container is not available please take the trash back with you to the nearest dump site.
3. Do not drive or walk off-road; use only existing and clearly marked roads or tracks.
4. Do not enter areas marked with no entry signs.
5. Do not damage or disturb plants or animals (birds, fish, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, or invertebrates) in the protected area. A multiple use zone is defined in certain marine protected areas for permitted fishing activity.
6. Sampling and specimen collection must be restricted to the areas specified in the approved Scientific Research Application. Sampling from other zones for research purposes requires a priori approval from EAD.
7. Do not feed any wildlife you come across. Disposal of food that may be eaten by an animal in the terrestrial or marine protected area is prohibited.
8. All kinds of hunting are strictly forbidden in terrestrial protected areas and in the specified no take zones of marine protected areas. This includes fishing or spear fishing, and hunting with firearms, archery, or falconry.
9. Do not mark, deface, move or damage any signs, notices or placards, scientific equipment, posts, mooring buoys or other markers installed by EAD.
10. Taking still and video shots for publications, advertising and commercial users require prior approval from EAD.
11. Interviewing EAD staff for their work at the protected area residences and stations is not allowed without having prior approval from EAD. All filmed interviews require prior approval from EAD before online or offline publication and distribution.

Specific Regulations for Boats and Vehicles

1. Do not anchor the boat on coral reef or sea grass areas. Use mooring buoys whenever available, and drop your anchor on sandy bottom areas only.
2. The speed limit for boats inside the no-take zones (core areas) of marine protected areas is 10 km / hr. The speed limit in other zones is maximum 60 km / hr. For terrestrial protected areas, follow the speed limits assigned for each area.
3. It is strictly prohibited to chase any wildlife including gazelles, birds, turtles, dugongs, schools of fish, etc.
4. EAD's boats and vehicles can be easily identified with EAD's logo on visible places for the recognition of protected areas users.

5. On islands, drive only on clearly marked roads or tracks. Never drive on off-road unmarked tracks, on dunes, on beaches or on inter-tidal areas. Do not enter any area marked as closed or closed with a barrier.
6. It is strictly forbidden to use the vehicle / boat horn or any other loud device without a clear justification (in cases of emergency).
7. Quad bikes (beach and desert buggies) are only allowed on marked tracks. Speed limits also apply to quad bikes.

Specific Regulations for Camping

1. Each marine or terrestrial Protected Area will have its own procedures for camping based on its own unique circumstances and location.
2. Currently, camping is allowed only in specific cases for the purposes of research and monitoring. All camping requests must obtain prior approval from EAD.
3. Recreational camping is subject to prior approval from EAD and is restricted to designated camping places.

Specific Regulations for EAD Guests

1. Entrance to any terrestrial or marine protected area or a restricted zone within it requires a prior special permission from EAD.
2. EAD guests must be accompanied at all times by an EAD Ranger or another EAD staff member assigned to guide and accompany the guests. All guests must abide by the EAD Ranger or staff member's instructions at all times.
3. It is the responsibility of the visitor's employer or sponsoring organisation to inform the visitor of all the existing applicable regulations.
4. EAD guests must abide by all the general and specific rules and regulations of the area.

Specific Regulations during Nesting / Migratory Season(s) of Marine Turtle / Birds

1. During the nesting/breeding/migratory season(s) of marine turtles and birds, specific areas within the marine or terrestrial protected areas will be closed to the public.
2. Special permission for scientists, students and other guests to view wildlife during the breeding and nesting seasons may be granted by EAD under strict conditions.

All Rules and Regulations are subject to changes during the year; please follow any specific on-site instructions given to you by the protected areas' staff. Guests and Visitors will be held responsible for any damage or violation of rules or regulations. Tour operating companies / diving centers (if any) are responsible for any damage or violation caused by their employees and /or visitors.

Offenders are subject to:

1. Penalties stipulated by Federal Law 23 of 1999 and Federal Law 24 of 1999 and their executive by-laws.
2. Suspension of visitor or guest permits.
3. Monetary fine, in the case of willful or negligent damage.