

SUSTAINABILITY STORIES

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WHAT IS YOUR JOB AND HOW DOES IT SUPPORT SUSTAINABILITY?

I am currently the General Manager Manufacturing at Gulf Petrochemical Industries Company (GPIC). I head the technical departments at GPIC ensuring the production and export targets are met in a safe, secure and environmentally compliant way. I am responsible for ensuring that the Company's short-term and long-term goals are achieved in the areas of safety, reliability, production, exports, human development, environmental and community care.

All the stages of the manufacturing life cycle are linked in one way or another to the pillars of sustainability and the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals. Starting from the design stage, raw materials, manufacturing, storage, exports and end use. All these life cycle stages must be managed responsibly and safely with social inclusion and due care for the environment.

WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO WORK IN THE FERTILIZER INDUSTRY?

I joined the industry in 1988. At that time, GPIC was a very new company and the first petrochemical complex in Bahrain with operations starting in 1985 for the production of ammonia and methanol. I thought it would be exciting to join a complex with state of the art technology. GPIC started producing urea later in 1998.

WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT LESSON YOU'VE LEARNED IN YOUR CAREER TO DATE?

One of the key corporate lessons is to be proactive, flexible, adaptive, learn new things, and willing to change ... quickly.

CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT GPIC'S SUSTAINABILITY JOURNEY AND PLANS?

At GPIC, we have long believed that business has both the opportunity and an obligation to make the world a better place. Over the years, this belief has fueled advances in our operations and how we invest in our business and support our communities. Within the business, sustainability has evolved into a strategic imperative that focuses on economic, environmental and social risks and opportunities. GPIC has grown into a champion of corporate sustainability.

GPIC's smart and forward-looking business approach has embraced the shift from the classical three pillars of Sustainable Development to the four Ps; namely People, Planet, Prosperity and Partnerships. The progression upholds GPIC's attempt to become a part of the global transformation for a sustainable future.

The overarching alignment with Bahrain's Economic Vision 2030 at the local level and the ten principles of the UN Global Compact (UNGC), the world's largest initiative on corporate sustainability on human rights, labor, environment and anti-Corruption, and the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on a macro level imparts a strong sustainability context to GPIC's ambitions. In addition, GPIC was amongst the earliest companies from the region to join two

important global initiatives, the UNGC Food and Agriculture Business Principles (FAB 6) and the UN's Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs).

GPIC has been particularly pro-active in the area of Climate Action. GPIC is actively involved in pre- and post- COP 21 consultations. GPIC has contributed towards Bahrain's Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) and is currently engaged at a national level and the industry level in exploring potential projects for renewable energy, waste water recycle/reuse, carbon capture and energy efficiency.

GPIC also provides annual GHG inventory reports at the industry and national level and shares its sustainability performance publicly through its Sustainability Reports and UNGC Communication on Progress Reports following the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) standards.

HOW DO YOU THINK FERTILIZERS AND PLANT NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT CAN HELP TRANSFORM FOOD SYSTEMS FOR THE BETTER?

To successfully implement Integrated Plant Nutrient Management (IPNM) joint efforts are required from policy makers, research, extension, agri-business, farmers and industry who all have a role to play. These groups must cooperate and coordinate their activities to achieve the most rapid results.

Fertilizer manufacturers must also contribute to optimal nutrient use. Some things that the fertilizer industry should be doing include:

1. Developing and supplying the most appropriate fertilizer for each agro-ecological region and crop as determined by local research.
2. Conducting field demonstrations in cooperation with local extension organizations and agri-businesses on the most appropriate use of fertilizers for specific crops, soils and farming systems.
3. Training agri-business retailers to consider all other available nutrient sources and then to select the most appropriate fertilizer products, application rates, methods and timing for specific crops and soils.

The most important people for good nutrient management are the farmers themselves as they manage the land directly. They can implement IPNM by: evaluating all fields for crop yield potential; determining residual nutrient availability; assessing availability for on farm nutrients (green manures, animal manures, etc.); calculating and prioritizing supplemental nutrient needs for each field and crop; establishing the most efficient nutrient application program; and continually assessing the results of nutrient application.

WHAT DOES SUSTAINABILITY MEAN TO YOU?

Sustainability is at the heart of the GPIC success story. We have always been committed to environmental care, the well-being of our people and the communities in which we operate. We have pursued new ways of addressing global and regional challenges which, in turn, has guided our scope from a relatively narrow approach to a much broader strategy of integrating economic, social, environment and governance prerequisites within our sustainability strategy and framework.

We have entered a new era where we are aligning our efforts with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and engaging more with leading global corporate sustainability initiatives such as the UN Global Compact. We are confident that through leadership, collaboration and innovation we shall be able to meet the aspirations for a global transformation for a better world for all. The current COVID-19 pandemic has proven that companies with a well-established and operative sustainability strategy coupled with robust environmental and social governance are more resilient and can attain business continuity in a sustainable way.