

MEDIA INFORMATION

Dubai, 25 May 2026

## A Greener Dubai in Shades of Red and Orange

### **VFS Global joins Dubai's Flame Tree Initiative in support of sustainability, urban beautification and community wellbeing in partnership with Dubai Municipality**

- VFS Global has committed to plant 1,200 flame trees over the coming months in cooperation with Dubai Municipality.
- As part of its overall 1 Million Trees Campaign, VFS Global has so far planted over 650,000 trees globally, contributing to global reforestation efforts.

**VFS Global today announced that it is joining the landmark greening initiative led by His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, as Dubai's iconic flame trees once again bring vibrant hues of red and orange to the city.** Inspired by the Crown Prince's vision, this initiative reflects Dubai's continued focus on sustainability, urban beautification, and enhancing quality of life for all residents. The effort forms part of a broader movement to further strengthen the city's green infrastructure and environmental resilience. HH Sheikh Hamdan celebrated the flame tree as a symbol of Dubai, 'a city full of life and beauty' and directed the expansion of flame tree planting across the emirate along with the distribution of seedlings to residents for plantation in their homes and farms.

The timing of this initiative by VFS Global coincides with Eid al-Adha which is deeply rooted in giving and sharing. As part of the initiative VFS Global has committed to plant 1,200 trees over the coming months in cooperation with Dubai Municipality. The trees have been sourced from Wadi Dafta plantation, owned and operated by Emirati farmer Mr. Ahmed Al Hafeiti.

**Zubin Karkaria, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, VFS Global Group** said, *"Flame trees are more than just a flowering species. They are a unique marker of the summer season in Dubai, a source of shade and comfort and a defining feature of Dubai's streets and communities. As a global organisation with operations in 168 countries and proudly headquartered in Dubai, UAE, VFS Global is truly honoured to join this initiative and support the leadership's inspiring vision to create greener, more vibrant communities."*

**Mr. Karkaria added:** *"Dubai has always set a global benchmark for visionary leadership and sustainable urban development, and our commitment to this initiative reflects not just our sustainability priorities but our deep connection to this city and the UAE and our responsibility to contribute meaningfully to its future."*

Flame trees have a longstanding presence across Dubai's streets and public spaces. Originally brought to the region decades ago, the species adapted successfully to the local environment and is today seen throughout many of the city's residential and community areas transforming landscape design and enhancing urban aesthetics.

**Ahmed Ali Obaid Alhefeiti, Founder and Owner of Wadi Dafta Plantation**, a pioneering UAE-based agricultural enterprise focused on sustainable farming said: “We commend the UAE leadership, VFS Global and Dubai Municipality for advancing this meaningful sustainability initiative. At Wadi Dafta Plantation, we are proud to support Dubai’s environmental objectives. Scientifically known as *Delonix regia*, the flame tree can reach heights of up to 15 metres, contributing to reduced heat exposure and the creation of cooler shaded microclimates within urban environments.”

Originally introduced from Madagascar, flame trees have adapted strongly to the UAE’s climate and today play an important role in enhancing Dubai’s green spaces through natural shade, visual character and improved pedestrian comfort by providing a natural cooling effect. Today, tens of thousands of flame trees line the city’s streets, parks and public spaces, including prominent locations such as Jumeirah Street, Airport Road, Safa Park and Dubai Canal - reinforcing the tree’s place within Dubai’s evolving green identity. The species plays a role in supporting local biodiversity by attracting birds, butterflies and pollinators during its flowering season.

Sustainability is a core pillar of VFS Global’s ethos and the organisation is deeply committed to reducing its own environmental footprint through energy efficiency, renewable energy adoption, waste management, and water conservation. The tree-planting initiative builds on VFS Global’s global sustainability efforts, through which the organisation has planted over 650,000 trees over the past four years. These initiatives are designed to contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, protecting biodiversity, and supporting reforestation - critical steps toward preserving ecosystems and fostering long-term community resilience. The company’s contribution to the flame trees initiative aims to play a meaningful role in advancing Dubai’s sustainability ambitions while reinforcing its own long-standing environmental commitments.

VFS also continues to integrate sustainable business practices, including ISO 14001:2015-certified environmental management systems across its operations. In 2024, the company achieved a 45% reduction in total emissions compared to the 2019 baseline, driven by green energy initiatives and operational efficiencies.

Read more about VFS Global’s Sustainability efforts in our Integrated Sustainability Report - <https://www.vfsglobal.com/en/PDF/CSR/vfs-global-integrated-sustainability-report-2024.pdf>

### **About VFS Global**

As the global leader in trusted technology services, empowering secure mobility for governments and citizens, VFS Global embraces technological innovation, including Generative AI, to support governments and diplomatic missions worldwide. The company manages non-judgmental and administrative tasks related to applications for visa, passport, and consular services for its client governments, increasing productivity and enabling them to focus entirely on the critical task of assessment.

With a responsible approach to technology development, adoption and integration, the company prioritises ethical practices and sustainability while serving as the trusted partner to 71 client



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governments. Operating over 4,100 Application Centres in 168 countries, VFS Global has efficiently processed more than 542 million transactions\* since 2001.

Headquartered in Zurich and Dubai, VFS Global is majority owned by Blackstone, the world's largest alternative asset manager, along with minority shareholders including Swiss-based Kuoni and Huentobler Foundation, Singapore based Temasek and UAE based Dubai Holdings.

*\* Comprised of 337.50 million transactions by VFS Global and 204.92 million transactions by CIX Citizen Experience*