

Press release

LAND strengthens its footprint in the Middle East & North Africa with a local presence in Saudi Arabia

Milan, 19.9.2024 –**The international landscape consultancy LAND, with offices in Austria, Canada, Germany, Italy, and Switzerland, strengthens its strategic foothold in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region with a local presence in Riyadh, the capital of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The opening of its on-the-ground presence was officially announced during a special site visit held on September 17 at the iconic Al Urubah Park construction site, hosted by the contractor Al Yamama Group.**

LAND, founded in 1990 by its current CEO Andreas Kipar and co-founder Giovanni Sala, has already been active in the Middle East for 10 years, contributing to the design of public sections of **EXPO 2020 Dubai**, along with **several projects in KSA, UAE, and Oman**. Noteworthy projects in Riyadh include **Al Urubah Park**, the region's first digitally driven park, where construction is currently underway, as well as **Al Khuzam**, an important residential development for the National Housing Company, featuring 70,000 units connected by an 8.5 km park, providing an anchor for citizens in the northern part of the capital.

With the establishment of a local presence in Saudi Arabia, LAND strengthens its role as a strategic consultant for nature-positive transitions in cities and territories, fostering closer collaboration with local and regional stakeholders. The new office, under the name **LAND MENA**, is located in the **Diplomatic Quarter of Riyadh**, a vibrant neighborhood home to over 80 embassies and international organizations. It plays a crucial role in the city's expansion and symbolizes how urban design fosters community and international relations.

"We are very excited to strengthen our presence in this strategic region and are eager to contribute our expertise to a place with such rich history, culture, and natural diversity," said **Andreas Kipar, CEO and co-founder of LAND**. "As a **member of the taskforce for Nature-Positive Cities within the World Economic Forum**, I am looking forward to sharing my vision for a Nature-Positive Landscape with partners and clients, placing communities and their needs at the very core of territorial development – in line with our mission of reconnecting people with nature."

"This fast-growing region is undergoing a huge transformation and is on track to become a major global player in the near future," added **Jens Hoffmann, COO and partner of LAND**. "The urban forestry initiative in Riyadh will serve as a model for how to address the extreme climatic conditions that many cities around the world will face. We look forward to supporting the country's green transition, creating livable and resilient places where people can gather, socialize, move, and enjoy. With our own Research Lab and our expertise in Natural Capital Accounting, we'll create strong cultural and innovative bonds to make sustainability tangible, visible, and measurable."

In this context, LAND gives concrete form to the transformative approach and to urban development introduced by the Saudi government through **Saudi Vision 2030** and its **Quality of Life Program**, aimed at improving citizens' well-being and fostering economic growth. Furthermore, the new entity operates in compliance with the **Saudi Green Initiative**, a long-term sustainable action plan that aims to address climate change in the Kingdom.

During the visit to the Al Urubah Park construction site intervened, among others, **Attilio Fontana, President of Regione Lombardia**, and Undersecretary Raffaele Cattaneo, who were on an institutional mission in Saudi Arabia. "This project," **commented President Fontana**, "comes at a time when Saudi Arabia is preparing for highly significant initiatives. Our relations can be further strengthened, thanks to our expertise in design, sustainability, and environmental innovation. These elements are shaping the urban and landscape development of our Region."

Alongside Andreas Kipar and Jens Hoffmann were LAND co-founder **Giovanni Sala**, LAND Director **Stefano Roman**, the artist **Thomas Schönauer** and the Managing Director of **LAND Research Lab GmbH Nikolas Neubert**, giving concrete evidence to the consultancy's commitment to digital transformation and R&D. Among other notable guests, **Carlo Baldocci, Italian Ambassador to the Kingdom in Riyadh**, and key representatives from **Assolombarda**, leading a delegation of companies in the Saudi capital from September 17 to 19.

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LAND

LAND – an acronym for Landscape, Architecture, Nature, and Development – is an international landscape consultancy with offices in Austria, Canada, Germany, Italy, Saudi Arabia, and Switzerland. Andreas Kipar and a Team of 200 landscape architects, architects, urban planners, agronomists, engineers, and researchers are dedicated to the regeneration of regions, cities, and places since 1990.

LAND's consulting, planning, and design activities aim to improve people's well-being and environment through the implementation of climate-positive solutions and participatory processes that lead to sustainable development.

We provide consultancy to public and private clients on how to innovate with nature, applying international policies and promoting collaborative planning procedures. Together with our clients and our extensive network of partners, we leverage the opportunities of the green transition for our communities.

Among our main projects: Green Rays strategy, Porta Nuova, Piazzale Loreto, and the re-development of the former EXPO site MIND in Milan; Essen's Urban Open Space Strategy and Krupp Park, comprising ThyssenKrupp HQ, and the Freiheit Emscher in Essen; Ruhr Regional Green Infrastructure Strategy; the renaturation of the Airolo valley and Cassarate River Park in Switzerland; Saint-Laurent biodiversity Corridor in Montreal; Al Urubah Park in Riyadh and EXPO 2020 Dubai in the UAE; strategic consulting in landscaping, infrastructure, and renewable energy through, among other things, Landscape Information Modeling LIM©, as well as the research and innovation projects UrbAlytics and T-Factor funded by the European Commission. LAND's work has been recognized through numerous prestigious international awards, amongst them Premio Mercurio, MIPIM, Wan Awards, Biennale Pisa, Passive and Low Energy Architecture Award (PLEA), European Garden Award 2023.



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