

Press Release  
28 June 2023

## **GREEN FINS LAUNCHED IN AQABA, JORDAN TO IMPLEMENT GREEN FINS ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS**

***Aims to protect and preserve the Red Sea's pristine coral reefs and marine ecosystems***

[The Reef-World Foundation](#) is delighted to announce that Jordan is now the 15th country globally to implement the [Green Fins](#) programme — a [UN Environment Programme](#) initiative. The programme's launch in Aqaba is evidence of Jordan's commitment to safeguarding its natural resources and promoting sustainable tourism as the country builds its reputation as a world-class diving destination.

Green Fins is implemented in the country by Aqaba Special Economy Zone Authority (ASEZA) with the support of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) through the "Employment-oriented MSME promotion" project on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), with the ultimate aim of improving the communication of environmental best practice from local diving centres to environmentally conscious tourists to help protect the environment.

Dominik Lee Zaax Wyszogrodzki, Green Fins Local Team Leader, said: *"Divers are willing to pay more for services provided by dive centres that follow environmental regulations, and they expect dive centres to be leading the way in protecting the ocean. Implementing Green Fins in Aqaba is going to open us up to new markets and bring us to be one of the top diving destinations in the world."*

Following a week of training by an all-female-led training team from Reef-World (10 to 15 June 2023), Jordan now has a national Green Fins team comprised of five fully certified Green Fins Assessors and two Green Fins Coordinators from representatives of the Royal Jordanian Navy Forces, Aqaba Marine Reserve and the University of Jordan made up of a diverse group of local diving experts, environmentalists, and industry leaders. The Green Fins Jordan team is led by Ms Thelma Redwan, the Product Director at ASEZA, who coordinates the programme in collaboration with The Reef-World Foundation, GIZ, and other stakeholders.

The newly established local Green Fins team will be responsible for recruiting, assessing, training and certifying dive and snorkel operators to become Green Fins Members in the country. This involves providing training about the ecology and threats to coral reefs, advice for adopting simple and practical solutions to these threats and guidance to the Green Fins' environmental standards for dive and snorkel operators. Green Fins membership will help marine tourism operators identify priority areas to improve their business sustainability performance and communicate their commitment to following environmental best practices as a way of attracting eco-minded tourists.

*"I'm thrilled to welcome Jordan to the Green Fins network as the fifteenth country to adopt the initiative to secure the future sustainability of their marine tourism industry,"* said Chloe Harvey, Executive Director of The Reef-World Foundation. *"ASEZA has shown exceptional leadership in recognising the opportunity to establish best environmental practice among their diving community with Green Fins. Jordan is a unique diving destination and home to a bountiful array of marine life. Our coral reefs are in serious trouble; it's possible that coral reefs globally could be lost in our lifetime. Reducing local, direct threats to coral reefs, such as those posed by diving and snorkelling activities, will significantly improve their chance of survival."*

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Diving and snorkelling-related damage to sensitive marine ecosystems, including coral reefs, is becoming an increasingly significant issue. This damage makes them less likely to survive other local and wider threats, such as those associated with overfishing or plastic debris and the effects of climate change. Based on robust individual assessments of business practices, the Green Fins initiative helps identify high-risk activities. The assessors then work with participating business leaders to build and commit to a tailored sustainability action plan to address these risks. Through Green Fins implementation in Jordan, Reef-World aims to improve the sustainability of the diving industry in the region by working with 15 marine tourism operators, training 75 dive guides and raising awareness of sustainability best practices among 15,000 tourists in the first year of implementation.

Abdullah, Manager at Red Sea Dive Center, said: *"I signed up for the Green Fins membership and got the help and support of the Green Fins team. I saw how thorough the process was and all the things they do on the assessment day. Now I'm convinced it's an amazing programme that could really help the environment and one I'm very proud to be part of!"*

Green Fins is a UN Environment Programme initiative, internationally coordinated by The Reef-World Foundation, which aims to protect and conserve coral reefs through environmentally friendly guidelines to promote a sustainable diving and snorkelling tourism industry. Green Fins provides the only internationally recognised environmental standards for the diving and snorkelling industry and has a robust assessment system to measure compliance.

To date, four dive operators in Aqaba have joined the global network of 700+ trained and assessed Green Fins Members. These are: [Aqaba Adventure Divers](#), [Arab Divers](#), [Coral Garden Diving Center](#) and [Red Sea Dive Center](#).

For more information, please visit [www.reef-world.org](http://www.reef-world.org) or [www.greenfins.net/countries/jordan](http://www.greenfins.net/countries/jordan). Dive and snorkel operators in Jordan interested in becoming Green Fins Members can sign up at: [www.greenfins.net/register](http://www.greenfins.net/register) or contact the team at [jordan@greenfins.net](mailto:jordan@greenfins.net).

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**For more information, images or an interview with a spokesperson from The Reef-World Foundation, please contact:**

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### **About Reef-World**

The Reef-World Foundation is a registered UK charity which delivers practical solutions for marine conservation around the world. The charity promotes the wise use of natural resources - particularly coral reefs and related ecosystems - for the benefit of local communities, visitors and future generations. It is dedicated to supporting, inspiring and empowering governments, businesses, communities and individuals around the world to act in conserving and sustainably developing coastal resources.

Reef-World leads the global implementation of the UN Environment's Green Fins initiative, which focuses on driving environmentally friendly scuba diving and snorkelling practices across the industry globally. As such, the charity provides low-cost and practical solutions to local and industry-wide environmental challenges associated with the marine tourism industry. It provides education and

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capacity building assistance to empower environmental champions (within the diving industry, local communities, authorities and governments) to implement proven coastal resource management approaches.

Please visit [www.reef-world.org](http://www.reef-world.org) to learn more or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

### **About Green Fins**

Green Fins is a proven conservation management approach – spearheaded by The Reef-World Foundation in partnership with the UN Environment – which leads to a measurable reduction in the negative environmental impacts associated with the marine tourism industry. The initiative aims to protect and conserve coral reefs through environmentally friendly guidelines that promote a sustainable diving and snorkelling tourism industry. It provides the only internationally recognised environmental standards for the diving and snorkelling industry and has a robust assessment system to measure compliance.

Green Fins encourages and empowers members of the diving industry to act to reduce the pressures on coral reefs by offering dive and snorkel companies practical, low-cost alternatives to harmful practices - such as anchoring, fish feeding and chemical pollution – as well as providing strategic training, support and resources. Reducing the local direct and indirect pressures tourism puts on coral reefs helps make corals healthier and more resilient to other stresses such as the effects of climate change. Look for the Green Fins logo when booking your next dive trip.

Please visit [www.greenfins.net](http://www.greenfins.net) to learn more or follow the initiative on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

### **About Aqaba**

Aqaba is a vibrant coastal city on the northern tip of the Red Sea. Renowned for its world-class scuba diving and snorkelling, Aqaba boasts pristine coral reefs and abundant marine life. The city combines natural beauty, rich history, and warm hospitality, making it an alluring destination for tourists worldwide.

### **About the GIZ- implemented "Employment-oriented MSME promotion" (MSME project)**

The Employment-oriented MSME Promotion project which is implemented by GIZ on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), along with the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply as its political partner in Jordan, supports in impactful ways the food processing, information & communication technology (ICT), and tourism as sectors with considerable growth and employment potential, with a particular focus on promoting women economic empowerment. The project helps create and strengthen employment-oriented growth opportunities for MSMEs, positively impacting both the MSME support ecosystem and the MSMEs themselves.

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