

Environment forum opens

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JEDDAH: The Gulf Environment Forum (GEF) opens on Sunday, with the support of Prince Turki bin Nasser bin Abdul Aziz, president of the Presidency of Meteorology and Environment.

The three-day forum has the full support of Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah and Crown Prince Sultan, as well as the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

GEF and the GCC Union of Chambers of Commerce and Industries have brought together major players in business and industry under the three key themes of exchange, develop and sustain, according to GEF Chairman Talaat Idriss.

Prince Turki will give the keynote speech at the opening ceremony, which will feature a presentation entitled "Scenarios of Environmental Change in the Gulf and Their Impact on the Business Community" by Habib El-Habr, director and regional representative of UNEP. On Monday, there will be a panel discussion on oil, gas and renewable energy focusing on integration rather than competition.

It will be chaired by Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman bin Abdulaziz, assistant minister for petroleum affairs. Edith Cresson, former prime minister of France, will be among the panelists.

The next session will discuss the role of trade, industry and energy in preserving the environment. The two other sessions during the day will focus on expert insights into techniques and technologies for environmental protection, and meeting the challenges of climate change as well as on the sustainable management of water and sanitation.

Tuesday's sessions will be devoted to legal frameworks to protect the environment, investment opportunities in environmental projects and examining the role of financial institutions, ingraining environmental sustainability practices in the region, and developing working relationships between government entities and the private sector for the effective management of waste and water.