**Qatari Diar Unveils *Al Nehem* Above Newly Opened Lusail Boulevard, Celebrating Qatar’s Iconic Marine Animal, the Whale Shark**

**A 30-meter icon of a whale shark, *Al Nehem*, has been unveiled, suspended between the four Lusail Towers, celebrating Lusail’s development and to raise awareness of one of the largest endangered animals in the world**

As Qatar completes its final preparations for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, Qatari Diar has unveiled *Al Nehem,* a 30-metre long icon of a whale shark by renowned artist Marco Balich as a tribute to Qatar’s endangered marine species. The installation is a symbol of the country's commitment to the conservation and preservation of their natural environment.

Qatar's warm, clean water waters are home to one of the world’s last colonies of whale sharks, part of the unique ecosystem of marine life which calls Qatar home.

Suspended 20 metres above Lusail Plaza between the four Lusail Towers designed by Norman Foster’s architectural firm Foster + Partners, the 30-meter long aluminum and steel whale shark is brought to life with lights and music with a bespoke composition by celebrated Maestro Roberto Cacciapaglia.

Qatari Diar’s flagship project, Lusail City, was launched in December 2005 and is now ready to welcome the 1.5 million visitors expected to visit the country during the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022. In addition to the Lusail Boulevard, which offers visitors the highest standard experience of food, culture and shopping, Lusail is now also home to an incredible rosta of hotels such as the new Waldorf Astoria, and Raffles and Fairmont hotels, occupied by FIFA during the World Cup. As a center for shopping and entertainment, Lusail also boasts the impressive Place Vendôme and Al Maha Island, featuring an outdoor funfair and numerous restaurants.

Looking ahead, the city will also be home to an aquapark on Qetaifan Island inspired by the oil and gas industry which is due to open in 2023.

Abdullah Al Attiyah, CEO of Qatari Diar, said: “The whale shark is one of Qatar’s most iconic creatures, and with visitors from all over the world expected to visit Lusail during the tournament, our hope is that the sculpture will help raise the profile of this endangered species so collectively we advocate to ensure their survival.

Qatar is home to one of the largest whale sharks’ pods in the world, with its northern coastal waters providing the perfect habitat for the marine mammal to gather to feed close to the surface. Qatar is one of the only places where visitors can swim with and experience these friendly and docile creatures up close, through a unique and responsible tour experience with Discover Qatar. Tours can be booked online for 2023 onwards at <https://www.discoverqatar.qa/>

The *Al Nehem* whale shark installation in Lusail is another incredible addition to Qatar’s landscape of outdoor art. Other recent installations of public art in Qatar that raise awareness of the region’s natural environment and the collective ambition to protect the planet include Ahmed Al Bahrani’s *Dugong Family* sculpture on the beach in Al Ruwais, Olafur Eliasson’s *Shadows Travelling on the Sea of the Day* at Al Zubara, Mohammed Al Ateeq’s *Acacia Tree Seed* at the Post Office and Jeff Koons monumental *Dugong*, which now sits proudly in Al Masrah Park overlooking the Corniche.