

World Environment Day (WED) 2017

I'm With Nature



JOIN THE GLOBAL CELEBRATION ON 5 JUNE

Once again UN Environment seeks to make the biggest global call and mobilization for action on 5th June, World Environment Day (WED). It is a day for everyone, everywhere. Since it began in 1972, global citizens have organized many thousands of events, from neighborhood clean-ups, to action against wildlife crime, to replanting forests. World Environment Day is the biggest annual event for positive environmental action. This year the host country Canada got the chance to choose the theme and will be at the center of celebrations around the planet. Canada works with international partners, like UN Environment, to address environmental issues, including climate change at home and abroad. Hosting World Environment Day, along with plans to ratify the Paris Agreement on Climate Change as soon as possible, shows that Canada is fully behind global action to tackle the biggest environmental challenges.

"Connecting People to Nature", the theme for WED 2017, implores us to get outdoors and into nature, to appreciate its beauty and its importance, and to take forward the call to protect the Earth that we share. This year's theme invites you to think about how we are part of nature and how intimately we depend on it. It challenges us to find fun and exciting ways to experience and cherish this vital relationship.

The Value of Nature

In recent decades, scientific advances as well as growing environmental problems such as global warming are helping us to understand the countless ways in which natural systems support our own prosperity and well-being.

For example, the world's oceans, forests and soils act as vast stores for greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide and methane; farmers and fisher-folk harness nature on land and under water to provide us with food; scientists develop medicines using genetic material drawn from the millions of species that make up Earth's astounding biological diversity.

Billions of rural people around the world spend every working day 'connected to nature' and appreciate full well their dependence on natural water supplies and how nature provides their livelihoods in the form of fertile soil. They are among the first to suffer when ecosystems are threatened, whether by pollution, climate change or over-exploitation.

Nature's gifts are often hard to value in monetary terms. Like clean air, they are often taken for granted, at least until they become scarce. However, economists are developing ways to measure the multi-trillion-dollar worth of many so-called 'ecosystem services', from insects pollinating fruit trees in the orchards to the leisure, health and spiritual benefits of a hike up a Himalayan valley.

So this World Environment Day why not to hit the park to enjoy your country's national parks and other wilderness areas? You can also connect with nature in the city, where major parks can be a green lung and a hub of biodiversity. Why not do your bit to green the urban environment, by greening your street or a derelict site, or planting a window box? You could put a spade in the soil or lift a paving slab and see what creatures live beneath. Wherever you are, you could vow to pick up 10 (or 100) pieces of trash, or take inspiration from the citizens of Mumbai, India, and organize a mass beach clean-up. And instead of such activities happening on this day only, these should be the lifelong or rather regular goals.

This year's theme invites you to think about how we are part of nature and how intimately we depend on it. It challenges us to find fun and exciting ways to experience and cherish this vital relationship. Individuals and organizations are encouraged to add activities related to the environment for saving it and also motivate the peoples for taking initiative toward it. In the age of asphalt and smartphones and among the distractions of modern life, connections with nature can be fleeting. But with your help, World Environment Day can make clearer than ever that we need harmony between humanity and nature so that both are able to thrive.

Sources:

<http://www.greeningtheblue.org>

<http://www.nsc.org.in>

<http://sikenvis.nic.in/ViewEvents.aspx?Id=5254&Year=2017>

<http://www.unep.org>