

BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY DAY-2021

THEME :

"We're part of the
solution #ForNature"

"நாம் அனைவரும்
தீர்வின் ஓர் பகுதி"

ABOUT

The United Nations dedicated May 22 of every year as International Day for Biological Diversity to develop awareness about bio diversity issues. The first International Day for Biological Diversity, also known as World Biodiversity day, was created in a UN General Assembly in 1993.

Since 2001, it is celebrated every year. This year's celebration is special as it will be the first ever online-only campaign increasing awareness during a pandemic. The theme for this year is "We are part of the solution" – which shows people are a part of nature.

The term biodiversity stems from two different words: biological and diversity. It refers to the variety of life on Earth. The three types of biodiversity include:

- ✔ Genetic diversity
- ✔ Species diversity
- ✔ Ecosystem diversity

Biodiversity is very important for many reasons. It supplies the earth with clean water and oxygen. Biodiversity also enables plants to grow, which produces food for humans and animals. Other benefits of biodiversity is that it keeps pests and diseases in check and protects against flooding. It also helps to regulate the climate. Together, all of these benefits are known as ecosystem services.

The health of the earth suffers when biodiversity decreases. It's also true of humans. The less biodiversity, the poorer our health becomes. Some even believe that pandemics are related to the loss of biodiversity. Now more than ever, we need to spread awareness for the importance of biodiversity.



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Host Centre: Puducherry Pollution Control Committee

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WHAT IS BIODIVERSITY?

- ✔ Biodiversity or Biological diversity means the life on Earth constitutes a variety of living organisms. There are at least 8 million species on this planet including plants, animals, fungi, bacteria to name a few. The biodiversity we have today was formed through billions of years of evolution.
- ✔ Ecosystems like deserts, forests, wetlands, mountains, lakes, rivers are also a part of biodiversity which allows living
- ✔ Biodiversity is key for food security and nutrition; and contributes to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 1 on poverty eradication and Goal 2 on zero hunger. Food systems depend on biodiversity and the ecosystem services that support agricultural productivity, soil fertility, and water quality and supply. For example, pollination is one of the most important mechanisms in the maintenance and promotion of biodiversity and life on Earth. Pollinators and pollination are critical for food production and human livelihoods, and directly link wild ecosystems with agricultural production systems.
- ✔ The soil's ecosystem (microorganisms and invertebrates) are also critical for food security.

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BIODIVERSITY: THE KEY TO CURBING PANDEMICS

According to the UN, more than 3 billion people depend on marine and coastal biodiversity for their livelihoods, whilst another 1.6 billion depend on forests. The conservation of the Earth's species no longer constitutes a mere altruistic dimension; it is vital to ensuring our very survival.

In fact, pandemics such as the latest COVID-19 (coronavirus) outbreak force us to reconsider the protective role that biodiversity plays in the future of humankind, since its many advantages result in one fundamental benefit: protection from infectious diseases.

There is evidence to suggest that the loss of biodiversity could increase the number of cases of zoonosis, in other words, diseases transmitted from animals to humans. In fact, 70 % of emerging infectious diseases in recent years have stemmed from zoonosis. Since several species are often involved in the spread of infection, the loss of biodiversity and extinction of many of those species increases the chances of the pathogens reaching human beings.

Therefore, whilst the WHO asks us to prepare for possible unexpected scenarios, scientists insist that surrounding ourselves with healthy, functional and species-rich ecosystems would be best for humankind and for the stability of our planet.

OUR SOLUTIONS ARE IN NATURE

This Biodiversity Day, as the world begins planning for a post-pandemic recovery, governments need to seize the opportunity to "build back better" by creating more sustainable, resilient, and inclusive societies.

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NATURE POSITIVE BY 2021

(Halt and start to reverse the loss of biodiversity and put nature on a path to recovery for the benefit of all people and the planet)

