

THE 2020



**WORLD
ENVIRONMENT
DAY**

REPORT



**COLOMBIA
2020**



“It was a real honour for Colombia to host World Environment Day. The time to act is now if we want to assure our present and our future. We must give people and nature their rightful place: at the core of the creation of the value of biodiversity.”

Iván Duque Márquez, President of the Republic of Colombia

Introduction

As the nations of the world strive to contain the COVID-19 pandemic, this year's World Environment Day brought into sharp focus the importance of fundamentally shifting humanity's relationship with nature to preserve our societies and prevent future pandemics.

Celebrated annually on 5 June, [World Environment Day](#) is the United Nations' (UN) biggest event advocating for environmental action and the need to protect our planet. Since it was first observed in 1974, the event has grown to become a global platform for public outreach on the environment in over 100 countries.

This year – despite the ongoing pandemic that has devastated the global community – Colombia, in partnership with Germany, hosted the main World Environment Day celebrations, streamed live online from Bogotá. Colombian President Iván Duque Márquez and Inger Andersen, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), led global calls to declare it is “Time #ForNature,” a call to action to combat the accelerating species loss and degradation of the natural world. From Kenya, Thailand and Canada to the International Olympic Committee to Apple – governments, organisations and businesses made commitments #ForNature. Building on a dynamic global communications campaign, UNEP inspired and coordinated online events which were accessed by people from every country in the world in this historic effort to unite for nature.

And the world responded, showing clearly that there is a groundswell of support for the environment. Millions of people – many of them confined to their homes due to the pandemic – came together online to remind us to, “Wake up! It's Time #ForNature”. In spite of logistical limitations as a result of the pandemic, governments, the private sector, civil society and individuals across the globe joined in World Environment Day events, announcements and calls to acknowledge the importance of nature to our health, our economies and our societies.

Watch the video: World Environment Day 2020 recap



“We are in a time of deep reflections on nature, on climate change, on how we should behave, on what the ethics of our society should be, to protect species and ecosystems.”

– Iván Duque Márquez, President of Colombia.



“To care for humanity, we must care for nature. As we work to build back better, let's put nature where it belongs – at the heart of our decision making. On World Environment Day and every day, it's time for nature.”

– UN Secretary-General António Guterres.



“Today, on World Environment Day, I call on everyone to work together to protect the nature that supports us all. The stronger our planet's life support systems are, the better human health and wealth will be.”

– Inger Andersen, UNEP Executive Director.

A global emergency that affects everyone



A field of sea-buckthorns is maintained by farmers in the Altai-Sayan Eco-Region of Uvs Province, Mongolia. UN Photo

With our ever-increasing demands, humans have pushed nature beyond its limits. In the last 50 years, the human population has doubled but the global economy and trade have grown nearly four-fold and ten-fold, respectively. The emergence of COVID-19 has underscored the fact that, when we destroy biodiversity, we destroy the very system that supports human life. By upsetting the delicate balance of nature, we have created conditions for pathogens – including coronaviruses – to spread.



Around half the world's gross domestic product (GDP) depends on nature. Our oceans and forests sustain billions of people and provide green jobs, including 86 million employment opportunities from forests alone. Four billion people rely primarily on natural medicines. Nature-based solutions – such as afforestation and using greenery to cool our cities and buildings – can provide around one-third of the emissions reductions needed to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement.

An IPSOS survey of 16,000 people, conducted to mark World Environment Day, shows that three in four people in 16 major countries expect their government to make protection of the environment a priority when planning a recovery from the coronavirus pandemic. Added to this, there is a view that the environment is a personal priority for people. [Read the full results here.](#)

Host country celebrations: Colombia set the stage



Ricardo Lozano, Colombia's Environment Minister, Inger Andersen, UNEP Executive Director, and Jochen Flasbarth, Germany's State Secretary for the Environment, making the announcement at COP25.

World Environment Day's host country for this year, Colombia, set the stage for the annual celebrations. Led by the Colombian President, a seven-hour programme including informative sessions and panel discussions on biodiversity was webcasted in English and Spanish. It also included a two-hour live segment featuring prominent personalities, including UNEP Executive Director Inger Anderson and the German Minister for the Environment, Svenja Schulze. The live programming received over 232,000 views across UNEP's social media channels (YouTube, Facebook and Twitter), Colombian channels, the We Don't Have Time social network and UN Web TV. The video of the session on [We Don't Have Time's Twitter](#) has received over 1.9 million views and over 5 million impressions.

Programming also include two videos jointly produced by UNEP and the Ministry of Environment of Colombia: [Colombia's Amazon, a story of hope](#) and [Colombia, a champion in protected areas](#).



Watch highlights
of the online
celebration
hosted by
Colombia

Political commitments #ForNature



Countries across the globe marked the occasion by announcing and acknowledging nature's critical role in our health, economies and societies. Policy announcements streamed in from across the globe, including new conservation projects, new funding for the environment, reforestation initiatives and new recycling schemes.

As part of The High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People, 14 world leaders – including from Colombia, Costa Rica, Finland, France and Seychelles – released a [statement](#), calling on governments worldwide to support a new global goal to protect at least 30 per cent of the planet's land and ocean by 2030, hailed by scientists as the minimum amount needed to halt global biodiversity loss.



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Africa

High-level engagements for World Environment Day took place across Africa, including in Kenya (events featured the director general of the National Environment Management Authority and the governor of Turkana), Ethiopia (two commissioners from the African Union and the Ambassador of Kenya to Ethiopia), Tanzania (the ambassador of Germany to Tanzania), South Africa (the Minister of Environment of South Africa and the UNRC in South Africa) and Cote d'Ivoire (the Minister of Environment).

In Kenya, [a ban on all single-use plastics in the country's national parks, beaches, forests and other protected areas took effect](#) on World Environment Day.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed launched a push for 5 billion new trees as part of the country's Green Legacy initiative.

The Government of Mauritius held an official opening ceremony for World Environment Day with prominent attendees, including the Minister of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change, the Attorney General, and the Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security. Other dignitaries included members of parliament and officials from several departments, including the ministry of the environment, the forestry service and the national parks service.

Asia and the Pacific

In India, the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change and UNEP's India Office [announced an urban forest programme](#) in 200 cities, receiving 6,500 views on Twitter.

UNEP and TED-Ed's "Earth School" was incorporated into the Ministry of Human Resources' digital platform for teachers, DIKSHA, with the plan of opening it to a larger network of government schools. With about 151,000 views and a user base of 51,000, India has become the second-most-prolific user of Earth School in the world.



"On #WorldEnvironmentDay, we reiterate our pledge to preserve our planet's rich biodiversity. Let us collectively do whatever possible to ensure the flora and fauna with whom we share the Earth thrive. May we leave an even better planet for the coming generations."

– Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi on [Twitter](#)



Thailand launched a national plastic recycling campaign.

"The campaign is likely to help limit plastic waste, which increased due to rising food deliveries during the time of work from home amid the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic."

- Deputy Prime Minister Prawit Wongsuwon.



Vietnam's Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment launched the [Action Month for the Environment](#) under the "Time for Nature" theme.



Bhutan underscored their commitment to nature by [launching a revised national environment strategy](#).



In Nepal, the national Electricity Authority [switched on the first phase](#) of a 25MW solar array, the largest solar plant in Nepal.



“I believe that World Environment Day, which falls today, can serve as a powerful collaborative platform for all the people of the world, communities and governments to solve the environmental challenges being faced by the world with momentum and on many fronts. (...) I urge all our citizens to become nature lovers, protectors of the environment and people who place a high value on biodiversity and ecosystems. May you all take part in creating a lush, green and beautiful motherland called Myanmar.”

- President U Win Myint, Myanmar

The Supreme People’s Court in China vowed to punish criminal acts damaging the ecology of the Yellow River basin. The pledge covered environmental pollution, illegal mining, deforestation, illegal hunting and the killing of endangered animals. The Supreme Court also made public rulings of 10 cases related to environmental crimes, setting the rulings as precedents.



China announced that it would upgrade all species of pangolins from second-class to first-class protected animals and committed to improved protection and rescuing the species. The Chinese government also removed pangolin scales from its 2020 list of approved ingredients used in traditional Chinese medicine, a move praised by wildlife protection campaigners as a “critical step” towards saving the world’s most trafficked mammal. Given its status, UNEP’s Wild for Life campaign has consistently advocated for greater protection of pangolins as one of its key species through various communication activities, including significant and consistent outreach in China through a network of Chinese celebrity champions, social media efforts and exhibitions in public locations from Beijing Airport to metro stations.

Europe

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson [pledged £10.9 million to protect habitats and rare wildlife](#), including turtles in the British Virgin Islands, penguins in South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, coral reefs in the Comoros and chimpanzees in Uganda.



“Ignoring nature impacts our health and quality of life. We must react now,”

-Pedro Sánchez, president of Spain [on Twitter](#).



“Our new world will be decidedly ecological. I am committed to that. We will build it together. We have a historic opportunity to rebuild our economy and our society on a new foundation, to reinvent ourselves, to invest in a carbon-free future.”

- Emmanuel Macron, President of the Republic of France, on his [official Facebook page](#) and [Twitter account](#)



“This year's World Environment Day must send the message that we want to protect and conserve the biodiversity.”

-Svenja Schulze, Minister of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Germany

Latin America and the Caribbean

Host country Colombia, one of the six megadiverse states in Latin America, aims to plant 180 million trees by August 2022.

The president of Perú, Martin Vizcarra, [examined the progress](#) on the production of 740,000-plus seedlings for reforestation in a natural reserve on the Amazon, and vowed to continue to combat illegal mining and illegal logging.

In Chile, the government announced a nationwide recycling initiative to improve waste management and disposal, including for medical waste, due to the pandemic.

The president of Costa Rica, Carlos Alvarado, [announced](#) the incorporation of the right to water in the country's constitution.



“The Earth invites us to take care of ourselves, to take care of our loved ones, to take care of our nature and to resume a more conscious and friendly course of action.”

- Sebastián Piñera, President of Chile [on Twitter](#).



“I reiterate my commitment to the implementation of sustainability models and ecological practices that guarantee a greener country.”

- Nito Cortizo, President of Panamá, [on Twitter](#)



The Government of Canada is committed to conserving 25 percent of Canada's land and 25 percent of its oceans by 2025.

North America

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau [released a statement](#) highlighting the actions that Canada has taken to protect biodiversity, including a 1.3-billion investment in domestic nature conservation. The investment is designed to help the country meet its international commitments for biodiversity, sustainable development and climate change.

The Canadian Minister of Environment, Jonathon Wilkinson, [announced more than 60 projects under development across the country](#) to conserve biodiversity, protect species at risk, and enhance the ecological integrity, connectivity and size of Canada's protected areas. ([Watch the video message](#)).

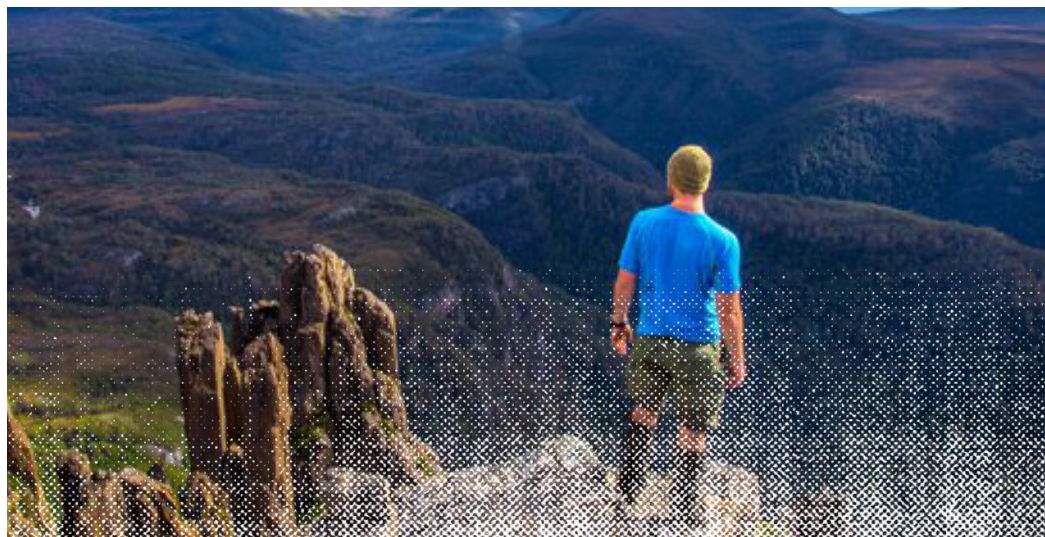
The mayor of Montreal, Valerie Plante, [published an op-ed](#) that was co-signed by five other mayors from around the world, including Berlin, Seoul and Al Hoceima, asking cities to put nature at the forefront of decision-making processes.

The Canadian Finance Minister hosted a virtual roundtable for cities, which was livestreamed on national television and YouTube.

West Asia

Senior officials from the environment ministries of [Jordan](#), [Bahrain](#), [Oman](#), [Kuwait](#), [Qatar](#), [Iraq](#) and [Saudi Arabia](#) made public statements on World Environment Day in support of protecting biodiversity.

Private sector engaged online and made announcements for World Environment Day



Tasmanian Walking Company Foundation, that will cultivate real change in support of Australian conservation projects.

More than 500 million people viewed a series of events presented by Alibaba Group for World Environment Day. The events were co-hosted by UNEP, the Ministry of Environment and Ecology of China and the Alibaba Foundation, with the support of the wider Alibaba Group. More than 50 million people engaged by sharing, taking actions and participating in an online game. The livestream, including a pre-recorded session with Karry Wang, received over 4 million views.

Thailand's leading telecoms companies, DTAC and TRUE, promoted the Run #ForNature campaign and World Environment Day public service announcement across their channels, which include television stations and websites, reaching at least 10 million subscribers.

[Apple](#) launched the World Environment Day challenge, awarding participants with a unique badge viewable in the awards section of the activity app on iPhone and Apple Watch.

More than 65 million people were reached through a partnership with [PayTM](#), which dedicated its homepage to nature with a banner and promotion of UNEP's campaign, Spot the Endangered.

ITC [released a video](#) highlighting how the Earth healed itself amid COVID-19 lockdowns. [Hindustan Unilever](#) touted the importance of waste segregation, including for masks, and Tata Tiscon, along with Wunderman Thompson, released a new campaign, Plant for the Planet.

The Tasmanian Walking Company [announced the official launch of a AU\\$ 1 million philanthropic initiative](#) which will cultivate real change in support of Australian conservation projects.

The webinar *Private sector resilience: how collective leadership can reverse nature loss* included private sector speakers, such as Hisham Hendi, Managing Director of Vodacom Tanzania, Simon Shayo, Vice President Sustainability of Anglo Gold Ashanti and Philip Redman, Managing Director and Director of Tanzania Breweries.

Millions participated in the global campaign Time #ForNature

In late May, the Time #ForNature campaign was launched with the goal of educating the public about the importance of nature and inspiring people to act and make their voices heard. The campaign had unprecedented reach on social media – the number of visitors to UNEP’s website was higher than ever before. It also helped shape the global narrative around nature at a time when other pressing issues, like COVID-19 and the Black Lives Matter movement, were taking centre stage globally.

Top five videos as per views:

WED public service announcement

7,706,304
views

The rebirth of a species – Giant tortoises in Galapagos

3,332,557
views

Save our Sloths – Loss of habitat threatens the species

2,734,970
views

Colombia’s Amazon - A story of hope

1,766,625
views

António Guterres - #ForNature

1,497,159
views

Social media

The #WorldEnvironmentDay hashtag in English was the top trending hashtag globally on Twitter for six hours, number two worldwide in Spanish for four hours, and number one in Spain and in the Latin America region for five hours. Posts on UNEP’s social media channels across eight languages for World Environment Day were seen over 100 million times and users engaged with these posts over 2.3 million times.

UNEP Executive Director [Inger Andersen went viral](#) when she tweeted and said in media interviews that “when we protect the planet, we protect ourselves”. The phrase was used by the United Nations [Secretary General, Canada](#), the [World Wildlife Fund](#), other [UN bodies](#), [academics](#), [youth](#) and [businesses](#).

UNEP produced 32 videos in eight languages; they ranged from a piece on the protection of the Amazon to a sustainable cooking class with Inger Andersen. The videos were viewed by more than 23 million people on social media and an estimated 10 million people in traditional media, including television. The [WED public service announcement \(PSA\)](#) was the top video on social media, with over 7 million views.

In-stream YouTube advertisements of the 1-minute World Environment Day public service announcement, targeting “affinity audiences” that were avid news readers, green living enthusiasts, in education or interested in outdoors, reached 472,000 viewers of the videos at \$0.005 per view and a 34 per cent view through rate (160,500 people watched the entire video), significantly higher than the standard benchmarks.

A partnership between UNEP and Singapore creative technology studio MeshMinds, the Run #ForNature augmented reality game on Instagram and Facebook invited players to raise their voices and pledge to build back better for people and the planet. By engaging with the game, users were able to personalize their pledge #ForNature before sharing it with the world. Players were invited to challenge their friends to play and pledge #ForNature by sharing personalised photos and videos of their high scores. The Run #ForNature augmented reality game gained over 500,000 impressions on Instagram alone. The quality of the production prompted \$5,000 of free advertisement credits from Facebook to promote and support uptake of the game.

Some other social media highlights include:

- Snapchat created a special World Environment Day augmented reality lens for its hundreds of millions of users globally.
- Twitter activated hashtag emojis for #WorldEnvironmentDay and #ForNature in over a dozen languages for the week leading up to 5 June.
- The language used by Inger Andersen and António Guterres has been adopted on social media by a range of stakeholders showing campaign's influence in setting global discourse on nature

Social media engagement in other languages and at the regional and country levels was also unprecedented:

- **West Asia:** A total of 84 tweets received 334,300 impressions, led to 4,000-plus profile visits and prompted a 26 per cent increase in followers. The top tweet received 80,516 impressions. On Instagram, 78 posts received 39,010 impressions, sparked 4,000 profile visits, and led to a 78 per cent increase in followers. The top Instagram post had 1,362 impressions.
 - **Arabic:** [The top Facebook post](#) reached 1,506,003 people and engaged 22,344; the [top tweet](#) received 27,246 impressions and engaged 413; the [top Instagram post](#) reached 1,031 and engaged 2,483. A [video on ecosystem-based solutions in Arabic](#), released on 28 May, received 6,633 views across social media platforms (including 4,890 views on Twitter and 1,019 on Facebook.)
- **Latin America and Caribbean:** Six videos in Spanish and English, with original footage from Ecuador, Bolivia, Chile and Panama, were disseminated on social media to share a positive narrative around conservation. The videos included [Megadiverse strength](#) and [Rebirth of a species – giant tortoises](#).
 - **Spanish:** There were 2 million impressions on UNEP's Spanish Twitter account. Posts on UNEP's Spanish Facebook reached 10.3 million users, including 2 million alone on 5 June. On Instagram, there were 1.4 million impressions and 731,000 users reached (1-7 June). A total of 6,460 new followers were added across platforms in one week, resulting in a total of 729,846 followers across platforms.
 - **Portuguese:** Three posts on Facebook reached over 500,000 users, including the [PSA](#), which reached 557,000 and engaged 1,900. Through Instagram, 471,000 accounts were reached from 1-8 June, resulting in 986,800 impressions – almost 50 per cent more compared to the week before World Environment Day. Through Twitter, 230,000 impressions were registered from 1-8 June (more than the entire month of May). UNEP's YouTube followers increased by 50 per cent from 1-5 June, due largely to a World Environment Day live broadcasts.

North America: From 1-6 June, tweets earned close to 37,300 impressions and reached over 11,000 on Facebook. The top tweet, promoting our Pathway to Paris concert event, reached over 21,000 impressions on Twitter. ([Watch the North America wrap-up video.](#))

Social media highlights:

Posts on UNEP's social media channels across eight languages were seen over

100 million times.

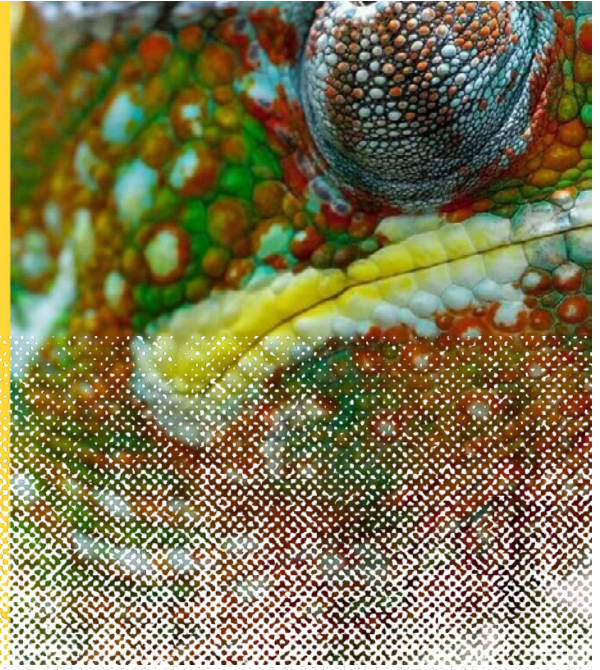
Posts on UNEP's Spanish Facebook reached **10.3 million** users.

The Run#ForNature augmented reality game gained over **500,000** impressions on Instagram.

Think you know Biodiversity?

Take the quiz below to see just how clued-up you are (select the options that you think are correct).

Take The Quiz →



Web

The World Environment Day website received 1 million views – almost double the number last year. On the day itself, the website received 300,000 page-views (+66 per cent compared to last year at 179,000) and 147,000 visitors (+88 per cent compared to last year at 78,000). The World Environment Day 2020 website was [nominated for Site of the Day by AWWARDS](#).

Visitors came from every country in the world. The largest traffic came from India, the United Kingdom, Brazil, Colombia, United States, Spain, Argentina, Australia and Canada. The Spanish speaking host country brought additional traffic this year from Spanish speaking countries starting with Colombia, Spain and Mexico, with 237,000 visits just to the Spanish language site. In terms of city-level traffic, host country capital Bogotá topped the charts, followed by mostly Indian cities in the top 10 (see table below).

WED website views and engagement:

300,000

website views on the Day itself

112,306

attempted the online quiz

238,000

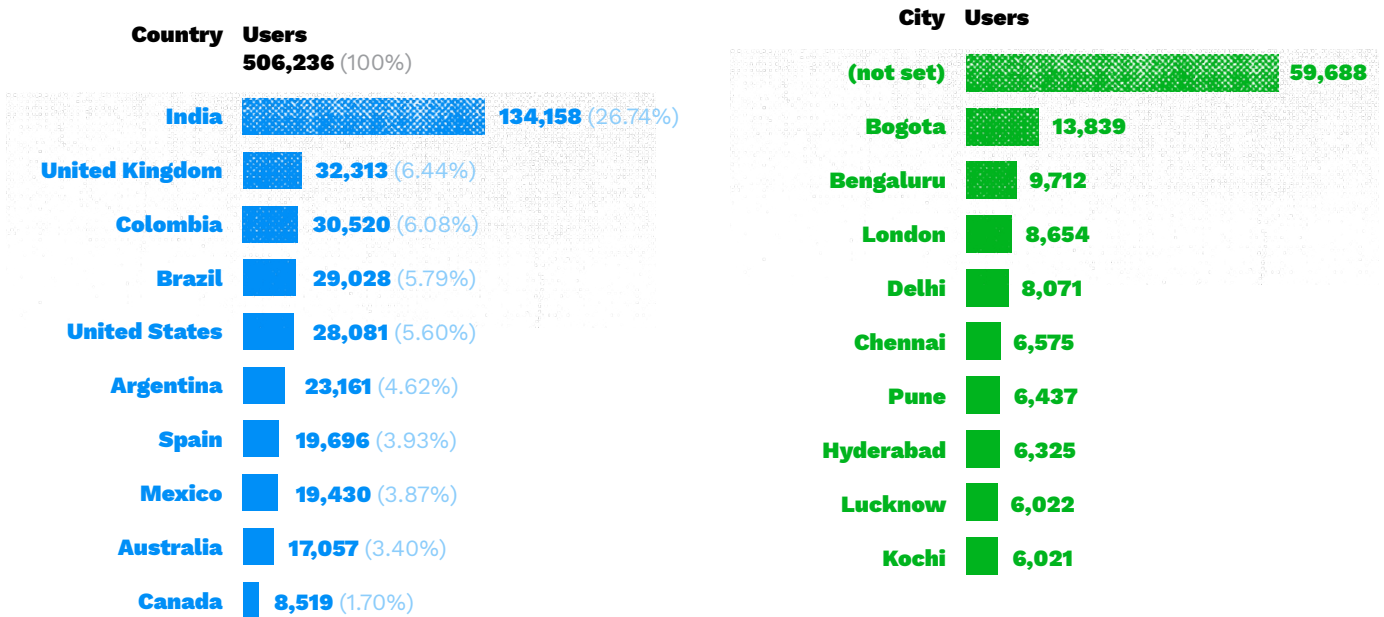
people viewed the interactive story "Explore Nature"

52,000

people viewed the practical guide

- Organic search drove 198,000 visitors to the site, an increase of 67 per cent from the previous year. Over 65,000 visitors came from India, most of whom were “new visitors” – partly driven by high Indian press coverage of World Environment Day.
- More than 150,000 visitors came to the site directly, a decrease of 31 per cent. This decrease primarily came from India (57 per cent). This may be due to the gradual fade coming from the initial brand recall when India hosted World Environment Day a couple of years back.
- Social media drove 45,000 visitors to the site, a decrease of 12 per cent compared to 2019.
- Six campaign emails were sent to the mailing list with more than 65,000 opens, the most popular email being sent two days before World Environment Day and titled “What not to miss”. Campaign emails received 10,500 click-throughs to the website.

Website visitors during WED by Top-10 countries and cities



To increase awareness and engagement online, a [quiz with 10 questions on biodiversity](#) was hosted on the website. A total of 112,306 people attempted the questions with a 64 per cent conversion rate. The largest volume of attempts were in English but the highest conversions came from Spanish and Russian.

A total of 238,000 people viewed the interactive story [“Explore Nature”](#), which allows people to visit iconic locations, including Serengeti National Park, Niagara Falls, the Arabian Desert and the Eiffel Tower.

UNEP’s dozens of web stories, questions and answers with staff, and infographics – all telling the story of nature – received more than 100,000 page views across unep.org and the World Environment Day website. Stories focused on several topics, including the state of biodiversity, indigenous wisdom and countries that are taking the lead on protecting biodiversity.

The [Practical Guides on the WED website](#) received 52,000 views. The most-viewed guides were in English and Spanish.

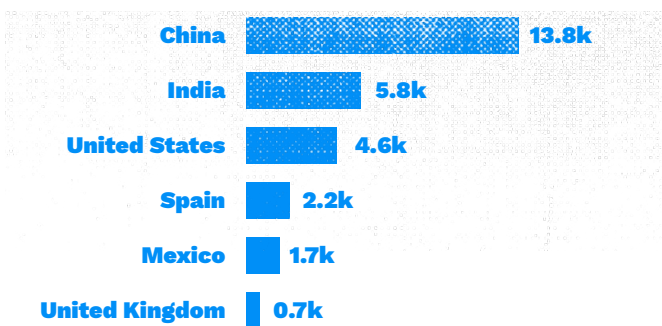
Google search ads for World Environment Day brought 114,500 visitors to the site with an average of \$0.13 cents (cost per click) for each visit. The ads drove to the quiz, interactive, practical guides, event schedule, and programming in English, Spanish and Portuguese.

Media coverage

Between 1-10 June, a total of 36,381 articles mentioning World Environment Day were published, slightly lower than 2019 which saw 37,218 articles in the same time period. Articles were published in 164 countries written in 43 languages (compared to 156 countries and 45 languages in 2019). Exposure peaked on 5 June with 18,100 articles. In Spanish media outlets, 5,600 articles were published, with 858 articles mentioning Colombia as the global host (see figures below).

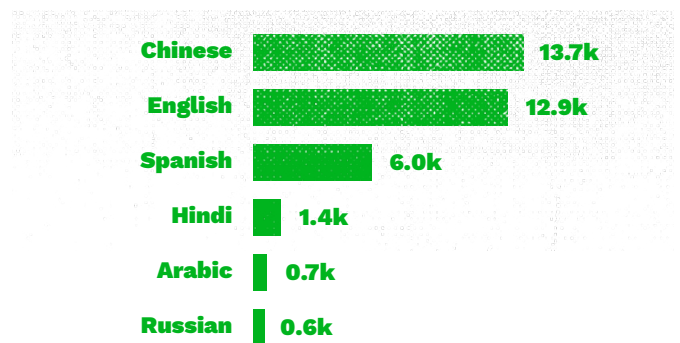
Top Locations Online News

June 1 - June 10 | The Top Locations widget provides insight into how coverage is broken down by country



Top Languages

June 1 - June 10 | The Top Language widget provides insight into how coverage is broken down by media outlet



Some of the top articles were:



Kenya bans single-use plastics in protected areas



COVID-19 Is a Symptom of a Bigger Problem: Our Planet's Ailing Health



World Environment Day 2020: What is your message to world leaders?



From jellyfish to elephants, biodiversity keeps the world turning



La crisis de biodiversidad es una crisis de desarrollo



Investing in biodiversity protection will help post-COVID-19 recovery: UNEP



Interview: China's global stewardship key to revitalizing biodiversity conservation: UNEP



UAE marine activists mark World Environment Day, June 5, with worrying message



Coronavirus is an 'SOS signal for the human enterprise'



World Environment Day: UN calls for more action despite progress made after the coronavirus pandemic



India can build back better from COVID-19



Gav Goulder—In Pictures/Getty Images

Inger Andersen wrote three op-eds, which were published by [Time Magazine](#) and other outlets. Her op-ed in Spanish was published in leading newspapers in eight countries in the Latin America and Caribbean region. Other op-eds included a [joint op-ed by UNEP North America and the Commission from Environmental Cooperation](#) calling on North American leaders to look to nature for solutions in COVID-19 recovery efforts; an [op-ed from the Head of India Office](#) on Mongabay-India; and an op-ed from Latin America and Caribbean Regional Director Leo Heileman in the UN Chronicle.

Elle India featured the local campaign Spot the Endangered on their website, reaching about 26 million people.

Inger Andersen and Joyce Msuya featured on five different BBC programmes. UNEP's video on how Africa can overcome COVID-19 was screened 77 times across France24's French, English and Arabic feeds between 23 May and 1 June. Inger Andersen gave interviews to Spain's El País newspaper and the Japanese daily Asahi Shimbun, and Europe Regional Director Bruno Pozzi spoke with Deutsche Welle.

The Europe Office's Vanishing Treasures story on snow leopards in Kyrgyzstan reached millions of viewers through at least 31 television channels from across the globe, including ABC (USA), Euronews (Europe), Canal 24 horas (Spain) and RAI (Italy). The [press release](#) reached at least 37 million potential readers through 39 articles published across 14 countries in different languages. The [video](#) was watched over 70,000 times across UNEP's social media channels.

In Africa, Doreen Robinson (UNEP) [spoke at the Kenya Television Network \(KTN\)](#), while the Deputy Director General of NEMA, Christine Mbaisi, [spoke on biodiversity in TV interviews for KTN](#) and [Kenya Broadcasting Corporation](#).



Bangkok, 5 June 2020 – The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) today announced Alex Rendell as a National Goodwill Ambassador for Thailand.

Goodwill ambassadors and partner engagement

A series of high-profile influencers lent their support to World Environment Day, including in social media and during online events, widening the day's reach and promoting engagement from followers across the world. [Adrian Grenier](#), [Aidan Gallagher](#) and [Jack Johnson](#), among others, provided social media support.

The Lewis Pugh Foundation co-created the [It's Time for Nature Series with Al Jazeera journalist Femi Oke](#) featuring 13 UNEP influencers, receiving nearly 390,000 views. UNEP's Patron of Wilderness Ben Fogle allowed a World-Environment-Day-branded takeover of his [twitter platform](#) with 460,000 followers.

Mae Jemison, the first woman of colour in space and a National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) astronaut, held an Instagram live discussion with guests who are making unique, powerful contributions to sustaining the Earth's environment.

Viacheslav Fetisov was [appointed as UNEP National Goodwill Ambassador for Russia](#).

Thai and Indonesian celebrities, including [Wannasingh Prasertkul](#) and [Kae Chollada](#), campaigned #ForNature on World Environment Day with a collective audience of 4 million. Alex Rendell's announcement as [UNEP's National Goodwill Ambassador for Thailand](#) hit a record high, reaching about 800,000 people on UNEP's regional Facebook and Twitter pages, and was featured in Thailand's major media outlets, blogs and social media spaces. Rendell was a panellist in a webinar organized by the Institute of Public Policy and Development and UNEP, which attracted about 67,000 viewers.

Video messages came from [Nicolas Hulot](#), (35,000 views on Twitter), [Yann Arthus Bertrand](#), [Bertrand Piccard](#), [Massimo Bottura](#), [Jane Goodall](#), [Dia Mirza](#), [Michael Haddad](#) and [Her Royal Highness, Princess Basma Bint Talal of Jordan](#). See the full video messages playlist [here](#).

Carlos Vives, one of the most renowned Colombian musicians, [called on everyone to reconnect with nature](#) and start appreciating the valuable contributions of ecosystems. Juanes, another renowned Colombian singer, [called on all citizens to celebrate the variety of life on Earth](#) and take action #ForNature. Miguel Bosé [shared a video](#) from the remote island of Juan Fernández, in Chile, and a poem on the power of Nature. [Gael García Bernal](#) published a thread on the need to protect environmental defenders.

[A biodiverse cooking demonstration](#) with Young Champion of the Earth Louise Mabulo, Inger Andersen and Philip J. Lymbery received 1.4 million views on Facebook and 2,600 on YouTube. AIESEC released two podcasts for World Environment Day around “#LeadershipIsAlsoAbout Acting Sustainably” that featured Young Champions of the Earth winners [Omar Itani](#) (listen on [Spotify](#) or [Apple Podcasts](#)) and [Sonika Manandhar](#) (listen on [Spotify](#) or [Apple Podcasts](#)).

A score of partners also helped spread the Time #ForNature message further:

- United Nations Development Programme launched the [It’s Time for Nature Youth Voices](#) campaign, including a [mashup video](#) in three languages with 10,000 views.
- United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC) launched [Race to Zero](#), a global campaign to rally leadership and support from businesses, cities, regions and investors for a healthy, resilient, zero carbon recovery.
- World Wildlife Fund (WWF) made available an open-source [asset pack](#), communicated the values of biodiversity on [WWF social channels](#), and published a co-authored blog between WWF and UN Habitat titled [Let’s make the World’s Cities a little Greener](#).
- Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations sent out messages on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).
- The Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), UNEP India and public regions agency Ogilvy India prepared a mini campaign featuring CMS species, promoted by [Elle in India](#) and UN and CMS social media channels.
- The World Council and Honorary Presidents of Religions for Peace put out a [statement](#) calling for an end to tropical deforestation. “As the leaders of [Religions for Peace](#), we urge all people, organizations and networks of faith to make use of and widely disseminate the educational materials produced by the [Interfaith Rainforest Initiative](#).”
- In India, UNEP India and the United Religions Initiative published a video with messages from 13 faith leaders, receiving 1,500 views on World Religion’s Facebook page and reaching 5 million users through Sanskar TV.
- The Bhamla Foundation launched an anthem to celebrate biodiversity, Dhakk Dhakk Dharti, receiving 4 million views across platforms.
- Nealy 300 people participated in the Pan-African Climate Justice Alliance’s webinar “Biodiversity, Health and Livelihoods” featuring speakers David Ombisi, from the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, Anne Tek, from the Kenya Council of Governors, Dr. Philip Osano, from the Stockholm Environment Institute, Benard Opaa, from the National Lands Commission of Kenya, John Okello, from the Inter-Religious Council of Kenya, and Mithika Mwenda, Executive Director of PACJA.



A worldwide celebration



Sand artist Sudarsan Pattnaik marks World Environment Day with a sand art at Puri beach in Odisha, India.

With the world under lockdown, more than 150 online events, from concerts, to conferences, to online film screenings, were broadcast across multiple time zones in more than 10 languages. From the [Pathway to Paris and 350 virtual festival for our planet](#) to the [Global Landscape Forum Bonn Digital Conference 2020](#), nature was widely celebrated. The [online event schedule](#) received almost 40,000 page views and the [Host Country Programme](#) page received 30,000 views on the World Environment Day website.

Global

- The [World Scout Movement](#) launched the [Earth Tribe](#) platform of environmental badges for their 50-million-strong movement.
- Initiated by UNEP and TED-Ed, Earth School was launched a month before World Environment Day, taking students on a 30-day “adventure” through the natural world. Earth School provided free, high-quality educational content to help students, parents and teachers around the world staying at home during COVID-19.
- Over 500 higher education institutions, representing 4.6 million students, announced their support for UNFCCC’s [Race to Zero](#)” campaign by committing to decarbonise and integrate environmental themes across their curriculums by 2050.
- [UNEP Major Group for Children and Youth](#), in partnership with more than 30 youth-led organizations, organized the virtual [Youth Environment Assembly](#) with the aim of mainstreaming diverse voices from youth movements in the environmental and climate agenda.
- The Partners for Inclusive Green Economy released [guidelines calling for recovery efforts that recognize the interdependencies between human and environmental health](#). The guidelines are aimed at building resilience to even more profound risks on the horizon – biodiversity loss, widening inequality and climate change.
- UNEP’s Law Division relaunched a new version of its [InforMEA portal](#).

- Numerous webinars were organized, many with participation from UNEP experts, including on [The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration \(2021-2030\)](#), [the Role of Faith Organizations in the Green Recovery](#), [Faith for Earth – safeguarding our planet](#), and [Why peatlands matter for food security](#).
- Over 720,000 people watched Deutsche Welle and Beethoven Pastoral Project's [three-hour programme, both live and on YouTube, of recorded musical performances from around the world](#), with participation of the UN Secretary General, the UNFCCC Executive Director, the German Minister of Culture and Environment, and the mayor of Bonn.
- Massimo Bottura's [video message](#) received 2,000 likes on Instagram; [the video of Food for Soul's president Lara Gilmore](#) received almost 8,000 views.
- Other events included Foundation Cartier's sound sculpture, [the Great Animal Orchestra](#), Cinemambiente's [Movies for Nature](#), a 24-hour free online streaming marathon of 11 films dedicated to biodiversity, and the [Vataravan Film Festival](#) with a special screening of Krishnendu Bose's National Award winning documentary "The Tiger Who Crossed The Line" which critically examines the impact of animal-human conflict.
- Cities4Forests received over 1,000 submissions for the [Forest Challenge Photo Contest](#) and planted a tree for each submission received.

Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI) and UNEP announced their partnership on [CitiesWithNature](#), a campaign calling on cities to share, learn and act #ForNature. Central to this campaign is a call to action to local and subnational governments to join CitiesWithNature and benefit from connecting with and learning from other cities and experts. CitiesWithNature spread the [call to action](#) to 1,750 cities and towns around the world. ICLEI executives Valérie Plante, mayor of Montreal and Ashok Sridharan, mayor of Bonn, [penned an op-ed](#) on the importance of nature to cities.

The [International Olympic Committee](#) and the [Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics Games](#) showcased sustainability through recycled medals and other sustainable practices. The Federation Internationale de Motocyclisme organized an [online event](#) on biodiversity and motorcycling.

An article with Yann Arthus-Bertrand was published in [Good Planet Magazine](#). Other support came from [Fondation Nicolas Hulot](#). [Veolia made a pledge](#) to promote an ecological approach to preserving the environment and biodiversity and organized a photo competition for its 180,000 employees around the world to allow them to illustrate their commitment to nature.

Africa

A number of webinars and online events were organized, including:

- The webinar *Environmentally Sound Management of Waste and Biodiversity in the Context of COVID-19*, organized in English and French by UNEP's Africa Office in partnership with the Lagos Waste Management Authority, Sustainable Seas Trust, South Africa and the Algerian National Waste Agency, attracted 183 participants.
- Organized by the UNEP Africa Office and NEMA Kenya, the *Biodiversity for Sustainable Livelihoods* event featured Keriako Tobiko a cabinet secretary for Kenya's Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Josphat Nanok, Governor of Turkana County and Mamo B. Mamo, Director General NEMA.

- The webinar *Biodiversity, Traditional Knowledge and Science: Bridging traditional knowledge and science for biodiversity conservation in Africa* was attended by 80 participants and was organized by UNEP in Ethiopia in partnership with the Environment, Forest and Climate Change Commission of Ethiopia, UNESCO, the Catholic Church, the Africa Union Commission and MELCA Ethiopia.
- The webinar *Nature-Based Solutions: Can biodiversity be considered a panacea for human well-being and livelihoods in the 21st century?* was attended by 75 people, and organized by UNEP in Ethiopia in partnership with Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, Environment, Forest and Climate Change Commission of Ethiopia and Ethiopian Athletics Federation.
- Two other webinars were also held: *Investing in Africa's Biodiversity for a Resilient and Sustainable Future*, organized by UNEP's West Africa Office, Abidjan Convention, African Development Bank and the Ministry of the Environment of Cote d'Ivoire, and *Building Resilience to Climate Change and Pandemics Through Investments in Nature*, organized by UNEP Tanzania Office in partnership with GIZ, The Nature Conservancy and WWF.

Asia and the Pacific

A number of high-profile events attracting sizeable audiences were held in the Asia and the Pacific region:

- The workshop *Care for Nature, Take Action—Together with Champions of the Earth*, organized by the China Forum of Environmental Journalists and China Environment Newspaper, was covered by over 25 traditional media.
- Hosted by Organic and Beyond, the *Time for Nature* online dialogue with Mr. Tu Ruihe, head of UNEP's China Office, reached 20,000 businesses, including Huawei, Didi, and UnionPay, and 1.2 million families.
- Targeted at youth, 4.6 million people watched the live stream of the *Co-exist for Nature* online dialogue and documentary, hosted by Jiemian News and Kwai.



Time for Nature online dialogue with Mr. Tu Ruihe, head of UNEP's China Office.

- China Green Foundation hosted a two-hour online live show calling for the protection of biodiversity, featuring the golden monkeys living in Shennongjia, Hubei province, reaching more than 2.8 million people.
- China's Ministry of Ecology and Environment unveiled a pair of environmental protection mascots in Beijing, named "Xiaoshan" and "Xiaoshui", inspired by green mountains and lucid waters. It was the culmination of a competition between more than 2,400 candidates that started last November.
- Chinese research institutions launched a birdwatching platform on World Environment Day for the study and protection of coastal wetlands and waterfowl.
- A primary school in Qinhuangdao, in China's Hebei province, held an activity to make nail paintings on waste wood, aiming to develop student's awareness of environmental protection.
- Xiamen municipal bureau of sport hosted the One Hour for Blue marathon, calling for a reduction of plastic usage in which all runners brought their own water bottles.
- A cycling race was organized, which ended in Afghanistan's Band-e-Amir National Park.
- UNEP's India office organized a webinar on "Investing in Nature for Building Back Better", receiving 1,700 views on Facebook. A concert by Ricky Kej, a Grammy winner, saw 25 leading artists from India and across the world performing.

Europe

Selected mobilisation and engagement events from Europe include:

- Public transport companies screened a specially-produced World Environment Day video. Made available to over 1,000 public transport companies, the video was used across Europe and Central Asia. Almaty Metro showcased it in metro stations 3,128 times a day throughout the month of June. In Spain, the video was shown in train, bus and metro stations. Various public transport companies promoted the video on their social media accounts, including public transport in Milan, Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia and Seville, as well as ALSA (Spain), Go-Ahead (United Kingdom), Alstom (France) and Light Rail Manila Corporation.
- The online screening of the film Sharkwater Extinction, organized by UNEP's Brussels Office, Geneva Environment Network and UN Information Centers, received thousands of viewers.
- The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe launched a global photo contest on flora and fauna in the time of COVID-19 in the support of restoration of ecosystems.
- A session from the Global Landscapes Forum in Bonn on Finance and the transition to sustainable commodity production, featuring Pan Pan, Emelyne Cheney, Ivo Mulder and Mario Boccucci, explored shifting commodity production to more sustainable and safer alternatives.

- UNEP's Europe Office and award-winning dance choreographer Corey Baker released a film, which aired on the BBC and was viewed around 110,000 times on UNEP social media.
- Spanish magician and teacher Xuxo Ruiz performed a magic trick on UNEP's social media accounts encouraging action for biodiversity.
- The Barcelona Michelin-starred restaurant Nectari presented its first plant-based menu in collaboration with Heurafoods, a plant-based proteins company.

Latin America and the Caribbean

- The host region, Latin America and the Caribbean, held a number of events in addition to the ones organized by host country Colombia:
- High-level online debates with national personalities took place in Brazil, Jamaica, Mexico, Paraguay and Uruguay.
- Activities were organized throughout the region, including an online environmental film festival in Mexico, a musical chat in Brazil and a global contest on biodiversity groups.
- In Brazil, two main online events were organized in partnership with the Museum of Tomorrow in Rio de Janeiro, with participation of the renowned environmentalist and artist Lenine and artist and photographer Sebastiao Salgado.
- The UNEP Brazil Office partnered with 13 organizations, covering all five Brazilian regions, to promote 20 live broadcasts on YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, Spotify, Zoom and Video camp, resulting in great visibility among new audiences at the local level.
- An online film festival in Mexico, SUNCINE, offered four films related to environment and the conservation of nature from 5 June to 8 June.
- During a virtual World Environment Day celebration in Mexico, hosted by the Mexican state of Puebla, Governor Miguel Barbosa Huerta said that the state will continue to promote the defence of nature.
- A webinar was organized in Paraguay and the FAO on how to build back better after the pandemic.
- In Jamaica, the Ignite Smart Caribbean Change-makers Summit was organized, a four-day online festival focused on developing ideas to regenerate and rebuild the Caribbean economy through interactive discussions with youth in various sectors.



Niagara Falls in Canada turned green for World Environment Day.

North America

Amongst the high-profile events in the North America region, a [Virtual Festival for Planet](#) was organized by Pathway to Paris and 350.org. A virtual four-hour concert with a series of well-known personalities, including former Irish Prime Minister Mary Robinson, Bill McKibben, Patti Smith, Ben Harper, and Rocky Dawuni, was [watched by more than 30,000 people on Facebook](#).

Iconic buildings and monuments in Canada turned green for WED, including the Olympic Stadium, Samuel de Champlain Bridge, the Biosphere, and Niagara Falls, which included a livestream.

MTV's video with American activist Lauren Singer on sustainable consumption and zero waste, using UNEP branding, was shared on MTV's [Facebook](#) (4.7 million followers) and [Twitter](#) (2.4 million followers).

The high level virtual event "[Unlocking Human Potential for Biodiversity](#)", hosted by Espace pour la vie Montréal, received over 10,000 impressions on social media. Key speakers include the Mayor of Montreal, the UNEP Regional Director and the Executive Directors of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Commission for Environmental Cooperation, the Canadian Minister of the Environment and Minister of Industry.

Other events in North America include:

- Nature Live [virtual bonfire](#) to talk about nature and conservation.
- Natural Intelligence Series' [newsletter](#).
- The Embassy of Canada in Washington, DC [added two new beehives](#), home to 30,000 bees, to the embassy rooftop.

- Yale University hosted a team of Yale experts in [an interactive online discussion](#) about what needs to be done to move society toward a sustainable future.
- The Earth Day Network announced that every \$1 donation to the Canopy Project [would plant two trees](#) and [promoted UNEP events on social media](#).
- Think Ocean celebrated diversity [in a graphic created for the day](#).
- [David Trubridge](#) presented “[I am the Land](#)”, a talk on the values of sustainability, conservation and global awareness.
- The [Canadian Finance Minister’s Urban Economy Forum](#), featuring mayors and high-level municipal representatives, as well as a UNEP expert, received 4,000 views on YouTube.

West Asia

The #ForNature Instagram Live series consisted of seven online sessions. [The most popular one](#) featured Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity and Etaf Chehade, West Asia Regional Coordinator for Healthy and Productive Ecosystems. It focused on transforming our relationship with the natural world. It received 4,916 impressions across all platforms and 500 live impressions.

Other events included:

- The launch of the West Asia Management Outlook, which was viewed over 3,500 times on social media.
- A total of 45 registered events took place in West Asia, organized by various organizations including, Al Hekma International School, Bahrain, a Karkouk tree planting event in Iraq, and a #GreeninQuarantine Podcast in Jordan.

An unprecedented World Environment Day

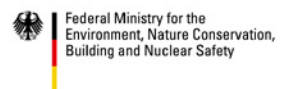
The 2020 World Environment Day was organized under exceedingly difficult circumstances. Because of COVID-19, all celebrations had to be held digitally with just two months' notice. Still, it was amongst the most successful days of its kind in terms of reach and participation. This would not have been possible without the contributions of thousands of individuals and UNEP partners around the world.



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