



STATEMENT BY
THE ACTING EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
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ON THE OCCASION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR BIODIVERSITY
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The International Day for Biodiversity gives us a chance to celebrate the incredible variety of life on Earth, to appreciate nature's innumerable contributions to our everyday lives, and to reflect on how it connects us all. The pandemic serves as a stark reminder that we need urgent, sweeping international cooperation to preserve nature, conserve biodiversity, and protect human health for generations to come.

This year's theme, "Our solutions are in nature", highlights the fact that biodiversity remains the answer to sustainable development challenges. From nature-based solutions to climate change, food and water security, and sustainable livelihoods, biodiversity remains the basis for a sustainable future.

Communities are facing the danger of even more unprecedented negative economic, social and human consequences if we do not act now and adopt a way of life in harmony with nature.

Biodiversity loss is a direct result of short-sighted human activities including uncontrolled mining and infrastructure development, unsustainable farming and deforestation. All these have degraded ecosystems and have created the conditions that lead to events like the pandemic.

While the world is striving to end this pandemic, we all need to take urgent action to build a resilient and sustainable global economy that incorporates nature at its heart, even as we build back from the crisis.

Millions of jobs in such sectors as forestry, fisheries, agriculture, tourism and pharmaceuticals are heavily dependent on nature. Recovery plans that include a transition to biodiversity-friendly economies will create more jobs and provide decent livelihoods.

About one billion people living in extreme poverty are in rural areas, where employment opportunities are already scarce. Their household income is based on ecosystems and natural goods that make up between 50 and 90 per cent of the so-called "GDP of the poor".

Governments should use the occasion of comprehensive recovery plans to build economies founded on the conservation and sustainable use of nature and the equitable sharing of its benefits. This will help all, including the most vulnerable.

We need the world to continue to work towards an ambitious and effective post-2020 global biodiversity framework, to be agreed at our next meeting of the Conference of the Parties. This framework can contribute to increasing nature's benefits for people. The results will be extensive: including improved global nutrition and access to drinking water, resilience to natural disasters and nature-based solutions to achieve the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement. All of this is integral to the Sustainable Development Goals, which risk being undermined as a result of the pandemic.

This pandemic has shown in clear terms that international cooperation is paramount for the health of our nature, our economies, and our people. Let us work together and support Solutions that are in Nature.

Happy International Biodiversity Day.

