

# The International Day for Biological Diversity 2020

“Our solutions are in nature”



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## Message

Undoubtedly, our solutions are embedded in nature but we need to find them, and more importantly learn to worship the nature. Raising awareness about respecting the nature’s bounty, conserving all biodiversity that it harbors and utilizing it for sustainable solutions is the key.

In my opinion, a major emphasis must be placed keeping in view the COVID-19 pandemic, on mainstreaming the so called underutilized and neglected food crops including wild fruits and vegetables in a mission mode approach.

While majority of the phytonutrients required for boosting immunity against COVID-19 are available in traditional food crops, yet there is another category of novel nutrition-rich foods much richer in zinc, iron, copper, folate, vitamins and antioxidants that are all needed to support and strengthen the human immune function. This category of underutilised and neglected crops deserves much more attention than ever before with all the technological advances that we have made in this 21<sup>st</sup> century. These diverse nutritionally powerful and hardy crops known for centuries need integration in the mainstream agricultural system.

Further, we should promote conservation and utilisation of all forms of crop diversity as plant-based diets to address malnutrition through local, national and regional programs and actions.

