

# It's time for nature this World Environment Day

Jun 5, 2020



Port Elizabeth - Friday the 5th of June is World Environment Day, a global awareness drive and call to take action against environmental challenges, such as global warming, the pollution of our oceans and the senseless plundering of the earth's wildlife.

The key message for World Environment Day 2020 is that "It's Time for Nature".

As the Covid-19 pandemic dominates the hearts and minds of citizens globally, and entire nations have been asked to stay at home to stay healthy, industries have been forced to shut down, resulting in empty highways and no human life on the world's beaches. Environmental activists around the world have highlighted the positive impact this has had on nature.

"During this time of national lockdown, it's as if nature has given us a message of hope," says Stacey Webb, Executive Director of the Sustainable Seas Trust.

"It's not too late for us to make positive and sustainable changes that benefit our environment, especially if we want to conserve the very thing we depend on for our existence... the environment".

In 2020, the focus of this global awareness day is on biodiversity, as recent events such as the bushfires in Brazil, the United States and Australia, to locust infestations across East Africa – and now, a global disease pandemic – demonstrate the interdependence of humans and their ecosystems. Nature is sending us a message.

Sustainable Seas Trust (SST) is an advocate for ocean conservation with a focus on mitigating plastic pollution. It also builds networks for sharing information and support focused on waste management.

World Environment Day is an opportunity to inspire positive change and a time to recognise that global change requires a global community.

"There are small and big things that each of us can do to make a positive impact. We should all be open to learning and researching ways we can make changes that benefit our environment," Webb continued.

Through its events and programmes, the African Marine Waste Network and Hope Spots, SST is bringing like-minded and passionate people together, locally and internationally, to develop best practices to better manage the issues of plastic waste in Africa.

This is important, because Africa has some of the most exquisite, biodiverse and marine-rich coastlines in the world, which must be protected. Waste-focused studies predict that by 2050 there will be more plastic littering Africa and entering its seas than any other continent.

So, as we celebrate World Environment Day on Friday, we need to think about the way we consume and how we can better live in harmony with the Earth and our Oceans. It requires everyone to build a greener future and there's no better way to do this, than by involving and educating the youth.

With June also being Youth Month, young environmental activists like Gretha Thunburg and Africa's own Leah Namugerwa from Uganda, are great examples of young people using their voices for nature.

It's happening right here at home too, as SST programmes inspire the youth how they can make a difference and educate their communities about securing a greener future for the world's children.

This year, World Environment Day will be celebrated digitally. You are invited to share why it's time for nature, how we can be a part of the solution and the global call #ForNature.

For more information and to share your story, visit: <https://www.worldenvironmentday.global>. You can also visit the Sustainable Seas Trust website to find out how you can support its programmes and initiatives.

With your donation you are investing in the future of Africa's coastline and oceans and the money is used in a variety of ways that range from educational programmes in local communities to establishing South African Hope Spots.

Image: Left to right: Lexi Woods (5), Chl e Mao-Cheia (10), Sonia De Klerk, Peyton Walker (10), and Lily Mao-Cheia (7) caring for the environment by participating in an SST beach clean-up. Photo credit: Leon Hugo

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