

Media Update

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UNEP

PRESS RELEASE

Pakistan to host World Environment Day 2021

World Environment Day 2021 will also mark the launch of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration

Nairobi, 22February2021 – Pakistan announced today that it will host World Environment Day 2021 in partnership with the UN Environment Programme (UNEP). This year's observance of World Environment Day will be on the theme of 'ecosystem restoration' and focus on resetting our relation with nature. It will also mark the formal launch of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration [2021 – 2030](#).

World Environment Day takes place every year on 5 June. It is the United Nations' flagship day for promoting worldwide awareness and action for the environment. Over the years, it has grown to be the largest global platform for environmental public outreach and is celebrated by millions of people across the world.

Making the announcement on the margins of the virtual 5thUN Environment Assembly (UNEA-5), Pakistan's Adviser to Prime Minister and Minister of Climate Change Malik Amin Aslam joined UNEP Executive Director Inger Andersen to acknowledge the urgency of preventing, halting and reversing the degradation of ecosystems worldwide.

Led by Prime Minister Imran Khan, the Government of Pakistan – in one of the world's most ambitious afforestation efforts – plans to expand and restore the country's forests through a '[10 Billion Tree Tsunami](#)' spread over 5 years. The campaign includes restoring mangroves and forests, as well as planting trees in urban settings, including schools, colleges, public parks and green belts. Pakistan has launched Eco-System Restoration Fund for supporting nature based solution to climate change, facilitating transition towards

environmentally resilient ecologically targeted initiatives covering afforestation and biodiversity conservation.

Recently, Prime Minister of Pakistan has launched “Protected Area Initiative” to develop 15 model Protected Areas across country to conserve over 7300. Sq km of land area as well as Green Stimulus with creation of over 5,500 green jobs

“The Government of Pakistan is fully committed to playing a leadership role in addressing the issue of climate change, including through the “10 Billion Trees Tsunami” initiative, which will restore and enhance over 1 million hectares of forest across the country,” said Malik Amin Aslam, Adviser to the Pakistani Prime Minister and Minister of Climate Change. “We are honoured to host this year's World Environment Day and lend our support to global restoration efforts.”

As Host of World Environment Day, Pakistan will highlight environmental issues and showcase the country’s own initiatives and its role in global efforts. The day will be celebrated across the world through various events and activities, in line with latest COVID 19 regulations.

“2020 was a year of reckoning, facing multiple crises, including a global pandemic and the continued crises of climate, nature and pollution,” said Inger Andersen, Executive Director of UNEP. “In 2021, we must take deliberate steps to move from crisis to healing: and in so doing, we must recognize that the restoration of nature is imperative to the survival of our planet and the human race.”

“Pakistan has shown real leadership in efforts to restore the country’s forests; we are grateful for their commitment to host World Environment Day 2021 and lead the charge for all nations to restore our damaged ecosystems through the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration,” she added.

The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration is intended to massively scale up the restoration of degraded and destroyed ecosystems to fight the climate crisis, prevent the loss of a million species and enhance food security water supply and livelihoods.

Reviving natural carbon sinks – such as forests and peatlands – could help close the climate emissions gap by 25% by 2030. Replanting with native tree species can also help buffer some of the expected devastating effects of a warming planet, such as increased risk of forest fires. Currently, 3.2 billion people – 40% of the world’s population– suffer from the continued degradation

of ecosystems, for example by losing access to fertile soil or safe drinking water.

The UN Decade runs from 2021 through 2030, which is also the deadline for the Sustainable Development Goals and the timeline scientists have identified as the last chance to prevent catastrophic climate change.

To achieve restoration at the required scale, incentives and financial investments must be made in changing the way lands and oceans are exploited, in research and education, and in inspiring a movement of people, businesses and governments through celebrating success stories.

NOTES TO EDITORS

Ministry of Climate Change is the highest federal institution in the country mandated to address issues related to environment and climate change. The Ministry has developed policy documents including National Climate Change Policy, National Forest Policy and Electric Vehicle Policy

About World Environment Day

World Environment Day is the United Nations' principal vehicle for encouraging worldwide awareness and action for the environment. Held annually since 1974, the Day has also become a vital platform for promoting progress on the environmental dimensions of the Sustainable Development Goals. With the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) at the helm, over 150 countries participate each year. Major corporations, non-governmental organizations, communities, governments and celebrities from across the world adopt the World Environment Day brand to champion environmental causes.

About the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration

The United Nations General Assembly has declared the years 2021 through 2030 the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. Led by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations together with the support of partners, it is designed to prevent, halt, and reverse the loss and degradation of ecosystems worldwide. It aims at reviving hundreds of millions of hectares, covering terrestrial as well as aquatic ecosystems. A global call to action, the UN Decade draws together political support, scientific research, and financial muscle to massively scale up restoration. Under the motto of #Generation Restoration

the UN Decade is galvanizing a global movement, in which everyone can contribute to the mission. Visit www.decadeonrestoration.org to learn more

About the UN Environment Programme

UNEP is the leading global voice on the environment. It provides leadership and encourages partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations.

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