

Media Update-2

2 June 2021

United Nations

SECRETARY-GENERAL MESSAGE

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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MESSAGE ON WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY

5 June 2021

We are rapidly reaching the point of no return for the planet.

We face a triple environmental emergency –biodiversity loss, climate disruption and escalating pollution.

For too long, humanity has cut down the Earth's forests, polluted its rivers and oceans, and ploughed its grasslands into oblivion.

We are ravaging the very ecosystems that underpin our societies.

And, in doing so, we risk depriving ourselves of the food, water and resources we need to survive.

The degradation of the natural world is already undermining the well-being of 3.2 billion people – or 40 per cent of humanity.

Luckily, the Earth is resilient.

But she needs our help.

We still have time to reverse the damage we have done.

That is why, on this World Environment Day, we are launching the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.

This global movement will bring together governments, businesses, civil society and private citizens in an unprecedented effort to heal the Earth.

By restoring ecosystems, we can drive a transformation that will contribute to the achievement of all the Sustainable Development Goals.

The task is monumental.

We need to replant and protect our forests.

We need to clean up our rivers and seas.

And we need to green our cities.

Accomplishing these things will not only safeguard the planet's resources.

It will create millions of new jobs by 2030, generate returns of over \$7 trillion dollars every year and help eliminate poverty and hunger.

The United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration is a global call to action.

It will draw together political support, scientific research and financial muscle to massively scale up restoration.

Everyone can contribute.

Science tells us these next 10 years are our final chance to avert a climate catastrophe, turn back the deadly tide of pollution and end species loss.

So, let today be the start of a new decade – one in which we finally make peace with nature and secure a better future for all.

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