

Editorial...

Every year we celebrate the biggest day for positive environmental action!...5th June - World Environment Day

World Environment Day (WED) is the United Nations' important vehicle for encouraging worldwide awareness and action for the environment. Over the years it has grown to be a broad, global platform for public outreach that is widely celebrated by stakeholders in over 100 countries. It also serves as the 'people's day' for doing something positive for the environment, galvanizing individual actions into a collective power that generates an exponential positive impact on the planet.

With environmental issues high on the international agenda, there are many questions that remain to be answered: what are the precise causes of climate change and how can we best tackle it? Is it possible to predict natural disasters? How do environmental factors like pollution affect human health? How can we better understand and limit our impact on biodiversity and the marine environment? How can we make land use more sustainable? The list goes on... We should work to give answers to these questions by supporting research activities that provide real and practical solutions.

"Planet Earth is our shared island, let us join forces to protect it."

WED is the opportunity for everyone to realize not only the responsibility to care for the Earth and to become agents of change. WED was among the top 10 most talked about topics in at least 15 countries on 5th June, with an estimated 47.6 million impressions on the Day itself.

How will you make your voice heard this year for the environment? The call this year is to recognize that we all face the same challenges and are connected and united by our common goal of a sustainable and prosperous Life for all on this planet. The call is to raise our voice in solidarity with one another, particularly with the citizens of the small island states. Whether it

is to organize clean up campaigns, food waste reduction initiatives, walk-to-work days, plastic bans, art exhibits, tree-planting drives, concerts, dance recitals, recycling drives, social media campaigns and different contests - every action counts. When multiplied by a global chorus, our individual voices and actions become exponential in its impact.

Environment means the surroundings. Land, water, air, plants, animals, solid wastes and other things that are surrounding us constitute our environment. Man and environment are closely intertwined with each other, to maintain a balance or equilibrium in nature.

Different groups of people working in different areas express it in various ways. When physical scientists talk about environment they generally refer to the physical environment that comprises the three interlocking systems the Atmosphere, the Hydrosphere and the Lithosphere. Biologists often refer to biological environment consisting of all living organisms of the Biosphere. Similarly social scientists refer to the social, cultural, economic and organizational environment.

Hence environment may be defined as "the sum of all social, cultural, economical, biological, physical and chemical factors surrounding the 'man' to give necessary protection to him."

Two types of environment we may come across. One is the natural environment of the air, water, solid wastes, noise, radiation, soil, timber, wildlife and living space etc. The second one is the man-made environment that deals with work environment, housing, technology, aesthetics, transportation, utilities, settlement, urbanization and so on.

These environmental components are considered as the resources and are mostly exploited and utilized by the men to fulfill their basic physical needs they can be considered as the fellow members of the global Eco-system with which men establish emotional, intellectual, or physical relationships and these provide the basis for a sense of purpose of life to them.

Thus, man is firmly placed as an important part of the global ecosystem, which depends on him much as he depends on it. Hence, there is a close relationship between man and environment.

Many people say there is a need to protect the environment, but do not really make any effort to do anything about it. Are you one of these people? What can we do to encourage people to take action to protect the environment?

Most people are increasingly aware of the need to protect our environment. Despite this, not many of us are really taking steps to reduce our impact on the planet. Here are some steps each of us can take and some ways to motivate others to do the same.

Many environmental problems seem so big that only governments, local authorities or big companies can deal with them. One example is global warming. We need government action to reduce emissions from coal and oil burning power stations and to develop safer sources of power. These require tough regulations and huge investment. The loss of forests and other habitat is another problem. How can we as individuals stop the destruction of the Amazon or Indonesian rain forests? Yet another example is waste. When people live in cities, they may not be able store or recycle waste, so huge landfills or incinerators are needed.

However, as consumers, we are the ones responsible for all these problems. First of all, we all need to consume less power. We need to turn off lights, replace inefficient bulbs with low-power ones, and not leave equipment on standby. Secondly, we need to control our surging populations. Each of us can make a decision regarding family size. This has a huge impact on the size of our cities and the need for food and more

agricultural land. In addition, we need to consider eating less meat and more vegetables and fruit, in order to reduce the amount of land needed for meat. Generally, the main step we need to take is to live more simply. We need to reduce our consumption, recycle, and reuse.

In conclusion, our choices, however small, do have a real impact. If each of us made took two or three simple steps to live more simply, imagine the positive effect on the planet!

Dr. Sunita Magre
Editor