

Committee of Permanent Representatives
Subcommittee Meeting
Thursday 21 May 2020
9:00 am - 12:00 pm
Online Meeting

Background Document for Agenda Item 4:

Briefing on the preparation for the World Environment Day 2020

This note serves as a background document for consideration under Agenda Item 4: Briefing on the preparation for the World Environment Day 2020.

The World Environment Day, scheduled to take place on 5 June 2020, will be hosted by Colombia in partnership with Germany. This year's World Environment Day focuses on biodiversity with a campaign theme of "Time for Nature". Member States are invited to provide guidance and recommendations to the Secretariat with a view to ensure a successful World Environment Day campaign 2020.

Briefing on the Preparations for World Environment Day May 21, 2020 Subcommittee meeting of the CPR

World Environment Day is celebrated every year on June 5. Held annual since 1974, the Day strives to raise awareness and encourage action for the environment. It offers an opportunity to reflect on accomplishments and renew our resolve in overcoming the environmental challenges facing the world today. Hosted by Colombia, in partnership with Germany, World Environment Day this year is focused on biodiversity.

Each year, the Communication Division runs a global communication and outreach campaign leading up to the Day raising awareness of the chosen environmental theme, using videos and other multimedia storytelling to highlight the problem and solutions. In addition, there is a far-reaching engagement strategy on social media and a call to action. In 2018, the theme was #BeatPlasticPollution; In 2019, it was #BeatAirPollution. The 2020 World Environment Day global campaign aims at highlighting how we as humans are inextricably linked to and depend on nature for our existence and quality of life.

In view of the prevailing circumstances due to COVID-19 pandemic, UNEP has redesigned this year's celebrations to primarily around a global digital campaign aimed at increasing knowledge and exciting engagement in virtual spaces on the theme of biodiversity.

The global digital campaign is called "Time #ForNature" that will educate and engage audiences about the value that nature provides us and convey the urgency for global action towards the post-2020 biodiversity framework given the unprecedented rates of biodiversity loss.

UNEP is producing a series of communication assets from videos, photo essays, and text stories to infographics and other content aimed at highlighting how nature underpins all aspects of our societies – from our food systems, to medicines, to clean air and water. UNEP will also highlight the destruction of nature and the unprecedented rate of biodiversity loss. Most of the content is making reference to the link between COVID-19 and nature to make it most relevant to the top topics today on news and social media. The Communication Division has developed a set of key messages and facts to inform the messaging on all stories and other outputs working together with Ecosystem Division and World Conservation Monitoring Centre.

The call-to-action for the global campaign is a digital push for the public to answer the question: "Why is it Time #ForNature?" This call-to-action is flexible and is sensitive to the fact that many people around the world may be staying indoors due to the pandemic. For people to participate, they need only an internet connection for a short period. Participants can post a photo of a favourite place in nature or simply explain why it's so important to protect our natural world.

Through guidance, we will prompt answers that are inclusive of the regional differences as to why it's Time #ForNature. For some, nature means leisure time. For others, the sustainable use of nature is a key component of their country's development – or restoration following the economic collapse. This is a vital element of the educational portion of the campaign.

A variety of approaches will be used to reach the broadest audience possible. From publicly broadcast videoconference conversations among leaders about why it's Time #ForNature to influencer-driven

Instagram posts that generate thousands of public messages, the final message will be clear - it's Time #ForNature and this is an issue that sparks global solidarity.

With Colombia being the host for World Environment Day this year, the Communication Division and UNEP's Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean is working with officials in Bogota to develop several online events and activations in the build to and on the Day itself. These include a live video conference between the Colombian President, Minister of Environment and UNEP's Executive Director, as well as with biodiversity experts.

The Communication Division has also developed a Time #ForNature visual identity for broad usage by partners all around the globe. Every year, thousands of people and organizations join World Environment Day celebrations with activities and initiatives designed and launched in support of the main theme for the Day. In the buildup to World Environment Day, partners are being engaged at both the global level and also through the regional and country offices. All peers across the UN System are also mobilized to take part in campaign activities.