



# WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY TOOLKIT FOR YOUTH

Time #ForNature  
#Youth4Environment  
#WorldEnvironmentDay



UN Major Group for  
**Children and Youth**  
the space for children and youth in the United Nations



# World Environment Day 2020

The theme for World Environment Day, 5 June 2020 is **biodiversity** — a call to action to combat the accelerating species loss and degradation of the natural world. Hosted by Colombia, in partnership with Germany, World Environment Day urges people to rethink how our world's systems have evolved and the impact they have on the environment, as we tackle the coronavirus pandemic and the ongoing climate crisis.

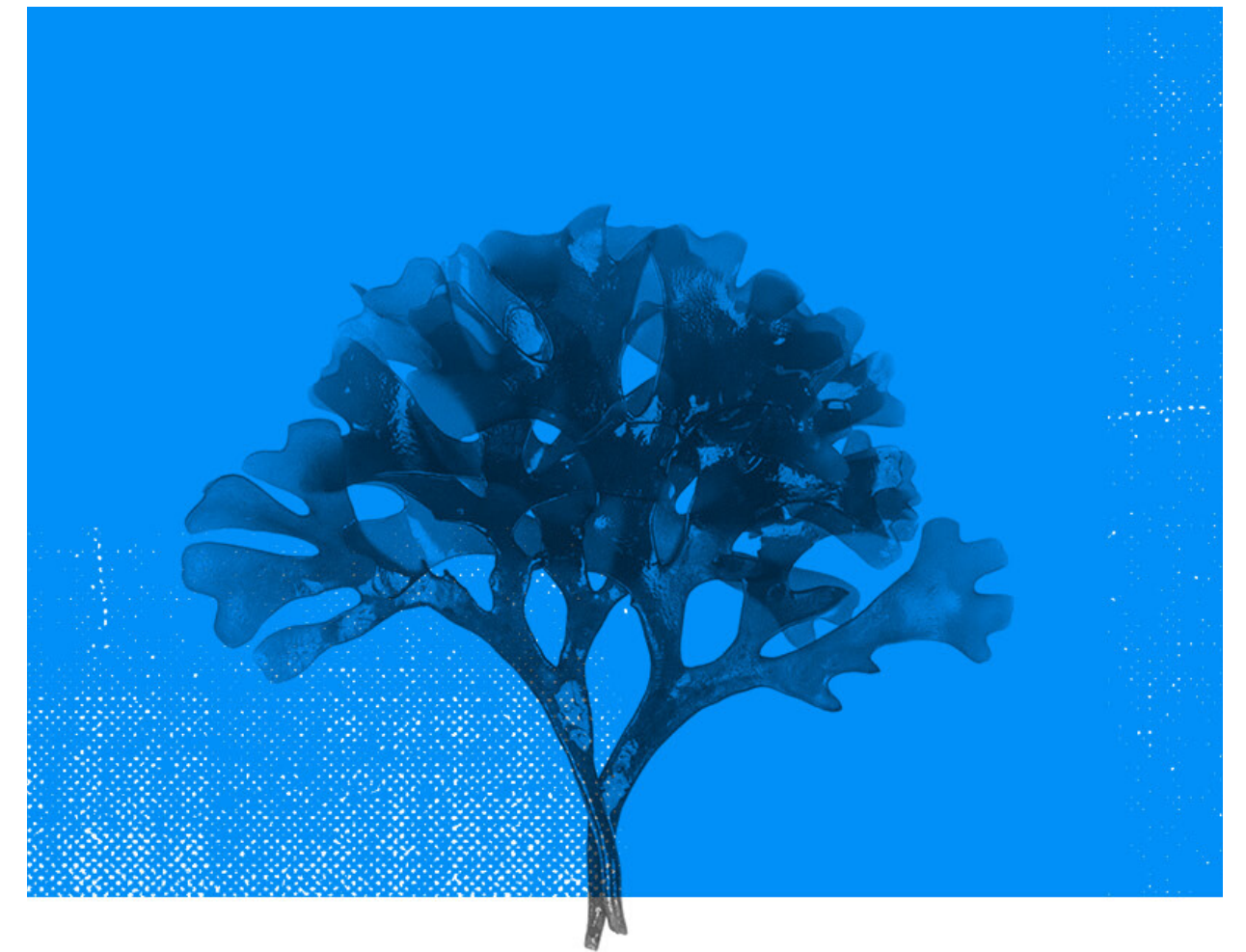
A healthy and sustainable environment is the foundation of an equitable, functioning society and the basis for prosperity and security. There is no doubt about the ecological and climate crisis humanity is facing in this century. Over the past years, the acceptance of the fact that the health of the environment, stability of climate and sustainable management of resources is of utmost interest for general well-being and stability of the human society.



# World Environment Day 2020

2020 is also the year #forNature. With UN75 process underway, the environmental dimension of Agenda 2030 needs to further strengthened and post-pandemic recovery needs to give a clear message that we need to #BuildBackBetter. This is also the time for implementation of the UNEA Resolutions, Paris Agreement targets, Land Degradation Neutrality targets and to push for a stronger post-2020 biodiversity framework.

COVID19 pandemic has taught us the importance of international cooperation, of collective action, of relying on the best available science and its recovery needs to be just and sustainable. This is not business as usual and we cannot go back to the “normal” we came from.





**These are unprecedented  
times. And we need  
unprecedented actions.**

***Actions where young people  
will now lead the way.***





# Why does *youth engagement* matter?

Youth and future generations are amongst the ones who will feel the most impact due to climate-induced natural disasters, food and water shortages, biodiversity loss, destruction of ecosystems, security threats, the climate refugee crisis, health crisis and sustained losses in economic productivity.

These impacts will and are already affecting millions of children and youth globally, especially those living in developing countries, Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and the Least Developed Countries (LDCs). The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted that no one is safe from health crises, and children and young people are the most vulnerable when it comes to health crises caused by environmental degradation.



We should use World Environment Day as a platform to act together, and demand bold action from people on nature protection. To push for smart, ambitious, measurable actions from the policy makers. This in turn be a stepping stone towards achieving the "Vision 2050 of Living in Harmony with Nature" and mobilising #Youth4Environment.

# Young people are already on the frontline



**Currently, over 42 percent of the world's population is under the age of 25.** This is a generation already scheduled to bear the maximum impacts of climate crisis and environmental degradation. The world's youth has inherited a planet where nature is increasingly overexploited. As a consequence what they have left is likely to disappear within lifetime unless we drastically reinvent our relationship with nature.

***While young people did not have a say in how humanity treats nature in the past, they have a voice now. They have the right to a healthy and prosperous environment and future, which go hand-in-hand.***



# **Are you a youth organisation or young person wanting to take action for WED? This toolkit is for YOU!**

**Are you a young person or youth organisation wanting to take action this WED? Then this toolkit is for you - to get inspired, to implement ideas, to come up with new solutions and most importantly to engage meaningfully in the process of WED. This is targeted for youth environmental NGOs and groups of different sizes, scopes, and capacities - with local, national, sub-regional, regional or global focus.**



**Want to host an activity  
or planning one already?  
SIGN IT UP!**



[youthenvironment.org/WED2020](https://youthenvironment.org/WED2020)



**Do you have a story of change,  
success, lessons learnt - a  
story of your work, of your  
community?  
SHARE WITH US!**



- If you are a youth or youth group wanting to organise an activity for WED 2020 - we ask you to sign up on the Youth WED Action portal on the website of the youth constituency at [www.youthenvironment.org/wed2020](https://www.youthenvironment.org/wed2020)
- This will allow participants to find your activity, when looking for events in their region
- We would like to support your plans, connect you with partners in your country/region, including UN agencies and send you more information once you sign up
- Your activity will become part of global youth programme and broadcasting campaign sharing all events that are going to take place.
- It is alright to sign-up even if your plan is not final or if you are still developing your ideas.

# What activities can YOU do?

**GIVEN THAT WED 2020 MOBILISATION WILL BE LARGELY “DIGITAL” IN NATURE, BELOW ARE SOME ACTIVITIES YOU CAN DO DURING THE WED. THIS IS NOT AN EXHAUSTIVE LIST, AND YOU ARE MORE THAN WELCOME TO COME UP WITH NEW IDEAS. THE ACTIVITIES CAN TAKE PLACE ANYTIME DURING THE “ACTIVATION PERIOD” OF WED FROM 22 MAY 2020 - 5 JUNE 2020**

# Host a webinar session & invite key stakeholders

You can host a webinar session or dialogue for youth within your community, city or country, and invite key stakeholders such as government representatives (including from local authorities), scientists, experts, faith-leaders, representatives from Indigenous communities, other NGO representatives, community leaders, etc. Depending on the target audience and stakeholders involved, you can explore wide range of topics in such sessions, including but not limited to:

- Capacity-building & learning session for youth audience on topics of biodiversity, environment, nature, and related
- Q&A or interaction session with scientists, researchers and/ or government authorities on environmental advocates
- Virtual panel discussion with different stakeholders on a topic relevant to your community
- Virtual town hall sessions
- Dialogues with decision-makers in order to raise awareness for relevant policy or activities that are missing



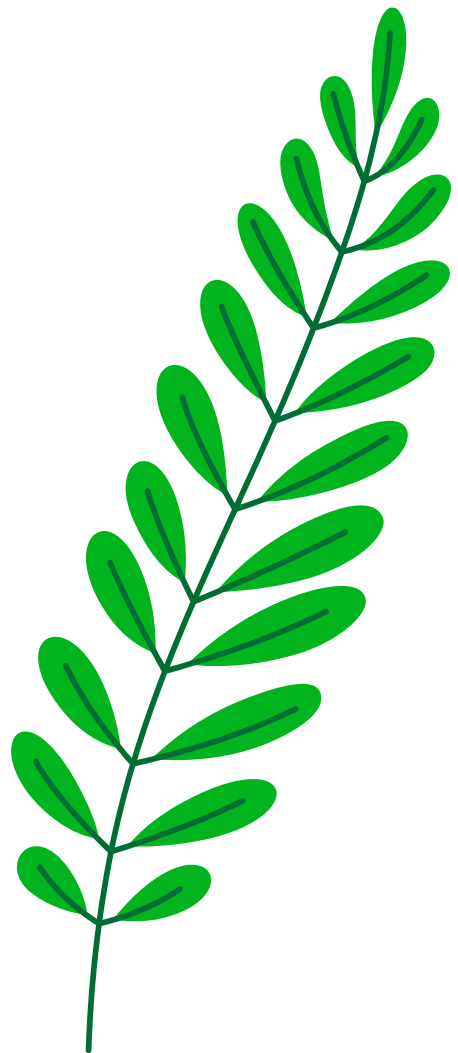
The topics of the webinar or event can be adapted as per your local context. We also encourage you to prepare a short report or summary of outcomes from your webinar which you can send to us once ready!



# Consult with fellow youth & develop a position paper

You can host a webinar session or dialogue for youth within your community, city or country, and invite key stakeholders such as government representatives (including from local authorities), scientists, experts, faith-leaders, representatives from Indigenous communities, other NGO representatives, community leaders, etc. Depending on the target audience and stakeholders involved, you can explore wide range of topics in such sessions, including but not limited to:

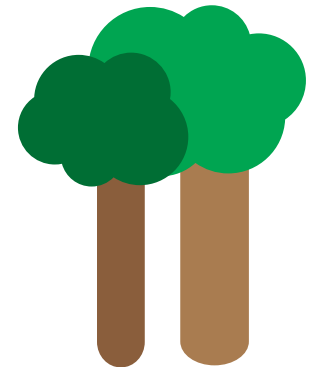
Biodiversity conservation and traditional / cultural / indigenous knowledge   Role of youth in ecosystem restoration  
Biodiversity and food security   Deforestation and forest fires   Aquatic Species: Threats and Conservation  
Perverse incentives harmful to nature   Sustainable Wildlife Management   Environment and Health/Well-being  
Issue of air pollution, plastic pollution and marine litter   Young people and ecosystem based adaptation  
Environmental pollution, drivers and how to address it   Environmental law and role of young people in it  
Human rights, youth rights and environment   Environmental Education   Introduction of Invasive Species  
Alternative ecologically sound socio-economic growth measurements   Youth and climate change mitigation  
Green post COVID-19 recovery plan   Role of youth in public policy development and implementation  
Agroecology and sustainable development management   Ocean biodiversity loss   Chemicals and waste  
Environmental degradation and the role of women and girls   Wildlife and the extinction of species



# Consult with fellow youth & develop a position paper

If you would like to focus on practical aspects in your community or city, you can write a position paper or open letter on a local issue. This position paper can then be sent to local politicians, mayor, city council, your school's headteacher or similar politicians. Topics can be related to addressing how your relevant authorities can -

- Improve recycling and promote waste segregation at sources of production
- Mainstream environmental education in formal, informal and non-formal institutions
- Protect local ecosystem and zones
- Tackle chemical waste in biospheres
- Strengthen integrity and resilience of ecosystems and nature parks
- Encourage and support farmers to protect biodiversity and native species / germplasm in their farms
- Regulate and control businesses contaminating biospheres (advocate for green sustainable businesses)
- Regulate tourism and encourage sustainable tourism practices
- How your school or university should build an insect protection garden
- Make an inventory / document biodiversity in your green spaces and environment



# How is your position paper most likely to be successful?

We encourage you to assess harmful activities in your immediate environment, community or school, or city / country. Writing about a topic you are familiar with is often easier for you and the decision-makers that are able to tackle the issues are easiest to approach on the local level. By offering alternatives and reasonable solutions in your position paper instead of leaving the solution to the decision-makers, your endeavour is more likely to succeed. Keep your paper short (2 pages), avoid technical jargon, render it informative and anecdotal, use the active voice and make sure to address the appropriate decision/policy maker(s) to increase the impact of your paper. Use bullet points to effectively convey your main messages. Similarly, if possible, you can invite other youth groups to sign-up to the paper. Remember to register your activity on the Youth WED portal so we can assist you directly and, once ready, to register it on WED Website to be published and featured.





# Host an activity on social media

Different platforms of social media can be used to voice-out the theme for World Environment Day and other related matters. Infographics, articles, statements, posters, and other visual and written works can be posted in these platforms by you. What you can do via social media -



- Twitter chat between youth and other stakeholders
- Instagram or Facebook live with leading youth advocates, experts, decision makers, politicians, celebrities, etc
- Posting an image on Instagram regarding the online strike/call for environmental conservation
- Start a challenge/nomination and invite people to participate
- Create Facebook, Instagram filters/frames for profile pictures to highlight WED and biodiversity
- Create a private room on Netflix and watch an environmental-themed film/documentary together with friends or anybody you want. Review the film or documentary live on Zoom/Facebook/Instagram and discuss the environmental issue(s).

You are further welcome and encouraged to tag social media of UNEP and UNEP MGCY (available toward the end of the toolkit) and those of your local leaders, politicians, decision-makers, partner youth organisations, etc. The hashtags are **#ForNature** **#Youth4Environment** **#WorldEnvironmentDay** - so we encourage you to use them! At the same time, you can come with your own hashtags, or use the one groups in your country or region may be using. We also encourage you to prepare a short summary of your discussions from your social media activity that you can later share with us.

# Online quizzes, games and competition

You can conduct online quizzes or competitions for willing participants about the multiple topics regarding the environment and biodiversity. Academic and trivia questions can be prepared related to biodiversity, nature or another topic of your relevance to test the youth participants' knowledge about topics concerning the environment. Similarly online games can be a way to engage people.

You can host such quizzes, games or competitions for different target groups and ages of young people. Some resources and examples for these are listed below -

## Quiz Applications

[Biodiversity Quiz A](#)

[Biodiversity Quiz B](#)

[Quizizz App](#)

[ProProfs](#)

## Kahoot!

[Biodiversity Kahoot!](#)

[Create your own Kahoot! for free](#)

## Quizlet

[Biodiversity Flashcards](#)

[What is Biodiversity Flashcards](#)

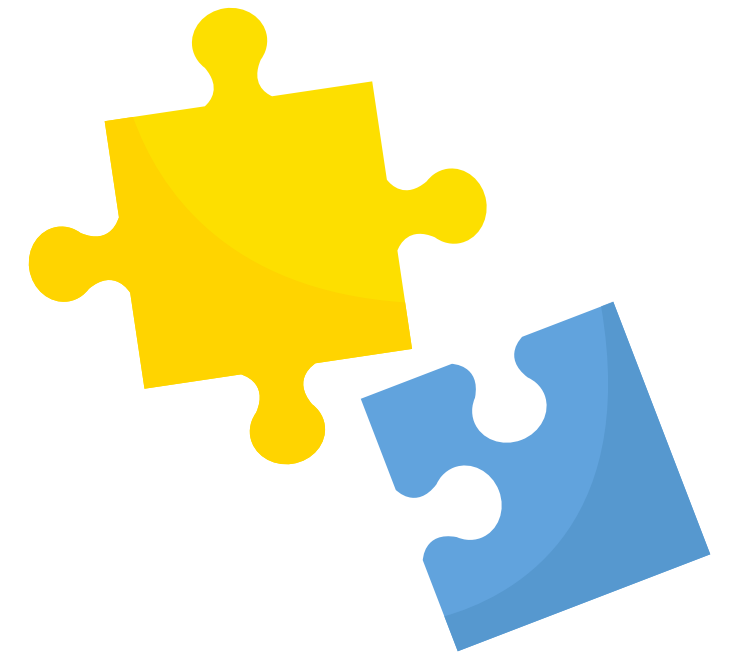
Environmental/Animal Charades ([species charades](#))

Phylo Game cards (<https://phylogame.org/>)

iNaturalist

[Biodiversity mapping and inventory](#)

Birdlasser (bird inventory and mapping)

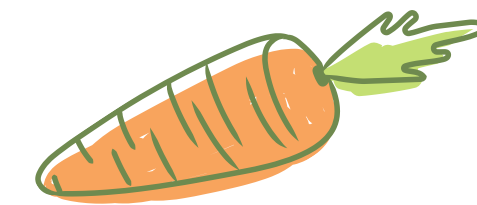


# Campaigns, actions and challenges on behavioral change

Establish some challenges on responsible consumption in the habits that affect ecosystems and therefore biodiversity, some of these can be planting a tree at home #TreeInHouseChallenge, Inviting to build community gardens or homes, to promote bee habitat (pollinators by excellence and a fundamental pillar of mega-diversity) this activity could be called A Bee One world, articulate effective actions from home and also remember sustainable habits of action, for example, a campaign for the preparation time in which it serves to move the hashtag in which people relate some experience that finds them connected to biodiversity, in the same way it can be outlined according to the global context (COVID- 19).

## Week/Month-Challenges to undertake and promote are:

- Maximizing intake of locally grown / regional/seasonal/vegetarian food
- Plant native flowers or trees that improve the diversity of endangered birds or insects
- Pick up litter on your way to work/the supermarket which would be disposed well
- Raising awareness through gifts: e.g. by giving seeds to your friends, neighbours, strangers on the street
- Minimise waste production, avoid plastic wrapping if possible
- Create biodiversity refuges at home (pollinator gardens, insect hotels)
- Donate old clothes, buy second hand clothes, recycle material to make new clothing
- Join or support a local eco initiative, either by volunteering or by donating
- Ditch the car, cycle for short distances to reduce exhaust fumes and petroleum fuel use
- Carpool to work and back as appropriate
- Switch over to an eco web search engine





# Empowering Children

As our nature is battling different forces of negative anthropogenic impacts, we need to save the future of our children. As they are the future stewards of environmental sustainability, we need to empower them as early as their developing age so they can become leaders in saving and protecting the environment.

Various activities are suggested for children to learn to respect and appreciate their natural environment and to learn more about what is happening to our nature. Let us remember that they will not just learn from physical materials such as books, modules, and coloring pads, they must observe the real world in front of their own eyes and by people around them. Education and raising awareness are the first steps in fostering the next environmentally conscious generation.



# Suggested Activities for Children

- Engage them in appreciating the nature through artworks related to environment
- Tell them a story regarding nature and biodiversity
- Engage them in age-appropriate movie screening that tackles environmental problems
- Promote learning through science and experimentation, from home for example (home gardens, terrariums, bird feeders, observation of the behavior of nature from the window)
- Create a script for a home environmental movie and have the children act it out to teach them about the importance of protecting the environment
- Create a history contest, video history (connecting with the point that prisca proposed) or story focused on biodiversity
- Incorporate natural aspects from your nearby environment in arts and crafts activities
- While in lockdown, visit a virtual nature museum with children (Virtual Tour, Natural History Museum; Virtual Tour, Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History)
- Bring wildlife home by observing wildlife webcams, joining an online safari, or by immersing yourself in a virtual reality encounter with gorillas or the great migration.
- If possible, join a local environmental group that provides activities for children





# It's Time #ForNature: Call to Action

On this World Environment Day, it is Time for Nature, Time to Wake Up. Time to reimagine our relationship with nature and to put it at the heart of our decision making. It will take not just one, but the global community to rise together, especially youth, to become fierce gatekeepers of a green future. Aligned with the World Environment Day, UNEP is launching a campaign called Time #ForNature, and you are invited to answer the big question: “Why is it Time #ForNature?”. You can post a photo of a favourite place in nature or simply explain why it's so important to protect our natural world. You can also incorporate this question on any of the events you or your organization will be hosting for the World Environment Day.



# Continuing the momentum - beyond WED - GET ENGAGED with us!

Engagement with World Environment Day is one step toward the movement, and we invite you to be engaged long-term and for upcoming activities and work! You may be wondering - how does your activity feed into the broader work? How can it be remembered? What can you do beyond WED? For an event of the importance of WED, your activity will definitely have a great influence and significance on your community, country, regional or at the global level. To understand it and take the most impact from it, it is crucial to summarize the activities that were held and create further impact based on the outcome. Please share reports and summaries of the outcomes of the activities. You will receive emails guiding you to the respective form shortly after WED. The content and storytelling about the activities will remain online and will therefore be a great reference for the engagement of your youth organisation.

Finally, we invite **you - as an youth individual or youth organisation** - to join the formal youth constituency on environmental governance - **UNEP Major Group for Children and Youth** - by signing up at [www.youthenvironment.org/join](http://www.youthenvironment.org/join)

# Online resources and learning materials

## **Reports**

[Emissions GAP Report \(UNEP\)](#)  
[Global Environment Outlook - GEO \(UNEP\)](#)  
[Youth Report on Ecosystem Restoration](#)  
[GEO for Youth](#)  
[GEO for Youth, Africa \(UNEP\)](#)  
[Living Planet Report 2018 \(WWF\)](#)  
[Africa Environmental Education and Training Action Plan \(UNEP\)](#)  
[Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services \(IPBES\)](#)  
[Local Biodiversity Outlook](#)  
[Global Biodiversity Outlook 5 \(CBD\)](#)

## **Engagement / learning platforms**

[UNCCD Knowledge Hub](#)  
[UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration](#)  
[Youth Portal on UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration](#)  
[UNCC: Learn](#)  
[Earth School by UNEP & TED-ed](#)  
[Multilateral Environmental Agreements - InforMEA](#)

## **Readings and knowledge/Related Toolkits**

[Latest publications \(Science Naturals\)](#)  
[UNESCO's commitment to biodiversity \(Notice Portal of UNESCO](#)  
[commitment to biodiversity\)](#)  
[Green Facts Digests \(Green Facts\)](#)  
[Biodiversity Learning Kit \(UNESCO\)](#)  
[Biodiversity Toolkit \(World Wildlife\)](#)  
[2020, Super Year for Nature and Biodiversity \(UNEP\)](#)  
[Africa Environmental Education and Training Action Plan \(UNEP\)](#)

## **Documentaries**

[11 must-watch environmental documentaries \(GlobalCitizen\)](#)

# For children - suggested online resources and learning materials

## For Children

### Resources from UN

[Fine fun activities to teach children about plastics pollution by UNEP](#)  
[Children's corner on UN Decade for Water Earth School by UNEP & TED-ed](#)  
[UNICEF climate comics portal](#)

### Storybooks

[25 Books That Teach Kids To Care About The Environment by Huffpost](#)  
[Top Children's Book on the Environment by Almighty Girl](#)  
[Resources by Penguin Publication](#)  
[Books for environment \(What We Do All Day\)](#)  
[Many: The Diversity of Life on Earth \(Biodiversity and environmental degradation\)](#)  
[Zobi and the Zoox \(Coral Bleaching\)](#)

## Virtual Content

[Natural History Museum](#)  
[Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History](#)  
[Cherry Blossoms Virtual Walk](#)  
[Wildlife Webcams](#)  
[Online Safari](#)  
[Gorilla VR](#)  
[The Great Migration VR](#)

## Coloring Pads for Children

[Environmental Coloring Books by nih.gov](#)  
[Coloring Pages \(First School\)](#)  
[Coloring Pages by Crayola](#)  
[Coloring Pages \(Pinterest\)](#)  
[Coloring Pages \(Edupics\)](#)



**CALL FOR ACTION!**

**Join the biggest ever movement of  
#Youth4Environment!**

**Want to organise a youth action for WED 2020 and/or  
share your story? And Register for virtual Youth  
Environment Assembly?**

**Go to: [youthenvironment.org/wed2020](https://youthenvironment.org/wed2020)**



**From 3 June - 5 June 2020, we are hosting a virtual *Youth Environment Assembly (YEA)* that will feature trainings, youth dialogues with high-level guests, ministers, UN agencies, etc. Join us now and register via [youthenvironment.org/wed2020](https://youthenvironment.org/wed2020)**

**REGISTER NOW AT**

[\*\*youthenvironment.org/wed2020\*\*](https://youthenvironment.org/wed2020)



# Contributors

## Authors of the toolkit

This toolkit is a joint effort of volunteers from UNEP Major Group for Children and Youth (self-organised youth constituency to UNEP) with support from UNEP Communications Division. Authors include:

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