



## UNITED NATIONS: When Mother Earth sends us a message

Mother Earth is clearly urging a call to action. Nature is suffering. Oceans filling with plastic and turning more acidic. Extreme heat, wildfires and floods, have affected millions of people. Even these days, we are still trying to get back on track from COVID-19, a worldwide health pandemic linked to the **health of our ecosystem**.

Climate change, **human-made changes** to nature as well as crimes that disrupt biodiversity, such as deforestation, land-use change, intensified agriculture and livestock production or the growing illegal wildlife trade, can accelerate the speed of destruction of the planet.

This is the second Mother Earth Day celebrated within the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. Ecosystems support all life on Earth. The healthier our ecosystems are, the healthier the planet - and its people. Restoring our damaged ecosystems will help to end poverty, combat climate change and prevent mass extinction. But we will only succeed if everyone plays a part.

United Nations Earth Day Statement 2023

### Message from Antonio Guterres (United Nations Secretary-General) on International Mother Earth Day 2023:

On International Mother Earth Day, we reflect on humanity's most important relationship — our relationship with the natural world.

From the air we breathe to the water we drink to the soil that grows our food – humanity's health depends on the health of Mother Earth.

Yet we seem hell-bent on destruction.

Our actions are laying waste to forests, jungles, farmland, wetlands, oceans, coral reefs, rivers, seas, and lakes.

Biodiversity is collapsing as one million species teeter on the brink of extinction.

We must end these relentless and senseless wars on nature.

We have the tools, the knowledge, and the solutions. But we must pick up the pace.

We need accelerated climate action with deeper, faster emissions cuts to limit global temperature rise to 1.5 degree Celsius. We also need massively scaled-up investments in adaptation and resilience, particularly for the most vulnerable countries and communities who have done the least to cause the crisis.

Healthy ecosystems — from oceans and rivers to forests and prairies — are also critical in our fight against climate change. Let's get to work to implement the historic UN biodiversity agreement to ensure that 30 per cent of Earth's land and water is protected by 2030.

At every step, governments must lead the way. But corporations, institutions and civil society also have a vital role.

Finally, we must learn from the time-won wisdom, knowledge and leadership of Indigenous Peoples, whose environmental stewardship stretches back millennia, and who hold many of the solutions to the world's climate and biodiversity crises.

This Earth Day, I urge people everywhere to raise your voices – in your schools, workplaces and faith communities, and on social media platforms – and demand leaders make peace with nature.

Let us all do our part to protect our common home for the sake of people and planet right now, and for the generations to come.