

Facts and Figures for World Environment Day

June 5, 2022

THE BIG PICTURE

- We are using the equivalent of [1.6 Earths](#) to maintain our current way of life, and ecosystems cannot keep up with our demands.
- The gap between what we need to spend to adapt and what we are actually spending is widening. Estimated costs of adaptation continue to rise and could reach [US\\$280-500 billion per year by 2050](#) for developing countries alone.
- Individuals and civil society [must play a key role](#) in raising awareness and urging governments and the private sector to make large-scale changes.

CLIMATE CHANGE

- To limit global warming to 1.5°C by the end of the century, we must [halve annual greenhouse gas emissions by 2030](#).
- There is a [50 per cent chance](#) that global warming will exceed 1.5°C in the next two decades.
- Methane, the primary component of natural gas, is [responsible for more than 25 per cent](#) of the warming we are experiencing today.
- The climate crisis causes extreme weather events that kill or displace thousands and result in [economic losses measured in the trillions](#).
- Investments in renewable energy [can deliver high economic multipliers](#), have high potential to crowd-in private investment and are an important step on the road to economy-wide decarbonization.
- Even under the most optimistic scenario where net-zero is reached by 2050, [global warming will continue in the short to medium term](#), potentially levelling off at 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

NATURE AND BIODIVERSITY LOSS

- Ecosystem degradation affects the well-being of an estimated [3.2 billion people](#), or 40 per cent of the world's population.
- Restoring 15 per cent of converted lands while stopping further conversion of natural ecosystems can [prevent 60 per cent](#) of expected species extinctions.
- Every year, we lose ecosystem services worth [more than 10 per cent of our global economic output](#)
- Around one-third of the world's farmland is degraded, about [87 per cent of inland wetlands worldwide have disappeared](#) since 1700 and one-third of commercial fish species are overexploited.
- Food systems are responsible for [80% of biodiversity loss](#), and [80% of all agricultural land](#) is for livestock and its feed, while [providing only 20% of calories](#).

POLLUTION

- Air pollution causes about [7 million premature deaths every year](#), one in nine of all deaths. Nine out of 10 people breathe unclean air, making it the most significant environmental health risk of our time.
- Only [57 per cent of countries](#) have a legal definition for air pollution. In 2019, [92 per cent of people](#) experienced air pollution in excess of safe World Health Organization guidelines.
- The most recent SDG monitoring cycle revealed that over [3 billion people](#) are at risk because they don't know enough about the health of surface and groundwater resources.

WASTE

- Under a business-as-usual scenario, annual plastic waste entering aquatic ecosystems could nearly triple from 9-14 million tons in 2016 to [23-37 million tons by 2040](#).
- The total global economic cost of marine plastic pollution on tourism, fisheries and aquaculture is estimated to have been [US\\$6-19 billion in 2018](#).
- From 1950 to 2017, an estimated [9.2 billion tons of plastic was produced](#), 7 billion tons of which has become waste.