



SEALOEEarth
Serene Environment And Life On Earth

A world in which all people participate in the stewardship of planet Earth.

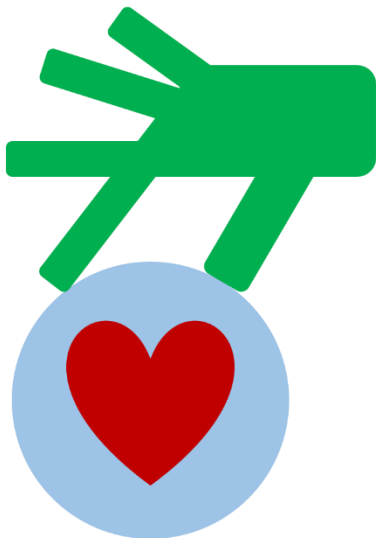
SEALOE Earth in Special Consultative Status with the United Nations ECOSOC since 2017

NEWSLETTER

Serene Day and Earth Day 2023

“Serenity helps peace flow from the inside to the outside. Tranquility aims to invite peace from the outside to the inside. Serenity is how we prepare to engage with the world around us in gentle ways. Tranquility is about designing our environments, routines, lifestyles, and relationships to be deep sources of energy. Although they are often used interchangeably, this distinction matters because it allows us to focus on different sides of the coin.”

~ Andy Mort



American Sign Language (ASL) sign for Serenity was designed by Dr. Chaitanya Hiremath, in 2023. To sign serenity, take your open right hand, then land only your thumb and middle finger on your chest near the top of your heart.
Photo credit: Chaitanya Hiremath

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We hope that you will enjoy reading this newsletter!

Harmony with Nature: United Nations

SEALOEarth participated in the 12th
Interactive Dialogue of the General Assembly
At United Nations Headquarters on
24 April 2023

Statement by Dr. Chaitanya Hiremath



Madame Moderator, Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Honorable guests, Colleagues, Ladies, and Gentlemen.

I am Dr. Chaitanya Hiremath from Boston, Massachusetts, USA. I am the founder and president of SEALOEarth, which stands for Serene Environment And Life On Earth.

I would like to address the question of how multiple stakeholders can be mobilized at the regional, national, and local levels to further the essence of the Earth-centered paradigm. It is my honor to share a solution to the reality of our global efforts.

First, let us examine the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in terms of human and earth-centered goals. The 13 Anthropocentric SDGs include Health; Education; Poverty; Food; Economic Growth; Technology; Inequality; Hunger; Justice; Governance; Decent Work; Peace; and Social Inclusion. And, the 4 Earth-centric SDGs include Energy, Climate, Water; Clean Energy; Life on Land; and Life below Water.

At first glance, the 17 SDGs are 76% human-centric and only 24% Earth-centric. Clearly, as a consequence of this, the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Beyond will yield human-centric results. You can only reap what you sow.

This is exactly what has been happening in light of the Basel Institute (of Commons and Economics) ranking report in 2019. At the top were Climate and Health. Disappointingly, at the bottom was maintaining Biodiversity on Land and below Water.

The magnitude of climate change and loss of biodiversity is immense. The first Earth Day in 1970 played a crucial role in energizing the environmental movement of the 20th century. However, subsequent yearly Earth Days have not been as impactful. Restoring the serenity of our planet requires more than just willpower and resolve; it necessitates fostering pride in our unique home.

I appreciate the efforts in the direction of the rights of nature in the context of the promotion of sustainable development. However, I express my concern that several other important aspects, lesser-known to the common man, such as the role of moonlight for turtle hatchlings, sound for whales, temperature for fish, and so on, are often overlooked as a priority.

Future consequences are inevitably shaped by present actions. The solution is the proposed International Serene Day (ISD). It will be the “first Earth Day” of the 21st century, kicking off a green era that is Earth-centric and will help create the paradigm shift we desire.

I would like to underscore the positive impact of human connection to nature on mental and physical well-being and emphasize the well-being of all inhabitants of planet Earth, human and non-human. Serene Day is needed to create awareness of anthropogenic intervention at several levels, including but not limited to air, water, land, light, sound, thermal, nuclear, and space. It will provide the opportunity for humanity to appreciate the beauty of nature and the grandeur of life around us. I urge you to support the draft resolution to proclaim 20 March the International Serene Day.

Representing two sides of the same coin, International Serene Day (March 20) to International Mother Earth Day (April 22) makes a great appreciation-awareness month, focusing on all aspects, lesser-known to well-known issues facing our planet Earth.

In conclusion, expanding Earth Hour and Earth Day to Earth Month, while acknowledging International Serene Day, promotes an Earth-centered lifestyle and underscores the significance of cherishing the planet's beauty and serenity.

Thank you for your attention.

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International Serene Day. March 20.

**“The solutions to our planet
Earth’s problems,
big and small,
begin with
an appreciation of nature.”**

- DR. HIREMATH



Promotion of International Serene Day

United Nations

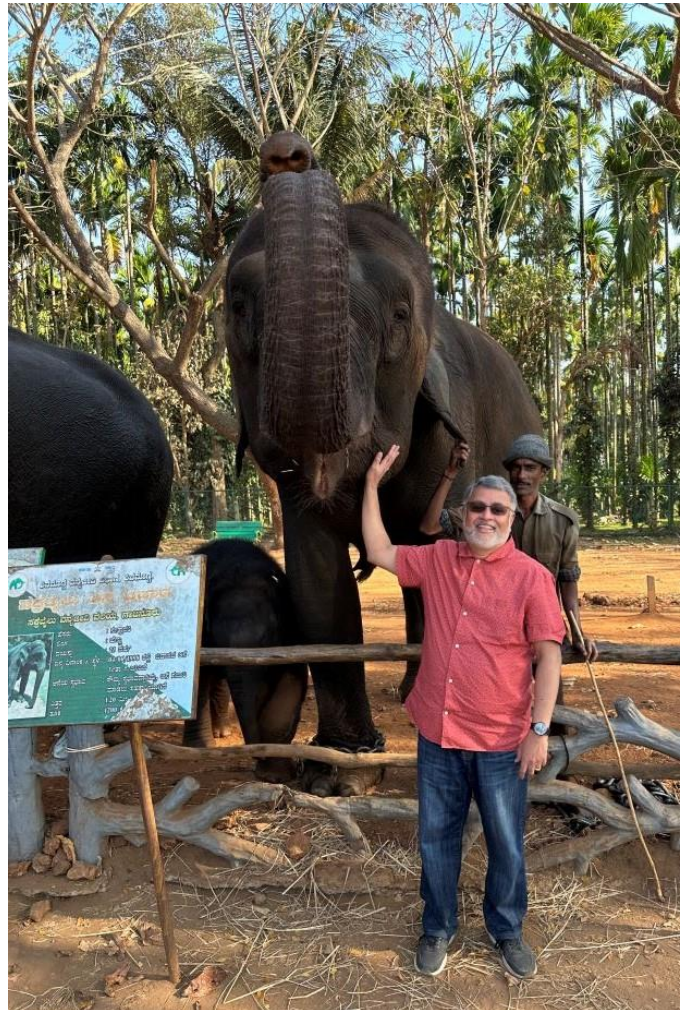
Spain



United States of America



India









Celebration of Earth

Westford & Littleton, Massachusetts, USA

On April 22nd, 2023, the Earth Flag was hoisted at the home of Dr. Chaitanya Hiremath.

The 11th anniversary celebration of Mother Earth Day took place on May 6th, 2023, at Reuben Hoar Library in Littleton, Massachusetts. Dr. Hiremath hosted the event, facilitated by Mrs. Shobha Hiremath. The band Whiskey Cherrybomb, led by Mr. David Jameson, performed and impressed both the live and online audience. It was arranged by Stage Music Center of Acton and coordinated by Satenik. Essay contestants shared their works, and awards were presented by Ms. Rebecca Shaw and Dr. William Harman. Certificates and prizes were subsequently sent out by mail. Sadhika Hiremath captured photos and assisted with the event's live-streaming.

Global Essay Contest 2023



Around the World

In the early 2023 alone, SEALOEarth’s global reach included countries such as, Algeria, Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Cambodia, Canada, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, France, Germany, Honduras, Hong Kong, India, Iraq, Israel, Ireland, Kenya, Malaysia, Nepal, Nigeria, Netherlands, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Russia, Singapore, Sierra Leone, Spain,

Sweden, Taiwan, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States, Vanuatu among others.

We were delighted to receive 66 exceptional essays from across the globe. These essays underwent a meticulous blind-scoring process by our esteemed panel of judges, comprising experts from Australia and the United States. The participation of students was encouraged by dedicated teachers from multiple schools.

Essay Contest Awards

"How can an International Serene Day create a paradigm shift from a human-centered to an Earth-centered world and inspire harmony with nature?"

Youth (ages 9-13)

Mahiro Jilesen, 14 (MA, USA)	First place
Chaeun Lee, 11 (Jiangsu, China)	Second

Juniors (ages 14-18)

Jian Lee, 15 (Gyeonggido, S Korea)	First place
Avery Ganz, 15 (MA, USA)	Second

Honorable Mention

- Aashrith Ram, 14 (MA, USA)
- Alexandra Dunne, 15 (MA, USA)
- Andrew Fang, 15 (MA, USA)
- Jeffrey Xu, 15 (MA, USA)
- Bibek Limbu, 19 (Sikkim, India)

Essay prompt for 2024

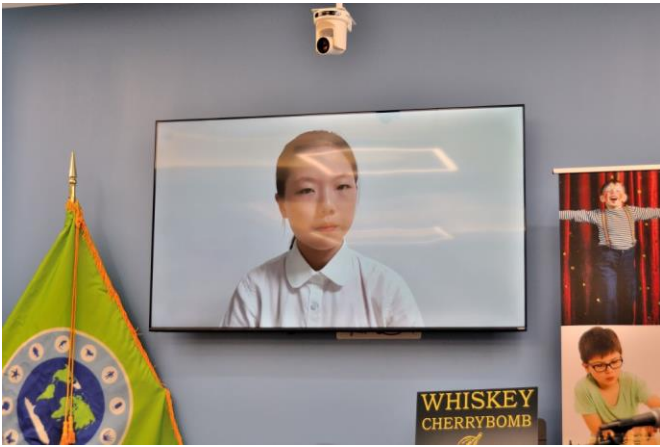
"How can the ethical relationship between humanity and Mother Earth be strengthened in the pursuit of sustainable development?"

The deadline is March 1, 2024.

For more information, please visit:

<http://sealoearth.org/essaycontest.html>









SEALOEarth Global Essay Contest 2023. Photo credit: Avery Ganz

International Serene Day. **March 20.**

**“Some basic needs on Earth
include
moonlight for turtles,
quiet waters for dolphins,
and
nature for humans.”**

- DR. HIREMATH



Earth's Insomnia



Chaeun Lee (11)
Jiangsu, CHINA

How can a National serene day create a paradigm shift from a human centered to an earth centered world and inspire harmony with nature?

Many years ago, the earth, small and tranquil, had a time of one of the most vital rests it needed. Silence. No humans roamed about, screeching around. Every night, sparkling stars would shine, perching on clouds. The earth has changed from being quiet long ago. Screeching sounds of car traffic and the ear-piercing sound of human chatter breaks into our lives. Having a National Serene day would imply for us to have some time for resting our ears, and taking nature walks.

But what exactly is a National Serene day?

The word serene typically means peaceful calmness, someone or something that is unfazed by something. [1] This would then suggest that if made, a National Serene day would be a day where, globally, citizens all over the world would stop watching tv, stop construction, and start doing peaceful, calm activities. It would be beneficial to humans as they would suffer less from headaches and Insomnia, which disturb our daily life and nighttime. [2]

However, this is human-centered. Human-centered is how everything we do is mostly about, for, and because of

humans. It means that the whole purpose is for humans. It is not a surprise, as our world works like that. We are a human-centered community. Nearly a third of people worldwide believe in human-centered beliefs, and we built up our economy boost that way. Though that may sound like nothing wrong, it is time we shifted our attention to the earth. Because mankind is not the only one who is suffering because of sound.



California Audubon. Photo credit: Donna Willey

For example, in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, tourist helicopters are scaring away elephants from their natural habitat. The sage grouse, an endangered species in the United States, has been intimidated by sound pollution; their numbers have dropped by 56% or more. Bats, are now confused, not hunting out at nighttime when they usually should. [3] Even the underwater creatures are not unaffected. Sound is important to key survival in the ocean, and boats have disturbed much of the life under the ocean, especially dolphins and whales. Research shows high-pitched, man-made sounds frighten many dolphins and whales and cause them to beach themselves. [4] But that is not the only harm they have done to sea creatures. Orcas struggle to communicate with each other because the sound of boats drowns out their wailing. [5] This seems even more shocking as an average orca communicates as loud as a jet plane's engines. Sound pollution destroys a shark's tissues. Although they have adjusted to the natural sounds of the ocean, it took them decades upon decades. Now, they might vanish entirely before they adjust. [6] Now, earth has fallen into deep insomnia. All the animals in the world are now suffering from sound pollution, light pollution, and more.

Why is this harmful to us? Why is this not beneficial to the world?

The reason is simple. The earth is a place full of diversity. All animals rely on one another for survival. For example, if a small plant died out then the animal eating the plant, for example, rabbits, would die out. Then the animal that eats the rabbit would die out as well, and so forth.

So how can a National Serene day help?

Instead of focusing on human-centered helpfulness, we can focus on helping animals, by silencing some communities and construction. Now, the only question is, how do we do that?

Of course, the ideal idea would be to just stop everything from making noise, but the idea is too varying, too vast- as well as too simple. The first idea is not to erase construction, but to limit construction. Construction activities such as drilling, blasting, or pile driving can generate harmful high levels of noise and disturb wildlife. Limiting these activities in special times such as breeding time, migration, or any other type of important time for animals will help reduce the negative impacts of sound pollution. Many scientists discovered that if human-made sounds are reduced, then the animal's stress would also be reduced too. For instance, when the first sign of the pandemic broke out and everyone stayed in their homes, scientists noticed a significant change in the wild. For example, in Thailand, endangered leatherback turtles were spotted on beaches that were once heavily populated and used by tourists. This just shows how human silence may lead to positive impacts on nature's inhabitants.

If this is too grand or too acute of a thing to do, then we can establish something called quiet zones. These quiet zones would help protect the habitats of some animals, such as national parks or natural reserves for animals to safely breed, live, and live without the disturbance of humans. Noise barriers such as vegetative buffers, earthen berms, or acoustic walls would help in both human development and animal

development. Both of these ideas can be used on National Serene day.

If we wish to approach this in a more careful way, we could conduct noise impact tests. This can help us see which areas are more greatly impacted by noise. This will guide us to see which places would be the most beneficial for us to safely work on without distracting wildlife. Another idea, however separate or close to the others, is to simply limit the use of activities and encourage the use of quieter equipment in places. For example, ATV riding, boating, and snowmobiling are all large examples of things that can be quietened.

The most important thing out of all of these is to be aware that there are other lives going on around the world. Sometimes we get too consumed whether we got an A plus or a D that we forget about how beautiful and unique our one and only earth is. Remember that there is only one earth, only one try for humanity. You never realize something is important until you lose it. Let's not be the case with our earth.

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International Serene Day



Zadie Murray (18)
Massachusetts, USA

The human race has lost sight of how important our Earth is. An International Serene Day can fix that. We cannot truly be serene without knowing we are fixing our planet. This means as a species we have to switch from a human-centered world to an earth centered world. The way to enforce all of these ideas is through the government. Just one day can cause us to realize what we've done to the planet and start to begin the reversal process with the right tools. Humans spend tons of time at home and in front of devices. If we used what we already know and can learn about the environment we could easily help instead. There are always times dedicated for people to choose to learn about their planet like Earth Day. But International Serene Day will assure that this education will not be ignored. We can accomplish informing the public using governments. The government is a resource that almost every country has a form of which can create the professionalism this project needs. We can give everyone a day off and send out government-mailed letters "assigning" people to different jobs to help the environment, similar to how the judicial system in countries like America gives out jury duty. This will create a time where everyone can reconnect, help, and use nature for their mental health benefits. Even if they make the choice not to help, information will be enclosed within the letter that will educate

people. Together, as governments united we can make a change.

International Serene Day will involve people to engage in joining or helping different environmental organizations. In order for us to follow through we must get outside and assist. An example of how we are currently doing the opposite is that, "The average American spends more than 10 hours a day in front of a digital screen." ("Restore your brain with nature" 2:15-2:18). A fraction of this time could be spent restoring the planet and making a difference. After all, we aren't the only ones living here. "Scientists have estimated that there are around 8.7 million species of plants and animals in existence." (National Geographic Society). International Serene Day would be the day to use that time and think about the other animals and plants on the planet. Imagine if we were able to aid these creatures and the Earth by bringing everyone together within one day.

We need International Serene Day in addition to Earth Day as another measure. Humans already have many ways to help our planet on their own and in their everyday lives. International Serene Day will enforce that and convey how easy it is to take those baby steps going forward to rescue and honor our Earth. You may be asking yourself, but we have an Earth Day already? Don't we already celebrate Earth then? Doesn't that educate us? Well, Earth Day is a good way to learn about how our planet is being affected. But, have you ever truly listened to what you can actually do to help? If you have, have you ever truly followed through with it? When humans celebrate Earth Day, they pay attention to how beautiful and wonderful Earth is and not the part of the holiday where you find out what to do to help. Frequently, humans choose to ignore things that seem hard or inconvenient. In an article written about Earth Day, it said, "Let me just say that it's totally okay. Sometimes, it can be very intimidating to take that leap into sustainability or zero waste living, but having friends or a supportive community is often exactly what we need to take those steps forward." (6 Easy Ways to Embrace Earth Day 2022-Manifesting Serenity). This proves that we don't always want to learn how to be more conscious because it's either

difficult, new, or scary. Often all three! We love Earth Day as a way to recognize the planet's importance and the seriousness of our problem. But, we need another push to truly embrace Earth similar to the goal of Earth Day. We need to take the next more urgent stride. In the SEALOEarth video Dr. Chaitanya while proposing International Serene Day and says, “[...] every day should be Earth Day for dedicated professionals like us, but this is not practical for the general public to educate and create awareness that needs a paradigm shift” (“INTERNATIONAL SERENE DAY, every year on March 20 (proposed)” (2:11-2:20), and this is true. We need a second day to truly take action, we are the inhabitants of this planet and must work together to shift our mindsets. We need International Serene Day to educate.



Jury Duty Stamp. Photo credit: United States Postal Service

How will we do this? We can't just create a day and expect everyone to figure out what to do. Using my knowledge and research about the US government I found a way to contact everyone directly to their houses individually. In the US we have a judicial system that sends out letters calling people to jury duty. Unlike most other types of mail, it can't be ignored since it is sent out by the government. Our staff at the marshal service, “[...] will first attempt mail service via registered, certified, or first-class mail addressed to the named individual at his or her usual residence or business address.” (US Marshals

Service-Juror Summons). At least five other countries also have complete access to all their civilian information. But, you don't need complete access to everyone's information like in these countries. All you need is a way to send letters to everyone, and in order to cut down on paper use it's possible to send one letter to businesses addressed to all employees instead of individual letters. It's time to take steps forward. We can use our governments for the benefit of our planet if we are strategic and logical. It's time to try.

The only true way to create harmony with and within our planet is to evolve in a way to save and appreciate our planet. Humans have to change, humans have to take steps in order to actually feel serene. As a species we have created governments, we have groups of people that run countries and lead people. Let's use that. Let's use this opportunity to bring humans together individually. Let's use the government to create a paradigm shift and change people's mindsets from human-centered to Earth-centered. Let's become the true form of serene by helping. Let's use International Serene Day for that.

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How An International Serene Day Could Revitalize the Environmental Movement



Jeffrey Xu (15)
Massachusetts, USA

Humanity is on the verge of environmental calamity. Aside from the more prominent problems plaguing the earth, such as plastic and air pollution, there are a plethora of more obscure but similarly disastrous diseases afflicting the environment. The lack of knowledge about these issues has led to them being relatively unaddressed, and as such, they run rampant ruining the world. During post-World War II times, there were similar environmental difficulties; yet, in spite of both the more primitive technology back then and a comparable deficit in the public consciousness about those difficulties, humanity was able to organize together the environmental movement into a strong, cohesive campaign, grow support for the campaign by massively publicizing the harmful effects of the damage done to the environment, and kick off a decade full of some of history's most important environmental regulations. The event that catalyzed this change was a rallying point for millions of environmentalists around the world. Today, we need something just as monumental, that will spark a green revolution anew. This is where International Serene Day, an international holiday proposed to the United Nations by SEALOEarth founder and CEO Dr. Chaitanya Hiremath, comes in. An International Serene Day would do the same thing that the first Earth Day did: put huge amounts of media attention on how the environment is being destroyed, unite the

environmental movement, and usher in an era of new green legislation and heightened public awareness about the environment.

Back in the 1960s, the environment was in a grim condition. Factories were polluting rivers, turning them from clear, flowing water to foul, oozing muck. DDT was used widely as a pesticide, despite the terrible impact it had on the environment. Nuclear weapons testing was releasing many tons of irradiated dust into the atmosphere. Lead was used in gasoline, which caused cars to emit toxic lead gas. Many species were on the verge of extinction. There was little being done to combat these issues, as the opinion of many was that "Pollution is the price of progress" (Rome, "Give" 526), and that the destruction of the natural world was a necessary evil required for humanity to move forward. Furthermore, racism and the Vietnam war were grabbing international attention, with most people's campaigning efforts dedicated to combating these two issues.



DDT: Secret life of a pesticide. Photo credit: Brian Dunning

However, during the next decade, many of these problems were fixed. DDT became banned in many countries, lead gasoline was phased out of use, and numerous treaties banning nuclear testing were signed. The general attitude was more pro-environment and anti-pollution. In America, Congress put aside partisan politics to go on a bipartisan environmental lawmaking spree, pushing out landmark statutes such as the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, Endangered Species Act, and many more. Furthermore, a new department was created to enforce all of these laws: the Environmental

Protection Agency (EPA, “Laws”). Similar legislation was occurring in Europe, with the first Environmental Action Programme drawn up in 1973. This in turn led to the creation of a Directorate General for the Environment, an entire department specifically responsible for the protection of Europe’s nature (DG ENV). Even the United Nations hopped on the bandwagon, creating the United Nations Environmental Program in 1972 (UNEP). In nongovernmental affairs, many environmental nonprofits were founded during the years following the first Earth Day; some notable examples include Earthjustice, the Natural Resources Defence Council, Friends of the Earth International, and Greenpeace. In the three years following 1970, membership in five of the largest conservation organizations of the time grew by over forty percent, with the new members bringing both increased funding and manpower (Fox 315).



The First Earth Day in April 1970. William K. Reilly with Gaylord Nelson (Earth Day Founder). Photo credit: US Environmental Protection Agency

While there certainly was a growing interest of the general public in the well-being of the environment during this time period, it was not enough to explain these radical changes. No, the event responsible for this sudden movement toward conserving the planet was the first Earth Day, on April 22, 1970. It brought together all the pro-environmental energy subtly growing in the background and put it on display for the wider world. Over 20 million people came together to protest what humanity was doing to the Earth, and when that many people spoke up, others started listening (“The History”). As said by the World Economic Forum, “Earth Day demonstrations left an

indelible mark on US policy” (Wood), resulting in the legislation mentioned above. Furthermore, Earth Day was where the environmental movement began, in the sense that it was the reason that environmentalists were recognized as a group campaigning for something in the same way that antiwar protesters were: “The coverage of environmental issues in the media increased dramatically. [...] For the first time, commentators began to talk about the cause as a mass movement” (Rome, “Give” 551). Earth Day was also responsible for a media frenzy that made the environmental cause common knowledge, with Earth Day becoming “a ‘peg,’ in news parlance, for thousands of stories about environmental issues” (Rome, “Genius” 201). Even just the hype building up for Earth Day convinced many college students to become green activists: “The New York Times reported in a front-page story in November [1969, 5 months before Earth Day] that the environment soon might eclipse the Vietnam War as the number one campus issue, and Newsweek made a similar prediction a month later” (Rome, “Give” 549). Finally, the ripples from the first Earth Day can still be felt today. Not only has Earth Day grown into a central rallying point for many environmentalists, with over a billion people participating in Earth Day 2022 (“The History”), but the first Earth Day also left a measurable impact on the environment in the places it was celebrated. A study published in the *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* found that the effects of celebrating Earth Day in 1970 on a community ranged from a lower risk of birth defects to a lower concentration of carbon monoxide in the air (Hungerman and Moorthy).

Today, humanity is in a similar predicament to the 1960s: the environment is in terrible condition due to our actions. While disasters such as plastic pollution and global warming are relatively well known by the general public and have major efforts dedicated to fixing them, there are many more of similar severity but lesser notoriety. For example, there is noise pollution, defined by Britannica as “unwanted or excessive sound that can have deleterious effects on human health, wildlife, and environmental quality” (Nathanson and Berg). Effects of noise pollution range from the sounds of

traffic deterring birds from an area, and causing the birds that stayed to lose weight (Why Noise Pollution 3:54), to explosions giving whales and dolphins hearing loss (Why Whales 3:19), and even loud trains damaging the mental capabilities of children (Why Noise Pollution 2:47). Yet, despite the fact that humanity “evolved in a completely different sound environment” (Why Noise Pollution 0:54), and in this artificially noisy world of our own creation, “it’s astonishing that our ears, anybody’s ears, work at all” (Why Noise Pollution 0:54), noise pollution is still mostly unknown and under-addressed. America had federal regulation regarding noise control in the 1970s, up until Reagan defunded it in 1981 (EPA, “History”). The states do not fare much better, with only twelve out of the fifty states having noise pollution regulation; worse, in almost half of those states, regulation is barely enforced. (“State Noise”). Across the Atlantic, Europe fares just as badly. Even the European Environment Agency, which is currently working on eliminating noise pollution, has grim projections for the future. In one of their own reports, they said that there are “no prospects of achieving a 30% decrease in the number of people chronically disturbed by transport noise by 2030” (European Union). This is even with their most optimistic model for the future; in their conservative model, noise pollution actually increases, due to rising population and transportation needs (European Union).

However, the difference between now and the 1960s is that there is no equivalent to Earth Day in the near future. There are the yearly Earth Days, but those lack the same impact as the original one. This is where International Serene Day comes in. International Serene Day will be the “first Earth Day” of the 21st century, kicking off a green era that rivals the 70s. While the first Earth Day had twenty million participants, International Serene Day will have over two billion. There is no shortage of volunteers, as a recent Pew Research Center poll found that eighty percent of people worldwide are willing to make changes to their lifestyle to combat climate change (Bell et al. 1). Even in the polarized political climate today, this many people, coming from all across the globe, and all pushing for a better environment will force governments into action. As for

what the focus of International Serene Day will be, it will proceed in a comparable fashion to Earth Day. Although the emphasis will be on raising awareness of underpublicized environmental cataclysms and advocating for pro-environment change, there will be a large amount of wiggle room for creative expression. Participants will be encouraged to use their imagination to best deliver their message, as long as it is in a peaceful manner, to capture the free, creative spirit that made the first Earth Day such a success. Combining the creativity of a significant portion of the world’s population with the communicative power of the internet, allowing information to spread rapidly and over long distances generates a recipe for certain success. After the first International Serene Day, expect to see a fallout that lasts for years to come, with governments and businesses finally moving forward to a brighter, cleaner future.

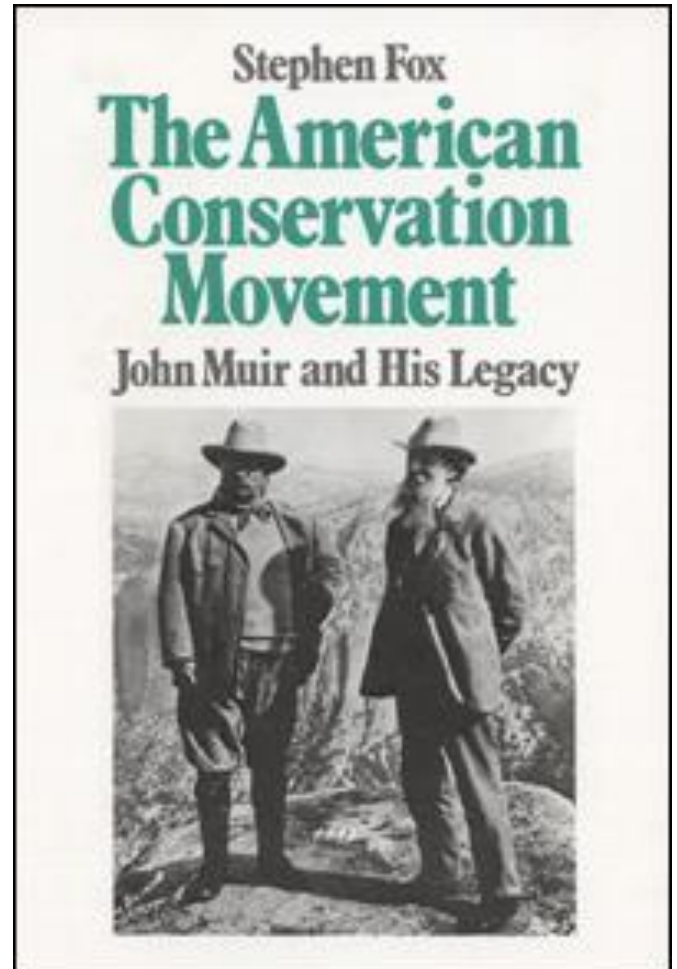
As said by Doctor Chaitanya Hiremath, the original proposer of International Serene Day, “One Earth Day per year is not enough” (“INTERNATIONAL SERENE” 2:05). The original Earth Day was able to solve many of the environmental problems of the 20th century, and do so within a decade. An International Serene day would solve many of the environmental problems of the 21st century and do so even faster. What is the United Nations waiting for? We need an International Serene Day, and we need it now.

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Stephen Fox: *The American Conservation Movement*. Photo credit: The University of Wisconsin Press

Creating Harmony Through Serenity: An International Serene Day's Potentials of Fostering Coexistence of Mankind and Nature



Jian Lee (15)

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Throughout the course of a day, we, the people of modern society, encounter countless sounds. From the harmony of music to the cacophony of traffic, silence and tranquility are rare occasions in an average day. The same goes for nature; among the blinding lights and deafening sounds of humanity, nature can hardly recognize its own. Anthropogenic intervention is, in fact, causing damage to the health of both the environment and humankind. Mother Earth is in need of an International Serene Day – a day to raise awareness of the toxicity of human intervention, “appreciate the beauty of nature and the grandeur of life around us,” and “foster pride in our unique planet” on multiple levels and aspects, so as to borrow the very words of Dr. Hiremath (“INTERNATIONAL SERENE” 3:18-3:36). In other words, International Serene Day is needed to make our planet an Earth-centered place, living in harmony with nature.

One way International Serene Day can achieve its goal of creating an Earth-centered world is by raising awareness of anthropogenic intervention. A good example where people

recognized the harmful effects of human civilization and are working to make a change is in the Gulf of Panama. Unlike the beliefs of most people, under the ocean is a lively ecosystem in which all kinds of species use sound to communicate with one another—seals, dolphins, whales—, the sound is currently drowned out by man-made noises from cruise ships, leisure boats, construction, commercial shipping, sonar, seismic exploration, or military exercises. (“Why Whales” 0:55-3:04). The low hum coming from large ships is especially fatal to whales since the sound has similar frequencies to whale songs, interfering with their communication and navigation. The paths of the 50,000 ships on the ocean surface right now greatly overlap with the habitats and migration routes of whales, resulting in a striking estimation of up to 24,000 collisions between 2007 and 2016 (“Why Thousands” 0:51-1:28). To stop the continuation of these tragic, yet surely preventable deaths, the Panama Canal, the center of global shipping routes, initiated a traffic separation scheme and a speed limit. Creating a narrow shipping route for the ships passing through the canal to use has decreased the potential for ship strikes by “more than 90%” (“Why Thousands” 5:15-5:48). Another example of positive efforts to minimize harmful anthropogenic intervention is Finland's Olkiluoto Nuclear Power Plant. While nuclear energy stands as one of the cleanest energy sources devised so far, it produces nuclear waste that needs to be stored in a safe place that prevents the leaking of harmful radiation for thousands of years. Countries around the globe are struggling to devise a solution for permanent, sustainable storage of nuclear waste that can rid of the risks of releasing lethal radiation into nature. Finland's solution was to dig “long tunnels with small holes in which they'll place casks of nuclear waste then backfill the tunnels with clay to be left for an eternity (“The Nuclear” 6:04-6:51). The key to this solution is the location; created in a stable bedrock with minimum exposure to natural disasters, the tunnels can be left without human management or risks of leaking radiation into groundwater. International Serene Day will provide a chance for the people of Earth to appreciate such movements to coexist with nature and further foster positive efforts.



This underground tomb in Finland will store nuclear waste for 100,000 years. Caroline Delbert (Popular Mechanics). Photo credit: Emmi Korhonen/Getty Images

International Serene Day will also provide an opportunity for people to appreciate and enjoy the beauty of Mother Nature. Since the commercialization of artificial light, light pollution, or the “over-illumination of cities and light skies by artificial light” has increased about 6 to 10% each year over the past few decades (“Light Pollution” 0:30-2:10). As a result, NASA photograph-based computer images of the United States display a change in which “what was a very dark country as recently as the 1950s is now nearly covered with a blanket of light” (Bogard). As for myself, I have never seen a starry night sky in real life until I visited the deserts of Death Valley when I was twelve. With all the air and light pollution in the atmosphere of the city, I have always taken skies full of glistening stars as a literary creation. Standing in the desert, looking up at the milky way for the first time in my life, I stood in wonder as the stars of night shone brighter than jewels in the light. I had never known that the night sky could be so stunningly beautiful. As a result of light pollution, not only do modern people like myself not know of a starry night sky, but they are also suffering from health defects such as eyesight damage, sleep deprivation, cancer, diabetes, and even depression. To spread awareness of these problems, a global movement under the name “Earth Hour” is held annually, organized by the WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature); every year, people turn their lights off for one full hour. According to Earth.Org, the event “took place in a record-breaking 188 countries and territories, with about 17900 participating

landmarks” in 2018, and the numbers are increasing by the year (Earth.Org). However, as mankind takes further steps into space exploration, movements to protect the night sky must expand outside of the Earth’s atmosphere. Mankind has sent over 11140 satellites into the Earth’s orbit, 3372 among which are active; to add to the number, many giant space-tech companies, including SpaceX, are planning to shoot thousands more to create a network encompassing the entire globe (“Space Debris” 0:45-1:45). Soon enough, there might be more satellites and burning debris in the sky than stars and comets. The current space debris crisis is only growing larger, and it calls for recognition by the public. In all, celebrating the beauty of Earth may expand from an Earth Hour and an Earth Day to an Earth Month – ultimately, to an Earth-centered lifestyle – by celebrating International Serene Day.



The arc of the Milky Way lights up the sky over Zabriskie Point in California's Death Valley National Park. Photo credit: Miguel Claro

Finally, International Serene Day can foster pride in Earth, which can lead to further efforts toward creating a more sustainable, harmonized human environment. Nature has the power to heal and nurture. For children, nature teaches children empathy and socialization, not only between people but also between species. Children can experience place attachment by spending time in the arms of Mother Nature, which can lead to healthy development and an inscribed love for nature. Even for adults, spending time in nature has physical and mental health benefits: “your heart rate will come down, you will breathe slower, you sweat less, and cortisol, the stress hormone, starts decreasing” (“Prescribing Nature” 6:19-10:23). In Professor

David Strayer's research, the electroencephalographic data showed that people who fully immersed themselves in nature had lower theta frequencies, which indicates that their brains were rested; these group of people, compared to those who were asked to multitask while on a walk in nature, were better rested and more present ("Restore your" 4:22-6:42). By encouraging such connection with nature by celebrating the International Serene Day, more people will go through stress-relieving, body-healing experiences with nature. This will then help people form a positive image of nature, which will naturally lead to taking pride in our beautiful nature and planet. As Dr. Nooshin Razani urges her audience to, people might even start to "take care of nature" ("Prescribing Nature" 17:10-17:26). Like a butterfly's tiny wings can start a violent storm, a single celebration or a small epiphany can ultimately lead to a worldwide movement to love and care for nature.

In conclusion, International Serene Day will encourage a paradigm shift into an earth-centered world where mankind can pursue a life in harmony with nature. It will foster the recognition of human effects on the environment, the appreciation of the beauty of nature, and the taking pride in our planet. Right now, the world is clashing with each other, creating a cacophony of destruction and pain. Let us instead create a world of harmony where people and the rest of the Earth's diverse residents live together in peace and serenity.

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The Panama Canal



Panama Canal is one of the world's mightiest engineering marvels - a 48-mile-long world-changing achievement linking two oceans across a continental divide. - Nigel Thompson. Photo credit: Getty Images

How an International Serene Day Could Save Our Planet

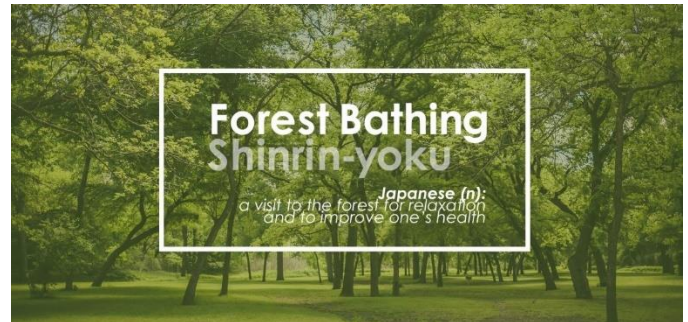


Alexandra Dunne (15)
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We are on the brink of a climate catastrophe and we must act if we, as the human race, want to have a future. We are already feeling the effects of climate change and action must be taken to ensure that things do not get worse. We are becoming more out of touch with our environment, and our children are suffering as a result. Corporations are operating without restriction and causing damage to our environment. Action must be taken. This action should be taken in the form of an International Serene Day. An International Serene Day would encourage humanity as a whole, and our youth, to explore and connect with nature, and it would hold corporations accountable for their effects on climate change and therefore, help humanity on a societal level to become more in-tune with nature by being more eco-friendly.

However, before the effects of an International Serene Day can be discussed, what an International Serene Day would look like must be defined first. It is important to clarify, foremost, that this guideline is based on an American-centric viewpoint. There cannot be a clear-cut model that is interpreted internationally, so what an American Serene Day model would look like was strictly focused on, despite this being an International Serene Day. For starters, all National Parks should be free to visit in order to encourage people to explore and immerse themselves in nature, as Serene Day is looking to

‘inspire harmony with nature’. First of all, nature needs to be accessible. This is one way to achieve this. A result of this is that Serene Day would likely act as a National Holiday in the U.S., with school and work off. Second of all, if we actually want Serene Day to be ‘serene’, then there should be a limit on motor vehicle usage, like lawnmowers. An additional idea is to have news channels segment some time to climate change education, same as is typically done with Earth Day. There are a lot of unknown ways that we are damaging the environment, and this day would be a good way to educate the public on these issues to promote a more-aware society and shift our focus to be more earth-centric. Finally, International Serene Day should kick off a week where the U.N. focuses on legislation that is climate-based. The legislative action they have taken thus far has been remarkably successful, and change must be made on a broader scale to make humanity truly as harmonious with nature as we need to be in order to save our planet.



Shinrin-yoku (Japanese) is Forest Bathing. Photo credit: Piano magazine

We, as a species, need to reconnect with nature. However, reconnecting with nature is a very vague topic. How does the average person connect with nature? One way is a meditation tactic called “forest-bathing”. This philosophy was originally discovered in Japan, under the name shinrin-yoku. A phenomena was discovered that after individuals spent time in nature for two hours, their cognitive function and problem-solving skills improved; however, the same results can be achieved in just fifteen minutes. (“Those Who Are ‘nature-wise’” 00:06:50 - 00:07:10) Ronna Schneberger states, “[After participants forest-bathed], their natural killer cells increased dramatically. Now, your natural killer cell is the cells that take out your dead or dying cells. They are your cancer-fighting, tumor-fighting cells. they increased by 56% and they stayed

that way for a month” (“Those Who Are ‘nature-wise’” 00:07:16-00:07:33) However, this is not the only benefit that forest bathing yields. Because of the exertion that our day-to-day lives require, we often live our lives in a headspace of intense focus, and this is incredibly damaging. As Ronna Schneberger states, “Our executive function, this front part of your brain that is responsible for critical thinking, decision-making, and empathy, it’s getting tired. It’s fatigued. And when it’s fatigued, it doesn’t actually work that well. Time in the forest is the perfect remedy” (“Those Who Are ‘nature-wise’” 00:11:31). This time in nature is not only vital for our bodies but spending time in nature improves your cognitive function. Just a few generations ago, humans would be spending enough time outside to reap the benefits of forest bathing, however, nowadays, many Americans do not. In a recent study conducted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Americans “reported spending an average of 87% of their time in enclosed buildings and about 6% of their time in enclosed vehicles.” (Klepeis), which means the average American spends 7% of their time outdoors. A change must be made, and spending even 15 minutes outdoors is proven vital. (“Those Who Are ‘nature-wise’” 00:09:34). Most people have 15 minutes of their day they can allocate to going outside to improve health, and International Serene Day would provide a way to introduce people to the concept of forest bathing. With a day off focused on immersing oneself in nature, one might find they feel better after they spend this time in nature, and forest-bathing yields those answers.

International Serene Day would also provide an opportunity for children to immerse themselves in nature. With the advancement of technology and increased urbanization, children play outside half as much as they used to (Press Association). Due to the increase of population, fewer and fewer places are rural and children no longer have as much open space to play (“68% of the World”). This, however, is stunting their development. Children no longer spend their adolescent years building connections with their environment, like the generations before did. Dr. Nooshin Razani discusses this: ...there are amazing scientists and researchers that have

chronicled the lives of children and throughout human history, actually, until about 20 years ago children in all cultures walked every day, large, large, distances, and they often had a personal special space that they went to recuperate and to cope and to get away from [adults] (“Prescribing Nature” 00:05:14 - 00:05:42) It is vital that children connect with nature, as children in their adolescent years need to form intimate relationships with their surroundings. It is a way to prepare emotionally and physically for adolescence. (“Prescribing Nature” 00:06:02). It is a place where children can be free from rules and play cooperatively and creatively with their surroundings, which is necessary in the rigid and rule-heavy society we live in. (“Prescribing Nature” 00:06:15). However, it has been shown that spending time in nature also benefits childrens’ social skills. Dr. Razani states that when children spent time in nature, “they learned how to socialize, how to greet and, how to coexist not only with other humans but with other species of life. (“Prescribing Nature” 00:06:58). It is vital that children develop social skills that are necessary because they are so stunted socially with their access to technology. International Serene Day would act as the spark that would lead to children spending more time outside by giving them an opportunity to immerse themselves in nature and form the connections with nature they need.



A new report says more than 50% of global industrial emissions since 1988 can be traced to just 25 companies – Tess Riley. Photo credit: Dazman/Getty Images

While it is important for everyone to do their part to combat climate change, it is absolutely crucial that change is made on a corporate level. As Tess Riley, deputy editor of Guardian Sustainable Business, wrote, “Just 100 companies contribute 71% of the world’s carbon emissions” (Riley).

While most corporations are taking steps in the right direction, most of their carbon goals are thirty to fifty years from now, which is far too late. As Steven Steill, the executive secretary of the UN framework convention on climate change said, “This does not go far enough, fast enough. (...) National governments must set new goals now and implement them in the next eight years” (Harvey). The only way to ensure true change and save our earth is to take legislative action. The United Nations must take stronger action to reverse climate change because corporations will always care about their bottom line over our future. The U.N. has been effective in this action before, for instance, their Montreal Protocol, which was signed in 1987, and their action ensured that the ozone will be healed in 43 years. However, this cannot be the end. There needs to be a yearly effort to combat this challenge, a problem of this magnitude that has not been seen since WWII and could very well mean the extinction of the human race if action is not taken. As mentioned prior, I propose that International Serene day also kicks off a week of climate-based legislative discussion in the U.N. and encourages discussion of climate-based legislation on the local, state, and national levels. The government needs to act in order to save our planet from a climate disaster.

For the sake of our planet, we need an International Serene Day. It would rekindle the connection between humanity and nature and help people find their love of exploration, encourage our youth to get outside and explore, and would hold corporations accountable for our climate crisis. All of these factors would help humanity on a societal level to become more in tune with nature by being more eco-friendly.

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A New Earth Day



Mahiro Jilesen (14)
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Over the last 6 million years humans have changed the world we live in and impacted every part of the Earth we have ever come across. For centuries, we have overlooked the impact this had on nature, but now that we are reaching a point where the fate of our world is at stake, we have scrambled to change our ways. We have raised awareness of climate change, created organizations that protect nature, and we have established Earth Day. Earth Day has been effective at raising awareness of litter and climate change, but to make a true difference we must change the way we think. We must change our ideology from human focused to Earth focused. Earth Day is not enough. We need Serene day. It was proposed by Dr. Chaitanya Hiremath of SEALOEarth. In the video INTERNATIONAL SERENE DAY, every March 20 (proposed), Its purpose is explained as a day to “provide the opportunity to humanity to appreciate the beauty of nature and the grandeur of life” (SEALOEarth 3:19). Serene day also comes with benefits to both nature and humans. It will help raise awareness of not only air pollution but also sound and light pollution. Eventually, it will lead to people realizing the beauty of nature and convince them how important it is that we protect it.

When people think of pollution, they think of litter. But we also have a massive impact in ways we don't see. Sound

pollution is a term many have heard but often ignored. Yet sound is also an important aspect of the natural world. Animals depend on it for communication and echolocation. By neglecting this part of nature people have put the lives of many humans and animals at risk. According to the video Why Noise Pollution Is More Dangerous than we think they say, “A single person on a motorcycle in the middle of the night riding across Paris can wake up thousands of people” (The New Yorker 7:48). Just a single person can impact thousands of people. Imagine this happening multiple times everywhere on earth and that's still barely scratching the surface of noise pollution. Another example of how we affect ecosystems via sound pollution is in the ocean. According to the video Why Whales can't Learn to Avoid Ship Strikes, they say that “For the last forty years man-made ocean noise has been doubling every decade” (Terra Mater 0:40). Even places we humans like to think of as calm and quiet have become cluttered with noise because of our actions. We are changing the world faster than the environment can adapt and we will soon reach the point of no return. These facts emphasize the need for Serene day.

Not only have we overlooked sound pollution, but we have missed something that has been disrupting nature in plain sight! Light pollution is another example of how our actions have damaged ecosystems. Before the light bulb invention. The night was pitch black, illuminated only by the moon and stars. Now the sky is filled with the glow of city lights. In the video Light pollution 101 | National Geographic | They say, “Light pollution is the over-illumination of cities and the night sky by artificial lighting” (National Geographic 0:30). The reason why this is disruptive is because it can disorient animals and mess up sleep cycles. Our bodies were made to sleep during the night and move during the day, but artificial lighting can change how our bodies perceive time and throw off our circadian rhythms. This goes for animals too. Animals also have trouble because they rely on the sun and the moon to orient themselves. Baby sea turtles are born with an instinct that urges them towards the moon, but sometimes they confuse city lights with the moon and never make it to sea. Light pollution is another major

problem that is seldom known, so Serene day is a great time to raise awareness of it.



Space junk – Emilie Le Beau Lucchesi. Photo credit: Shutterstock

There are other kinds of pollution that have been brought into existence by scientific discoveries. Space junk and nuclear waste are problems that had not existed till the late 1900s. According to the video, space debris: a problem that is only getting bigger they say, “currently over 128 million objects larger than a millimeter are orbiting the earth” (Interesting Engineering 0:01). All these objects cause collisions all the time, and every time a collision happens more space junk is created. This sets up a deadly chain reaction that will create a web of space debris around the earth. By continuing to pollute the environment and space, we are creating a hazardous combination. Space junk will prevent us from escaping earth and the pollution will slowly kill us off. In space there is no friction so objects going at high speeds never slow down and increasing the speed of an object makes its kinetic energy increase exponentially. This is why things with low masses in space, such as flecks of paint, can still pack quite a punch. Along with space junk, nuclear waste is rapidly growing, and it won’t be going away anytime soon. Nuclear waste can stay radioactive for a million years, but nuclear waste is different from the other types of pollution because its effects are much more violent than others. Nuclear waste produces nuclear radiation which is caused by the decaying of atoms. A specific type of nuclear radiation called ionizing radiation is what wreaks havoc on an organism by destroying the DNA. This can have horrifying consequences for the organism. According to the video Is radiation dangerous? - Matt Anticole by Ted-Ed

say symptoms can range from “... cancers, cellular dysfunction, and potentially even death.” (TED-Ed 3:20). These are examples of more problems that are slowly sneaking up on us but can be brought to awareness by Serene day.

Through pollution, we have damaged nature and harmed the animals who call it home, yet animals are not the only creatures who need it. Humans were made from nature, and we need it as a child needs their parents. Our stress levels are always incredibly high these days but there is one remedy that is free to anybody, and it's called nature. According to Nooshin Razani, a pediatrician from San Francisco, “[nature is a place] ... that all humans need to be in, in order to properly develop empathy, communication, creativity, and the ability to self soothe... now if you take a modern person into that same thing, they become happy, relaxed, and smarter” (TEDx Talks 10:38). Most modern people think now that we have overcome nature, we do not need it. In fact, people need nature now more than ever. We have neglected our need for nature, and it is as damaging as ignoring thirst or hunger. Yet, there is still hope, for it only takes a mere 15 minutes for nature to make you feel more focused and less stressed. In the video called Those who are “nature wise” have an edge in today's world, Therapist Ronna Schneberger says, “... if you go for a walk for 15 minutes it will ... reduce your cortisol levels by twelve percent” (TEDx Talks 9:35). Nature doesn’t just aid our mental development; it also helps moderate our stress and health for us. These effects don't go away the instant you leave the forest either. They can help you throughout the day. Serene day will have all these benefits, while also making people realize how helpful nature is to us.

The word serene is an adjective that describes something that is calm, quiet, and untroubled. This is the goal of SEALOEarth and the goal of a serene day. If people go out and appreciate the immense goodness of nature and how serene it is when we are not destroying it. We, humans, will learn to embrace nature and be good to it. Nature has been good to us and we owe nature at least that. We owe nature for the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the food we eat. We owe everything to it. So, once we realize that we have neglected

nature when it has never neglected us. We can nurse it back to health, so it can be serene once more.

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International Serene Day. March 20.

**“The goal of
International Serene Day is
100% me-time with nature
and
the task is
100% appreciation of nature.
The connection with nature is
simple and stirring.”
- DR. HIREMATH**



How to Help Save our Planet



Jonathan Lin (15)
Massachusetts, USA

What else do we need to save our Planet? We already have organizations working toward saving our planet, countless environmentalists and climatologists dedicated to saving our environment, global awareness of our destruction of the planet and humanity is already turning toward saving it, but that is not enough. We are still not doing enough. We could create more organizations, but that wouldn't create the global impact that they need. They could have more environmentalists and climatologists but it is too late for them to grow up, and there is already near global awareness of the destruction of our planet, though not all may believe in it. But what resource has been untapped, which group has yet been touched, but the general population. They are a major factor (Adelphi, "Biodiversity"). They might be aware of it, but not many are truly dedicated to it. This is why they need to be rallied, together we will have the power to truly start accelerating the saving of our planet. That is why we need International Serene Day. Already with the success of Earth Day, it changed a whole generation, and birthed the modern climate movement. Now, think about what a whole month of that could do, what we could accomplish in it, the global impact that it would create. An International Serene Day would herald the beginning of a whole month dedicated to our planet, a month-long connection with the

planet. Yet still would remain one issue, this will just bring more awareness, this will not motivate all that we need. That is why we would need to share how celebrating our planet and living in harmony with it could change the human species for the better, how it can and will improve the lives of those that choose to live with it. That is what we need. An International Serene Day that will show us how we can solve the problems we created for our planet, how our celebration of it can help us, and how we can live more in harmony with nature as both a species and as individuals.

Serene Day will be a continuation of Earth Day, as "an annual celebration that honors the achievements of the environmental movement and raises awareness of the need to protect Earth's natural resources for future generations" (National Geographic Society, "Earth Day"). It will take many of the successful features of Earth Day and expand them out over an entire month starting on Serene Day. Earth Day currently has a network called the "Earth Day Network" (EARTHDAY.ORG) that pursues three core goals, Broadening the meaning of Environment, Diversifying its movement, and Mobilizing Communities (EARTHDAY.ORG). All of these goals will be shared by Serene Day though more focus will be put on the mobilization of communities. It will tell us not just what we can do for Nature but what Nature can do for us if we are just willing to appreciate it.

Serene Day might be supported by many people but countless others will choose not to celebrate it, despite the urgency we must have toward protecting our planet, for a variety of reasons: Disregard, inability to, ignorance, and more. That is what Serene day will try to overcome. It will teach everyone about the benefits of going out into nature, appreciating it, and how to transition to becoming more eco-friendly and eventually completely. Going out into nature such as hiking has proven to be good for your mental health because the trees release phytoncides, natural bug removing chemicals that also drastically increase the number of natural killer cells, cancer fighting cells, by 56% (Nature Wise). Being in these environments looking around satisfies our drive to do something while also calming us enough to gain peace (Forest

Bathing Travel Japan). This is just the start of what going out into nature can do. In addition to calming us enough to gain peace, walking can also cause “Powerful Nature Moments” (Nature Edge, 00.01.55) that cause you to stop and have many “amazing insights” (Nature Edge, 00.04.21). We must also appreciate the nature that we have for it will not be there if we continue and we’ll be the ones to suffer, suffering blows to our food, security, health, and even economy (Adelphi, “Biodiversity”). Earth Day already spread to the world how to transition to a more sustainable and eco-friendly lifestyle (EARTHDAY.ORG), but that still wasn’t enough so that is what International Serene Day will aim to do. To make the transition toward a climate friendly lifestyle easier and possible.



White House Garden. Photo credit: Chuck Kennedy

While we have not always lived perfectly in harmony with nature as a species, it is important now, more than ever before, to be in harmony with nature as a global impact grows. The population of the human species has been growing exponentially over the past hundred years, and with it our usage of natural resources and impact on the environment has grown exponentially. From a population of 1.6 billion in 1900 to over 8 billion today. (WorldOMeter) We have been destroying biodiversity faster than it can replenish itself with humans increasing the rate of extinction by 100-1000 times its normal value, with growing numbers of climatologists and environmentalists saying this might be the 6th Mass Extinction. (Postcards front the 6th Mass Extinction). Now we must live even more in harmony with our environment to ensure our planet’s safety remains as it is. So then, what is living in harmony with nature? Living in Harmony with nature is maintaining biodiversity, maintaining the climate, and maintaining natural resources (Harmony with Nature).

Maintaining biodiversity has proven to be difficult for humans as we’ve explored and expanded across more of the world. Again and again with the Yellowstone Gray Wolves, the Dodo Birds, the Passenger Pigeon (Passenger Pigeon) we have hunted to extinction, and even in some cases like the Yellowstone Gray Wolves, they were capstone species. The harm to the environment caused by removing the Yellowstone Gray Wolves for nearly 100 years was not realized till the Gray Wolves were reintroduced in 1995 to drastic changes throughout that ecosystem (National Geographic Society, “Yellowstone Wolves”). That is why we must interact carefully with ecosystems till we completely understand, lest they come cascading down upon us. Maintaining the climate is yet another thing we have failed to do. Air pollution in cities, trash polluting our forests, pesticides and chemicals polluting our rivers and oceans. That is what International Serene Day would help eliminate. Slowly, but over an entire month, removing the source and results of the pollution, progressing toward a cleaner, better world.

An International Serene Day can show us how to solve the problems we created for our planet, how our celebration of it can help us, and how we can live more in harmony with nature as both a species and as individuals. The continuation of previous Earth Day beliefs and practices will help usher it in and make it work, the practical explanation on how it can help humans escape the bustle of industrial life, the harmony that we will have to live with Nature. All of these will help shift our society, our world toward a more Earth Centric View, though none of this will happen if we don’t unite to work for it.

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Awareness Days

World Wildlife Day (3 March)

On 20 December 2013, at its 68th session, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) proclaimed 3 March – the day that the Convention on International Trade in **Endangered Species** of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) was signed in 1973 – as UN World Wildlife Day; to celebrate and raise awareness of the world's wild animals and plants.

World Environmental Day (5 June)

In 1972, the UN General Assembly designated 5 June as World Environment Day (WED). The first celebration, under the slogan "Only One Earth" took place in 1973. In the following years, WED has developed as a platform to raise awareness on the problems facing our environment such as air pollution, plastic pollution, **illegal wildlife trade**, sustainable consumption, sea-level increase, and food security, among others.

International Day of Peace (21 September)

Each year the International Day of Peace (IDP) is observed around the world on 21 September. The UN General Assembly has declared this as a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, through observing **24 hours of non-violence and cease-fire**.

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International Serene Day: A Recipe for a Sustainable Future



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INTRODUCTION

Earth has changed drastically over the past one hundred years. Scientists have made incredible discoveries and inventions that have greatly revolutionized our civilization, but that has happened at a very huge cost. Back in the 1900s, there was a lot more wildlife than today. According to the WWF, there has been a 68% decline in the amount of wildlife from about 1970 to 2023. The global temperature in the 1900s was very stable, and also the rate of warming was very slow. But now, the temperature of the Earth's surface has increased by 1.1 degrees Celsius. As industries have been developing over the past century, more fossil fuels have been burned. More trees have been disappearing to provide the infrastructure which has increased the amount of carbon dioxide that is present in the atmosphere. This has also created a vast amount of pollution in the air, which has mental and physical effects on humans and can really decline biodiversity, which we all depend on to have a healthy life. An increase in farming has resulted in humans being in closer contact with animals, which has created more zoonotic diseases like Covid-19 and Ebola. This has led to humans being in the center of nature, rather than being part of nature which is very important for a balanced, stable, and healthy ecosystem.

HOW POLLUTION HAS IMPACTED THE WORLD

There are many factors that have changed the Earth-centered world to a human-centered world. But I think pollution has had one of the most devastating impacts that we see today. Basically, there are three types of pollution. Many human activities and rapid industrialization are major reasons for air pollution. But there are two types of pollution aside from air pollution that we really haven't paid attention to which are light and sound pollution.

Light pollution is when the night sky is brightened by man-made artificial lights over cities when most of it is really unnecessary. Even though you might think this really doesn't affect nature, it indeed does and creates an environmental impact. For instance, when the turtle's hatching instinct is to follow the moon, the illumination of the lights over cities intercepts it, which can really disrupt their cycles, and the hatchlings will become very discombobulated. It can also completely change the sleep cycles for people who live closer to the city, which can lead to a plethora of health problems and could even cause death. Thousands of satellites will be launched in the future, making the sky unusually bright which contributes to light pollution. "Losing a connection to the night sky is losing our connection to nature", said Johan Eklöf, a zoologist. As of the year 2016, about 99 percent of the United States and Europe, and 80 percent of the global population have lived under light-polluted skies.



Artificial lights disorient many species, including the grasshoppers that swarmed the powerful lights over the Las Vegas strip in 2019. Photo credit: Bridget Bennett



Construction worker with jackhammer. Photo credit: Royalty-free stock photo

The second one is sound pollution. In greater New York, there is so much noise that is unnecessary. When trains pass by and a construction worker tears up the street with a jackhammer, it creates a lot of noise for the people who live in downtown apartments. It can really cause long-term health problems such as cancer, lung disease, high blood pressure, and also the inability to pay attention at school or at work. In downtown Manhattan, there were train tracks near a school which caused students trouble to learn or hear what the teacher was saying. By 6th grade, the students on the louder side of the building were a full year behind the students on the quieter side of the building. According to www.nyc.gov, about 20 percent of the population said that they frequently experience loud noises. Even though there is an impact on humans, sound pollution also impacts animals. Underwater noise pollution is another huge problem. Animals like whales and dolphins can get badly affected because it causes more stress for them, and can traumatize them which can completely change their migration patterns. It is also very difficult for these animals to avoid ship strikes, because of SONAR and underwater activities.

INTERNATIONAL SERENE DAY

There are many actions that humans can take to fix our planet over time. These can be to reduce, reuse, or recycle, or it could be to keep planting trees. It could also be to conserve water and decarbonize. Furthermore, it could also be to reduce the amount of unnecessary light and sound that gets emitted

from industries. Although these options work, I think that an International Serene Day would be the best idea to help protect our earth. To fix a problem of this magnitude, every human must take responsibility and make changes to their lifestyle. Even though big corporations and governments are taking active measures to mitigate climate change, it's still not enough. That's why we need an International Serene Day to bring everyone together as a whole to educate people about the dangers of climate change and global warming and get them to commit to this cause. Thankfully, Dr. Chaitanya Hiremath has proposed to observe an International Serene Day every year on the first day of spring, March 20th.

An International Serene Day will definitely make people adapt to more sustainable activities, such as planting more trees or having recycling drives. Social media channels can be leveraged to further influence and promote environmental awareness. Doing this will not only help the world, but it will also educate future generations about the dangers of climate change and global warming, eventually leading to more people living healthier lives.

Another way that International Serene Day will be a good starting point to develop eco-friendliness is by cultivating the aspect of appreciating nature. International Serene Day forces people to take some time off from their jobs and reduce kids' screen time to step out and enjoy nature, by doing some outdoor meditation and exercising activities. Dr. Nooshin Razani, a pediatrician and a nature champion says, "When you're out in nature, your mind is restored after 15 to 20 minutes walking through trees. You will have a bigger attention span, you can solve more complicated cognitive tests, and puzzles. Researchers have observed that after three days, the prefrontal cortex, the part of you that's in charge, it relaxes, it's reset, and that's when you have your most creative and productive time." Ronna Schneberger, a professional award-winning naturalist also states that "Research also shows that time in a park or forest bathing will decrease stress and anxiety, and it will increase the ability to focus, think critically and make better decisions." These eco-friendly activities will really benefit humans in the long run.

In conclusion, I think that International Serene Day is one of the most effective ways to produce a greener and more sustainable future. We have to give all the other organisms space to live by not exhausting the world's resources. All of this is in our hands, and even simple actions such as not making too much noise, or turning off lights when not needed will pack a mighty wallop. Tough problems need bold actions. If we want to save the planet and inspire harmony with nature, we must act NOW!

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International Serene Day. March 20.

"Magnitude of climate change and loss of biodiversity is enormous, however numerous other important aspects are often overlooked as a priority. Serene Day is needed to create awareness of anthropogenic intervention at several levels."

- DR. HIEMATH



The Benefits of International Serene Day Relating to Ocean Pollution



Paige Markesich (15)
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Sylvia Earle, a marine biologist who founded the organization Mission Blue, which deals with protecting the ocean from many threats including climate change, once explained, " 'With every drop of water you drink, every breath you take, you're connected to the sea. No matter where on Earth you live. Most of the oxygen in the atmosphere is generated by the sea' " ("Sylvia Earle" 00:05:00). The oceans of the Earth are what keeps humans and all living things alive, and by polluting them, humans are destroying the one thing that gives the Earth life. Water is connected to everything, and everyday activities like going out on a boat or leaving trash on the beach can severely impact the state of water bodies and organisms. More actions need to be taken to help this dire situation, and humans need to physically do more to save the world around them. The push for change can be started by an International Serene Day, held on March 20 each year- the first day of spring, and occurs for a month. The goal of having an International Serene day is to celebrate the world humans live in, and create a connection between the beauty of nature and human awareness of how human action is hurting the planet. An International Serene day would greatly benefit in solving the pressing issues of ocean noise and plastic pollution, which affect both human and marine life tremendously.



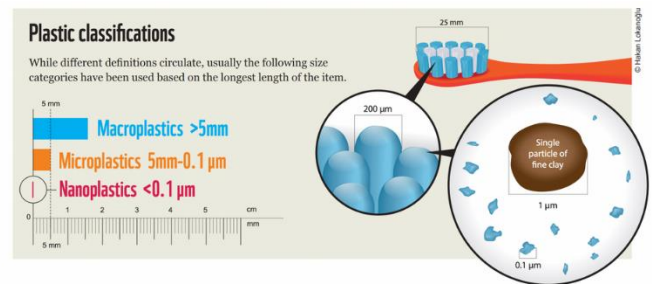
The impacts of noise pollution in the ocean. Photo credit: Earth.org

Ocean noise pollution is caused by humankind and negatively affects marine life. Humans have created noise pollution, and "For the last 40 years man-made ocean noise has been doubling every decade" ("Why Whales" 00:00:44). This is a sad fact to hear, especially because man-made noise pollution is a constantly increasing issue. It also means that for the last forty years, no solutions to the increasing pollution have been effective, as man-made ocean noise has been doubling every decade. Certain types of man-made creations like ships, explosions, construction, and sonar devices have created a loud and damaging environment for marine wildlife that was once their home (Ellis). All of these man-made creations have an extremely large impact on ocean habitats and marine wildlife, and will only continue to grow as innovations and machines are created in the evolution of humankind. Noise pollution bears a deep impact on aquatic and marine life in the ocean, damaging their bodies permanently. Specifically, an example is that "Octopus and squid may suffer trauma to sensitive hair cells leaving them unable to balance properly in the water" ("Why Whales" 00:03:54). Noise pollution affects marine life directly, causing physical damage to their bodies, and altering the way octopus and squid navigate waters. When functions like how they navigate in water are damaged, it makes it difficult for them to adapt and fully move effectively to perform tasks like swimming. This can cause danger because now they are vulnerable to more predators. Noise pollution in the ocean is also a pressing issue because not many people are aware of it, and "Although noise constantly surrounds us, noise pollution generally receives less attention than water quality and air

quality issues” (Jain). Ocean noise pollution is important because it receives less attention than other pollution issues. It is important to understand that even though noise pollution itself cannot be seen, the effects impact the lives of many species of marine life like octopuses and whales, and is an issue just as important as those of air and water quality.

Noise pollution is not the only pollution created by mankind that extremely affects ocean life, with plastic pollution being a massive issue in today’s world as well. Plastic pollution is solely created by humans through the production of plastics. A research article from the National Library of Medicine describes the statistics of plastic pollution: “Marine pollution by plastic waste reflects massive global growth in plastic production, which now exceeds 420 million tons per year” (Landrigan et al.). Plastic pollution is an extremely large problem in the world, exceeding four hundred and twenty million tons per year. This is alarming and expresses how much humankind depends on plastic in daily life. The problem that this creates is that the accumulation of plastic waste often ends up in oceans and waterways, creating problems for marine life and infiltrating their ecosystems. Research from the National Library of Medicine also states, “Plastic pollution threatens marine mammals, fish, and seabirds and accumulates in large mid-ocean gyres. It breaks down into microplastic and nanoplastic particles containing multiple manufactured chemicals that can enter the tissues of marine organisms, including species consumed by humans” (Landrigan et al.). Microplastic and nanoplastic particles are serious health hazards and can affect humans specifically, by consuming organisms that contain manufactured chemicals broken down from these microplastics and nanoplastics. This is critical information because many people are not aware of these facts, and will not know when they ingest such plastics. Plastic pollution affects more than just marine life and can affect human health as well. Plastic pollution is severely important, and urgent action needs to be taken to combat the massive problem. The Center for Biological Diversity bluntly describes this issue: “Plastics pollution has a direct and deadly effect on wildlife. Thousands of seabirds and sea turtles, seals and other

marine mammals are killed each year after ingesting plastic or getting entangled in it” (“Ocean Plastics”). With a variety of species of marine life being harmed by plastic pollution, some species are already in danger of extinction. Without biodiversity in ocean habitats, whole ecosystems can be affected, and food chains become disarrayed. Every species of marine life is important in its ecosystem and plays a role in the function of its ecosystem.



Nanoplastics, owing to their minuscule size, can travel to virtually any part of the world. Photo credit: WWF

Through implementing an International Serene Day, more solutions and actions related to issues such as ocean noise pollution and plastic pollution can be reached. The founder and president of SEALOEarth, Dr. Chaitanya Hiremath explains that an International Serene Day “ ‘Provides an opportunity to society to appreciate the beauty of nature and pride of the unique planet, and the grandeur of nature’ ” (“International Serene” 00:03:22). International Serene Day is a day to celebrate the world humans live in and to make aware of the beauty that is being destroyed from the recklessness of waste and pollution produced by humankind. Dr. Chaitanya Hiremath also expresses that “ ‘one earth day per year is not enough, earth day must be every day’ ” (“International Serene” 00:02:15). Having an earth day every day is important because the world cannot be evolved in one day, and it takes time to create positive change. Creating solutions to the many problems that contribute to harming the planet takes time. To find peace with nature, time must be taken to understand it, and help it heal from the distress it has been through. Through my research on plastic and ocean noise pollution, I strongly believe the best way to improve the oceans of the planet would be to educate more people on these matters. Truly understanding how pollution is affecting not only marine life but humankind as well is

important and could attract more people that want to create change because of concern for the next generations. Another idea is to organize events where people can connect with nature, such as going to a local river and observing the organisms that live there, or going to a beach and helping pick up trash, becoming aware of the unnecessary waste humankind produces. By creating strong connections to the natural world, people can feel emotion toward how the Earth is being harmed. During International Serene Day, fundraisers can be held throughout the month and can contribute to foundations like 4OCEAN, which help to clean up plastic pollution in bodies of water. Donations can also be made to foundations that help combat ocean noise pollution, like The International Ocean Noise Coalition (IONC) which was “created to address the need for a global approach to combating human-generated (or “anthropogenic”) ocean noise” (International Ocean Noise Coalition). Bringing to light organizations that help to battle pollution such as these can attract attention, and contribute to the efforts being made to maintain peace with nature. An International Serene Day would not only help emphasize these types of pollution, but many more, and help human society and the Earth to connect in harmony as one.

Ocean noise and plastic pollution both contribute greatly to the distress that the Earth is currently experiencing, and instituting an International Serene Day can greatly help in the healing of marine life and human society that are directly affected by the pollution. The big takeaway from having an International Serene day is that by creating awareness and action to combat the forces of ocean noise and plastic pollution, humankind can create a connection to the beauty of nature, and broaden their views on how negatively the Earth is impacted by such pollution. As Sylvia Earle expresses in her TED Talk, every breath one takes, every drop of water one drinks, connects them to the ocean, no matter where they are (“Sylvia Earle” 00:05:00). The oceans of this world are connected to all the living things that inhabit Earth, including humans. Humankind must realize the importance of the oceans, and through an International Serene Day, can create the much-needed shift that focuses on restoring the Earth that is home.

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Nature as a Prescription for Health: How International Serene Day Can Inspire a Shift towards an Earth-Centered World



Bibek Limbu (19)
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The magnitude of climate change and loss of biodiversity is a pressing concern for all of us. In an effort to raise awareness and inspire action on these issues, the United Nations proposed the creation of International Serene Day (ISD) on March 20th. This annual event provides an opportunity for humanity to appreciate the beauty of nature and the grandeur of life around us, and to reflect on the ways in which our actions impact the planet. By bringing together people from all walks of life, ISD serves as a reminder that we are all connected and that it is our shared responsibility to protect and preserve the Earth for future generations.

But how can we go beyond simply appreciating nature and actually work towards creating a more harmonious relationship with it? One way is through the adoption of an Earth-centered worldview, which recognizes the interconnectedness of all living beings and the importance of preserving the health and balance of the planet. This shift in perspective can inspire a sense of awe and reverence for nature, leading to a greater willingness to take care of it.

One powerful example of this shift in perspective can be found in the work of Dr. Nooshin Razani, who has been advocating for the use of nature as a prescription for health. In her TEDx talk, Dr. Razani highlights the numerous benefits of spending time in nature, including reduced stress and anxiety, increased focus and productivity, and improved physical and mental health. These benefits are backed up by scientific research, such as a study published in the *Journal of Environmental Psychology* which found that exposure to nature can significantly reduce stress and improve overall well-being (Berman, Jonides, & Kaplan, 2008).

In addition to the personal benefits of spending time in nature, there are also numerous societal and environmental benefits to be gained from embracing an Earth-centered worldview. For example, the concept of "forest bathing," or spending time in a natural setting, has been shown to improve air and water quality, reduce noise pollution, and increase biodiversity (Li, 2018). By prioritizing the health and well-being of the planet, we can create a more sustainable and harmonious world for all.

It is clear that individuals have the power to make a positive impact on the environment through their actions and choices. However, governments and organizations also have a crucial role to play in promoting an Earth-centered worldview and creating a more sustainable future. One promising example of this is the City of Paris, which has implemented numerous initiatives to reduce light pollution and improve the overall quality of life for its citizens.

Light pollution, which is the over-illumination of cities and night skies by artificial lighting, can have negative impacts on both the environment and human health. The excess light can overwhelm photoreceptor cells in the retina, damaging vision and disrupting natural sleep cycles, which can lead to a number of health problems including cancer (National Geographic, n.d.). In addition, light pollution can also interfere with the behavior of nocturnal animals and even affect the hatching and migration patterns of baby turtles, as they rely on

the light of the moon to guide them to the sea (National Geographic, n.d.).

The City of Paris has recognized the negative impacts of light pollution and has implemented a number of initiatives to reduce it. These initiatives include turning off unnecessary streetlights at night, using low-energy LED bulbs, and promoting the use of public transportation (City of Paris, n.d.). By taking these steps, the City of Paris is not only helping to preserve the natural beauty of the night sky, but also improving the health and well-being of its citizens.



Paris public lighting using low-energy LED bulbs. Photo credit: Nicola Fioravanti

In addition to reducing light pollution, the City of Paris has also implemented other initiatives to promote sustainability and protect the environment. For example, the city has introduced a number of bike-sharing programs and has invested in the expansion of its public transportation system, which has resulted in a reduction in air pollution and an increase in the number of people using sustainable transportation options (City of Paris, n.d.). The city has also implemented a number of green infrastructure projects, including the creation of green roofs and the installation of rainwater harvesting systems, which help to reduce the urban heat island effect and improve air quality (City of Paris, n.d.).

The initiatives implemented by the City of Paris serve as a model for other cities around the world, demonstrating that it is possible to prioritize the well-being of the planet and all its inhabitants while also improving the quality of life for citizens.

By adopting an Earth-centered worldview and taking action to protect and preserve the environment, governments and organizations can play a crucial role in creating a more sustainable and harmonious world for all.

The adoption of an Earth-centered worldview can also inspire a sense of unity and shared purpose, as it recognizes that all living beings are connected and that we are all responsible for the health and well-being of the planet. This shift in perspective can lead to the development of more collaborative and cooperative approaches to problem-solving, as people come together to find solutions to common challenges.

One example of this is the global effort to combat climate change, which requires the cooperation of governments, organizations, and individuals from all around the world. By working together and adopting an Earth-centered worldview, we can take collective action to reduce our carbon emissions, protect and restore natural habitats, and adopt more sustainable practices.

In addition to addressing global challenges like climate change, an Earth-centered worldview can also inspire a sense of community and belonging. For example, the concept of "forest bathing," or spending time in a natural setting, has been shown to improve social cohesion and foster a sense of community among participants (Li, 2018). This is likely due in part to the relaxing and restorative effects of nature, which can help to reduce stress and improve overall well-being.

In conclusion, an International Serene Day can serve as a catalyst for a paradigm shift from a human-centered to an Earth-centered worldview, inspiring a greater sense of unity and shared purpose among people from all walks of life. By adopting an Earth-centered worldview and taking action to protect and preserve the planet, governments and organizations can play a crucial role in creating a more sustainable and harmonious world for all.

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Two sides of the same coin. Earth Month.

“International Serene Day (March 20) to International Mother Earth Day (April 22) makes a great appreciation-awareness month, focusing on all aspects, lesser-known to well-known issues facing our planet Earth.”

- DR. HIREMATH



Why an International Serene Day is Important



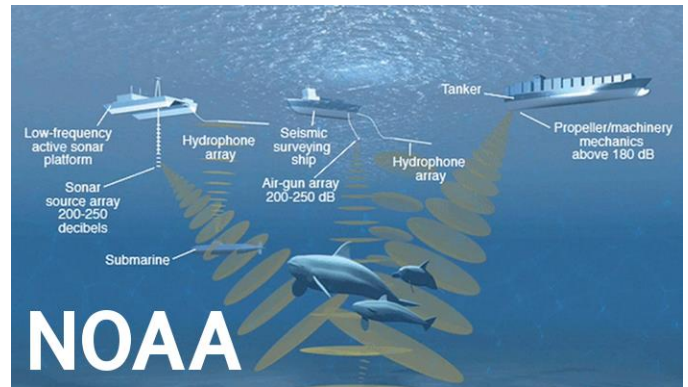
Michael Mahony (15)
Massachusetts, USA

Is one Earth day truly enough time to spread awareness on how to protect the Earth that we live on, and why would International Serene Day change humans' focus off of ourselves and on the Earth as whole? This problem should be split into three parts. What is an International Serene Day? Why is it needed? And how could this month-long awareness campaign help people become more in tune with nature? Each of these questions are essential to understanding the necessity for an International Serene Day. International Serene Day is not just a mere holiday but the start of a paradigm shift from human-centered to Earth-centered so humans can be more in tune with nature and we as a people can come together to save the environment.



Humpback whales swimming underwater. Photo credit: Ed Lyman/NOAA

Humans have done so much harm to the earth because of self-centeredness and carelessness. It is not only important but completely necessary that we as humans look at the mess we have made and fix it; Human activity in the ocean has been negatively affecting life in the ocean for too long (Why Whales Cannot Avoid Striking Ships, 2:36). There is an extreme amount of unnatural noise in the ocean because of human activity which can be harmful to the wildlife in the ocean. Lots of unnatural noise is bad because “most marine life is dependent on sound to survive” (Why Whales Cannot Avoid Striking Ships, 3:38). Unnatural noise affects almost the entirety of marine life; “Noise can also reduce an ocean animal's ability to hear environmental cues that are vital for survival, including those key to avoiding predators, finding food, and navigating to preferred habitats” (National Ocean Service). The negative impact that humans are having on the environment needs to end and the Earth needs all humans to come together in unity to fix such problems. An awareness holiday could make all the difference in humans' view of the Earth and its environment by spreading awareness for nature.



Ocean noise research. Photo credit: NOAA

International Serene Day is a fitting solution for such an issue. International Serene Day is of the utmost importance as, “Everyday should be Earth Day for us” (International Serene Day, 2:15). Not only this, but our planet needs not one Earth day but an entire month to campaign the importance of keeping humans Earth focused (International Serene Day). Such a campaign as this is not easy to honor as there are people on Earth who do not care, but it is up to those in power and who can make a difference to ultimately save the world from human carelessness. The importance of this holiday is to make humans

more aware and in tune with their natural side; “International Serene Day will also foster pride in our unique planet which is non-existent at the moment as we have taken this planet for granted” (International Serene Day, 3:31) Humans need to take the focus off of ourselves and focus more on the world as whole and all creatures living on it (International Serene Day). Many people are willing to sacrifice the beauty of our planet for their monetary gain, and this holiday would help make people understand how important it is to protect the environment and all the organisms that live in it. Being in tune with nature is just as important as keeping it safe and in fact being in tune with nature will lead to the urge to protect and keep it safe; “International Serene Day could lead to the cherishing of our planet which is in distress” (3:40). Being in tune with nature will make us want to cherish and love the places that make us better people, so this helps people keep the Earth safer as they will use such a time to appreciate nature and it will change focus from just human life to all life on Earth.

How does cherishing nature also lead us, humans, to live better, more stress-free lives? People need nature to survive as “(Nature) belongs to us as an essential part of our health” (Prescribing Nature for Health, 0:32). This is an extremely important idea to understand and to live by as most people do not think that such external factors can dictate our health so much. If people are constantly in nature and outside cherishing the beauty of our Earth’s natural environments it is proven that they will be less stressed; (Those Who Are “Nature-wise” Have an Edge in Today’s World). Being out in nature is so easy as all that one has to do is simply step outside and take a brief break from the busy world that makes up people’s lives. It is not only important to go outside but it will actually improve one’s health (Those Who Are “Nature-wise” Have an Edge in Today’s World). Personally, when I myself am outside it makes me feel so relaxed and helps me clear my mind and escape from the stresses of life. When someone goes outside often and they love being in nature they begin to protect that area and others like it. People start to feel responsible for the places that make them happy and may feel that they owe it to those places to protect them (Prescribing Nature for Health). If there are enough

people who truly love the beauty of the Earth and want to protect it, then their campaigns will be the start of humanity’s paradigm shift from human-centered to Earth-Centered.

As fellow humans, we need to all understand the importance of keeping the planet safe for all organisms who share our beautifully unique planet. International Serene Day is vital for the future of humanity and ultimately Earth. The focus of humanity will undergo a paradigm shift from person-centered to Earth-centered because of International Serene Day and all those who celebrate this holiday will become in tune with their infinitely important natural side. We as people need to be better about how we treat our Earth and International Serene Day is just the start of a necessary change in our focus.

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Uniting Humans With Nature: A Proposal For An International Serene Day



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Massachusetts, USA

How distant are humans really from nature? The question may perplex you, but children are “spending about half the time that they used to spend outside now as they did 20 years ago” (Prescribing Nature 8:19). For the past few decades, humans have been restrained to a human-centered paradigm through urbanization and new human innovations such as the internet. Although this has benefited us economically and improved human society, it came with drastic consequences that made us neglect nature's beauty and confined us to our own man-made environment. As each day passes, we as humans strive further and further away from nature as our bond with it weakens. We are in need of an International Serene Day, where individuals go outside and harmonize with nature, which will incline to a paradigm shift from a human-centered world, to an Earth-centered world since residing with nature is beneficial towards human mental health and promotes a more sustainable and harmonious relationship with nature

The concept of an international serene day would encourage individuals globally to spend time around nature and connect with the environment in a meaningful manner. On this day, humans will spend time outdoors in nature, instead of

being immersed in human urbanization. This will call for a break from work and school on this day, since workers and students become isolated from nature when we are in school and work. This will allow us to turn away from our computers and phones and turn us towards going outside and appreciating natural beauty. The goal of this day would be to cultivate a deeper appreciation for nature and the environment, positively benefiting humans mentally while renewing the harmonious bond between humans and nature. An International Serene Day “provides the opportunity to humanity to appreciate the beauty of nature and the grandeur of life around us” (International Serene Day 3:18).

Stress and anxiety have been an issue of recent concern lately, especially with the COVID-19 pandemic. People were stuck inside their homes with nowhere to go, and nothing to do, and mental health was becoming a concern. Data suggested that in the months following the pandemic, people were more likely to “more likely to develop mental illnesses or disorders” (National Institutes). This data further proves the consequences of being isolated from nature. The effects of going outside in nature have been widely researched and documented. It is known that nature “presents scenes that gently capture your attention instead of suddenly snatching it, calming your nerves instead of frazzling them” (American Heart). This is because of the spacious environment that nature emits, it is calm and relaxing, instead of being fast-paced and attention-grabbing, like how many urban environments are with busy traffic and advertisements. In fact, walking outside for 15 minutes can “reduce your cortisol levels by 12%” (Those Who Are Nature Wise 9:34). Nature gradually relaxes the human body, and the number of cortisol hormones needed to deal with stress fall since nature itself relieves it. Not only does nature help relieve stress, but nature also boosts cognitive thinking and improves creativity. In a recent study, results concluded that “People that went out into the wilderness for 4 days had increased creativity by 50%”(Those Who Are Nature Wise 12:06). With nature's beauty and complexity, observing nature can open the human mind to new perspectives and ideas, while also improving attention. These all work together to improve

creativity in the human mind. Lowered stress and anxiety levels also work to improve creativity, since stress and anxiety inhibit creativity in humans. Spending time outside in nature is quite powerful since it allows one to become much less stressed and more creative than those who do not spend time outdoors. However, spending time outdoors also allows for better care for the environment.

As people are disconnected from nature, people tend to poorly treat it by littering, destroying environments, and mass polluting ecosystems. As we reconnect with nature, we become more and more emotionally attached to the environment. We begin to develop place of attachment similar to how “they would think about their mother or a person they care about and they grow up wanting to preserve and take care of those” (Prescribing Nature 7:20). By spending time in nature, we become cautious of our impact on the environment due to our emotional attachment to it. We become more and more sustainable towards the environment because we have acknowledged its presence. This leads to better care of the environment and a more harmonious connection between humanity and nature. Spending time outdoors also inclines us to become more affectionate towards the creatures that live and rely on in the environment. While we spend time outdoors, we learn how to “greet and how to coexist not only with other humans but with other species, other life” (Prescribing Nature 6:55). As we connect with the environment, we also begin to harmonize with the other species that the environment provides for. Normally, we neglect the presence of the fauna in our environment, but as we become more immersed in the environment, we acknowledge the existence of other species in the environment and are inclined to treat them with respect. This leads to us becoming more cautious about our actions and recognizing how they affect other species. Spending time with nature is not necessarily beneficial to humans, but also to the environment, as humans learn to treat their environment with respect as they reconnect with it.

An International Serene Day contains the potential to greatly improve human mentalities while also sustaining environments. An International Serene Day can revolutionize

the dynamics of human society by opening a new lifestyle to individuals around the world. The effects of this International Serene Day can greatly affect attitudes toward the environment in the long term. By promoting a deeper connection and appreciation for the natural world, this International Serene Day can foster a greater understanding of the importance of environmental protection. As more and more people acknowledge the environment, humans can unite to create a more sustainable future together. Our Earth is currently neglected, as humans collectively produce two billion tons of waste each year, and thousands of natural ecosystems are being destroyed for human utilization. With climate change and pollution starting to intensify, we are in dire need of change, and this International Serene Day contains the potential to preserve our only home, Earth.

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International Serene Day: People's Thoughts

Around the World

SEALOEarth had an incredible opportunity to meet and exchange views with people from all walks of life, including invited talks, presentations, and essay contestants. Here is what some of them had to say:

“By understanding what causes noise pollution and the effects it has on our beloved ocean creatures, an International Serene Day gives humans the tools to create positive change in the ocean.” – Charlotte K

“In order to save future generations of every organism, it is imperative that changes are made in order to bring about an International Serene Day which would help to raise awareness and possibly save millions if not billions of organisms in the future.” - William B

“Our Earth is currently neglected, as humans collectively produce two billion tons of waste each year, and thousands of natural ecosystems are being destroyed for human utilization. With climate change and pollution starting to intensify, we are in dire need of change, and this International Serene Day contains the potential to preserve our only home, Earth.” - Andrew F

“Through implementing an International Serene Day, more solutions and actions related to issues such as ocean noise pollution and plastic pollution can be reached.” - Paige M

“After coming to the realization that humans only make the world a filthier and a more dangerous place, many accept the fact that humans need the motivation to keep their planet healthier. A solution to this worldwide problem is International Serene Day. An International Serene Day would not be a day-long like Earth Day is, it would be a kick-off to a month-long campaign before Earth Day.” - Ainsley S

“An International Serene Day would help bring awareness to the growing problems of nuclear waste, underwater noise pollution, and space pollution by creating a paradigm shift from a human-centered world to more of an earth-centered society.

The world is in need of help, and people need to act now before it is too late.” - Henry B

“An International Serene Day should be a day where people put aside distractions and stress and spend time outdoors and become closer to the natural world.” - Davaney M

“Harmony is not only when things work together well but when there is an agreement of ideas. International Serene Day will advocate this to show how if society works together to properly learn how to protect our oceans, then an agreement of how to address the issue can be reached.” - Anvita D

“An International Serene Day will help the people on our Earth understand the issues that we are creating and causing to destroy our home and the lives in it in the future.” – Trisha S

“International Serene Day can allow us to think how much noise there truly is in our lives.” - Lia A

“International Serene Day will bring awareness to how humans abuse the Earth, and will inspire human appreciation for the planet. This proposed day is a necessity for a healthy future. The change needs to start somewhere, and International Serene Day can be the beginning of a new cleaner, more efficient human race. It will all start with one day, a day to create a shift in humans' way of thinking, International Serene Day.” - Evie W

“There are many different ways problems that are happening every day can be solved. All of these solutions require different amounts of work, but all and all, an International Serene Day can be a wake-up call for everyone who doesn't see the problems at stake.” - Lauren F

“When an international serene day is implemented, an increased number of people will start to take an interest in environmental issues. Soon we can tackle many more environmental issues and have a healthier and less polluted earth.” - Sahana V

“By practicing an International Serene Day, awareness of wildlife would increase and maybe even cause a decrease in the damage to these animals.” - Aashmi A

“As a species that has the knowledge and technology to benefit our surrounding ecosystems and organisms, International

Serene Day should be about spreading awareness so that we can create a better, healthier, and safer life for ourselves, but a cleaner life for the environment and ecosystems that raised, and let us thrive in our environment.” - Risha K

“International Serene Day is vital for the future of humanity and ultimately Earth.” - Michael M

“Once people notice the beauty of Earth through forest bathing on International Serene Day, people will want to protect their ecosystems, cut down on pollution, and reconnect with the natural Earth.” - Evan M

“If we are able to get outside and enjoy nature, we can really begin to see what an International Serene Day would look like.” - Jenna H

“Spreading awareness through International Serene Day can inspire people to innovate and try to create solutions for noise pollution, as well as encourage the general public to switch to activities that lead to less noise pollution because doing this will increase the quality of ours and other animals’ lives.” - Akshath P

“We need International Serene Day in addition to Earth Day as another measure. Humans already have many ways to help our planet on their own and in their everyday lives. International Serene Day will enforce that and convey how easy it is to take those baby steps going forward to rescue and honor our Earth.” - Zadie M

“International serene day is a day when people around the globe are aware of their surroundings and how they impact the environment and how the environment impacts them.” - Olivia B

“International Serene Day would be just one day per year, but it could make a world of difference. Not just for forests, but for the whole earth.” - Katie F

“Having International Serene Day as the start of representing a month for the protection of earth can be a solution or at least progress in the fact that biodiversity of marine life may be better protected as greater awareness over these issues are spread to lead to more long-lasting effects.” - Ethan V

“International Serene Day can help repair the bond with Earth, and in turn create an environment where Humans and Nature can live peacefully together.” - Pranav Y

“The majority of sounds created by animals are misinterpreted or completely nullified due to noise pollution. International Serene Day should be a day when everything is harmonious. In addition, International Serene Day should be a day when serenity is present within humans. An Earth-centered world is when life is untroubled, contented, and sounds peaceful. Peace and contentment is a factor of life that is essential for all living things on this planet.” - Shiven K

“An International Serene Day solely focused on humans spending more time outside is the best place to start the paradigm shift of human-centered to earth-centered. This give and take between nature and humans will make a more beautiful and pleasing world.” - Lacey F

“Although an ideal world would have International Serene Day every day, one month a year is a necessary first step for people to participate in forming a better prospective future.” – Amaira J

“The unpleasing sounds we are emitting are destroying the lives of animals that live with us and share these lands, and International Serene Day will bring pride for us, to our planet, and all of our species when we hear their natural sounds of them and see their beauty.” – Syeda A

“An International Serene Day would do the same thing that the first Earth Day did: put huge amounts of media attention on how the environment is being destroyed, unite the environmental movement, and usher in an era of new green legislation and heightened public awareness about the environment.” - Jeffrey X

“International Serene Day would act as the spark that would lead to children spending more time outside by giving them an opportunity to immerse themselves in nature and form the connections with nature they need.” - Alexandra D

“By encouraging the connection with nature by celebrating International Serene Day, more people will go through stress-relieving, body-healing experiences with nature. This will

then help people form a positive image of nature, which will naturally lead to taking pride in our beautiful nature and planet.”
- Jian L

“An International Serene Day would help to create a paradigm shift by bringing society to better accept and embrace ideals like those of eco-economics and stray from those of capitalism.” - Graysen C

“The problem of sound goes so far and extends so deep not only in our own lives, but the lives of animals around us too, and without the start of a potential solution such as an International Serene Day, the problem will never be truly recognized.” - Noah C

“An International Serene Day can be a catalyst that introduces new opinions on the idea of nature.” - Kristina P

“With an International Serene Day, it would, in the long run, encourage a paradigm shift in society by allowing people to immerse themselves in the beauty and peacefulness of nature, therefore changing the way we view and treat the Earth.” - Peier L

“It all comes down to the concept of mutualism; a symbiotic relationship that Earth needs to see amongst its inhabitants. This is where International Serene Day becomes relevant. The first and most foundational part of this mission would be to educate. In order to care about an issue, one must understand its proportions. Therefore, International Serene Day could first provide outlets of information during this month through school systems, social media, and community locations. An International Serene Day would look like unity and lead to new life.” - Kate K

“What is International Serene Day as a whole? It is a symbol of progress and is a reminder to look up once in a while instead of burying our noses in our laptops or screens and looking out the window. Other organisms live on Earth and we can't live on Earth ignoring how essential they are to our lives.” - Jada P

“International Serene Day will help shed light on the idea that humans would not exist without the earth, so it is important to put immense effort into preserving it.” - Andrew S

“International Serene Day should teach us that we cannot be healthy unless our Earth is, and we must give back to the Earth as the Earth has for us.” - Avery G

“If this International Serene Day were to exist in the future, there would hopefully be a change in all organisms' lives for the better.” - Sofie C

“International Serene Day, which is a day where the focus is on the Earth more than the people, and to help open people's eyes about the problems of the environment. Starting this month-long on the first day of spring and ending on earth day helps put more emphasis on the earth, and will cause a paradigm shift to a more earth-centered world. The start and end dates are both related to the Earth, which will help people understand what this month is all about.” - Leo K

“We already have organizations working toward saving our planet, countless environmentalists and climatologists dedicated to saving our environment, global awareness of our destruction of the planet, and humanity is already turning toward saving it, but that is not enough. We are still not doing enough. We could create more organizations, but that wouldn't create the global impact that they need. This is why they need to be rallied, together we will have the power to truly start accelerating the saving of our planet. That is why we need International Serene Day.” - Jonathan L

“An International Serene Day can serve as a catalyst for a paradigm shift from a human-centered to an Earth-centered worldview, inspiring a greater sense of unity and shared purpose among people from all walks of life. This shift in perspective can inspire a sense of awe and reverence for nature, leading to a greater willingness to take care of it.” - Bibek L

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Draft Resolution 1.1

Dr. Chaitanya Hiremath

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 63/278 of 22 April 2009 designating 22 April as International Mother Earth Day,

Reaffirming General Assembly resolutions 53/199 of 15 December 1998 and 61/185 of 20 December 2006 on the proclamation of international years, and Economic and Social Council resolution 1980/67 of 25 July 1980 on international years and anniversaries,

Acknowledging that the magnitude of climate change and loss of biodiversity is enormous,

Expressing concern that several other important aspects, lesser-known to the common man, such as the role of moonlight for turtle hatchlings, sound for whales, temperature for fish, and so on, are often overlooked as a priority,

Noting the definition of serene as calm, peaceful, and tranquil,

Noting also that on the day of an equinox, daytime and nighttime are equal all over the planet,

Further noting the March equinox is celebrated in most cultures and countries around the world with various traditions, holidays, and festivals,

Mindful of the importance to foster pride in our unique planet,

Underscoring the positive impact of human connection to nature on mental and physical well-being,

Emphasizing the well-being of all inhabitants of planet Earth, human and non-human,

Recognizing that Serene Day is needed to create awareness of anthropogenic intervention at several levels,

including but not limited to air, water, land, light, sound, thermal, nuclear, and space,

Recognizing also that Serene Day provides the opportunity for humanity to appreciate the beauty of nature and the grandeur of life around us,

1. *Decides* to proclaim 20 March the International Serene Day;

2. *Invites* all Member and observer States, the organizations of the United Nations system and other international and regional organizations, as well as civil society, including non-governmental organizations and individuals, to observe the International Serene Day, in an appropriate manner and in accordance with national priorities, in order to raise awareness of International Serene Day;

3. *Stresses* that the cost of all activities that may arise from the implementation of the present resolution should be met from voluntary contributions;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to bring the present resolution to the attention of all Member and observer States and the organizations of the United Nations system.

Acknowledgments

We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to the Hiremath family for their invaluable time and belief in our vision of uniting people, caring for all inhabitants of our unique planet, and cherishing our environment

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Staples

Thank you for your generosity and belief in our cause.

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SEALOEARTH's mission is to heighten awareness of the responsibility of all people to manage global resources in a sustainable way, regardless of an individual's country of origin, cultural background, spoken language, or religion.

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