

International Mother Earth Day

International Mother Earth Day, on 22 April, promotes harmony with nature and reminds us of the importance of protecting all the different ecosystems and species on our planet. Read the article to find out more.

Before reading

Do the preparation task first. Then read the article and do the exercises.

Preparation task

Match the definitions (a–h) with the vocabulary (1–8).

Vocabulary

1. a species
2. an ecosystem
3. devastating
4. extinction
5. a habitat
6. an outbreak
7. conservation
8. sustainable

Definition

- a. a situation when a particular animal or plant stops existing
- b. the protection of plant and animal species
- c. the natural home of a plant or animal
- d. a group of similar animals or plants
- e. a time when an illness suddenly begins
- f. all the living things in a particular area and the way they affect each other
- g. able to continue for a long time because it causes little or no damage to the environment
- h. causing a lot of damage

International Mother Earth Day

What is International Mother Earth Day?

It's a special celebration that brings together people from around the world to remember that planet Earth is our home and we want to live in harmony with nature. We are all responsible for protecting our planet and looking after all the species that live here. April 22 was first established by the UN as International Mother Earth Day in 2009, joining groups that had previously celebrated Earth Day on the same date. The UN website explains that the idea of 'Mother Earth' is used because it 'reflects the interdependence that exists among human beings, other living species and the planet we all inhabit'.

Why is it important?

On this day, environmental organisations from all over the world come together to highlight the urgent need to protect the many ecosystems that make up our environment. These ecosystems are under attack from climate change and the natural disasters caused by rising temperatures: forest fires, floods and terrible storms. More than a million animal and plant

species are in danger of extinction through loss of habitat, mainly due to human activity. This, in turn, is leading to outbreaks of deadly diseases that spread from wildlife to humans. On International Mother Earth Day, environmentalists call for action to reverse this damage.

How did it start?

The first Earth Day was celebrated in 1970 in the USA after a decade of local protests about air and water pollution in the United States. In 1969, people were angry about a terrible oil spill in Santa Barbara, California, and the damage it caused. US Senator Gaylord Nelson called for a national 'teach-in', bringing together students and teachers to discuss key issues of pollution and conservation.

On 22 April 1970, 20 million people, approximately ten per cent of the total population of the States at the time, joined the 'teach-in' and met in streets, parks and universities across the land to call for a healthy, clean, sustainable environment. Some people think of that day as the birth of the modern environmental movement.

Twenty years later, in 1990, Earth Day went global. More than 200 million people in 141 countries came together to call for environmental issues to be discussed on the world stage. In 1995, Senator Nelson was given an award for his work for the environment.

Today more than one billion people all over the world come together each year to celebrate International Mother Earth Day and remind politicians that action needs to be taken to move towards a more sustainable way of life that works for both people and the planet.

Tasks

Task 1

Match the answers (a–f) with the questions (1–6).

Questions

1. In what year was the first Earth Day celebrated?
2. How many people celebrated the first Earth Day?
3. In what year did Earth Day become an official UN event?
4. How many people celebrated the first global Earth Day?
5. How many people celebrate International Mother Earth Day now?
6. In what year did Earth Day become a global event?

Answers

- a. 1 billion
- b. 2009
- c. 200 million
- d. 1970
- e. 20 million
- f. 1990

Task 2

Match the words (a–h) with the group they belong in (1–2).

Group

1. Need protection
.....
2. Cause problems
.....

Words

- a. climate change
- b. ecosystems
- c. deadly diseases
- d. environment
- e. habitat
- f. human activity
- g. natural disasters
- h. species

Discussion

What do you think you can do to help conserve and protect our environment?

Answers

Preparation task

1. d
2. f
3. h
4. a
5. c
6. e
7. b
8. g

Task 1

1. d
2. e
3. b
4. c
5. a
6. f

Task 2

1. b, d, e, h
2. a, c, f, g