

Happy Earth Day!

This year, Earth Day will focus on spreading awareness on ending plastic pollution. Read on and learn why you should carry a reusable container or bag the next time you choose to purchase food or items.

The Origin Story

Earth Day kicked off almost 50 years ago when people took to the streets to protest negative impacts of industrial development in the US.

Due to this, global ecological awareness started growing, laws were being enacted and organisations were up and coming.

Today, April 22 is a global event with almost 200 countries taking part in what is the largest civic-focused day of action in the world.



Earth Day Organisation President, Kathleen Rogers said, "It is a day of political action and civic participation. People march, sign petitions, meet with their elected officials, plant trees, clean up their towns and roads. Corporations and governments use it to make pledges and announce sustainability measures. Faith leaders, including Pope Francis, connect Earth Day with protecting God's greatest creations, humans, biodiversity and

the planet that we all live on."

End Plastic Pollution

This year, the theme focuses on ending plastic pollution and creating support for a global effort to eliminate single-use plastics along with global regulation for the disposal of plastics. Lead organiser of Earth Day worldwide, the Earth Day Network aims

to educate millions of people about the health and other risks associated with the use and disposal of plastics, including pollution of our oceans, water, and wildlife, and about the growing body of evidence that decomposing plastics are creating serious global problems.

From poisoning and injuring marine life to the ubiquitous presence of plastics in our food to disrupting human hormones and causing major life-threatening diseases and early puberty, the exponential growth of plastics is threatening our planet's survival.

EDN has built a multi-year campaign to End Plastic Pollution. Goals include ending single-use plastics, promoting alternatives to fossil fuel-based materials, promoting 100 per cent recycling of plastics, corporate and government accountability and changing human behavior concerning plastics.

EDN's End Plastic Pollution campaign includes four major components:

- Leading a grassroots movement to support the adoption of a global framework to regulate plastic pollution,
- Educating, mobilising and activating citizens across the globe to demand that governments and corporations control and clean up plastic pollution,
- Educating people worldwide to take personal responsibility for plastic pollution by choosing to reject, reduce, reuse and recycle plastics, and
- Promoting local government regulatory and other efforts to tackle plastic pollution.



10 Shocking Facts about Plastic Pollution

FACT 1

8.3 billion metric tons (9.1 billion US tons) of plastic has been produced since plastic was introduced in the 1950s. The amount of plastic produced in a year is roughly the same as the entire weight of humanity.

FACT 2

Virtually every piece of plastic that was ever made still exists in some shape or form (with the exception of the small amount that has been incinerated).

FACT 3

91% of plastic isn't recycled and since most plastics don't biodegrade in any meaningful sense, all that plastic waste could exist for hundreds or even thousands of years.

FACT 4

500 million plastic straws are used every day in America. That's enough to circle the Earth twice.

FACT 5

Nearly 2 million single-use plastic bags are distributed worldwide every minute.

FACT 6

100 billion plastic bags are used by Americans every year. Tied together, they would reach around the Earth's equator 773 times!

FACT 7

One million plastic bottles are bought every minute around the world – and that number will top half a trillion by 2021. Less than half of those bottles end up getting recycled.

FACT 8

Eight million tons of plastic winds up in our oceans each year. That's enough trash to cover every foot of coastline around the world with five full trash bags of plastic... compounding every year.

FACT 9

There is more microplastic in the ocean than there are stars in the Milky Way.

FACT 10

If plastic production isn't curbed, plastic pollution will outweigh fish pound for pound by 2050.

Source: Science Advances, National Geographic, World Economic Forum Report, The Guardian, National Park Service, Earth Policy Institute, United Nations and EarthDay.org



So, How Can You Make a Difference?

Strive to live sustainably with these simple steps.
Imagine if a billion people around the world follow suit.

Plant a Tree

2018 Tree Planting Activity

Global Environment Centre Malaysia

The monthly tree planting activity is aimed at conserving various species of peat swamp and restoring deteriorated areas (at the North Selangor Peat Swamp Forest) to its former glory, retaining the original characteristics of the peat swamp forest. It promotes environmental awareness and the planting activity is designed to attract different interest groups, including children.

The tree planting activity is sponsored and you do not have to pay!

The participation is on a first come, first served basis, limited to 100 participants with 400-600 seedlings for each of the planting session — in one hectare area of the forest reserve.

The dates for 2018, which all take place on a Saturday, are now open for registration:

- 28 April
- 30 Jun
- 21 July
- 18 August
- 22 September
- 27 October
- 24 November

Wanna know more? Visit gec.org.my for more details.

3313 project

Landskap Malaysia

The 3313 project is a public campaign for the reforestation of tropical rainforest trees in Malaysia. The project encourages

individuals and corporate groups worldwide to contribute by adopting rainforest trees that are endemic, rare and indigenous in Malaysia.

The '3313' project means that a contribution towards one tree will cost RM33 per tree. All proceeds will be channeled towards the Tropical Rainforest Living Collection (TRLIC) projects in Malaysia. Through 3313, tree(s) are planted on their Living Collection sites.

There are three Living Collection sites in Malaysia now:

- Tropical Rainforest, The Living Collection Merisuli, Lahad Datu, Sabah
- Windows into the Wild: Tropical Rainforest Living Collection Banun, Amanjaya Forest Reserve, Perak
- The Tropical Rainforest Living Collection & Rafflesia Conservation, Lojing Forest Reserve, Kelantan

Wanna know more? Visit landskapmalaysia.org and trlc.org for more details.

Plan a CSR Tree Planting Day

Free Tree Society

The Free Tree Society welcomes corporations and groups to come and join them for a mass planting session. Typically, they can bag and plant 50 seeds/seedlings per person during a two-hour planting session. Free Tree Society will then nurture the seeds that are planted and grow them, ready to be given away to good homes.

Wanna know more? Visit freetreesociety.org for more details.



Recycle

If you haven't already, start recycling even if your town or city doesn't require you to do so. Head to the nearest recycling centers and make the effort to recycle your glasses, cans and papers. Secondly, consider a hybrid vehicle. With car makers producing more reasonably priced hybrid vehicles which will help to cut down pollution, why not get them?

Carpool

Carpooling is also a good choice. Or you could always utilize public transportation. If you live close enough to work or classes, why not walk or cycle? What you say can also help. Spread the word to others or speak-up at local government meetings and talk about things like pollution, recycling and deforestation. You could also be more proactive by joining green websites, starting a green group or talk to your kids about the issue at hand. Invite your kids to come up with ideas and educate them.

Change a bulb

Simpler things you can do are switching your light bulbs to compact fluorescent bulbs which last longer while consuming lesser energy compared to incandescent bulbs. You can also use natural cleaning agents.

Carry a canvas bag

Invest on canvas or recycle bags instead of plastic bags. Make use of greywater, which is water used in other chores, to flush the toilet or water the garden.

