

# I'm With Nature

Every year. Everywhere. Everyone.

A Guide for  
Universities to  
Celebrate

World  
Environment  
Day

5 June 2017



I'm With Nature



Canada



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## Introduction

This year, there is just one word for what we want to make World Environment Day: epic. The aim is for celebrations to be bigger and better than ever and to call on people to show their love and affection for our shared natural world. To make this happen we need the support of University students, academia and research institutions and this short guide has been designed to help the university and research community come together to make 2017 the biggest World Environment Day ever!

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## About World Environment Day

World Environment Day is the United Nations' flagship day for encouraging worldwide awareness and action for the environment. Over the years, it has grown to be one of the largest global platforms for public outreach, celebrated by millions of people in well over 100 countries.

It is the 'People's Day' for doing something positive for the environment. Its aim is to harness individual actions and transform them into a collective power that has a legacy of real and lasting impact on the planet. From Bahrain to Bangkok, the day is celebrated in countless ways with everything from beach clean-ups and tree planting to petitions and photo competitions, with thousands of schools, companies and government getting involved. The beauty of the day is in this diversity. It's when citizens across the world collectively act, care and show their love for the planet.

**Every year.  
Everywhere.  
Everyone.**

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**Share what you're doing  
using the hashtags**

**#WorldEnvironmentDay  
#WithNature**

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# Why celebrate World Environment Day at Universities?

## Learn:

The lesson plans that have been designed for World Environment Day are a great resource for teachers: please do use them and let us know if you've other good ideas for how to teach in this area.

## Inspire:

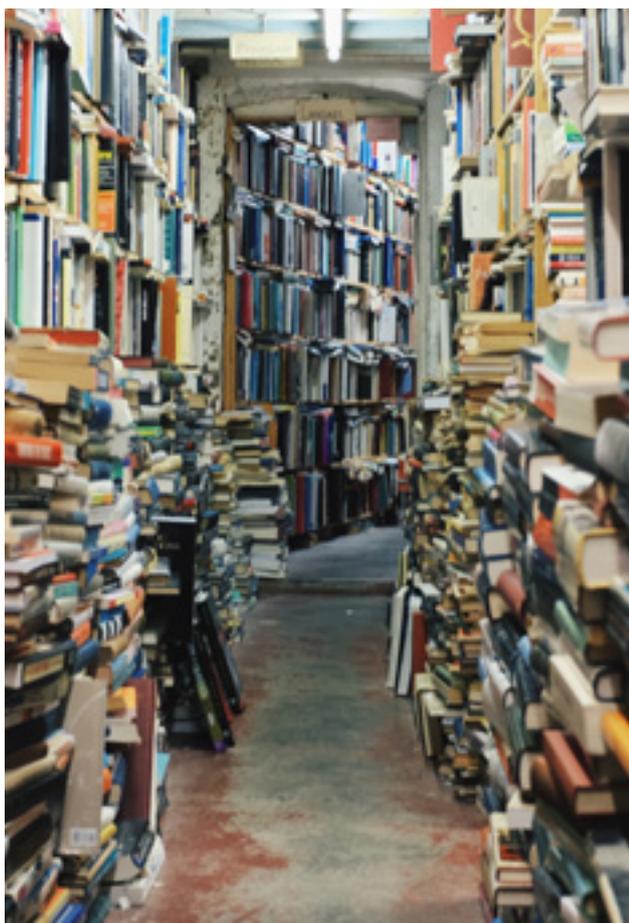
It's a way to inspire pupils (and parents) about how even the youngest citizens are learning and acting in support of the environment.

## Be the change:

Why not use World Environment Day for the school to look at how it could be greener? There are no end of ways you could improve what you currently do.

## Show and tell:

Use the day to let the local media know what your school is doing, share it on social media and also register your event on the website so that we can share your activities with the whole global World Environment Day community.



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# 2017 host country and theme

Hosted by Canada, this year's World Environment Day has the theme **Connecting People to Nature**, and the slogan, *"I'm With Nature."* The idea that underpins this is that in our modern world few of us take enough time away from our daily lives to appreciate and engage with our natural world.

By celebrating World Environment Day surrounded by this nature, we can rediscover the importance of caring for the environment so that it can care for us. With this in mind, Canada will ask its citizens to celebrate the day in a number of amazing ways:

## Find your nature:

Canada is issuing passes giving anyone free entry to all its National Parks for the whole of 2017.

## Get adventurous:

Canada is inviting families and school children to get together in parks to record as many different forms of wildlife as possible as part of a "Nature Blitz".

## Learn to love the natural world:

Schools across the country will prioritize the environment in their lessons to deepen their students' understanding of why nature is so important to human well-being.

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# Global celebrations

This year we want to see if we can beat the highest number of activities celebrating the day with over 4,000 events, over 20 million people hearing about the day online and over 1.5 million people getting involved. We want to make sure that universities are part and leaders of the WED celebrations and, as such, this is our first ever University pack to support university participation. Registering your activity will help us showcase how universities all over the world are getting involved in supporting World Environment Day. Let's create a movement for action and encourage everyone in the education community to find creative ways to be #WithNature. We want to see and hear how you are celebrating so make sure to let us know about your activity!

Email us at  
[worldenvironmentday@unep.org](mailto:worldenvironmentday@unep.org)

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# Principles that can help you plan your event on campus

## Dream up an idea:

Bring together students on campus to brainstorm ideas and activities that can make a difference. What could the collective impact of the campus be to solve a problem? Is there an issue that the students would really benefit from learning about?

## Have fun:

Make your event for World Environment Day fun, inspiring and interesting – you should be excited by the idea you have – go for goosebumps!

## Surprise yourself:

Often we think about what we can't do, rather than what we can. Think about what you can do and come with hope – it's the most infectious thing we humans have!

## Inspire others:

A great idea will naturally attract others who can take a small idea and make it extraordinary. So, with your powers of persuasion, bring on board the people you think can make this awesome and share it with your networks

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## Seven ideas for universities

There is an endless range of ways that you can celebrate World Environment Day. To help you on your way, we've outlined seven ways universities can get involved!

### 1. Share this with clubs and societies on campus

On the World Environment Day website, we'll be running a major digital campaign that will be engaging millions of people all over the world. Invite them to get involved, share these materials with them on your channels and across campus to make people excited about the day.

### 2. Cleanups

For the weekend in advance of World Environment Day and throughout 2017, people will be taking to the shores of beaches, rivers and lakes across the world to cleanup the plastic and rubbish that is washed ashore. Join in and make a difference in support of the UN Environment #CleanSeas campaign. Go to [www.cleanseas.org](http://www.cleanseas.org) for more information.

### 3. Campus commitment

There's no end of possibilities for institutional commitments to be taken within the university in support of the environment. Poll students to find out what they would like to fix most and then organize a debate on the issues raised (eg. banning single use plastic bags, having water refilling stations, creating a greener place on campus or shifting energy use). This is an area rich with possibility. Identify the problem, make a plan and set a target to fix it!

### 4. Organise a high-level debate

Is there some new and substantive research your University is about to release? Launch it on the day and bring together the expertise and commitment of university faculty, staff and students in a discussion on the role that higher education plays in triggering transformative change.

### 5. Build it into the curriculum

There are a wide range of ways that environment can be integrated into teaching for the week of World Environment Day, for example:

- Political & sociology students: What international trends are impacting environment change and what does the future hold?
- Sports & health science: What are the benefits of nature to living healthier lifestyles?
- Business studies: Has the green economy taken off, where will it go next and what are the barriers to change that are being broken down?

### 6. Take to social media

Organize a global snapchat among student groups, visually show what your campus is doing to green its operations, encourage students to join one of UN Environment's online campaigns.

### 7. Support local schools

UN Environment has produced a lesson plan for primary and secondary students. Engage with the faculty of education to volunteer in schools during World Environment week to deliver the lesson plans and involve the younger generation in celebrating nature.

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## What to do next

To help spread the word about World Environment Day, we encourage you to put our website to full use. Here you will be able to:

### Register your activity on the site

If you register, we can then highlight your work on all our digital platforms!

### Download the curriculum materials:

We will be adding school packs to the site, so download them and let us know how useful you find them.

### Brand toolkit:

Download a brand toolkit with all the logos for you to use for the day.

### Other ideas:

Go to the website which can be found at:

[www.worldenvironmentday.global](http://www.worldenvironmentday.global)

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## Contacts

Finally, our team is happy to support where it can, so do email us to register your event on

[worldenvironmentday@unep.org](mailto:worldenvironmentday@unep.org)

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Register your events at  
[www.worldenvironmentday.global](http://www.worldenvironmentday.global)  
(Registry opens in May)

Share what you're doing  
using the hashtags:

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[#WithNature](https://twitter.com/WithNature)

