



50 Actions for the Planet

“What humans do over the next 50 years will determine the fate of all life on the planet.”

- Sir David Attenborough

April 22 marks the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day, a time to celebrate the amazing biodiversity that comprises life on our planet. For the last half century, the world has come together each April to raise awareness and demand action in support of conservation. This year, as we respond to the global COVID-19 pandemic, our thoughts go out to all of you and to those providers on the front lines of essential services—doctors, nurses, health care workers, leading businesses and small business owners and individuals who ensure that our families can receive what they need.

This is also a moment when we even more profoundly realize the connections between nature and people.

The World Health Organization has confirmed that COVID-19 is a zoonotic disease, meaning it jumped from wildlife to humans, similar to the SARS and Ebola disease outbreaks. A confluence of human expansion, vanishing natural habitat, and climate change has driven people and wildlife into closer proximity, increasing the risk of outbreaks like this.

As we mark this year's Earth Day, we need to protect the planet now more than ever—so that we safeguard our future. We can do this by preventing some of the root causes of potential future pandemics, including ending the illegal wildlife trade, continuing to influence conservation and climate change policies, and conserving such amazing places as the Amazon, the coral reefs of the Pacific, and the Northern Great Plains here at home.

We seek to conserve these places not just because of the sanctuary they provide wild animals but also because of what they provide to people—stabilizing climate, providing food and water, and diminishing some key vectors to the spread of disease.

Everyday actions can help ensure that nature is able to fulfill its critical role. This means conserving water and energy, choosing sustainable products, minimizing waste, and eliminating plastic pollution. It also means promoting renewable energy, advancing climate policy, choosing green energy options, and reducing personal CO2 emissions. All of these actions—and the ecosystems they impact—are connected.

For a healthy, resilient planet, we must protect its forests, oceans, grasslands, wetlands, mangroves and coral reefs. Protecting nature can help protect all life on this planet. Join us in giving back to our planet this Earth Day, so that when we look back over the next 50 years we will see decades of restoring our ecosystems and building resilience, and a sea change in personal behavior that turned the tide. *The time to act is now—to be the change we need—it all starts with individual actions.*

Let's get started with Action #1: Reconnect with Nature

Nature has a restorative power. Tap into the world around you by rediscovering nature in your own backyard. Taking time to appreciate what our environment provides can remind us that we are all connected—many communities, cultures, and languages, but only one planet. Let's celebrate it!

Climate

2. **Switch to CFLs.** Replacing one incandescent lightbulb with a compact fluorescent light can save 150 pounds of carbon dioxide per year. CFLs produce the same amount of light, use 1/3 of the electricity and last up to 10 times as long.
3. **Turn off the lights.** Artificial lighting accounts for 44% of electricity use. Make it a habit to turn off the lights when leaving a room for 15 minutes or more and utilize natural light when you can. Unplug chargers and other devices when you're not using them. Up to 50% of the energy used by a mobile phone comes from chargers left plugged in when not in use.
4. **Advocate for action.** It is by far the most critical action people can take in terms of addressing the climate crisis. Local engagement is good, but speaking out to federal legislators is critical. [Tell Congress](#): We Need a 100% Clean Energy Economy.
5. **Choose [renewable energy](#)** or purchase renewable energy credits.
6. **Opt for biking and walking.** Short car trips are responsible for three quarters of transportation emissions. Cutting out unnecessary car use can dramatically reduce emissions in the transportation sector.
7. **Make [Earth Hour](#) a weekly event** at home with family and friends. Unplug to honor our planet, reduce energy usage, and reconnect with nature.
8. When it comes to planning your next travel, be "A NERD."
Avoid: Avoid flying by plane and choose a less carbon intensive mode of travel where possible. Consider no travel or video conferencing as an alternative.
New: Fly newer aircraft, like the A320neo or Boeing 787 Dreamliner.
Economy: More seats plus a higher load factor means lower fuel burn per passenger.
Regular: Very small regional jets and very large jets with four engines burn more fuel. Medium-sized jets tend to be more efficient.
Direct: Flying direct, without layovers, reduces fuel consumption.

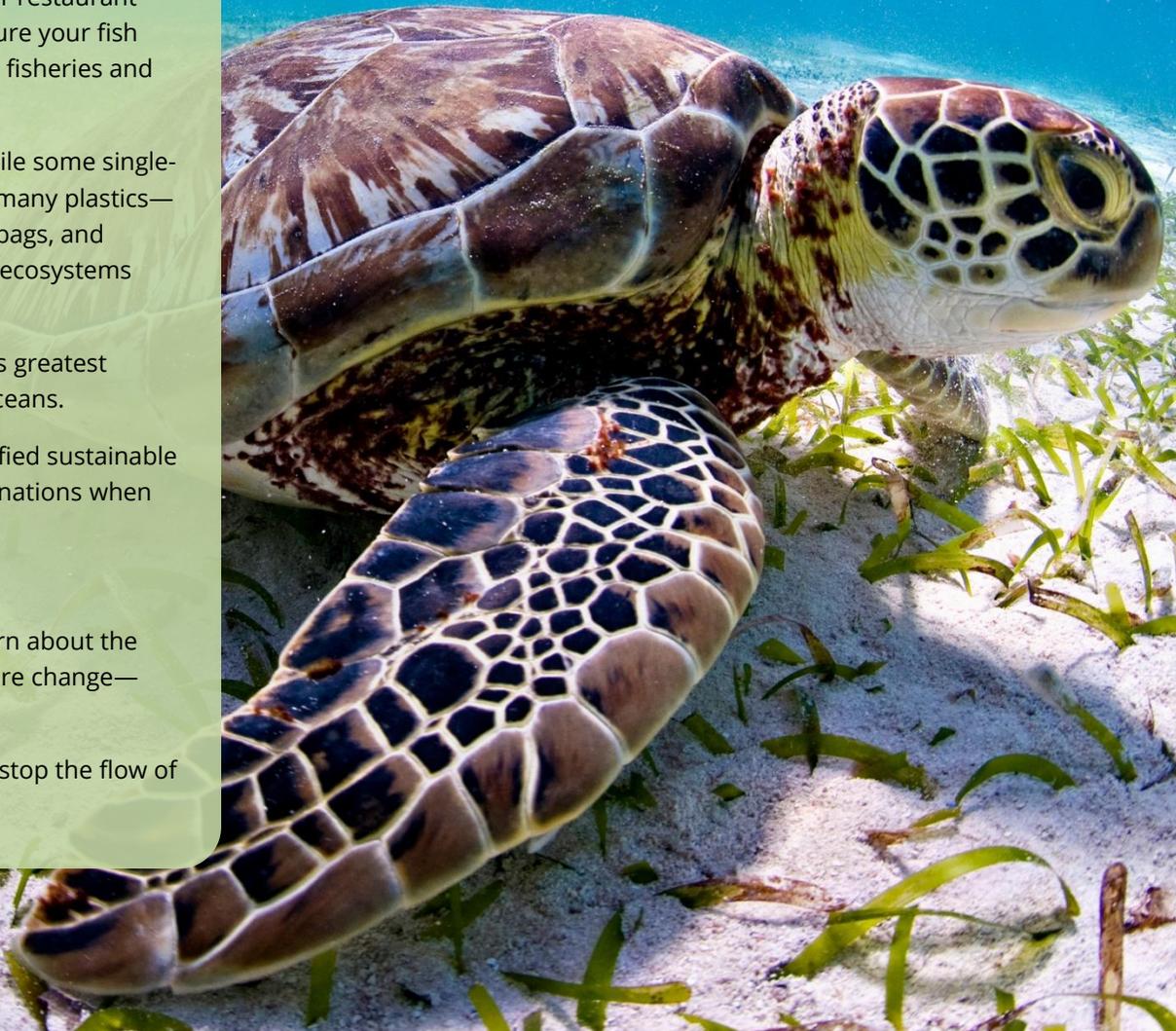


Forests

9. **Look for the FSC label.** When purchasing wood and paper products including paper towels, tissue, and toilet paper, look for the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) label to show that your product—or even the packaging it's wrapped in—comes from a responsibly managed forest.
10. **Look for the RSPO label (Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil)** to ensure you are purchasing products made with palm oil produced in a socially and environmentally responsible way that did not contribute to deforestation.
11. **Switch to e-billing.** In the US, paper products make up the largest percentage of municipal solid waste, and hard copy bills alone generate almost 2 million tons of CO₂.
12. **Recycle your paper and cardboard.** Recycling 1 ton of paper saves 7,000 gallons of water, 3 cubic yards of landfill space, and 4,100 kilowatt-hours of electricity.
13. **Use a reusable mug** to avoid sending disposable cups to the landfill.
14. **Plant a native tree.** An average tree can absorb one ton of CO₂ over its lifetime.
15. The average US office worker goes through 10,000 sheets of copy paper per year. **Print on both sides** whenever feasible.

Oceans

16. **Buy responsibly-caught seafood.** Help keep our fisheries and fish stocks healthy by looking for the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) and Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) labels on product packaging or restaurant menus. Their blue and green fish logos ensure your fish can be traced back to responsibly-managed fisheries and farms.
17. **Skip unnecessary single-use plastics.** While some single-use plastics can support safety and health, many plastics—such as non-reusable water bottles, plastic bags, and straws—pollute our ocean and can destroy ecosystems and endanger marine life.
18. **[Pledge](#)** to work together to solve the world's greatest environmental problems and protect our oceans.
19. **[Opt for sustainable tourism](#).** Choose certified sustainable accommodations, tour operators, and destinations when planning your next vacation.
20. **Say no to plastic straws.**
21. **[Increase your ocean IQ](#).** The more you learn about the ocean, the better prepared you'll be to inspire change—and help others do the same.
22. **[Join the fight against plastic pollution](#)** to stop the flow of plastics into our oceans.





Freshwater

23. **Join the [Freshwater Force](#)**—an opportunity for a passionate group of WWF supporters to come together for the conservation of freshwater habitats.
24. If you have access to even a small piece of outside space, use this time to **plant an eco-friendly garden**. Plant native species, landscape with water-efficient plants, and use eco-friendly fertilizers.
25. If your washing machine has a setting for wash load size, **choose a low setting**—you'll use less water and your clothes will get just as clean.
26. **Use your dishwasher**. The average dishwasher in US homes today uses 8.7 gallons of water per load. Washing by hand for 10 minutes with water running can use 20 gallons.
27. **Use your dishwasher efficiently**. Scrape your dishes rather than rinsing and only run the dishwasher when it's full.
28. **Use a reusable water bottle**. Limit the amount of plastic you're using, and save the water required to produce plastic water bottles.
29. **Take a minute off your shower**. Cutting a minute off your shower can save over a gallon of water every minute. Simple choices in your daily routine like turning off water while shaving or brushing your teeth can help save a lot of water.



Plastics

30. **Advocate:** Petition your local government for better recycling capabilities, strict regulations on waste disposal, and initiatives to cut plastic waste.
31. **Educate yourself.** Find out which plastics your town's recycling system accepts, and make sure you're always recycling them.
32. **When possible, "bring your own"** to replace common single-use plastics like bags, beverage cups, water bottles, straws, and utensils.
33. **Organize or join a cleanup.** Every piece of plastic you pick up is one less piece in nature.
34. **Plan a recycling seminar** or webinar for your office or your community—invite a representative from your local municipality to discuss ins and outs of recycling for your location.
35. **Purchase responsibly** and choose products that have recycled content.
36. **Reuse creatively.** Think of out-of-the-box ways to reuse older plastic items. Use and reuse plastic as long as you can, then get creative and reuse it for something else!

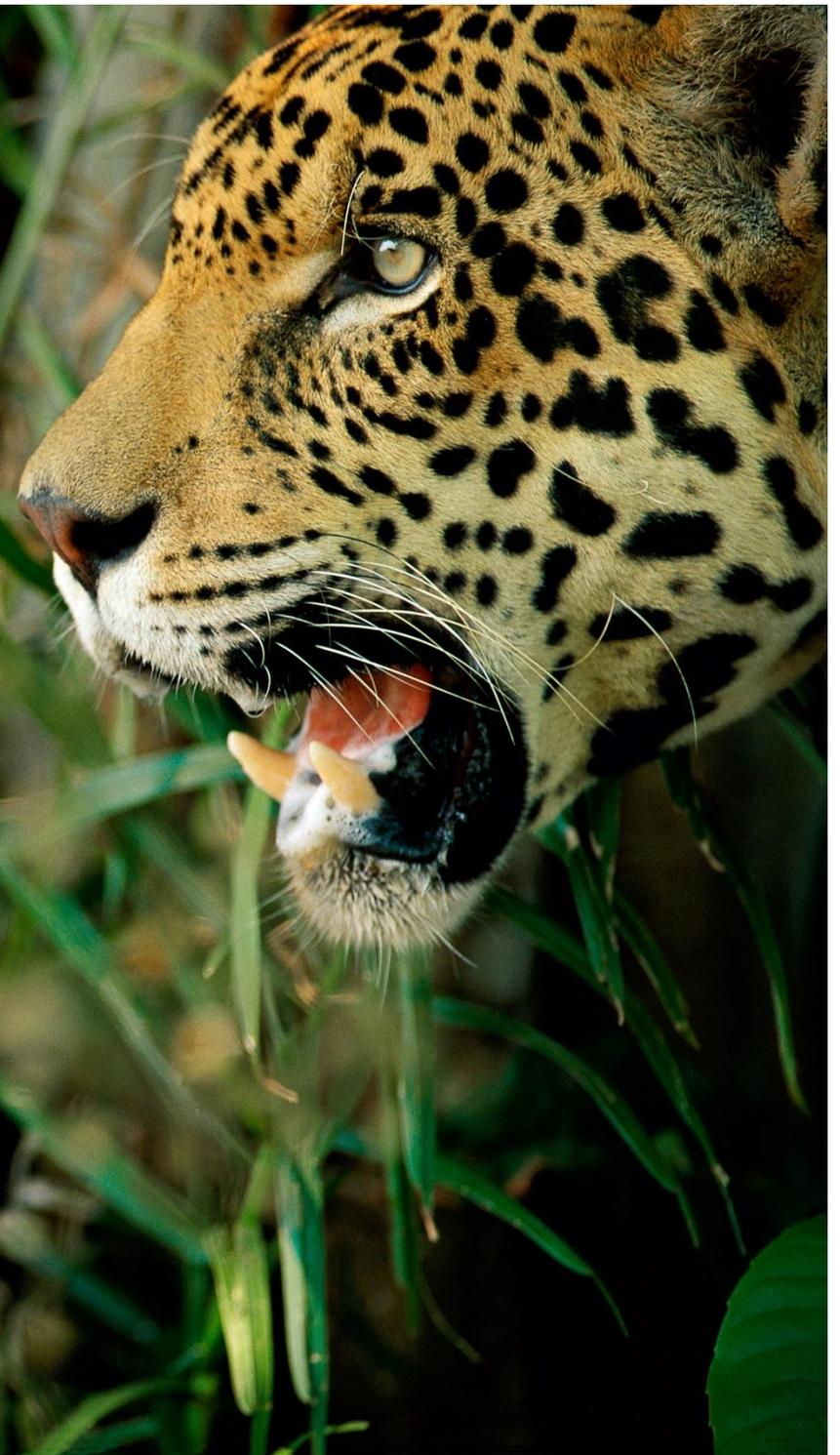


Food

37. **Push the limits of your ingredients.** Is your produce wilting in the crisper? You can reinvigorate some veggies, like lettuce, with a quick ice water bath. Bananas going brown? Peel and freeze them for baking or smoothies. Leftovers, wilted, or ugly produce are perfect for hearty soups and stews.
38. **Most food is safe to eat longer than we think**—for fresh and canned goods. Most expiration dates have nothing to do with safety and many foods are still safe to eat days, weeks, or months after the “best by”, “sell by”, and “best before” labels. Trust your senses to know when food has gone bad or you can search the [FoodKeeper App](#) to learn more about food freshness and storage options.
39. **Ready, set, freeze!** You can freeze almost anything—eggs, meats, produce, sauces—whether you just bought it, or already cooked it. Keep containers tight with a little room for liquids. Freeze in portions for easy access, and date and label so it’s easier to manage. A little extra work up front will save you cooking, prep, and shopping time later. And you’ll save money if you use everything you buy.
40. **Choose frozen options.** Frozen foods can be just as nutritious, and stay edible for much longer. A lot of seafood, for example, is frozen before it reaches your supermarket and then thawed and put on display. That means it will only stay fresh for a few days. By buying frozen seafood, you can extend the shelf life of the product considerably.
41. **Share if you can.** We’ve seen how communities come together to make a difference. Of course, we should only buy what we need. But we can also get creative and share recipes with friends, family, and neighbors to make sure we don’t waste an ounce while also keeping us connected in times of isolation. And if you have extra food, reach out to others who might not.
42. **Get to know farmers.** Farmers are facing a difficult time as prices fluctuate and concerns over labor health and shortages rise. Farming is vital for our economy and food system. By supporting nearby farmers or your local farmers’ market, people can begin to understand how agriculture can serve as a tool for conservation and food security. And with greater understanding, we can begin to share in the challenge of producing enough food for everyone without impacting our planet.
43. **Advocate.** Congress and the Administration have a lot of influence over our food system. You can get involved in the process. Visit worldwildlife.org/act to see how you can add your voice.

Wildlife

44. [Protect Tigers](#). Support the Big Cat Public Safety Act.
45. **Don't litter**. Litter can harm wildlife and pollute landscapes. Pick up litter when you can, and keep our spaces green. Read these [7 principles](#) for more tips on how to respect and protect nature when outdoors.
46. [Sign on to Stop Wildlife Crime](#). Pledge to stop wildlife crime and commit to preserving nature's beauty for future generations.
47. **Use reusable bags**. Plastic bags can be mistaken for food by many wild animals.
48. **Inspire and educate our future conservation leaders**. Explore the world in your own home with [Find Your Inner Animal](#); check out our [Wild Classroom](#) for family fun and learning opportunities; download the [WWF Together](#) and [Seek](#) apps for additional educational activities with children.
49. **Support pollinators**. At least 30% of crops and 90% of flowering plants rely on pollinators, including monarch butterflies, to produce fruit.
50. [Join WWF's Monarch Squad](#) and get the latest on what you can do to help save the monarch butterfly.





together
possible

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This guide includes recommended actions that will have a positive impact on our environment. The seven topic areas include Climate, Forests, Oceans, Freshwater, Plastics, Food, and Wildlife.

To learn more about each of these topics, how WWF works in these areas, and how you can make a difference, visit www.worldwildlife.org/employee-engagement for resource guides that include additional tips and actions you can take to reduce your footprint.

Please share this guide and our additional resources with your friends, family and colleagues. Together, we can find solutions for a better future where people and nature can thrive. No one alone can do it, but together, it's possible.

Thank you.