



I'm With Nature



WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY



5 June 2017 – Celebrated on 5 June each year, World Environment Day is the largest global day for positive environmental action. Promoting awareness of the importance of functioning ecosystems and the services they provide, and safeguarding them for future generations, are critical to achieving the [Sustainable Development Goals](#).

“Connecting People to Nature” is the theme for this year's [World Environment Day](#) celebrations, encouraging people to get outdoors and reconnect with nature, to appreciate its beauty and to take forward the call to protect the Earth we all share. This was underlined by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres last week when he stated that “Those who fail to bet on the

green economy will be living in a grey future”, and [expressed](#)

his deep regret following the US decision to withdraw from the Paris Agreement. The United Nations is focusing more and more on green solutions and how to combat and mitigate climate change. Cooperation between states within the agreement hence becomes all the more crucial.

And cooperation has to turn into action. From Kyrgyzstan to Finland, countries have for example announced new protected areas totalling more than 1,600 square kilometres. Governments are also announcing new protected areas at sea, placing the world on track to preserve a tenth of all oceans by 2020. In a message part of a [newly released short video](#) , top European Union Officials and a Belgian Minister of the Environment recommit their engagement to protect nature by sharing what their favourite place in nature is and what they will do to protect it. European Commissioner Karmenu Vella, the EU authority for nature protection, announced a new action plan to provide stronger and better management of Natura 2000\* protected sites in Europe, “promoting plans that encourage our biodiversity to recover and grow and that will bring people back to nature.”

In Brussels, UN Environment together with UNRIC joined the Environment Festival at the Parc du Cinquantenaire on Sunday, 4 June, where visitors were invited to reconnect with nature through a short quiz and asked to share their favourite spot in nature. Visitors could also visit the stunning [photo exhibition](#) on forests brought to the heart of Europe by partners 'Revolve magazine'.



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