

# INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY



**22 MAY 2020**  
**INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR  
BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**  
**Our solutions are in nature**

The United Nations (an international organisation currently made up of 193 member states of which South Africa is part) proclaimed the International Day for Biological Diversity in December 1993 and in December 2000, 22 May was adopted as the annual date for this event to honour the adoption of the Agreed Text of the Convention on Biological Diversity (an agreement between countries based on natural and biological resource use and protection). The purpose of this day is to promote understanding and awareness of biodiversity related issues on a global scale, since humans all over the world are being negatively affected in one way or another by the results of biodiversity loss.

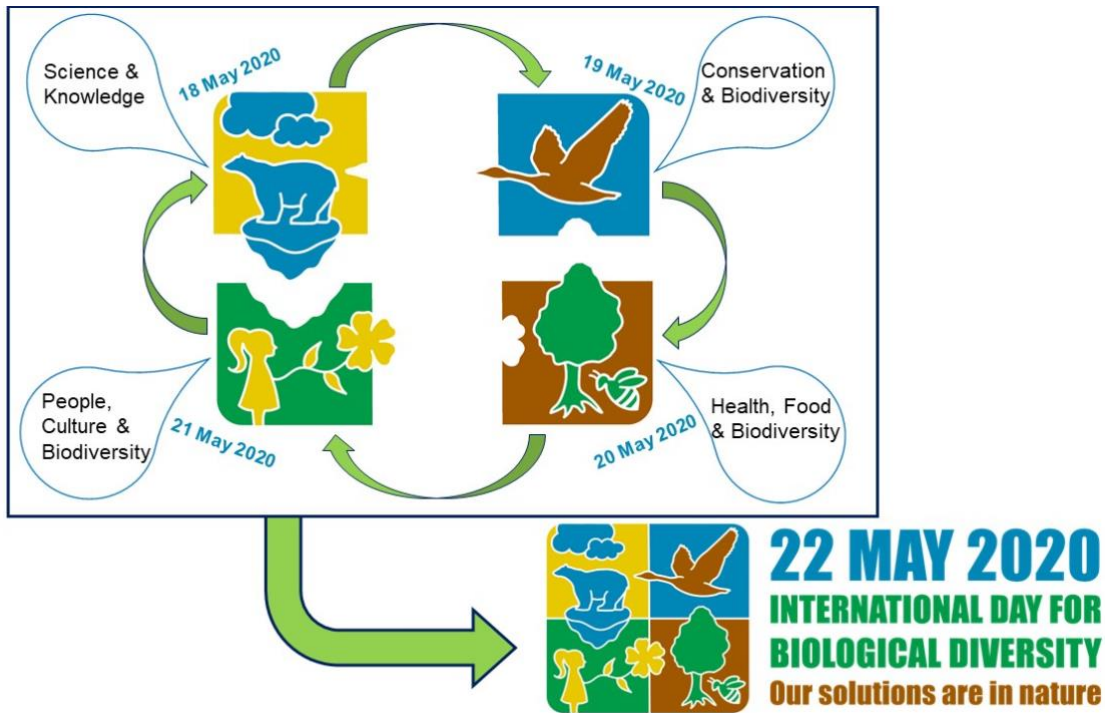
By the actions of the United Nations, we are all urged to re-examine our relationship and interactions with the natural world. From all the work that have been done by various conservation agencies across the globe, the one thing that remains certain is that: despite all the technological advances we as a human race have made over the years we still remain completely dependent on healthy functioning ecosystems for our water, food, fuel, shelter, clothes, energy, medicines, to name but a few. Therefore, the theme for this year's International Day for Biological Diversity is "Our solutions are in nature". This theme highlights the fact that we must focus on nature-based solutions for the improvement and protection of all life on earth by working together at all levels to build a future of life in harmony with nature.

The year 2020 is the time for countries to reflect back on what has been done in terms of various strategies to ensure the protection of our biodiversity worldwide. It is the final

year of the 2011-2020 Strategic Plan on Biodiversity and its 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and it is also the final year of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity which leads to the transitional phase for the start of other important biodiversity-related decades for 2021-2030 (i.e. the Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and the Decade on Ecosystem Restoration). It is also important that all country leaders now place focus on the urgency of actions needed at the highest levels to support a global biodiversity framework which contributes to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and places the world on a path towards realising the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity ("Living in Harmony with Nature"). This vision can only be realised if biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and used wisely, through maintaining ecosystem services to ensure that benefits essential for all human life can be ensured. To promote this under the 2020 theme, several sub-themes (represented by a particular puzzle piece which forms part of the 2020 logo) will be covered from 18 to 21 May 2020:

-  18 May 2020: Science and Knowledge
-  19 May 2020: Conservation of Biodiversity
-  20 May 2020: Health, Food and Biodiversity
-  21 May 2020: People, Culture and Biodiversity

For a detailed description of each theme and its coinciding logo part please visit the following website: <https://www.cbd.int/idb/2020/logo>.



These themes are all key elements of the biodiversity agenda for which our government must implement measures to ensure that our biodiversity is protected for future generations. However, our government, nor any other government in the world, is not able to do this tremendous task on their own. It is necessary for every single person on this planet to get involved and to do our bit to contribute towards the conservation of our biodiversity. We must encourage each other to do what we can no matter how insignificant you may think your actions might be. For example, take a shower rather than a bath. A bath on average uses between 50 and 150 litres of water depending on the fill level, while a water-efficient showerhead uses approximately 9 litres per minute. Therefore, if you take a 5-minute shower you can save up to 30 litres of water per wash session compared to filling your tub halfway for a bath. For a family of four this can save up to 43 800 litres per year! In the arid Northern Cape Province this can make a tremendous difference to our river systems. By preventing over-extraction from these systems, it will improve their ecosystem functioning on which our farmers again rely for food production. Everything in nature is interlinked, therefore every little thing we do to benefit nature will benefit us as humans in the long run! Everyone is encouraged to get

involved with conservation actions in their region and to help protect our environment.  
Remember: BIODIVERSITY IS LIFE, WITHOUT IT WE CANNOT SURVIVE!!!

