



World Environment Day 2026

GLOBAL HIGHLIGHTS



"The planet is sending us signals. We must act on climate change as though our lives depend on it. Because they do."

**— Inger Andersen,
UNEP Executive Director**

World Environment Day (WED) 2026 brought tens of millions of people together in a global push to counter climate change.

The day, and the wide-ranging communications campaign that surrounded it, focused on how extreme heat, devastating floods and other disasters are warning signs of an ever-deepening climate crisis. But WED also carried a message of hope.



Through videos, social posts, web stories and on-the-ground initiatives, the Day underscored that humanity still has time to avoid full-blown climate catastrophe and build a fairer, more sustainable future for all.

Millions took part in UNEP's #NowForClimate campaign, while thousands of events unfolded across the world — from art contests and policy dialogues to youth forums and tree-planting drives.

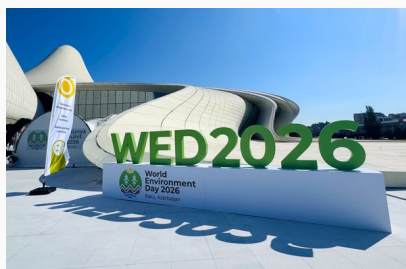
In his World Environment Day message, UN Secretary-General António Guterres urged countries to accelerate the transition away from fossil fuels, protect nature and support communities already facing the impacts of climate change, reminding the world: "This is the moment to act — for our environment and for our future."

Azerbaijan

Advancing climate action through nature

"The climate crisis transcends borders, making it imperative to enhance international cooperation."

— Ilham Aliyev, President of Azerbaijan



World Environment Day sign outside the Heydar Aliyev Center in Baku, 5 June 2026

As host of World Environment Day 2026, Azerbaijan used the occasion to spotlight the interconnected crises of climate change and ecosystem degradation, while demonstrating how national action can reinforce global ambition. Under the theme "Inspired by Nature. For Climate. For Our Future," Azerbaijan's World Environment Day observance emphasized that healthy ecosystems are fundamental to climate resilience and sustainable development.

The official ceremony, held on 5 June at the Heydar Aliyev Center in Baku, brought together government leaders, international partners, civil society and the public. In his opening remarks, Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources Rashad Ismayilov called for urgent action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and keep the goals of the Paris Agreement within reach.

"The science is clear," he said. "Every fraction of a degree of warming costs lives, livelihoods and ecosystems — and no country is spared."

The ceremony also featured messages from senior government representatives, UN officials and international climate leaders, followed by performances by Azerbaijani artists and K-pop star Mark Lee. The live broadcast drew more than 300,000 views.

Two side events explored regional environmental priorities. Joint Action for Methane Reduction convened experts from government, academia and industry to identify practical pathways for cutting methane emissions. The Caspian Sea at a Crossroads dialogue brought scientists and policymakers together to examine the causes and consequences of declining water levels and explore opportunities for stronger regional cooperation.

The commemoration extended beyond the official ceremony. At Yanar Dag, UNEP Executive Director Inger Andersen joined Azerbaijani youth for a dialogue on climate action and environmental leadership, while an eco-festival showcased environmental art, sustainable fashion, children's activities, eco-products and partner exhibitions.

Events marking the Day continued across the country. Minister Ismayilov and Andersen joined partners and volunteers for a tree-planting initiative in Mushfigabad while volunteers removed nearly 200 kilograms of waste during a coastal clean-up along the Shuvalan shoreline of the Caspian Sea.



World Environment Day 2026 opening ceremony at the Heydar Aliyev Center



Local children presenting artwork to UNEP Executive Director Inger Andersen at the outdoor eco-festival



UNEP Executive Director Inger Andersen in dialogue with Azerbaijani youth at Yanar Dag



Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources Rashad Ismayilov and UNEP Executive Director Inger Andersen took part in a tree-planting initiative



UNEP's global campaign

By the numbers

105M



People reached
across UNEP channels

239M



Number of times
UNEP's WED content
viewed on social media

180M



Video views
across all platforms

3M



Social media engagements
Likes, comments, shares

4M



Website views
by 2.2M users

2,692



Events registered
in 154 countries

58,200



News articles
in 177 countries

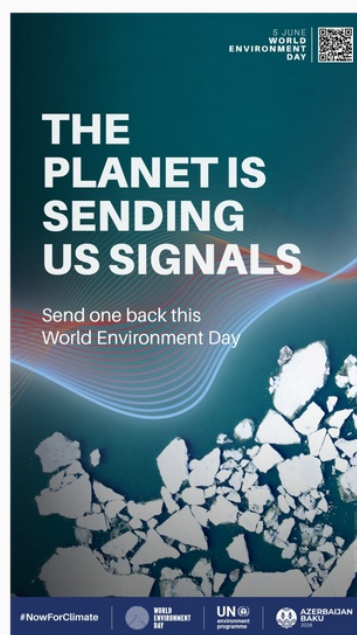
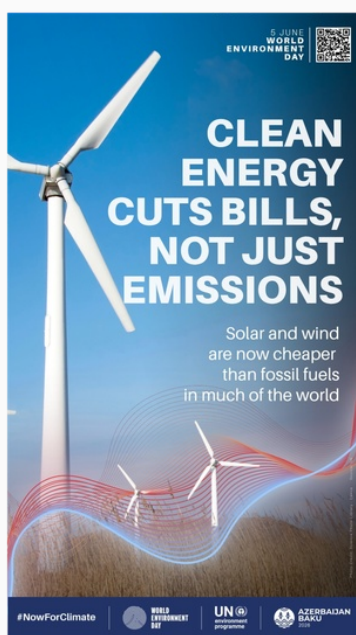
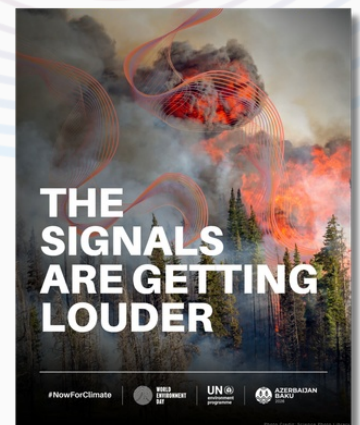
928K



Number of times
UNEP's WED newsletters
were opened

UNEP's 2026 World Environment Day campaign reached hundreds of millions of people globally while catalyzing initiatives that helped cities and communities put climate solutions into practice.

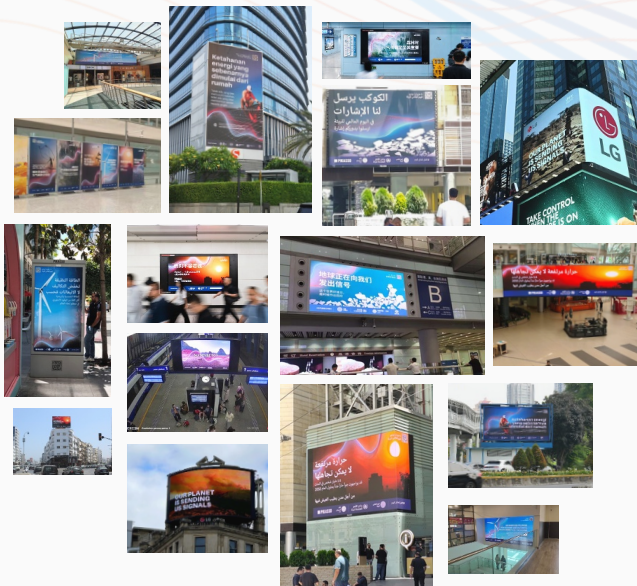
The two main campaign hashtags, #WorldEnvironmentDay and #NowForClimate, trended first and second globally. The campaign reached audiences across languages and platforms, bringing together communities around a simple message: the planet is sending us signals, and now is the time to act.



The campaign reached global audiences on an exceptional scale, generating 4 million views of the World Environment Day website, 239 million social media impressions and 180 million video views in at least 6 languages across all platforms. Moreover, across 154 countries, 2,692 registered events to mark the day brought communities together through educational programmes, youth initiatives, public celebrations and partnered activities. The campaign also attracted widespread media attention, generating more than 58,200 news articles across 177 countries and in 52 languages.

A parade of political leaders voiced their support for World Environment Day, including Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Pakistan President Asif Ali Zardari, Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez and the Dalai Lama, who wrote: "This is our only world. We must protect it."

From airport terminals to subway platforms and roadside signs, World Environment Day messages appeared on billboards in dozens of languages across Algeria, Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, China, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Mexico, Morocco, Paraguay, Poland, Thailand, the United Kingdom, the United States and Uruguay, bringing the message into the daily lives of millions of commuters and travellers.



Beyond public engagement, World Environment Day catalyzed tangible climate action through cities around the world. Through UNEP's 50@50 initiative, UNEP and the Cool Coalition mobilized 58 cities—from Barranquilla to Lagos and Tokyo—to launch local campaigns on extreme heat and sustainable cooling, with 16 cities committing to conduct heat stress tests over the following year. UNEP also released the Cheaper, Cleaner, Unstoppable. policy brief, demonstrating that affordable, scalable climate solutions are already available across energy, transport, buildings and cooling, while equipping policymakers with evidence to accelerate the transition.

Global limbo dance challenge

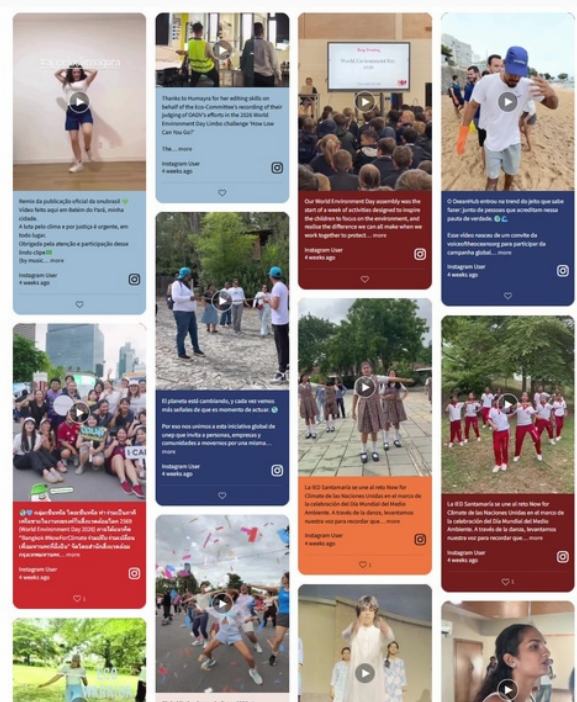


The central engagement ask for the 2026 World Environment Day campaign was the global limbo dance challenge, which invited people everywhere to join a symbolic, energetic movement: *How low can we keep global warming to safeguard our planet for future generations?*

Launched on 15 May across UNEP's social media channels, the challenge was anchored by a choreographed dance film set to "Deep Down", the global hit track by UNEP Goodwill Ambassador Alok.

The challenge generated significant visibility and participation across platforms. English-language content published on UNEP's YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok amassed over 17.4 million views and 90,000 engagements, with the main "Dance for our Planet" video generating over 3.2 million views. Participation from public figures, creators, and supporters extended the campaign's reach to more than 26.8 million views and 1.15 million engagements globally. Among the standout participants was K-pop star Mark Lee, whose limbo dance video generated 8.2 million views, with over 1 million engagements. Other key participation included UNEP Goodwill Ambassadors and advocates such as Jason Momoa, Amber Valletta, Antoinette Taus, President of the UN General Assembly Annalena Baerbock, Good Morning Britain's Laura Tobin, Brazilian influencer Jessi Alves, Voices of the Ocean, Tanzania rapper Frida Amani, Kenyan rugby sevens player Kevin Wekesa, and Azerbaijani travel creator Ayshah Mammadova.

The challenge also leapt off screens and into public spaces, including flash mob on Broadway in New York, and an activation with hundreds of dancers in Lumpini Park in Bangkok, Thailand.



Events around the world

Across the globe, World Environment Day 2026 transformed the #NowForClimate message into action in schools, universities, city streets, transport systems, public squares and policy forums. Led by UNEP's regional offices and hundreds of partners, the campaign connected global climate ambition with local realities, bringing together governments, young people, scientists, businesses, artists and communities through restoration projects, public engagement, cultural events and scientific dialogue.

Asia and the Pacific

Across Asia and the Pacific, World Environment Day 2026 brought together governments, young people, workers, researchers and communities, highlighting the links between climate, nature, food systems and ocean sustainability while encouraging people to take action in their own neighbourhoods. Indonesia used World Environment Day to launch a broader public campaign ahead of the Ocean Impact Summit, combining green festivals, urban farming workshops, sustainable food experiences, youth performances and public discussions.

Young people played a leading role through the Cool School Challenge, showcasing practical initiatives including mangrove restoration, composting, cycling, urban gardening and neighbourhood clean-ups. Climate messages also reached commuters through digital billboards and public transport displays, extending the campaign well beyond traditional event venues.



Hundreds joined the #NowForClimate dance challenge at Bangkok's Lumpini Park to celebrate World Environment Day

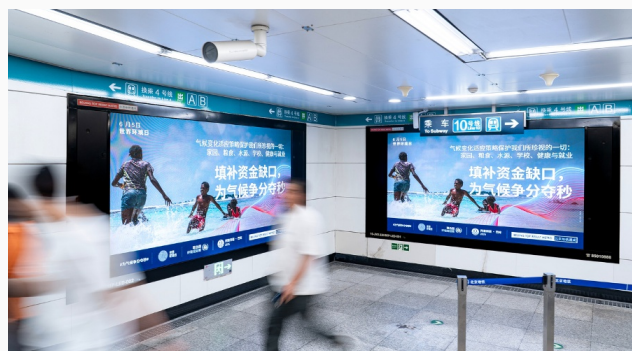
In India, the Government of Maharashtra advanced efforts to integrate passive cooling into building regulations, urban planning and school infrastructure through UNEP's BeCool Programme urban planning and school infrastructure through UNEP's BeCool Programme. Tamil Nadu released India's first Standard Operating Procedure for Cool Roof Coating Application, developed with UNEP's technical support, to expand cool roofs and reduce heat stress in homes, schools and public buildings.

Elsewhere in the region, public participation took many different forms. Bangkok transformed Lumphini Park into an open-air celebration where hundreds joined the global #NowForClimate dance challenge, while in Beijing, government representatives, UN agencies, businesses, civil society and youth gathered to discuss China's contribution to climate action before a youth choir closed the event with a cultural call for action.

In Yangzhou, the Municipal Federation of Trade Unions and the Urban Management Bureau trained sanitation workers to recognise heat stress, respond to weather warnings and stay safe during extreme heat, supporting UNEP's Beat the Heat initiative. The Beijing Metro and Beijing Airport also carried World Environment Day messaging across its transit hubs, bringing climate awareness into the daily journeys of thousands of passengers.



2026 World Environment Day event at the UN Office in China



World Environment Day billboards appeared across cities in Asia

Africa

Across Africa, World Environment Day 2026 showcased the continent's diverse approaches to climate action, with activities ranging from ecosystem restoration and environmental education to scientific dialogue, youth engagement and knowledge sharing.

Several countries focused on restoring ecosystems while empowering young people. Cameroon launched a week of activities combining public outreach, competitions, tree-planting, and community clean-ups. Through the "One Student, One Tree" initiative, students helped plant approximately 29,000 saplings.

In Ethiopia, celebrations linked to the country's Green Legacy Initiative brought together students, teachers and government officials for performances, environmental competitions and field visits showcasing restored forests, agroforestry and ecotourism.

UNEP's Southern Africa Office convened researchers, policymakers and students for a virtual symposium exploring practical climate solutions, including passive cooling technologies, electric public transport and climate-resilient agriculture. At the United Nations Office at Nairobi, staff, youth and partners participated in a Wikimedia Edit-a-thon to strengthen freely accessible environmental knowledge, an interactive dialogue on youth leadership, and a screening of the documentary *Groundswell*, highlighting the role of storytelling in inspiring climate action.

Elsewhere, activities underscored the links between climate action, resilience, peace and sustainable development. In South Sudan, schoolchildren joined the United Nations Mission in planting "trees of hope," reinforcing the links between environmental stewardship and peacebuilding.

Malawi marked the day by launching its National State of the Environment and Outlook Report, outlining pathways to address deforestation, land degradation and climate vulnerability through integrated ecosystem restoration and sustainable energy solutions.



Côte d'Ivoire Youth Network for the SDGs and UN staff joined a beach clean-up in Grand-Bassam



Event at the UN Office in Nairobi for World Environment Day 2026 featuring youth participants



UNEP staff, youth and Wikimedia volunteers expanded trusted environmental knowledge at a Wikipedia Edit-a-thon in Nairobi

Europe and Central Asia

Across Europe and Central Asia, World Environment Day brought together high-level policy dialogue, public participation, cultural engagement and youth education.

In Geneva, government representatives, diplomats, UN agencies and civil society gathered for discussions that helped build momentum towards the 2026 UN Climate Change Conference, while the city's iconic Jet d'Eau was illuminated in green to mark the occasion. In Belgium, World Environment Day featured a film screening, participation in EU Green Week, the launch of an educational learning trial at an urban farm in partnership with FAO, and the green illumination of landmark buildings in Bruges, Brussels, and Leuven, and campaign messaging across Brussels Airport.



Geneva's iconic Jet d'Eau was illuminated in green for World Environment Day

In Poland, UNEP/GRID-Warsaw brought together scientific, business, civil society and media partners for the event Climate Action: Biodiversity as the Foundation of Resilience, highlighting the vital role of nature in strengthening resilience to climate change. The event was complemented by a nationwide public awareness campaign across digital billboards in Warsaw, Kraków, and Łódź.

Public outreach took many creative forms across the region, including dedicated NRJ radio activations in Austria, Belgium, France, and Germany that reached millions of listeners. In France, the NRJ Green Live concert in Rennes and nationwide broadcasts amplified World Environment Day messages. In Turkmenistan, children explored climate action through the interactive Climate Box programme, using games and hands-on learning to understand environmental challenges and solutions.



In Turkmenistan, children explored climate action through the interactive Climate Box programme



World Environment Day event by UNEP/GRID-Warsaw discussed biodiversity and climate resilience

Latin America and the Caribbean

Across Latin America and the Caribbean, World Environment Day reached millions of people through transport networks, public spaces, universities, digital platforms and community events.

Campaign messages appeared across hundreds of digital screens in Mexico City's metro, reaching large numbers of commuters each day, while airports in Uruguay and Paraguay, ferries linking Uruguay and Argentina, and Montevideo's public transport network carried World Environment Day messaging throughout the region.

Brazil combined creativity with large-scale public engagement. More than 60 digital creators adapted the Global Limbo Dance Challenge for local audiences, while community performances, billboard campaigns and Rio Climate and Nature Week helped amplify the campaign to millions of people. The innovative "Last Cup" campaign used football to highlight the existential threat that sea-level rise poses to Kiribati, attracting extensive coverage across sports, business and mainstream media.

Elsewhere, countries adapted the global campaign to local priorities. Mexico highlighted environmental justice, electric mobility and pathways towards net-zero emissions, while Chile organised a Wikipedia Edit-a-thon to strengthen reliable Spanish-language climate information. Colombia hosted expert dialogues on climate action, Peru showcased Indigenous-led ecosystem restoration in the Andes, and Caribbean partners promoted locally relevant zero-waste solutions. Together, these initiatives reflect a region-wide effort that wove together public outreach, community leadership, and science-based messaging on climate.



World Environment Day messages on display across transport networks and public spaces in the region



Communities across Brazil took part in the #NowForClimate Limbo Dance Challenge

North America

At United Nations Headquarters in New York, Member States, UN agencies, youth and partners came together to discuss the roles and responsibilities of countries in advancing climate action and engaging stakeholders. More than 30 Member States took the floor, sharing commitments to strengthen environmental policy and accelerate climate action.

In the spirit of this year's #NowForClimate campaign, a flashmob on Broadway, performed the limbo dance, symbolically encouraging passers-by to "keep it low" by reducing climate impacts and joining the global movement. On 5 June, the United Nations Chamber Music Society, presented Don't Ruin My World – Soil of Life, written by and featuring Grammy Award-winning musician Julian Marley, whose performance highlighted the connection between music, environmental stewardship and climate action. World Environment Day also reached millions of people through a citywide digital display campaign, with campaign messages featured on the giant LG screen in Times Square, NYC Link screens across all five boroughs, and digital displays at UN Headquarters.

Across Canada, local events and digital outreach encouraged communities to take part in climate action. The City of Toronto marked the day by publishing a report highlighting progress on reducing greenhouse gas emissions through cleaner transport, renewable energy, building retrofits and circular economy initiatives. Meanwhile, the national government reaffirmed Canada's commitment to protecting forests, oceans, rivers and biodiversity.



The #NowForClimate dance challenge brought World Environment Day messages to the streets of New York

West Asia

Across West Asia, World Environment Day 2026 focused on raising public awareness of climate change while highlighting regional priorities including renewable energy, ecosystem restoration, water security and climate resilience. A coordinated digital billboard activation, delivered in collaboration with Pikasso, brought the #NowForClimate message to millions through large-format displays across major cities, public spaces and transport corridors.

In Dubai, the Day showcased the Dubai Electricity and Water Authority's flagship clean energy and sustainability projects, including solar park, green hydrogen, smart grids and green buildings. In Baghdad, the Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED), working with Iraq's Ministry of Environment and student volunteers, organised a large-scale tree-planting campaign that demonstrated the power of community participation in restoring urban ecosystems.



Digital billboards carried World Environment Day messages across major cities in West Asia

As the world looks ahead to the next milestones in the global climate agenda, World Environment Day 2026 reinforces a simple truth: the planet is sending us signals, and the time to act is now. Together, we can still shape a safer, more resilient and sustainable future.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
worldenvironmentday.global
unep-communication-director@un.org

#NowForClimate



WORLD
ENVIRONMENT
DAY



AZERBAIJAN
BAKU
2026