



World Cities Day

Hello readers! In today's article we will be telling you about World Cities Day - an annual United Nations observance held on October 31. The global observance, first held in 2014, is organized by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) in coordination with each year's selected host city.

Each year, one unifying theme is chosen; the general theme of World Cities Day "Better City, Better life". This year's sub-theme is ***Adapting Cities for Climate Resilience***. Cities worldwide are increasingly suffering the effects of climate-related disasters, such as floods, droughts, sea level rise, heat waves, landslides and storms. At least 130 port cities with over one million inhabitants are expected to be affected by coastal flooding and the one billion people in urban informal settlements are particularly at risk.

World Cities Day aims to promote the international community's interest in global sustainable urbanization, push forward cooperation among countries and cities in meeting opportunities and addressing challenges of urbanization, and contributing to sustainable urban development around the world.

The main goals of World Cities Day 2021 are to:

- Increase awareness on climate change adaptation and urban resilience;
- Inspire effective climate action at the local level by sharing knowledge on effective urban systems resilience solutions; and
- Contribute to the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Paris Agreement for Climate Change to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Guyana, like many other countries is vulnerable to climate change and already experiences severe floods and droughts. From shifting weather patterns that threaten food production, to rising sea levels that increase the risk of catastrophic flooding, the

impacts of climate change are global in scope and unprecedented in scale. Without drastic action today, adapting to these impacts in the future will be more difficult and costly.

It is clear, that to fight climate change all must be united in their efforts locally and globally. To better understand why we should join the fight, consider these sobering facts:

- Global temperature has risen by 1.4°F since 1880;
- By 2025, rising temperatures will result in the amount of water available per person decreasing by 30%-70% in some areas, including the Caribbean region;
- Carbon dioxide levels in the air are at their highest in 650,000 years;
- Global average sea level has risen by more than 7 inches over the past 100 years, more than double the amount of the last century; and
- In South and Central America, more than 600 extreme weather events occurred between 2000-2013, affecting 52.6 million people, resulting in 13,500 deaths, and economic losses of US\$45.3 billion.

These facts provide solid evidence that climate change is real and if we fail to adjust our actions, then our Earth's climate will become dangerous for people. Therefore, climate change is an issue of urgency and hope. Every individual must take action and use their power to fight climate change. Simple actions can be taken to aid in addressing this issue. These include:

- Mending and reusing clothes and other products to save money and reduce waste going to the landfill;
- Replacing old appliances with energy efficient models and light bulbs.
- Saving electricity by plugging appliances into a power strip and turning them off completely when not in use;
- Eating less meat, poultry, and fish and composting kitchen waste;
- Planting trees;
- Buying minimally packaged goods;
- Decreasing your personal carbon footprint by walking, cycling, and using public transportation whenever possible. Consider carpooling with friends, neighbours, and co-workers;

- Taking the stairs instead of using the elevator. In addition to saving energy, taking the stairs gives you a mild workout which will help keep you healthy; and
- Adapt energy efficient technologies for your factories and industries.

You can share your ideas and questions by sending letters to: “Our Earth, Our Environment”, C/O ECEA Programme, Environmental Protection Agency, Ganges Street, Sophia, GEORGETOWN, or email us at: eit.epaguyana@gmail.com. Follow us on Facebook and Instagram and subscribe to our YouTube channel.