

Message for the 2021 International Day for Biological Diversity
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BIODIVERSITY DAY
We're part of the solution
#PlantHealth #ForNature

A planet without biological diversity is an endangered planet.

From plants to soil, to pollinators and animals, to food and agriculture, the value of biodiversity is immeasurable. As international organizations and UN agencies, it is our duty to ensure our environment is healthy, diverse and safeguarded. Taking concrete actions today to preserve biodiversity is critical to build a better and more sustainable world for tomorrow. It is time to realise that “we are part of the solution” and now is the time to act for nature!

The threats to our diverse ecosystems are just around the corner. Human activities and climate change have and may increasingly contribute to put nature and biodiversity at risk. As tiny and unsuspected as lethal and ravenous, invasive plant pests cause biodiversity decline all over the world and are responsible for the loss of up to 40% of global food crops every year. They pose a major threat to plant health, the environment, and food security. The IPBES Global Assessment recognised pests and other invasive alien species as one of the main drivers of global biodiversity loss, and limiting their spread is our global mission.

As one of the biodiversity-related conventions, the International Plant Protection Convention, which I am representing here today aims at preventing the introduction and spread of invasive pests to new areas by setting a series of international standards for phytosanitary measures. When implemented by countries, these IPPC standards help protect natural and agricultural resources, and preserve biodiversity worldwide.

The massive use of hazardous pesticides is also contributing to the decline of biodiversity and the deterioration of our ecosystems. Along with plant pests and diseases, hazardous chemicals kill many good bugs, pollinators and natural enemies that help combat invasive threats and maintain our natural ecosystems balanced. When combined with the implementation of international standards for phytosanitary measures, integrated pest management, including the use of bio-pesticide and other environmentally friendly methods, can seriously make the difference and avoid deliberate harms to the environment.

The proof of how much we depend on and owe to nature has never been more vivid than today. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown how humans and nature are deeply interconnected. Our health intimately depends on the health of planet we live in, and it is our shared responsibility to make our world a healthy and safe place. Through our actions, our choices, our activities we can make the difference and make a great contribution to nature.

The solutions we seek are in nature, and protecting plants means protecting life.

Happy International Day for Biological Diversity to all!