

Householders' Options to Protect the Environment Inc.

PO Box 6118 – Clifford Gardens, TOOWOOMBA QLD 435

(22 Vacy Street, Toowoomba QLD 4350)

Ph 07 4639 2135; Email: office@hopeaustralia.org.au

Website: www.hopeaustralia.org.au

Facebook: www.facebook.com/Householders.Options.to.Protect.the.Environment

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The information and images utilised in this newsletter were sourced from the United Nations (UN) Environmental Observance websites and affiliated links.

Editorial

Welcome to the first edition of HOPE's E News Bulletin for 2026. This special issue invites us to see environmental observances not just as dates, but as reminders that wetlands, forests, soils, oceans, and cities are chapters in our shared story. Each teaches us about resilience, generosity, and renewal, showing that restoration becomes possible when awareness grows into participation. Across Australia, people are already writing hope into the landscape, caring for country, speaking up for nature, living lightly, and supporting one another through change. As you read, may you feel encouraged to recognize your place in this story, knowing that your curiosity, your actions, and your voice help shape a healthier, more hopeful future for people and planet.

Kind regards,

Fidelia Fidelia, Guest Newsletter Editor – HOPE Inc.

“Advocating for responsible and sustainable stewardship of the environment”

UN Environmental Observances 2026

1. World Wetlands Day — 2 February <https://www.un.org/en/observances/world-wetlands-day>



Wetlands are among the most productive ecosystems on the planet, yet they remain one of the most threatened. World Wetlands Day marks the anniversary of the Ramsar Convention and celebrates the vital role these landscapes play in biodiversity, climate regulation, water purification, and flood protection. Wetlands also support fisheries, store vast amounts of carbon, and provide cultural and recreational value to communities.

In Australia, wetlands such as mangroves, saltmarshes, floodplains, and riverine systems face pressures from development, altered water flows, invasive species, pollution, and climate change. Their loss not only affects wildlife but also weakens community resilience to droughts and extreme weather.

How communities can help:

- Join local wetland restoration, vegetation planting, or clean-up events
 - Reduce chemical use at home to prevent runoff into waterways
 - Support conservation policies and promote the protection of remaining wetland habitats
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2. World Wildlife Day — 3 March

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/world-wildlife-day>



World Wildlife Day celebrates the rich diversity of wildlife on Earth and raises awareness about the threats facing species and ecosystems. It highlights the urgent need to combat habitat loss, illegal wildlife trade, climate impacts, and pollution — all major drivers of biodiversity decline. The day also recognises the social, cultural, and economic value of wildlife worldwide.

Australia is home to unique species found nowhere else on Earth, yet has one of the world's highest extinction rates. As wildlife habitats shrink and pressures increase, conservation efforts become increasingly important. Protecting wildlife supports ecosystem balance, pollination, water health, and human wellbeing.

How communities can help:

- Support local wildlife rescue and rehabilitation groups
- Plant native vegetation to create biodiversity-friendly backyards
- Report suspected cases of illegal wildlife trade or poaching

3. World Water Day — 22 March

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/world-water-day>



World Water Day focuses global attention on the importance of freshwater and sustainable water management. It highlights global inequalities in access to clean water and the need for cooperation to safeguard this essential resource. With climate pressures intensifying, water scarcity has become one of the defining challenges of the century.

As the driest inhabited continent, Australia faces unique water challenges. Drought, over-extraction, pollution, and climate change place additional stress on rivers, aquifers, and catchments. Protecting water sources is essential not only for people, but also for agriculture and ecological stability.

How communities can help:

- Fix leaks and install water-efficient devices
 - Reduce water use in gardens, homes, and workplaces
 - Support local catchment groups and river restoration programs
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4. World Meteorological Day — 23 March

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/world-meteorological-day>



World Meteorological Day acknowledges the vital role meteorological and climate services play in supporting public safety, environmental protection, and disaster preparedness. Weather forecasting, climate monitoring, and early warning systems contribute to reducing loss of life, supporting agriculture, and helping communities adapt to a changing climate.

Australia's weather extremes — heatwaves, cyclones, floods, and bushfires — highlight the importance of accurate meteorological information. Early warnings save lives and protect property, while long-term climate insights guide planning and resilience-building.

How communities can help:

- Stay informed through national weather alerts and emergency apps
- Participate in local climate and weather education programs
- Support local resilience initiatives focused on disaster preparedness

5. Earth Day — 22 April

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/earth-day>



Earth Day is a global movement that unites millions of people in taking action for the planet. It promotes environmental protection through community engagement, education, and advocacy. Each year, the day focuses on a theme — such as restoration, climate action, or ending plastic pollution — encouraging collective responsibility.

In Australia, Earth Day brings attention to issues such as biodiversity loss, pollution, climate change, and declining ecosystems. It serves as a reminder that small daily actions, when taken together, can have a powerful impact.

How communities can help:

- Participate in community clean-ups and tree-planting events
 - Reduce plastic use and adopt sustainable consumption habits
 - Support environmental organisations working on restoration and conservation
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6. International Mother Earth Day — 22 April

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/mother-earth-day>



International Mother Earth Day recognises Earth as a living system that supports all life. It encourages respect, stewardship, and harmony with nature. The observance highlights the interconnectedness between human wellbeing and the health of ecosystems, emphasising the need for sustainability and environmental protection.

For Australia, the day offers a moment to reflect on the impacts of climate change, land clearing, pollution, and biodiversity decline. Restoring natural systems is essential for clean air, safe water, food security, and long-term resilience.

How communities can help:

- Plant native trees and create wildlife-friendly spaces
- Choose sustainable, low-impact products
- Support local conservation programs and nature-based climate solutions

7. International Day for Biological Diversity — 22 May

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/biological-diversity-day>



This global observance highlights the importance of biodiversity and the urgent need to halt species loss. Biodiversity underpins healthy ecosystems, supports food production, purifies air and water, and provides the foundation for human health. The day encourages countries and communities to safeguard nature and actively restore degraded ecosystems.

Australia's unique biodiversity faces threats from habitat fragmentation, invasive species, pollution, and climate change. Protecting it is essential to maintaining ecological balance and ensuring resilient landscapes.

How communities can help:

- Create native habitat gardens and reduce pesticide use
 - Participate in citizen science monitoring of wildlife
 - Support local conservation groups and recovery projects
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8. World Environment Day — 5 June

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/environment-day>



World Environment Day is the UN's largest environmental observance, engaging millions worldwide. Each year focuses on a major environmental issue — such as land restoration, climate change, or plastic pollution — inspiring individuals, organisations, and governments to take meaningful action.

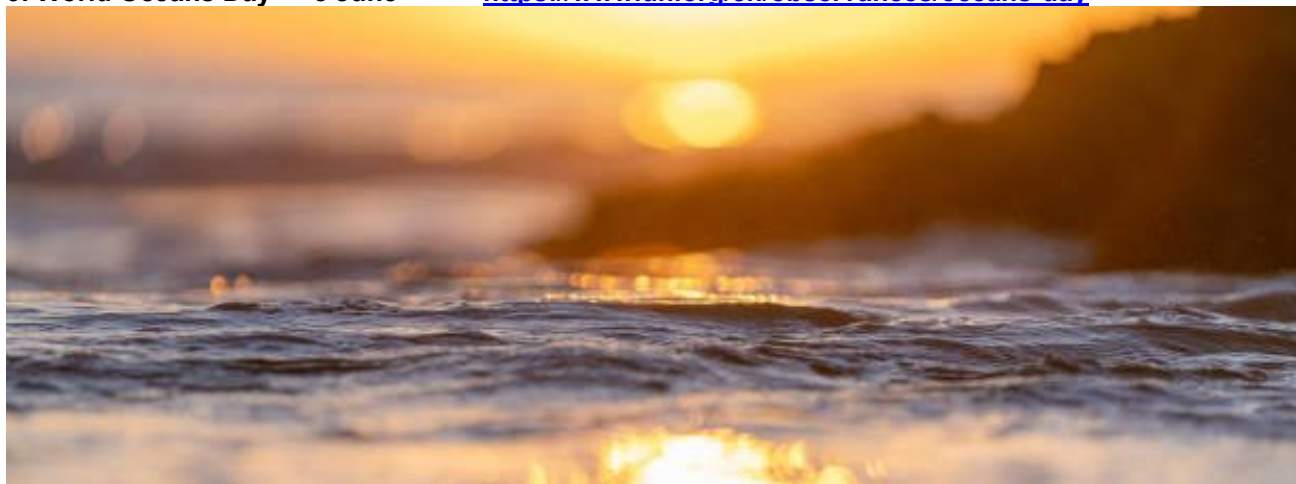
In Australia, the day serves as a key moment for community events, awareness campaigns, and government announcements. It encourages reflection on national environmental challenges and opportunities for positive impact.

How communities can help:

- Join local environment events or clean-ups
 - Reduce household waste and support recycling initiatives
 - Advocate for sustainable policies and environmental protection
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9. World Oceans Day — 8 June

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/oceans-day>



World Oceans Day celebrates the essential role oceans play in climate regulation, biodiversity, and human livelihoods. It also highlights threats such as pollution, overfishing, habitat loss, and warming waters. Healthy oceans are critical for food security and global climate stability.

Australia is surrounded by rich marine environments, including the Great Barrier Reef — one of the most biodiverse ecosystems on Earth. However, these ecosystems face increasing pressures from climate change, coastal development, and marine pollution.

How communities can help:

- Reduce plastic waste and avoid single-use plastics
 - Join beach or coastal clean-ups
 - Support marine conservation organisations and sustainable seafood choices
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10. Desertification & Drought Day — 17 June

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/desertification-and-drought-day>



This observance raises awareness about land degradation, soil loss, and increasing drought severity. It highlights the need for sustainable land management and restoration to prevent desertification, protect food systems, and strengthen resilience to climate change.

In Australia, drought and soil degradation threaten ecosystems, agriculture, and rural communities. Restoring degraded land can improve productivity, reduce erosion, and support biodiversity.

How communities can help:

- Plant vegetation to stabilise soil
- Reduce water waste and practice efficient irrigation
- Support regenerative agriculture and land restoration projects

11. International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies — 7 September

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/clean-air-day>



This observance highlights the global health impacts of air pollution and encourages action to improve air quality. Clean air is fundamental to human health, climate stability, and ecosystem wellbeing.

In Australia, air quality can be affected by vehicle emissions, industrial pollution, bushfire smoke, and dust. Improving air quality reduces respiratory illness and strengthens environmental health.

How communities can help:

- Use public transport, cycle, or carpool to reduce emissions
 - Lower energy use at home and support clean energy options
 - Advocate for stronger clean-air policies
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12. International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer — 16 September

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/ozone-day>



This day commemorates the Montreal Protocol, a landmark environmental treaty that successfully phased out ozone-depleting substances. The ozone layer continues to recover — a global success story demonstrating what cooperative environmental action can achieve.

Australia has played an active role in global ozone protection, and continued progress depends on responsible chemical management and strong regulation.

How communities can help:

- Dispose of old refrigerators and air-conditioners safely
- Support policies that limit harmful chemicals
- Choose energy-efficient appliances

13. World Habitat Day — First Monday of October

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/habitat-day>



World Habitat Day encourages reflection on the state of towns and cities and promotes sustainable urban development. It emphasises the need for inclusive, safe, resilient, and environmentally responsible housing and infrastructure.

Australia's cities face challenges such as urban sprawl, housing pressure, transport emissions, and declining green space. Sustainable planning is essential for healthy communities.

How communities can help:

- Support and advocate for greener, more walkable neighbourhoods
- Participate in local planning consultations
- Volunteer in urban greening and community garden projects

14. World Cities Day — 31 October

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/cities-day>



World Cities Day promotes sustainable urban development and encourages cooperation to address challenges such as pollution, waste, infrastructure, and climate resilience. Cities are major contributors to emissions but also centres for innovation and environmental action.

In Australia, the day highlights opportunities for improving liveability, reducing ecological footprints, and building climate-ready communities.

How communities can help:

- Advocate for active transport and public transit investment
 - Support green infrastructure and urban tree-planting
 - Participate in local sustainability initiatives
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15. International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction — 13 October

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/disaster-risk-reduction-day>



This observance highlights the importance of reducing disaster risks through preparedness, early warning systems, and resilience-building. With climate change increasing the frequency and intensity of extreme weather, disaster risk reduction is more important than ever.

Australia is highly vulnerable to bushfires, floods, cyclones, and heatwaves, making preparedness a national priority.

How communities can help:

- Prepare a household emergency plan
 - Stay informed using national emergency apps
 - Participate in community resilience programs
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16. International Mountain Day — 11 December
<https://www.un.org/en/observances/mountain-day>



International Mountain Day celebrates the importance of mountain ecosystems, which provide water, biodiversity, and cultural value to communities worldwide. Mountains are highly sensitive to climate change, facing threats such as glacier melt, biodiversity loss, and habitat degradation.

In Australia, mountain regions such as the Alps are home to unique species and important water catchments. Protecting these ecosystems supports both people and nature.

How communities can help:

- Practice responsible tourism and minimise environmental impact
 - Support mountain conservation initiatives
 - Learn about the biodiversity and cultural heritage of mountain landscapes
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17. World Soil Day — 5 December <https://www.un.org/en/observances/soil-day>



World Soil Day raises awareness of the importance of healthy soils and sustainable land management. Soil is fundamental to food production, biodiversity, water cycling, and climate regulation. Yet soil degradation is increasing globally.

In Australia, soil erosion, nutrient loss, and declining soil carbon affect farms, ecosystems, and community resilience. Restoring soil health benefits both the environment and local economies.

How communities can help:

- Compost food and garden waste
 - Reduce chemical fertilisers and adopt organic practices
 - Support regenerative agriculture and local farmers
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UN Environmental Observances – 2026 International Years

2026 – International Year of the Woman Farmer

<https://www.fao.org/woman-farmer-2026/en>



Women farmers play a crucial role in feeding the world, yet they often face unequal access to land, finance, training, technology, and decision-making. The International Year of the Woman Farmer in 2026 aims to shine a global spotlight on these inequalities, recognising women's leadership in agriculture and promoting policies that empower them.

This observance encourages governments, institutions, and communities to reduce barriers faced by rural women, improve land rights, strengthen access to agricultural support, and highlight innovations led by women in farming and food security. By lifting up women farmers, nations can help strengthen food systems, reduce poverty, and build resilience in a changing climate.

How communities can help:

- Support local women-led farms, cooperatives, and food enterprises through purchasing and promotion.
- Advocate for equal access to land, training, and agricultural assistance for women in policy conversations and community forums.
- Share stories of women farmers and amplify their leadership in local media, education settings, and community events.

2026 – International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/international-years>



The UN declared 2026 as the International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development to recognise the essential role that volunteers play in achieving environmental, social, and economic progress. Volunteers contribute time, skills, and energy to strengthen communities, support conservation efforts, deliver essential services, and empower local action.

This observance highlights that meaningful change is not only driven by policies and funding, but also by everyday people who show up, organise, restore, educate, and advocate. It encourages governments, organisations, and citizens to support volunteerism as a pathway to sustainability — from ecosystem restoration and community resilience, to climate awareness, local food programmes, waste reduction, and disaster response.

For Australia, where volunteering underpins community services, environmental groups, rural firefighting, and citizen science initiatives, this year affirms the value of civic participation and shared responsibility.

How communities can help:

- Join local environmental or community volunteer programs
- Support organisations that rely on volunteers.
- Recognise, thank, and uplift people who give their time for public good.

2026 – International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists

<https://www.fao.org/rangelands-pastoralists-2026/en>



Rangelands such as grasslands, savannas, and shrublands cover more than half of the Earth's land surface and support biodiversity, food systems, climate regulation, and cultural heritage. The International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists in 2026 recognises the essential role these landscapes and pastoral communities play in sustaining nature and rural livelihoods. It encourages greater attention to rangeland health, pastoralist knowledge, and sustainable management.

In Australia, vast rangeland areas support grazing industries, Indigenous cultural landscapes, biodiversity, and regional economies. Protecting these environments helps strengthen ecological resilience, food security, and community wellbeing.

How communities can help:

- Support local land stewardship and restoration initiatives
 - Learn about rangeland ecology and traditional management practices
 - Encourage policies and programs that protect rangelands and pastoralist livelihoods
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UN Environmental Observances – International Decades featuring 2026

UN Decade of Sustainable Transport 2026 – 2035

https://sdgs.un.org/un-decade-sustainable-transport-2026-2035?_gl=1*15ni2dv*_ga*MTgwMzE5OTU4My4xNjc3MjE3NjI0*_ga_TK9BQL5X7Z*czE3NjUxOTg3OTUkbzU4JGcxJHQxNzY1MTk4ODQxJGoxNCRsMCRoMA..



Transport systems influence how people access jobs, education, food, and essential services while shaping environmental impacts such as congestion, emissions, and air quality. The United Nations Decade of Sustainable Transport (2026–2035) seeks to advance cleaner, fairer, and more resilient mobility solutions that support healthier communities and a stable climate.

This observance emphasizes the importance of expanding low-carbon transport options, electrifying fleets, strengthening public transit, integrating walking and cycling networks, and improving logistics efficiency. By encouraging innovation, investment, and good governance, the Decade calls for transport systems that serve people and the planet.

How communities can help:

- Support and advocate for safer cycling routes, walkable streets, and improved public transport access
 - Choose cleaner mobility options when possible, including walking, cycling, shared transit, or electric vehicles
 - Participate in local planning discussions to champion transport that is inclusive, accessible, and climate-friendly
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International Decade of Sciences for Sustainable Development 2024 – 2033

<https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/77/326>



The United Nations declared 2024 to 2033 as the International Decade of Sciences for Sustainable Development to emphasise the role of science in solving global challenges. This decade recognises that evidence-based knowledge, research, and innovation are essential for addressing climate change, biodiversity loss, resource pressures, health risks, and social inequality. It encourages nations to strengthen scientific capacity, improve access to data and technology, and ensure research benefits communities and decision-making.

The initiative calls for collaboration across governments, universities, industry, civil society, and Indigenous knowledge holders to advance science that serves people and the planet. It highlights the importance of education, equitable participation in research, and the integration of traditional and modern knowledge systems.

How communities can help:

- Support science education, citizen science projects, and STEM learning opportunities
- Promote accessible, community-focused research and local innovation
- Encourage policies and partnerships that invest in science for sustainability

UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021 – 2030

<https://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/1182090/icode/>

<https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/73/284>



The United Nations declared 2021 to 2030 the Decade on Ecosystem Restoration to accelerate global action to heal degraded forests, wetlands, rivers, oceans, agricultural lands, and urban environments. It recognises

that human wellbeing is deeply tied to nature and that repairing damaged ecosystems is vital for food security, clean water, climate stability, cultural values, and biodiversity.

In Australia, where bushfires, erosion, salinity, drought, and coastal pressures affect both communities and wildlife, restoration plays an essential role in building resilience and securing a sustainable future. Repairing damaged landscapes supports biodiversity, strengthens water security, sustains regional livelihoods, and helps communities adapt to changing climate conditions.

How communities can help:

- Participate in tree planting, bush revegetation, and habitat repair projects
- Reduce waste and pollution entering natural environments
- Support and advocate for restoration programs at local and national levels

UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021 – 2030

<https://oceandecade.org> and <https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/72/73>



The United Nations declared 2021 to 2030 as the Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development to mobilize global action that supports healthy oceans and the communities that depend on them. This initiative recognizes that oceans regulate climate, support biodiversity, provide food and livelihoods, and sustain cultural and economic wellbeing. Advancing ocean science is essential for improving marine conservation, strengthening resilience, and guiding sustainable use of ocean resources.

The Decade encourages cooperation among governments, researchers, Indigenous knowledge holders, industry, and communities to expand knowledge of marine systems, restore damaged environments, address pollution, and prepare for the impacts of climate change. It promotes innovation, shared research, and stronger decision making based on scientific evidence.

How communities can help:

- Reduce single-use plastics and support waste minimization
 - Participate in beach or coastal clean-up activities
 - Support organisations working on marine research, conservation, and sustainable ocean management
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UN Decade of Family Farming 2019 – 2028

<https://www.fao.org/family-farming-decade/home/en/>

<https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/72/239>



The United Nations declared 2019 to 2028 as the Decade of Family Farming to strengthen the role of small-scale farmers who produce much of the world's food. This initiative recognizes that family farming contributes to food security, local economies, cultural heritage, and sustainable land stewardship. It seeks to address barriers faced by farming households including limited access to land, finance, markets, technology, and support systems.

The Decade encourages countries, institutions, and communities to invest in policies and programs that improve rural development, empower farmers, enhance climate resilience, and promote sustainable agriculture. It highlights the need for inclusive decision making and respect for traditional knowledge that keeps landscapes productive and communities connected.

How communities can help:

- Support small and local producers through purchasing and promotion
- Participate in community gardens or local food initiatives
- Advocate for fair access to land, training, and agricultural support for farming families

International Decade for Action on Water for Sustainable Development 2018-2028

<https://www.fao.org/family-farming-decade/home/en/>

<https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/72/239>



The International Decade for Action on Water for Sustainable Development from 2018 to 2028 aims to advance global cooperation in managing one of the world's most essential resources. It highlights the critical role of water in supporting human health, food systems, ecosystem stability, climate resilience, and

sustainable development. The Decade seeks to improve access to safe drinking water and sanitation, strengthen water governance, and promote efficiency, conservation, and innovation.

The initiative calls for collaboration across governments, Indigenous knowledge holders, community organizations, researchers, and industry to protect water catchments, reduce pollution, and manage growing demand. It also emphasizes the importance of equitable access to water, especially for vulnerable groups and regions facing scarcity or climate-driven extremes.

How communities can help:

- Reduce household water use through efficiency and conservation.
 - Support catchment, river, and wetland protection activities.
 - Promote policies and initiatives that safeguard clean and secure water for all.
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