

Earth Day

April 22nd 2018

Operation Agri Day



What is Earth Day and what is it meant to accomplish?

48 years ago, on 22 April 1970, millions of people took to the streets to protest against the negative impacts of 150 years of industrial development. Around the world smog was becoming deadly and evidence was growing that pollution led to developmental delays in children. Biodiversity was in decline because of the heavy use of pesticides and other pollutants but global ecological awareness and campaigning was growing and, as a result, many new environmental laws were enacted.

Earth Day is now a global event each year and it is believed that more than 1 billion people in 192 countries now take part in what is the largest civic-focused day of action in the world.

It is a day of political action and civic participation. People march, sign petitions, meet with their elected officials, plant trees and clean up their towns and roads.

Such care and concern should not be limited to one day a year!

Why is this important to us as Christians and supporters of Operation Agri?

As Ruth Valerio has said in her book, ['L' is for Lifestyle: Christian Living That Doesn't Cost the Earth](#): "...All creation exists for God, to worship him". Ruth continues, "Once I had understood the meaning of the 'image of God' ... I realised that one of the main reasons why I am here is to look after the rest of what God has made."

Faith leaders, including Pope Francis, connect Earth Day with protecting God's greatest creations, humans, biodiversity and the planet that we all live on. **Psalm 24:1** tells us, **"The earth is the Lord's and everything in it."** This counsels us to use the earth's resources with care and compassion, knowing that they are gifts from God - for all generations.

If you are a regular reader of Operation Agri's quarterly magazine you will have seen the article entitled "We all have responsibilities."* Here our editor points out some of the effects of global warming - altered rainfall patterns, coastal erosion, droughts, floods, heat waves and the immediate risks from sea level rise which seriously affects 800 million people.

* Pages 2 and 3

https://www.operationagri.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Outreach_Abroad_2018_01.pdf

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The problems we humans have created and are still creating, resulting in a despoiling of God's earth, arise from fossil fuels, deforestation, industrial processes, some systems of farming including the over-use of synthetic fertilisers.

What can we do about it?

In our churches we could look into carrying out an environmental audit. In our homes we can make sure we are well insulated, use as little heating as possible, recycle our waste carefully and campaign on ecology issues wherever possible. For further information see:

<http://www.twinkl.co.uk/event/earth-day-2018>

<http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/takeaction/>

Where does Operation Agri fit into this concern?

Whereas the main national focus for Earth Day this year is rightly on the huge problem of plastic waste, *our* concerns lead us to look at what can be done for the subsistence farmers we seek to support in Africa and elsewhere. Our main focus would be to help improve food production without the use of damaging fertilisers or pesticides. Such practice is being taught in Uganda, Tanzania and Malawi using compost as the main source of nutrition for the soil and pest control through products that don't harm soil organisms.

Knowing how important the issues raised by Earth Day are for us all, but particularly for struggling communities around the world, we accept that we have a heavy responsibility to reduce its effects and want to **commend to you EARTH DAY Sunday 22nd April as an opportunity for you to support Operation Agri** through your church or individually so that our work on behalf of subsistence farmers and their families can continue and expand.

"Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor & needy." Proverbs 31:8-9.

We thank you on behalf of families around the world who will benefit from your compassion.

Go to www.operationagri.org/donate or contact us c/o Malcolm Drummond, 361 Firs Lane, Palmers Green, London N13 5LX or admin@operationagri.org.uk