

awards and events

World Environment Day

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY 5 JUNE 2008



TOWARDS A LOW CARBON ECONOMY



This year's global **World Environment Day** celebrations on 5 June take place in Wellington, New Zealand, on the theme 'Kick the Habit! Towards a low carbon economy'. The event will also be celebrated worldwide, with hundreds of activities planned across every continent. Highlights of the New Zealand celebrations include the award ceremony for UNEP's International Children's Painting Competition, which attracted 190,000 entries from children in over 100 countries; an art exhibition with a climate change theme at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa; and the presentation of the Green Ribbon Awards to people and businesses that protect New Zealand's environment. A Leadership in Climate Change Solutions symposium will be held in Wellington and, in Auckland a Business and Science Leaders Breakfast will discuss the challenges and opportunities of climate change.
www.unep.org/wed/2008



World Day to Combat Desertification

The **World Day to Combat Desertification** on 17 June will focus on Combating Land Degradation for Sustainable Agriculture. Created by the United Nations in 1994, the event aims to raise public awareness and promote the implementation of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification. The 193-member Convention is the only internationally recognized legally binding instrument that addresses the problem of land degradation in drylands, with a special emphasis on Africa. Desertification Day is celebrated around the world organized by UN agencies, NGOs and community groups. It aims to be "a unique occasion to remind everybody that desertification can be effectively tackled, that solutions are possible, and that key tools to this aim lie in strengthened community participation and cooperation at all levels."
www.unccd.int

Following the principle of 'Think globally, act locally', **Clean up the World Weekend** on 19-21 September will see thousands of volunteers from around the world cleaning up in their local community. The campaign, held in partnership with UNEP, was founded in Australia in 1993 by Ian Kiernan; since then, more than four million tonnes of rubbish have been collected by members around the world. Organizers expect around 35 million people to get involved in this year's campaign. "Anyone can get involved in the campaign, from small community groups to businesses," says Ian Kiernan. "Getting active is easy and the benefits are enormous. The satisfaction of knowing you've helped make a difference in our global community is priceless."
www.cleanuptheworld.org



A recent survey of 1,000 people by the Australian National University saw 19 per cent of respondents cite the environment as "the most important problem facing the country today". The **Banksia Awards**, which recognize environmental excellence among Australia's individuals, community groups and corporations, celebrate their 20th anniversary on 18 July. Ten award categories include Water, Land and Biodiversity, Eco Innovation and Indigenous, as well as People's Choice and Gold Awards. According to the organizers, the 2008 edition "will address initiatives aimed towards better environmental stewardship, sustainable growth and actions to combat climate change".
www.banksiafdn.com



The European Commission's **Green Week 2008** will take place in Brussels, 3-6 June, to coincide with World Environment Day. Under the slogan 'Only one Earth - don't waste it!', the event will focus on natural resources, waste management, and sustainable consumption and production. "Many people are unaware of the speed at which we are using up our natural resources, and that we are producing waste far faster than it can be turned back into a useful resource," the EC says. The event will provide NGOs, businesses, government and the public with a platform for debate. Sessions include 'Can businesses be successful while also using resources in a sustainable way?' and 'Can big construction projects such as the London Olympics 2012 be truly 'green'?'. There will also be an exhibition of innovative sustainable development projects from across Europe.
<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/greenweek/home.html>



Known as the "Nobel Prize of grassroots environmentalism", the \$150,000 **Goldman Environmental Prize** is held every year around Earth Day 22 April. Now in its 19th year, the Goldman Prize recognizes individuals for sustained and significant efforts to protect and enhance the natural environment. The winners are often women and men from isolated villages or inner cities who chose to take great personal risks to safeguard the environment. For 2008 they include activists Pablo Mendoza and Luis Yanza, who are fighting oil company Chevron to bring environmental recovery to an area of the Ecuadorian Amazon devastated by oil pollution; Marina Rikhvanova, a Russian woman working to protect Siberia's Lake Baikal from oil and nuclear interests, and Feliciano dos Santos, a Mozambican activist-musician raising awareness about sanitation and clean water systems.
www.goldmanprize.org

The **Ashden Awards for Sustainable Energy**, held in the UK, reward 'visionary champions who are finding solutions to climate change and bringing real social and economic benefits to their local communities'. This year's event takes place in London on 19 June. This year's finalists from UK and the developing world have "demonstrated considerable success and innovation in delivery of sustainable energy services from solar, wind, biomass, biogas, micro-hydro and other sources — or in promotion of energy efficiency". The Ashden Awards were founded in 2001 by the Ashden Trust, one of the Sainsbury Family Charitable Trusts. Organizers say the awards have helped more than 80 innovative projects develop their work and bring them to a wider audience.
www.ashdenawards.org

