



ICLEI World Congress 2009

From 14 to 18 June, over 700 local and national government leaders as well as leaders from the UN, NGOs, academia and the business community will come together in Edmonton, Canada for the ICLEI World Congress 2009. The Congress, held under the theme "Connecting leaders", will explore the achievements of the most advanced cities and towns, and debate what can be done to advance local action for sustainability.

www.iclei.org/index.php?id=7756

World Migratory Birds Day

World Migratory Bird Day, which started in 2006, is a global awareness-raising campaign highlighting the need for the protection of migratory birds and their habitats. This year's theme is 'Barriers to Migration' - highlighting the many man-made obstacles birds face during their migration. On 9-10 May, people around the world took action and organized public events such as bird festivals, education programmes and birdwatching excursions. The Day's activities take place in many different countries and places, and are all linked through the global theme. Anyone interested in organizing an event to mark World Migratory Bird Day can do so and is encouraged to register their planned activity on the campaign website.



www.worldmigratorybirdday.org/2009/index.php



Home

Home is a new feature-length film by world-renowned French photographer Yann Arthus-Bertrand which will be released for free around the world on 5 June for World Environment Day. Yann Arthus-Bertrand takes viewers on a unique journey all around the planet to contemplate and understand its workings and show us that the marks we leave behind are having a negative impact on its well being. The film is a travel notebook showing only landscapes captured from above. In this sense Home calls for a new awareness, because as we observe ourselves from the air, we see our world in a whole new light. This step back gives us pause to consider our interaction with the environment. The movie is a non-profit initiative, and income generated from its viewing will be transferred to Arthus-Bertrand's association, GoodPlanet, which fights for the protection of the environment. The shooting of the film was carbon neutral and the carbon emissions that were produced during filming were offset by the support of environment-friendly projects.

www.home-2009.com/

awards and events

Green Star Awards



Green Star

The Green Star Awards are a joint initiative between the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the UN Environment Programme and Green Cross International to recognize those who have made remarkable efforts to prevent, prepare for, and respond to environmental disasters around the world. The awards, given every two years, aim to raise the profile of environmental emergencies and disasters and underline the connection between environmental impacts of natural disasters, technological accidents and complex emergencies, and their consequences for affected populations and providers of humanitarian assistance.

Among the inaugural winners of the Green Star Awards announced in May were: the Spiez Laboratory in Switzerland; the Center for Scientific Support in Disaster Situations (CENACID) in Brazil; the governments of Sweden and The Netherlands; and an environmental response specialist, Michael Cowing, of UNEP.

www.unep.org/greenstar/



International Day for Biological Diversity

Invasive alien species are one of the greatest threats to biodiversity. Since the 17th century, they have contributed to nearly 40 per cent of all animal extinctions for which the cause is known. This was the focus of this year's International Day for Biological Diversity on 22 May. The Day aims to raise public awareness and devise practical steps to tackle the problem. Meanwhile, time is running out to achieve the 2010 goal to significantly reduce the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional and national level, as agreed in 2002 by the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

www.cbd.int/ibd/2009

Tunza Youth Conference

The Tunza International Children and Youth Conference in Daejeon (Korea) in August will gather one thousand children and youth to share their views and concerns on climate change and develop a statement which will be presented to the December 2009 climate change meeting in Copenhagen. UNEP is co-organizing the conference with the UNEP National Committee of Korea, in partnership with UNICEF and other key UN partners. The 800 children and 200 youth will discuss topics ranging from global warming to biodiversity, green jobs and sustainable lifestyles. A Global Town Hall meeting on 20 August will connect the conference via webcasting to virtual participants around the world, including high profile UN officials and political and business leaders.

www.unep.org/tunza/

