



Opening Remarks

**Ms. Margaret Jones Williams
Deputy Resident Representative
UNDP Suriname**

**Launch of Environment Week and
Recognition of World Environment Day**

June 06, 2023

9:00 a.m.

**Assuria Event Centre
Paramaribo, Suriname**

Salutations

- His Excellency Minister Marciano Dasai, Minister of Spatial Planning and Environment
- Mr. Vincent Sweeney, Head, Caribbean Sub-Regional Office, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
- Colleagues and distinguished guests
- Ladies and gentlemen

It is indeed an honor and a pleasure to be here with you this morning, on behalf of the United Nations Development Programme, to join His Excellency Minister Dasai to open this event and to launch Environment Week 2023 and recognition of World Environment Day.

World Environment Day is the United Nations day for encouraging worldwide awareness and action to protect our environment, and is celebrated every year on June 05.

The theme for this year will focus on solutions to plastic pollution under the campaign #BeatPlasticPollution.

The world is currently producing so much plastic that the world is being inundated by plastic. According to the World Environment Day websiteⁱ more than 400 million tonnes of plastics are produced every year. Half of this amount is what we call single-use plastic, which is designed to be used only once. Of the single-use plastics, less than 10 per cent is recycled. Approximately 19-23 million tonnes of plastic ends up in lakes, rivers and seas, where they are ingested by fish, turtles and other animals.

Suriname is marking Environment Week with several activities not just in the capital of Paramaribo but across several districts, showing the Government's commitment to sound environmental management. The United Nations Development Programme is pleased to be a partner in the celebration of World Environment Day and the Week of activities.

These activities are reaching and including, the private sector, civil society, non-governmental organizations, youth, schools and persons with disabilities. Support for environmental issues requires the commitment and participation of everyone across all sectors of society.

Sound environmental management will move Suriname strongly towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Almost all of the SDGs are related to the environment. Of the 17 SDGs we can recognize 10 that are directly linked to the environment.

SDG 2 – Zero Hunger - Food Security – We need to protect the environment for farmers to have good crop production

SDG 3 - Health and Well Being – A healthy environment will support healthy populations

SDG 4 – Education – We have to teach the children about the environment

SDG 6 – Water and Sanitation – Clean water comes from a clean environment

SDG 7 – Access to Energy for all – Including renewable energy options

SDG 11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities

SDG 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production – Producing bio-degradable products, encouraging re-using and re-cycling

SDG 13 – Climate Action – Climate change has impacts on health, on water supply, on wildlife, and increases risks of disasters

SDG 14 – Life Under Water – Protecting riverine and marine species and ecosystems

SDG 15 – Life On Land – Protecting wildlife and habitats, including the 93% forest cover of the Surinamese Amazon

Additionally, we have to mention the SDGs that are cross-cutting, including SDG 5 on Gender Equality and SDG 17 on Partnerships for the Goals.

In closing, I take this opportunity to congratulate Minister Dasai for the strong show of leadership in opening this important week of activities, for the partnership and for leading his technical team at the Ministry of Spatial Planning and Environment.

I look forward to participating in the activities this week.

Thank you.

.....

ⁱ <https://www.worldenvironmentday.global/about/theme-host#:~:text=About&text=If%20we%20act%20now%20we%20can%20beat%20plastic%20pollution%2C%20says%20UN...&text=The%20theme%20for%20World%20Environment,is%20being%20inundated%20by%20plastic>.