

# Our Health and the Health of Our Earth are Intertwined

The health of our environment and the health of the human population are immensely intertwined. We haven't seen the loss of life at this rapid rate since the dinosaurs went extinct. The Global Biodiversity Outlook 5 recently revealed that none of our 2010 Aichi Biodiversity Targets were reached by 2020. The Aichi Biodiversity Targets were intended to provide nations with the targets for species and habitat protection necessary to protect our planet, over the last 10 years.

Our Earth is not an issue we can afford to wait on. Our livelihoods depend on it. A healthy Earth is vital to creating a healthy environment where all creatures have access to a safe habitat, clean water, healthy food, clean air, and more.

*Without functioning ecosystems, which depend on healthy biodiversity, there would be no clean air to breathe, safe water to drink or nutritious food to eat. Healthy ecosystems also regulate the Earth's climate, filter air and water, recycle nutrients and mitigate the impact of natural disasters.*

*Why all human rights depend on a healthy environment*

Portugal and Spain became the first countries to put the right to a healthy and sustainable environment in their constitution in 1976, and 1978 respectively. In 1981 the right to a healthy environment appeared in regional human rights treaties with the African Charter on Human and People's rights, and again in 1988 with the San Salvador Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights in 1988. Today more than 80% of the UN's members recognize the right to a healthy environment as a human right. While the U.S does not, there are some states that recognize it in their constitution.

It's become quite clear in recent months with the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic, that the Earth is prepared to protect its self at the cost of human life. Evidence has shown that pandemics such as the current one are often caused by the effects of human activities that cause damage to the planet.

Many have chosen to take action in light of recent events. Greta Thunberg, and other young people have filed cases with the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, stating that our approach to climate change as it stands, violates their rights. Similar cases have been filed against Australia and the Netherlands.

As a young person myself, I do believe that climate change is the most pressing issue that threatens our world today, on a global scale. Composting is one of, if not the most important thing an individual can do for the environment, along with continuing to read and learn about the threats that climate change imposes on our Earth.