



# SERVE THE PLANET EARTH DAY 2018



*"The five elements – ether, air, fire, water, and earth – are the vesture of God, as well as of man. Use them moderately and with wisdom, with fear and humility." – Sathya Sai Baba (SSS 07.43: November 24, 1967)*

*"Earlier, people used pitchers, plates, and pots made of clay by local artisans. After some time, stainless steel utensils replaced the clay utensils. But now plastic pitchers, plates, and pots have come into vogue. These plastic articles have exposed man to great dangers. The plastic bags and other articles have created enormous waste material which is not biodegradable. Even if you bury it underground, it does not decompose and remains as it is even after many years. Much land is being spoiled by this plastic waste. Vegetables grown in such land are harmful to man. In this way, many harmful changes have crept in to the life of man today." – Sathya Sai Baba (SSS 40:15, 22 August 2007)*

## What is Earth Day?

Earth Day has been promoting environmental awareness and protection since its launch by the United Nations in 1970, and is celebrated globally on April 22nd every year. With World Human Values Day following shortly after on April 24th, there is an opportunity to commemorate both occasions through activities that honour Sathya Sai Baba's life and His message on the reverence and care for Mother Earth.

Earth Day 2018 will focus on mobilising the world to reduce plastic pollution. Throughout the year, the campaign will focus on creating support for a global effort to eliminate single-use plastics along with global regulation for the disposal of plastics.<sup>1</sup>

## Why does it matter?

Increasing pollution and waste, resource exploitation, loss of biodiversity, and deforestation, are having a detrimental impact on Mother Earth and all of creation. From poisoning and injuring marine life<sup>2</sup> to the ubiquitous presence of plastics in our food to disrupting human hormones and causing major life-threatening diseases and early puberty, the exponential growth of plastics is threatening our planet's survival.<sup>3</sup>

## What can we do?

Currently, about 300 million tons<sup>4</sup> of plastic are produced each year to make bags, bottles, packages, and other commodities for people all over the world. Unfortunately, only about ten percent of this plastic is properly recycled and reused. The rest ends up as waste in landfills or as litter in our natural environment, where it leaches dangerous chemicals into the nearby soil and water, endangering humans and wildlife alike.

Let us join the global effort and do our part in ending plastic pollution. Every day should be treated as Earth Day. So, let us become more conscious of our daily habits and avoid single-use plastic bags and packaging. A personal toolkit and more information is available [here](#). For information on eco-friendly alternatives to plastic products, as well as other tips, please visit the Sathya Sai International Organisation Serve The Planet resource page at <http://www.sathyasai.org/ya/serve-the-planet-2017>.

1. Earth Day 2018 Campaign - A World Without Plastic Pollution: <https://www.earthday.org/campaigns/plastics-campaign/>

2. National Geographic - A Whopping 91% of the Plastic Isn't Recycled: <https://relay.nationalgeographic.com/proxy/distribution/public/amp/2017/07/plastic-produced-recycling-waste-ocean-trash-debris-environment>

3. NPR Study: Most Plastics Leach Hormone-Like Chemicals: <https://www.npr.org/2011/03/02/134196209/study-most-plastics-leach-hormone-like-chemicals>

4. Earth Day 2018 - Take Personal Responsibility to End Plastic Pollution: <https://www.earthday.org/stop-using-disposable-plastic/>