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World Earth Day: Role of Tree Plantation in Mitigating Climate Change Effects

Mumbai Written By: Pradip Shah Updated: Apr 23, 2024, 07:19 PM IST



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Tree plantation is among the best methods of tackling climate change. Trees not only preserve the health of the soil, they act as carbon sinks, combating the dangerous effects of climate change.

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As civilisation boomed, our reliance on resources led to widespread deforestation with over 45% of trees cleared all over the world. As we look around, we see tall buildings where trees once thrived. As we observed World Earth Day on April 22, it's imperative to take tangible steps to make our planet a better place. After all, we need to leave behind a green legacy for our future generations.

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The Carbon Conundrum: Trees as Climate Warriors

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Unprecedented challenges such as erratic weather patterns and natural disasters are no mere coincidences. They reveal part of a larger problem - climate change. Trees play a critical role in combating the dangerous effects of climate change by acting as carbon sinks. They store carbon from the atmosphere in their stems and roots, effectively mitigating greenhouse gases which trap heat and worsen global warming. With deforestation rates soaring, preserving existing forests and embarking on ambitious tree plantation initiatives are imperative steps in curbing carbon emissions and safeguarding our planet's climate stability.

'Planet vs Plastic': A Battle We Can't Ignore

This Earth Day's theme, 'Planet vs Plastic' also highlights the urgency to act against plastic pollution. Trees' roots capture and trap the microplastic in soil preventing them from contaminating the groundwater. Similarly, mangroves are known to absorb the microplastic content in the water. A lush forest cover would intercept plastic debris before it reaches oceans and other water bodies, thereby saving countless marine creatures from getting entangled.

Forest produce also provides sustainable alternatives to plastic-based products, such as wood, bamboo, and other plant-based materials. This reduces the demand for plastic and eases pressure on waste management systems. Fight against plastic pollution by planting trees.

The Ozone Shield: Trees as Natural Protectors

Moreover, trees play a pivotal role in safeguarding the delicate balance of the ozone layer. Just as trees offer shade and shelter, the ozone layer

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and marine life.

Trees, with their leafy canopies, act as natural UV filters, intercepting and absorbing a significant portion of UV radiation before it reaches the Earth's surface. By fortifying the ozone layer, trees offer a vital line of defence against the adverse effects of prolonged sun exposure, ensuring the well-being of both ecosystems and human populations.

Prioritising Tree Plantation Initiatives

In light of these issues, there's no better time than now to prioritise tree plantation initiatives as integral components of broader environmental conservation efforts. Organisations like Grow-Trees play a key role in carbon sequestration. Over the years, they have planted more than 19 million trees across India, Tanzania and Uganda, effectively absorbing ~390 million kg of carbon per year. Their online tree plantation platform allows users to plant trees from the comfort of their home. This encourages collective action from all ends.

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Pradip Shah

Pradip Shah is co-founder of the social enterprise Grow-Trees.com.

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