



Earth Day, April 22

On April 22, earth day, the United States, too, marks its deep commitment to preserve the bounty and beauty of the Earth for future generations everywhere.

Across the 9,629,091 square kilometer expanse of the United States, Americans of all ages are engaged in activities that celebrate the wonders of nature and highlight the efforts required to maintain a healthy environment. There are film festivals in Boise, Idaho and Washington, dc. Students and teachers in San Diego, California are planting trees and planning gardens.

Volunteers in Jamestown, Rhode Island are cleaning shorelines. In addition, activists, business leaders, sportsmen, and government representatives like those of the California environmental resources evaluation system are engaged in the kind of public discussions upon which thoughtful economic and environmental policies are founded.

It is through the sustained, combined efforts of governmental institutions, businesses, and civil society organizations as well as individual actions that America has made substantial progress in reversing the environmental degradation evident in the 1970's, while supporting the nation's extraordinary population and economic growth.

In the 34 years that have passed since U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson launched earth day, the United States has continued to show its ability to set, achieve and maintain high standards for environmental protection. And we have laid out ambitious new goals like the reduction of mercury

Emissions in energy production and ending the sale and export of illegally harvested timber around the globe. President Bush has pledged that the United States will meet the challenge of addressing long-term global climate change by reducing the ratio of greenhouse gas emissions to economic output by 18 percent by 2012 compared to 2002.

Even as the United States faces increasingly complex challenges, I am confident that America's current three generations of environmentally-conscious citizens have the commitment, education, energy and ability to pursue the greatest good. The United States recognizes its responsibility to assist others, particularly in the developing world, to create more favorable living conditions for their citizens while insuring judicious care of natural resources. My government has committed an unprecedented level of new resources to carry out this strategy. We are applying those resources through the networks of public, private and civic partnerships that truly promote innovation and results.

America firmly supports the expansion and diffusion of the knowledge, technologies and means to sustain earth's vital ecosystems. This includes investment in renewable energy, clean coal technologies, and the development of emission-free vehicles for use within the next ten years. The United States and 28 other nations are meeting now in Japan to continue the planning for a new global observing system. This system will link thousands of individual technological assets into a comprehensive earth observation system to provide the best scientific data possible to inform future decision-making on a wide variety of environmental issues.

It is within our joint ability to ensure the bounty and beauty of our natural world. With the world's population expected to double in the next few generations, it is our duty to prepare today's children to make informed choices in order to sustain our earth.