



## Guyana Society for Biodiversity and Ecosystems

# Happy World Environment Day 2018!

## "Beating Plastic Pollution"

Every year, on June 5th, World Environment Day (WED) is celebrated to remind us about the wonders of nature and its role in keeping us alive. It highlights how our actions are negatively affecting the environment and how we can in turn protect that which sustains us. Over the years WED has raised awareness on important environmental issues such as depletion of the ozone layer, desertification, rising sea levels and climate change. This year, the theme for WED is "Beating Plastic Pollution". Most of the things we use in our daily lives are made of plastic but plastic is not biodegradable; meaning that it does not decompose and disappear from the environment.

In Guyana, there is concern about the disposal of plastic in our coastal environment. When it is not disposed of properly, it clogs up drains causing them to become foul smelling, stagnant breeding places for disease spreading mosquitoes and also contributes to flooding. Plastic can get into oceans where it is eaten by animals such as sea turtles, whales, birds and fishes making them sick and eventually causing them to die. When fishes consume plastic, various toxins remain in their bodies which get passed to us when we eat them and can cause various health issues. For several years World Wildlife Fund and the Guyana Marine Turtle Conservation Society have collaborated on marine turtle conservation on Shell Beach in the North West of Guyana and have found that mortality among threatened species of leatherback turtles was due in many instances to suffocation from ingesting pieces of plastic, mistakenly taken for jelly fish which is their main diet.

As we celebrate World Environment Day 2018, we urge you to play your part in protecting the environment. You can do simple things, such as using less plastic bottles and plastic bags to finding new and creative ways to reuse plastic containers or by telling a friend why they should use less plastic. By working together, we can create a better environment for our wildlife, for ourselves and for our children. Together we can beat plastic pollution!

Visit our website at [www.biodiversityguyana.org](http://www.biodiversityguyana.org) or email us at [ibg2016guyana@gmail.com](mailto:ibg2016guyana@gmail.com)/  
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