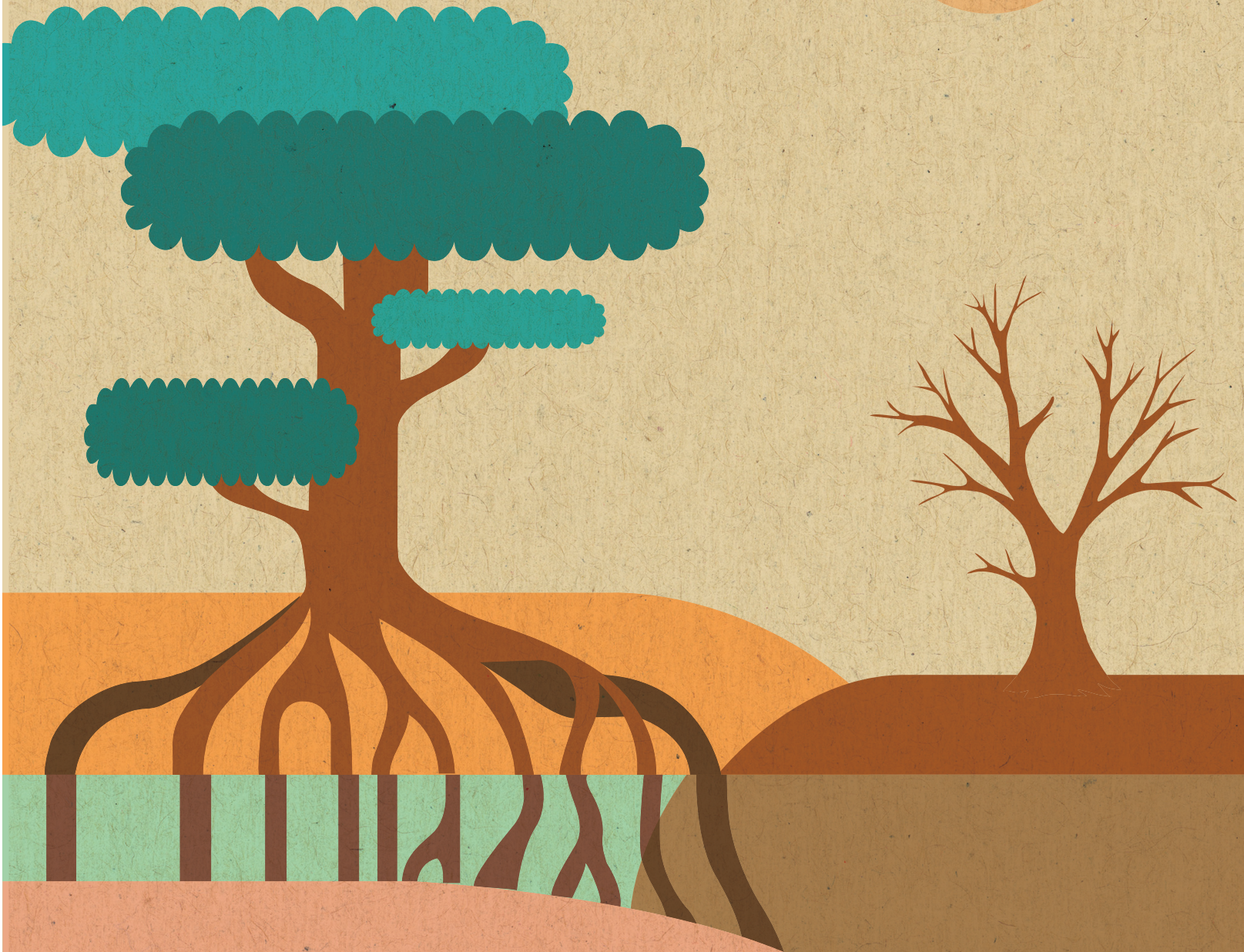




The Climate is Changing, Why Aren't We?



*Lifestyle Changes to Address
Climate Change*

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INTRODUCTION

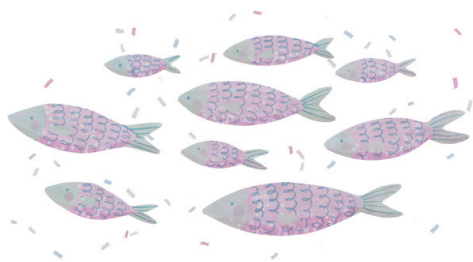
To lead a sustainable lifestyle, has become a buzzword today. What do we really mean by this? It encompasses multiple aspects. It means rethinking the way we live, how we live and how we organise our everyday life. It also means changing the way we socialise, exchange, share, educate and build identities. It requires us to understand how can we transform or societies and live in harmony with our natural environment. As citizens, at home and at work, many of our choices – the type of energy we use, our mode of transportation, the waste generated, so on and so forth – does not contribute towards clean and sustainable lifestyles.

Fostering sustainable lifestyle that is in harmony with the environment is the need of the hour for all of us. As a society, we must act strongly to use and reuse our resources much more efficiently. We must transform our towns and cities through sustainable lifestyles like no littering, cycling and walking as much as possible.



THE CLIMATE CHANGE CRISIS

We must understand that climate change is a real problem & the effects are easily visible.



Protecting the planet is something we all should prioritize. Recent years have been among the warmest and have seen the worst rains & floods, with extreme weather events recorded around the globe.

Climate change comes with many negative effects on humanity. Production of our food is in danger; the level of sea rise is alarming across the globe; most of us are likely

to have already experienced unprecedented heatwaves, or winters that are not as cold or long as they used to be or unusual downpour and flooding. All these changes throw many natural balances out of gear and can have a lasting negative impact on humans, animals and nature.

The oceans are getting more acidic and the food in the sea is also becoming scarce every day. Ocean acidification results from an increased concentration of hydrogen ions and a reduction in carbonate ions due to the absorption of increased amounts of CO₂. Ocean acidification, combined with other climate impacts like warm waters, deoxygenation, melting ice, and coastal erosion, pose real threats to the survival of many marine species.



LOW-WASTE & SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLE

Living a low-waste & sustainable lifestyle can be a good start to reduce the manner in which our actions impact global waste and the climate crisis.

Living a sustainable lifestyle means creating less waste. This means altering the way we use key resources like water, clothes, food, essential commodities or even how we use our gadgets.

The lack of awareness about proper segregation of waste at source and safe disposal of waste is a major cause of concern. Many people remain unaware that unsegregated garbage disposed indiscriminately ends up in landfills and this pile emits a huge quantity of greenhouse gases, especially methane, which in turn, contributes highly to global warming.

Even if reclaimed, these landfills render millions of acres of land unfit to use as the continued dumping, for decades, spoils the composition and character of the soil and water table beneath.

However, since change is possible, the glimmer of hope remains. Even though some habits are deeply rooted in our behaviour, we can still change them. Becoming aware of habits that our adversely impacting the environment is the first step; changing our habits to implement preventive measures becomes the automatic next step. So, here are 10 focus areas where our actions can make a big difference:

Minimise Food Waste

Replace Plastics

Maximize use of clothes

Composting

Reuse & Recycle

Upcycling

Use of Organic food & Eco-friendly packaging

Water conservation

Rainwater harvesting

Energy conservation & Energy Efficiency

Go Green: Plant Trees



MINIMISE FOOD WASTE

There are a lot of greenhouse gases emitted in the food production cycle, from the process of production, packaging to transportation. Becoming aware of the production cycle our food goes through will help us minimize food waste.

Of the 16.5 billion tonnes of GHG emissions from the global agri-food

systems in 2019, 7.2 billion tonnes came from the farm gate, 3.5 from land use change, and 5.8 billion from supply-chain processes, according to a study*. In 2019, deforestation was the largest source of GHG emissions, followed by livestock manure, household consumption, food waste disposal, fossil fuels used on farms and the food retail sector.

In 2019, the global agrifood systems were responsible for 16.5 billion GHG emissions.



Hence it is imperative to minimize food waste. At an individual level, one can try the following:

Look for creative ideas to use leftovers to convert into manure or store appropriately without getting spoilt for consumption later.

Have shopping lists tailor made to avoid buying unnecessary things.

Organize shelves in your fridge and store food appropriately to extend the life span without compromising on quality and nutrition.

Cook limited as per appetite and quantity of consumption.

Source: *The estimates arrived were part of a study carried out by the UN Statistics Division, International Energy Agency (IEA) and researchers from Columbia University and the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Studies collaborated with FAO.

REPLACE PLASTICS

As per the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), over 300 million tonnes of plastic are produced every year for use in a wide variety of applications.

At least 14 million tonnes of plastic end up in the ocean every year, and plastic makes up 80% of all marine debris found from surface waters to deep-sea sediments.

Marine species ingest or are entangled by plastic debris, causing severe injuries and death. Plastic pollution threatens food safety and quality, human health, coastal tourism, and contributes to climate change. Moreover, majority of plastic bags cannot be recycled, hence, they end up in a landfill, where it takes thousands of years to degrade.

Plastic makes up 80% of all marine debris found from surface waters to deep-sea ediments.

PLASTIC BOTTLE



STAYS 450+ YEARS

What can you do to minimise your plastic usage. Try these simple alternatives.

Carry cloth bags when stepping outside homes. These can be reused multiple times.

Try and carry containers made of metals or earthen ware and other eco-friendly alternates for transporting essential needs and for your takeaway.

Reduce the use of single-use plastic items in any event and ensure that any plastic waste generated is collected and segregated for further disposal.

Citizens can mobilize in cleaning of plastic litter from wetlands and waterbodies -lakes, rivers, freshwater springs.



SET YOUR OWN FASHION TREND

Fast fashion is another trend that is contributing to climate change. People are presented each year with hundreds of new fashion trends.

There are new clothes in new colours & styles that brands encourage one to buy, but one can only wear a limited number of clothes. So, there is no need to have closets full of clothes, shoes and other accessories as with the manufacture of every such product, enormous quantity of harmful emissions occur during the manufacturing process apart from other forms of pollution like water and land degradation.

Shop Vintage and Second-Hand products rather than fast fashion.

Make Conscious Fashion Choices a Habit; wherever possible repair and upcycle clothes; buy what is really needed.



Studies have shown that the most impactful action one can take to reduce the environmental footprint in the fashion world is to wear clothes until they are worn out.

Researchers have found that an item of clothing usually lasts between 100-200 wears, however only a small amount of clothing gets worn that much.

On an average, people buy 50 new pieces of clothing every year, yet some pieces will only be worn a handful of times. We need to curb our desire to get many and instead practice to use maximum from the existing wardrobe. Most textiles take up over 200 years to decompose.

Source: <https://www.cleanup.org.au/top-10-ways-to-reuse-reduce-and-recycle-your-clothes>

Most textiles take up over 200 years to decompose.



COMPOSTING

Composting is a great way to reduce carbon footprint and it does not need a lot of things. All one needs to do is to place the vegetable and fruit scraps in a composting bin. To this, you can also add eggshells, unbleached paper, and other options which will aid in the composting process and make the resultant nutritious for plants.

It helps reduce the amount of garbage generated thereby eliminating the harmful methane produced by food waste when it goes to landfills.

It helps reduce the amount of garbage generated.



Benefits of Composting

Composting wasted food and other organic produce significantly reduces GHG, mainly methane emissions.

Compost reduces and, in some cases, eliminates the need for chemical fertilizers.

Compost promotes higher yields of agricultural crops.

Compost can help aid reforestation, wetlands restoration, and habitat revitalization efforts by improving contaminated, compacted, and marginal soils.

Compost can be used to remediate soils contaminated by hazardous waste in a cost-effective manner.

Compost can provide cost savings over conventional soil, water and air pollution remediation technologies, where applicable.

Compost enhances water retention in soils.

Compost provides carbon sequestration.

REUSE & RECYCLE

Reusing or giving a new purpose to objects one does not use anymore helps minimize the waste that ends up in a landfill. In landfills, the chemicals that degrade enter the soil, and then the groundwater. We drink the water and also eat vegetables grown in that soil. Majority of plastic bottles end up in landfills. Some easy recycle habits that one can cultivate include:

When we cannot reuse or repurpose items, we can recycle them. Even though recycling may look like the best solution to reduce waste, it isn't that easy.

Recycling centres are too few for the number of potential recyclables we generate. Moreover, there are different types of plastics, for instance, which cannot be recycled together, as each of them has different properties. Add to this, there is a lot of energy and water waste involved in the process. So, recycling should be the last step.

Waste must be segregated, cleaned as much as possible to ensure least contamination so that it is easy for recycling; Engage and give respect to ragpickers/informal workers and waste collectors who support the recycling system in the country.

Promote reuse-refill and adopt recycling.



Using a reusable bottle to minimize the use of plastic bottles.

Refilling is eco-friendlier than buying a new one every time.

One can make plant pots from used metal cans.

Get your own couch customized out of reject furniture or equipment.

Grow own herbs.

Make artefacts out of used containers and accessories.



UPCYCLING

Upcycling is the practice of taking something of diminished value and modifying it to create something of increased value. Recycling typically breaks down waste to convert it into something new.

Downcycling breaks down an item to another useful item, but likely not as valuable in form and function. But upcycling will not only help recycle and prevent waste but it will also have equipped us with something worthy enough to own and use.

It is better to recycle than to trash items.



Examples of Upcycling

Use cardboard roll from toilet paper as cable organisers to prevent wires getting tangled.

Convert an old briefcase and mount it on the bathroom wall to make it a fantastic cabinet.

Convert old bulbs into oil lamps or candles.

Mount old cutlery on the kitchen wall to make some cool hangers.

Make some stylish shelves from a handful of old books and wall mounts.

Use frames of retro badminton or squash rackets as wall mirrors.

Convert an old bicycle into a bathroom vanity unit.

Turn an old dining chair into a towel hanger and shelf combination.

Convert the rim of an old bicycle wheel into a wall-hung clock.

Collect old clothes and make beautiful cloth bags.

Use old tyres to make beautiful chairs.

ORGANIC FOOD & ECO-FRIENDLY PACKAGING

By encouraging consumption of organic food and/or growing organic vegetables or greens we can eliminate the use of chemical fertilizers and pollutants and minimize soil degradation.

Eco-friendly packaging is usually made from biodegradable, recycled material which reduces the waste of natural resources

for production. In addition, the manufacturing process tends to be more efficient, further reducing precious resources and minimizing the negative impact businesses have on the environment.

Can minimize use of chemical fertilizers & soil degradation.



Green Practices

If space is available, try cultivating veggies and greens at your own backyard.

Encourage cultivation and consumption of organic fruits and vegetables.

Cook meals at home and use reusable containers to serve it.

Ordering food can't be avoided, but aim at doing it less. Even when ordering a takeaway, insist on eco-friendly packing.

There is a plethora of eco-alternate products manufactured with natural plant-based raw material, so promote

such vendors & encourage people around to go for those options.

Educate family, friends & communities about the varied eco-friendly options available and why it is important to use them as opposed to plastic containers.

Enlighten them on the dangers that plastic could inflict on the environment. Instead of plastic cotton swabs, use bamboo ones.

Instead of kitchen paper napkins, use reusable and washable cloth.

Replace plastic sponges with an eco-friendly loofah.

WATER CONSERVATION

Water conservation has become essential in all regions, even where water seems abundant. That's because our water resources are finite and getting smaller every year. Conserving water can also extend the life of the septic system by reducing soil saturation and reducing pollution due to leaks.

Overloading municipal sewer systems can also cause untreated sewage to flow to lakes and rivers. The smaller the amount of

water flowing through these systems, the lower the likelihood of pollution. In some communities, costly sewage system expansion has been avoided by community-wide household water conservation. Efficient water management is a major necessity in today's world. As an individual we can act responsibly with some small changes that are easy to follow.

Our water resources are finite and getting smaller every year.



For your laundry...

Use your washing machine only for full load.

Consider a high-efficiency washing machine.

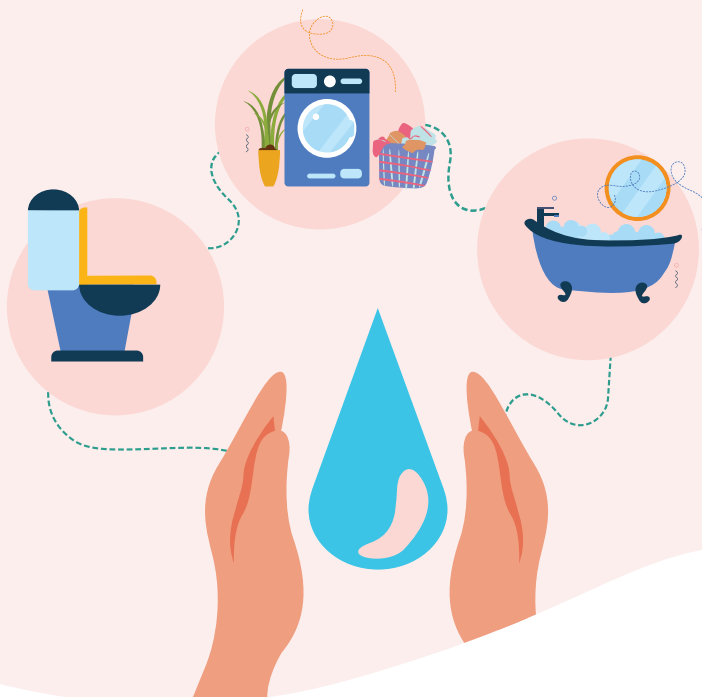
In your toilets...

Don't use the toilet as an ashtray or wastebasket.

Buy an adjustable toilet flapper.

Install low or dual flush models.

Install composting toilets.



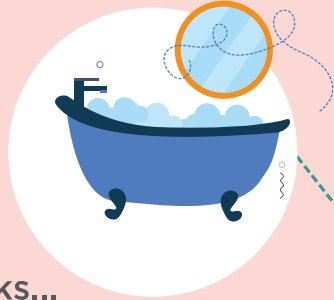
While bathing...

Install water-saving showerheads, shower timers, and low-flow faucet aerators.

Take shorter showers.

Use buckets for bath as opposed to showerheads.

WATER CONSERVATION



Faucets & Sinks...

Fit household faucets with aerators.

Turn off the water while brushing.

Rinse razor in the sink.

Minimize use of kitchen sink garbage disposal units.

Opt for a dishwasher over washing utensils with hand.

When washing dishes by hand, don't leave the water running.

Don't let the faucet run while cleaning vegetables.



Extending Conservation Measures...

Insulate water pipes.

Recycle water where possible.

Eat less water-intensive foods.



Prevent leaks...

Check faucets and pipes for leaks.

Check toilets for leaks.

Use water meter to check for hidden water leaks.



RAINWATER HARVESTING

Rainwater is one of the most clean and easiest natural sources of water yet most of it gets wasted. Rainwater harvesting is a simple process or technology used to conserve rainwater by collecting, storing, conveying and purifying rainwater that runs off from rooftops, parks, roads, open grounds, etc. for later use and to recharge groundwater levels.

A rainwater harvesting systems consists of:

Catchment from where water is captured and stored or recharged.

Conveyance system that carries the water harvested from the catchment to the storage/recharge zone.

First flush that is used to flush out the first spell of rain.

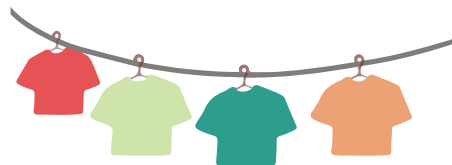
Filter used to remove pollutants.

Storage tanks and/or various recharge structures.

Making sure that every land infrastructure and building has adequate provisions to collect and save rain water will result in enormous water conservation and recharge.

ENERGY CONSERVATION AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Energy conservation involves using less energy by adjusting behaviours and habits while energy efficiency involves using technology that requires less energy to perform the same function. While energy efficiency may cost money up front, before potentially saving money down the road, energy conservation is something which can be put into practice immediately, either at very little or no cost.

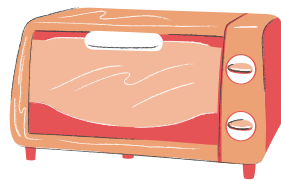


Air-dry dishes and clothes. Instead of using dishwasher's drying feature, consider letting the dishes air-dry. And instead of using the dryer on a sunny day, hang the clothes outside to dry.

Energy conservation can be put into practice immediately.

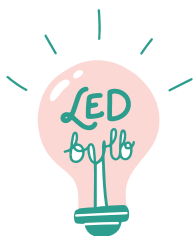
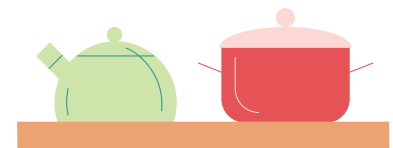


Set the fridge temperature to 32.778°C and freezer to -16.11°C



Bake with glass or ceramic pans. Set the oven's temperature 25 degrees lower than indicated in the recipe when doing this.

Cook using the right-sized burner. Conserve energy by using stove's small burners for small pots and large burners for large pots.



Use energy-efficient light bulbs. Install energy-saving CFL or LED bulbs in lighting fixtures to use 25-35 percent less energy, compared to regular incandescent bulbs.

Keep the house a little hotter in the summer and a little cooler in the winter. Opt for wearing lighter clothes in the summer and wearing a few extra layers in the winter in exchange for those few degrees' change in temperature.

GO GREEN

Trees provide oxygen that we need to breathe. Trees reduce the amount of storm water runoff, which reduces erosion and pollution in our waterways and may reduce the effects of flooding. Many species of wildlife depend on trees for habitat. Trees provide food, protection, and homes for many birds and mammals. Trees and shrubs improve soil and water conservation, store carbon, moderate local climate by providing shade, regulate temperature extremes, increase wildlife habitat and improve the land's capacity to adapt to climate change

Trees improve soil and water conservation, increase wildlife habitat and improve the land's capacity to adapt to climate change.



HABITS FOR PLANTING TREES

Link up with one or several occasions and have a resolution to plant one tree at least on every such occasion.

Select a healthy tree that naturally thrives in the local climate.

Plant most tree species in the fall or early spring.

Pick an open, flat area, away from buildings, powerlines, and utilities. Make sure the chosen location gets at least 6 hours of sunlight daily.

Make it the responsibility of local groups, resident associations, youth clubs to monitor and care the plants in the locality.

GO GREEN

HOW TO PLANT & MAINTAIN A TREE

While planting a tree is challenging, the bigger challenge is to nurture and protect the sapling till it is able to survive on its own before becoming a fully grown tree. The correct practices followed during planting will go a long way in helping the tree survive and flourish. Keep these steps in mind as you plant trees.



Water the soil on planting day before digging the hole.

Dig a hole 2-3 times the diameter of the root ball.

Dig the hole to the same depth as the root ball.



Nestle the root ball into the prepared hole.

Fill in the planting hole with the original soil and tamp lightly.

Water deeply at the base of the tree until the soil is saturated.

Add 3-4 inches (7.6-10.2 cm) layer of organic wood mulch around the tree.

Keep the soil consistently moist for the first 2 years.

Water less frequently once the tree is established.

Remove damaged or diseased branches every few months.

CONCLUSION



By doing our part towards creating a sustainable & debris-free environment, we will also be inspiring others and setting a good example to follow. Above all, we can walk with our heads held high, feeling satisfied and proud about our small but important contribution to the world. As individuals we have the potential to make a big difference and together, with these small changes, we can create a green impact in the world.

As they say, any change has to come from within and has to be a people's movement. No matter what schemes are announced or funds are sanctioned by governments, it will only be a half-baked effort if people's participation and collective efforts are not there. Therefore, let us all take this pledge to keep doing our bit towards a cleaner and greener world and for a better tomorrow.

