Environmental Awareness

United Planet's global network of leaders and volunteers strives to foster cross-cultural understanding and address shared challenges in order to unite the world in a community beyond borders.

Environmental Awareness for a Cleaner United Planet

In the developing world, environmental challenges often take a back seat to seemingly more pressing social and economic development issues -- but they are undoubtedly linked. Preserving the environment is necessary for improved quality of life, and can even contribute to economic and social development.

United Planet is committed to a variety of environmental awareness projects around the world. There are many opportunities for both short-term and long-term professional and non-professional volunteers to make a critical difference worldwide.

United Planet offers environmental volunteer programs in several countries.

Costa Rica

With its lush rainforests, volcanoes and beautiful beaches, Costa Rica is an environmental delight. United Planet works with several non-profit organizations to support eco-tourism and to protect endangered plants and animals, including the Sea Turtle and the Great Green and Scarlet Macaws.

Protecting the flora and fauna encourages eco-tourism, which in turn funds more environmental protection projects, setting in place a cycle that benefits both. Specific projects include reintroducing plants to deforested areas, construction and maintenance of forest trails, and farms that cultivate medicinal plants while offering jobs to the people in the community. Other projects give shelter and medical care to animals, rehabilitating and reintroducing them into the wild. Ongoing research studies focus on animal health care, husbandry and biology.

United Planet works with partner organizations to protect endangered Sea Turtle populations all along Costa Rica's coast. Volunteers guard nests from human poachers, assess the habitat for threats to sea turtle life, collect and relocate eggs, and work in and help construct hatcheries. These programs are augmented by environmental awareness education. Basic Spanish is required.

Ecuador

In the Santa Lucia Cloud Forest, United Planet volunteers work in the organic garden planting seeds, monitoring coffee crops and maintaining protected areas. Conservation work includes maintaining trails and keeping an inventory of identified flora and fauna. Environmental education initiatives in the local community include improving awareness of biodiversity and conservation methods. Other projects in Ecuador include the recycling management, and facilitation of conservation and ecological programs. Basic to Intermediate Spanish required.

India

The Sea Turtle Conservation Quest in Goa offers volunteers the opportunity to live in a peaceful tropical setting within one of India's most renowned beach destinations, while supporting local government agencies and humanitarian organizations aimed to protect the growing dangers facing local marine turtles. The growing presence of tourism and development in Goa has come at the expense of the turtles' survival. This Quest offers participants an opportunity to enjoy the beauty of the area while working as a group to help improve the habitat for turtles. Volunteer activities include: beach protection, including sealing off nesting areas and identifying areas where turtles have laid their eggs, and community awareness campaigns to educate tourists and the local community about the plight of these animals.

New Zealand

Volunteers work as part of teams that work to restore, replant and maintain the local environment. Volunteers will also help educate the local community about the area's environmental situation. Some environmental projects will also involve working with the native animals of New Zealand.

How You Can Help

Volunteer! United Planet's environmental projects are a way to enjoy nature while doing important work to preserve vital habitats. There are many opportunities for both short-term and long-term professional and non-professional volunteers to make a critical difference worldwide.

Who Can Volunteer?

United Planet Short-term programs (1-12 weeks) are open to citizens of any country. United Planet can accommodate individuals ages 16 and up (students, working professionals, retirees, and more); families; groups; and more.

United Planet Long-term programs (6 months or 1 year) are open to citizens of the U.S. and Canada, ages 18-30.

Please get in touch for full information: quest@unitedplanet.org | 1 800 292 2316

"We were able to make a small difference in our community while being immersed in the Latin American culture. I truly learned so much about Costa Rica and the world as a whole. Living with a host family really made me feel like a Costa Rican. I'd like to thank United Planet for helping me give back to the community, teaching me a great deal and leaving me with some unforgettable memories. Pura Vida!"

–Dipti Rao, United Planet Volunteer in Costa Rica