

WORLD SCIENCE DAY FOR PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT 2020

**ONLINE ROUND TABLE ON
SCIENCE FOR AND WITH SOCIETY
*IN DEALING WITH COVID-19***



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

6 November 2020
13.00-15.00 (GMT +1)



BACKGROUND

Every year, on 10 November, UNESCO celebrates The World Science Day for Peace and Development to raise awareness of the role of science for peaceful and sustainable societies. This year, at a time when the world is struggling with the global COVID-19 pandemic, the focus of the World Science Day is on “Science for and with Society in dealing with the global pandemic”.

Throughout this unprecedented health and sanitary crisis, UNESCO has endeavoured to bring science closer to society and to bolster the critically needed international scientific collaborations. From the science perspective, UNESCO’s response to COVID-19 is structured around three major pillars: promoting international scientific cooperation, ensuring access to water and supporting ecological reconstruction.

Promoting international scientific cooperation

To tackle the COVID-19 pandemic, it is imperative to strengthen international and national scientific cooperation, as well as the dialogue between scientists, policymakers, private practitioners, industries and health professionals, civil society and public at large. This calls for open access to scientific knowledge and know-how, data

sharing and evidence-based policy and decision making and an urgent transition to Open Science globally.

Improving access to water and sanitation

Access to clean and safe water and sanitation is critical and is indispensable to avoid the spread of COVID-19 and to fight the pandemic. UNESCO provides scientific and technical advice and builds capacity for evidence-based and inclusive water policies and for the sustainable management of water resources towards ensuring access to clean and safe water and sanitation for all.

Supporting ecological reconstruction

The pressure on biodiversity and its natural habitats favour the emergence of zoonoses such as COVID-19. More than ever, there is a need to rethink the links between people and nature. UNESCO’s designated sites, such as Biosphere Reserves and Global UNESCO Geoparks, are powerful tools for bringing people closer to nature by testing and applying integrated approaches to biodiversity conservation and sustainable use and sustainable development.

OBJECTIVE

The main purpose of the 2020 World Science Day Roundtable dialogue is to share good practices and new ideas with UNESCO to strengthen the interlinkages between science and society to resolve global challenges such as the current pandemic.



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Prof. Edith Heard



is a British researcher in epigenetics, noted for her studies of X chromosome inactivation. She was appointed as a Professor of the Collège de France in 2012, holding the Chair of Epigenetics and Cellular Memory. She is also co-chair of the French national programme PAUSE which helps to temporarily host scientists living in geopolitical crisis zones. In January 2019, Edith started as Director General of the European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL). EMBL has long-standing accomplishments in basic research relevant to infection biology and has helped to initiate several COVID-19 actions in Europe. The Heard group at EMBL focuses on epigenetic processes such as X-chromosome inactivation, in order to learn more about the basic principles of gene regulation, and to explore the roles of chromatin modifications, chromosome organization and non-coding RNAs on gene expression in development and disease.



PANELISTS

Prof. Zakri Abdul Hamid



is currently the Chairman of Atri Advisory, and the Pro-Chancellor of Multimedia University in Malaysia, and was also recently appointed the Chairman for the Business Council for Sustainable Development Malaysia as well as the Chairman for the International Network for Government Science Advice (INGSA) for the ASEAN Region. He held the post of Science Adviser to the Prime Minister of Malaysia and also former Director of the Institute of Advanced Studies, United Nations University. He is the founding Chair of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and former member of the UN Secretary-General's Scientific Advisory Board. He sits on the Global Leadership Council of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network; member of the Islamic Development Bank Scientific Advisory Board and Vice-Chair of the Governing Council of the UN Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries. He was previously the Joint-Chair of the Malaysian Industry-Government Group for High Technology (MIGHT). Among the awards he received are: 2019 UN Malaysia Award; 2018 Midori Biodiversity Prize; 2017 ASEAN Biodiversity Hero, and the 2014 Zayed International Prize for the Environment.

FOR PEACE AND DEV

Prof. Amon Murwira



Melina Sakimaya



is Zimbabwe's Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation Science and Technology Development. He is a Full Professor in Aerospace Earth Observation, Satellite Remote Sensing, Geographic Information Science, Global Satellite Navigation Systems, and Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (Drone Technology) Applications. He has a PhD in Geoinformation Science and Satellite Earth Observation from Wageningen University and International Institute for Geoinformation Science and Earth Observation (ITC), The Netherlands.

He has more than 20 years national and international experience in the development and applications of Aerospace Earth Observation and Geographic Information Science. He has been closely involved in leading the development and training in Geoinformation Science and Earth Observation in the SADC region and Africa at large. Among his key contributions, include the setting-up of the Zimbabwe National Geospatial and Space Agency (ZINGSA) and the reconfiguration of the Higher and Tertiary Education System of Zimbabwe to Education 5.0 that includes 1. Teaching, 2. Research, 3. Community Service, 4. Innovation and 5. Industrialisation.

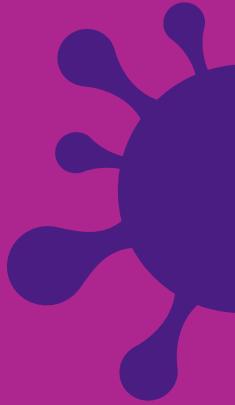
is a Brazilian biologist and environmental justice activist, who has always been intrigued by the wonders of nature and all of its inhabitants. She is the co-founder of the Global Youth Biodiversity Network (GYBN), the international youth coordination platform and constituency to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), where she oversees the network's capacity building & empowerment programmes as well as its engagement in biodiversity governance and decision-making processes under the CBD. For the past ten years, she has helped establish and develop the network to become a vibrant global youth movement for biodiversity with 1.2 million members and member organizations in 145 countries, and in 2020 she has been awarded the Midori Prize for Biodiversity, in recognition of her achievements.

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AGENDA

TIME	TITLE	SPEAKER
13:00-13:05	Opening remarks	Dr Shamila Nair-Bedouelle Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences, UNESCO
13:05-13:15	Launching of the WSDPD by video message	Ms Audrey Azoulay Director-General UNESCO
13:15-13:30	Keynote speech Science for and with Society in dealing with COVID-19 pandemic	Prof. Edith Heard Director-General European Molecular Biological Sciences Laboratory Professor and Chair of Epigenetics and Cellular Memory at the Collège de France
13:30-13:35	Trends in global research on new and re-emerging viruses that can infect humans: a bibliometric study	Ms Susan Schneegans Editor in Chief UNESCO Science Report
13:35-14:05	Roundtable dialogue: Science for and with Society Moderated by Dr Shamila Nair-Bedouelle, ADG/SC	Prof. Tan Sri Zakri Abdul Hamid Chairman of Atri Advisory Former Science Adviser to the Prime Minister of Malaysia Prof. Amon Murwira Ph.D. Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development, Zimbabwe Ms Melina Sakiyama Co-founder, Global Youth Biodiversity Network
14:05-14:40	Questions & Answers	
14:40-14:45	Closing remarks	Dr Shamila Nair-Bedouelle Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences, UNESCO



Division for Science Policy
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Natural Sciences Sector

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