

Celebrating World Environment Day: Indoor Planting's Perks for a Greener Environment

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ABSTRACT

On 5 June 2024, UNEP and ESCAP are bringing together partners and stakeholders in Asia and the Pacific to discuss priority areas on land restoration, desertification, and drought resilience in the region. The event will explore solutions applicable for the region, such as circular water resource use, sustainable food production, and drought resilient urban development. Indoor planting offers numerous physical and emotional benefits. Plants act as natural air purifiers, absorbing toxins and releasing oxygen, improving indoor air quality. They also help regulate humidity levels, benefiting those with dry skin or respiratory issues. Additionally, plants contribute to noise reduction, creating a calming environment, and caring for them has been shown to reduce stress and promote well-being. The visual appeal of indoor plants can brighten a room and enhance its aesthetic. This article encapsulates the essence of World Environment Day 2024, focusing on the themes of land restoration and drought resilience, while acknowledging the host country's role and the regional emphasis on Asia and the Pacific.

INTRODUCTION

World Environment Day is celebrated annually on 5 June to put a spotlight on environmental challenges of our time. World Environment

Day 2024 focuses on land restoration, stopping desertification and building drought resilience. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is the global host of this year's edition. Asia and the Pacific

is exceptionally rich in biodiversity. Land-use changes and land degradation caused by factors such as extensive agriculture, deforestation and unmanaged urbanization and sprawl, are reducing the biodiversity of many land ecosystems. Healthy soils store massive amounts of carbon, which, if released, would cause a huge spike in planetary warming. Changes in water courses, pollution and unsustainable consumption of water resources are causing water-related stress and reduced aquatic biodiversity. Globally the equivalent of one football pitch of soil is eroded every 5 seconds. Yet, it takes 1,000 years to generate 3 cm of top soil (Russo *et al.* 2005).

The Asia and the Pacific region, home to two-thirds of the world's population, is facing increasing impacts of water stress and land degradation. These are being caused by a number of factors, including population growth, rapid industrialization and urbanization, and a changing climate that is accelerating droughts. The majority of people in Asia and the Pacific live in cities, with increasing urbanization expected to increase the impacts of water stress and urban droughts. Cities produce more than half of global waste and at least 60 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions, which result in polluting waterways and further reducing available freshwater. Through the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030), actors are scaling solutions for the protection and revival of ecosystems all around the world, including in Asia and the Pacific, to increase drought and climate resilience and reduce land degradation. By restoring land and productive systems, humanity can secure a nature-positive, net-zero future, safeguarding a healthy planet for all. On 5 June 2024, UNEP and ESCAP are bringing together partners and stakeholders in Asia and the Pacific to discuss priority areas on land restoration, desertification and drought resilience in the region. The event will explore solutions applicable for the region, such as

circular water resource use, sustainable food production and drought resilient urban development (Merchant, 1981).

INDOOR PLANTING

Indoor planting has become increasingly popular in recent years, as it allows you to bring the beauty and tranquillity of nature inside your home. Whether you have a small apartment or a spacious house, indoor plants can bring a sense of freshness and life to any space.

BENEFITS OF INDOOR PLANTING

Indoor planting offers numerous benefits, both physical and emotional. Some key advantages include:

- 1. Air Purification:** Plants act as natural air purifiers, absorbing toxins and releasing oxygen. This can help improve the air quality inside your home.
- 2. Regulating Humidity:** Indoor plants can help regulate humidity levels, which can be beneficial for individuals with dry skin or respiratory problems.
- 3. Noise Reduction:** With their soothing sounds and gentle movement, plants can help create a calming and tranquil environment.
- 4. Stress Relief:** Caring for plants has been shown to reduce stress and promote a sense of well-being.
- 5. Visual Appeal:** Indoor plants can brighten up a room and create a visually appealing space.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT PLANTS:

When selecting indoor plants, it's important to consider factors such as light requirements, temperature preferences, and water needs.

Here are some tips for choosing suitable plants:

- ✓ **Light Requirements:** Different plants have different light requirements. Some thrive in direct sunlight, while others prefer indirect light. Pay attention to the plant tag or consult a nursery expert to determine the ideal lighting conditions for your chosen plants.
- ✓ **Temperature Preferences:** Some plants prefer warm temperatures, while others prefer cooler temperatures. Be mindful of the temperature in your home and select plants that thrive in that environment.
- ✓ **Water Needs:** Different plants have different water needs. Some require more frequent watering, while others can go longer between watering. Pay attention to the plant tag or consult a nursery expert to determine the appropriate watering schedule for your selected plants (Dubey *et al.* 2022).

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL INDOOR PLANTING:

Here are some general tips for successful indoor planting:

- ❖ **Proper Potting:** Use a suitable pot with drainage holes to avoid overwatering. Fill the pot with high-quality potting soil, ensuring good drainage.
- ❖ **Lighting Placement:** Place plants in an area where they will receive the appropriate amount of light. Consider using artificial lights if necessary.
- ❖ **Watering Schedule:** Follow the watering instructions provided by the plant tag or nursery expert. Overwatering can lead to root rot, while under watering can cause brown leaves and stunted growth.
- ❖ **Fertilizing:** Some plants may require fertilizing once a month or every few

months. Follow the manufacturer's instructions and fertilize responsibly (Raj *et al.* 2024).

CONCLUSION

Indoor planting not only adds beauty to your home but also offers a wide range of benefits, including air purification, noise reduction, and stress reduction. By choosing suitable plants, following proper planting practices, and providing proper care, you can enjoy a thriving indoor garden that complements your living space. So, why not bring a touch of nature indoors and enjoy the benefits of indoor planting today?

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MAJOR BENEFICIAL INDOOR PLANTS:



Jade plant: *Crassula ovata*



Earth eagle: *Echinococcus horizontalis*



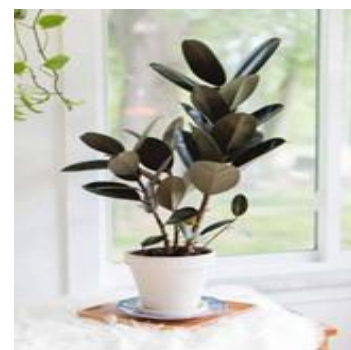
Spider plant *Chlorophytum comosum*



Money plant, *Epipremnum aureum*



Areca palm *Areca spp*



Rubber plant, *Hevea brasiliensis*