

CSR TODAY

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CONSERVATION CAREERS

**NEGATIVELY
AFFECTED
BY COVID-19
PANDEMIC**

A survey of 330 conservationists and 67 conservation employers in March/April 2020 shows that nearly 80 per cent of conservationists have been negatively impacted by Covid-19, while about nine in ten employers have been impacted



CSR TODAY

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COVID-19 bring in change



Rajesh Tiwari

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**THE LEVEL OF AIR
POLLUTION IS
AFFECTING CARDIO-
PULMONARY HEALTH
IN GENERAL, SO
HAVING LESS
POLLUTION AT
A TIME WHERE THIS
VIRUS IS AROUND
CAN ONLY BE A
GOOD THING**

The COVID-19 pandemic seems to be bringing in some changes. The life-threatening viral infection that is sweeping the globe has brought in some changes - work from home, study from home, enjoy your home, be with your family, look at your backyard. The nature also seems to be claiming urban places.

Once Corona goes - and we pray that it should be as early as possible - our lives and lifestyle are set to change. Protective clothes, masks, physical distancing would be order of the day. Pollution is going to reduce, whether air, water, soil, noise and so on.

In fact that the air quality has improved has been testified in a study published by US space agency National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). The decrease in aerosol levels was observed after just a week of reduced human activity and the data presents a 20-year low in aerosol levels for this time of year in northern India, according to the study conducted by Universities Space Research Association (USRA).

The research conducted by USRA's Pawan Gupta and the NASA team at Marshall Space Flight Center showed aerosol particles plummeting over northern India because of decreased activities resulting from Covid-19.

The NASA Satellite data shows a significant decrease in aerosol levels across northern India, a USRA press statement said.

Every year, aerosols from anthropogenic (human-made) sources contribute to unhealthy levels of air pollution in many Indian cities. Aerosols are tiny solid and liquid particles suspended in the air that reduce visibility and can damage the human lungs and heart. Some aerosols have natural sources, such as dust storms, volcanic eruptions, and forest fires. Others come from human activities, such as the burning of fossil fuels and croplands. Human-made aerosols tend to contribute most of the smaller particles that have greater potential for damaging human health.

"We knew we would see changes in atmospheric composition in many places during the lockdown. But I have never seen aerosol

values so low in the Indo-Gangetic Plain at this time of year," said Gupta in the statement.

The first five maps above show aerosol optical depth (AOD) measurements over India during the same March 31 to April 5 period for each year from 2016 through 2020. The sixth map (anomaly) shows how AOD in 2020 compared to the average for 2016-2019.

The data were retrieved by the Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer (MODIS) on NASA's Terra satellite.

In a typical early spring in the Ganges Valley of northern India, human activities generate the majority of aerosols. Motor vehicles, coal-fired power plants, and other industrial sources around urban areas produce nitrates and sulfates; coal combustion also produces soot and other carbon-rich particles. Rural areas add smoke—rich in black carbon and organic carbon—from cooking and heating stoves and from prescribed burns on farms (though farming fires more often occur at other times of year). By all accounts, the 2020 lockdown reduced those human-made emission sources.

Scientists expect aerosol levels to increase slightly in upcoming weeks in parts of India as seasonal dust storms begin. Dust concentrations are typically low in March and early April, before temperatures rise and strong westerly winds blow sand in from the Thar Desert and Arabian Peninsula. The question is whether overall AOD will remain below normal.

Data from the Sentinel-5P satellite shows that nitrogen dioxide air pollution levels have plummeted across Europe since the pandemic. NO₂ is emitted in most cases by burning fossil fuels at high temperatures, as in internal combustion engines. However, Vincent-Henri Peuch, Director of the Copernic Atmosphere Monitoring Service told Euronews that the importance of the drop should not be overstated.

"I don't think we can say that there is any long term significance in this decrease. However, in the short term I think these decreases are useful. The level of air pollution is affecting cardio-pulmonary health in general, so having less pollution at a time where this virus is around can only be a good thing," he said.

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CSR INDIA UNITED

1 man feeds 1000 daily in Mumbai's suburb of Borivali

Ever since the Corona lock-down began in India, there has been mayhem due to a lack of proper information, guidelines and rules regarding what is permitted and what is not, specially travelling and going out of your own home. We have all seen the images of thousands of labourers

and vegetables within the society's compound. He advised them to strictly stay at home and not venture out, as most people were already aware of the tragedy due to the Corona Virus and its rapid spread in China before.

During these trying times, most middle and upper class families have

sudden lock-down has caused a double whammy. Mauris Noronha and his team go door to door in these chawls and slums of Borivali and Dahisar and give the poor free daily and weekly rations of food grains that they cannot afford themselves. Till the 9th of April he had provided food to over 15,000 poor people and visited over 2000 homes in the slums and backward areas.

Zero income, zero savings, and now they are a burden with the families they are staying at. These are the major category of people who wanted to cross borders, catch trains and rush home, but were stopped and stranded at many places. There is little help for such migrant labourers and even for the poor Marathi mannos in Mumbai. Whose incomes are suddenly a question mark and whose job security is at high risk.

But thanks to the highly praised social work being done by this charitable person, at least the poor dwelling in and around Borivali West, are not going hungry.



trying to leave the metros specially Delhi and Mumbai, desperate to reach their homes in far away villages of the country. Though Governments have come out with day to day information, the very fact that it's too much causes confusion and panic.

Even before the lock-down, Mauris Noronha from I.C Colony, Borivali, in Mumbai, informed the 120+ families in his housing society, that he would be delivering all required food grains, fruits

access to essentials like groceries and dairy. Both physical access to the shops or deliveries, and more importantly financial access. Though every income class has been hit, the savings at one's home, enable the average Indian in metro cities to go through the 30-60 days period, albeit with difficulties. However, for those working as migrant labourers residing temporarily in the hutments and slums with their relatives and yearning to go home, the

The activities conducted by Mauris are, food grain and vegetable supplies to the poor, medicines for infants and elderly citizens, sanitizers and masks to ambulance staff as well as police stations and a regular ration distribution to the house maids and building watchmen of the housing societies in the vicinity. In total the food quantity just this one man has resourced and supplied is over 15,000 kgs. He has received hundreds of compliments

JINDAL SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY LAUNCHED

JGU's New School focuses on Environmental Studies



The O.P. Jindal Global University (JGU) launched its 9th School: The Jindal School of Environment and Sustainability (JSES).

The first interdisciplinary environmental studies school in an Indian university will be led by the renowned environmentalist, Professor Dr. Armin Rosencranz, formerly at Stanford University, as its founding Dean.

The School was launched by Dr. Bibek Debroy, Chairman, Economic

Council to the Prime Minister, Government of India, Mr. Justice Michael D. Wilson, Judge, Supreme Court of Hawaii, USA, Mr M.C Mehta, Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of India and Dean Armin Rosencranz.

The establishment of the 9th school of JGU, JSES is a significant step in the context of mitigating the immense challenges that are facing the environment in India and the world. We face an increasing array of environmental challenges that require greater

levels of innovation and collaboration among industry, government, academics and communities.

"The Jindal School of Environment and Sustainability (JSES) hopes to lead India and the world towards a sustainable future with an innovative and interdisciplinary teaching pedagogy, cutting-edge research and practice-based engagement. The School will develop a strategic plan that builds a sustainable future in these challenging times. Through national and interna-

Conservationists learn how to inventory a forest.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, conservation job and internship opportunities worldwide have dropped by an estimated 50 per cent compared to their normal levels.

Image: NRCS Oregon, CC BY-ND 2.0

CONSERVATION CAREERS

NEGATIVELY AFFECTED BY COVID-19 PANDEMIC

A survey of 330 conservationists and 67 conservation employers in March/April 2020 shows that nearly 80 per cent of conservationists have been negatively impacted by Covid-19, while about nine in ten employers have been impacted, writes **Kristi Foster**

With health and economic impacts at the forefront of global concerns, what's happening to the people whose job it is to protect the future of our health, wealth and wellbeing – that of the planet?

Once labeled a field for 'radical environmentalists,' today conservation is a diverse and booming sector that employs hundreds of thousands of professionals worldwide and draws thousands of passionate people through its doors each year. They are the youth who envision a world where decision-makers don't compromise their futures. They're the professionals who wake up mid-career seeking more than a paycheck and security. They're the people who put meaning before material gains, community above competition and tomorrow's prosperity ahead of today's profit. Rangers and researchers, fundraisers and filmmakers seek little recognition as guardians of the planet for future generations – the oceans we fish, the forests we harvest and the species that have intrigued and inspired us for millennia. But how has the employment sector for conservationists been hit by Covid-19?

Conservation jobs: On hold?

As of April 2020, conservation job and internship opportunities worldwide have dropped by an estimated 50 per cent compared to their normal levels.

"Conservation Careers scours the job markets globally each day to find the best opportunities to share, and have seen rates drop from 130-240 to around 50-100 new job and internship opportunities per day, with the most dramatic decrease during the last two weeks of March 2020," said Dr. Nick Askew, director of Conservation Careers.

Conservation employers share a similarly grim story. Of 67 conservation employers who responded to an online survey by Conservation Careers during March and April 2020, over 90 per cent said their recruitment or staffing has already been negatively impacted by

Covid-19. These include shorter-term impacts – such as a shift to personnel working remotely, decreased hours, staff unable to fully perform their roles and extended hiring periods – and major impacts, including frozen donations and funding cuts, staff being laid off, seasonal crews or internships being cancelled and uncertainty looming over future funding.

For many of the organisations surveyed – based in countries including the UK, US, Australia, Canada, Malaysia, Madagascar, Costa Rica and Paraguay – recruitment has been suspended indefinitely in the face of uncertainty.

"Before [Covid-19], we were looking to recruit part-time development staff/consultants, and now our entire budget is dedicated to keeping staff on board," explained one conservation professional. "We anticipate spending down all of our reserves until we can no longer keep staff, then I will likely be let go." Other organisations that are still hiring are struggling to fill roles with a dramatic drop in applicants.

And if conservation organisations are uncertain about their futures, conservationists find themselves even less certain of their careers.

In a survey of 330 conservationists by Conservation Careers in March and April 2020, 78 per cent reported that their job search or career has been negatively impacted by the pandemic, while 18 per cent aren't yet sure how they'll be impacted. Fewer than 4 per cent have not been impacted – yet.

Many conservationists have been laid off or put on unpaid leave or sabatical indefinitely, while those looking for jobs and other opportunities – including a growing number of career switchers – have found their prospects greatly diminished. Others who've recently made it to the interview stage or received job offers have had their applications postponed indefinitely or offers put on hold or withdrawn.

"I've been offered the dream job!" wrote conservationist Tania to her peers online. "I was offered the job of project manager in a very remote location with

a great NGO – it's an amazing place and an amazing role, two weeks ago I would have said yes instantly! But now I'm very worried about accepting, given the current Covid-19 situation..."

Layoffs, fewer job prospects and delayed recruitment aren't the only way conservationists are being impacted. Students have had the field component of their dissertations postponed, cancelled or replaced due to lost research funding and travel restrictions.

Other conservationists have had to return home from contracts abroad, lost seasonal contracts, or are unable to pursue planned or prospective internships, projects and expeditions abroad.

"At Natucate, we had to cancel a large amount of our bookings," said Daniel Kaul, founder of Natucate, a company offering voluntary service abroad on nature conservation, environmental and animal protection projects.


"Several conservation projects that we support can no longer operate and have to shut down activities, some of them even permanently. As crucial conservation work in these areas no longer takes place, nature and wildlife are put at risk again in the long term – a fact that deeply saddens us."

If nature adapts, can humanity adapt too?

It's taken only a handful of weeks without human interference for nature to remind us of its capacity for resilience, if we give it a chance.

In the absence of cruise ship visits offloading tourists and motorised boats kicking up sediment, Venice's La Serenissima's canals have been transformed virtually overnight, revealing the unique Venice lagoon ecosystem, complete with shoals of fish, crabs, plant life and even duck eggs.

Satellite images show air pollution has fallen in China and northern Italy, and air quality improved in countries like the UK within a week of lockdowns on non-essential travel. In the US, vehicle pollution has declined dramatically over major cities like Los Angeles, Seattle, New York, Chicago and Atlanta.



Cage-free settings allow chickens to perform some of their natural behaviour such as perching and dustbathing.

Asia's biggest food companies silent on the welfare of farm animals

Even as a pandemic threatens food supply chains, most firms, including China's top pig and poultry producer, have shed no light on how they are managing risks and opportunities linked to farm animal welfare.

Major food companies in Asia must improve the welfare of farm animals that they produce, supply or use, an annual benchmark of 150 of the world's largest food companies has shown.

Out of 17 Asian companies in the benchmark, 15 emerged in the bot-

tom tier for being virtually silent on how they are managing the risks and opportunities associated with farm animal welfare.

The 15 Asian companies—which made up half of the bottom tier—included China's top pig and poultry producer Wens Foodstuff, feed and meat manufacturer and distributor New

Hope Liuhe, retailer China Resources Vanguard and Japanese food producers Meiji Holdings and Maruha Nichiro.

The Business Benchmark on Farm Animal Welfare (BBFAW) 2019, released earlier this month, comes at a time when the Covid-19 pandemic is highlighting the fragility of global food supply chains and the need to do more to stop the spread of diseases from animals to humans.

"In a world where farm animal welfare is an increasingly important driver of both business value and investment risk, maintaining and improving animal welfare standards must be a focus," said



As of 6 April 2020, there were 88 confirmed coronavirus cases among foreign workers at this dormitory in Singapore. Operated by S11 Capital Investments, it has a 13,000 capacity.
Image: Google Maps

COVID-19

measures leave Southeast Asia's migrant workers exposed, lay bare their living conditions

Job loss, crowded quarters and reduced access to healthcare are among the issues foreign workers face. Advocacy groups say the pandemic can only be controlled with an inclusive approach that protects every individual's rights to life and health.

The spread of the Covid-19 coronavirus among Singapore's migrant workers has thrown the vulnerability of this community into sharp relief as Southeast Asia continues to grapple with the pandemic.

Singapore, together with Malaysia, Thailand and Brunei, are the key destination countries for migrant labour in Southeast Asia.

The city-state's response to the pandemic in recent months, such as contact-tracing and containment measures, has been praised by many public

health experts. But on Sunday (5 April), the government ordered the quarantine of about 20,000 migrant workers living in two dormitories after the Covid-19 clusters grew to 63 confirmed cases in one dormitory, and 28 cases in the other. Workers in the dormitories told national newspaper The Straits Times of cockroach-infested rooms, overflowing toilets and the lack of social distancing measures, sparking public outrage over their living conditions.

"The way Singapore treats its foreign workers is not First World but Third World," Singapore's ambassador-at-

large Tommy Koh wrote on Facebook. "The dormitories are not clean or sanitary. The dormitories were like a time bomb waiting to explode. They have now exploded with many infected workers. Singapore should treat this as a wake up call to treat our indispensable foreign workers like a First World country should and not in the disgraceful way in which they are treated now."

Some members of the public wanted to rally together to provide better food for the workers, after seeing photos of the lacklustre meals catered following the quarantine order. Some 200,000

Asia stands to lose 68 million jobs if coronavirus is not contained in six months—ADB

The Covid-19 pandemic will threaten the employment of 52 million workers in China, while the rest of the region must brace itself for about 16 million job cuts if the outbreak goes on until September, the Asian Development Bank warned.

By **Hannah Alcoseba Fernandez**



A nearly empty flight from Beijing, China to Los Angeles, California in the US, amid the Covid-19 outbreak. Stringent travel restrictions around the world have hit the travel and tourism sector hardest.
Image: Mx. Granger / CC0, CC BY-SA 3.0

About 68 million jobs could be lost in Asia due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has warned.

China will see the highest number of workers affected, with about 52.8 million workers potentially losing their jobs by the end of September in the “worst case scenario”, if the pandemic is not contained by then, according to the ADB’s Covid-19 Economic Impact Assessment Template rolled out last week.

The template calculates the overall impact on 24 developing Asian econo-

mies and supplements the findings of the multilateral lender’s annual economic publication, Asian Development Outlook (ADO) 2020, released last Friday.

In the ADB’s worst-case scenario over the next six months, jobs in China’s transport sector could shrink by 6.53 per cent as global travel restrictions—currently affecting 550 million international trips, or 40 per cent of the global total—continue.

Hotel and restaurant workers in the mainland are also at risk as employment in this sector could dip by 6.25 per cent.

The Covid-19 coronavirus first emerged in the central Chinese city of Wuhan late last year and has spread around the world. Although China appears to be recovering, cautious consumers may continue to stay away from shops, restaurants, and other commercial establishments until the outbreak is over.

The pandemic has also affected manufacturing firms by disrupting supply chains, especially those in the automotive, electrical and electronics industries, noted the ADB in its template. “If governments move quickly



A display of a thermal scan in a building.

CORONAVIRUS AND THE BATTLE FOR A COLLABORATIVE FUTURE

Back when the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals were finalized in 2015, the philosophy underpinning SDG No. 17 was very much in the ascendancy. Dubbed Partnership for the Goals, the wide-ranging targets covering everything from technology to trade, capacity-building to multi-stakeholder partnerships, and data and monitoring to accountability, were developed

in the same year as the Paris Agreement amply demonstrated the merits of multilateralism.

Barack Obama's quiet flexing of diplomatic muscles coupled with China's desire to avert a trade — damaging new Cold War had delivered a nuclear deal in Iran, the world's first universal climate change pact, and a broadly effective containment of the world's increasingly isolated authoritarian strongmen. Meanwhile, the global business com-

munity was edging towards an arguably belated recognition of the importance of cooperation, be it within industries, across different sectors or between corporations and governments.

And then, less than 12 months later, hopes of a new era of multilateralism and enlightened cooperation were crushed overnight by the shock victory of an avowedly “America First” U.S. president. Within hours the whims of the American Electoral College system



INDUSTRY LEADERS JOIN HANDS FOR A NATIONAL WATER MOVEMENT



Indian Musicians Unite for a “WE ARE THE WORLD” Like Project on World Water Day

A National Water Movement finds its calling

Whenver there has been a crisis in the world, musicians have always stepped in to resonate their voice and catapult it into a movement. One of the biggest mo-

ments in history has been the creation of the “We Are the World” project, where artists came together to unite to raise funds for the famine in Africa.

Back home, at a time when it’s imperative to focus on water stressed villages of India, a strategy that will further impact agriculture and local economic growth, IdeaHive Media, an agency focusing on creating social impact projects, partnered with Watershed Organ-

isation Trust (WOTR), as its knowledge partner, who has pioneered in watershed efforts, both directly and through partner NGOs, in 3,500 villages across 8 states of India to create a national water movement called Paani ka Teeka.

The project has brought together the music industry to join hands and create a “We are the World” like initiative to bring support to 1000+ water stressed villages. Paani Ka Teeka’s project goals

Why Earth Day needs to be an official company holiday

I'm not saying that by making Earth Day a company holiday we can immediately reverse the damage, but I am saying that it could go a long way in reminding our people what matters most, says **Deven Patten**, Director of Sustainability, Young Living Essential Oils



Young Living officially made Earth Day a company holiday in 2019, and more than 2,000 employees participated in over 30 service projects.

Earth Day is one of those holidays that's taken about as seriously by some companies as St. Patrick's Day or National Doughnut Day. Actually, at least St. Patrick's Day means green shortbread cookies in the breakroom. Usually, all Earth Day gets is a company-wide email.

This year, however, everything has changed. Many of us are stuck at home, juggling our regular jobs with attempting to teach kids using the same screens we're in front of all day. For many, everything from a simple daily walk to a strenuous hike or bike ride has become critical to our sanity. It's possible that one benefit that will come out of this international crisis is a greater appreciation for our outdoors and our planet.

This year is the 50th anniversary of Earth Day, and it's a perfect time for companies to step up and make it an official company holiday. Earth Day

is an opportunity to honor our most precious asset, and it's a reminder of the very real responsibility we have to protect our planet — a planet that is in dire need of help. Earth Day needs to go beyond a casual mention to a legitimate company holiday. Here's why:

Happy Earth, happy employees

Like everyone else, I find myself wrapped up in emails and meetings and obligations that can consume my entire day. Your employees experience the same thing, and I'm willing to bet they're so busy they often forget to look out the window and see if the tulips have started blooming or if any nests are built in the trees around the parking lot.

Earth Day encourages an appreciation for nature by urging employees to take a look at the world around them. Guardianship arises as an extension of that appreciation, which means employ-

ees are more likely to return to work the next day (even if virtually) more interested in conservation, sustainability, recycling and other green practices. That can have a far-reaching positive impact, starting with a more positive culture and more fulfilled employees. And that means a more productive working environment.

But it goes beyond that — sustainability is also beneficial to your bottom line. Harvard Business Review published "The Comprehensive Business Case for Sustainability" a few years ago, and it includes some great case studies and statistics that support the claims of economic viability of sustainability in business. Several other reports on the same topic recently have been published, and they all come to the same conclusion: Sustainability is good for business. Reading and understanding the data prior to discussing with your executive suite will be very important.

Wilmar International's sustainability team engaged in a Zoom meeting, using a range of virtual backgrounds. Wilmar's sustainability head Perpetua George says keeping spirits up during lockdown is a challenge. Image: Wilmar International



LOCKDOWN INNOVATION

How are Asia's sustainability practitioners staying effective in the time of coronavirus?

How can you police deforestation or run an earth-friendly holiday resort while working from home? Eco-Business asked sustainability folk working in palm oil, consumer goods, consulting, environmental activism and journalism how they continue to do their jobs in unprecedented times, write **Robin Hicks**

The last few weeks have been a test of how adaptable humans are, said Perpetua George, who has spent just under a month in lockdown, trying to manage the sustainability operations of the world's largest palm oil company from her family home in Kuala Lumpur.

Sustainability jobs that require fieldwork have mostly stopped in response to lockdown orders to contain the Covid-19 pandemic. Globally, the number of available jobs in conservation has fallen by half, and large chunks of