

# Five Environmental Campaigns for the 50th Earth Day

*Gemma Alexander*

April 22, 2020, marks 50 years since the day that 10 percent of the U.S. population took to the streets to protest environmental degradation, thus launching Earth Day, and with it, the modern environmental movement. It would be tempting let Earth Day 2020 be a little nostalgic and focus on the history and successes of that movement. But the environmental challenges we face today – with climate change first among them – are too urgent.

“It’s not about what we’ve accomplished. We’re looking forward as opposed to looking backward,” said Kathleen Rogers, Earth Day Network president.

“We wanted to create a very big tent. We looked for ways you can be an activist or not and still be involved,” she said. Looking at what has worked in the past 50 years, the Earth Day Network found several effective strategies, which they summarized in the acronym SAVE.

- **Social Activism** – Marches, speeches, rallies, and other forms of civic involvement.
- **Volunteerism** – Planting trees, cleaning up litter, and other hands-on activities that directly improve the environment.
- **Education** – Raising awareness of environmental issues and the science behind the solutions.

Among those various approaches, Rogers said they found that there was something for everyone to participate in. Regardless of one’s politics or temperament, there is some part of the environmental movement that they can get behind.

The pandemic disrupted many of their original plans. But Earth Day Network still wants to activate at least a billion people worldwide for their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary theme of climate action. They developed five campaigns that support the various SAVE approaches to environmentalism.

## [EARTHRISE](#)

[EARTHRISE](#) is an intergenerational global social activism movement for climate action. Although many planned marches and protests had to be cancelled, EARTHRISE now seeks to digitally mobilize millions around the world on and around April 22, 2020.

## [The Great Global Cleanup](#)

[The Great Global Cleanup](#) is a worldwide volunteer campaign to remove billions of pieces of trash from neighborhoods, beaches, rivers, lakes, trails, and parks. Individuals and, where it’s safe to gather, groups are working to directly reduce waste

and plastic pollution, improve habitats, and prevent harm to wildlife and humans.

## **Earth Challenge 2020**

[Earth Challenge 2020](#) is an education campaign. It is also the largest-ever global citizen science initiative. Earth Challenge will provide everyday individuals with the tools they need to report on the health and well-being of the environment, from water quality, to air quality, to the species around them.

## **Foodprints for the Future**

[Foodprints for the Future](#) combines education with volunteerism. This campaign aims first to educate individuals about the climate impacts of our food system. And it encourages everyone to make the individual choices that minimize those impacts.

## **Artists for the Earth**

[Artists for the Earth](#) is a global education campaign that invites artists from around the world in every discipline to use the power of their art in service to the environment.

## **Doing Your Part**

Even if you are self-isolating, there is room for you under the Earth Day 2020 umbrella. This year, for the 50th Earth day, take action your own way to keep our planet clean and habitable.

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