

**2026  
20TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION**



# GO EARTH HOUR



**Bhutan  
FOUNDATION**



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Cover photo: © Kinley Wangmo / WWF - Bhutan

## INTRODUCTION

# Joining the biggest hour for Earth

Earth Hour, initiated by WWF Australia in 2007 has grown into a global movement uniting people, businesses and landmarks to switch off non-essential lights for one hour (8:30-9:30pm) on the last Saturday of March.

This year, Earth Hour turned 20, celebrating two decades of collective action for nature and climate.

Led by Environmental Partners – Bhutan Ecological Society, Bhutan Foundation, Bhutan For Life, Bhutan Trust Fund for Environmental Conservation and World Wildlife Fund Bhutan, Bhutan joined the movement. Through this collective effort, Bhutan demonstrated its solidarity with the planet while raising awareness about the urgent challenges of climate crisis, and nature and biodiversity loss.

While Earth Hour is observed for a single hour, its message extends far beyond those 60 minutes. In this spirit, a month-long build-up campaign was organized in Bhutan, culminating in a day-long event at Gelephu Mindfulness City (GMC).

Why GMC? The objectives of Earth Hour closely align with GMC's vision as a carbon-negative city committed to creating a wildlife-friendly living landscape rooted in co-existence. Guided by the principles of mindful prosperity and nature-friendly development, GMC represents a thoughtful approach to sustainable urban living. As the vision stands on the brink of becoming reality, the venue was both meaningful and fitting.

This report reflects the power of collective action. We extend our sincere gratitude to Gelephu Mindfulness City Authority, Gelephu Thromde, Environmental Partners, private sector partners, youth volunteers, nature and clubs, and the Sarpang Dzongkhag for their invaluable support, which played a pivotal role in the successful observance of Earth Hour 2026 in Bhutan.

As we look ahead, we hope that the spirit of Earth Hour continues to inspire actions that go beyond the single hour.

# PUT YOUR PLEDGES HERE

OUR EARTH  
OUR POWER!

Reduce  
Reuse  
Recycle



Nyinzangpa



Reduce  
Reuse  
Recycle

Our waste is  
our responsibility

- Save earth

I pledge to  
save energy  
I pledge to  
protect our earth

60  
EARTH  
Hour



I love earth

I will not litter

Save Earth

I Love Snake

Happy  
Birth Day  
Happy Earth  
day!!!



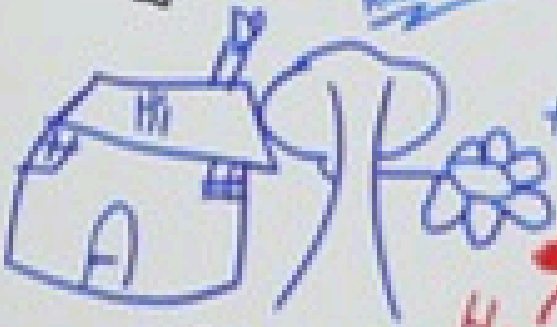
60  
Earth  
Hour

Happy  
Earthday  
America

60  
Earth  
Hour

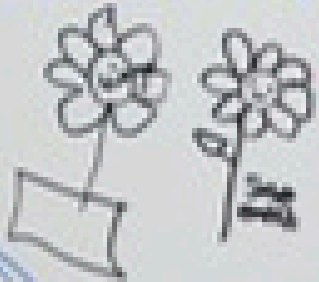
- As Scouts, we were  
trained to protect the  
EARTH.

SADHANA



Happy  
Earthday  
America

- Praying  
for  
the  
Earth



Yase! Adhikari





© Jigme Lhazin / WWF-Bhutan

# 40,000+ Hours from Bhutan for the Planet

Bhutan dedicated over 40,000 Hours for Earth as part of Earth Hour 2026, marking a significant national effort in the global environmental movement. Earth Hour, the world's largest grassroots initiative for the environment, celebrated its 20th anniversary this year.

Bhutan's participation underscores the country's deep-rooted commitment to conservation and collective action towards a nature positive future.

The total hours were accumulated through a month-long national campaign, with contributions from individuals, schools, youth groups, private sector entities, corporations, and government agencies. Participants dedicated time to a wide range of nature positive actions, including cleaning campaigns, waste management initiatives, adoption of sustainable practices, switching off nonessential lights, and spending time reconnecting with nature.

This year, the Environmental Partners, namely Bhutan Ecological Society, Bhutan Foundation, Bhutan for Life, Bhutan Trust Fund for Environmental Conservation, joined WWF-Bhutan to organize the campaign and events.

# Key outcomes

Partnership with Gelephu Mindfulness City (GMC) and Gelephu Thromde

Partnership with environmental organizations

Youth engagement

Private sector engagement and partnership

Influencer engagement

Broader advocacy and awareness on climate change, and nature and biodiversity loss

**60 EARTH HOUR** **EARTH HOUR**  
JOIN THE BIGGEST HOUR FOR EARTH

**GELEPHU MINDFULNESS CITY**  
Nature-based solutions fair  
Art exhibition  
Panel discussion  
Nature walk  
Lights off

©Royal Office For Media

28 March  
GMC  
earthhour.org



**60 EARTH HOUR** **YOUTH FOR OUR PLANET**

**EFN-RTC**  
Social media challenge  
Moon-gazing  
Lights off

©EFN

2, 19, 28 March  
earthhour.org



**60 EARTH HOUR** **TOUCHING THE EARTH**

**DIGITAL DETOX**  
#InternationalDayofHappiness  
48-hr digital detox  
Sunrise meditation  
Stargazing  
Trail clean-up  
Nature art  
Deep dialogue: "What does it mean to care for the Earth"

©Touching the Earth

20-21 March 2026  
earthhour.org



**60 EARTH HOUR** **BIRDING IN YANGTSE**

**TRASHI-YANGTSE NATURE CLUB**  
Bird Watching  
interactive learning on coexistence  
Art competition

©Trashi Yangtse Nature Club

7-21 March  
Trashi Yangtse  
earthhour.org





**60 EARTH HOUR** **Tree Plantation**  
SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT

#InternationalDayofForests  
Supported by Bhutan Insurance Limited through the #OneTreeInitiative  
1,000-tree plantation  
Plantation management

©Kinley Wangmo / WWF-Bhutan

21 March 2026  
Plantation Site: Tsewang, South Thimphu

earthhour.org

**60 EARTH HOUR** **SUSTAINABLE WASTE MANAGEMENT**

Middle & higher secondary schools  
**Sarpang**  
Video competition

**60 EARTH HOUR** **GMC & NATURE**  
Integrating Biodiversity into Cities

**MODERATOR**  
Mr Chencho Norbu  
Technical Advisor  
Climate Change and Environmental Law Centre  
JSW School of Law

**PANELIST**

<b>Dr Norbu Wangdi</b> Director, Forests and Water Bhutan Ecological Society	<b>Mr Sonam Wangdi</b> Chief Program Officer Bhutan Trust Fund for Environmental Conservation	<b>Mr Phub Dhendup</b> Chief Forestry Officer Divisional Forest Office, Sarpang DoFPS, MoENR	<b>Mr Samdrup Norbu</b> Director, Parks & City Beautification Gelephu Mindfulness City Authority	<b>Mr Sangay Wangdi</b> Associate Director, City Development Gelephu Mindfulness City Authority	<b>Mr Chimi Rinzin</b> Country Director WWF-Bhutan

**28 March 2026**  
earthhour.org



**60 EARTH HOUR** **GMC & NATURE**  
Integrating Biodiversity into Cities

**MODERATOR**  
Mr Chencho Norbu

**PANELIST**  
Dr Norbu Wangdi, Mr Sonam Wangdi, Mr Phub Dhendup, Mr Samdrup Norbu, Mr Sangay Wangdi, Mr Chimi Rinzin

28 March 2026  
earthhour.org

**60 EARTH HOUR** **PANDA EXPLORE**  
LEARNING WITH WWF-BHUTAN

#WorldWildlifeDay  
Guided tour  
Tiger video  
Meet the expert  
Q&A  
Storytelling session  
... and more

©Marc Nesen

3 March 2026  
Panda Explore  
WWF-Bhutan

# In numbers

**40,000+ hours**

worth of nature-positive actions from planting trees to cleaning campaigns, from creating awareness to spending time in nature.



**20,000+ hours**

from Gelephu Mindfulness City alone. The City switched off lights for 30 minutes during Earth Hour.



**1,000 trees planted**

at Tsewang, South Thimphu, in partnership with Bhutan Insurance Limited and Department of Forests and Park Services.

**5 Environmental Partners**

collaborated and organized the Earth Hour 2026 campaign in Bhutan.

**28,856 individuals**

committed to nature-positive actions.



**9 influencers**

including decision-makers, social media influencers, artists and spiritual leaders engaged.



**6 schools**

from Sarpang participated in the "sustainable waste management in my school" competition.



# Earth Hour 2026 at Gelephu Mindfulness City

This year's national observance was held at GMC, which contributed over 20,000 hours alone, which was the target number of hours for 2026 from Bhutan. GMC is envisioned as a carbon-controlled and wildlife-friendly city, integrating protected areas and biological corridors into its urban design. It aims to pioneer the world's first urban coexistence model through an elephant corridor, while advancing mindful prosperity through nature-positive development, where people and nature thrive in harmony.

The event formally opened at Gelephu Middle Secondary School, with the participation of 100 students, representatives from GMC, environment partners, Thromde and Dzongkhag offices. The Governor of GMC, DASHO (Dr) Lotay Tshering, who was the Chief Guest for the event delivered the keynote address, setting the stage for a panel discussion on GMC and Nature.



© Yangchen C Rinzin / WWF-Bhutan





© Yangchen C Rinzin / WWF-Bhutan

## Eco-bag distribution

During the event, 1,000 eco-bags made from jute were handed over to GMC to kick-start their project to phase out use of single-use plastics in GMC. The GMC Authority will be distributing the bags once a collective 11,000 numbers of jute/eco-bags are procured. The plan is to initially provide each person in GMC with the bag, while looking into a sustainable modality to help phase out single-use plastic. There is an opportunity for partners to put in a proposal to provide technical support on how to make this plan actionable.

# Education youth engagement & creative expression

Highlighting the impact of small but meaningful actions, videos showcasing sustainable waste management initiatives from winning schools of a video challenge organized among Middle and Higher Secondary Schools in Sarpang were screened during the event.

Additionally, three winners of an art competition on “Nature and Coexistence”, organized by the Trashi Yangtse Nature Club in partnership with Cora Art Studio, were recognized and awarded certificates. The organizers also hosted an art exhibition at Gelephu Thromde Park, which drew hundreds of participants who later joined the Earth Hour countdown.

At 8:30 pm, GMC joined millions across the globe by switching off nonessential lights, demonstrating solidarity with the planet and sparking conversations and action on the climate crisis and nature loss.



# Towards Earth Hour

A month-long campaign kick-started the Earth Hour campaign on social media and in-person activities around the country.





# Sustainable tree plantation

A month-long campaign kick-started the Earth Hour campaign on social media and in-person activities around the country.

In Thimphu, on 21 March, coinciding with the International Day of Forests on March 21, and as a tribute to His Majesty the Fourth King, 1,000 trees were planted at Tsewgang in Thimphu under the One Tree Initiative of the Bhutan Insurance Company. More than 100 staff from BIL and WWF-Bhutan participated in the plantation.

The plantation site is adopted by Bhutan Insurance Limited.



© Bhutan Olympic Committee



TOUCHING  
THE EARTH



# International Day of Happiness

50 EARTH  
HOUR





# Digital detox camp

Meanwhile, Touching the Earth group organized a three-day digital detox retreat, encouraging participants to reconnect with nature through reflection and mindful living. A total of 30 young Bhutanese unplugged from their devices and dived into a Digital Detox Camp, a 48-hour journey of meditation, skygazing, and creating Earth Mandalas from natural materials.







© Kelzang Lhamo / WWF-Bhutan

*EFN volunteers Ngawang Lhendup, Tshering Chokey and Gaylek Wangchuck (left to right) with WWF-Bhutan staff at GMC*

## Youth-led action & community participation

Youth played a central role in the campaign. Scholars from the Education for Nature (EFN) Program at Royal Thimphu College mobilized fellow youth through challenges promoting nature-positive actions. About 70 students from RTC took part in Earth Hour events.

The EFN Society organized a TikTok video challenge for Earth Hour 2026 to promote environmental awareness through digital media. The challenge was launched in the first week of March and ran until 24 March. During Earth Hour, a candle lighting session was organized during which youth reflected on nature and coexistence and encouraged collective environmental action.

Beyond the organized activities, numerous schools, youth groups, corporations, and individuals across the country independently conducted initiatives, collectively contributing to the national effort. For instance, 68 Students from Punakha Central School dedicated a cleaning campaign for a week to observe Earth Hour







# Learn with WWF-Bhutan launched

Coinciding with World Wildlife Day on 3rd March, the Learn with WWF-Bhutan program was launched at Panda Explore, a learning centre housed in the WWF-Bhutan office. The initiative engages students through interactive learning on nature and wildlife at WWF-Bhutan's learning Centre, Panda Explore.

A total of 43 Students from Druk School and Motithang Higher Secondary School participated in the program.

The species in focus was the Bengal tiger, and Dr Lungten Dorji, Senior Forestry Officer and Cat Specialist, shared his experiences and insights on tiger conservation with the students.

© Kinley Wangmo / WWF-Bhutan



## LEARN WITH WWF-BHUTAN



Shared Land. Shared Future.  
PANDA EXPLORE







# Young birders of Eastern Bhutan

Jointly organized by Trashi Yangtse Nature Club and Cora Art Studio, about 50 children from Trashi Yangtse participated in a day-long bird-watching trip to Bumdeling Wildlife Sanctuary. An art competition was also organized on the theme "Nature and Coexistence" among 50 children.







*Bhutan Foundation's Country Director, Norbu Dema, delivers the closing remarks at the Earth Hour event on behalf of the Environmental Partners*

## **Strengthened environmental partnerships and impact**

Earth Hour 2026 in Bhutan was jointly organized by the country's Environmental Partners: the Bhutan Trust Fund for Environmental Conservation (BT FEC), Bhutan for Life (BFL), Bhutan Ecological Society (BES), Bhutan Foundation, and WWF-Bhutan. The collaboration reflects strengthened partnerships and shared commitment to conservation impact.

Earth Hour continues to inspire youth-led climate action, promote sustainable lifestyles, and encourage individuals to give an hour for Earth, while reinforcing the role of environmental organizations as trusted partners in conservation. In comparison, Bhutan dedicated 7,000 Hours for Earth in 2025, making the 40,000+ hours in 2026 a substantial increase in participation and national impact.

# Way forward

Earth Hour is one of the key collaborative platforms through which Environmental Partners will work together to align and strengthen ongoing conservation and sustainability efforts. The partnership aims to assimilate similar initiatives implemented by participating organizations, ensuring coherence, efficiency, and greater collective impact. Actionable areas of collaboration include awareness campaigns, community engagement, waste reduction and recycling initiatives, promotion of energy efficiency, advocacy for sustainable lifestyles, and coordinated outreach activities that amplify shared environmental goals. Some key actionable outcomes from Earth Hour 2026 are listed below:

- Phasing out of single-use plastic in GMC
- Waste management advocacy and awareness
- Nature-based Solutions program offer to Pelsung
- Gearing up for a bigger role in GMC in areas of nature conservation, wildlife habitat management, and wildlife-friendly infrastructure





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