



# SEAMEO – UNESCO Joint Webinar on World Environment Day



'Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to you, the biodiversity conscious and responsible audience, and our distinguished speakers to celebrate World Environment Day 2020. Let me thank SEAMEO for inviting UNESCO and for organizing this event 'Covid 19 effects on biodiversity: science education reimaged'.

I have three points that I wish to share with you:

1. Covid 19 is an acute pandemic crisis. More than 6,3 million people have been infected. 380,000 human lives lost. In the same time, there is enormous biodiversity loss, climate change and pollution in the world. These crises are massive threats to human living; they already affect food-, water-, and energy-security. They have an impact on health and medical preparedness. They cause the migration of people. These crises will not go away by themselves, and future pandemics are likely to happen. We have to form a **Coalition with Nature**, with adequate funding for Science and Education. It will only work with Science and Education, and educated people participation.
2. UNESCO warned against the exploitation of natural resources in 1971. The **World Network of Biosphere Reserves** was born: places for nature conservation and human living. These places function based on Science and Education.
3. UNESCO has partnered with SEAMEO on the [www.theplasticinitiative.org](http://www.theplasticinitiative.org) and 'UNESCO Green Academies'. These programmes aim to retrofit schools into environmentally friendly places, providing green skills to students and teachers, and their communities, and to keep our cities, rivers, coasts and oceans clean. It has to be supported by Science and Education.

Pandemics, biodiversity loss, climate change and pollution are real. We have to do more about it, with a pro-active approach, and not re-active.

Let me know introduce you to the moderator, Dr. Jesus (Jess) Fernandez, in Indonesia. Dr. Jess holds B.SC, M.Sc, and Ph.D degrees. He serves as the Deputy Director of the SEAMEO Regional Centre for Food and Nutrition. He served in a number of biodiversity relevant posts of global importance. His areas of specialization include organizational management, strategic planning, systems-based solutions, and much more. He was recognized as one of the Outstanding Alumni of the University of the Philippines.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Dr. Jess Fernandez !

## COVID-19 Effects on Biodiversity: Science Education Reimagined