

KEEPING ENVIRONMENT MESSAGES ALIVE DURING COVID-19

PERSPECTIVES FROM A COMMUNICATIONS PRO

Petre Williams-Raynor

June 2020

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CONTEXT SETTING



- Emerged December 2019.
- More than 5.9 million infected.
- More than 367,000 dead.

REALITIES



Peter Williams-Raynor

- Unprecedented resource requirements as Governments race to improve health systems & save lives.
- Projections for significant financial shock.
- No expiry date.

WHAT WE'RE LEFT WITH

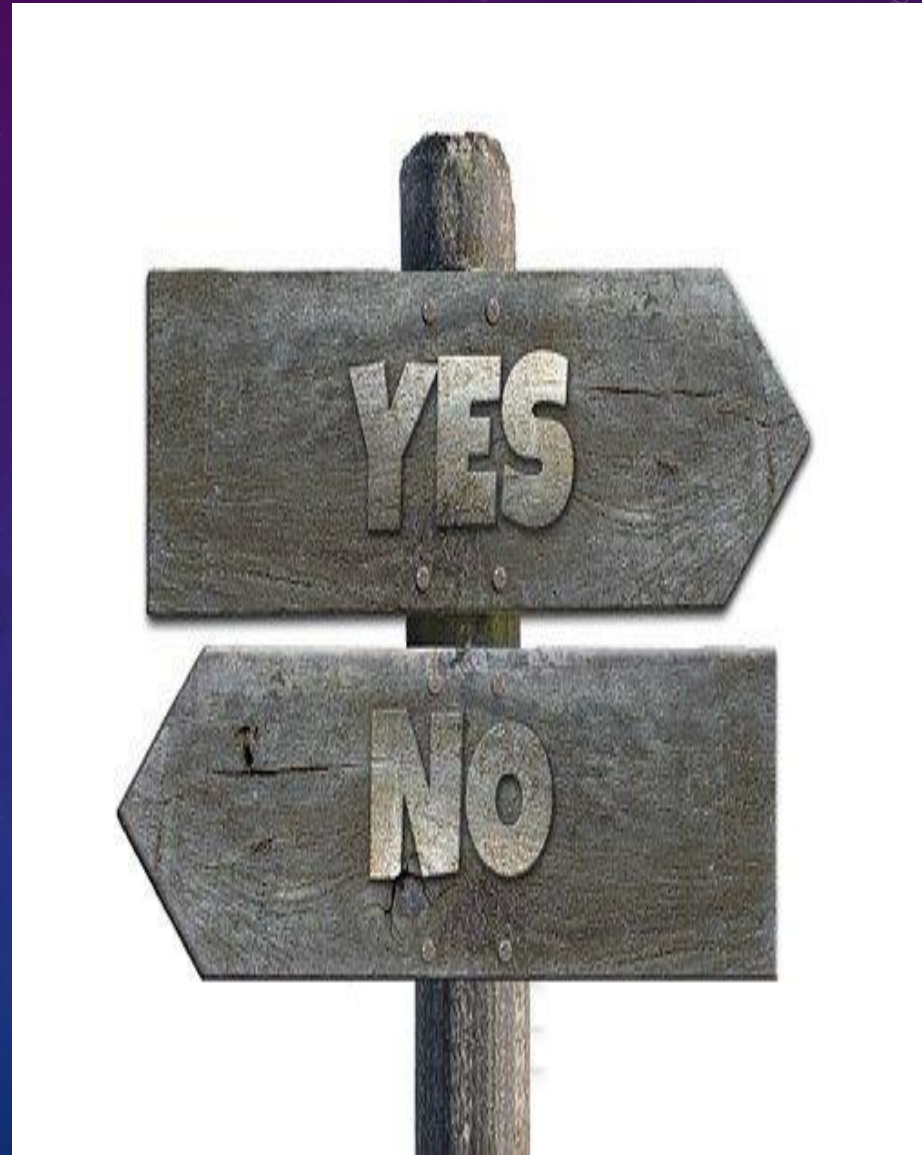


Petre Williams-Raynor



Is there a place for
environment
messaging?

Is it, in fact, 'time
for nature'?





5WS & AN H



WHY?



Source: Earth Today,
Jamaica Gleaner, April
16, 2020



#1: Prevailing environmental concerns have not gone anywhere – from climate change and its triggers to species loss and plastics pollution, among others.

#2: There are environmental challenges with the potential to be equally, if not even more, deadly than COVID-19.

‘The pandemic has exposed that gains made to address poverty, hunger, good health and well-being may face serious setbacks, unless the global community also urgently addresses the global environmental threats that have similar capacity to gravely undermine the systems that enable humanity and the planet to survive and thrive.’

- UNEP, 26 May 2020

#3: While the natural environment enjoys a respite from intense human activity, there are emergent concerns.

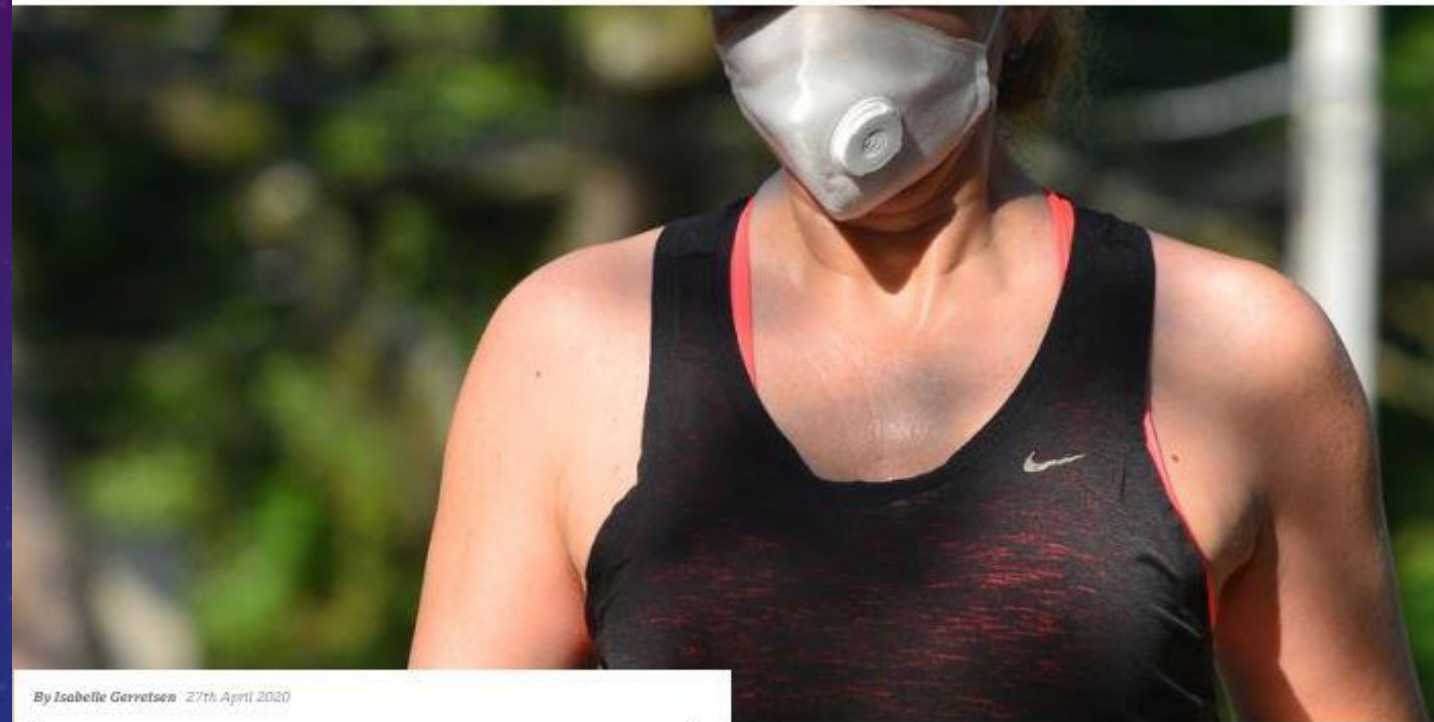
Source: *The Guardian* online,
May 5, 2020



Conservation in crisis: ecotourism collapse threatens communities and wildlife

#4: There are clear indicative linkages between COVID-19 and the environment. We need to unpack those linkages, certainly in the effort to 'Build Back Better for People & for Planet', as advanced by the UN.

How air pollution exacerbates Covid-19



By Isabelle Gerretsen 27th April 2020

There's a murky relationship between air pollution and coronavirus, which may mean that tackling air pollution will be a crucial part of easing lockdown.

#5: Life must go on, even in a
COVID-19-managed world.

Petre Williams-Raynor



WHO

- Journalists.
- Policymakers.
- Researchers.



- Personalities & pundits.
- Bloggers.
- 'Regular' people.

WHAT

- Linkages between COVID-19 and the environment.
- Prevailing environmental concerns.
- The stories of the people and places who continue to struggle under the weight of environmental concerns.
- Money matters.



SOME HEADLINES

Will Covid

Cor
change crisis

EARTH TODAY

Gov'ts urged to prioritise environmental considerations amid COVID-19 storm

THE GOVERNMENTS and people of the Caribbean are reminded to keep environmental considerations as key to sustainable economies and overall development front of mind, even as they negotiate the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic, up to yesterday, had infected more than 4.5 million people and claimed the lives of more than 310,000 globally, while governments dig ever deeper into their coffers to strengthen the public-health response and save lives. Simultaneously, hundreds of thousands of people have found themselves out of work, while closeted at home, many anxious over what the coming weeks and months will bring. Among the emergent concerns have been for natural ecosystems and the implications for development over the long term.

"Awareness raising, communication and transparency are key in the struggle to define and agree upon a new green, all-inclusive economy which values ecosystem services for all of us. It will be a global challenge," said Ian Bottom, regional coordinator for the Integrating Water, Land and Ecosystems Management in Caribbean Small Island States (IWLECS) project, which is funded by the Global Environment Facility.

"Human activity has altered virtually every corner of our planet, from land to ocean. As we continue to relentlessly encroach on nature and degrade



As the tree is cut, it is seen here with foresters Dillon Palmer (left) of Grenada and Fitzgerald Providence of St Vincent and the Grenadines. Palmer and Fitzgerald are part of a team of local people for IWLECS.

PRESENTED IN ASSOCIATION WITH:



Environmental Foundation of Jamaica

Against this background, Andersen said the UNEP stands ready to support member states and front-line UN partners in providing technical expertise on chemicals and hazardous waste management as they seek to address the increase in waste necessitated by the medical response to the crisis. It is precisely because of the interconnected nature of all life on this planet that an ambitious post-2020 biodiversity framework matters greatly, and we remain committed to efforts to make this happen.

"In the post-crisis setting as governments approve stimulus packages to support job creation, poverty reduction, development and economic growth, we will continue to support member states and partners to 'build back better', to capture opportunities for leapfrogging to green investments, such as renewable energy, smart housing, green public procurement, public transport – all guided by the principles and standards of sustainable production and consumption," the UNEP boss added.

CONSERVATION NEEDS

Betlem, meanwhile, has cautioned against the over-exploitation of natural resources as people come up against financial hardship on the road to a COVID-19-managed world.

"We are very concerned about the global threat of COVID-19 for humankind, economies, livelihoods, etc. Experience has taught us that when human beings face bad economic times, this often results in a further over-exploitation of natural resources," he told *The Gleaner*.

WEEC, he added, will do its part to guard against that.

"As a project, WEEC must first focus on completion of all agreed activities in order to achieve the anticipated outcomes as agreed with the donors. Even if there are some delays, unavoidable due to the

-19

delivered if necessary such as via phone or an online medium. I submitted a list of ideas and for this, he said.

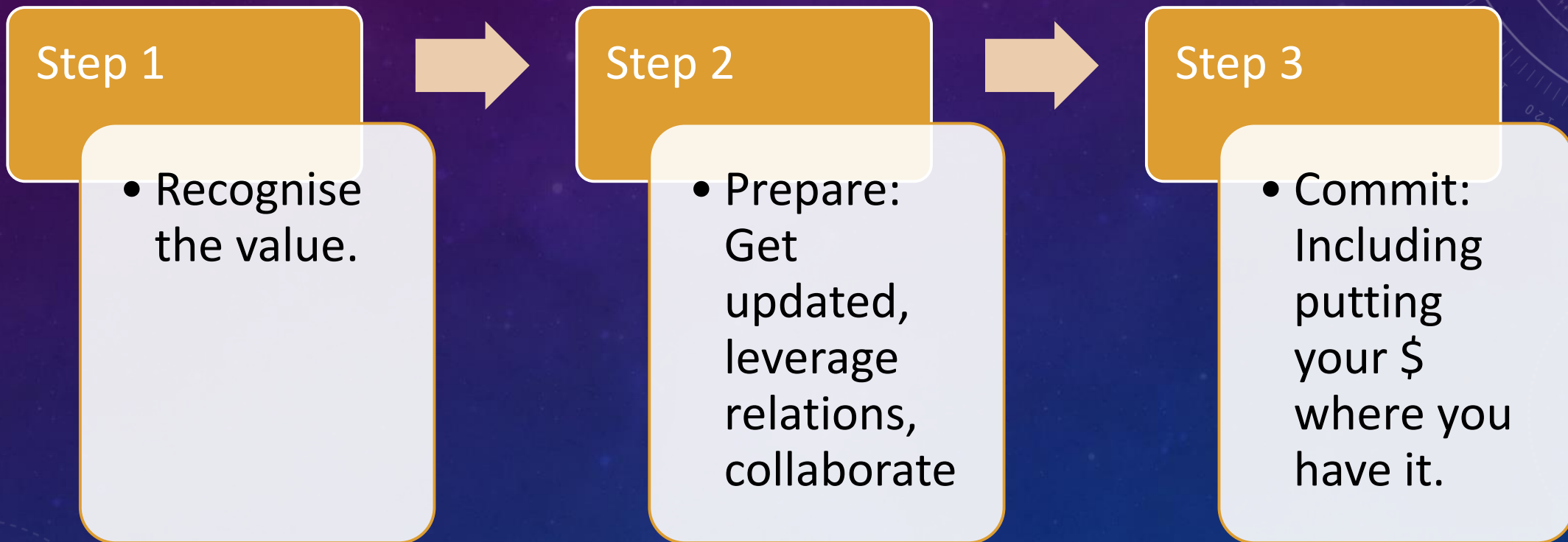
series areas, even where aspects of the project could not be implemented. We are mindful that these added challenges associated with available communication, previously anticipated, therefore, unanticipated communication expenses, being availability of, and its, services, could add to the difficulty with the available green technology in these areas. We can review the project and determine kind of assistance can be provided. Lewis added. Things stand, the CEO said, and a decision is that four of the projects are to be completed.

WHEN & WHERE

Now!!!

Here & Everywhere

HOW



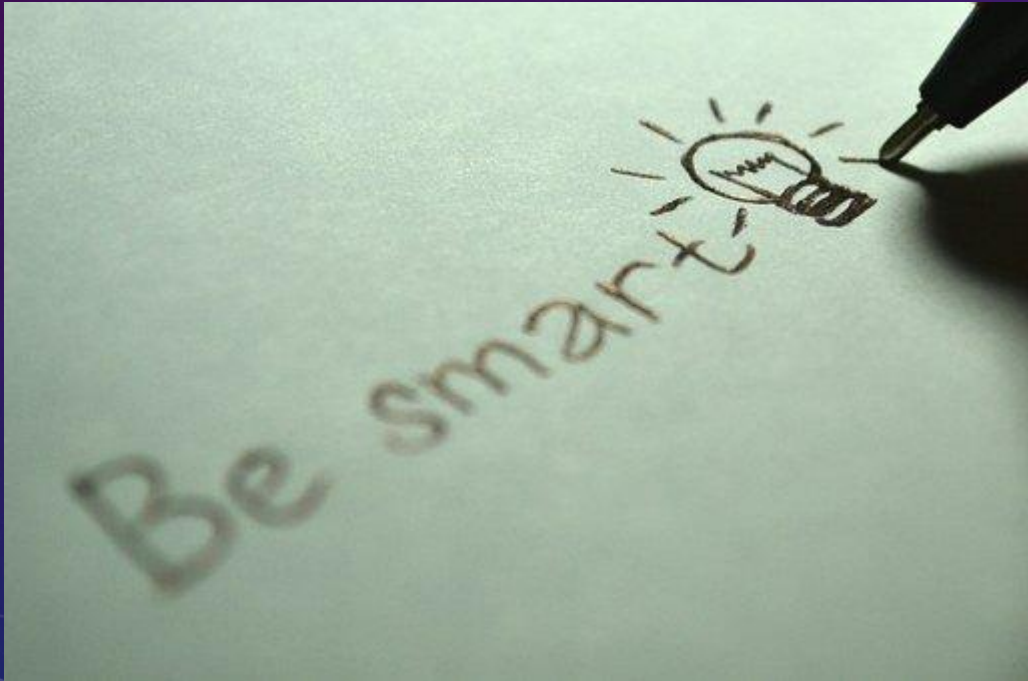
TOOLS

- Storytelling
- Research
- Phone calls
- Virtual meetings

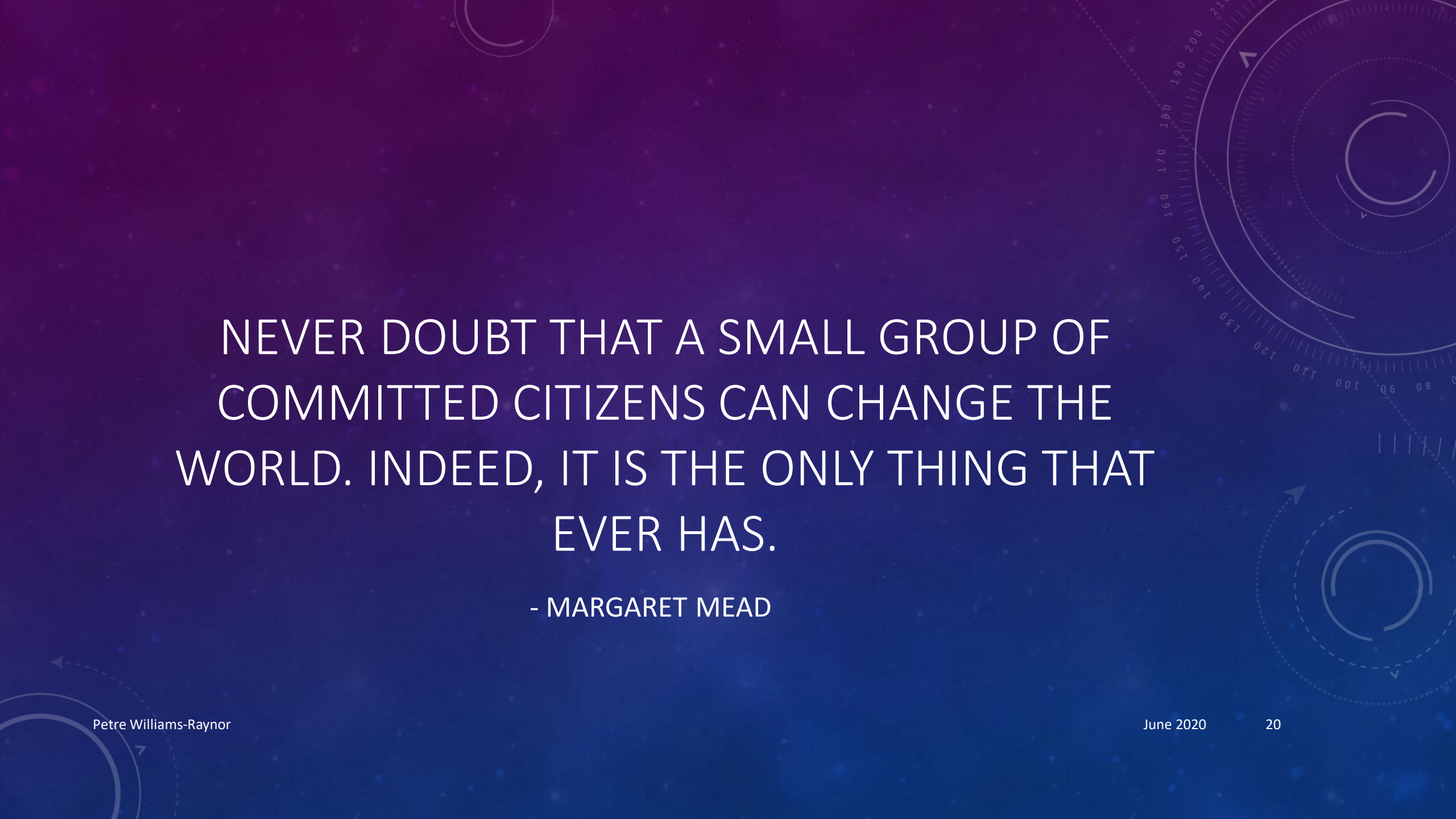


- WhatsApp
- Carefully planned face-to-face
- Traditional and new media

CONCLUSION



It is a smart move to keep the environment and environmental planning front of mind at this time of COVID-19.



NEVER DOUBT THAT A SMALL GROUP OF
COMMITTED CITIZENS CAN CHANGE THE
WORLD. INDEED, IT IS THE ONLY THING THAT
EVER HAS.

- MARGARET MEAD

TWITTER: @WILLIERAYNOR

BLOG: GREEN SEEDS [HTTPS://WILLIERAYNOR.WORDPRESS.COM/](https://willieraynor.wordpress.com/)

A photograph of a small potted plant with several round, bright green leaves. The plant is in a dark, textured pot and sits on a rustic wooden surface. A white card with the text 'THANK YOU :)' is placed in front of the pot.

THANK YOU :)

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