

As recently as five thousand years ago the Sahara Desert was lush grassland

Water is the Earth's only self-renewing vital resource

Rivers created our greatest civilisations: the Nile, Egypt. The Tigris and Euphrates, Mesopotamia. The Indus River, the Indus civilisation. The Yangtze river, ancient China. The Amazon, pre-Columbian growers



3000 BCE
The Indus civilisation builds 50-mile irrigation tunnels and develops the first sanitation systems such as the communal great baths at Mohenjo Daro.



7 AD
China's Sui dynasty builds the world's longest artificial waterway. The Grand Canal covers a distance equivalent to New York to Florida.



1864-1943
GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER, US
Worked, through the Tuskegee Institute, to develop depleted soils; a pioneer environmentalist who worked to improve farmers' lives.



1936-
WARREN MORTON WASHINGTON, US
Tyler Prize-winning atmospheric scientist, former chair of the National Science Board and senior scientist at the National Centre for Atmospheric Research.



1941-1995
KEN SARO-WIWA, NIGERIA
Activist and journalist who campaigned against pollution from dumped petroleum waste. Tried and hanged by the military regime of General Sani Abacha. His family agreed a posthumous financial settlement with oil giant Shell.



4500 BC-1900 BCE
The Sumerians master irrigation to grow crops.



2700 BCE
Ancient Egyptians build the 46-ft Sadd el-Kafara, believed to be the world's first dam.



1829-1906
SOLOMON GALLEON BROWN, US
Son of emancipated parents; poet, scientist, community educator and the first African-American to work for the Smithsonian Institution.



1899-1964
ROGER ARLINER YOUNG, US
Scientist of zoology, biology and marine biology and the first Black woman to earn a PhD in zoology.



1940-2011
WANGARI MUTA MAATHAI, KENYA
Environmental and political activist; the first African woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize, creating the Green Belt Movement to plant trees and promote conservation and women's rights.



1942-
SIR PARTHA DASGUPTA, UK
Economist and author of the 2021 landmark report on the economics of biodiversity, The Dasgupta Review, which urges us to change how we think, act, and measure economic success to protect the natural world.

GLOBAL-MAJORITY HEROES OF LAND, WATER AND PLANET

"The impatient idealist says: 'Give me a place to stand and I shall move the earth.' But such a place does not exist. We all have to stand on the earth itself and go with her at her pace"

Chinua Achebe, No Longer at Ease



YOU

YOU can change the world, working in water and environmental management. Do YOU want to become a water engineer? Could YOU help our planet to slow or adapt to climate change? Could you provide clean, safe water to millions of people? YOU can inspire a generation and reshape the future. YOUR ideas matter. Make joining CIWEM your first step.



1996-
KELVIN DOE, SIERRA LEONE
Self-taught engineer, entrepreneur and president of the Kelvin Doe Foundation that empowers young people in Africa to innovate and engage with new technologies and ideas.



1991-
BETH KOIGI, KENYA
Founder and inventor of Majik Water, which harvests water from air for water-scarce communities.



1976-
MICHAEL REGAN, US
In 2021 becomes the first Black person to lead the Environmental Protection Agency.



1949-
JUDY LING WONG, HONG KONG/UK
Artist, HonFCIEM and campaigner, best known as honorary president of the Black Environment Network.



1950-
YUBA SOKONA, MALI
A leader in addressing energy, environment and sustainable development in Africa. IPCC vice-chair since 2015.



1957-2013
PERWEEN RAHMAN, PAKISTAN
Campaigner for water and housing rights for Karachi's poor. Murdered in 2013, after criticising the city's landowning cartels.



2004-
AUTUMN PELTIER, CANADA
Teenage Indigenous water warrior and campaigner, named chief water protector for the Anishinabek nation.



1996-
VANESSA NAKATE, UGANDA
"Africa's Greta Thunberg" started a solo strike for climate outside Uganda's parliament in 2019, campaigns to protect the Congo Rainforest and runs renewable-energy initiative the Green Schools Project.



1982-
DWAYNE FIELDS, UK
TV presenter, adventurer, explorer, naturalist and the first Black Briton to reach the North Pole.



1976-
LIZ BONNIN, FRANCE/UK/IRELAND
TV broadcaster covering science, wildlife and natural history. Presenter of wildlife and science programmes including How the Earth Works and Blue Planet Live.



1965-
FARHANA YAMIN, UK
Climate lawyer, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) author, advocate for small island states and founding member of Extinction Rebellion.



1961-
ARUNDHATI ROY, INDIA
Booker Prize-winning author of *The God of Small Things* turned environmental and social-justice campaigner.

Only 2.5 per cent of Earth's water is fresh

Our bodies are 70 per cent water

One fifth of humanity lacks access to clean, fresh water and two-fifths to healthy sanitation

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@environmentmag