

Wangari Maathai Quotes

*People, Thinking, Government, Tree, Children, Moving, Land, Technology,
Important, Needs, Issues, World, Men, Long, War, Jobs, Effort, Trying, Country,
Rights*

You can make a lot of speeches, but the real thing is when you dig a hole, plant a tree, give it water, and make it survive. That's what makes the difference

~Wangari Maathai

You cannot enslave a mind that knows itself. That values itself. That understands itself.

~Wangari Maathai

You cannot protect the environment unless you empower people, you inform them, and you help them understand that these resources are their own, that they must protect them.

~Wangari Maathai

When we plant trees, we plant the seeds of peace and seeds of hope.

~Wangari Maathai

No matter who or where we are, or what our capabilities, we are called to do the best we can.

~Wangari Maathai

I'm very conscious of the fact that you can't do it alone. It's teamwork. When you do it alone you run the risk that when you are no longer there nobody else will do it.

~Wangari Maathai

Every person who has ever achieved anything has been knocked down many times. But all of them picked themselves up and kept going, and that is what I have always tried to do.

~Wangari Maathai

African women in general need to know that it's OK for them to be the way they are - to see the way they are as a strength, and to be liberated from fear and from silence.

~Wangari Maathai

Human rights are not things that are put on the table for people to enjoy. These are things you fight for and then you protect.

~Wangari Maathai

We cannot tire or give up. We owe it to the present and future generations of all species to rise up and walk!

~Wangari Maathai

We tend to put the environment last because we think the first thing we have to do is eliminate poverty. But you can't reduce poverty in a vacuum. You are doing it in an environment.

~Wangari Maathai

It's the little things citizens do. That's what will make the difference. My little thing is planting trees.

~Wangari Maathai

I don't really know why I care so much. I just have something inside me that tells me that there is a problem, and I have got to do something about it. I think that is what I would call the God in me.

~Wangari Maathai

There are opportunities even in the most difficult moments.

~Wangari Maathai

What a friend we have in a tree, the tree is the symbol of hope, self improvement and what people can do for themselves.

~Wangari Maathai

In Kenya women are the first victims of environmental degradation, because they are the ones who walk for hours looking for water, who fetch firewood, who provide food for their families.

~Wangari Maathai

Sometimes we become bound by other people's thoughts because we are not sure about ourselves.

~Wangari Maathai

Until you dig a hole, you plant a tree, you water it and make it survive, you haven't done a thing. You are just talking.

~Wangari Maathai

We can love ourselves by loving the earth.

~Wangari Maathai

We need to promote development that does not destroy our environment.

~Wangari Maathai

We all share one planet and are one hummanity, there is no escaping this reality.

~Wangari Maathai

Those of us who have been privileged to receive education, skills, and experiences and even power must be role models for the next generation of leadership.

~Wangari Maathai

In a few decades, the relationship between the environment, resources and conflict may seem almost as obvious as the connection we see today between human rights, democracy and peace.

~Wangari Maathai

It is important to nurture any new ideas and initiatives which can make a difference for Africa.

~Wangari Maathai

I am working to make sure we don't only protect the environment, we also improve governance.

~Wangari Maathai

An individual citizen cannot protect himself from the powers of large corporations or external governments. It is the responsibility of the government to protect its citizens.

~Wangari Maathai

The living conditions of the poor must be improved if we really want to save our environment

~Wangari Maathai

When you know who you are you are free.

~Wangari Maathai

I don't believe [Africa] is ready to shift - and she needs to shift. So she needs to get the technology and she can only get that technology from the developed world.

~Wangari Maathai

I know there is pain when sawmills close and people lose jobs, but we have to make a choice. We need water and we need these forests.

~Wangari Maathai

If you make mistakes that is alright because we all make mistakes and we learn from those mistakes. You gain confidence from learning, failing and rising again.

~Wangari Maathai

Disempowerment - whether defined in terms of a lack of self-confidence , apathy, fear, or an inability to take charge of one's own life - is perhaps the most unrecognised problem in Africa today.

~Wangari Maathai

The little grassroots people can change this world.

~Wangari Maathai

We are very fond of blaming the poor for destroying the environment. But often it is the powerful, including governments, that are responsible.

~Wangari Maathai

That's the way I do things when I want to celebrate, I always plant a tree.

~Wangari Maathai

Some say that AIDS came from the monkeys, and I doubt that because we have been living with monkeys from time immemorial, others say it was a curse from God, but I say it cannot be that.

~Wangari Maathai

Because I was a woman, I was vulnerable. It was easy to vilify me and project me as a woman who was not following the tradition of a 'good African woman.'

~Wangari Maathai

We can work together for a better world with men and women of goodwill, those who radiate the intrinsic goodness of humankind.

~Wangari Maathai

You can educate people on how to preempt their own conflict.

~Wangari Maathai

The issue of carbon is one area where we really need to work together and if people don't have the technology they need, that technology needs to be made available and affordable.

~Wangari Maathai

First of all, farmers should work with universities and research institutions in the country, and hopefully with the government.

~Wangari Maathai

There's a general culture in this country to cut all the trees. It makes me so angry because everyone is cutting and no one is planting.

~Wangari Maathai

Culture is coded wisdom

~Wangari Maathai

I definitely hope to relax when I get back home. I will disappear into the forest and be rejuvenated by the beauty of the mountains.

~Wangari Maathai

Once people see that you improve your life if you are educated, then education becomes a valuable tool and people want it.

~Wangari Maathai

It is wonderful when you don't have the fear, and a lot of the time I don't ... I focus on what needs to be done instead.

~Wangari Maathai

We owe it to ourselves and to the next generation to conserve the environment so that we can bequeath our children a sustainable world that benefits all.

~Wangari Maathai

It was easy for me to be ridiculed and for both men and women to perceive that maybe I'm a bit crazy because I'm educated in the West and I have lost some of my basic decency as an African woman.

~Wangari Maathai

What I am trying to say is that they need to learn to rely on themselves

and to learn from other people, and when you learn something from other people, then you keep moving onward for yourself.

~Wangari Maathai

It's a matter of life and death for this country. The Kenyan forests are facing extinction and it is a man-made problem.

~Wangari Maathai

Why has there been so much secrecy about AIDS? When you ask where did the virus come from, it raises a lot of flags. That makes me suspicious.

~Wangari Maathai

It would be good for us Africans to accept ourselves as we are and recapture some of the positive aspects of our culture.

~Wangari Maathai

We do the right thing not to please people but because it's the only logically reasonable thing to do, as long as we are being honest with ourselves - even if we are the only ones.

~Wangari Maathai

I think what the Nobel committee is doing is going beyond war and looking at what humanity can do to prevent war. Sustainable management of our natural resources will promote peace.

~Wangari Maathai

So GMOs, who knows? Maybe GMOs will come, they will get maize that produces double. But who knows what else may happen to the maize?

~Wangari Maathai

All of us have a God in us, and that God is the spirit that unites all life, everything that is on this planet.

~Wangari Maathai

The developed world should be willing to help [Africa] and support her and make this energy affordable.

~Wangari Maathai

I'm sure that many people who are involved in an environmental effort ... they will be pretty much encouraged by this recognition.

~Wangari Maathai

Nobody in the world is completely dependent on another person, but we are all interdependent.

~Wangari Maathai

I think some of these solutions are prepared in an office without a full understanding of the local situation.

~Wangari Maathai

You can't reduce poverty in a vacuum. You are doing it in an environment.

~Wangari Maathai

When people can't use you, they ridicule what you represent. I was lucky that I understood that, because when one does not understand that, it is very easy to be broken and to be subdued.

~Wangari Maathai

Unfortunately, the issues of climate change, unlike many other issues, are very subtle because the changes we observe are very, very subtle.

~Wangari Maathai

And so I'm saying that, yes, colonialism was terrible, and I describe it as a legacy of wars, but we ought to be moving away from that by now.

~Wangari Maathai

Quite often when you help poor people, they don't think about the environment. They think about survival.

~Wangari Maathai

As long as there is no trust and confidence that there will be justice and fairness in resource distribution, political positioning will remain more important than service

~Wangari Maathai

I think that for anybody who has worked in the civil society, government bureaucracy moves very very slowly.

~Wangari Maathai

The people are starving. They need food; they need medicine; they need education. They do not need a skyscraper to house the ruling party and a 24-hour TV station.

~Wangari Maathai

Culture defines who we are and how we see ourselves. A new attitude toward nature provides space for a new attitude toward culture and the role it plays in sustainable development

~Wangari Maathai

We tend to put the environment last because we think the first thing we have to do is eliminate poverty and send children to school and provide health.

~Wangari Maathai

As a scientist I cannot say we don't want to hear anything about GMOs, because these are advances in science. But I think its also important, especially when you are dealing with food, to be cautious.

~Wangari Maathai

I was particularly talking with respect to aid, because that to me is one

area that can make people so dependent, and unfortunately, that dependency starts with the government.

~Wangari Maathai

All through the ages the African people have made efforts to deliver themselves from oppressive forces.

~Wangari Maathai

Women are responsible for their children, they cannot sit back, waste time and see them starve.

~Wangari Maathai

Do not be naive. AIDS is not a curse from God to Africans or the black people. It is a tool to control them designed by some evil-minded scientists, but we may not know who particularly did it.

~Wangari Maathai

There will always be people who think that you have ambitions.

~Wangari Maathai

People are dynamic. They change, and soon as there are enough of you, things change [for a whole society].

~Wangari Maathai

What people see as fearlessness is really persistence. Because I am focused on the solution, I don't see the danger.

~Wangari Maathai

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