

Wednesday, February 11, 2009

Population and natural resources: managing pressure

Posted by **Lise** on 02/11 at 11:48 AM

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Jean-Michel Severino (French Development Agency)

"Demographic growth, industrialisation and the increase of demand resulting from higher living standards is exerting growing pressure on the world's natural resources. The effects of climate change are also showing their first impacts on some of the regions of the world that are least equipped to manage them. How can these pressures be handled on the long run? What role can public policies play to tackle this rising challenge?"

Read more: <http://www.ideas4development.org>

Tuesday, February 10, 2009

Finding love on Facebook can lead to sustainable projects, read Silvia and Vincenzo's story

Posted by **Administrator** on 02/10 at 04:41 PM

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By Joanie Bergeron Poudrier

Silvia and Vincenzo, as many young couples these days, met on the social networks MySpace and Facebook.

But their story is slightly different, or should I say more inspiring, than any other I've heard before. After two months of virtual communication, they decided to leave everything behind and finally met each other.

Their meeting was eye-opening. They had so much in common that they developed a shared project: to promote Africa through different eyes. This is when Tourists 4 Development was born.

You can follow Vincenzo and Silvia on [Alternative Channel TV](#) throughout their journey in Africa as they visit some amazing places. Along the way, they'll visit some incredible sites where few tourists have ever set foot before.

Highlights of their Burundi trip

In the village of Busekera they stayed with the Batwa pygmies. They went to the Rusizi Natural Reserve where they met Director of the Institute for the Conservation of the Environment. They met locals who started an eco-friendly business, where they make jewelries made out of a vegetal-ivory that comes from a tree. In Gitega, they met with the instigator of an Avocado oil project, which uses unconsumed avocado to make oil. This project was put in place to eradicate malnutrition among children of the city.



Highlights of their Kenyan adventure

They started their journey in the Kenyan Savanna by staying at the local owned II Ngwesi Community Lodge

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Canadians Meet the Challenge of One Million Acts of Green!

Posted by **Administrator** on 02/10 at 04:30 PM

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CBC, Cisco and green-minded Canadians nationwide proudly announce that One Million Acts of Green (OMaOG) has reached its goal of 1,000,000 acts of green registered online at www.onemillionactsofgreen.com.

Participants from coast-to-coast and from all walks of life have clearly embraced the program, pushing the campaign to its ultimate milestone in less than four months. Elementary and high schools, universities, municipalities, businesses and even local coffee shops have demonstrated their commitment, challenged each other to 'go green' and collectively achieved our goal.

With the support and enthusiasm of Canadians nationwide, One Million Acts of Green will continue the challenge to see how high we can go! Keep logging your green acts, challenge co-workers, friends and family. With participants from over 50 countries, challenge your friends from abroad to meet Canada's stellar results.

Who's the Greenest?

OMaOG's "greenest" provinces are: Ontario, Alberta, British Columbia and Nova Scotia

The top 12 groups, in order of most acts committed are: Trent University, Dalhousie University, City of Airdrie, Bishop Strachan School, Havergal College, BMO Financial Group, MTS Allstream, Town of Okotoks, Hamilton's Delta Secondary School, Cisco Canada, Acadia University and North Bay, Ontario.

To participate visit www.onemillionactsofgreen.com.

Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper wants to shelter the dirtiest oil from global warming

Posted by **Administrator** on 02/10 at 04:23 PM

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Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper wants to shelter the dirtiest oil on earth from global warming regulation. Today, an international network of environmental groups is launching a cross-border campaign Obama2canada.com, urging President Barack Obama to stand strong on his new energy economy agenda and reject such entreaties.

Why: Well... Producing oil from tar sands emits three times the global warming pollution as conventional oil, requires excessive amounts of energy and fresh water, and destroys huge swaths of boreal forest, the last, largest intact forest left on the planet.

More info : Oilsandswatch.org .

Enviro-Utopia and Mecca of Renewable Energy are both synonyms to describe Masdar City

Posted by **Administrator** on 02/10 at 04:17 PM

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Masdar City is the most ambitious sustainable development in the world today - it will be the world's first zero carbon, zero waste city powered entirely by renewable energy sources.

It has been called an 'Enviro-Utopia', a 'Mirage in the Desert', an Entrepreneurial Eco-system, the 'Mecca of Renewable Energy', the world's first 'Zero Carbon,

Zero Waste City', the 'City of the Tomorrow' - and it's not even been built.

The multibillion-dollar Masdar Initiative, which was launched only a year ago, is a combination clean-tech investment fund, property developer and renewable-energy start-up, all dedicated to preparing Abu Dhabi for the end of oil and positioning it as the global leader in green energy and sustainable living.

This month will see groundbreaking for the six-square-kilometre, \$22 billion project that its backers say will be the world's first zero-pollution carbon-neutral urban center. Masdar (which means "the source" in Arabic), will be capable of housing 47,500 people, some of whom will take up residence this year. Construction is expected to take 10 years.

cotton are labeled as such, making it easy for customers to identify them.

Blog roll

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H&M took its first tentative steps into using organic cotton in 2004, using 5 tonnes (11,000 pounds) in children's clothes, an amount that represented about 5 percent of the material in the clothes. The items were not labeled as containing organic cotton.

In the following years H&M used 50 tonnes (110,000 pounds) in 2005, 30 tonnes (66,000 pounds) in 2006 and about 160 tonnes (350,000 pounds) in 2007, when the company started to release items made of 100 percent organic cotton and some items that were a 50-50 blend of organic and conventional cotton. That number took a huge jump in 2008 when H&M used 3,000 tonnes of organic cotton.

Also this year, H&M plans to integrate other alternative materials into its lines, including polyester made from recycled plastic bottles and recycled polyester, and recycled cotton. All of the organic cotton that H&M uses is certified by the Control Union.

Read more on Greenerdesign.com/news

For more info www.hm.com/us and www.controlunion.com

ECO Canada Announces Finalists of the 2009 Environmental Employer of the Year Awards.

Posted by **Administrator** on 02/10 at 04:07 PM

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ECO Canada would like to congratulate this-year's finalists in the Environmental Employer of the Year Awards.

The top three companies in the small-to medium-sized category (15-50 employees) are: Odyssey Environmental, EcoMetrix, and Stratos. The top three companies in the large category (51+ employees) are: TERA Environmental Consultants, SENES, and Upper

Thames River Conservation Authority.

The finalists will be vying for the title of 2009 Environmental Employer of the Year which, if victorious, will distinguish them as an industry leader in human resource (HR).

The final 6 were chosen based on results of a company employee satisfaction survey that is administered and analyzed by ECO Canada. A committee of HR professionals then evaluates both the organization's HR practices and employee satisfaction results to determine a winner.

The Environmental Employer of the Year Awards run annually in September and announcements on winners are made in spring the following year. If you know of an environmental organization that excels in its human resource practices and derives a minimum of half their revenue from environmental work, nominate them at www.eco.ca. Your participation will give employees a voice and support good practices in an increasingly competitive job market.

For more info visit Eco.ca.

It's time to take a deep look at the world's oceans

Posted by **Administrator** on 02/10 at 03:59 PM

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By David Suzuki with Faisal Moola

We humans are air-breathing landlubbers, and that shapes the way we see and treat the world. We don't think much about what's underwater or underground. So we've been dumping garbage into the oceans and taking what we want from them for years without considering the consequences. We've never had to look at any of it – until now.

We're starting to see what lies below the surface and in those places far away from land, and it's not always a pretty picture. We see massive islands of plastic and other debris swirling in gyres around the world.

We see 9,000-year-old glass sponge reefs off the coast of B.C. that, until recently, were torn apart by trawl nets dragged across the ocean floor. We see the effects of climate change on Arctic sea ice and on the animals that live under the sea.

We'll be able to see even more, thanks to a recent initiative by Google, along with National Geographic, the BBC, and scientists and other partners from around the world. Google is adding the world's oceans to its extensive Earth mapping. In a phone conversation with David Suzuki Foundation staff, John Hanke, director of Google Earth and Maps, admitted, "We had really overlooked two thirds of the planet." Partly because of prodding from oceanographer Sylvia Earle, the company has embarked on a massive project as part of Google Earth 5.0 to map the oceans using sonar imaging, high-resolution and 3-D photography, video, and a variety of other technologies. The glass sponge reefs, for example, are being considered for formal protection, and Pacific

support could make the difference. As Dr. Earle noted, "You can't care if you don't know, and this a new way of knowing."

Part of what makes it exciting is that it's not just a tool for scientists and academics. "It's going to be a lot of fun for adults and kids to learn about the oceans," Mr. Hanke said, noting that the free program, which includes multiple layers of content and information, will continue to expand as more data from scientists, explorers, and others is added.

We can no longer afford to be blind to the state of our oceans. Let's hope this will open our eyes before there's nothing left to see but destruction.

Take David Suzuki's Nature Challenge and learn more at Davidsuzuki.org

Canada Says Shampoo Ingredients Are Toxic

Posted by **Administrator** on 02/10 at 03:43 PM

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By GreenerDesign Staff

OTTAWA, CA -- Among the latest substances the Canadian government recently labeled toxic are two found commonly in shampoo, personal care products and a range of items such as paints and food additives.

The substances were evaluated as part of Canada's Chemicals Management Plan. The latest assessment of 16 substances found that five pose concerns for human health and three are a concern for the environment.

Siloxanes D4 and D5 are two of the substances toxic to the environment, and are found in a wide swath of products: shampoo, antiperspirants, lipstick, textiles, paints and coatings, sealants, plastics, non-medical ingredients in pharmaceuticals, food additives, surface treatments for wounds and more.

These two silicon-based chemicals were not found to be a concern to human health based on how much of the substances humans are exposed to, though they were found to be a danger to the environment since products that contain them are widely used, leading to high levels of D4 and D5 entering the environment. The substances persist in the environment and can harm fish and aquatic organisms.

The government aims to minimize the amount of D4 and D5 used in products and regulate the amount that is released through wastewater from manufacturing plants.

Read more on Greenerdesign.com.

Towards a Green Economy - Elements of a Global Green New Deal

Posted by **Lise** on 02/10 at 11:45 AM

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Achim Steiner (United Nations Environment Programme)

"During the past two months we have seen Governments commit more than USD 3000 billion towards stabilizing financial markets. A further USD 2000 billion have already been announced for economic stimulus packages. Never in the history of humankind has so much money been allocated with so little preparation and strategic analyses. Paradigms about the role of the state ..."

Read more: <http://www.ideas4development.org>

Monday, February 09, 2009

The nutrition challenge and what I saw in India

Posted by **Lise** on 02/09 at 11:42 AM

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Josette Sheeran (World Food Program)

"The global financial crisis and the high cost of food mean different things in different places. In those parts of the world where hunger is on the march, their impact can be measured in empty stomachs and blighted lives. That is why, during my recent visit to India, I traveled to a remote district ..."

Read more: <http://www.ideas4development.org>



papers published in the foremost scientific journals" just so they can "pick up a crumb: a crumb which then disintegrates" in their palms.

George Bush's administration was so anti-science – blacklisting and purging scientists and suppressing or altering scientific studies – that 60 top scientists released a statement in 2004 accusing the administration of distorting scientific fact "for partisan political ends".

Science hasn't fared much better here in Canada. A year ago, an editorial in the scientific journal Nature criticized our government for its skepticism about the science of global warming, and for muzzling federal scientists and closing the office of the national science adviser.

How refreshing it was, then, to listen to U.S. President Barack Obama's inaugural speech on January 20.

"We'll restore science to its rightful place, and wield technology's wonders to raise health care's quality and lower its cost," the president said. "We will harness the sun and the winds and the soil to fuel our cars and run our factories."

What's even more refreshing is that President Obama is backing those words with action. He has appointed top scientists to key positions, including Nobel Prize-winning physicist Steven Chu as energy secretary, leading marine biologist Jane Lubchenco to head up the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, and Harvard physicist John Holdren as head of the White House Office of Science and Technology.

These appointees understand and take seriously the science of climate change. President Obama also understands the geopolitical ramifications of policies that help fuel climate change, as he made clear in his speech when he noted that "each day brings further evidence that the ways we use energy strengthen our adversaries and threaten our planet."

It was refreshing also to hear the new president talk about choosing "hope over fear, unity of purpose over conflict and discord" and about "what free men and women can achieve when imagination is joined to common purpose, and necessity to courage."

That common purpose and need for courage, as the president knows, extends beyond U.S. borders. After all, migratory Pacific salmon don't recognize the line between our nations, nor do rivers like the pristine Flathead, which flows from B.C. into Montana and forms the western boundary of Montana's Glacier National Park, or threatened and endangered species like grizzly bears that breed, feed, and roam across our common border. And the winds that carry pollution and greenhouse gas emissions don't get turned back at the border for endangering citizens on either side.

Here in B.C. where I live, most of the species at risk – from grizzlies to monarch butterflies – cross back and forth regularly between the two countries. We can't hope to protect them without strong and complementary habitat-protection policies in both countries. We also need agreement on policies to protect the waters that flow between our two nations. President Obama said during his campaign that he opposes industrial development in the headwaters of the Flathead. "The Flathead River and Glacier National Park are treasures that should be conserved for future generations," he said in reaction to a push by the B.C. government for development in the region, including an open-pit coal mine 40 kilometres from the Canada-U.S. border.

Climate change is another issue that must be addressed quickly and effectively by both nations. President Obama has proposed an economy-wide cap-and-trade program to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Scientists and economists around the world know that putting a price on carbon emissions, through cap and trade and carbon taxes, is the best way to bring our emissions under control. And while a number of Canadian provinces have joined with U.S. states to implement cap-and-trade programs, our federal government has yet to act.

It's great to see a U.S. administration that isn't afraid of real progress and change. But, as President Obama noted, it isn't just up to the American government to create that change; it's up to all of us. And while he was referring to American citizens, we Canadians must also join to confront the challenges that both our countries, and indeed, the entire world, face. It's time to realize that, when it comes to finding solutions to our common problems, science matters.

Take David Suzuki's Nature Challenge and learn more at www.davidsuzuki.org.

Nature article: "Science in Retreat"

President Obama's inaugural address.

Grameen Shakti Brings Sustainable Development Closer to Reality in Bangladesh

Posted by **Administrator** on 02/03 at 04:20 PM

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David told me that about 70 percent of the 130 million people who live in Bangladesh have no electricity.

They typically use polluting kerosene lamps to light their homes at night.

"I tell them that for the cost of kerosene, you can buy a solar system," he said.

Read more at Greenerbuildings.com.

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