



ONE SKY NEWS

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Editor's Message

By Nikki Skuce

As I travelled to Ethiopia this past October for a vacation, the 1984 song "Feed the World" started reeling through my head. It was a time when I awoke to an injustice and unfairness in the world and a need to band together to assist those in need. My trip, especially being at the end of the rainy season, dispelled many stereotypes harboured from those images seen twenty years earlier. But in essence it was a trip to the birthplace of my activism.

When the Tsunami hit at the end of the year, it seemed to be a similar turning point for many others; an awakening that we need to help people in need - whether they live in our community or across the ocean. Canadians have a history of giving, but the outpouring of assistance - people reaching into their pockets, organizing events, donating time and energy - was truly momentous.

Also momentous, I'm sure are the efforts of those trying to recover and rebuild from the disaster. From a recent monitoring trip to our project in Sierra Leone, once again the hope and joy amongst hunger, hardship and destruction amazed me. Many Sierra Leoneans hold on to hope and optimism despite all that they face - as I'm sure many do in Sri Lanka and Indonesia, or Columbia and Nepal.

Whether surviving a human or a natural disaster, Gil Courtemanche in his book A Sunday At the Pool in Kigali writes: "If you want to keep living... you have to believe in things as plain and obvious as brothers, sisters, friends, neighbours, hope, respect, solidarity." Let's keep believing and reaching out to others.

The CRE Project: Voices of Valour

By Kristin Patten

The Cross River Environment (CRE) project in Nigeria is wrapping up, providing food for reflection. After 2 years, 1.46 million dollars, working with 5 Nigerian ENGOs, 5 Canadian groups, 16 communities, countless community-based organizations, 3 state ministries, 4 One Sky interns; drinking uncountable bottles of Star beer and spending months of our lives in international travel, meetings, workshops and late-night philosophizing where did we get to? Looking at the thoughts and words from Nigerian and Canadians involved in the project as we wrap up and prepare for a potential second phase of the project, some things stand out:

Relationships. The CRE coalition has spent much effort during the project developing relationships built on trust. In the words of the Coalition members, "The Coalition enabled us to see each other's work from a point of trust and transparency. Cooperation is possible, and we can work together in peace." Too often in development work, the northern partner will come in with his or her 'to do list', measuring progress and success as each item on the list is checked off. The coalition measured progress by the relationships they had built with each other, and with the partners, communities and government departments they work with.

The whole is greater than the sum of its shared parts. One Sky's own networking approach is motivated by an understanding that this world's environmental and human challenges are too complex and vast for any one organization to solve. The success of this approach was reflected in the CRE project. The five Nigerian environmental organizations in the CRE project gradually became a coalition each with their own individual identities, but also with a collective identity. The CRE coalition, as it strengthened, began to strategically speak as one strong voice. United as a coalition government began to listen, opening doors that had previously been closed. Coalition members, too, began to learn from each other, sharing skills, expertise and ideas. Individually and collectively, the coalition strengthened through working together.



Team after building sand water filter

(Cont.)

(cont.)

Valour. Valour is the name of Patricia's (CRE Field Assistant) baby boy, born in August 2004. A strong name for a strong baby boy, born of a strong woman. Valour is defined in the dictionary as 'courage'. Nigeria, and the CRE project, are full of courageous individuals. The environmental movement in Cross River emerged during the Abacha dictatorship when speaking out for environmental principles could mean harassment or in the extreme, execution. On a daily basis, the courage of environmentalists, Nigerian and otherwise, is in the strength of their convictions that don't always match with societal norms and often come under fire. This is the courage in believing that apocalyptic prophecies of environmental catastrophe are avoidable, that there are sustainable solutions to environmental challenges, that environment and development can go hand in hand, that gender is a part of the environmental movement, that Nigerians have their own solutions, skills and talents.

I could tell you about the "hard results" of the CRE project the success of DIN's dry season gardens, Living Earth's Forest Management Committees, Greenheart's canopy walkway and tree platforms, the release of Cercopan's first primate into the forest enclosure, NGOCE's active membership and small grants program, NCF's progress in community conversation of wetlands...but that's like describing a friend by drawing their bones, veins and arteries. The essence the soul - of the CRE project is in the relationships built, the collective strength of the coalition, and the valour of the individuals involved.



CRE Project Team members Jennifer Castleden, Patricia Eyamba and Evelyn Sengendo

Volunteer Thanks!

One Sky would like to thank all of its Smithers volunteers for assisting with our local initiatives, goods and services fundraising auction, research into fair trade diamonds, storytellers initiative, and governance. In particular, we would like to thank Fatima Cengic, Kim Patzwald, Glen Ingram, Sandra Thomson, Gail Hochachka, Helene Fleury and Ibrahim Kamara for their dedicated volunteerism.

Supporting One Sky

Since its incorporation, One Sky has coordinated sustainable development activities locally and has also been working in some of the most difficult places globally with projects in Sierra Leone and Nigeria. By working in challenging areas and maintaining a positive sense of hope, One Sky aims to inspire and create change.

In order to carry out our initiatives, we rely on grants and individual donations. If you would like to show your support for One Sky by making a donation or getting involved, please contact us at:

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One Sky Outreach

One Sky believes that we need to network in order to reach our goals and achieve environmental sustainability. We are currently active members of the Canadian Environmental Network, Canadian Council for International Cooperation, Citizens United for Renewable Energy and Sustainability, Energy Centre of the North, National Renewable Energy Forum, IUCN Environment and Security Working Group, and Environmental Forum for Action.

HIV/AIDS Policy Development

One Sky is developing policy for our organization and as a template for other environmental NGOs on HIV/AIDS. Especially for those groups working overseas, it's an issue that can't be ignored. For more information contact Evelyn at evelyne@onesky.ca.

Energetic Solutions Conference in Nigeria - By Greg Brown

Energetic Solutions, held in Nigeria November 21-27, 2004, was an ambitious project undertaken by One Sky in 2004. The international conference brought together over 100 government, private and civil society sector representatives from 10 countries to discuss renewable energy in the 6th largest oil producing nation.

The months leading up to the conference were hectic and uncertain. There was an October 1st deadline with threats of 'war' from Niger Delta militia leaders, two national strikes over rising fuel prices (the second ending half a week before the conference), last minute fundraising efforts in Nigeria and Canada, and changes to the conference location. Nevertheless, registrations poured in, participants arrived safely and the conference started as planned.

The conference kicked off in Abuja with a social evening sponsored and attended by the Canadian High Commissioner. The following two days in Abuja included a variety of presentations and break out group sessions, and workshops covering topics such as solar energy, levelling the playing field for renewable energy technologies, national policy instruments, and fuel efficient wood stoves and gender. The conference then moved to Calabar (home of One Sky's Nigerian field office) where we boarded buses and travelled to the Port Harcourt area for a field trip of the Niger Delta. We visited the community of Rumuekpe that is experiencing the social and environmental impacts of the oil and gas industry with a gas flare in their backyard. The final two days were spent in Calabar working toward "The Calabar Declaration - A Declaration on Sustainable Renewable Energy". This four-page document agreed to by consensus the final day suggests wide-ranging actions for the deployment of renewable energy in Nigeria.

Another successful outcome of the conference was the formation of the Council for Renewable Energy in Nigeria (CREN). Still in its infancy, CREN's aim is to promote Renewable Energy Technologies in Nigeria and promote the Calabar Declaration. Odigha Odigha, from One Sky's partner organization NGOCE, is the chairman for the committee. A Cross River State chapter has also been formed to pursue RE in the state. Funding sources for the groups core activities are currently being pursued.

For the international participants the conference was a chance to visit this oil-rich country where oil and gas ('black gold') contributes over 90% of the export earnings and is the cause of ecological and social disturbances. Where despite this, only 20 % of those living in rural areas have access to electricity. Some of the energy issues in Nigeria were exemplified by a fuel shortage on the field trip day and the rumble of generators that supply back-up power when Nigeria's electricity power agency (NEPA) 'takes away the light'.

For some of the Nigerians the conference was a chance to visit the conflict-prone Niger Delta, and for others it was a chance to explore a broader political space something that is in short supply in the country. For all conference participants, it was an opportunity to hear about global energy issues, share success stories and challenges, and network amongst various stakeholders.

Overall, the conference was a success and the lasting effects will only be measurable in the days ahead. For more information on the conference visit:

www.onesky.ca/energetics.html. One Sky is grateful to the following people for their coordinating, advising, and organizing efforts: Edom Tawo, Odigha Odigha, Oronto Douglas and Patrick Naagbanton from ERA Port Harcourt, Ewah Eleri from ICEED, Laura Ehling, Bassey Archibong, Juliet Olory, Carol Brunt, and the many others who contributed their time, energy and ideas. As well, One Sky acknowledges the following sponsors:

- Canadian International Development Agency
- Heinrich Boell Foundation
- Niger Delta Development Commission
- International Development Research Centre
- Canadian Environmental Network
- Hydro Quebec
- Canadian High Commission - Nigeria
- Department of Foreign Affairs Canada
- Environment Canada
- NGO Coalition on the Environment
- Environmental Rights Action
- Polis Project on Ecological Governance



Energetic Solutions participant Tim Weiss at gas flaring site, Rumuekpe community in the Niger Delta

Shovels in Hand

By Kevan Berg

In 'Permaculture: A designer's manual', Bill Mollison (1988) illustrates the consequences of the disastrous transfer of mechanized monocultural systems from western temperate lands to fragile African or tropical soils. He points out that intensive clearing, burning, and bare-soil cultivation over short cropping cycles are gravely inappropriate agricultural strategies for the wet tropics where 80-90% of available nutrient is contained within plant biomass itself. Such strategies have now clearly become routine within equatorial farming communities, and it is thus critical to engage in a process of recovery.

Mollison (1988) outlines an alternative: the small intensively planted tropical and sub-tropical home gardens in areas of Taiwan and the Philippines that are designed to effectively satisfy all nutritional and cultural requirements for a family of five throughout the year. The gardens are sophisticated sustenance food systems, yet fast, simple, and low-cost in construction. They yield basic staples, create mulch, preserve soil nutrients, and direct and accept all water and wastes of use. Taro, rice, and watercress might carpet a clean water food patch edge-banked by dry staples such as yams, sweet potato, and cassava. Pit-composts are set in series and cloaked by mixed circles of banana, papaya, pigeon pea, and tomato. These are watered from the hand basin. 'Dirty' water is safely disposed of within a bed of manure-tolerant green forage crops such as comfrey, elephant grass, lemongrass, and legumes that are regularly cut and removed as green feed to the animal pens; mulch to the potato boxes.

The gardens are well designed on a 'need-to-tend' and 'least-path' basis. All preferred greens and bulk culinary herbs are grown nearest the kitchen; a lemon or lime and an allspice or caper tree within hands reach. Seasonal vegetable crop is planted within carefully-planned beds that are always in action, full of plants, and mulched from a multifunctional hedge that not only provides saplings for woodworks and fuel, but also fodder, which when bulked out by kitchen scraps should feed guinea pigs, poultry, some rabbits, and even fatten



Kevan and Michael Aruna in Wboama community

a small pig.

Finally, the gardens are designed to mirror the natural structure typical within local tropical forests. Coconuts and a variety of palms might overlay a spread of fruit and nut trees carefully selected by crown spread to yield a complete food canopy assemblage that casts intentional shadow over shade crops like coffee, while welcoming sun through canopy gaps for grains and other heavy-feeders. A densely planted understorey carpets out weeds and rampant grasses down below, while vine crop infill the scatter of green by scrambling up trellis and over roof. Flowers scamper color at random throughout the mix serving as useful wasp predator refuges alongside a mash of useful weeds and gap-filling shrubs.

Mollison's above imagery illustrates that the key land use patterns essential for the recovery of balanced tropical human habitats might actually root directly within the home garden. And so it is based on this concept that we take shovels in hand, a flipchart and some markers, and begin. It seems an odd quest deep into jungle memoirs in a search of a buried scroll of truth, some legitimacy, to chronicle the forest's ancient rights for actually revealing these white pillars of skyscraping wood, this golden green and showered canopy. We are two, Mr. Michael Aruna and I, perhaps couriers with a message from the trees, but maybe basket-bearers with simple seeds of hope. And in partnership with four farmers' groups in and around the town of Koidu, we together dig mulch design and plant into community gardens our trees, seeds and tubers of humble appeal to this hot hazy sun. Koidu, this crumpled town sunk deep within the weathered and rounded Nimini Hills of Sierra Leone's eastern Kono district. Here are the headwaters of the diamondiferous Sewa River, a jungle landscape lush in broadleaf and bouldered by rotten rock and bedrock gneisses. Here growth is rapid, uninterrupted, and might be tagged wet-tropical. And it is here the forests beckon under threat of axe and saw, that African soils spill an algae green, and here that the farmers and miners must join hands and lands to balance the task of the shovel for a sustainable future.



Wboama Community Group members in Kono District

NCC Gender and Environment Policy Write-shop - By Evelyne Ssengendo

On December 8th 9th, 2004, One Sky staff and intern, Patricia and Evelyne, set out to facilitate a two-day invite-only write-shop (no more than 20 representatives from NGOs and government) on the theme: gender and environment. Shirley Case, an intern with NGOCE, also helped facilitate and Sandra Thompson and Gail Hochachka were there as observers. The write-shop involved members from the Nigerian Canadian Coalition (NCC) and was a component of the CRE Project.

The objective of the write-shop was to develop a "white paper" on gender and environment policy for Cross River State through discussions of current issues in the state, and more generally in Nigeria and internationally. The write-shop was to enable the participants to speak on these two issues in terms of where we are at, and, even more importantly, on where we would like to go both in the State and the country as a whole. It was expected that through the write-shop format - involving focused discussions on assets, issues, and concerns around gender and the environment, an examination of existing policy (if any) and the production of a one to two page document of concise policy recommendations - the framework for the white paper would be developed.

The initial plan was to hold the write-shop, followed by a two-day drafting session, circulate the draft paper for comments due January 15th, and release the final white paper to Government, NGOs, and media by January 30th, 2005. But during the write-shop we began to realize that this rigid schedule was unlikely to be realized... We had made the assumption that all participants and facilitators were on the same level of understanding with regards to gender and environment and recognized these two issues and their impact similarly. Upon recognizing this assumption, the facilitators and observers had to adjust the original write-shop plan and its specific objectives. Although there was a lot of interest and dynamic discussions around these issues from participants, we concluded that what needs to be done before developing policy recommendations, is in a large part capacity development around the issue of gender (even before linking it to the environment) as there remains some misconstrued ideas or meaning of this concept (and others such as equity, equality and gender-based analysis). Some identified steps that need to take place prior to the formulation of actual policy recommendations include finding an appropriate culturally-sensitive approach for presenting the issue of gender that speaks of the context of the Cross River State communities, identifying existing gender and environmental policies, and looking at culturally relevant case studies. While our focus shifted, it was recognized that there is a great deal of potential for the coalition to influence gender and environment policy. That combined with a significant amount of interest from the coalition members provides a good starting point for future recommendations.

Update on Micro-Credit Program in Sierra Leone - By Solarin Harding

On a clear sunny day in a country by the sea, in the beautiful land of Sierra Leone, is a Canadian doing her internship. I am here working on the Gender Program in Sierra Leone, of which micro-finance is one of our projects. We currently have eight groups affiliated with our organizations - Friends of the Earth Sierra Leone and One Sky. Through generous individual donations, we have given micro-credit loans to the women's group at Lumpa in the Western Peninsula. There are currently nineteen women in the group who meet weekly and pool together group savings. We started giving out loans in mid-2004 and have had a great success rate in repayments.

Due to the initial success with the loans program, we are hoping to reach more women affected by poverty. We have been able to link with another micro-finance organization called ARD-Association for Rural Development. This organization is solely a micro-finance institution. They work predominantly around the Freetown peninsula. We have recently linked our affiliated women's groups located within Freetown with this organization for potential micro-finance support.

The project aims to impact both households and community by assisting women and their families in achieving sustainable livelihoods. A loan is given to small groups who can open a cooperative microenterprise together. The profits derived go into helping to improve the financial well-being of the families.

Thanks to a donation from the Bulkley Valley Credit Union, we have also started giving loans to a second group in Gloucester and are giving a second round of loans to the Lumpa women's group. Loans are put toward supplies and start-up costs for small businesses in areas such as agriculture, petty trading, piggery and poultry rearing, soap making and gara tie dying. This testing phase of our program has been quite successful because it has shown us that this project has the potential to change the lives of people in Sierra Leone.



Members of Lumpa Women's group

Reflections from Bumaji Trip

By Susan Liu

My friend Lisa said that she felt nauseous when she saw the picture of my sunfly-bitten hand, while my mother back home worried that I would get "permanent scars" from mosquito bites... why would anyone want to go to a village deep in the Nigerian rainforest, they both exclaimed! I acquired the "village trophies" during a 2-week community sketch mapping activity, and I am soon going back for the second part of the exercise (which means more sunflies!). Buabre, one of the 12 Bumaji villages, is in the northern part of Cross River State, south-east Nigeria. Buabre village is what is considered a "buffer zone" community located close to the recently designated National Park, where the villagers used to hunt for bush meat and grow their farm produce.

The issue at heart is the balance of conservation versus sustainable livelihood. The importance of sketch mapping is the first step into natural resource management and planning. It's an exhilarating experience to watch villagers take hold of the colourful markers and draw their rivers, mountains, farms and forests. It is satisfying to see youth conversing with the elders to remember traditional names of their home and reclaim some of the lost cultural heritage. It is a learning experience to participate in the discussion of the impact of farm plants on soil and water erosion, sustainable harvesting cycles of Afang (a popular Nigerian vegetable), as well as techniques of controlling the over-population of bush pigs. Although exciting, these observations by no means play like a Hollywood action movie.

Empowerment and transformation take place through a slow process. Sometimes very slow, with extended palm wine breaks.

Originally planned as a capacity building training activity for the Nigerian Conservation Foundation staff, as one of their partners, I had the privilege to tag along. The logistical details were tricky: the party of eight hiked for one hour, after 2 hours riding in a banana truck, before eventually reaching the village of Buabre. We had to hire neighbouring villagers to help us carry supplies, which included enough food items for 2 weeks for eight people. The organizers had doubts about a big city Canadian girl in a Nigerian village and it's more pressure on them if anything goes wrong.

I have always admitted that I am a city girl who is accustomed to modern luxuries; I didn't pretend Buabre was going to be easy. But I had toughened up and trained myself to be psychological and physically strong enough for such an activity, because, as an aspiring humanitarian, I always believe that I need to know

what happens at the community level. And the Buabre experience did not disappoint; it not only allowed me to confirm the sunflies' infamous reputation, but I also witnessed positive social transformation.

That might be great if my own growth is the be-all and end-all goal. This exercise raised another question, and put my selfish role within so-called development into the forefront. When conditions are strenuous and resources scarce and the villager wants change now, do we have the luxury and time to give a Canadian youth a "wilderness experience", as one of my native Nigerian friend calls it? What good is a map for the villagers? They need a road, a bore hole and a functioning hospital, he said! This friend thinks that I could show off my sunfly bites and look brave in front of others is the only good thing that came out of this exercise.

Interesting feedback from a Nigerian. On average locals do not see foreign development workers as being very effective. My friend confirmed this statistic.



Men's mapping exercise in Buabre village

From my own evaluation, I do not doubt the usefulness of the sketch map because that question is best directed to the villagers, and they came to a positive conclusion on that. My concern is focused on the usefulness of my presence. I did my best not to bog the team down and actively contributed to the daily logistic details, however, I did not have any natural resource management expertise to offer and was limited by my ability to communicate in pidgin English. Although a natural resource management facilitator was there to impart the knowledge to NCF staff, my own personal experience in Nigeria as an "observe and learn" intern disheartens me.

Trained as a generalist in managing social projects in the development

context, I wonder if I could contribute effectively in the village setting where water engineers, medical experts or qualified educators are of higher priority. Although "interns" are by definition apprentices to be trained, I wonder if I am slowing down the half-century development experiment even more? But it is true that we all have to start somewhere, like one of my NCF Nigerian colleagues said, after I survived the trip and did not die on her! A good understanding of participatory community mapping methodologies is an invaluable skill that will be crucial to any projects in rural villages everywhere. Hope for a better future is why I am going back to Buabre to be part of this activity. I believe this experience will allow me to contribute to the development process and improve the lives of other villagers in the future. Buabre villagers could be proud that their involvement in my education will have made a difference in someone's life in this world.

Monitoring the Kimberley Process

By Kristin Patten

Travelling to Africa to watchdog the \$9.5 billion a year rough diamond trade sounds exciting and adventurous... in reality, it means the not quite as exciting details of auditing and monitoring. Due to my past campaign work and the above interest, I found myself at a course in Antwerp last October entitled "Civil Society Participation in Kimberley Process Certification System Peer Reviews". What this technical jargon boils down to is this a bunch of governments, industry and civil society got together (after a ton of media pressure by NGOs, including One Sky) to stop the trade in conflict diamonds. The resulting agreement is called "the Kimberley Process" (KP). NGOs keep insisting that there needs to be a way to check to make sure that governments are in fact doing what they promised to do in the KP, so the whole thing isn't just a paper signing exercise. This is monitoring. Eventually countries sign up for voluntary 'review missions' where a team of government, industry and one lone civil society representative check to make sure that the country has everything in place as required.

Partnership Africa Canada recently put on two training courses so that civil society representatives on monitoring missions would have adequate skills and knowledge. I attended on behalf of One Sky, given my past role in One Sky's Blood Diamonds are for Never campaign. The training took place over three days and included a crash course in the diamond industry (archaic, opaque, million dollar deals concluded with a handshake) as well as monitoring. Myself and my fellow participants - NGO representatives from Angola, the Congo, Sierra Leone, Guinea and the USA - worked our way through various auditing scenarios and were toured around the Antwerp diamond industry, including a glimpse into a cutting and polishing factory.

The training is a long way from the rebels trading gems for arms in remote regions of Sierra Leone. And a long way from the current misery of the average Sierra Leone diamond miner working for fifty cents or less a day. But I do have hope that the Kimberley Process will work for its intended goal curbing the trade in conflict diamonds. Peace and stability in countries like Sierra Leone is essential so that international and local organizations can work to increase benefits for diamond miners and mitigate environmental impacts of diamond mining. My own \$9.5 billion dollar dream for Sierra Leone is that one day, with a lot of hard work and perseverance, diamonds are a blessing and not a curse to those sweating daily to mine them.

a collection of place

By Adrian McKerracher

Another sun rows to the horizon in palm leaves and bamboo; another coconut chins to the planet from its orbit with the stars; the cave of another stomach is lit by a candle of rice; they say another pistol has been buried where potatoes grow. Indeed, another knife blade is so gently dulled by its trail across memory's throat; another hand composes its bones like piano keys misplaced in an earthen gallery of vital decay;

another leaf is reduced;
another pepper is returned to seed;
another fish learns with its curious eye facing up.

Another betrayal of geometry is erected (like tables, instruments, and cars dropped from the sun) where elemental children - fire-skin and water-eyes - tote their age in the charcoal hats of endurance; another newborn wails with the chaos of breathing; another tree falls like a tipped hat rack of butterflies and lanterns; another father carves lines in his face with a stone, his back to the mirror that his late son framed in a country where traffic no longer remarks at the delay of funeral marches.

But wait!

Another tooth is rendered from the comedy of people together; another egg is arranged by the chemistry of fire; another palm is converted to wine; another seed comes down on the storm; another written word hardens on the tongue of a girl selling oranges. Another garden of laundry is sewn in rows of waking roosters; another pump sputters

Youth! Youth! Youth!

Another drum discovers bodies, like diamonds held up to the moon, and against all odds, the right people kiss. Somewhere an engine turns on the very first try. Another page is smoothed like a bedsheet; another tide goes leaving its history of things; another coin protrudes from the casual sand and we call it the sun.

Turn Down the Heat! By Nikki Skuce

"Nowhere are the challenges and opportunities of sustainability more evident than in the way in which we use and produce energy. The Government will place increased focus on energy efficiency and energy research and development. It will engage stakeholders in developing comprehensive approaches to encourage increased production and use of clean, renewable energy and to promote greater energy efficiency."

- Throne Speech, 2004

Canadians use as much energy as the entire continent of Africa, home to 700 million people... On a per capita basis, Canada is the largest consumer of energy in the world and the second largest producer of greenhouse gases. It's true, Canadians live in a large country with a cold northern climate and large distances between population centers (transportation is our largest energy use with heat accounting for nearly 60% of energy used by Canadian homes). But that doesn't excuse us from taking action! Simply stated, energy-efficiency, waste reduction, water conservation, and other resource-efficient practices are better for the environment (and our bottom line).

On February 16th, the Kyoto Protocol will enter into effect and that requires leadership and change by all Canadians. In Smithers, a remote northern community, the Kyoto commitment will be challenging but it is achievable. This community has some of the worst air pollution in North America and individuals are feeling the results of rising fuel and energy costs.



Switch to compact fluorescents! says the raven in One Sky's educational signs.
Designed by Facundo Gastiazoro

One Sky has been focussing on energy issues at the local, national and international levels. At our office, we have recently developed educational signs that will give visitors energy efficiency tips and information about renewable energy and appropriate technology. We are planning more workshops and hope to have a solar water heater or photovoltaics installed before the Spring.

With winter upon us, here are a few tips to get you started on reducing your energy footprint and costs:

- Lower your thermostat - For every 1 degree celsius you lower your thermostat, you save 2% on your heating bill.
- Keep your blinds and curtains open during the day in the winter to maximize on passive solar energy, and keep them closed at night for extra insulation. Conversely, keep blinds and curtains closed during the day in summer to help keep your home cooler.
- Use caulking and weather stripping to seal air leaks. A well insulated, well-sealed house keeps cold air out, warm air in and controls moisture. You can either hire a professional or conduct your own draft search by using a candle on a windy day. Getting rid of drafts and leaks around windows, doors, baseboards and attic hatches reduces your needs by up to 20%.
- Insulate your home properly - it's cheaper than energy and helps you save in both winter and summer (by as much as 30% annually).

For more ideas on how to reduce your energy footprint, take Environment Canada's One Tonne Challenge: www.climatechange.gc.ca/onetonne