

One Sky – Canadian Institute of Sustainable Living

2003 Annual Report

Our mission is to “promote sustainable living globally”



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One Sky Staff and Board at 2003 AGA

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Gender and Environmental Programmer (ginny@onesky.ca)

Juliette (Jud) Jones (2002-03)
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Lori McQuid (2003)
Nigeria Project Field Coordinator

Chris Hunter (2003)
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CRE Project Assistant (mali@onesky.ca)



Program Director Nikki Skuce and Gender Coordinator Veronica Coker in Sierra Leone

“I have been truly inspired this year by the energy, passion and commitment that exists within One Sky. As staff and volunteers describe the rich experiences and challenges of living and working in Sierra Leone and Nigeria their stories infect us all, motivating us to take action wherever we can. The work we are doing is transformative in nature, on the ground, but most importantly in the lives of everyone involved.”

- Sandra Thomson, Chair of the Board of Directors

Inside

Contact Information

Executive Director's message

Program Achievements

Human Security and the Environment

ESDP Phase III

Blood Diamonds

Nigeria Project

Internships

Landmines

Networking

Environmental Education

Financial Report

Horizons – The Coming Year

Our Partners

Supporters and Donors

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Executive Director's Message



A year ago, the world was precariously balanced on the brink of war with Iraq. We have since plunged deep into a conflict that has always been about oil, not weapons of mass destruction. Almost two thirds of the world's oil is in the Middle East and our global dependence on this oil will double by 2010. Whether it is oil, water, timber or diamonds our planet's natural resources will only become more precious over time. Much of our work here at One Sky is about the interface between human security and the environment. Whether this is working with war affected children in Sierra Leone or evidence based policy analysis of the resource sector in Nigeria the concept is the same... we are inextricably globally linked on a single, fragile planet. What is of concern in Africa is of concern in Canada. A year ago One Sky launched a campaign to help clean up the trade in conflict diamonds. We called for independent and regular monitoring for an international certification scheme known as the Kimberley Process. This was achieved at

a key international meeting in October, 2003. A month later a One Sky team investigated conditions in Northern Sierra Leone only to find that life has not changed for many alluvial diamond miners. There are still children digging in mines... watersheds are still being destroyed by indiscriminate alluvial diamond mining, the environment continues to be threatened, human rights are ignored.

That seems to be the nature of our business. We enjoy successes but they are often replaced by growing challenges, which need to be met by new, creative alternatives. Renewable energy stands out as an excellent example. In the past year our Nigeria project assisted local NGOs to install solar power in rural or underserved offices. We were also involved through the CEN in developing a national policy initiative on renewable energy. This year One Sky will be the key organizer of an international renewable energy conference in Nigeria that will promote alternative energy use in one of the most energy affected places on the planet... the Niger Delta. It seems to be an appropriate melding of our practical hands-on approach with policy driven structural change.

We have challenged ourselves here at home to address our own office energy footprint as well. In the past year we purchased our office building in downtown Smithers through a unique financial arrangement with private investors motivated by socially conscious investment. Our goal is to renovate and rebuild - using green building techniques and energy conscious technologies. It is exciting to have our own building and to challenge ourselves to walk the "energetic" talk...yet it is also difficult. We have been growing quickly. Our budget two years ago was 275 K and an incremental leap from the year before. This last year our budget more than doubled to 868 K and we are likely to top \$1 million in 2004. We have three office/houses in Canada, Sierra

Leone and Nigeria and more than a dozen staff at any given time. It must be somewhat overwhelming for the three new board members (Tom Buri, Helene Fleury and Aleila Miller) that have joined One Sky because things keep changing. This organization is doing so many projects now that it can be hard to follow the nuances of individual programs that range from HIV/AIDS and gender to ecological curriculum and community forestry. Luckily we have very dedicated staff and a host of enthusiastic volunteers. One special example is Kris Dartnell, a chartered accountant who volunteered on two occasions in Nigeria for over 10 weeks to work on financial and project management with our partners. Kris not only completed this financial capacity building, she wrote a handbook and a financial assessment at the same time! That same level of enthusiasm is what drives our internship program. Our internship program is not easy and we advertise it under those terms. This year our interns have brought a lot of energy to both our Smithers operations and activities overseas. They reached their goal of raising \$10,000 at the One Sky auction AND managed to deliver the One Sky schoolbus to Sierra Leone packed with school supplies. That one short sentence hardly does justice to the sweat, hope and stubbornness that was required to complete these two tasks in a long list of other internship projects. As you read through this report I hope you get the sense of what might be behind some of the accomplishments. It might be hard to imagine the effort that went into a singular deliverable such as “built a demonstration building using mud brick blocks”. Those eight words represent eight months of someone’s life combined with education and capacity building for dozens more. What can seem a simple task can take on epic proportions when it is accomplished with a love for the details and process and people. This is what defines quality and I hope that it is a sense of quality that is behind our current rapid growth.

Growing an organization is not easy. It requires the confidence of donors and funders and the diligent work of keeping finances in order and project deliverables on time. More importantly it requires a cohesive strategic plan and a sense of direction. In some ways we are still young enough to be sorting this out and in other ways we seem to intuitively know where we are going. I would like to thank everyone who has supported this vision and had a sense of confidence in a young organization that lacks the equity of institutional history... particularly our funders and donors. I very much want to thank those people that have driven this organization, believed in our success and enabled us to make a small but growing difference in the world. We have a lot of fun around here. Between the staff, board members and volunteers we have created something, with a special optimistic flavor, that makes one feel like we are moving forward and not stalled by the world’s challenges. The coming year promises to be very, very full.

Michael Simpson
Executive Director

Program Achievements:

Human Security and the Environment

Sierra Leone

One Sky and Friends of the Earth Sierra Leone (FOESL) have been working for over three years in a partnership project entitled *Human Security and the Environment* that is supported by the Canadian International Development Agency. Sierra Leone is in a post-conflict rebuilding stage after over 10 years of civil war. Our aim is to draw the links between human security and the environment. This project is working with marginalized target populations including internally displaced people and war affected children to provide vocational training and educational opportunities in environmentally sustainable activities. Joint activities include developing an ecological centre near the village of Hamilton, doing sanitation campaigns, North-South and South-South exchanges, capacity building and organic and pedal powered workshops.

In the year 2003 we:

- Successfully shipped a 72-passenger Blue Bird school bus from Smithers to Freetown filled with collected school supplies and equipment for FOESL and Sengbeh Pieh school.
- Built a demonstration building using mud-brick blocks and profiling the tiles on site. Trained former child combatants in the construction process.
- Expanded the organic agriculture garden and gave several composting workshops.
- Held an Earth Day celebration with the theme *Water For Life*.
- Assisted with a strategic planning session for Friends of the Earth and held capacity building workshops.
- Developed the foundations for a women's micro-credit project and organized a Women's Day HIV/AIDS workshop.
- Spoke at various conferences/events including Amnesty's *Up in Arms: Raising Awareness for War-affected Children*
- Held a fundraising auction with over 8K in proceeds to FOESL.



Unpacking the school bus filled with donations sent from Smithers to Freetown

Program Achievements: *Blood Diamonds Are For Never*

From our work in Sierra Leone, we drew the links between resources and the civil war that endured for over a decade – a war that was ultimately about control over rich diamond resources. Conflict diamonds are an example of a natural resource that, like coltan, timber and gold, are driving many of the conflicts and environmental impact in Africa. One Sky launched its *Blood Diamonds Are For Never* campaign on Valentine's Day in 2003. We actively pursued a campaign of public engagement aimed at the retail diamond industry, Canadian consumers of diamonds and the international diamond mining industry to eliminate conflict diamonds - diamonds that have had devastating impacts in countries like Sierra Leone and the Congo.

One Sky teamed up with Amnesty International and Partnership Africa Canada for the *Canadian Jewellers for Conflict-free Diamonds* initiative to push for “independent and regular monitoring” through a U.N. sanctioned policy instrument known as the Kimberley Process. The Kimberley Process is a joint effort between the diamond industry, governments and civil society that aims to end the trade in conflict diamonds through an international certification system. To address one of the major flaws in the system, we encouraged Canadian consumers and jewellery retailers to take action by pushing for regular, independent monitoring in Canada and other Kimberley Process member countries. To do this we initiated a post card campaign, produced materials on conflict diamonds and lobbied both retailers and major diamond producers to support an effective Kimberley Process. We had meetings with the Canadian Jewellers Association, Jewellers Vigilance Canada, diamond giant DeBeers, Natural Resources Canada, and with an ad company that agreed to do pro-bono work for us. Along with Amnesty International, we staged effective public actions in Toronto where we received over 400 signatures in one afternoon encouraging Canadian jewellers to join our initiative in advocating for a cleaner system. During our campaign we were receiving over 30,000 hits a month on our website.

Our campaign efforts were largely successful and at the last Kimberley Process meeting, a voluntary peer review system was agreed to. We will continue to monitor the implementation of the Kimberley Process. One Sky's campaign coordinator Kristin Patten spent time in Sierra Leone researching the social and environmental impacts of the alluvial diamond industry and investigating the illicit trade in diamonds that continues to elude governments and the Kimberley Process.





Program Achievements: *Cross River Environmental Capacity Development Project, Nigeria*

One Sky's *Cross River Environmental Capacity Development (CRE) Project* kicked-off its implementation stage in May 2003. With funding from CIDA, this partnership project supports five Nigerian organizations to improve environmental management and affect policy change in Cross River State, Nigeria.

To achieve this goal, we are:

1. Providing training in project and organizational management;
2. Developing capacity for gathering, analyzing and disseminating environmental information and policy to civil society, government and the private sector;
3. Supporting activities in key land and water management demonstration projects in local communities;
4. Building networks and partnerships among communities, civil society organizations, government and the private sector;
5. Providing training in gender analysis, gender equality and HIV/AIDS integration approaches;
6. Increasing NGO capacity to carry out participatory monitoring and evaluation; and
7. Increasing public awareness in Canada and Nigeria of environmental issues in CRS.



Solar power workshop in Calabar

"We are building up a family here and it is working out. We are learning from each other and we are working together perfectly. One very crucial thing that is happening is that we are beginning to see One Sky as a legacy, which the future of a coalition for the environment is based. We are thinking beyond the life of the project and we have a hope that the future is bright. We are strong in will and conviction that we can succeed. Nothing is more hopeful than this.

- Alade Adeleke, Regional Coordinator, NCF

In 2003 the CRE Project partners, supported by One Sky:

- Formed a Task Force on Ecotourism to influence tourism development in Cross River State and held an Ecotourism summit.
- Conducted research on non-timber forest products domestication.
- Conducted five organizational development workshops: Making Input into Public Policy, Mass Media and Social Advocacy, Results Based Management, Financial Management and Bookkeeping, and Strategic Planning.
- Developed Forest Management and Land-use plans in five forest communities surrounding the Cross River National Park.
- Trained women and men in four communities on alternative income-generating activities including beekeeping, livestock-rearing and market gardens.
- Received training in financial management, basic bookkeeping, and the use of software to improve financial management capacity.
- Re-established an environmental network in Cross River State consisting of twenty-three environmental NGOs.



One Sky volunteer Kris Dartnell (right) assisted groups with financial management training in Nigeria for over ten weeks.



- Participated in overseas training/exchanges/public engagement (Two Nigerian partners to Canada to learn and share knowledge on coalition-building, networking, leadership and organic agriculture; two Nigerian partners to Kenya to receive training in participatory monitoring and evaluation; five Canadian partners to Nigeria to share knowledge on financial management, computer networking and maintenance, organizational development, organic agriculture and ecosystem-based planning; three Canadian partners and two Nigerian partners to the World Forestry Congress in Quebec to present papers and host a side-event on strengthening environmental management and policy in the Guinean-Congolian Bioregion in Africa).
- Established a small-NGO support fund for environment and community development activities in Cross River State. Twelve small ENGOs were supported in 2003.
- Relocated twelve red-capped mangabeys to a forest enclosure, the first in the world for relocation of this species of primates to a forest habitat
- Trained Gender and HIV/AIDS focal persons within the five Nigerian ENGOs, the Cross River State Ministry of Environment and the Women's Affirmative Action Group.



Youth Intern Jennifer Thompson co-facilitating a composting workshop for a women's group in Sierra Leone.

Internships

One Sky firmly believes in mentorship in all aspects of its work. Our youth internship program aims to develop environmentally aware youth with international understanding, experience and appreciation, and to strengthen our North-South partnerships. In 2003, we had two interns in Sierra Leone and one in Nigeria wrap up their internships at the AGA as three more youth interns began. One Sky hosts interns at our office in Smithers for over three months before they head off overseas to gain international work experience and assist our partner organizations. During this year's Canadian phase, interns were involved in helping ship a school bus full of donations from Smithers to Freetown, assisting with the campaign against conflict diamonds, organizing a speakers tour for one of our Nigerian partners, and organizing a fundraising community services auction. They underwent a training program in Victoria before leaving for Sierra Leone to work on our *Human Security and the Environment* partnership project and to Nigeria to work on the *CRE project*. To date, One Sky has successfully hosted nine internships.

Program Achievements: Landmines

One Sky wrapped up the Landmines project in El Salvador this year. The project was a victim assistance and landmines awareness initiative based in El Salvador that trained individuals within the context of their communities in the development of appropriate technologies to both benefit themselves and the environment. The project was led by the Salvadoran Centre For Appropriate Technology (CESTA). The Sierra Club of B.C. contracted out One Sky to manage the program. Activities included micro-enterprise development in areas such as wheelchair repairs, training programs in appropriate technology, the running of a landmines "ecobus", information programming on landmines both in Canada and in El Salvador and activities in support of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines. Due to the series of severe earthquakes in 2001, the program was delayed and renewed with enthusiasm during this past year.

Networking

One Sky believes that networking is essential to tackling today's environmental and social problems. In the past year, we have used networking as a tool in order to have a greater impact. As seen with our *Canadian Jewellers for Conflict-free Diamonds* initiative, our success in engaging with the Canadian Jewellers Association and the Canadian government to strengthen the diamond certification scheme was largely a result of collaborating with Partnership Africa Canada and Amnesty International as well as with a larger international network. Kristin Patten also organized and facilitated a panel on the Kimberley Process at Environment Canada's Diamonds and Sustainable Development workshop in Ottawa, and Nikki Skuce gave a presentation and workshop on One Sky's *Blood Diamonds are for Never* campaign at Amnesty's "Up in Arms: Raising Awareness for War-Affected Children" conference in Vancouver.

One Sky is the Western node of the Canadian Environment Network's International Program (CENIP) and sits on the National Council of the CEN as the International Program Caucus representative. This past year, One Sky participated and presented at the CEN-IP's Renewables and Organic Agriculture conference in Guelph and the Community Resource Management conference in Mexico, advocated on policy issues at CIDA for the ESDP program, and continued to manage the listserv, directory and website.

Following up on activities from the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), Nikki Skuce was selected as the ENGO representative on the Canadian delegation for the CSD-11. One Sky became a member of the Canadian Council for International Cooperation this year and Michael Simpson presented the Nigeria project as a case study for their "Building Knowledge and Capacity for Policy Influence" meeting held in Montreal.

Program Achievements:

Environmental Education Project

One Sky is working in collaboration with teachers Janet Sondresen and Natalie Charlton to produce educational kits on "A day in the life of a child in Sierra Leone" for schools in Saskatchewan and British Columbia. Kristin Patten is working with a committee of teachers in Sierra Leone to provide feedback on the units. Filled with photos, stories, interviews and activities, these educational kits will be distributed in July 2004.

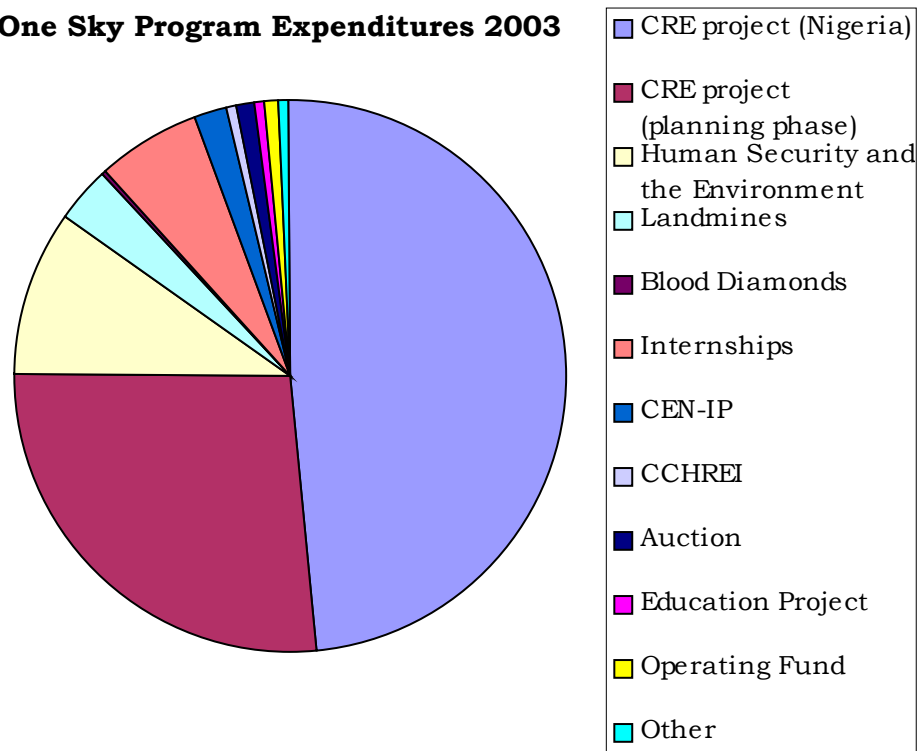


One Sky worked with Amnesty-Toronto to create awareness around conflict diamonds and had hundreds

Financial Report for the Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 2003

For the fiscal year ending December 31, 2003 One Sky generated \$841,759 in revenue indicating a 288% increase in revenue over the previous year of \$292,304. With money carried over from 2002, total expenditures of \$868,904 left us with a small deficit at year end of just over \$3,000. A large part of One Sky's revenue increase derives from our bilateral project in Nigeria. Other income is generated through our partnerships with the Northwest Institute of Bioregional Studies and the Sierra Club of B.C. through programs with the Canadian International Development Agency, private contracts and donations. These included a \$75,000 grant from the Environment and Sustainable Development Program and a public engagement grant for our Blood Diamonds campaign. In addition we had internship programs and contracts with NGOs for work as part of the CEN-International Program and for the environmental education project. We held fundraising events including another successful goods and services auction, and received numerous private donations. This past year we purchased the One Sky office in Smithers in the hopes of turning it into a sustainable office and model of energy efficiency. We continue to build an operating fund and we remain fiscally sound. Kirsteen Laing continues as our part time bookkeeper and we successfully completed our third audit through the chartered accounting firm Edmison Mehr.

One Sky Program Expenditures 2003



Horizons – The Coming Year

One Sky has emerged as an organization that works in a more holistic way and links issues of human rights and development, our environment and the economy. We are looking forward to the second year of implementation for the Environmental Capacity Building Project in Nigeria and are already looking at potential regional projects in collaboration with NGOs in Cameroon that border the same Guinean Lowland Forest Ecosystem. One Sky will be coordinating *Energetic Solutions* – a hands-on renewable energy conference for the CEN-IP in late November. This conference will be held in Nigeria where we will first visit Port Harcourt to learn about the social and environmental impacts of the petroleum industry before working towards solutions and developing a renewable energy plan for Cross River State. We will continue working in Sierra Leone with Friends of the Earth and are hoping to start working with other ENGOs there on organic agriculture projects for women and war-affected youth. The follow-up to our *Blood Diamonds are for Never* campaign include producing an environmental sector analysis of Sierra Leone and research into the potential for developing a market for fair trade diamonds. With funding from CARE International, we are working with eight women's groups on a micro-credit project in Sierra Leone with environmental education components incorporated into the program. There is a potential for the coordinators of this project to attend a training session as part of our Nigeria project and to be mentored by our CRE project Gender and HIV/AIDS Coordinator Patricia Eyamba. We intend to continue with two overseas staff in Sierra Leone joined by two to four youth interns in the summer and fall as well as place interns in Nigeria. Last year we purchased our office building and are hoping to turn it into a sustainable model and implement an ecological footprint program that includes working with local businesses to improve energy conservation. We will coordinate many of this year's CEN-IP activities as well as participate in various government consultations. Our participation in CCIC and other relevant networks will continue to be important components of our work. Finally, our Annual General Meeting this coming year will include over 20 staff and board members in June, including overseas staff and some project partners. It will provide an excellent opportunity to share ideas and strengthen our strategic direction.

Our Partners

One Sky has actively engaged in partnerships with the Northwest Institute for Bioregional Research here in Smithers as well as the Sierra Club of B.C. in Victoria, B.C. The Environmental Capacity Building Project in Nigeria involves a number of partners. Joint projects are being carried out with the Fallsbrook Centre, the Atlantic Council for International Cooperation, the Nappan Project, Silva Forest Foundation, Greenheart Conservation Company and Laing and McCulloch Forest Management Services Ltd. In Nigeria we are working with Living Earth, the Nigerian Conservation Foundation, CERCOPAN, Development In Nigeria and the NGO Coalition for the Environment. We also partnered with CUSO to hire a cooperant to work in our field office. Our work with the Canadian Environmental Network has enabled us to link with national and other international efforts around environmental capacity building. We continue to develop international linkages including with ENGOs in Sierra Leone such as Friends of the Earth and the Peace Diamond Alliance, and with CESTA in El Salvador. We have worked closely with Partnership Africa Canada (PAC) and Amnesty International on our *Blood Diamonds are for Never Campaign*. We have been grateful for the support from our partners at the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

A special thanks to our supporters and funders!

One Sky continued to be the recipient of many generous donations in 2003. For the school bus project, we received numerous boxes of school and office supplies, a lot of volunteer time to paint and pack the bus, and a generous 50% discount on shipping costs from Atlantic Container Lines. Many people and local businesses supported our fundraising efforts in the community goods and services auction. A lot of friends and family of interns and employees moved by the work and outreach of these individuals showed their support by donating to specific projects or One Sky generally. We received cheques in the mail to support our efforts and participants at our events were always generous. A special thanks must go out to our volunteer Board of Directors who put in several hours working on the strategic plan and on improving governance issues.

To all of our supporters we would like to say a very special “thank you” for making this past year such a success.

The Northwest Institute for Bioregional Studies
Canadian International Development Agency
The Environment and Sustainable Development Program (CIDA)
Canadian Council for Human Resources
in the Environment
The Canadian Environmental Network
The Falls Brook Centre
The Sierra Club of British Columbia
B.C. Web
Janet and Terry Sondresen
Natalie Charlton
Atlantic Container Lines
Brenda Cassidy
Evelyn Ethier
John A. Hoicka
John W. Hoicka
Archie Stogianos
Jeanie Boyce
Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association
Nikki Skuce
Kris Dartnell
Marcus Abram
Greg Drury
Johan Boyden
Gagan Leekha
Melanie Morin
John L’Orsa
Ed Siwicki

