

Environmental Information Sources: Web Sites and Books

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Web Sites are listed in the following categories:

Educational Institutions

International

Nonprofit & Research Organizations

U.S. Federal and State Government Agencies

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Audubon Magazine

<http://archive.audubonmagazine.org/>

The National Audubon Society named in 1905 for the accomplished ornithologist and naturalist, John J. Audubon, states on the website that its mission is "to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity." The Society publishes the Audubon Magazine, which offers impressive and compelling multimedia features, with photos, videos, slideshows, audio recordings, podcasts, and book reviews. Web exclusive articles and a section called "Audubon in Action" provide educational stories about animals, plants, and places around the world and updates on legislative proposals relevant to environmental conservation. *

The Habitable Planet: A Systems Approach to Environmental Science

<http://www.learner.org/resources/series209.html>

Created by the Harvard Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics in association with the Harvard University Center for the Environment, this 13-part program includes an overview of the Earth's systems along with an exploration of the effects that human activities have on these systems. The website offers this description: "The Habitable Planet: A Systems Approach to Environmental Science is a course for high school teachers and undergraduate students in environmental science. The content course will help teachers of biology, chemistry, and Earth science to provide more content in their classes. The course components include 13 half-hour video programs, a coordinated Web site which includes the streamed video programs, the course text online, five interactive simulations, background on the scientists who created the content and those whose research is documented, a professional development guide (also available in print form), and additional resources. Graduate credit is available for the course through Colorado State University." "Many Planets, One Earth," "Atmospheres," "Oceans," "Ecosystems," "Agriculture," "Water Resources," and "Earth's Changing Climate" are a few of the program titles. *

Sustainability Research & Policy Network (SRPN) within the Social Science Research Network (SSRN)

<http://www.ssrn.com/update/srpn/srpnann/annA001.html>

This link points to an announcement that the SSRN is launching a Sustainability Research &

Policy Network (SRPN), “which will provide a worldwide, online community for research in all areas of sustainability and policy, similar to other subject matter networks within SSRN.” The announcement says that SRPN developers foresee it becoming “a comprehensive online resource for research in sustainability and policy, providing scholars with access to current work in their field and facilitating research and scholarship.” GSE Research is the online publisher behind this effort. SRPN will produce 25 e-journals and 2 Research Paper Series, the Center for Robust Decision-making on Climate & Energy Policy (RDCEP) Working Paper Series and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) Discussion Paper Series. Access to the journals will be free through the start-up period (September 2012). The journals feature topics such as the built environment; food industry, politics, and sociology; nuclear energy; politics and energy; pollution; renewable energy; social responsibility and business; among others.

Urban Forest Hurricane Recovery

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/features/series/hurricanerecovery.html>

This area on the University of Florida’s Extension Service website addresses Urban Forest Hurricane Recovery. Visitors to the site may view a PowerPoint presentation about cleaning up trees after a hurricane and how to prevent future hurricane damage to urban forests. Fourteen chapters provide information about restoring trees after a hurricane, selecting tree species for wind resistance on coastal plains, and developing an urban forest management plan for hurricane-prone areas. Target audiences for this website include public health officials, people organizing disaster preparedness and recovery efforts, and public policy makers. *

Woods Institute for the Environment

<http://woods.stanford.edu/cgi-bin>

The Ward W. and Priscilla B. Woods Institute for the Environment is housed at Stanford University and aims to bring together academic researchers and public policy decision makers to devise practical solutions to problems facing people and the planet. Five core research interests at the Institute are climate and energy, fresh water, land use and conservation, oceans and estuaries, and sustainability in the built environment. Another strong interest is developing environmental leaders for the present and future. A link called “Gateways” provides entry points to areas of the website best suited for faculty (grant funding opportunities, leadership development programs, and a database of researchers), journalists, businesses, college students (grants and seminars), and K-12 teachers and students. *

INTERNATIONAL

Cities and Climate Change: Global Report on Human Settlements (United Nations)

<http://www.unhabitat.org/pmss/listItemDetails.aspx?publicationID=3085>

The United Nations’ Human Settlement Programme produced this report that examines how cities in the world are affected by climate change and offers predictions for the 21st century. The website offers this overview of the report, Cities and Climate Change reviews the linkages between urbanization and climate change, two of the greatest challenges currently facing humanity in the 21st Century, and whose effects are converging in dangerous ways. [The report] illustrates the significant contribution of urban areas to climate change while at the same time highlighting the potentially devastating effects of climate change on urban populations. It reviews policy responses, strategies and practices that are emerging in urban areas to mitigate

and adapt to climate change, as well as their potential achievements and constraints. In conclusion, the report argues that urban areas have a pivotal role in both climate change mitigation and adaptation and identifies strategies and approaches for strengthening this role. Authors of the report present research data from several United Nations programs and other projects that examine climate change and environmental science.*

The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species

<http://www.iucnredlist.org/>

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and Natural Resources Red List of Threatened Species makes information about plant and animal species available on its website. IUCN's approach to assessing conservation status is considered to be "the most comprehensive, objective global approach for evaluating the conservation status of plant and animal species." Links across the website point to lists of species that fall into a spectrum of conservation statuses labeled "least concern," "near threatened," "vulnerable," "endangered," "critically endangered," "extinct in the wild," and "extinct." A simple search box appears on the homepage, and additional search options offer the categories of keywords, taxonomy, location, systems, habitats, threats, assessment, and life history.*

Ocean Data Viewer

<http://data.unep-wcmc.org/>

This website is maintained by the United Nations Environment Programme, World Conservation Monitoring Center and provides data from several partner agencies about the world's oceans. Visitors to the site will see a political map of the world which they can use to navigate to a particular area of interest. Sixteen downloadable data sets provide details about the mean sea surface temperature, mean sea surface productivity, two indices of biodiversity, global distribution of cold water corals, coral reefs, seagrasses, and mangroves. The site explains that its purpose is "to provide an overview and access to a range of data, and relevant conventions, which are available to help inform decisions that are important for the conservation of marine and coastal biodiversity." The target audience for the site includes government agencies, scientists, researchers, people in private industry, and non-government organizations. One goal of the site is to encourage open sharing of data to enable analyses using multiple information sources in support of ocean conservation and sustainable use. *

NONPROFIT & RESEARCH ORGANIZATIONS

2011 National Environmental Scorecard: League of Conservation Voters

<http://www.lcv.org/scorecard/>

"The League of Conservation Voters' 2011 Scorecard includes a comprehensive overview of national environmental policy in 2011, full descriptions of key House and Senate votes and a complete record of how every member of Congress voted on those key environmental issues." Visitors to the site may search by state, Congress member's last name, zip code, or session of Congress to learn how individuals voted on proposed legislation related to environmental issues affecting, pollution, public health, and clean air and water.

Energy Map

<http://energymap-scu.org/>

The Energy Map initiative is an entrepreneurial endeavor to pioneer methods to bring affordable, renewable energy to the 1.5 billion people around the world who do not have access to these resources. Launched by the Center for Science, Technology, and Society at Santa Clara University and the Ayllu Initiative, the site's homepage says that "Around the world, social entrepreneurs are pioneering methods to bring affordable renewable energy to underserved customers. While they currently serve only a fraction of the existing market, the technologies and business models they are developing have the potential, if successfully scaled and replicated, to serve almost everyone." A section of the site features technologies, exploring power sources and uses as well as methods to deliver affordable, clean energy to underserved customers. The map shows areas in the world where social enterprises are delivering energy solutions to underserved populations around the world. A section on "business models" explores matters of scalability, affordability, distribution, and social impacts of businesses involved in the energy enterprises.*

Environmental History Resources

<http://www.eh-resources.org/index.html/>

This website is maintained by Dr. Jan Oosthoek, an environmental historian from the University of Newcastle (U.K.) and features essays, podcasts, videos, and a bibliography about "human societies and the environment in the past." The essays section "contains papers and material exploring different topics including forestry, nature conservation, water pollution, environmental change, land use, and articles" addressing the definition of environmental history. The podcasts are essentially "online radio shows featuring discussions about developments in environmental history and interviews with scholars and scientists working in the field."**

Environmental Sciences & Sustainability: The NY Academy of Sciences

<http://www.nyas.org/Topic.aspx?tid=a43f6ad6-0e70-49ce-9f03-afb7b87de3e5>

According to the website, "since 1817 the New York Academy of Science "has brought together extraordinary people working at the frontiers of discovery and promoted vital links between science and society. One of the oldest scientific organizations in the United States, the Academy has become not only a notable and enduring cultural institution in New York City, but also one of the most significant organizations in the international scientific community." Members of the academy include research scientists in academia and industry along with representatives from business and government and policy making organizations. A weekly podcast, "Science and the City," features captivating speakers. The Academy publishes annals, well-known conference proceedings and annual reviews, which are available by subscription. A magazine and e-briefings, multimedia presentations of Academy events, are freely accessible. The website features disciplinary communities, one of which focuses on Environmental Sciences & Sustainability. *

Global Warming Materials for Educators: Union of Concerned Scientists

http://www.ucsusa.org/global_warming/science_and_impacts/impacts/global-warming-materials-for.html

Teaching materials offered at this website are based on peer-reviewed, published scientific

research and have been reviewed by scientific experts in the relevant fields. Emphasizing the California and the Gulf Coast regions, curricular materials feature global warming early warning signs map, renewable energy, and communicating ecosystem services to help students learn about valuable but often under-appreciated benefits that nature provides. **

Natural Resources Defense Council: Smarter Living [pdf]

<http://www.nrdc.org/living/>

This website provides reliable information for consumers who wish to make healthy and environmentally friendly decisions about the food they eat, products they buy, and how they use energy and water. Sections of the site are devoted to: food, health, home and yard, workplace and schools, and “smart shopper’s guides.” In spring of 2012 some of the featured reports explain how to exterminate bedbugs, choosing an effective filter to remove contaminants from household drinking water, and qualities important in selecting knives for a green kitchen. Guides provide advice on choosing sunscreen and swimwear, chemical-free prevention of fleas in pets, expanding the range of grilled foods to include fruits and vegetables, and organic lawn care. The “health” section includes a “chemical index,” where readers can find out about toxic substances that are used on common, household products. *

NOVA: Journey of the Butterflies

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/nature/journey-butterflies.html>

The following description comes from the website for this NOVA documentary from November 2011: “Orange-and-black wings fill the sky as NOVA charts one of nature’s most remarkable phenomena: the epic migration of monarch butterflies across North America. To capture a butterfly’s point of view, NOVA’s filmmakers used a helicopter, ultralight, and hot-air balloon for aerial views along the transcontinental route. This wondrous annual migration, which scientists are just beginning to fathom, is an endangered phenomenon that could dwindle to insignificance if the giant firs that the butterflies cling to during the winter disappear.” Film maker Nick de Pencier describes the techniques used to make this documentary, which is available in its entirety on the website. *

Power and Smoke: A Nation Built on Coal, from American RadioWorks & American Public Media

<http://americanradioworks.publicradio.org/features/coal/>

This radio documentary explores the history and aspects of coal production in the United States. Visitors to the site can listen to the story, download it, or read a transcription. Contributors include a professor of environmental history from Carnegie Mellon University and directors of the Smog Museum in Donora, PA. **

WILD READ: from the Friends of the National Conservation Training Center

<http://www.wildread.blogspot.com/>

The Friends of the National Conservation Training Center maintain this website to continue discussions for a virtual book club that reads about environmental and ecological topics. Initiated in cooperation with the National Wildlife Refuge Association and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the group began in 2011. Links to comments about books the group has read and a schedule of forthcoming titles are on the website. Moderators of the discussions include authors of environmentally themed books. Goals of WILD READ, from the original website,

include: connecting people with nature through reading books and essays; encouraging a culture of story-telling and sharing about refuges and beloved places in nature; promoting public education about a land ethic so that people become better stewards of nature resources; and creating a meaningful sense of place in nature.

U.S. FEDERAL & STATE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Enforcement and Compliance History Online (ECHO): Drinking Water Data

<http://www.epa-echo.gov/echo/>

Safe Drinking Water Act

http://www.epa-echo.gov/echo/compliance_report_sdwa.html

Maintained by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Enforcement and Compliance History Online (ECHO) has recently been improved. Members of the public may search to see whether drinking water in their community met the standards required under the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), which is designed to safeguard the nation's drinking water and protect human health. SDWA requires states to report drinking water information periodically to the EPA. ECHO contains data from more than 800,000 regulated water facilities. The data integrate reports on inspections, violations, and enforcement of the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, and hazardous waste laws. ECHO also includes data from the Toxics Release and National Emissions Inventories.

National Renewable Energy Laboratory

<http://www.nrel.gov/learning/>

The National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) located in Golden, Colorado is the "only national laboratory solely dedicated to advancing renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies from concept to commercial application." The website offers this description: "Renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies are key to creating a clean energy future for not only the nation, but the world. This Web site describes NREL's research in renewable energy technologies, and also provides information on energy efficiency and various applications of renewable energy." Another objective of the NREL is to develop educational materials, and the website features instructional resources in the following categories: Renewable Energy Basics; Using Renewable Energy; Energy, Delivery, and Storage Basics; Advanced Vehicles and Fuels Basics; and Student Resources.*

National Resources Conservation Service: Soils: College Level Teaching Resources

<http://soils.usda.gov/education/resources/college/index.html>

Personnel at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service have developed this site for college students studying soil biology, soil risks, soil quotations, and urban soil issues. Some of the sections on the site include world soils, a soil biology primer, and a soil quality test kit. A link is provided to the University of Idaho's "Twelve Soil Orders," a website that explains the twelve-category soil taxonomy system developed by the USDA's Soil Survey staff in 1975. The site offers information and images about the distribution, properties, ecological significance and use of the twelve orders. The "Soil Quotations" area presents interesting quotes from biologists, soil scientists, and poets about the nature and importance of

soil. A link labeled "Agriculture in the Classroom" link points to state agricultural profiles created by the USDA.*

ToxTown: Environmental health concerns and toxic chemicals where you live, work, and play (National Library of Medicine)

<http://www.toxtown.nlm.nih.gov/>

This interactive website is designed to introduce students of all ages to toxic chemicals and environmental health risks in a city, a town, a farm, the southwestern U.S., and the border between the U.S. and Mexico. Clicking on any of the areas presents environmental concerns, for example, abandoned mines and uranium tailings in the Southwest, and animal waste and a landfill for a farm. Visitors to the site can mouse over a chemical name or click on an environmental condition to learn more; the site links to various other web pages from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Centers for Disease Control's Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, MedlinePlus from the National Library of Medicine, and other reliable sources. **

United States Forest Service: Schedule of Proposed Actions

<http://www.fs.fed.us/sopa/index.php>

The website explains that "the Schedule of Proposed Actions (SOPA) is published in January, April, July, and October. It contains a list of proposed actions that will soon begin or are currently undergoing environmental analysis and documentation." This information enables anyone to comment on proposals of interest. Readers may use drop-down menus of the states and of the National Forests, Grasslands, Scenic Areas, Recreation Areas, or Tallgrass Prairies to find out if any actions are proposed for a specific area. The site offers a link to a list of abbreviations and definitions as well as pointers to other related U.S.F.S. and government agencies and publications.*

Acknowledgements

Items followed by a single * are adapted from *The Scout Report*, Copyright 1994 – 2012 (<http://scout.wisc.edu>).

Two ** indicate the site was featured on the Applied Math and Science Education Repository Bulletin at <http://amser.org>

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Electronic Green Journal, Issue 33, Spring 2012, ISSN: 1076-7975