



# Chalk Talk

Greetings | Feature | News | The Blue Planet

PLEASE SHARE CHALK TALK WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES !!!

## Letter from the Editor

Dear Readers,

During a recent interview, Bob McDonald, host of CBC's *Quirk & Quarks*, credited the first colour



'Earth Rise', NASA (Apollo 8), 1968

photo taken of the Earth from space by the astronauts of the 1968 Apollo 8 mission as having inspired the birth of the Environmental Movement. It was the first time that we had the opportunity to see our world. Like Narcissus, who fell in love with his own image reflected in water, we were smitten with our planet ... so beautiful, so distinct, and so blue!

It is humbling to think that this entity, suspended in the universe as though by magic, in a pool of blackness, is our home. While subsequent photos clearly indicate the continents and oceans, and, if you know your geography you can find the outlines of countries and major topographical features peeking through a swirl of weather systems, no border lines are to be found, just one environment.

In 1970, not long after the iconic photo of the 'Blue Planet' became part of our consciousness, the first Earth Day was celebrated and the Environmental Protection Agency in Washington, D.C. was established. We became acutely aware of the fragility of the 'ecosystem', the impact of pollution on the protective 'ozone layer' as well as on the air, water and soil that nourishes and sustains all life.

This issue of **Chalk Talk** features educational resources that provide valuable information on the Environment. CoEd Communications is dedicated to supporting the important work of teachers by providing classroom resources on a range of topics. We invite you to visit our website at [4edu.ca](http://4edu.ca) to view the many **free** teachers' resources on offer.

Mary Kovack

## Environment Canada



Canada

**E**nvironment Canada's mandate is to preserve and enhance the quality of the natural environment; conserve Canada's renewable resources; conserve and protect Canada's water resources; forecast weather and environmental change; enforce rules relating to boundary waters; and coordinate environmental policies and programs for the federal government.

[Environment Canada](#) (EC) offers educators a variety of [environmental learning and sustainability](#) classroom resources and programs that are interactive and fun. Students are encouraged to learn about the environment and to apply this knowledge to help collect data that can be used by EC scientists in their work. This hands-on approach brings environmental learning to life for students and makes it relevant to their everyday lives. Participating school groups can share information and successes, find answers to their questions, network with others, and discover other environmental organizations.

Teachers are invited to explore three of Environment Canada's experiential learning programs: **Nature-Watch**, **ObservAction Network**, and **SkyWatchers**, all designed to challenge students to use their observational and research skills. **[See feature below]**

Visit the Environment Canada website for many more great classroom resources, including:

- **Great Lakes Kids** — [http://www.on.ec.gc.ca/greatlakes/For\\_Kids-WS4DB7BBAD-1\\_En.htm](http://www.on.ec.gc.ca/greatlakes/For_Kids-WS4DB7BBAD-1_En.htm)
- **Lessons Plans in Pollution Prevention** — <http://www.ec.gc.ca/cppic/citizens/lessonPlans/En/cr.cfm>
- **Educational Resources on Wildlife** — <http://www.on.ec.gc.ca/wildlife/publications-e.html#education>

[Source: Environment Canada on-line]

"Our planet is a blue planet: over seventy percent of it is covered by the sea. The Pacific Ocean alone covers half the globe. You can fly across it non-stop for twelve hours and still see nothing more than a speck of land." — *David Attenborough, from episode one, The Blue Planet*

## Environment Canada Experiential Learning Opportunities

Environment Canada offers educators many hands-on classroom programs.

- **NatureWatch**, which includes **FrogWatch**, **IceWatch**, **PlantWatch** and **WormWatch**, are monitoring programs that get students in collecting valuable data pertaining to soil, air, water and other aspects of environmental quality. To order classroom resources, [click here](#).
- **ObservAction Network** involves elementary and high school students in local water projects. At present, the ObservAction Network offers three projects designed for young people in schools: **Fresh Water Fish EcoWatch Network**, **Adopt a River** and **Project H2O**. Educators interested in helping their students test the water, [click here](#).
- The **SkyWatchers** program makes weather observation more than "just another subject" by integrating daily data collection into the school day. To download **SkyWatchers**, a curriculum-based teachers' resources for Grades 4 to Grade 7, and **Project Atmosphere Canada**, a resource created in collaboration with the Canadian Meteorological and Oceanographic Society, [click here](#).



Environment  
Canada

Environnement  
Canada

# Nature watch

## FROG watch



## Website of the week

### Statistics Canada is the authoritative source for information on the Environment — [www.statcan.ca](http://www.statcan.ca)



For Earth Day projects, check out StatCan's recently updated [Environment page](#), found under 'Resources by school subject'. Select the 'Key resources' tab to access several insightful articles and a great map. [<http://www.statcan.ca/english/kits/courses/environment1.htm>]. The new online **2007 Canada Year Book** features an article on the environment that gives an easy-to-read overview of current indicators of air and water quality and greenhouse gas emissions. For more detail, teachers can consult StatCan's annual publication, **Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators**.

['Click here'](#) to access StatCan's main Environment section where you will find the latest 'The Daily' news releases, and a variety of featured resources and studies, including **Envirostats**. Several maps are listed, illustrating land cover, climate regions, energy resources and more. Under 'Data' tab find statistical tables on many aspects of the environment [<http://www.statcan.ca/english/kits/courses/environment2.htm>]

**Envirostats:** A StatCan quarterly bulletin, Envirostats allows you to read up on the latest environmental issues. The Spring issue of EnviroStats at <http://www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/16-002-XIE/16-002-XIE2008001.htm>, recently published reports on households' disposal of toxic wastes and composting of organic waste. Also, check out **Human Activity and the Environment**, (<http://www.statcan.ca/english/environ/index.htm>), Statistics Canada's leading publication tracking how Canadians interact with their environment, offering great maps, tables, lesson plans.

To receive updates on any of these resources, teachers are encouraged to sign up to receive a free subscription to the monthly **Learning Resources Bulletin** — <http://www.statcan.ca/english/edu/news.htm>.

### CEA — Workshop Opportunity & Professional Development



Canadian Education Association  
linking . listening . learning . leading since 1891

Teaching that Works:  
Learning that Matters

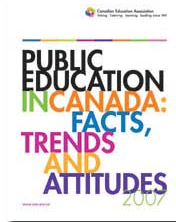
workshop kicks off CEA's focus on teaching and will contribute to New Brunswick's *When Kids Come First*

May 8-9, 2008, Fredericton, N.B.: CEA has developed a reputation for meetings that energize, open minds, and inspire a proactive mindset among participants. The **Teaching that Works, Learning that Matters**

vision with a particular relevance to education professionals focusing on achievement and assessment. The New Brunswick workshop is co-hosted by its No. 2 and No. 18 School Districts. It will be presented in both official languages and offer simultaneous interpretation. Don't miss this powerful learning opportunity! For more information [click here](#).

### Public Education in Canada: Facts, Trends and Attitudes

With this report, CEA provides a context for rethinking schools to drive dialogue and critical thinking about the challenges we face in educating all students to take their place in a world of dynamic social, technological and economic change. Key findings from CEA's *Public Attitudes Toward Education Survey* are contained in this report. This is CEA's fourth such survey and is based on the opinions of over 2,400 Canadians collected between January and May 2007. Commentaries from educational leaders based on these survey results help provide a context to issues such as student assessment, confidence in school systems, and educational change. In addition to the survey results, this report contains a collective picture of education in Canada, with an overview of our education systems, a summary of key public school indicators and a brief outline of trends in educational reform. **Download a PDF of the report at [Public Education in Canada: Facts, Trends and Attitudes](#).**



### Education News & Related Articles

[Stanley Park's hollow tree to be cut down; Vancouver officials vote to remove famous cedar](#) — Petti Fong, Western Canada Bureau Chief, *TheStar.com*, Apr 1, 2008

“Despite last-minute pleas by heritage conservationists, a Vancouver park board has voted to remove Stanley Park's famous Hollow Tree which has stood there for 1,000 years. The dead cedar was badly damaged by storms in 2006 and has since been leaning over at a dangerous angle. The park board voted last night to remove the tree which will probably be sliced down its length and mounted on a wall so visitors can see how big it was.”

[POLAR EXPEDITION: ABOARD THE AMUNDSEN, Vanished 'bridge' jolts ice pack sleuths](#) – Peter Calamai, Science Reporter, *The Toronto Star*, March 17, 2008

“Canada's largest research project in International Polar Year has been forced to switch gears because Arctic sea ice is disappearing faster than anyone imagined. Massive shrinkage of the permanent ice pack last summer scuppered plans to run continuous measurements and experiments starting this month at a semi-permanent base out on the ice, south of Banks Island in the Western Arctic.”

[GREEN ENERGY: Governments should warm up to biomass](#) — Cameron Smith, *TheStar.com*, Mar. 15/08

“Sometimes, when a solution is staring them in the face, people don't see it. They're too busy trying to make old ways fit new needs. Such is the case with biomass – renewable organic material that can be used as fuel, such as wood, straw, husks and spoiled seeds from grains, switchgrass and municipal waste. Biomass has been acknowledged as useful. But neither the provincial nor the federal government has seen it as a major tool for limiting global warming. If they had, there would be incentives in place for using it in controlled, high-efficiency heating.”

To be added to this mailing list, please opt in by clicking [here](#)

To be removed from this mailing list, please opt out by clicking [here](#)

We are the Company for Education Communications. We specialize in developing, producing and evaluating school resources and award programs. Working in conjunction with Departments/Ministries of Education, school district/boards, associations, teachers and subject specialists across the country; we provide free, curriculum-based educational resources to Canadian classrooms.

The opinions, conclusions and other information expressed in the preceding content do not necessarily reflect the views of and are not endorsed by CoEd Communications.

**416.955.9526**  
**416.955.0815**

THE COMPANY FOR EDUCATION COMMUNICATIONS INC.

66 George St., 3rd floor • Toronto, ON, Canada, M5A 4K8 • [www.coedcomm.com](http://www.coedcomm.com) • [info@coedcomm.com](mailto:info@coedcomm.com)