

Message from Jeff Sachs

Real Video (5:29)

Quicktime (5:29)

This season saw the highest number of tropical storms on record in the Atlantic. In this special video address, Jeffrey D. Sachs, director of The Earth Institute, discusses how the Earth Institute is facilitating high-level discussions on the complex issue of climate change, and how EI scientists are studying and modeling climate in an effort to understand what can be done to head off any greater dangers ahead.

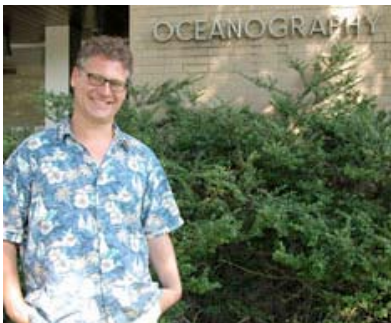
[Earth Institute Event on Nov. 10: Understanding the Global Warming Forecast](#)

[Earth Institute Event on Nov 11: Understanding Katrina](#)

[Go to our special Climate Change section](#)

Take the Climate Quiz

How much has the global temperature increased? Test your knowledge of this and other questions with our Earth Institute Climate Quiz. [Go to quiz](#)

**In the News****The Cost of Making the Poor Pay**

Every year, up to three million people die from malaria. Most of these people live in the poorest countries on Earth. Controlling malaria is one of the Millennium Development Goals set in 2000 to tackle the health problems of the world's poor, and this must be achieved if Africa is to escape from the cycle of extreme poverty and disease. [From SciDevNet, October 31, 2005](#)

Studies Point to Fiercer Storms

Adam Sobel, an associate professor of earth science at Columbia University who also works on climate dynamics at the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, said storm intensities found in the past 30 years were far greater than prediction theories even estimated, meaning that they may be a product of more than just global warming. [From the Journal News, October 28, 2005](#)

Global Forum For Free Sharing of Research Data Planned

A forum to promote the free exchange of information in the global scientific community was proposed last week at the annual meeting of the International Council for Science (ICSU). The forum would help ensure that scientists in poor countries can access information as easily as those in the North, said Roberta Balstad, chair of the ICSU Priority Area Assessment on Data and Information. [From SciDevNet, October 24, 2005](#)

Hitting it Big

It's easy to assume that wildly successful people — those who have riches, power, or fame — were charmed at birth. But many, like tropical soil expert Pedro Sanchez, became superstars only after age 50, after years of hard work. [From AARP, November-December, 2005](#)

New Grants Fund Global Research

Forty-one students will travel all over the world to research environmental sustainability on the Earth Institute's dime, officials announced last Tuesday. The grants are available to all Columbia students across schools, including undergraduates, who traditionally struggle to find funds for their projects. [From the Columbia Spectator, October 24, 2005](#)

Forest Carbon Storage 'Depends on Diversity'

The ability of tropical forests to store large amounts of carbon and so help curb future climate change depends heavily on the tree species growing in them, say scientists. [From SciDevNet, The Christian Science Monitor, and WNPR Connecticut Public Radio, October](#)

**Audio Slideshow: How a Scientist Linked the Sahel Drought to Temperature of Oceans**

Many scientists suspected poor land use caused the Sahel droughts of the 1970s and 1980s. But scientist Alessandra Giannini found the more likely culprit was the global oceans. [view slideshow](#)

**Seeing the Forest and the Trees****Study finds that loss of tree diversity affects the ability of tropical forests to sequester carbon**

A new study released in the online edition of Science suggests that tree diversity in tropical forests plays a crucial role in determining how much carbon these natural storehouses are able to hold, as well as their ability to provide other important ecosystem services such as preventing erosion. [more](#)

Devastating Droughts in the American West Not Isolated Events

Scientist presented analysis of these costly natural disasters

Only in recent years have scientists begun to unravel the causes of persistent droughts in the west. Richard Seager, a senior scientist at the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, visited the New York Academy of Sciences to discuss the history of drought and its consequences. [more](#)



Reducing the Impact of Mother Nature

During live Q&A, expert in natural disasters explains ways to mitigate damage

Is the worsening of hurricanes due to global warming? And how can we reduce the impact of natural disasters? The answer to these and other questions came from Art Lerner-Lam, director of the Center for Hazards and Risk Research, during a "live chat" sponsored by VIIP Virtual Forum on October 13, 2005. [more](#)



Down in the Trenches of Environmental Science and Policy

Mid-terms have a decidedly different feel for some students at the School of International and Public Affairs. Instead of cramming for a test or staying up all night to finish a paper, students in the Workshop in Applied Earth Systems Management recently presented recommendations for implementing international treaties or proposed legislation that address problems ranging from solid waste transport to mercury emissions. [more](#)

Sachs to Keynote at International Conference on Climate and Risk

An international conference, "Living With Climate Variability and Change: Understanding the Uncertainties and Managing the Risks," to be jointly sponsored by the International Research Institute for Climate and Society (IRI), the World Meteorological Organization, and the Finnish Meteorological Institute, has been set for July 17-21, 2006, in Espoo, Finland. [more](#)

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Cause of Monster Storms Hard to Pinpoint

Are sport utility vehicles and power plant smokestacks to blame for giant hurricanes like Wilma, Rita and Katrina? Not exactly. It's impossible to prove that any single weather event is caused by global climate changes, said Suzana Camargo of the International Research Institute for Climate Prediction. *From the Rochester (N.Y.) Democrat and Chronicle, October 20, 2005*

Debate Brews: Has Oil Production Peaked?

"Before 1998, I was on the side that said, 'Technology solves all problems,'" says Roger Anderson of Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory. "The problem is, after \$12 oil, oil companies responded by merging and firing large portions of their technical staff." *From USA Today, October 16, 2005*

World Temperatures Keep Rising With a Hot 2005

New international climate data show that 2005 is on track to be the hottest year on record, continuing a 25-year trend of rising global temperatures. *From Times Online (UK), October 14, 2005 and The Washington Post, October 13, 2005*

Students Take Stock of Hudson

"The idea is to take the entire estuary section of the river and let every group look at the whole system," said Margie Turrin, educational coordinator for the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, as she shepherded some of the dozens of drenched students back from a half-dozen stations along the pier to an impromptu laboratory set up in a blockhouse. *From The Journal News, October 13, 2005*

Green Roofs Save the Planet and Money in the Bronx

An experiment in the 1990's showed that New York was four degrees hotter than its surrounding suburbs and rural areas, because asphalt and black tar absorb the sun's rays, retain it and then re-radiate it back into the atmosphere. A green roof would help reduce that effect. *From WNYC, October 5, 2005*

No Easy Way Out of the Greenhouse

Wally Broecker, Newberry Professor of Earth and Environmental Sciences at Columbia University, has some advice for global warming activists to follow over the next 100 years or so: Get real. Also, Earth Institute geophysicist Klaus Lackner answers questions about the synthetic tree, a device he developed to remove carbon dioxide from the air. *From Discover, October 2005*

Families in Need Get Dream Homes in Harlem

In Harlem today there was a call to house poor families in New York City and around the world. Homes were dedicated for six needy families this morning a gesture many hope will catch on. *From Channel 7 News, October 3, 2005*

[more recently in the media](#)

NOAA Awards Grant to Study Impact of Low Oxygen Levels on Puget Sound

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has awarded researchers from The Earth Institute and elsewhere a two-year grant worth more than \$500,000 to study the historical trends of low oxygen levels in the waters of Puget Sound. The grant supports research to reconstruct the history of low oxygen levels, or hypoxia, in two basins of Puget Sound by examining the chemical and biological record stored sediment cores. [more](#)



In Rwanda, Clever Use of Technology Helps a Little Go a Long Way, and Faster

In a country that made headlines for a brutal genocide that left an estimated 800,000 dead, Rwanda now counts itself among several African nations battling with another devastating enemy: AIDS. But a clever new project called "TRACnet" will help deliver life-saving drugs to patients faster. [more](#)



The IRI Becomes The International Research Institute for Climate and Society

In October 2005, the Trustees of Columbia University changed the name of the International Research Institute for Climate Prediction to better reflect the work of the Institute. By providing practical advancements that enable better management of climate related risks and opportunities in the present, Columbia's IRI creates solutions that will help to increase adaptability to long term climate change. [more](#)

Special Events at the Earth Institute

Wed., Nov. 9, 6-7:30 pm, Davis Auditorium
The HIV Epidemic: A Catalyst for Better Healthcare for All?

Wafaa El-Sadr, M.D., M.P.H., Professor of Clinical Medicine, College of Physicians and Surgeons; Chief, Division of Infectious Diseases and Epidemiologic Research, Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University

Thurs., Nov. 10, 4-5:30 pm, Lerner Hall
Understanding the Global Warming Forecast: Our Past and Future Climate

Peter deMenocal, Associate Professor, Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory

Fri., Nov. 11, 10-2 pm, Low Library
Understanding Katrina

Experts will examine the science, physical and social vulnerabilities, and disaster risk management around one of the most destructive and costly natural disasters in U.S. history.

Mon., Nov. 21, 5-6:30 pm, Faculty House
American Policy and the Iraqi Constitution

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