Message from Jeff Sachs

"You could say this really was the year of living dangerously," says Jeffrey D. Sachs, director of the Earth Institute, in this special year-end e-newsletter video.

Understanding Katrina

Columbia experts convene to examine a broad range of issues raised by Katrina, including global warming, public decision-making processes, policy options, mitigation strategies, socio-economics and ethics. go to video coverage of the conference.

In the News

Scientists Who Blog

Print journals cannot keep up with developments in certain fields, adds Gavin Schmidt, a researcher at NASA’s Goddard Institute for Space Studies, who blogs at RealClimate.org with other climate scientists. From Nature, December 1, 2005

Study Shows Weakening of Atlantic Currents

Atlantic Ocean currents that cause northern Europe to be warmer than it would be otherwise have weakened by about a third over the last 50 years. British research shows. From The New York Times, November 30, 2005

Can Science and Religion be Reconciled?

Robert Pollack, Director of the Center for the Study of Science and Religion at Columbia University, discusses the relationship between faith and science. From The Leonard Lopate Show (WNYC), November 29, 2005

Rise in Gases Unmatched by a History in Ancient Ice

Shafts of ancient ice pulled from Antarctica's frozen depths show that for at least 650,000 years three important heat-trapping greenhouse gases never reached recent atmospheric levels caused by human activities, scientists are reporting. From The New York Times, November 25, 2005

Changing Climate Change

by Jeffrey D. Sachs

Fossil fuels are plentiful, but harmful; renewable sources like wind are good for the climate but not plentiful. Solar power is plentiful but not cheap. Nuclear power is plentiful but not safe. Improved technologies can offer a way out of this bind, but only if we think and act ahead. The Daily Times (Pakistan), November 28, 2005

Climate Change in Arctic Studied for Keys to Earth’s Warming

An upward shift in global temperatures could have real effects, including less water for irrigation, more wildfires, more insect outbreaks, warmer winters, poorer ski conditions, better growing conditions farther north, disappearing glaciers and more heat waves. The Billings Gazette, November 20, 2005

Rockland Students Learn About Land Use

A day-long program on land use showed students the complexity of a seemingly simple project: building a golf course. The program was sponsored in part by the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory. The Journal News, November 16, 2005
Second GROCC Meets Amid Changing World

More than 200 participants from nearly 150 corporations and other institutions from around the world met November 14 and 15 at Columbia University for the second session of the Global Roundtable on Climate Change (GROCC). With 2005 on pace to becoming the second warmest year on record, as well as the most active for hurricanes, and with world leaders preparing for critical negotiations on climate policy in Montreal in December, the Earth’s climate was on everyone’s mind.

It’s My Money and I’ll Run If I Want To

“The role of money and the connection to free political speech — I think it’s going to destroy our democracy, and I’m actually quite serious,” said Steven Cohen, a professor of public administration at Columbia University. “I think we are in the process of doing it right now.”

From The New York Times, November 10, 2005
(subscription required)

Rx For Survival: A Global Health Challenge

Jeffrey D. Sachs, director of The Earth Institute, was interviewed in this six-part series on the most critical and emerging threats to global public health, chronicling the leaders who, against all odds, deliver the goods.

From PBS, November 2, 2005

more recently in the media

Special Events at the Earth Institute

Mon., Dec. 5, 5-6:30 pm, Faculty House

Oil and US Foreign Policy: A Historical Perspective

David Painter, Associate Professor of History, Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University

Mon., Dec. 5, 6-8 pm, International Affairs Building, Rm 1501

MPA in Environmental Science and Policy Program Open House

For more information or to RSVP, contact Louise Rosen at 212-854-3142 or lan46@columbia.edu

Wed., Dec. 7, 6-8pm, at CERC

Center for Environmental Research and Conservation Educational Program Open House

Thurs., Dec. 8, 6-7:30 pm, Faculty House

Slash and Burn Agriculture — The Search for Alternatives

With Pedro Sanchez, Director of Tropical Agriculture at The Earth Institute, and Cheryl Palm, Senior Research Scientist at The Earth Institute

The Keeling Curve has been hailed as the most rigorous and fundamental measure of global change. James E. Hansen, director of the Goddard Institute for Space Studies (GISS), will give a presentation at AGU on how well humanity has responded to the warning inherent in the work of Charles D. Keeling, who passed away earlier this year.

Earth Institute Researchers Present their Work at the American Geophysical Union

Scientists from The Earth Institute will arrive in San Francisco this week to attend the fall meeting of the American Geophysical Union (AGU), an annual gathering of more than 11,000 researchers from around the world who study the Earth and other planets. Representatives from the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory (LDEO), the Goddard Institute of Space Studies (GISS), the International Research Institute for Climate and Society (IRI) and many other affiliates of The Earth Institute will present a wide range of geologic, geochemical and interdisciplinary research.

Wealth & Giving Forum Inspires Spirit of Giving to Fight Malaria in Africa

A myriad of messages compete for attention in today’s world. Filtering reliable facts from all the noise can be a time-consuming challenge for philanthropists interested in taking concrete steps to create lasting, positive change. Organizations like the Wealth & Giving Forum are helping families and individuals of means to distill competing demands on philanthropy into clear initiatives that can lead to informed and meaningful acts of giving.

On March 28 and 29, The Earth Institute at Columbia University will convene the fourth biennial State of the Planet conference to discuss the feasibility of sustainable development for billions worldwide. The gathering promises to offer stimulating discussions and innovative ideas in areas as diverse as the earth sciences, ecology, economic development, policy, agriculture, biodiversity and global health.

Look for more details soon or email scp@ei.columbia.edu to receive regular announcements and conference highlights.
Columbia Senior Research Scientist Receives Distinction as Fellow of Agronomy Society

Cheryl Palm, director of the Millennium Villages Project, was chosen to be a Fellow of the American Society of Agronomy.

Landfill Disposal May Pose Greater Health Risks Than WTE Treatment, Student Research Shows

Disposing of waste via landfills increases health risks 30-fold, compared with using waste-to-energy treatment — which generates electricity by burning waste — for disposal. This is according to a study conducted by a student in the Masters in Public Health (MPH) program at the Mailman School at Columbia University.

Lara Ettenson and David Westman gave a presentation on mercury emissions to over seventy people at the Applied Earth Systems Management Workshop's final briefings.

MPA Students in Environmental Science and Policy Give Final Briefings

On November 30, the MPA Program in Environmental Science and Policy concluded its semester-long projects with its final briefings for its Applied Earth Systems Management Workshop. The review had over seventy people attending, with students presenting on topics ranging from solid waste transportation to mercury emissions.

Comments and Suggestions

Contact our editor

Past issues

A concept of the Gowanus Saltmarsh in Brooklyn.

Urban Design Lab to Help Promote Sustainability and Environmental Justice in New York City

New Earth Institute center will provide practical assistance to community groups working to improve and develop their neighborhoods

On November 16, former New York City mayor and Columbia professor David Dinkins joined members of The Earth Institute in inaugurating a new, interdisciplinary Urban Design Lab. The Earth Institute's newest center is intended to make the resources of the University more readily available to residents of the city.

The Earth Institute Partners with Columbia's School of Engineering and Applied Science to Promote Faculty Diversity

The Earth Institute and The Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Science (SEAS) have joined together to ensure that a rich, diverse faculty becomes a mainstay of research and education at Columbia University. The new diversity initiative represents another step in what has become one of Columbia's highest priorities: the integration of women and men from a range of backgrounds into all aspects of academic life.

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