

CLIMATE CHANGE COLLECTION SCORECARD

Date: 1/28/05

Reviewer: Kirsten Butcher

Name of resource: Recognizing Forests' Role in Climate Change

Sponsoring Organization: Union of Concerned Scientists

URL: http://www.ucsusa.org/global_environment/biodiversity/page.cfm?pageID=526

Site Homepage: <http://www.ucsusa.org/>

RESOURCE WITHIN A SITE? **Y** / N

FOUND THROUGH DLESE? Y / **N**

IF SO, WHICH COLLECTIONS?

RECOMMENDATION YES **YES WITH RESERVATIONS** NO

STARS 1 2 **3** 4 5 (LAME TO STELLAR)

NARRATIVE (USE OTHER SIDE IF NEEDED)

- Nice text-based discussion of forests' role in global warming – the writing appears thoughtful but relatively easy to follow if the learner has the appropriate background knowledge.
- The site provides an in-depth discussion of current and needed policy for impacting the role of forests in climate change. Students who want to connect information on climate change (provided they already understand basic concepts) may greatly benefit from the carefully presented arguments about policy needs to address climate change compared to current policies and government proposals.
- My concerns are that the resource does very little to attempt to promote student learning or engagement. It primarily provides online access to text information that may be useful to learners with the right motivation and background knowledge. That being said, I think the information on the site is very useful and important.
- Links to key concepts with more information would make the site more user friendly for beginning learners. For example, the site mentions the carbon cycle almost immediately without any support in learning about this issue (for learners who are not already knowledgeable about this concept). Students who do not understand the carbon cycle are unlikely to understand what it means for mature forests to “sequester carbon in their soils.”
- The only two visual graphics used are not clearly supported by/explained in the text. In fact, the graph presented early in the site does not appear to match the text with which it is associated (the information that can be easily seen in the graph is the amount of global emission of CO₂ caused by deforestation compared to other means, not a percentage of the total or an illustration of how it affects the extinction of forest species.

INTENDED USE

 X REFERENCE

 COMPUTER ACTIVITY

 NON-COMPUTER ACTIVITY

 EDUCATOR, **LEARNER** OR BOTH (CIRCLE) IF FOR LEARNER, EVIDENCE ITS BEEN TESTED? Y / **N**

BEGINNER OR **ADVANCED** (CIRCLE)

- Seems most appropriate for intermediate to advanced students. Understanding of the carbon cycle is a prerequisite for learning from this site.

Easily Printed? **Y** / N – Appears that it will print well, but will take a lot of paper.

BUGS & TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES (PROBLEMATIC TO ROBUST)

1 2 3 **4**

COMMENTS: No errors were encountered. As long as links work appropriately, errors should not be found.

SCIENTIFIC ACCURACY- FACTUAL ERRORS/OMISSIONS (NATIONAL ENQUIRER TO NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC)

1 2 3 **4 ??**

EVIDENCE IT HAS BEEN REVIEWED FOR ACCURACY? Y / **N**

COMMENTS: Although I do not notice glaring errors, I do not have great expertise in this topic so I cannot judge if there were any scientific errors in the information. The links to reference materials published on the topic lead me to believe that the information is reliable and accepted based on a peer-reviewed process (at least, in terms of the original articles).

PEDAGOGICAL INFORMATION

☒ X REFERENCE ONLY
☐ TEACHER GUIDE
☐ MATERIALS LIST
☐ ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES
☐ TIMEFRAME PROVIDED
☐ STANDARDS ALIGNMENT INDICATED

PROMOTES STUDENT LEARNING (WEAK TO STRONG)

1 2 3 4

COMMENTS: Motivated students may benefit greatly from the information presented – especially the text that deals with forest policy as related to climate change. However, the site does not offer any tools or activities to promote active learning. I classify this as a site that can be useful for students, but doesn't actively promote student learning.

APPROPRIATE/EFFECTIVE MULTIMEDIA DESIGN (WEAK TO STRONG)

1 2 3 4

COMMENTS: There is no real multimedia component to this site. Textual reference information simply is presented in an online format.

VISUAL APPEAL (WEAK TO STRONG)

1 2 3 4

COMMENTS: For the most part, this is an online presentation of a written paper. Block paragraphs in an appropriately sized column, a couple figures, and the use of a colored section do prevent the text from completely overwhelming the learner. But the site could benefit from improved use of visual tools.

TEACHING TIPS: ANNOTATION DESCRIBING HOW SITE COULD BE USED OR ADAPTED FOR CLASSROOM

RECOMMENDATION: ANNOTATION DESCRIBING HOW THE DEVELOPER COULD IMPROVE THE SITE.

- Provide links to appropriate background information for beginning learners.
- More effectively support/explain visual graphics with text. Choose graphs and diagrams that more clearly communicate the intended message.
- Increase use of headers to visually organize large amounts of text for the learner.