





# What is the class blog?

- Each student is required to write a blog entry, the purpose of which is to **effectively communicate a peer-reviewed scientific journal article** involving a topic of environmental change to a **general, news-reading audience.**



# Why a class blog?

- **To practice reading, understanding, and communicating academic literature**
- **To develop *new* writing skills. Science communication writing requires attention to detail and creativity**
- **Because science communication is as important as the science itself**
- **To learn about new and relevant research related to students own interests and those of their peers**



# Student ownership of learning

## Students were in charge of

- **Brainstorming:** What criteria make for an effective blog article on a recent scientific research article?
- **Producing** blog articles on a consistent schedule (2-3 articles per week)
- **Editing** each other's work

What characteristics would a great science blog article have?

Audience?  
Style?  
Accuracy?

**Captivating title**  
**Concise writing**  
**Attention grabbing “hook”**  
**Clear relevance**  
**Helpful in-text links**  
**Simple language**  
**Gr. 12 level**  
**Definitions**  
**Related images**  
**Helpful links**  
**Simple stats/ charts**  
**White space**  
**Cite sources**

Used to  
develop the  
marking  
rubric

## Who is Responsible for Climate Change: Nations or Corporations?

We always think of our responsibility as Canadians to reduce our impact on the environment and this is reflected by our Nation's signing of environmental treaties like the Kyoto Protocol or the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation. Most of these international agreements focus on developed nations, like ours, significantly reducing our Carbon emissions. But what about the environmental damage done by corporations? Where do they fit into these international agreements?

25  
11  
2013



SEARCH

ENVIROCHANGE ARCHIVE

Select Month

RECENT POSTS

The Evolution and Destruction of the Cave of Crystals  
Who is Responsible for Climate Change: Nations or Corporations?  
Anthropogenic Impacts and The Great Barrier Reef  
The Trees and The Bees  
Cloudy skies and the faint young sun: More than just a sweet name for your new indie band

RECENT COMMENTS

A map of the 90 corp...  
on Who is Responsible for Climate...

ALILA MANGGIS  
LAUNCH... on Warming  
Tides Wash In Bad



# The Trees and The Bees

We all reach an age where we receive “the talk”. Although it can be awkward, uncomfortable and downright embarrassing, it is necessary that we become informed about the dangers facing the ecosystems of our world. For decades humans have been exploiting the natural environment for enterprise and profit without considering the effects damage will have in the future. One of these dangers comes in the form of the threat posed to bee colonies by the cultivation of palm oil plantations. It’s an undeniable part of growing up- we all have to learn about the trees and the bees.

20  
11  
2013

An important issue currently facing the tropical forest is the change in land use resulting from the increasing presence of oil palm plantations. The naturally occurring oils that are extracted from the trees are used internationally in a wide array of products ranging from breakfast cereal to biodiesel. Palm oil plantations require large clear sections of land and these are more often than not obtained through cutting down existing tropical forests. This clear cutting of the forests called home by various species results in a loss of biodiversity. Critical habitats are destroyed, and the change in surface landscape has negative effects for large and small animals alike.

George Livingston of the University of Texas has found evidence that orchid bees are sensitive to the increasing oil palm habitat. This variation is isolating the bees from the forest and causing changes in the species. By collecting bees at different locations between forests and oil palm plantations, Livingston has observed that species richness, abundance, and community similarity in bee populations all declined as distance from the forest increased. Although some communities were able to establish population in oil palm plantations, the overall lower abundance levels suggest that the modified environmental conditions created by the palm oil industry are not ideal for survival.



Figure 1: Male Orchid Bee (Wikipedia)

Changes were also observed in the physical evolution between orchid bees in the woods and bees in the oil palm plantations. Bees in the plantations were recorded to have longer tongues, a variation for which environmental filtering was

## ENVIROCHANGE ARCHIVE

Select Month ▾

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LAUNCH... on Warming Tides Wash In Bad...

Mercury poisoning an...  
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History of Planting... on  
So long, staples: desertificat...

## CATEGORIES

Aboriginal Populations  
Aerosols  
Agriculture  
Anthropogenic Climate Change  
Arctic  
Biodiversity  
Carbon Emissions  
caves  
Climate  
Clouds

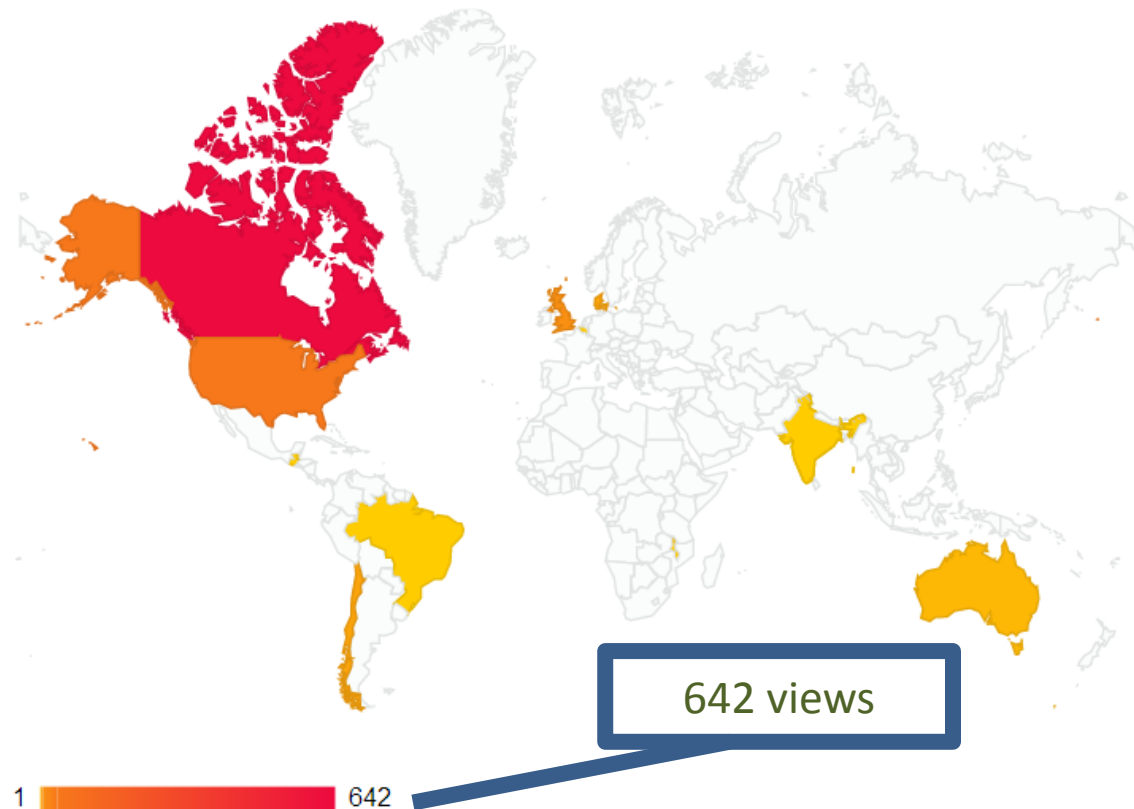
# Who read our blog?

Top Views by Country for all days ending 2014-03-24 (Summarized)

[7 Days](#) | [30 Days](#) | [Quarter](#) | [All time](#)

Country	Views
 Canada	642
 United States	39
 United Kingdom	8
 Hong Kong	3
 Chile	3
 Denmark	3
 Australia	2
 Bermuda	1
 India	1
 Belgium	1
 Guatemala	1
 Malawi	1
 Brazil	1

From 13  
countries





Thank you

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Have a peek at the class blog at:

<http://environmentalchangewestern.wordpress.com/>