

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, TRANSPARENCY, AND POSITIVE CHOICES

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Examples of related projects, complementary initiatives, and allied activities are provided below. Some of these are clearly outside the scope of what the Fund would support. However, many illustrate the power of coupling information technology and ecological health. The Fund hopes that teams proposing projects will build on the strengths of these efforts. These links are solely provided as inspiration. The Fund, its employees, directors, and/or members offer no endorsement of any of the sites or products below.

Currently Available Tools:

<http://www.ineedtobreatheplease.com/maintenant/>

A mobile, mp-3 compatible air quality monitor that can be plugged into an i-pod and alert the user of potentially harmful air quality conditions throughout their day.

<http://therealcosts.com/>

A Firefox plug-in that calculates the travel-related CO₂ emissions associated with certain transportation purchasing decisions. The goal of this plug-in is to increase the environmental awareness of an individual's day-to-day life with respect to carbon emissions. The Fund might be interested in a similar project that looks at the water impacts of these or similar purchasing decisions.

<http://www.badbuster.com/>

This is a Windows Explorer plug-in that tags company brand names as good (green), so-so (yellow) and bad (red) as they appear in your web browser. The Fund might be interested in supporting a collaborative project that highlights Great Lakes "friendly" products, firms, or value chains.

<http://www.vesseltracker.com>

Vesseltracker allows individuals access to ship traffic information via a range of free and for-fee products. A free Google Earth plug-in that allows people to visualize ship traffic positions as reported from the Automatic Identification System (AIS) required of commercial vessels. This can be found at: <http://www.vesseltracker.com/GoogleEarthKML/vesseltrackerlight.kmz>. For areas not currently in their system, they offer a receiver/uplink kit. If you live in the region, Vesseltracker will provide you with access to ship data around the globe if you provide them with an antenna location in that area and the installation of the AIS software package. See:

<http://www.vesseltracker.com/en/Installation-Kit.html> for more information.

<http://www.breathingearth.net>

A presentation of carbon dioxide levels emitted for countries around the world coupled with the number of demographic changes that are likely occurring as you watch.

http://earth.google.com/outreach/env_science.html

Environment related KMLs (Google Earth layers) developed for Google Earth.

<http://www.superfund365.org/>

Conceived and designed by Brooke Singer, this is an online data visualization application with an accompanying RSS-feed of Superfund sites across the United States. They visit one site each day for a year and develop creative displays of toxicity and other site specific information.

<http://www.willyoujoinus.com/>

An interactive game supported by Chevron that lets the user select among different energy resources to power their city, and in turn, their daily lives. This site allows people to understand the economical and environmental impacts of their decisions.

<http://www.urban-atmospheres.net/Experiments/Ergo/index.html>

Mobile devices equipped with air quality sensors that allow individuals and communities to interact and understand the quality of air in their immediate surroundings.

<http://www.urban-atmospheres.net/ParticipatoryUrbanism/index.html>

This site describes the concept of participatory urbanism – communities of individuals linked through mobile technology to provide environmental and social information related to a particular urban area. The concept is currently focused on air quality measures and provides examples of how it has been and can be used. However, this concept is not limited to air quality and can be tested in other applications to change behaviors that lead to additional ecosystem improvements.

<http://carma.org/>

This website displays carbon emission levels of power plants around the globe. The visual display of red, yellow and green expandable circles is backed up by carbon dioxide levels reported by utility plants. The Fund might be interested in a collaborative project that highlights efficient use, or rehabilitation of Great Lakes resources.

<http://www.ilovemountains.org/myconnection/>

This website directly connects the energy used by an individual (or organization) with the source coal and details how that coal was mined. It is targeted at raising the awareness of individuals to a type of coal mining that the authors consider particularly detrimental to ecosystem health. The Fund might be interested in efforts to link consumers to the beneficial effects of Great Lakes “friendly” purchasing choices.

<http://www.sierraclub.org/environmentallaw/coal/plantlist.asp>

This site provides up-to-date status on proposed coal-fired power plants in their area, including investors and financiers. The Fund might be interested in collaborative efforts that illustrate which value chains create Great Lakes benefits, and link consumers to them.

http://earth.google.com/outreach/program_details.html

This Google Earth resource link allows non-profits to use different applications within Google Earth to further their mission.

<http://nature.berkeley.edu/infolab/projects/informationtoolsdevelopmentproject>

An information tools development project at Berkeley that is trying to use the mobile phone (a ubiquitous part of our society) to deliver consumer relevant health, environmental and social information.

<http://www.equator.ac.uk/>

Information on the Equator project that tested linkages between the digital and physical world to influence behavior/experiences and improve the quality of life.

News & Articles:

<http://whysustain.us/>

This is a blog site for “sustainability” professionals to provide their perspective and project ideas on innovations in the field.

http://www.wired.com/techbiz/it/magazine/15-07/ff_maps

This article describes how the availability of Google maps and Google Earth has changed how people interact and the availability of new software developments in real-time.

<http://gristmill.grist.org/story/2007/10/3/103644/416>

This article summarizes the new 'fishphone' technology developed by Monterey Bay aquarium that allows seafood purchasers and consumers to text the name of a food item to an automated service. The service then sends consumers feedback on the environmental friendliness of that particular seafood item, such as how it was harvested or the contaminants it contains.

<http://www.startribune.com/389/story/1457997.html>

This article lists and describes a handful of interactive websites that allow people to visualize information in a different way.

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/science/article2609451.ece>

<http://www.vosizneias.com/2007/10/london-smart-shopping-carts-is-battle.html>

These news articles describe a new shopping cart that counts the calories and nutritional value of foods added during an individual trip to the grocery store. In a similar vein, what ecological information can be tracked and displayed (at a grocery store or other retail or wholesale establishment) to change an individual's purchasing behavior?

Data Visualization: People, Concepts, etc.

http://www.eyebeam.org/learning/eco_vis02.php

The main website for a design challenge where individuals are asked to create new and innovative ways to display ecological impact data and information.

http://www.globalscorecard.net/guide_to_ECR/I02.asp

This website describes how to follow the value of a particular service or resource through the business supply chain. Such practices would be necessary to truly understand the ecological inputs and outputs of a particular decision or manufacturing process.

<http://www.mulbrandon.com/portfolio.html>

This website demonstrates unique and compelling ways to correlate and display data.

<http://www.gapminder.org/video/talks>

Examples of different methods to interpret and display data and information.

<http://www.visualizingeconomics.com/>

"Making the 'invisible hand' visible". This site displays global economic and growth information.