



People and ecosystems Biodiversity for development

Communicating the issues

“Get down off our mountain tops”

“Walk the talk”

“Analyze the chemistry of change”

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Solutions





We cannot continue to communicate as we used to do



TRONDHEIM
CONFERENCES ON
BIODIVERSITY

facebook home search browse invite help logout

Neville Medhora's Profile (This is you) Texas

Information [edit]

Account Info [edit]
Name: Neville Medhora
Networks: Texas Alum '05
Austin, TX
Last Update: May 30, 2006

Basic Info [edit]
Sex: Male
Birthday: November 17, 2005
Hometown: Houston, TX

Contact Info [edit]
Email: nev@mail.utexas.edu
AIM Screenname: elliven11
Mobile: 713.301.1546
Current Address: 1818 Lakeshore Blvd #39
Austin, 78741
Website: http://www.Neville1.com
http://www.HouseOfRave.com
http://www.FacebookProfile.com

Education Info [edit]
College: Texas '05
High School: Langham Creek High School '01

Photos [edit]
You have 4 albums. See All

Status [edit]
Neville is in the ATX.
Updated 3 hours ago.

Texas Friends [edit]
196 friends at Texas. See All

Groups [edit]
You are in 6 groups. See All

The Wall [edit]
Displaying 10 of 70 wall posts. Write Something | See All

Friends in Other Networks

Austin, TX (23) NHMCCD (1)
Baltimore, MD (1) Northwestern (1)
Baylor (3) Oberlin (1)
Ben Davis High School (1) Orlando, FL (2)
Philadelphia, PA (1)

Facebook Trick 3
Created May 18

Testing 2
Created May 18

Anahita Kalianivala (TCU) wrote at 11:25am
I confirmed you!! ..in case you didn't notice :-)
Wall-to-Wall - Write on Anahita's Wall - Delete

Feroze Karanjia (East Brunswick High School) wrote at 4:21pm May 29th, 2006
this sucks, all you college people are out for the summer and im sittin here in 90 degree weather still with 20 more days
Wall-to-Wall - Write on Feroze's Wall - Delete

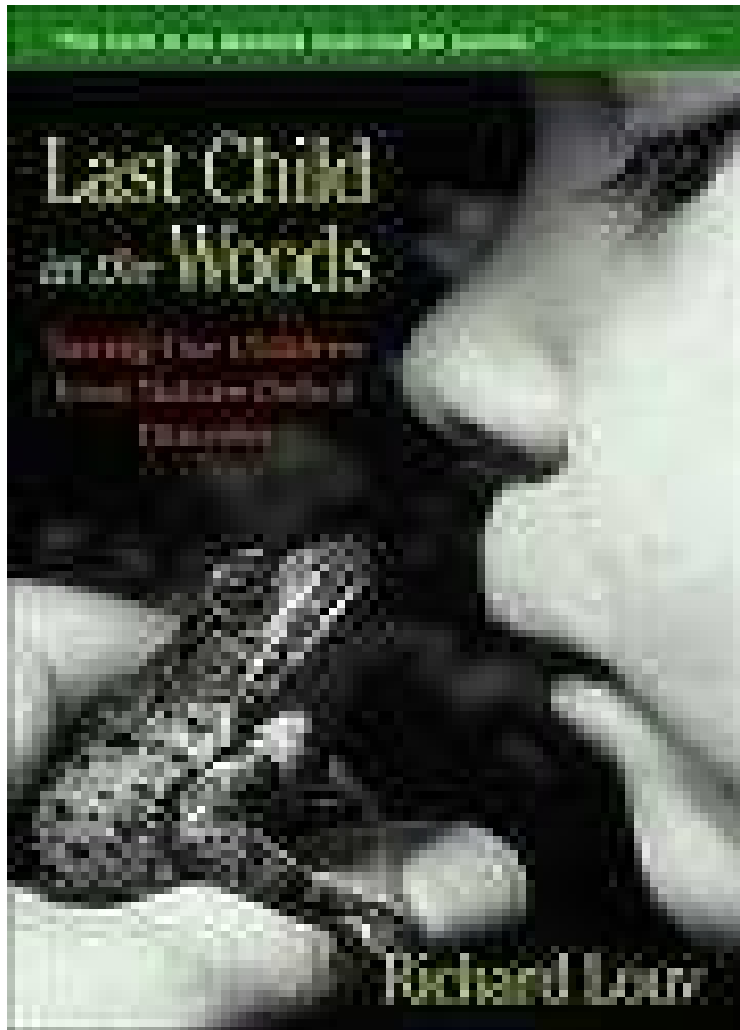
Fact of life (1)

Today a vast variety of entertainment and information options are available to people in their homes: DVD, MP3, Podcasting, Skype, blogging, wikis, video games, MySpace, YouTube and Facebook. People are in control of which information they want to source.



Fact of life (2)

The amount of information, opinions and 'talk' pumped at people has grown tremendously over the last decade. Biodiversity today has to compete with too many other messages. We have to run faster in order to stand still.



Facts of life (3)

The public especially in the OECD countries lack a real connection with nature.

They have come to think of nature as more of an abstraction than a reality.

Youth is even more disconnected: Instead of passing summer months hiking, swimming and telling stories around the campfire, these children are more likely to attend computer camps or weight-loss camps.





1. Get down off our mountain tops

Drivers impacting on biodiversity are down in the valley.

From a communication perspective
that is where you have to be.





Seen from the communication perspective:

Weighty biodiversity reports, backed up by years of painstaking research.

Policymakers on average only spend between 20 seconds and 5 minutes on these reports.

Communication conclusion:

**research reports are not the end, but the
should be the beginning of our efforts!**

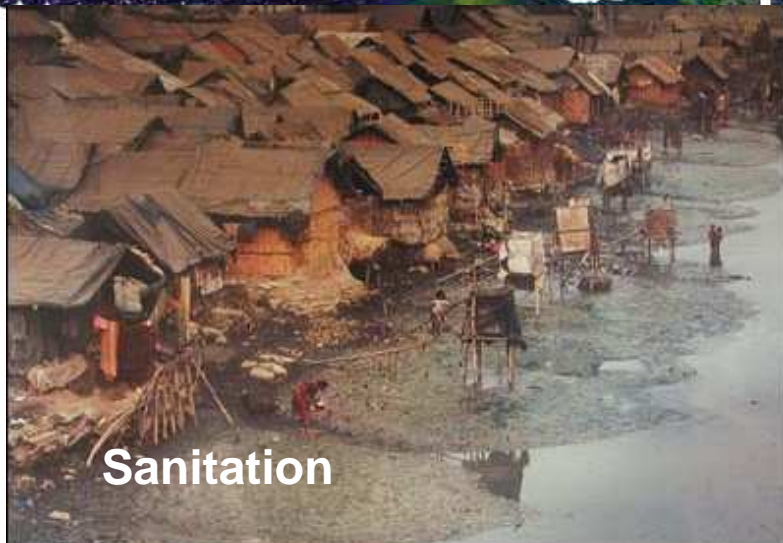


Some inconvenient questions:

- what change do we want to see in the world?
- are we prepared to overcome the psychological barriers of being comfortable with the status-quo, and happy just complaining about the loss of biodiversity?

Do we recognize the need to achieve our objectives through others?

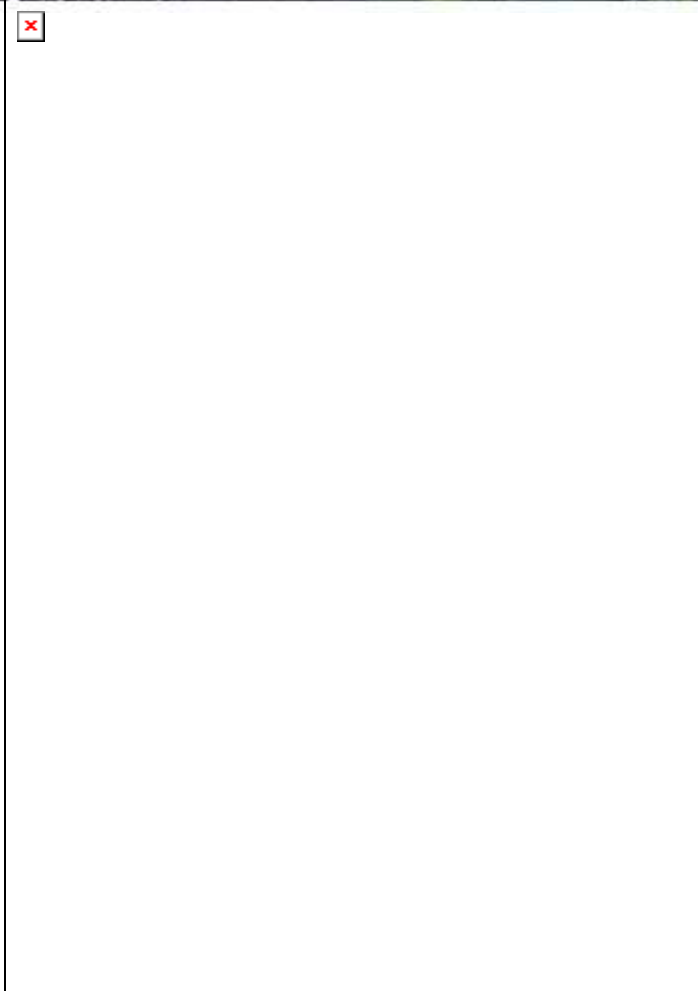
Is there a culture of engaging with others to achieve our objectives?





Paradigm shift

Vision	From	To
Conservation & sustainable use is	The overall goal	One of the means towards sustainable development
We cooperate	To get more power	To realize synergy
We act	To win	To share in success
Biodiversity experts should be	In control of all activities	Advisors in larger teams
Important for us is	Research logic & formalities	Impact on the ground
Knowledge is	To be translated and packaged by communication	To support transactions and communication with partners
If biodiversity is not a priority	We lose	We learn
The way we deal with risks is	We avoid risks	We take risks



Interaction ecology - economy not anymore about the one winning and the other losing, it is about joint learning for sustainable development.



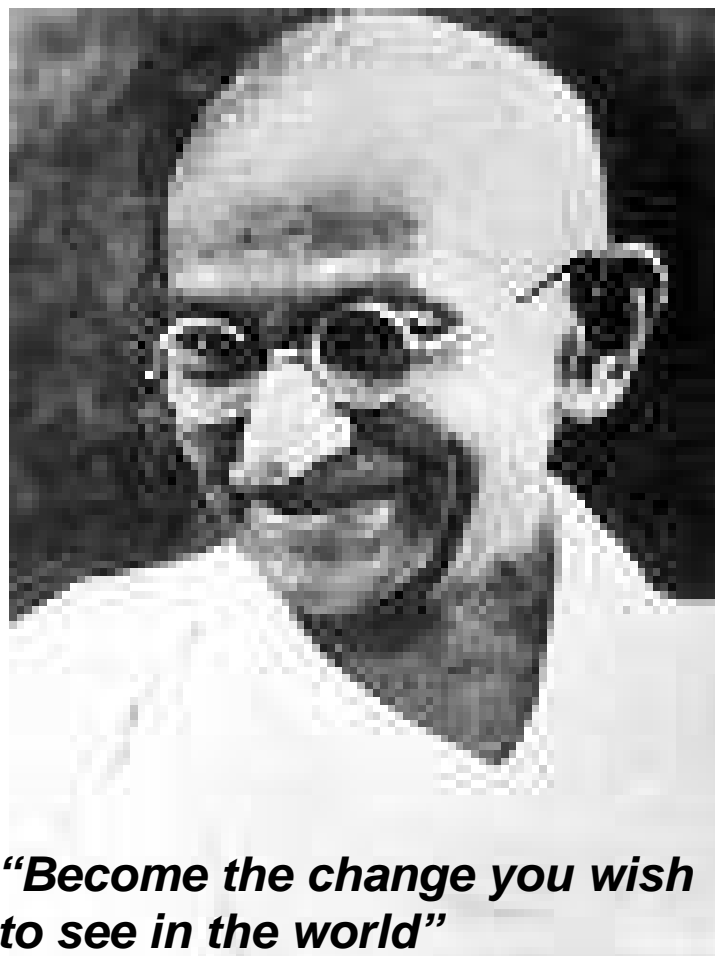
2. Walk the talk!

Not what we say matters, but what we do!

Perception is the only reality: How credible are we?

INCONVENIENT QUESTIONS:

- Who has more than 2 cars in his/her household?
- Who has not made provisions in his/her garden for birds, frogs, butterflies or bees?
- Who has non-indigenous plants in his/her garden?
- Who eats meat every day?
- Whose PC, TV or mobile charger are on standby when not used?



Walking the talk:

Affects your audience:

People appreciate that you know what it means to change; you personally have undergone the experience; you have shown the courage.

Improves leadership skills:

When you live the change, it is easier to talk about it in simple terms. Your speeches will be more authentic. It enables to listen better to those you want to change, as you can connect better with the concerns and needs of the audience.

It contributes to your credibility, especially if you invite others to provide feedback on your behavior.



The small tortoiseshell butterfly, one of the many beautiful visitors that a pollen rich garden will attract.

If a major issue in the country is a bird species: what provisions for birds are made in their garden for birds? If the main issue is water, how is water managed in the garden and home?



In a country where invasive species is a priority issue, a leader might look at his or her garden at home: If it is filled with non-indigenous plants, then change it.

Natural Pest Control – the Garden Spider!



MORE INCONVENIENT QUESTIONS:

- What is the ecological footprint of our meetings?
- How sustainable is our office?
- How sustainable is our procurement, our HRM?
- How sustainable are our policies and their implementation?
- Do we provide effective leadership towards sustainability?



To a certain extent already we see some walking the talk, e.g. making our meetings more a biodiversity 'experience'. But we have to do really much more...!

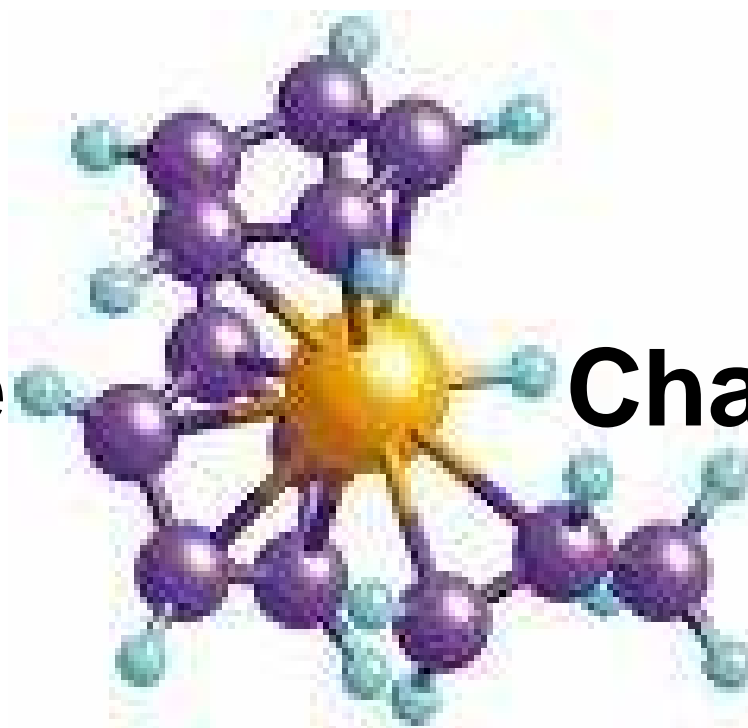


3. Analyze the chemistry of change!

Do we know what we want to achieve
and

what it takes for people, organizations, societies to
change?

Knowledge Change





Metaphors

For a communicator trying to 'sell' biodiversity, the concept does not seem to address any specific human needs or segmented audiences. Biodiversity does not ring a bell among the public. There is no big story, no flavor. It does not resonate with emotions.

Examples of difficult scientific concepts that do resonate with the public:

"The heart is a pump",
"The eye is a camera",
"The cell is a factory",
"The kidney is a waste filter",
"The brain is a computer",
"Photosynthesis is like baking bread"
"Global warming is caused by a CO₂ blanket".



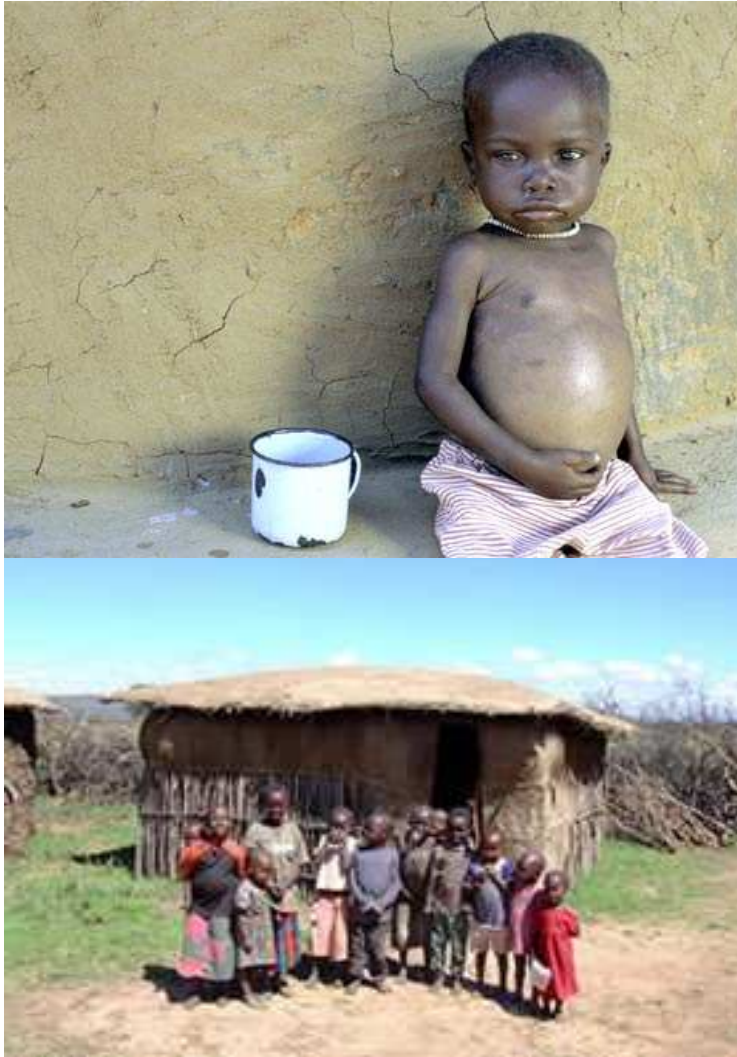
Framing

People have conceptual maps in their minds – frames – that help them to sort incoming information quickly.

The first words can trigger a certain “mental model” so that they say to themselves, “Aha, so this is bout...” This can make it difficult to change people’s ideas.

- free market’
- ‘tax relief’
- ‘war on terror’

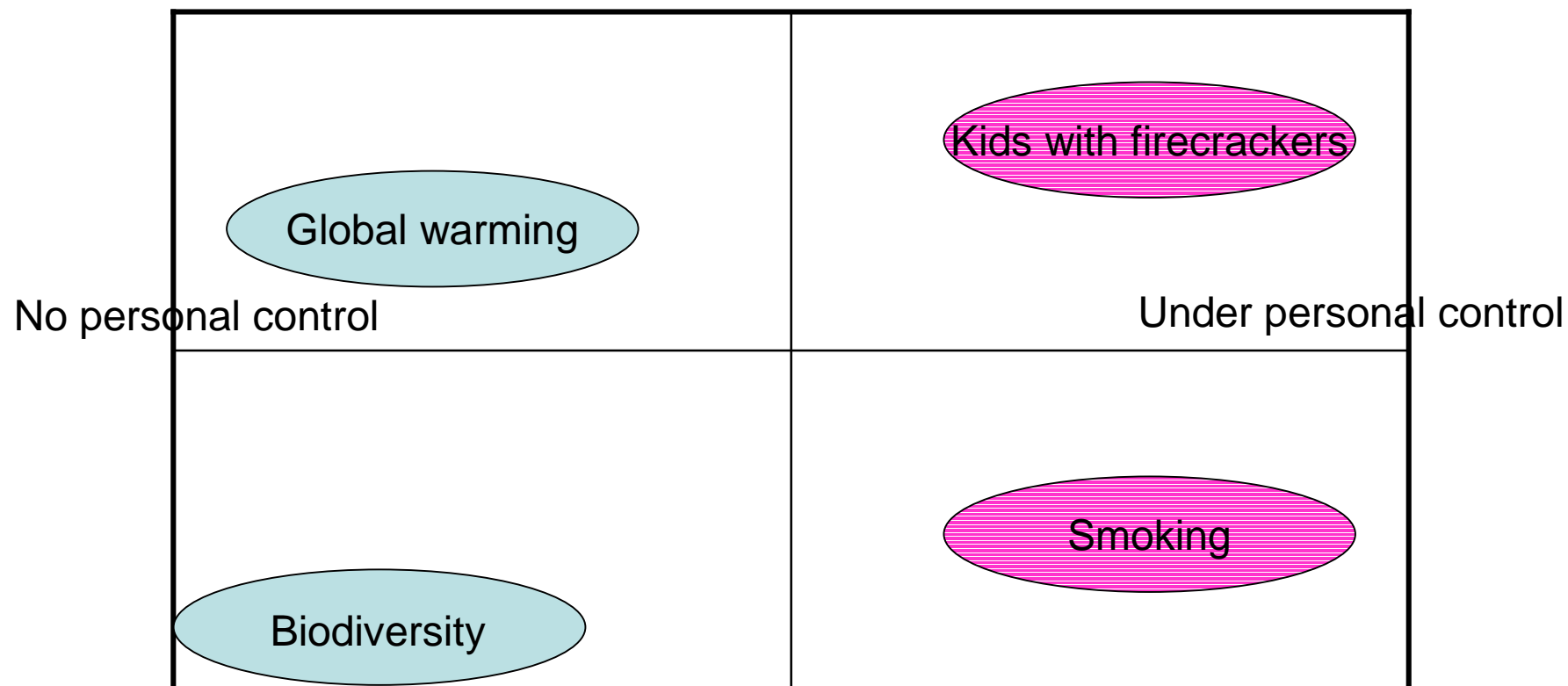
- ‘green coals’
- ‘bio-fuels’
- ‘genetically modified’



The power of one

Logic tells us that a bigger problem should get more attention. One person suffering from a disease is certainly bad, but a thousand afflicted individuals should motivate us far more. But it doesn't work that way. Our brains operate in an illogical and perhaps unexpected manner. They are wired to respond more strongly to an individual plight than the same condition afflicting a group.

Horror outcome



Sad, but let's move on outcome



Learning by doing

Information meetings with local women on health, food, income generation and the Maya nut. Trainings by local women to market planting and sustainable use of the Maya nut. Empowering communities to understand and resolve their own problems using local skills, knowledge and resources.



If you are interested to learn more about the chemistry of change, learning and communication, you can pick up a CD ROM with the pre-publication of the SCBD IUCN toolkit on CEPA.



Conclusions and recommendations

Get down off our mountain tops

- knowledge about entry points for partnerships with other sectors and as a support for transactions with other sectors, instead of communication translating & packaging biodiversity knowledge.

Walk the talk

- biodiversity events as 'learning experiences' and leaders who 'live' the change and 'learn by doing'

Analyze the chemistry of change

- bring together the best expertise to brand biodiversity, reframe major biodiversity issues, find motives and methods of learning for change in a range of sectors and cultures and use the results of this analysis when we formulate objectives, measures and actions. We should not use anymore communication stand 'alone' or 'end of pipe'.



Thank you!