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## WHERE HAVE ALL THE GOOD FISH GONE?

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by Allison Anderson

### ***We must reconsider our consumption of the most over-harvested and worst-managed fish species.***

As consumers around the world seek the health benefits of seafood, demand for it has sky-rocketed, exhausting the stocks. Gone are the days that one can consume without guilt one of the many fish species facing decimation. Moreover, it is no longer only the cod in danger of huge-scale overfishing as other highly favoured fish including tuna, halibut, flounder, wild Atlantic and Pacific salmon, orange roughy, Atlantic sea scallops, and even less traditional foods – such as sharks, marlin, swordfish, monkfish, snapper, and Alaska king crab – face dwindling numbers and for some, even extinction (*Maclean's*, November 2003).

With commercial trawlers virtually raking the oceans, the populations of all large fish have been reduced to less than 10 percent of their former size over the past five decades, according to the research of Ransom Myers, a well-known fisheries biologist based at Dalhousie University. Myers' research was published in a May issue of the scientific journal *Nature*.

The large species are not only shrinking in numbers, but in size as well. The large species' average size is only one-fifth to one-half of what it once was, their age of reproduction sometimes never even being reached, says Myers. A tragic example of this is the average Chilean sea bass in the waters off Antarctica, which now weighs less than 10 lbs., compared to 150 lbs. twenty years ago (*National Geographic*, May 2003, and *Maclean's*, November 2003).

The growing fish farm industry dirties the seas with disease-carrying, antibiotics-packed feces, and often entails escaped populations wreaking havoc in the environments of their wild counterparts. Further, the industry has equipped even small fleets with sophisticated technology such as satellite navigation systems geared towards pilfering the deep, once impregnable, seas where fish gather and spawn.

Of course, if there was not such an insatiable demand for seafood, fishermen would not go to such great lengths to satisfy it. With the taste, for example, for sushi and sashimi in the late-twentieth-century came premium prices for bluefin tuna and a decline in their Western Atlantic populations from a quarter million in 1970 to 22,000 to-

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## COMPOSTING SUPER-HERO

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By Barb Harvey & Norman Ewing

As the students of this fine law school may or may not know, the compost behind the Fraser building does not look after itself. For the upcoming academic year, the generous Scott Dunsmuir (a.k.a. "Captain Dirt") has assumed the responsibility of caring for the pile of decaying organic matter that we produce at the law school. As a result of his efforts, we will successfully be able to divert mountains of apple cores and orange peels from local landfills and hopefully help the earth breathe just a little bit easier. This is just one of the many practical steps that the ELC sustainability committee is taking to reduce our collective ecological footprint. If you are interested in getting involved, contact Sue at samunn@uvic.ca. If you're lucky, you too may earn a superhero nickname!

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Scott Dunsmuir sure loves dirt!



## ABOUT THE ELC

### **ELC Mission Statement:**

The Environmental Law Centre is a student-run organization committed to the protection of the environment through education, discussion and research on environmental issues and their legal solutions, and to the development of legal advocacy skills for students and environmentalists. The Centre is open to law and non-law students and strives to create an inclusive environment, where all students may participate fully.

### **ELC Executive 2002:**

Jeanette Ettel, Co-President  
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### **ELC Newsletter Editors:**

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## ***Up Close and Personal With Captain Dirt*** (CONTINUED from pg. 1)

### **Name:**

Scott Dunsmuir (a.k.a. "Captain Dirt")

### **Place of birth:**

Queensville, Ontario

### **Why you took on the ELC composting challenge?**

I think the main driving force for me was Trey Anastasio's drug-dealer. After all, without a constant supply of what must be pretty high quality hallucinogens, Trey wouldn't have been able to write songs like "Dirt", telling us:

"I'd like to live beneath the dirt...A tiny space to move and breathe is all that I would ever need"

I mean, if that song hasn't inspired composters around the world, then you can call me Scott.

### **If you could have any one super power, what would it be and why?**

My super power would definitely be never having to sleep. I mean, really, sleeping is just such a waste of time. Right off the bat, I lose 33% of my available composting hours. What a cruel, cruel world we're trapped in.

### **If you were stuck on a desert island, what 3 items would you take with you?**

A turn-table and two copies of Dylan's Blonde on Blonde on vinyl (just in case one started to skip or warp in the extreme heat). I wouldn't last very long, but it'd be good times.

### **What is the strangest thing you have ever eaten?**

Meat. I used to eat that stuff... how weird is that?

### **Life aspirations?**

Open an organic restaurant/micro-brewery, and hang out with some penguins for a day... that would be great. Any penguins other than emperor penguins would do, they're way too lazy.

### **Secretly, you wish that...**

My moniker was cooler than Captain Dirt.

### **Guilty pleasure?**

Historical fiction. Stop laughing at me!

### **Composting/general earth care tips for your adoring public?**

Bigger is better, more heat generates in a bigger pile

Aeration is key, stir your compost up with each addition

Ratio- Worms are important, if you add 1lb of scraps a day on average, then you should have 2 pounds of worms in the compost...a 1:2 ratio.

Balance both your moisture level and the variety of scraps you add.



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## LETTER FROM THE CO-PRESIDENTS

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With this year's executive comprised of mostly first-year students, the ELC is full of new energy and ideas. Our focus this year is on education and outreach. In the works are speaker events on a wide range of environmental law topics. This year's major research project also has an educational dimension – it will involve reviewing recent changes to BC's environmental legislation. If you're interested in getting involved or have any suggestions, we'd love to hear from you!

Jeanette Ettel (jettel@uvic.ca)  
Jennie Milligan (jmilli@uvic.ca)

# WANT PAPER TOWELS IN THE RESTROOM?

by Christina Godlewska

Year after year it's an issue. Why do we have to spend almost a solid minute, with a line of impatient-looking folks standing behind us, rubbing our hands underneath those archaic hand dryers? I have the same question. However, give it a quick second thought, glance at the figures and you will realize that paper towels are NOT the answer.

And no it's not just about the 90% savings on operations costs. According to David Ring, vice president of sales and service for World Dryer, an average school, using about 30 dryers, saves 17 trees per year from being used to produce the paper towels. He adds that the yearly paper towel waste created by that school would amount to three cubic yards of landfill space. Now I'm not saying that we can trust Mr. VP Sales and Service for exact figures. But odds are he's not completely wide of the mark either.

Of course, making hot air drains energy resources as well. But check out the kJ (kilojoules)/use column in this direct comparison:

Table 1.

Description	Mj/kg	towels/kg	kW draw	time (sec)	kJ/use	Cost per 1,000 uses
Virgin towel	131	352	---	---	743	\$23.00
Recycled towel	81	352	---	---	460	\$23
Standard dryer	---	---	2.2	30	222	\$1.47
"Green" dryer	---	---	1.5	15	76	\$0.50

**TABLE 1. Energy use comparison of paper towels and electric hand dryers**

[Source: Franklin and Associates Inc. For details, see the January 2002 issue of Environmental Building News, available online at [www.buildinggreen.com](http://www.buildinggreen.com)]

The chart above examines the "embodied energy" in paper towels (timber operations, manufacture, shipping, etc.) and compares that with the energy use by electric hand dryers. As our own Manager of Janitorial Services, Colin Butterfield reminds us, "in the logging, manufacture, delivery [from] supplier, to purchaser, to the building and return to landfill there are considerable energy inputs".

The standard dryer is what we have right now. The major problem with them is that they take such a long time and most of us do not have that much patience. But the company who makes this 'Green dryer' ([www.exceldryer.com](http://www.exceldryer.com)) claims that it uses a high-velocity air stream to actually blow water droplets off the hands. This supposedly cuts the drying time to 12 to 15 seconds. In addition, because the dryer doesn't rely only on heat, it uses less electricity: 1,500 w instead of the industry-standard 2,200 w.

So rub more vigorously, leave yourself more time, and if you're going to complain, lobby for greener, faster dryers, not more waste and wastefulness.

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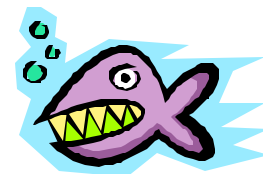
day (*National Geographic*, February 2002 and August 2001).

Another origin of over-exploitation, according to Sylvia Earle, a marine biologist and National Geographic Explorer-in-Residence, has been the billions of dollars spent by governments to subsidize the industry, aiming to maintain jobs and human-communities. "But what is not realized is that when the fish have gone, the way of life will come to an end anyway," she says. "What's happening is not sustainable" (*National Geographic*, May 2003).

Recovery will not be easy in the loosely patrolled, vast regions of the oceans. It demands fewer fish killed through the reduction of quotas and fishing efforts, cutting of subsidies, reduction of by-catch, and creation of networks of marine reserves ("no-touch" zones). However, the best manager in the long run could be you, in the form of consumer boycotters of those endangered species now spreading across the continent (*National Geographic*, May 2003, and *Maclean's*, November 2003).

To prevent their extermination, there must be less debate concerning to whom these dwindling stocks belong, whether within our borders or beyond, and more of an understanding of just how near to extinction some of these species are.

[Allison Anderson is a member of the UVic branch of the Student Animal Legal Defense Fund. To get involved, contact Catherine Milsum, General Co-ordinator: [milsumcj@uvic.ca](mailto:milsumcj@uvic.ca)]





# RECYCLING IN VICTORIA

by Tracy Anderson

## At Home

### **What Can Go In Your Blue Box**

- Plastics - Rigid plastic containers with a stamped recycling symbol of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, or 7 can be recycled. Clean and flatten the container and discard any non-plastic parts, as well as any lids or neck rings.
- Glass - Clean the bottle or jar before recycling. Labels may be left on.
- Metal Containers - Clean and flatten aluminum and tin cans. Remove the label.

### **What Can Go In Your Blue Bag**

- Mixed Paper – Clean paper products can go loosely in the blue bag. Acceptable paper includes:  
Flyers/ notices - Junk Mail - Magazines - Cereal boxes - Laundry boxes - Paper bags - Bond paper - Envelopes - Newsletters - Utility bills - Catalogues - Phone books - Blueprints - Shredded paper - Index cards - Writing paper - Note paper - Gift wrap
- Clean newspapers and inserts.

### **Corrugated Cardboard**

- Flattened boxes that are cut or folded down to pieces no larger than 45cm by 90cm (18" by 36") can be put out beside your blue box.
- Cardboard should be clean, gathered together, and tied with twine or string.
- No pizza boxes.

### **Other Items Around the House to Recycle**

- For locations around Victoria offering refunds for beverage container deposits, visit <http://www.mydepot.ca/>.
- Liquor bottles can go back to any BC Liquor Store or some bottle depots.
- Plastic grocery bags can be recycled at Thrifty Foods stores.

## At School

Bins in the classrooms are for paper only. Cans and bottles can be recycled in the lounge.

### **Compost**

The compost bin is located outside the lounge in the courtyard. Common school things you can put in the compost:

- Raw fruit and vegetable scraps (banana peels, apple cores, etc.)
- Tea bags and coffee grounds

## **Recycling Resources**

Call the CRD Recycling Hotline at (250) 360-3030 with any recycling or composting questions.

### **Recycling Pick-up Schedules**

- For most of Victoria pick-up schedules can be found at <http://www.crd.bc.ca/es/bluebox/>.
- For Oak Bay residents, schedules are found at <http://www.oakbaybc.org/index.htm>.

### **Where to Get a Blue Box or Bag**

- For a list of locations around Victoria, visit <http://www.crd.bc.ca/es/bbox.htm>.

### **Composting Resources**

- GVRD Composting and Yard Trimmings - A Vancouver website with clear step-by-step instructions on backyard composting or worm composting for those in apartments. <http://www.gvrdb.ca/recycling-and-garbage/composting.htm>.

### **General Resources**

- The Recycling Council of British Columbia can recommend a location near you to recycle anything, from appliances and hazardous materials to beverage containers and paper. Check out their website: <http://www.rcbc.bc.ca/index.htm>, or call 1-800-667-4321.

## **ELC CLINIC STUDENTS IN ACTION**

Students enrolled in the fall clinic course are taking on some exciting projects dealing with the following issues:

- *Protecting the Greater Victoria National Defence Lands* - Andrew Uhlman
- *Cleaning up the GVRD Sewer System: A Model Source Reduction Bylaw* - Corey LaBoucane
- *Banning Junk Food Machines from Public Schools* - Kathleen McIntosh
- *Stopping Fecal Contamination of Shellfish* - Kari Toovey
- *Challenging BC's New Forest Practices Legislation* - Ian Gerritsen
- *Using the Endangered Species Act to Protect Cultus Lake Salmon and First Nations Rights* - Corkey Douglas
- *Reforming Log Salvage Regulation to Protect the Fraser River Estuary* - Alexis Wallace

