

Columbians Taking Initiative

Using the Tools of Business to Inform Environmental Policy

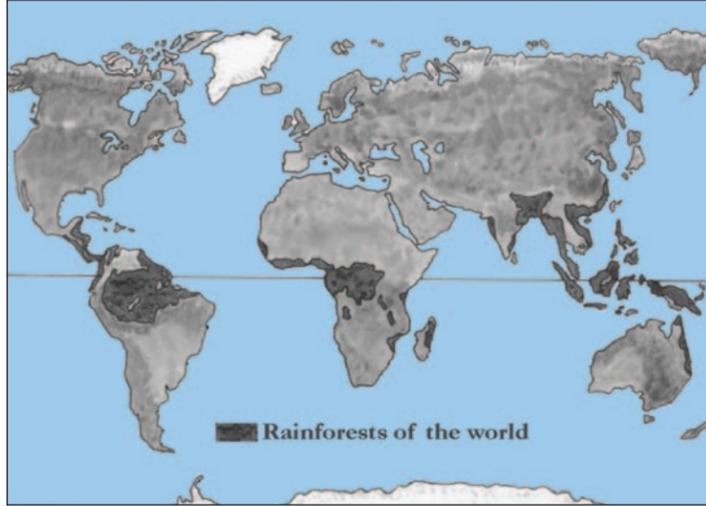
By Elisha Sessions

At a conference on climate change in Montreal this month, the United Nations will be considering a sweeping proposal generated by Columbia business students and faculty to financially reward countries that protect their rainforests.

If adopted, the new provision would extend the Kyoto protocols—the set of agreements aimed at, among other things, reducing carbon dioxide emissions by industrial societies—to developing nations.

Under Kyoto, polluters who create too much carbon dioxide are penalized, while nations who meet the agreement's targets are rewarded.

"One of the problems with Kyoto," says Professor Geoff Heal of Columbia Business School and one of the leading figures in the Columbia



initiative, "is that it doesn't include developing nations, and that's where most of the world's tropical forests are located.

"Tropical forests not only help reduce carbon dioxide, but the very act of destroying them creates an enormous amount of carbon emissions—which have a signifi-

cant impact on global climate stability."

If developing countries become signatories to Kyoto, Heal reasons, they would stand to make more money from keeping their rainforests intact than if they allowed loggers to destroy them.

The project began when Kevin Conrad, a 2005 busi-

ness school graduate who was raised on the island of New Guinea, home of the world's third largest rainforest area, sought out Heal to supervise the final project for his Executive M.B.A. Conrad worked with Heal and fellow classmates to examine whether money from the Kyoto agreements could equal Papua New Guinea's logging revenue.

Conrad's business plan concluded that the "carbon credits" the nation could receive as a result of slowing deforestation would indeed outstrip the economic benefits of destroying its forests—provided the rules were changed to allow credits for this purpose.

With this economic data in hand, Conrad and Heal enlisted Papua New Guinea's support to start the Coalition for Rainforest Nations, which is lobbying to reform how the Kyoto protocols deal with

deforestation. The prime minister of Papua New Guinea, Michael Somare, announced the initiative during his visit to Columbia in May of this year.

Heal says that Conrad's business plan was key. "We explain to these countries that it is in their economic interest to sign on," he says. The approach has been successful; in addition to Papua New Guinea, the Coalition now includes Bolivia, the Central African Republic, Chile, DR Congo, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala and Nicaragua.

Heal expects the Coalition's proposal to pass at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, which starts Nov. 28 in Montreal—despite possible "no" votes from the United States and Saudi Arabia—which would allow it to move to a scientific working group within the UN.

Stepping Out: Grad Students Treat City as Lab for Testing Ideas

The mansion that hulks near the corner of 160th St. and Edgecomb Ave. would have been just another myste-

rious fixture in the City's landscape had Columbia student Amy Keith not done a little research before setting out last Friday on a walking tour with some of her fellow students.

Keith, a first-year at

Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA), is an inaugural member of City Trekkers, the creation of two SIPA students: Don Blakeney, who is pursuing a joint degree in interna-

tional affairs and planning, and Hillary Peck.

On the trek through Washington Heights, the group's first official outing, Keith pointed out that the 160th St. mansion once served as George Washington's headquarters during the American War for Independence.

But while the trek provides a chance to bone up on the city's landmarks, its main purpose is for students to take what they've learned in the classroom and apply it to the city around them.

On this particular walk, for instance, the trekkers peered in the windows of local stores and, using the framework of economic globalization, talked about what's being sold, who's selling it and how these particular goods had made their way into W. 162nd St. shops.

"We want to augment what

we're learning in our classes with what's actually happening in New York's neighborhoods," Keith explains.

After hiking more than 60 blocks, the group had dinner at a Dominican restaurant with Jason Raymond, a teacher at the High School for Law and Public Service in Washington Heights. In response to their questions about the challenges faced by local-area schools, he reported that recent years have brought a decline in violence as well as rising test scores—saying that parent participation had been key.

The group will soon be roaming well beyond northern Manhattan. "This was the first of what we envision as ongoing treks into New York," says cofounder Peck. "We'll probably go downtown next."



SIPA students walk 60 some blocks in search of practical applications for classroom theories.

Awards & Honors

Columbia law professor **JOHN FABIAN WITT** has won the 2005 William Nelson Cromwell Foundation prize for excellence in junior scholarship in the field of American legal history. The award, given annually by the American Society for Legal History, recognizes innovative work in any area of American legal history scholarship by graduate students, law students and faculty. Witt earned the award for his recent book, *The Accidental Republic: Crippled Workingmen, Destitute Widows, and the Remaking*

of American Law—about the experiments in accident law at the turn of the 20th century, which, he argues, supplanted 19th-century free-labor ideology with a new regime of risk and insurance, thereby laying the foundations of the American administrative state.

ROBERT K. KRAFT, CC'63 and Trustee Emeritus, is this year's recipient of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)'s Theodore Roosevelt Award. The "Teddy" is presented each year to a "distinguished citi-

zen who—having graduated from an NCAA member institution and having participated in competitive intercollegiate athletics—has shown continuing interest and concern for physical fitness and competitive sport, and exemplified most clearly and forcefully the ideals and purposes to which collegiate athletics programs and amateur sports competition are dedicated." It is the highest honor that the NCAA can bestow on any individual.

Kraft played football for the Lions for three seasons. He is currently chairman

and CEO of the National Football League's New England Patriots, considered to be one of the model franchises in professional sports after having won three NFL Super Bowl championships in the past four years.

Kraft is the first former Columbia student-athlete to be honored with the Teddy award. Previous recipients include Presidents Gerald Ford, Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush. The first recipient (in 1967) was Dwight D. Eisenhower, who served as Columbia's president from 1948-1953.

TheRecord

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

UPS 090-710 ISSN 0747-4504
Vol. 31, No. 6, November 28, 2005

Published by the
Office of Public Affairs

t: 212-854-5573
f: 212-678-4817

Susan Brown
Assistant Vice President
of Public Affairs

Columbia Record Staff

Editor: Mary-Lea Cox
Calendar Editor: Ulises Velasco
Graphic Designer: Dorothy Robinson

Contact The Record:
t: 212-854-3282
f: 212-678-4817
e: curecord@columbia.edu

Contact the Calendar:
t: 212-854-6546
e: calendar@columbia.edu

The Record is published biweekly during the academic year, except for holiday and vacation periods, by the Office of Public Affairs. Permission is given to use Record material in other media.

University Photographer
Eileen Barroso
t: 212-854-6527

Correspondence/Subscriptions

Anyone may subscribe to The Record for \$27 per year. The amount is payable in advance to Columbia University, at the address below. Allow 6 to 8 weeks for address changes.

Postmaster/Address Changes

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to The Record, 535 W. 116th St., 402 Low Library, Mail Code 4321, New York, NY 10027.

Please Recycle