

Gaining knowledge, changing perceptions and creating awareness - the results of earth science education

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All of us in the field of earth science would like to be appreciated for the value that we bring to society. After all it is we who investigate the earth, describe earth history and find the needed mineral resources for use in our society. Geologists know about the importance of their work; others, such as decision makers in government and the private sector, planners, the public, and schools, do not seem to be aware of the multiple uses of geological information. Some governments and societies are trying to bridge this gap of understanding by helping people to gain knowledge, change their perceptions and create more awareness of earth science and its uses. Such groups as the At-

lantic Geoscience Society Education Committee, Scientists and Innovators in the Schools (SITS) and the Nova Scotia Museum and Department of Natural Resources have created active programs to facilitate change. Much of this energy targets schools and especially teachers. With fewer resources, schools need more help than ever. Earth scientists, their societies, and other NGO groups such as SITS, can form effective partnerships with government to promote knowledge about and awareness of earth science. Helping people change their perceptions, gain knowledge and create awareness about earth science helps our science and society.