

EarthNet: An Internet Teaching Resource

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EarthNet (<http://agc.www.bio.ns.ca/schools/esrc/esr-home.html>) is an Internet virtual library, which provides information on earth science resources suitable for classroom use in grades Primary through 12 and first year university. The sophisticated, tailor-made software has been developed at GSC Atlantic and features simple, icon-directed retrieval. The database presently includes more than 800 earth science resources and links. Fields completed for each resource are: type, grade level, earth science topic, year released, cost, source, description and support material. By obtaining information on appropriate resources, teachers can readily design a lesson or course, complete with exciting, readily available resources.

EarthNet is intended to be much more than an on-line catalogue. The website will provide a communication link for all teachers who access the database and use the resources. Feedback and reviews of individual resources will be encouraged and special emphasis will be given to the exchange of lesson plans prepared by teachers. Such supplementary in-

formation will be attached to the specific resource and hence will be available in future retrievals. EarthNet will foster Internet discussion or news groups for educators and students, for example discussions of recent volcanic eruptions and dinosaur fossils.

Day to day operation of EarthNet is through a secretariat at GSC Atlantic, Dartmouth. The project coordinator is assisted by other geologists throughout Canada who constitute a National Resources Group of provincial and territorial representatives and is in the process of establishing a National Teachers Advisory Committee.

To be successful, EarthNet needs several thousand dollars annually. Financial support has been provided by the Geological Survey of Canada (Atlantic), the Canadian Geological Foundation, the Canadian Geoscience Council, the Canadian Society of Petroleum Geologists, and the Atlantic Geoscience Society. EarthNet is a project of the Atlantic Geoscience Society and the Canadian Geoscience Education Network.