A Planet Under Pressure: Citizens and Scientists Taking Action on Global Warming and Other Threats

A David and Cecilia Ting Endowment
2011-2012 Film and Lecture Series

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Wosk Centre for Dialogue, Asia Pacific Hall, 580 West Hastings, Vancouver, BC

The Canadian Oil Sands: Economic saviour or environmental disaster?
Presented by Dr. David Schindler, Killam Memorial Professor of Ecology,
Department of Biological Sciences, University of Alberta

Abstract:
The Alberta oil sands are being promoted by the oil sands industry and government officials as the solution to North American energy needs for the foreseeable future. The impacts of oil sands development have been downplayed in propaganda promoting the oil sands. In this lecture, Dr. Schindler will discuss some of the impacts that have been ignored or misrepresented, such as water quality, fisheries, wetland reclamation, carbon sequestration, and treaties with aboriginal communities.

Bio-Sketch: Dr. Schindler received his doctorate at Oxford University, where he was a Rhodes Scholar. He began his career as an assistant professor at Trent University (1966-1968). He then joined the Fisheries Research Board of Canada, where he was the founding director of the Experimental Lakes Area (ELA) in northwestern Ontario, a facility where the impacts of pollutants can be studied in whole ecosystems. Schindler’s work with eutrophication and acid rain has been used in Canada, the USA and Europe as the basis for environmental policy. He left ELA to take the University of Alberta’s Killam Memorial Chair in 1989. He has served as President of the American Society of Limnology and Oceanography, and as Canadian National Representative to the International Limnological Society. He is the author of over 300 scientific publications.

Schindler chairs the Board of Directors of the Safe Drinking Water Foundation, a small non-profit foundation that specializes in helping aboriginal communities with their water problems and in educating students about protecting freshwaters. Until recently, he chaired the International Review Committee for the Alberta Water Research Institute. His current research includes the restoration of mountain lakes stocked with alien fish species, the restoration of eutrophic lakes, and the effects of the oil sands industry on the Athabasca River.