



## Walking Together

It was some time later when Solana's champions made their way to the base of the old maple tree, backpacks overflowing and eager to share with the tree spirit their discoveries.

"Solana . . . Solana . . . we're back!" sang out Piper, "and just look what we've brought to share with you, Solana . . . are you there?"

The face in the tree seemed older, more wrinkled and fragile—the bark greyer and rougher than before. The voice of Solana was even softer than the three remembered, and they had to strain to hear her words of greeting. "Ahh . . . my three champions. I knew you would return before it was too late! Our friend Ariel saw you coming, and awakened me. She has gone to find Terian and Marina. They will soon be here. Tell me of your voyage."

Kieran spoke first. "You were right, Solana. We had to work together to get the information we needed. Some-

times the information was very complicated, and it took more than one person to figure it out. Piper even had some of her environment club friends help us with their ideas. Heather got the computer teacher to help me on the Internet at school, and I focused on the library. We think that together we've come up with some pretty good projects and activities to help make our footprints smaller."

"That's for sure, Kieran," added Heather. "We studied about food in science, and I've learned so much about where our food comes from! While we were planting the Peace Garden, even my history teacher got involved in our work. He said we should try to make sure that we record our plans and projects so that the students next year and the year after that will know what we've done. He suggested a time capsule, and that's exactly what my class is doing. We started gathering all the plans and ideas and pictures that were taken when the school first began working on their schoolyard garden.

"We interviewed some of the teachers, parents and former students who helped to plant the first trees and shrubs in the garden area. They had great stories to tell! We are recording everything to put into our school's environmental time capsule, which will be opened in five years to be updated. We even found you in one of the pictures, Kieran. Boy, you were a lot shorter back in those days! I never knew history class could be so much fun!"

Solana's weathered face formed into a smile. "And, what have you to share, Piper?"

"My environment club friends and I worked really hard on the water and garbage tasks, and we took our information and survey results home to our families. We have all made family commitments to cut down on water being wasted at home. I will never brush my teeth again with the tap running! We figure that as a class we will save enough water to fill an Olympic-sized swimming pool. Imagine . . ."

"We worked on energy and transportation the most," added Kieran. "We've been using our math, science and tech classes to research alternative energy sources like wind-generation equipment. Some of the class are working on a letter-writing campaign to ask for more bike paths in town. We've even got a request in to our school board for more bike stands at the school. Well, just look at all of our plans,

Solana—see, we've written them on these maple leaves."

Kieran, Piper and Heather emptied their backpacks of several piles of leaves. They took turns reading the plans for environmental action or plans for reducing their footprints from the leaves to Solana. The three champions were so engrossed in their task that the return of Terian, Marina and Ariel went unnoticed until Heather looked up from her work. With a small cry of joy, the three were reunited with their companions.

"Ariel . . . Ariel," called Piper, "I've been watching everywhere for you. Did you see the neat nest box that the local naturalist club put up on the water tower? I've been hoping that you would move in! I missed you so much!"

Heather stroked Terian's beautiful coat which seemed to glisten in the spring sunshine. Kieran walked around Marina, examining her shell and patting her gently on the head. "It looks like our companions want to hear what we've discovered, too. Let's let them in on our EcoPlans. How do you like that name?!" asked Heather.

A crash of thunder signalled the arrival of the Keeper of Time. Chronos, as always, commanded everyone's attention. The black-and-silver robed figure strode from behind the maple.

"Well, Solana, it seems your champions have returned, just in the nick of time. I trust that they have been somewhat successful. By the commotion they have caused it would appear that they have some good news to report. So, you three, it is time to account for yourselves. Speak up! What do you have to say for yourselves?"

"Just look here, Chronos. We accepted your challenge. We've gained the knowledge, we've made our commitments, we've even come up with our plans of action. See?" Kieran pointed at the piles of leaves that sat at the base of the tree. On each, plans for reducing footprints were written.

With a sweep of the Time Keeper's hand, the leaves were sent swirling into the air. A deep laugh echoed from the hooded figure as the leaves danced and turned in space. "I am touched by your efforts, I truly am! I just hope that they are not too late. You know that you cannot turn back the hands of time."

Heather, exasperated by Chronos, found her voice. "Now listen, Chronos, we've done our best. And these leaves aren't just from us. We've got action plans and commitments from hundreds of others just like us. We understand the problem, and we're going to see that things change. Don't laugh until you've read our ideas."

"Well spoken, young champion! I see that your quest has given you confidence and perhaps even a vision of what might be. That is good. I have underestimated you. Solana, you were right in your choices. These three have proven themselves worthy of being called EcoGuardians. They have earned the right to carry the EcoGuardians' Shield, but only for the length of time that they can keep their commitments to the Earth."

Solana's voice was soft, so soft that it had become a mere whisper in the spring air. "My fine young champions, your voyage has been a most noble one. Your home, the Earth and all her children will benefit from your work. My roots that know the pressure of the millions and millions of footprints upon the earth, feel a lightening of the weight as a result of your efforts.

"Come, young ones, gather the leaves and place them upon my bare branches. Show your decisions to everyone."

Kieran and Heather climbed into the tree, placing leaves upon the branches, while Piper passed the delicate promises up to them.

Suddenly, Piper cried out in surprise "Heather, Kieran, look here, where this leaf was resting on the ground. There's a tiny maple tree underneath it. Look, over there, another one! Why, there are maple tree seedlings growing under every leaf I pick up. Solana, what does this mean?"

"It is a sign, my young champions, a sign of hope. Your deeds have produced this great treasure, a promise of new life. I will survive in the spirit of these new beings that you have helped to grow. The circle of life will continue, but may your actions to save yourselves never cease. Take the shield from beneath my roots. Now you may complete the pledge that is found upon it. Carry the shield with you through your life, and pass it on one day, as a legacy for the youth of tomorrow."

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Well . . . what did you think of the tale? You liked it! I thought you might. How do I know so much about this tree? Well, I'll tell you. My name is Piper, and I was the youngest of the three friends who first came to this empty lot. It seems so long ago, and yet it's all so fresh in my mind that it might have happened yesterday. One of the projects we worked on was an adopt-a-park idea we got from the town council. We turned the empty lot into this beautiful park you are sitting in today. We started with a vision of a beautiful park and it seemed to grow up with us. I guess, that's what you call having a vision of what might be, and living to see your dream come true.

What's that you say? Yes, I think the old tree would be very happy indeed to see what has become of her children. Look how tall and strong they are growing. Soon they will be old enough to give you maple sap in the spring time. Did you have a question? Why, what a great idea! I am certain that Solana's saplings would like to be adopted by your class. You can come back another time. Each of you can choose a tree as your special friend and get to know it in every season of the year.

Time for one last question. Ah, you want to know if I kept my shield and my pledges? Well, I just happen to have them right here in my bag. Would you like to see them? Let's take them back to the classroom and I'll share them with you. For now, our time together is almost over. I'm glad you invited me to come to the opening of your time capsule. Gather up your things and let's go back to your class. Now that you know the story, you can come back any time and be a part of it.

# QUESTIONS

## EcoGuardians' 6<sup>th</sup> Chronicle Walking Together



*Discuss the following questions and record your answers:*

1. Describe Solana when the EcoGuardians meet her again.

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2. Why do you think Solana is in the condition she is?

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3. What have the EcoGuardians written on the leaves?

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4. What are EcoPlans?

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5. What does Chronos think of the EcoGuardians now?

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6. What is under the leaves on the ground?

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7. Who told the EcoVoyageurs story?

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# WALKING TOGETHER ECOPLAN:

## What to Do?



*"The seventh generation Law of the League of the Iroquois assured that no important decision was ever made by the tribal members without taking into account the effect such a decision would have seven generations into the future."*

*You have almost completed your EcoVoyage. You have learned about your Ecological Footprint and that you must somehow reduce it. You now have the tools and the knowledge to make changes*

1. In a group of four or five students, choose an area of your footprint you would like to see change. Write it down.

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2. List all the projects your school, your family or your community could do to reduce their individual footprints in this area. You might want to write different ideas for each group.

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3. Now you must choose one project from you list that will become your EcoPlan. Which one should you choose? For each of the projects, ask yourselves the following questions:

- a) Whose footprint will be reduced after we do the project?

ours    our families'    our school's    our community's

Projects that reach out to the school and community can be more complicated but they can help more people.

- b) Of all the projects you listed, which ones are most interesting to your group? Projects that are most interesting usually are more successful.

- c) How long will each project take? Some projects may take a few days while others can take the whole school year. Figure out how much time you have to do the EcoPlan and which ideas from your list will work with the amount of time you have. Remember, projects usually take longer than you think!

- d) How complicated will each project be? Sometimes projects are too complicated and it's better and more manageable to do a smaller chunk of a project.
- e) What is the goal of each project you listed? How will you know if you've reduced your footprint? If your footprint won't be reduced after your project, then you need to change your idea. When you are finished your EcoPlan, you should also be able to measure how your footprint has been reduced.
- f) Will you be able to get the information and resources you need to do the project? If you won't be able to get the information you need to do the project, you will be disappointed and frustrated.
- g) Will you be able to get all the help you will need to do the project? If not, you may want to use another idea for your project. Think about all the people you will need to complete it.
- h) Who might resist parts of your EcoPlan and why? How can you include these people in your plan? Should you invite them to your class so that they can help?

4. Now that you have gone through your list and have asked yourselves the above questions, list the top three EcoPlans your group has chosen and present them to the class for discussion.

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5. From your discussions with the class, choose the best EcoPlan idea and complete the following:

OUR ECOPLAN IS . . . \_\_\_\_\_

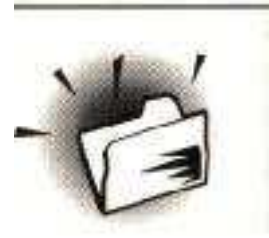
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Record this, along with your team members' names on a green leaf.

6. Draw a footprint. On it have your group write the environmental challenge your EcoPlan addresses. Place this under the Tree of Life posters. When your EcoPlan is complete, you can remove your footprint from the base of the tree and put your green leaf on the tree.



# ECOPLAN: How Do We Do It?



*"Plans are the dreams of the wise."  
- German proverb*

Now that you have agreed on an EcoPlan, it is time to start planning your project. You can map your project using the following:

## Mapping Your EcoPlan

1. What environmental challenge will your EcoPlan focus on?
2. Briefly describe the goal of your project and your strategy to accomplish this goal.
3. What are the approximate starting and ending dates of your EcoPlan?
4. List everything that needs to be accomplished to reach your goal. Think of the authorities you should tell about your project (principal, parents, city mayor, etc.). Write down the steps to achieve your goal on the chart below. Beside each step, write down:
  - a) the date you think you can finish each step by
  - b) the name or names of the people responsible for the step
  - c) the things you will need for each step
  - d) the names of people and organizations that may be able to give you useful information or help
  - e) how you will celebrate, publicize and/or get support for your EcoPlan
  - f) how you will measure the success and completion of each step

STEPS	FINISHED BY:	PERSON(S) RESPON-SIBLE	WE WILL NEED	OUTSIDE HELP	SUPPORT	MEASURING OUR SUCCESS

# ECOPLAN:

## Doing Our EcoPlan



"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

- Margaret Mead, author

Now you are ready to put all of your planning into action. It's time to reduce your footprint. Before you get started, here are some tips to keep in mind.

*Many scientists use journals to record observations, ideas and data. Use your EcoGuardian Portfolio as a journal for your EcoPlan.*

As you work on your EcoPlan, collect or record such things as:

- what you've done and when you did it
- people contacted and reasons for contacting them
- newspaper articles that take a stand on issues related to your EcoPlan
- ideas
- sketches
- observations
- letters to the editor
- maps
- photographs
- cartoons
- data
- graphs
- research collected

*Make comments at any stage of the project on:*

- how well things are going
- whether or not you need to change your goals or the steps you're using to reach these goals
- your personal thoughts and feelings about yourself, the group or the project

# ECOPLAN: How Did We Do?



*"Nobody makes a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could only do a little."*

- Edmund Burke, British statesman & orator

You have completed your EcoPlan project and it is time to evaluate your team's work.

1. To begin, meet with your group and discuss any comments you recorded in your portfolio during your EcoPlan. Share your feelings about the experience and what you learned.
2. As a group, create an evaluation form and have people in the community or others evaluate the EcoPlan outcome.
3. Now, use the charts on the following pages to examine the success of your EcoPlan, your participation during the project and the way your group worked together.

## ECOPLAN EVALUATION

Our EcoPlan project: \_\_\_\_\_

The goal of our EcoPlan was to: \_\_\_\_\_

The team members' names: \_\_\_\_\_

For each of the questions below, give your team points from 0 to 5. When you are finished answering each question, add up your team's score.

	NO				YES	
1. Did your team reach the goal of the EcoPlan?	0	1	2	3	4	5
2. Is there a measurable difference in your footprint because of your EcoPlan?	0	1	2	3	4	5
3. Did you learn anything new during the EcoPlan?	0	1	2	3	4	5
4. Does your EcoPlan experience make you want to do more to ensure a better future?	0	1	2	3	4	5
5. Do you think small groups of people can help reduce our Ecological Footprint?	0	1	2	3	4	5

**TOTAL:**    /25

# EcoPlan: How Did We Do?

## Self-Evaluation Form



Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
EcoPlan: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Skills I developed or improved during the EcoPlan:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. My greatest contribution to the group:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. The most important thing I learned during the EcoPlan:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. How I changed after completing the EcoPlan:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. My thoughts about reducing my Ecological Footprint:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What I learned about my power to make change:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. How did the EcoPlan affect me? my community? my region? the global environment?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What I learned about my environmental responsibilities:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. What I learned during this project that I can apply to other situations I'd like to change:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. Why I think it's important for citizens to volunteer for community services  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# EcoPlan: How Did We Do?

## Self- and Peer-Evaluation of Team Work



*Evaluate your own performance and that of the members of your group during the EcoPlan using the following chart. Use this marking system:*

Excellent 3  Good 2  Needs Improvement 1  No effort in this area 0

Name	Me	Team Member	Team Member	Team Member	TeamMember
Got Started Immediately					
Contributed to the Team					
Listened to the Opinions of Others					
Offered Useful Feedback to Others					
Asked for Help When Needed					
Helped Other Team Members to Understand the Work					
Encouraged Others to be Involved					
Praised Others for Their Ideas					
Solved Problems					
Got Things Done on Time					
Did Their Fair Share of Work					
Cooperated with Other Group Members					
<b>TOTAL</b>	/36	/36	/36	/36	/36

# ECOPLAN:

## What We Did, Sharing Our Learning



"If you plan for a year, plant rice. If you plan for ten years, plant trees.  
If you plan for one hundred years, educate our children."  
- Chinese proverb

Now that you have completed and evaluated your EcoPlan, it is important to share your findings with other students in your school, your family, your community, and perhaps even your country and the world. The only way we will reduce our Ecological Footprint is to inform others and get them involved.

You can choose several ways to celebrate your EcoPlan message. For example:

- Prepare a report that can be read by everyone.
- Create a display, exhibit or booth that can be put up in a community centre, local library, school hall, local shopping mall, city hall, etc.
- Invite TV and newspaper journalists to do a story about your EcoPlan.
- Get your news out on the World Wide Web.
  - Use e-mail to contact other schools in the community, province or outside Canada.
  - Use the Internet to further explore your EcoPlan topic or to get ideas on how to publicize your EcoPlan.
  - Create Web pages about your EcoPlan.
- Write to government officials, your local Members of Parliament, and other concerned groups about your EcoPlans.
- Plan an environmental fair. Invite other classes in your school and the community to participate

***Have your group brainstorm ways in which you could take further action with your EcoPlan. List them here:***

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## ENDNOTES



- 1 Page 38. Eat Up. Healthy Food for a Healthy Earth. Candace Savage. Earthcare Books. Douglas & McIntyre Ltd. Hong Kong, 1992.
- 2 Page 125 - 126 Reclaiming Our Cities and Towns. David Engwicht. New Society Publishers, Pennsylvania, 1993.
- 3 Page 38 - 39. Eat Up. Healthy Food for a Healthy Earth. Candace Savage. Earthcare Books. Douglas & McIntyre Ltd. Hong Kong, 1992.
- 4 Page 6. Eat Up. Healthy Food for a Healthy Earth. Candace Savage. Earthcare Books. Douglas & McIntyre Ltd. Hong Kong, 1992.
- 5 Page 1- 2. What's on the Table? A Guide to Green Groceries. The Tula Project, Conservation Council. Text: David Cozac and Debbie Russell,, with contributions from the Tula Project Steering Committee. New Brunswick.