

**For Whales' Sake**  
**By Jackie Hilderling**

*Earth Day - Every Day!*  
*A simple formula for caring for our planet*

April 22<sup>nd</sup> will be the 38<sup>th</sup> international "Earth Day", a day dedicated to creating environmental awareness and fostering conservation and sustainability. The estimate is that 6 million Canadians are among the 500 million from more than 180 countries using Earth Day to focus on environmental issues. But surely, the knowledge gained from all these years should motivate us not only to undertake action on Earth Day, but to use our ability to make a difference - every day.

There need not be huge personal cost, inconvenience or jobs lost. With minimal effort individual action can reduce environmental problems. All it takes is willingness and a simple shift in thinking. A shift in thinking where, when considering the "price" of a good or service, we not only consider the short-term dollar value but also weigh out the price in terms of resource use.

We should be so far beyond believing this "sustainability" of resources is something negative. Sustainability does not mean becoming an environmental puritan. You *will* use the Earth's resources, all organisms do, and it is not hypocritical to save resources with one action and use them with another. It is confusing to me that many seem to believe that the only two options with regard to personal environmental action are (1) having virtually no "ecological footprint" or (2) being a ravaging, indiscriminate consumer. There are many gradations between apathy / paralysis and making a difference. Do what you can, when you can.

Sustainability just means using resources more efficiently, for longer; something for which your great, great grandchildren will thank you.

So how do you embrace your power to make a difference? It *is* simple.

When you buy:

- Insist on durable products; avoid disposable
- Buy from close to home
- Consider the amount of resources used to make the product e.g. the amount of packaging
- Insist on energy efficiency
- Choose for biodegradable
- Reduce consumption; recognizing the difference between "want" and "need"
- Buy what can be recycled
- Prefer companies with sound environmental practice

Use your voice:

- Share what you know about making a difference
- Insist on precaution; finding out if something is dangerous prior to using it
- Vote for sustainability

Believe:

In *your* power to effect positive change

The simple formula for caring for our planet is:

**(Reduce + Reuse + Recycle) x Respect = Sustainability**

**And a better life for all**

For more information see [www.econauts.org](http://www.econauts.org). Click " For Whales' Sake."

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