

A Human Face for an Environmental Problem

HERE IS probably no more completely borderless problem facing our world today than the issue of global warming. As one professor, William Moomaw of Tufts University, notes in our cover story, "In some sense it's the perfect international issue." Everyone will be affected directly by this phenomenon, no matter what corner of the globe they inhabit. And it will only be through international cooperation that effective measures can be implemented to reduce or eliminate the more catastrophic possibilities.

Universities and other institutions of higher learning and research are playing their part in looking for solutions both by teaching the next generation of scientists and other leaders about this potentially world-wide danger and by involving undergraduate and graduate students in current research projects that span every environment on the planet—from studying the

effects of greenhouse gases on the melting glaciers in the polar regions to the impact of substantially reducing the Amazon rainforests, which currently act as a huge carbon dioxide sponge mitigating the damage being done by human sources.

As part of our ongoing occasional article series on the sciences in international education, we are taking a look in this issue at several education abroad programs that are focused on environmental science. In the article, Mary Harty of the University of Washington notes, "just as important as having the textbook knowledge is knowing why it matters." Her students worked in Brazil where they not only saw the raw scientific data on the rain forests being collected, but also the huge human toll that often strikes the poorest people first and most gravely. She says that this helps her students "put a face on climate change and what it means in human terms ... The

students actually saw the people who would be affected by it." Only international education can add this vital human dimension to the study of climate change with the immediacy of actual, on the ground experience.

Also in This Issue

The growing phenomenon of international joint and dual degrees is offering a great deal of promise for international education. But it also has its significant challenges. Our feature "Degrees of Success" takes a close look at these degree options at several institutions that have been exploring the best ways to make use of these arrangements.

And our third feature spotlights three former international education students who have had a significant impact on their home countries upon their return. The ripple effects of international education are often its most important results. **IE**

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