

manage nature". The nature of the scientific method is to look at pieces but this is a denial of the fact that the pieces are interconnected and the sum of the parts is not necessarily the result of joining the pieces e.g. join two atoms of hydrogen to one of oxygen and you get water. This is an example of synergism. At the current time scientists have identified 1.7 million of an estimated 30 million plant species. We're currently losing species faster than we can identify them. Consider the fruit fly which has been studied for 80 years and had over 100,000 person years of research devoted to understanding it. "We still don't know how a fruit fly overwinters. How can we say that we can manage wild populations?"

The third is that "we believe we can control the negative impact identified in environmental impact assessments". Lets be honest about what they can tell us. Anyone who claims they can predict what will happen as a result of building the link doesn't understand science. You only know what to look for by what you already know. We know very little about ecosystems, we use too short a time to evaluate development proposals, and we use too small a sample size to evaluate projects. Statistically an environmental impact assessment is invalid. We believe we can limit or reduce damage by cost benefit analysis when the benefits are immediate and the costs are not. Consider the use of DDT. The benefits were obvious, the chemical company made money and DDT killed insects. No one could predict biomagnification of the chemical in the food chain. For every technology you use you have to pay a cost. We haven't dealt with acid rain or dioxin.

The fourth is that "we believe we elect people to lead us into the future".

Out of 38 cabinet members, 6 were only politicians and of the remaining 32, 22 were from a business or law background. People look at issues through their special lenses. It is not an accident that our government is preoccupied with Meach Lake and free trade. The people we are electing to office are incompetent at interpreting the impact of proposals affecting the environment.

The fifth is that "we believe humans are rational". The thin band around the brain (neocortex) is the rationality part. If one gets in a heated argument you quickly pass through this layer to use the reptilian part of the brain and if you fall in love you lose 50 IQ points and use still another part of the brain.

The sixth is that "we believe the media reflect reality". Print and electronic media create reality, they do not reflect it. How can you have an in depth report of a major issue in 2 minutes?

In concluding his address Dr. Suzuki noted that TIAPEI was leading us into the future and he suggested the following:

1. We cannot deal with the major issues if we do not understand science;
2. We must demand politicians make environmental issues the primary issue;
3. We must be more skeptical about information and where it comes from;
4. We need to change what we are in the long term and you must accept that we have to do it for our children. Eighty percent of Canadians live in urban areas and they are losing touch with their environment (He recounted the story of his daughters showing their pet salamanders to their friends and their friends reaction of recoiling in disgust while a baby reached out to touch them);
5. I believe native issues are at the very heart of environmental issues. He asked the Haida Guujaw (Gary Edenshaw) what would happen to the Haida if the trees on South Moresby were cut down. Guujaw's reply was that "then we will be the same as everyone else."