



## **From the Arctic to Africa: How Climate Change is affecting the Health of our Planet**

*Renowned experts say Science Centres can inspire a better understanding of Global Warming and Sustainability Issues*

Toronto, Ontario, Canada--June 18, 2008--Sheila Watt-Cloutier, Inuit leader, Nobel Prize Nominee, advocate/activist on Arctic climate change, and Dr. Mohamed Hassan, executive director of the Academy of Sciences for the Developing World, described the dramatic effects of climate change in their respective regions at the 5<sup>th</sup> Science Centre World Congress, taking place this week at the Metro Toronto Convention Center.

In their combined keynote speech, *Planet Earth: Living on It, Changing It and Sustaining It*, Ms. Watt-Cloutier and Dr. Hassan spoke about the need for more science centres to address sustainability and climate change within local contexts.

"We need science centres in the North that present traditional knowledge in equal partnership with Western science," said Ms. Watt-Cloutier. "Science centres need to be defined by the community's priorities."

Dr. Hassan outlined a four point plan of action suggested to encourage scientific and technological innovation in Africa.

"Each country should have at least one science centre and science centres should expand their function to cover sustainability issues," he said. "We should promote inquiry based science education in partnership with science centres and become portals of innovation to solve real world problems."

During the plenary session, CEO's from five science centres and the CEO of Siemens Canada, Guenther Scholz, discussed how their institutions demonstrate a commitment to social responsibility.

"We must understand that business and the scientific community need to work together to share that responsibility to shape the future, this is the way we will be able to have a much bigger impact on society," said Mr. Scholz.

For daily podcasts, summaries of the keynotes and plenary sessions and more information on the 5SCWC schedule visit [www.5scwc.org](http://www.5scwc.org).

The Ontario Science Centre is hosting the 5th Science Centre World Congress from June 15 to 19, 2008 at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre in Toronto. Themed *Science Centres as Agents of Change-Locally, Nationally and Internationally*, this is the first time the congress is being held in North America. This triennial international event brings together CEOs and senior decision makers from the world's leading science

centres to discuss issues and opportunities in the field, and the central role science organizations play in increasing the public's engagement with science.

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