

EDUCATOR RESOURCES
Note to Teachers

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The *Natural Inquirer* is an integrated science education journal for students aged 11-14. In the United States where the journal was first published, the *Natural Inquirer* presents research from scientists working in the United States Department of Agriculture's Forest Service. This edition of the *Natural Inquirer* presents the results of a worldwide effort to understand the world's forests, organized by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, or FAO. The report from which this *Natural Inquirer* is written is the Global Forest Resources Assessment 2005. It contains information from 229 countries and territories around the world.

You can access the FAO report at <http://www.fao.org/forestry/fra2005/>.

This journal is organized into four Inquiries. Each Inquiry presents a category of findings from the Global Forest Resources Assessment 2005. Each Inquiry builds on the previous inquiry's information, and each should be considered a separate lesson. A lesson plan for each Inquiry follows this "Note to Teachers". The educational concepts, which immediately follow the "Reflection Answer Guide", summarize suggested key learning objectives for the journal.

To be most effective, the Inquiries should be presented in the order outlined in the journal. At the beginning of the journal, three sections set the context for learning. "Welcome to the World's Forest Edition of the *Natural Inquirer!*" provides an introduction to the journal. "Thinking about the Environment" presents benefits of forests and sets the stage for why it is important to understand forests at a global scale. "Thinking about Science" presents the method used by FAO to gather the information presented in the Inquiries. To be most effective, students should read these sections before they begin the Inquiries. A short lesson plan for these sections is presented on page 29.

Each Inquiry is comprised of 2 main sections: "The Situation" and "What They Discovered." "The Situation" introduces the question asked by FAO. This section also presents background information that leads to the research question. Whenever there is a scientific question to be answered, there is a situation that led to the development of the question.

"What They Discovered" presents the answer to the research question. This section includes tables and photographs as well as text. Embedded within this section are "Reflection Sections," which ask questions aimed at encouraging students to think critically about what they are reading. You may use these questions to check student comprehension. In some instances, a "You Do the Math" section provides an opportunity for students to integrate math with their scientific learning.

Before beginning any of the Inquiries, have your students read "Welcome to the World's Forests Edition of the *Natural Inquirer!*" This section introduces the journal and provides opportunity for students to begin thinking about the world's forests within their own subregion, region, and as a part of the global landscape. Students should only have to read this section once. Before they leave this section, have them locate their own region and subregion of the world.