Carbon Recycling: What You Should Know

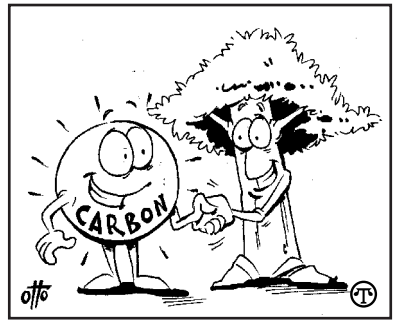
(NAPSA)—The next time you drive past a forest, you may appreciate it for a lot more than its beauty. These facts about carbon recycling may be part of the reason.

Q. What is carbon sequestration (also known as carbon recycling, carbon conservation and carbon sinks)?

A. Carbon sequestration results when plant life removes carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and stores the carbon in its tissues. Here's a familiar example. A tree uses carbon dioxide during photosynthesis to construct its roots, trunk, stems, and foliage. In the process, the tree sequesters (stores, recycles or conserves) carbon. This is true for all plant life, terrestrial and aquatic, large (redwoods) and small (plankton).

Q. Why is carbon conservation of interest?

A. Managing earth's plant life to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere is a way to sustain economic productivity and accomplish environmental objectives. As a consequence, carbon recycling is emerging as a major strategy for reducing the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Some scientists refer to carbon conservation as a crucial "bridge strategy" to manage greenhouse gases in the 25 to 50 years it might require to reduce the carbon emissions that result from the way we use fossil fuel today.



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Q. Is there any evidence that carbon recycling really works?

A. Yes. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) estimates that forests in the United States removed about 281 million metric tons of carbon per year from 1952 to 1992, which offsets approximately 25 percent of U.S. emissions of carbon during that period.

Q. How can we increase carbon conservation?

A. We can begin to use "best management practices" in forest preservation and harvest, in our agricultural practices, and when we restore degraded terrestrial habitat and wetlands.

To learn more about carbon recycling, visit the Greening Earth Society Web site at www.greeningearthsociety.org.