

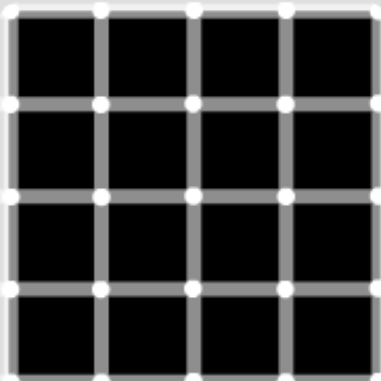


The Franklin Institute  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA  
Photo courtesy The Franklin Institute

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## "The ultimate science experiment": a challenge to act

June 3rd, 2008 - Posted in [Featured](#)

Sciencenter executive director and ASTC board member Charlie Trautmann delivered a keynote address at the 2008 [Ecsite](#) conference in Budapest on May 29. His talk, titled "If not us, then who?," challenged science centers globally to engage their audiences in addressing significant current issues in which science and public understanding play an essential role.



"We are now at the crossroads of history," he said, citing evidence that climate zones in Europe are moving north at a rate of about 10 meters every day. Invoking the Iroquois advice that, "in every deliberation, we must consider the impact on the seventh generation," he called on science centers to bring their capacities to bear on the issue of global environmental sustainability. As trusted institutions with significant audiences, able to act with independence and flexibility, science centers are well positioned to build public understanding of climate change while taking action to make their own operations more sustainable, he said. He concluded by challenging science centers to engage their audiences in "the ultimate science experiment: changing the world."

Participating in the Ecsite conference were 800 delegates from nearly 45 countries. For more about Ecsite, the European Network of Science Centres and Museums, click [here](#).

*About the image: Ecsite speaker Charlie Trautmann speaks in front of a 10-meter tape that dramatically illustrates the rate at which climate zones are shifting toward the poles. Photo courtesy Ecsite*