Seeing Reason: Ecology Explorers
Setting Up the Projects

Setting Up for Success
This unit makes use of the *Seeing Reason Tool*. Familiarize yourself with the tool and its related materials, such as the tutorial. Follow the steps below to set up the workspace prior to working with your students.

Set Up Project 1
Build the project in the *Seeing Reason* Teacher Workspace:

- **Project Name:** Ecology Explorers: Overlapping Habitats
- **Project Description:** In preparation for your study of endangered species during the Webquest, research the relationships between humans and animals in general and identify what happens when their habitats overlap.
- **Question for students:** What happens when human and animal habitats overlap?
- **Assign teams to the project.** Create students teams of two to three and assign each team to the project. Each group of four should have two teams; so you may want to name the teams: *Team1a, Team1b, Team2a, Team2b*.

Set Up Project 2
Build the project in the *Seeing Reason* Teacher Workspace:

- **Project Name:** Ecology Explorers: Species Success
- **Project Description:** From your team's species, choose one or both species to explore what influences its biological success. You will use the information from your research and map building to develop your research report and your group's species presentation.
- **Question for students:** What influences the biological success of your species?
- **Assign teams to the project.** Assign the same teams to this project as in project 1.

Introduce students to causal mapping using Seeing Reason
1. Introduce students to the *Seeing Reason Tool* by exploring the Try the Tool demonstration space together.
2. Start by discussing the sample map.
3. Next, clear the map (using button at bottom of page), and make a map of student thinking about a non-research-based question such as, What makes a song popular?
4. Show students how to read, construct, and describe factors and relationships. Demonstrate how chains of factors emerge as discussion goes deeper.
5. Show students how they can support their map models by including definitions, quotes, citations, or data in the factor and relationship description fields. Explain what you will be requiring in the upcoming project.
6. Explain that maps can show how thinking changes over time, and encourage students to engage in cycles of mapping, research, discussion, and re-mapping.
7. Tell students they will work in teams so they can discuss their developing ideas.
8. Explain that you plan to examine their developing maps, looking for opportunities to support and guide their learning. Discuss the comments feature, and agree on how you will use it.