

Thursday 31st January

“Craftivism” is the word for activists who use crafts to spread their message. They range from “yarn bombers” reclaiming the streets with knitted graffiti to the secret sewing brigade making their point with beautiful but challenging cross-stitched banners. Crafters are changing the world – one stitch at a time. Save the Children is collaborating with Craftivist Collective to create an art installation from hundreds of stitched jigsaw puzzle pieces as part of its Race Against Hunger campaign. Greenpeace has designed an “Arctic Craft Kit” for supporters to use in its campaign to Save the Arctic. For more information, go to: www.craftivist-collective.com

Sources: Positive News
Resurgence
www.edie.net
www.scidev.net

Additional Prayers

If you would like to receive the prayer diary each month by [email](mailto:prayer-guide@christian-ecology.org.uk) (free), please email prayer-guide@christian-ecology.org.uk

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Picture on front cover: Winter Trees
by Poppy Pickard

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Prayer guide for the care of creation

January 2013



“Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness.”
(Matthew 6.20-21 & 33)

“Once we realise that we own nothing, we are enlightened, not only in the sense that our minds are flooded with light, but also in the sense that a weight is lifted from us and our hearts grow lighter.”
(Donald Nicholl)

“Prayer at its best opens earth to heaven”
(Selwyn Hughes)

Tuesday 1st January

The climate talks at Doha ended with an agreement to extend the Kyoto Protocol for a further 7 years, with a commitment to reach a definitive climate agreement in 2015. FoE commented: "Rarely has so little been achieved by so many powerful people gathered together in one place. The failure to agree any meaningful international action to slash emissions leaves the world teetering on the edge of catastrophic climate change. Wealthy nations must shoulder the blame. They've put their short-term interests ahead of the well-being of billions of people around the globe."

Wednesday 2nd January

According to WWF: "The acid test for these negotiations was real emissions cuts plus real and concrete financial commitments for climate change and the basis for a new global deal by 2015 that is both ambitious and equitable. Instead we got a shamefully weak deal that is so far from the science that it should raise ethical issues for those responsible. The most significant development was what happened outside the negotiations. Social movements, labour unions and

civil society joined hands to stand against the lack of ambition and urgency that governments brought to the conference table. We return home to work together to ensure that governments act with the speed and scale that the climate crisis requires."

Thursday 3rd January

A Government report called "Reducing Risks of Future Disasters" calls for a repository of solutions that have successfully alleviated disaster risk, so that future developments can call on a library of examples instead of implementing programmes that nobody can be sure will work. Around 1.3 million people have died in natural disasters over the past 20 years, mostly from drought, earthquakes and storms. The economic damage from these disasters is equivalent to the total (\$2 trillion) spent on overseas aid in the same period. Professor Angela McLean, chair of the reporting group, said that by 2040 storms, floods and droughts could be reliably forecast to within 6 days, though earthquakes, tsunamis and volcanic eruptions remain difficult to forecast. Brenda Gormley, another member, said we need to learn and build on informal solutions from local communities

Sunday 27th January

Save us, Father, from over-reliance on human ingenuity and short-term solutions as we strive to repair the damage we have wrought to your world. Acknowledging our reasoning powers as your most precious gift, inspire us to put our trust in you alone, who gave your Son for us on the Cross.

Monday 28th January

Planning Minister Nick Boles has declared his wish to increase the urban area in Britain by one-third because we do not have enough houses for the growing population. Population Matters however points out that we have more houses than ever before, but we have too many people.

Tuesday 29th January

A new report from the UN Population Fund says that the ability to decide on the number and spacing of one's children is taken for granted by many in the developed world and among elites in developing countries. Yet, for the majority of people in developing countries, the power and means to determine the size of their families are

scarce or inadequate. 222 million women lack access to reliable, high-quality family planning services, putting them at risk of unintended pregnancy. Many studies have shown that investing in family planning helps reduce poverty, improve health, promote gender equality, enable adolescents to finish their schooling and increase labour-force participation.

Wednesday 30th January

The UNFPA report "State of World Population 2012" calls on countries, international organisations and civil society to:

Radically increase financial support and political commitment for rights-based family planning, made available for all who want it, when they want it
Eliminate economic, social, logistical and financial obstacles to voluntary family planning so that all who choose to use it have access to it
Reduce the number of unintended pregnancies and abortions by increasing availability, reliability and quality of family planning services
Engage men and boys in family planning for their own benefit and to support the right of women and girls to use contraception.

Friday 25th January

“We are part of the natural world, made of the same ingredients as the rest of life on earth over which we have assumed dominion” (or, as Christians would say, “been granted dominion”) “but, having lost our connections to reality, we don’t fully grasp the predicament we are in” according Jerry Mander. “When we hear our political leaders renewing their race towards unlimited exponential growth, we realise they don’t know what they’re talking about. They are lost in an obsolete set of mental frameworks, a 30-centuries-long process to sublimate the most basic point of all, namely that all our economic and social activity depends on Nature. We are not separate, and we are not in charge. Failing to grasp that fact while promoting economic strategies that remain unconscious of such realities may prove to be our most fatal flaw.”

Saturday 26th January

“Society is faced with a profound dilemma: to refrain from growth is to risk economic and social collapse. To pursue it relentlessly is to endanger the ecological systems on which we

depend for survival.” (Professor Tim Jackson)

“When growth falters, politicians panic. Businesses struggle to survive. People lose their jobs and sometimes their homes. A spiral of recession looms. Questioning growth is deemed the act of lunatics, idealists and revolutionaries. . . But what happens if we relinquish our fetish for labour productivity? Sounds crazy, but we’ve become so conditioned by the language of efficiency. Output is everything. Time is money. . . . But what sense does it make to ask our teachers to teach ever-bigger classes? Our doctors to treat more and more patients per hour? Our nurses to rush from bed to bed no longer able to feel empathy and offer comfort? Compassion fatigue is a rising scourge in the caring professions, hounded by meaningless productivity targets. . . In short, achieving a green economy may be less to do with sustained growth and more to do with building an economy of care, craft and culture. And in doing so, restoring the value of human labour to its rightful place at the heart of our society.”

about how to transfer and spread disaster risk. “Healthy ecosystems can mean large reductions in disaster impacts.”

Friday 4th January

Momentum of Change Awards were presented at Doha for “Lighthouse Activities” around the world. They included work to protect coastal areas in Senegal from salt-water erosion, a Ugandan project to bring solar electric lamps and phone chargers to customers’ doorsteps, and the work of Lanka Electric Vehicle Association in introducing electric vehicles on the streets of Colombo. At the ceremony, Ragheb Alama, a Lebanese music star and UNEP ambassador for climate change awareness, said: “God gave us beautiful and strong Nature, and if we believe we can destroy her, Nature will destroy us.”

Saturday 5th January

Qatar is pioneering a \$5 million pilot project for a network of greenhouses where growing conditions for a range of vegetables are provided by distillation of sea water heated by concentrated solar power. The project covers 10,000 sq. metres including 3 large greenhouses where its first crop

of cucumbers has been harvested. Kjetil Stake from the Sahara Forest Project said: “Our ambition is not just to be a pilot. We want to go large scale and, for that, we need investors. However we are clear that we want to do this on a step-by-step basis, and first we want to learn from the pilot.”

Sunday 6th January

Father, we pray for the scientific community throughout the world, especially for those whose research may produce results contrary to the expectations of those who commissioned it, that they may find ways to publish what they know to be true. We pray that the media may be responsible in the way they present scientific findings, and that certainty may not be claimed where there is none. Above all, Father, we pray that the dangers, as well as the benefits of scientific advances may never be overlooked or understated. This we pray in the name of your Son, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Monday 7th January

Sir Nicholas Stern, launching the UN Momentum of Change at Doha, said that, for the world to move to a green

economy, it needs to invest an extra 2-3% of GDP – up to \$2 trillion. “It’s a large sum, but not huge in relation to world resources and it’s a process that will result in great returns.” Greg Barker, UK Energy Minister, described a partnership between: London-based financiers and insurers, working with the Kenyan government to develop the huge potential for geothermal energy in the Rift Valley.

Tuesday 8th January

A group of financial institutions including Triodos Bank has called on the Government to give a true and fair view of all subsidies available for power generation, including fossil fuels and nuclear, verified by the National Audit Office. Renewable energy has been particularly targeted for relying on government interventions such as the Feed-In Tariff. A major Dutch study in 2011 found 53 types of government interventions in the energy market – the majority favouring fossil fuels.

Wednesday 9th January

An ICM poll in October found that 68% of those polled would support a community-owned wind farm within 2

miles of their home, with only 7% against. Without community ownership, 49% would support an installation and 22% oppose it. Currently, 10% of UK renewable energy is community-owned. 67% of those polled preferred a wind turbine to a shale gas well: just 11% said they would prefer a shale gas well using fracking to extract the gas.

www.icmresearch.com/community-owned-renewable-energy

Thursday 10th January

Co-operative green energy can now be financed through a new website which provides tools to access social media for investing in projects such as hydro, solar and wind power. Its first share offer was launched in September by Sheffield Renewables for the Jordan Dam hydroelectric plant whereby water from the River Don will turn an Archimedean screw device to generate 310,000 kWh of electricity a year – enough to power 80 typical family homes and save 170 tonnes of CO₂. Other projects in the pipeline include one from Herefordshire-based Woolhope Woodheat, which provides free installation of low-carbon wood fuel boilers, using fuel from neglected woodlands. Shareholders typically

ignored the scientific advice to reduce the total catch by 30%, although the bigeye tuna is already fished at 40% above its sustainable level.

Tuesday 22nd January

Since 1972, the Barefoot College based in Tilonia, Rajasthan, India, has trained more than 6,525 housewives, mothers and grandmothers, midwives, farmers, labourers and shopkeepers as solar engineers, weavers, radio operators, dentist masons, midwives and artisans. Based on Gandhi’s belief that knowledge, skills and wisdom found in villages should be used for their development before getting skills from outside, the college follows another Gandhian belief – that sophisticated technology should be in the hands of poor communities so that they are not dependent or exploited. Recently, women have been trained as solar engineers for countries as far apart as Jordan, Colombia and Kenya, bringing solar lighting to villages in those countries.

Wednesday 23rd January

Satish Kumar, editor of Resurgence magazine, has long claimed that a nation’s economy is based on land,

labour and capital. When politicians talk about “economic growth”, they are not referring to the growth of land or people, but simply of capital. “But what good is there in having more and more capital but less and less available land and more and more dissatisfied people? We need to stop using the term “economic growth” and start naming it truly as “industrial growth”. Then we need to ask whether we can go on achieving industrial growth for ever and ever. The answer is obviously No.”

Thursday 24th January

Today sees the launch of “Food Matters”, an evening event at New Road Baptist Church, Oxford, to explore why food matters and what it means to us. Speakers include:

Rev. Mike Rayner, director of British Heart Foundation Research Group, Ruth Valerio of A Rocha, author of “L is for Lifestyle”, Anne Kelaart DL, chairman of Oxfordshire Rural Forum, and Paul Valentin, associate international director of Christian Aid. To register attendance, go to: www.foodmatters.org.uk/launch-event/ or ring 01865 208250.

supply disruptions, volatile prices and accelerated environmental degradation. It recommends the formation of a club called “Resources30” consisting of 30 of the world’s principal resource-producing and consuming countries, to fill the gaps on resource and scarcity governance. For example, major biofuel-producing countries could collectively buy call futures from their biofuel industries when food scarcity emerges, so acting as a virtual food reserve.

Saturday 19th January

The shortlist for 2013 awards for innovations in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) includes Green Power, which sells solar-powered lights to people in Vanuatu who rely on kerosene for lights and wood for cooking. A Fijian company, Paradise Technologies, is also shortlisted for selling energy-efficient lighting and cooling systems, so reducing electricity costs and cutting carbon emissions. The SIDS awards are part of the Ashden Award scheme which promotes universal access to sustainable energy. The winners will receive £20,000 each plus business

support when the winners are announced next May.

Sunday 20th January

Father, we thank you for the skills which, passed down from one generation to another, enable us to harvest the earth’s resources. We thank you for those who enable your gifts to be channeled into areas of need and we pray that you will raise up many others willing and eager to share your gifts for the benefit of all.

Monday 21st January

4 million tonnes of tuna are caught every year – at least 60% of them in the western and central Pacific. But overfishing due to growing consumer demand and harmful fishing practices have depleted stocks to such an extent that yellowfin and albacore tuna are on the IUCN’s “near threatened” list while bigeye tuna is “vulnerable”. Fishing aggregating devices (FADs) are used to lure fish so that they can be caught in purse seine nets, which capture everything around the FADs including sharks, stingrays and turtles. Often FADs end up as debris in coral reefs. A meeting in Manila of the main fishing nations banned the use of FADs in 4 months of each year, but

receive 3-5% in annual dividends plus 30% more if the project is registered with the Enterprise Investment Scheme. www.microgenius.org.uk

Friday 11th January

Financial Transaction Taxes (FTTs) otherwise known as Robin Hood taxes have been implemented, first in France, then in 10 other EU countries including Germany, Spain and Italy. France applies a 0.2% tax on financial transactions by companies worth over 1 billion euros and intends to use the money to fight global poverty and promote HIV awareness. A spokesman for the Robin Hood tax campaign said: “Britain’s refusal to back the tax has left us out in the cold as Europe moves to make banks pay their fair share. The good news is that this supergroup of European countries proves what we knew: this tax is a great idea, it can be implemented and it doesn’t need to be global to work.”

Saturday 12th January

Today Christian Ecology Link is running an Ecocell Workshop on travel and the demand for it. Themes to be covered include:

- The effect of higher oil prices;
- The role of communities in providing local transport for local needs;
- Examples of community action such as in Freiburg, Hamburg, Copenhagen and Groningen;
- Travel as a pilgrimage.

The workshop is from 10.45 to 4.30 at St. Aloysius Catholic Church Hall, 20 Phoenix Road, London NW1. To book a place, email Tony Emerson at: tony.emerson12@btopenworld.com or ring 020 8769 4078.

Sunday 13th January

Lord, give us ears to hear your word in the prophets of today, the wisdom to understand your message and the courage to act accordingly.

(Barbara Wood)

Monday 14th January

Norway is increasing its carbon tax on offshore oil companies from £24 per tonne of CO₂ to £45 and is implementing a tax of £5.50 per tonne of CO₂ on its fishing industry as well as boosting its funds to tackle climate change by £1 billion, spending an extra £44 on forestry programmes, and £69 million on carbon credits to

help offset emissions, accelerate carbon-neutral building regulations and push the adoption of electric vehicles. These initiatives are the most radical of any oil-producing nation and pose a challenge for the UK and Scottish governments which have never supported a carbon tax on the oil and gas industries.

Tuesday 15th January

The Government has proposed to lift restrictions on fracking for shale gas. FoE puts these questions:

1. Will shale gas make it harder to reach our climate targets? The Government's Committee for Climate Change says it would be incompatible with the UK's legally-binding targets. Exploiting shale gas globally would lead to a temperature rise of 3-5° C. – way above the maximum 2° rise needed to avoid catastrophic climate change.
2. Will shale gas impact on investment in renewable energy? A Chatham House report says: "The anticipation of cheap natural gas could inhibit investment in renewables. But if the revolution fails to deliver a lot of cheap gas, it could be too late to revert to a

solution to climate change based on renewables."

3. Are there high risks for health and the environment? The Chartered Institute for Water Management says: "The UK should not encourage fracking until there is more evidence that operations can be delivered safely."
4. Why is fracking allowed in the UK when it is banned in France and there are moratoria in Holland, Austria, the Czech Republic and parts of Germany? An expert study for North Rhine-Westphalia said there were too many risks and unclarified issues and recommended no further fracking until more research had been done.
5. Does fracking create more jobs than green energy solutions? A US study shows that investing in renewable energy creates up to 3 times as many jobs as investing in gas.
6. Will fracking aggravate local water supply problems? Around 4 million gallons of water are used for each frack and every gas well can be fracked several times. CIWEM says: "Fracking must not be allowed to conflict with water use for public water supply or that needed for a healthy environment"

7. Will local communities be involved in decision-making? The Government is proposing to allow extraction of minerals such as shale gas to be considered by the National Planning Inspectorate rather than local councils, potentially by-passing local democracy.

Wednesday 16th January

A report from Cambridge Econometrics finds that investment in offshore wind would create more jobs and generate higher GDP than reliance on gas-fired power. It compares a scenario where there is steady growth in offshore wind capacity through to 2030 (the wind scenario) with one where there is no new offshore wind after 2020 and the UK uses significantly more gas for its electricity needs (the gas scenario) The results show that:

GDP is £20 billion higher in the wind scenario than the gas scenario by 2030;
70,000 more full-time jobs would be created in the wind scenario than the gas scenario by 2030;
By investing more in offshore wind the UK would save £8 billion a year on

gas imports by 2030 i.e. £91 for every UK household.

Investors have already warned that the failure to include a 2030 decarbonisation target in the Energy Bill means that investment in renewables after 2020 could fall off a cliff.

Thursday 17th January

The Government Procurement Service (GPS) is the UK's largest energy consumer, spending £1.5 billion a year on gas and electricity. Now it is offering green energy companies contracts worth £25 million a year to diversify 2% of its total demand. If this pilot project is successful, GPS will diversify up to half its entire energy portfolio, amounting to £750 million. The pilot project now starting will initially focus on biomass and energy from waste and will save taxpayers around £155 million over 15 years by diversifying suppliers, contract duration and pricing mechanisms to protect taxpayers from volatile prices.

Friday 18th January

A Chatham House report claims that the world is facing a period of intensified resource stress with likely