Global Connections:
The International Impact of Community Action

Redressing the Balance: working towards environmental justice in Scotland

GLOBAL CONNECTIONS : THE INTERNATIONAL IMPACT OF COMMUNITY ACTION

Redressing the Balance: working towards environmental justice in Scotland. Handbook 6

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1. Introduction

This handbook is designed to frame environmental justice in an international context and is one of a range of handbooks being written to widen the hands-on support for environmental justice campaigners in Scotland. We have invited contributions from various agencies and individuals that are working on issues connected to environmental justice, asking them to explore the relationship between the work they are doing and the theme of environmental justice. Merely scanning the contents page demonstrates the range of work that is being done in the bid to create and sustain environmentally just local and global communities.

It is precisely because there are such a range of forces contributing to environmental injustice that Friends of the Earth works from one specific international perspective, ecological debt. Other handbooks in the "Redressing the Balance" series describe and explain the types of community-based action that can be taken in the fight for environmental justice in Scotland. We are also working to promote international environmental justice, through our work raising awareness of the concept of the North having an ecological debt to the South. As will become clear as the concept is explained in the first chapter, our commitment to promoting the recognition and repayment of the ecological debt is largely because we acknowledge its capacity to address the myriad of factors contributing to environmental and social injustice. As such it is perhaps appropriate that we start this anthology with a brief introduction to the details of ecological debt.

In his introduction to the sometimes complex issue of global governance, Graham Venters suggests that there are four important stages to connecting the local community to the system of global governance:

- situating local environmental problems in a wider context
- developing solidarity with the new global civil society
- advocacy and lobbying within political structures
- joining movements that agitate for the reform and transformation of the institutions of global governance.

Although we are looking at a wider range of issues than just global governance, these seem like useful ways of grouping the contributions we have invited.

2.Situating local environmental problems in a wider context

We are going to start this handbook with our own piece on ecological debt. As well as touching on the range of issues that will be considered in more depth in other sections of the handbook, the piece is also a useful introduction to this first section, where we will consider ways in which to place local environmental issues in their wider contexts. The Ecological Debt Education Project at Friends of the Earth Scotland has been raising awareness of ecological debt in Scotland using a popular education approach to widen the perspectives of local communities involved in social and environmental justice campaigns. A full description of the popular education concept may be found in "Credit Where it's due: The Ecological Debt Education Project" FoES, Sept 2003.

Linking the local to the global has become a common phrase in the environmental movement. The six pieces in this section will take us through six different perspectives on what that phrase actually means on the ground. Following the piece on ecological debt we will consider the work on ecofootprinting in Scotland. The idea of us each having an ecological footprint has been a fantastically successful metaphor to engage the imagination and interest of people, young and old, in Scotland. In this piece we find out a little bit more about how the concept has been developed and used to encourage people in Scotland to think about their links to other parts of the world.

An oil refinery on the Niger Delta

The next piece, on the biography of latex gloves is a wonderful way of making real our links to other places and people. By taking a product that is already known for the effects it can have on health workers in Britain, this cradle to grave analysis tells us the whole story of a product that has social and environmental impacts far beyond our everyday lives. This piece provides a great example of a common tool in educational work that tries to link our everyday lives to global processes and institutions.

Daniel Mittler links the local to global in a direct way through his campaigning work with FoE Germany (BUND). Through this he has campaigned not only at international conventions themselves, but has also "toured" in order to reach a whole new audience.

Graham Venters piece succinctly maps out the institutions and powers that ultimately control not only our own lives but the way in which we relate to people in other countries. It is a really useful article for all of us out there who have always struggled to find our way through the maze of acronyms that seem to dominate global governance. However it is also a very useful introduction to the final piece in this section.

The Ecodebt logo

George Monbiot's contribution is a vitally important one in the debate on linking the local to the global. By returning to discussions of the importance of local economies that have become so familiar to those of us who have taken an interest in environmental ideas in the past few years, Monbiot manages to put forward very powerful arguments that

force us to reassess what have become almost unspoken assumptions about the importance of the local.

2.1 International issues and ecological debt in Friends of the Earth Scotland - Judy Kelso, FoES

Perhaps the best way to explain how an ecological debt can be accrued and the meaning of this, is by telling the real story of such a debt accumulation. Oil was discovered in the Amazon rainforest of Ecuador in the 1970s and it wasn't long before an oil company, Texaco, was extracting the oil to be sold on the world market. Indigenous communities claim the oil business has had a devastating effect on their environments and health. It is claimed that Texaco did not comply with technical norms set for processing toxic waste, resulting in damage to the health of residents and damage to the natural environment. It has been estimated by the group Acción Ecológica, that Texaco destroyed more than one million hectares of tropical forest, spilled 74 million litres of oil and used out-of-date technology resulting in the dumping of 18 million litres of toxic waste (3000 gallons of oil per day into lagoons).

Credit: Digital Vision

Another group, Rainforest Action Network claim that the effects of these actions have resulted in extremely low crop production, loss of game animals and the invasion of tribal lands.

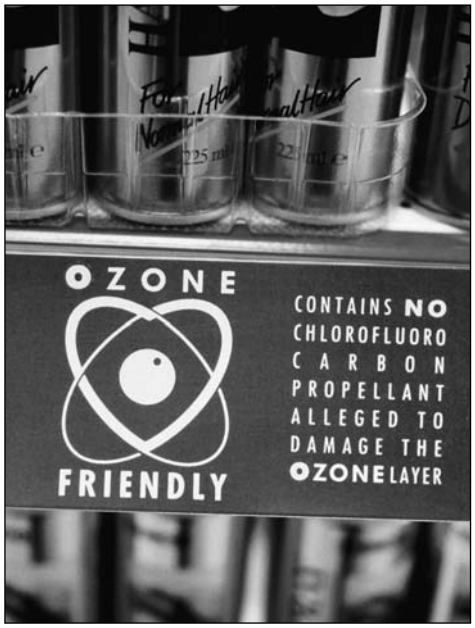
Once you tie into the plot the complex relationship the Ecuadorian government has with the story, we have most elements of how an ecological debt accrues. When Texaco began the extraction of oil they formed a consortium including the state company Petroecuador. Since that time, Ecuador's exports have changed from being largely dominated by agro-exports to oil exports. Texaco's permit to extract oil ran out in 1990 and since 1992 the operation has been run by Petroecuador. Taking into account the vast financial debt payments that Ecuador has to pay (in 1998 the debt per person was $1241, as opposed to a GNP per person of $1505) it can be understood why the government are keen to maximise their exports (now through oil exports) rather than cut them back (which the Indian's demonstrations would probably result in).

So what are these key elements of accruing an ecological debt?

- extraction of natural resources for use elsewhere, without the full price of the extraction being paid – oil spills etc
- sometimes these natural resources are taken without any payment – gold for example
- toxic waste dumping – when waste that cannot be dumped in the North is taken to the South and dumped there where the laws are not so stringent.

- nuclear weapon testing – this happens more in the South
- biopiracy – taking traditional knowledge and genetic material and patenting it, without any of the financial benefits of the product being returned to those who had provided the information in the first place
- greenhouse gas emissions – the North has been overusing its environmental space in terms of the earth's capacity to absorb greenhouse gases.

Clearly the history of when the ecological debt began accumulating can be traced right back to colonial times. However the campaign on ecological debt grew out of work that was being done by a Chilean NGO on the external debt of Southern countries (see the Jubilee Scotland article for more information on external debt campaigns). Recognising that there was an argument for the North to repay its debt to the South, and the powerful effect this could have on development arguments, the idea was taken to the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Unfortunately the idea was not taken up by the attendees (instead, the other radical environmental idea of the time, sustainable development, became very important as a result of the attention it was given at this conference).



Credit: Digital Vision

The campaign lost momentum for a few years after this, but has recently been given a new lease of life by the Ecuadorian organisation Acción Ecológica (previously a member of Friends of the Earth International). Since 1999 Acción Ecológica have been collating case studies of ecological debt accumulation and developing the theory of ecological debt. This has partly been through setting up the organisation IEETM (a Spanish acronym which translates as the Institute for Third World Environmental Studies). An important further development of their work has been the links they have made with other Southern countries dealing with ecological debt issues.

The result of much of this work is a call for the North to recognise and repay its ecological debt. The idea is starting to be taken up in the North, however still in a very limited way. What is clear is that ecological debt is a very challenging idea - if we were to actually begin to repay the debt it would require a huge change to the way we organise and live our lives.

Environmental justice is commonly understood as the fair distribution of environmental costs and benefits and is often fought at a local level in places where there is an unfair distribution of environmental costs, for example the location of landfill sites in Scottish communities. Ecological debt is a development of the idea that we each have a right of access to a fair share of the earth's resources. Overconsumption of those resources by any community creates an ecological debt to those who, as a result of this overconsumption, have not had access to the full amount of their fair share yet often have to

cope with the negative outputs of the resource use. Although we are used to locating environmental justice at a local level, the identification of ecological debt accumulation helps us make the leap to identifying environmental injustices at a global level. A good example of this is the issue of climate change. Climate change is caused by the emission of certain kinds of gases, being emitted as a result of processes such as flying, which are usually to the benefit of the rich nations of the world. Yet although the benefits of the flying only goes to one section of the world's people, the climate change effects are felt throughout the world. So this is an example of how an environmental cost is borne at a global level by people who have received none of the benefits of the process that created the problem.

The importance of putting the label ecological debt on these global environmental injustices is that it puts the responsibility for the problems being experienced back into the laps of those who created the problems.

Credit: Friends of the Earth Scotland

Protestors at the anti-war march in Glasgow

We have been working with communities in Scotland to try and build an understanding of what ecological debt is and what processes contribute to its accumulation. Essentially we see ecological debt as a mobilising concept; we believe that when people engage with the idea they will actually want to make changes to the way things are at the moment, through democratic processes. Central to the work we do in communities in Scotland is our belief that Scottish communities have a strong sense of justice, not just for their own situations but others' as well and consequently don't want to build their lifestyles on the exploitation of others. Because of the global nature (and the hidden nature of power/corruption) of what we are talking about many of the impacts of ecological debt accumulation are invisible to people in Scotland – our role is to work with people in Scotland to build understanding of these global processes.

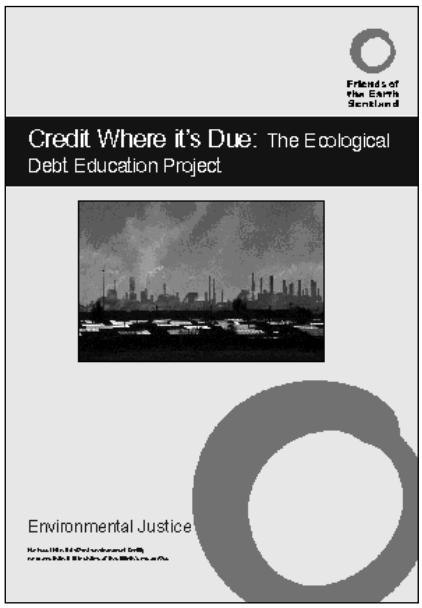
Of course this is only one step towards tackling the reason why the North overconsumes to the degree it does. But we believe that the democratic process that we are trying to stimulate is a powerful way of creating change, and is also a good counterbalance to the corrupt mechanisms by which the ecological debt continues to accumulate.

We are trying to build understanding through building solidarity between communities here that are experiencing environmental and social injustice and those in Ecuador. Instead of highlighting the way we are each overconsuming, we are trying to show the common experiences so that communities of struggle across the world can unite to show a common front against the powerful forces acting to maintain the status quo and continue consuming more than their fair share of the earth's resources.

We have developed a number of educational resources which are designed to draw out the themes of ecological debt, which we have been using with com-

munity groups in Scotland. We have run a number of one-off workshops with groups interested in considering the international context of their local issues. These issues have included making wildlife conservation relevant to the lives of inner city young people, campaigning to have a public voice heard in the development plans of a large Scottish city, and making links between, and building capacity in, various campaign groups in a rural part of Scotland. We hope to build on this work by working with groups on a more diverse range of issues, such as poverty or asylum.

As well as running workshops with groups ourselves, we have also been working with other community workers who are interested in introducing the idea of ecological debt with the communities they work with. The training sessions have explored the links between workers' interests, how they perceive their communities' interests and the themes of ecological debt. We have broken down the educational resources and found ways that they can be used usefully with various communities. In fact the resources as they stand at the moment reflect much of the input from those sessions.



The Ecological Debt Education Project Handbook contains those educational resources, as well as a much fuller discussion of the ideas touched on above. The handbook would be a good place to start if you are interested in exploring the ideas of ecological debt yourself or with others.

There are also a whole range of useful articles to read. Most of them can be found on the following website, where they were collated for a conference on ecological debt in 2002: http://deudaecologica.org/benin/ponencias.html

A number of other useful websites are

http://www.jubileeresearch.org/
http://www.cosmovisiones.com/DeudaEcologica/a_alier01in.html
http://www.accionecologica.org/
http://www.institutoecologista.org/
http://www.rcade.org/secciones/comisiones/comisiones/deudaecologica.html

One of the main responses we get from the work we do with either community groups or community workers is "okay, we accept the argument for recognising and repaying the ecological debt, but what now?".

The most important contribution of the concept of an ecological debt is its capacity to really shift the way we see ourselves in the world. It is not about the South being reliant on the North, or about the North defining the agenda for world development. When we talk about refugees for instance – the debate is usually swamped by arguments surrounding the rights of refugees, but rarely does the issue of our responsibilities come up. Introduce the idea of us having an ecological debt to many refugees, forced to leave their homes

as a result of environmental change, brought on by the results of our lifestyles and the argument immediately turns around.

The point being made is not that we should all be inspecting our individual lives for any evidence of ecological debt accumulation, but that we should be considering how our most basic feelings about fairness express themselves in our links with people in other parts of the world. And the way we are connected to people in other parts of the world is rarely directly. The food we eat or how we travel is all mediated by national level policies. What we are trying to do with the ecological debt project is try and hotwire that connection with the rest of the world, so that it doesn't feel like such an enormous distance from our day-to-day thoughts and feelings. If we believe in environmental justice for the people of Scotland and are prepared to fight tooth and nail for it, then there is no reason why we can't believe in environmental justice on a global scale, and be prepared to put our hands up and say "that's no fair".

2.2 Ecological Footprinting – Betsy King, WWF

Daily, each one of us imposes a footprint of global resource demands and waste assimilation on the planet that sustains us. The challenge for us all is sustainable development, ensuring that our production and consumption does not exceed the Earth's capacity.

What is Sustainable Development?

"Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."
(Brundtland, 1987)

Governments at every level are now committed to sustainable development, as affirmed at the Rio Earth Summit (1992) and more recently the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg (2002). However, current trends show increased rates of resource consumption that cannot be sustained, as well as inequities in access to natural resources.

- Human demands on the Earth's natural resources increased by 50% between 1970-2000 and now exceed the planet's carrying capacity by over 30% (WWF Living Planet Report 2002)
- Traffic on major roads in Scotland has increased by 66% since 1984 with a 3.6% increase between 2002 and 2003
- Scotland's total waste production is rising by 2% each year
- Scotland has managed only a 2.6% reduction in carbon dioxide levels since 1990 compared to the UK average of 7.5% and increased floods are predicted as a result of climate change. 170,000 homes in Scotland are at direct risk.

The Ecological Footprint (Footprint) is an important tool that can be used by individuals, communities, organisations, regions and countries to help measure and bring about the reduction of wasteful consumption. It simply and clearly conveys two ideas that are central to sustainable development, the concept of environmental limits and the inequity of current consumption patterns. The Footprint provides a measure of the mark that we leave on the natural world, considering how much land and sea are needed to provide us with the water, energy and food we need to support our lifestyles. Working out the Footprint can help us to judge how sustainable our lives are and what changes we need to make now and in the future to ensure sustainable development.

… using our fair share …

Our prosperity and clean environment in Scotland should not come at a cost to other countries across the globe. The Scottish Executive's document, Meeting the Needs … Priorities, Actions and Targets for sustainable development in Scotland, April 2002, is based on the principles that in Scotland we should:

- 'Have regard for others who do not have access to the same level of resources, and the wealth generated
- Minimise the impact of our actions on future generations by radically reducing our use of resources and by minimising environmental

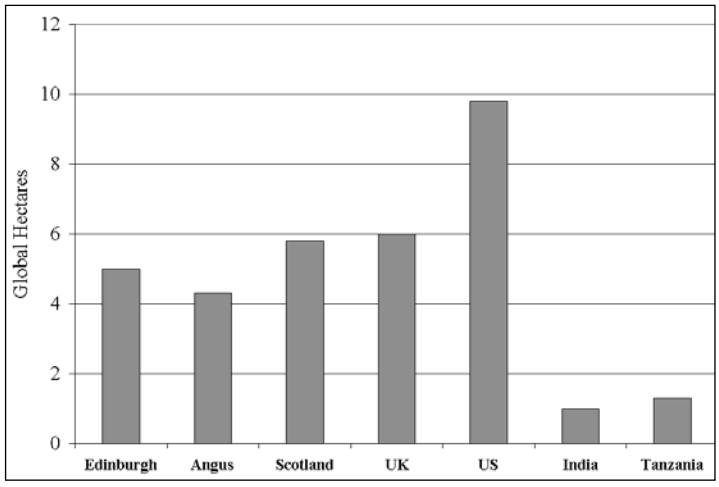
impacts

- Live within the capacity of the planet to sustain our activities and to replenish resources which we use'.

The Footprint provides an indicator of our global resource use and can be compared with that of others to show the scale of change that is necessary to reach a 'fair' share. With the earth's resources shared equally among everyone, a 'fair share' would be just under 2 hectares per person. On a national scale, however, the UK has an average Footprint of 6 hectares per person. Scotland has an estimated Footprint of 5.8 hectares per person. If all the world's population consumed like we do in UK, we would need two extra planets to sustain ourselves!

What is the Ecological Footprint?

The Footprint concept was created in the early 1990s by Professor William Rees and Dr Mathis Wackernagel and has since been used in many countries at national, regional and local levels, for example Mexico, US, Canada, the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Italy, Spain, Australia, England and Wales. Internationally, WWF, the global environment network, uses the Living Planet Index and the Footprint to produce the Living Planet Report, a most definitive statement about the health of planet Earth. (http://www.panda.org/news_facts/publications/general/index.cfm).



Comparison of Ecological Footprints

The Footprint analysis measures the impact of human activity upon nature, answering the most basic question for sustainable development: 'how much nature are we using compared with how much we have?' The Footprint expresses the land area that is required to feed, provide resources, produce energy, assimilate waste and re-absorb its CO_2 output from fossil fuels through photosynthesis. The ecological balance sheet is calculated by looking at our basic human consumption needs - food, materials and energy converted into areas of biologically active land required to produce them and to absorb wastes.

Once the data has been collected and the Footprint calculated, it provides an indicator of environmental sustainability to show trends over time and com-

pare between countries, regions, organisations and individuals. The Footprint provides government with a tool to help their strategic thinking on sustainable development, model different options and examine their impact on the Footprint, for example waste management, sustainable transport measures and renewable energy production. It can also be used to help individuals, communities and organisations to think about the 'big picture' and highlight what needs to be done to work towards a 'one-planet lifestyle'.

The Footprint in Scotland

Footprinting is already under way in Scotland nationally, regionally and locally.

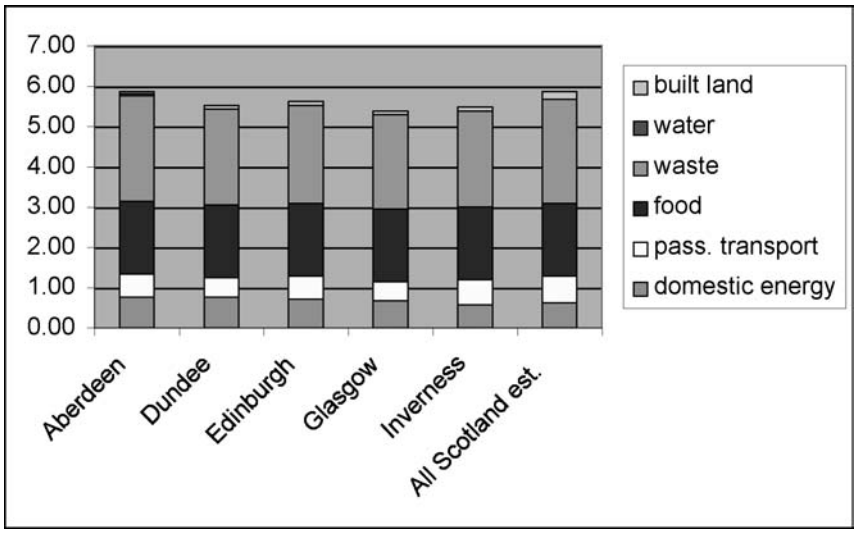
'Scotland's Footprint: A Resource Flow and Ecological Footprint of Scotland' will be completed in early 2004. If the Footprint is chosen as a sustainable development indicator for Scotland, the study could provide Scotland-wide baseline information from which progress on reducing Scotland's Footprint can be monitored (www.scotlands-footprint.com).

The Scottish Executive has already published calculations of the Footprints of Scotland's biggest cities in 2003 as part of the Cities Review. One third of Scots live in the five main cities: Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee, Inverness, Aberdeen and together they account for 75% of Scotland's GDP and 75% of Scotland's energy consumption and pollution.

Summary

From Review of Scotland's Cities- the Analysis Scottish Executive 2003
http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/society/rsca.pdf

Footprints revealed are Glasgow (5.37), Inverness (5.47), Dundee (5.51), Edinburgh (5.60) and Aberdeen (5.87). A full technical report showing how the Footprints were calculated is available on consultants, Best Foot Forward's website, www.best-footforward.com. However, the Cities Review does not indicate how progress can be made on Footprint reduction. Calculation of the Footprint is just the first step. It is only through understanding and active involvement that Scotland's Footprint will be successfully reduced.



Angus Council has embarked on an ambitious Footprint project as part of its Local Agenda 21 and

Community Planning processes. The aims of the project are two-fold: to raise awareness and foster an understanding of environmental impacts within the community and to instigate change to more sustainable lifestyles. As a first step, a baseline countywide Footprint was produced in May 2003.

A pilot community based project involving people in the Footprint concept at a local level has also been carried out in Brechin. Working with local people and schoolchildren, the project asked participants to complete a questionnaire either on-line on the Best Foot Forward website (www.bestfootforward.com) or on paper. The data was used to work out the average household Footprint in Brechin and households were given tips on how best to reduce their Footprint. It is hoped to repeat the process in 2004 to find out whether there has been a reduction in Brechin's Footprint and to possibly extend the project to other towns in Angus.

Work in progress

"Scotland's Global Footprint: WWF Scotland – Local Authority Footprint Project"

WWF Scotland is just beginning a project that will work with two Scottish local authorities, using the Footprint concept to help policy-makers and the public understand the global environmental impact of current lifestyles, and to see how that impact can be reduced. The project will help local authorities address their new responsibilities for sustainable development in Community Planning and Best Value.

In three years the project aims to:

- develop software which will enable all Scottish local authorities to use the Footprint technique
- use the Footprint to help secure Best Value which contributes to sustainable development
- develop school materials on the Footprint in collaboration with Eco-schools
- create web-based materials on Footprint for the public (footprint calculator, on-line discussions)

Getting involved

1. Every individual, household, business and country consumes resources and reduction of Scotland's Footprint will depend on actions taken by everyone. To calculate your own Footprint there are many personal calculators available on-line, for example at:

- www.myfootprint.org

- www.phm.gov.au/ecologic/bigfoot/mid

2. Use the results of your personal Footprint Calculation to take practical action for Footprint reduction. To find out some things that can be done in daily life to help make a difference, visit the WWF-UK website http://www.wwf.org.uk/core/takeaction/rethink.asp.

3. Find out whether your local council is intending to measure the Footprint of the area and to use the information to develop its policies on climate change, waste, transport, minerals, spatial planning, procurement, food, economic development and environmental protection. Ensure you and your local community are involved. An introductory guide for local authorities is available at http://www.wwf.org.uk/core/about/scotland/sc_0000000864.asp

4. Visit the WWF website for further updates on our Footprint projects:

WWF Scotland
8 The Square
Aberfeldy
PH15 2DD
www.wwf.org.uk/scotland
Tel: 01887 820449
Fax: 01887 829453

Some Further Reading

Bond, Stuart (2002) Ecological Footprints: A Guide for Local Authorities, WWF-UK
http://www.wwf.org.uk/core/about/scotland/sc_0000000864.asp

Chambers, N, Simmons, C and Wackernagel, N (2000) Sharing Nature's Interest: Ecological Footprints as an indicator of Sustainability, Earthscan, London

WWF Scotland/Sustainable Scotland Network (2003) Ecological footprinting- Proceedings of the Sustainable Scotland Network Quarterly Meeting jointly organised with WWF Scotland on 21 March 2003 in Arbroath, WWW Scotland http://www.wwf.org.uk/filelibrary/pdf/ecofootscotland.pdf

2.3 Latex gloves: A cradle to grave analysis – Kathy Jenkins

Natural latex gloves are used in the NHS and healthcare industries throughout the world to provide vital protection from infectious diseases such as HIV and Hepatitis. They are, therefore, in themselves a health and safety measure. Increased awareness of infection risk and strengthened regulation has lead to an increase in their use.
An unexpected downside of this has been a dramatic increase in latex-related ill health among health and other workers.

So the spotlight is now on latex gloves. We are going to look behind the spotlight to undertake a 'cradle to grave' analysis (or life cycle assessment – LCA) of the risks posed by the manufacture, use and disposal of latex gloves to workers and to the environment. As you read further you will be aware that an in depth risk assessment of each aspect of this story would be a long and complex exercise, beyond the capacity of this article. What we have done here is to take an initial look at the lifecycle of latex gloves.

There are, of course, many other products made from the same original material extracted from rubber trees. These include, for example, tyres, rubber tubing, various types of goggles, shoe soles, condoms, pacifiers, carpeting, surgical masks, erasers. Each of these will have a life cycle of its own with some similarities and some differences to that outlined below.

Our investigation of latex gloves moves from cradle to grave in three parallel areas:

- Resource extraction
- Health, safety and well being of workers
- Emissions and waste

Environmental Impact of Resource Extraction

Natural latex gloves are manufactured from a milky liquid harvested from the bark of the rubber tree, Hevea brasiliensis, native to South American rain forests. In 1876 the rubber tree was brought to London and from there to Ceylon and Singapore and rubber plantations were created. They now exist throughout South East Asia, including Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Southern China. In addition, parts of rain forests in South America have been destroyed in order to create rubber plantations to boost productivity and profit. The bulk of rubber production is now in South East Asia and the largest market is the United States.

Although mature rubber plantations do offer fairly wide biodiversity, they cannot match that of the rainforest. Before they are mature they can suffer and cause problems due to lack of diversity, including soil erosion. They also entail the use of pesticides. One example is Ethephon (2-chloroethylphosphonic acid), used to stimulate rubber flow. This can be slightly toxic to birds and fish and pose risks to non-targeted plants.

In the 1980s, as a result partly of action on the part of rubber tappers and support from environmental groups, notably from the United States, the Brazilian government brought in agrarian reform which created 'extractive reserves'. These are protected land where local rubber tappers are allowed to harvest rubber trees in a sustainable way. These reserves work to preserve both the rainforest environment and the jobs of local workers.

In Southeast Asia, another solution is being developed, intercropping. Rows of rubber trees are alternated with other crops. These can be for local consumption, including sweet potatoes, maize, peanuts, sorghum or for economic production including tea, coffee, some fruits, pepper, lemongrass and medicinal herbs. The environmental advantages brought by intercropping include increased soil and water conservation, an increase in the size and height of rubber trees, longer life for rubber trees. The conclusion of researchers studying this process was: "these intercropping techniques not only accelerate rubber growth and prolong the rubber production period, but also bring high economic, ecological and social benefits in a short time."

At the same time the federal government of the United States which consumes 20% of the global rubber supply has made it a priority to find alternative domestic sources of rubber production, a response to reduced production in Asia following price cuts. Researchers at Colorado State University are working to develop rubber production from sunflowers and guayule, a native plant in southwestern states (looking at the life cycle of this process would be a new exercise!)

Health, Safety and Well Being of Workers

Rubber Tappers
Health and well being is partly determined by income levels. It is also related to the amount of control workers have over what they do. In the Brazilian rainforest traditional rubber tappers have faced problems in both of these areas. When demand for rubber grew in the 20th century, rubber tappers came under exploitation by "rubber barons" and were almost slaves. There are now two systems under which they work. One is where they are tied by debt to patrons who lend them money to be repaid with earnings. Often the earnings are less than the debt and tappers suffer low income and almost no control. This is now being challenged by systems where tappers are autonomous. This and the development of "extractive reserves" have been the result of a number of factors, one of which has been non-violent resistance of the rubber tappers.

Led by Chico Mendes, rubber tappers formed a union, the National Council of Rubber Tappers. They struggled for their livelihoods and their environment, first against the debt patrons and then against cattle ranchers and settlers seeking to clear rainforest and backed by government land policies. Aided by environmentalists, they have made gains, but the fight still continues. In its midst, Chico Mendes was shot (it is thought by a cattle rancher) and killed.

Work hazards for rubber tappers

It appears that many of the health risks to those who process latex come from the chemicals added to the raw material and that these risks are not necessarily replicated in rubber tappers. However, they are exposed to others. Workers on rubber plantations are exposed to pesticides. The example

cited earlier, ethephon can cause dermatitis and eye irritation. In the US, eye protection is required when working in a treated area. Tappers are at risk from several hazards we in the developed world might not consider. The first is snake and other insect bites and stings. Research in both Brazil and Thailand shows snake bite to be an important cause of illness and death among tappers. The second is heightened risk from tropical diseases including malaria, due to work in forests which are high risk areas. In Thailand, rubber tappers have the highest risk of all groups. Problems in combating this include the evolution of insecticide resistant strains of mosquitoes. Control measures involve use of fish to eat larvae, use of antimalarial drugs and health education. Other hazards include cuts from tapping knives and damage to eyes from chips of wood and dust from drilling holes in the trees.

Another issue is the use of child labour in rubber plantations. In Malaysia, for example, many children work in the plantations as part of a family group. They can work up to 7 days a week, 8 hours a day. In one report, 15% of children suffered work-related injury.

Workers in latex manufacture

The manufacture of latex material for gloves involves the addition of a number of chemicals to the rubber tree liquid. Chemicals include, for example, ammonia, fatty acid soaps, sulphur, zinc oxide, titanium dioxide, talc dust, calcium nitrate and calcium carbonate. Again looking at the life cycle and control of each of these would be a new exercise. Research shows considerable risk from these and other chemicals to those involved in the manufacture of latex gloves (and other rubber products). This includes increased risk of non-alchohol related cirrhosis of the liver, occupational asthma and a number of cancers. One study found that of four traditional industries with a risk from stomach cancer, coalmining, iron and steel, ceramics and rubber, rubber workers had the highest risk. An analysis of work exposures and cancer in the United States found an increased ratio of melanoma in male rubber workers and of uterine cancer in female rubber workers. Work done in Croatia shows women involved in manufacturing latex gloves to be at increased risk of asthma and frequent non-specific respiratory problems. Under COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) legislation, risk assessment, substitution of safer chemicals and control over exposure should be enforced to reduce this toll of ill health.

In between manufacture and use, other workers are affected by latex.
"A 33 year old woman sought medical treatment for occupational asthma after 6 months of periodic cough, shortness of breath, chest tightness and occasional wheezing. She had worked for 7 years as an inspector at a medical supply company, where her job included inflating latex gloves coated with cornstarch."

Users of Latex Gloves

Latex gloves are used as personal protective equipment by healthcare workers, hairdressers, house keepers, food service workers, and more occasionally, police, firefighters, painters, funeral home workers, gardeners. For healthcare workers they have been shown to provide better protection from infection and more flexibility (important for example for surgeons) than synthetic gloves. However, their use can cause an allergic reaction. They can also cause problems with dermatitis. Allergy is caused by sensitisation to certain proteins (allergens) in the latex. It is not yet known exactly which proteins cause the response, so the overall protein content is seen as the most important measure. Gloves high in protein are more likely to cause an allergic reaction. Symptoms can include runny nose, sneezing, itchy eyes, and more seriously occupational asthma. They can also on rare occasions include life threatening anaphylactic shock. Studies have shown that the chances of an allergic reaction increase when gloves are powdered, usually using cornstarch. The protein binds to the powder and is more easily released into the air. Some patients can also be at risk from latex allergy. In particular it is recognised that sufferers of spina bifida are at increased risk. Those who become sensitised may have to be treated in latex free environments. Researchers are not sure why this group has such an increased risk, but it is thought to be caused by early and intensive exposure to latex based medical products.

In 1997 joint research, the TUC (Trades Union Congress) and National Asthma Campaign reported that up to 1 in 10 of those exposed to latex at work became sensitised. This is backed up by US research.

This situation is largely preventable. First, those who are not exposed to infectious disease can use synthetic gloves. For those at risk of infection, researchers in Germany have found a dramatic fall in asthma cases by changing the type of gloves used. Gloves with low protein content and low levels of powder are safer. Unfortunately they are also more expensive. High profile campaigns are ongoing to ensure that the NHS substitutes safer gloves. It appears that they are making headway. The UK Health and Safety Executive (HSE) plan of action on Occupational Asthma calls for a reduction in the incidence of occupational asthma from latex gloves to zero by 2004 through the introduction of safer substitutes. The NHS major supplier has now removed high protein and powder gloves from their catalogues. The Medical Devices Agency, Department of Health (http://www.medical-devices.gov.uk/) have also issued guidance. A Standard Malaysian Glove scheme has been developed to ensure quality in manufacture. This focuses on the 4 p's: protein level, powder content, pinholes and physical properties.

Environmental Impact of Emissions and Waste

The lifespan of harvested rubber trees varies from 20 to 30+ years. Eventually they have to be replaced. Burning of rubber trees at the end of their life has been a problem. However, experiments are now being done

leaving them to decay, thus reducing soil erosion and silting in waterways preventing flooding. Work is now being done to make use of rubber tree wood in furniture manufacture.

Credit: Digital Vision

One of the major environmental problems associated with latex is water pollution. The UK Environment Agency (Environment Agency 2003) reported that in 2001 the most common sources of pollutants that caused serious harm to British waters were:

Agriculture (174 incidents)
Sewage and the water industry (171)
Industry (142)
An example of the latter was that in May 2001 liquid latex leaking from the Blackburn Paper Mill in Feniscowles polluted 14 km of the River Roddlesworth. (Paper is sometimes treated with latex to give it higher gloss.)

Research on Malaysian latex glove manufacturers reports that effluent from leaching tanks is one of the main sources of water pollution. Leaching with water is used to remove substances from the gloves. Now that sensitisation to proteins is recognised as a problem, post leaching is used to remove even more of the water soluble proteins. A major contradiction for our cradle to grave analysis is that increased leaching is needed to reduce levels of protein in the gloves – a process needed to protect health care workers, but one which creates additional river pollution. Other environmental risks include hazardous chemical sludge containing zinc, soil contamination and air pollution from burning of rejected gloves.

Again these things can be tackled. Malaysian rubber manufacturers are being urged and assisted in undertaking environmental performance evaluation and developing environmental management systems based on ISO 14001.

The final stage of our story is the disposal of natural latex gloves after they have been used in the health care industry. Substitution with synthetic gloves is not an answer to this dilemma as they are less biodegradable and whether buried or burned create higher levels of pollution, including release of very toxic substances such as Dioxin. Latex gloves can be recycled, however this begs the question of disposal of contaminated gloves. If you look at the Environment Agency website http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk , and search for Rubber Compounding and Pre-Forming, you will find detailed guidelines for the handling and storage of materials, emissions into air, discharges into water, disposal of solid and liquid waste. A project looking at sustainable hospital issues can be found at http://www.aoec.org/CEEM/profiles/umasslowell.html

A full assessment of this life cycle would also have to look at the energy use and pollution involved in transportation from and to each stage of collection, manufacture, use and disposal and the environmental effects of energy use in the manufacturing process itself (i.e. electricity) and in the disposal processes.

2.4 **Local and global** – Campaigning experiences in the run up to Johannesburg 2002 – By Daniel Mittler

Friends of the Earth (FoE) is increasingly thinking of itself as the "people's network". In Europe, two events have mainly contributed to this self-image and aspiration: the building of a dike out of thousands of sandbags around the conference centre at the global climate negotiations in the Hague in 2000; and the building of a 30 metre long, 5 meter high Lifeboat at the climate talks in Bonn in 2001. For both of these events, FoE had mobilised many thousand people from more than 30 countries. And both of these events took place at or inside the security parameter of the United Nations Summit. Grassroots activists had never gotten this close to the negotiations before.

FoE activists from Estonia travelled three days each way just to be part of these actions. To stand and be counted at the global scale. The Lifeboat even visibly expressed the fact that it stood for the voices of the many: its more than 2000 hand-painted planks had demands in many languages written on them. The planks were brought by individuals from all corners of the globe. Some, for example, had been painted in Japan - and had travelled with the "Peace Boat" crew – a Friends of the Earth affiliate – all the way to Bonn. The Hague and Bonn represented a new kind of direct involvement by local activists in global events. Both actions provided an opportunity for local activists from many countries to meet and be inspired by each others stories as well. They created an immense amount of good will – and some people, who had just come along, because they had heard about the actions and thought they sounded like fun, decided to get active in local FoE groups once they got home.

These events, however, depended crucially on being reachable for people from all over Europe (to make this affordable, we had sponsored buses from as many places as we could). When, in 2001, we were looking ahead to the World Summit on Sustainable Development as the next big global campaigning target, we at first had no idea, how we could link the "people's network" vision, with, from a European point of view, such a remote place as Johannesburg. It took a while, but eventually we developed some ideas that could at least symbolically do what we had done physically in Bonn and The Hague: take a grassroot's voice inside the global negotiation process.

In Europe, we decide to not have everyone travel to an action, but to have an action travel to local groups! As one of our key messages for the summit was the need to create binding rules for big business at a global scale, we decided to create a 5 metre high inflatable "corporate giant" – a symbol for the ever-increasing power of multinational companies. With the giant came T-shirts to make the action look good for the media and postcards for passers by and local activists. The postcards were the equivalent of the planks on the

Credit: FoE England, Wales and Northern Ireland

lifeboat. They allowed people to send their own message to the World Summit. The many thousand demands we collected varied massively. Some simply said: "Stop supporting greed"; others explained in some detail, why the author thought social and ecological rules for big business are long overdue. Admittedly, the World Summit was not an easy occasion for which to collect messages. Many people did not even know that a World Summit was coming up when they were confronted with our giant on the streets. Even less did they know what might be discussed there – and what, therefore, might be an "appropriate" demand to make. This highlights that it isn't easy to make the global scale understandable and "workable on" at the local level. But at least our actions did raise awareness of the Summit. One lesson is nonetheless, that it is best to think of how one can create an emotive link with local issues while drawing attention to global event. FoE Scotland did so admirably: they combined the corporate giant with a caterpilar machine – and had the giant represent French multinational Lafarge chewing up the Isle of Harris for its superquarry (linking this local danger with the need for global corporate control).

In terms of allowing genuine local voices to be heard at a global scale, the second part of our "Don't let big business rule the world" campaign worked even better. We created a radio station to which local communities from around the world could send in stories about how corporations are affecting their lives. At the Friends of the Earth International Biannual General Meeting campaigners from all over the world received training in how to do recordings in radio quality on tiny recording equipment – and many groups, especially in developing countries, were given recording equipment to use at home. Amazingly, this worked. Stories from the community of South Durban that's affected by petroleum refining in an even worse way than the poor citizens of Grangemouth; or stories of how the earthquake in El Salvador had such devastating effects because of crass environmental negligence, all made it onto "Radio Earth Summit". The website of Radio Earth Summit in turn offered all these materials for free in radio quality – so that local community radio stations all over the world could use these local testimonies. We do not have the exact figures of how many radio stations did this. But there is no doubt that, globally, many millions heard the local stories that were at the heart of radioearthsummit.org.

The final way in which we tried to link the local and the global in the Johannesburg campaign was through the "Hear Our Voice" action that we organised for the day before the Heads of States and Governments arrived in Johannesburg. In Johannesburg we had another corporate giant – 6 metres high this time and made out of industrial waste. We confronted this giant with 6,000 papermache figurines, symbolising the messages we had collected all over the world (on postcards, via Radio Earth Summit and also, less exceptionally, via a website www.rio-plus.10.org) as well as the "little people" who expect their governments and leaders to protect them against the corporate juggernaut. This "art installation" – as we called it also in order to make getting permission for this action to be held inside the security cordon easier

– represented messages from all over the world, but was created locally. The Jo'burg "corporate giant" was the work of an artist collective in Soweto. And the papermache figurines were painstakingly created in 15 of the poorest communities in the Johannesburg region. We worked with informal settlements as well as township groups. There was a financial reward for their work – and even a prize for the prettiest papermache figure, that in local terms did represent quite a lot of money. But most people participated in the project not only for the material benefits but also for the training that the work provided. For the papermache figurines, paper needed to be recycled. And months after the Summit, 8 of the 15 communities we had worked with, were still working with paper – e.g. doing recycling work – and were making money with this as well.

Credit: FoE England, Wales and Northern Ireland

There is no denying, nonetheless, that our involvement with the local communities in South Africa was limited to a very short time period – and that we did not provide a sustainable basis for their livelihoods. We have to admit that this was not the primary objective of our work, anyway. Eight out of fifteen communities still using the skills they learned through helping to produce our project, may be better than the statistics for most official development aid projects. But I, at least, never lost a sense of unease about parashooting into the Johannesburg area and not taking ultimate responsibility for the communities that, for some months at least, looked to us for a way out of their grinding poverty. There is no doubt, that the South African project coordinator we had hired was very successful in creating a trusting and open relationship between the communities working on "Hear Our Voice" and FoE. This was most evident when the choir of one of the communities sang, with great gusto, at the official opening of "Hear our Voice" and when we celebrated the successful action at a joint party with the local communities afterwards. Good personal relationships made the differing power relations between us, the paid activists, and them, the poorest of the poor, at least not destructive. But there is no doubt that this power asymmetry was never resolved and that we failed to have a strategy for real local community empowerment (though it looks like we might have succeeded by accident to contribute to some empowerment after all). Some of the communities we had worked with had never been inside the posh suburb Sandton, where the Summit took place. I remember vividly their faces of horror and shock, when we walked through one of the huge malls that Sandton provides in such abundance. In terms of the politics and power dynamics of the Summit, bringing this excluded community right into the heart of the Summit and the capitalist centre of South Africa was symbolically brilliant. But had we thought enough about what impact this trip might have on those communities? Probably not.

All these examples show that it is possible to link the local with the global. It can be done in many ways – by having people travel to global events to make their voices heard; by collecting local voices and bringing them to global events (we, for example, played excerpts from Radio Earth Summit at "Hear Our Voice" right inside the security zone of the Summit with negotiators of many countries passing by and having to listen!). And, of course, by having

actions for global events produced locally. But it isn't easy – and especially where different levels of power are involved between the globally active campaigners and the locally rooted activists, the many ethical questions our divided planet poses come into sharp relief.

And, well, it is more work – and requires more of an intellectual leap – than I had previously thought to find ways of bringing the global to the local. I was a local activist for many years (though in two countries – Germany and Scotland – sometimes at the same time). My topics when I was Secretary of Edinburgh Friends of the Earth were the A701 and the dumping of waste at Kirknewton. When I took the job as head of international campaigns at Friends of the Earth Germany, I thought that this local experience would make it easier for me to find ways of making the global, which is now my daily bread, "campaignable" at the local level. Well, easier may be. But that doesn't mean easy. Once you are involved in global debates, your language, your way of thinking changes, however much you might not want it to. You may just manage to step back and turn complicated paragraphs of international treaties into a headline for a press release, or a statement a journalist can print. But that's still a long way from linking what's going on at the global level to local battles. And the stories where this link can be made (e.g. through direct consumption links etc.) are good campaigning stories – but do not necessarily hook up with the boring, but important, policy discussions at global level. And, in any case, your only have 24 hours in a day, and if you are following global policy debates, you are more likely than not not going to have the time to also run a neat campaign on, say, uncertified tropical hardwoods being sold in your local DIY store. At least at FoE, resources for doing both are often missing.

Still, it needs to be done! And the stories of The Hague, Bonn and Johannebsurg, despite their limits, are to me still inspiring. But bear with those of us trying to make the global to local link, when it doesn't always happen. And send me your ideas of how it can be done - they are badly needed!

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2.5 Global governance and environmental justice – Graham Venters

The issue of global governance has arisen as a result of the recognition by diverse constituencies across the world that powerful global institutions have emerged as significant forces in world affairs, shaping the development of national societies and economies. The capacity of individual states to pursue domestic policy and respond to political demands originating within the political community is similarly significantly constrained, even seriously compromised. Global governance, then, is a dimension of globalisation to the extent that it registers the political aspect of economic convergence and the weakening of the domestic/international distinction in the political and economic domains, while also evoking a critique of the existing institutions of global governance, especially the capacity of these institutions to respond to democratic processes. An analysis of global governance thus provides

insights into the way 'actually existing' global governance operates, the interests associated with these institutions and the way political instruments continue to matter in an age dominated by markets and the logic of the market. At the same time, global governance suggests an idea and a programme for extending democratic control and constructing new forms of political identity that operate beyond the state. In fact, global governance, as a progressive idea, poses a key challenge to the role of states and national identity in the world.

Credit: Friends of the Earth Scotland

Background

Global governance takes a variety of forms. The UN immediately springs to mind. Every legally recognised state has a seat in the General Assembly and the Security Council is, in theory at least, the ultimate lawful authority responsible for peace and security. The World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) manage global trade and financial affairs. The World Bank (WB) is the major lending agency responsible for underpinning development in the South. The major powers of the developed world, along with Russia, meet every year as the G8 to discuss and co-ordinate policy. Of course, there are numerous regional institutions that negotiate and implement decisions across the policy spectrum. Much of what is said here applies equally to the EU and other regional organisations.

The WTO (formerly the GATT), the IMF and the WB form the so-called Bretton Woods system, established at the end of the Second World War to regulate and underpin the international economy. The expansion of trade, the flow of capital and development of the Third World took place in a world order of preponderant US power. National economic management and priorities, especially for the rich industrialised countries, remained features of this system – a fully global financial 'space' did not exist, despite the dominance of the dollar, and economic integration was limited.

Over time and for a number of reasons, this regulated form of capitalism shifted to a more deregulated, 'open' and increasingly interdependent (if not integrated) form. Markets appeared to usurp states as national policy reflected and endorsed the new liberal orthodoxies of free trade and the free movement of capital. Markets were deemed the most efficient mechanisms for pursuing economic growth and satisfying human welfare and happiness. Welfare states and redistribution declined in the North along with rising inequality. In the South, private financial lending soared, producing deeply indebted and impoverished countries. Subsequent structural adjustment programmes undercut domestic development and promoted integration with the world economy. Inequality between the rich North and poor South increased greatly. The local and global environmental consequences of increased growth and consumption, poverty, trade and economic integration accelerated as the market penetrated more countries and expanded into more areas of social and economic exchange and production.

There is much debate about the extent to which this process was propelled by market forces or emerged from deliberate political choices in which powerful states took a leading role. Whatever the complexities of the argument, the global economic institutions reflected, implemented and policed the process. Essentially, these multilateral, intergovernmental institutions provide the framework and formal rules that govern the trading and financial system within which states and societies are, to a lesser or greater extent, integrated. They are intergovernmental, that is based on an international treaty negotiated by states. They act as the agent of states and reflect, by and large, the power hierarchy of the states system. As intergovernmental organisations, they are relatively remote from national democratic processes. While national governments will claim to represent the democratic will, critics maintain that the standards of transparency and accountability are weak.

Credit: Friends of the Earth International

The UN has only limited economic and trade powers – essentially advisory and research capacity. The UN, of course, sponsors world summits that address environmental and social issues. Governments commit themselves to declarations, targets and sometimes treaties. However, the UN remains the main global forum where states and peoples enjoy some degree of representation although as an intergovernmental body, democracy is severely constrained. Moreover, the Security Council remains the source of authoritative decision-making. After the Cold War there were exaggerated hopes that the UN could become a major benign force in world affairs. Clearly, (powerful) states and markets continue to hold sway.

This incomplete summary of the major institutions of global governance suggests that the formal 'economic' institutions enjoy a limited democratic legitimacy and are aligned with forces promoting a market order (though also subscribing to environmental and social purposes – e.g. the WB). The UN has some appeal to universal representation but remains largely intergovernmental (with notable exceptions – e.g. the consultative status of civil society organisations). Security is dominated by the interests of the major powers, pre-eminently, the US.

Environmental Justice

So – what has all of this to do with environmental justice? The links are numerous and can be approached in a number of different and complementary ways. Environmental justice is a principle that allows us to measure the uneven and unequal distribution of the costs and negative externalities associated with economic growth. Environmental justice also advocates a fair and equitable distribution of the environmental costs and benefits of economic activity. Moreover, the shift to a more sustainable global economy needs to take into consideration the ecological indebtedness of the rich North to the relatively impoverished underdeveloped South. In effect, to imagine a global society informed by environmental justice implies a

redistribution of power, wealth and environmental costs on a planetary scale.

To the extent that environmental problems inevitably have a global dimension and to the extent that these problems are expressions of an unequal global economic order, the issue of global governance takes centre stage. There are a number of possible solutions to the demand for sustainable development at the global level. For the sake of simplicity, I will outline two broad programmes (not necessarily mutually exclusive).

One is to agitate for the democratisation and transformation of global institutions. This position broadly accepts that the background condition of an interconnected and multi-level world society and argues that we need to invent a form of democratic global governance. This might involve direct elections to the UN, the creation of a new security council based on environmental and social equity. Perhaps the abolition of the WTO in favour of a world fair trade organisation. Various reforms and necessary changes are possible. The key requirement is to pursue these at the global level by demanding a new system of global governance. Note that the demand for new democratic institutions is closely linked with the demand for substantial justice.

Another approach is to challenge the background condition of globalisation and argue for more regional, national and local forms of economic activity and governance. For example, where some international NGOs have called for new trade rules abolishing subsidies so that poor farmers in the South can gain access to markets in the North, others have argued that this will increase dependency on the world market at the expense of local forms of self-reliance. This might not necessarily preclude global institutions and their role but it argues that world citizenship is a rather abstract concept – local attachments are more keenly felt and have a greater mobilising force. Moreover, local production and exchange are inherently more sustainable. Presumably, the transition to the 'local' will still necessitate a degree of global co-ordination. Perhaps the tension between the two positions comes down to the issue of multiple overlapping 'spaces' with different degrees of emphasis on the priority of each level.

The need to address the global in any account of environmental justice would seem to be incontrovertible. This implies the requirement to understand the role of global institutions and processes. How do the different institutions contribute to the struggle for environmental justice and how do they obstruct it? What new institutions of global governance are needed? How might change be brought about? These questions equally imply that the existing forms of transnational civil society already embody the notion of world citizenship. Thus while citizenship as a legal notion remains tied to the national state (beyond it in the EU), the idea already enjoys moral and political force. The need now is to create the structures at the global level that reflect and strengthen the principle of world (cosmopolitan) citizenship.

Global governance and the local community

If the activities of the Westminster parliament sometimes feel distant, then global governance can seem very remote from the everyday life of communities. This both reflects the nature of these institutions (the preserve of elites and technocrats and their political distance from more familiar democratic processes) and the geographical remoteness of their physical presence or roving meetings.

Credit: Friends of the Earth International

Connecting the local community to the system of global governance involves at least four moves: situating local environmental problems in a wider context; developing solidarity with and becoming part of the new global civil society; advocacy and lobbying within the existing national and regional political structures; joining movements/organisations agitating for the reform and transformation of the institutions of global governance.

Situating the local

Local environmental injustice is invariably linked to wider economic processes and institutions of governance at the national, European and global levels. The policy-making process that determines the legal framework addressing the social effects of environmental problems may be located at levels beyond space of the local or city community. Investment decisions that have unacceptable environmental and social effects may originate in countries far removed from local or national democratic processes. 'Situating the local' involves the critical work of mapping the links between local environmental problems and the wider economy (especially the extent to which it is 'internationalised') and discovering the governance structures and policy networks that regulate or permit activities that result in unjust outcomes.

Solidarity

If new forms of global governance are to be developed that address and redress the social inequalities underlying the environmental crisis then building a global civil society becomes imperative. The many diverse identities, constituencies and movements concerned with environmental and social justice must develop a global awareness and self-understanding based on the notion of global citizenship. The huge demonstrations that accompany the regular meetings of the institutions of global governance are testimony to this 'globalisation from below' as is the Porto Alegre social forum in Brazil. Differences will remain but a common programme, or partial consensus, might be forged around the notion of global democracy.

Advocacy/lobbying

The decision-making processes of the global institutions traditionally fall within the sphere of governments and state bureaucracies. However, as citizens have become engaged with the intricacies of trade policy or the function of the UN, national government policy has been subjected to scrutiny and criticism. For those who are convinced that the work of lobbying remains a significant strategy then locally based groups and individuals will be concerned to take up issues with their elected representatives. Even though issues of global governance do not fall within the competence of the Scottish Parliament, the constituent parties could be approached and certain parliamentary groups will be especially worthy of attention. The EU, as an international actor of great importance, remains central to the issues of global governance and environmental justice. MEPs can be approached while national NGOs form federated networks working within EU institutions.

Movements/organisations

Finally, there are many movements actively campaigning for the reform of the existing rules that regulate the global system (e.g. the Trade Justice Movement) or organisations that advocate the reform of the global governance system in favour of the extension and deepening of democracy (e.g. Charter 99). Some political parties may also have a programme that involves the reform or transcendence of the existing structures. Of course, many of these organisations and parties will be lobbying for improvements within the current structures whilst also proposing positive alternatives.

2.6 How to stop America - George Monbiot (first published in the *New Statesman*)

Presidents Roosevelt and Truman were smart operators. They knew that the hegemony of the United States could not be sustained without the active compliance of other nations. So they set out, before and after the end of the Second World War, to design a global political system which permitted the other powers to believe that they were part of the governing project.

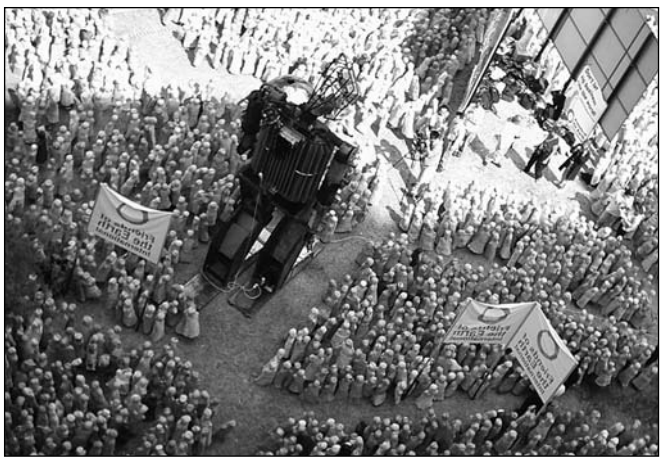
When Franklin Roosevelt negotiated the charter of the United Nations, he demanded that the United States should have the power to block any decisions the UN sought to make. But he also permitted the other victors of the war and their foremost allies - the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, China and France - to wield the same veto.

After Harry Dexter White, Roosevelt's negotiator at the Bretton Woods talks in 1944, had imposed on the world two bodies, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, whose underlying purpose was to sustain the financial power of US, he appeased the other powerful nations by granting them a substantial share of the vote. Rather less publicly, he ensured that both institutions required an 85% majority to pass major resolutions, and that the US would cast 17% of the votes in the IMF, and 18% of the votes in the World Bank.

Harry Truman struggled to install a global trade regime which would permit the continuing growth of the US economy without alienating the nations upon whom that growth depended. He tried to persuade Congress to approve an International Trade Organisation which allowed less developed countries to protect their infant industries, transferred technology to poorer nations and prevented corporations from forming global monopolies. Congress blocked it. But, until the crisis in Seattle in 1999, when the poor nations were forced to reject the outrageous proposals inserted by the US and the European Union, successive administrations seemed to understand the need to allow the leaders of other countries at least to pretend to their people that they were helping to set the global trade rules.

The system designed in the 1940s, whose ultimate objective was to ensure that the United States remained the pre-eminent global power, appeared, until very recently, to be unchallengeable. There was no constitutional means of restraining the US: it could veto any attempt to cancel its veto. Yet this system was not sufficiently offensive to other powerful governments to force them to confront it. They knew that there was less to be lost by accepting their small share of power and supporting the status quo than by upsetting it and bringing down the wrath of the superpower. It seemed, until March 2003, that we were stuck with US hegemony.

But the men who govern the United States today are greedy. They cannot understand why they should grant concessions to anyone. They want unmediated global power, and they want it now. To obtain it, they are prepared to destroy the institutions whose purpose was to sustain their dominion. They have challenged the payments the United States must make to the IMF and the World Bank. They have threatened the survival of the World Trade Organisation, by imposing tariffs on steel and granting massive new subsidies to corporate farmers. And, to prosecute a war whose overriding purpose was to stamp their authority upon the world, they have crippled the United Nations. Much has been written over the past few weeks about how much smarter George Bush is than we permitted ourselves to believe. But it is clear that his administration has none of the refined understanding of the mechanics of power that the founders of the existing world order possessed. In no respect has he made this more evident than in his assault upon the United States's principal instrument of international power: the Security Council.



Credit: Friends of the Earth International

The Art Installation in Johannesburg

By going to war without the council's authorisation, and against the wishes of three of its permanent members and most of its temporary members, Bush's administration appears to have ceased even to pretend to play by the rules. As a result, the Security Council may have lost both its residual authority and its power of restraint. This leaves the leaders of other nations with just two options.

The first is to accept that the global security system has broken down and that disputes between nations will in future be resolved by

means of bilateral diplomacy, backed by force of arms. This means, in other words, direct global governance by the United States. The influence of its allies – the collateral against which Tony Blair has mortgaged his reputation – will be exposed as illusory. It will do precisely as it pleases, however much this undermines foreign governments. These governments will find this dispensation ever harder to sell to their own people, especially as US interests come to conflict directly with their own. They will also be aware that a system of direct global governance will tend towards war rather than towards peace.

The second option is to tear up the UN's constitution, override the US veto and seek to build a new global security system, against the wishes of the hegemon. This approach was unthinkable just four months ago. It may be irresistible today.

There are, of course, recent precedents. In approving the Kyoto protocol on climate change and the International Criminal Court, other nations, weighing the costs of a world crudely governed by the United States against the costs of insubordination, have defied the superpower, to establish a global system in which it plays no part. Building a new global security system without the involvement of the US is a far more dangerous project, but there may be no real alternative. None of us should be surprised if we were to discover that Russia, France and China have already begun, quietly, to discuss it.

Of course, one of the dangers attendant on the construction of any system is that it comes to reflect the interests of its founders. There has, perhaps, never been a better time to consider what a system based upon justice and democracy might look like, and then, having decided how it might work in theory, to press the rebellious governments for its implementation.

There is no question that the existing arrangement stinks. It's not just that the five permanent members of the Security Council can override the will of all the other nations; the General Assembly itself has no greater claim to legitimacy than the House of Lords. Many of the member states are not themselves democracies. Even those governments which have come to power by means of election seldom canvas the opinion of their citizens before deciding how to cast their vote in international assemblies.

It is also riddled with rotten boroughs. Many of the citizens of the United States recognise that there is something wrong with a system in which the 500,000 people of Wyoming can elect the same number of representatives to the Senate as the 35 million of California. Yet, in the UN General Assembly, the 10,000 people of the Pacific island of Tuvalu possess the same representation as the one billion people of India. Their per capita vote, in other words, is weighted 100,000-fold.

Even if all the world's nations were of equal size, so that all the world's citizens were represented evenly, and even if the Security Council was abolished and no state, in the real world, was more powerful than any other, the UN would still fail the basic democratic tests, for the simple reason that its structure does not match the duties it is supposed to discharge. The United Nations has awarded itself three responsibilities. Two of these are

international duties, namely to mediate between states with opposing interests and to restrain the way in which its members treat their own citizens. The third is a global responsibility: to represent the common interests of all the people of the world. But it is constitutionally established to discharge only the first of these functions.

Its members will unite to condemn the behaviour of a state when that behaviour is anomalous. But they will tread carefully around the injustices in which almost all states participate, such as using money which should be spent on health and education on unnecessary weapons. They will do nothing to defend the common interests of humanity when these conflict with the common interests of the states. Nearly all the governments in power today, for example, are those whose policies are acceptable to the financial markets: they are, in effect, the representatives of global capital. Radical opposition parties are kept out of power partly by citizens' fear of how the markets might react if they were elected. So while it might suit the interests of nearly everyone to re-impose capital controls and bring many forms of speculation to an end, an assembly of nation states is unlikely to rid the world of this plague. The preamble to the UN Charter begins with the words "We the peoples of the United Nations". It would more accurately read "We the states".

That the Security Council should be disbanded and its powers devolved to a body representing all the nation states is evident to anyone who cannot see why democracy should be turned back at the national border. That the UN General Assembly, as currently constituted, is ill-suited to the task is equally obvious. I propose that each nation's vote should be weighted according to both the number of people it represents and its degree of democratisation.

The government of Tuvalu, representing 10,000 people, would, then, have a far smaller vote than the government of China. But China, in turn, would possess far fewer votes than it would if its government was democratically elected. Rigorous means of measuring democratisation are beginning to be developed by bodies such as Democratic Audit. It would not be hard, using their criteria, to compile an objective global index of democracy. Governments, under this system, would be presented with a powerful incentive to democratise: the more democratic they became, the greater their influence over world affairs.

No nation would possess a veto. The most consequential decisions – to go to war for example – should require an overwhelming majority of the assembly's weighted votes. This means that powerful governments wishing to recruit reluctant nations to their cause would be forced to bribe or blackmail most of the rest of the world to obtain the results they wanted. The nations whose votes they needed most would be the ones whose votes were hardest to buy.

But this assembly alone would be incapable of restraining the way in which its members treat their own citizens or representing the common interests of all the people of the world. It seems to me therefore that we require another body, composed of representatives directly elected by the world's people. Every adult on earth would possess one vote.

The implications for global justice are obvious. A resident of Ouagadougou would have the same potential influence over the decisions this parliament would make as a resident of Washington. The people of China would possess, between them, sixteen times as many votes as the people of Germany. It is, in other words, a revolutionary assembly.

Credit: Friends of the Earth International

Building a world parliament is not the same as building a world government. We would be creating a chamber in which, if it works as it should, the people's representatives will hold debates and argue over resolutions. In the early years at least, it commands no army, no police force, no courts, no departments of government. It need be encumbered by neither president nor cabinet. But what we would create would be a body which possesses something no other global or international agency possesses: legitimacy. Directly elected, owned by the people of the world, our parliament would possess the moral authority which all other bodies lack. And this alone, if effectively deployed, is a source of power.

Its primary purpose would be to hold other powers to account. It would review the international decisions made by governments, by the big financial institutions, and by bodies such as the reformed UN General Assembly and the World Trade Organisation. It would, through consultation and debate, establish the broad principles by which these other bodies should be run. It would study the decisions they make and expose them to the light. We have every reason to believe that, if properly constituted, our parliament, as the only body with a claim to represent the people of the world, would force them to respond. In doing so, they would reinforce its authority, enhancing its ability to call them to account in the future.

We could expect undemocratic states to wish to prevent the election of global representatives within their territory. But if the General Assembly was reconstituted along the lines I suggest, they would discover a powerful incentive to permit such a vote to take place, as this would raise their score on the global democracy index, and thus increase their formal powers in the General Assembly. In turn, the parliament's ability to review the decisions of the General Assembly would reinforce the Assembly's democratic authority.

We might anticipate a shift of certain powers from the indirectly-elected body to the directly-elected one. We could begin, in other words, to see the development of a bicameral parliament for the planet, which starts to exercise some of the key functions of government. This might sound unattractive, but only if, as many do, you choose to forget that global governance takes place whether we participate in it or not. Ours is not a choice between democratic global governance and no global governance, but between global democracy and the global dictatorship of the most powerful nations.

None of this will happen by itself. We can expect the nations seeking to frame a new global contract to do so in their own interests, just as the victors of the Second World War did. If we want a new world order (of which a

parliamentary system is necessarily just a small part), we must demand it with the energy and persistance with which the vast and growing global justice movement has confronted the old one. But nations seeking to design a new security system would discover that the perceived legitimacy of their scheme would rise according to its democratic credentials. If it is true that there are two superpowers on earth, the US government and global public opinion, then these nations would do well to recruit the latter in their struggle with the former.

Now is the time to turn our campaigns against the war-mongering, wealth-concentrating, planet-consuming world order into a concerted campaign for global democracy. We must become the Chartists and the Suffragettes of the 21st Century. They understood that to change the world you must propose as well as oppose. They democratised the nation; now we must seek to democratise the world. Our task is not to overthrow globalisation, but to capture it, and to use it as a vehicle for humanity's first global democratic revolution.

3 Developing solidarity with the new global civil society

Whilst the first six pieces have given us an insight into the various ways in which we can begin to contextualise our daily lives, this second section describes how some in Scotland are attempting to use these links once they are made.

One of the important lessons we have learnt from the Ecological Debt Education Project is how difficult it is to truly understand the realities of people's lives elsewhere. We dealt with this by trying to build links with community groups in Ecuador. The five articles describe five experiences of developing solidarity both within Scotland and abroad.

This chapter provides a stimulating reminder of the range of work of this nature that is happening in Scotland. Whilst some pieces, such as Amadu Khan's, outline some of the barriers to communities understanding the links between their experiences, others describe successful attempts at overcoming those barriers in Scotland, using both innovative ideas from Scotland and elsewhere.

What links each of these pieces is the clear commitment to being open to understanding the experiences of others in order to build stronger, more environmentally just global societies.

3.1 Green racism, globalisation and environmental injustice amongst refugees - Amadu Wurie Khan, Wester Hailes Multicultural Welfare Project

There are an estimated 12,000 refugees and asylum seekers in Scotland, and figures may rise due to the on-going dispersal programme of the Home Office. As they assimilate into the Black & ethnic minority (B/EM) population in the urban communities of Glasgow and Edinburgh, they naturally inherit the disenfranchisement, racism, vulnerability and other malaise that characterise the B/EM experience in Scottish society.

Although there is ample research and literature on varied aspects of these social injustices affecting the B/EM and its refugee and asylum seeking constituency, nothing has been done by the political class and vested interest or stakeholders to scrutinise the manner in which environmental injustice afflicts the refugee condition in the UK.

This paper therefore, is an attempt to explore this form of social injustice. It will particularly discuss the manifestations of environmental injustice suffered by refugees in Scotland. The way in which environmental injustice impacts on the wellbeing of asylum seekers and refugees will also be discussed. I will argue that refugees and asylum seekers suffer a duality if not a continuum of environmental injustices both in their countries of origin in the South and in Scotland.

A brief description of both the government's and civil institutions' policy and practice on asylum, will help to contextualise the particular vulnerability of refugees and asylum seekers to environmental abuse than other segments of the B/EM population in Scotland.

Whether refugee or asylum seeker (or the particularly ambiguous UK category of 'Exceptional Leave to Remain'), current immigration policies and practice in the UK and Scotland continue to marginalise them as a social and economic burden on the state. They are still subjected to dispersal across the UK and Scotland, and may be detained in removal centres, irrespective of the stage they are at, in an often protracted asylum process. In Scotland, children and other minor dependants or asylum seekers have been detained in such centres.

Government policy also prescribed that asylum seekers are not allowed to work and are on 70% income support, at least in the early stages of their asylum process. Compounding this is that they suffer racism, immense negative media coverage and perceived by the public to be opportunists. These policies and practices among others are responsible for the vulnerability of refugees to environmental injustice in Scotland.

Chien (1994) argues that environmental justice seeks to ensure that there is equal justice and protection under the law for everyone irrespective of race, ethnicity, cultural beliefs and socio-economic status from being exposed to any environmental dangers. Therefore, there is an act of environmental injustice when any form of discrimination occurs against a group of people in the way they are exposed to environmental hazards like pollution and overcrowding, and where their health and safety as well as socio-economic progress is in peril.

Amadu Wurie Khan

Such a discrimination or exposure to environmental injustice of a group may also be because the group are socially marginalised and disempowered to protest due to poverty, lack of education, racism or other related factors like immigration status. In simple terms, environmental injustice is coterminous with social injustice and explains why political power inequality in society leads to the misuse of people and their environment.

As a subtext of social justice therefore, environmental justice should enshrine the individual and collective rights of society to access and enjoy their natural and built environment and society's obligations to safeguard those rights. For immigrant communities like refugees and asylum seekers, and other B/EM who may not be aware of the environmental costs they are exposed to as they move into environmentally unfriendly residential areas or work, it is the statutory and moral responsibility of society and its authorities to inform the immigrant community of such risks and even to prevent this where possible. Where this is not the case, an act of environmental injustice is being committed against the immigrants, who in most cases have

no choice of a better place to reside in or work.
Critical to the achievement of environmental justice is that everyone in the society participates in the discussions and decision making of environmental issues and initiatives in equal measure particularly as these affect their lives and wellbeing. Where this is missing, and where individuals are made to be recipient of environmental decisions and policies without their participation, then there is an environmental injustice. This is because these individuals or groups are the ones mostly to be negatively affected by these policies and the environmentally dangerous projects like polluting factories that are engendered by such reckless policies.

In summary therefore, environmental injustice has as its indices social injustice, inequality in the use and access of environmentally friendly initiatives, and the lack of protection from environmental hazards of individuals and communities.

It is important to note that environmental injustice is perpetrated not just at the local and national, but on a global scale. The ownership and exploitation of resources in the South by the industrial Western world and their multinationals have continued to affect the imbalance of wealth and environmental resources on a global scale. This has led to armed conflicts, environmental disasters and impoverishment in the Southern economies. It also contributes to the attendant problem of increased migration from the South to the North.

The advent of globalisation through the workings of powerful multinationals exploiting resources in the developing world for huge profits creates many environmental disadvantages as well as social and economic hardship for local people. Cases where whole villages and communities have been dispossessed of their land, economic sources of income and their cultural life patterns abound in the literature. The need to earn a living and the location of industries and factories in cities, have forced many people to migrate from the rural to urban areas in their countries. This has destabilised communities, created social and environmental problems like overcrowding, squatter communities, poor health and abuse of labour in urban environments.

Also, as many people suffer from political inability to address their country's economic exploitation, and benefit less from the wealth produced, they become disgruntled with the multinationals and their body politic Godfathers. This has led to civil wars, as is the case in many warring developing countries like Sierra Leone. Consequently, civil wars and their potential destruction to the environment, economy, lives and wellbeing of their victims have forced the latter to migrate as refugees to the wealthy and politically stable Western countries. Similar destructive operations of multinationals have long been evident in the US and thus considered being a source of environmental injustice.

Globalisation therefore, may be partly to blame for creating a situation where the richer Western world becomes more prosperous at the expense of environmental degradation and poverty of peoples in the developing

world, which eventually gives rise to the refugee phenomenon. As they seek political and economic refugee in the west like in Scotland, refugees continue to suffer environmental injustice.

Ample evidence adduced from research in environmental participation in the UK points to the exclusion of B/EM communities like refugees from involvement in the built and natural environment. Many environmental initiatives by mainstream environmental service providers including access to national heritage sites, the countryside and other historic and geographical places of environmental recreation and educational value have less visible B/EM and refugee participation. One reason that may help explain this lack of participation is that activities are not tailored to meet the needs and interests of the B/EM population. This may have contributed to the lack of knowledge by B/EM and immigrants about the availability of these activities as well as the enjoyment to be derived from their participation in the built and natural environment.

Critical to participation of this nature and that may aid refugee and B/EM gaining of environmental benefits is the right to participate as equal partners at the decision making and delivery levels of environmental initiatives, a sine qua non for environmental justice. However, most of the environmental sustainability audits and consultations carried out across Scotland fail to particularise either a B/EM or refugee focus. A typical example was the access and use of the Union Canal by local residents in west Edinburgh. Although many consultative exercises through focus groups and forums were organised, none was held among the B/EM and its refugee constituents. Also, it was observed that most of the excursion trips and other environmental recreation activities around the canal, organised by local agencies and British Waterways, made no serious attempt to benefit the refugees. It was left with the Wester Hailes Multicultural Welfare Project (WHMWP) to organise environmental activities like canal and countryside trips for both the B/EM and refugee communities.

A similar observation has been made in Glasgow, which has the largest population of refugees. In order to address this social exclusion and environmental injustice, the British Trust for Conversation Volunteers (BCTV) have for the past two years designed specific environmental recreation activities aimed specifically at the cities refugee community. It could therefore be argued that the failure of environmental programmes and activities to reflect the needs, concerns and perspectives of ethnic minorities may have discriminated and excluded them from environmental participation and benefits contributing to an environmental injustice.

A corollary to the participation and environmental stake holding in any civil society is the need to educate, raise awareness and inform everyone on social and environmental issues. Educational and information drives of this nature must reflect the diverse cultural and linguistic experiences of society's members. It is a practice that gives prominence to the ability by refugees to access and understand information, rights and responsibilities as well as to know about environmental hazards within the society.

On the contrary, most refugees as immigrants and minority language users

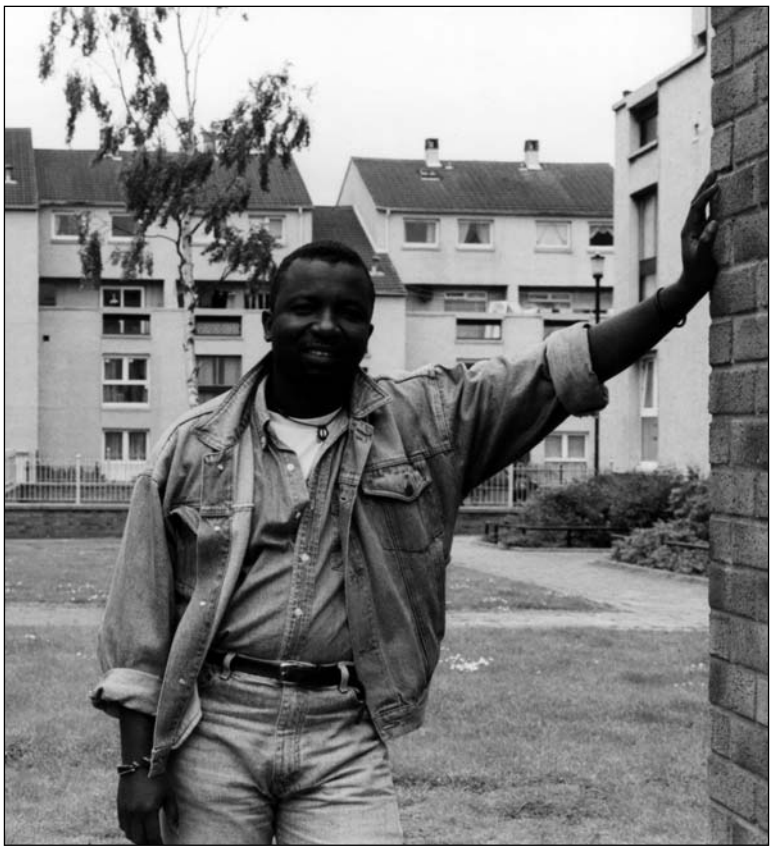
are disadvantaged in terms of accessing information on environmental issues even where this is readily available in English as the main language. This may help explain why they are excluded from participating in environmental initiatives discussed above. Also the lack of English skills by immigrants limits their rights in relation to environmental protection and to know about any environmental danger that they are exposed to, particularly in their work places. More importantly, their inability to communicate in English may preclude them from protesting and lobbying against environmental injustices of this nature.

In a multicultural Scotland, environmental justice must incorporate not only the linguistic but cultural diversity of all peoples. Issues of spirituality and religion, belief systems, customs and cultural nuances should inform the interpretation, understanding, design and delivery of environmental initiatives. These rights and good practices are enshrined in the social and cultural rights of the UN. Where diverse perspectives of refugees are harnessed, they have a potential to bring alternative economic alternatives that may help maintain a sustainable livelihood, pattern of living and safe communities.

Moreover, the diverse cultural experiences may introduce new perspectives in the development, sustainability and conservation of the natural and built environment as has been practiced in the countries of origin of refugees. On the contrary, this opportunity has not been harnessed for the benefit of the environment and in aiding safe communities. The marginalisation and exclusion of refugees from environmental consensus making and agenda setting therefore, have undermined the enrichment of cultural diversity to the environmental debate in contemporary Scotland.

Despite the fact that there is a plethora of professional skills and expertise among the refugee community, they continue to experience high unemployment, under-utilisation of their skills, exploitation of their labour and low wages. This has led to abysmal socio-economic disenfranchisement, poverty and poor health for refugees and their dependants who are often women and children.

Research has also shown that they are more likely to work in the illegal economy and labour intensive jobs with minimum or no protection from environmental hazards at the work place. Cases where refugees have been exposed to toxic substances like pesticides in Britain have been noted in the literature. The exposure to health and safety dangers at work in this way is environmental injustice and common-



Amadu Wurie Khan in Wester Hailes

place among refugees in Scotland as has been noted elsewhere. Accentuating this social and environmental injustice is the dispersal policy of government. Under this policy, refugees are dispersed to areas of deprivation with already poor housing and spartan facilities. This has led to overcrowding, tensions with locals who see themselves as competing with refugees for the meagre resources and thus, breakdown in community relations. The rise of racial attacks and other xenophobic vigilantism by locals against refugees in Glasgow's Sighthill underline the continued violation of the human rights, lack of safety and poor physical and emotional health of refugees.

It is obvious from this discussion that the environmental injustices that refugees suffer have an overarching relationship with their social injustice. The implications for their human, social, cultural and environment rights among others as protected under international and Scottish laws are also apparent. It is instructive to conclude that such environmental abuses against refugees are underpinned by institutional racism.

The exploitative environmental activities of multinationals at the global level, and the government's draconian and inhumane refugee policies that jeopardise their emotional, physical, economic and social wellbeing in Scotland put refugees in perpetual environmental misery. I will suggest that until this 'green' racism is addressed, building a sustainable refugee community will be futile.

3.2 The Global Concerns Trust – Nahid Aslam, Centre for Human Ecology

In this article I will look at the reasons why the Global Concerns Trust was set up, the work it is involved in and the issues of international development particularly from a South Asian (Punjabi) perspective.

The Global Concerns Trust is the first Black & Minority Ethnic Development Education charity to be set up in Scotland. It became a registered charity in 1999 (No. Sc 05640) and was the idea and vision of Alastair Christie, the then Chief Executive of the Edinburgh & Lothian's Racial Equality Council. The vision was quickly taken on board by a number of Black Activists living in and around Edinburgh at that time and a group was formed.

The vision of the Trust was and still is, 'to enable young people to help tackle the challenges of development and the environment in Africa and Asia'. Our feelings were that young people, did not have the power to tackle the problems of poverty in the Third World head on, but that with some encouragement and resources they would be in a better position to see the difficulties that arose for those working in the Development Sector when it came to challenging and changing the way Systems work. And providing reasons for why it was not simply enough, for example, to give free food to a country where large numbers of people were suffering starvation or malnutrition, doing so would have an adverse effect elsewhere for the economy of that particular country.

Our focus was Asia and Africa because the vast majority of Black & Minority Ethnic people that have come to settle in Scotland have their roots in these two continents. Our target was the youth of these two communities because we felt that development as an employment path was something that the BME communities had not looked at in any viable way. We wanted to change that, in the hope that eventually this generation who would enter the international development sector could propose some radical changes and maybe push those changes through at policy level.


Nahid Aslam

Our belief was that, maybe if we could enable the second / third generations of BME youth to get involved in looking at poverty issues in their countries of origin something more sustainable would take place. If a young person was regularly visiting a town or village from where their parents had come, seeing and hearing about the issues that were affecting the lives of those people living in that area, then s/he would be more inclined, on their return to Scotland to be able to mobilize other members of their community to help them in setting up a project in that village or town which had asked for or requested it, because the group would theortically, have a vested interest in supporting 'its own', we felt.

By enabling that young person to come by the skills and resources needed to start off a project and providing on-going support to that individual or group, we at GCT felt that the project would be more likely to survive and also the individuals involved would gain many practical and theoretical skills that they could then be able to use and market when they entered the job market. It would also increase their self-confidence and motivation and make them more 'valuable' members of society.

I became involved as a volunteer in the Trust in 1999 and my interest lay in the fact that we at the GCT would be able to work to provide young BME individuals – particularly those who were in their final years of secondary schooling – an alternative way of viewing the countries they or their parents had migrated from. After listening to the views of a number of BME individuals of my own generation, I felt that a great number of second generation BME 'youngsters' were buying into a range of mainstream ideas, the developing world being either totally 'corrupt', or the developing world being full of beggars who didn't want to work and preferred to live off hand-outs. This included the misconception that Africa and Asia were poor because of their own corrupt leadership and lack of public will to change the status quo.

I also felt that one of the main reasons why the BME communities in the UK were not integrating into wider society was because they felt that just as African and Asian Leadership was seen as corrupt, the host community was also thinking that they too were corrupt as individuals. This was creating in them feelings of low self-esteem which made them want to go into themselves more and be with only those people with whom they could identify – i.e. members of their own country of origin and also members of their own class.

Out of all the BME communities living in the UK, the Punjabi is the largest. It comprises of Sikhs, Hindus and Muslims from East Punjab (India) and

Muslims and Christians from West Punjab (Pakistan). Except for religion, this community shares a similar culture. The majority of Punjabis, when they migrated to the UK were from a working class background, with not much school education (particularly for the women). However, there were also a few Punjabis who were from educated urban backgrounds. They had come to study and then decided to settle. Their women also tended to be educated to degree level. The lifestyles and outlooks of both these groupings were poles apart, as one would expect, but for the host community that saw all BMEs as one, it placed a great barrier on both these communities, particularly the working class Punjabis because they did not have the skills or confidence to integrate and so found themselves becoming more and more marginalized until it reached a stage were they self selected to 'drop-out' – as is still evident in places like Bradford and Rochdale, where we now have ghettos where even the 'white man' fears to tread!

For the middle class Punjabis it was slightly easier to integrate and they were in a position to take advantage, to a greater extent of the services available by the host community. Unfortunately they sometimes tried to disassociate themselves from their country of origin, unless a situation arose where the host community brought out issues of difference and ostracized them. Then they came back to their working class 'brothers' to find a sense of belonging and used them to socialize with, but always with an air of 'superiority'.

The Punjabi community of North India and Pakistan started arriving in greater numbers during the 1950s and 60s, during that time of Colonial history when Britain was calling out for migrant workers to perform menial tasks not wanted by Her indigenous community. The majority of those who came from the Indian Subcontinent were young Punjabi men, either small scale farmers who had managed to borrow and beg enough money to pay for their sea voyage over to the British Isles or whose families had sold their land to pay for their sons and brothers tickets, in the hope that they would do good in Britain and support them financially in the future to buy their land back. They were 'economic migrants'. Their desire - to work hard, save money and return back to their countries of origin with enough money to spend the rest of their days in ease. Many of them did in fact return, however a significant number decided that the political climate in their home countries was not a favourable one to return too and that they would be better off settling in the UK. They then applied for their dependents to join them. Those that came to Edinburgh had initially lived for a period in one of Britain's industrial cities such as Manchester, Rochdale, or Leeds before hearing about and then migrating up to Scotland.

In the sixties and early seventies the vast majority of Edinburgh's Punjabi men worked in Public Transport – on the buses. From there they saved their money to start their own business and moved into retail whenever it was convenient for them to do so. Women primarily had been housewives but then 'helped' their husband once the family retail business was set up and running. Children also supported their parents in the running of the business – boys often even taking days of school to 'help' their dad in the running of the shop. This type of behavior brought the mainstream community to believe and expect that Asian children would and indeed could only, work in their father's business and so it was not necessary for them to be encouraged

to follow any other career path. A great number of Pakistani and Sikh boys left school at the earliest opportunity, with very few qualifications, to then indeed join their fathers in the family business – it was the 'expected' thing to do. Many of these boys have done very well economically, particularly during that time when small retail businesses could provide a good living, but as the larger retail markets opened up, many of these 'youngsters' did not have the skills to compete and their businesses started to collapse. However, the trend of non-expectation within the education system had been set, and it is only recently that a move has been made to 'encourage' BME youth into 'non-traditional' lines of employments. The GCT is playing its part in providing one of these 'non-traditional' lines.

The link with the Punjab is still as strong for the Punjabis now as it was in the 1960s, primarily because the first generation has consciously set about developing and maintaining that link. Firstly by ensuring youngsters learn and continue to speak in their mother tongue at home, secondly by going to visit relatives in the Punjab rather than holidaying in any other part of the world, thirdly by trying to ensure that spouses for their children come from that part of the world – particularly wives for their sons, so that the tradition is kept alive through the 'mother or primary care-giver', who is always 'first generation'.

For the GCT, forging links with small scale NGOs in those parts of the developing world where the majority of the Scottish BME have originated has been key. We have had links with projects in India and Pakistan, as well as with NGOs in Kenya, Nepal, Malaysia and the Philippines. The links have been made by individuals themselves who have visited a particular place or spent a considerable amount of time in a particular area, have met with the NGO, seen how it works and decided that this particular project is a worthy one to support. We have then, with the help of that NGO put together information packs that have been used in schools and community centres where we have held talks on issues to do with international development. Our aim has always been to work with grassroots organisations with the desire to develop close relationships with that particular community. We have worked to encourage individuals from Scotland to visit the particular NGOs that we have supported, for them to see at first-hand how the projects operate because we feel that this provides valuable experience for the individual and that it can leave a lasting commitment to development issues on the part of that individual, and hopefully, in the process, can fire up the ability in them to turn an idea into action once that individual returns home and works to motivate others to get involved in international development issues.

There are huge numbers of BME communities in the UK working, often silently, on international development issues. Much of the good works that they do never get publicised. Yet countless groups and individuals send remittances to towns and village of their origin and have helped build schools, hospitals, mosques, roads and wells, etc, for the benefit of the whole community. Sometimes the money sent by individuals to relatives in the developing world has amounted to more than the total budget that the UK government has sent to a particular developing country in the form of aid.

Even DfID is now beginning to recognize this and has expressed a desire to work with these communities, to channel their money in a more effective manner. To this end it is working in partnership with a number of BME organisations – mainly in England, but also with the GCT – to help build the capacity of these and other BME organizations interested in building their capacity in international development issues. A new organisation is about to be born – it will be known as 'Communities for Development' and will have the remit of supporting those individuals and organisations who are working to create a more just world society and providing for those individuals within their community they have left behind in their countries of origin so that the wealth that has been created by the few can be spread out amongst the many. The GCT has been involved in this process and it is our vision to see a world where wealth is not just concentrated in one part of the globe nor in the hands of just a few members of the human community but that it is made available to a greater number of people and benefits many more people than it does at present. The hope is that in this process the planet earth itself can benefit, because, unless a person feels happy and secure within himself (including economically), he will not want to concern himself with the happiness and security of others – his close family members, his community, let alone the world environment around him.

Indeed he will not know how to!

3.3 Local Issues, Global Perspectives - The need for global citizenship - John Watson, WDM

Global issues are part of everyday life in a way that they never were for previous generations. Television, the internet, international sport and increased opportunities for travel, all bring the wider world into everyone's daily experience. Moreover, economies around the world are more than ever interdependent, with growing reliance on both trade with, and investment from, other countries. Thus international developments also impact on jobs, savings and consumer goods and prices. Increasingly Scotland itself is becoming a multicultural society, with new Scots arriving from all corners of the globe.

With a long history of international trading links, and a strong tradition of exporting people, Scots are perhaps more aware than most that local life is linked to wider international issues. But as the globalised world seems to become ever more complicated it's sometimes hard to see how our local link with the bigger picture really works.

Globalisation may seem to be bringing people together, but looked at from a different perspective it's also tearing us apart. In the last 20 years, while the world has shrunk at an ever increasing rate, the gap between rich and poor has risen dramatically, both between the richest and poorest countries, but also within countries on either side of the divide. Television and the internet may give us more opportunities to hear about injustice, but in themselves they provide no clue as to how to change it. The concept of Global Citizenship does.

We all have some idea of what it means to be a citizen of Scotland or the UK. We demand our rights, as members of a democratic society, to justice and other benefits and to a say in the way society is run, and balance these against our responsibilities, whether to pay taxes or to use our vote responsibly. This involvement of ordinary citizens in understanding and influencing the decisions of the state is one of the great civilising influences of our time.

Global Citizens simply broaden their horizons somewhat and insist that our new interconnectedness forces us to accept the whole world as our community. Now our understanding of rights must be internationalised to be those of every human being. Our responsibilities extend to others overseas but still require an understanding of how the average Scot can influence events on both sides of the world.

Well, from the moment we switch off Sony alarm clocks in the morning we're global citizens whether we like it or not. Nowadays your average clock could have been constructed using components from five different countries. And buying that clock provides support for its method of construction, hence influencing the economies of all those producers. The choice you make between Nescafe and a Fair Trade brand can seriously influence the income of coffee farmers in Uganda. Choosing to spend your Caribbean holiday in a foreign-owned hotel has implications for the local economy of the region.

And your power as a global citizen goes far beyond shopping. One of the most powerful institutions in the world is the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which exerts control over the economies of many of the world's poorest countries. The Chair of the IMF's financial committee happens to be one Gordon Brown, the MP for Dunfermline East. This leaves the good folk of that part of Fife with a remarkable opportunity to speak out for the people of Mali, Malawi or Mauritania, simply by writing a letter to their own MP.

WDM's new "World-wise" project is working in four parts of Scotland to encourage understanding of the way that global developments impact on our daily lives, and of the opportunities we have to act locally in the pursuit of global change. The project has identified areas of Scotland where the local situation is particularly influenced by global trends and developments:

- Dunfermline has a strong mining history and recent experience of inward investment;
- Livingston has recently suffered from the loss of new industries;
- Paisley is historically a mill town but lost most of its manufacturing jobs in the 1980s;
- Stirling relies on tourism and farming for much of its employment.

In each case the project will carry out a programme of education for global citizenship by exploring the global links to issues of local importance. Already campaigners against a landfill site in Fife have made contact with a similar action group in Durban, South Africa. Groups in Scotland will be linking with groups in Mali to produce education materials that highlight the

connections between the global trends impacting on each area. Communities in Livingston will have the chance to find out more about Recife in northern Brazil, now host to some of the foreign investment which has recently pulled out of Scotland.

The website www.world-wise.info has been set up to act as a noticeboard for the project and will be expanded as the work progresses. Anyone interested in becoming an active global citizen in Scotland is recommended to have a look, and can get involved by completing the online questionnaire.

3.4 Exchange Programmes – Leonie Wilson, SEAD

I worked for a three years for Scottish Education and Action for Development (Sead) on their Striking A Chord project, which involved an exchange programme with the Dominican Republic.

Sead has years of experience doing exchange work and developed the concept of "mutual solidarity". Mutual solidarity is a two-way relationship where two communities or groups choose to make a link recognising that each party stands to gain from the relationship. In Sead's case this concept has been particularly applied to the relationship between communities in Scotland and the Majority World.

A Glasgow community activist spoke of her experience of mutual solidarity at a conference in 1993. She was asked to do a workshop on their campaign for healthy housing, which led to the first tenant-led solar housing project. Cecilia Moyo from South Africa was asked to listen to the story of their struggle and comment on the similarities facing people in South African townships.

It was evident that some people in the workshop knew more about Third World issues than they did about the struggle facing their own communities in Scotland. This was the first time they had heard our horror stories of living in cold, damp flats, the associated health problems, and how the poorest families owed hundreds of pounds in fuel debt.

When I listened to the various guest speakers from different Third World countries, I could hardly believe just how much we had in common and felt that my spirit was totally on their wavelength. It was the first time I had been given the opportunity to exchange stories of oppression with overseas counterparts and to dispel some of the myths surrounding our poverty. It occurred to me then that we shared the same pain and negative image; an image created by unfriendly media and reinforced by ignorance. It was then that I realised the real educational value of people from different parts of the world learning from each other's experience of poverty and development.

Mutual solidarity has been promoted and facilitated through exchange programmes. The majority of exchange programmes have occurred with guests from the Majority World visiting community groups in Scotland most recently from South Africa and the Dominican Republic. They have also involved two visits of activists to South Africa and Dominican Republic with

the Task Force to South Africa in 1997 and the EduAction Exchange to the Dominican Republic in 2000.

Guests are invited to Scotland on the basis of their experience of grassroots issues directly related to the work communities with whom Sead is working in Scotland. During the "Shifting the Balance" programme a lot of the work was focused on democracy and many guests from South Africa brought their experience of activism towards a more democratic South Africa with them. The "Striking A Chord" project was about alleviating poverty using the arts and guests were invited on the basis of their experience in these areas. In both cases it was useful working with guests with whom Sead has developed a relationship.

Credit: SEAD

Indian women making chapatis at the "Inter Continental Caravan", which involved over 500 individuals on a month long tour of Europe in 1999.

Exchange programmes that work towards the concept of mutual solidarity take a basic format which involves workshops, conferences, events which explore the local issues of the community groups in Scotland, explore the issues of the guests and then explore the links between them and what they have in common. Workshops should contain space to explore not only what people have in common but to share common ideas and solutions to improve things.

Through Sead's evaluation activities guest programmes have been shown to do a number of things:

- offers hosts and guest a chance to share ideas and find a common agenda
- challenge stereotypes of who has the expertise
- gives recognition to what participants are doing
- helps focus the mind on local concerns from a new perspective
- brings people together who often don't meet even within the same community
- inspires people to see what can be achieved against the odds
- for guests it gives them time to reflect on their own experience, and for hosts seeing themselves through somebody elses eyes
- it draws out what people have in common rather than what divides people and therefore breaks down boundaries

In February and March 2001, Sead invited Lico and Alba who work with MUDHA to work with different groups in Scotland to broaden the debate around local and global racism and poverty. They were in Scotland for over three weeks. MUDHA work in some of the bateyes (cane sugar plantation communities) to alleviate the lack of services. They work mainly with

Dominicans of Haitian ancestry, and Haitian immigrant workers but also with the few Dominicans which live there too. Discrimination and racism against Haitians in the Dominican Republic is common and MUDHA also do campaign work from an antiracist standpoint. Lico and Alba were experienced trainers and group workers working on the cultural education and training programme and community health programme.

Work with MUDHA was the product of a two year relationship, during which there had been 4 visits to Dominican Republic, one at the beginning of the programme to establish contact, another follow-up visit to develop the EduAction Exchange, the EduAction Exchange itself (during which 2 groups of people worked intensively with MUDHA) and a visit specifically to develop the content of the programme jointly with Alba and Lico. Both organisations wanted to broaden and contribute to the debate around racism, discrimination, poverty and identity through this exchange. There were enough similarities between the ways of working of the two organisations including the popular education approach and bringing the international perspective to local issues and both organisations would be able to benefit from the experience (beyond the exchange).

In the Scottish context we wanted to challenge the increasingly racist and anti-immigration attitude perpetuated by both the media through headlines such as "bogus asylum seekers", "immigrants flood country", and by the Government and Conservative party seemingly looking for votes on the basis of how many “illegal immigrants” they propose to deport each year. There were similar issues in the Dominican Republic around Haitian immigrants.

In November 2000, I visited the Dominican Republic and Alba, Lico and I worked together to develop a programme which would satisfy both organisations. We developed sessions linking local, national and international issues into an historical, economic, political, social analysis and covered themes of human rights, racism, white ideology, media representation, institutional racism, identity to name but a few, and explored ways to challenge racism through contributing ideas to a poster campaign and discussion. We chose to do a poster campaign as it is a very visual and creative way of taking action and can be used as an educational tool with other groups of people.

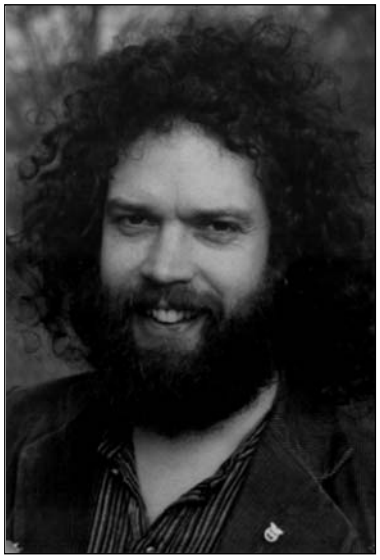
Alba and Lico met and worked with a variety of different organisations and groups from Workers Educational Association members in Scotland, groups from Social Inclusion Partnership areas, black led organisations, to students at Stirling University. Each session joined participants’ own experiences of racism and discrimination with the experience of Alba and Lico’s work in the Dominican Republic and worked towards the poster campaign. The workshops successfully created a space for honest and frank participation and discussion, crucial in discussing what is an issue people often skirt around. And importantly for both SEAD and MUDHA they were about how, through developing a deeper understanding of local and international poverty and discrimination, we can all work to challenge these in our own communities and lives whilst retaining a global perspective.

Exchange work is not a one-way process. Both Alba and Lico found their experience rewarding and thought provoking for them and for MUDHA.

They discovered people who had solidarity with their struggle, they were shocked at the amount of poverty in Scotland and the similarities between the causes of poverty. They felt it gave them the opportunity to reflect from a different context on racism, immigration and identity in Dominican Republic. They intended to use the experience to educate other MUDHA staff, community promoters and the groups they work with in the bateyes. They feel that it is in their interest that the people they work and live with are able to perceive that other communities in other parts of the world have similar problems and experiences and that to be stronger, human solidarity needs to be promoted.

3.5 Influences on the agents' project – Eurig Scandrett, FoES

In 2001, Friends of the Earth started the Agents for Environmental Justice project, funded by the Community Fund. The project recruited local activists in communities facing environmental injustices and provided them with an education programme to validate and support their struggles for environmental justice. The project used popular education approaches in order that the course was relevant, yet added value to the work which the activists were doing. Most of their study was situated in their communities and community activism was given equal status to reading theoretical texts. In this way, the project was designed to be valuable to the activists' whole community as well as the individual, and Friends of the Earth should be influenced by the community struggles as well as the activists affected by their involvement in the course. Where did we get our ideas from?



Eurig Scandrett - FoES

Environmental justice is a phrase that was coined by the black communities in the USA. African-Americans, along with Hispanic and Native Americans, took the lead in challenging the toxic dumps and polluting plants which were being placed in their neighbourhoods. African-Americans, Hispanics and Native Americans were the first to experience the detritus from the world's most developed and profligate economy, they are the third world within the borders. However, other groups from the third world proper also have claim on environmental justice, in particular in South Africa and Nigeria. Throughout the world, environmental struggles of the poor have taught the rich world's largely white environmentalists the importance of putting social justice, and the experience of the victims, in the forefront of environmental justice struggles.

The idea of Community Agents has been developed in rural South Asia, to recruit and train local people to become animators, or mobilisers of local community action in their own villages. Whether initiating community enterprises or micro-credit businesses, or mobilising the provision of social services or resistance to external damage, the community agents

have been influential in encouraging indigenous development amongst the poor in rural areas. The idea was brought to Scotland as a form of stimulating rural development, with some success, and Friends of the Earth wanted to extend the idea to anybody who is active in their community and for whom some training and support could bring about change in urban situations and communities of interest, as well as the rural areas.

Popular education is a particular pedagogical approach which aims to create a curriculum out of a dialogue between those who are engaged in a political struggle and those who have access to the skills and knowledge which can help this. The education is therefore partisan on the side of those who are being exploited, and encourages collective learning for social change rather than individual achievement. Popular education (or education populare) is originally Latin American, being based on the philosophy and literacy work of Paulo Freire in Brazil. It spread from Brazil across the subcontinent of South America and on to other parts of the South and into Europe and North America. In Brazil and elsewhere, popular education continues to play an important part of political struggles, such as the Brazilian landless peoples' movement MST.

Friends of the Earth has put together a project in support of the communities who are struggling for environmental justice in Scotland, and has received credit for this. But the ideas which make up project, all come from across the world, from the South and from those who are oppressed by the white man throughout the world. We are indebted to those peoples in Africa, South Asia, South America and (non-European) North Americans, who have taught us how to confront injustices.

4 Advocacy and lobbying within political structures and joining movements

We have combined the two subjects of lobbying within political structures and joining movements, because there is so often crossover between them. Vicki Clayton describes the work of Jubilee Scotland in section 4.3 and the high profile Jubilee 2000 campaign is a prime example of how civil movements can make good use of political lobbying to achieve their aims.

In the four pieces in this section we get a great overview of the types and areas of action that can be used to affect change in the way our views are represented on globally significant issues. The pieces range from a structured breakdown of how to use what often seems like the remote European Parliament, through a valuable insight into what happens when educationalists from around the world get their heads together, to the aforementioned article on the links between Jubilee Scotland's aims and the fight for environmental justice.

We finish the handbook with a piece by our chief executive Duncan McLaren on the role Friends of the Earth plays in an international context, helping us keep in mind the wonderful resource we have in the links that environmentalists have made through Friends of the Earth over the years.

4.1 Using the Parliamentary process – Kirstie Shirra, FoES

In order to achieve environmental justice at both national and international levels, there is a need for strong, effective environmental legislation to be introduced.

In the run up to the 2003 Scottish Parliament elections an opinion poll found that '86% of people think the environment is an important political issue' and '51% said the environment would influence how they would vote' (NFO System 3 Poll). This suggests that the Scottish public is supportive of stronger environmental legislation but there is much yet that can be done. This chapter aims to give a brief introduction to the political institutions that represent us and how to begin influencing them.

4.1.1 The Institutions

1. Europe

The European Union (EU) has been creating environmental law for around 25 years with more than 200 directives now in force. EU environmental legislation respects the important principle of 'subsidiarity': that wherever possible, action should be taken by the authority as close as possible to the people it affects. However, pollution, climate change and sustainable development are all issues that are trans-boundary and therefore require parallel trans-boundary legislation. As well as formulating internal policy, the EU also promotes measures at an international level to deal with worldwide environmental problems and undertakes a number of multilateral activities e.g. the Kyoto Protocol.

There are 8 Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) responsible for representing the whole of Scotland at a European level.

2. Westminster

72 Members of Parliament (MPs) represent Scottish constituencies at Westminster (this is due to be cut following the creation of the Scottish Parliament).

While the majority of Scottish environmental issues are now the responsibility of the Scottish Parliament, there are a number of other issues that the Westminster parliament legislates on which could have an impact on environmental justice. These include international trade, foreign policy and corporate accountability.

3. Scotland

The Scottish Parliament was established in 1999 following a Scottish referendum on devolution. There are 129 Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs), 73 of whom are elected by a first past the post system and represent individual constituencies, and the remaining 56, who are regional members, through proportional representation. This means that everyone in Scotland is represented by one constituency MSP and seven regional MSPs.

The Scottish Parliament passes law and scrutinises the work of the Scottish Executive. The Scottish Executive is the government in Scotland and is formed from the party or parties holding a majority of seats in the Parliament. The members of the Executive are collectively referred to as 'the Scottish Ministers'. The Scottish Executive is responsible to the Scottish Parliament.

The Scottish Parliament is responsible for most environmental issues in Scotland and for implementing much of the legislation which comes out of Europe.

While the Scottish Parliament has no direct power over international aspects of the environment it does fulfil an awareness-raising role and can promote positions on the world stage. The First Minister's attendance at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002 is a perfect example of this.

Roles and Responsibilities

EU	Westminster	Scottish Parliament
• Air • Biotechnology • Chemicals • Civil Protection and Environmental Accidents • Climate Change • Environmental Economics • Health • Industry • International Issues • Land Use • Nature and Biodiversity • Noise • Radiation Protection • Soil • Sustainable Development • Waste • Water	• Energy and fuel • Transport (some aspects)	• Agriculture, forestry and fishing • Environmental protection policy • Air, land and water pollution • Natural and built heritage • Water supplies, sewerage, flood prevention and coastal protection • The functions and budget of SEPA • Policies of sustainable development within the international commitments agreed by the UK • Transport

4.1.2 How to get involved

How to contact your representatives:

• MSPs
in writing: The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP
by phone: 0131 348 5000 or 0845 278 1999
by e-mail: firstname.lastname.MSP@scottish.parliament.uk

• MPs
in writing:: The House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA
by phone: 020 7219 3000
by e-mail: addresses can be found at
www.parliament.uk/directories/hciolists/alms.cfm

• MEPs
by phone: 0131 557 7866
further details: www.europarl.org.uk/uk_meps/MembersMain.htm

Your representatives can do various things on your behalf:

- ask parliamentary questions
- initiate a debate
- propose amendments to legislation
- introduce legislation
- write to a relevant minister/body/etc

Contacting your representatives may also persuade them to vote a particular way on an issue of importance to you.

Join a campaign

Your influence upon your representatives, and the political institutions they belong to, may well be stronger if you join a campaign. As part of a campaign you could submit a petition to the relevant parliament, organise/carry out a protest or stunt and gather media support and coverage.

CASE STUDY: CHEMICAL REACTION
'Chemical Reaction' is a campaign created by a coalition of the European Environment Bureau, Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace. Its aim is to influence European legislation on the registration, evaluation and authorisation of chemicals. The campaign argues that 'everyday we are exposed to industrial hazardous materials used in common household items' and that this must be stopped. In July 2003, 483 organisations and 23,600 citizens had signed the campaign's 'Declaration for a Toxics Free Future'.
www.chemicalreaction.org

MORE INFORMATION ...

Scottish Parliament www.scottish.parliament.uk
Scottish Executive www.scotland.gov.uk
UK Parliament www.parliament.uk
UK Government www.gov.uk
European Parliament www.europarl.eu.int
European Commission's Green Portal www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/index_en.htm
Friends of the Earth Europe www.foeeurope.org

The Scottish Office of the European Parliament:
The Tun
4 Jackson's Entry
Holyrood Road
Edinburgh
EH8 8PJ

0131 557 7866
epedinburgh@europarl.eu.int

The Scottish Parliament has 80 Partner Libraries throughout Scotland. These are public libraries which hold Scottish Parliament information and documents. Details of your nearest Partner Library can be found at:
www.scottish.parliament.uk/partnerlibraries/index.htm or by asking in your local library.

4.2 The World Education Forum – Liam Kane

Porto Alegre, Brazil, January 20th-22nd 2003

The World Social Forum has become a lively meeting place for the world's popular movements against the globalisation which is destroying the planet and its people. Its charter, describes "… an open meeting place for reflective thinking, democratic debate of ideas, formulation of proposals, free exchange of experiences and inter-linking for effective action, by groups and movements of civil society that are opposed to neo- liberalism and to domination of the world by capital and any form of imperialism, and are committed to building a society centred on the human person."

The World Social Forum has given birth to a number of smaller initiatives, one of which is the World Education Forum. The second WEF took place in Porto Alegre in January 2003, just before the main event. It brought together ten thousand people from over 100 countries, all committed to the idea that 'a better world is possible' and keen to ensure that education plays its part in bringing this about. Participants came from all areas of education - primary, secondary, Higher, adult and informal - and were predominantly educators themselves, students of education, education administrators or teachers union representatives.

It's appropriate that this took place in Porto Alegre, Brazil. Over the last 30 years, through its experience of 'popular education' - the educational work of grassroots movements struggling for change - Latin America has developed some wonderful ideas on how radical educators and activists should go about their business.

The WEF opened with a mass meeting, lots of cultural events and two speeches which for me stood out. One was that of the education minister in the new left-leaning Brazilian government of 'Lula'. He outlined his plans to tackle the desperate problems of Brazilian education and said that with his government's redistributive policies, there would be more than enough money to sort them out: not often you hear politicians say that, eh?

Then, with no notes or hesitations, a 12-year old Cuban girl spoke passionately and eloquently on the state of the world, criticising, among other things, the 'fascist attempt at a coup in Venezuela'. It was dramatic to hear such revolutionary rhetoric in someone so young. I agreed with all she said but it was disconcerting: it just sounded like she'd been pumped full of propaganda. Cuba's done some wonderful things in education but it lags behind other Latin American countries in its practice of 'popular education', in which one of the aims is to enable people to think and act for themselves, not just be passive consumers of propaganda and spin, even if it does come from the left.

There were meetings and debates on a wide range of topics relating to education for change. As I'd done some research into 'popular education' in both Latin America and Scotland, I was asked to debate on 'popular' versus 'state' education. I couldn't believe it when nearly three thousand turned up to the riverside warehouse in which the debate took place (like the other world forums, the majority of attendees still come from the host country): in

Scotland, thirty would be a full house!
Talking to others, people's experience of the forum depended on the particular debates they attended. Personally, I found some very stimulating and others quite bland. Some were politically radical, the one on neoliberalism, education and social movements, for example; others just seemed to be arguing for more resources for education in poorer countries, a worthy aim in itself but sometimes discussed in isolation from other, hotter political issues. Having said that, despite the many undercurrents and tendencies within the Forum - natural enough in itself - as a whole the overwhelming culture was encouragingly progressive: the Forum also endorsed a clear anti-war message.

In the end it was the experience of being there that mattered, rather than the quality of individual speeches and debates. You meet lots of like-minded people from all over the globe, exchange addresses or emails and it does wonders for stimulating global solidarity networks. Education for all ages has a radical potential and an important role in political change for social, economic and environmental justice, both at the level of policy and in community mobilising. It's worth keeping an eye on how the World Education Forum develops (check out its website for news, interviews and debates - http://www.ctrlaltesc.org/index.pl?section=wef): I'm sure Scottish activists have something to contribute as well as something to learn.

4.3 The Debt Campaign in Scotland – Vicki Clayton, Jubilee, and David Angel

Jubilee Scotland campaigns for 100% debt cancellation for the world's poorest countries.

We believe:

- Debt relief works.
- Debt relief would enable poor countries to achieve the Millennium Development Goals .
- It is a poor country's right to fund basic social needs before debt repayment.
- International lenders and debtor country governments must work together to achieve future financial stability

Jubilee's latest campaign image for "Face up to World Debt"

Jubilee Scotland is the successor organisation to the Jubilee 2000 Scottish coalition. Jubilee 2000 set out to achieve a one off cancellation of a $300 billion backlog of unpayable debts owed by 52 of the world's poorest countries to rich creditors. The Jubilee 2000 campaign took off like a rocket. Youth group, schools, churches, trade unions, aid agencies, academics and voluntary organisations joined in – not only in Britain but across the world. 24.1 million people in 160 countries signed the Jubilee 2000 petition, which gained an entry in the Guinness Book of Records

whilst celebrities from Bono to the Pope supported the campaign. The Jubilee 2000 coalition was always conceived of as a short-term campaign – its aim to achieve debt cancellation by the Millennium. Voices from Jubilee groups in the South told campaigners that while they appreciated what had been done, we, in the North were naive to think that so big an issue could be resolved in so short a time. They were insistent that the campaign must go on.

Since the Millennium Jubilee Scotland has continued to campaign for the cancellation of unjust debt in some of the poorest countries in the world. Despite securing a promise to cancel $110 billion of debt to date less than $36 billion has actually been cancelled.

Background

The debt crisis had its origins in the oil crisis in the 1970s. The wealthy oil producing countries deposited their money in Western banks, which suddenly finding themselves awash with money, lent generously, and sometimes recklessly, to developing countries. Subsequent soaring inflation transformed the situation, so that the poorest debtor countries found themselves unable to pay the interest on their loans, let alone ever repay them. They were therefore trapped in debt-poverty forever, with no money to spend on basic health or education needs.

In 1996 the World Bank launched its debt relief programme - the deeply flawed Heavily Indebted Poor Country Initiative (HIPC). The HIPC initiative cancels too little debt for too few countries. Countries must adhere to strict conditions. State industries are privatised and are snapped up by multi-national corporations resulting in job losses and increases in user fees. In Ghana, West Africa, where 70% of people live on less than $1 a day and 30% lack access to safe drinking water, under pressure from creditors the government embarked on a hasty privatisation program of the public urban water system, which has resulted in a near doubling of water fees.
Where debt has been reduced, money released has made a difference. In Uganda debt has been reduced by 42%, freed resources have been channelled into the Poverty Action Fund which, managed by civil society, has diverted funds into ensuring primary school attendance has risen from 2.1m to over 5m and spending on primary health care has increased by 270%.

Debt and the Environment

The effect of countries struggling to keep up repayments on crippling debts directly affects the environment. Pressurised by the IMF and World Bank to pay their debts in US dollars countries are forced to increase their exports. One easy solution to bring in this hard currency (which is then turned over to creditors) is for poor countries to exploit their natural resources. Many indebted countries have subsequently:

- exhausted or contaminated land by intensively cultivating cash crops such as coffee or tobacco
- allowed overfishing of their waters
- given multinational companies logging rights to huge areas of forest, displacing traditional settlers and causing widespread ecological problems ranging from flooding and desertification to loss of habitat and endangered species.

Debt forces this environmental degradation. Indebted poor countries are using up their natural resources to produce export goods for cash. Production goods such as timber, coffee, tobacco and chemicals (Bhopal India) have a direct negative impact on the local environment. Pollution increases whilst soil, water and air quality are all reduced.

Debt cancellation could be used to:

- free up resources for environmental repair projects,
- allow sustainable farming for local needs rather than intensive farm ing for export.
- remove the mechanism for forcing indebted countries to give conces sions to multi national corporations which would improve environmental laws as well as laws defending workers rights.

Jubilee Scotland works to:

1. Raise awareness of the debt crisis

2. Co-ordinate the campaigning, lobbying and public-awareness work on debt in Scotland.

3. Devise, implement and support new campaigning, lobbying and public-awareness work in consultation with partners within and outside of the UK.

Jubilee Scotland keeps the subject of third world debt and its effect on the developing world, in the minds of the public and provides easy-to-participate-in campaigns for groups and individuals of all ages. Through a local group network of 14 local groups across Scotland Jubilee Scotland connects with grass roots support for it's lobbying and campaigning.

Join our campaign and get involved

- Join a local Jubilee Scotland group or get your local community involved.
- Add your contact details to Jubilee Scotland to receive the free quarterly newsletter.
- Sign up to receive a monthly Briefing with the latest on debt by e-mail or post.
- Visit our website for further information
- Pick up a supply of our campaign materials

Something you can do right now:
Tony Blair says he is committed to building a world in which each individual has the “economic and social freedom to develop their potential to the full”.

We would like him to back up his fine words by supporting full cancellation of unpayable poor country debts and using his influence with other rich country leaders to make this happen. It is also important to let your own Member of Parliament know how you feel about debt.

Writing to politicians, including Tony Blair about world debt might seem an insignificant action given the size of the problem. Yet letter writing has played a big part in any progress so far towards canceling poor country debts. In the run up to the millennium the UK Government received 500,000 postcards calling for more action. For every 150 postcards they received one new primary school classroom has been built in Uganda using money which would otherwise have been spent on debt repayment.

MORE INFORMATION ...
Jubilee Scotland. 41 George IV Bridge, Edinburgh, EH1 1EL
Tel: 0131 225 4321
email mail@jubileescotland.org.uk
www.jubileescotland.org.uk

4.4 Community Activism and FOEI – Duncan McLaren, Chief Executive, Friends of the Earth Scotland

Friends of the Earth International is the world's largest grassroots environmental network, with close to a million members in thousands of communities in about seventy countries. The network's policies and activities are founded in community activism. Although first formed in Northern countries in the early 1970s, the network now includes as many Southern national members from all continents.

The network grows from the bottom up. Unlike other international environmental groups, new national chapters are formed when an indigenous group applies to join the network, not when a central office decides. Full membership is subject to the approval of existing members after a period of associate membership.

The main criteria that a new group must meet are threefold. First it must be a campaigning group – seeking to change policy and practice of government or business – although many groups also undertake practical projects or educational activities. Second it must be democratic in structure, and third it must have representation in communities. Most national members meet the third criteria by working with a network of local groups, although others have regional or local offices or work with networks of independent community groups. This means there is a great diversity of structures and styles of Friends of the Earth.

It also means that there is not comprehensive coverage around the world. The international network is strongest in Europe and Latin America, and weakest in the Middle East and Africa, with some significant gaps in Asia: as yet there is no Friends of the Earth group in China, India or Russia!

Like membership, key decisions of the network, such as what international campaigns to run, are taken by the Bi-Annual General Meeting (BGM) of the network. The International Secretariat – a small group of paid staff based in Amsterdam – facilitates network communication and fundraising for the campaigns and network capacity building. An Executive Committee comprising elected representatives of member groups takes decisions between BGMs, and allocates resources such as the membership support fund. Fundamentally international campaigns only happen when several groups are prepared to allocate their own resources to that campaign, and to support an international campaign coordinator (normally based in one of the active groups).

Despite its diversity the network has a clear character and ideology. Resistance to big business is deep-rooted in the network, but this does not imply a naïve belief in state provision. Rather it recognises the failings of both states and markets in providing for environmental and social needs, and supports community-based alternatives, alongside direct accountability of governments and businesses to communities. This generates active and ongoing debate over the role of international rules-making, with outcomes that vary according to the campaign. In the Climate campaign, the network has supported and campaigned for the Kyoto protocol; while in the Trade campaign, the network has argued for cutting back of the remit of the World Trade Organisation.

The Friends of the Earth International network can create immense international pressure over critical local issues. Of course, not every case can be taken up, but some local struggles have become beacons of resistance for the wider network. Currently the Ecuador Heavy Crude Oil Pipeline (Oleoducto Crudos Pesados (OCP)) has united activists working with indigenous tribespeople in Ecuador with campaigners in Germany, the USA, Italy and elsewhere to put pressure on the public and private financiers of this destructive and risky project.

This type of powerful campaign is most often generated where it is not only locally important, but serves to illustrate larger campaign demands – such as here for the reform of the international financial institutions and for the repayment of the ecological debt owed by the wealthy northern nations to the poor south. As a campaign network, FOEI uses a range of tactics from simple sign-on petitions, solidarity letters and visits to legal actions, political lobbying, consumer and investor pressure on companies.

Local campaigns in Scotland which have international implications could benefit from the kind of collaborative campaign which FOEI can facilitate. Where FoE Scotland is involved in a community campaign of international importance, we are able to make proposals for solidarity action through the FOEI network. For example, FOEI was able to help bring pressure on multinational Lafarge over its plans to create a superquarry on the island of Harris.

Sometimes the simplest tools can be the most powerful – bringing the testimony of those directly affected to where the decisions are being made. But

more often, more sophisticated campaigns are needed to bring pressure to bear. When Japan was dithering about whether to sign up to Kyoto, activists demonstrated outside Japanese embassies around the world. To get Shell out of a destructive project in the Kirthar national park in Pakistan, Friends of the Earth International initiated a legal challenge. The network includes campaigners with a wide range of political, legal and financial skills and experience – and contacts with other environment and development organisations - which local activists might otherwise be unable to access.

Whether campaigning against water privatisation, deforestation or damaging emissions trading projects, often, a local campaign only needs support from one other national group in the network – the home country of the multinational company or agency involved. And in some cases the best help can come from networking between community activists in two or more countries where they share a common corporate neighbour. Such links can help campaigners sway local authorities too: for many local authorities, simply the idea that their activities are being scrutinised and criticised in another country, can be very frightening.

Of course, Friends of the Earth International can't get involved in every case, but there's lots of potential for more networking and solidarity between community groups across the Friends of the Earth International network.

MORE INFORMATION ...

Friends of the Earth International Resources:
Website www.foei.org
Member magazine and info service: Link and Interlinkages
Campaign activists email lists and web-based bulletin boards
Contact via FOE Scotland

INDONESIA
Wahana Linkugan Hidup Indonesia or WALHI for short, is the Indonesian Forum for Environment (Friends of the Earth Indonesia), founded in 1980. Uniting more than 450 NGO's throughout Indonesia's vast archipelago, with independent offices and grassroot constituencies located in 24 of the nation's 31 provinces, WALHI campaigns for indigenous rights and natural resource conservation. Current campaigns include working with communities in Toba Samosir suffering pollution from PT Indorayon's pulp and paper mill, in Bulumkumba where community land has been expropriated for a rubber plantation by PT London Sumatra (whose major investors include US financial giant Citigroup), and – with help from Friends of the Earth International members - lobbying the Indonesian government to protect forests from threats by mining giants like Canada's Placer, and UK-Australian Rio Tinto and BHP Billiton.

SOUTH AFRICA
GroundWork (Friends of the Earth South Africa) is a non-profit, environmental justice NGO established in 1999 in Southern Africa to help communities affected by industrial pollution better able to defend and promote their environmental rights at local, national and international levels. GroundWork places particular emphasis on assisting vulnerable and previously disadvantaged people who are most affected by environmental injustices. Their main campaigns cover air quality, waste and incineration, and corporate accountability. In 2003 they collaborated with FOE England, Wales and Northern Ireland to bring local campaigners to the AGMs of Shell and Anglo-American. They have introduced 'bucket brigades' for air quality monitoring with advice from American NGOs.

GERMANY
BUND was founded in 1975. Today the organisation is one of the most powerful environmental organisations in Germany. Members are active in some 2,200 local and regional groups. BUND's campaign priorities are sustainable transport, fighting nuclear power, improving nature protection laws, and greening the German tax system. BUND´s diverse local groups allow it to mobilize mass support on the national level. BUND thus was able to host one of the largest ever Friends of the Earth International actions in 2001: 4,000 activists from more than 30 countries came to the global climate talks in Bonn to build a giant "Lifeboat". BUND also has its own youth branch, BUNDjugend. Their most successful campaign so far has been "The Bet", in which 150 schools bet the German government that they would be able to save more carbon dioxide in eight months than the government had promised to save in eight years. They won!

EUROPE
In Europe the network funds another secretariat, based in Brussels. The 30 European FOE groups cover countries inside and outside the EU, so their common activities are not restricted to lobbying the Commission and Parliament. European campaign priorities include food and agriculture, trade and corporate accountability. As well as networking groups together, and fundraising to support weaker groups in the South and East of Europe, the European office can help national and local campaigns with access to European institutions and pressure points – especially valuable if a national government is breaking European law.

ARGENTINA
FOE Argentina (Amigos de la Tierra Argentina) was founded in 1984. At present it is a Federation assembling NGOs from different regions of the country. The campaign areas include: wetlands-water, inland fisheries, dams, mining and climate change. Currently FOE Argentina is working with other FOEI members to defend the mbya guarani community from Argentina's provincial government of Misiones which is offering them just 60 hectares of legal property in exchange for the 600 hectares of ancestral land they currently occupy in the surroundings of the Iguazu Falls. The government wants the 600 hectares for tourism – investment in hotels, casinos and a golf course, and plan to relocate the 200 members of the community, consisting of approximately 45 families, in just 60 hectares, far away from their ancestors' land.

5. Conclusions

Over these pages we have been honoured to have such a range of informed and motivating pieces. In that respect it seems difficult to find something equally useful to add! However, it is with exactly that feeling of inspiration that we should stop to reflect for a moment.

Anybody in Scotland working to achieve environmental justice will be familiar with the feeling of being all-consumed by whatever fight they have between their teeth. For many of the contributors to this handbook that is the same feeling that they have for the international issues they work on day in day out. As the title of this handbook suggests, what we have been trying to do with these invited contributions is to hotwire that connection between our deeply rooted need to make positive changes in our world and the outrageous injustices that exist in an international context.

Sometimes that connection can be difficult to make. When we have our heads and hearts full of the injustices we see daily in the physical and social world around us, taking the time out to think about Ecuador or Uganda can feel almost frivolous. Hopefully this collection of pieces has made some of the places that these injustices occur in seem a little bit closer and the people that are affected a little more familiar.

The reason for making these connections isn't to try and prove that every problem and all people are the same. As many of the contributions highlight, we all have different histories, however it is foolish to believe that our histories aren't connected. As John Watson points out at the beginning of his piece on global citizenship, from the moment we wake up in the morning we are, without trying, connected to people's lives all over the world. By taking the time out to reflect on those connections, as you have by reading this handbook, you have begun the process by which you can choose and shape the nature of your connection.

In this collection of pieces we have considered how to locate the local in the global context, how to build solidarity with that said global community and how to take action in that world. These chapter headings reflect the process of conscientization that we at Friends of the Earth Scotland use to try and create changes to world in which we live. We believe that in order to change the world in which we live each of us need to understand it and that understanding can only come from looking at our own lives and asking why, why, why. Inevitably the answers to those questions will take us further and further from the point from which we started, to people and places we have never heard of. Yet as we come face to face with the injustices these people and places experience, hopefully we can reconnect with our need to create positive change, in order to bring us a little closer to the just and sustainable future so many of us dream of.