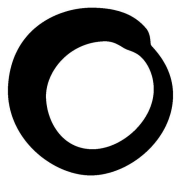


West Cumbria and North Lakes Friends of the Earth Newsletter



**Friends of
the Earth**

Date goes here

Winter 2005

Save the Orang-utan

Back to our roots and campaigning to save endangered rainforest species.

The Orang-utan is at risk because of a little known substance called Palm Oil. It is found in one in ten supermarket products {biscuits, crisps, ice-cream, chocolate, soap, detergents, cosmetics etc}. Oil palm plantations destroy the habitat of not jus the orang-utan but also the Sumatran tiger and some are set up on land stolen from indigenous peoples.

We want supermarkets to trace the sources of their palm oil and ensure it doesn't come from destructive sources, but most are taking no effective action.

Therefore we want the Government to bring in a new law to force companies to minimise their impact on the environment. Please send the enclosed postcard to Friends of the Earth asking your MP {for most of you this will be Tony Cunningham} to support just such a new law.



Don't be fooled – nuclear is still not the answer

Friends of the Earth has allocated more resources to anti-nuclear campaigning, as a result of the pro-nuclear propaganda coming out of Government and industry at the moment. We are also angry at reports that Britain will start building new civil nuclear power stations before a Government energy review has even begun.

Scaremongering calls by the pro-nuclear CBI for a quick decision on new nuclear stations because of the energy crisis it claims we face this winter are based on false premises. Nuclear cannot be expected to make any difference for at least 15 years. Other options, such as a growth in renewable energy and energy efficiency are quicker and cheaper.

Nuclear power has consistently proved more expensive than industry claims. In 2003, the Cabinet Office estimated that nuclear power would cost more per KWh than either on-shore or off-shore wind.

Nuclear power does not offer substantial reductions in CO2 emissions. Doubling nuclear power generation in the UK would cut our greenhouse gas emissions by no more than eight per cent.

Nuclear power would neither make the UK self-sufficient in energy, nor guarantee security of supply. It won't replace gas, which we will increasingly get from Norway and the Netherlands. Nor will it

replace oil, with much of our imports coming from Norway.

Nuclear energy only produces electricity and will not replace petrol or diesel as a transport fuel {currently the source of around 22 per cent of UK carbon dioxide emissions} and aviation is the fastest growing source of CO2 emissions. Nor will it replace gas for heating.

All change at West Cumbria Friends of the Earth - Annual General Meeting November 05

A momentous meeting this year as two of our long standing campaigners resigned and have yet to be replaced. Jill Perry, energy and climate campaigner, and Dianne Standen, transport campaigner, leave a huge gap in our campaigning capacity. If you can help fill it please come to our next meeting on December 6th. The other role which is yet to be filled is that of newsletter editor, as Karen has decamped to London after a stay of only a year or so in the area, but her contribution will also be sorely missed. At the moment we are rotating editorship of the newsletter but a dedicated editor would be a great help in our determination to keep in touch with our membership. Our co-ordinator Sarah also resigned but fortunately she has been replaced by Dave Moll. A full list of posts is found at the end of the newsletter.

DO YOU HAVE A FLUORIDE PROBLEM ?????

In 2000 the government's own scientific enquiry found that approximately 48% of the local population living in fluoridated areas like ours would be suffering from an excess of fluoride.

Up to 50% of fluoride taken in each day stays in the skeleton for life. It may be 30- 40 years before skeletal fluorosis begins to affect the joints and bones but some of the early symptoms of fluoride poisoning are...arthritis, gastric pain and problems, migraine, dermatitis, memory loss, tinnitus and fatigue.

If you are drinking local water, tea and using fluoridated toothpaste you are likely to be at risk.

The Strategic Health Authority has advised anyone wanting to know their individual fluoride intake to contact their doctor. Daily Fluoride levels can be determined by a urine test.

Don't wait till its too late.... Fluoridation will continue here until more people start to question and protest about the use of an untested chemical in their water. Finding out individual levels of fluoride intake, which we know will be high, is one way of focusing attention on the lack of adequate information and research locally. It will also let you know if you are at risk and what changes you may need to avoid fluoride. If you would like a list of reasons for testing to send or give to your doctor contact dianne.standen@virgin.net or 01900 813378
GET TESTED
Advise your family and friends to GET TESTED

Welcome to a new Cumbrian FoE group – Eden FoE

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What is NAMA?

It's another bad idea from the World Trade Organisation. Peter Mandelson is the EU representative to the WTO and he wants to increase trade {non-agricultural market access} in natural resources such as forests

Please read more about it in the enclosed leaflet and send off the postcard to Tony Blair

Real Food News

The British Retail Consortium (BRC) has called on the Brazilian soya industry to "resist further growth of GM planting" because "it will be enormously difficult to maintain trust in the food chain should Brazil's supply of non - GM soybean dry up". Brazilian farmers are deciding whether to plant GM or non-GM soya for next season's crop. Brazilian Soya production is vital to ensuring a future for GM-free food in the UK. Although all the major UK food companies avoid GM ingredient in their food, vast quantities of GM soya for animal feed are still being imported. Animal products, like milk, meat and eggs, are not subject to GM labelling regulations. Supermarkets need to place firm orders in Brazil for non-GM soya for animal feed and ingredients. Marks & Spencers already sell only non-GM fed milk showing it can be done. Please write to your supermarket and explain you want non-GM fed animals as standard. You can take part in an online at http://www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/real_food/press_for_change/gm_labelling/index.html.

GM-free Britain

As part of our ongoing GM free Britain campaign, we have received a letter from the Co-operative Group reaffirming their commitment to Co-op brands not containing any ingredients or additives from GM source and their policy to eliminate GM crops from the diets of animals reared for Co-op brand products. To maintain this position, they rely on the availability of segregated sources of soya, maize and all GM crops that may come on the market. The Co-op bank does not invest in businesses involved in the development of GMOs, where uncontrolled release into the environment; negative impacts on developing countries; patenting and cloning are involved. The Co-op's commitment to GM free produce should be applauded and also supported.

GM "superweed" found in Britain

New Government research published in July reported on the discovery of the first GM "superweed" in the UK the result of GM oilseed rape cross-breeding with a common weed (charlock) in the farm scale evaluation. This is the first known case in the UK. As recently as June the UK Environment Minister Elliot Morley voted to try and force France and Greece to lift their bans on GM oilseed rape. The bans were put in place in 1998 because of concerns about gene escape into the environment. As these findings emerged, it was discovered that German biotech giant Bayer had withdrawn its application to grow GM oilseed rape in the EU.

Wind turbines and migrating birds

Anti-wind farm campaigners often argue that turbines pose a threat to migrating birds. Most species of migrating birds are already threatened in one way or another, so this is a concern to people who might otherwise support wind power but don't want anything which to threaten wildlife.

There has been little research into the impact of modern large-scale wind turbines on bird life but recent information from a study in Denmark suggests that migrating birds in fact adapt fairly quickly to what might be perceived as major obstacles on their journeys. The research, conducted by the National Environmental Research Institute in Grenavej, investigated whether geese and ducks can detect and avoid large turbines by tracking their migration patterns with radar. The study focussed on a large offshore wind farm in the western part of the Baltic Sea. During the construction period there was a decline in the percentage of flocks entering the wind farm area, particularly in daylight. At night a larger proportion entered the wind farm area but reduced the risks of collision by keeping their distance from individual turbines and flying in the corridors between the turbines. Overall, less than 1% of geese and ducks flew close enough to the turbine blades to be of any risk of contact. This backs up the results of monitoring at Blyth {9 turbines just off-shore in a busy bird area}. Only 1 in 10,000 through flights resulted in collision, 1 – 2 per year per turbine.

Officially the RSPB supports renewable energy such as wind power, providing turbines are sensitively sited, as part of our effort to mitigate climate change. The largest European offshore wind farm, off the west coast of Denmark, consists of 80 turbines and comprehensive monitoring of their impact on bird and marine life has been built into the programme from the outset. Models for assessing sites and their impact on bird life have been formulated by Scottish Natural Heritage, amongst others, so more information should be available as time progresses, hopefully about the offshore wind farm planned for the Solway Firth.

So, the research seems to say that, like human beings, birds may not always like the idea of large-scale wind turbines, but once they are in place, they actually quite like them.

Dates for your diary

2nd December: Make Poverty History meeting 7.30pm Queens Hall, Keswick School to be addressed by Tony Cunningham MP

6th December: West Cumbria FoE meeting, Friends Meeting House, Kirkgate, Cockermouth, 7.45pm

3rd Jan {or should it be 10th – to be discussed at December meeting. Phone Dave on 01900 825503 for the final word} West Cumbria FoE meeting, Friends Meeting House, Kirkgate, Cockermouth, 7.45pm

New Roles at West Cumbria Friends of the Earth

Membership Secretary: Margaret Blackburn
Newsletter editor: to rotate
Treasurer: John Whiteley
Admin Co-ordinator: Dave Moll
Chairman: John Whiteley
Food Campaigners: Mary Lawley, Lorraine Taylor.

Email address remains the same:
info@foe-wcumbria.freeserve.co.uk
and will be administered by Dave.