



Friends of the Earth

Bromley

April 2011 No. 280 Newsletter

Bromley FoE: inquiries to Birch House, Grays Road, Westerham TN16 2JB
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April Meeting

**Friends Meeting House,
Ravensbourne Road, Bromley**

The work of the RSPB

*- its contribution to the conservation of birds, habitats
and other wildlife locally, nationally and globally*

Bob Francis, past leader of Bromley RSPB

Tuesday 5th April - 7.30pm.

Everyone welcome – bring a friend

In this Issue:

Diary Dates	2	FoE Waste Action	10
Spending cuts	2	FoE on air pollution	11
March mtg report	3	Bromley FoE press rlse	11
All Around My Patch	4	WDM on climate change	12
Social Sustainability	7	WDM on food speculation	13
Transport info	6	FoE Europe	14
Campaigns info	7	Bromley FoE contacts	15
CAAT news	8,9	Non-members section	16
Coolings visit	9		

Copy for the next Newsletter must be with the Editor by
SUNDAY 17TH APRIL. Contact details inside front cover.

Green Street Green – It's a wonderful world – see page 4

Diary dates:

April 5th (Tue)

May 3rd (Tue)

May 8th (Sun)

May 21st (Sat)

June 7th (Tues)

June 11th (Sat)

June 26th (Sun)

Bromley FoE's April meeting: Bob Francis, RSPB

Bromley FoE's May meeting: Neville White, Amnesty Intl

Bluebell walk - Cudham

FoE Regional Day in London

Bromley FoE's June meeting: Martin Bishop on Bullers

Wood School's Ecosystem

Bromley FoE's High Street stall – Energy Bill

Keston Countryside Day

Re-User Item

Children's books – complete set of 17 Ladybird Read with Me books – key words reading scheme

Also many other books of things to do with children, list available from Peter Gandolfi
(famgando@hotmail.com)

All excellent condition and cheap

Bromley Council's spending cuts and the need to reduce carbon dioxide emissions – by Graham Hemington

Concerned about the possibility that the cuts might result in less effort on reducing carbon dioxide emissions, I wrote to the Council leader, Stephen Carr:

There is one particular spending cut I should not like to see, namely, the costs involved in reducing carbon dioxide emissions as required by law. Please do what you can to maintain or even increase the efforts on this vital action.

His reply: Thanks for your letter of 2 February regarding carbon dioxide emissions and I fully acknowledge the contents. Please be assured that this council will continue to actively work towards the reduction of these emissions as it is seen as one of our priority areas to concentrate on.

Next Newsletter - copy details:

Any news, articles, poems, questions, views etc for the next Newsletter must be with the editor **by SUNDAY 17TH APRIL:**

by post to John Street, 82 Babbacombe Road, Bromley, BR1 3LS

by phone to: 020-8460-1078, **by email** to: johnstreet@gn.apc.org.

The editor reserves the right to shorten contributions for space, or other, reasons

March meeting report – Graham Hemington

Fixing the Food Chain, with Oliver Hayes, from FoE's Food Campaign

Imagine this scenario in Paraguay: rainforests being destroyed, replaced by GM soya cultivation with pesticides (for UK and other European farmers), local farmers suffering exposure to pesticide sprays, polluted water supplies, shortage of food, intimidated and forced off their land, taken over by Monsanto.

This was the dramatic introduction in the film Killing Fields to Oliver's talk Fixing the Food Chain: cheap soya imported into the UK to feed farm animals but at a huge cost, namely bad treatment of local farmers and loss of trees and biodiversity. This led to Rob Ffello MP taking up the Sustainable Livestock Bill which aimed to encourage UK farmers to grow alternative crops to soya, which does not grow in the UK, to feed livestock without forest-trashing.

The Bill was supported by 188 MPs, but failed to get enough Yes votes in the Commons at the Second Reading. However, the supporters did enough to get the government to sit up and think.

Actions

(1) FoE will try to influence Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform (see below), despite limited resources.

(2) EU to 'green' farmers in the reform of CAP

(3) Coalition government:

- Livestock and soya symposium to compel government and stakeholder action

- Strong line on soya in the negotiation of the reform of CAP
- Better food procurement standards (schools etc)

(4) What do we (FoE) want

- Funding for alternative domestic feeds to soya
- Support for extensive mixed and grazed livestock systems
- End to subsidies for intensive factory farming
- Mandatory environmental standards

(5) Reform of CAP

New protein report recommendations (lupins, peas, fava beans?)

- More animal feed to be grown in Europe
- Funds and training to help farmers grow their own
- Research into crops that are best suited to local conditions

(6) What local FoE groups can do

- Join New Food Network and get the latest information
- Go to food training day
- Take action with MPs and MEPs
- See mid-term review and what's next in 2011/12

So if you want to reduce the loss of rain forest, eat less meat!

All around my patch

Sheila Brown on life in Green Street Green

In this so-called “clean and green” Borough of Bromley, is Green Street Green (so good they named it twice) maybe the greenest of them all? On the very edge of the big grey sprawl of London, overlooking green fields and woods, Green Street Green is a village with a sense of its own identity, boasting a village school, two thriving churches, two nursery groups and a community centre, all with their own community networks promoting a feeling of neighbourliness.

Orpington is a short bus ride away, Bromley a slightly longer one. For our local children growing up, the rite of passage is first of all to be allowed to take a bus into Orpington with their friends, then when they are a little older, into Bromley.

Our High Street and local shops are a focal point of the community. These include two newsagents, a chemist, a butcher, a florist and plant shop, a locksmith, a party shop, a charity shop and a pet shop. A few years ago Friends of the Earth ran a campaign urging us to shop locally, and some of our number said they could not do that as they had no local shops. We also have a café, three pubs with restaurants, an Indian restaurant and an Indian Takeaway.

In 1977 Waitrose moved into the village and small grocery and greengrocer shops disappeared. As supermarkets go, Waitrose is small-scale, although they did later expand into newspapers, magazines and flowers which undermine local traders

– on principle we buy our newspapers and magazines from the newsagent.

However, Waitrose has the feel of a local corner shop and invariably one encounters several people one knows; it's also a great place for local teenagers to get part-time jobs (although there are fewer of these now that they have started introducing the “self-scan” system, which I naturally object to as it surely costs jobs).

Our local bank closed in 2000 and the Post Office disappeared a few years later, but even so we are far better off than many areas in that we have post offices at both The Crescent and Windsor Drive, each only about a ten-minute walk away. Among other things The Crescent has a really good greengrocer and that rarity, an independent hardware store (what we used to call ironmongers).

Being so close to lovely countryside with walks through fields and woods is an additional recommendation and a big plus, and the Green itself provides a recreational area and a venue for a local summer fête.

Green Street Green is a great place to be when snow keeps people's cars off the road, and it is good to see the local populace walking to their local supermarket and trudging home with just two carrier bags full of shopping (one for each arm!). At such times neighbourliness reaches a peak with everybody exchanging greetings and swapping snow stories. Yes, definitely one of the best parts of “Village London.”

Social Sustainability - Michael Payne

As Judy Palmer noted in last month's newsletter, last December was a particularly difficult time for carrying out normal day to day tasks that involved travel and, by implication, reminded us all of how much we rely on the car for travel. Judy went on to note, that it demonstrated how easy, or difficult, it can be to be **Socially Sustainable**.

As I live closer to the centre of Bromley than Judy does to Orpington, it is even easier for me to keep my FoE principles as regards travel and having two train stations (Bromley North & Bromley South) within walking distance does have its advantages. It has enabled us to live without a car for some 25 years now.

However, I suspect those who live further away from a town centre, can find living a **Socially Sustainable** life style a little difficult at times and this is the rub. Rural life can sometimes be seen as a life "friendlier to the earth" than an Urban lifestyle.

However, an Urban lifestyle may in fact be closer to the ideals of FoE. Unless, that is, those Ruralites are able to sustain themselves from their land, a point I doubt nowadays. If we take up other points raised by Judy in her article, it looks that one has a much better chance of saving the planet if we all become Urbanites. In days gone by our ancestors were able to maintain themselves within a Village environment, not so now. Most of society nowadays needs a Town or a City to sustain their lifestyle.

With this significant change in lifestyles and people becoming more insulated from society we need to find a new way of putting our views across. We can, I suggest, only achieve this by starting to re-connect our neighbours with their environment. as addressed in Judy's article. Furthermore, we may have reached a stage where there is a need to place greater emphasis on one of FoE's original maxims and less on others, i.e. placing greater emphasis on "Acting Locally" and less emphasis on "Thinking Globally".

This means focusing more on the mundane and less on the aspirational, i.e.

- Better advice on how to insulate the home and conserving energy and less effort given to campaigning against nuclear power.
- Greater encouragement for the use of allotments and in buying locally grown food and less emphasis on highlighting the CO2 emissions of aircraft bringing in our food from abroad.
- Greater emphasis given to local campaigns to improve public transport, less hot air in objecting to programmes like Top Gear.
- More ideas on how to install wind power generators & solar panels in the home and less effort given to reminding us all that our lifestyle is damaging the plight of farmers in Africa. It's no good encouraging donations of money to help Somalia farmers whilst at the same time we continue to blight the atmosphere.

/continued on page 7

Transport information – Ray Watson

The battle is not yet won

The long, long dispute over expanding operations at Biggin Hill Airport will, regrettably, be with us for a long, long time – that is the reluctant conclusion that follows the airport's application to boost its hours and take fare-paying passengers for the duration of the Olympic Games.

The decision on that was being taken by Bromley Council after this Newsletter went to print, but during the hard-fought campaign it emerged that Biggin Hill Airport Ltd (BHAL), the company that runs the airport under a lease from Bromley Council, would seek 'wider variations' to the lease after the Olympics. Talks with the council have already taken place.

It took an application under the Freedom of Information Act to uncover that fact. It is sad that we have to resort to that Act when we, the residents, own the airport and that the council is supposedly working on our behalf.

As it is, the various residents' associations and groups like Bromley FoE had to fight an uphill battle in opposing BHAL, which spent money on advertisements, used a professional PR company and dragooned five businesses at the airport to write to 60 councillors claiming the airport helped the local economy, though not pointing out that not all firms at the airport are connected with aviation - and they did not mention that the Biggin Hill area has a low level of unemployment.

We also had to contend with the council leadership trying to push through the application in a short period for

consultation – changed after protests. Further, even councillors were critical of the council for not ensuring that residents were made aware of the airport's plans. Indeed, it even referred people to the airport's website – which hardly provided an impartial summary of the situation.

Much also depended on legal interpretation of the lease. Again, residents were at a disadvantage, because they did not have the money to consult lawyers.

That said, a small number of residents' associations did provide some cash to pay for leaflets and other printed material. Even more important, a group of six residents worked almost full time and at their own cost to give the facts to councillors, handle publicity and the Press and to get people to object. In that sense, getting 1999 individual letters and emails and objections from 28 organisations sent to the council was a credible performance. There were about 108 messages in favour.

But it could have been so much better. Sadly, apathy was a problem, even though tens of thousands of people are affected by the airport through noise, air pollution, traffic congestion and falling property values.

So, the lesson is clear: Bromley people must be prepared for an even bigger battle next time. It will not be long before the spectre of a growing airport will be before us again. We need to be prepared.

Campaigns info – Ann Garrett

Chernobyl - 25 years on

The nuclear power station disaster at Chernobyl on April 26th 1986, is recognised as the world's worst nuclear accidents. One of the power station's reactors exploded and the subsequent fire spewed a radioactive cloud across Europe. The accident claimed the lives directly of at least 50 people, but other deaths from thyroid cancer and related illnesses is estimated anywhere between 4,000 and 200,000. In the UK 9,700 farms and 4.3 million sheep were put under restriction.

There is still great danger at the site as the original structure will only last another 5 years and work on the wrecked power plant is likely to cost £750 million. This would help build a more sophisticated roof over the burnt-out reactor and storage for 200 tonnes of highly radioactive fuel.

The disaster also triggered the relocation of tens of thousands of local people, some of whom have never been back to the contaminated towns. However, some poorer elderly people have returned and are farming on contaminated soil. The accident released 100 times more radiation than the atom bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and is a reminder of the potential dangers of nuclear power.

Bromley and Beckenham CND will be doing anti-nuclear train campaigning opposite Bromley South station (where the waste from Dungeness passes through on its way to Sellafeld for reprocessing) on May 7th from 2.00 –

3.30 pm and support from members of FoE would be welcomed. They will also be handing out leaflets there on Chernobyl Day April 26th at 2.00pm

Use of bacteria bugs for jet fuel

Jay Keasling, a professor of bioengineering at the University of California whose work is at the forefront of synthetic biology is working on a replacement for jet and diesel fuel.

He is involved in making fuel chemicals from yeast and E.coli which take in sugar and eventually transform into diesel. This will result in better gas mileage, and reduced emissions. The making process would also be cheaper than using ethanol as it would use less energy, and generally be better for the environment.

However there is an argument that although this work of synthetic biology points the way to green energy, there is also the danger that synthetic bugs might escape from the lab and spark a catastrophe. Does this concern outweigh the fact that the new diesel reduces greenhouse gas emissions by 80%?

Social Sustainability, *continued*

To start with, though, we need to encourage neighbourhoods to re-connect with their place and re-establish communities. This process may not have the gravity that will be taken up by national and/or local press but it could make you feel better and, more importantly, connect with your suspect neighbours. Cue – The Big Society.

CAAT news - UK arms sales exposed: Urgent Action bulletin

Please add your voice to say 'This Is NOT OK'.

The UK's scandalous approach to arms sales is in the spotlight. As protests against authoritarian regimes across the Middle East have been met with violent repression, CAAT has exposed the UK's role in arming the region. Right now, the government is under pressure and with your help we have a tremendous opportunity to turn that pressure into change.

This week a YouGov poll reported that only 7% of people think the UK was right to sell arms to Libya. Already over 2,000 people have signed our petition to tell the government that its support for arms sales is NOT OK. This Wednesday 9 March, the first stop for the petition will be Downing Street, where we'll be sharing your comments with the Prime Minister.

Irresponsible exports

The government's policy says it won't approve arms export licences where there's a clear risk the equipment might be used for internal repression. But six months ago it was happy to sell tear gas and crowd control ammunition to Libya and Bahrain. What did it think authoritarian regimes like these might use crowd control ammunition for?

The truth is that its focus is on increasing, not restricting, arms sales. Just ten days ago, as conflict escalated in Libya, David Cameron was jetting around the Middle East trying to sell more arms. The Government hopes this will all blow over. We need to show them this is only the start. Already activists have blockaded the

government departments responsible for promoting arms sales.

Please help us build the pressure by taking action today. Thank you.

CAAT press release - Activists block access to BIS and UKTI DSO to demand an end to arms sales

Today, Tuesday 1 March, a group of anti-arms trade activists succeeded in blocking access to the UK Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS) and UK Trade & Investment Defence & Security Organisation (UKTI DSO) for over an hour in protest at the UK's arms exports to Libya.

They demanded a fundamental shift in the UK's approach to arms sales: an end to the government promotion of arms exports and no more sales to repressive regimes and areas in conflict. A samba band played, while one of the protesters scaled the entrance to BIS to hang a banner above the entrance.

The protest took place in response to the news that British weapons have been turned on pro-democracy protesters in Libya. BIS is the department which granted licences which allowed crowd control equipment, tear gas and armoured vehicles to be exported to Gaddafi's repressive regime. UKTI DSO is the government's arms promotion unit, which designated Libya a "priority market; co-ordinated "high-level political interventions" for arms sales; and supported the large British presence at the Libdex arms fair in November 2010.

/continued on page 9

Visit to Coolings “Green & Pleasant” Garden Centre – Paul Rainey

On March 10th, thanks to Sue and John Boccock, a group of nine friends were shown round the new garden centre building, at the Coolings “Green & Pleasant” site in Main Road, Knockholt by one of their staff.

They are very proud of the fact that only five skip loads of waste had to be removed from this former nursery site for landfill during construction of this building in 2008-2009.

This large single floor building is formed of a frame of glue-laminated timber beams. Some of these are gently curved and support four wide south-facing spans of roof. These alternate with vertical north-facing ceiling windows. This arrangement allows natural light into the building without direct sunlight scorching products displayed for sale.

Many walls are of glass, but some are built of compressed straw bales and coated with thick layers of lime render, while others are clad with red cedar which has been kiln-baked for long life.

Sussex-made clay pavers laid on sand, and not using cement, form the floor except in the catering and gift areas where it is of reclaimed pine floor boards. These materials are good for their under-floor heating system. Rainwater is harvested from the roof for a 7,000 litre underground tank and use for watering plants and flushing toilets.

Heating and hot water is provided by a large biomass boiler which burns all their waste pallets and cardboard packaging. Much work is needed: first

in the summer stacking and storing waste to keep it dry, and then in stoking the boiler in winter. Severely cold weather does require reinforcement from an immersion heater.

Electric lighting throughout the building is all low-energy while light and movement sensors ensure that lights are only switched on when and where needed. The ceiling windows have opening motors to allow ventilation.

We were then shown round their nature trail. We learnt more about bird, bat and bug boxes as well as field trials on squirrel-proof bird feeders. We could also admire some wallabies, two-month old piglets, and enormous Buff Orpington chickens.

CAAT news, *continued*

Anne-Marie O'Reilly, Outreach Co-ordinator at CAAT commented: The government likes to claim that it has a responsible and rigorous approach to arms exports. But it made Gaddafi's regime a "priority market" and British weapons were turned on pro-democracy protesters in the last week. Revoking some export licences is too little, too late: such licences should never have been granted in the first place.

One of the activists present at the demo added: We're here in solidarity with those demanding democracy across the Middle East and North Africa. British arms companies profit from propping up dictators and repressive regimes but this has to end.

**FoE Waste Action –
Please ask the Prime Minister to talk half as much rubbish**

The Government is currently deciding what to do about the nation's rubbish. The results of their Waste Review are due in May - so this is a crucial opportunity to push for an ambitious goal to halve household 'black bag' waste by 2020. **Please ask the Prime Minister to talk half as much rubbish.**

This is your chance to tell him that you're sick of having to needlessly throw stuff away. The solutions we're suggesting would help local councils to provide better recycling and re-use services. They'd also encourage businesses to reduce packaging and make products that are built to last.

We need to show David Cameron that people want to throw away less rubbish, and have better recycling services instead. Please take action today.

This is what FoE says on their website – Are you sick of having to throw stuff away that could be recycled or reused?

We are. And we need your help to make sure the Government's new waste review puts things right. It's focussed on England's rubbish but it'll have a huge impact across the UK.

Please use the bin below to give the Prime Minister a taste of the things you have to needlessly throw away. Then fill in your details to send Mr Cameron a clear message - that he must set an ambitious goal to help homes and businesses reuse and recycle more and waste less.

Dear Prime Minister,

Today I had to throw away...

(Select from) - Plastic packaging; Cans; Piece of foil; Glass bottle; Piece of paper; Plastic bottle; Newspaper; Piece of cardboard; Piece of food

Getting waste right is a key test of your Government's ambition to be the 'greenest ever'.

You can show me you're on track by ensuring the Waste Review sets a goal to halve household 'black bag' waste by 2020, with a similar goal for business waste.

This would:

- Create tens of thousands of new jobs
- Slash emissions and supply precious resources for UK manufacturing
- Save councils and businesses billions in unnecessary waste infrastructure

Editor's note – Much of what FoE are asking people to campaign for already seems to be underway in Bromley. Most of the items in the list above are already collected for recycling of some kind, although I'm not sure about the recycling of plastic bottles. And in any case, councils have a financial incentive to reduce the amount we throw away as the landfill tax continues to rise and the amount of space available for landfill decreases.

FoE says - UK given three months to tackle air pollution – or face prosecution

The UK's failure to meet air pollution rules is a scandal, Friends of the Earth said today (Friday 11 March 2011) after the country was warned that it has three months to come up with an urgent action plan to cut London's air pollution - or face prosecution over its persistent breaches of EU pollution rules.

The UK currently faces legal action over its failure to meet EU rules on air pollution from PM10s - tiny sooty particles which mainly come from London traffic that can be harmful to health.

But the EU said today it won't prosecute the UK over pollution breaches prior to 2011 - provided it comes up with a credible action plan, including "where necessary, suspending activities" that cause the problem. However, the UK could face a fresh prosecution for breaching rules from the start of 2011.

Friends of the Earth's London Campaigner Jenny Bates said:

"The UK's failure to meet air pollution rules is a scandal - thousands of people die prematurely in London every year because of poor air quality. Boris Johnson has promised to make London the greenest capital in the world - but he's scrapped measures, such as the western extension of the congestion zone, that would have helped cut pollution. The Mayor must now come up with an urgent plan to protect Londoners' health - or the UK could face a massive fine in the European Court."

It has been estimated that over 4,000 people die prematurely in the capital every year as a result of long term exposures to air pollution from small particles.

Marylebone Road in Westminster has already exceeded the daily limit 16 times in 2011, out of the 35 allowed for the whole year

This press release was issued on Bromley FoE's part in the Recycling Day of Action:

Members of Bromley Friends of the Earth will be holding a stall in Bromley High Street outside Caffè Nero from 2.00 - 4.00 pm on Saturday March 19th, and will have a large David Cameron mask, recycling bin and saw cut-outs to attract attention for their recycling campaign, which is part of a national day of action.

The David Cameron figure will saw the bin in half as a symbolic message to the Prime Minister to use his influence to compel companies to cut down on packaging and build products to last, so that the nation's rubbish can be halved.

Friends of the Earth are asking David Cameron to set a goal by 2020, especially as he has stated that he wants to run the greenest government ever. This would also help cash-strapped councils in their recycling and re-use services, and make things easier for both businesses and householders.

WDM – Climate change: Our campaign for climate justice

Whilst rich countries are responsible for most of the emissions pumped into the atmosphere it is the poorest communities in the world that are being hit the hardest by climate change. But rather than providing compensation for causing climate change rich countries are using it to trap the world's poor into new and dangerous climate debt. WDM is campaigning for climate justice for developing countries.

What is WDM doing?

WDM is campaigning in solidarity with our allies in the global south to ensure the UK fairly pays the compensation it owes for causing climate change, instead of using it to reinforce existing global inequalities, by propping up the World Bank and forcing new loans onto developing countries.

We are calling on development secretary Andrew Mitchell to stop pushing climate loans on developing countries, loans that will only lock countries into new debt and increased poverty. The UK must end its support for the discredited, undemocratic and unaccountable World Bank, and instead support funds through more democratic institutions such as the UN Adaptation Fund. Finally, we are also calling that the UK uses new money, rather than diverting money from the aid budget as they are currently doing.

The UK's World Bank climate funds are set to create hundreds of millions of pounds of new Third World Debt for some of the world's poorest people. Take action with us to stop this outrage. Help WDM stop this by writing

to the Secretary of State for International Development, Andrew Mitchell, demanding that loans are turned into grants and that future money are not given through the undemocratic World Bank.

Suggested letter text

The world's poorest people are suffering disproportionately from climate change. Failing crops, loss of access to water and increased diseases are destroying people's lives. As one of the biggest historical and current emitters, the UK owes a massive climate debt. But the UK is currently giving a large percentage of climate funds as loans, which will lock the world's poorest people into further unjust debt.

I want you to ensure that:

*The UK's loan to the World Bank's Pilot Programme for Climate Resilience is turned into a grant

*Future climate money is given to funds which give grants, such as the UN Adaptation Fund, not through the undemocratic World Bank.

Do you want to know more?

The WDM website has responses to a number of frequently asked questions about climate debt.

Go to <http://www.wdm.org.uk/climatedebt> To find the answers to a variety of questions.

WDM - Food speculation: Stop bankers betting on food

Our campaign to limit commodity speculation

Banks are earning huge profits from betting on food prices in unregulated financial markets. This creates instability and pushes up global food prices, making poor families around the world go hungry and forcing millions into deeper poverty.

What is the problem?

Banks, hedge funds and pension funds are betting on food prices in the financial markets, causing drastic price swings in staple foods such as wheat, maize and soy.

Massive price hikes are catastrophic for the world's poor, who spend most of their income on food, and lead to:

- * Increased hunger as food becomes unaffordable.
- * Malnutrition as less dairy, meat, fruit and vegetables are eaten in order to afford staple food
- * Increased burden on women to earn more money by taking up risky employment such as sex workers or domestic workers.
- * Households using up savings, going into debt or selling assets to pay for food.
- * Families unable to afford healthcare and education as more of their income is needed to buy basic food.

How are they doing it?

Historically, 'futures contracts' were created in US financial markets to help farmers deal with the uncertainty of growing crops (such as unforeseen

weather conditions). A futures contract enables farmers to sell their crops at a future date at a guaranteed price. However, these contracts can also be bought and sold by bankers who have little or no involvement in the actual food being traded but bet on food prices, to make money.

During 1990s and early 2000s, aggressive lobbying by bankers led to weaker regulations over food speculation. New and complicated financial products were created to allow more ways to make money from betting on food. Banks such as Goldman Sachs created special index funds to help financial companies make money from food prices, just like they do from share prices.

While bankers are reaping huge profits from betting on food, poor families across the world are paying the price of hunger and malnutrition.

What can be done?

The World Development Movement is calling on the UK government to support proposals for:

All futures contracts to be cleared through regulated exchanges. Most contracts are currently done in private, which means it is impossible to know how much of what is being traded. Contracts need to be brought out into the open.

Strict limits to be set on the amount that bankers can bet on food prices.

FoE Europe on – Road to climate catastrophe

EU maps out road to climate catastrophe

Two important climate and energy papers were released today by the European Commission in Brussels amid criticism from Friends of the Earth Europe.

The environmental group argues that the proposals for how Europe might tackle climate change over the next 40 years show the EU is effectively abandoning its pledge to limit global warming to 2 degrees Celsius.

The '2050 Low Carbon Roadmap' document advocates that the EU steps up its emission cuts to 25% by 2020. Delivering the reductions would rely on the EU successfully meeting its energy efficiency target. But Friends of the Earth's analysis of scientific evidence shows that a 25% reduction is almost certain to lead to global temperature increases of more than 2 degrees. [1] This is the 'tipping point' that scientists say should be avoided to prevent the worst impacts of climate change such as more frequent severe weather and the loss of species and habitats.

The 'Energy Efficiency Plan' recognises that the EU is not on track to meeting its 2020 energy savings target of a 20% reduction in energy use compared to business as usual, but puts off stronger action until 2013.

Reacting to the publications, Friends of the Earth Europe climate and energy campaigner Brook Riley said: "The proposals outlined today make a strong economic case for bigger emissions cuts within Europe - instead

of through the discredited international offset system. But the objective of reducing emissions by 25% by 2020 still means we will almost certainly exceed 2 degrees of average global temperature rises. Politicians seem willing to run the risk of bringing on climate chaos and the devastation that will mean for people in Europe and around the world. An EU target of 25% is not enough: only 40% cuts by 2020 will offer a decent chance of keeping global warming under control."

The '2050 Low Carbon Roadmap' also stresses the importance of the EU's 2020 energy efficiency target, which at current projections will be missed by more than half. Meeting the target would reduce CO2 emissions by about 740 million tonnes (equivalent to 20% cuts below 2005 levels), cut annual energy bills by up to €1000 per household, and create up to two million new green jobs, according to reports released today by the European Commission.

Friends of the Earth Europe campaigner Brook Riley said: "The proposed reliance on energy efficiency to deliver higher emissions cuts boosts the case for a binding savings target. With most of the EU's energy coming from CO2 intensive fossil fuels, the fastest way to counter climate change is to reduce energy use. But the Commission's plan is blatantly contradictory - admitting we are not on track to meet efficiency targets for 2020 but in the same breath putting off stronger action until 2013."

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Waste and Recycling

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Letters to the Editor

Why not write us a letter if you have a strong opinion on something or just want to share your thoughts. Send them in and perhaps even start a discussion - who knows.

Need a lift to meetings?

If you require a lift to Bromley FoE meetings, please contact Ray Watson or Sheila Brown on the numbers shown above.

Disclaimer

Please note that any opinion expressed in this Newsletter is not necessarily that of Bromley Friends of the Earth or Friends of the Earth.

Reuser Column
Don't throw It away - Reuse It!

If you have any items to sell, or anything that you require, please send details to the Editor. Items will be displayed for three months, the number in brackets after an item indicating for how long it has appeared. Could you please contact us if an item has been sold/obtained, so that it can be removed from the newsletter.

Any donations to Bromley FoE generated from this column gratefully received!

Non-members' Section

If you are not a member of Bromley Friends of the Earth, BFoE, then hello. We are an active local group affiliated to national Friends of the Earth concerned with promoting the understanding of environmental issues. We also campaign on these issues at a local, national and international level.

If you would like to know more about who we are and what we do please contact either of our co-ordinators, Sheila Brown (01689-851605) or Ann Garrett (020-8460-1295); their email addresses are on the previous page. Alternatively, you can come along to one of our free monthly meetings held on the first Tuesday of every month at the Friends Meeting House, Ravensbourne Road, Bromley (that's towards the bottom of the High Street and on the right going south). If you would like to join us then please fill in and send us the form below.

Membership Application/Renewal* Form (*please delete as appropriate.)

Please return this form to: **Bromley FoE, 2 Bucks Cross Cottages, Chelsfield Village, Orpington, Kent, BR6 7RN**. Other enquiries regarding the group should be sent to: Birch House, Grays Road, Westerham, Kent, TN16 2JB; phone 01959-571566, email r.watson865@btinternet.com.

I wish to support Bromley Friends of the Earth and enclose my £8 annual subscription. I also enclose a donation (optional) of To help towards the cost of producing and distributing the monthly Newsletter.

Name.....

Address.....

..... Postcode.....

Email Address.....

Do you have any hobbies or interests that may be of use to the group?

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