

Earth First!

February 2008

Action



Update

A quarterly round-up of ecological and other direct action from around Britain and beyond

Sizewell blockaded

1st December, early morning. What else would you rather do than lay on the road in front of a nuclear power station, lock yourselves together and unfurl your banner reading 'Nuclear power is not the answer to climate chaos'?

After two and a half hours of shift change disruption protesters made a deal with the coppers that they could leave, with all of their equipment, not get arrested, and be free to come and do it again another day. Bizarrely, the police agreed to this.

Work halted at Welsh coal mine

5th November. More than thirty climate activists joined with local residents from Merthyr Tydfil in stopping excavation work for a full day on Britain's biggest ever open-cast coal mine at Ffos-y-fran in South Wales. Activists entered the site early in the morning and evaded police and security before taking over the 1,000 acre site on a hilltop near Cardiff. Dressed as clowns and polar bears, they chained themselves to bulldozers and other heavy machinery to prevent work on the mine.

Ffos-y-Fran will become one of Europe's biggest opencast sites, mining 10.8m tonnes of coal over 17 years. A tonne of coal contains 746kg of carbon and burning it produces 2.7 tonnes of CO², meaning that the Ffos-y-fran mine will be responsible for almost 30 million tonnes of CO². One of the protesters said 'Coal is the filthiest fuel known to humankind and

projects like this mine destroy all our chances of tackling global warming.'

The mine will also have a massive impact on the local community from noise and dust, with the nearest houses just a few hundred yards away. Over 10,000 local people petitioned against the pit.

Contact Terry on 07966443728

Australian coal blockades

Australia is one of the world's largest coal exporters and is seeing an upsurge of action against the extraction and export of coal.

On 3rd November 400 people took part in a protest at the world's largest coal port in Newcastle. 250 of them entered the shipping channel with canoes and inner tubes to disrupt coal exports.

On 19th November Rising Tide Australia blockaded a coal train on its way into the same port, by locking to the train line. No trains were able to enter Kooragang Coal Terminal.

In the same week Greenpeace activists shut down the Munmorah coal power plant in New South Wales, by stopping the coal-feed conveyor belt.

www.risingtide.org.au



Subscribe to the EF! Action Update

The Action Update brings you a quarterly collection of news and updates on ecological direct action from the UK and beyond. You can pick up copies from your local social centre, or even better: subscribe and get it direct. Just send us the subscription slip from the back of this newsletter together with a donation. Or to get an electronic version (PDF file) for printing and distributing yourself email us at actionupdate@earthfirst.org.uk

This time we've not included a contacts list, but we'd like to next time. So drop us a line by 10 April if you'd like your group's details included.

The next issue will be out in May, so if you've got news to share about your campaigns and actions send us your articles (150 words maximum) to actionupdate@earthfirst.org.uk or post them straight onto our website: www.earthfirst.org.uk

Dutch EF! clog up conveyor-belt

8th December 07. As part of an International Action Day against the coal industry, a collective of twenty Dutch Earth Firsters blocked the coal-conveyor belt to a plant owned by energy giant E.on situated on the Maasvlakte near Rotterdam.

The increasing number of coal-fired power plants worldwide and in the Netherlands is one of the biggest threats to climate change.

www.groenfront.nl/english

www.earthfirst.org.uk

News in brief

Bath squatters

A team of artists and entertainers collectively known as the Letimov Steam Circus have been occupying large sheds at the old Stothert and Pitt crane works in Bath for the last two months. Proceedings to evict them from the site have started.

Email: charlesdancey@gmail.com

Squatters needed!

A new Social Centre in Wiltshire requires volunteers. Accommodation is of course free. Help is wanted with decorating, celebrating, gardening, having a film night, foraging and cooking! Email: yarrow@mail.com

Flights cancelled

Manchester 18th December saw FlyBe subverted with 'Cancelled' written across their adverts for their short-haul summer routes.

Climate action in Dover

In the early hours of 4th November climate activists dropped a banner from a four-storey building, declaring 'The earth is too hot!' The banner was clearly visible from the main through-way from the M20 to the busiest port in Britain.

Shortly afterwards two road warning signs were put up on a roundabout informing drivers of 'Climate chaos ahead'.

Singing Santas

On 15th December, one of the busiest shopping days of the year, activists in both Norwich and London dressed up as 'Santas against excessive consumption'. The Santas enlightened shoppers with carols highlighting the fact that binge consumption at Christmas time is directly linked to climate chaos.

info@risingtide.org.uk

Penguins reclaim ice rink

On 2nd January 30 penguins reclaimed the ice rink at the Natural History Museum in protest at British Airways sponsorship of the museum's winter festivities. Carrying banners and placards reading, 'BA Fly, Penguins Die', and 'Freeze Flights' the penguins went skating and handed out leaflets for around 20 minutes before being forcibly removed from the ice by security staff.

www.planestupid.com

Day of climate action

Early December saw protests around the world and in the UK to coincide with the 2007 United Nations Climate Change Conference taking place in Bali.

Women's blockade of Department of Transport



On Friday 7th December a group of women blockaded the Department for Transport preventing staff from getting to work. The action came in response to the Transport Secretary Ruth Kelly confirming the government's intentions to build a third runway and a sixth terminal at Heathrow and coincided with the opening of their first 'consultation'. The climate activists accused the Department of Transport of pushing policies which are catapulting us towards dangerous run-away climate change.

www.climatecamp.org.uk

Climate march

On Saturday 8th December 10,000 climate campaigners braved the pouring rain to take part in marches in London and Glasgow. This was one of the biggest demonstrations calling for climate justice the UK has ever seen.

Biofuels protest

Also on 8th December a protest was held at a London Tesco's against their investments into biofuels. 3 protesters were manhandled by police in central London, who forced them into into a metal protest pen. Despite this a peaceful protest was held for an hour including a stop by 300 cyclists and one minute's silence for those who are suffering or who have died as the result of massive expansion of large scale biofuel plantations across the South.

Tesco describe themselves as the UK market leader in biofuels.

www.tescocorporate.com/bio-fuels.htm

www.biofuelwatch.org

Plane Stupid

8th December saw Plane Stupid activists shut down travel agents and airline of-

fices along the route of the London Climate March. The activists put signs on the doors reading 'Closed for a rethink'.

www.planestupid.com

'The tide is rising'

7th December, Manchester. A banner with the warning 'The tide is rising' was dropped to greet all those entering the city of Manchester on the Princess parkway.

Manchester Flight Centres shut

On the same day all Flight Centre branches in Manchester city centre were super-glued shut in time for Saturday trading and to coincide with the climate march in London. They were pasted with notices saying: 'Closed - we want your kids to have a planet' The UK's only Hummer dealership, Bauer Millett, was also D-locked shut.

Billboards subverted

On 8th December in Manchester three airline billboards advertising cheap flights to European cities were subverted with the words 'Stop worrying about climate change. Be happy with a free guilt remover'.

Rooftop protest

15th December saw the recently formed Kernow and Plymouth Rising Tide groups get together for a rooftop protest at Newquay airport. The protest put a spotlight on the airport's focus on climate-wrecking short-haul flights. Five activists occupied the roof and displayed big banners reading: 'No public debate, no public demand', 'All private gain' and 'No more hot air on climate change.'

The roof top activists were supported with music, dancing and puppetry from the ground.

www.risingtide.org.uk

Die-in Tate Britain

Activists from London Rising Tide staged a 'die-in' in the BP sponsored Tate Britain on 4th January.

They demanded that the Tate cuts its ties with BP: 'An art gallery is no place for an environmental hazard such as an oil company. B. are here to greenwash their image and distract from the ecological devastation they're causing around the world'.

The protestors handed out leaflets and urged patrons to demand the end of Oil Companies sponsorship of Art Galleries.

www.risingtide.org.uk

Mr. Pole R. Bear visits the BBC

Bristol saw a series of actions against the BBC, organisers of the Wildlife Photographer of the Year Award and the Bristol Museum, in protest at the sponsorship of the event by Shell.

On 11th December two members of "Arctic Associates" and one grumpy refugee polar bear paid a visit to the BBC Wildlife Magazine in Bristol. More than a hundred employees looked on aghast as the protesters accused Shell of endangering thousands of species through oil spills, toxic pollution, and climate chaos. Later on activists disrupted Bristol Museum's reception to kick off the exhibition with a 'Yes Men'-style intervention. On the opening morning, dozens of humans, polar bears, a snow leopard and a tiger handed out leaflets in front of the museum backed up by the 'Shell's Wild Lie' counter-exhibition.

www.risingtide.org.uk/bristol

Summit disrupted

On 22nd November London Rising Tide invaded the Aviation Emissions Trading Summit 2007 held at Selfridges Hotel, central London. They interrupted proceedings with an impromptu speech and presentation of a box of atmosphere. Free shares for 'pre-Emissions Trading Scheme atmosphere' were also given out to each delegate at the conference. The protesters wanted to highlight the huge risk of accelerated climate change through flights and protest against the Emissions Trading Scheme. The protesters said that this scheme allows the industry to claim environmental credentials when in fact stopping airport expansion and reducing flights is what is required.

Parliamentary disruption

28th November - Climate activists opposed to plans for a third runway at Heathrow disrupted the proceedings of the Transport Select Committee, which was conducting an inquiry into 'The future of BAA'.

Wearing t-shirts emblazoned with 'No Third Runway' the protesters handed out copies of a Tyndall Centre climate change report about the impacts of flying on global warming.

www.planestupid.com

Oxford tree protests

The beginning of 2008 saw more resistance to the ongoing gentrification of Oxford. The protests focussed on Bonn Square and the Westgate Shopping Centre where around 40 trees are marked for destruction.

On 4th January a 100 year old tree was occupied by a protester to prevent it being felled. When he left the tree 10 days later, after running out of water and supplies, he was arrested for aggravated trespass. More arrests ensued on the same day when protesters attempted to stop the tree from being felled.

9th January saw an impromptu day of action when protesters resisted the removal of mature trees at the back of a shopping centre. The protest led to the arrest of Councillor Glass Woodin and also saw one of the trees being occupied for over 24 hours.

12th January saw at least 100 people reclaiming Bonn Square. Many took spontaneous direct action against the fencing-off of the square.



Jets blockaded

21th January. Over twenty environmental protesters breached security at Edinburgh Airport and blockaded the entrance to the private jet company, Greer Aviation. The activists, from Plane Stupid Scotland, pledged that the actions come as part of a nationwide campaign to reverse the current plans for a tripling of air travel in Scotland which they say flies in the face of the government's own climate targets.

The protesters, with banners reading 'This planet has no emergency exits', and dressed in business attire with individual private jet wings strapped to their backs highlighted that unregulated business jet use must be brought into the aviation debate.

In the UK, private jet use is the fastest growing sector of aviation. Such journeys typically have a global warming impact that can be an incredible 50-70 times that of the same journey made by train.

News in Brief

Happy bunnies

6th January. 129 rabbits liberated from a lab breeder in Lincolnshire. The breeder supply HLS, as well as several UK universities with animals for experiments.

Monumental victory

On 6th December plans for a 2.1km bored tunnel taking traffic from Stonehenge were scrapped. The announcement made in a Parliamentary statement concluded the £540m for the proposed tunnel scheme could not be justified.

www.savestonehenge.org.uk

School-dodger glued to bed

8th January, Mexico. A ten-year-old lad who didn't much fancy the return to school after the Xmas holidays simply attached himself to his bed with industrial strength shoe glue, and carried on watching cartoons for another couple of hours whilst paramedics and police attempted to get him unstuck.

Keep oil underground - the only way to fight climate change.

A new report by OilWatch at:
www.oilwatch.org

Riders in the storm

At the December London Critical Mass forty riders braved the wind and rain to attend the bike ride. However, heavy traffic caused the Mass to split up. The Police were notable by their absence.

www.criticalmassLondon.org.uk

Nuclear convoy stopped

On 12th November 3 activists from Faslane Peace Camp locked on across the Glen Fruin Haul road, stopping a nuclear convoy for half an hour whilst it was en route from RNAD Coulport to AWE Burghfield. The convoy itself carried weapons of mass destruction the equal of 24 Hiroshimas along public highways and through population centres.

www.nukewatch.org.uk

Jeremy Clarkson subverted

London, December 2007- Two adverts promoting DVD's by Top Gear's Jeremy Clarkson were spotted sporting large stickers declaring 'This causes climate change'.

Shell targeted

9th November was the 12th anniversary of the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and 8 other Ogoni people who were leaders in the movement against Shell in Nigeria. As in Nigeria in the early nineties, state violence is being used on the local people of Rossport, Ireland who are fighting the construction of a Shell gas refinery.

Edinburgh

On 11th November the petrol station on Dalry Road was blockaded for 2 hours by 20 people including members of the Clown Army. The protesters shut off the petrol station by blocking entrances and hoisting signs. The protesters aimed to educate and entertain those prevented from accessing the station, bringing with them musical instruments and games as well as information about Shell. The Comiston Shell Petrol Station was subjected to a night-time redecoration.

Derbyshire

On 9th November supporters of the International struggle against Shell demonstrated outside the Shell Gas offices in Duckmanton, near Chesterfield with banners, noise and images of the community struggle in Ireland. They leafleted the workers at the offices and demanded an end to the ongoing violence, intimidation and bribery that the Shell project has brought on the local people of Mayo, NW Ireland.

We own the streets!

In response to continued police repression and the Government's consultation on 'Managing Protest around Parliament' Saturday 12th January was called as a nationwide day of action to defend freedom of assembly.

The consultation on the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 (SOCPA) has raised concerns amongst anti-SOCPA campaigners that it could lead to an extension of the powers, meaning that any demonstration anywhere in the country would be required to seek police authorisation in advance.

Demonstrations in support of the right to protest were held in Milton Keynes, Cambridge, Liverpool, Brighton, Cambridge, Aberystwyth and Oxford. The monthly peace camp at Aldermaston staged a solidarity 'Freedom of Assembly' demo outside the Atomic Weapons Establishment. In London, where protest is banned within a kilometre of parliament, a procession demonstrated outside several key sites with the SOCPA zone,

including the Home Office, New Scotland Yard and MI5. People were arrested for lying down in the road outside Downing Street and at Parliament Square activists were violently removed from the sit in and Brian Haw was assaulted and arrested.

Lockheed locked out

US-based arms firm Lockheed Martin was targeted early on 13th December at its central London HQ as activists from Trident Ploughshares and London Catholic Worker delivered a seasonal message to the company, locking workers out of the building. The group chained shut and blocked off all the entrances to the building for 45 minutes, from around 8am. The anonymous building (Manning House, 22 Carlisle Place, London. SW1P 1JA), houses the UK corporate headquarters of the arms giant, which makes Trident nuclear weapons (warheads and missiles) and produces surveillance systems used by intelligence services to spy on the public and for commercial espionage.

Aldermaston blockade



On 12th November about 50 people blockaded the on-going construction of the Orion laser at AWE Aldermaston, Berkshire. The laser is designed to help build the next generation of UK nuclear war heads. The 50 activists split into four different blockades at various strategic points to attempt to stop all construction traffic - including a blockade of Burghfield, the nearby factory where the warheads are put together (and then shipped to Coulport/Faslane in Scotland).

Using a variety of large concrete lock-ons, lock on tubes and super glue the activists severely disrupted the construction traffic for 2 and half hours. There were 13 arrests in total.

EDO/ITT

On 20th December 15 activists targeted the ITT offices in Basingstoke, to protest against the takeover of Brighton arms manufacturer EDO MBM by the infamous ITT corporation. A large amount of horse manure was dumped at the front gate of the ITT offices and employees' cars were leafleted, informing them of the decision by EDO shareholders to vote in favour of the takeover, and warning them of the ongoing campaign against the Brighton based arms manufacturer, which has cost EDO millions of pounds over the past three years. A direct action campaign will continue against ITT with the aim of persuading them not to continue business at the Brighton site after the takeover. The campaign will continue until the Brighton offices are shut down.

Totally immoral

The 'Total out of Burma' Day of Action took place on Saturday 24th November. Protests were held at 36 Total petrol stations across the UK. Some stations were blockaded and all the protests reported support from the motoring and pedestrian public. The protests called upon Total Oil to pull out of Burma and stop financing the Burmese military regime. The day of action was part of a growing global campaign calling on French oil company Total to stop funding the Burmese junta.

Buy Nothing Day

The last Saturday of November saw International Buy Nothing Day taking place in many corners of the globe. Central Leeds saw a free shop sprout from the pavement to drive the message home offering burgers, books, records and clothes.

12 people from Norwich Rising Tide held a Rat Race in the city centre. Activists created a mobile rat race that stopped off at the city's busiest malls and high streets.

In Edinburgh clowns from Rampant Reekies, played games, danced and were generally silly on the streets, entertaining people without selling products. They set up a free shop and a Food Not Bombs stall gave out free food. in the form of pea soup, banana smooth.

Activists from Manchester Climate Action evacuated various parts of The Trafford Centre by activating fire alarms and interrupting the daily toil of tedious transactions.

Agrofuels Special

Governments and corporations are promoting agrofuels as green energy' and part of the solution to climate chaos.

Campaigners are warning that agrofuels are part of the problem rather than the solutions. They link agrofuels to

- deforestation and accelerated climate chaos
- high food prices leading to hunger and starvation
- human rights abuses and the displacement of communities.

Rainforest destruction and climate chaos

Rainforest campaigners are warning that, within the next few years, agrofuels could become the main reason for rainforest destruction. Rainforest destruction and intensive agriculture are the quickest ways to make climate chaos worse. 2 gigatons of CO² are being released annually through burning, draining and decomposition. That's 25% of worldwide greenhouse gas emissions. Many rainforests and other ecosystems have a 'tip-

ping point'. This means we can degrade them so far and then they will collapse suddenly and completely leading to runaway climate change.

The grain required to fill a 25 gallon SUV gas tank with ethanol will feed one person for a year.

Food or biodiesel

According to the FAO soaring demand for biofuels are directly contributing to price increases for crops such as sugar, maize, rapeseed, soybean, palm oil and wheat. Corn prices in Mexico have gone up by 70% in six months. This has already sparked mass protests because people can no longer afford their staple food.

In Europe, the amount of wheat devoted to biofuel will rise twelvefold to 18 million tonnes by 2016.

Earlier this year, Jean Ziegler, the UN's Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, denounced agrofuels as 'a crime against humanity' and called for a five-year moratorium on their production.

More human rights abuses

The Chair of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, has warned that 60 million indigenous people may soon become agrofuel refugees. In Argentina 150,000 rural families have already been displaced from their land by soya companies. Many had to leave their land because of aerial spraying with dangerous pesticides, which has made it impossible to grow crops and live safely on their land.

An unholy alliance

On 15th April the UK biofuel legislation known as the RTFO (Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation) will come into force. The legislation commits the UK to a 2.5% mix of biofuels in both diesel and petrol rising to 5% in two years (2010). Currently British road transport uses less than 1% of biofuels yet is already contributing to tropical deforestation, biodiversity loss, and food price increases.

Tesco, Cargill and Greenergy are one of the business partnerships which sell agrofuels from soya, palm oil, sugar cane. They also sell biodiesel from rapeseed oil. They have a refinery in Immingham and are planning a second one in Liverpool.

Ensus on Teesside aim to be the biggest bioethanol suppliers in Europe producing 400million litres of fuel annually.

BP, Associated British Foods (ABF) and DuPont are associated with D1 oils as D1-BP Fuel Crops Limited and have a refinery in Saltend, Hull: 330,000 tonnes bioethanol / year (later biobutanol), under development.

Calls for action

Campaigning group Biofuelwatch are calling on climate action groups to organise events, publicity and protests in their local area against agrofuels from large-scale monocultures.

National Week of Action against Agrofuels 26th Jan - 2nd Feb

Events already planned include protests at Tesco and BP petrol stations, agrofuel refineries and companies investing in monoculture agrofuels.

April 15th 'April Biofuels Day'

The day the UK biofuel legislation will come into force.

www.biofuelwatch.org.uk

Company	Site	Status	more info
DMF Biodiesel,	Rosyth	Proposed	search DMF
Ineos	Grangemouth	Building	ineos.com/pro_ent_gro.html
Earls Nook Ltd	Teesside	Running	biofuelscorp.com/
Petroplus	Teeside	Running	petroplusholdings.com
Ensus	eeside	Building	ensugroup.com
D1 Oils	Teeside	1 Running 1 Proposed	d1plc.com
ABF, BP & Dupont	Saltend, Hull	Building	bp.com/genericarticle.do?categoryId=2012968&content-Id=7034350
Bioethanol Ltd	Immingham	Proposed	bio-fuels.co.uk
Abengoa Bioenergy	Immingham	Proposed	abengoaenergy.com
Greenergy	Immingham	Running	greenergy.com
Vireol	Grimsby	Proposed	vireol.com
Green Spirit Fuels	Grimsby	Building	greenspiritfuels.com
British Sugar	Wissington	Running	britishbioethanol.co.uk
Bio-Driven	Canterbury	Proposed	biodriven.co.uk
Green Spirit Fuels	Henstidge	Building	greenspiritfuels.com
Agri-energy	Milford Haven	Proposed	agrienergy.co.uk
D1 Oils	Bromborough	Building	d1plc.com
Argent Energy	Ellesmere Port	Proposed	argentenergy.com
Argent Energy	Motherwell	Running	argentenergy.com
Goes Green	South Shields	Proposed	
ABS Biodiesel	Bristol Port	Building	

Information taken from www.biofuelwatch.org.uk

International News

Mining blockades

In January in the Philippines tribal villagers blockaded an Australian mining company, leading to an indefinite operation shut down of OceanaGold Philippines. They are protecting the watersheds which feed 150,000 papaya trees.

Old growth defence

Australia. In Tasmania the fight against the construction of a pulp mill is hotting up, with campaigns to protect the southern forests of the Weld Valley, the Styx Valley, and the Florentine Valley continuing. Loggers are trying to force roads deep into areas to 'open them up', valleys are being declared exclusion zones & arrests made, with amazing protest structures springing up in response.

A spokesperson from 'Still Wild Still Threatened' warns that "Tasmania is currently in a state of environmental emergency. Vast tracts of old growth forests are being destroyed and sent to the chipper in order to further inflate the already grossly bulging bank accounts of a select few."

In November the Simcoa silicon plant near(ish) Perth was shut down for 7 hours with conveyor belt lock-ons. Trees are turned into charcoal for making silicon; 8% of Western Australia's electricity also gets chucked into the mix.

In December Bridgetown residents stopped a logging truck in the high street, and East Gippslands forests are being protected through lock-ons and 'black wallerbying' (running around).

www.huon.org and

www.myspace.com/stillwildstill-threatened



Shell to sea

Protests against Shell in Ireland are continuing, both in Mayo and in the rest of the country. The protests are against the Shell scheme to install a huge gas refinery.

On 9th November 400 people turned out for another day of action at Shell's proposed refinery site. Actions included a blockade of workers entering the site, a brief occupation of the site by 30 protesters and a 100 strong sit down blockade to prevent lorries from entering.

On 19th December Shell to Sea activists scaled the heights of the Irish Department of Natural Resources and placed a banner reading 'Protect Irish Natural Resources'.

To mark Ogoni day on 4th January (the anniversary of the first large scale demonstrations against Shell in Ogoniland in the Niger Delta), activists returned to the Shell HQ and gave the multinational a taste of its own medicine by re-enacting a 'gas flare' outside the main entrance just as staff were arriving for work.

On 17th January, over 30 local people again visited the RPS office in Belmullet to let it be known that under no circumstances would they accept raw gas running through their community.

The next large scale protests will be on 1st February, to coincide with Shell's global profit announcement.

www.shelltosea.com

dublinshelltosea@gmail.com

Road raids

The struggle against a destructive motorway scheme continues at Tara, Ireland.

2nd November saw more digger diving and a siege to the hotel where Irish transport minister Noel Dempsey was staying. Activists harangued the politician as he left the construction site for the new Office of Public Works. His day was further spoiled when it was discovered that two tyres of his ministerial Mercedes had been let down.

On 9th November twenty-one campaigners stormed the administrative complex

of the site contractors (SIAC, Ferrovia and Eurolink.) near Tara Hill, occupying offices and filming surprised staff. Then they went to a nearby construction site and climbed on to bulldozers, stopping road construction for one and a half hours. The EU recently passed a ruling ordering contractors to stop, in view of the continuing damage to Ireland's World Heritage Site.

www.tarapixie.net

GM update

Direct action against GM is continuing across the world.

Maize fields trashed in France

In France Monsanto's genetically modified maize fields were trashed in the autumn, and earlier in the year. 16 people including Jose Bove went on a hunger strike to push for a one-year ban on the growing of GM. After 8 days the French government suspended cultivation. Although GM corn feed is imported into several EU countries, the only one grown in the EU is Monsanto's MON810.

At the end of tober Greenpeace activists in Australia occupied animal feed and dairy premises which use GM crops.

GM trees chopped down

Rotorua, New Zealand. Environmental saboteurs appear to be responsible for the destruction of field trial crop of genetically modified radiata pine and Norway spruce trees at the Crown Research Institute Scion's base. On 14th January saboteurs circumvented an electrified security fence by tunnelling underneath it, and chopped down 20 genetically engineered trees. A spade with a 'GE Free New Zealand' sticker was left behind. Researchers will likely be forced to abandon this particular experiment since a full 20% of their trees were destroyed.

UK GM plantings on the horizon

Last year the only GM field, of potatoes, was decontaminated. This year potato 'trials' are likely to be continued, and other announcements as the government tries to foist GM on the resisting British public. Watch this space.

Sea Shepherd



Early January saw two members of the crew of the Sea Shepherd ship Steve Irvine enter a Japanese whaling ship to deliver a letter informing them that whaling activities are illegal. The two activists were held hostage on board the whaling ship for two days before they were released. As a result of this incident the whaling fleet dispersed and fled Antarctic waters resulting in a whole week in which no whales were killed. The action of the two British and Australian activists captured the attention of the world media and resulted in solidarity demos around the world including London, Barcelona, Berlin, New York etc.
www.seashepherd.com

Dam protests

In India 25,000 farmers formed a human chain around one of the world's largest dams, in protest against development by British mining corporation Vedanta Resources. The British company wants Bauxite from a hugely biodiverse forest area, threatening rare species and an entire tribal population.

Nordic trolls

Iceland: On 14th December nine 'jolasveiner' (mischievous trolls) wandered into the Hellsheldi Power Plant situated by Mount Hengill and expressed their opposition to the rise of heavy industry and the destruction of the surrounding natural habitat. These naughty little trolls handed out aluminium cans and potatoes to workers and security guards. They played on machinery and sang Christmas songs.

At the moment Hellsheldi produces about three times more energy for heavy industry than for domestic use. It is to triple in size to power an aluminium smelting factory. The expansion of Icelandic Alloys contributes greatly to Iceland's greenhouse gas emissions. It is now emitting 38% more greenhouse gases than in 1990.

www.savingiceland.org

No comment!

The trial of 11 climate activists who attempted to shut down Ratcliffe-on-Soar power station action last spring took place from 14-16 January in Nottingham. The defendants were arguing that they acted out of necessity because of fear for their lives and others. Ratcliffe coal power station is one of the largest emitters of CO2 in Britain and directly contributes to climate chaos. The judge will return the verdict on the alleged aggravated trespass on 25 Febru-

ary for ten of the defendants. One got off scot-free as there was not sufficient evidence to convict him. He had made use of his right to silence all the way through police custody and court, with the police failing to submit enough evidence.

Swiss riots

In Switzerland nearly 500 riot cops with tanks and water cannons stopped a peaceful Reclaim The Streets party. The cops used pepperspray, non-lethal guns, beat people and detained 245 people.

Legal Update

Access to Solicitors at Police Stations

The way people get access to a solicitor when in police custody changed on 14th Jan 2008 for England and Wales.

CHANGE 1: Getting to talk to a solicitor when arrested.

If you want to talk to a solicitor when you are under arrest then tell the police (same as before). But instead of the police contacting the solicitors directly they will ask a call centre(!) (grandly called Criminal Defence Services Direct - CDS Direct) to *attempt* to call your solicitor. They will probably only try to reach your solicitor once. If your solicitor hasn't responded to a message within two hours then you will be passed on to a duty solicitor or a legal adviser on the end of the phone.

What to do

- If you think you or others may be arrested then contact your solicitors in advance and ask whether they can deal with the new system. They should have sorted out their telephone system to make it easy for CDS Direct to get hold of them.
- It's better to ask for a firm of solicitors rather than a particular solicitor. The CDS Direct only have lists of solicitors firms, and if the call centre can't find your solicitor's name they may just assign you a duty solicitor instead, or even only allow you to speak to a legal adviser on the phone.

So on your bust cards put the name of the solicitor's firm, rather than just the solicitor's own name.

It's still worth putting the solicitor's telephone number on your bust card because you can then phone them as soon as you see someone being arrested.

CHANGE 2: No interview - no solicitor

If the police are not going to interview you then you will not get to see a solicitor. Instead of that you can speak to a "legal adviser" on the end of a phone. They'll probably just tell you what you've already worked out - ie what you've been arrested for, the fact that the police won't be interviewing you and that you'll be released at some point, perhaps be bailed or charged. Sometimes people are charged or bailed without being interviewed - in which case you won't get to see your solicitor until you've been released.

Contact us

Have you experienced the new legal advice system? The Activists' Legal Project would like to hear about your experiences, good and bad.

info@activistslegalproject.org.uk

For more legal information for activists check our website:

www.activistslegalproject.org.uk

Upcoming Events

Earth First! Winter Moot 2008

22nd - 24th 2008 February- Nottingham

Join us for:

- Activist skill share
- A chance to share info on your own campaign
- Planning direct action on climate chaos, genetic crop trials and mega-dams in Iceland
- Sharing ideas for the EF! Summer Gathering



Open to all those who have been involved in radical ecological direct action and to those who want to find out more.

Cost: £15 (includes accommodation and food) **Creche and disabled access** both available, but please call to let us know if you need these or anything else.

Starts 5pm, Fri 22nd Feb At The Sumac Centre, Gladstone Street Nottingham,

Directions: www.veggies.org.uk/sumac

For more info call 01508 531636 (number not available during the event)

Saving Iceland UK meeting

Friday 22nd February - Nottingham

Start 10am at the Sumac Centre. **Directions:** www.veggies.org.uk/sumac

A day of talks and film showings to pass on information about the on-going international campaign and the current situation in Iceland.

Open to those interested in travelling to Iceland or taking part in solidarity actions against the construction of large, wilderness wrecking dams in Iceland.

For further information and essential booking contact 01508 531636 or [savin-iceland@riseup.org](mailto:savingiceland@riseup.org) www.savingiceland.org

1st April - Fossil Fools Day

A day of action against the fossil fuel industry on April 1st 2008...

1st - May - Day of Action Against False Solutions to Climate Chaos

Governments and corporations keep pushing technofixes instead of tackling the root cause of climate chaos – the growth economy. A day of action against biofuels, nuclear power, emissions trading, carbon off-setting...

3rd June - Day of Action on Food and Climate Chaos

A day of action to coincide with the UN conference on food security and climate change on 3rd -5th June.

More info: www.networkforclimateaction.org.uk www.fossilfoolsday.org

What is Earth First?

Earth First! stands for the use of direct action and non-hierarchical organisation to confront, stop and eventually reverse the forces responsible for the destruction of the Earth and its inhabitants.

It is not a cohesive group or campaign but a convenient banner for people who share similar philosophies to work under.

In the UK people have been using the Earth First! banner for direct action since the early 90s – directly confronting and stopping road building, the quarrying of coal, rock and peat, freeing our fields of genetically modified crops, protesting against climate criminals, fighting corporate power and much, much more.

If you believe action speaks louder than words, then Earth First! is for you. To find out more, including how to get involved go to our website: www.earthfirst.org.uk

Earth First! Summer gathering

13th-18th August 2008

A place to meet people, share skills and plan ecological direct action.

For more details check website nearer the time.

www.earthfirstgathering.org.uk

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Name: _____ **Email:** _____

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Subscriptions cost a minimum of £5 for 10 issues. Send more so we can distribute it free to prisoners etc. Cheques/Postal Orders payable to Earth First! Action Update. Worried about security? You may wish to consider a pseudonym and a care of address.

Action Update c/o The Basement, 78a Penny St, Lancaster LA1 1XN