

40 years of struggles and successes

mobilise. resist. transform

2011 | foi 40th anniversary



**Friends of
the Earth
International**

mobilise, resist, transform

friends of the earth international is an international federation of diverse grassroots-based environmental organizations with over 2 million members and supporters around the world. We challenge the current model of economic and corporate globalization, and promote solutions that will help to create environmentally sustainable and socially just societies.

our vision is of a peaceful and sustainable world based on societies living in harmony with nature. We envision a society of interdependent people living in dignity, wholeness and fulfilment in which equity and human and peoples' rights are realized.

This will be a society built upon peoples' sovereignty and participation. It will be founded on social, economic, gender and environmental justice and free from all forms of domination and exploitation, such as neoliberalism, corporate globalization, neo-colonialism and militarism.

We believe that our children's future will be better because of what we do.

friends of the earth has groups in: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Belgium (Flanders), Bolivia, Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Curaçao (Antilles), Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, El Salvador, England/Wales/Northern Ireland, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Grenada (West Indies), Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Latvia, Liberia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia (former Yugoslav Republic of), Malaysia, Malawi, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Palestine, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Scotland, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania, Timor Leste, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine, United States, and Uruguay. (Please contact the FoEI Secretariat or check www.foei.org for FoE groups' contact info)

available for download at www.foei.org

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editorial team Ronnie Hall and Ann Doherty

cover image When grandma harvests the first corn of the year, it is cooked and then eaten directly from the pot. The first cooked cob goes to the person who can answer the most questions about the fairy tales told by grandma the previous night. Whoever gets the last cob is the one who washes the old pot using cold ashes from the cooking fire. Swali Yenagoa Bayelsa State, Nigeria. © Ifieniya Festavera Lott

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40 years of struggles and successes

nnimmo bassey friends
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chair, nigeria

Forty years is a long time to struggle - and struggles can sometimes seem endless when we are in the middle of them - but Friends of the Earth International's fortieth anniversary offers us a wonderful opportunity to stand still for a moment, together with our friends and allies around the world, and simply reflect, marvel even, at just how much we - friends of the earth all - have achieved in the last four decades.

It's true that many struggles continue, but there have also been dramatic changes and important successes over the last four decades, which we can look back to for inspiration and motivation. Forty years ago, for example, the protection of the environment barely registered on most political agendas, yet in numerous countries it is now considered the norm, and legislation to protect the environment and health is established and developing, both nationally and internationally. This is in no small part due to the efforts of Friends of the Earth International's member groups who have campaigned long and hard for tangible and meaningful results, in close collaboration with local communities and social movement allies.

Thousands flood
the streets of
Copenhagen demanding
climate justice.



Yet the last twenty years has also seen the shadow of neoliberal economic globalisation creep steadily across the world, rapidly threatening and reversing this positive trend. Ever more powerful transnational corporations are fighting hard to wrest control of the planet's limited natural resources away from local communities and indigenous peoples. Many of Friends of the Earth's struggles are now focused on challenging this increasing onslaught.

Sometimes we are so engrossed in our struggles that we can scarcely spare a moment to look back. We seek to do just that at this time. In this short report there is only space to touch on a few notable examples of our collaborative successes and struggles, but they range from a complete ban on commercial whaling in Spain as long ago as 1985, through to Latin America's first national law banning new metal mining projects, passed in Costa Rica in 2011.

Other inspiring examples of people's resistance, supported by Friends of the Earth member groups, include a *de facto* moratorium on new genetically modified crops and foods in the EU in place since 1998; stopping plans for 15 coal-fired plants in Germany; a new law protecting glaciers from mining in Argentina; a Bangladeshi High Court move to close Bangladesh's ship-breaking yards; persuading the Norwegian government to hold off on oil activity in northern Norway; challenging the destructive activities of oil companies in Nigeria; and convincing the International Maritime Organisation to approve new rules on pollution from ships.

But friendship with this earth requires more than resistance; it is also about transformation, bringing about the world we want to live in, and leaving it in pristine condition for our children. We are actively working to build that better world, in close collaboration with our allies including La Via Campesina, the World March of Women and many others.

Examples of our victories include acknowledgement that water is a human right in the Uruguayan constitution; unprecedented recognition for waste-pickers in South Africa's 2009 National Environmental Management Waste Act; the provision of alternative and sustainable economic opportunities for 5,000 people in Ghana, especially women; the passing of the world's first Climate Change Act in the UK in 2008; communities planting a new and bigger forest in Ostende, Belgium (to replace one lost to energy giant GDF Suez); the submission of a new Minerals Management Bill in the Philippines to promote sustainable, needs-based minerals management; and facilitating the participation of more than 600,000 people in 46 community consultations on mining, oil and dam projects in Guatemala.

As we look back over the past forty years we salute the tenacity of our members and supporters. We are pleased that demands for environmental justice are gaining ground around the world.

Although we know that the struggles ahead will be grim, as global crises multiply, we can also gaze into the future and see a path that is clearly defined by transforming acts of solidarity and cooperation. We are confident that working together we will build a world where justice and dignity are assured and environmental and human rights are respected.

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bangladesh

foe | bangladesh/bela

aiming to smash the dirty ship-breaking industry

Bangladesh's ship-breaking beaches are soaked in a toxic soup of hazardous substances, such as oily wastes, asbestos, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), lead and arsenic. These toxins leak out of ships as they are being dismantled bit by bit.

Because their environment is so severely contaminated, and because of frequent fires, explosions and accidents, life for those in the ship-breaking industry is extremely hazardous and there are regular fatalities. There are 18,000 men working in the industry, some as young as 14, and all are paid very little, housed in the most basic accommodation, and provided with little or no medical care.

The 1995 Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal bans the export of toxic waste. Yet many of these ships come to Bangladesh from countries such as the US, UK, Norway and Japan. Seeking to cut costs, owners change



Workers dismantling ships in Chittagong, Bangladesh.

Workers carry pieces of iron from old ships, Chittagong, Bangladesh.

Ship breaking in Bangladesh.



"Employers never treat us as humans. They cry for us only when BELA's legal actions lead to the closure of their businesses. If BELA was not there, the world probably would have never known about our miseries. We just hope that one day the government will come forward in providing us with decent jobs and protecting us from the cruel treatment of our rich masters."

Given, shipbreaking labourer



foe germany/bund

successfully stopping coal-fired power plants

Just a few short years ago the German government planned to build some 30 new coal-fired power plants across the country, even though Chancellor Angela Merkel and then Minister for the Environment Sigmar Gabriel were busy promoting Germany internationally as a climate pioneer.



2001: FoE lifeboat at climate summit, Bonn, Germany.

-  hard/
mineral coal
-  lignite
-  stopped
-  plans to
construct
that might be stopped



© foe germany/bund

Coal-fired power plants of Germany showing their megawatt power.

FoE take part in a demonstration outside the venue for the UN climate talks in Bonn.



© foe

Lignite and coal-fired power plants are more than twice as harmful to the climate as modern gas-fired power plants. The large clouds of steam from the power plants' cooling towers also create another significant problem: more than half of the energy generated is lost as wasted heat. Coal-fired power plants also have high capital costs and are thus designed for a very long service life of over forty years. This means new coal plants will lock Germany into high greenhouse gas emissions for decades.

If built the carbon dioxide emissions from these plants would constitute one tenth of Germany's total emissions from its industrial and energy sectors. Companies planning to invest in revitalising this outdated and unwanted technology included RWE, Vattenfall, EnBW and E.ON.

There has been intense resistance to these proposals at the grassroots level, however, and Friends of the Earth Germany/BUND and its many different local groups have so far succeeded in stopping 15 of them, which are spread over Germany. The ones that have been stopped are located in Berlin, Lubmin, Kiel, Brunsbüttel, Stade, Wilhelmshaven, Bremen, Emden, Dörpen, Düsseldorf, Köln, Mainz, Ens Dorf, Quierschied, and Germersheim. Luckily Friends of the Earth Germany convinced many other organisations to join their campaign, which contributed to this huge success!

Friends of the Earth Germany have used legal challenges, which have been a very effective approach. Soon there will be decisions with respect to lawsuits against two further coal-fired power plants, which are already under construction in Datteln and Hamburg-Moorburg. They intend to stop those too, together with their local grassroots members.

If Germany wants to achieve its stated environmental goals, the federal government must abandon its plans to build coal-fired power plants.



costa rica



Open-pit mining destroys the environment.



Speaking out against Crucitas.



'Costa Rica does not want mining' banner.

Communities discussing Crucitas.



foe costa rica/coecoceiba

historic ban on open-pit mining

In November 2010, Costa Rica became the first country in Latin America to ban open-pit metal mining.



Opposing Crucitas in Costa Rica.

Costa Rica's only open-pit gold mine, in Las Crucitas, had previously been declared a project of "national interest" when it was established on the basis of legal irregularities by then president Oscar Arias, in October 2008 - even though it posed a stark threat to the rich biodiversity in the San Juan river basin.

Friends of the Earth Costa Rica/COECOCEIBA was part of a national platform of various types of organisations, including environmentalists' and peasants' organisations, who worked with local communities in the northern zone of the country. They had been collectively campaigning against opening up the northern region to mining for 17 years. During that time, this big coalition initiated several legal processes, demonstrated outside the mine, marched on parliament, and even engaged in hunger strikes. More than 90 per cent of the population now oppose open-pit mining developments.

In May 2010, the newly elected president of Costa Rica, Laura Chinchilla, signed an executive decree that placed a moratorium on open-pit gold mining in the country. Then, in November 2010, Costa Rica's legislative assembly, citing environmental concern, reinforced the presidential decree by voting unanimously for the ban on all new open-pit metal mining projects.

Yet the bill did not affect the country's existing gold mining project in Crucitas until 24 November 2010, when a Costa Rican court finally annulled the mining concession previously granted to mining company Industrias Infinito. Friends of the Earth Costa Rica provided part of the technical support underpinning the charges, and provided an expert witness to testify on the issue of impacts on forests.

nigeria

foe nigeria/environmental rights action

shell kept out of ogoniland and forced into courtrooms

Gas is often found mixed with crude oil and must be separated. Burning the gas, known as gas flaring, is the cheapest way to do this, yet also the most environmentally destructive. It acidifies lakes and streams and damages crops and vegetation. It also increases the risk of respiratory illnesses, asthma and cancer, and can cause painful breathing, itching, blindness, impotency, miscarriages and premature deaths. It also has global impacts, since gas flaring is a major cause of climate change. And it is a waste of a valuable commodity: while nearly three-quarters of Nigerians live in extreme poverty, Nigeria loses US\$2.5 billion every year through flared gas.

It is unsurprising, then, that gas flaring is a major factor in the tension and conflicts raging in the Niger Delta region. Yet companies including Shell have persistently refused to put a stop to gas flaring in the Delta.

Friends of the Earth Nigeria/Environmental Rights Action have been campaigning for many years to stop Shell's wasteful and polluting practices. Besides raising Nigerian citizens' awareness they have also been using legal channels to force oil companies in Nigeria to clean up their operations.

In November 2005, the Federal High Court of Nigeria ordered that gas flaring must stop in the Niger Delta Iwherekani community, because it violated guaranteed constitutional rights to life and dignity. The judge also declared that Nigerian gas flaring was unconstitutional. This was the first time that a Nigerian court's decision applied rights guaranteed by the country's constitution to an environmental case. In 2009 the government announced it would ban gas flaring in early 2010. In spite of this success, however, the government has yet to actually force the oil companies to stop flaring.

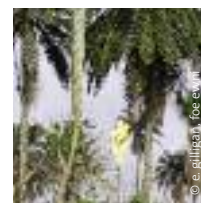
The legal strategy, in combination with continuous campaigning and pressuring the oil companies and the government, is starting to pay off in other ways as well. Oil spills and gas flaring cases have succeeded in putting Shell under a global spotlight, even though the government has not yet put a full stop to such practices. The cases have also forced Shell to reveal at least some information about its operations in Nigeria. Recently, Shell was also expelled from the Dow Jones Sustainability Index: according to several sources this was due to its continuous pollution in Nigeria. This is a strong blow to the company's reputation.



© e.gilligan/foe ewmi

2004: Shell gas flare at Rumekpe showing kids sitting in close proximity to the flare, which is easily accessible to anyone in the village.

2004: Gas flaring in the Niger Delta, Nigeria.



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uniting local, national
and international
campaigning to challenge
shell abuse

Shell has earned itself international notoriety for its well-documented environmental destruction and complicity in human rights abuses in the Niger Delta. This triggered the formation of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) in the Niger Delta, led by Ken Saro-Wiwa and other community leaders from the Ogoni region. In November 1995, however, Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight others were executed by the military dictatorship, and legal actions have ensued, charging Shell with complicity in these killings. Lawyers from Friends of the Earth Nigeria/ERA were part of the defence team for the late Ken Saro-Wiwa and are supporting ongoing cases against pollution.

In June 2009, a landmark case against Shell was resolved out of court, ahead of a pending trial in New York: Shell paid US\$15.5 million in compensation to the victims of human rights abuses in Ogoniland. However, despite its decision to settle, the corporation issued a statement that claimed, "Shell had no part in the violence that took place."

On 3 December 2009, a unique legal action issued by four Nigerian victims of Shell oil leaks in three communities, in conjunction with Friends of the Earth Netherlands/Milieudedefensie, began at the court in The Hague. This is the first time in history that a major Dutch company has been brought to trial in a Dutch court for damages occurring abroad. Following preliminary claims from Shell relating to process issues, which have now been rejected by the Dutch court, the 'real' lawsuit will begin in 2011.

Shell continues to be pursued by further cases. In January 2011, Friends of the Earth International, FoE Netherlands/Milieudedefensie and Amnesty International also filed a complaint against the oil company before the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), over the company's claims that oil spills in the Niger Delta are almost entirely due to acts of sabotage. The plaintiffs are challenging the validity of the figures that Shell has given regarding the causes of oil leaks in Nigeria, which Shell claims are primarily due to sabotage. These highly misleading statements lead to immense difficulty for the communities, as the company is not obliged to pay compensation for damage if the cause of a spill is sabotage.

Shell remains shut out of Ogoniland and until it cleans up its pollution and ends gas flaring throughout the Niger Delta, it will be forced into courtrooms until justice is served.



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2004: shell oil spill at kuhpoku.

2004: Shell barrels in Nigeria.

2004: shell oil heads leaking at k-dere, ogoni.

2004: Shell gas flares at Umuebulu community in the Juipo oilfield, Etche local government area, near Fort Harcourt, Niger Delta.

Furthermore, communities across the Niger Delta – including those that are not directly affected – have gained confidence in their ability to challenge oil companies. More communities have actively engaged in legal cases, including a community youth organisation that has made a political demand for the Agip oil company to cease gas flaring in their community.

Friends of the Earth Nigeria regularly distributes fact-sheets and newsletters, places ads in local newspapers and holds 'town hall' meetings in the affected communities, to keep local people up to date with the legal work and to strengthen their faith in the legal cases. Staff members also make field trips in the Niger Delta to identify communities affected by new spills, and to record damaging impacts to be presented as further evidence.

In 2010, oil giant Shell announced that it would invest US\$600 million in phasing out one third of gas flaring in Nigeria, and in March 2011, the president of Nigeria announced a gas revolution that many argue will end gas flaring. Whether this will really happen is doubtful though: a study of this so-called revolution shows that it focuses on bringing investment into Nigeria, without any indication as to whether the gas to be utilised would be previously flared gas or gas sourced from new gas fields. In addition, after endless deadline shifts, the Nigerian state resorted to a new trick at COP-15 in Copenhagen, when carbon speculators were told that flare gas would now be used for electricity generation, and would attract carbon credits through the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). Even though gas flaring has been illegal for decades, the UNFCCC declared that a couple of these proposals would qualify as CDM projects. This route threatens even more stalling on bringing an end to illegal gas flaring in the oil fields of the Niger Delta. Resistance will continue.



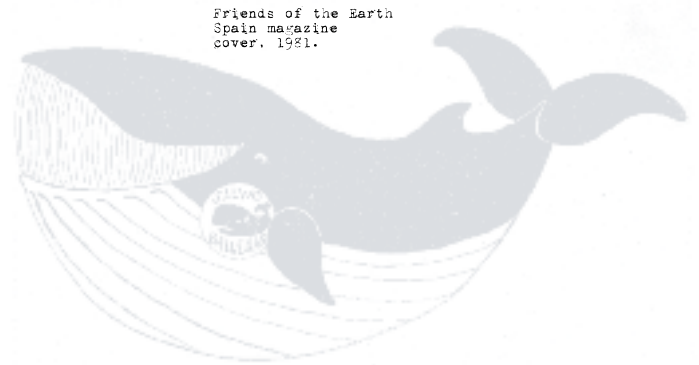
spain



Sperm whale.
Friends of the Earth
Spain magazine
cover, 1981.

foe spain

the death of whale hunting



In 1972 a recommendation for a ten-year moratorium on commercial whaling was approved by the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment. And in the 1970s, as more and more non-whaling countries joined the commercially-oriented International Whaling Commission (IWC), it was gradually transformed into an organisation focused on the conservation of whales. Spain, a whaling country, was not a member.

In 1979 the IWC introduced a ban on the hunting of all whale species (except minke whales) by factory ships - although there were and are loopholes that permit countries to continue whaling. This same year saw the launch of Friends of the Earth Spain's anti-whaling campaign, which the Spanish government tried to block. However, since the IWC prohibited its members to negotiate with non-members, Spain also found itself obliged to join the IWC in 1979 in order to sell its fish catch to Japan, an IWC member.

Friends of the Earth saw an opportunity to influence the Spanish government, and became an NGO observer to the IWC. This allowed it to exert pressure at both the national and international levels, which was a new approach for the Spanish ecological movement. 200,000 people signed up in support of a moratorium against whale hunting in 1981, proposed by an alliance of organisations including Friends of the Earth.

Friends of the Earth Spain also got a seat as an observer to the IWC's 33rd meeting in the United Kingdom, gaining access to the plenary meetings and the Technical Committee, and representing all ecologist associations in Spain. This meeting was of great importance in the campaign, revealing as it did that only a minority of countries, including Spain, were still hunting.

In the same year Friends of the Earth Spain also persuaded the Spanish Socialist Party (PSOE), then in opposition, to present a legal proposition on a moratorium on whale hunting to parliament. This opened up a fast track to success. At the IWC meeting in 1982, the Spanish position on whale hunting changed, and a national moratorium started three years later. In 1985 whale hunting was stopped in Spain and the whale factories in Cee and Cangas were closed.



foe uruguay/redes

victory in the struggle for life and against water privatisation

On 31 October 2004, in a landmark decision, 64.7% of Uruguayans voted for a Constitutional Reform in Defence of Water. Water was thus included in the country's constitution as a human right, which paved the way for its public, participatory and sustainable management.

The referendum was put forward by the National Commission in Defence of Water and Life (CNDAV), of which Friends of the Earth Uruguay/REDES is an active member. The CNDAV consisted of a wide range of social and political organisations that opposed the concept of water as a commodity. It was created in 2002 in response to the signing of a Letter of Intent between the Uruguayan government and the International Monetary Fund, which aimed to extend the privatisation of drinking water and sanitation services in the country, through companies such as Suez Lyonnese Des Eaux of France, and Aguas de Bilbao from Spain.

After the constitutional reform, however, the water services were nationalised. In the case of Suez, and following a continent-wide campaign, the company had to leave many Latin American countries. The successful water referendum was a vitally important social victory: together the Constitutional Reform in Uruguay and the Water War in Cochabamba, Bolivia became corner stones of the global movement in defence of water. In 2005, 31 October was declared the International Day of Action in Defence of Water. October was adopted as a month of global action challenging the corporate control of water and to protect water as a common good and a right available to all under the slogan 'Water is life, not a commodity'.



October 2003: 'Human river' water protest organised by FOE Uruguay delivering petition for water as a constitutional right.



October 2003: 'Human river' water protest organised by FOE Uruguay.

AGUA PARA LA VIDA



October 2003: Delivering petition.



ghana

foe ghana

sustainable jobs contribute to harmony



Education on small-scale sustainable enterprises for women in Ghana.

Women's small scale sustainable enterprises in Ghana. local community education program. An initiative of FoE Ghana.

Women's training workshop. Ghana.



The dry, remote areas of northern Ghana have long been plagued by tribal conflicts, social upheaval, food insecurity, high illiteracy rates, widespread poverty and environmental degradation. The poor quality of life forces many young people, particularly women, to leave in search of menial work in the south of the country.

In view of these challenges, Friends of the Earth Ghana set up a project called 'Peaceful and Sustainable Development' aimed at creating sustainable and meaningful local employment. The jobs created directly reduce poverty, and reduce the incentives for young people to become involved in conflict.

"The involvement of the youth in conflict has greatly reduced because of the opportunity this project gave to the idle youth through the establishment of a Youth Enterprise Centre."

Mr Welvis Hudu Adam, former Municipal Chief Executive (the Mayor) of Yendi Municipal Assembly, one of the project areas.

The project supports those dropping out of school and the economic activities of rural women and young people. Those who want to continue their education by re-taking their external exams are supported with free tuition and re-registration. Day-care centres have been set up to enable women to engage in productive economic activities while their children are being cared for. Farm tools and seeds are provided, and shea butter and gari processing centres have been set up. Bicycles with trailers are provided so that women can transport their agricultural products to market.

Training is also offered in sewing, batik, tie-dye and general textile design, and workshops are given on business management and book-keeping, as well as conflict resolution and conflict management.

The diversification of women's economic activities has also improved food security, and some communities have managed to produce surplus gari, beans and groundnuts to be traded with people in southern Ghana. Newly empowered women entrepreneurs can now re-invest in their communities, and they enjoy economic independence and greater freedom to determine their own futures. As a result of increased disposable incomes, more children, and particularly girls, are able to attend school, and health care facilities have been improved.

Over the past five years, the project has benefited over 5,000 people directly, 90 percent of them female. Workshops and training programs have been held in schools, mosques and churches. Social clubs in communities and schools have brought different ethnic groups together, so that young people could test their newly acquired reconciliation skills. The project has also been successful in increasing women's participation in decision-making.

The projects have now been handed over to the communities to manage themselves and they are being run effectively without Friends of the Earth Ghana's direct involvement.



australia



foe australia

green-farmer alliance against coal and coal seam gas

Farmers and environmentalists in Australia are not natural allies, but Friends of the Earth and farmers have bridged the divide as they take action to oppose the expansion of coal and coal seam gas mining.



Viking billboard.



Tara picket line.

Lock the Gate action.



Australia is the world's largest exporter of coal, and coal seam gas expansion has begun. Many new open cut coal mines are being planned for the food bowl area of the Darling Downs. In places like the beautiful Felton Valley, near the city of Toowoomba, a large coal mine will be built alongside a petrochemical plant that, on its own, will produce about 3 per cent of Queensland's greenhouse gas emissions. 40,000 coal seam gas wells, pipelines, compressor stations and Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) plants are proposed for this region, and more across the country.

The impacts include the alienation and destruction of much of the best agricultural land, the degradation and draw-down of underground water systems including the Great Artesian Basin, health problems for affected communities, and the widespread destruction of wildlife habitat. The greenhouse gas emissions from the industry will increase Queensland's greenhouse gas emissions by 21 per cent and Australia's overall emissions by over 6 per cent.

Friends of the Earth Brisbane's response, the Six Degrees campaign, has involved building alliances with numerous rural action groups and communities, including farmers, who oppose the intrusion of coal and coal seam gas mining, because it threatens their lands and the well-being of their communities.

Since the state government is firmly behind the mining sector, Friends of the Earth and the various landowner groups created the Lock the Gate campaign. This campaign aims to persuade all landholders to refuse to negotiate with mining companies – in effect, to lock their gates to them. This is in spite of various laws that make it illegal to refuse to negotiate terms of access with the companies.

Now Lock the Gate has gone national, as the movement spreads across the country. A Lock the Gate Alliance has been set up to coordinate campaigns across the various states.



europe

foei groups

a europe-wide struggle to be gmo-free!

At the beginning of the 1990s a new threat challenged our environment and health: genetically modified crops and food. Friends of the Earth Europe reacted very early to this new attempt by a few agribusiness corporations to impose their products and increase their control of the food chain.

An early priority was following the development of European legislation and promoting better public understanding. Members groups began to mobilise people at the local level as well. Very soon Friends of the Earth groups became a reference on the issue of genetic engineering. Public outrage in many countries and persuasive lobbying by groups including Friends of the Earth eventually led to a *de facto* moratorium on new GMOs from 1998.

One key word sums up the Friends of the Earth Europe GMO campaign: diversity. First of all, diversity of people. Little by little, more and more Friends of the Earth and other groups were involved, from all parts of Europe including Eastern Europe. Crucially this enabled the campaign to combine national and European lobby work and influence policies, building a grassroots movement against GMOs, shaping a hostile public opinion and creating resistance in every region and every village around Europe. Connection and coordination with Friends of the Earth International's GMO campaigning created a strong campaign ranging from local to global levels.

Diversity has also been a characteristic of the activities of the campaign. From lobby work at European, national and regional levels, to joint awareness work in many countries; from European wide tomato tours, to decentralised days of action; from international conferences, to a march of shopping trolleys in front of the European Commission.

Collecting signatures for the Bite Back campaign.



Giant tomato on tour.

Friends of the Earth activists from 14 European countries call for their food to be protected from genetic contamination in October 2002 in Brussels.





Friends of the Earths Bite Back campaign aims to prevent the US and the World Trade Organisation from force feeding GMOs to Europeans.



© foe europe



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© foe.wm/n.cobbing



© H. Jackson, foe evm

Anti-GM activist.

Farmers and members of the public from around the United Kingdom at the October 2003 Tractors and Trolleys GM protest.

Corn growing in the UK.

One example was the Bite Back campaign to counter-attack the US's complaint to the World Trade Organisation about the EU's GMO policies. This campaign included the Monster Tomato Tour: a giant tomato visited more than 20 cities in 12 countries between 2003 and 2004, an excellent tool for promoting public awareness, media coverage and signature collection. The GMO-free Europe campaign, initiated by FoE, has also been one of the biggest European-wide actions and managed to create a real movement of regions and towns defending their right to say no to GMOs.

And the most important diversity of all: the one of successes! In the early 1990s, Friends of the Earth sowed the seed of doubt on GMOs in Europe. Twenty years later, a huge number of civil society organisations are involved, public opinion is massively against GMOs, and Europe is nearly GMO-free in terms of cultivation. In the meantime, Friends of the Earth Europe influenced EU-wide legislation and many other regulations and political decisions.

Even after all this time, the campaign still remains strong and successful. Nine countries have implemented some kind of prohibition on MON810 corn and/or Amflora potatoes (the only two GMOs approved for cultivation), and more than 200 regions and 4,500 local authorities have declared their territory GMO-free. With the European Union a major importer of foods and crops, a GMO-free Europe also helps to make a GMO-free world. Long may it remain!



foe uruguay/redes

cultivating native seedbeds

Friends of the Earth Uruguay/REDES is part of an alliance that has been built up to recover and defend native seeds, together with the Association of Organic Farmers of Uruguay (APODU) and the Southern Regional Centre (CRS) of the Agronomy School at the University of the Republic.

ATAIC School
of Sustainability,
September 2010,
Brazil.

Farmers
exchange seeds.



They focus on collective ways of working together on a small-scale, within family-based production models. The network organises seeds exchanges, training activities and regional and national encounters for collective evaluation and planning. The members of the network are organised in groups distributed throughout the country.

In the first year, 20-30 producers participated and began to collaborate in the production and exchange of local seeds, increasing the volumes of seeds for certain crops that are important for organic production. This became an *in situ* collective for the conservation of native seeds called the Native Seeds Network, which promotes the exchange of seeds and associated traditional knowledge.

In 2010, after several years of development, nearly 120 producers participate. Thanks to this work, onion, garlic, potato, sweet potato, carrot, pumpkin, strawberry, oats, wheat, corn, tomato, pepper, beans and sunflower seeds have been produced. In addition, there have been assessments of different kinds of onion, garlic, strawberry, sweet potato, tomato, wheat and potato. Over 30 varieties, most of them produced in an ecological way, have been distributed to farmers so they can use them in their fields.



mozambique



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foe mozambique/justiça ambiental

the mphanda nkuwa struggle

Mr Morais, Mozambican community member.

Mozambican community concerned about their future.

Mozambican territory that will be flooded.



© foemozambique/ja!

FoE Mozambique/Justiça Ambiental (JA!) has been campaigning with communities in the Zambezi River Basin for more than nine years, to address the impacts of the existing Cahora Bassa dam and to stop the construction of the proposed Mphanda Nkuwa dam. For a poor country like Mozambique, where less than 14% of the people have access to electricity, investing over US\$2 billion dollars in a project primarily intended to export to energy-hungry South Africa, not only ignores the needs of the country, but forces the poorest of the poor to cover the costs.

Mphanda Nkuwa could finalise the destruction of the Zambezi Basin, and with it the livelihoods of its people, 80% of whom are dependent upon agriculture and fishing. The older Cahora Bassa dam already forced thousands to relocate, reduced soil fertility, increased erosion, impacted fisheries and farming, worsened the threat of flooding and malaria, and reduced the availability of safe drinking water.

In 2001 the Mozambican government decided to construct the Mphanda Nkuwa, 70km below the first dam. This could lead to the forced resettlement of at least 1,400 people, and impact 200,000 more downstream. Projected impacts include the further destruction of the delta and its biodiversity, yet more flooding and erosion, and the degradation of subsistence-based flood plain farming. The dam is also being built in a seismically active area. The stage is set to turn so-called 'development' into a disaster. Campaigners and communities had managed to delay the dam's construction but in 2010, the Mozambican government approved its construction, without an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and in defiance of Mozambique's laws.

Friends of the Earth Mozambique and the local communities continue the struggle to avoid this disaster, and create awareness, action, alternatives, and hope.

"Mphanda Nkuwa Dam is not development. It will be built at the cost of Mozambique's future and at the risk of the Zambezi people. Big foreign corporations will reap the rewards and the people of Zambezi will lose the little that they have. Real development should bring light to the people and security to their lives. If the government wants what is best for Mozambique, the dam should be stopped, and efforts to restore the Zambezi prioritised."

anabela lemos, foe mozambique/justiça ambiental (ja!)



philippines



© a. oquias, dreamstime



© n. macedo, foep/philippines

foe philippines/lrc-ksk

ringing in the changes with new mining bill

Life on the water, Philippines.

Filing the Minerals Management Bill at Congress.

Huts in the Tagaytay region of the Philippines.



© audifortene, dreamstime

Friends of the Earth Philippines/LRC-KsK has worked with and actively supported indigenous peoples and rural communities suffering the impacts of mining for many years. Mining depletes non-renewable resources, and has massive societal and environmental impacts, yet the Philippine government's legislation and policies have remained largely pro-mining since 1995, when the Philippine Mining Act was passed. This Act sought to liberalise the mining industry, opening it up to foreign investment in order to meet the demands of globalisation.

Although the law was eventually declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court, the decision was overturned less than a year later. The history of that case mirrors the

continuing proclivity of successive administrations to act against their better judgment once the so-called profits of mining are brought into the picture.

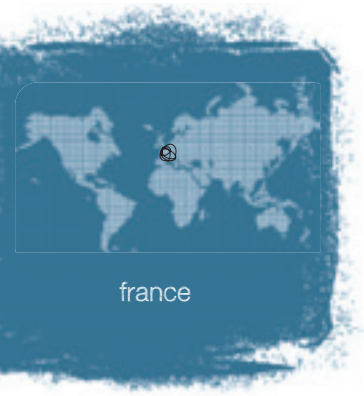
The easy access of mining companies into indigenous peoples' lands and ancestral domains, and the controversy over mining in watersheds and other protected areas, stand in stark contrast to the promised rewards. In the Philippines, the Marcopper disaster in Marinduque is one of the most notorious examples: more than three million tons of toxic sludge were released into the Boac River in 1996 when a drainage tunnel burst, rendering the river biologically dead.

Working collaboratively, civil society, including Friends of the Earth Philippines, has helped to develop and promote a new Minerals Management Bill, which seeks to scrap the present Mining Act of 1995.

The bill, formally filed by a number of Representatives on 1 December 2010, seeks the conservation of non-renewable mineral resources for the benefit of both present and future generations of Filipinos by adopting a sustainable, rational, needs-based minerals management. It promotes the utilisation, development and management of natural resources, particularly minerals, for the country's national industrialisation and development. About 200 activists, coming from mining affected communities, indigenous peoples, church, urban poor organisations and civil society environmental groups, sang in support of the new Bill outside the House of Representatives, dressed in santa suits and playing tambourines.

"This bill is the product of years of painstaking consultations and write-shops with grassroots communities of indigenous peoples and rural folks, multi-sectoral organisations and civil society groups as well as church formations, who are actual victims and witnesses of the havoc created by the present mining policy of the government. The people wrote this bill."

Judy Pasimio, Friends of the Earth Philippines



A vélorution in Paris in the 1970s.

foe france

40-year campaign for eco-friendly transport

“Adapt the city to cars”, by building urban highways: this was George Pompidou’s project, symbolised in late 1971 by the desire to create a highway on the left bank of the Seine in Paris. In opposition to this, Friends of the Earth believes that this worship of the car turns city streets into deathtraps for cyclists and causes real pollution affecting all the city’s inhabitants, who have to suffer the fumes and noise.

Spring 1972 saw the launch of a Friends of the Earth France campaign aimed at excluding cars from cities and promoting the use of bicycles. The organisation of bicycle events, the first ‘Vélorutions’ as they were already called, gathered thousands of cyclists behind the slogan “Bagnoles, ras-le-bol. Ça pue, ça pollue et ça rend nerveux!” (Cars, we can’t stand them anymore. They stink, they pollute and they make us nervous!).

In May 1976 Friends of the Earth France’s magazine, entitled “Vive la Vélorution” (Long live the Vélorution) echoed World Cycling Day, which was organised by Friends of the Earth International in Paris, New York, London, Brussels and dozens of other cities on 5 June. Eventually, the project to build a motorway through the heart of Paris was buried and since then, cars have lost their dominant place in many cities.

In 1977, during the local electoral campaign, Friends of the Earth France campaigned for the creation of an urban traffic plan in Paris that incorporated bicycle paths and required the provision of municipal bicycles. These claims were eventually taken up 25 years later, by the Mayor of Paris.

Today, the ongoing struggle against cars in towns is part of the global campaign for transition to eco-towns and sustainable societies, a major issue for Friends of the Earth France.



norway



© C. Sillicath



© foe norway

“Oil Free Lofoten and Vesterålen.”

Lofoten islands, showing the scenic area around the fishing village of Reine.

Activists from Young FoE Norway greeting the national congress of the Labour party (the prime minister's party) with the slogan “Oil Free Lofoten and Vesterålen” and wearing traditional fishermen's hats.



© foe norway

foe norway

oil drilling put on hold

On 11 March 2011 the Norwegian government decided to hold off on oil activity in the areas of Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja in the North of Norway. This decision was a major victory for Friends of the Earth Norway/Norges Naturvernforbund and the rest of the environmental movement, who have been campaigning on the issue for years.



Arne Hole.

The pristine areas offshore of the Lofoten, Vesterålen and Senja archipelagos in the North of Norway, are among the world's most sensitive and biodiverse ecosystems. The area holds unique cold-water reefs, pods of sperm whales and killer whales, and some of the largest seabird colonies in Europe, as well as being the spawning grounds of the largest remaining cod stock in the world. Friends of the Earth Norway has been working together with local community and fisheries organisations, calling for these areas to be protected from the risks and emissions associated with oil and gas activity.

The government's decision was not a final victory, as the issue is likely to come up again in a few years time. But it was definitely worth a moment of celebration for all those who have worked so hard to protect these unique areas from the impacts of oil and gas activity. This victory gives inspiration to all those continuing the fight against the oil industry, and it is proof that it pays to persevere. Having the scientific facts on their side, combined with the fantastic enthusiasm of activists all over the country, allowed Friends of the Earth Norway to stop a powerful and desperate oil lobby.

“The oil industry spent millions of dollars and substantial resources in an attempt to influence the population of Lofoten and the rest of Northern Norway, making it difficult for a small organisation with limited finances like ours to be heard. But through close collaboration with Friends of the Earth Norway, we reached a far wider audience than we would have managed alone. We proved that petroleum activities on the narrow continental shelf would displace local fisheries with long traditions. We showed that through cooperation and a ‘can do attitude’, we can get our message out despite the scarce resources we have!”

Arne Hole, General Manager, the Norwegian Coastal Fishermen's Union.



argentina

foe | argentina

frosty reception for glaciers bill overturned

The Andean glaciers, critical 'solid water reservoirs', are melting because of climate change. They are also being threatened by open-pit mining projects.

After the conflict over the Barrick Gold Pascua-Lama project in neighbouring Chile, legal initiatives to protect glaciers were put forward in Chile and Argentina. In 2008, the law was passed by the Argentinean Congress, but then vetoed by the Argentinean president. Several organisations, including Friends of the Earth Argentina, submitted a letter to the president requesting that she review the decision. Together with over 100 organisations they also initiated a campaign to collect signatures calling for the passage of the bill.



Great ice walls of the Moreno glacier, Patagonia Argentina.

Ice breaking at the Moreno glacier, Argentina.



The Glaciers Protection Campaign successfully reached out to a wide range of social sectors. Actions were carried out in cities along the mountain range, in Buenos Aires and elsewhere. 156,350 signatures were eventually submitted to the House of Representatives.

Congress was forced to reconsider the initiative. Following two years of demands and protests, and after eight hours of debate in the Senate, the bill was approved on 30 September 2010.

This new law is supposed to safeguard all areas with frozen soils and it prohibits mining near glaciers. It is also the most progressive step forward in the fight against climate change since it demands that climate change policies be in line with the goal of preserving glaciers, both at the national level and in international agreements on climate change. Hence it can be used to challenge the current global temperature targets that threaten glaciers' survival.

Many longstanding mining concessions are affected, and Barrick Gold Company took the country to court. On 4 April 2011, environmental and civil society organisations started a new campaign aiming at 2 million signatures asking for the full implementation of the law and the rejection of Barrick Gold's legal actions.



south africa



© foe south africa, groundwork

Margaret Lanra
at South African
Wastepickers' Convention.

foe | south africa / groundwork

wastepickers reclaiming their livelihoods

For a growing number of people, what others deem garbage provides an important source of livelihoods. South African citizens are joining the expanding global movement of waste pickers, who sort through the ever-growing heaps of waste at municipal landfills. They are turning garbage back into commodities in order to support themselves and their families, within a context where few can hope to find a job. They are also making important contributions to environmental sustainability by reducing the amount of waste that goes to landfill, and providing inputs for recycling processes.

Friends of the Earth South Africa/groundWork is actively supporting the waste pickers in their endeavours. In particular, they lobbied the South African government to help the waste pickers gain recognition in the National Environmental Management Waste Act of 2009, as legitimate stakeholders that provide a benefit to South African society. This was the first time the wastepickers had received any recognition within national legislation.

Friends of the Earth South Africa has also supported the wastepickers in building links internationally and mobilising. They have built strong connections with the global movement of waste pickers, through the Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives, and the Women in Informal Employment: Globalising and Organising. With groundWork's support they visited India and met with the Centre for Science and Environment in India, and activists and waste pickers who earn their living from recycling waste.

In July 2009, Friends of the Earth South Africa also hosted the first National Waste Pickers' Meeting. The result was a commitment to work collectively towards securing waste pickers' livelihoods.

Four months later seven waste pickers joined Friends of the Earth South Africa in a visit to Egypt to attend a conference, 'Towards a Culture of Sustainable Communities, Economies and Environment' in Cairo.

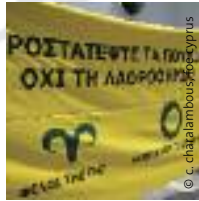
Another unprecedented success came in 2011 when the Mpofane Municipality officially granted waste pickers the right to salvage waste from the local landfill site. The formerly unemployed people, now working together as the Mooi River Waste Reclaiming cooperative, were delighted to be recognised by the United Nations-founded SEED Initiative, which presented them with an award for entrepreneurship in sustainable development.

"This is a step forward in our struggle for environmental and economic justice for people who legitimately earn a living from the waste products of society. We are going to learn from the experience of others and enrich our struggles in South Africa, so that we can help build a unified global movement of waste pickers."

Musa Chamane, Friends of the Earth South Africa



cyprus



foe cyprus

stopping poachers in their tracks

'Protect Birds, Not Poaching!'

October 2010: FoE Cyprus campaigners collect and dismantle limesticks in Larnaca district.

October 2010: 'Stop Poaching Now!' in the National Park of Cape Greco in Famagusta district.



Cyprus constitutes one of the most important migratory routes for birds in Europe. The island hosts 385 bird species, 332 of which are migratory. Although the use of non-selective bird trapping methods is illegal according to both Cypriot and European legislation, every year millions of birds are trapped and killed by poachers. As a result, dozens of resident and migrant species are either suffering a large decline in their populations or are already in danger of extinction. At the same time, illegal bird trapping has supported the establishment and development of a well-organised and wealthy criminal network.

Friends of the Earth Cyprus has been assessing the impacts of poaching for many years and has launched several public awareness campaigns. But a recent escalation in serious criminal attacks against public servants and environmental activists, combined with efforts to weaken poaching legislation, spurred Friends of the Earth Cyprus to join forces with the German-based Committee Against Bird Slaughter (CABS) and launch a new campaign against poaching.

They published a report on spring trapping in Cyprus, and set up a cyberaction. But they also took a direct, practical approach: they organised a bird protection camp and conducted several non-violent direct actions in the districts of Larnaca and Famagusta. Within a week they had located and dismantled 934 limesticks, 11 mist nets and 9 electronic decoys. They also released dozens of protected birds and recorded dozens of bird trapping activities and sites.

Above all they have managed to expose the killing fields of migratory birds in Cyprus, to reveal the real intentions of irresponsible politicians at the national level, and to play a catalytic role in the voting down of the proposed amendment weakening existing poaching legislation. They also promoted a zero tolerance policy against poaching in Cyprus.

As a result the responsible authorities carried out a wave of anti-poaching operations in the following two months, the first since Cyprus's accession to the EU in 2004.

"Friends of the Earth Cyprus is at the forefront of the struggle against illegal bird trapping in Cyprus and the work they do in this field is admirable, especially if someone takes into consideration the fact that in many cases this is done under difficult conditions with fears for one's personal safety".

Charalambos Theopemptou, Commissioner of the Environment in the Republic of Cyprus



malaysia



Tuai Rumah Bato Bagi.



© foe malaysia/sam



© foe malaysia/sam



© foe malaysia/sam

foe malaysia/sahabat alam malaysia

defending native customary rights

Uma Balui Lebue. Braving the rapids, Long Jawe. Plaintiffs in the Bakun case.



© foe malaysia/sam

Long before its hydropower potential was considered, the area along the Balui river was inhabited by indigenous communities made up of various ethnicities. In the 1980s, however, plans materialised for the construction of the second tallest concrete-faced rock-filled dam in the world, the Bakun Hydro-Electric Dam. When completed the dam will be one and a half times the size of Singapore and 205m high.

“What’s the use of going to Asap? The land is 3 acres, the house is a mad deal, so small at RM52,000. Electricity and water have to be paid for. What’s the use? Here, it is blissful.”

longhouse chief for uma balui lebue, tuai rumah bato bagi

Amidst this controversial development project were 15 longhouses made up of indigenous peoples from various ethnic groups of Kayan, Penan, Lahanan, Ukit, Kenyah, Kajang and others. These riverine communities practised shifting agriculture, hunting and gathering, and lived a peaceful life until the State Government of Sarawak formally extinguished their native customary rights in 1997, specifically to enable this mammoth project.

In 1998, about 10,000 indigenous people were evicted from their original homeland to a resettlement site in the Asap River (Sungai Asap). The resettlement process has been fraught with problems that have yet to be resolved. However, five longhouse communities representing some 100 families refused to move, and seven of their leaders, filed a representative action against the State Government of Sarawak in 2000 through Friends of the Earth Malaysia/SAM’s lawyers.

The preparation for this case took many years and involved producing land use and boundary maps, by documenting oral histories; scouring through archives for old documents showing settlement; gathering evidence about ancient gravesites, old trees, artifacts, legal documents, and clothes; recording old customs; and talking to experts.

Friends of the Malaysia have been at the forefront of this struggle, helping to organise and mobilise the communities, and supporting their legal case. This was first heard in the High Court in Kuching 2008, where the Plaintiffs lost purely on technical grounds. They appealed to the Court of Appeal and lost once again in 2010. But in March 2011 they were granted right to appeal to the Federal Court. The communities were jubilant, and the struggle continues.

“We do not work in isolation. We need to showcase our struggles, achievements and failures to the outside world. We need solidarity, to be connected with others with similar problems. We have been given this opportunity through FoEI. Without the support of the FoEI family, much of this struggle would be lost in translation.”

jok jau evong, SAM sarawak coordinator



© s. hulme

foe england wales and northern ireland

FOE EWI campaign for local councils to cut emissions by 40%.

Launching the Europe wide climate campaign the Big Ask, together with Thom Yorke of radionead.



© s. hulme

world's first climate change act

Friends of the Earth (England Wales & Northern Ireland) secured the introduction of the UK's 2008 Climate Change act – a world first that commits the UK to legally binding cuts in greenhouse gases – as a result of its Big Ask campaign. Other countries are following the UK's lead and introducing their own legislation. In 2009, the group delivered seminars with the UK's Foreign and Commonwealth Office and its Department of Energy and Climate Change to promote the act across Europe, complementing the campaigns of other Friends of the Earth groups. In 2011, new laws are expected to be agreed in Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark and Ireland.

Friends of the Earth also focused on real change at the local level. Councils have a big say in UK climate emissions and the group's campaign aims to persuade councils to commit to cuts in carbon dioxide emissions of at least 40 per cent by 2020. More than 70 Friends of the Earth local volunteer groups, in alliance with other organisations, have been gathering public support and inspiring councils to act.

The campaign is proving extremely successful. In Leeds, for example, it included packed public screenings of the climate change film, 'The Age of Stupid', attended by councillors and business leaders. The message hit home and Leeds City Council passed a motion to reduce emissions by at least 40 per cent by 2020. More than five million people in England are now covered by strong local targets to cut carbon dioxide emissions. Other influential councils leading the way include Brighton, Bristol, Haringey, Manchester and York.

Momentum is building and in 2011 Friends of the Earth has been focusing on the introduction of a nationwide scheme of local carbon budgets, to limit the amount of carbon each council can emit. This will ensure emissions come down steeply in every single local authority area, not just the ones already signed up to targets.

"Working with Friends of the Earth is a very natural thing. It's about grassroots campaigning, ordinary people putting pressure on politicians like me to do the right thing for the environment"

Neil Harrison, local councillor, Bristol



el salvador

foe | el salvador

'we can live without gold, but we can't live without water'

In 2005, Friends of the Earth El Salvador/CESTA began a campaign to inform the public about transnational corporations operating in their country. This included the corporations' plans, projects, areas of operation, and the social-ecological impacts they generate.

Canadian transnational company Pacific Rim began carrying out mining exploration activities in El Salvador in the same year, with serious consequences for communities: polluting and depleting water sources, logging trees and destroying soils.

It has also generated conflict, which has resulted in attacks, threats and the murder of leaders opposing these mining projects, including Gustavo Marcelo Rivera, Ramiro Rivera Gomez, and Dora Alicia Sorto, who was in her eighth month of pregnancy. Priest Luis Quintanilla and Francisco Pineda, the president of a grassroots organisation at the centre of this struggle, the Cabañas Environmental Committee (CAC), have also been threatened and survived attempts on their lives.



The Sensuntepeque municipality expresses its opposition to mining.

El Salvadoran communities oppose mining.



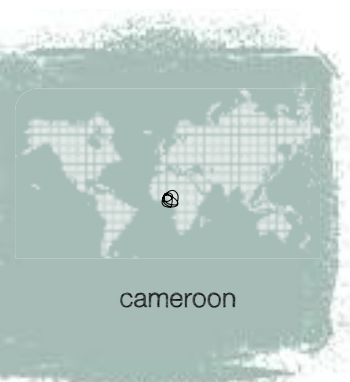
Despite these brutal attacks, resistance continues unabated, with marches, demonstrations, legal battles and constant denunciations by the affected communities, together with organisations such as Friends of the Earth El Salvador. Such is the overall strength of feeling that as of 2008 two successive Salvadoran governments had denied mining exploitation permits to Pacific Rim and other transnational companies. There is also a proposal for a law to ban metallic mining in El Salvador. One can rightly claim that these companies have been defeated by the bravery of the peasants, young people and children who blocked the roads.

In 2009, Friends of the Earth and 16 groups from communities affected by megaprojects, prepared a legal proposal called *El Grito de las Víctimas* (The Scream of the Victims). This initiative contains proposals for reforms to El Salvador's Environmental Law, Public Health Code, and Municipal Code, and was publicly presented to the Ministry of Environment and Strategic Affairs.

However, in January 2010 Pacific Rim's subsidiary, Pacific Rim Cayman LLC, responded by filing a complaint against El Salvador through the International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) in January 2010, under the Dominican Republic-United States-Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA). The ICSID Tribunal will decide whether the government of El Salvador has to pay US\$77 million in compensation. Pacific Rim also initiated a legal case against seven environmental activists opposing the mining development. But these strategies have damaged Pacific Rim's image in El Salvador, which is also a significant campaign victory.

Furthermore, a similar ICSID complaint, again under CAFTA, was also lodged by another company, Commerce Group Corp, which was demanding compensation of an alleged US\$100 million because its requests for licenses to exploit gold and metals had been denied. In March 2011, this claim was rejected by ICSID.

Communities are hopeful that their long battle against mining in El Salvador is succeeding.



cameroon

foe | cameroon / ced

bagyeli mapping shows path to success

The Bagyeli ‘pygmies’ living in southwest Cameroon have sustained themselves for centuries using their vast knowledge of the plant and animal life of the surrounding forest. They traditionally survived by hunting, fishing and gathering honey, fruit, wild yams, caterpillars and snails.

But the creation of the Campo Ma’an National Park, to compensate for the environmental impacts of the infamous Chad-Cameroon Oil Pipeline project, signalled a new era for the Bagyeli. They were evicted from the park, and denied access to hunting, gathering and sacred sites. Now, they are also threatened by the expansion of rubber and palm oil plantations.

Since 2003, Friends of the Earth Cameroon/CED, the Forest People’s Project and the Rainforest Foundation have been supporting the Bagyeli in documenting their use of the forest and its resources using hi-tech Global Positioning Systems (GPS) devices to pinpoint the location of sacred sites, and hunting and gathering territories. This participatory mapping process has generated community maps used to lobby and advocate for the recognition of the land rights of Bagyeli people at the local and national level.

The negotiation process that took place during the early 2000s was successful in that the Indigenous Bagyeli were allowed to continue their traditional practices inside the national park. Although the Bagyeli continue to demand the right to return to their lands, this recognition of their rights to gather natural resources was an important development. It was in fact the first time that communities’ rights to use the land and resources within a national park were recognised in the whole Congo Basin.

Participatory mapping is also intended as a tool that can be strategically deployed to stop the conversion of forests into plantations. This mapping has a high potential for influencing national governments. This tool has been adopted in other countries in the Congo Basin (DRC, Republic of Congo, Gabon and the Central African Republic), and other parts of Cameroon. It is also being used to map communities’ rights with respect to mining concessions, and industrial farms).

There is also an ongoing advocacy effort aimed at formalising participatory mapping as a legal tool for recognising and protecting communities’ rights.

“If you do not collect fruits, you cannot have soap; if you do not go fishing, you cannot eat salt; if you do not cultivate plantains to sell you cannot buy clothes. I am dirty and without clothes because I do not do anything. I have already been forbidden from entering the forest.”

Indigenous Bagyeli person, Cameroon



Indigenous Baka map their lands.



Communities map their land.
Indigenous Bagyeli drawing up their community map.
Community mapping.





south korea



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foe south korea/kfem

direct intervention delays dam construction

Friends of the Earth South Korea's campaign message is "Stop destroying four rivers."

Three Friends of the Earth South Korea activists on the pillar of the Han River lock gate. The placard says "Listen to what people say."

KFEM activists after the 41-day sit-in.



© foe korea/kfem

Friends of the Earth South Korea/Korean Federation of Environmental Movements (KFEM) staunchly opposes large development projects that threaten natural ecosystems, including the so-called Four Major Rivers Restoration Project initiated by the Lee Myungbak government. This project has nothing to do with restoration. Its main feature is the construction of 20 new dams on the four largest rivers in Korea: the Han, Nakdong, Geum and Yeongsan rivers.

The US\$19.8 billion project was first announced in December 2008 and the Lee government has been rushing to try and complete it by 2012. Construction began in November 2009, just five months after the plan was put forward. KFEM is one of many civil society groups anticipating severe damage to the rivers, and has campaigned constantly on this issue since the project was first proposed. They raised the issue of endangered species like *Aster altaicus* var. *Uchiyamae*, a plant that is doomed to extinction by this project.

Nnimmo Basse, chair of Friends of the Earth International, visited South Korea in March 2010, and held a joint press conference with Friends of the Earth South Korea.

In July 2010, in an attempt to suspend construction, five Friends of the Earth South Korea activists accessed the dam building sites in the middle of the night: three of them climbed the 20m high pillar of the Han River lock gate and two of them took over the high-rise tower crane operation room at the Nakdong River. Friends of the Earth South Korea demanded that construction be suspended – at the very least during the rainy season – and that the government should accept their proposal to set up a reviewing committee in the National Assembly. The two activists had to retreat from the crane after 19 days because of an approaching typhoon, but the action by the rest on the pillar lasted for 41 days. The prosecution tried to detain the sit-in activists but they were eventually examined by police without being detained; KFEM will still be charged with trespass however.

KFEM is still struggling to stop the project and to find ways to restore the damaged rivers.

"I was very upset when I happened to see the riverbed dug up. I think the involvement of Friends of the Earth in this struggle was good for people who were too confused by the government's advertisement to see the truth."

Jung Younju, citizen of Seoul



scotland

“These proposals impact on the local ecology, the community rights of the local people, and the greenhouse gas emissions of Scotland. They perpetuate the human rights impacts of continued reliance on coal as a fuel, and detract from the need for Scotland to invest in and share its renewable energy potential. As such it is essential that Friends of the Earth Scotland resist the development, support local community opposition, mobilise our activists, and expose and challenge the statements from the developer.”

Juliet Swann, Head of Projects and Campaigns,
Friends of the Earth Scotland

foe scotland

communities struggle against new coal



Postcard action against new coal developments in Scotland.

In July 2009, people from towns in North Ayrshire, on the West Coast of Scotland, decided it was time to get active. Faced with plans for a new coal-fired power station on their doorstep, which had already been slipped into the government’s national plans, they had a big struggle ahead of them. They formed a campaign group, ‘Communities Opposed to New Coal at Hunterston’ (CONCH) to bring local people together and give them a platform to oppose the plans.



The FoE dinosaur.

Friends of the Earth Scotland strongly opposed the plans as well. Their work on energy has shown that Scotland has no need for more coal-fired power, which would lock the country into carbon-heavy electricity for decades. Scotland has the most ambitious carbon reduction targets in the industrialised world, as well as 25% of Europe’s renewable energy potential. But this project alone could throw it way off course, forming a quarter of Scotland’s emissions allowance by 2020.

The developers intend to fit Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) technology, calling the energy ‘clean coal’. This is particularly misleading since coal is never ‘clean’ in its extraction, and CCS technology would only ever capture less than a quarter of emissions.

Friends of the Earth Scotland has been working with CONCH, and other environment, poverty and faith groups, to oppose the plans. They have organised stalls, given money for resources and worked on a joint campaign strategy. Their supporters and contacts have written letters of objection to the government. They have also objected to the planning application and supported a court case questioning the power station’s inclusion in the national planning framework. They are also talking to the local council because if they object it could trigger a full investigation.

“As the campaign has developed, the input from Friends of the Earth Scotland has certainly been of value. As a local community group, CONCH is in a continually under-resourced state. The small-scale financial support that FoE Scotland has given has been welcome relief. Their ability to get in front of Ministers, politicians, and local councillors, where CONCH’s overtures are often resisted, is an interesting reflection on the reality of the local representation/democratic process. It is clear that the coalition of national charities working on the campaign has raised our profile through increased web presence, PR resources and organisational credibility.”

David Lightbody, Communities Opposed to New Coal at Hunterston (CONCH)



honduras

foe honduras/madre tierra

communities demanding real agrarian reforms

Friends of the Earth Honduras/Madre Tierra Mother Earth furthers the movement originally initiated by the community leaders of COHAPAZ (the Honduran Committee for Action for Peace), with a particular focus on social and environmental justice. It focuses on the grassroots perspective, supporting rural communities affected by mining and quarrying activities (as in the case of the Valle de Siria, where communities were supported with medical brigades and the production of video testimonies), and peasant communities affected by agribusiness (as in the case of peasant communities in the department of La Paz and in Aguan). A key challenge is ensuring that communities' voices and concerns are heard loudly and clearly, both nationally, and at the Central and Latin American levels.



Action in Honduras demanding agrarian reform.

Organic kitchen garden in the colony of Campocielo.



The threat of biofuels, the seizure of Honduran agriculture by large multinationals, and the goal of food sovereignty have been central themes in training workshops. Friends of the Earth Honduras is also a member of the multi-organisation agrarian platform coordinated by the Partnership for Agrarian Reform and Food Sovereignty (SARA), participating in the 'Vamos al Grano' (Come to the Point) campaign. Under the banner 'Vamos al Grano', there have been workshops, marches, demonstrations, and sit-ins, focused on promoting real institutional reform, and alerting people to the issue of climate change and its impacts on people and small-scale agriculture.

This collaborative campaign is particularly aimed at persuading Congress to adopt a new 'Law on Comprehensive Agrarian Reform and the Transformation of the Ownership of Natural Resources and Environmental Management'. This aims to promote agriculture that is fairer and more equitable, encouraging the role of smallholders as a means of reducing food insecurity and rural poverty in Honduras. The campaign is also calling on the Honduran government to prioritize means of reducing the negative impacts of climate change on small-scale agriculture.

Another important regional project focuses on the 'Promotion and Preservation of Common Heritage Resources'. This aims to promote the active participation of citizens and communities (especially farmers) in the defence and rescue of biological diversity and cultural development in Central America, focusing on the interaction between climate change, food sovereignty and biodiversity; organic farming; communities' rights; and the recovery of native seeds, with the ultimate goal of creating a seed bank. Honduran communities benefiting from this project are the communities of Santa Ana, Santa Elena and Guajiquiro, in the Department of La Paz.

Since the *coup d'état* of June 2009, Friends of the Earth Honduras has joined the demonstrations and mobilisations of the Honduran resistance under the principles of nonviolence, in order to struggle for peace, social and climate justice, and respect for the human rights of the Honduran people and the peoples of Latin America.



belgium



foe belgium (flanders & brussels)



© foe belgium (flanders & brussels)

"Tree hugging day" in the forest, before the last section was felled.

Tree planting team.



© foe belgium (flanders & brussels)

planting a new forest in ostende

For the past ten years, the Lappersfort forest on the edge of Bruges has been the site of a symbolic struggle to protect the few pieces of forest left in Flanders, one of the regions in Europe with the least green space and the highest density of motorways and cities. The forest was occupied by activists in 2002, and people spent months living in the trees to stop them being cut down. The result was that the majority of the forest has been successfully saved.

But one last struggle has been for a 3.2 hectare area of forest: its owner, a subsidiary of energy giant GDF Suez, announced in 2009 that they wanted to clear the land to make way for industrial buildings. The forest, like one third of all forest in Flanders, had been designated as 'industrial land' by the government.

Although a second occupation began, and €20,000 was raised (to buy individual plots of the forest) by Friends of the Earth Flanders & Brussels, local action group Groene Gordel Front, and the occupiers of the forest, it was not enough to purchase the land. The chainsaws and earthmovers finally entered the forest in March 2010, and felled the trees.

In response, in November 2010 over 100 people from the local community, together with those who had donated funds, planted a new forest in neighbouring Ostende. In total, the new forest will be more than twice the size of the forest that was destroyed. It will take some generations for the forest to become fully grown, but the model of cooperative land ownership will ensure that the land will be protected for generations to come.

The campaign also gave new momentum to the forest protection movement, putting the issue of deforestation in Flanders - and especially the issue of 'wrongly designated forests' - at the top of the political agenda.

"The attempt to buy the forest, unfortunately, couldn't stop the felling on March 4th. From the beginning we stated that - if we failed to buy the last piece of the endangered Lappersfort Forest - we would plant a new forest with the proceeds. We did this with the valued support of the forest occupiers, and several organisations including Friends of the Earth Flanders & Brussels."

Local Friends of the Earth activist Andy Vermaut, who managed to attract several hundred people to donate to the 'Save the Forest' campaign



2010: FoE US oil money rally outside the Whitehouse.

© foie.us

foe united states

following the money to end environmental destruction



© foie.us

2010: FoE US BP oil action.

2010: FoE US oil money rally outside the Whitehouse.



© foie.us

For the past 25 years, Friends of the Earth US has worked to protect vulnerable people and ecosystems by focusing on the financiers of projects that harm communities, human rights and the environment.

Their work began in the 1980s when activists pressured Congress to review the environmental impacts of World Bank projects. As a result, the World Bank established environmental and social standards that over the years have stopped harmful projects like the massive Arun III dam in Nepal, which would have irreversibly damaged one of the last intact Himalayan forests. They later expanded their World Bank work by joining the movement to cancel developing country debt and stop harmful structural adjustment policies.

Over the decades, Friends of the Earth US has worked to strengthen and hold the Bank accountable to their standards, while working with local activists and project-affected communities, to improve conditions on the ground. In the mid-90s, while working with Chinese activists to halt the Three Gorges Dam, they noticed that the Chinese government was deliberately avoiding the World Bank – and its standards – by seeking funding from Export Credit Agencies (ECAs). They successfully campaigned to stop the US Export Import Bank (Ex-Im) from funding the dam, but sadly, this project was built, displacing more than one million people, destroying cultural landmarks and causing significant environmental damage.

Over the years, their advocacy work on the US Ex-Im Bank led to a set of common environmental standards among 20 international ECAs. They soon expanded their campaign to US Ex-Im's sister organisation, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), which backed controversial projects such as the Freeport McMoRan mine in Indonesia and Enron/Shell's Cuiaba pipeline in Bolivia. In 2002 the group filed a groundbreaking lawsuit against these agencies for not considering the climate impacts of the fossil fuel projects they financed; this was the first lawsuit in the US to open the courtroom doors to those impacted by climate change.



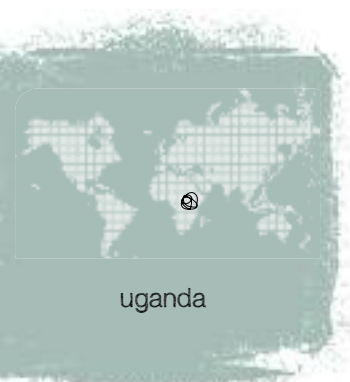
Ex-Im Vote "No" On Kusile Action.



Friends of the Earth and other activists from the U.S. and Africa demonstrate across from the World Bank headquarters in a rally asking the World Bank to reject a \$3.75 billion loan for South African utility Eskom to build a 4,800 MW coal plant - which would be one of the world's largest and most polluting.

As these financiers adopted more stringent environmental standards, project developers turned to Wall Street banks for money, in another effort to evade standards. Friends of the Earth US built an international network of campaigners to target these new players, and in 2003, public pressure led international banks to launch the Equator Principles, a set of common project finance standards that has now been adopted by 60 financial institutions.

Today, the new power players in development finance are based in developing countries themselves, posing a new advocacy challenge. Five years ago Friends of the Earth US began working with environmental groups in China to promote sustainable lending practices at internationally active banks such as the China Export-Import Bank. By partnering with groups inside and outside China, Friends of the Earth US has been able to win some victories, such as China Ex-Im's decision to indefinitely suspend its loan for the giant Belinga iron ore mine in Gabon, which would have affected one of the country's premier national parks.



uganda

foe | uganda/nape

shoring up support for communities affected by the bujagali dam



White Nile. Bujagali Falls. Uganda.

A boat driver at the source of the Nile in Jinja, Uganda.



The Ugandan government began building the Bujagali dam on the River Nile in 2007, even though the project had previously been delayed for over ten years for many reasons, including exorbitant project costs and its predicted economic and environmental impacts.

The project is financed by the World Bank (WB), the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the European Investment Bank (EIB), all of which have overlooked and even ignored their own safeguard policies.

Friends of the Earth Uganda/NAPE held meetings with the Bujagali dam developers, dam affected communities, civil society organisations, and the World Bank and the AfDB, to agree on mitigation, monitoring and evaluation measures. Together with other European NGOs, Friends of the Earth Uganda also submitted a complaint to the European Investment Bank.

The government agreed to protect the Kalagala and Itanda falls to reduce the overall environmental damage caused by the Bujagali dam, and to compensate for the cultural loss that will be brought about by the submergence of the Bujagali falls. The World Bank and other donors have agreed a disclosure policy and to set aside funds to support geothermal exploration and solar energy development in Uganda.

Friends of the Earth Uganda provided the affected communities with Ecosan (Ecological Sanitation) toilets, and with rainwater harvesting tanks. They are also working with the communities, campaigning for the company to provide them with water. As a result, Bujagali Electricity Limited (BEL) also began to provide rainwater-harvesting tanks to affected communities in June 2010.



Jinja falls. Uganda.



japan

foe japan

greening the mongolian desert in china

Desertification, which destroys the ecological basis of people's livelihoods, is a major cause of poverty and hunger around the world. One quarter of the planet's land area is desertified today, and one sixth of the world's population is affected. Many people are forced to abandon their lands, becoming ecological refugees.

The people of Horqin Sandy Land in Inner Mongolia, China, have traditionally lived from the land, grazing their goats, sheep and cattle in the grasslands. However, overgrazing, increased agriculture and deforestation over the past decades due to the population boom in China have put great pressure on grasslands, with an estimated 2,500 square kilometers of land turning into desert each year. Green areas are replaced with dry, infertile sand, and local people are unable to support themselves.

In reaction to this situation, Friends of the Earth Japan began working with a village in the Horqin Sandy Land area in 2001 in a project called 'Greening the Desert'. By 2010, their collaboration had expanded to twelve villages and two junior high schools in the area. Joint activities include planting trees and protecting grasses to allow them to recover. Ultimately, lands are being transformed into farmlands and grassy fields so that people can once again graze their cattle. They will also be able to sell cut grass in order to earn money. In 20 years, it is predicted that they will be able to supplement their incomes by selling trees as logs, while avoiding excess deforestation. Friends of the Earth Japan will continue to support and encourage their efforts so that they can live in coexistence with nature by themselves.



This area was desertified four years ago. It has been recovered for use as farmland.

Planting trees with Japanese volunteers.





denmark

foe denmark

rejecting carbon capture and storage policies

“We formed our organisation in order to stand stronger. Friends of the Earth Denmark came into the picture because one of us knew someone from the organisation. They gave us good advice and assisted us when we held a public meeting, and since then we have had good cooperation – also around a demonstration. It has been very positive for us to be able to draw on their skills and knowledge. We then feel we are not without means.”

Asger Møller Madsen, local farmer and chair of the citizens' group



The chairman of No to CO₂-storage, Asger Møller Madsen, in conversation with Climate and Energy Minister Lykke Friis.

February 2011: Anti-CCS-demonstration.

In 2008 energy-giant Vattenfall announced plans for a full-scale carbon capture operation at a coal power plant in Denmark, to be ready by 2020. The plan was to transport the carbon dioxide captured to an underground storage 30 km away, via a pipeline.

Vattenfall began seismic investigations involving explosions that frightened domestic animals and caused insecurity amongst farmers and citizens who felt they had not been properly informed. Some farmers refused Vattenfall further access to their land.

In May 2009, citizens formed a group called 'Nej til CO₂-lagring' ('No to CO₂-storage'). They contacted Friends of the Earth Denmark/NOAH to draw on their expertise on CCS. The group campaigned with demonstrations, and stalls in the villages as well as lobby and media work.

Late in 2009 Vattenfall announced that they would postpone their CCS plans in Denmark “until the technology is commercially available”. Instead Vattenfall decided to focus on projects in Germany, where they will receive EU-subsidies. But citizens’ resistance in Germany is also strong, and there is now close cooperation between the citizens’ initiatives in the two countries.

Anxiety over the possible seepage of carbon dioxide from storage containers has not gone away, despite experts’ assurances that everything will be safe and under control. The public needs to remain vigilant and maintain their resistance, just as they have done with respect to biotechnologies (GMOs) and nuclear technologies. They should not relax their guard if plans are temporarily shelved: the industry and its lobbyists are willing to wait in order to benefit from the enormous capital they are investing in these projects.

The ‘No to CO₂-storage’ campaign and Friends of the Earth Denmark will continue to work together, on issues such as the amendment of the Subsoil Act, which will implement the European Union’s 2009 directive (Directive 2009/31/EC on the geological storage of carbon dioxide). In March 2011 the Danish Climate and Energy Minister announced that inland CO₂-storage will not be permitted before 2020 – a partial victory.

Friends of the Earth Denmark are campaigning for a parliamentary decision that rules out the inclusion of CCS in Denmark’s energy and climate policy for good. Their proposal, made in February 2011, is supported by No to CO₂-storage, the Danish Society for Nature Conservation, Greenpeace, SustainableEnergy, The Danish Climate Movement and Bürgerinitiative gegen das CO₂-endlager (Northern Germany). It has already attracted support from three political parties in opposition.

“We understood the worry of having to live on top of a CO₂-dump and were happy to support them with the means we had. The struggle of these citizens is obviously consistent with the struggle Friends of the Earth Denmark have been waging, trying to open the eyes of politicians and the public to the dangers of developing CCS.”

Falle Bendsen, Friends of the Earth Denmark



costa rica

foe | costa rica / coecoceiba

opposition to stone container transforms environmental campaigning



© s. perez / foe uruguay/redes



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Plantations in Latin America.

Local family on the Osa peninsula, Costa Rica.

Coastline on the Osa peninsula Costa Rica.



© onehemisphere

From 1992-1994, Friends of the Earth Costa Rica, together with communities and local organisations from the Osa peninsula in southern Costa Rica, developed a strong campaign to denounce and oppose transnational company Stone Container's plans to grow 20,000 hectares of *Gmelina arborea* monoculture tree plantations.

In memory of
María del Mar Cordero,
Oscar Fallas, David Maradiaga
and Jaime Bustamante

Friends of the Earth
Costa Rica / coecoceiba



© onehemisphere

Tapir, Osa peninsula, Costa Rica.

The plantations were intended to supply industrial quantities of wood chips for export to the US. The planned industrial complex and port were to be located in the heart of the Golfo Dulce, a major biodiversity spot and one of the country's best preserved coastal areas.

The campaign successfully terminated the company's plans, which were poorly planned, insensitive to local conditions and social characteristics, and likely to have huge social-environmental impacts. The strength of the campaign was that it was organised by local communities, and included many protests and resistance actions. It also allowed local communities to consider and develop a political perspective on the importance and use of their territories, and it created political spaces for discussion with the government and others actors. Significantly, it also alerted the population to the need to discuss the current model of development, sustainability and local communities' rights more generally.

The environmental sector then began to transform itself into a peoples' movement, drawing increasingly on the concepts of social ecology and environmental economics, whilst building alliances with other people's movements. The campaign also contributed to identifying the peasant and indigenous sectors as natural allies for proposals and discussions around environmental issues, and generated increased international solidarity.

The campaign against Stone Container also has a symbolic meaning since three young environmental activists that had participated actively in the campaign were killed in a fire in their home at exactly the same time that the campaign reached a successful conclusion. In addition, seven months and seven days later, another young environmentalist died mysteriously, and his body was found in a park in San Jose, located just in front of the headquarters of Stone Container.



spain

foe spain

driving out transgenic crops

Spain is the only country in Europe that cultivates genetically modified (GM) crops on a large scale: 10,000 hectares of transgenic corn have spread across Spanish fields since 1998. With legislation made to measure for multinational companies, and a government increasingly susceptible to pressure from the US, Spain has been transformed into the transgenic gateway to Europe.

In spite of a lack of any kind of information or debate, civil society, including Friends of the Earth Spain, mobilised itself against the imposition of GM crops from the start, disseminating information, exerting political pressure by means of many different initiatives, and building strong alliances, especially with farmer organisations (such as COAG, a member of La Via Campesina).

The anti-GM movement, which also involves Friends of the Earth Spain's local groups, has already seen some significant campaign victories. The Balearic Islands has been declared a GMO-free zone, and there has been strong resistance in many regions such as Galicia and Madrid. The imposition of unacceptable coexistence rules was brought to a halt as well.

In 2009 more than 8,000 people demonstrated in Zaragoza, the capital of Aragon (the European region with the most GM crops), and 150 actions took place across the country. In 2010, 15,000 people gathered in Madrid to demand a ban on GM crops.

Gradually the state of play in Spain is shifting: at last most Spanish people know what GMOs are and what the consequences of growing and using them are, and opposition has increased. In 2010, the area of GM maize grown in Spain decreased for the second consecutive year.

Friends of the Earth Spain are continuing the campaign and are now involved in other collaborative struggles, including building the movement for food sovereignty.

“The fight against GMOs in a country like Spain has always been very hard. During all these years, we were the only country that grew GMO crops in Europe and we were seen almost as a hopeless case. But we’ve shown that through mobilisations and campaigns based on serious and rigorous information, on the basis of the vision of hundreds of people, and through teamwork with other organisations, that we can achieve great changes. And this allows us to look to the future with hope, with the real possibility of a GMO-free future in Spain.”

David Sanchez Carpio



Anti-GM coffin action.



Growing opposition to transgenics in Spain.

Spanish non-GM corn seeking refuge at the French Embassy.

Bees against transgenics action.





indonesia



© u. sifombing

foe indonesia/walhi

struggle against cement in central java

The Kendeng Mountains lie in the Sukolilo subdistrict, in the district of Pati in Central Java. Sukolilo has many historical sites and much exotic natural potential for tourism, including the Tomb of Saridin, grottos, hermitages, and the heritage of the Malawapati Kingdom.

This is where the Sedular Sikep community lives. This community famously follows the teachings of Samin – Saminism – which was spread by Samin Surosentiko (1859-1914). They rejected Dutch colonial culture and the capitalist economy that emerged in the 19th century. Whilst they opposed physical resistance, they refused all rules and the obligation to pay taxes to the Dutch government. Instead they developed traditions and customs of their own. The community still lives in the same way, farming without recourse to modern tools. The farmers plant corn and chili peppers on dry land, and rice in some wetlands. Other areas are planted with teak trees and bananas. The total population working in the agricultural sector is 144,500.

Stop the Cement Factory. Java.
Mountain area on the island of Java, Indonesia.
Young teak trees.



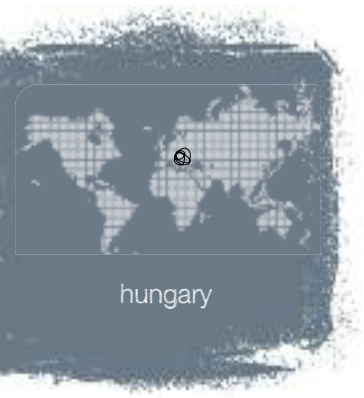
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Pati's natural wealth stems from its unique karst landscape in the mountains of North Kendeng. Unfortunately it is this same geological feature that has attracted Indonesia's biggest cement manufacturer, PT. Semen Gresik (Persero) Tbk, since the karst's limestone is used in the production of cement.

The company wants to build its cement plant in the main agricultural area where rice and corn are grown. If they are allowed to proceed, environmental and health impacts are likely to include the contamination of critical local water systems, and significant levels of air pollution, noise and dust. There is no guarantee of any economic benefits for the local community, and they are totally opposed to this type of industrial development anyway.

The corporation officially accessed the area in 2006, with official governmental permission for exploratory mining activities. Friends of the Earth Indonesia/WALHI, supporting the communities' strong opposition, filed an administrative lawsuit against the mining permit in the Semarang Administrative Court, which was won at appeal at the Supreme Court. This decision repealed the company's mining permit, forcing PT Semen Gresik to stop its activities.

Now, however, the citizens of the area have been alerted to the fact that there are efforts underway to change the spatial planning designation policy for the Kendeng area, to allow for mining and industry and the entry of corporations, as well as agriculture, tourism and water catchments. Despite the triumph in the Supreme Court, the fight continues.



hungary

KliMAvédelmet!



© a. molnar, green circle, hajdúszoboszló (a member group of friends of the earth hungary)

foe hungary / mtvsz

giant climate mosaic colours climate debate

The mosaic map of Hungary in front of Parliament, with 100 Friends of the Earth Hungary activists urging a radical national climate strategy.



© a. molnar, green circle, hajdúszoboszló (a member group of friends of the earth hungary)

On a rainy November day in 2007, one hundred local activists from all corners of Hungary gathered in front of the Hungarian Parliament in Budapest, and placed 1,500 painted wooden tiles on the ground, forming a large, colourful mosaic in the form of a map of Hungary.

“These 100 dedicated activists represented ten thousand people demanding radical action on climate change. The strength of this movement is its co-operation and it proved to be successful, we are glad that our group could be part of it.”

Zsuzsanna Sara, leader of Beretzk Peter Environment Protection Association, a local group in Roszke, SE Hungary (and a member group of Friends of the Earth Hungary)

This was the final action of Friends of the Earth Hungary/MTVSZ's 'Climate Protection Now' campaign, marking the successful culmination of a two-year struggle for a radical national climate change strategy.

Participating regional member groups organised a total of 75 public actions in 27 Hungarian cities. Friends of the Earth Hungary met 12,000 people who supported the campaign by painting climate messages and signing petition postcards. At the closing event a climate petition was handed to the Speaker of the House, the Minister for the Environment and representatives of all the parties in parliament. The petition, signed by 63 NGOs, and the postcards demanded the same thing: Hungarian citizens want more commitment and concrete steps that really address the structural causes of climate change. They want national decision-makers to agree a radical national climate change strategy.

The struggle was successful: in February 2008 Hungary's National Climate Change Strategy was adopted, the first step towards radical climate change legislation.

“We met many thousands of people during our campaign and the majority clearly expected a radical national climate change strategy from decision makers. It was so rewarding to see that decision-makers invited to the action were really impressed by the public pressure we had mustered.”

Alexa Botar, climate campaigner with Friends of the Earth Hungary



colombia



Forum in Defense of the Páramo and Against Mining.



Colombian community activists.



Community campaigners at the Forum.

Colombian Forum in Defense of the Páramo.



foe colombia/censat agua viva

defending the páramo el almorzadero

In the early 1990s, Friends of the Earth Colombia/Censat Agua Viva was invited to the municipality of Cerrito in north-east Colombia, by communities concerned about a mining company exploring for anthracite coal in the Páramo el Almorzadero. The locals knew little about coal but they understood that their rich waters, flowing from the páramo, were threatened.

“The Paramo El Almorzadero is a living territory; there is no place here for mining, only for native species, lagoons, marshes, rivers, and therefore for peasants who have always lived here.”

Maria Stella Sandoval Rincon, Friends of the Earth Colombia

Through the democratic and participatory process that ensued, the inhabitants concluded that the jobs and economic resources mining might generate would never replace the security provided by agriculture, water and land. The peasants and the local population mobilised and organised themselves, and the company left the area and the coal project was shelved. Instead, the leaders of the resistance promoted agroecology as a means of protecting the páramo, creating food sovereignty, and strengthening their cultural and territorial identity.

However, by the end of the century, the threat of coal mining was back. The defence of the Páramo El Almorzadero became a key campaign for the Garcia Rovira province once again, and a variety of activities were initiated, including the National Congress of Páramos and High Andean Forests, the first National Seeds Market, and the National Meeting of Peasant Markets. These provided new and broader spaces to strengthen resistance, disseminate information, and construct alternatives.

Eventually the various social organisations decided to create the ‘Surveillance and Monitoring Commission for the Protection of the Páramo el Almorzadero’, which includes Friends of the Earth Colombia. In its quest for a permanent solution this Commission submitted a People’s Legislative Initiative signed by over 800 people, calling for the Cerrito Municipal Council to declare the part of the Páramo El Almorzadero in its jurisdiction a mining-free area. In August 2010, the Municipal Council finally approved the initiative, and the Mayor passed it.

This also inspired the neighbouring Chitaga Council to pass a similar municipal regulation covering their part of the páramo.

“It is important to stay united: if we said ‘no’ to coal exploitation, we have to respect it. Even more so when we see what happened in other places with mining extraction activities, where you only see poverty. For us, water is first, we struggle for life.”

Isaias Villamizar, peasant from Cerrito, Santander



togo



foe togo

supporting togolese fishing communities

Children from Togolese fishing community.
Artisanal fisherfolk set out to sea.
Togolese fishermen and their nets.



Togolese beaches bustle with activity in the early morning as wooden 'pirogues' are pushed out to sea, and later in the afternoon when they are hauled back in. Women smoke the fish and sell them on the beach and at the local market, just as their parents and grandparents did. However, these traditions are imperilled, and hunger and poverty are on the rise along these palm-fringed beaches.

It is an absurdity of the global market that most of the fish eaten in Togo comes through Europe, while many of the country's coastal fisherfolk are no longer able to sustain themselves by fishing. Hunger is increasing, as many people can no longer afford to buy the fish that is a major source of their protein.

Togo's coastline and its inhabitants are threatened by modern fishing fleets from northern Europe, which dominate the sea and deplete its marine resources. They are enabled by international trade agreements, with the European Union for example, which provide unfair subsidies favouring large-scale operations over community-based coastal livelihoods. The governments of Togo and other West African countries are torn between the promised 'development' and income promised by these trade agreements, and the need to protect the natural resources upon which people depend for their livelihoods.

Friends of the Earth Togo is campaigning to convince the people of Togo to buy locally caught fish rather than cheaper foreign imports. They are also educating local fisherfolk about the importance of using alternative nets which allow the young fish to escape back into the sea where they can later breed. They support suspending fishing activities during certain periods, traditionally one week per month during the full moon, so that fish stocks can be replenished. They are also working with local women to promote alternative ways of smoking fish, and using recycled wood rather than local trees or charcoal.



The day's catch.



ukraine

foe ukraine

people triumph over polluting factory

Economic development in the Ukraine has been pursued through the importation of cheap, outdated, and often outlawed technologies from developed countries. People's health and the need to preserve the country's natural resources have been ignored.

In 1992, for example, in the Dnipropetrovsk region - a heavily industrialised area with incredibly high levels of pollution - a Ukrainian company ISTA began constructing a car battery factory, importing equipment from Germany, where local protesters had managed to stop production.

Between 1995 and 2000, local people living near the plant began to suffer from health problems. These were confirmed by medical practitioners. A local dentist, for example, found lead in the teeth of his child patients. In addition, former plant workers began to disclose details of bad practice. Concerned individuals tried to get the authorities and the plant management to deal with these concerns to no avail.

Friends of the Earth Ukraine helped to organise a local action group, and called a meeting in April 2000, to protest against ISTA's infringement of environmental and human rights. Over 1,000 people turned up, including plant management, who angered the crowd by asserting that the plant was no more dangerous than a "bread shop".

After the meeting, ISTA started legal proceedings against the action group, the local Friends of the Earth branch and the local dentist, alleging that the plant was environmentally benign and that their image was being damaged. They attempted to intimidate the activists and their supporters into submission.

In response, Friends of the Earth hired experts to collect information about the factory. They found that the plant did not have the necessary environmental expertise, and was not fulfilling its obligations to supply information to the authorities.

After Friends of the Earth publicly denounced the persecution of its members by the company, ISTA requested a meeting and the media became involved. In the end, the planned expansion of the plant was stopped, people living in the vicinity of the factory were given a satisfactory out-of-court settlement, and the entire plant management was replaced.

rally opposing car battery factory.



Media interest in petition against factory.



Involving the media in the campaign to stop expansion of polluting battery plant.

Anti-factory demonstration.





switzerland



foe | switzerland / pro natura

public backs tough planning laws



Demonstration against Amgen in Galmiz, Switzerland.

© FoE Switzerland

At the end of 2004, a plan to establish a large factory in Galmiz, Switzerland, creating 1,200 new jobs, was announced. It appeared that American bio-medical corporation Amgen was looking for a new production site in Europe with easy access and a low-tax regime.

Buckling under pressure, the local municipality and the canton authorities agreed to the project, while the head of the spatial planning federal office didn't react, which meant authorising an exception to the spatial planning laws - even though at least two excellent potential alternative sites existed within 30 km!

But Friends of the Earth Switzerland/Pro Natura and other environmental organisations objected because it would contravene both logic and existing laws to put a 550ha industrial site in the heart of the Grand-Marais - a former marshy area converted into arable land in the 19th century and famous for its high quality vegetable production.

Friends of the Earth Switzerland decided not to play the legal card, but to build a popular movement, together with local farmers, and environmental and heritage protection NGOs. A specific association was created and a peaceful protest march of some 2,000 people held in April 2005 generated a lot of media coverage. The debate raged in national newspapers and the parliament. In the end, the company dropped its plans: in 2006, Amgen announced that it would be investing US\$1 billion in Ireland, creating 1,100 jobs. However, that plan was also 'indefinitely postponed' in 2007.

Since then, FoE Switzerland has been very successful in raising the topic of planning and its impact on land use, soil resources, biodiversity loss, urban sprawl and greenhouse gas emissions. They are pushing for a national referendum proposing new legislation to ensure that land is used sustainably, that agricultural land is preserved and used exclusively for food production, and that the total surface area that can be built on may not be extended for the next 20 years.

More than 110,000 citizens signed up in the first 12 months, and the referendum is expected to take place in early 2012.





australia

“What was so significant about this campaign was the fact it brought Indigenous aspirations about land and development so closely together with biodiversity protection. It has set a new benchmark for the creation of national parks. Indigenous communities are, once again, key players in managing a significant part of their traditional lands.”

Cam Walker, National Liaison Officer,
Friends of the Earth Australia.



FOE red gum banner -
World Environment Day
rally for Victoria's
Forests 2006.

Millewa State Forest.

foe australia

the barmah- millewa collective

Straddling both sides of the iconic Murray River 200km due north of Melbourne is an awe-inspiring landscape, the Barmah-Millewa Forest. This expansive complex of woodland and ephemeral wetlands is the largest Red Gum forest in the world.

Its Traditional Owners, the Yorta Yorta people, have long focused on Barmah-Millewa as their ‘heartland.’ Since European invasion, Yorta Yorta have maintained an unbroken campaign for their land rights and the health of country, including at least 18 formal claims for land and compensation. The most recent of these began in 1998, when Yorta Yorta elders asked Friends of the Earth to join a campaign to protect Barmah-Millewa and re-establish their rights to manage the forest.

With the vision of seeking social and environmental justice, new alliances were formed and the Friends of the Earth Barmah-Millewa Collective was born.

Downstream at Nyah-Vinifera, the 1,000 ha Red Gum forest on Wadi Wadi country was also threatened with renewed logging after a twenty-year absence. A parallel campaign formed the Friends of Nyah-Vinifera.

The following twelve years saw extensive lobbying of both state and federal governments to have Red Gum forests protected. Direct actions such as blockading illegal logging operations worked in unison with lobbying, community education and outreach. Alliances grew and battlelines joined along the river. A unified Red Gum campaign emerged involving numerous conservation groups and Traditional Owner nations.

In 2009, the Victorian government protected 91,000 ha of Red Gum forest in new parks, including Barmah National Park and Nyah-Vinifera Park. A year later, New South Wales finally caved to community pressure and protected a further 114,000 ha, including Millewa. In both states, these particular forests were singled out for co-management with their Aboriginal Owners.

Auspiciously, in July 2010, just weeks after the parks were officially launched, floodwaters began to trickle out onto the forest floor. After a decade of drought, wetlands sprung to life along the Murray. Throughout spring and summer, Barmah-Millewa and Nyah-Vinifera were inundated with water, allowing fish, birds and aquatic plant life to breed and restore dwindling populations.

“On the long road to land justice, Barmah-Millewa has always been a beacon for Yorta Yorta people. Over the past decade Friends of the Earth have walked this road with us, becoming a trusted ally and true friend. Together we’ve notched up a great milestone with the creation of Barmah-Millewa National Park, creating a cultural and ecological foundation for Yorta Yorta into the future.”

Neville Atkinson, Chairperson of Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation



united states

foe united states

safeguarding coastal communities

Global shipping has the largest impact on those living closest to ports, especially indigenous people and poor coastal communities. With approximately 70 per cent of global shipping emissions occurring within 250 miles of shore, people in these communities struggle with disproportionately high rates of cancer, respiratory disease and premature death.

Friends of the Earth US has spent the past ten years fighting to improve the lives of affected communities by working at the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the UN body tasked with regulating the shipping industry. Their participation has been crucial in limiting harmful air pollution from ships.

They initiated a legal challenge in 2000, asking the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to reduce air pollution from ships. The fight moved centre stage in 2009 when the EPA finally developed a proposal to rein in ship pollution and submitted an application to the IMO, in conjunction with Canada, effectively seeking a ban on the highly-polluting bunker fuel used in large ships along the North American coastline.

Friends of the Earth US used their status at the IMO to be a voice for people like Jesse N. Marquez of the Coalition for a Safe Environment, who works at the grassroots level in southern California. The coalition called attention to the harmful impact that shipping emissions have on the indigenous people, who inhabited these areas long before they were ports, saying “[we] did not move into ports, we have always existed there.”

On 26 March 2010, the IMO finally approved the new rules, which will significantly reduce deadly shipping emissions in the United States and Canada. The rules will take effect in 2012 and by 2015, ships traveling within 200 miles of US shores will be required to cut their air pollution by 80 percent or more (although Arctic waters are not currently included). The decision effectively bans the dirtiest bunker fuels and will prevent millions of illnesses and 14,000 premature deaths in the US by 2020.



The Holland America Oosterdam leaving the Port of Seattle, Washington State, USA.

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2002 Protest action of Timmawa in front of the Japanese embassy.

2003 Meeting of the people affected by the dams with the Japanese Government in Tokyo.



foe japan

standing firm on san roque

For more than a decade, Friends of the Earth Japan has worked closely with local communities in the Philippines, who opposed – and have since suffered the impacts of – the construction of the San Roque Dam (as part of the San Roque Multi-purpose Project). The dam was funded by the Japanese government.

“Twelve years have passed since the local people and FoE Japan started to work together on the issues triggered by the construction of the San Roque Dam. We cannot bring an end to this work until the livelihoods of local people are restored, and Japan stops forcing similar development projects on others.”

Hozue Hatae,
Friends of the Earth Japan

Collaborative activities with local communities and the indigenous people living in the area included a joint protest in front of the Japanese embassy in Manila; and hosting community leaders in Japan to enable discussions with Japanese citizens, and meetings with the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) and members of the Diet of Japan.

Since the dam was completed in 2002, FoE Japan has been campaigning for compensation for lost lands and livelihoods, and is working to make sure that promises made to families engaged in farming and gold-panning are met in full. They have also campaigned to ensure that the indigenous community is recognised alongside other affected people. Even though unresolved issues remain – including unpaid compensation and the impoverishment of residents – this effort has helped to ensure that some of those relocated received substitute farmland. Approximately 1,000 people also participated in a livelihoods program after being officially recognised as gold-panners.

Japan consistently finances projects in developing countries that focus on the exploitation of natural resources and the development of large infrastructure, which can have serious environmental and social impacts. To prevent this Friends of the Earth Japan has also been participating in policy consultations on environmental and social guidelines with JBIC and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

“FoE Japan has helped us demand rights for the gold-panners and farmers since the beginning of the San Roque dam project. We are grateful to them and the people who participated in the study tours they organised. Their fearless visit to us, even after our previous chairperson was assassinated, really encouraged us to continue our campaign. We would like to keep this cooperation alive and prove that we are not demoralised!”

Ms. Nora Luzano, the chairperson of local people's organisation, **Timnay dariti Mannalon a Mang-wayawaya iti Arno (TIMMAYA or Peasants' Movement to Free the Arno River)**

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the Earth
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