



Friends of the Earth is a charity that gets people campaigning at all levels – in communities, nationally and internationally. Our campaigns are groundbreaking and have been behind laws to protect wildlife in Britain, doorstep recycling for every home and the world’s first climate change act. We believe the environment is for everyone and that healthy people and a healthy planet go hand in hand. We believe things can get better if we tackle the underlying causes of the threats to our planet – economic and social injustice. **And with your help we can do this.**

www.foe.co.uk

Friends of the Earth, 26-28 Underwood Street, London N1 7JQ
 Tel: 020 7490 1555 Fax: 020 7490 0881 Website: www.foe.co.uk
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Environmental justice

The issues

Environmental injustice around the world

Friends of the Earth believes that tacking environmental injustice will not only protect people, but also the natural world. If you have healthy people, you get a healthy planet. But to do this we have to get to grips with some big problems:

Inequality

People living in deprived areas have less influence on what happens to their environment – be it the site for a new factory or saving a forest from the chainsaws.

It's also people on the lowest incomes, who don't consume much, that cause the least environmental damage.

Yet poorer people are often worst hit when the environment is damaged. For example, the populations of developing

countries are more likely to have their lives turned upside down by climate change. Already some low-lying Pacific islands are being abandoned because of rising seas.

Those with less money also get least out of what the planet has to offer us. The rich countries in the European Union have just 7 per cent of the world's population. Yet they gobble up nearly a sixth of its resources – things like timber and metals for industry.

Transport

It's the less wealthy who are affected most by traffic. They get the health and congestion problems because they tend to live nearer big roads. Children in the UK's most deprived areas are five times more likely to be killed by traffic than those in richer areas.

“You'd come out of the house and this filth would be on the car, everywhere. We cannot be poisoned without any comeback. Our environment is as important as anyone else's and it's worth fighting for”

Dean Axford on the effects of the Wilton chemical complex, Teesside



Fuel poverty

Four million UK households are in fuel poverty. This means they spend more than a tenth of their income on staying warm.

Poor laws

It's hard for people to use laws to protect their environment. For example, it's expensive for an individual to take a polluting company to court.

In the UK some planning laws are stacked against ordinary people. This means it's hard to have a say in decisions affecting where you live. Take the plans for a nuclear power station in Hartlepool. Locals were only given a few days notice of when they would be consulted; many were not even aware the consultation was happening.

False climate solutions

Have you ever booked a holiday then paid to offset the emissions of your flight? Offsetting claims to help tackle climate change. For every tonne of carbon dioxide produced, the thinking goes, a tonne is avoided by investing in low-carbon projects.

The truth about offsetting, though, is it lets rich countries continue pumping out climate change gases while poorer countries are expected to develop cleanly. If we are to avoid catastrophic climate change, we need emissions cuts all round.

www.foe.co.uk/environmentaljustice/evidence



Pacific Calling Partnership/Edmund Rice Centre

“Many of the trees are dying out, including the breadfruit which is so important to the local diet. The mangroves I remember from childhood are almost gone. There was a favourite place I used to go with my dad when I was growing up, but this has disappeared under the sea”

Maria Tilon on rising sea levels in Kiribati, a low-lying island in the Pacific

Introduction

What is environmental justice?

Environmental justice means everyone has:

- A right to healthy places to live, work and enjoy themselves.
- A right to a fair share of nature's benefits like food and water.
- A responsibility to look after the planet for others and for future generations.

In doing this we not only ensure a better life for all of us – but help protect the environment too.

But to get environmental justice for everyone, society must change: we need a fairer world. This includes ordinary people having legal support and the political clout to influence decisions affecting the environment where they live.

In this booklet we highlight examples of environmental injustice – and describe what we're doing to tackle them. Read on and find out how we can work together for a fairer – and greener – future.



CEIBA/Friends of the Earth, Guatemala

Show of hands: voting against a new mine in Guatemala

Friends of the Earth's solutions

How we tackle environmental injustice



GIA B. Anash

Friends of the Earth wants to solve problems, not complain about them. Our campaigns have brought about important changes, such as a world leading climate change law. Here are some of the ways we want to tackle environmental injustice.

Solution – towards climate justice

At the heart of climate justice is a simple idea: those most responsible for climate change should be doing the most to tackle it.

Rich countries have benefited most from polluting the atmosphere – they've been pumping out climate-changing gases since Victorian times. Yet the world's poorest people are hit the hardest by global warming.

Poor countries are also less able to deal with the effects of climate change such as

drought and severe flooding. Friends of the Earth is therefore campaigning for rich countries to:

- Take the lead on cutting carbon emissions and to do this now.
- Cut carbon by making real changes at home – not by offsetting emissions abroad, which will not tackle climate change.
- Pay for poorer countries to adapt to the effects of climate change.
- Help developing countries develop their own economies using clean technology, such as renewable energy.

Support Friends of the Earth

Easy ways to help change the world



Friends of the Earth

Changing our individual behaviour can help, but we'll have even more impact if we act together to change politics. That's why Friends of the Earth asks you to support us in our work. Here's how you can help:

Take action and campaign with us

From simple actions to joining groundbreaking campaigns, you can help make the environment better for everyone.

Make a donation or regular contribution

A regular direct debit is a great way to support our vital campaigns. And there

are many other ways you can help us financially. These include getting a Friends of the Earth credit card, signing up to Good Energy for green electricity, shopping with us, or holding a fundraising event.

Keep your finger on the pulse

Sign up for our email newsletter for the latest news, campaign actions and greener lifestyle tips delivered straight to your inbox.

Do all this and more at

www.foe.co.uk
www.foe.co.uk/shop
 or phone 020 7490 1555



Friends of the Earth

Solution – better UK planning

Friends of the Earth is campaigning for planning laws that:

- Listen properly to the views of people who live locally.
- Give people and the environment as much importance as economic growth.
- Promote low-carbon solutions such as renewable energy.

In Merthyr Tydfil, South Wales, for example, there are plans to build a waste incinerator that would be the biggest in the UK. The community already has the largest UK open cast coal mine on its doorstep. Friends of the Earth is working with the people of Merthyr to ensure they have a say in this big new decision for their community.

Solution – law in your hands

Friends of the Earth lawyers help people stand up for their rights. In 2008 we worked with a resident of Port Talbot, South Wales. He had got hold of information showing pollution around a nearby steelworks broke legal levels. The lawyers worked with him to force the Welsh Assembly Government to produce plans to bring the pollution back within legal limits.

We're also working with people around the world to prevent destruction of rainforests and poisoning from pesticides (see overleaf).

Solution – Power Up

Every year Friends of the Earth runs a unique training weekend called Power Up. This helps people understand the planning system and their legal right to influence decisions affecting their communities.

Solution – fixing public transport

We are calling for every council to do its bit to tackle climate change. Part of this is pushing for better public transport that everyone can afford to use.



Isaack

Did you know that between 1997 and 2008 the real cost of motoring fell by 13 per cent. At the same time, bus and coach fares increased by 17 per cent, and rail fares by 7 per cent.

www.foe.co.uk/environmentaljustice/solutions

Our work in environmental justice is one of the things that makes Friends of the Earth so unique.

We're also the most extensive environmental network on the planet. In the UK alone we have more than 220 local groups campaigning at a community level. Globally we have around 2 million supporters and 77 national organisations. Here are just some examples of how we're using that influence to tackle environmental injustice around the world.

Friends of the Earth has groups in:

Argentina	Curacao	Honduras	Mauritius	Slovakia
Australia	Czech Republic	Hungary	Mexico	South Africa
Austria	Cyprus	Indonesia	Mozambique	Spain
Bangladesh	Denmark	Ireland	Nepal	Sri Lanka
Belgium	El Salvador	Italy	Netherlands	Swaziland
Belgium (Flanders & Brussels)	England, Wales & Northern Ireland	Japan	New Zealand	Sweden
Bolivia	Estonia	Korea	Nigeria	Switzerland
Brazil	Finland	Latvia	Norway	Tanzania
Cameroon	France	Lithuania	Palestine	Timor Leste
Canada	Georgia	Luxembourg	Papua New Guinea	Togo
Chile	Germany	Macedonia	Paraguay	Tunisia
Colombia	Ghana	Malawi	Peru	Uganda
Costa Rica	Grenada	Malaysia	Philippines	Ukraine
Croatia	Guatemala	Mali	Poland	United States
	Haiti	Malta	Scotland	Uruguay
			Sierra Leone	

London Smiles all round as market saved

Queen's Market has long sold affordable food in one of London's most deprived boroughs. So when local people heard it was due to be turned into luxury flats and a supermarket, they set up Friends of the Earth to resist the development. In 2008, some of them attended Power Up

– Friends of the Earth's annual weekend of training and workshops. As a result the Friends campaign went into overdrive. The council received 2,500 letters and 12,000 signatures on a petition. And the message hit home. In 2009 the London Mayor refused planning permission.



Kristina Simakovits

Bangladesh Toxic ships sail into court

Bangladesh's ship-breaking industry has never been properly regulated, with the result that workers have been exposed to toxic waste. But now things could be changing. After more than five

years of legal work by Friends of the Earth Bangladesh/BELA, the Bangladesh Supreme Court has ordered strict new regulation of the industry. This includes the closure of some yards.



GMB Akash/Paros

Indonesia Gas drilling causes massive mud flow

On 29 May 2006 the biggest mud volcano on Earth started to flow in East Java. This smothered 12 villages in toxic mud, forcing at least 42,000 people from their homes. Today the mud continues to wreck lives and jobs. Friends of the Earth

Indonesia/WALHI believes the disaster was caused by gas drilling in the area. Along with human rights organisations and locals, WALHI is campaigning for compensation for the disaster and the rehousing of everyone affected.



Chris Stowers/Paros



Paraguay Soy – a killer crop

In South America forests and grasslands are being destroyed to make way for huge soy plantations – much of which is used for animal feed in factory farms in Europe and the United States. This is having disastrous environmental effects – forests are not only home to wildlife but absorb carbon dioxide, which helps to stabilise the climate. Soy is also having a deadly impact on people who live in the area.

Small farmers are selling up because they cannot compete with the big businesses running the plantations; some are driven from their land at gunpoint. There is also evidence that pesticides used to spray the soy are poisoning locals. Friends of the Earth Paraguay/Sobrevivencia is working to publicise the problems of soy, promote the need for alternative crops, and push for laws that protect rural villages.



Friends of the Earth

Nigeria Oil giant's pollution horror

In Nigeria oil giant Shell has been polluting farmland and rivers for years. It has made a fortune from the country's oil and gas at terrible cost to local people, farmland and fisheries. According to the Nigerian Government, 400,000 tonnes of oil have been spilled in the Niger Delta – and more than two thirds of it has not been cleaned up. This has destroyed the

jobs and health of some people living in the area. In 2009 Friends of the Earth Netherlands/Milieudefensie and Friends of the Earth Nigeria/Environmental Rights Action worked with locals to force the oil giant into court. They are demanding that Shell not only clean up the mess it has made – but pays compensation for ruined lives and jobs.



Georgia Osoodi/Paros

Uganda People power keeps forest standing

Forests around the world are disappearing at an alarming rate – we're losing an area the size of 36 football pitches per minute – but there's some good news from central Uganda. More than 7,000 hectares of forest rich in wildlife, including many endangered species, have been saved following a campaign by Friends of the Earth Uganda/ National Association of

Professional Environmentalists (NAPE). The Government had planned to sell the forest to a company to use it for growing sugar cane. NAPE stepped in and, with local people, spearheaded a coalition to save it. A campaign that included mass texting, online letters and demonstrations brought the issue to national attention. The Government has now backed down.



NAPE/Friends of the Earth Uganda

Australia Uranium mine bites dust

Friends of the Earth Australia works with Australian Indigenous Peoples opposed to their traditional land being used for uranium mining and radioactive waste dumps. In recent years it has

worked with the Mirrar people and other organisations to successfully stall the development of a new uranium mine in the Kakadu National Park in the Northern Territory.



Fermy Tweedel/Paros