

YOUNG ACTIVISTS HANDBOOK

THE YOUNG PERSON'S GUIDE
TO CHANGING THE WORLD
WHILE HAVING FUN TOO



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme

This Handbook was produced by Young Friends of the Earth as part of a project entitled Inspiring Activism For Environmental Justice, supported by the Youth in Action program. Youth in Action is a Europe-wide program to foster civic engagement by young people, especially at the European level. It aims to develop the needs of young people (aged 13 to 30) in over 30 countries by providing funding and support for development of specific activities and objectives through non-formal learning with young people and their youth workers/leaders. In Ireland the Youth in Action program is administered by Leargas. Leargas is the National Agency in Ireland for the management of national and international exchange and cooperation programmes in education, youth and community work, and vocational education and training.

For more information:
www.leargas.ie/youth



Hello and welcome to the movement!

This Youth Activism Handbook was produced by Young Friends of the Earth Ireland as a resource for youth and student activists everywhere. Young Friends of the Earth is a dynamic and fun youth network building a movement for a greener and more just world.

All are welcome to get involved!

Email youngfoe@foe.ie or visit our website www.youngfoe.ie where you can watch documentaries online. And add us on Facebook! www.Facebook.com/youngfriendsoftheearthireland

Sian, Young FoE intern

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About Us

Young Friends of the Earth is a network of youth activists, working together to take action for environmental justice. We are building a movement of young people to bring about a just world where people are put before profit, and where our planet is protected.

There are about twenty YFoE groups across Europe and each year there are Europe-wide gatherings, including an annual Summer Camp. YFoE is open, friendly and inclusive, and a lot of fun!





Some of the YFoE National Coordinating Group on lunch from a meeting.

How we work

YFoE Ireland is a loose network of local groups – most of which are currently in colleges and universities. Some are called, for example “Young Friends of the Earth Maynooth” whereas some are affiliated but go by a different name, for example the UCC Environmental Society. YFoE works with these local groups, and one of our main priorities is to facilitate ideas sharing and movement building between different local groups and college societies. There is a National Co-ordinating Group that meets every six weeks, to oversee the activities and come up with ideas. YFoE Ireland is only a few years old and so is still evolving and expanding.



Tara, YFoE activist



Joining Young Friends of the Earth opened a new world for me, I met people who were as interested in campaigning for the environment as I was. I had the opportunity to travel to Copenhagen for the Climate Talks and I also attended the European Young Friends of the Earth AGM in Amsterdam where I met students from all over Europe who I'm still close with today. Being in YFoE makes me feel optimistic about our future. Collectively, our voice can shape our environment to be greener, more sustainable and safer for the next generations to come.



I wanted to make as big a difference in the world as I could. I believe that environmentalism can't be just about personal actions, it has to be about challenging higher authorities to see change. Young Friends of the Earth allows me to do this in an exciting and fun way, connecting me with new friends from across Ireland.



Gwen, YFoE activist



YFoE activists at a FoE “snowman protest”

Friends of the Earth

Friends of the Earth is an international federation of environmental organisations; the biggest such network in the world. Each local organisation focuses on its own priorities, as long as they don't conflict with the core principles of the organisation.

Friends of the Earth Ireland (www.foe.ie) was established in 2005 and has an office on Upper Mount Street, with four friendly staff, including Oisín the Director. FoE or “Big FoE” as YFoE sometimes refer to it, supports YFoE with office space, funding and the provision of a part-time intern who helps YFoE in their activities.

“ I hadn't done any environmental activism before I got involved in Young Friends of the Earth. I've been really inspired by everything we've been doing so far, and all the people that I've met. I spent a week at the Summer Camp in Hungary, where 70 young people from all across Europe took part in workshops on green issues, shared skills and made loads of new friends. Great experience all round! ”



Jamie, YFoE activist

“ Truthfully I first got involved cos dressing up as a penguin and causing havoc for the Ministry of the Environment seemed like a good way to spend a Wednesday afternoon! And I realised more and more that doing nothing for the environment was like kamikaze - and there's no reason why aiming to save the planet can't be great fun too, especially the fundraising! ”



Orla, YFoE activist



Participants at the Young Friends of the Earth Europe Summer Camp last year in Hungary.

Young Friends of the Earth Europe

YFoE Ireland is connected to a dynamic and diverse network of European Youth activists. There is a central office in Brussels with a few support staff, as well as steering groups made up of activists from local groups. There are Europe-wide campaigns such as the Push Europe campaign, and regular gatherings such as the AGM and the annual Summer Camp. This year the Summer Camp was in Galicia in Spain.



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme

Young Friends of the Earth, in Europe and in Ireland have worked closely with the Europe-wide Youth In Action program, receiving funding for several projects. This program was set up in 2007 and aims to foster active citizenship among young people, at the national and European levels. Youth In Action funded YFoE's first activities, under a project we started called Inspiring Activism for Environmental Justice, of which producing this guide was a part. In Ireland the YiA program is administered by an organisation called Leargas.

To take part in the Youth In Action program visit www.leargas.ie

Inspiring Quotes

"You must be the change you wish to see in the world."

- Gandhi

"In the confrontation between the stream and the rock, the stream always wins - not through strength but through persistence."

- Anonymous

"There is no chance, no destiny, and no fate that can circumvent or hinder or control the firm resolve of a determined soul."

- Ella Wheeler Wilcox

"When spider webs unite, they can tie up a lion."

Ethiopian Proverb

"You must do the thing you think you cannot do."

- Eleanor Roosevelt

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

- Margaret Mead

"I said many beautiful things, but it made no impact. This is because

I used my frame of reference, and not theirs."

- Paulo Freire

"It should always be remembered that a real organisation of the people, one in which they completely believe and which they feel is definitely their own, must be rooted in the experiences of the people themselves. This is essential if the organisation is to be built upon and founded upon the people."

-Saul Alinsky

"People will act on the issues about which they have strong feelings.

There is a close link between emotion and motives. All projects should start by identifying

issues which local people speak about with excitement, hope, fear anxiety or anger."

-Hope and Timmel

"Once social change begins it cannot be reversed. You cannot un-educate the person who has learned to read. You cannot humiliate the person who feels pride.

You cannot oppress the people that are not afraid anymore."

-Cesar E. Chavez

"If you don't risk anything, you risk even more."

- Erica Jong

"The honest answer to the question "How can I stop climate change?" is "I can't. But we can."

-Tony Juniper (Former FoE UK Executive Director).

"If the real radical finds that having long hair sets up psychological

barriers to communication and organization, he cuts his hair. If I were organizing in a orthodox Jewish community I would not walk in there eating a ham sandwich, unless I wanted to be rejected so I could have an

"We cannot have some excuse to copout. My 'thing', if I want to eating five times a day while others go five days without eating."

- Former Brazilian President Luiz Inacio "Lula" da Silva

- Saul Alinsky



PRESS RELEASE

Snowmen protest demands Climate Bill as the Green party's legacy on climate hangs in the balance.

4 Dec 2010

Friends of the Earth activists built snowmen in the grounds of the Department of the Environment to demand that John Gormley delivers the Climate Bill. The snowmen protest took place on Friday morning, with placards that read "No Climate Bill, sNOW Thanks" and "Hey John, Where's Your Climate Bill?"

Molly Walsh Policy Officer with Friends of the Earth said "The Greens absolutely must keep their promise and publish the Climate Bill before Christmas. They still have a chance to end a year of delay on a successful note. All that these snowmen want for Christmas is a Climate Bill."

The Cabinet finally agreed a Climate Bill two weeks ago, almost a year after the Government agreed and published a Framework Document for climate legislation. A draft Bill had been promised for the first quarter of 2010. In his Carbon Budget speech to the Dáil last December Minister Gormley said the Climate Change Bill was "sending out a message to people here and beyond our shores of our intent, our determination, our sense of purpose in tackling climate change. It is a message that I am proud to take to Copenhagen." One year on Gormley still has nothing to show for his determination and has nothing to take to the UN talks this year.

Oisín Coghlan Director of Friends of the Earth stated. "Minister Gormley is running out of road. It was interesting when he announced the Greens' intention to leave Government last week the media assessments (Irish Independent and RTE News) of their time in Government all mentioned their failure to deliver the Climate Change Bill. There is still time to put that right, but only just."

Friends of the Earth has launched an email action to the Green Party parliamentary party to remind them of why they went into Government and of their latest promise to publish the Climate Bill before Christmas: All I want for Christmas.

Top Tips

Writing a press release.

If you are doing something that you want to get picked up by the media, the best thing to do is to write a press release and email it to as many journalists as possible.

Make the headline as exciting and newsworthy as you can. It needs to catch journalists' attention. It has to be exciting enough to make them open the email and read your press release.

Generally there is a subheadline which gives a bit more information, just a sentence, it is good if this is also quite catchy and interesting, include any other relevant information that makes the story newsworthy.

Imagine if your college society is planning to have a street party on car-free day to take back the road from cars for one day. The 'who' is students, the 'what' is the street party. The 'where' and the 'when' are where and when you are having the event and the 'why' is for car free day.

Start by answering the questions **WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, WHY.**

Journalists are very busy, try to make it as easy as possible for them. Try to write the press release in the style that a newspaper article is written and a journalist will just copy and paste some sentences from your press release

- It is usual to include a quote from somebody involved in what you are doing. The quotes should be in normal language that is really like something that someone might actually say!

SAMPLE:
PHOTO CALL: MONDAY 19 MAY 2008, 10:00AM
VENUE: GRAND CANAL SQUARE, DUBLIN

USI SUPPORTS ROCK THE VOTE LAUNCH

19 May 2008

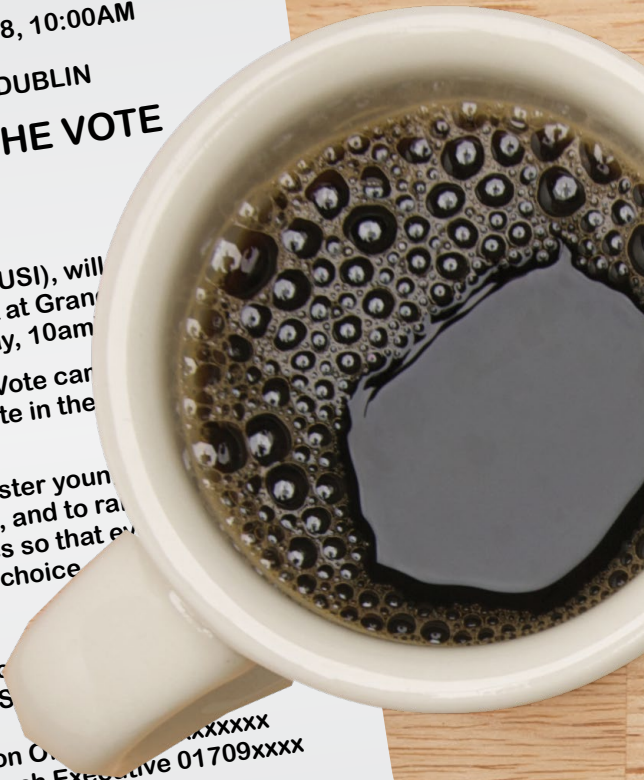
The Union of Students in Ireland (USI), will 'Rock the Vote' for today's launch event at Grand Canal Square in Dublin (Monday 19th May, 10am)

Supported by USI, the Rock the Vote campaign is encouraging young people to vote in the 2009 Treaty referendum.

The campaign also aims to register young people who are not already registered, and to raise awareness about the key issues so that every young person can make an informed choice.

Ends

For more information please contact:
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xxxxxxx
Peter Mannion, USI Education Officer xxxxxxx
Press & Research Executive 01709xxxx



4 NEWS



Senator David Norris with the Green Week penguins.

Norris launches Trinity Green Week and campus wetland

M

by Cormac

GARDAÍ are on suspicion of a woman Mary... ing phone... and the Ath... Detectives... 37-year-old... ing business...

Getting Media Attention

Getting media attention for your action is quite straightforward. Journalists and photographers have to make a living so if you offer them an exciting event they can write a story about, or a nice photo opportunity, then you stand a good chance of getting your action covered.

Media Contacts

Friends of the Earth have a media contacts list, as do the Union of Students in Ireland. All students union officers also get a USI Directory each year with media contacts so perhaps ask if you can use this. Emails sometimes change and there are quite a few national newspapers, radio stations, local papers etc. Email youngfoe@foe.ie and we should be able to help.

Photo Ops

Photo agencies and photographers, want a good shot. So make your photo op a strong visual; and if the photographer asks you to move things around, do as (s)he asks; (s)he knows what kinds of shots will get chosen by editors.

Sound Bites

Have short sound-bites prepared in case journalists ask you what you are here for. Inform anyone present that they might be asked by a journalist for quotes, and possibly photos, even 'vox pops' if it is a big event.

Make Things Happen!

Remember the media aren't interested in covering your opinions; they cover EVENTS, so make things HAPPEN. A protest, a stunt, a declaration, a photo op, whatever.

Press Release

Send press releases on the day, or the day before your event. Ring around the day before to encourage journalists to attend. See the section on "How To Write A Press Release" in this guide.

Photo Call

With a photo call, it depends on who you talk to, but you'll be safe sending it a day or two before. Photographers usually gather each morning and are given their list of things to cover that day. A sample of what a photo call email might look like is on this page

Remember the media aren't interested in covering your opinions; they cover EVENTS, so make things HAPPEN.



Quick Tips

Getting Volunteers

Activism is built on voluntary effort – volunteers are the lifeblood of any campaign or movement. Here are some tips on how to find volunteers, and how to keep them engaged.

Dave from YFoE offers some tips.

The NUMBER ONE reason people will get involved is because they ARE ASKED TO

Thousands of students start college each year – many of them want to be involved in SOMETHING; they might not know what that is yet. Perhaps advertise a meeting for volunteers for your campaign/project/group.

Keep volunteers informed of progress –its important they get a SHORT email every now and then letting them know that things are happening so they don't feel they are wasting their time.

Ask them to do stuff to keep them feeling involved – always have petitions or flyers handy for example. It's not that important whether the petition wins you the campaign; it's about giving volunteers something so they feel involved. Why not give them a few petition sheets and ask them to get their friends and co-workers to sign it? Try get the balance right between giving direction, and empowering volunteers to take ownership of the campaign themselves.

Once you've gotten people involved, one of the most important things you can do is keep things going regularly so that you don't lose momentum. You may be really busy or tired but they might be eager; don't let them slip through your fingers while you can instead be keeping them involved!

Why not set up a coffee stand, giving out free tea and coffee, along with your campaign leaflets?



Do fun things like banner making workshops, especially before a protest.

A key concept: Momentum.

After any public event (meeting, rally, film screening) your potential recruits will be at their most enthusiastic and willing. This is the time to give them things to do. Don't wait til you see them again; people are fickle and something else may have grabbed their attention. Ideally you should have flyers or petitions to distribute.

Be friendly, and remember people's names! Try not to let cliques form.

Go for pints after meetings...



- You can't do it alone!
- Ask your friends
- Ask your Students' Union
- Ask class reps
- Ask a relevant college society – they might be looking for something to do
- Ask everyone! You might be surprised
- Set up a colourful stand on campus and see who comes along
- Use Facebook to advertise for volunteers
- Get at least one person to share the pressure with you – it is a lot less stressful when you have people to lean on

Joining the Dots Environment and Social Justice

Can we stop environmental catastrophe without radically changing society?

Tom Smith, student at UCC, asks some tough questions about what kind of world we live in and what it means to be an environmentalist.



Is the concept of environmental justice, aspiration of YFoE and so many other well-intentioned groups, in any way meaningful without direct links to social justice?

And conversely, are social justice activists - working in the areas of human rights, poverty alleviation etc. - operating from a partial philosophy if they exclude issues of environmental justice from their world-view?

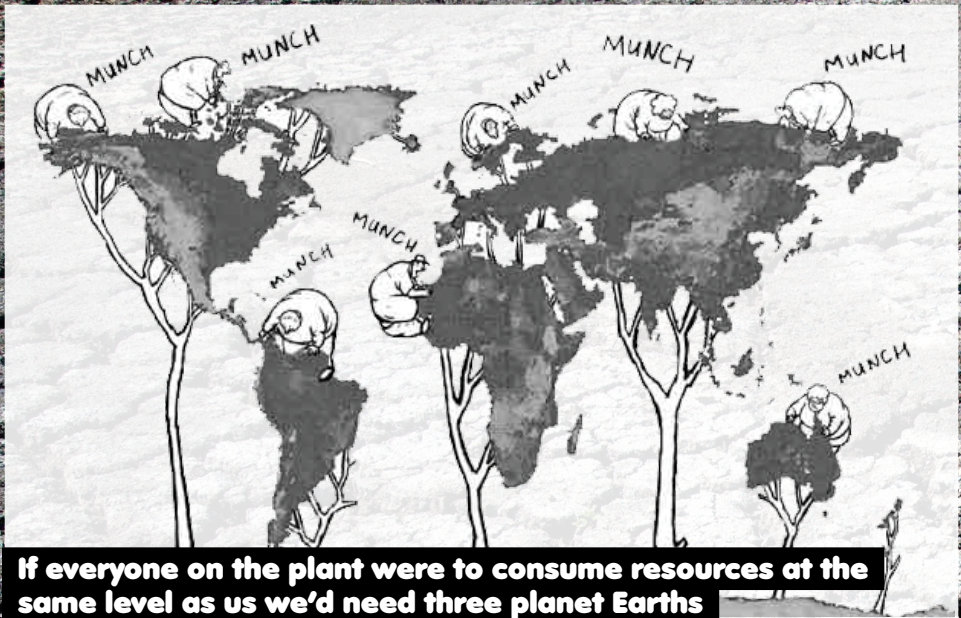
These are compelling questions, and have often not been adequately explored by activists in the past. People's lives today are probably more time-constrained than ever, with the all-consuming work-eat-shop-TV-sleep-work-eat-shop treadmill as intense as ever, so it's no surprise when the minority of people who take action on pressing social, political, economic and environmental issues of the modern age limit themselves to one area of activity.

However, the areas of environmental and social justice are far from mutually exclusive. As humans have spent their recent history colonising and drastically altering ecosystems the world over, they increasingly and extensively overlap. Indeed, by drawing a dividing line between them, to a large extent we're merely reinforcing the (false) dichotomy created in our mental and physical world between humans and nature.

While well-meaning, many social justice activists are anthropocentric in ignoring environmental challenges, with many environmental activists equally failing to acknowledge that humans are animals too, who need habitats and can live in harmony with ecosystems as much as any other species.

Such a split simply doesn't exist, with environmental devastation impacting on human development, in the same way that human development feeds into environmental devastation.





If everyone on the planet were to consume resources at the same level as us we'd need three planet Earths

A graphic and infamous example of the irrationality of this human/environmental duality is that of Haiti's descent into a state of barren chaos in the late 20th century and beyond. Here, thanks to a confluence of factors (but mostly externally-imposed and wildly inappropriate economic policies), we saw the country's poverty increase massively, just as its population density more-than-doubled in a short period. Economic inequality worsened drastically, and the rural population dwindled, with people migrating in their droves to eke out a living in some of the most dangerous peri-urban slums on the planet. Amidst this desperation, people were forced to extremes and soon worsened deforestation and degradation of the landscape to survive (e.g. in the 20th century, Haiti's forest cover went from more than 60% to less than 2%). The vicious cycle of social trauma->environmental damage->further social trauma was unleashed as

consequent soil erosion, flooding and mudslides (with trees no longer there to absorb rainwater or knit the soil together) had lethal and debilitating results.

Environmental programmes attempted to stem the loss of tree cover, particularly during the 1980s, but with roughly seven trees being cut down by the impoverished population for every one planted, it was a futile endeavour. Thus we can see that action on environmental issues is often so intertwined with social problems that to deal with one in isolation is foolish, at best.

A key turning point in making environmental justice activists acknowledge that the work they do is directly related to social justice has been regarding climate change. It's well acknowledged by now that those worst hit by global climate variability are the poor, both internationally and within our own countries.

As this global crisis, caused primarily by the industrial activities of the West, impacts hardest on those living in the global South (through increased disease burdens, crop failures, natural disasters, coastal flooding etc.) it forces us to really think about dealing with environmental challenges in a fair, just way. For instance, to minimise the impacts of climate change (for it's surely too late to talk about "stopping" the phenomenon), should we focus on curbing the harms of Western resource consumption and pollution, as that is the historical cause, or should we also be trying to dissuade the impoverished populations of the global South from attempting to emulate our "affluence" and thus worsen the burden of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions? Is it fairest to make allowances of GHGs emissions that can be assigned to countries on a per-capita basis? And in (so-called) conservation initiatives attempting to mitigate climate change - such as REDD¹ - should benefits accrue to national governments for the protection of their resources, or should it go to the local communities whose consent is vital to protecting the forests locally? Indeed, is it fair to even implement mechanisms to stop deforestation, when we fail to see that our landscape at home is

1 Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation

entirely denuded while we're using the land for other uses, such as agriculture?

As another of the most obvious examples, take the commonly quoted calculation which shows that if everyone on the planet were to consume resources at the same level as us in the financially affluent West, we'd need three planet Earths to sustain ourselves. With China, India, Brazil quickly closing the wealth gap (to the benefit of a portion of their population, at least) by rapid economic growth, that's exactly where we're heading. As environmental activists located in the West, we're forced to acknowledge both the huge environmental costs of such economic growth by middle-income countries, and also the huge inequity if we view this growth as wrong while failing to look closer to home.

It's an ethical minefield, that's for sure, and what's written above just about scratches the surface. However, the joy of acknowledging all this is that new generations of activists can have a more coherent set of core values, and grapple consistently with more issues than ever before!

Happy justice-seeking!

'At first I thought I was fighting to save rubber trees, then I thought I was fighting to save the Amazon rainforest. Now I realise I am fighting for humanity.'
- Chico Mendes, Brazilian rubber tappers' leader

How to

Organize a fundraiser gig!

The best way to raise some money for your organization is to run something that you know your friends will enjoy and of course, bring more friends with a few bob in their pocket

Tara Clarke, NUIM graduate and YFoE activist gives some Top Tips.

If you or your friends are in a band and don't mind playing for free, gigs are a great way to raise money. Not only can you charge people in, but you can also hold raffles and other games to raise as much as you can in one night. Here are a few steps to running a great fundraiser gig:

Find your band

Even if you don't know the band that well, they shouldn't mind playing to a different crowd and it's for a good cause.



Get promoting

Here is where we depend on the wonderful Facebook. Set it up as an event and invite everyone you know... including your granny! Having leaflets and posters to put around college also maximizes your chances of getting more people to come. However, leaflets are not always necessary; they can be expensive and waste a lot of paper. Find a friend that is a Photoshop wiz kid and get yourself an eye-catching A2 poster for the common room.



Book a venue

Preferably in the city centre where there are many transport links. You want to make it as easy as Uncle Bens to get to. The Pint on Eden Quay, Dublin 1 (beside Connolly station) is a great venue. It's free to book, you just have to pay €50 for the sound engineer for the night. There's also drink promos which is great to have on the poster.





Organise some games

Organise some games and get your hands on spot prizes! If you work in a supermarket/shop, it should not be a problem getting some spot prizes, especially if you mention their business on Facebook and the poster. One game that worked a treat for Young Friends of the Earth was 'Guess the number of jellies in the jar'. Everyone paid €1 to guess and the person who had the closest guess won the jellies... simple as. Raffles are also easy to run too.



Add the final details

You're pretty much organised, but a few more details could increase awareness for your organisation 10-fold as well as producing great pictures for afterwards. Why not get your friends together to help you paint a banner for the back of the stage? Balloons, bunting and streamers are great additions to change a plain looking venue into a proper party. Print off a few posters about what you're raising money for to put around the room and in the bathrooms.



Don't forget to keep updating Facebook to keep it fresh in people's minds. Put the venue up on Google Maps and maybe throw in a few transport options. Also, never take on more than you can handle - you'd be surprised about how much friends like helping out!

Lastly, not only are you raising money for a great cause you also raising awareness and that can do more in the long run, so don't forget to give yourself a pat on the back afterwards.

Good Luck!



How to Organise a Green Week

Trinity College Environmental Society auditor Gwen Duffy gives some sound advice on how to run an exciting campus Green Week



Start early spend the year aiming towards green week, keeping some of your best ideas for it. You don't want to end up with everything to do in the last few weeks.

Committee make sure you have a strong committee with assigned roles so that one person doesn't end up organising everything.

Involve invite other societies and people to participate and help. They may have ideas and connections that you haven't thought of.

Freebies get free things, such as pens and tea, from local environmental and fair trade organisations to give out during the week. They will raise awareness and attract people to your stand.

Competitions run numerous competitions such as photography, table quizzes, green business, etc and have good sponsored prizes.

Workshops have workshops that everyone can get involved in and learn something new, such as bike workshops or something about growing your own food (or beer!).

Quality, not quantity don't overwhelm yourselves by planning too many events. Decide on 2/3 events and work really hard to make them great and have maximum attendance.

Creativity a little creativity will go a long way in making your green week a success. Make everything big, bright and loud so that everyone knows it's green week. Use props that will grab attention.

Advertise put up posters, hand out flyers, make Facebook events. After all your hard work you want as many people as possible to attend your events and get lots of new people involved.

Theme choose a different theme for green week every year so you have something to focus on.

Some other things you could do

A GREEN GUIDE NATURE WALKS CAMPAIGN FOR BETTER RECYCLING FACILITIES CAMPAIGN FOR ENERGY CONSERVATION (BUILDINGS) DO A PETITION DRIVE DRESS UP IN PENGUIN COSTUMES DO AN ECO-FASHION SHOW GET FAIR TRADE PRODUCE INTO THE CANTEEN SET UP A COMMUNITY GARDEN PUSH FOR CYCLE PATHS HOLD A GREEN FAIR RAISE AWARENESS OF CARPOOLING CAMPAIGN FOR BETTER PUBLIC TRANSPORT HOLD A DEBATE (WITH DEBATING SOC) HOLD A "SWAP SHOP" BRING IN A GUEST SPEAKER HOLD A FILM SCREENING RUN A COMEDY DEBATE DO A POSTER CAMPAIGN GET RID OF PLASTIC CUPS FROM THE CAFES HOLD A DIRECT ACTION WORKSHOP ARRANGE A FARMERS' MARKET GIVE OUT FREE FOOD SET UP A BIKE WORKSHOP

Film Production & Editing

Producing a short film is an amazing way of getting across your ideas to a large number of people.

Dave Curran from Young Friends of the Earth shares some ideas.





Think about it: If your friend emailed you a link which would you be more likely to open?

A long article full of big blocks of text and references...

or a short YouTube film, with music and snappy editing so as to keep your attention?

Studies show younger generations have lower attention spans than our parents did, perhaps due to a combination of multiple TV channels, browsing the internet, being able to click ahead to your favourite track/episode rather than wait for the tape/record to get there. Maybe it's generally all the new and interactive media at our fingertips. Who knows.

So if you have an important message to get across, think seriously about making a short video to distribute via Facebook or email. Though it is hard and expensive to make a good video, a simple camera and some imagination can do wonders if you use the right techniques.

For technical advice you can ask Filmbase, some electronics stores, or look at the numerous How-To guides on the internet or instructional videos on YouTube. Perhaps there is a film department or society in your college? But remember there's no better way of learning than doing it in practice.

You can hire equipment from non-profit organisations such as Filmbase in Dublin, or the Cork Film Centre. Some college societies have some equipment. In other countries there are equipment rental companies, but few have non-profit membership based organisations like Ireland does (at least as far as we can tell).

Checklist:

Here is a list of things you might (in some cases definitely will!) need to produce a short video:

A SCRIPT!

Some sheets of paper with all the dialogue to be spoken, in the right order. Also put in directions such as where people should stand, walk, gesture etc.

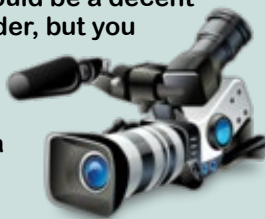


ACTORS?

If your script requires playing out a scene, don't assume your volunteers and friends will be able to act in front of the camera. Even remembering the lines can be difficult when the camera is on you. Consider hiring an actor for the shoot; on www.crookedhouse.ie you can put up ads for actors, and if you're not looking for movie stars you should be able to hire someone for a reasonable price

CAMERA

Pretty important for shooting a film! Cameras range in size and cost from small digital cameras that can shoot video, to large professional movie cameras, with everything in between including steadicams for moving shots and all sorts of miniature cameras that take movie-quality footage, and some that can be attached to bikes, skateboards etc. Best bet for an amateur film would be a decent quality camcorder, but you will probably need other equipment too, such as a mic, a tripod, etc



MICROPHONE (MIC)

There are lots of types of mics, so you will need to ask for advice on which is the best to use. Camera mounted mics are not usually great on small cameras. Clip-on mics can be attached to your subjects' collars or clothes to pick up sound best. You can get both wired and wireless clip-on mics. A "boom" mic is a long microphone you sometimes see used on movie sets; they are "directional", ie they focus their attention on where you point them, thus taking more of the sound you want, and less of the surrounding noise. "Wind sock" mics are boom mics with fluffy covers that block the noise of wind. Handheld mics are those you see reporters using, and are fine for shooting interviews.



TAPE OR DIGITAL?

If your camera captures footage digitally this is easier for uploading onto a computer later. Traditionally in movies film captures better quality footage but technology has closed the gap.



TRIPOD

Very important if you are shooting anything other than a sit-down interview, and even then you might need it. Tripods usually come with a "plate" on top, which the camera slides onto and locks in place.



SPARE BATTERIES

Don't take any chances!



TIME

Shooting and producing a film **ALWAYS** takes longer than you anticipate. Better to allow more time than run out or have to rush the job.



CABLE

If you are shooting on tape you will need to upload the footage onto whatever computer you are using, most likely by uploading it in "real time" (ie an hour of footage takes an hour of uploading) using a cable of some sort (e.g. firewire cable). Ask for advice on this to make sure you have the right type!

COMPUTER

You will need to edit the footage. A computer is essential! If there's a lot of footage this will take up a lot of space; make sure your computer is powerful enough to handle the editing program itself.



EDITING SOFTWARE

There are many editing programs you can use: Adobe Premier Pro, Final Cut Pro, iMovie (for mac)... Normally these are expensive, though if you ask around there may be an internet-savvy person who can download you a copy. Not that we condone that sort of thing. (We totally do, unless you are reading this from the Microsoft Headquarters, in which case we do not).



YOUTUBE DOWNLOADER

Some computer programs, which you can download for free, allow you to take youtube videos and download them so you can edit them together into your video. Youtube has millions of videos, so if you want to make an environmental themed movie, there is no shortage of news and documentary footage of melting ice caps, rainforests, oil drilling, beautiful nature scenes etc. One such program is JDownloader, which is free.

VIDEO CONVERTER

You can download free programs that can convert a video clip from any format to any other (e.g. from AVI to .Mov format). Try this one: AnyVideoConverter.



MIC "SHOCKMOUNT"

These are for insulating your microphone from vibrations. It is possible to make them. You'll probably be ok without these.

STEADICAM

These are great for moving shots (e.g. shooting someone walking through the street, or having your camera move through a room). But they are expensive to hire. For about €400 you can hire a professional steadicam operator for a day (ask at Filmbase). A steadicam comes in many forms but often it is a harness that you wear, which is connected by a mechanical arm to a holder that the camera sits on, and usually a battery which also acts as a counterweight. Using it is very tricky if it's your first time, and it is heavy so you might fall and break it (or yourself).

General Tips

K.I.S.S.

Keep It Simple, Stupid! You are not Stanley Kubrick and you don't have millions of euro. Keep your shots as simple and straightforward as possible or else expect all manner of problems. In fact expect all manner of problems even for simple projects! There's a reason it costs millions of dollars to shoot one standard TV episode these days. A huge storm caused havoc during the shoot of Coppola's *Apocalypse Now*; a simple rainy day could mess your shoot up.



THE RULE OF THIRDS

This means that, like in photography, in cinematography the “image” should be thought of as divided into three sections across and three down (so actually, nine). If you're shooting a subject (e.g. a person) their head should ideally be at one of the intersections (where the vertical and horizontal lines cross). Don't feel you absolutely have to stick to this but you should bear it in mind.

USE HEADPHONES WHILE SHOOTING

The headphones are attached to the camera and they tell you exactly what sound is being picked up. Just because you hear it clearly doesn't mean the camera does; headphones fix this.



Camera must stay on one side or the other of the red line.

THE 180 DEGREE RULE

This means that in any shot there is an “invisible” 180 degree line through the shot, and the camera must always shoot from just one side of this line. Look up any interview with, say Barack Obama. He will always appear to be on “your” left or your right – this is because the camera operator has stayed on one side of the 180 degree rule. Otherwise it is disconcerting to the viewer, and hard for them to get their heads around where things are in the shot. It feels like the subjects have suddenly switched sides. If you have ever watched a football game you will notice how, except on rare occasions one team is always trying to kick the ball to the right of your TV screen (until they switch sides at half time of course!). Google this for more explanation if you are not clear.

FILM SCENES USING MORE THAN ONE SHOT

That way you can take the best bits and edit them together.

HOW CLOSE TO ZOOM?

Some tips: If the subject is moving, you need to see their legs in the shot, otherwise it looks like they are floating or using a skateboard! Close ups are good for showing emotion or creating tension.

FILM AT THE SAME HEIGHT AS THE SUBJECT

BEWARE EXTERNAL SOUND

e.g. wind, passers-by etc. Mics of various kinds come in handy for this, as do headphones (see above).

STAND CLOSE

It is generally better to stand close to your subjects rather than zoom in.

SHOOT WITH THE LIGHT, NOT AGAINST IT.

Shoot roughly in the direction of the sunlight, so your subject's face isn't in the shadows.

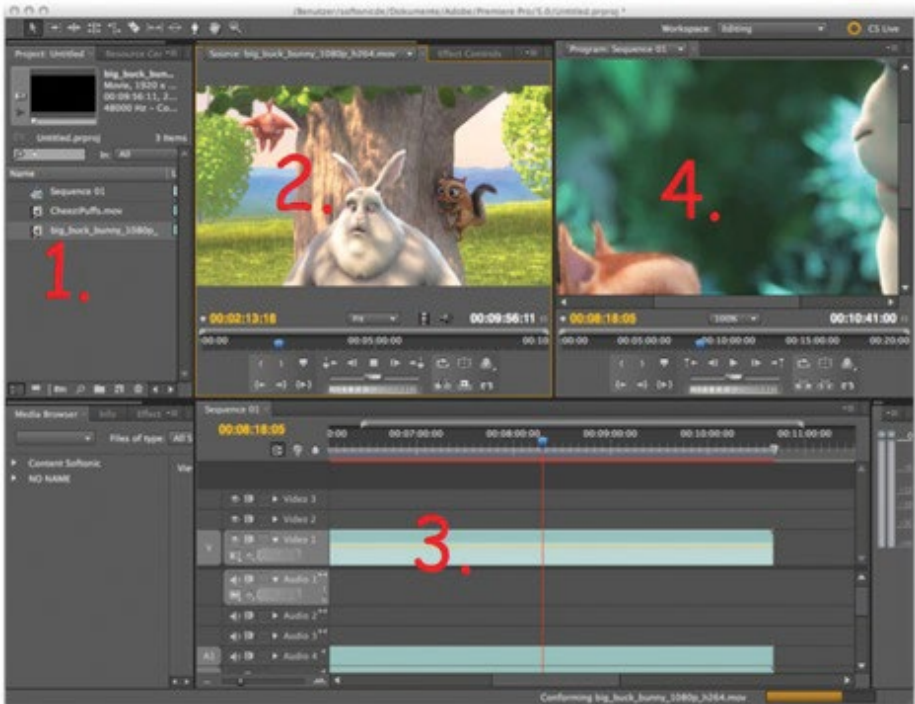
FOCUS

Adjust the camera's focus to make sure you are focused on the right place. Otherwise the background might be clear and the person's face blurry, which looks bad (unless it's what you're going for).



Editing Your Film

There are online tutorials on youtube for the various video editing programs (e.g. here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=BhL2wYNwL_g). It is recommended you try these. But for now here is a VERY simple overview of how some of the programs work. Below is a sample screenshot of what you might be looking at while the program is open in front of you.



1. When you import clips to the edit program, the clips will be here. You then select one and drag it to:
2. ...Here, where you can play the clip, and cut the piece you want to use. You then drag that to:
3. ...Here, which is your timeline, where all the clips are laid out. Clips usually consist of Video (top half of the timeline) and Audio (bottom half). You can separate the video and audio easily enough.
4. Here is where the movie is watched as it is now. i.e. if you arrange clips in an order on the timeline, you can see how it currently looks by watching it here.

Remember video programs don't all look the same, and the layout can vary even with the same program, so don't assume this is exactly what it will look like.

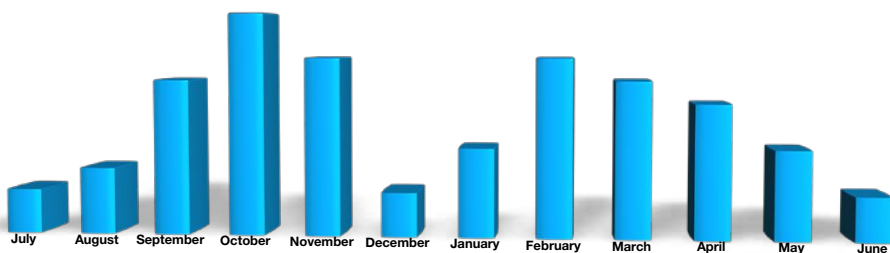


The Student Power Cycle

The student year is short – when you take mid-terms, summer holidays, Christmas holidays and exams out, it's only about 6 months long. This means activists have two main windows of opportunity where student power (e.g. the free time people have, the chances of good turnout at demos etc) is at its height – roughly the middle periods of the two academic terms.

activists have two main windows of opportunity where student power is at its height

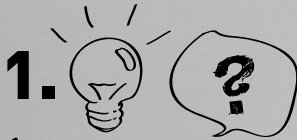
This doesn't mean nothing can happen outside of these periods; remember some students don't do exams so they'll be free during exam time, and many students will still be reachable during the summer, especially if unemployment is high because people might be looking for something to do. But to maximise your chances of success when trying to mobilise student power, pay attention to the Student Power Cycle!



Developing your Idea and Your Plan

How to plan:

Projects and campaigns usually start because we feel inspired about an idea or passionate about a particular issue. Our first impulse is to throw ourselves into action straightaway. But if we take a little time to analyse the situation and to develop a plan of action we can increase our effectiveness and our chances of success.



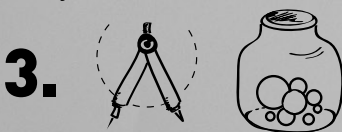
1. Define your aims

What is it that you want to achieve? You should be able to sum up this up in one clear sentence: "Create an organic school garden", "Stop this development from destroying our village", "Live together in a co-operatively owned house". Your group's aim should be realistic and achievable. Don't worry too much if your group can't come up with a united long term vision, but you do need to agree on a common immediate or short term goal to be able to work together.



2. Gathering more information

What do you need to know to achieve your aims? This could include environmental data, details about similar projects/campaigns or background information about companies/institutions/people involved. Accurate information will not only help you make a good plan and give you ideas for action, but also help you to convince local people and potential allies. But don't get paralysed by a mountain of irrelevant information...!



3. Identify targets

In this part you are analysing the information you have already gathered. Start by looking at all the different people and institutions that have an interest in the issue. Who are the people you need to talk to/convince/pressure to achieve your aim? There is a very useful tool for this called Forcefield Analysis. Look up the 'Planning' Resources on seedsforchange.org.uk.

CAMPAIGN MAPPING

4.



Tactics and Actions

Once you have identified people/institutions to target, you need to decide on the best method to do this. Many groups do this by plunging straight into discussing the first one or two ideas that people come up with. Often they get stuck there for hours and time runs out before other (more interesting) options can be explored. This approach not only limits the choice of action, but also stifles creativity. You can avoid this by using an Action Brainstorm.

This tool helps to quickly gather a large number of ideas for actions you can do. The idea is to encourage creativity and free energy. Begin with stating the issue to be tackled. Ask people to say whatever comes into their heads as fast as possible - without censoring it. The crazier the ideas, the better. This helps people to be inspired by each other. Have one or two note takers to write all the ideas down where everyone can see them. Make sure there is no discussion or comment on others' ideas. Structured thinking and organising can come afterwards. After the people run out of ideas check over the list of actions that has been generated and get short explanations for any that aren't clear.

Now you can move on to discussing the advantages and disadvantages of the different ideas. Make sure you don't discount crazier ideas out of hand. Sometimes these are the ones with the most potential. A good way of analysing actions is the flowchart. See 'Planning' Resources on seedsforchange.org.uk.

5.



Pull the Plan Together !

By now you should have a good idea of what kind of actions and tactics you want to go for. The next exercise helps you to form them into a Time Line.

The purpose of a time-line is to give you an idea of how many different things you may have to do, and when.

For example, a group wants to set up a resource centre for local people and community groups to use. They started by working out what the overall time frame is - the aim is to have the centre up and running within six months. Then the group worked out what tasks need to be done by when. For example the funding application needs to be handed in quite soon, because it takes most funders two or three months to decide. But to be able to apply for funding the group needs a constitution, finance plan and a bank account. The group also needs some money straight away as well as publicity to get more people involved. See 'Planning' Resources on seedsforchange.org.uk for a drawing of a TimeLine.

6.



Reviewing your plans and actions

In the day to day nitty gritty work it is easy to lose sight of the long-term aims. When a group gets stuck it helps to review what you set out to do and what you have achieved so far. It is also important for every group to recognise and celebrate its successes as well as learning from mistakes. As more information is discovered your strategy may need to change.

Let's not forget that empowering people and building communities are really important in this disenfranchised society. They are major achievements, even if they are not a direct aim of your group.



Meet with officials

Meeting with elected officials, or other authorities, in person is an opportunity to make personal contact with decision-makers and convey your position in a persuasive and animated manner. A lobby visit allows you to tell your TD or college president what you think about a certain issue or bill and ask her/him to take positive action.

You might be surprised how much impact you can have by just sitting down and making your representative know that you feel strongly about the issue.

Friends of the Earth UK won the world's first climate change reductions legislation largely on the back of several hundred individuals visiting their MPs' offices as part of a mass lobby. Here are some suggestions for a successful lobby visit:

Before the Meeting

- Request a meeting in writing with specific times and dates. Follow up with a call to the scheduler or secretary to confirm the meeting.
- Make sure to convey what issue or bill you would like to discuss.
- Decide on talking points to express your most important ideas.
- Set a goal for the meeting. Do you want the Representative to vote for or against a bill or introduce legislation?

During the Meeting

- Be prompt.
- Keep it short and stick to your talking points.
- Take the time to thank the elected official for past votes in support of your issues.
- Provide personal and local examples of the impact of the legislation.
- Be honest and don't claim to know more than you do about an issue. You don't have to be the expert, just a committed and active constituent.
- Set a deadline or timeline for response.

After the Meeting

- Write a thank you letter to the legislator.
- Send any materials and information you offered.
- Follow up on deadlines and if they are not met, set up others. Be persistent.

How to

Organise a Protest

Protesting is perhaps the single most effective tool in the activist's handbook. It gathers people together, creates solidarity, and sends a powerful message of strength to both the opponents and the participants.



Protesting is not just about persuading those in power to change their policies; it is a “call-out” to like-minded citizens everywhere, to not just sit at home complaining about the problem but to come together with others and try to fix it.

It is hard to put one’s finger on what makes a difference between a successful protest and one where nobody shows up. But it is far better if people are already talking about the issue before you come along and ask them to come and take part in a demonstration about it. If you have to explain why people should care, your campaign may not be quite ready to have a protest. Perhaps try other methods first – an open meeting, a petition drive, etc.

How to Pull it Off

Protests rarely spring out of nowhere. Major mobilizations often have several preconditions:

- An existing “community” of people who are potential supporters - people rarely seek out protests made up entirely of strangers. People get involved in political activism through people they know, or through other, related groups and activities they have taken part in. Tapping into these communities - neighbourhoods, groups of students, people who work together, college societies - will make your mobilization efforts more successful. Sometimes there are key people of influence within social networks who, if you convince them, others will more likely follow.
- Lots of people understand the issue, not just intellectually but relate to it in real life - so the simpler the issue (or the simpler you make it) the easier it is to mobilize around. When you are “framing” (ie describing or explaining) the issue, it should be as black and white as possible; and your job is to emphasise the right-versus-wrong aspect rather than dwell on nuance or complexity. People are moved to protest through stories of injustice and appeals to common values; you must win over their hearts as much as their minds.
- A clear focus on who the villains are!

Sometimes there are key people of influence within social networks who, if you convince them, others will more likely follow.

Organisers' checklist:

What you'll need:

- Megaphones
- posters
- flyers
- placards
- banners
- a meeting point
- a rally point.

Optional:

- Guest speakers
- sound equipment
- whistles
- drums
- costumes
- facepaint
- stewards (ie people wearing high-vis jackets to guide the march... depends on the numbers expected).

Placards and banners should ideally be made publicly so everyone can join in - for example make them in the college canteen during lunchtime!

Get the word out as far in advance as possible - a few weeks preferably, or possibly more.

Use all methods at your disposal - Facebook, posters, emails etc.

If you can, go around and talk to people – people can ignore posters but the personal approach is better if you have the time.

Make sure you inform the Gardai of your route – they may want to meet you beforehand.

Sort out the logistics first - the guest speakers (if any), the route, the posters, the sound equipment etc. Make sure this is out of the way early.

Think realistically how long the whole process will take. For example, will people travelling from other towns be late arriving? How long will it take hundreds of you to walk from A to B?



If you are gathering in a college, choose a busy area as the meeting point: A crowd often attracts a crowd, and it's better to fill up a small space than feel lost in a huge empty carpark.

Make sure that even if not many turn out, you still have enough costumes, placards, whistles, banners etc to make a good visual spectacle.

To keep the momentum of the campaign afterwards, perhaps invite people for tea and sandwiches in a nearby pub after the march. Then take their emails. Perhaps have a discussion on where they think the campaign should go next.

Also for keeping the momentum, perhaps hand out petition forms or flyers to participants, to distribute to their friends. Perhaps have a next action arranged.

Make it creative, without losing sight of the purpose.

If your protest involves students, why not involve the juggling society, or the music society.

Start your protest somewhere busy and visible, and make it musical! Drums and whistles are good, or you could stick a stereo on a trolley, perhaps powering it with a generator. The beats will make the whole thing more fun for people to join in with.

Use facepaints, or dress up. That way even if not that many people turn out, you can make a great photo op that might still get into the paper.



Direct Action

Direct action has been vital in many social struggles, using tactics such as civil disobedience, sit-ins, hunger strikes, blockading roads, and many more, smaller actions.

This article highlights the critical role it plays in activism.



Adapted from *Do it Yourself: A Handbook for Changing our World*; Edited by Trapese, a popular education collective. See www.trapese.org

For a list of 198 non-violent direct action tactics, see www.aforcemorepowerful.org/resources/nonviolent/methods.php

Direct action is an important part of activism. It stands in contrast to indirect or political action where elected representatives are asked to make changes on our behalf. A huge range of things can be considered 'direct action'.

So what's the difference with protesting, for example?

The difference is that in direct action people do not wait for the authorities to change – they place their bodies and their freedoms in the way of power. Direct action has been vital in many social struggles, using tactics such as:

- Civil disobedience
- Sit-ins
- Hunger strikes
- Blockading roads
- and many more, smaller actions.



“In direct action people do not wait for the authorities to change”

Why use direct action?

Historically, very few struggles have used exclusively legal means to achieve their goals. Many of the rights we have in Western countries, such as:

- the right of women to vote
- the eight-hour working day
- the working age limit
- civil rights for black people

and more, have been achieved through massive resistance and upheavals of the people.



Some groups such as Greenpeace use highly mediated and publicised actions to achieve their goals, such as the 2012 blockading of Shell petrol stations in the UK to highlight Shell's planned drilling in the Arctic.



Other groups use lower-profile actions, such as banner drops, street parties (to highlight over-dependence on cars), or 'guerilla gardening' – planting abandoned urban land with food.



Small actions can sometimes achieve big publicity and results – the Vita Cortex workers' sit-in in Cork in 2011/12 was eventually a success.

So how do we do it?

Isn't a protest direct action?

Well, yes, but protests are often a form of petition to the authorities. A step up would be for a group of protestors to occupy an official building. If you are going to do this, plan it carefully and make sure that you have a police station support person and a legal observer (more info on seedsforchange.org.uk). In universities, often an email suggesting a student occupation of a university building can be remarkably effective!



Coalition in Defence of Water and Life

Bolivia Maude Barlow in her book *Blue Gold* (2001) explains how the city of Cochabamba in Bolivia has become a key symbol of a victory of people's struggle against global capitalism.

A huge majority opposed the privatisation of their water supply by the US transnational Bechtel, which meant prices increased by up to 400 per cent. A broad-based movement of workers, peasants, farmers and others created La Coordinadora de Defensa del Agua y de la Vida (the Coalition in Defence of Water and Life, La Coordinadora for short) to 'de-privatize' the local water system. Hundreds of thousands of Bolivians marched to Cochabamba in a showdown with the government, and a general strike and transportation stoppage brought the city to a standstill.

Despite a severe police response, finally, on 10 April 2000, the directors of Aguas del Tunari and Bechtel abandoned Bolivia, taking with them key personnel files, documents and computers, and leaving behind a broken company with substantial debts. Under popular pressure, the government revoked its hated water privatisation legislation.

Under popular pressure, the government revoked its hated water privatisation legislation.

Deeply chagrined at the failure of its pet project, the local government basically handed over the running of the local water service, SEMAPA, to the protesters and La Coordinadora, complete with debts. The people accepted the challenge, and set out to elect a new board of directors for the water company and develop a new mandate based on a firm set of principles: The company must be efficient, free of corruption, fair to the workers, guided by a commitment to social justice (providing first for those without water), and it must act as a catalyst to further engage and organise the grassroots.



Economics **as if People and the Planet** **mattered..**

By Dave Curran



It's no coincidence that the words "economics" and "ecology" sound somewhat similar. "Eco" has latin origins and refers to the home. Economics and ecology are both about how we manage our home. In economics, this refers typically to the individual business, or consumer, or at the "macro" level the entire economy. In ecology, our "home" is the planet Earth.

Both subjects are concerned with incredibly complex systems of interaction, with millions and billions of independent actors somehow managing to reach a delicate equilibrium with one another (most of the time).

Yet most economists completely ignore the similarities between them. Economists will tell you how delicate and complex modern economies are, and how injecting too much of one element –for example by printing too much money- can ripple through the rest of the system with unintended "knock-on" effects (like inflation). For this reason many economists are sceptical about grand schemes to fix social problems, especially if run by central government planners. They say the whole economic system is so complex that we should avoid fiddling with it.

However mainstream economists generally fail to appreciate that the same delicate equilibrium is found in nature.

If economics is to have any use to us in the 21st century, it needs to see nature as more than just a supplier of inputs (raw materials, "unused" land, energy) for the economy. The market economy is an integral part of a much larger system. Everything we eat, use, breathe and make comes from nature.

Right now capitalism is in its worst crisis since 1930s. And four years into this "Great Recession", almost all the tools in the mainstream economic toolbox have been tried, without success.

Seven billion consumers (and growing) all aiming for a western lifestyle is simply impossible.

Yes some government intervention is welcome; surely we don't want to just sit back and wait for the market to fix everything.

But top-down technocratic solutions like printing more or less money from central banks, or increasing or decreasing government spending –all of these have been tried by one government or another, and none have even begun to solve the problems of unemployment, insecurity and instability.

The reason is something more fundamental has changed about the modern capitalist system: it is running up against major planetary boundaries. Energy, arable land, pollution, food, population, countless types of minerals; in so many ways we are hitting ecological limits. As someone said, "the Earth is full".

Now economists are focusing on economic growth as the way out of the crisis: if we can grow the economic pie then we'll have enough money to pay off the gargantuan debt, create millions of new full-time jobs and everything will smoothen out. Surprisingly, even many on the “anti-capitalist” left have become passionate advocates of growth as the solution.

And why not? This strategy has worked for decades, allowing the insatiable greed of consumer capitalism to co-exist alongside a certain amount of social solidarity through the welfare state, public health and education, trade unions etc.

The problem is, now the science suggests we have reached the limits to economic growth. Seven billion consumers (and growing) all aiming for a western lifestyle is simply impossible. To survive the 21st century we need to *reduce* our impact on the planet, not expand production indefinitely and hope the wealth trickles down to everyone.

Economists have realised you can't cut your way out of this crisis. That's a good thing. But they still haven't caught up with where the science is at regarding the limits that our planetary boundaries place on growth. However, the crisis has given momentum to a new economics; one that recognises the enormity of the environmental crises, but also the huge capacity of people working together to find new and creative ways of doing things. This new ecological economics -promoted for example by the New Economics Foundation in the UK- respects both natural and economic systems, but also appreciates human capacity for problem solving. No quick fix grand plans from governments but a diversity of grassroots solutions from the ground up. Markets are good, as long as they do not erode communities or nature, or reduce human dignity. As a philosophy it is decades old -going back to E.F. Schumacher's landmark book *Small is Beautiful*.

The crisis has given momentum to a new economics.

The new economics is based on co-operation, small scale enterprise, long term thinking, strong communities, mutual support and solid moral values -everything that global capitalism tramples on today. Some elements of it are creeping into mainstream politics too -the focus on “responsible capitalism” by the British left for example.

This new economics is conservative (small 'c') in that it seeks to conserve traditions, institutions and nature rather than seeing all change as inherently positive regardless of what disruption it causes. It is progressive in that it recognises the capacity of people working together to make the world a better place. It is liberal in that it values diversity -business, co-operatives, state agencies, non profits, entrepreneurs and communities all trading, interacting, competing and collaborating in a vibrant social economy where greed isn't good but entrepreneurship is great; and where money can't buy happiness.

And it is green in that it recognises environmentalism as not an ideology or a belief system, but simply the updating of economic theory by including in it scientific understandings of how our natural world works (and how it affects us).

From those of us committed to social change, this new green economics potentially points to different and perhaps more interesting forms of activism, beyond the protest politics that radicalism seems to always revolve around.

As long as destructive capitalism is dominant, protest will always be necessary. But why not focus also on more productive efforts, like setting up co-operatives, clubs, businesses and social enterprises. Technology has opened up new avenues for creativity, for sharing ideas and knowledge and for collaboration. Let's use them to build, not just to oppose.

Perhaps this way economics can go from being a force for ecological destruction, into a tool for positive social change.

this new green economics potentially points to different and perhaps more interesting forms of activism



The Online Activist Toolkit

Over the past few years, the Internet has become an essential part of our lives. It's important to make it part of your campaigns, but don't become too dependent on it. It's a good communication tool, for organising, and keeping in touch with activists, and informing journalists and the public about your activities.

Just remember that online activism is useless unless it leads to offline action.

By Declan Meenagh



Facebook

The fact is that everyone is on Facebook. It's vital to have a Facebook presence, and it's vital to use it correctly. Fan pages are the best way for a group to have a public presence here. It makes it more professional and lets you create advertisements, which are cheap.

Creating a Facebook event is a very easy way to promote your activities. They are very easy to share, invite people to, and get the word out.

Set up a new Facebook group for active members, keep it secret, and keep in touch with your team. These allow group chats and let you collaborate on documents. It's an easier way to have internal conversations between meetings than email.

Further reading:

www.mashable.com and
www.allFacebook.com

Twitter

Twitter isn't as ubiquitous as Facebook, but it is used by a lot of journalists. Having a presence on Twitter is good for sending live updates about events. It's also useful for getting in touch with politicians. Don't send tweets into Facebook; it looks unprofessional and they are two different mediums so it doesn't work.

Doodle

This is a useful tool for finding a meeting time when people are free,
www.doodle.com.



Blogger

A blog is a series of articles on the web. It's useful to have one to keep in contact with activists, the public and journalists. Blogger lets you make static pages, so your blog will act as a website. Blogger is completely free, and very easy to use (you can have a website up in five minutes). The theme editor in blogger lets you play around with all aspects of the design and is very flexible. Make sure to link to your other social media accounts like twitter or Facebook. On these accounts, link to your blog posts as well.

YouTube

Nearly everyone has a phone with a video camera. Take videos of activities, interview people about the issues and post them to Youtube.

AudioBoo

AudioBoo is basically Twitter for audio clips. It has an iPhone and Android app, and is very easy to use.

SOME FINAL ADVICE:

Be yourself, be honest, don't spam, use photos and videos, link to other sites, ask and answer questions.

Follow Declan on twitter:
Email Declan:
Read his blog at:

www.twitter.com/dagda
dmeenagh@gmail.com
www.deathstick.org

Documentaries

A film screening can be a good fun event to hold – perhaps followed by a discussion or a social event. It is particularly good if the film is related to something you are campaigning on. Here are some Activism related films. Some of these are available in DVD shops; some are available online to download for free. Remember the “Learn More” section of the Young Friends of the Earth website (www.youngFoE.ie) has some interesting documentaries that you can stream live on the site.

Reviews from the Permaculture Media Blog
(www.permaculture-media-download.blogspot.com)

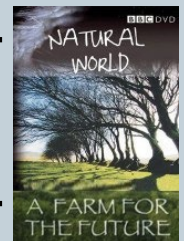
The Pipe (2011) (Documentary)

A compelling documentary film four years in the making, The Pipe tells the story of the small Rossport community which has taken on the might of Shell Oil and the Irish State.



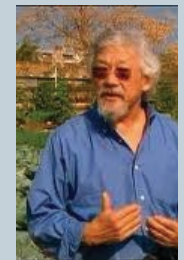
A Farm for the Future (2008) (Documentary)

An interesting BBC documentary about how permaculture farming can help us to survive the end of the oil age and the food production issues it will cause.



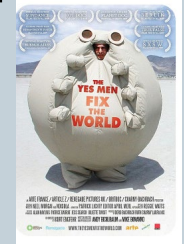
Cuba: The Accidental Revolution (2007) (Documentary)

When the Soviet Union collapsed, Cuban society was cut off from transport fuel, synthetic fertilizers, chemical pesticides and fossil fuel products in general. Factories closed, food supplies plummeted. Without fuel, fertilizer, and pesticides, Cubans were forced to turn to organic methods, oxen, and urban gardens, eventually establishing the modern world's first successful sustainable agriculture program.



The Yes Men Fix the World (2009) (Documentary)

This is a screwball true story about two gonzo political activists who, posing as top executives of giant corporations, lie their way into big business conferences and pull off the world's most outrageous pranks.



The Cove (2009) (Documentary)

In a sleepy lagoon off the coast of Japan, behind a wall of barbed wire and “Keep Out” signs, lies a shocking secret. It is here, under cover of night, that the fishermen of Taiji engage in an unseen hunt for thousands of dolphins. The nature of the work is so horrifying, a few desperate men will stop at nothing to keep it hidden from the world. An elite team of activists, filmmakers and free-divers embark on a covert mission to penetrate the cove.



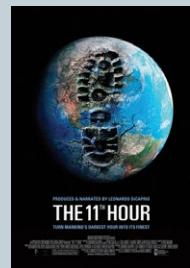
The Corporation (2004) (Documentary)

The Corporation explores the nature and spectacular rise of the dominant institution of our time. Footage from pop culture, advertising, TV news, and corporate propaganda illuminates the corporation’s grip on our lives.



The 11th Hour (2007) (Documentary)

The 11th Hour confronts viewers with evidence of the indelible footprint that humans have left on this planet and the catastrophic effects of environmental problems like pollution, deforestation, over-mining of resources. The film explores the reasons for the fix we’re in - corporate greed, public ignorance, bad leadership – but also describes how we can get out of the mess.



The Take (2004) (Documentary)

In the wake of Argentina’s spectacular economic collapse in 2001, Latin America’s most prosperous middle class found itself in a ghost town of abandoned factories and mass unemployment. Since then, workers have reclaimed the factories and made an astounding success of them—operating them as non-corporate, democratically run cooperatives.



The End of the Line (2009) (Documentary)

Humans have long regarded the world’s oceans as vast and inexhaustible. Now, we have learned otherwise. The End of the Line charts the devastating ecological impact of overfishing by interweaving both local and global stories of sharply declining fish populations.



Food, Inc. (2009) Documentary

Food, Inc. lifts the shroud from the modern food industry, exposing the highly mechanized underbelly that has been hidden from consumers. Food, Inc. reveals surprising and often shocking truths about what we eat, how it's produced, and who we have become as a society.



The Age of Stupid, (2009)

A man living alone in the devastated future world of 2055 looks at film footage from 2008 and asks: why didn't we stop climate change when we had the chance?



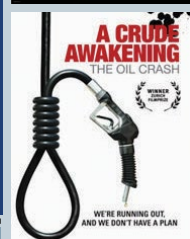
Inconvenient Truth, An (2006) (Documentary)

Though this is largely a speaker-on-stage style documentary, it's backed by great pictures, charts, and graphs, with cutaways to on-site footage and personal anecdotes, all woven together in a way that makes the whole thing very watchable. Gore's three-decade-long study of climate change shows in his seemingly effortless presentation of the material. The result is 100% convincing; the last nail in the coffin of the climate skeptics.



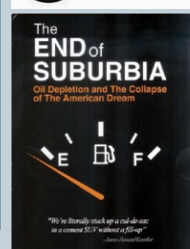
A Crude Awakening, The Oil Crash (2007) Documentary

A Crude Awakening serves as an excellent introduction to the subject of Peak oil and all of the related topics. The film puts the story together in a cogent, comprehensive way, leaving those who already know about Peak Oil with an expanded, reinvigorated understanding of the subject and provides newbies with a clear picture of a complex topic that promises to change life as we know it.



End of Suburbia, The (2004) (Documentary)

As gas prices soar and the possibility of future shortages becomes a regular mainstream-media story, questions are emerging about the sustainability of the American suburban way of life. What are its prospects as global demand for fossil fuels begins to outstrip supply and the cheap-fuel underpinnings of suburbia begin to erode?



Power of Community, The (2005) Documentary

How Cuba Survived Peak Oil

Cuba lost over half of its oil imports after the fall of the Soviet Union in 1990. This spelled disaster for its oil-dependent economy and society. But by completely reorganizing its agricultural system and implementing many other changes in day-to-day affairs, Cuba survived. This movie does a good job of showing us how they did it—and how WE might have to do it when Peak Oil finally kicks in.



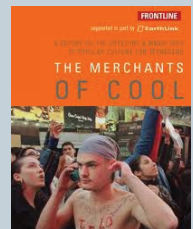
Gasland (2010)

When filmmaker Josh Fox is asked to lease his land for “hydraulic fracturing” or “fracking”, a high pressure form of oil and gas drilling, he embarks on a cross-country odyssey uncovering a trail of secrets, lies and contamination. A recently drilled nearby Pennsylvania town reports that residents are able to light their drinking water on fire.



The Merchants of Cool (2001)

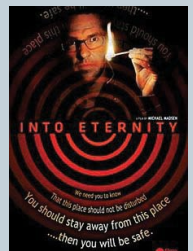
They are the merchants of cool: creators and sellers of popular culture who have made teenagers the hottest consumer demographic in America. But are they simply reflecting teen desires or have they begun to manufacture those desires in a bid to secure this lucrative market? And have they gone too far in their attempts to reach the hearts--and wallets--of America's youth?



Into Eternity

Into Eternity is a documentary about a deep geological repository for nuclear waste. It follows the construction of the Onkalo waste repository at the Olkiluoto Nuclear Power Plant on the island of Olkiluoto, Finland. Director Michael Madsen questions Onkalo's intended eternal existence, addressing an audience in the remote future.

Into Eternity raises the question of the authorities' responsibility of ensuring compliance with relatively new safety criteria legislation and the principles at the core of nuclear waste management.



Biking Around

How to be a Green Commuter

Getting a bike:

Buy secondhand – especially if it's your first bike. Buy from a shop where you can return with any problems, or else directly from the previous owner only if you're confident the bike is in working condition.

Beware of cheap bikes that “only need a bit of work” as they can often end up costing you more than one from a shop. If you are in doubt about the condition of a bike, don't buy it! Think about weight when you're choosing a bike, it's supposed to help you get places, not hinder you.

Locks:

Never buy a cheap lock, it's false economy. Even a cheap bike costs money to replace, so buy a good lock – spending 10% the price of the bike is a rule of thumb, but don't spend less than €20. Always lock your bike through the frame, not just the wheel, and lock it to something sensible. Never lock it to something that can be broken or unfastened, or that your bike can be lifted off. Avoid leaving your bike locked overnight, or consider buying a second, different lock.



Basic maintenance:

Lubricate your chain so that oil gets inside the links, but wipe off excess oil on the outside of the chain, as this collects dirt which can damage moving parts. Keep your tyres at the pressure indicated on the side – this can help prevent punctures, makes it less effort to cycle, and makes for safer braking. You'll probably need to top them up every week. If you can, store your bike inside. If you have no space to store it inside, then try to keep it somewhere sheltered.

Safety:

Make sure to always carry a front and rear light, this is for your safety but also it's the law. Always indicate before you turn, drivers can't read your mind. Be wary of large vehicles' blindspots – trucks turning left often can't see cyclists beside them. Be extremely careful around taxis as they are likely to be pulling in and out or u-turning, and have passengers opening doors without looking.

Fixing your bike:

You can do a lot of minor repairs yourself, even with a limited toolset. Everyone should learn to fix a puncture, and those with more of an interest can learn to fix anything else. If you don't have tools, there might be a community bike shop whose tools you can use – like Rothar in Dublin or Cork Community Bikes. These places also run bike maintenance classes, or else you can try some video tutorials from madegood.org

Accessories:

Cycling is easy, and you don't need many accessories. Mudguards can be very helpful for Irish weather, and can be fitted to most bikes without problems. Unless you're carrying a lot of weight, or travelling very far, a back-pack might be a better choice than a carrier or rack, as these can be heavy themselves. It might be advisable to bring a puncture repair kit and a small pump with you, though.



We have one planet and one planet only. Earth is our natural habitat which we share with every-other known organism. It is our home. ...

A World Worth Protecting

Conrad Richardson, former Environmental Officer with UCD Students' Union, asks what we must do to protect the Earth, and what will it mean for us if we don't...

Despite the high profile debates about climate change it is unequivocal that the planet is becoming warmer as a result unsustainable human activities. As a matter of fact "it is now evident from observations that there have been increases in global air and ocean temperatures; since the 1980s temperatures have risen between 0.2° to 0.6°".(UK Climate Projections, 2011) This is consequently leading to widespread melting of snow and ice, and thus rising global sea levels.

Climate change is a continuously evolving science with impacts that are global and that are becoming worse and more visible with each passing year.

In many ways human beings are acting like a parasite on the earth, our consumerism and wasteful practices playing havoc with the Earth's natural cycles. We are no longer developing in harmony with our environment; instead we are causing huge damage to the complex and fragile natural systems that make human life possible. We emit huge quantities of greenhouse and hazardous gases, we overuse natural resources and we create huge quantities of harmful waste. Many of us are unaware of the ever-increasing stresses we are putting on our planet, and fail to understand that our current way of life is simply not sustainable and that in the decades to come there will be repercussions –indeed they are being felt today in droughts, floods and increasingly frequent natural disasters.

We have one planet and one planet only. Earth is our natural habitat which we share with every other known organism. It is where we co-exist and survive. It is our home. As organisms we have evolved to adapt to our environment; the air we breathe, the food we eat and the water we drink all comes from fragile yet balanced cycles and any sudden deterioration of such cycles will directly impact on our state of well-being. To date we do not know of any other planet which has the necessary requirements for our survival. If we are to continue to develop in an unsustainable manner in the future we will find ourselves facing serious repercussions with nowhere to escape to. For this reason it is vital to protect and sustain our fragile environment. It should be in our own interest to protect our planet, not only for ourselves but also for future generations. A sustainable planet will allow for happier, more peaceful and healthier lifestyles

Today we face a colossal and inevitable challenge.

We are left with three choices; mitigation, adaptation or suffering. We are going to do some of each, however the more mitigation we do the less adaptation will need to be done and thus the less suffering there will be. To mitigate it must be understood that human-induced climate change is a result of unsustainable development, therefore the only solution must be to develop a fully sustainable society, where we use natural resources at a rate which they can be naturally replenished. We need to develop in a manner best defined using the 1987 Brundtland Commission Report definition; “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.

All in all, if we want to significantly reduce our ‘ecological footprint’, we must act as a global community in which we view the earth as our home and understand that nature does not recognise political borders.

Then to succeed in reducing emissions we need what social scientists call a ‘paradigm shift’ – where we completely rethink how we view the issue. We need to globalize towards a sustainable future, using recyclable low-carbon input technologies that are naturally regenerative and essentially inexhaustible, all at the same time as “ensuring that development strategies for economic growth are implemented in harmony with environmental sustainability”. (World Bank, 2009)

Perhaps most importantly of all, we need to change our value systems. With massive inequality, economic instability, financial criminality and widespread anger and disillusionment with the old system, we know for certain that the old ways have failed. The system based on greed, materialism and endless economic growth has come crashing down. It is up to us –young people- to determine what kind of world we build in its place.

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YOUNG Friends of the Earth



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme

