

is more important than ever that the offshore industry continues to invest in order to protect its workers.”

**Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> September**

Waste management could have been devised with a view to useful employment, local control, community renewal and energy or resource efficiency. Instead, many local authorities have entered into 25-year contracts with multinational corporations to maximise their profits over that period. None of them promised to prevent waste from arising. Their aim is not to prevent or reduce waste in the first place, but to organise it profitably in a rubbish society. Their focus is on turning waste management into a commodities market rather than on any idea of environmental responsibility. When the market says that electronic waste can release profits by being shipped to India, then shipped to India it will be. When the market says our 'recycled' glass can release profits by being crushed and sold as fish-tank bedding, then it will happen. However, when the market says that there is no more profit in these things, our electronic waste and glass will be dumped and our paper buried or burnt. We had no say in the political arrangements that made the private profit of global conglomerates predominate over the public interests of our local communities. Now, it is commercial organisations that have a vested interest in the continued production of waste, and none at all in the waste reduction that events will force on us all.

**Additional prayers:**

**Sources:**

Living Earth, The Ecologist [www.foe.org.uk](http://www.foe.org.uk), [www.greenpeace.org.uk](http://www.greenpeace.org.uk),  
[www.wwf.org.uk](http://www.wwf.org.uk), [www.amberlinks.org](http://www.amberlinks.org), [www.edie.net](http://www.edie.net)

The October Edition of the Prayer diary will be put online at the end of September 2008.

If you would like to receive the prayer diary each month by email (free), please email [prayer-guide@christian-ecology.org.uk](mailto:prayer-guide@christian-ecology.org.uk) and request this. Picture on front cover: Soft Shield Fern

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**CHRISTIAN ECOLOGY LINK**

**Sep 2008**

**Prayer-Guide**

for

**The Care of  
Creation**



“Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.” (Rev. 3.20)

“To pray is nothing more than to open the door, giving Jesus access to our needs and permitting him to exercise his power in dealing with them. It requires no strength. It is only a question of our wills. Will we give Jesus access to our needs?” (Ole Hallesby)

### **Monday 1<sup>st</sup> September**

Leaders of all the main Christian denominations have called upon Christians throughout England to use the period from now until 4<sup>th</sup> October as an opportunity to put the environment at the heart of their worship. This initiative, called ‘Time for God’s Creation’ springs out of a resolution by the 3<sup>rd</sup> European Ecumenical Assembly that this period “be dedicated to prayer for the protection of Creation and the promotion of sustainable lifestyles that reverse our contribution to climate change.” For further details go to: [www.churches-together.net](http://www.churches-together.net)

### **Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September**

A report on global agriculture by the International Assessment of Agricultural Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD) brings together 4 years of study by 400 scientists and 30 governments. It recognises that organic agriculture can contribute to global food security, help tackle climate change, protect soils and conserve wildlife. It also criticises industrial agriculture for being “too narrowly focussed”. DEFRA’s Professor Bob Watson, who chaired the assessment, concluded that “business as usual is no longer an option” and called for a shift to ‘agro-ecological’ food production. The report called for a move to more holistic farming systems that aid biodiversity and local communities. The Soil Association comments that organic farming at its best achieves both these aims. “It is more adaptable to small-scale and poorer farms in developing countries, as it doesn’t rely on expensive chemical inputs.”

### **Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September**

New research from the University of Kansas finds that GM soya engineered to resist Monsanto’s weedkiller Roundup produces around 9%

### **Friday 26<sup>th</sup> September**

The Shell Springboard programme, now in its 4<sup>th</sup> year, is offering small businesses up to six awards of between £20,000 and £40,000 to help fund innovative ideas to tackle climate change. Shell’s chairman believes that small businesses are a vibrant and creative sector of the economy, so are ideally placed to be climate change entrepreneurs. “Shell’s planning suggests that we will be reliant on a mix of different energy sources and energy saving technologies. Grassroots innovation could be a crucial factor in driving the development of this mix.” One of last year’s winners, Dr Paula Carey of Carbon8, won the award for turning everyday rubbish from landfill sites into building materials such as bricks or roofing. She is now in partnership with Kent County Council to create a pilot project on a local landfill site. Closing date for applications: November 7<sup>th</sup>.

### **Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> September**

Re-manufacturing is often regarded as the poor relation of waste disposal, but the industry employs more than 50,000 people and contributes £5 billion to the UK economy, covering everything from printer cartridges to rugged industrial machinery. A formal definition might be “Bringing end-of-life products back to as-good-as-new, with a warranty to match.” A new website – [www.remanufacturing.org.uk](http://www.remanufacturing.org.uk) - explains what it does, who is doing it, and with what products, as well as providing advice for businesses seeking cost savings while helping the environment.

### **Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> September**

God our Father, please teach us how to live more simply, that others may simply live. Help us to turn away from our arrogant ways and to be more sensitive towards all your creation. Redeem us, redeem your world, heal its wounds and dry its tears, for the sake of your dear Son, who died for us all.

### **Monday 29<sup>th</sup> September**

According to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) there were over 200 hydrocarbon spills last year from Britain’s oil rigs and gas platforms, with no improvement on previous years. On average there was more than one ‘major or significant’ oil or gas leak every other day. “Twenty years on from Piper Alpha, we must learn key lessons to ensure that failures of basic systems do not lead to major incidents. With the demand for oil and gas so high and with assets being worked beyond their original intended life span, it

kill fish and allowing ships to enter only through vast locks that would need to be built into the structure.

Alternatives include a 'tidal fence' which would not dam the estuary, but use a string of underwater turbines to generate electricity from the natural flow of the tides. Ships and fish could pass easily, although the fence would generate only a fraction of the energy produced by other proposals. A tidal reef would see floating turbines connected to concrete bases and strung between Aberthaw in Wales and Minehead in Somerset. The water-level difference of just 2 metres would have a smaller impact on the tidal range, allowing ships to sail through 'doors' in the reef and fish to navigate the slow-moving turbines. Low-tech components would make the project cheaper than the barrage and the electrical output would be more constant.

### Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> September

Government ministers have claimed that new power stations would be needed to plug a claimed 'energy gap', but a report by independent energy experts Poyry for WWF and Greenpeace finds that no major new power stations will be needed to meet Britain's electricity requirements up to at least 2020. The report also finds that if Britain delivers on its renewable energy promises and acts successfully to improve energy efficiency in line with its National Energy Efficiency Action Plan, there would be no energy gap to plug. Moreover this strategy would reduce our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by up to 37% by 2020. Keith Allott of WWF commented: "This report should be good news for the Government. If it gets real on its own targets on renewables and energy efficiency, then we can keep the lights on, reduce our reliance on expensive fossil fuel imports and dramatically cut our carbon emissions. But a green light for a new Kingsnorth power station would at a stroke undermine the Government's policies on climate change and Gordon Brown's promise of a green energy revolution."

### Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> September

"Delivering Sustainable Construction" is an event consisting of a day of practical exhibitions and informative seminars highlighting sustainable construction. The event takes place at the Margam Country Park, Port Talbot, South Wales and is free to all. Expert speakers will lead seminars on biomass boilers, structural insulation, ground/air heating and ventilation, anaerobic digestion, solar thermal heating, permeable paving, district heating systems, water treatment and sustainable drainage systems. The programme is suitable for architects, consultants and constructional and environmental professionals looking to achieve sustainable construction. To book a place, email Burdens Environmental, or go to their website.

lower yields than non-GM soya. The GM crop only recovered when extra manganese was added – suggesting that genetic modification hindered the take-up of manganese from the soil. Even this addition, however, only brought the GM soya's yield to the same level as the non-GM crop. These findings undermine claims that GM crops are the solution to world hunger – hardly surprising when GM crops are modified, not for higher yields, but for insect and weed control.

### Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> September

Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) has wiped out 70% of the world's commercial bee colonies and is now appearing in Europe. UK government inspectors found that 20% of bee colonies perished last winter. Although organic honey cannot be produced in Europe because of pollution, organic farming has a prime role to play in preventing complete disaster – which would affect many of our food crops. The Institute of Science in Society (ISIS) comments: "Organic farming practices that retain more natural habitats and avoid chemical pesticides should provide honeybees with sanctuaries from the ravages of CCD. It would be prudent to create organic bee sanctuaries as widely and as soon as possible."

### Friday 5<sup>th</sup> September

Organic Fortnight begins tomorrow with courses, food festivals in Bristol and Glasgow, school breakfasts, assemblies and farm visits, and – on the 13<sup>th</sup> – a fund-raising ball in Oxford when green ties will be de rigeur. While 1 tonne of synthetic nitrogen fertiliser requires 1 tonne of oil and 37,000 litres of oil to produce, its use releases 67.5% of Britain's emissions of nitrous oxide – a pollutant 310 times more powerful than CO<sub>2</sub>. Organic farming relies instead on solar-powered clover and animal manure, enabling the soil to store more carbon which would otherwise contribute to global warming. For details of Organic Fortnight, go to: [www.soilassociation.org/organicfortnight](http://www.soilassociation.org/organicfortnight)

### Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> September

- CEL's **LOAF** principles continue to attract wide interest:
- **LOCALLY PRODUCED FOOD** supports local economies and reduces transport emissions;
  - **ORGANICALLY GROWN FOOD** leads to a healthier soil with more organic material, micro-organisms and wildlife;
  - **ANIMAL FRIENDLY FOOD** leads to healthier living conditions for farm animals;

- **FAIRLY TRADED FOOD** guarantees that overseas workers who produce our imported foods get a fair wage and UK farmers are paid a fair price.

CEL has produced **LOAF** placemats which can be photocopied to provide A4 sheets to go in each person's place when there is to be a communal meal such as a Harvest Celebration, an Alpha Supper or any church meal. See [www.christian-ecology.org.uk](http://www.christian-ecology.org.uk)

### Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> September

Father, forgive us for our short-sightedness, our greed and for the part we have played, however unwittingly, in the destruction of your world. Forgive us that we have exploited the world's resources for ourselves while so many others lack the basic necessities. Create in us a new heart and a new determination, that we may adopt a lifestyle that is gentle to the earth and just to the poor.

### Monday 8<sup>th</sup> September

A new report from WWF called "UK Water Footprint: the impact of UK's food & fibre consumption on global water resources" finds that:

- While we use on average 150 litres of water a day, we consume around 30 times as much in 'virtual' water used to produce the food we eat and the clothes we wear. This is equivalent to about 58 bathtubs full of water.
- Only 38% of our water use comes from UK rivers, lakes and groundwater. The rest is taken from many overseas countries which irrigate and process food and fibre which we consume. Many of these products are grown in drier areas where water resources are already stressed or likely to become so.
- Cotton production in Pakistan has led to the Indus River often running dry before it reaches the sea. This has huge effects on local communities and wildlife such as the Indus River dolphin.

Stuart Orr of WWF comments: "Most people aren't aware that it takes massive amounts of water to grow the food and fibres that we consume, on top of what we use for drinking, washing and watering the lawn."

### Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> September

WWF is encouraging companies such as Marks & Spencer to evaluate their water footprint and to promote sustainable water use in areas

### Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> September

Dear Father, you have given us matchless gifts in the realm of science and technology. Help us to understand that you alone are the source of all truth and understanding. Let us never be blinded by the lure of the market-place or tempted to put at risk the lives and health of our fellow-humans. Watch over our motives, loving Father, that we may always give prime place to the furtherance of your Kingdom. This we ask in the name of your Son, who died that we might live.

### Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> September

The Government's case for an expanded Heathrow details the economic benefits of expansion. A new report from the Stockholm Environmental Institute found three major flaws in the Government's assessment:

1. Projections of passenger demand rely on fares falling because the cost of oil would fall from \$65 a barrel in 2006 to \$53 a barrel by 2030. But oil is currently \$111 a barrel and experts predict a further rise by the end of this year.
2. Foreign passengers changing planes at Heathrow are counted as a benefit to the economy, contrary to Treasury guidance on this point. In 2005 nearly 30% of Heathrow passengers were simply there to change planes.
3. It assumes the only alternative to expansion is to do nothing. But there are plenty of more environmentally-friendly alternatives, such as encouraging short-haul passengers to switch to rail travel, investing in video conferencing or limiting transfer passengers.

FoE comments: "If it wasn't for this economic sleight of hand, the case for airport expansion would collapse. The Government must review its entire aviation strategy and ask an independent commission to examine again the economic case for airport expansion."

### Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September

The Government has decided to look at ten renewable energy options for exploiting the tidal range of the Severn Estuary. The Severn Barrage would see 10 miles of concrete and rock infill between Penarth (west of Cardiff) and Brean Down near Weston-super-Mare, allowing the tide to enter through sluice gates, shutting the gates and finally releasing the water through 216 turbines. This would reduce the tidal range by 11%, affecting 65,000 birds that overwinter there, churning up sediment that would

### **Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> September**

The IAASTD report mentioned under September 2<sup>nd</sup> found no conclusive evidence that GM crops increase crop yields. It concluded that although the Green Revolution had indeed increased crop yields, this came at an unacceptable environmental and social cost, degrading soils, contributing to climate change and failing the world's poor. The biotechnology industry pulled out of the report process when it became clear that the report would not endorse GM crops. Now Prince Charles has added his voice to the debate. "Forging ahead with an industrialised farming system will continue to fail people and the environment around the world. Global political effort must be channelled into long-lasting green farming solutions that put people, not corporations, at their heart. The UK Government must look at the evidence before falling for GM industry hype."

### **Friday 19<sup>th</sup> September**

The US Department of Energy has now raised the estimated cost of the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste dump in Nevada – including research, construction and operation up to 2033 – to \$96.2 billion, replacing their 2001 estimate of \$57.5 billion. Work on Yucca Mountain began in 1983 and has already cost \$13.5 billion although the earliest opening date will be 2017. The campaign group Beyond Nuclear comments: "To spend nearly \$100 billion on a hole in the ground guaranteed to leak deadly radioactivity into the drinking water supply over time would represent the biggest boondoggle yet of the Atomic Age. Sixty-six years after Enrico Fermi first split the atom, we still don't have a solution for the first cupful of high-level radioactive waste generated." Greenpeace commented: "Once touted as 'too cheap to meter', nuclear power and the cost of storing its wastes have become too expensive to really matter. We need real solutions to our climate and energy problems that are fast and affordable. Nuclear is neither."

### **Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> September**

For a month from today, British Food Fortnight celebrates the diverse and delicious range of food that Britain produces. 9,000 chefs and cooks in the major chef associations, catering organisations and colleges are on hand to help schools teach children how to cook. Shops, pubs and restaurants are invited to run promotions, tastings and special menus. 14 online suggestions ( 1 for each day) will help us to eat more healthily, more variedly and to discover the diverse and delicious range of food that Britain has to offer.  
[www.britishfoodfortnight.co.uk](http://www.britishfoodfortnight.co.uk)

where water is scarce. In India and Pakistan WWF is working with farmers who grow thirsty crops such as cotton, rice and sugarcane to explore ways in which farmers can use less water to grow more crops. In one sugarcane trial, water use dropped by 40% while yields rose by one-third. Public involvement is crucial. "As a consumer you can ask local supermarkets to say what they are doing to ensure good water management along their supply chains. As a citizen you can urge Government to make good water management a priority. If we do nothing to alleviate the acute pressures on water resources both home and abroad, our inaction could have far-reaching consequences for people and habitats."

### **Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> September**

Today at the Pines Calyx near Dover, a workshop entitled "Zero Carbon Homes Explored" features cutting-edge briefings from leading practitioners in sustainable building and technology. Developers keep telling us that zero carbon homes are too expensive to build. Yet integrated designs costing only £1.150 per sq. ft. are now a reality and will be featured in the presentations which will include examples filmed for Channel 4's Grand Designs and the 'Home for the Future' showcased at the Ideal Home Show 2008. The day-long event, costing £95 +VAT can be booked at: [www.sustainabilityexplored.co.uk](http://www.sustainabilityexplored.co.uk) or by phone on 01304 851737.

### **Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> September**

In 1997 more than 100 nations voted for the UN Watercourses Convention which sets a global framework for disputes over water resources. 35 nations need to ratify it before it comes into force, but only 16 have hitherto done so. Speaking at World Water Week, WWF Director-General James Leape said:

"Because most of the world's trans-boundary river basins lack legal protection, the world needs a global framework for managing disputes. If the treaty is brought into force, it could help end the chaos of water-grabbing and improve the health of 263 rivers and lakes in 145 countries. Ghana, the Netherlands and the Economic Community of West Africa have set a good example . . . Behind the world food crisis is a global freshwater crisis, which is expected to rapidly worsen as climate impacts intensify. Irrigation-fed agriculture provides 45% of the world's food supplies. Without it, we could not feed our planet's present population of 6.5 billion people."

## Friday 12<sup>th</sup> September

Much of our fresh vegetables come from Spain – mainly from Andalusia where annual rainfall averages 430 mm. compared to 1400 mm. in the UK. The water to grow these vegetables comes from Catalonia in northern Spain which is currently suffering a severe drought. Already much of its water goes to satisfy industrial needs in Barcelona. By eating Spanish vegetables, we are contributing to the hardship of many people in northern Spain. This is but one of many such examples around the world. The solution? Consume less, waste less – and keep it local.

## Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> September

As the consumption of bottled water continues to grow, here are a few facts:

- It costs 10,000 times more to create bottled water than it does to produce water from a tap;
- Drinking one bottle of water has the same impact on the environment as driving a car for one kilometre;
- A litre bottle of Evian or Volvic generates up to 600 times more CO<sub>2</sub> than a litre of tap water;
- Plastic water bottles take 1,000 years to biodegrade.
- 

Solutions? Take a bottle of tap water with you wherever you go. Put it in the fridge overnight. Calculate how much you save per month by using tap water instead of the bottled stuff.

## Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> September

Father, we thank you at this harvest time for creating this wonderful world and for giving us the task of caring for it. Forgive us when the way we live denies our calling. Have mercy on us and our planet. Fill us daily with your grace, that we may always remember that we are here as your stewards, who will one day be asked for our account.

## Monday 15<sup>th</sup> September

As oil prices continue to impact on the rising cost of fertilisers, farmers are increasingly considering the use of treated sludge as a fertiliser substitute. The first year of operating the upgraded Pembroke Dock sludge reception centre has proved highly successful thanks to improved methods of sludge blending and balancing the storage, thickening and transport capacities. The sludge comes mainly from Tenby, Fishguard and Milford

Haven. The treated product is pumped into enclosed trailers and sent to Carmarthen for lime treatment before being put on the land. The facility provides a benchmark for other sludge centres being developed around the country.

## Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> September

Environmental journalist Charles Clover, in his book on industrial fishing entitled “The End of the Line” makes the point that, if trawling were to take place on land in plain sight of everyone, then it would be quickly banned because the indiscriminate destruction involved was so intense that we would all be sickened by the sight. A Norwegian coastguard video has revealed for the first time what takes place. The crew of Shetland trawler *Prolific* are filmed dumping 5,000 kg. of dead cod and other fish in UK waters – just when we are exhorted not to waste food. Reasons for such discards: the fish are too small, or the wrong species, or exceed the EU-allotted quota or will fetch too low a price in the market. EU policy sets quotas for fish landed at ports, so fishermen are free to keep trawling until they’re happy with the value of their catch, discarding previous, less valuable trawls. It’s a license to maximise profit at the expense of marine life everywhere. Reform of EU policy is urgently needed, so that ALL fish killed must be landed. Setting aside large areas of no-take marine reserves would give marine life some respite from relentless over-fishing.

## Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> September

Sheep and cattle in Australia are responsible for 11% of the country’s greenhouse gas emissions, but kangaroos, which are not ruminants, produce relatively little methane. According to a study by the Australian Wildlife Service, an increase in kangaroo population to 175 million with a 30% reduction in total cattle and sheep populations by 2020 would lower annual greenhouse gas emissions by 3%. “Eating low-emission kangaroo meat will provide an option to avoid emissions permit fees and have a positive global impact. A decrease in sheep and cattle farming would also cause less damage to native wildlife habitats.” Trials are on foot to discover how effectively farmers can manage free-ranging species such as kangaroos. Management of springbok in South Africa, red deer in Scotland and bison in the USA has shown that when landowners value a wild species, populations increase and conservation becomes easier.

Question: Should meat-eaters in the UK be turning to non-ruminants for their meat?