



Positive Links With Gaia University

During March 2008 the Findhorn Foundation sponsored a stellar conference entitled 'Positive Energy: Creative Community Responses to Peak Oil and Climate Change'.

The conference hosted speakers such as the activist and deep ecologist Joanna Macy, Senior Fellow of the Post Carbon Institute Richard Heinberg, the Outreach Director of Community Service Inc. Megan Quinn, Chairman of the GEN Board Jonathan Dawson, and the founding Chairman of GEN Declan Kennedy.

Focusing on positive solutions to the challenges of Peak Oil and Climate Change, the week-long event attracted more than 250 participants.



Key speaker, Joanna Macy.

"We knew we were going to inspire many positive on-the-ground solutions" relates Jonathan, lead conference organiser. "The question

remained as to what kind of follow-up support could be offered?"

Liora Adler, co-founder of Gaia University, put forward an innovative proposal to link the Positive Energy conference to the creation of a new Masters programme in 'Action-Design for Local Resilience'. The concept aims to make use of an existing conference or event to provide the inspirational and practical background for future hands-on project work.

These on-the-ground, community-based projects are supported by the tutors and mentors of Gaia University plus experts drawn from the conference speakers and their associates. A follow-on orientation workshop in one of the Gaia University Regional Centers completes the start-up requirements and gives impetus to the documented project work that the Masters candidates will produce.

"We are more than doubling the impact of the conference," states Jonathan. "Engaging some of the participants in a two-year Masters programme will surely lead to powerful results."

For further information regarding this and other programmes at the Findhorn Foundation and Gaia University visit their respective websites: www.findhorn.org and www.gaiainiversity.org

Eco-Twinning Leads To A New School

'Pepite', the fourth grade class at the Italian ecovillage, Damanhur, held a sale of some of their toys to raise money to purchase a piece of land in the Nicaraguan rainforest as they wished to help protect the land.

With the profits from the sale the children were able to purchase one and a half hectares of forest land. To their surprise and delight their purchase included the island of Mancarroncito in Nicaragua. The island didn't have a school so the Mancarroncito children travelled over an hour each way by boat to the mainland for their daily studies. Pepite's interest in the land prompted the local government and the inhabitants of Mancarroncito to build a school on the island.

Damanhur's fourth graders are

committed to an ongoing cultural exchange with the school of Mancarroncito. Both schools have written booklets for each other, which include details of endangered species on their continents. The Damanhurian children have also raised and donated enough money for the school in Mancarroncito to buy a solar panel.

Cristina, a representative from the school in Nicaragua, visited the Italian school in February 2008 and delivered the booklets that the Mancarroncito children had written. In return the Damanhurian children gave Cristina toys for the children of Mancarroncito and also the booklets they prepared about endangered herons in Italy.

For further details, contact gazzella@damanhur.it

Fight To Save LA Ecovillage



Residents of LAEV show-off their colourful traffic calming painting.

Located in the heart of a working-class, multi-ethnic neighbourhood in Los Angeles, The Los Angeles EcoVillage, LAEV, has provided a wonderful model over the last nearly 30 years as to how an intentional community can help transform their own urban village. It is the hub for many community-building activities – cycle activism and traffic calming, a food co-op, community meetings and presentations, youth music and arts projects – the list is almost endless.

Trees have been planted in the street and artwork decorates the neighbourhood – including a wonderful multi-coloured mandala at the intersection just outside the community where they eat meals and conduct workshops in the middle of the road!

Now, however, the future of the tight and friendly neighbourhood

that LAEV has helped to create is under threat. The local education authorities have plans to locate yet another school in the neighbourhood, this time right next to LAEV. This will involve the bulldozing of 35 affordable housing units (all too scarce in Los Angeles) and will require families from other parts of the city to bus yet more students into this already school-rich district.

LAEV is lobbying the authorities with the aim of encouraging them to choose another site. LAEV is a distinctive and precious member of the ecovillage family. Let's help them build on the great work they are doing.

Please help by writing in support of LAEV: <http://www.laecovillage.org/LAUSD2008addresses.html>

For further information, contact [Lois Arkin crsp@igc.org](mailto:Lois.Arkin.crsp@igc.org)

Creating A Legal Code For Communities

At their best, ecovillages and other forms of intentional communities, including co-housing, are centres of innovation and inspiration, introducing new technologies and social systems that spread out into the wider society.

Yet, their operation is severely hindered by the lack of a legal code that relates to their specific working methods and needs. The main recurring problems for such communities are real estate ownership, the organisation of work and urban renewal solutions.

In response, Conacreis has been created in Italy to develop and promote legal codes specific to the

needs of ecovillages and intentional communities. Such communities have great potential to contribute to the revitalisation of abandoned and under populated areas, and to sustainable development efforts including the introduction of organic farming, renewable energy technologies.

Conacreis invites all those with ideas and/or experience in the field of legislation for intentional communities to brainstorm with them on the proposals they make to the Italian government.

For further details, please contact: elfrassino@conacreis



Permaculture Lake's Edible Landscape

While the new permaculture lake at Tamera, Portugal is still growing with the winter rain, the community's ecology team has been busy designing an edible landscape on its bank terraces.

The lake was begun in November 2007. The ultimate aim is to build a water landscape with several lakes and ponds. This is

part of an on-going contribution to the healing of south European landscapes. It is designed as a model to cultivate natural food for several hundred people.

For more details of the permaculture development at Tamera and of how you can work with permaculturist, Sepp Holzer, visit: www.tamera.org/?id=events



Permaculture class with Sepp Holzer at the rapidly developing Tamera Lake.

EDE On Turkish Radio

The latest country that the Ecovillage Design Education (EDE) Curriculum has visited is Turkey.

This workshop was the first of its kind to be organised in Turkey and attracted so much attention that a national radio programme paid a visit. The EDE formed part of a broadcast focusing on a series of seminars about Sustainable Living in Istanbul being organised by workshop participants.

Another EDE workshop participant is organising seminars for high school teenagers on global warming and desertification. Things certainly seem to be on the move in Turkey.

For further details, contact: Deniz Dincel at: ddincel@gmail.com

Findhorn Green Award

Findhorn-based publishing company, Big Sky Environmental Design and Print, has won several prestigious environmental awards in a regional competition, including the overall Green Business Recycling Award.

Big Sky impressed the judging panel by demonstrating their ability to recycle 95% of their waste, with Managing Director, Lex Le Feuvre explaining, "We've made a huge effort to ensure that the absolute minimum of our waste goes to landfill, but rather than look at more ways we can recycle waste, our main aim is to produce less in the first place".

This strategy was welcomed by Member of the Scottish Parliament and Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment, Richard Lochhead, who presented the award. It is the second award made in the last year to Big Sky by Richard Lochhead. In May 2007, the company became the first printer in the North of Scotland to gain the International Environmental Standard ISO 14001 as a result of the successful implementation of their Environmental Management System, which involves an extensive waste monitoring and management programme.

This certification puts the Findhorn company in the top one per cent of the UK's environmental print companies.

Peace Pilgrimage In Colombia



Peace village San José de Apartadó members with a solar panel from Tamera.

On 21st February 2008, more than 120 international friends of the peace community, San José de Apartadó in Colombia, walked together for five days. The pilgrimage was in memory of the brutal murder of their speaker, Luis Eduardo Guerra and seven children, exactly 3 years earlier.

Two members of the Tamera ecovillage in Portugal remained in the community of San Josecito for four weeks – teaching adults to read and write, and teaching basic health skills and helping in every possible way.

In October, the council of the peace community, Colombia's University of Resistance and Tamera will invite peace workers from all over Colombia and South America for a pilgrimage through villages in the area. This will be followed by the first seminar of the Global Peace Campus. The pilgrimage will be led by Javier Giraldo (Jesuit priest and inspiration behind the Global Peace Campus concept).

To support this event in any way – fundraising, promotion or any other special skills – please contact: www.sos-sanjose.org

Spring In The Tent Of Nations



Volunteer erecting one of the impressive tents just south of Bethlehem.

The next step in developing a Peace Research Village (PRV) for the Middle East takes place in April 2008 in Palestine, via an educational seminar entitled Creating Knowledge for a Peace Research Village for Palestinians and a training in non-violence for Israelis.

In parallel, ecological improvements for the venue, Tent of Nations, just south of Bethlehem, will be undertaken with the aim of making it an ecological model for the

country (www.tentofnations.org).

The participants will support the care of land through tree planting and cultivation, and support the development of water harvesting techniques and compost toilets. They will also install solar panels on the site in order for the project to enhance its self-sustainability.

The project still needs financial support to make it happen. For information on this write to Kate Bunney: klbunney.igf@tamera.org

SUBMISSIONS

DEADLINE

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To contribute to the Global
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