



Dear ECCR members, partners and friends

In this e-newsletter:

Corporate engagement and advocacy

- Momentum builds around BP and Shell tar sands shareholder resolutions
- Shell moves to implement recommendation from ECCR Niger Delta report
- ECCR meeting with Morrisons on protection of migrant workers
- More than 50 US companies voluntarily adopt 'say on pay'
- CORE coalition criticises UK Government inaction on business and human rights
- Early Day Motion calls for payment disclosure by oil, gas and mining companies
- Groundwater levels 'continue downward spiral' around Coca-Cola's India plant
- World's top firms cause \$2.2tn of environmental damage, says report

Responsible and sustainable investment

- Emerging Markets Disclosure Project investor statement call for new signatories and renewed commitments

Events

- Last chance to book for ECCR/Church of Scotland 'Banking on Justice' conference, 18 March
- Tax, global poverty and the City: Christian Aid tax campaign training day, 20 March, London
- Ending forced child labour in Uzbek cotton: multi-stakeholder meeting, 7 April, Brussels
- Building truth & integrity through our business, Quakers and Business Group spring gathering, 24 April, Bristol
- ECCR Oxford Group meeting, 6 May
- ECCR London and South East Group launch meeting, 19 May
- By cloud or fire: spiritual journeys to climate safety, Operation Noah, 22 May, London
- Shifting paradigms: theology and economics in the 21st century, 13-16 July 2010, Hertfordshire

ECCR announcements

- A welcome to new members
- ECCR's work needs your support – [donate online](#)
- Members' news and views web forum
- March *Bulletin*: an apology to email recipients
- For forthcoming ECCR local group meetings, please see under Events.

Corporate engagement and advocacy

Momentum builds around BP and Shell tar sands shareholder resolutions

In support of shareholder resolutions on Canadian tar (oil) sands filed for the 2010 AGMs of BP and Shell, ECCR corporate member FairPensions' has published an [investor briefing](#) and set up an [online action](#) enabling people to email their pension scheme and urge a vote for the resolutions. ECCR intends to vote for, and is encouraging members to support, both resolutions. [Read more.](#)

Among others supporting the resolutions are Co-operative Asset Management, CCLA, Rathbone Greenbank, WWF, Greenpeace, Platform and Unison. [UK MPs](#) have called for their Parliamentary pension scheme to back the tar sands campaign.

The Co-op is supporting the [UK premier of the film *Dirty Oil*](#) on Monday 15 March, satellite broadcast live from London to cinemas across the UK with an expert panel discussion. The film illustrates the devastating impact that Canadian tar sands developments are having on the environment and local First Nation communities.

A new report from Platform, [Cashing in on Tar Sands](#), finds that state-backed bank RBS, which is 84% owned by the public, is the UK bank most involved in financing loans to companies engaged in tar sands extraction, undermining the UK Government's position on the need for a low-carbon economy.

ECCR co-signed a [Guardian letter](#) from advocacy groups urging RBS to rebalance its financing away from environmentally and socially destructive tar sands towards more sustainable lending.

Shell moves to implement recommendation from ECCR Niger Delta report

On the same day that ECCR published its case study report [Shell in the Niger Delta: A Framework for Change](#), Royal Dutch Shell announced that it would link top executives' bonuses to criteria from the Dow Jones Sustainability Index. ECCR's report recommends linking senior executive pay to progress on human rights and environmental issues. The company's move also followed shareholders' rejection of its 2009 AGM remuneration report. Shell told the [Business & Human Rights Resource Centre](#) that it was 'looking carefully' at ECCR's recommendations 'to see if any of these can help improve ... social and environmental performance'. ECCR's report received substantial media and online coverage including from [The Independent](#), [Responsible Investor](#), [E-Financial News](#), [Ekklesia](#) and the [Ecologist](#).

ECCR and its project partners hope to meet with Shell shortly to discuss issues raised in the report.

ECCR meeting with Morrisons on protection of migrant workers

ECCR and corporate member the Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church met with senior executives of Morrisons, the supermarket group, towards the end of 2009. Discussion focused on the company's approach to protecting migrant workers in its supply chains. This followed Morrisons' low ranking in ECCR's sector-wide 2009 report, [Vulnerable Migrant Workers: The Responsibility of Business](#). Notes of the meeting are available to ECCR members from [Suzanne Ismail](#).

More than 50 US companies voluntarily adopt 'say on pay'

The Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR) in the US reports that, with resolutions filed with over 70 companies by investors pushing for annual advisory shareholder votes on executive compensation, more than 50 US companies have now voluntarily agreed to an annual shareholders' 'say on pay'. ICCR members see this as a milestone at a time when the US Congress is considering 'say on pay' legislation. [Read more](#). In the UK, a non-binding shareholders' advisory vote is required by law on all listed companies' remuneration reports.

CORE coalition criticises UK Government inaction on business and human rights

The CORE (Corporate Responsibility) coalition of NGOs, ethical businesses and trade unions has criticised the UK Government for failing to act to ensure corporate responsibility overseas. Responding to the Government's recent statement on the findings of the Joint Committee for Human Rights, CORE said: 'Only by offering coherent guidance to companies and allowing proper access to redress for overseas victims of corporate abuse will this problem be resolved. By failing to take the [Committee's] criticisms seriously, the government has lost an opportunity to make Britain a global leader on corporate responsibility.' [Read more](#). ECCR is a CORE member.

Early Day Motion calls for payment disclosure by oil, gas and mining companies

Labour MP Chris Mullin has introduced an Early Day Motion in the UK Parliament urging the Government to consider adopting legislation similar to that introduced in the US requiring oil, gas and mining companies to fully disclose revenue payments to governments. Currently 48 MPs have signed up. Campaigners are working to get more MPs' signatures before the recess and election to generate momentum for the new Parliament. [See if your MP has signed up](#). If they have not, [ask them by email to do so](#).

Groundwater levels 'continue downward spiral' around Coca-Cola's India plant

The Coca-Cola company is reported as continuing to operate its bottling plant in Kala Dera, Jaipur, India, despite the area being declared a drought area last summer and groundwater levels continuing to fall sharply, severely restricting access to water for local farmers and villagers. Government data obtained by the India Resource Center confirm that local groundwater levels fell 4.29 metres (14 feet) in the year to August 2009, following the previous year's fall of 5.83 metres (19 feet). A 2008 study commissioned by Coca-Cola concluded that the company's use of water in Kala Dera was unsustainable. [Read more](#).

World's top firms cause \$2.2tn of environmental damage, says report

A report for the UN into the activities of the world's 3,000 biggest companies estimates that the cost of pollution and other damage to the natural environment would wipe out more than one-third of their profits if they were held financially accountable, [the Guardian reported last month](#).

Responsible and sustainable investment

Emerging Markets Disclosure Project investor statement call for new signatories and renewed commitments

The Emerging Markets Disclosure Project (EMDP) is an international initiative to improve corporate environmental, social and governance (ESG, or sustainability) reporting in emerging markets, led by representatives of Boston Common Asset Management, Calvert Investments, and the US Social Investment Forum and its International Working Group, with advisory support from the UN Principles for Responsible Investment. In 2008, global institutional investors managing close to \$1tn in assets signed the EMDP Investor Statement on Sustainability Reporting to encourage companies in emerging markets to provide better ESG information.

EMDP's steering committee now asks previous signatories to confirm support, and those hearing about the project for the first time or who did not sign in 2008 to do so, by 31 March 2010. EMDP's next phase is focused on engagement to promote greater disclosure of sustainability factors by companies operating in Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, South Africa and South Korea. [Read more](#). [Investor statement](#). To sign or renew, please email [Lauren Compere](#).

Events

Last chance to book for ECCR/Church of Scotland 'Banking on Justice' conference, 18 March

Late registration is still possible for the ECCR/Church of Scotland 'Banking on Justice' conference on 18 March in Edinburgh. Chair: Ian Galloway, Church and Society Council, Church of Scotland. Speakers: Ryan Brightwell, Co-operative Financial Services; Alex Connor, Triodos Bank; Kathy Galloway, Christian Aid Scotland; Doug Gay, co-author *Justice and Markets*; Jamie Hartzell, Ethical Property Company; Miles Litvinoff, ECCR; Victoria Woodbridge, EIRIS. For details see www.eccr.org.uk/Events or contact [Helen Boothroyd](#) (tel. 01325 580028).

Tax, global poverty and the City: Christian Aid tax campaign training day, 20 March, London
Christian Aid are holding a training day for people who have campaigned with them on tax justice or would like to find out more about their campaign. Hear about the importance of tax to Christian Aid's overseas partners in tackling poverty and corruption, the impact of Christian Aid's 'Big Tax Return' campaign on political parties and the City, how the campaign will develop and ways to be involved. Saturday 20 March, 10.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m., at Christian Aid head office, 35 Lower Marsh, Waterloo, London SE1 7RL. Registration essential: 020 7523 2264 or email campaigns@christian-aid.org.

Ending forced child labour in Uzbek cotton: multi-stakeholder meeting, 7 April, Brussels
The Responsible Sourcing Network (a project of As You Sow), Institute for Human Rights and Business, Anti-Slavery International and Boston Common Asset Management are organising a meeting in Brussels on 7 April 2010 to address forced child labour in Uzbekistan's cotton sector. The day-long meeting will bring together brands, retailers, civil society organisations, investors, trade unions, industry associations and others to discuss how stakeholders can work together to end the practice of forced child labour in Uzbek cotton fields. Plenary and panel discussions will be followed by a working session focused on developing strategy and next steps. [Venue, agenda and booking details](#). Contact: [Daniel Fibiger](#), As You Sow.

Building truth & integrity through our business, Quakers and Business Group spring gathering, 24 April, Bristol

This Quakers and Business Group event will focus on sustainable supply chains, achieving carbon neutrality, and the well-being of people and business. Speakers: Ian Christie, Forum for the Future/ University of Surrey; John Bennett, Pack-IT (winner, Best Small Social Enterprise 2009); Tania Pascoe (The Commitment Company). Saturday 24 April, 9.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. Friends Meeting House, 126 Hampton Road, Redland, Bristol BS6 6JE. Q&B members and guests £10, Non-members £20. [Full programme and to book and pay online](#). Or by post to Q&B Treasurer, 1 Slate Cottages, Bristol BS8 3RX. Enquiries: [Eoin McCarthy](#).

ECCR Oxford Group meeting, 6 May

ECCR's longest-standing local group meets regularly in local homes and would welcome new members interested to find out more about ECCR's work and take part in local activity for change. ECCR Oxford has worked on Shell for many years, together with a variety of other current issues. The next meeting is on Thursday 6 May at 4.00 p.m. Please contact [Bob Nind or Bridget Walker](#) for further details (tel. 01865 766604).

ECCR London and South East Group launch meeting, 19 May

'Rethinking Ethical Investment in Turbulent Times' - launch meeting of the ECCR London and South East Group. A new ECCR group for London and the South East will be launched with a presentation by Robert Howell of the Council for Socially Responsible Investment, New Zealand, who is one of five Quaker authors of *Right Relationship: Building a Whole Earth Economy* (2009). Venue: Mount Street Jesuit Centre, 114 Mount Street, London W1K 3AH (Wednesday 19 May, 5.30 - 7.00 p.m. For more information and to book, please contact [Helen Boothroyd](#) (tel. 01325 580028). [Map and transport information](#). We are grateful to corporate member the Society of Jesus Trust for providing the meeting venue.

By cloud or fire: spiritual journeys to climate safety, Operation Noah, 22 May, London

Six months after the disappointment of Copenhagen and on the eve of Pentecost join us at Friends Meeting House on Saturday 22 May for a day of reflection, inspiration and discussion. A chance for veteran supporters and new friends to chart a way through the political and spiritual wilderness. [Read more and find out how to join in.](#)

Shifting paradigms: theology and economics in the 21st century, 13-16 July 2010, Hertfordshire

Politicians and economists have called for a 'paradigm shift' in response to the credit crunch. The unprecedented circumstances of the global recession provide a unique opportunity for dialogue between theology, ethics and economics. This Modern Churchpeoples' Union conference is a contribution to that discussion. Speakers include Stephen Green, HSBC; Guy Treweek, St Peter, Hammersmith; Philip Goodchild, University of Nottingham; Catherine Cowley, Heythrop Institute; Peter Oppenheimer, Oxford Centre of Hebrew and Jewish Studies; Tarek El Diwany, Islamic Finance; Malcolm Brown, Church of England; Michael Northcott, University of Edinburgh and Traidcraft; Valpy Fitzgerald, Oxford University; John Atherton, William Temple Foundation. Chair: Canon Edmund Newell. Tuesday 13 to Friday 16 July 2010, High Leigh Conference Centre, Herts. [Further details and booking.](#)

ECCR announcements

A welcome to new members

We are delighted to welcome new corporate members LASER (London and South East Region of the [Industrial Mission Association](#)) and [Progressio Ireland](#), as well as individual members who have joined us this month.

ECCR's work needs your support – [donate online](#)

ECCR's work for corporate and investor responsibility, justice and environmental stewardship has developed very considerably in recent years. We need to increase our levels of financial support if we are to continue making a difference. Every donation will help and be much appreciated. [Please donate here.](#)

We would like to thank all those members who have kindly responded with donations to our appeal to date.

Members' news and views web forum

ECCR members are invited to visit our [Members' news and views](#) web forum to share news, ideas and resources on issues related to ECCR's mission. Please send contributions and responses to [Helen Boothroyd](#).

March *Bulletin*: an apology to email recipients

We apologise that, due to a technical problem, the digital version of ECCR's March *Bulletin* sent out at the start of the month contained layout errors. We are working to fix this and to resend the issue to email *Bulletin* recipients as soon as possible. Printed copies of the *Bulletin* were not affected.

For forthcoming ECCR local group meetings, please see under Events above.

With all good wishes.

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ECCR is a company limited by guarantee in England & Wales (No. 2764183) and a Body in Association with Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.

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ECCR's e-newsletter reaches approx. 450 people in the UK, Ireland and internationally each month. It is circulated midway through every month except August. Members and partners are welcome to submit brief news items for inclusion in future issues.

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