



Dear ECCR members, partners and friends

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Corporate engagement and advocacy

BP and Shell shareholder resolutions on Canadian oil sands

ECCR corporate member FairPensions reports a good response to requests for investors to co-file shareholder resolutions on oil sands for the AGMs of BP and Shell. ECCR is co-filing on BP. Filing deadlines are fast approaching. Investors interested in the possibility of co-filing either or both resolutions who have not yet responded are urged to contact [Louise Rouse](#) (tel. 020 7403 7812).

DRC conflict minerals: imminent deadline to sign investor statement

The SRI and faith-based investment community has drafted an investor statement condemning the global trade of conflict minerals originating in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Over 50 investors have added their signature to this statement, which will be sent to many of the world's largest electronics companies, as well as other non-electronics companies that source significant amounts of coltan, tantalum and tungsten. The final date to add signatures is 15 December 2009. A press release highlighting this issue and the investor statement will be issued on 17 December 2009. To add your signature, please email [Dan Fibiger](mailto:Dan.Fibiger@AsYouSow.org) at As You Sow. [Watch CBS TV film.](#)

New UK Government guidance on Israeli settlement goods

The UK Government has announced advice to British retailers that they can label food products to differentiate Palestinian from Israeli settlement produce. Goods of both origins have in the past been labelled 'West Bank'. ECCR's [research](#) shows that some retailers have been hesitant about introducing clearer labelling. Now some retailers have already indicated that they plan to implement the new guidelines. ECCR's view is that better labelling is possible only if retailers have robust supply chain monitoring systems. We intend to monitor how retailers respond to the guidelines and will keep members informed. Read the [full text of the government advice](#). For background information, please see www.eccr.org.uk/module-htmlpages-display-pid-64.html or contact [Suzanne Ismail](#).

ECCR joins call for action on Royal Bank of Scotland

ECCR was among more than 30 signatories, including the Convenor of the Church of Scotland Rev. Ian Galloway, of a letter to the Observer and to UK Chancellor Alistair Darling taking the UK Government to task for failing to push RBS and other bailed-out banks into supporting socially useful and more sustainable investments. The letter received considerable [media coverage](#) and coincided with the publication of a new report from PLATFORM, [Towards a Royal Bank of Sustainability](#).

ECCR joins London Mining Network

ECCR has become a member of the [London Mining Network](#) (LMN), an alliance of human rights, development and environmental groups. LMN seeks to hold London-listed mining companies to account for their social and environmental impacts through information exchange, research, awareness raising, support to communities and workers, and other advocacy. LMN is co-ordinated by ECCR member Richard Solly.

Nigerian farmers versus Shell trial begins

A court case brought by four Nigerian farmers and fishers who say they are victims of Shell oil leaks, supported by Milieudefensie/Friends of the Earth Netherlands, has opened in The Hague. This is reportedly the first time that a Dutch company has been brought to trial before a Dutch court for damages occurring abroad. The Nigerians claim to have lost their livelihoods after oil from leaking pipelines streamed over their fields and fishing ponds. They are seeking compensation from Shell and want the company to clean up the oil remaining in the ground. [Read more.](#)

ECCR's forthcoming case-study report, *Shell in the Niger Delta: A Framework for Change* is due for publication in February 2010.

CAFOD finds severe water contamination at Goldcorp mine

An investigation by ECCR donor-partner CAFOD and Canada's Development & Peace has uncovered documents showing water contamination at a Honduras mine owned by multinational mining company

Goldcorp. Among investors in Goldcorp are British-based AXA Investment Managers UK (US\$4.3 million), Blackrock Commodities Income Trust and City Natural Resources High Yield Trust, according to the report [From Money to Metals](#) by UK mining researcher Roger Moody. [CAFOD statement](#).

Amnesty International UK seeks investor contacts

Howard Baker, formerly with FairPensions, has joined Amnesty International UK's Business and Human Rights team as Investor Relations Adviser. He hopes to build relationships with investors committed to the principles of responsible investment, to engage with them and potentially to seek their support on issues with companies where human rights and business interests of investors overlap. Interested investors are invited to email Howard at Howard.Baker@amnesty.org.uk.

ICCR members push for US pay disparity disclosure

In an unprecedented move by US faith-based institutional shareholders, at least 21 US-based health industry companies are the focus of shareholder resolutions led by members of ECCR's US partner the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR), asking them to publicly disclose the total compensation packages of their top executives, including their health care packages, vis-à-vis that of their lowest paid US workers. [Read more](#).

News from KAIROS Canada

ECCR's longstanding partner organisation KAIROS has appeared before Canada's Parliamentary Foreign Affairs committee to express support for Bill C-300, a groundbreaking private member's bill on corporate accountability. The bill would require mining, oil and gas companies to respect human rights and environmental standards in order to access financing through Export Development Canada and the Canada Pension Plan. [Read more](#).

On 30 November KAIROS received notice from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) that its project proposal for 2009-13 had been declined and did not fit CIDA priorities. This decision terminates a 35-year history of co-operation between CIDA and KAIROS and its predecessor organisations. Pressure is now mounting for CIDA to renew funding for KAIROS' s human rights programme. [Read more](#).

New Oxfam report argues profits must be shared to help poor

Poor people are losing out on massive profits generated by extractive industries which are not being shared fairly with producing country governments, Oxfam says in a new research report. Profits from gold, copper, oil, gas and diamonds could be reducing poverty and inequality and strengthening public services, it argues, but unfair distribution of profits between weak governments and powerful multinational companies, and a lack of transparency, means many countries cannot capitalise on their natural resources. Oxfam's report, [Lifting the Resource Curse](#), calls for 'a new, fair deal for poor people in resource-rich countries'.

Early Day Motion on Vedanta

The legality and ethics of operations of London-listed Indian mining company Vedanta Resources are under continuing scrutiny, and the UK Government's National Contact Point has censured the company for not complying with the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. UK voters can ask their MP to sign [Early Day Motion \(EDM\) 221](#) urging the Government to launch an investigation into the support that the Department for International Development and other agencies give Vedanta and its subsidiaries. A quick way to do this is via the free web service www.writetothem.com.

New call for companies to adopt human rights policies

Former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson, Realizing Rights and the Business & Human Rights Resource Centre are contacting CEOs of companies to ask whether they have a human rights policy and if not to adopt one by June 2010. The initiative is currently focusing on companies headquartered in emerging and developed markets. [Read more.](#)

New online forum on business and human rights

John Ruggie, UN Special Representative on Human Rights and Business, is seeking more input and discussion on his 'Protect, Respect and Remedy' framework via a new online forum: www.srgconsultation.org. The forum is currently focused on the corporate responsibility to respect human rights, the second pillar of the framework. For background on Prof. Ruggie's UN mandate, visit www.business-humanrights.org/SpecialRepPortal/Home.

Responsible and sustainable investment

CCLA launches new fund for charity and faith investors

Leading charity fund manager and ECCR corporate member CCLA has launched the COIF Charities Ethical Investment Fund, which will exclude companies with significant exposure to contentious products and services, particularly alcohol, arms, gambling, tobacco and pornography. The fund has been developed in response to the findings of CCLA's 18-month client consultation. [Read more.](#)

Ethical finance: does Britain care? – EIRIS survey

44% of the British public are interested in finding out about the ethical credentials of the next financial product or service they buy, according to new research released by ECCR donor-partner the EIRIS Foundation. A national online consumer survey conducted by Ipsos MORI found that many people now feel that banks and financial institutions should prioritise ethical concerns such as protecting human rights, tackling climate change, protecting the environment and investing in fair trade in their lending and investing activities. However, lack of knowledge and of trust are key barriers to people purchasing ethical financial products and services. [Read more.](#)

CIFs should do more to meet the needs of charity investors – EIRIS

Common Investment Funds (CIFs) should do more to meet the needs of charities that wish to invest responsibly, according to research released by the EIRIS Foundation. EIRIS's new guide [Responsible Investment by Charities: The Role of Pooled Funds](#) reviews the investment approach of 44 UK CIFs to help trustees understand how they can integrate environmental, social and ethical concerns into their investments. EIRIS advises charities that are not satisfied with what is currently on offer to talk to their fund managers about their responsible investment needs.

Events

Building an ethical economy, webcast, January 2010, London

A conference on 'Building an ethical economy: theology and the market place' will be webcast from the Trinity Institute, New York, live to St Paul's Institute, London. Speakers include Archbishop Rowan Williams and Cambridge economist Sir Partha Dasgupta. Participants will be able to ask questions in real time. The webcast conference will be delivered by St Mary-le-Bow Church and JustShare in partnership with St Paul's Cathedral Institute at The Wren Suite in the Cathedral Crypt. People can attend as much or as little of the conference as they wish. Thursday 28 and Friday 29 January 2010, 2.00 pm to 10.00 pm GMT. Registration £20. [More information.](#) Inquiries/registration: [Matthew Power.](#)

ECCR and Church of Scotland conference: Banking on Justice, March 2010, Edinburgh

ECCR and the Church of Scotland are organising this one-day conference in partnership with Action of Churches Together in Scotland (ACTS), the University of Edinburgh's Centre for Theology and Public Issues, Christian Aid Scotland, the Iona Community and SCIAF - Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund. 18 March 2010, St Georges West Church, Edinburgh. For further details and to book, please contact [Helen Boothroyd](#) (01325 580028).

ECCR announcements

A welcome to new members

A warm welcome to the [Justice and Peace Commission - Shrewsbury Diocese](#).

ECCR Ireland Working Group begins outreach

Following our conference in Dublin earlier this year, Irish-based ECCR members and partners have established the ECCR Ireland Working Group. The group aims to reach out to a wide circle of organisations both faith-based and others interested in issues of corporate and investor responsibility and to develop work with a focus on Irish-based companies. For more information, please contact Trócaire Private Sector Advocacy Officer and ECCR Board member [Mark Cumming](#) (+353 1 505 3261).

Modified mission statement

As part of its current strategic review, ECCR's Board has agreed the following modified mission statement:

'The Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility (ECCR) is a church-based investor coalition and membership organisation working for economic justice and environmental sustainability. ECCR undertakes research, advocacy and dialogue to encourage companies to meet the highest standards of corporate responsibility and transparency, as well as assisting faith communities, their members and other investors in upholding these same high standards through responsible and positive-impact investment.'

New ECCR web forum for members' news and views

ECCR members and partners can now use our new web page [Members' news and views](#) to share news, ideas and resources on issues related to our mission. The first members' items appearing are Glevys Rondon's report on a European tour by indigenous women from Ecuador, Guatemala and Peru, and Peter Ullathorne's report on a recent Business in the Community seminar, 'Reputation or profit: does there have to be a choice?' Please send contributions and responses to [Helen Boothroyd](#).

ECCR seeks help in monitoring the church media

ECCR is looking for help from members with monitoring those parts of the church media that you usually read. We would like members to alert us to news items and articles that mention ECCR and/or cover corporate and investor responsibility issues that may be relevant to our work. If you might be willing to help, please contact [Helen Boothroyd](#) with details of which church media - print or online - you regularly read. This will enable us to prevent duplication of monitoring.

Member and donor-partner consultations

ECCR members and donor-partners will all have received our annual consultation questionnaire. We would much appreciate your help in assessing our past efforts and planning our future work by completing and returning your questionnaire, ideally by 22 January 2010. In early January, members will receive a further consultation regarding ECCR's future governance model.

Board and Secretariat changes

Patrick Hynes, representing corporate member [Oikocredit](#), has joined ECCR's Board. Matt Crossman of [Rathbone Greenbank Investments](#) is our new Company Secretary.

Sunniva Taylor, who has made a valuable contribution over the past two years as a member of our research team, has left ECCR. Sunniva's contract with [Quaker Peace & Social Witness](#), under which she also worked for us, has ended. We wish her every future success. Suzanne Ismail continues in her joint QPSW/ECCR research role.

Funding ECCR's work: online donations; advice sought on grant-makers

ECCR can now accept donations in support of its work via the website. Please visit www.eccr.org.uk/Donate. Members, partners and friends who are connected with, or know of, any grant-making body that may be willing to support ECCR's work financially are invited to contact [Miles Litvinoff](#) (020 8965 9682)

With all good wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

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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 monthly e-newsletter reaches more than 400 people in the UK, Ireland and internationally who work on, or are interested in, corporate and investor responsibility, social and economic justice, and environmental sustainability. The e-newsletter is circulated midway through every month except August. There will also be no e-newsletter in January 2010 due to the Co-ordinator's annual leave; normal service will resume in February 2010. Members and partners are welcome to submit brief news items for inclusion in future issues.

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