



E-newsletter January & February 2012

Working for economic justice, human rights and environmental sustainability

Dear ECCR members, partners and friends

In this e-newsletter:

Corporate engagement and advocacy

- London 2012 sponsorship controversy
- Investor guide to 'fracking' risks published by ICCR
- Petition on mining in Palawan, Philippines
- *Bankrolling climate change* report
- FSA report suggest shareholders must take responsibility for RBS decisions
- Bank bonuses: UK Government consultation
- European Parliament committee favours financial transaction tax
- New book and report on UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (Ruggie)

Responsible and sustainable investment

- Church of England adopts new ethical investment policies on pornography & high interest lending
- QPortfolios: the first UK Quaker-governanced ethical investment
- Global Development Co-operative Fund launched
- Report predicts that up to 10% of portfolios will be in impact investment by 2022
- UK pension funds increasingly consider RI criteria in manager hires
- EIRIS research supports Mexico sustainability index launch
- New umbrella UK pension scheme committed to responsible investment
- Pensions Trust signs up to Stewardship Code
- European Commission proposes social investment fund label
- Church of Scotland produces Lent group material on key social and economic issues
- WCC General Secretary calls for morality and ethics in financial systems

Events

- Where do we go from here? Engaging congregations in effective action for economic justice, 30 January, London
- From Fair Trade to trade justice, 4 February, London
- Shareholder activism at AGMs: training day, 11 February, London
- Earth matters: at one with our world, from 21 February, London
- Treasure in the field: spiritual capital, sustainable living, 10 March, Bristol
- The eye of the needle, 24 March, Bristol
- Diverse world diverse chaplaincy: IMA national conference, 30 April – 2 May, Birmingham
- National Ethical Investment Week: 14-20 October

ECCR announcements

- Donate to ECCR through JustGiving
- Gift Aid

London 2012 sponsorship controversy

The Indian Olympic Association and many campaigners are opposing Dow Chemicals' sponsorship of the London Olympics because of their ownership of Union Carbide, the company responsible for the Bhopal gas leak. Some campaigners have also questioned sponsorship by BP and Rio Tinto. ECCR's open debate 2011 [Vulnerable Workers, Trafficking, Pornography and the Economics of Exploitation: London 2012 and beyond](#) highlighted the wide range of issues around economic exploitation and vulnerable workers facing the key sectors and sponsors associated with the Olympics 2012, identifying this major sporting event as an important opportunity for companies to put in place robust policies and practices to combat exploitation

Investor guide to 'fracking' risks published by ICCR

ECCR's US partner [ICCR](#), together with the [Investor Environmental Health Network](#) (IEHN), has published [Extracting the Facts: An Investor Guide to Disclosing Risks from Hydraulic Fracturing Operations](#). An eighteen-month investor dialogue convened by ECCR corporate member [Boston Common Asset Management](#) and Apache Corporation provided a venue for extended conversations on risks, management practices and disclosure and review by industry experts of draft practices and indicators. Unconventional and frontier hydrocarbon is one of the seven [priority issues](#) in ECCR's current work programme.

Petition on mining in Palawan, Philippines

London Mining Network, of which ECCR is a member, is highlighting a campaign in the Philippines to prevent mining on Palawan, an island very significant for biodiversity, primary forest cover and indigenous peoples. Companies looking to mine there include London-listed Toledo Mining. The local campaign unites farmers and indigenous peoples and is linked to national level mining activism. [Sign petition](#). ECCR is a member of the Working Group on Mining in the Philippines, which in 2009 published the report [Philippines: Mining or Food?](#)

Bankrolling climate change report

A new report published by BankTrack and partners [Bankrolling Climate Change: A Look into the Portfolios of the World's Largest Banks](#) reveals that Barclays, the Royal Bank of Scotland and HSBC are among the top banks that have lent billions of pounds to the coal sector over recent years. ECCR's report [The Banks and Society: Rebuilding Trust](#) was published in March 2011.

FSA report suggest shareholders must take responsibility for RBS decisions

A [report by the UK Financial Services Authority on the failure of RBS](#) highlighted that shareholders, who voted overwhelmingly for the Royal Bank of Scotland's acquisition of ABN AMRO in 2007, must share some of the responsibility for the subsequent problems at RBS.

Bank bonuses: UK Government consultation

The Government proposes to extend transparency arrangements at large banks by requiring the eight highest-paid non-board executives to disclose their remuneration arrangements, and is holding a [consultation](#) on these proposals to run until 14 February.

European Parliament committee favours financial transaction tax

The Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee of the European Parliament has indicated that it is likely to support an EU financial transaction tax of 0.1% on equity and bond transactions and 0.01% on derivatives, which is opposed by the UK Government. The Committee will formally vote on the issue in April and the Parliament in June. ECCR is a member of the [Robin Hood Tax Coalition](#).

New book and report on UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (Ruggie)

[*The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Foundations and Implementation*](#), edited by Radu Mares, provides an in-depth analysis of the work of Prof. John Ruggie, UN Special Representative on business and human rights, with a particular emphasis on regulatory and governance issues surrounding corporate responsibility. Standard Life Investments' December 2011 report [Business and Human Rights](#) reviews implementation of Ruggie's [Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights](#) in the extractives sector, finding a significant gap between current practice and the standards required by the Guiding Principles. ECCR was one of 46 faith-based and civil society organisations from around the world to sign a [statement](#), filed with the UN Human Rights Council, calling for a robust UN mechanism to follow up on Ruggie's recommendations.

Responsible and sustainable investment

Church of England adopts new ethical investment policies on pornography and high interest lending

In December 2011 the Church of England national investing bodies adopted two new ethical investment policies following advice from the Ethical Investment Advisory Group (EIAG). The expanded pornography policy sets a low turnover threshold for exclusion and commits to use engagement to challenge all companies in which they are invested that have any sort of revenue stream from pornography, including mobile phone companies. The policy on high interest rate lending builds on the previous one, under which companies involved in doorstep lending were excluded, by extending the investment exclusion to cover payday and pawnbroker loans. [Read more](#). ECCR is currently undertaking research on telecoms, internet, TV and hotel companies' involvement in revenue from pornography. Dr Stella Creasy MP highlighted the terrible social consequences of high interest lending at ECCR's open debate 2011 [Vulnerable Workers, Trafficking, Pornography and the Economics of Exploitation: London 2012 and beyond](#) and encouraged those concerned to sign the [e-petition](#) to cap the total cost of credit.

QPortfolios: the first UK Quaker-governanced ethical investment

Qportfolios is a new SRI investment under Quaker governance and managed by King and Shaxon. The ethical profile is set and governed by a committee of Quakers. The investment is open to anyone, Quaker or not. The fund has a number of unique open governance features – for more information contact ECCR individual member Alan Kirkham 07530 231722 or see www.Qportfolios.co.uk.

Global Development Co-operative Fund launched

The Co-operative Bank has launched a new social investment fund, the Global Development Co-operative, in partnership with the International Co-operative Alliance and The Co-operative College, to raise funds from international investors for low cost finance to co-operative businesses in the Global South for capital and infrastructure projects. Co-operative Financial Services is a corporate member of ECCR.

Report predicts that up to 10% of portfolios will be in impact investment by 2022

[Insight into the Impact Investment Market](#), published by J.P. Morgan and the Global Impact Investing Network (GIIN), found that major impact investors plan to invest almost \$4billion over the next year and most expect that 5-10 percent of overall portfolios will be allocated to impact investments in ten years.

UK pension funds increasingly consider RI criteria in manager hires

[Responsible Investor](#) featured a survey by the National Association of Pension Funds which found that 72% of funds currently include responsible investment as part of their selection process for hiring investment managers or intend to do so soon.

EIRIS research supports Mexico sustainability index launch

ECCR corporate member [EIRIS](#) was one of the lead partners in developing the methodology and assessment framework behind the new Mexican Stock Exchange sustainability index. EIRIS also assesses eligible companies according to their performance, impact and responses to ESG (environmental, social and governance) issues including climate change, human rights and corruption.

New umbrella UK pension scheme committed to responsible investment

[NEST](#), the National Employment Savings Trust, a new pension scheme that any UK employer can use to meet this year's new workplace pensions duties, has committed itself to a 'world class responsible investment approach' and appointed [EIRIS](#) to provide data on a broad range of ESG issues and risks.

Pensions Trust signs up to Stewardship Code

The [Pensions Trust](#), which provides pension services for many UK charities and not-for-profit organisations, has signed up to the [UK Stewardship Code](#).

European Commission proposes social investment fund label

The European Commission has put forward a regulation to introduce a European Social Entrepreneurship Funds label to help investors easily identify funds that focus on investing in European social businesses. Funds would have to show that at least 70% of investments support social business. [Read more](#).

Church of Scotland produces Lent group material on key social and economic issues

The Church and Society Council of ECCR corporate member the Church of Scotland has prepared [Bible Study and discussion materials for Lent](#) on a variety of social issues including a number related to ECCR's concerns, such as ethical questions relating to the internet and the use of money.

WCC General Secretary calls for morality and ethics in financial systems

The World Council of Churches is planning a conference to propose criteria and a framework for a new global 'financial and economic architecture'. At a pre-meeting in December 2011, General Secretary Revd Dr Olav Fykse Tveit said "The ongoing and deepening turbulence in our global financial and economic system, together with expanding and multiplying pockets of social unrest around the world, clearly demonstrate that important parts and dynamics of the current international financial and economic architecture are fundamentally flawed".

Where do we go from here? Engaging congregations in effective action for economic justice, 30 January, London

A learning day at St Paul's Cathedral organised by the St Paul's Institute and the Contextual Theology Centre to bring together clergy and social justice organisations to discuss the current social and economic context and the role of the Church in working for change. Speakers include Rt Rev Dr Peter Selby and Dr David McNair, Senior Economic Justice Advisor at ECCR donor-partner and corporate member Christian Aid. Monday 30 January; 11 am – 3 pm; Wren Suite, St Paul's Cathedral. [Details and booking](#).

From Fair Trade to trade justice, 4 February, London

An afternoon of talks and workshops organised by ECCR corporate member Traidcraft to help participants take campaigning action. Saturday 4 February; St Paul's Church, Robert Adam Street, London, W1U 3HW. [Book online](#) or phone 020 7242 3955.

Shareholder activism at AGMs: training day, 11 February, London

After memorable experiences at corporate AGMs in 2011, ECCR corporate member and partner [FairPensions](#) is looking to train a new group of shareholder activists to challenge the UK's biggest companies on executive pay, their environmental record and many other issues. Saturday 11 February; 10 am – 4 pm; Human Rights Action Centre, 17-25 New Inn Yard, London, EC2A 3EA. [Booking](#) essential – places are free but limited.

Earth matters: at one with our world, from 21 February, London

ECCR corporate member the Christian Council for Monetary Justice recommends this new course addressing the urgent need to review and renew the human relationship with nature. Speakers include Ian Mason of the School of Economic Science. 5 weekly sessions at 7pm from Tuesday 21 February; 11 Mandeville Place, London, W11 3AJ. Fee £60 (concessions £50, students £40). Enrolment: 020 7034 4000.

Treasure in the field: spiritual capital, sustainable living, 10 March, Bristol

Christian Ecology Link (CEL) conference, with speaker Jonathon Porritt. Saturday 10 March; 11 am – 5 pm; Old School Rooms, St Michael's Church, Stoke Gifford, Bristol, BS34 8PD. Cost £15 (£10 before end January; £5 for those aged under 25). [Details and booking](#).

The eye of the needle, 24 March, Bristol

ECCR corporate member the Churches Council for Industry and Social Responsibility (ISR) is running a day conference entitled 'The Eye of the Needle: Biblical Clues to a New Economy' facilitated by Simon Barrow of [Ekklesia](#) to explore the distinctive contribution which the Christian faith can make to shaping a new, post financial crisis, economic order. Saturday 24 March; 10 am – 4 pm; The Vassall Centre, Gill Avenue, Bristol, BS16 2QQ. Cost £30 including lunch. ECCR stall. Bookings: eyeoftheneedle@ccisr.org.uk or phone 0117 955 7430.

Diverse world diverse chaplaincy: IMA national conference, 30 April – 2 May, Birmingham

Annual conference of ECCR corporate member the Industrial Mission Association (IMA). Speakers include Jerry Blackett, CEO Birmingham Chamber of Commerce, and David Urquhart, Bishop of

Birmingham, who chaired the launch meeting for ECCR's 2011 report [The Banks and Society: Rebuilding Trust](#). 30 April – 2 May; Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre, Bristol Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham, B29 6LJ. [Further information and to book](#).

National Ethical Investment Week: 14-20 October

An initiative, now in its 5th year, to ensure that everyone knows they have green and ethical options when it comes to their finance and investment decisions. Contact lisa.wootton@uksif.org. UK Sustainable Investment and Finance (UKSIF), ECCR and CCLA produced a 12-page [Action Guide for Churches](#) for National Ethical Investment Week 2011. Worship material in the guide can be used throughout the year. Printed copies are still available from [Helen Boothroyd](#) (07503 931172).

ECCR announcements

Donate to ECCR through JustGiving

ECCR is now registered with [JustGiving](#). Please donate online by typing ECCR into the 'Donate to charity' search box on the [JustGiving home page](#) or by texting ECCR11 and £amount to 70070.

Gift Aid

ECCR is now registered for Gift Aid which can significantly increase the value of donations and membership subscriptions received. Our sincere thanks to all members who have already completed a gift aid form. Members who have not yet done so and are UK tax payers are asked to complete one and thereby increase the value of your support to ECCR at no additional cost to you. Please contact [Helen Boothroyd](#) or [Binia Nightingale](#) for a gift-aid form.

With all good wishes

The Ecumenical Council for Corporate Responsibility

PO Box 500, Oxford OX1 1ZL, UK
www.eccr.org.uk info@eccr.org.uk
t. +44 (0)1865 245349

Helen Boothroyd, Church and Membership Relations Officer
helen.boothroyd@eccr.org.uk
t. +44 (0)7503 931172

Each issue of ECCR's e-newsletter reaches more than 600 people in the UK, Ireland and internationally. Members and partners are welcome to submit brief news items for inclusion in future issues. Views expressed are not necessarily those of ECCR.

If you do not wish to receive future ECCR e-newsletters, please reply to this message with Unsubscribe in the subject line. You can also subscribe or unsubscribe [here](#).

ECCR is a registered charity (No. 1139618), a company limited by guarantee in England & Wales (No. 2764183) and a Body in Association with Churches Together in Britain and Ireland. Registered office: New Road Baptist Church, Bonn Square, Oxford OX1 1LQ.