

into a pleasanter place to visit, live and work. The plan is to link living walls, roof gardens, water features, public art and trees with existing verges and seating areas. Rainwater will be harvested from roofs and stored in tanks where it will be used for irrigation of the new green spaces. For more details, go to: tinyurl.com/Victoria-BID-audit.

Wednesday 30th July

In 1943 pioneering farmer Eve Balfour wrote: "The health of soil, plant, animal and man is one and indivisible." Carbon-conscious farmers are embracing the idea of feeding the soil, not the plant, understanding and encouraging soil biology. They know that we must repair our damaged soils because fossil fuels (the source of artificial fertilisers) are non-renewable and, equally importantly reduce the health of the soil. Their approach is backed by hard scientific data from soil scientists at Aberdeen University and world-renowned soil scientist Rattan Lal, who also advises the IPCC.

www.farmcarbontoolkit.org.uk

Thursday 31st July

Bruce Horton of consultants MWH, writing in CIWEM's Environment magazine, says: Turning green is still seen as an unaffordable luxury by much of the ruling elite. The main reason is that, while costs are understood, the benefits provided from the natural world are not valued by policymakers. Some say we should not seek to put a value on nature, that some things should stay beyond the dirty reality of economics, that nature is, in effect, priceless. But in economic terms, priceless means infinite. If this were true, there would be no need to worry, as nature would always win out over 'economic gain'. The reality is that there is already a price on the things that most of us

regard as important, and that price is zero. Unless we can articulate the benefits we derive from engaging with the natural world, they will continue to be ignored. Short of creating a political revolution that leads to a benevolent environmental dictatorship, working with the market system is our best and only hope."

Sources:

"Good Food" by Colin Tudge

Clean Slate (CAT)

Environment (CIWEM)

Resurgence

www.edie.net

If you would like to receive the prayer diary each month by email (free), please email prayer-guide@christian-ecology.org.uk

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Picture: Ragged Robin by Judith Allinson

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Prayer guide for the care of creation

July 2014



"Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to his voice and hold fast to him. For the Lord is your life. (Deut. 30.19-20)

"If you wish to experience peace, provide peace for another. If you wish to heal your sadness or anger, seek to heal the sadness or anger of another. Those others are watching for you now. They are looking to you for guidance, for help, for courage, for strength, for understanding and for assurance at this hour. Most of all – they are looking to you for love." (The Dalai Lama)

"The fruit of Silence is Prayer,
The fruit of Prayer is Faith,
The fruit of Faith is Love,
The fruit of Love is Service,
The fruit of Service is Peace."

(Mother Theresa)



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Tuesday 1st July

The World Water Council and the UN Food & Agriculture Organisation are to collaborate amid concerns about water and food security. In response to fears that water shortages could lead to local and regional tensions, they will address issues ranging from crop water productivity and water conservation to eradicating hunger and driving political action. A Panel on Water for Food Security will meet in Korea next April. Earlier, Coca Cola announced that it was on track to become 'water neutral' by 2020, by replenishing 108.5 billion litres of water. Nestle has committed to a 40% reduction in water use across its EU operations while its vice-president has predicted that water will soon become the most valuable commodity in the world.

Wednesday 2nd July

Colin Tudge points out in "Good Food for Everyone For Ever" that half the wheat grown in the world is fed to livestock, plus 80% of the maize and well over 90% of the soya. By 2050, on present trends, our livestock will be consuming enough good grain and pulses to feed another 4 billion people over and above the predicted 9.5 billion. And for good measure major crops such as maize are now being turned into biofuel. "To put the matter crudely, the race is on between poor children in poor countries and fuel-guzzling vehicles. Since, in the modern world, all the prizes go to the rich, it's no contest."

Thursday 3rd July

Should we therefore all become vegetarians?

All our protein requirements can be met (as they still largely are in China, India and the Middle East) from a combination of grains and pulses. Cattle need to eat 10 grams of plant protein for

every gram of meat protein that they produce, and they drink staggering amounts of water. Yet, according to Tudge, there is no system of all-plant agriculture that could not be made more biologically efficient by adding a few livestock, provided they are of the right kind and reared in the right way, i.e. on permanent grass rather than grains and pulses. Humans cannot digest cellulose, but we do eat animals that can, such as cattle, sheep and goats, so via such animals we can partake of one of nature's most abundant resources. Also, in many parts of the world arable crops are impossible where the land is too high or cold or wet. But sheep can live off the coarsest of grasses and goats can thrive in semi-desert. Finally, the manure of livestock is a prime source of fertility the world over. His advice is, in brief: "Plenty of plants, not much meat and maximum variety."

Friday 4th July

In an era of cheap oil, it can be more profitable to raise cattle on grain than on grass. It is admitted that grass-fed cattle produce more methane per animal than grain-fed cattle. What is ignored however is that grassland, properly managed, is a net absorber of carbon dioxide. When grass is heavily grazed, the symbiotic fungi that invade its roots survive in the soil and trap the carbon there. Research has shown that where cattle graze heavily, then move on to graze elsewhere, the carbon content of the soil actually increases. So well-managed grassland, when grazed, in fact helps to alleviate global warming.

Saturday 5th July

In 2000 the Ford Motor Company was using 9.8 cu. metres of water per vehicle produced. In 2013 that figure was down to 4 cu. metres. The reduction was largely due to water-saving

Thursday 24th July

Scientists from Plymouth University and elsewhere have taken nearly 600 samples of seabed material from the Atlantic, Arctic and Mediterranean at depths ranging from 115 ft. to 2.8 miles. They found that much of the seabed resembles a rubbish tip of bottles, plastic bags, discarded fishing nets and other forms of human litter. Plastic accounted for 41% and derelict fishing gear 34% with smaller quantities of glass, metal, wood, paper, cardboard, clothing and pottery. The densest accumulations of litter were in deep canyons. Dr Kerry Howell of Plymouth University said "This survey has shown that human litter is present in all marine habitats, from beaches to the most remote and deepest parts of the oceans."

Friday 25th July

Bionic Yarn, a textile company created by pop star Pharrell Williams, is partnering Dutch firm G-Star to make an entirely new fabric from recycled ocean plastic. Under the name of Vortex Plastics, the aims are:

To retrieve floating plastics from oceans and beaches;

To help restore the resilience and health of marine ecosystems;

To recycle ocean waste into smart new products.

Harvesting ocean products is logistically difficult, but scientists and environmentalists are working together to produce the world's first ocean-derived jeans this August.

www.parley.tv/thevortexproject

Saturday 26th July

A new 5p. charge on single-use plastic bags will come into force in October 2015, but small

retailers are to be exempted. The charge will apply also to biodegradable plastic bags. Wales introduced a 5p. charge in 2011, Northern Ireland in 2013 and Scotland will introduce its scheme this October. DEFRA explained it wanted to reduce burdens on small start-up and growing businesses. So once more the economy trumps our environment.

Sunday 27th July

Heavenly Father, help us in our perplexity as we confront the challenges of climate change. Help us to look at our choices in the light of your biblical truth, to determine where we stand and, by word and deed, to take whatever action seems necessary to protect your precious earth, for which your Son died on the Cross.

Monday 28th July

B & M Waste Services has opened a £1 million facility in Manchester to process 70,000 tonnes of commercial waste a year. Materials from business and industry such as cardboard, wood and metals will be recycled, while all non-recyclable waste will be compacted into bales and transported to a combined heat and power plant in Germany. Trafford Council member Michael Hyman said: "B & M's new facility demonstrates its commitment to investing in highly innovative technology which will help drive economic growth. I feel sure that other businesses who want to reduce their carbon footprint will also invest in this prestigious service."

Tuesday 29th July

A £4 billion redevelopment of London's Victoria district will include 24 hectares of green roof space. The aim is to turn Victoria from an urban jungle of windswept, traffic-ridden thoroughfares

Park and to remain out of all other UNESCO World Heritage sites. This is a clear answer to the prayers and lobbying of 750,000 citizens. However David Nussbaum of WWF warned: "We must now extend our efforts to work with businesses, the investment community and governments around to the globe to remove existing pressures that put this and other World Heritage sites in danger." The UNESCO World Heritage Committee meets this month at Doha to discuss the conservation status of Virunga, the Great Barrier Reef, the Selous Game Reserve in Tanzania, the Donana National Park in Spain and other sites of concern.

Sunday 20th July

God the Holy Spirit,

Come to us and among us;

Come as the wind and cleanse us;

Come as the fire and burn;

Come as the dew and refresh;

Convict, convert and consecrate many hearts and lives, to our great good and your greater glory.

This we ask for Jesus Christ's sake.

Monday 21st July

Most people in the world, despite increased urbanisation, still live and work in the countryside – mainly at rural crafts, of which the chief is farming. Industrialisation simply puts them out of work. If Indians farmed in the way the British do, half a billion people would be unemployed – more than the total EU population and almost twice that of the USA. The same applies in most of Africa, where there are even fewer options. Yet industrialisation, urbanisation and a monetised economy geared to GDP is promoted by the world's most powerful

governments as the universal panacea for many of the problems of Africa, Asia and South America. Even worse, this formula must be applied at once if countries are to survive in increasingly competitive world markets. The problem is that competition in the meeting of basic needs (food and water) simply means a race to the bottom. The poorest countries go to the wall in a competitive race to provide cheap materials for the rich world.

Tuesday 22nd July

Trees hugely affect climate. One hectare of well-grown trees pushes out 50,000 litres of water a day. 100 hectares sends out 5,000 cubic metres a day – enough to fill two Olympic-sized swimming pools. All the water is saved from running away into rivers and seas. Instead it forms clouds, which drift elsewhere and fall as rain on another day and in another place. Furthermore, trees re-route the rain as it falls, particularly in the tropics, where much of it is caught in the leaves and is evaporated and returned to the atmosphere, to fall again as rain somewhere else.

Wednesday 23rd July

Last winter Britain suffered a series of floods, prompting some to suggest engineering remedies such as porous pavements or water butts to slow the pace of water. Yet trees will slow and filter rainwater absolutely for free, and then release it gradually. All we have to do is to leave them alone. Also, growing trees store CO₂ in their tissues and continue doing so even when incorporated in timber buildings. Carbon is released only when the wood is burnt. Therefore replanting a forest should be required practice whenever felling takes place.

technologies such as the Dry Paint Overspray System which eliminates water from the painting process. Later this year Ford will ask its major suppliers to report on their water use.

Ford's goals include:

A 30% reduction in CO₂ emissions per vehicle produced between 2010 and 2025.

A 40% reduction in per car waste sent to landfill between 2011 and 2016.

Sunday 6th July

God of all grace, call to the nations on earth to cease from strife, that all may join to fight their common foes of poverty and ignorance, disease and want.

Lead humankind back out of the way of death into the way of life, and from destruction to the building up of a new world of peace, liberty and joy.

End all strife over religious differences and scarcity of resources. Bring in the dawn of truth and plenty. Amen.

Monday 7th July

According to the 2011 Government report "The Future of Food & Farming", the world has about 4.6 billion hectares of agricultural land. Is this enough to feed a future population of 9 billion people? Shared equally between everyone, this works out at half a hectare each – just over an acre. In Britain the average wheat yield is around 8 tonnes per hectare. Colin Tudge suggests that one hectare producing 8 tonnes of wheat or the equivalent could provide the macronutrients – the basis of a staple diet – for more than 20 people. Of course other regions are less productive, but traditional small mixed units in SE Asia, where rice and horticulture are tightly integrated with fish, ducks and pigs, are

even more productive. Even the arable farmers of the Sahel, producing 1 tonne of sorghum per hectare, are producing enough for their families to live on. So the prime task is to encourage good farmers to farm with the best modern scientific advice, with minimum collateral damage. Traditional farms, generally small, mixed, labour-intensive and at least quasi-organic, still provide about 70% of the world's food. If governments and their experts were truly on the side of humanity, they would be putting good science, the weight of the law and taxpayers' money into such farms instead of speculative GM technology which over 15 years has yet to raise crop yields to any significant extent.

Tuesday 8th July

The farm industry, like every industry, is designed above all to make money. Most of it is made by a few big companies, so contributing to an increase in GDP and economic growth, even though that aim may directly conflict with the aim of feeding the people. This lies behind Government pressure on farmers to compete in world markets. In other words, farmers should produce more food – but only if they can do it more cheaply than other nations, failing which we simply buy food from cheap overseas markets. Unfortunately world food prices depend on a stable oil price and a stable population. To rest our ability to feed ourselves on such a flimsy basis seems unwise to say the least.

Wednesday 9th July

According to Colin Tudge, there is no such thing as cheap food. If chickens sell in the supermarket at 50p. a pound, or tins of fruit are offered at 3 for the price of 2, we can be sure that some person or animal or landscape further

up the supply chain is being screwed. Some farmer is working for less than the cost of production, animals are packed into cages, forests are being felled or rivers polluted. Food is only cheap if the hidden costs are ignored. Who cares when a new prawn farm wipes out the mangroves where the fish used to breed that fed the local population? Sooner or later, we shall all be picking up the bill.

Thursday 10th July

In Britain and the US only about 1% of the workforce now works full time on the land, leaving so few competent farmers that good agriculture designed to feed people gets ever more difficult. As the world's oil dwindles and the big machines are grounded, farming geared to feeding people becomes vital but countries with industrialised agriculture will be unable to change course if they have lost all their farming skills. Rwanda, for example, may be far better placed to face this future, although it will need to halve its agricultural workforce.

Friday 11th July

In the 1980s the network of independent agricultural research stations was either privatised or closed down. Now nearly all agricultural research is funded by corporations – hence the emphasis on GM technology, which is seen to be potentially lucrative, even though in 15 years of development it has made little or no contribution towards raising crop yields. However, small organisations like the Soil Association and Garden Organic continue to research ways of improving the yields of food crops.

Saturday 12th July

The Campaign for Real Farming aims to develop “enlightened agriculture” defined as

“agriculture that is intended expressly to feed people, well and for ever, without wrecking the rest of the world.” Its economic framework is rooted in small and medium-sized social, sometimes community-owned, enterprises. The idea is that individuals and communities must have control over their food supply. The necessary land reforms can be brought about peacefully through setting up new enterprises in situ and allowing the status quo of industrialised agriculture to wither on the vine. CRF organises the annual Oxford Real Farming Conference every January and funds a College for Enlightened Agriculture which is at an embryonic stage.

www.campaignforrealagriculture.org

Sunday 13th July

God of heaven and earth, you are calling us to play our part in the care of your creation and to manage carefully the land you have given us to tend. We pray for wisdom as we seek an agriculture designed, not for money-making, but for feeding the world. Guide our policy-makers, planners and farmers, and help us all to understand that we hold land, not in perpetuity, but in trust for generations to come.

Monday 14th July

Former Archbishop Desmond Tutu recently said: “It makes no sense to invest in companies that are undermining our future.” He encouraged people of conscience “to break their ties with corporations financing the injustice of climate change” and called for an “apartheid-style boycott of fossil-fuel companies.” Meanwhile the General Synod of the Church of England voted overwhelmingly to ensure that CofE investment policy is aligned with its policies on climate change. In America, a swathe of cities, universities, faith groups and 17 foundations

with assets of over \$2 have committed to move their money out of fossil-fuels. Yet reserves of fossil fuels in the inventories of leading companies and nations amount to 2,795 gigatonnes of carbon. This means that we not only have to stop looking for more, but also keep 80% of these known reserves in the ground if we are to have any chance of keeping global temperatures within 2 degrees C. of warming.

Tuesday 15th July

Zero Carbon Britain 2030 (ZCB) is a report from the Centre for Alternative Technology showing how we can decarbonise our economy and lifestyle by 2030. The 1956 Clean Air Act led to an immediate switch to cleaner fuels, while the 1996 Landfill Tax led to an explosion in recycling and composting waste. Legislation can be effective. New energy and carbon taxes could be offset by reductions in income tax and VAT. An escalating tax on carbon fuels would promote a switch to low-carbon vehicles, increase car-sharing and reduce vehicle congestion as well as promoting healthy alternatives such as walking and cycling. Fuel poverty could be reduced by inverting energy tariffs. For example, a household's first 1000 kWh of electricity could be charged at 7p. a unit, the second 1000 kWh at 14p. and all after that at 25 p. In this way decarbonisation could be reconciled with social justice, and tariffs designed to incentivise both efficiency and frugality.

Wednesday 16th July

According to the 2014 BP Statistical Review, the use of coal for energy generation grew by 3% in 2013, faster than any other fossil fuel, while its share of the market exceeded 30% for the first time since 1970. The use of windfarms for

generating electricity grew by 21% in 2013 while solar power grew at 33% but from a lower base point. Meanwhile a new paper by Lord Stern warns that the economic risks of unchecked climate change are bigger than previously estimated and that living standards will decline this century unless growth in greenhouse gas emissions is checked.

Thursday 17th July

Ignoring calls from seven European nations including Germany to set a 40% energy-saving target by 2030, the EU Commission has recommended a 27% reduction in energy use, despite the EU Parliament supporting a 40% cut. Brook Riley of FoE called the 27% target “pitifully weak and incomprehensible at a time when the EU is crying out for a way to reduce dependence on Russian gas. Why did the Commission bother to carry out research showing the huge socio-economic benefits of an ambitious energy-saving target if it was only going to discard it? It's vital that Germany, Denmark and other progressive EU states reject the Commission's position and press for more cuts in energy use.”

Friday 18th July

The Government has approved the building of the world's second biggest wind farm off the Suffolk coast, supporting almost 3,000 jobs and bringing over £520 million of investment to the UK economy. Work could begin on the 1.2 GW. farm in 2017, with completion in 2019. The 240 turbines will deliver clean power to about 820,000 homes.

Saturday 19th July

London-based Soco International has agreed to end its oil explorations in the Virunga National