

Sources:

"Why Genes are Not Selfish" (Colin Tudge)
Clean Slate (CAT)
Environment (CIWEM)
www.edie.net

Additional Prayers

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

For further information and requests for prayer, please write or email:
Philip Clarkson Webb,
15 Valley View,
Southborough,
Tunbridge Wells TN4 0SY

Email: pcw@christian-ecology.org.uk
Website: www.greenchristian.org.uk

Picture on front cover:
Golden rod by Poppy Pickard

Christian Ecology Link Ltd is a company registered in England and Wales. Administrative Office:
10, Beech Hall Road,
Highams Park, London, E4 9NX
Company Registration No. 2445198
Registered Charity No. 328744.
tel: +44 (0) 845 4598460
info@christian-ecology.org.uk

Prayer guide for the care of creation

August 2014



"This is what the Lord says: 'Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths; Ask where the good way is and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls.'"

(Jeremiah 6.16-19)

"Each time a person stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the life of others, or strikes out against injustice, they send a tiny ripple of hope, and those ripples, crossing each other from a million different centres of energy, build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance."

(Robert F. Kennedy)



Friday 1st August

An "Overshoot Index" derived from data prepared by the Global Footprint Network relates each country's population size and resource consumption to its ability to provide essential services such as food production, water collection and waste absorption. The Index shows that 96 out of 146 countries listed – including all but eight of OECD nations – are already in overshoot, i.e. living beyond their ecological means. The UK is the 26th most overshoot nation, with a sustainable population of just 20.6 million people. Roger Martin, chair of Population Matters, comments: "Countries in overshoot are unsustainable from their own resources in the long-term unless they reduce their populations, or their consumption per head, or some combination of both. An increase in either worsens a country's long-term position."

Saturday 2nd August

The International Energy Agency reports that, in order to meet the world's growing energy needs, it will require \$48 trillion in new investment by 2035. "But this won't materialise unless there are credible policy frameworks in place as well as stable access to long-term sources of finance. Neither of these conditions should be taken for granted." But the oil industry is actually cutting back on upstream investment because, with oil prices ranging between \$90 & \$110 per barrel, it is not worth them investing in Arctic or deepwater plays until the price tops \$120 a barrel. With interest rates likely to rise, the ability of industry and governments to dramatically increase investment in oil exploration is likely to decrease still further. A hike in oil prices seems inevitable.

Sunday 3rd August

Creator God, you have given us a vision of
a new heaven and earth,
Resources conserved,

Earth tended,
Atmosphere cleansed,
Trees planted,
Injustice ended,
Oceans teeming,
Nations at peace,
Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer,
Alert the nations, rouse the churches
Receive our commitment to you.
Earth and heaven will then sing of your
glory. Amen

Monday 4th August

According to the US National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration, May's average global temperature of 15.54 C. was the warmest since records began in 1880. Next year it is expected that El Nino will warm up the Eastern Pacific Ocean, with far-reaching effects on the global climate.

Yet the Australian prime minister has chosen to scrap Australia's tax on carbon emissions which he described as a "useless, destructive tax which damages jobs, hurts families' cost of living and doesn't really help the environment." Michael Raupach of the National University climate change institute said: "This flies in the face of three giant realities: human-induced climate change, the proper role of government as a defender of the common good, and the emerging quiet energy-carbon revolution."

Tuesday 5th August

A report from the European Environment Agency finds that eco-innovation among small and medium-sized enterprise across Europe faces major financial barriers in its progress towards the EU target of an 80-95% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. It suggests using reduced labour taxes such as income tax and, instead, implementing a tax system based on resource use and environmental pollution. Environmental taxes could also encourage job

South-East and still meet the Government's climate change targets. They argue that building a new runway in the South-East would worsen the North/South divide as growth at regional airports would have to be constrained so as to ensure that CO2 emissions from aviation fell to their 2005 levels by 2050. If aviation emissions were allowed to rise, it would impose additional costs on the rest of the economy of £1-8.4 billion a year by 2050, as non-aviation sectors would have to make even deeper emission cuts.

Wednesday 27th August

An energy recovery facility in Staffordshire, opened recently by the Duke of Gloucester, will save council taxpayers £250 million over 25 years and help the county towards its target of Zero Waste to Landfill. The facility, developed by Veolia in partnership with CNIM Clugston, will generate enough power for 35,000 homes and has created 40 new jobs. The leader of Staffordshire County Council said: "The Four Ashes W2R site provides us with a leading facility which delivers huge savings, renewable energy, jobs and an educational offer. An educational centre on the site will be open to schools from Staffordshire and surrounding areas, helping young people to understand why it is important to recycle and that energy is a finite resource."

Thursday 28th August

The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute reports that global military spending in 2013 stood at \$1.75 trillion. The US spent 37% of the total and Western Europe spent \$312 billion – more than China and Russia combined. By contrast, the IPCC estimates that – to give a better than 50% chance of keeping within the agreed global limit of a 2 degrees C. temperature rise – world annual spending on mitigation would have to rise by about \$483

billion., although many researchers believe this is too little.

Friday 28th August

A 175-turbine wind farm 9 miles off the Sussex coast has been approved by the Government, but has aroused strong opposition from the National Trust, the South Downs National Park Authority and other local groups. A Conservative councillor for Worthing said: "It will be spoiling the view from what is otherwise a wonderful seaside town. No longer will we have a beautiful sea horizon, we will have these hulking great monoliths." Energy Secretary Ed Davey said the £2 billion project would produce enough renewable energy to power about 450,000 homes. Construction would begin next year and could be finished by 2018.

Saturday 30th August

Friends of the Earth has calculated that schools could save up to £8,000 a year through installing solar panels. For a typical solar PV array of 50 kWp solar panels:

- £5,100 would be annual income through the Feed-in Tariff;
- £1,900 would be savings on electricity bills;
- £1,000 would be income from selling surplus electricity to the national grid.

For details, go to: www.foe.org.uk/news/how-could-your-school-save-8k/year-solar-power
See also: www.engynious.com

Sunday 31st August

Tomorrow begins Creation Time – the season lasting till October 12th when Christians spend prayer time, meditation and action towards care for God's creation. This year the special theme is "God, Whose Farm is All Creation". Material to support worship leaders, responding to this UN Year of Family Farming, is available at: www.ecocongregationscotland.org/materials/creation-time

transfer water from south to north, but environmental impacts are hard to assess.

Wednesday 20th August

The Environment Agency says that, despite the past 6 months being the wettest on record, changing weather patterns and rising demand mean that rationing cannot be ruled out in the future. Population Matters has calculated that, if the UK population reached 82 million by 2050, we would require 1.5-4.9 million tonnes of water more than would a population of 64 million. The additional reservoirs would cost £5.9-£22.6 billion – all merely to maintain standards.

Thursday 21st August

A report from SmartestEnergy reveals that independent renewable energy schemes in Scotland generated £234 million-worth of energy in 2013 compared to £191 million in 2012. The 6.9 MW. Loch Carnan scheme, Scotland's biggest community-owned wind farm is expected to generate £2 million in revenue this year, the profits of which will be reinvested in South Uist, Benbecula and Eriskay. In 2013 more than £66 million was invested in independent renewable energy, i.e. schemes not operated by the Big Six energy companies.

Friday 22nd August

From today until the 25th the Greenbelt Festival takes place at Boughton House near Kettering NN14 3AG. Several CEL members will be there. For details go to: www.greenbelt.org.uk/2014/files/ or contact Greenbelt Festival at 16 Snow Hill Court, London EC1A 2EJ.

Saturday 23rd August

The new Environment Secretary, Liz Truss, has announced that from 2017 onwards Central Government will commit to buying fresh, locally-sourced, seasonal food so that "all food that can

be bought locally will be bought locally." Potential suppliers will be judged against criteria such as water and energy use and waste production. This "Plan for Public Procurement" will according to the Minister "be a huge boost to British farmers and producers and for students, patients and employees who want to enjoy fantastic food." The Prime Minister said: "Our long-term economic plan is all about backing the do-ers and the hard-workers – and no-one does more or works harder than our British farmers."

Sunday 24th August

Father, we thank you for the world we live in, for the food we provide and for the abundance of its store. Help us to look after your creation and to learn from it. Weed out all in our lives that hinders peace, so that your kingdom may be spread through us and that we may be channels of your peace.

Monday 25th August

Sainsbury's Cannock store has become the UK's first supermarket to run on electricity generated solely from food waste. In a partnership with waste management firm Biffa, food waste is collected from Sainsbury's stores across the UK, to be converted into bio-methane gas using Biffa's anaerobic digestion facility. The gas is used to generate electricity, which is supplied to Sainsbury's Cannock store by a new 1.5 km. cable. All general waste from Sainsbury's stores is now recycled or turned into fuel. Surplus food that can't be used by charity partners is processed into animal feed to support British farmers or used to generate energy through anaerobic digestion.

Tuesday 26th August

Reports on airport expansion from WWF, RSPB and the Aviation Environmental Federation (AEF) challenge the Airport Commission's claim that it is possible to build a new runway in the

growth and drive innovation, but were in 2012 equivalent to just 2.4% of GDP. "If we want to live well within the ecological limits of the planet, we need to rely heavily on Europe's inventiveness. This is not just about new inventions – encouraging the uptake and diffusion of new green technologies may be even more important."

Wednesday 6th August

Solar farms in the UK currently produce 2.5 GW. of electricity, but there have been doubts about their impact on biodiversity. A new report from the BRE National Solar Centre in partnership with the National Trust, RSPB, Plantlife, Eden Project and Solar Trade Association finds that solar farms increase biodiversity compared to farmed or neglected land, but monitoring and learning from experience will be essential. Patrick Begg of the NT said: "New renewable resources such as solar farms are vital if we are to generate the low-carbon, clean energy that we need to power the nation, but they must be developed in tune with the landscape." Paul Barwell of STA said: "There is huge enthusiasm among our members to turn solar farms into an even greater force for environmental good by providing safe and protected spaces for our vulnerable wildlife. We much look forward to seeing partnerships blossom between conservation groups and our members."

Thursday 7th August

Seafood, mainly from fish farms, is Norway's largest export after oil and gas. Demand for farmed fish is growing, but there is a shortage of Omega 3 fatty acids needed in fish foods. Norway's Technology Centre Mongstad is to be given \$1 billion of state support to build a facility which will use captured CO2 and residual heat from the TCM plant to produce Omega 3 and other high-value products from marine algae and then use it in fish feed. TCM's managing

director said: "Carbon is becoming increasingly constrained in the global economy, while food demand from farmed fish is rising. It seems a smart solution to use CO2, a by-product of oil and gas, as a raw material for aquaculture. So TCM, as well as operating at the forefront of carbon capture technology, is also playing a part in using CO2 for innovative circular economy business models."

Friday 8th August

The Environmental Association for Universities & Colleges (EAUC), representing 230 UK universities and colleges, has signed an agreement with UNEP to encourage sustainable innovation among future generations of graduates throughout the world. Its chief executive said: "Our members have to take the lead on a global scale to ensure our students have the skills and knowledge to ensure a social, economic and environmentally-responsible future for us all." EAUC's Green Gown Awards, which recognise British universities' sustainability initiatives, will now be put on a global scale.

Saturday 9th August

A report from the Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership finds that £7 billion was invested in low-carbon vehicles between 2003 and 2013 and this has re-vitalised the UK car industry. It has resulted in a 25% reduction in tailpipe emissions over the same period and an increase in low-carbon buses, with 1500 in operation in 2013. The Government has pledged: £200 million to cut the cost of an ultra-low emission vehicle; £37 million to make it cheaper to instal fast charging of batteries at home or on the street; £21 million to provide rapid charging at strategic locations from stations to town centres;

At least £100 million for further research and development.

The Government Car Service will order its first electric cars this autumn and there are plans to add electric vehicles throughout the public sector including the NHS, the police and local councils.

Sunday 10th August

Father, we cannot spread care for your creation throughout the world, but help us to begin where we are. Make us honest and careful in all our dealings, true in our words and actions. We cannot alter the course of a suffering and unjust world, but help us to light candles in the darkness, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Monday 11th August

When Charles Darwin coined the phrase “Natural Selection” as the counterpart of the artificial selection that breeders have used down the centuries, he added “Natural Selection . . . is as immeasurably superior to man’s feeble efforts as the works of Nature are to those of Art.”

This contrasts with the attitude of gardeners and others like Capability Brown who took it as self-evident that Nature had to be improved upon. It contrasts even more starkly with the arrogance of many commercial genetic engineers who seek to tailor animals and plants to suit the commercial whims of the day, and promise a time when they will have the power to re-build life from scratch.

Tuesday 12th August

The proponents of genetic engineering often claim to be motivated by scientific objectivity - that an objective assessment of the facts leads straight to genetic modification as the way forward for agriculture. However, the prevailing economic dogma holds that farming everywhere

must be directed to making a profit, in competition with everyone else, rather than directing all their efforts to producing food. So the methods of industry, which tends to reduce labour requirements, are the only viable road to profit (as long as oil is cheap). Genetic engineering inevitably leads to centralisation of power and profit. Hence the readiness of some governments, including Britain’s, to throw their weight behind the technology. As usual, profit trumps sustainability.

Wednesday 13th August

Page one of standard economic textbooks tells us that the role of economics is to maximise wealth. But this judgment ignores two fundamentals:

- 1 That the world is finite, and
- 2 That people matter more than the system.

The whole house of cards is underpinned by technophilia – the embedded belief that high tech can always get us out of any trouble. The economist John Maynard Keynes believed we must first decide what is necessary, what is possible and, crucially, what is right. Then, he wrote, “the economic problem will take the back seat where it belongs . . . and the arena of heart and head will be occupied where it belongs, or reoccupied by our real problems, the problems of life and human relations, of creation, and of behaviour and religion.”

Thursday 14th August

Can agriculture be re-designed so as to feed people rather than to feed profit to corporations? Currently the great supermarkets that now in effect control the world’s food supply grow rich by scouring the world for the greatest bargains, playing farmers worldwide against each other, then imposing the greatest mark-up they can get away with. To achieve economies while oil is still relatively cheap, they demand that farming

should be practised on the largest possible scale – monocultural fields of wheat as far as the eye can see, factory farms with 30,000 cows or a million pigs or poultry, so that completely uniform produce can be borne in jumbo trucks to central distribution points towards the points of sale. Factory farms need very few workers, so millions of farmers are thrown out of work and finish up in urban slums. Yet the point of the whole exercise is not to produce good food for everyone, but to maximise profits for a few, while millions go hungry.

Friday 15th August

Author Colin Tudge believes there is no way of transforming the mega-corporations that own the world’s agriculture into the kind of farming that the world actually needs. He believes the answer lies in the many enterprises which are being set up despite the overwhelming power of corporations and banks – enterprises motivated by values that go beyond maximising wealth, often financed by Community Interest Companies, Industrial Provident Societies and co-operatives of many kinds. The embryonic Trust for Enlightened Agriculture, like the National Trust, aims to raise money to enable farmers to acquire land dedicated in perpetuity to a farming system that provides good food with justice, without cruelty and wildlife-friendly.

Saturday 16th August

A report from the Cambridge Institute of Sustainable Leadership in collaboration with the NFU, Asda, Sainsbury’s and Nestle, says that, with UK population expected to exceed 70 million by 2030, the extra demand for living space and food will have a major impact on land use. The UK is self-sufficient in barley, wheat, milk and lamb, but overall runs a food and drink trade deficit of £18.6 million a year. On top of these pressures, the Government is committed to using bioenergy crops such as miscanthus as

renewable sources of energy. The report criticises the Government’s lack of a coherent vision on how to make the most of our farmland – a finite resource.

Sunday 17th August

Father, we pray today for all who work closely with the natural world: For farmers and gardeners who grow our food,
For scientists and technologists who probe the secrets of life,
For foresters who plant and harvest trees,
For artists, photographers and poets who capture beauty for others to see,
For conservationists and all who guard the precious heritage of the earth.

Monday 18th August

The Cambridge report estimates that extra pressures on land use will require an extra 7 million hectares of land by 2030. Andrew Montague-Fuller, its lead author, said: “We may well find that there’s a large amount of land growing biofuels, with solar panels and wind farms, when actually we need more land put aside for the food needs of our growing population. We may get the balance wrong if we don’t face up to this shortfall.”

Tuesday 19th August

Much of the UK’s water consumption is embedded in imports from countries such as China, where officials have called the nation’s water shortage “a grave situation”. A report from the National Academy of Sciences says that 2/3rds of China’s cropland is in the north, which has only 1/5th of the nation’s water supplies. The FAO reports that the intensive use of groundwater for irrigation has lowered water tables by up to 300 metres. However in southern China less than 30% of groundwater sources are used due to a plentiful supply of surface water. Major engineering work is planned to