



## Happy New Year

Happy New Year to all our members, 2006 will be an important year for all of us both on the local, national, and international scene.

If I could put together a wish list for 2006 it would include:

- Reduction of energy usage, energy conservation, true environmental costs of purchase and production, development of renewable resources, efficient utilisation of specific energy sources, progressive reduction in demand, banded wealth taxation to dramatically reduce individual car ownership, tax reduction incentives and cash bonuses to those who reduce their total energy consumption, and legislative progressive targets introduced in 2006 to implement staged sustainability for our future energy needs.
- Waste creation, rapid reduction required, dramatic reduction in packaging, all goods manufactured with a statutory high percentage of recyclable materials, supermarkets sizes to be reduced to lessen the waste in packaging, transportation and environmental deprivation, standardised plastic production of a few varieties and colour coded for recycling purposes, local environmental estates where all waste is recycled and reused.
- Reclamation of our communities from multinational organisations, taxing supermarkets and chain stores for the true costs of their environmental deprivations, supporting local businesses, establishing a local Moray bank, encouraging local organic food production, introduce new business start-up apprenticeships for motivated school leavers, develop cycle ways throughout Moray that are also suitable for single disabled vehicles, buy local to ensure future development opportunities, create local heat and power units for small residential and industrial estates, develop local plans to improve the quality of life for everyone throughout Moray using local, whenever possible, sustainable resources.

This may appear unattainable but we cannot go on living as if there is no tomorrow, if we wish to care about our children's and their children's future welfare. Our "Ecological Footprint" here in Scotland is 5.35, which means that if every country in the world replicated our current average lifestyle,

they would require another two planet Earths to fulfil their needs. Of course, we are not the only industrialised country with such a "footprint"; quite a few others have similar or worse ones. The time to start making a difference was 30 years ago, but that of course would have been curtains for any political party with the foresight and courage to implement the necessary changes required. Now it is imperative, especially as global warming is increasingly accepted as real, that we each and every one of us strive to convince our politicians and community leaders to be strong and implement the changes necessary for a sustainable future.

Yours for a happy 2006,

*Mike Bowker.*

## Moray Branch Actions

At our last branch meeting we discussed a number of potential projects the branch could be involved in over 2006. In addition to windfarms and incinerators a number of ideas were considered. These included:

Local Food Production: In order to advertise and highlight the wealth of food grown and produced locally we intend to research and produce a booklet

Stalls at Farmers Market: We should use stalls to spread information and recruit new members. Leaflets could be complemented with videos, creative projects etc. It was agreed we should try to have 3 or 4 stalls a year.

Fundraising: Ideas including cards and quiz sheets were discussed. If you have any suggestions please let us know.

Insulation: Investigation into difficulty of insulating 1½ storey buildings and possible solutions.

Schools: The need to involve schools was discussed. We need to foster links with the Eco-schools programme. A primary schools writing competition will also be organised.

Composting: The need for a Moray's green waste to be composted in Moray will be our next letter writing campaign. This will be included at next meeting.

Plastic Recycling: While a plant in Moray may be unfeasible there should be scope for other options. It was felt that members did not know enough details of the issue and we should investigate the issue.

Cycle Paths: We need to encourage The Moray Council on this issue and on safe routes to schools.

Website: More information needed for website.

We can only progress these issues with your help. If you are interested in any of the issues please get in touch.

## Seabed Survey

Divers have uncovered rare species on a survey of the local seabed. Seasearch surveyed a number of new sites in the north east of Scotland, a place normally avoided by divers because of its exposed and rocky coastline.

Volunteers discovered relatively large numbers of a rare, normally solitary starfish called stichastrella rosea on reefs off Hopeman. Near Lossiemouth, they also found red mullet - another fish thought to be moving north as waters warm.

Mr Duncan of Seasearch said the seabed was desperately in need of more protection. "Diving week in and week out, Seasearch volunteers and thousands of other recreational divers understand we have a marine environment to cherish in Scotland. Yet we still have a lot to learn about what lives beneath the waves, let alone have the necessary legislation urgently needed to protect it."

For further information: [www.seasearch.org.uk](http://www.seasearch.org.uk)

## Waste Exchange

Aberdeen Forward, has opened its new project: the Creative Waste Exchange in Aberdeen. This project collects materials donated by industry and commerce and after some sorting and preparation makes these materials available to the community as a low cost resource. Materials are suitable for arts projects etc. For more details: [www.creativewasteexchange.org.uk](http://www.creativewasteexchange.org.uk)

## Social Event

A guided walk is organised for Sat 25<sup>h</sup> February along the coast at Garmouth. Meet at the Garmouth car park (near the playing fields) at 10.30 am. Walk is slightly over 4 miles long and will include a talk on archaeology, geology and local history. A cup of tea at one of our members home is included. For more details contact Mike on 01452 886611 or [michael.bowker@ntlworld.com](mailto:michael.bowker@ntlworld.com)

## Wind Energy

The planning application for a community wind turbine at Grange, near Keith, has been approved by the Scottish Executive. It is hoped that construction could start this year and Moray Foe are keen to support the proposal by buying a share in the turbine. When this looks like it is going ahead and the financing of the project is open to the public we will be going round the members with

a begging bowl for donations. So start saving your pennies – you have been warned!

In December 2005 The Moray Council decided not to formally object to a proposed wind farm at Berry Burn. This is a pleasant surprise considering the Councils previous hostility to wind power in Moray. Proposed changes to the local Plan will make it almost impossible for further wind farms to be situated in Moray with only the proposals at Aultmore and Drummuir still going through the planning process.

Data from "Stormy Weather; 101 Solutions to Global Climate Change". By Guy Dauncey with Patrick Mazza.

Years since the Earth's ozone layer was formed; **2000 million**

Number of species that can live outside the oceans in a world without an ozone layer; **0**

Years since we started destroying the ozone layer; **66**

Years since we decided to stop destroying the ozone layer; **14**

Years in which the extent of ozone depletion has decreased; **0**

## Local Plan

The consultation phase on the draft Moray Structure Plan and Moray Development Plan has now ended.

A copy of the Moray FoE submission can be viewed on our website at:

[www.morayfoe.org.uk](http://www.morayfoe.org.uk)

The moray Council will be responding to submissions shortly. We intend to stick to our objections unless the plan is substantially changed.

## Forthcoming Events

### Future Meetings

Meetings are held on the last Tuesday of every second month at 7.00pm in the Moray Resource Centre, Maisondieu Road, Elgin.

Dates for 2006 are: **Tue 31 January**  
**Tue 28 March (AGM)**  
**Tue 30 May**  
**Tue 25 July**  
**Tue 26 September**  
**Tue 28 November**

All members are welcome.

### Guided Walk

Meet at the Garmouth Car Park on **Sat 25 February** at 10.30am