



# BeFriending Creation

Newsletter of Quaker Earthcare Witness  
Affirming our essential unity with nature

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## Seeking Consistency in Word and Deed

by Roy Taylor, QEW Steering Committee Clerk

Are we doing a good job at doing what we say we are supposed to be doing?

Years ago we developed a variety of ways to describe ourselves. The FCUN working group is now reviewing the words we use to see if they still have meaning for us, are they accurate and do they need updating to better reflect the organization that we are now?

The following is my review of our introductory statement:

*Quaker Earthcare Witness is a network of Friends (Quakers) in North America and other like-minded people who are taking spirit-led action to address the ecological and social crises of the world from a spiritual perspective, emphasizing Quaker process and testimonies, including continuing revelation. ... QEW's primary calling is to facilitate transformation of humans' attitudes, values, identity, and worldview that underlie much of the environmental destruction going on in the world today.*

If we are a “network,” what are we doing to grow and promote this network? Are our activities designed to be network friendly? How could we be networking better?

I wondered about why we focus our activities on North America when we are working on a global issue. When asking about the history of this bracketing I was informed that this term was used as an inclusive and not selective phrase. We wanted to be something more than just a group within the United States and Canada. We wanted to include Costa Rica and so we expanded our thinking to include the entire continent. While



Image created by Mary Coelho.

I personally find this restrictive and self-limiting, I acknowledge the fear that we can't take on the whole world, so let's just focus on our portion of it. What are we doing to reach out to Friends in other countries of the Americas? Where would that work fit within our structure?

What do we mean by “taking spirit-led action ... from a spiritual perspective”? I think that we have been working on this and we are now using the term contemplative action. How might this phrase be integrated into our description?

See **Clerk's Message**, page 3

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## BeFriending Creation

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We publish *BeFriending Creation* to promote the work of Quaker Earthcare Witness, stimulate discussion and action, share insights, practical ideas, and news of our actions, and encourage among Friends a sense of community and spiritual connection with all Creation. Opinions expressed are the authors' own and do not necessarily reflect those of Quaker Earthcare Witness, or of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). The editor is responsible for unsigned items. Submission deadlines are February 10, April 10, June 10, August 10, October 10, and December 10.

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**Membership** is open to all who demonstrate commitment to support the work of Quaker Earthcare Witness and who support its work at the Monthly or Yearly Meeting levels, or through other Friends organizations. Quaker Earthcare Witness is a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation; contributions are tax-deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

### VISION AND WITNESS

WE ARE CALLED to live in right relationship with all Creation, recognizing that the entire world is interconnected and is a manifestation of God. WE WORK to integrate into the beliefs and practices of the Religious Society of Friends the Truth that God's Creation is to be respected, protected, and held in reverence in its own right, and the Truth that human aspirations for peace and justice depend upon restoring the earth's ecological integrity. WE PROMOTE these truths by being patterns and examples, by communicating our message, and by providing spiritual and material support to those engaged in the compelling task of transforming our relationship to the earth.

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### Earthcare Calendar

**April 10, 2014.** Deadline for article submissions for May-June 2014 *BeFriending Creation*.

## Letters to Share

*"WHAT CANST THOU SAY" ABOUT SPIRIT-LED EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF EARTH, about your own stirrings toward care for the planet, in relation to the vision and thoughtful action of Quaker Earthcare Witness as a whole? We'd like to hear from you. Send your letters to Katherine at [katherine@quakerearthcare.org](mailto:katherine@quakerearthcare.org), and share your thoughts and leadings with Friends and caring others throughout North America.*

February 4, 2014

Dear BeFriending Creation,

Thank you so very much for publishing both of our articles in the latest edition (*BFC*, January-February 2014)...it was quite exciting to see us in print like that. We meant to include our Meeting affiliation—Mohawk Valley MM, New York Yearly Meeting—and share that we are willing to visit any Meetings that would like to hear more or have us do a workshop about the trip. Thank you for your ongoing service to Friends and this work. — Buffy and Liseli

February 9, 2014

Dear BeFriending Creation,

I'm an environmentalist at heart. Since 2005, I've been focused on the problem of climate change.

Dealing with climate change is my greatest passion. But for me to call it a passion is to presume too much—my day job still takes precedence. Then, I see to keeping up our house, spending time with my wife and kids, and in the few minutes left, I work with a climate action team.

I see few outlets for me to work on climate change, and too little spare time to do it.

And most people I know don't even think about how their current activities are unsustainable. The vast, far-flung consumer sphere we live in points us in exactly the opposite direction. Consume on, dudes and dudettes, it exhorts us. And we happily comply, misunderstanding that the product cornucopia we enjoy is rapidly shrinking.

In human affairs, so much change is held back by our tendency to give in to the momentum of current practices. This doesn't mean that the larger issues aren't important, even crucial. It's just that we all too easily muse while the fire before us burns out of control.

The compelling question for me is this: what social obstacles stand between us (as a society) and stopping climate change? For I believe climate change is a problem not because we don't understand the physics/meteorology underlying it, not because we don't have technologies to make clean energy or capture carbon, but because we lack the social will to do so.

Why this lack of social will? My working theory is that we are being hobbled by (a) fossil energy interests and (b) political systems subservient to the carbon-based corporations.

The carbon-based corporations are using public relations tools to misinform the public and direct our attention away from climate change problems. At the same time, they are also working mightily with established politicians who are still stuck depending on large corporate donations to get elected, and are thereby answerable to their "masters."

See **Letters**, page 11



## Clerk's Message, from page 1

Quaker organizations were taken to task this month in an article in Friend's Journal, "Doing Good Well," by Charles Schade (<http://www.friendsjournal.org/good-well/>). His suggestions for what we should be aiming for:

- Set measurable goals and make the goals public;
- Provide relevant program metrics tied to program level cost information;
- Make concrete funding requests based on anticipated activities and projected results, not on anecdotes and vague appeals to emotion;
- Report on successful and less-than-successful activities, describing lessons learned from each outcome and the changes anticipated as a result; and
- Ask donors to support the administrative work necessary to accomplish regular evaluation and reporting.

I agree with Charles on these points and I am pleased to note that we are already working on these in part. This is a good reminder that we need to be more publicly obvious with our work in the manner that we publish our stories on our website. While he is very goal and program oriented in his review we also need to be clear about our purpose and how we describe ourselves to others. At our last CCC [write out] meeting we were reminded that we should be using the five

statements of purpose (reapproved last summer) in a more prominent manner.

Each of our committees and working groups are describing themselves and their work. These descriptions will be posted on the website along with the stories of the work these groups are accomplishing. This will show us where our resources of time and money are best spent. Fund raising to support these activities will have greater clarity and we will then be able to measure some of the successes we are experiencing.

A number of our committees and working groups are exploring new ways to reach out to our base and further. Exploring clear and concise ways to define ourselves and our vision helps both us and those with whom we are trying to communicate. These will be helpful tools for our Yearly Meeting representatives as they go back to their meetings with our message. It will also be helpful for our members who are finding new people and organizations that have not met us yet to get quickly past who we are and move on to how we can be working together. ∞

## Help Support Young Adult Friends

QEW is happy to again this year serve as one of the sponsors for the YAF Conference at Pendle Hill, June 6-11, 2014. You can contribute to help support this good work by going to <http://secure.quakerearthcare.org/donate>. For more about the conference, see <http://www.pendlehill.org/yafcon>.

## Apply for a QEW 2014 Mini-Grant!

Have you been thinking about doing an Earthcare project this spring but don't know where to start?

Take advantage of a funding opportunity QEW offers through QEW Mini-Grants. Put together a group of like-minded Friends and fill out our application, and your project could be awarded up to \$350 in matching funds for your project.

This year we especially want to emphasize the work of young Friends and Friends working outside the US, but we welcome applications from all.

You'll find more information and our application form online at <http://www.quakerearthcare.org/article/quaker-earthcare-witness-mini-grants>.

Our deadline for QEW Mini-Grant applications is **May 2, 2014**. Questions? Call Bill Holcombe, Clerk, at (203) 313-4438 or send an email message to [bholc7@hotmail.com](mailto:bholc7@hotmail.com). ∞



Sarasota, FL First Day School garden.



# Massachusetts Quakers Host Carbon Tax Forum

By Maureen Lanan and Mary Gilbert

AS FRIENDS DEEPLY CONCERNED about climate disruption and seeking ways to reduce the fossil fuel pollution spewing into the air, the Cambridge Quaker Earthcare Witness committee of Friends Meeting at Cambridge (FMC) was excited to learn that a carbon tax bill has been introduced in our state legislature.

On February 2, 2014, FMC hosted State Senator Mike Barrett (D-Lexington) and Gary Rucinski of Citizens Climate Lobby to discuss the new Massachusetts carbon tax legislation introduced by Barrett and State Rep. Tom Conroy (D-Wayland). The bill was first proposed at the beginning of 2013 and has stalled in the Massachusetts House and Senate Joint Committee on Revenue. They are expected to hear it this spring. (We can make phone calls on that.)

The bill is a state-level version of a national carbon tax supported by Citizens Climate Lobby (CCL). CCL recommends a national tax be levied at the point when fossil material is first taken from the earth. This idea has precedent: Texas taxes oil and other resources at the point of extraction from both private and public property. For a national carbon tax, the tax money would go into a special fund and pay dividends evenly to citizens across the U.S., much as Alaska pays citizens about \$1,300 a year from oil revenue. The added cost would be transferred to consumers, who would adjust their purchasing choices on the inflated fuel cost. Energy conservation would be based on free-market consumer choice.

Could a carbon tax grow the Massachusetts economy? REMI (Regional Economic Metrics, Inc.) did a study based on taxing carbon-based fuels, such as gasoline, at the point of purchase by end-users like drivers and householders. The study assumes sales, personal income, and corporate taxes could be reduced by 25, 25, and 50 percent, respectively. It also shows that for the lowest tax scenario it modeled—\$15 per metric ton of CO<sub>2</sub>—\$2 billion would be added to the state economy by 2035 and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions would be reduced by 10 percent. As the tax is increased, the economy would continue to grow and emissions would decrease.

Barrett said the study found the proposal slightly



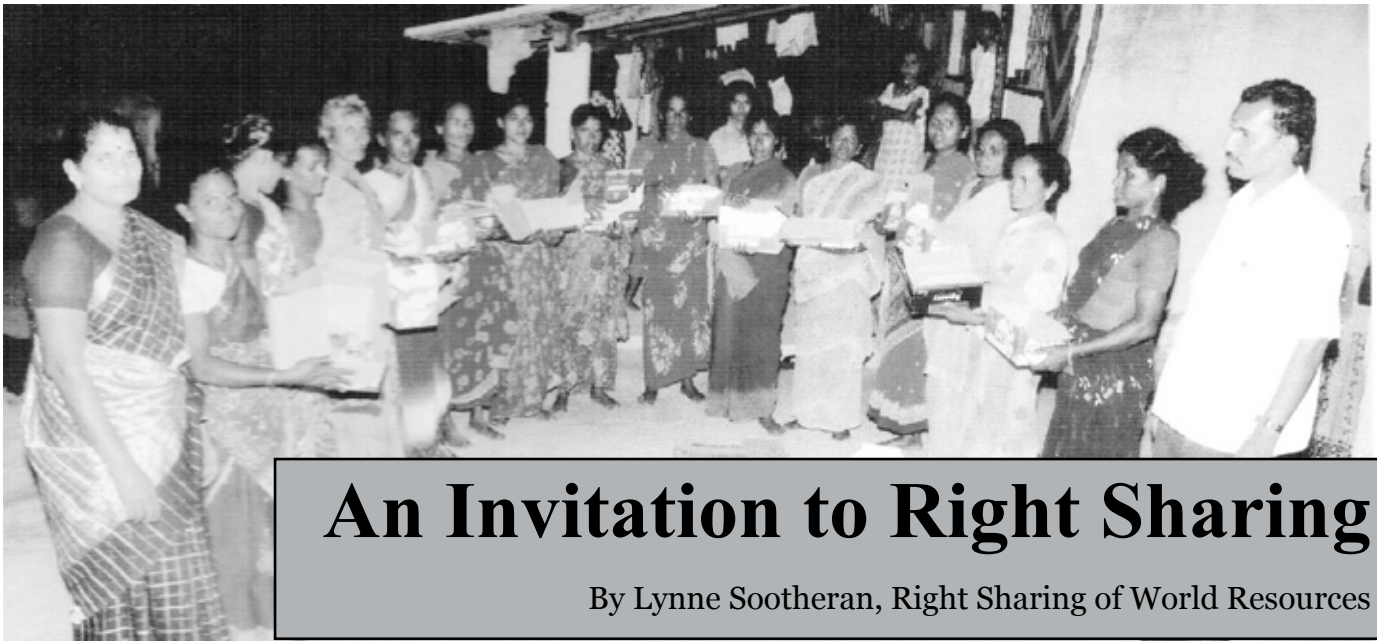
regressive, and he is exploring ways to address those concerns. He says the bill is a positive forward step and that it uses a “free market” approach conservative economists support.

The state of Washington projects similar economic growth and reduced emissions from a proposed carbon tax there. British Columbia has had a \$30/ton carbon tax in place for several years. It is popular because it has measurably increased economic growth and decreased CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. A carbon tax could grow the Massachusetts economy while reducing green-house gas emissions.

Since no fossil fuels are mined in Massachusetts, and the U.S. Constitution forbids taxes on interstate or international commerce, how might the carbon tax work here? Utility and gasoline companies would assign an added charge when the fuel is purchased. This fee would vary depending on the carbon footprint of the source, so electricity derived from coal would have a higher surcharge than electricity from natural gas because coal generates more CO<sub>2</sub>/kWhr than natural gas. (Currently no information about the embodied carbon used to generate energy from oil drilling, fracking, wind turbine production, or the like is available. Such cradle-to-grave tracking will be crucial to accurately assessing the carbon use posed by different fuel/electricity options.)

The bill will need a strong, state-wide constituency if it is to pass. Common wisdom says that when at least 10 percent of voters believe in something intensely, a tipping point in legislative and popular support occurs. FMC wants to help the state reach this tipping point.

See *Carbon Tax*, next page



## An Invitation to Right Sharing

By Lynne Sootheran, Right Sharing of World Resources

GREETINGS, FRIENDS. My purpose here is to introduce members of Quaker Earthcare Witness and others interested in healing the Earth to Donor-Designated Projects available through Right Sharing of World Resources (RSWR). Since 1967, RSWR, a Quaker organization, has worked to alleviate poverty throughout the developing world. Most recently, it “has worked in partnership with hundreds of women’s self-help groups, among the poorest of the poor in Africa and India, lifting families out of poverty and away from violence.” We do this by providing \$5,000 grants to groups of women who have designed their own projects. They form their own banking system and pay the interest back to themselves. Many of the projects are then able to help additional women start their own businesses.

Some of these projects would be of particular interest to QEW members because they deal with reclaiming land from the consequences of the green revolution. These women are healing the Earth as they make a frugal living. In the process, many are doubling their

family income from \$1.25 a day to \$2.50 a day. RSWR contracts with local field representatives to identify and nurture projects that have a good chance of succeeding, in places where the need is great. In most cases, there is no other organization providing grants to these women.

This article describes three projects that are available to anyone—any group, any Monthly Meeting or Church, any Yearly Meeting or other organization—that can be supported under our new program of Donor-Designated Projects. This is an opportunity for individuals or groups to provide financial support for an entire project, one that especially speaks to their heart, one that seems especially worthy of their support.

The first project, #I-930, involves 25 women farmers from southern India. Here is a project description provided by Dr. R. Kannan, our field representative, who has his Ph.D. in Gandhian studies: “The area of this project is drought-prone and the land has been rendered infertile because of the overuse of chemical

*See **Sharing**, next page*

### **Carbon Tax**, continued from previous page

Among Friends and friends we can lift up the moral imperative of climate change. Members of ecological or open space groups can ask them to put discussion of a carbon tax on their agendas. We can help build alliances between groups like 350.org, the Committee for a Green Economy, League of Women Voters, and the Sierra Club. Our state is having a gubernatorial election this year; questioning candidates from either political party about the tax will get attention and support for the bill from the candidates. And, of course, talking to your state legislators and their staff would help too.

Cultivating public support to help pass this bill

may require us to develop relationships with people of different opinions and in different life circumstances. Rural residents need to drive longer distances and will be sensitive toward a carbon tax. The municipal and non-profit sectors must be considered when crafting the legislation. The book *The Righteous Mind* by John Haidt was suggested to help reach out to conservatives.

Climate change and a carbon tax may be gaining attention now only because the weather is so strange that it frightens people. We are lucky that Massachusetts has legislators who understand the threats of climate change and who have given us legislation to support. ↵

**Sharing from previous page**

fertilizers and pesticides. Even if the land were fertile, the people could not afford to farm it because of the high cost of the chemical input. These 25 women want to help renew the fertility of their lands through sustainable and organic farm methods. In addition, with help to buy millet and other grains to plant, they want to buy cows and poultry to give them additional income and fertilizer.

“The Gramma Valar Nirai Trust (GVN), the non-governmental organization (NGO) working with these women, will provide training. It has worked with RSWR on four other projects. So far 410 women farmers have benefited from the RSWR revolving funds. Women members organized by GVN are venturing into the age-old, almost forgotten, indigenous minor grains, millets, and integrated farming. Minor grains and millet are the answer to malnutrition, depletion of ground water, and soil erosion.”

Project #S-902 is from Sierra Leone, and its description was written by Harold Johnson, the RSWR field representative there: “The project is requesting money for 25 poor rural farmers. RSWR has funded two other projects in this area, but there are still 685 women who need help. The women would like to purchase seeds and other input to grow rice, cassava, okra, potatoes, and groundnuts. They would also like to start growing paw paw and ginger as additional cash



crops. The women farmers' beneficiaries will eat some of the produce and reserve enough seeds for the next planting season. The War Widows Development Program has had two other projects with RSWR and has helped over 200 women. The group's leader is capable of handling anything set before her and she is well informed.”

The third project, also in India, is #I-943, under the direction of the Success Trust. This project involves 32 marginal female farmers, who will be involved in farming, rearing cows and calves, selling vegetables, and making coconut thatch. This NGO has had two other projects with RSWR through which it has taught skills

in organic farming to poor women. The new project will give the women an income in their own villages so that they won't have to migrate and thereby become prey to the money-lenders and middlemen looking for bonded laborers (who are virtual slaves). The women themselves have chosen the activities. Success Trust offers training to its women members in savings, credit, legal rights, and the environment.



Three hundred twenty of them have received revolving loans from previously funded projects.

My husband Kent and I, both members of the Board of Right Sharing of World Resources, have funded two Donor-Designated Projects since they became available in late 2012. We give because we are moved by the needs of these women, the good that comes from funding projects, the knowledge that the money is used wisely and well, and—as the RSWR newsletters say—because “God calls us to the right sharing of world resources.” It seems equally true that justice, compassion, and the needs of the Earth call us to this sharing. Kent and I are grateful to be of service to these women in this way.

As individuals, families, Meetings, Churches, Yearly Meetings, or groups of women and men who share these concerns, if you would like to support one of the described projects, please e-mail Sarah Northrop, Program Director of RSWR, at [sarahnorthrop@rswr.org](mailto:sarahnorthrop@rswr.org), or Betty Tonsing, General Secretary of RSWR, at [bettytonsing@rswr.org](mailto:bettytonsing@rswr.org). My husband, Kent Simmonds, and I would also welcome conversation with you about RSWR Donor-Designated Projects or giving of any kind to RSWR. My cell phone number is 563-379-9467, and my email address is [sootly01@luther.edu](mailto:sootly01@luther.edu). Kent's cell phone number is 563-277-2434, e-mail at [simmonke@luther.edu](mailto:simmonke@luther.edu).

The women and families helped by Right Sharing of World Resources would be grateful for any amount you would like to contribute.

With love for the Earth and the families that need our help to heal it,

Lynne Sootheran

Board Member, Right Sharing of World Resources ❧

# Quaker Investment Criteria



By Robert Howell, Northern Monthly Meeting,  
Te Haahi Tuhauiwiri\*, Aotearoa New Zealand

THE NOVEMBER-DECEMBER ISSUE of *Befriending Creation* had the theme of divestment. While divestment is an important question, it raises the more fundamental issue of what are the Quaker principles and criteria that should be used to direct investment generally. This matter is one that I took to Canberra Regional Meeting in Australia and they have adopted the criteria I'm sharing in this article, and we recommend it to other Meetings.

Please note that there are choices about the range of investment types that can be excluded when answers are not right or wrong, but depend on tactical factors. *Negative* and *Positive Screening* is where investment types are excluded (for example, tobacco) or preferred (such as renewable energy). *Engagement* is where we as shareholders engage with companies to encourage positive change. Engagement uses ownership stakes to engage with those companies that are not meeting desirable standards, through dialogue and shareholder activism.<sup>1</sup>

English Quakers started Friends Provident in 1832. In 1984, Friends Provident started the first ethical fund in the UK, the Stewardship Fund. It is a fund that excludes a lot of investment options. Christian Brothers Investment Services is the leader in Catholic socially responsible investing. It is an example of a fund that has minimal exclusion, considerable engagement, and very good reporting of its impact.

Michael Baldwin and Paul Hawken started Highwater Global Fund in 2005. Company selection is based on criteria drawn from the work of *Natural Capitalism* by Hawken. Portfolio21 is based in Oregon. They have developed criteria using the Natural Step framework. Both Portfolio21 and Highwater Global Fund are examples of Funds that have investment criteria based on strong sustainability; that is, the principle of living within the capacity of the Earth to support life.<sup>2</sup>

## Possible Quaker Investment Guidelines

**Core Values:** Our core values include simplicity, peace, integrity, community and environment, and equality.<sup>3</sup>

## Definition of Ethical Organisation

If funds are to be invested in organisations, those

organisations need to care for the ecological systems that support life here on our planet, and to promote a just distribution of our Earth's benefits in accord with our testimonies. Organisations need to be financially, socially and environmentally sustainable and responsible, treating all stakeholders fairly. Stakeholders include owners, members of the governing body, management, staff, subsidiaries, contractors, suppliers and distributors, customers, clients, and the local communities.

From an environmental viewpoint, the organisation will respect and act in accord with nature and within the limits set by the ecological systems on which humans are dependent for life. This is a definition of a strong ecological sustainability.

The social component includes human rights, and companies' use of their labour force, including health and safety and fair employment practices, as well as the meaningful involvement of labour in decision making.

An ethical organisation maintains good governance. It acts with financial and ethical integrity and transparency. This includes working with financial institutions and agents that espouse these values. It includes providing accurate and accessible financial and performance reports, and truthful advertising and promotion.

No company is completely sustainable or ethical, but investment will be in those companies that are closest to this standard (subject to other investment factors described below). The application of any ethical criteria will require weighting the various components or qualities that make up an ethical company. Because of the severe ecological degradation to our world by such issues as climate warming, the environmental factor is critical, and strong ecological sustainability should take priority in the consideration of which companies to invest in.

Any agent or advisor when reporting or advising should take an account of how each company meets these ethical criteria and any engagement taken to encourage change.

\*Te Haahi Tuhauiwiri is the name given to Friends by the indigenous peoples of Aotearoa New Zealand and means roughly, "the people who stand swinging in the wind of the Spirit."

*Continued on next page*

*Investment*, continued from page 7

## Strategic Risk

A risk analysis is needed to take account of the factors that will significantly influence future conditions and events, both positive and negative, especially in the medium to longer term. The major global drivers will include population change, climate change, price increases for hydrocarbons, water, food, toxins, geopolitical shifts, wide swings in economic activity and technological advances.<sup>4</sup> Ideally, companies have calculated their ecological impact, are living within it and have incorporated the major global drivers into their strategic planning. There will be complex interactions amongst all of these drivers that will cause abrupt and radical shifts in human living and work, creating risks and opportunities. Companies will have strategies to cope with this turbulence and the resulting volatility of returns. This may involve engagement with companies to encourage longer-term perspectives rather than the payment of dividends over the short term.

Preferred strategies to cope with this turbulence and volatility of returns will include investing in a smaller number of companies,<sup>5</sup> taking a larger stake, and/or engagement where management is encouraged to take a longer-term perspective rather than a short term requirement to pay out regular or high dividends. The choice of company or fund will include how aware management is of the major global drivers and how they are incorporating these into their strategic plans.<sup>6</sup> When reporting, there will be an account of how each company deals with strategic risk.

The universe of investments meeting these criteria may be smaller than would usually be the case and a narrower range of investments is considered acceptable.

## Negative and Positive Screening and Engagement

The strategies will include screening out, positive selection and/or promotion of various investments.

Negative screens will include organisations involved in industries and behaviour like:

- armaments and weapons systems
- nuclear power<sup>7</sup>
- gambling
- tobacco
- animal exploitation and experimentation
- irresponsible alcohol manufacture and distribution
- significant human rights abuses
- significant environment abuses
- high carbon emissions
- inappropriate behaviour towards indigenous peoples

On tactical grounds, there can be investment in some companies that would usually be screened out, when there is the scope for engagement.

Positive Screens will include organisations involved in industries and behaviour like:

- energy efficiency improvements
- environmentally sustainable goods and services
- clean technologies
- renewable energies
- green business
- progressive employment practices
- local community activities
- public goods such as public transport
- sustainable housing
- low carbon emissions

The principles of environmental sustainability and simplicity will favour investment in goods and services essential for simple and sustainable living with a focus on local resources and production regarding factors such as food, housing, water and energy systems and clothing. Investment will favour production and distribution systems that are resilient and able to cope with relatively rapid changes in temperature and weather. Also favoured will be transport and communication systems that are not dependent on unsustainable energy and resource use.

## Other Policies and Implementation Issues

A financial advisor, if you engage one, will likely ask questions about your time horizon, and intergenerational equity, and diversification. Questions about time horizon deal with how old you are. If you are young and you want your investment for pension purposes, then you can take a longer view than someone who is elderly and wants short term returns. In the latter case liquidity of assets is more important.

Intergenerational equity is where capital is retained, in real terms, for future generations. A philanthropist may set up a fund to be ongoing over many years. The retention of capital (and the inflation rate) is therefore important. However, if a fund is established for a specific purpose (such as building up capital for a building project) then retention of capital at the end of the project is not required and a different investment approach will be taken.

Diversification deals with whether all asset classes will be used (cash, fixed interest, property and shares). Social/Community investments may be included in the portfolio.<sup>8</sup>

### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> This section draws on

a) *Your Faith Your Finance A Guide to Money, Faith and Ethics* See *Investment*, page 11



# Update on the Sustainable Development Goals

By Mary Gilbert, QEW Representative to the UN

ON FEBRUARY 5, 2014, the UN Open Working Group (OWG), assembled to form the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), finished taking stock of 37 vast and interconnected world topics such as water, agriculture, oceans, forests, human rights, and 32 more. Between March and July they will put together a recommendation to the General Assembly as to what the SDGs might look like. In September the General Assembly will take over, and a year of hardball negotiations will follow. A final version of the SDGs is to be adopted in September of 2015.

The OWG began with three-day sessions last March, and in the fall transitioned to monthly five-day sessions. Attending these meetings has been a major educational experience covering just about everything going on in the interface between the natural world and human life. The Secretariat provided rich briefing papers on all topics. Although countries and groups of countries (that is, SIDS, or Small Island Developing States) expressed different positions, there was no actual negotiation to distract from the learning. The two co-chairs of the OWG, Ambassadors Korosi of Hungary and Kamau of Kenya, created a remarkable atmosphere of sharing and trust among country delegates, many of whom said they had never experienced this before at the UN.

The most exciting thing to me is the obvious agreement that there be *no more silo thinking* in conceptualizing the SDGs. The inadequacy of thinking only within your area of expertise is now obvious. Agricultural thinkers will not be able to ignore water-use planners, who will not be able to ignore forestry experts, who will not be able to ignore transportation engineers, who will not be able to ignore human-rights workers, and so on. It's to be all-of-a-piece.

## Goals, Targets and Indicators, and Data

There will be no more than 10 overarching Sustainable Development Goals. Within each goal there will be several meaningful targets. Indicators, which are measuring tools, will be specified for each target. The ability to assemble data varies enormously from country to country. Also, the data needed now must be *disaggregated*, by gender, age, urban or rural, disability, and so on. These data mostly don't yet exist. Hoo boy! It's a costly logistical challenge!

The silo thinking of 14 years ago made it easier to name goals, targets and indicators for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). For example,

- MDG Goal 4 is to reduce child mortality.
- The target is to reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate.
- As indicators they are using three imperfect but readily available sets of data from UNICEF-WHO, on infant mortality rate, the under-five mortality rate, and the proportion of one-year olds immunized against measles.

Compare these with a goals and indicators model grid from the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN). The goal *Health and Well-Being at All Ages* lists the following indicators:

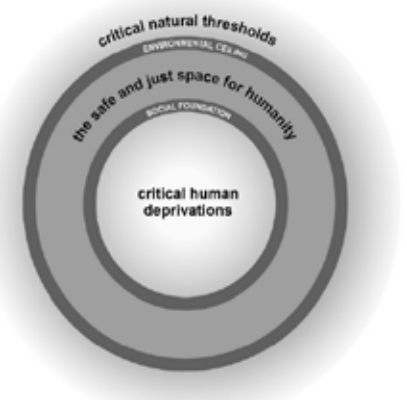
- Happiness and subjective well-being (Such indicators exist.)
- Improved diets, focus on nutrients, an end to child stunting
- Dis-aggregation of all indicators
- Physical and financial access to health care for the most marginalized and vulnerable
- Access to water and sanitation, including in health centers

Related indicators show up under several goals. These are complex, interlocking manifestations of the world.

I would like to share with you the Oxfam Doughnut, developed by Oxfam Great Britain senior researcher Kate Roworth.

The title of her paper is "*A safe and just space for humanity: can we live within the doughnut?*"

You will find a 4-minute video at <http://www.oxfam.org/en/grow/video/2012/introducing-doughnut-safe-and-just-space-humanity> or just search for Oxfam Doughnut.



Picture two concentric circles. The outer circle represents the limits set by nature—we must live within this circle if our civilizations are to be sustainable. The inner circle represents a social floor for humankind—inside this circle basic needs are not met and there is misery. Our task is to develop guidelines such that everybody gets to live in the cake-y part of the doughnut, through reining in extravagant overuse of our world and lifting the very poor into security and comfort. ∞

# A View of the UN Open Working Group

By Patricia Chernoff, QEW Representative to the UN

AT THE BEGINNING OF EACH DAY'S meetings of Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, several keynote speakers make an effort to educate the diplomats from various countries on the theme of the day. On the day I am reporting, the theme was Science and Technology, considered keys to the future by those in these fields.

Eric Solheim is the Chair of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Development Assistance Committee. He said Official Development Assistance (ODA) needs reform to account



*Eric Solheim*

for the role of middle-income countries and needs and better direct an "abundance of money." To this end, he said OECD is considering reforming the concept of ODA, which currently "disincentivizes success"; widening the concept of financial flows for development; and measuring impact, not only effort. Solheim called for increasing development spending for less developed countries and supporting the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change process.

The second speaker was Rolf-Dieter Heuer, Director-General of European Organization for Nuclear Research, who said that sharing scientific knowledge bridges cultures and promotes peace. He described a virtuous cycle "that should never be broken" as consisting of basic education in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics



*Rolf-Dieter Heuer*

as well as research and development. Heuer proposed sustainable development targets for global and national investment in science, research and development,

technology, and mathematics to ensure that these areas are publicly funded.

The third speaker was Martin Khor, Executive Director of South Centre, who recommended that means of implementation be included in each sustainable goal as a separate goal.

On technology transfer, he said high economic growth with minimal carbon emissions requires access to financing and technology. He noted that technology patents



*Martin Khor*

create barriers to health, food production, and climate change mitigation. He suggested capacity building on using flexibilities within the WTO Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights. He further suggested creating a "pool" of environmentally sound technologies, assessing their suitability before development and transferring them. He said, "It is better not to transfer technology than to transfer bad technology." He recommends an Open Working Group to establish a technology facilitation mechanism.

Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing Co-Chair Pertti Maajanen reviewed the Committee's work thus far and said the Open Working Group and Committee are "sister processes." He outlined the following areas of growing consensus among the Committee's experts: desire to form a comprehensive and integrated financing strategy; commitment to guaranteeing financing the Millennium Development Goals; and the need to look into financing of large environmental issues such as climate change, biodiversity and desertification, the environmental sector, and the need for qualitative policy responses.

Following the presentations, country delegates are encouraged to ask questions and to interact with the speakers. This format has been quite a success, often leading to a rich dialogue among countries. ❧



### Letters from page 2

So, it seems to me that we would need to reform the “corporations as people” model, institute effective campaign reform, and educate people on how climate change is affecting them now/will affect them in the future.

And at the same time, perhaps we need to become better citizens than consumers. Perhaps we need to fashion a way to move ourselves towards more personally sustainable patterns of consumption.

But personal inertia is a powerful force. I sit at my kitchen table, made of unsustainably harvested wood, in a house warmed and lit by fossil fuels, typing away at a laptop which, when made, produced ounces of waste

metals and gallons of toxic wastewaters. Do I have a clear strategy for moving from these unsustainable, carbon-spewing practices?

I do not. And so, I cannot just find fault with society, but with myself.

So, where to start, both at the social level and my own, as an environmentalist burdened, like Marley's ghost, with an unsustainable lifestyle?

Perhaps joining the Quaker Earthcare Witness discussion is one place to begin.

What do you think?

J.C. (John Clifford) Armbruster  
Olympia Monthly Meeting

### Investment from page 8

ics <http://www.yourfaithyourfinance.org/> and *How to Invest to Care for People and the Planet*.

<http://www.arrcc.org.au/how-to-invest-to-care-for-people-and-the-planet>.

2 See my article on *UNPRI and Australian Banks* which shows the problems of a weak definition of sustainability based on an ESG framework versus a strong definition of sustainability <http://www.arrcc.org.au/images/stories/reports/Banks%20and%20UNPRI.pdf>

3 *Handbook of Practice and Procedure in Australia* 6<sup>th</sup> ed, 2011, The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Australia Inc, p 8

4 These global drivers are based on an analysis of the foresight literature in *Strong Sustainability for New Zealand Principles and Scenarios*, <http://www.nakedize.com/strong-sustainability.cfm>

5 Carlos Jolly, one of the Co-Chairs of the Expert Group that drafted the UN Principles of Responsible Investment (UNPRI, 2012), has stated that the Responsible Investment community has not been more responsible than the investment community generally. In part this is because of funds that have a wide range of investments in many companies (large cap listed shares). “(T)he trillions of dollars controlled by RI asset owners, managers and consultants are not deployed consistent with long term investment strategies that would conduct our economies in a direction consistent with sustainable development, environmental protection, and greater economic justice – which would imply radical departures from what the market feels comfortable with and the valuation it puts on the large cap listed shares that dominate most global portfolios” See *Why We Need To Change The Way We Invest* [https://d3n8a8pro7vnm.cloudfront.net/accr/pages/36/attachments/original/1361872481/Why\\_We\\_Need\\_To\\_Change\\_The\\_Way\\_We\\_Invest.pdf?1361872481](https://d3n8a8pro7vnm.cloudfront.net/accr/pages/36/attachments/original/1361872481/Why_We_Need_To_Change_The_Way_We_Invest.pdf?1361872481)

6 See *A drought in your portfolio: are global companies responding to water scarcity?* EIRIS Water Risk Report, June 2011 <http://www.eiris.org/files/research%20publications/EIRISWaterRiskReport2011.pdf>

This research shows only a handful of the global 2000 companies analysed have the policies, management systems and reporting mechanisms they need to adequately address the risks they face from water scarcity. The report concludes that the vast majority of companies and investors remain unaware of both current and future water risks and are therefore failing

to protect company value. Because of this, investors should think twice about investing in such companies.

7 Nuclear power plants provide about 6% of the world's energy and 13-14% of the world's electricity. There are around 440 nuclear power reactors in operation in the world. Safety is an issue with the accidents at Three Mile Island (1979), Chernobyl (1986), and Fukushima (2011) being the most well known accidents. Building more plants create a greater possibility of accident or exposure to terrorist activity. Nuclear plants are very heavy users of water. Whatever the views about the merits of nuclear power, because of widespread public concern about them and the long time needed for planning and building new plants, nuclear energy will never be a significant solution to global warming. The more prudent investment would be in projects promoting energy efficiency and renewables.

8 Generally, social/community investment refers to direct investments in endeavours, which are outside the usual market-related activities. They may be aimed at achieving social good(s) whilst, ideally, offering an acceptable return at an acceptable level of risk. Examples are housing projects, job creation, environmental and educational projects or community building. These investments may be less liquid with pricing and risk assessment challenging. They may offer a lower financial return but have a discernible charitable component.

## Mark Your Calendars!

Please join us for these upcoming events:

- **April 10 - 13, 2014:** QEW 2014 Spring Meeting at the Cenacle Retreat & Conference Center, Chicago, IL
- **June 6 - 11, 2014:** Continuing Rev\_L\_tion YAF Conference at Pendle Hill, Wallingford, PA
- **June 11 - 14, 2014:** FUM Triennial, at Indiana Wesleyan University, Marion, IN
- **June 29 - July 5, 2014:** FGC Gathering, near Pittsburgh, PA
- **October 2 - 5, 2014:** QEW 2014 Fall Meeting at Pendle Hill, Wallingford, PA

# BeFriending Creation March–April 2014

**Quaker Earthcare Witness**

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## April Connections and May Mini-Grants

By Shelley Tanenbaum, General Secretary



AS A NETWORK OF FRIENDS who are carrying a concern for Earthcare, we meet twice a year to set policy, reconnect with each other, share stories of our work, and help each other strengthen our spiritual core. We do this through Meeting for Worship, worship-sharing, Meeting for business, time for committees and working groups to meet, informal discussions and sharing meals, walks to the Lake (we will meet six blocks from Lake Michigan) and (often) impromptu singing. This April 10-13 our Steering Committee will be meeting in Chicago (register to by going to <http://secure.quakerearthcare.org/civicrm/event/info?reset=1&id=6>). Steering Committee meetings are open to all QEW Friends. If you have wondered who keeps this organization going and where we are headed, please join us this April!

One of the many projects that QEW has developed is our Mini-Grant program. We offer matching grants to support projects whose primary purpose is to benefit the environment and/or promote environmental awareness and education in local communities. Friends' organizations in any country--whether a school, meeting, or other group--are eligible to apply for these annual awards, up to a maximum of \$350. Partnerships with non-Quaker groups in the community are encouraged. The deadline for applications is coming up soon (May 2).

Last year we were able to support several significant projects, including grants to:

- Create a peace garden planting demonstration project in Kigali through Rwanda Yearly Meeting
- Plant an edible garden with Sarasota, FL Monthly Meeting's First Day School
- Install a solar water heater at Casa des Amigos in Mexico City
- Design and install a community compost site to benefit local gardens by Milwaukee, WI Monthly Meeting
- Plant trees in Uganda as a joint project between Uganda Yearly Meeting and Weare, NH Monthly Meeting
- Establish a rain garden to control storm runoff pollution as a joint project with Green Street (Philadelphia), PA Monthly Meeting, Green Street Friends School, and the local community

If you would like to support Mini-Grants for 2014, please click Donate on our website ([www.quakerearthcare.org](http://www.quakerearthcare.org)) or send a check to QEW, P.O. Box 6787, Albany, CA 94706.

To learn more about QEW Mini-Grants or apply for a grant, please visit our website or contact Bill Holcombe at [bholc7@hotmail.com](mailto:bholc7@hotmail.com). ☞