



GREEN FOUNDATION IRELAND COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE
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ANNUAL REPORT ON ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31 DECEMBER 2019



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GENERAL OVERVIEW

for the year ended 31 December 2019

Green Foundation Ireland aims, through education, to inspire the public to work towards a sustainable society for Ireland.

We held five extremely successful events during 2019, two of which were part of Biodiversity Week. These were:

- Biodiversity Bites Delgany held in Delgany Golf Club.
- Making Your Home a Nature Reserve held in Golashane Nature Reserve, near Kells in County Meath.
- Food as a Commons! held in Nano Nagle Place, Cork City.
- Climate Jobs and a Just Transition held in Queen's University Belfast.
- Education Seminar and Book Launch held in the Mansion House, Dublin.

There was great discussion and interaction between the attendees and the panel of speakers at all of these events and these will no doubt lead to important impacts for the wider community.

Details of all these events (including reports, videos and photographs where appropriate), as well as our events held in previous years, are available on the [Events Section of our website here](#).

The Education Sub-Committee of GFI was very active during 2019 in progressing the Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) project. This collaborative project with ECO-UNESCO and Good Energies Alliance Ireland has continued to develop inter-actions with the Department of Education and Science, National Parents Council Primary and Post-Primary, Educate Together, National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. An Taisce has expressed an interest in working with GFI on the ESD project. Grant funding from the Environmental Pillar has been obtained for this project which is continuing in 2020.

Education is key to empowering young people to make a difference in their world and education is central to creating the changes needed for sustainable development to become a reality which has the potential to benefit all of society.

GFI intends to more fully utilise the *Eco Eye* series as a teaching and learning platform for ESD by indexing and in other ways making individual programmes more accessible in short bites.

GFI plans to communicate the already existing resources on the GFI website to a much wider audience of both committed green activists and the interested wider public.



These resources can also be used by educators as part of their curriculum subject development in second level and further education. The GFI website is also available to all students and we plan to raise awareness of this at a national level. In addition GFI is planning to make educational podcasts available on topics based on this information.

GFI will continue to work in collaboration with Ecoed4all, ECO-UNESCO, Secondary Teachers for Sustainability and various other stakeholders to promote ESD within the curriculum of all secondary schools.

We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to each and every one of our Board and Management Team, as well as to all our supporters, who have all contributed so much to our successful year on a voluntary basis. We are looking forward to the challenges that the coming year will bring including those presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.



BIODIVERSITY WEEK:
Biodiversity Bites Delgany



19 MAY 2019

Biodiversity Week:

[Biodiversity Bites Delgany](#)

Held in Delgany Golf Club

GFI Co-Ordinator: Joan Campbell

Approximately 90 people, including *Irish Times* reporter Sylvia Thompson, attended the interesting and engaging *Biodiversity Bites Delgany* held in Delgany Golf Club, and the following article by her appeared in *The Irish Times* the next day.

In addition to this, **Donna Mullen** (Chair of Green Foundation Ireland) made a presentation about how to encourage biodiversity in your own garden in a practical manner, of the importance all kinds of insects and birdlife, and how we can help them live with us.

Donna ended the afternoon with a workshop especially for the younger ones in the audience during which she showed children and adults how to make a bat box from the kits provided. A bat box was available to everyone in the audience who wanted one, courtesy of Green Foundation Ireland.

As well as this, there was a presentation by **Keith Scanlan** of the results of the Preliminary Biodiversity Survey of Delgany's Three Trouts Stream and area.

Zoe Woodward of Delgany Tidy Towns, also noted that there was also a memorial presentation to the late Éamon de Buitléar's widow Lailli in recognition of his work to wildlife and the local community.

Zoe extended a massive thank you to everyone who was involved, including the speakers, the organisers, the supporters, the attendees, those who participated from the floor, and especially to Joan Campbell for chairing the event.



The Irish Times – Monday 20 May 2019

Irish farmers will adapt to climate change 'with the right advice'

*Gathering in Co Wicklow discusses challenges
of reducing greenhouse gas emissions*



Sylvia Thompson

Irish farmers feel like they are being blamed for climate change but they will rise to the challenges of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, a researcher in agricultural biodiversity told a gathering to celebrate National Biodiversity Week in Co Wicklow on Sunday.

"Farmers are the owners and managers of the land and they did all the things we asked them to do to become successful farmers – so with the right advice and support, they will change. We can address biodiversity, ecosystems services [provision of clean water, food and a stable environment], climate change mitigation and adaptation together," said **Jeremy Emmet-Booth**, a postdoctoral researcher with the Climate Change Advisory Council.

Moving away from monoculture rye grassland to multispecies grassland which includes clover, plantain and chicory would, according to Mr Emmet-Booth, bring multiple benefits for livestock and nature.

"Clover reduces the need to spread nitrogen which benefits the climate and multispecies grassland improves the health and fertility of livestock and reduces parasites," he said.

Ninety per cent of agriculture in Ireland is grassland based and 32 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions in Ireland come from agriculture.

Speaking at the Biodiversity Bites Delgany event, **Matthew Jebb**, botanist and director of the National Botanic Gardens said that we need to move away from the dramatic biodiversity story that "all is lost" to finding solutions.

"A robust ecosystem is our best hope and our biggest safety net to provide clean water and food," he said.



Citing Scotland as an example of a country that funded ecosystem services, Mr Jebb said the Scottish government realised that looking after the ecosystem saved money in the long run. "In Scotland they realised that clean mountains produce clean water which costs less to purify but, in Ireland, we spend about four times more on rubbish removal than we do on ensuring our biodiversity is robust."

Taking the Glen of the Downs special area of conservation in Co Wicklow as a local example, Mr Jebb said a community response to the removal of invasive species such as laurels would be helpful. Creating wildflower areas in gardens and golf courses were other beneficial things to do for biodiversity, he added.

Environmentalist **Duncan Stewart** said the most important thing communities could do was to educate themselves about biodiversity loss and climate change and inform those around them.

"I'm hearing that climate change and biodiversity loss are still not topics on the doorsteps for our local and European elections this week. We have to make the links between our use of fossil fuels in our homes, transport and agriculture with climate change and act quickly.

"The biggest issue still is that society is not impressing on our politicians that action is needed now because our children's future is at risk."

Delgany Tidy Towns, which organised the event, launched the Delgany Tree for a Child programme under which a tree will be planted for each child in the village over the next five years.

IMPACTS

Education

Approximately 90 people attended the event, learning about building a sustainable community.

Biodiversity enhancement

Practical bat box building and the Tree for a Child scheme were initiated.

Advocacy

The ideas on sustainable farming were fed into our submission on CAP and the workshop with Birdwatch Ireland.



BIODIVERSITY WEEK: *Making Your Home a Nature Reserve*



22 MAY 2019

Biodiversity Week:

Making Your Home a Nature Reserve

Held in Golashane Nature Reserve, Co Meath

GFI Co-Ordinator: Donna Mullen

We were astonished at the level of interest in this event, with 90 people expressing an interest in tickets. However as we wanted to show a home nature reserve in action in a house, we had to limit the numbers to 30 people, and 25-30 people showed up.

The event started with a talk by **Donna Mullen** who then took everyone around her home to show the adaptations for wildlife – including letterbox openings into the attic and slates for bat access. **Brian Keeley** also explained the workings of bat boxes. There was much interest in the information on animal psychology, as many of the people who came were involved in animal rescue.

Then everyone met the animals which we have fostered from the Kildare Animal Foundation Wildlife Rescue, and we had a discussion on the reintroduction of hedgehogs on the farm. Pippin, the injured bat, was a great success and allowed people to see a bat closely as she munched on her food.

Next there was a chance to see the wild animals, as we brought out bat detectors and listened to bats calling in the darkness. Some intrepid explorers hiked down to the large pond so they could see the newts.

We took over the garden and built 15 bat boxes. The participants brought them home with them and at least two people wanted to replicate them in local woodworking classes.

Finally the event finished outdoors with tea and large amounts of chocolate cake, while the bats whizzed above our heads. The weather was warm and it was a wonderful evening.

IMPACTS

Education

Over 25 people attended the event, learning about biodiversity enhancement.

Biodiversity enhancement

15 bat boxes were built and distributed through the local area.

Advocacy

The adaptations for biodiversity led to a nomination for the Rural Inspiration Award, and a meeting in Brussels with the European Commissioner, Phil Hogan, to discuss actions for pollinators.

FOOD AS A COMMONS!



29, 30 JUNE and 1 JULY 2019

Event:

Food as a Commons!

Held in Nano Nagle Place, Cork City

GFI Co-Ordinator: Nuala Ahern

This one-day event of talks, discussion, field visits and feasting was organised in response to our growing environmental crisis, recognising the contribution of the current food system to climate breakdown and biodiversity loss, and yet realising there are opportunities that exist for system redesign. Indeed, across Europe, growing numbers of people are becoming actively involved in reshaping food systems at local level. This event was therefore a celebration of creative ideas and practices that might enable us to recover the multidimensional values of food as a public good rather than allow it to remain solely as a means for private corporate profit.

Proceedings began with a welcome from **Dr Colin Sage**, who designed and convened the day and represented the Cork Food Policy Council, and from **Nuala Ahern** who welcomed everyone on behalf of the Green European Foundation and Green Foundation Ireland. She explained that the event in Cork was part of a GEF transnational project on Fair Food, and that the conclusions of the morning would be fed into the wider European project. The project calls for initiatives capable of shifting our food and agriculture systems from an extractive and individual to a generative and collective mode, with more community use and sharing. This means we need to value food differently, so that it enhances human health, the environment and biodiversity, and farm livelihoods.

Dr Colin Sage in his introduction to the day highlighted the enormous importance of building a civic food movement capable of challenging the corporate control of every aspect of the current agri-food system. This was best exemplified, Colin argued, by the extraordinary concentration of the global agri-chemical sector which had come to appropriate and exercise enormous power over seeds, the basic building blocks of our food. Reclaiming and defending seeds nurtured by hundreds of generations of farmers around the world was vital. For that reason, Colin had made available a packet of heritage seeds for every participant in the day, urging them to sow, care for and harvest these plants in the knowledge that every mouthful of food they provided was a minor personal victory against the corporate food system.

Dr Henk Renting from AERES University of Applied Sciences in Almere, The Netherlands, then spoke on the topic "Food commons: (re-)connecting city and countryside". Henk's presentation was richly illustrated with examples of civic food initiatives from across Europe and further afield and can be seen at the end of this report. He quoted Carolyn Steel on "our profound disconnection with food is the curious legacy of industrialisation and a symptom of a way of life we can no longer afford". Food has many dimensions of which its use as a commodity is only one.



Dr Órla O'Donovan from the School of Applied Social Studies at University College Cork read a translation by the Irish poet Paddy Bushe of a poem in early Irish attributed to the poet Amergin that reminded us of our interconnection with the natural world.

She said that the notion of 'commons' had real value in challenging the privatisation of public goods. Órla emphasised the need for water as a commons which required to be recognised as a public good.

World Café

Following coffee, the meeting then went into World Café mode facilitated by **Klaus Harvey** of Kinsale Transition Town, with eight tables accommodating five to six people and working on two main questions: 'Why is a food commons relevant for Cork?' and 'What specific measures might be undertaken to build a food commons in Cork?'.

During the 'change-overs' between tables, (after 25 minutes of discussion at one table, participants are then asked to move to a new table and begin another round of discussion with different people), the meeting heard from: food historian, **Regina Sexton**, on why we need to nurture a local food culture; **Maria Young**, co-ordinator of Green Spaces for Health, on the food growing sites of the South Parish; and **Tomás Kelly**, an expert in Geographical Information Systems who has built a digital map showing many dimensions of the food system in Cork city.

The World Café wrapped up at around 1pm with each table summarising the three key points that had been harvested from the discussions. These were briefly presented by the table hosts to the meeting and then all of the participants had the opportunity to 'vote' for their own preferred three priority issues. Aggregating these votes led to the following rank-order of issues:

1. Advocate for the local authority to create the post of 'Local Gardening / Community Growing Officer' who would support growing initiatives, identify potential new sites (with security of tenure) and help network growers / projects across the city.
2. To press for a City Development Plan that prioritises: drinking water fountains (in the fight against plastic); a locally-sourced food strategy that enhances food security / resilience and helps connect the city back into its rural hinterland; and, above all, creates food growing spaces as living walls, rooftop gardens, in workplaces and in communities.
3. How can we build a civic food movement that might replicate the success of the Tidy Towns in terms of voluntary commitment and pride in local achievement? There are a host of neighbourhood and community organisations, including the GAA, churches and schools, with whom a food movement could collaborate. How might a 'sustainable, food-oriented tidy towns-type' movement be achieved? Can we encourage food-growing (e.g. planting fruit trees) to be part of Tidy Towns?

4. We should establish a Citizen's Assembly in Cork capable of discussing all aspects of our food supply, including transport implications of shopping practices. Issues of inequality around food need to be made more explicit. Ultimately, there is a need to create a forum where people's concerns and ideas can be expressed and help shape a better, more sustainable and healthy food system for all. This needs to be achieved in consort with the local authorities and could be facilitated by the Cork Food Policy Council if appropriately resourced.

These four priority issues are an aggregation of a very rich spectrum of ideas expressed around the tables and offered as genuinely practical proposals for improving the performance of the food system in the Cork city-region from a commoning perspective.

Commensality: bringing people together to enjoy food and talk

Participants then made their way to St John's College nearby where a Chilean theatre group who had come from Valparaiso in Chile, with their container in which they cooked the food of the locality and engaged in street feasting, theatre and song.



La Cocina Pública / The Public Kitchen

They were hosting **La Cocina Pública** (The Public Kitchen) as part of the Cork Midsummer Festival. The group had been in the Cork South Parish for two weeks and had been harvesting memories, recipes, stories and songs for performance in the cooking, serving and sharing of a traditional local dish. The conviviality of the occasion fitted exactly into the idea of 'food as a commons' where we dined together outdoors on long tables eating simple food with a local history.

Green spaces

The third and final component of the day was then led by **Maria Young**, the Green Spaces for Health co-ordinator, who took the group on a walking tour of three growing spaces in the South Parish. Each site provided tangible evidence of what small groups of people with a vision of a better food system can achieve in public space. Such places demonstrate to local neighbours that a little time and effort in growing food plants for one's plate is not wasted energy but an opportunity – however slight – to connect with the natural world, with our source of nutrition and with each other in performing shared tasks.



We hope that the visibility of these projects will encourage more to engage with such work. And, in this respect, the real value of the 'Food as a Commons' event may not be calculable for a while, but it will resonate for those who attended for a long time to come.

IMPACTS

Education

With more than 50 people attending, this event energised the local community in Cork and provided information on sustainable living.

Advocacy

Work on this event led to our submission on the Housing and Planning Bill 2020.

CLIMATE JOBS AND A JUST TRANSITION

Responding to our climate and ecological emergency



9 NOVEMBER 2019

Conference:

[Climate Jobs and a Just Transition](#)

Held Queens' University Belfast

GFI Co-Ordinator: John Barry

"This is the moment for us to tell a bigger, more connected, more powerful story.

We can have a better, cleaner, healthier society, and we can have it globally.

We need not a just transition but a much deeper more profound justice transition."

– Asad Rehman, War on Want

The Green European Foundation/Green Foundation Ireland conference held in Queen's University Belfast on 9 November 2019 saw a range of engaging speakers from Ireland and the UK present their perspectives on just transition and climate jobs. Just transition refers to putting social justice at the heart of the transition to a zero-carbon economy and society, ensuring workers and communities are not left behind by the changes required.

Climate Jobs

*"We need to make sure that the scale of the response
meets the scale of the challenge."*

– Jonathan Essex, Green House Think Tank

In the first session of the day **Jonathan Essex** and **Peter Sims** of Green House Think Tank presented their recent [climate jobs](#) report, where they looked at the number and types of jobs which could be created in a zero carbon UK in 2030. Overall, it was calculated that a £30bn UK package could create at least 800,000 jobs.

Through the climate jobs project the authors sought to quantify the scale of change required to reach zero carbon by 2030, for example, how many more buses will be needed, how much more recycling will be needed. The authors used current UK-wide land use, jobs density and population density statistics to estimate the changes required for zero carbon, and then calculated this information for 200 regions across the UK. Their analysis also included analysis of jobs in local councils in recent years.

Green House Think Tank has produced a climate jobs summary for each of the 200 regions of the UK studied, for example, in Sheffield 20,000 jobs could be created in the short-term. The authors also looked at how and where these new jobs are going to be distributed, for example, some jobs will move from urban to rural areas.



Six sectors were modelled:

- Renewable energy
 - Install wind/solar/tidal
 - Maintain installations
 - Upgrade grid
 - Storage and demand management
- Built environment
 - Energy retrofit street by street
 - Install energy efficiency and renewable energy
 - Retrain construction workers
 - Better maintenance
- Sustainable transport
 - Car share schemes
 - Increase public transport
 - Improve cycling/walking routes and facilities
 - Preventative road maintenance
- Reuse and recycling
 - Repair workshops
 - Deconstruction rather than demolition
 - Sorting and reclaiming materials
 - Locals compensated for jobs lost in landfill and incineration
- Rural economy – land use, agriculture and forestry
 - Active woodland management
 - Smallholders
 - Farm workers and fruit growers
 - Localised supply chain and processing business
- Support/training – enable the transition in other sectors
 - Trainers
 - Volunteer coordinators
 - Workplace mentors
 - Innovation and start-up support
 - Support workers

For example, looking at the transport sector in Northern Ireland, the report estimates 3,400 new bus drivers, 900 new bus support staff and 300 new railway staff, compensating for 3,000 jobs lost in car maintenance.

The authors acknowledge that making these climate jobs happen would be more complex than the numbers suggest, and require much discussion locally. They also noted that these are conservative estimates of job numbers, as they did not include unproven technologies, and did not calculate jobs in certain sectors such as reforestation, restoration of peat bogs, or the offshore wind industry, so jobs created could be even higher than their estimates. Essex notes that "we have talked about a million jobs, but there may be more like three million".



The authors did not look at the training required to reskill and upskill workers but they cited [this paper](#) from the University of Leeds on skills for the low-carbon transition. They also referenced the work of Colin Crooks, who calculate that [1 million social enterprise jobs could be created across the UK](#).

Essex and Sims stressed that this is about creating jobs locally at the appropriate state and scale, and a commitment to a different way forward, for example, retrofitting existing houses rather than building new ones. With this report they have modelled a new economy, where more jobs create a greater sense of community. As Sims commented, this is the opportunity to create jobs for people in our society who in one way or another are being left behind.

Place-based Policy Alignment and Just Transition – the Belfast Climate Commission

"The current economic model that we have is destroying our earth ... unfettered economic growth cannot work"

– Damien McIlroy

The first speaker of this session was **Damien McIlroy** of Queen's University Belfast, who looked at just transition from the perspective of place-based and people-based action. He argued that "free market-based policy still determines the outcome trajectory of the current environmental crisis". His advice was to "throw out the rulebook and challenge the existing wisdom" and focus on system change, inclusion and human rights.

He continued by arguing that we are trapped in ever decreasing circles by the economic model we are in and the "drive to accumulate dilemma". The current function of state or local government, he suggested, is to "support the functionalist requirements of the capitalist modes of production". Instead, we must "co-design a new social-economic strategy premised on an economy of maximum sustainable size".

McIlroy spoke of participatory approaches to system change, citing as examples the US-based [Climate Justice Alliance](#) and their "Our Power Campaign", through which they organised just transition assemblies around the US. He also referenced the work of [Isabelle Anguelovski](#), who looked at Citizens and Workers and Environmental Justice Activism (CEJ) activism in three cities – Havana, Boston and Barcelona. He suggested legal measures and instruments that could be used to build this kind of action, for example, employment equality acts and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) just transition standards, along with groups who could be involved – neighbourhood renewal partnerships, thematic community partnerships, HR/equality rights based organisations and activist education organisations.



Clare McKeown from Belfast City Council spoke next, presenting the elements of the council's resilience strategy as part of the [100 resilient cities](#) project. The council has an all-party working group on the climate crisis, along with the city-wide Resilience and Sustainability Board, an Innovation and Inclusive Growth Commission and a partnership with Queen's University Belfast, [Place-based Climate Action Network](#). The council also works with the Eurocities Environment Forum and with Innovate UK. McKeown noted that 75% of GHGs come from cities, and cited Barcelona, Malmö, Copenhagen and Bristol as leaders in the development of low-carbon cities. One of the reports commissioned by the Resilient Cities project is [The Economics of Low-Carbon Cities](#) report, which McKeown described as a "mini-Stern report".

Amanda Slevin, Policy Fellow in the Place-based Climate Action Network (PCAN) at Queen's University Belfast, introduced the PCAN project which was launched earlier this year. PCAN is about translating climate policy into action on the ground in communities, and involves the establishment of three place-based climate commissions (Belfast, Leeds and Edinburgh) across the thematic platforms of business and finance.

There is also a PCAN fund for local projects, for which key priority areas have also been identified, including infrastructure, food security, business and supply chains and natural capital. She highlighted the number of deprived communities in Belfast and asked how just transition can be achieved without leaving anyone behind. She stressed that projects must be community-led and that "we cannot have projects forced on communities":

"It's not about change being forced upon people but change happening in partnership with people, about collective action and participatory democracy".

Trade Unions and Just Transition

– From Origins and Context to Policy and Practice

The first speaker in this session was **Stiofán Ó Nualláin** of Trademark and Unite, who discussed the connection between environmentalists and workers. He noted that "environmentalism focused on bad consumer choices only appeals to comfortably well-off people who have the time to consider these things", where many people are focused on meeting their basic needs. Ó Nualláin spoke of the Lucas plan where in 1976 environmentalists and workers worked together to come up with a new model for the business. There is a [film](#) documenting this and a [new Lucas plan](#) being developed in the UK.

Ó Nualláin argued that the just transition cannot be a "purely commercial matter"; not all socially useful activities are profitable and not all profitable activities are socially useful. He stated that we must question the logic of the market, where only a product with a market has value, and challenge the private sector, noting that we need to have a say in what we produce and what we produce them for. Ó Nualláin also introduced the idea of a [jobs guarantee](#) and spoke of the need for the state to provide socially useful forms of employment, referencing [Reclaiming the State](#) by Williams and Fazi.



"Yes, the planet got destroyed. But for a beautiful moment in time we created a lot of value for shareholders."

"This cartoon used to be a joke, now it's a plan" – Stiofán Ó Nualláin

Ó Nualláin also outlined the key elements of a "green new deal":

1. Decarbonisation of the economy.
2. The democratisation of finance and state-led investment, and the directing of finance towards green projects.
3. Building public affluence in place of private wealth.
4. Land reform and ownership – here he referenced a recent Open Democracy report which showed that 50% of land in UK is owned by 1% of population.
5. A just transition and green industrial revolution.

Next, **Seán McCabe** from Thinktank for Action on Social Change (TASC) spoke of their work on just transition, which looks at the societal conditions necessary to enable a successful transition. His work has focused on agriculture in Ireland, and he has just completed a month-long research trip around rural Ireland.

He highlighted that farmers and their families are at the frontlines of climate change, and that farming is also the sector with the highest level of income inequality in Ireland. He found that farmers are facing a variety of challenges; they are taking on huge debt to increase herd size, and have assets but no cash flow and thus no ability to take on workers. This means that any additional work due to increased herd size is done by the family. He warned of potentially catastrophic levels of negative equity if there is a fall in milk price, and highlighted mental health issues among farmers. McCabe also noted that farmers feel under attack from environmentalists and there is hostility to talking about climate change.



McCabe suggested that a key factor impacting the sector is cheap food, with consumers who are cash poor and time poor shopping in low-price supermarkets.

He argued that "these retailers are extracting wealth from both the communities they are based in and the producers who supply them" and that the "centralisation of power" through large creameries and abattoirs has taken from farmers the ability to negotiate a price for their product.

He stated that policies such as a living wage, a four-day work week and the right to housing are essential to give people the ability to feed and cook for themselves.

McCabe had two suggestions for further work which can help us to understand a just transition in the agriculture sector.

- The first was listening – he stressed that:

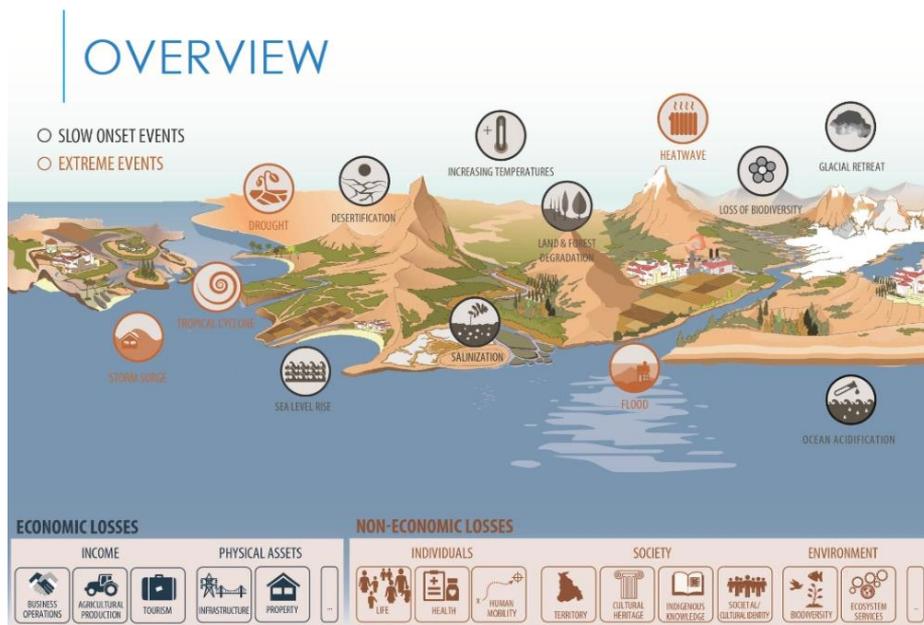
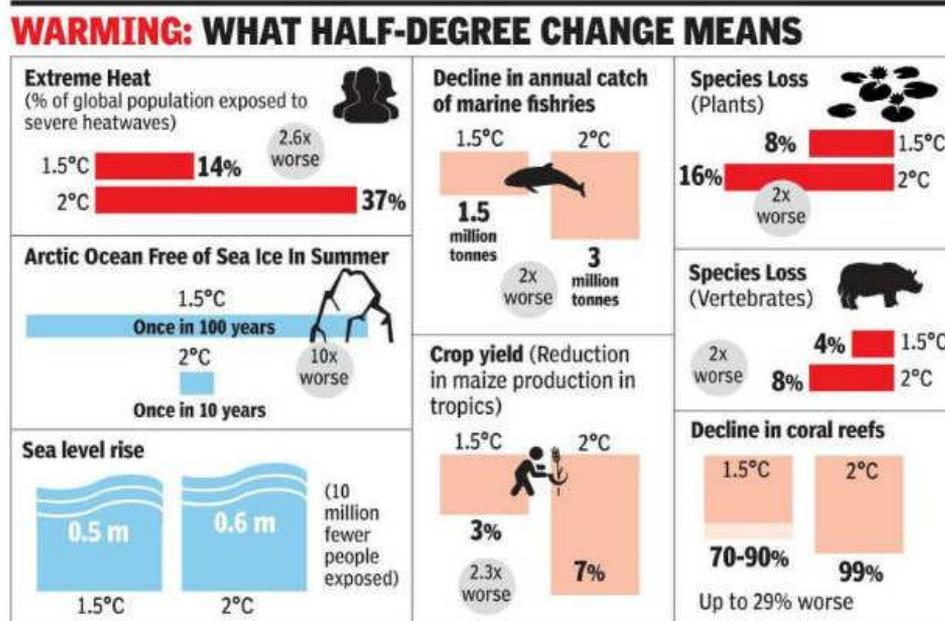
"we need to match community priorities to climate action, we cannot force projects on communities, we need to get the support and build from there".

- The second was the appropriate spending of climate finance. He argued that we now have the opportunity to use climate action as a tool of development and to build community wealth, and to fight back against the wealth extraction that's happening through large multinationals. He suggested that finance is used to stimulate co-operatives, which in turn pay their members a living wage and provide jobs.

Asad Rehman, War on Want

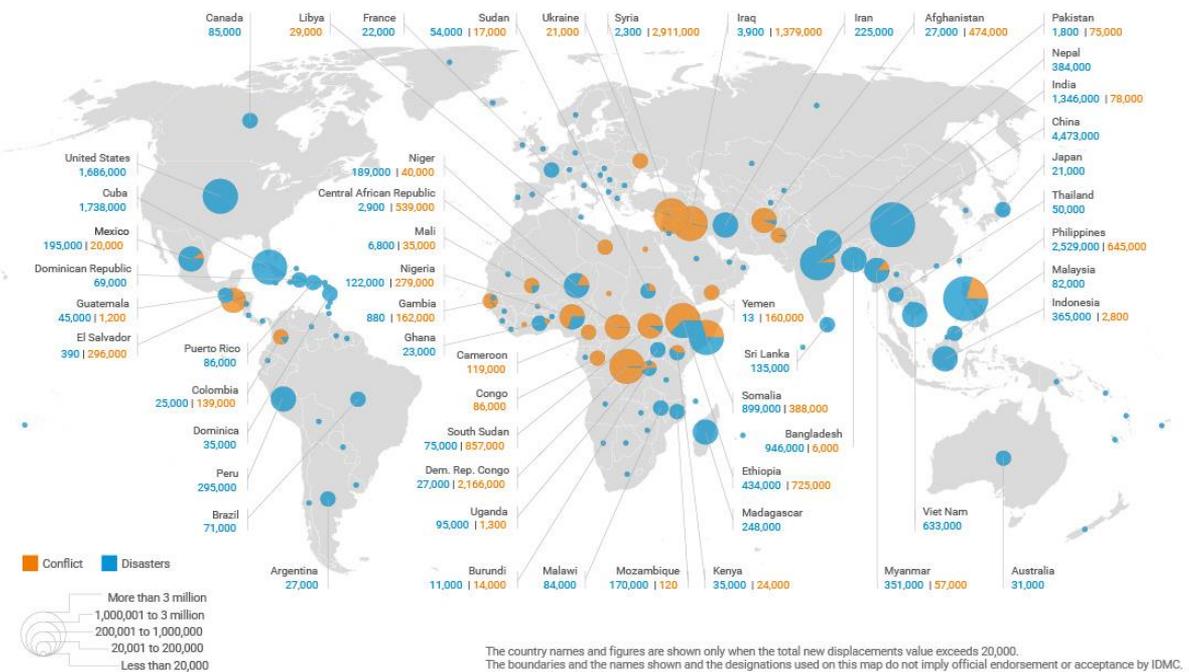
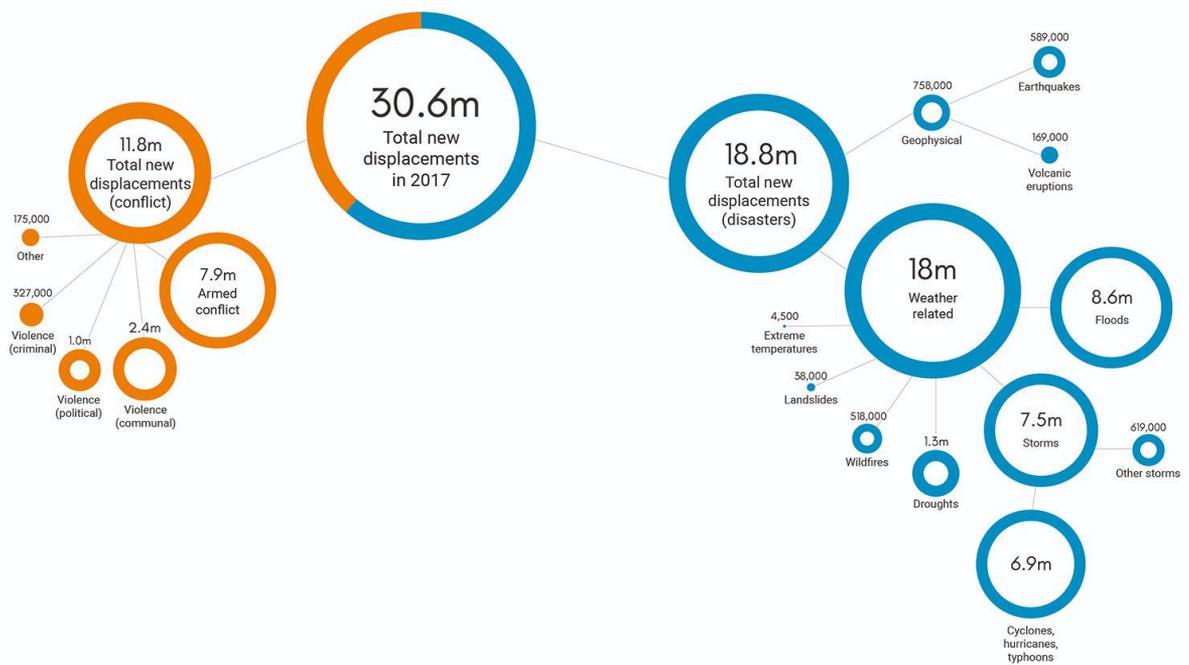
The day's keynote speech was given by **Asad Rehman** of War on Want, which he described as a charity "rooted in the labour movement". He argued that we need a Global Deal for People rather than a Green New Deal for the Global North, encompassing a "deeper and broader just(ice) transition".

Rehman began by outlining the loss and damages associated with climate change from a climate justice perspective, taking us through the two images below. He warned that the 2018 IPCC report is the "lowest common denominator" and that warming may be happening three times faster than the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) suggests.



Rehman highlighted the displacement which has happened already due to climate change, referring to the UN Special Rapporteur Philip Alston's [comments](#) that we are risking a climate apartheid. Discussing this image below from the [Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre](#) (IDMC) displacement report, he noted that "only the people on the left are protected" by international law.

He also discussed the second image below, which shows where displacement is happening.



"The Global North are on the deck of the Titanic, and they're still sipping cocktails and listening to the orchestra. The hold of the Titanic is where the Global South are, and they're already drowning"

Rehman stressed that when it comes to climate action "our starting point is an unequal world". He noted that there are currently 3.3 billion people without energy and 3.5 billion people living on less than €5 per day. For the poorest 50% of the world, their income is going up by only 2c a year. He quoted the popular slogan of the French Gilet Jaunes movement: "the elite worry about the end of the world, the rest of us worry about the end of the month".



He posed the following questions to encourage us to think about just transition within a system change framework:

- A Just Transition for who?
- A Just Transition rooted in what reality? e.g. Global North or Global South?
- A Just Transition financed by what?
- A Just Transition built on what resource extraction? e.g. Global South again?
- Who are we taking power from?
- Who are we building power with?

Rahmen cautioned that we cannot just "green our economy", we have to think about the resources and the material extraction that will be needed. He noted that a third of all the shares on the FTSE100 are still from the extractive industry.

He suggested that we need to build our collective power and create a movement of movements incorporating the following elements:

- Vision that we believe in – we need to describe the world that we want.
- Overarching story – "this is not just about climate change and it is not just our children. What about the people who are already dying?" We also need to recognise that "our struggle is part of a much larger struggle".
- Popular demands that connect with people.
- Policy demands behind the popular demands.

He then outlined the essential elements of what could be the Global People's Demands/ Global Green New Deal:

- The fight for the commons: right to food, land, energy, water.
- A global living wage and access to income – workers' rights through the supply chain.
- Universal public services: health, education and housing.
- Fair share of global effort – emissions.

He noted that Universal Declaration of Human Rights guaranteed the first three of these 70 years ago, and asked "what's happened to us since then that we've forgotten these?"

Rehman closed by outlining the system changes which would need to happen to support the Global People's Demands, identifying three key elements:

- Make global finance and trade work for us.
- Migration: the right to move and the right not to move.
- End global debt.

Fuelling the Just Transition – the Role of Non-Carbon Energy

The final session of the day began with a presentation by **Juliana Early** of Queen's University Belfast who spoke on energy in the transport sector. She discussed the 2018 UK government report [Road to Zero](#), which will be followed by a Transport Decarbonisation Plan in 2020. She stressed the importance of "developing technology for societal needs" and spoke of the infrastructure and technological changes required for decarbonisation.

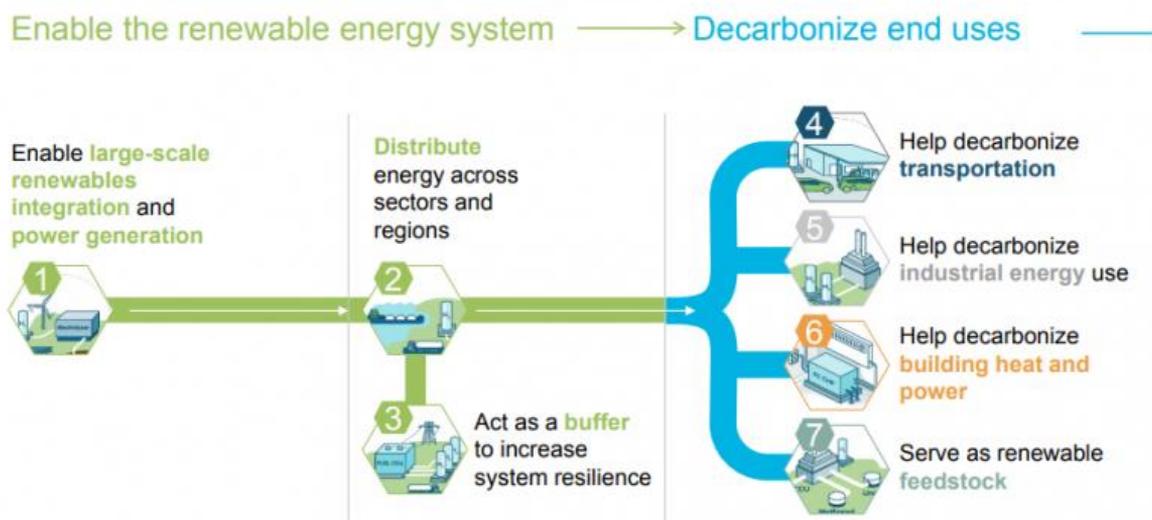
She also highlighted the gaps between current policies and the needs of society. She stressed the need for dialogue with communities to decide if new technologies, for example, hydrogen electrolyzers, are the right solution. She also raised climate justice concerns in relation to mineral extraction in Latin America, for example, [here](#) and the [Congo](#) (see [here](#) also).

Paul McCormack of Belfast Metropolitan College spoke about the [GenComm](#) project, which looks at hydrogen energy and involves several third level institutions, energy co-operatives and local councils. He framed his work within the "4th industrial revolution", where the relationship between science and industry is characterised by wider community inclusion in the collaboration, so people are not left behind.

He gave several examples of how hydrogen technology is evolving and beginning to come into mainstream energy provision, such as [hydrogen buses in Ballymena](#) and GenComm's work with Rathlin and [Valentia](#) Islands.

McCormack suggested that hydrogen can help to increase the uptake of local renewable energy sources by communities and provide energy security for remote communities. He also noted the investment in hydrogen by large companies such as [Energia](#) and [Shell](#). He used the image below to explain how hydrogen can help the energy transition.

Exhibit 3: Hydrogen can play 7 roles in the energy transition





Andy Gouldson from the University of Leeds was the final speaker of the day. He began by asking if we, as the climate community, have a "social licence" to take the rapid actions necessary for decarbonisation. He stressed that we don't, we're still in the minority: "we need to build this social licence, or we will get a certain way down the line and then we get social kickback".

He also stressed that "transition needs to be done by us, not to us". He spoke of the sectors of society threatened by the transition, for example, unions representing oil and gas sectors. At Leeds University researchers have been assessing how many jobs are at risk, and how many jobs might benefit, calculating that about 10% will see demand for their skills go up, and 10% will see demand for their skills go down.

Gouldson cited the [Citizens Jury](#) project, which is nearing completion in Leeds, as an example of working together for the transition; it was done "by the city for the city". He noted that the organisers were concerned that "people would come back and say they don't want this, but they are largely fully signed up to this, because there is a positive vision of a better Leeds in front of them", an appropriate end to a day whose key theme was public participation in the just transition.

IMPACTS

Just Transition / Education

Almost 40 people attended and benefitted from the interesting insights that all speakers provided into climate jobs and a just transition, and how we should respond to the challenges of our climate and ecological emergency. These presentations were recorded by video and are available to be viewed by the public on our website.

EDUCATION SEMINAR and BOOK LAUNCH



2 DECEMBER 2019

Seminar and Book Launch:

[Education Seminar and Book Launch](#)

Held in the Oak Room, Mansion House, Dublin

GFI Co-Ordinator: Eileen McDermott

THEME

There is widespread public awareness of and concern about environmental issues at this time and this book launch will bring together two topical issues one relating to Environmental Literacy and the other to Eco Anxiety. While Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) continues to be a topic of debate in Ireland especially its inclusion in education curricula, there is no doubt that Environmental Literacy plays a huge role in ESD. Environmental awareness in turn has the capacity to lead to Eco Grief or Eco Anxiety for some who may find our current situation difficult to deal with.

This seminar and book launch tried to address both of these issues in a solution focused way, so that we are equipped with a more hopeful way of dealing with environmental issues.

Eileen McDermott welcomed everyone to the seminar on behalf of Green Foundation Ireland (GFI) and thanked Professor Pat Brereton for allowing GFI to launch his book *Environmental Literacy and New Digital Audiences*. Eileen also thanked the guest speakers and invited Pat to speak about his book.

Professor Pat Brereton, School of Communications, Dublin City University

Drawing on Affordances of Conventional and New Media including fictional film, documentary and nature films, television series and quality streamed shows on Netflix, YouTube and online environmental programmes, video games and interactive media, the question raised in Pat's book is how to most effectively get environmental messages across?

"We cannot be educators without instilling hope for the future"

– Paulo Freire

With a growing backlash towards climate change adaptation, greater emphasis has to be placed on promoting education and environmental literacy across all aspects of communications studies.



"I would tend to endorse eco-literary scholar Greg Garrard's (2004) assertion that the definition of what counts as pollution, much less any major environmental issue, up to and including climate change, remains a cultural as well as a political question that depends as much on shifting values and priorities, as on actual emissions of toxic substances."

In relation to Environmental Literacy and Education, Pat noted this is not simply a top down process of disseminating correct attitudes, values and beliefs. There is a need to promote a dialogue with audiences of different persuasions and at all levels of engagement, to help highlight and at best co-produce consensual solutions to the major challenges of our time.

It is not simply about 'saving the whale' or indeed saving local habitats but is equally about the development of an appreciation of the wonders and beauty of the world and provoking a sense of wanting to save it.

The book contains 11 chapters as follows:

1. Environmental Literacy Introduction
2. Understanding Audience Psychology and Trigger Points for Promoting Environmental Literacy
3. Promoting New Media Literacy
4. Food Documentaries and Green Anxieties: Actively promoting Environmental Literacy
5. Eco-Documentaries: Old Problems New Aesthetic Opportunities
6. Contemporary Hollywood Blockbusters and Environmental Narratives
7. An Environmental Reading of Post 9/11 American Televisual Series
8. Netflix and Emerging Streaming Networks: New Forms of Immersive and Addictive Narratives and Characterisation
9. Video Games and Environmental Learning: New Modes of Audience Engagement
10. Going Viral: YouTube and New Forms of Environmental Literacy
11. Conclusion: Constructing an Environmental Literacy Consensus through New Media

Pat's book is available to purchase in book format with Kindle and e-book versions also available on-line.

Professor John Sharry, *Parents Plus Charity, Feasta, UCD and The Irish Times*

John discussed how to talk to children about the climate and ecological crises and raised the issues of 'eco grief' and 'eco anxiety' as aspects of climate change which we need to be aware of, as well as the importance of becoming informed as a parent. Being able to manage our own emotions in relation to climate change and environmental issues is vital. Also responding to children based on their age and development level is vital. It is very important to think through what message you want to give. John noted the importance of becoming solution focused – by channelling children's worry into action and helping children develop resilience.

It is really important to give children a happy childhood.



Elaine Nevin, National Director of ECO-UNESCO

ECO-UNESCO has been working with young people to promote environmental protection for over 30 years. And in that time Elaine noted they have been channelling the passion and energy of young people into positive environmental action through their range of programmes including their Young Environmentalist Awards, Youth for Sustainable Development, trainings and clubs.

"We work with over 10,000 young people annually in formal and non-formal settings – with a focus on non-formal approaches. We are affiliated to UNESCO are a QQI training centre and this year we were announced as one of Irelands first SDG champions."

Elaine noted some of the work ECO-UNESCO is involved in including:

Young Environmentalist Awards:

- 2019 celebrated 20 years of YEA – showcase and awards ceremony with 1,000 young people in Convention Centre; 322 projects; 102 finalists; 7 semi-finals ECO-Dens; 57,521 online votes.
- First YEA Ideas Fest held in Tralee, Co. Kerry (for YEA 2020) – hackathon style event for young people to get input and feedback from local experts and decision makers.

Youth for Sustainable Development:

- Continued to support weekly after schools youth programme with a focus on SDGs and action projects. 202 young people trained as peer educators.
- Expanded to other locations in Ireland – Carlow, Bray, Drogheda, Navan, Kildare.

Green Works:

- Their first Green Careers event for young people 14-19 offering advice on green careers, progression and education opportunities. Supported by Accenture and the Department of Education and Skills.

SDG Champion 2019 / 2020:

- Announced by the Department of Communications, Climate Change and Environment as one of their first 12 National SDG Champions in September 2019.

Duncan Stewart, RTÉ's Eco Eye and Director of Green Foundation Ireland

Duncan noted the importance and urgency of the current situation and the importance of including Education for Sustainable Development within the school curriculum. Duncan also suggested twinning with schools in the developing world (where the effects of the climate crisis have already been catastrophically experienced). This would bring the reality of climate change to a new level of understanding for students. Duncan noted a new venture [ecoed4all](#) that he is involved with and which aims to promote ESD within schools and communities.

This was followed by a lively Q and A session before the event concluded.



Eileen thanked everyone on behalf of GFI for their contributions and attendance.

IMPACTS

Education

Over 30 people attended this event, raising awareness about the importance of Environmental Literacy and its impact on education and personal development.