



**May 2011**

For the past decade the ESG has campaigned locally, regionally, and at European and global level for a healthy environment pressing for environmental policies to be matched by investment and political will.<sup>1</sup> The following, if adequately addressed, would go a long way towards making the necessary environmental improvements in Gibraltar:

### **ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

- a) Climate Change Forum to present biannual reports at public meetings to encourage community engagement, participation and awareness of the single most important issue facing humanity today;
- b) NGO participation important – climate change affects everyone and should be cross party and include interested stakeholders such as environmental NGO's;
- c) This “Think Tank” should look at Gibraltar's long term sustainability with regards to energy, water, and food, and map out alternative strategies for future secure provision of our basic needs. In the full knowledge that Climate Change and its impacts will have devastating consequences for future generations, it is essential that we take responsibility by launching a well funded research programme and plan of action and not simply expect others to “deal with this” at some future time!

### **ENERGY**

- a) Renewable Energy projects to be launched with short and long-term targets. Modern Power Station using diesel engines could be modified to use biofuel (such as olive oil from Europe, generated as a by product, available regionally) enabling Gibraltar to comply in time with EU Directives.
- b) Meanwhile a sustained programme is needed to modify our grid to allow selling of electricity to the Electricity Authority by private micro generation of electricity. (Solar Water Heating, Photovoltaics, Photovoltaic roof tiles, Micro Wind Turbines, etc.) ;
- c) Government Grants to be set up to encourage approved micro systems for renewable energy for the householder;
- d) Project to reduce our energy use for example only allowing the higher efficiency household items to be imported or highly taxing the less efficient items; ("A" classification items for energy consumption being the best) banning of importation of incandescent light bulbs; replacement of all street lighting for high efficiency LED's or similar;
- e) While some reports on renewable energy feasibility for Gibraltar are already available (see MoD report 2005 – contact ESG for info) fresh research and focus into how best to harness energy from the multiple sources open to us needs to be set up with no further delay and for this to be done openly inviting ideas and resources from interested stakeholders;
- f) Gibraltar-wide study to be conducted to assess energy efficiency and consumption to limit unnecessary or wasteful practices;
- g) Vigorously pursue other Govt own stated objectives as set out under its Environmental and Action Management Plan;

### **POLLUTION**

- a) It's important that our three ageing power stations are closed once the new replacement station is built within the expected deadline of end 2012. This would allow us to comply with EU directives on air quality and substantially elevate the quality of life in residential areas around these power stations;

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<sup>1</sup> *Locally* via various campaigns, lobbying, negotiation, information/ *Regionally* via cross border coalitions/at a *European level* via MEPs' and the European Commission/*Globally* via the Bucket Brigade and scientific sampling

- b) It is essential to place strict environmental controls on all polluting industry in Gibraltar to eliminate effects beyond the fence line e.g. oil treatment, desalination, dockyard, cement factories, refuse storage and transport, petrol stations, etc. Mitigating technologies exist and Government and the private sector should be directed to invest in environmental protection equipment and practice *regardless of whether legally required*. The absence of safe buffer zones due to our size demands that we do not only settle for compliance on environmental protection standards as do larger countries. It is after all, our own community and hence our own families we are trying to protect;
- c) Ensure the Precautionary Principle is a key factor when assessing impacts and mitigating needs of all industry related activity;
- d) Re-invent the Environment Agency to be target driven and results orientated with a mission to make Gibraltar as pollution free as possible. For this agency to become autonomous and independently enforce environmental and public health laws;
- e) Such targets to include the systematic application of BAT (Best Available Technology) in all industry;

## **TRAFFIC**

- a) Traffic reduction measures and schemes and new low emission public transport targets to be actively developed;
- b) Free Bus Service for local residents to be introduced without further delay;
- c) Incentives for low emission vehicles over heavily polluting ones to be applied (reward and penalising schemes);
- d) Control and eventual elimination of two-stroke motorbikes as these produce high levels of air and noise pollution;
- e) While welcome to see cycling encouraged on our roads, this cannot take place without accompanying rules and safety guidelines: Cycle lanes to be included in new roads/Warning Signs for motor vehicle drivers to be aware of cyclists/Cyclists to adhere to safe road use- e.g. set up road signs targeting cyclists-indicate, respect lights, etc.
- f) Road surfaces to be maintained year round as pot holes pose a serious danger to cyclists and motorbike riders, raising risk of accident and collision with cars;
- g) Increase road safety by creating more pavements to encourage walking
- g) Consideration of feedback from public consultation exercise on Govt Transport Plan namely ESG's and ITWMC among others;

## **RECYCLING**

- a) Recycling of all our refuse – sustained public awareness and enforcement campaign;
- b) Enforcement of litter and fly tipping laws;
- c) Creation of a dedicated Eco Park to reduce fly tipping and waste piles (eye sores);
- d) Netting enclosure at City Dump to limit spread of lightweight waste onto our roads and green cliffs;
- e) Facilities to be provided at the City Dump to receive paper, plastic and cardboard waste for onward recycling which at present goes to landfill;
- f) Development and promotion of Govt Recycling Policy to ensure that all high waste producers of glass and cans use the recycling services available today. (This to include schools, hospitals, clubs, bars and restaurants);

## **BUNKERING**

- a) Freeze and controls imposed on Bunkering activities to include vapour recovery;
- b) Disallow East Side Bunkering as this will increase air pollution problems as well as significantly raise the risks of a serious oil spill with devastating implications for humans, marine and bird life and our economy;
- c) Full disclosure of income evaluation of bunkering and port activity to the public purse, taking into account the degrading impacts this has on quality of life and marine environment, as well as to our tourist product which is sustainable and critically important to our economy;
- d) Elimination of floating petrol stations;

e) In setting up land based fuel storage alternative, this to be done to the highest standards and using BATS, including full public consultation during planning and construction process. Commercial sensitivities should not be used to withhold information on new, polluting activity;

## **SEWAGE TREATMENT**

a) Sewage treatment plant to be installed without further delays to eliminate raw sewage disposal to the sea (and if it can be done anaerobically/ eliminating smells and producing methane as a by product for energy production, all the better);

## **CONSERVATION**

a) Expansion of Nature Reserve to include East side sand slopes down to the sea joining it up with marine protected area. (To protect the last bit of natural coastline remaining in Gibraltar);

b) Major expansion of urban tree numbers and major creation/expansion and up keep of urban green areas;

c) Due consideration of key areas and recommendations as factored in the Upper Rock Management Plan produced by the GONHS

d) Upper Rock Authority announced some time back needs re-launching and should include active participation from relevant stakeholders, public discussion and participation in the decision making process;

## **PLANNING**

a) Complete overhaul of Planning Procedure in Gibraltar;

b) DPC to have a neutral chair, to be open and transparent with public consultation on all major projects;

c) EIA's to include consideration of the *existing environment* on new development projects as well as impacts from *new projects* on the environment;

d) All major projects, including Govt, to undergo EIA's given the limitations of land space in Gibraltar and need for best assessment ahead of breaking ground;

e) Adherence to Best Practice in planning to be applied to all Planning Procedures in Gibraltar;

f) Recommendations made under the Strategic Environmental Plan released alongside Gibraltar's' Development Plan to be given open and serious consideration: Most importantly Gibraltar must consider setting limits on levels of development, traffic and pollution to safeguard quality of life;

g) Gib Dev Plan "green measures" and check-list to be actively applied and reviewed;

h) Green Building Legislation to be vigorously adhered to as well as developed to retrospectively tackle recent and major new development for improvements in environmental performance;

## **EAMP (Environmental and Action Management Plan)-**

a) Urgent Govt wide implementation of its Environmental and Action Management Plan (EAMP -*which nevertheless needs improving/expanding* to address dockyard and bunkering as well as other impacting activities on the Rock omitted from the Plan<sup>2</sup>);

b) EAMP to permeate all Ministries and Departments, Agencies and others to ensure that all decisions reflect genuine environmental considerations as well as economic and technical factors;

c) EAMP *public* presentation overdue and anticipated;

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<sup>2</sup> See ESG Website : <http://www.esg-gib.net/esg-on-govt-action-plan-3-2-11/>

## CROSS BORDER ISSUES

- a) The cross border nature of the Bay's environment means that achieving progress in environmental issues is often hampered by political issues, even though the solutions require cross border co-operation. Such pressures are once again evident in the impasse facing the Tripartite Process; a dialogue, that for a while, appeared to provide a workable model for co-operation at many levels including the environment.
- b) A detailed appraisal on key environmental issues was produced by the three Govts involved (Spain, Gibraltar and United Kingdom), pledging to get to grips with cross border issues. A practical and technical approach was being designed at a cross border level that could provide technical and practical support and response to **real problems and issues** affecting people and the environment.
- c) A group of 5 NGO's from Gibraltar and Spain<sup>3</sup> have submitted three dossiers to the Tripartite Forum outlining critical regional environmental issues with potential solutions.

Issues include:-

- pollution ● health ● land reclamation ● urbanisation ● loss of green spaces & biosphere,  
● sewage treatment ● industrial expansion ● maritime activity

- d) Environmental NGO's have also lobbied and secured their participation within the technical assessments under the Tripartite Process. This, however, has not yet taken place due to the indefinite stalling of the Tripartite Talks themselves. We hope the Government of Gibraltar will continue to seek co-operation at cross border level for environmental and health issues which are urgent in nature with a resumption of the working groups meeting under the Tripartite Forum.

## EPIDEMIOLOGICAL STUDIES:

- a) One of the key and urgent areas to be considered is the true state of *public health* of Bay communities given their long term and chronic exposure to toxic emissions from poorly regulated heavy industry and the Oil Refinery based in the Spanish town of San Roque. Gibraltar's first independently commissioned epidemiological study for the Gib population is an important first step but one that needs to be followed by further study to fully understand the state of our health, and the "potential" and "actual" impacts from environmental factors which most affect us *including from local sources*. Cross border studies are also necessary to gauge how the Bay environment impacts on the health of **all** Bay communities. The focus should then quickly move to bring all identified causes of ill- health and higher mortality in the area in line with best practice and best available technology within Europe with the aim of improving health prospects and quality of life.
- b) The ESG and our public health advisers consider more research is required as well as an expansion of the existing air monitoring programme in Gibraltar (also advised by the report issued on the 1<sup>st</sup> Epid Study in January 2011).

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## ESG Election Wish List

It is hoped this wish list will be considered by all parties standing for 2011 elections. The ESG strongly believes that implementation of these measures would bring enormous benefits to our community and quality of life; offer greater sustainability and improve Gibraltar's environmental performance.

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**Please visit ESG website which carries a rich record of 8 years worth of media releases, reports, photographs, videos, interviews and more:**

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<sup>3</sup> ESG, GONHS, Greenpeace, AGADEN and Verdemar