



LIST OF OBJECTIVES 2019

**FOR A HEALTHY QUALITY OF LIFE
CLEAN ENVIRONMENT AND
SUSTAINABLE FUTURE**

ESG Philosophy and Motivation



September 2019

In 2000 the ESG formed as an NGO to campaign on environmental issues. Since 2003 we have published our “List of Objectives” and lobbied all parties standing for election to ensure the environment is placed firmly on the political agenda. We have a good grasp of local and regional environmental issues and have the advantage of experience and knowledge that comes with passionately following and researching these for two decades.

The ‘environment’ and the crisis of ‘climate change’ are now mainstream news. However achieving meaningful change to address these most serious challenges requires adaption and use of appropriate economic and technological systems to make our societies more sustainable and less polluting. This “adaption period” is critical to avert the worst effects of climate change and nations everywhere are being called upon to forge such plans. Gibraltar must also develop a climate plan that sets out targets to reduce our pollution and use of fossil fuels in as short a time as possible and include all relevant activity on the Rock.

Our group’s focus has been on cleaning up and making Gibraltar a healthier and more pleasant land to live, while at the same time celebrating and protecting the incredible nature we are so fortunate to inhabit. Our historic work on local and regional pollution and seeking application of best available technology and regulations is well known and we have always been conscious of the benefits to the wider climate impacts by reducing our pollution.

We also call for higher environmental protection standards than legally permitted elsewhere, because of our size and proximity to sources of pollution. ‘The Precautionary Principle’ is a critical tool we have also called upon to be applied when legislation fails to provide adequate protection for people or the environment.

By cleaning up our polluting sources we are also improving our health and quality of life, which is obviously a basic human right, and one we should all aspire to enjoy.

Gibraltar’s size and political situation makes achieving true sustainability in terms of waste/energy/food etc. impossible. The trade in fossil fuels carried out in Gibraltar, the Bay and North Africa is part of a global reliance on oil and plans must soon come into line to transition away from this practice. However, the petrochemical industries across the bay continue to expand and are a stark reminder that whatever improvements we make in Gibraltar – and make them we must - our backdrop is one that is literally killing the planet. Efforts should be increased at a local and cross border level to seek a moratorium of such industries and clean up this regional environmental hotspot. In this regard the ESG and our partners can be proud of the decade long fight we took to Brussels and the EU, to clean up the large Oil Refinery located in the bay, a few kilometres from Gibraltar in San Roque, and during which time, was operating to 3rd world standards. Under the current climate crisis, we are studying the possibilities of once more taking on this major challenge as industries, major reclamation works and rampant urbanisation threatens the region.

The ESG has formed several successful partnerships over the years with local, regional & global NGOs and embarked on several campaigns.

Bucket Brigade



Refinery Reform Campaign



Clean up



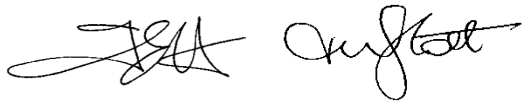
the world



KEY ISSUES INCLUDE

- 1. CLIMATE CHANGE
- 2. ADHERENCE TO EU (OR HIGHER) ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS BEYOND BREXIT
- 3. ENERGY
- 4. POLLUTION – (LAND/SEA, PORT & DOCKYARD IMPACTS – AIRPORT & BORDER)
- 5. TRAFFIC & TRANSPORT
- 6. BUNKERING
- 7. CROSS BORDER
- 8. EPIDEMIOLOGICAL STUDIES
- 9. SEWAGE TREATMENT
- 10. WASTE / RECYCLING / LITTER
- 11. PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT
- 12. CONSERVATION
- 13. EMF RADIATION
- 14. TOURISM AND BEACHES
- 15. ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION & MANAGEMENT PLAN

Sincerely,



Janet Howitt

Tom Scott
for the ESG Committee

1. CLIMATE CHANGE

Gibraltar has serious challenges on its journey towards becoming carbon free. Government has declared a Climate Emergency Pledge and the ESG has joined other local environmental and heritage NGOs to press for an ambitious and independently monitored programme for the decarbonising of our community. This coalition known as the 'Coalition for Climate Action' has emerged from public meetings organised by the ESG in 2019, in response to the growing local and global civic call for action on climate change.

The coalition wants urgent action on:

•Transport •Energy •Pollution •Waste •Development •Trade in Fossil Fuel

and calls for a funded and cross party supported, independent climate body, to be tasked with the rolling out of an agreed programme within a strict timeframe, that is binding on all future administrations, to achieve the transition away from a carbon intensive society.

(See No.16 for EAMP)

2. ADHERENCE TO EU (OR HIGHER) ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS BEYOND BREXIT

ESG commends Governments commitment to continue to apply EU environmental standards in Gibraltar, even once out of the European Commission, and expects all parties to sustain this. As stated above, our ideal objective would be to see higher than EU standards applied when these fail to deliver adequate protection due to our small size. Additionally, our aim now, under a Climate Change Pledge, would be to set goals that will radically transform our industry, transport, and trade to decarbonise Gibraltar as far as possible and as quickly as can be done. (i.e. a change in approach and strategy and not merely a legal requirement).

3. ENERGY

Since 2002 the ESG has been fighting air pollution from aging power stations and calling for research into and application of most appropriate renewable energy systems. We have recognised the interim need for a state of the art modern power station to be set up using best available technology and monitoring standards, and for this to be run until it can be replaced increasingly by clean technology. Clearly Gibraltar requires significant and stable power supply for desalination purposes as well as powering homes and businesses.

We have been waiting for this interim power station to be set up since 2009/2010 when the previous administration planned to build this at Lathbury Parade. The present administration reversed this decision in 2011/2012, and set about building this, instead, in the NW flank of Gibraltar in the port area, to be run on Diesel/LNG gas. This change has brought with it, numerous other factors, including need for reclamation. We are concerned that, while the primary use of gas over diesel should produce less pollution in the immediate area, that full commissioning takes place as soon as possible. A recent announcement has confirmed this to be end of this year. We will continue to monitor this. Real-time Stack monitoring – a measure called for by the ESG - should further assure residents of emission quality from the power station. Of course gas, while burning more cleanly than diesel, is nevertheless a fossil fuel and its use must be phased out in favour of renewable energy technologies.

Energy production for Gibraltar has to take a central role in the action on Climate. This is a key factor we believe must be included in the Climate Change Emergency Plan that has to follow a strict timeframe outside of any other EU targets or plans.

ESG supports a variety of renewable energy systems for Gibraltar including solar, vertical axis land based wind, offshore wind farms, and marine current turbines. The group hopes that a consensual approach on the medium and long-term planning for investment into renewable energy systems in Gibraltar will be found to accelerate our progress in getting there. A major objective is in identifying, via robust research, a clean and sustainable alternative to oil, for the production of our potable water, via desalination.

4. POLLUTION

This is a very important area for us, which we work on pretty much all the time as we file reports on pollution incidences and help members of the public who share their concerns and reports with us. Until pollution excesses disappear we shall continue to fight these and press for lasting solutions to pollution by way of investment in clean technologies, removal of out-dated industrial practices and effectively enforcing polluter paying principle, which if heavy enough, will start turning the tide. The use of best available technology and practice should be enforced in our small town. The links between reducing/eliminating pollution and helping address climate change have always been very clear to the ESG and provided us with extra motivation in our 20-year struggle. Specifically the ESG considers the issues are the following as at September 2019:

a. Real-time Stations & Mobile Air Monitors

Pods have now been placed throughout Gibraltar at a number of hotspots. After some months data is now posted online and can be found at: www.gibraltairquality.gi

We welcome the steps taken to capture air sampling in areas many of us believe air quality to be seriously compromised and we can take heart that now we can see what the picture looks like.

The pods provide '*indicative levels*' of pollution and by virtue of their design, size, etc. will not be relied upon as heavily as permanent real-time stations. However these indicator levels will be very useful to the authorities in implementing change as are used elsewhere, as well as of keen interest to NGOs like us and the public at large.

-We remain convinced of the need for one of the real-time stations in the south to be placed in the NW district (as soon as possible) so that this data can also be inserted into our air quality reports.

ESG is studying the trends of the pollution levels captured by the pods, as data has only been available for a few weeks. We regret that vocs, (volatile organic compounds, produced when refuelling, paint spraying, etc.), are not currently measured by pods at key sites where these gases will be present. We are pushing for this to be added without delay. (Sites include nr Harbour Views and GibDock). **Update:** early days for the pods as they are moved around Gibraltar and fine tuned to better reflect the areas and the pollutants they should be covering. We continue to monitor this very closely.

b. Current Power Stations and Skip generators

The present mothballing of the power stations has been welcomed. Their complete dismantlement and removal once the LNG Gas/Diesel Station is fully commissioned will bring about a new era in power generation, one that will nevertheless be an interim step to Gibraltar moving towards ever growing reliance on renewable energy. The ESG continues to monitor the situation to speed up this process as quickly as possible. The date suggested of the end of the year by Govt and GEA will hopefully come to fruition and will finally remove chronic sources of air and noise pollution from our power stations and skid generators.

c. GibDock

The ESG has publicly called upon both this industry and the authorities to address the environmental impacts from the dockyard activity. We were most concerned when back in 2007? three large housing estates were built immediately adjacent to the dockyard raising issues of conflict that inevitably followed. We have seen years of heavy pollution from this industry where residents are bearing the brunt and potential health consequences and time has come for this to be either closed or see appropriate investment in mitigation to eliminate operational impacts.

d. Onshore Power Supply (connection and conversion)

We have long called for the installation of onshore power connection and conversion, (also known as cold ironing), to be mandatory for vessels using our harbour. Indeed a Green Port Status is increasingly calling for this facility to be part of its compliance. Works have started to set up this facility at the Extension Jetties site. All other sites like GibDock, South Mole, Rooke area, Detached and North Moles, should all have the option to be able to do this, as soon as possible. This land based power supply would remove pollution from marine fuel engine emissions from the quayside (especially from idling over long periods), which, in Gibraltar, means improving air quality for nearby residents. Instead the emissions would come from a cleaner burning new power station.

e. Ships at anchor

Fuming offshore tankers are a fairly common sight to us here in Gibraltar. Indeed the number of ships offshore creates smog and worsens our air quality to exceed that of land based traffic. Internationally legislation is in place to further clean up emissions from vessels (particulates) once they enter the harbour area. However such implementation is some way off and Governments commitment to introduce emission controls on particulates from vessels is very much welcomed. Other measures already in place to convert to cleaner fuels when entering port and sulphur limits in fuels used by vessels visiting Gibraltar works quite well at present for a high percentage of vessels. Enforcement against errant polluting vessels needs to be tightened up and quicker response time is needed with less reliance on the public to feed in reports.

f. Cruise Ships and Super Yachts

It is quite common to see large cruise ships that visit Gibraltar smoke heavily at berth at the North Mole, often for long periods of time. This pollution needs to be quantified, as there are several residential estates and play areas downwind of these vessels. We understand that some cruise ships draw too much power for these to use onshore provision (once this is in place). There is much variety in the cruise liners that come to Gibraltar, in terms of size/ energy draw/ efficiency and length of stay. Their environmental impacts should be fully understood. Super Yachts can also be quite polluting and the ESG would like to know what rules and standards apply locally to limit pollution from these very large and fuel hungry vessels to manage their impact while at berth.

g. Vapour recovery technology

Should be applied on all fuelling transactions from shipping to eliminate fugitive fumes during transactions that periodically sweep through neighbourhoods. Additionally all land-based activity dealing in any type of fuelling should always incorporate vapour recovery as best practice.

h. Road idling

Rules regarding unnecessary idling of engines by all road vehicles, needs to be enforced. Despite initial efforts by the Department of Environment and Transport, to inform and remind the public about the health impacts from idling, this practice continues widespread in Gibraltar because of lack of fines and enforcement. We need larger and more signs. We need penalties to be applied as examples and deterrents. There should be idling free zones with stricter rules – outside schools, narrow and busy streets, the border, etc. Tourist vehicles must be reminded of their responsibilities not just to their clients to keep a cool bus/taxi, but also the impact these high number of vehicles imposes on everyone else. Idling should be banned in principle and fines should be imposed as is done in the UK and elsewhere to protect public health. Coach idling in the Mid Town car park creates a serious pollution problem and must be addressed.

i. Airport associated noise and air pollution impact

As airport activity grows so must monitoring of the impact on air quality and noise levels. Refuelling of planes takes place v frequently and in close proximity to airport and to passengers moving in and out of aeroplanes. What is the impact of these fumes on people? Can this be done to tighter regulations?

h. Border issues

The chaos of the border environment continues with the heavy volume of traffic/runway closures/Spanish customs actions. The second hand buses used to provide the border-town run are not EU compliant and should not be used on our roads. It is hoped that once the runway tunnel is complete, that a new plan to mobilise current pedestrians will have been forged. The absence of such a plan will potentially lead to an increase in motorised traffic coming into Gibraltar, as people will not be willing to walk the much longer new route round the tunnel. This is a major issue and needs addressing urgently. The park and ride facility, initially conceived for the use of the large car park at Devil's Tower Road, should be exclusively reverted for the purpose intended, once Bassadone vehicles are out.

5. TRANSPORT & TRAFFIC

Transport and Traffic have fast become one of the heaviest environmental impacts of our day. We have campaigned for a holistic transport plan that was finally published a few years ago and which is slowly being implemented. Some improvements have been achieved but there is much left to do to provide calm roads, clean air, and encourage more of us to leave our motorised vehicles behind.

Apart from personal and commercial transport, we have the additional load linked to development, which is a constant, and together, make for an unhealthy environment and in places, intolerable levels of traffic. This 'temporary' yet 'constant' presence of diesel chugging transport degrades our quality of life and very importantly adds to the consumption of fuel and production of kerbside pollution and CO₂. The opportunity of influencing change to cleaner transport clearly lies in Government hands via policy and we hope a climate emergency will see all party manifestos declaring their plan *for decarbonising our transport* in Gibraltar. Here we look at specifics regarding transport as follows: -

- **STTP** (Sustainable Traffic & Transport Plan) Cross party support for this detailed plan would ensure a speedier implementation for the benefit of all the community
- **Idling** is a real curse be it from land based transport or vessels in water. Diesel fumes are carcinogenic thus it is imperative to urgently stop the habit of idling. Stronger campaigns are needed with information promoting the harmful effects on health and strategic fining must be introduced to deter others
- **Diesel** itself is being phased out in Gibraltar and that is a positive development. However this imperative is directed at resident cars only and does not address commercial or visitor vehicles
- Incentives for clean running vehicles have been used and it is hoped there will be a lot more done in this regard in 2019/2020
- **Incentivising** clean running vehicles (hybrids and electric) and discouraging fossil fuelled vehicles should be embraced more aggressively as this could help bring about necessary changes faster and a cleaner environment
- **Visitors** should be advised to park in designated parking areas that are clearly marked, where machines are constantly serviced (!), and where they are not routinely clamped because of failure of the former. Park and Ride facility at Devil's Tower Road with increased provision of public transport is necessary
- **Removal** of second hand buses that a) are highly polluting and b) cannot switch off engines and run A/C must be a priority. These buses are as busy as the Government owned buses that serve Gibraltar. The Citibuses run very busy routes, are polluting and create pollution hotspots wherever they are. This is bad for locals, visitors, and for our reputation. We think that given the demands on transport and mass visitor movement in Gibraltar, that this should be done using clean technology to improve local environment for both locals and visitors alike. Some form of transition fund/loan should be available to help companies upgrade to clean transport
- **Control** of car ownership to limit numbers on roads regardless of ability to pay for multiple vehicles
- **Emission standards** testing of vehicle emissions must be applied more widely and to strict and stringent standards
- **Government hybrid buses** to be urgently introduced to run on flat routes
- **Noise pollution** can be very onerous on our roads. Motorbikes (especially those with modified exhausts), commercial vehicles and construction machinery are the worst offenders. Noise pollution needs to be tackled more vigorously in Gibraltar.
- **Mobile Phones & driving** is a widespread practice in Gibraltar that must be better controlled. A matter of time before a serious accident happens due to this illegal activity
- **Pavement provision and pedestrianisation** – parts of Upper Town in particular could benefit from both these measures. Indeed some streets have had parking control measures and removal of vehicles and this could be applied to other areas such as Prince Edwards road/hill for example
- **Walking/Cycling** more of this will follow once we remove the overwhelming numbers of cars and heavy vehicles from our roads
- **Cycling Scheme** not working very well. Bicycles getting trashed, hire bike locations sometimes found empty etc.?
- **Walking and Cycling distances** – Welcome recent campaigns to promote walking and cycling
- **Motorbike/Moped** – lawlessness and numbers a concern
- **Need for provision of clean transport vision** for Town, Upper Rock and 'outer Gibraltar' tours to replace rising number of diesel buses that pollute where they go and when parked, whether MidTown or at sites of interest with idling engines.

6. BUNKERING/SHIPPING

- a) **Spills and Fumes** – Significant improvement over the years, with greater resourcing and investment
- b) **VTS** - Vessel Tracking Systems installed some years back, (an ESG campaign), now delivering higher safety shipping standards
- c) **Measures** have been in place for some time now to direct vessels entering Gibraltar harbour/waters to switch to cleaner burning fuels, (still marine diesel but of a higher grade). This has had a clear impact as many vessels follow this requirement
- d) **Ships at anchor** - should follow best practice and limit power generation to essential while in emission controlled areas (ECAs) to reduce harmful emissions close to shore. The Port Authority should also exert greater control over client vessels and bunkering barges, and the level of sooty emissions produced by some, on a regular basis. These cause high elevations of particulate and nitrogen dioxide levels, which threaten human health
- e) **Power supply** – ship pollution from running engines at berth is now a principal environmental problem at many ports in Europe. Measures such as onshore power conversion and connection, are being introduced along with legislation to enforce ships in for repair or visiting for more than a day, to switch off their engines and connect to the local grid. The ESG has campaigned for some time to see this measure implemented and enforced in Gibraltar. **Update:** one site is currently being prepared to install cold ironing. Progress. Others should follow asap
- c) **Detached Mole** –the berth for bulk fuel storage, and other services. ESG is concerned that while supporting a land-based fuel storage option over floating mother vessels, this mole does not represent the ideal solution. Greater use of vapour recovery technology is also essential to eliminate fumes, which periodically sweep through the town on certain fuel transfers at this site. However, while we understand this may change, there have been no vessels berthed here for some time. Conflict between fuelling at this site will only grow with the creation of a major residential reclamation directly opposite the mole (Victoria Keys)

7. CROSS BORDER ISSUES -

Co-operation - and contact continues between the ESG and Spanish Environmental NGOs. Long-term objectives shared include for a moratorium on industry and the need for an independent and rigorous cross border epidemiological study. Work is on going.

Complaint - the ESG acts as a watchdog on regional environmental issues and continues to file detailed complaints to the EU on the transgressions of pollution spikes usually from the CEPESA Oil Refinery. In February 2017 we lodged another complaint of excessive flaring by this industry, which was investigated against a background of our long-term complaints, and information lodged with the EU since 2002, with the assistance of Hassan's International law Firm.

Western Beach - since April 2010, Western Beach has seen appalling and illegal levels of sewage contamination from a storm drain diversion pipe in La Linea. The ESG has campaigned hard on this at several levels. The contamination continues after a brief interlude of improvement, especially during the non-bathing months - mid September to mid April - when rainfall usually results in high levels of faecal contamination and E Coli. 9 years later and we still have this problem! Major MoD housing development has recently being constructed to the east of the beach, which may flag up issues of foul smells from the area over time. With the impending exit from the EU, we will no longer have MEPs to try and get EU support for attempting resolution of these cross border environment and health problems. A serious worry indeed.

Update: Roll back of existing Spanish Environmental protection measures and regulations

This situation is now producing grave concerns for our regional environment and must be challenged by Spain's own environmental networks. These concerns include:

- The dismantling of the Junta de Andalucía's Consejería de Medio Ambiente thereby weakening an already poor oversight of environmental management of the Bays chemical industries and other practices
- Expansion of petrochemical industry despite the Europe wide call for action on the climate change crisis
- Major infill and reclamation at Algeciras port for fuel storage and container storage in an already congested part of the bay – destroying ecosystems and removing important feeding areas for migratory marine life
- Multiple large urbanisation projects approved to be built along the Costa de la Luz coastline, protected and valued as a primary tourist destination
- Roll back of protection of the environment in direct opposition to the EU drive for member states to respond to Climate Change and impacts from all quarters

8. EPIDEMIOLOGICAL STUDIES

An independent, cross border epidemiological study is necessary because people on both sides of the border are deeply concerned about the high incidence of cancer and higher mortality that exists in many of the bay populations – cancer clusters have been identified in Sevilla, Cadiz and Huelva in a report led by Public Health WHO expert Professor Joan Benach who has acted as adviser to the Environmental groups. A triangle of higher mortality was ring-fenced by the professor whose research exposed close correlation between serious illness and mortality and heavy industries.

Gibraltar also suffers its share of cancers and given our location should be included in a bay wide independent study produced by epidemiologists with an environmental scientific background.

9. SEWAGE TREATMENT

Update: Detailed plans for a sewage treatment plant and location are now all in place. These have been presented to the DPC, who flagged up a number of issues, with most agreeing the scale and look of the plant was quite unacceptable at this location. So a revised plan is expected on this. ESG welcomed progress on this major project for Gibraltar. At the DPC we made our views known regarding the need to eliminate fugitive fumes and noise from the pumping station (Little Bay), and at the treatment site itself. Currently waiting for applicants on behalf of Government to return to DPC with more information as requested including landscape concerns.

We have also advocated for anaerobic digestion process to be included in the new treatment facility, aiding in odour reduction and converting waste to heat very efficiently. This, according to the applicant will be designed/planned once 6 months of operation at the plant have expired to provide a salinity picture to aid in the suitable digestion process. Still concerned over the high volume of sludge produced and need for exporting of this waste via the border, especially given Brexit considerations.

Qs: Bad smells pervade at certain locations of Gibraltar, which are nauseating for the driver, never mind the walker. Can these issues be resolved, or are they impossible to resolve? When will the treatment plant get going? We knew it would need to be after the major events of the summer but hope to see real movement here soon.

10. WASTE / RECYCLING / LITTER

Waste Gibraltar needs a modern, purpose-built Waste Plant. Sites have become overwhelmed and a measure of reorganisation is underway. Never more than now, with the prospect of a hard or soft Brexit, does Gibraltar need a fit for purpose Waste Plant. Plans had been approved but then stalled.

Recycling Hoping that recycling will become more efficiently resourced so that the positive levels produced by the Dept (and the community) continues to grow.

Litter Gibraltar's environment still suffers from littering. Believe clearer information of all facilities (via signs, leaflets, media), improved street facilities (bins), enforcement (litter wardens), are all necessary. ESG has involved itself with Gibraltar's littering issues since its first CUTW campaign in 2005. The campaign that enjoys widespread community support has a number of key aims, which have formed the backbone of a Litter Strategy and set of principles that the ESG works on throughout the year. Reports on every major clean up event are produced by the ESG, published, and submitted to the authorities and agencies. While more of our aims are being realised each year there is much that still needs to be done.

Update: Indeed 2019 has thrown up lots of issues for our campaign. Sites on the move – problematic border – elections and Brexit. These affect our ability to manage the ever-growing mountains of waste produced by a very busy tourist economy and high visitor turnover. Development and construction waste now at peak activity also adds to the pressure. Essentially the Clean up is about civic pride and pulling together, but also for sustained improvement. We believe that education/information, facilities/large & small, and enforcement/fines, to be the recipe for successful litter and waste control.

CUTW 2019 will assess, monitor and produce a review of where we are at regarding litter and waste issues and submit reports calling for urgent and appropriate actions.

11. PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Eplanning has clearly aided planning transparency and access to information

Gibraltar Development Plan has been contracted out which in the ESG's view is a good idea. This way it will be completed quicker and will also follow widespread public consultation

New Town Planning Act passed unanimously in Parliament in the summer of 2018. The new Act saw widespread consultation that we took full advantage of and submitted our ideas also. Despite it being passed over a year ago it has still not been implemented and we have continued to see multiple Government projects announced for comment only which goes against the promises made by Government

Planning Schemes Additionally, the Chief Minister has ultimate say in the decisions on planning schemes – we interpret these as large areas. It is sometimes very difficult for some DPC members (including the ESG) to accept the scrutiny involved in overseeing smaller or private projects and pressing for debate/discussion on merits or otherwise, only to not have a voice on major planning schemes at all – these will have transformational impacts on the whole of Gibraltar, its landscapes and sustainability

Holistic and long-term planning It is therefore essential in our view to have sustainability in planning. Gibraltar's limited land area (with or without reclamation) means that available space should be parcelled up holistically to cater for every need – from the poor, to the rich – in-betweeners and then breathing space!!

Green areas outside of gardens and reserves should be increased and made compulsory in all developments. This landscaping ought not to be part of a new development 'somewhere' but to take up street space to increase shade and life for the community

Five per cent of green area in a new development contained in the development plan is not always applied which is understandable in a town project but less so outside the city walls

Landscaping in large projects is essential to keep green, breathing spaces in our cityscape [Update:](#) recent announcements on retaining green areas and creating new ones is welcome

Sustainability in development – energy, water, waste and materials must be used to follow sustainable targets

[Our climate change emergency demands](#) that ALL activity in our community is screened for its contribution to CO2. All developments must be evaluated from the moment a project is conceived and will include every CO2 pound produced until such time as site is commissioned and then it will have a CO2 measured as energy efficiency – this is so far the only sustainable rating we have and must change. The ESG has raised this issue at DPC and there has been support for this new measure but it is not clear where or how this evaluation will be carried out or by who

Strategic Vistas and retaining Gibraltar's well known iconic landscapes and profiles is also important to the ESG and is a measure included in previous development plans as an important tool but not so far resourced to be included in development in Gibraltar. Well, clearly it must be and we shall continue to press for this alongside the GONHS and Heritage Trust.

12. CONSERVATION

ESG is concerned that without a Gibraltar wide holistic plan our open, green spaces and coastal sites could be built upon even though these provide important breathing spaces and habitats in an otherwise increasingly urbanised environment. ESG also considers that major developments should incorporate more green areas and landscaping - [See Planning for more information on this.](#)

The ESG welcomes several new programmes led by the Department for the Environment, to better manage local biodiversity, protect important habitat and create awareness. We pride ourselves in raising awareness about litter and fly tipping in remote/green/coastal areas during our Clean up events, which have seen habitats improve, and greater focus given by the authorities. This is a campaign we have run since 2005.

Projects like Commonwealth Park have greatly enriched the town centre and further green projects announced are welcomed by the ESG.

13. EMF RADIATION

EMF radiation from mobile phone masts and other WiFi equipment was part of an intense campaign by the ESG back in 2014-2015. It resulted in a Government policy on mast installation, which promoted the precautionary principle and holistic planning for all operators. This helped the overall situation considerably. As growing evidence on health impacts from this invisible pollution becomes available, especially on effects on young children, the elderly and infirm, we would like for more to be done in this area. For example, there are a growing number of countries that are banning WiFi in nurseries and first schools, and even within hospital wards, promoting the use of cabled alternatives. This is an on-going concern that we shall continue to discuss with the authorities, as greater awareness must be raised about potential health impacts on young children with the almost permanent use of ipads and other such equipment.

5G – Gibraltar continues to follow the spread of mobile technology, which is highly popular at a personal and business level. The ESG follows all aspects of this story given there are legitimate concerns raised about 5G by health and scientific professionals everywhere as well as from governing bodies from around the world.

Our issue isn't that 5G is lethal and should not be installed in our hometown. Our issue is simply that if this new technology which is 'milder' but effectively saturates exposure in order to provide a service – is not harmful in any way, then Government – as the ultimate authority – and companies wanting to bring this service in - are duty bound to provide reports/studies and reassurance to the public that concerns voiced globally are groundless. To date none have been forthcoming.

14. TOURISM IN THE UPPER ROCK

Mass tourism carries environmental impacts on wildlife and wilderness areas due to transport needs and numbers involved. Peak season sees large cruise liners, flights and thousands of cars entering Gibraltar on a monthly basis. This also impacts on infrastructure, facilities, traffic etc.

Upper Rock Management Plan A very comprehensive plan that saw widespread consultation and includes strong management recommendations. However what clearly hits you when in the upper rock is the absence of experienced rangers to ensure visitors and locals respect the environment and follow the rules. The sheer weight of numbers demands this should be in place. In peak season our macaques are subjected to dangerous levels of human interaction. Narrow roads create safety issues between walkers (that are being encouraged) and the endless stream of tourist carrying vehicles.

The possibility of a major increase in Cable car carrying capacity via a recent application by MH Bland, while being a more environmental mode of transport, poses significant issues in the top station area. Without a holistic Government plan managing numbers of people up there at any one time, this will present even more congestion than currently exists and will lower visitor experience even further. The safety issues presented by releasing high volumes of people potentially on foot every hour into the home of the macaques demands a holistic NEW transport plan be set in place – running on clean energy.

Litter issues are a problem in the upper rock due to the topography and we usually include a number of sites in our Clean up campaign.

Cruise Liners also present environmental issues and we are calling for careful evaluation of the impact from their funnel emissions while at berth.

15. ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION & MANAGEMENT PLAN (EAMP) and more

Gibraltar signed up to the “*Overseas Territories Environmental Charter*” 14 years ago and some time after that produced Action Plans – last one in 2013, to roll out how different environmental impacts would be tackled and within what time frame. It is clearly well overdue and the ESG has been pressing Government for an update ever since.

The Plan could arguably be similar to what the public are calling for now with respect to climate change and a plan required, time lined, for that.

Indeed reducing environmental impacts as we have been campaigning for, for 20 years, would bring about benefits to the climate as well as to ourselves.

During the creation of an upgrade to the EAMP, the Government, especially in light of Brexit, has changed its plan to instead produce a different type of plan, based on the UK approach to sustainability and action on climate change. A short to medium to long-term approach.

While we support long term planning, we believe short and medium term actions should be clearly identified and ‘out there’, in order to get the community, both at a personal and at a business level, on side and preparing for changes ahead. We have been calling for its publication for some time now and the Climate Emergency Pledge and Crisis is now placing even greater pressure for this type of information to be published. We recognise that Brexit is also placing a lot of pressure on the Department of Environment and Government in general and is why we also support an independent climate body to focus exclusively on our decarbonising journey.

We will lobby all parties for such a plan on all issues.

It is always been very clear to us that environmental issues and interests in Gibraltar need to be tackled and supported at a cross party level. A short/medium and long term plan needed to decarbonise Gibraltar and make the difficult decisions we need to make today, demands cross party support and continuity.

Let 2019 be finally the year that our community delivers on historic promises to stand together for our environment - we need to do this for ourselves, our children and for our planet.

ESG efforts since 2002 has seen, or placed pressure, for :

The setting up of our Air Monitoring Stations
Independent air sampling via Bucket Brigade
Reduction in Bunkering Fumes
Environmental Policy
Initial Epidemiological Study
Recycling facilities and action on litter
Increased Environmental Awareness via outreach programmes, talks, community clean ups etc.
New Power Station Project get underway
Seat on the Development and Planning Commission (DPC)
CUTW Campaign aims receive Government support
Refurbishment of a number of CUTW hotspots
Cross border work on the CEPESA Oil Refinery and Sewage at Western Beach achieve results in Brussels
Cross border campaign result in Audit on CEPESA Refinery to set out a mandate for real change & clean-up
Radiation reduction efforts on mobile masts, etc. (see ESG Facebook page: Mobile Phone Mast Concern Gibraltar)
2014 - The ESG receive "*A Group Heritage Award*" in recognition of the value the Clean up the World Campaign represents for Gibraltar's built and natural environment
2016 - The ESG receive an "*Independent Civil Society Award*" from Equality Rights Group in recognition and deep appreciation for the constant vigilance, dedication and disciplined hard work demonstrated by the group in the interests of safeguarding Gibraltar against encroaching dangers and degradation of its environment
2019 – The ESG is presented with a prestigious Global Energy Foundation Award for our work in our Clean up Campaign as well as in reducing pollution locally and regionally
2019 – ESG chairperson Janet Howitt awarded the Gibraltar Medallion of Excellence for her environmental work that has been possible due to the committed group of people that make up the ESG who have tirelessly campaigned for a better environment in Gibraltar since we formed in 2000



Visit ESG website: www.esg-gib.net for more information on our work and interests
Telephone Contacts: (00-350) - 54960000 or 58009259