

ESG Radio Newsletter Thursday 17th May 2007

I would like to pass on some very interesting news on important ESG campaigns and then will announce some upcoming events you may like to become involved in.

Petition:-

On Monday 14th May the ESG, as part of La Plataforma por El Estudio Epidemiologico, handed in a petition of over **13,000 signatures** to the Chief Ministers offices. The petition had been signed by residents from all over the Bay and was co-ordinated by the cross border Plataforma. A copy of the petition was simultaneously handed in to La Junta's office in Algeciras by our Spanish colleagues. We sincerely hope that the Gibraltar Government as part of La Comision Mixta, will now press on with its public commitment to undertake an independent and rigorous epidemiological study both in Gibraltar and the neighbouring Spanish towns. This would help verify the impacts on health of Bay residents from the emissions of CEPSA Oil Refinery as well as all other major sources of pollution.

The ESG now calls upon La Comision Mixta to set a date soon for a meeting with members of La Plataforma where these widespread concerns can be directly presented and a timeframe for the much needed studies to be set.

We also take this opportunity to thank all those whose time and effort helped us collect the many thousands of signatures that will help our campaign at several levels.

2) Neil Parish

Continuing on with Bay pollution for a moment you may be interested to learn that MEP Neil Parish will be visiting Gibraltar towards the end of this month and the ESG will use this opportunity to brief him of the various developments and incidents at the CEPSA refinery.

3) Telecinco –

Many of you may have seen the very powerful documentary on Telecinco last week called “Diario de los Contaminados.....” An hour long programme broadcast on Spanish national television about the serious environmental and health situation conditions in Puente Mayorga and Huelva. It highlighted studies undertaken by Profesor Benach and his team that show the striking clusters of higher mortality that exist in these areas profiling the urgent need for investigations of the root causes of what the Profesor described as a “public health crisis”. The programme is definitely worth watching and you can catch this via the internet on www.huelvadenuncia.org

It is clear that the wind of change is upon us- not as quickly as we would like but the fact that this programme was shown at all signals support for the affected communities who for so long have been appealing for their right to a healthy environment and for the need for these heavy chemical industries to be regulated to the highest possible standards. **At last their voices are being heard.....**

4) The Airport

The Chief Minister recently announced details of the new airport terminal and controls on aviation activity. The ESG is naturally delighted to hear that environmental considerations are playing a significant role in the development and planning stages although we would also welcome the publication of a full environmental impact assessment. The ESG will be making a full statement on the issue once it has had time to absorb and digest the contents of the CM's recent statement.

5) OK, now onto more general matters. A good bit of news is that Morrisons has set up a recycling bin for your unwanted plastic bags. While this should be applauded and supported the ESG would also like to see Morrisons promote their reusable bags which will also reduce the number of bags that will be binned and spread throughout Gibraltar.

6) World Environment Day is coming up soon on 5th June. The ESG will be celebrating the day along with many others on the Rock in an event organised by the Ministry for the Environment on Saturday 2nd June; but today we wanted to mention a special event we are organising in aid of this important occasion. A sponsored walk of around 5kms will be launched from Casemates on Saturday 2nd June and this is open to anyone of moderate fitness and families in particular. We have come up with a comfortable route which should accommodate little legs and prams too. Forms will

be available from 3 central locations; these are: The Nature Shop, Healthwise and Gib Heritage Trust. You can also download a form from our website on **esg-gib.net**

The aim of the walk is to support the current community wide drive to change our local car culture by promoting healthier forms of transport including walking!! although any funds raised will also go towards ESG ongoing campaigns. The walk is also timed to spread awareness about World Environment Day. Participants are asked to wear green and to report to the ESG stand at casemates at 10.00am. That's it for now, please contact us for any more information you may require on: 43156/78067 or 0034-671118270