

Mid July update by ESG

As usual lots going on with regards to our environment – we have tried to select a few topics which may be of particular interest to you.

First let's start with local issues:

The statement by the Minister for the Environment on this years' budget was welcome in that a detailed account was given on Govt's longer term strategy to address environmental issues on the Rock. It was reassuring to hear the Minister start his speech with climate change and how its dedicated "Climate Change Forum" has submitted a report to Government for consideration. Given the public interest in this issue the ESG **hopes the report will be published.** - On World Environment Day the Ministry for the Environment held a day long seminar. The morning session was importantly interactive and dynamic focussing on Gibraltar's schools and younger generation. The afternoon promised more of this realism kicking off with a powerful film clip of the realities of climate change throughout the world. It was after this that the simple message of "**the urgent need to act**" was lost in most of the lectures given. Furthermore there was no debate, no invitation for audience participation, and perhaps a lost opportunity for the public to feedback **their** awareness and knowledge about these issues and most importantly **their** preparedness for change.

The Trade Fair provided an opportunity for public involvement which was good – **now we need open discussion.**

The budget on the environment could provide plenty of material for such a debate and it is hoped that GBC will facilitate this along the lines of the major Sports and Health Debate held a little while ago.

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Another campaign to mention is the upcoming **Clean up the World the theme this year is "our climate..our actions..our future!"**. Taking place this year on the **15th and 16th September**, we are now inviting people to sign up and volunteer for the clean ups. This will be Gibraltar's 3rd participation in a global community event which has been running for fifteen years! You can see a profile on Gibraltar's participation in 2005 and 6 on website : **cleanuptheworld.org**. We hope to assemble a number of teams to clean up problem litter areas around Gibraltar. Other greening up and fixing up projects are being developed and details of these will be made available as soon as possible.

This year promises to be resoundingly successful in both pushing forward the littering, recycling and waste agenda while also celebrating our concerns and love of the environment. This second phase of the Clean Up Event is of course possible through the carnival-type parade in the heart of town on the morning of the **15th** with a Green exhibition at casemates. School artwork as well as practical information will be on display and we hope to have a number of green themed activities at the square to keep the younger ones busy. Dance and music will lend a dynamic and lively atmosphere to the occasion.

Please call 43156, 71020 or 74467 to volunteer your help – Individuals as well as groups of 5 or more are all welcome!!

It would be wrong to go before mentioning **Bay developments** as these affect us all. Some of you may have heard that finally and in response to public pressure, la Junta has commissioned a six month audit on the Oil Refinery emissions which have been causing much concern. The ESG sees this as a breakthrough but is determined to keep a careful eye on the proceedings. Together with its colleagues across the border, public pressure will continue to be maintained. For instance, **Denny Larson's assessment on CEPSA and related petrochemical activities after his visit with MEP Neil Parish to the plant last year is almost ready and being translated as I speak.** This extensive report commissioned by the MEP will be a most useful tool to be used by campaigning groups on both sides of the border. We hope to post it on our website after it has been submitted to the European Environment Commissioner next week.

We shall keep you posted on these developments.

These and other campaigns such as ITWMC, renewable energy and our power stations will be included in our next newsletter to be published shortly.