

Campaign of the Month



THE WAVE
COME TOGETHER TO STOP CLIMATE CHAOS
LONDON 5.12.09

March on climate change!

On Saturday 5 December 2009, ahead of the crucial UN Climate Change Conference, tens of thousands of people, including students and Union staff, will march through the streets of London and Glasgow to campaign against climate change.

The Wave and The Wave Scotland are being organised by Stop Climate Chaos Coalition, the UK's largest group of people dedicated to action on climate change and limiting its impact on the world's poorest communities. The Stop Climate Chaos Coalition includes over 100 organisations, including the NUS, and has a combined supporter base of over 11 million people.

The UN Climate Change Conference is where world leaders will negotiate for a new world deal to fight climate change and will be held at Copenhagen from 7 to 18 December 2009. Many regard it as our last best chance to halt runaway climate change by ensuring that global warming remains below 2°C.

Students' Unions join the call to action

Students' Unions throughout the UK are making their collective voices heard through activities up and down the country.

The University of Warwick Students' Union, People & Planet group are holding a number of talks and campaigns in the run-up to Copenhagen. This will culminate with members travelling by train to Copenhagen to join the protests there.

Students from Liverpool Guild of Students' and The University of Manchester Students' Union will hold

a hitch-hike race to Copenhagen, organised by Liverpool Guild's Oxfam Society. Starting from Liverpool city centre on the 9 December, they hope to reach Copenhagen by the 12 December to take part in the protests held in the Danish capital.

University College London Students' Union is holding a week dedicated to the issues surrounding the Copenhagen Conference and raising awareness through film showings, political debates, actions, stalls and quizzes.

Aberdeen University Students' Association have a high-profile visual campaign on campus and a number of students are going to the Glasgow march.

The NUS is urging students to get involved either on campus or by attending one of the marches. The Stop Climate Chaos Coalition provided campaign ideas and information at the recent Ethical and Environmental Officer Training event held at Leeds University Union. NUS Scotland held a recent campaign training event for Ethical and Environmental Officers to recruit volunteers for The Wave Scotland and to plan a day of action at their Students' Association.

How you can get involved

Join in the 5 December march in London or Glasgow - www.nus.org.uk/en/News/Events/March-to-stop-climate-chaos/ (London) or www.stopclimatechaos.org/scotland (Glasgow).

Download the student action pack to help raise awareness in your Union and Institution from www.nus.org.uk/PageFiles/5832/SCC_ActionPack09_FINAL.pdf

Greenzone

Bringing you the latest ethical and environmental news stories



Hope in a conflict zone: The Zaytoun story...

It is fitting the first (and currently only) origin of Fairtrade certified olive oil is Palestine; the land which the International Olive Oil Council cites as the original home of the olive tree.

The olives are still picked by hand and pressed locally by farmer families who have nurtured the trees for generations; these traditional processes make the olive oil of exceptional quality and also much more environmentally sound than the industrial production in Europe.

Now, thanks to Community Interest Company, Zaytoun, hope of economic growth and of change is a reality for small scale olive farmers in Gaza and the West Bank.

Zaytoun works with olive farming co-operatives across Palestine to produce Fairtrade and organically certified olive oil. The project began on a small scale, as founders Cathi and Heather brought 200 bottles of olive oil to the UK to sell amongst family and friends. Word and interest spread, faith groups and independent retailers have been purchasing the oil since 2004 and now production is ready to hit the shelves of bigger retailers including students' unions via NUS Services.

An estimated 100,000 families depend on olive farming and harvesting in Palestine and a healthy olive farming sector represents food security, jobs and cash income for many. The route to the UK market, via Fairtrade pricing, provided by Zaytoun CIC helps Palestinian farmers cope with local trade injustice; farm land access problems encountered by many and water scarcity in the local area.

For more information on Zaytoun and Palestinian olive farming please visit www.zaytoun.org



My point of view

Dannie Grufferty, Chair of the Ethical & Environmental Committee has her say.

A lot has been happening of late concerning campaigns and the like, that aim to lower our carbon footprint. Yet, how relevant are such things to 'normal' people? It remains difficult sometimes for many to... well care enough to adapt behaviours. The Government's new energy adviser has criticised the general public for often talking about climate change but then not liking it when it affects what happens on their front door. Campaigns like 10:10 ask individuals to change their behaviours and lower their emissions by 10% by 2010. Initiatives such as the Sound Environmental Impact Awards and the E&E Opt-In Group assist students' unions and students to adapt their behaviours.

We can complain all we like about Government environmental policies; but when people talk of climate change and then refuse to have a wind-farm anywhere near them, nothing can really change. Should we also as a movement not practice what we sometimes preach? Targets on recycled paper of 50% went to NUS Services' Board in early September; mainly to ensure we are not being too dogmatic to shareholders. But should it not be 100%? What is it that stops us from really driving changes in our behaviours and consumer habits? Does a lower-carbon life mean less of a life? I don't think so! To be continued... ●