



Around Europe

Quaker Council for European Affairs

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Does David Cameron Know What he's Doing?

The British prime minister, David Cameron, has pledged that if he wins the next general election, he will negotiate with his European Union (EU) partners to "bring back" powers from Brussels to London, and then hold a referendum so that the UK electorate can decide whether or not the UK stays in the EU. Eurosceptic Conservatives and members of the UK Independence Party (UKIP) are happy. The UK's European partners are not.

The reaction from leaders of other EU Member States has been to point out that changing the rules of the game, or picking only elements of cooperation which suit one party, is not acceptable. *The Guardian* quotes Angela Merkel: "We are prepared to talk about British wishes but we must always bear in mind that other countries have different wishes and we must find a fair compromise." European leaders actually have little enthusiasm for negotiations which are likely to be long and difficult, and would turn out to be a waste of time altogether if the UK electorate were to later vote to leave the EU. Only the Czech prime minister, Petr Nečas, was supportive of David Cameron, stating that a more flexible and open Europe is desirable, as is the continued membership of the UK.

It is important to recognise that when decisions are made by the EU at the European level, the UK, as a Member State, has a major say in those decisions. UK government ministers take part in Council meetings. And UK MEPs represent the interests of their regional constituencies in the European Parliament. EU legislation has to be agreed by the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union as well as by the European Commission in "trialogue" negotiations. Such "trialogue" negotiations are currently underway on Horizon 2020, the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation 2014-2020, for example.

It is also important to remember that "Europe" is not just the EU. The UK is one of 47 Member States in the Council of Europe, which is based in Strasbourg and carries responsibility for human rights and the Rule of Law. The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR), also in Strasbourg, whose ruling that prisoners should be given the right to vote is opposed by David Cameron, is an institution of the Council of Europe, not the European Union. The ECHR's ruling that asylum seekers

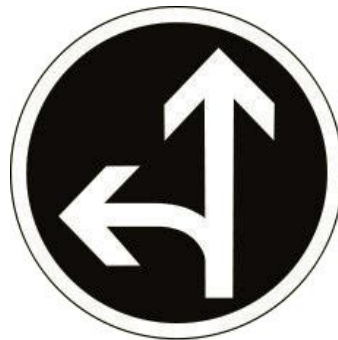
should not be deported to countries where they are likely to be subject to torture or degrading treatment, even if they have been convicted of serious crimes, has also been controversial in the UK. There are also other European, or mainly European, organisations, which should not be forgotten, such as the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), with 57 participating states and a secretariat in Vienna, which is concerned with security, conflict prevention, human rights and democracy, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), a military alliance.

Now David Cameron wants to negotiate a repatriation of powers from the EU to the UK. He is intent on drawing up a list of areas where the UK can opt out of EU regulations, starting with the Working Time Directive, which regulates minimum holidays for EU workers. (Whose "national interest" would opt out

of the Working Time Directive serve, one wonders.)

The UK government has embarked on a broad consultation to help decide which powers, or "competences", it will attempt to claw back from the EU. Over the next couple of years, until the end of 2014, organisations and individuals are being invited to participate in this review. The purpose of the exercise is to establish where the balance of competences between the EU and the UK lies in actual practice, and to consider how this balance might be changed so that the national interests of the UK are served better. Since the 1957 Treaty of Rome established the European Economic Community (following the formation of the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951), the EU institutions in Brussels, Luxembourg, and Strasbourg have acquired competences in a growing number of areas as shown in the table on the next page.

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Which way for the UK?
Image: CC by Desmoris

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Evolution of EU competences		
This table refers to the first explicit reference to a competence in the EU Treaties but does not address their subsequent development.		
1957 Treaty of Rome Customs union Free movement of goods Common commercial policy Free movement of persons, services and capital Common agricultural policy Common transport policy Competition Coordination of economic policies Common market European Social Fund European Investment Bank	1986 Single European Act Single Market Environment	1997 Amsterdam Treaty Employment Social policy Discrimination
	1992 Maastricht Treaty Common foreign and security policy Justice and home affairs Economic and monetary union Education Culture Cooperation and development	2007 Lisbon Treaty Space Energy Civil protection Data protection Sport

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/35431/eu-balance-of-competences-review.pdf

It may seem to many people in the UK that the EU has been grabbing increasing power over their lives. But it is important to understand the principle of subsidiarity, which is enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty. Subsidiarity dictates that decisions should be made at the most local level practicable, at local, regional or national level, rather than in Brussels. The EU can take action only in areas which lie within its exclusive competence, or in areas of competence shared with national governments if it is more effective for action to be taken at the European rather than national (or regional or local) level. Member States can challenge actions of the European Commission in the European Court of Justice if they believe that the principle of subsidiarity has been disregarded.

All this should be borne in mind as the UK government conducts its review of the balance of competences between the EU and the UK. The review is being conducted over four "semesters". At the beginning of each semester, the relevant government departments are issuing calls for evidence related to the competences being reviewed. During the first half of 2013, internal market, taxes, animal health and food safety, development, health, and foreign policy are being reviewed. Global issues, security and defence, and democracy and human rights are amongst the topics being addressed within the review of the EU's competence in the area of foreign policy. Individuals and organisations with knowledge and expertise in any of these areas are being encouraged to submit evidence to the relevant government departments.

The crux of the matter is that the EU is more than just a single market with internal freedom of movement for people and goods. The UK has enjoyed the benefits of EU investment in regional development, for example. The participants in a club, whether a sports team, a charity, an orchestra, or a co-operative, are free to do and achieve things which they cannot do on their own. Part of the deal is that they are required to attend training sessions or rehearsals or to invest time and money in various ways. Decisions about who contributes what and when, and how the benefits of joint action are to be distributed, are decided collectively. This is in the interests of all the participants. (See <https://www.gov.uk/review-of-the-balance-of-competences> for further information and how to participate.)

It works the same way with the European Union. The EU is much more than the sum of its parts. Over the past four decades since the UK joined the European Economic Community, much has been achieved which could not have been achieved by all the Member States acting alone "in their own interests". It has long been in the UK's interests for decisions to be made at the European level. In a kindergarten, children learn to share and cooperate for the sake of the whole group. It seems that David Cameron has yet to learn this lesson.

Gordon Matthews

Then and Now: Terrorism

The first edition of *Around Europe* was printed in January 1978. Today, looking back through 35 years of Quaker news from Brussels, it is striking just how many of the same issues are still the focus of the Quaker Council for European Affairs today. Terrorism is one theme that appears again and again. There is no universally accepted definition, but terrorism is most often considered to be the use of violence or intimidation in the pursuit of political goals. It has been used as a tactic throughout human history.

Then: *Around Europe*, Issue 1, 1978.

We first encounter terrorism in *Around Europe* as the title of a brief news item in the earliest edition. It describes an initiative by the French government to build a "legal union" within Europe to create "automatic extradition rules for a certain number of serious crimes". This push for closer cooperation on extradition most probably arose from the many terror attacks across Europe in the 1970s. Active groups



included the Irish Republican Army (IRA) from Northern Ireland, the Charles Martel Group in France, Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA) in Spain, and the Red Brigades in Italy. Terrorism appears again in *Around Europe* in the wake of a series of bombings across Belgium in October 1984. The bombings were carried out by the Fighting Communist Cells. They sought to inflict damage on the US presence in Belgium, notably NATO and the Belgian operations of large US companies. All the political parties in the European Parliament passed motions condemning the violence and called for deeper European cooperation on the issue.



Aftermath of IRA attack in Brighton, England (1984) Image: CC BY-SA 3.0 D444n

Now: *Around Europe*, Issue 275, 2005.

With the advent of the 'War on Terror', terrorism became a more distinct and particular focus of QCEA. Attacks such as those in New York in 2001, Madrid in 2004 and London in 2005 had a profound impact on politics in the West. Whilst it may be hyperbole to say

that the world changed after 9/11, the attacks produced fundamental shifts, both in international geopolitics and Western domestic security concerns. Whilst QCEA's work on terrorism in the 1980s was limited mainly to monitoring Europe's approach to terrorism, in the 2000s QCEA challenged the whole paradigm through which Western governments responded to the issue of security. The front page article in issue 275 (September 2005) announces the publication of nine briefing papers by QCEA. The central message of the briefing papers is that the European response to terrorism has 'the potential to undermine the human rights of all people - not just of those committing the acts in question but of all of us'.

Since this declaration, QCEA has continued to work on the human rights implications of the European response to terrorism. In a 2007 report QCEA suggests that the EU must 'emphasise the humanity of terrorists' and do more to challenge 'the use and misuse of fear in religion and politics'. The Quaker conviction that there is that of God in everyone is in direct contradiction to the human desire to demonise the accused. This focus on the basic human rights of suspects, including the right to a fair trial, remains a focus of QCEA's work today.

*All the briefing papers mentioned in this article are available online on the QCEA website under publications. The online archive of *Around Europe* (bit.ly/AroundEurope) goes as far back as 2005. For older copies please contact us: office@qcea.org*

Chris Venables

Defining the Green Economy

The green economy seems to be in vogue. The term has been increasingly cropping up in speeches by world leaders and national politicians, in international television broadcasts, on the banners of environmental activists, and even in *Around Europe*. Whether translated as *l'économie verte*, *die Grüne Wirtschaft* or *la economia verde*, this concept is often proclaimed to be something of a panacea to the simultaneous environmental and economic crises that the world currently faces. But what does the green economy actually mean? Does everyone use the term in the same way? And is the concept something to be supported, or, perhaps, challenged?

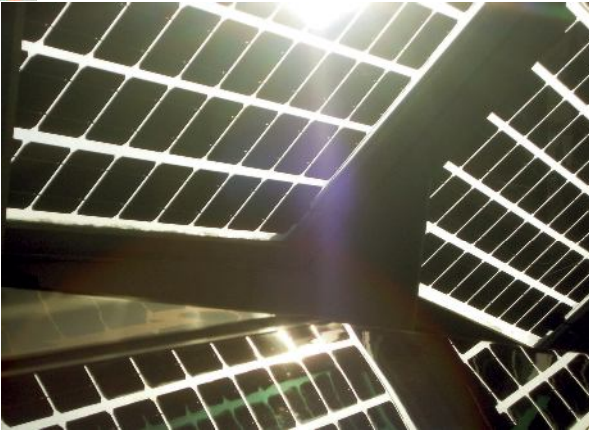
Where did the idea of the green economy come from?

The term green economy was first coined in 1989 in a report commissioned by the UK government entitled *Blueprint for a Green Economy*. Yet the idea lay dormant until 2008, when it re-emerged as a response to the economic and environmental crises, and the growing recognition that these were interlinked. The

green economy was given the spotlight as one of the two key themes discussed at the Rio+20 United Nations (UN) Summit on Sustainable Development which took place in June, 2012. According to conference's objectives and themes, the green economy can be seen as a lens for focusing on and seizing opportunities to advance economic and environmental goals simultaneously." Since the conference, the green economy has become a buzzword in international policy discussions.

How have others defined the green economy?

According to a 2012 report by the United Nations Division for Sustainable Development, there is no internationally agreed definition of the term "green economy," and at least eight different explanations of the concept can be identified in recent official publications. As the report points out, most of these definitions characterise the green economy along the same general themes: a model that encompasses economic prosperity, environmental degradation,



The green economy: More than just investing in solar panels
Image: CC ABI Skipp

climate change, equality, well-being, and social justice. Despite this, there are some important differences. Seven of the eight definitions make some reference to a model based on economic growth, demonstrating that many see the green economy as being synonymous with green growth. Only one of the eight official definitions described does not refer to a growing economy. This is the definition proposed by the 'Danish 92' group: "The Green Economy is not a state but a process of Transformation and a constant dynamic progression. The Green Economy does away with the systematic distortions and disfunctionalities of the current mainstream economy and results in human well-being and equitable access to opportunity for all people, while safeguarding environmental and economic integrity in order to remain within the planet's finite carrying capacity. The Economy cannot be Green without being Equitable."

However, in the media and day-to-day policy discussions, the term often sheds its allusions to well-being and social equality altogether. Instead, it is commonly employed to describe economic activities and investments that have a green objective, such as increased investment in renewable technologies. Politicians may claim to be supporting the green economy when they develop new wind power schemes, for example.

Why is the definition important?

There are a number of problems with a phrase so open to interpretation, and so rarely defined, becoming integrated into political rhetoric. We need to know

what something is before we can implement it. How should a citizen respond to a political manifesto, for example, that pledges to support the green economy? Is this a commitment to installing solar panels on the roof of the parliament, or to developing an entirely new approach to our economic system? How can we hold decision-makers accountable to this pledge if we don't know exactly what they intend it to mean?

A key risk here is that the term green economy will be used to mean a marginally green-er economy. In other words, business as usual, with a few green extras: the economy as we know it, but with a lick of green paint. This is a far cry from transformative actions towards the fairer, more sustainable and more inclusive system that is promised by many of the original definitions - and which is urgently needed in our society.

How would QCEA like to see the green economy defined?

QCEA believes that the green economy can be an effective concept in sustainable development policy, and we welcome tools that can assist decision makers in drawing synergies between economic, social and environmental issues. In starting to develop the concept of the green economy, policy makers have taken vital first steps towards recognising that the environment and the economy are, indeed, intertwined and interdependent. In order to be effective, however, the green economy must be consistently defined and not left open to interpretation. The concept must always address social justice as well as the urgent environmental problems that we face. Economic growth should not be the focus of a green economy and we question whether continued growth is, in fact, at all compatible with sustainability. We call for a wider range of indicators to measure wellbeing in holistic, rather than economic, terms.

By challenging decision makers to define the phrase, particularly when it appears to be little more than empty rhetoric, we are calling for accountability and giving them the message that we will not accept a 'watered down' version of this innovative concept. We need to begin making large scale changes to our economic model; greenwashing it will simply not do.

Bethany Squire

Challenging market economics with a Biblical sense of the goodness of God in creation is to join a spiritual struggle. Faith in God, solidarity with the suffering poor and all other forms of life demands that we take a stand and say, "This destruction must stop". We must be perfectly clear about the implications of undertaking this responsibility. It is more than just setting up household recycling bins, growing organic vegetables or riding a bike to work. It is more than a talking job. It is a renovation which will change everything: the way we do business, the way we eat, the way we travel, the houses we build, the products and services we can expect and the prices we pay for them, the way we feel about trees and the way we worship God.

Keith Helmut, 1990. Quaker Faith and Practice, (Britain Yearly Meeting), extract 25.15



Shattering the Earth in our Quest for Energy: Fracking in Europe

I, like many people, have a slight nostalgia for childhood and the time when I believed that wishing for something would make it come true. There is something gentle about that time of belief, when our optimism and sense of justice was not yet shredded by experience.

But this childish wishing is also dangerous: it entices not only individuals but also nations along paths that may not be rational. This is how I see the wistful and slightly defiant idea that we in the Global North might become self-sufficient in fuel. We hear of gas deposits in Europe and of increased domestic production in the US. Ah, we think, if only we didn't need to rely on others, if only we could control production and price ourselves. We long for a nice, clean flow of cheap energy, for unworried relaxation on comfortable furniture in a warm room despite the cold driving rain outside.

Leaders of national governments are not immune to our human longing for an easier world. In February 2011, citing needs for jobs, growth, and European competitiveness, the European Council called for an examination of the environmental effects of hydrofracking.

Methane trapped in rocks

Hydrofracking is a method of harvesting methane gas held in impermeable rocks or coal. To release the gas for capture, the rocks are cracked open by forcing millions of litres of water and chemicals into the ground under high pressure. The names of the chemicals used are rarely published, but they often include friction reducers, acids, corrosion inhibitors, antibacterial agents, surfactants, gelling agents, stabilizers, scale inhibitors and other chemicals, plus

sand. The forceful injection of a huge volume of this solution creates cracks in the rocks. The sand or other propping agent holds the fissures open, allowing the gas to flow out and be captured.

One does wonder about the wisdom of a technology designed to break up parts of the firm foundation on which we live, the rock beneath the surface of the earth - and, indeed, some fracking operations have been associated with minor earthquakes. But more risky is the possible leakage of methane, a potent greenhouse gas, into air and into the groundwater. Altered soil structure may allow methane to leak into the air. Another problem is the huge volume of waste water produced and left in ponds on the surface, or, for about 80 per cent, allowed to remain underground. The waste water is saline and contaminated with additives, some of which are toxic.

Are we so unwilling to give up our addiction to energy? We need soil and water to grow food. Contaminated water and soil could affect human health as well as healthiness of livestock and food produced. In Pennsylvania, methane has been discovered to have polluted groundwater and wells used for human consumption. Living near a fracking site can provide some simple home entertainment: in some homes, the tap water has enough methane to be ignitable - you can set your tap water on fire!

Jobs are usually mentioned as a benefit from every proposed industrial activity. This seems to be a good: we are all aware of the pain of the economic crisis. However the optimism regarding new jobs must be set off against the short-term nature of such work, as well as the possible loss of other industries such as tourism and food production. And then there are knock-on effects: social inequality is worsened by the effect of increased prices with the influx of workers and paychecks into towns near fracking sites. In addition, the types of jobs created gives us an idea of the resource demand of this method of collecting gas: the US Chamber of Commerce has associated fracking with increased employment in construction, metal processing, manufacture of equipment, chemical manufacture, mining of sand, and transport - and more than 2000 jobs in health care. Like any extractive industry, once the supply dries up, the jobs will also vanish. And the connection of human well-being with economic activity is still being ignored: some months of employment is a poor trade-off for damaged bedrock, contaminated groundwater, possible loss of local food production, and other more permanent results.

Fracking in Europe

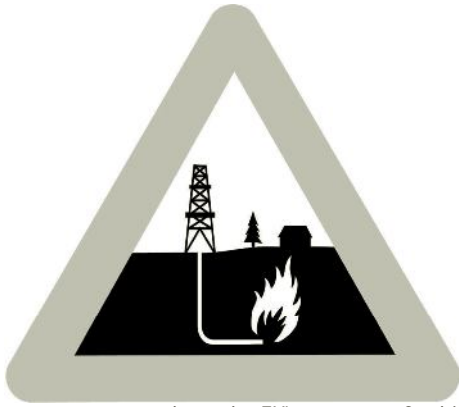
The European Commission proposes to create a framework to manage risks associated with shale gas. We are a bit like addicts who lose sight of their own

A New Nickname for QCEA

QCEA has been brainstorming on a "handle" or catchphrase or nickname by which QCEA could be known colloquially. This is not a proposal to change the name of QCEA officially but to have a phrase which is snappier. We are looking for a name that is transparent and indicates something about the organization. The words should be short and evocative, and they should be easy to recall and to pronounce. Ideally, it should not duplicate an existing name.

Below are six options that were brainstormed by QCEA supporters. Help us out by letting us know which you prefer by filling out the survey on our Facebook page or on Survey Monkey (<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SN7B7ZW>).

- Quaker Action Europe
- Quaker Action Brussels
- Quaker Advocacy Europe
- Quaker Witness Europe
- A Quaker Voice Europe
- Quakers Changing Europe



Have your own say about the EU's stance on fracking

Image: cc by cybergedon

integrity in the search for a 'fix' for their addiction. Are we addicted to luxury, to the relief of the economic prosperity that Europe enjoyed in the past half century? Or can we face a revision of our focus to human well-being rather than growth? We know reducing our energy use -and greenhouse gas emissions- will damage our world less. Do we really need short sleeves in winter indoors at the cost of damaging our bedrock, soil, water, health and atmosphere?

Hydrofracking is already taking place in Europe, in vertical wells and with some shale gas exploration projects in a few EU Member States. The UK had suspended its programme after some small earth tremors but lifted the ban last December. Some countries (e.g. Denmark) are reviewing the use of the technology. Other Member States, like France and Bulgaria, have prohibited it, while the Netherlands has instigated a temporary moratorium.

It is up to each EU Member State to ensure the legality of any fracking operation with regard to environmental and other requirements. Legislation that should be considered includes regulations affecting human health and safety, environmental impact assessments, protection of surface water and groundwater and other habitats, management of waste, and permission to use chemicals. To ensure coherence of policies, the state should also consider the Europe 2020 policy objectives, including reducing factors contributing to climate change. This is one reason why our fantasy is unrealistic: the problems regarding energy are due not only to supply but also to the after-effects of drilling and burning fuel. It is very clear that we need to decrease our energy consumption. Instead of turning up the thermostat to ignore the wind and the rain, we will need to put on another jumper. And get used to the wind: storms are likely to increase with global warming.

Shale gas may be particularly inappropriate to address energy needs on this globe with a warmed climate: fracking may contribute to release of large amounts of methane, a gas that has a far larger impact with regard to the greenhouse effect than carbon dioxide. A clear conclusion is hard to reach, in part due to technical choices such as method, infrastructure, and

maintenance. And to what is being compared: some comparisons are of different types of energy sources, whereas the real question is whether we can continue our flamboyant energy-inefficient lifestyles at the cost of our natural environment.

Called to stand against fracking

Fracking has grown enormously in the United States since 2005. In New York, where the discussion of whether to permit fracking is ongoing, the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) has come to a decision that they are called to stand against fracking: "As Quakers, we experience the Divine through loving and truthful relationships with all people and all creation. After extensive efforts to inform ourselves about fracking we have concluded that it is inconsistent with our faith and practices which include a commitment to integrity, community, equality and care of God's creation."

As for the EU's stance on fracking, you have a chance to have your own say. The European Commission has published a consultation on fracking (see "Unconventional fossil fuels (e.g. shale gas) in Europe" at http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/consultations/index_en.htm) QCEA will be making a submission and those signed up to our sustainability action alerts will receive an advance copy. Sign up at office@qcea.org.

Alexandra Bosbeer

As Quakers, we experience the Divine through loving and truthful relationships with all people and all creation. After extensive efforts to inform ourselves about fracking we have concluded that it is inconsistent with our faith and practices which include a commitment to integrity, community, equality and care of God's creation. We observe that the natural gas industry and government agencies have placed financial gain over the health of our communities and the environment. ... In other states where horizontal hydrofracking has been performed, it has resulted in the loss of vast amounts of fresh water, the release of toxins into the environment, damage to communities, and cost to the tax payers.

We support legislation and incentives which promote research, development, and use of renewable and sustainable energy; support local farms and farmers; protect the air and water; enforce accountability for industries that risk environmental harm; and create economic policies that promote work for New York State residents that they can do in good conscience. We urge all citizens to thoughtfully consider the long term effects of hydrofracking on the water, land, local economy, infrastructure, services, and the community as a whole. ... We are called to stand against fracking, and invite others to join us in opposition to this practice.

Extract from New York Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends Minute on Hydrofracking, approved 11 November 2012



Book Review

Bankrupting Nature: Denying our Planetary Boundaries

Occasionally I read a book that I feel compelled to share with others. On turning the final page, I feel a responsibility to pass on the information that I have just acquired, a sense that these ideas, whether influential facts or inspirational fiction, have too much potential for me to be able to keep them to myself. This is how I felt on closing the copy of *Bankrupting Nature: Denying our Planetary Boundaries* that I have been reading recently.

I do not mean to suggest that every point made in *Bankrupting Nature* is a groundbreaking revelation, nor that every argument it makes is entirely incontestable. Rather, the issues addressed in this timely report by Anders Wijkman and Johan Rockström, are so pressing and well articulated that it is easy to wonder how anyone could read the book and not be moved to action.

Bankrupting Nature, launched in December 2012, is a report to the Club of Rome, a global think tank that aims to holistically analyse the current challenges facing the world and its inhabitants, with a view to improving the prospects of future generations. The book's joint authors demonstrate an impressive combined portfolio. Wijkman's CV lists high profile political roles including Policy Director of the United Nations Development Programme and Secretary General of the Swedish Red Cross, whilst Rockström's career encompasses a variety of scientific bodies working on sustainability. Together, they combine their expertise to ensure a politically comprehensive approach, well grounded in scientific expertise.

The report examines multiple and interlinked problems relating to global governance, climate change, biodiversity loss, population growth, and social inequalities. Some of the most interesting subjects discussed include: the complex and vital relationship between financial structures and nature; the effect that providing electricity to poorer nations could have on limiting population growth and reducing climate change; and some pressing insights on the world's response to the potential problem of peak oil. Although its authors claim that *Bankrupting Nature* is not a book about climate change, they do devote a large proportion of the report's 206 pages to this issue. Whilst many of the arguments presented on global warming may not be new, they are extremely well presented, neatly outlining and refuting the arguments of climate sceptics. This makes the book the perfect tool to have on hand in such a debate.



Bethany with *Bankrupting Nature*
Image: OCEA

One could be forgiven for feeling more than a little demoralised at certain points in the book. Although Wijkman and Rockström avoid an entirely pessimistic approach by searching to provide solutions and proposals, this is often on a strategic rather than a tactical level. That is to say that the reader finishes the book with a very clear idea of what is to be done but not so much clarity about how this can be achieved or about the changes they can implement themselves. In recognising that they cannot provide all the answers, however, Wijkman and Rockström encourage and invite further discussion on finding solutions to the issues they highlight. At the heart of all of their proposals is the vital concept that economic and environmental issues cannot and must not be separated. (Take a look at our article on 'Defining the Green Economy', page 3, to read more about our own views on this holistic approach.)

Whilst the scope of the book is admirable and well supported by an impressive bibliography of predominantly economic and scientific papers, the sheer quantity of facts and information can, at times, be a little overwhelming and difficult to digest. The authors compensate for this, however, by using a very readable tone and consistently providing reader-friendly definitions of complicated concepts. This is greatly assisted by an excellent translation into English by Jim Wine, who maintains accuracy, clarity and style throughout.

Having enjoyed and been inspired by *Bankrupting Nature*, my conundrum now is how to make best use of what I have learnt. Although I read the book from cover to cover, a comprehensive index means that it can easily be used for reference. Therefore, I hope it will be a useful tool from which I can brief myself on key arguments before debates and conferences. I may even be inclined to start carrying it around with me, so that always have a range of counter-arguments at my finger tips in any environmental discussion - if only they would print a pocket version!

Bethany Squire

Bankrupting Nature: Denying our Planetary Boundaries

Anders Wijkman and Johan Rockström

ISBN: 978-0415539692

Revised edition. Published by Routledge: December 2012

£24.99 (€29.29), \$44.95

206pp



QCEA has Grown! Our New Programme Assistant Imogen Parker Introduces Herself

From a young age, I have loved to travel, and my interest in cultures continues today. Before starting work with QCEA, I completed a Masters Degree in International Relations after an undergraduate degree in French and Geography. I have lived in France for two years, and I have travelled widely through Europe and Australia as well as the Middle East before the 'Arab Spring'.



Imogen Parker Image: QCEA

It was whilst in the Middle East that I became even more interested in Human Rights and specifically Women's Rights, as well as the influence of other countries on that region. The land is considered sacred, yet, as one of the most resource-rich areas of the world, it is exploited for its oil. For me, the continual conflict between identity and geography, in the crucible of external global influences, makes the Middle East one of the most vulnerable yet fascinating areas of the world.

Having been schooled in a Quaker environment, I have gained a great amount from Quaker practices and ethics. I look forward to exploring more about Quaker work internationally and at the European level, while understanding more about the complexities of the European Institutions in relation to Criminal Justice and Human Rights.

I play the flute and enjoy music, art and literature: I can't wait to explore the city and the surrounding region.

Imogen Parker

SAVE THE DATE:

Europe, Economics and Justice: Can we do better with less?

A conference organised jointly by QCEA and Quaker Peace & Social Witness
15-17 November 2013 in Brussels

What are the causes and consequences of the European economic crisis? What alternatives are there to austerity? How can we, as Quakers, contribute to the building of a just and sustainable economy which meets human needs without destroying the planet?

These questions will be addressed with the help of keynote speakers and workshop facilitators. Please come and join us as an interested individual, or as a representative of your Area Meeting or worship group.

The conference fee, including meals and accommodation from Friday evening until Sunday afternoon, is £160 or €185 (£145 or €170 for QCEA supporters or associates). (Brussels locals: contact us for the price of the conference and meals without accommodation.)

For further information, contact office@qcea.org or see <http://www.qcea.org/home/events/conferences/>



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Changes in *Around Europe*

This is the first of a trial series of a bigger *Around Europe*. These double issues will be published only every two months, although subscription prices remain the same.

We thank those who have commented already and will be delighted to receive more feedback on this experiment. Write office@qcea.org, send us a letter, or comment on our Facebook page!