



Annual Report 2013

Annual Report

2013

Feasta, the Foundation for the Economics of Sustainability, aims to identify the characteristics (economic, cultural and environmental) of a truly sustainable society, articulate how the necessary transition can be effected, and promote the implementation of the measures required for this purpose.

Cad a dheanfaimid feasta gan adhmad?
Ta deireadh ne gcoillte ar iar
What will we do in the future without wood?
The end of the forests has come

Contents

Introduction	1
Risk-Resilience	2
Climate Group	3
IEN/Environmental Pillar	4
Food Security	5
Currency	6
Networking	7
Events	8
Kerry Week	9
Submissions	10
Management	10
Website and Publicity	11
Feasta in the Media	12
Fundraising	13

The year 2013

Introduction by Mark Garavan

This year has seen Feasta continue in its task of generating ideas and solutions to our complex economic and environmental problems. We have done so against the background of what appears to be 'business as usual' in the global system that governs our lives. The belief system that our economic model and its associated political, cultural and technological supports can carry on as they have been doing appears to be as entrenched as ever. The decision put before us seems limited to the false choice of 'austerity' or greater indebtedness. And whichever we choose, the ultimate goal is always assumed to be an increase in economic growth, regardless of the fact that GDP is a highly flawed measure of progress.

This unsustainable system continues in the face of overwhelming evidence of climate change, ecological disorder and grave social inequality. Extreme weather events have become regular features of our new reality. Human suffering and impoverishment worsens. Yet, systemic denial continues.

The importance of thinking and acting in new, ecological ways could not be clearer. In this

context, Feasta has continued to take up the challenge of thinking through what systemic change would look like in fields as diverse as money systems, food security, risk and resilience, and smart taxes. Nothing could be more urgent than quality thinking and decisive action.

Feasta remains committed to addressing the systemic and inter-related nature of the challenges before us. For years, we have been offering analyses of this system and suggesting viable alternatives to it. Our approach has been solution-focused.

The last year has witnessed a growing movement all around the world demanding that this dysfunctional global system change. Here lies our collective hope – that more and more people have come to see that 'business as usual' is no longer a viable or sustainable option. For our part, Feasta will continue to work in developing and propagating the new ideas that will inform the new system that we so desperately need. The pages that follow below are testimony to the depth and diversity of our work in this regard.

Risk-Resilience

Risk-Resilience continued to work on large-scale systemic risk and risk management from a systems perspective. In January we were invited by the US government to give the opening presentation to a high-level pandemic preparedness meeting of ASEAN countries in Manila, The Philippines. Arising from this we produced "Catastrophic Shocks in Complex Socio-economic Systems - a Pandemic Perspective", which has been well received. It was widely shared in the blogosphere and reviewed by such respected blogs as ZeroHedge, and also featured in a Doomstead Diner podcast.

We continued with our recurrent theme of how to understand, frame and manage the outcome of a catastrophic break-

down in socio-economic systems arising from the convergence of global deflation and oil peak.

In 2014 Risk-Resilience will benefit from the recent expansion of the group. This will affect the nature of our work over the coming years. Our earlier warnings that society needs to be alive to severe risks from deflation and its dangerous implications for energy and food security are being taken increasingly seriously and as a consequence the group has been asked to contribute to a number of evolving initiatives on large-scale risk management. This should evolve significantly in the coming year. Our first workshop on "The Human Systems Ecology of Large-Scale Systemic Risk" will take place over two days in May, with the

intention that this becomes a rapid immersion program for governmental and civil society awareness and risk management of large-scale risk. We expect that funding from this can help support the expanded group activities and Feasta core funding. We have been invited to give a number of international lectures and seminars and this can be expected to increase as the year progresses. A number of significant publications are also being prepared for launch in 2014.



Climate Group

Every year the climate group has a get together over a weekend to discuss how to address climate economic and policy issues. Last year this was held in Winchester jointly with Winchester Action on Climate Change (WinACC).



The first day consisted of a number of presentations about litigation on climate issues with speakers from Holland (Roger

Cox whose foundation is suing the Dutch government); Kristin Casper the Greenpeace legal expert who described the whole field of climate litigation as not a sprint but a marathon; and Kelly Matheson of Our Children's Trust in the USA - on behalf of young people suing the US government for failing to act adequately. We described our hopes and ideas for action against fossil fuel companies to try to get courts to issue "injunctive relief" to restrain of fossil fuel sales on behalf of coastal communities - the Sink or Sue Project. This would then be a stepping stone to cap and share and a climate trust that would be needed to administer court action.

The second day consisted of other presentations about climate change - for example from Milena Buechs about her research with communities and the psycho-social lessons of getting people active to cut their emissions at the household levels. (Carbon Conversations).

Subsequent to the Winchester meeting much of the effort has been to follow up the idea of climate litigation - with the pursuit of a "mock trial" to be held in 2015 at Portsmouth University Law School. This would rehearse the ideas needed for communities to take action against the fossil fuel companies, be

videoed and with sections being used as a "litigation kit" to show communities what they would have to do if they pursued this legal action. A particular focus would be on disadvantaged communities.

Earlier in the year John Jopling made a presentation at the Alternatives for Transformation meeting at Maynooth on 9th March in which he explained how a global cap and share scheme would operate as a global Commons regime. This forms part of the climate group's proposal to establish an independent institution, a Global Climate Commons Trust, to administer a global cap and share scheme designed to achieve the radical reductions needed in carbon emissions, in particular those from the use of fossil fuel.

Another development during the year was an invitation to Feasta member Brian Davey to speak to groups in Slovenia and Croatia about Degrowth during the course of which climate change and cap and share were major themes. The issues, as articles, appeared on the Feasta blog. This material was subsequently used to feed into a poster at a Tyndall Centre conference in London in December.

On 10/11th December several people active in the climate group participated in the Tyndall Centre's Radical Emissions Reduction Conference - with Milena Buechs giving one of the lecture presentations. Brian Davey, John Jopling, Laurence Matthews, and Nick Bardsley attended the conference. Brian and Nick produced a poster that presented the idea of De-growth and the crucial role of cap and share in that. Laurence produced a poster about the psychological ideas behind cap and share and John on the case for a Global Climate

Commons Trust. As a result John Jopling has been invited to write an article in Carbon Management, a peer reviewed journal to be published by Future Science in 2014. Perhaps it is fair to comment here that some of us were not entirely happy with the way that the conference was organised as the almost exclusive focus on plenary sessions limited scope for discussions and points from the floor. Nevertheless we were able to network quite extensively. For example, there was a notable presentation was by Professor Jaap Spiers an Advocate General from the Netherlands about legal action on climate change. Brian and John had previously met with Professor Spiers and we had a chance to renew acquaintances and resume conversations. Overall the theme of the conference was about how urgent the climate crisis now is with very deep cuts in emissions being needed if there is to be any hope of humanity not exceeding a 2 degree C increase - which, in turn will probably mean a runaway of global temperatures up to 4 or even 6 degrees C more.

An increasing amount of the time of various Feasta climate group members has been taken up with helping to develop anti-fracking activities, with its multiple implications, including climate change, in our own areas - near Winchester, near Nottingham, and throughout Ireland. There has been an exchange of materials used in anti-fracking activities between the different groups and material has also appeared on the Feasta blog.

Details of our activities in Ireland can be found in the IEN and Environmental Pillar section on the following page of this report.

IEN and Environmental Pillar

Feasta is a member of the Irish Environmental Network, which provides financial support and forms a framework within which member organisations cooperate. The main such form of cooperation is the Environmental Pillar, which develops common policy positions and provides environmental representation on a wide range of national and local bodies.

Feasta's main engagement is through a representative on the Steering Committee of the Pillar, with a particular focus on climate change, and on its Climate and Energy Work Group.

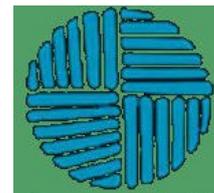
There was previously an Economics Work Group in the Pillar, as a result of which the Pillar's understanding of economics is strongly influenced by Feasta's ideas particularly on land and resource taxation. This year a Resource Efficiency Work Group has been established and there is an opportunity for any Feasta member who might be interested in resource efficiency, sustainable consumption and production etc. to get involved.

The Environmental Pillar Climate and Energy Work Group focussed particularly on two aspects of national Climate Change Policy – the long-promised Cli-

mate Change Bill and the development of climate change policy.

Two members of the group met with staff from the Department of the Environment pushing for a follow up to the “Building the Climate Change Regime” project (which looked at proposals including cap and share), without much success.

In addition, we made a presentation to an EPA Climate Research Conference on climate research priorities.



Work Module 2 Title: Climate Change Law advocacy

Work Done:

- February Press Release on lack of Climate Bill
- February Press Release on Climate Bill Draft Heads
- April submission to Oireachtas Environment Cttee. on Heads of Climate Bill
- June PR on Clean Air and Climate Coalition (seeking inclusion of black carbon in Climate Bill.)
- July Pillar Presentation to Oireachtas Environment Committee
- July Participation in Pillar meeting with Minister Hogan
- September Press Release in reaction to IPCC report, calling for Strong Climate Bill
- December Participation in Pillar meeting with Minister Hogan

Outcomes Achieved: Set the agenda for the Oireachtas Environment Committee and their discussion of the Climate Bill; positioned the Pillar as a key participant in the climate bill debate; opened possibilities for a number of important improvements to the Bill.

Work Module 3 Title: National Climate Policy Development Process

Work Done:

- January attendance at IFA climate policy conference
- February reply to NESC Secretariat draft 2050 report
- February attendance at European Bioeconomy conference
- February participation in meeting with DAFM about FH2020
- March submission on National Reform Programme report
- March meeting with Simon Coveney
- March participation in IEN-EPA meeting
- April meeting with European Parliament Environment Cttee. delegation
- April comment on draft National Reform Programme report
- May major part of the Pillar submission on National Bioenergy Strategy
- June Press Release responding to government on fossil fuel exploration
- October Press Release on 2012 GHG emissions figures
- November Press Release responding to government on fossil fuel exploration
- December Pillar meeting with Minister of State O'Dowd on bioenergy

Outcomes Achieved: Contributed to the Strategic Environmental Assessment process for Food Harvest 2020. Ensured that climate change policy discussion takes other environmental and social factors into account; kept the issue of integration of climate policy on the agenda.



*Food grown at the RED gardens as part of the Food Security project,
Cloughjordan*

Food Security

The Food Security sub-group has remained active in the areas of idea development and research over the past year, but there has been less of a focus on Feasta-led events or papers written on the subject of food. This was largely due to lack of available time of members involved, but also reflects the continued focus on more topical issues of financial collapse and risk assessment.

The analysis of food-related issues at local, regional and global scale have continued. Of most significant concern is that despite the real increase in the number of people engaged in growing food for local supply, the proportion of total food consumed that is produced locally, with minimal external resource dependency, remains critically low from a risk and resilience standpoint. This is especially the case for Ireland. A diverse range of reasons for this are being explored, as well as policy and organisa-

tional options that could make significant difference. The ecovillage community in Cloughjordan remains a key focus of this work.

Work on developing methodologies for metrics for evaluating food supply systems continues, in association with the RED Gardens and the Cloughjordan Community Farm. At a more detailed level, the Good Food Indices are being developed and refined with data from the RED Gardens, with the aim of establishing simple but effective systems of comparing crops and production methods, combining basic yield, resource use, seasonal variation and nutrition. This work was one of the subjects of a very well-received talk given by Bruce Darrell at the GIY Gathering in Wexford.

At a larger scale, research in the group is focusing on the necessity for agricultural production at all scales in Ireland and

abroad to respond to three potentially divergent pressures to: 1. increase viability, both socially and financially; 2. become more sustainable through the reduction of environmental degradation and accelerated mitigation of climate change; 3. become more resilient within the context of a changing climate and increasing resource constraints. Adapting systems of production to become more viable, sustainable and resilient may be very difficult, as options that increase one, may in fact reduce the other two factors. This trade-off issue is beginning to be explored with the IEN Climate Group, with a focus on agriculture policy options that would mitigate the climate impact of Irish Agriculture, without degrading its viability and resilience.

Currency Group

The Feasta sub-group concerned with monetary and financial system dysfunction is reporting, this year, as the Feasta Currency Group. This is not to imply that Feasta's Liquidity Network (LQN) approach is stalled (more on this below), rather that we are working on a broad front to highlight and make relevant some difficult 'technical' issues - issues that are far too important to be left to economists and bankers.

The online Community of Practice we set up in 2012 has grown from 95 currency activists to 135 [1]. Activity varies, and has not yet given rise to co-ordinated group responses in the way that we envisaged, but it represents a targetted direct channel to individuals actively engaged and is being used to cross-inform and connect.

In May we ran a conference in Dublin with Sensible Money entitled The Money Mess. The event aimed to describe the nature of monetary dysfunction and its environmental and social consequences [2]. From an activist perspective we contrasted the monetary reform and money diversity responses, and the thinking behind each. For non-activists we continue to try to articulate the linkages between

the dry, technical and technocratic-led financialised economy and individual well-being.

In the autumn we welcomed Erik van Oosten, a Dutch MSc student as an intern, based at the Cloughjordan eco-village,



*Our intern
Erik Van Oosten*

to work with us on innovative capital financing for community scale energy projects. We are hoping the work carried out by Erik will lead us into an active involvement in community projects. Our aim in this area is to concentrate on financing instruments that minimise (or avoid entirely) the interest burden and facilitate meaningful local involvement. The link between money and energy is an important one as the late Richard Douthwaite [3] and others have pointed out.

In all of these initiatives, the thinking behind the Liquidity Network is never far away. Sometimes, it develops, as for example in our recent analysis of the impact of financial incentives on 'crowding out' pro-social behaviours. But it fre-

quently informs our approach. 2014 may well be the year that 'pure' LQN thinking comes back to centre stage as cash-strapped local authorities look seriously at rebuilding local economies using locally designed exchange currencies. But these will need to go way beyond existing 'proxy pound' and timebank models to have the desired effect. Local economies that have been 'strip-mined' and local councils that have been de-skilled have a serious challenge in achieving real re-localisation.

Like other groups within Feasta, we are also conscious of the need to network and partner to make the best use of our limited resources. Our partnerships with Sensible Money and with organisations within the wider Irish Environmental Network represent an important way forward. Watch this space.

Endnotes

[1]<https://www.facebook.com/groups/designercurrencies/>

[2]<http://www.feasta.org/2013/10/31/the-money-mess-one-day-conference-may-31st-dublin/>

[3]<http://fleeingvesuvius.org/2011/08/04/the-supply-of-money-in-an-energy-scarce-world/>



Networking

The key objectives of this working group are to explore new Feasta partnerships/relationships and simultaneously to develop a robust model for networking in accordance with Feasta values. Good progress was achieved in 2013 on both fronts.

Following a period of research, key partner organisations and individuals were identified and contact was made with them. Key research documents on the topics below have been summarised. The focus of this activity included:

- Alternative democratic governance models and sustainability
- Resilience and sustainable development
- Consensus and Commons

The organisations approached included:

- German Congress of Trade Unions (www.dgb.de)
- Institute for Social and Development Studies (Institut fuer Gesellschaftspolitik) (www.hfph.mwn.de)
- International Expert Group on Earth System Preservation (Munich) (www.iesp.de)
- Catholic University Leuven (KU Leuven) (“Democracy and the Market”, democracymarket2012@gmail.com)
- German Advisory Council on Global Change (www.wbgu.de)

Ongoing activities include the development and delivery of a lecture series on ‘Welfare without Growth’ as an introduction to the proposal for a New Social Contract between citizens and legislators/the executive -similar to the one organised between the German Trade Unions (DGB) the Technical University Berlin and the Green Umbrella Organisation in Germany (DNR). See also www.transformationskongress.de.



Members of the Intergenerational Learning Group, including Feasta's Anne Ryan (upper left) and Seán Conlan (lower left), at the Climate Gathering, June 2013

Direct work is also being done on the development of the new social contract. It has strong links and the endorsement of the German groups mentioned above, and is scheduled to be tabled at the Irish Constitutional Convention with strands represented by Trade Unions/churches/environmental organisations/Societal leaders (President / political leaders / business...).

(Material) de-growth

An integration of tools and methods – including for example the commons, care for the planet, new feminism, connecting with young people and new forms of work with links to South America and Germany.

Intergenerational Learning

Following the Climate Gathering the concept of the transformation of learning/education is being explored. Activities have included workshops in Dublin, France and the Netherlands and collaboration with EHFF (European Health

Futures Forum) in the preparation of a series of Webinars.

Viable Systems Model

Two years ago, Feasta adopted this approach to its own organisation. As part of the development of the Networking/Partnership process, contact and discussions have taken place with leading exponents and researchers in the application of the model in the UK and on the continent. A draft version of the VSM model for Networking has been developed by Feasta and it is hoped to organise an international seminar/webinar in 2014 on the topic of networking and partnerships from the perspective of VSM / complexity theory / systems thinking.

In addition to the above, Feasta were represented at a number of other events both in Ireland and abroad. These included The Climate Gathering (Dublin), Meetings with the German Advisory Board on Global Change in Berlin and with organisers of the lecture series of

“Prosperity without Growth?” (German Trade Union Congress and Lutheran Churches), attendance of lectures on “Smart Economy for Sustainable Jobs and Prosperity” - all in Berlin, and sem-

inars and online meetings in France, Germany and the Netherlands. Feasta had a table with information about its activities in French at a biodiversity fair in Macon, France in March 2013. The

development of a partnership approach using VSM (Viability Systems Model) was also a topic at a meeting of Feasta members in Rossbeigh (see page 9).

Events

Transcripts, videos or powerpoints from many of the presentations listed below are available on the Feasta website (see page 11).

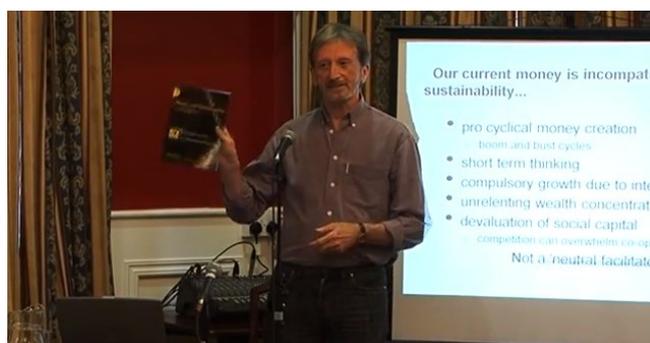
- February 9 and October 7: Two permaculture taster courses, co-hosted with Cultivate. These workshops hosted by Feasta’s Bruce Darrell and Cultivate’s David Philip gave an introduction to permaculture design principles and outlined how they can be applied to one’s own life and work.
- February 10 and 11: Two lectures given in Cloughjordan by Brian Davey entitled “The place of the environment in economic theory ” and “Can technology and markets solve all the problems?”
- March 9: Anne Ryan and John Jopling both gave presentations at the Maynooth Alternatives for Transformation meeting. John’s talk was on global cap and share while Anne’s was on Basic Income.
- April 15-16: Brian Davey gave two

presentations in Slovenia and Croatia on degrowth in a small peripheral economy.

- May 22: Brian Davey gave a presentation on evolving global commoning at the "Economics and the Commons" conference held in Berlin, entitled "Earth, Air, Fire and Water".
- May 31: The Money Mess conference, co-hosted with Sensible Money (see page 6)
- June 22: Cloughjordan Ecolearn Experience Day. A one day seminar led by Professor Peadar Kirby and Bruce Darrell, which placed into a wider global context the everyday issues of sustainability and resilience that the Cloughjordan ecovillage seeks to model.
- June 29-30: Feasta/Winchester Action on Climate Change weekend workshop on “Fresh Approaches to Tackling Climate Change” (see page 3)
- July 15-19: Rossbeigh, Kerry gathering (see page 9)
- September: GIY Gathering: Bruce Dar-

rell contributed to discussion panel “Can urban food growing save the world? and gave a workshop on the need for research.

- November 16: Bruce Darrell spoke at Collaborative Economy event with Cultivate and WeCreate in Cloughjordan
- November 29: John Sharry spoke on “Hope in the Face of Disaster – Creating a sustainable, viable, future path for civilisation” at Social Justice Ireland’s Social Policy Conference
- December 10-11: Brian Davey, John Jopling, Laurence Matthews, Nick Bardsley and Milena Buchs attended the Radical Emissions Reduction conference organised by the Tyndall Institute two-day conference in central London. Milena had been accepted as a speaker (on 'Carbon Conversations' - research how people can be encouraged to reduce their carbon footprints) whilst the others were invited to exhibit posters.



Graham Barnes speaking at the Money Mess conference, May 2013

Kerry workshop

Every year John Jopling invites a group for in-depth discussions at his Retreat Lodges in Rossbeigh, County Kerry. This year's annual Kerry Workshop took place on the week of July 15-19. There were 4 full days of discussions, a summary of which is included below.

Update on the Global Economics - Presentation by Nicole Foss detailed the process of long periods of credit expansion, always being followed by a credit contraction. These cycles have been building for centuries, with the current cycle being massive and global in scale. The current economic crises are the beginning of the credit contraction, and collapsing confidence, but we still have a long way to go. She then did a survey of the state of economic contraction within a wide range of countries throughout the world.

Biophysical Economics - Brian Davey outlined the work on Mario Giampietro and Kozo Mayumi about a methodology for measuring social and economic process, on a multi scale basis, relating together funds and flows, such as human activity, energy flow, waste, water, land, household types, etc. within at national, sector and sub sectoral levels. It gives useful non-monetary metrics for evaluating and comparing different societies. Demographic trends and evolution of household trends were also discussed.

Cynefin Framework - Bruce Darrell described the methodology and details of the Cynefin Framework as a "sense making" tool which details the different methods of acting/engaging depending on whether the system you are dealing with is simple, complicated, complex or chaotic. Many of the problems of the worked are due to the fact that we seem to be using approaches/methods suitable for a complicated realm, when trying to manage complex systems. Discussion in-

cluded how this management framework fits into the organisational structures of the VSM.

Complexity Approach to Sustainability - Angela and Jon Espinosa talked about their new book, on a chapter by chapter basis, followed by a description of the components of the Viable Systems Model, and how they interrelate. The model separates activities within a system/organisation into a series of primary activities - what the organisation is trying to do, and the 4 meta-system components (coordination, harmonization, navigation, and policy) that support these activities. Discussion included the implications of the use of this model at different recursions or scales.

Partnerships and Networking - Sean Conlan referred to 3 diverse contexts that he has been working within involving the players in the anti fracking movement in Letrim, participants in the reformation of european health surface, and Feasta's networking process. He was looking for guidance in getting diverse organisations and people to be able to work together towards common aims. The VSM was discussed as a very helpful frame to view these situation, particularly the various meta-system functions that would be needed.

Practical Examples of VSM - The new structures of Feasta were described as a practical example of the use of VSM. This was an interesting example as the role of Feasta as an organisation can be seen as distinct from the work of Feasta's membership and the projects that make use of Feasta's brand and support.

Governance Systems of Alternative Currencies - Graham Barnes spoke about the different points of view of people who wanted to reform the money system as a centralized process, as com-

pared to people who wanted a diverse, DIY approach. This discussion included the possible role of a designer currency with the purpose of facilitating specific social changes.

Commons and Indigenous Peoples - Brian Davey spoke about why indigenous people are taking a leading stand about environmental crises. The commons is described as a community of people in a community of species, which lends itself to a cooperative way of living and a view of ecosystems which focusses on intersubjectivity between different species and beyond that to a balanced and spiritual world view, as opposed to a linear view of development and progress.

Global Commons Institute - John Jopling outlined the various approaches that could lead to a global system of climate governance. This approach sees the climate as a common poll resource, or an aspirational commons, which would need a form of regulatory regime, in this case to control the use of the atmosphere as a dump for greenhouse gas emissions. Discussion involved different views of whether this kind of global approach could ever be implemented, including the issue of failing governance in general.

Talking More Plainly About Complex Issues - Mark Horne introduced the idea of expressing complex ideas though the use of narrative. This led on to a discussion about metaphors, including the dangers of using metaphors.

Education Backed Currency - Bruce Darrell introduced his idea for a small designer currency within the Clough-jordan Ecovillage. The purpose of the currency is to bring together and encourage collaboration between different educational providers, created on the basis of educational events. It could start as an accounting mechanism, shifting to

a means of exchange then to a physical currency.

Coolconomics - Albert Bates gave a talk about biochar, its origins, develop-

ment and the need for carbon farming in order to pull huge amounts of carbon out of the atmosphere. He introduced a number of small stoves that are being developed and are currently available.

His focus is on how to 'brand' this industry as 'cool' in order to accelerate its development and uptake.

Submissions

1. Submission to Consultation on Heads of Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Bill, April 2013. In this submission we urge the Irish government to follow up its recent UNEP study with further consideration of proposals and to explore all possibilities including those proposed in the Feasta climate group's book Sharing for Survival. In addition we suggest that the government make use of scenario-based analyses when forming climate change policy.
2. Feasta Response to the European Commission consultation on a 2030 framework for climate and energy policies, Aug 2013. In this submission we emphasise the need for clear targets, not only for greenhouse gas emissions reduction but also for carbon sequestration and storage. These can be achieved via mechanisms such as Cap and Share and a Carbon Maintenance Fee, described in detail in Sharing for Survival. We also urge the Commission to end its support for the continued exploitation of fossil fuel sources.
3. Additionally, in December Brian Dav-ey made a submission on fracking to the Nottinghamshire County Council. Entitled "The Unacceptable Impacts of Coal Seam Gas and Shale Gas Extraction", it marshals evidence from the USA and Australia in order to make a case against fracking, an industry with a track record of alienating communities and doing a great deal of environmental damage.



Management

As described in last year's Annual Report, Feasta's management structure was transformed two years ago and is now organised according to the Viable Systems Model (VSM) framework. This model has opened up the organisation to more members and moved us away from the bottleneck of the previous Executive structure. It provides a large degree of autonomy for each distinct activity that an organisation engages in while simultaneously ensuring the accountability of

those involved to the organisation.

Primary activities are carried out by five working groups: Projects and Brand Management; Feasta Fundraising; Publications and Website; Organising Events; and Networking. These provide reports each month to an overall co-ordination group. A co-ordination meeting, chaired by Bruce Darrell, is also held each month during which we run through and discuss the different activit-

ies, and an overall report is drawn up and circulated. The Trustees' powers and responsibilities of the Trustees under company and charity law remain unchanged.

Morag Friel continued in her role as office administrator and membership co-ordinator, while Caroline Whyte continued to edit and maintain the Feasta website.

Website and Publicity

In addition to the submissions, papers and videos described elsewhere in this Report, you can find many more items of interest from 2013 on the Feasta website.

The final three sections of the Feasta Climate Group's book *Sharing for Survival* were uploaded, completing the online edition of the book:

- James Bruges provided a useful overview of biochar – charcoal produced for agricultural purposes – based on research from India, the UK and Mozambique. One hope for biochar is for increased global food production while permanently enhancing soil. The other hope is that it could help the struggle against climate change.
- Caroline Whyte made a case in favour of global per-capita allocations of funds from the share in Cap and Share: a sort of worldwide cash transfer programme which could then be used as a springboard for a more permanent basic income scheme. She draws on recent development theory, technological innovations and research on social and economic equity to bolster her argument.
- Finally, in his final completed work before his death in November 2011, Richard Douthwaite argued with help from David Knight that the climate crisis really can be overcome and that action to mitigate climate change could substantially improve many people's lives, particularly in the poorer countries.

A further two chapters of Feasta member Patrick Noble's book *A Potent Nostalgia* were also published on the website. Patrick speculates on the effects that social patterning has on our aspirations for a good life, pointing out that even those of us who live in cities have a tendency to



create village-type communities within them.

We also published three chapters from Brian Davey's soon-to-be-published book *Failed Faith*. In the chapter "information, preferences, knowledge and belief", Brian observes that it is often not appreciated that human attention is a scarce good and explores the implications of this. His chapter "entrepreneurship - the narrative of creative destruction" argues that the heroism of entrepreneurs may be somewhat exaggerated, whereas the tragedy is probably downplayed. Finally, in "The Market for Delusion on Climate Change", Brian explains why it is incredibly unsettling to those believing in mainstream economic theory to hear the message of climate science because it implies that the free market does not, after all, automatically deliver collective well being.

Graham Barnes provided a discussion paper entitled "Designer Currencies and Behaviour Change" in which he explored the relationship between the values that are implicitly embedded in a currency and the type of explicit behaviour that that currency could promote. Graham further developed the concept of designer currencies in his essay "Designer Currencies and the Preferred Domain", in which he argued that a Designer Currency can enhance local identity and spread awareness of local supply, but it can also go beyond that, helping to

identify important gaps in local supply and forming an integral part of proactive local economic development.

Another paper by Graham, "Financing Renewable Energy Projects", described some creative methods for overcoming two systemic economic hurdles that are faced by those seeking finance for renewable energy projects: market 'externalities' that make the projects appear less attractive (versus fossil fuel development) than they should; and the effect of embedded interest in the cost of capital.

Graham also contributed an article entitled "Co-ops and Credit Unions - a Governance Crisis?" in which he asks why bank management experience is suddenly being considered so vital to the credit union movement, at the exact time when many people with decades of management experience in the more mainstream banks have had their 'incompetence and carefree disconnectedness' exposed.

Anne Ryan contributed a paper adapted from her presentation to the Alternatives for Transformation conference in March, explaining how a universal basic income would increase everybody's capacity to cope with financial shocks and uncertainties far more effectively than the current system and how it would also improve general quality of life, while supporting many different kinds of work,

with or without pay.

John Jopling's paper from the same conference is also on the website. John explained why governments cannot be expected to adequately address the climate crisis and instead proposed a commons-based approach that would involve a wide range of non-governmental organisations in a cooperative and participatory process.

Brian Davey provided commentary relating to his presentation in Croatia in March (see page XX). He speculated as to whether a small peripheral state could be a pioneer for adapting to degrowth. His discussion critiqued two articles on the economy of Croatia that were recently published by the Green European Journal, one calling for green growth and the other for degrowth. You can also read Brian's presentation on degrowth in Slovenia on the website.

Brian's essay on "Syria and the Limits to Growth" explores the reasons why Syria is experiencing so many problems, and why some Western governments are so eager to intervene. Brian argues that Syria's woes are actually rooted in the ecological crisis.

Caroline Whyte wrote an opinion piece on the Greenpeace Arctic 30 case, in which 30 Greenpeace activists who were initially charged with piracy after boarding a Russian ship in the Arctic in order to protest oil drilling saw the charges against them being changed to hooliganism. She suggests that the piracy charge might, after all, make sense if the

plaintiffs and defendants swapped places.

We also published an updated version of David Knight's paper "Economic growth, population growth and climate change". David presents abundant evidence that economic growth, rather than population growth, is the main determinant of increased fossil fuel emissions. Planned carbon and economic descent and a more even distribution of income between the richest individuals and countries and the poorest would provide the quickest, fairest and most effective means of reducing emissions.

Graham Barnes provided his reflections on the Transforming Finance conference held on May 10th in London. He found it to be "a very worthwhile day; an organisational tour de force by Beth Stratford and her team; lots of good contacts and peppered with insights; but perhaps too many talking heads squeezed in and not enough in-depth dialogue."

Willi Kiefel contributed his observations on the Environ 2013 colloquium in Galway. He was impressed by the high standard of research and presentations. Converting the hard work done by researchers into political reality is a challenge however.

Book reviews on the website discussed books with themes ranging from the wealth of the global commons to the historical role played by the world's major religions in the movement for environmental protection, equity and justice to the missing link between money and

sustainability.

There are also summaries by Willi Kiefel of the paper "Some recommendations for rules for governance for sustainable development" by Rene Kempff, Saeed Parto and Robert B. Gibson, and of Peter Wagner's paper "The democratic crisis of capitalism: Reflections on political and economic modernity in Europe".

Finally, the Feasta publicity group (formed in 2012 after the restructuring of Feasta along VSM lines) published three press releases in the latter part of 2013. The first of these was on the UNIPCC report on climate change in September. We pointed out that binding emissions caps are essential to effective climate change policy and that such caps need to include a mechanism for fairly distributing the funds generated by the sales of emissions permits. Legal action may provide the key to effective climate justice.

The second and third press releases related to Ireland's financial circumstances, critiquing the debate in October around the Irish budget as being characterised by a false choice between 'austerity' or 'growth' and describing the exit of the troika in December 2013 as "simply indicating a transfer of Ireland's allegiance back to the international bond markets, not a restoration of sovereignty." We believe the Irish economy's profound vulnerability could be better addressed via a commons-based financial system and energy independence.

Feasta in the Media

Our work over the last year has been frequently mentioned on major websites and news organisations such as resilience.org, zerothedge.com, heis.de, Association for the Study of Peak Oil, Global and European Studies Institute, economic-undertow.com, and dasgelbeforum.de.org. During his

speaking tour in Slovenia and Croatia Brian Davey had four media interviews, including an interview on Slovenian TV. There have been discussions of our work in Greek, German, Spanish, French, Swedish, Czech, and Portuguese.

The Doomstead Diner featured four

podcasts with Feasta members in 2013: David Korowicz on financial contagion and tipping points; Brian Davey on Syria and resource limits; and Graham Barnes (twice) on renewable energy finance. John Sharry will be interviewed by Doomstead Diner in the course of 2014.

Fundraising

ICTR Statement of Guiding Principles

ICTR In 2013 Feasta became a signatory to the ICTR's Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising. The statement exists to improve fundraising practice, promote high levels of accountability and transparency by organisations fundraising from the public, and provide clarity and assurances to donors and prospective donors about the organisations they support.

Compliance with the ICTR's requirements entailed making a Public Statement, Donor Charter, Disclosure and description of our feedback and complaints procedure easily available on our website. A further requirement is that we provide a report on our fundraising activities in every Annual Report from now on (see below).

Fundraising Activities

With the switchover of Feasta's structure to a VSM-based framework in 2012 (see page 10), a new Fundraising Group was formed.

A successful fundraising strategy is crucial to Feasta's ongoing ability to function, particularly since a trust fund which had helped to support Feasta financially since its founding has now been wound down. Our strategy in 2013 has taken a three-pronged approach:

1. prepare a series of core funding requests to specific philanthropists
2. make use of the internet to launch a

- number of crowdfunding campaigns for core funding
3. apply for project-based funding from grant-giving institutions

Track Record document

The group put considerable time and effort into producing a 4-page Track Record Document entitled "Keys to the Future". It describes who we are and what we do, and goes on to provide a summary of Feasta's achievements over the years since its founding in 1998 and outline our plans for the future. This document will be a vital component of all three approaches to fundraising mentioned above and should also prove a useful reference for other Feasta activities.



We also planned and did much of the filming for a 6-minute fundraising video which will be released in early 2014. The video features endorsements of Feasta and its work by environmental and social justice activists from around the world, including Allan Savory (speaking from his mud hut in Zimbabwe), Rob Hopkins, Ann Pettifor, Stan Thekaekara (speaking from the Nilgiri Hills in southern India), Albert Bates and Nicole Foss.

The plan is to use the video as part of an Indiegogo crowdfunding campaign in 2014. We will also directly embed it on our website and social network pages

and will provide links to it when contacting specific philanthropists.

We prepared cover letters to a number of philanthropists which will be included along with our Track Record Document when we contact them in 2014. We also included requests for donations in a number of mailouts to Feasta members and to our wider news mailing list, along with a notice on our website. Several individuals responded by making generous contributions which are very much appreciated.

As in previous years we applied for and received some core funding from the Irish Environmental Network. We are currently pursuing applications for crowdfunding with iDonate and likecharity.org and have signed up to the 1% Difference campaign.

