

Catching up to Cairo

Marking the 10th anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development in mid-October, Environmental Advocates of New York joined with several other groups to host a forum at the State University of New York at Albany to review progress toward reaching the goals set down a decade ago in Cairo, Egypt. Some of the news is good, including reduced infant mortality and advances in universal education and reproductive health care. But it is becoming increasingly clear that the United States and other wealthy countries have fallen far short of their commitments to fund international family planning assistance and have all but forgotten one very important part of the Cairo Programme of Action: the need to protect our environment.

Throughout the world, families are living without clean, fresh water or adequate sanitation. Addressing the earth's healthcare and education needs effectively means addressing the need for a clean environment. The participants at the Cairo conference understood that a growing global population is dependent upon a clean environment. That fact has not changed but its place on the population and development agenda has – and not for the better.

The Cairo plan can work if wealthy countries meet their funding commitments and implement the full agenda, including sustainability. The United Nation's Population Division reports that with continued efforts to follow the Cairo plan, population growth is likely to slow. But that alone will not solve the population problem. Seventy-three million additional people a year are squeezing onto the planet and growth remains very high in some of the earth's most fragile ecosystems, challenging the ability to ensure a sustainable future.

People and wildlife in New York and across the planet depend on a healthy global environment. Increasing population in the developing world puts pressure on already strained resources, both community resources such as health care and school systems, and natural resources such as clean water and wildlife. Experience shows that programs and policies that take into account the interconnected facets of people's lives can be successful. The solution here is clear. The US and its 178 colleagues from Cairo must make the environment a priority on the population agenda, and back that commitment with the financial resources to do the job. ★

On the Alert

■ **Something in the Air:** The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has released a draft sampling plan for lower Manhattan to determine if the area has contaminants from the collapsed World Trade Center towers at levels of concern. A public comment period ends on November 19. Written comments can be mailed or delivered to the Office of Environmental Information Docket, EPA Docket Center, Docket #ORD-2004-0003, EPA West Building, Room B102, 1301 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C., 20460; faxed to 202-566-1744; or submitted online at: www.epa.gov/edocket. Hard copies of the draft sampling plan are available on request by calling 1-800-803-2833. To view the plan or for additional information, visit: www.epa.gov/wtc/panel.

■ **Antenna Up:** A draft environmental impact statement has been prepared by the state Office for Technology (OFT) for the Statewide Wireless Network (SWN). The SWN is a plan to provide wireless voice and data communication for emergency providers and state agencies. The plan estimates that New York will need up to 1,200 additional antenna sites. While many will be placed on existing towers and tall buildings, new towers will be needed in rural areas and may affect scenic vistas. Two hearings will be held in November (see *Calendar*), and comments will be accepted until November 30. Send comments to NYS OFT, Statewide Wireless Network Project Office, Empire State Plaza, PO Box 2062, Albany, NY 12220-0062, or by email to swn@oft.state.ny.us. For more information, visit: www.oft.state.ny.us/swn, or call Jeffrey Anzevino, Scenic Hudson, 845-473-4440 ext. 221.

■ **Student Action:** A new coalition of North American student networks and progressive organizations is working to get 30,000 signatures on its Declaration of Independence from Dirty Energy. Energy Action is leveraging youth power to create change for a clean,

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Environmental Advocates of New York is a non-partisan public interest organization working since 1969 on a comprehensive agenda of issues designed to oppose threats to the environment, to preserve natural resources and human health, and to fight for high drinking water and air quality standards.

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www.senate.state.ny.us
New York State Assembly
Albany, NY 12248
518.455.4100
www.assembly.state.ny.us
★ US Capitol Switchboard
202.224.3121

efficient, just and renewable energy future. This Fall, Energy Action is challenging all candidates for elected office and leaders of institutions to lay out their plan for a complete transition beyond dirty energy. To sign on to the Declaration and to find out how to get involved, visit: www.energyaction.net or contact Jorie Pollak, NYS Coordinator, at j_pollak@skidmore.edu.

■ **And the Winner Is:** Time is running out to submit a nominee for the Citizens' Environmental Coalition's (CEC) 2nd Annual Dirty Dozen Award. The award highlights the companies or government agencies that most undermine the spirit of environmental protection in New York State. Past "winners" include Diaz Chemical Company, which had a decades-long history of poisoning the community and subsequently ceased their production of toxic chemicals in Holley, NY. The Town of Cheektowaga reinstated its illegally halted curbside recycling program after receiving the award last year. Winners are selected from nominees submitted by communities or organizations across the state. To nominate your local bad actor, contact CEC at 716-885-6848 or cecintern@choiceonemail.com.

The Month Ahead



November

3: *New Tools, Techniques and Approaches in Watershed Management*, sponsored by Finger Lakes-Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance. Ramada Inn Lakefront, Geneva. 8:30AM. \$20. Email Betsy Landre at blandre@eznet.net.

3: Hearing on Statewide Wireless Network (see *On the Alert*). Radisson Hotel Corning, Carder Rm., 125 Denison Pkwy., East, Corning. 7:00PM. Also: 11/4, Broome County Library, Decker Community Rm., 185 Court St., Binghamton, 7:00PM.

5: *Health Impacts from Transportation*, conference sponsored by Federated Conservationists of Westchester County (FCWC). Local and outside experts will discuss air quality, transportation and the health costs of air pollution. Pace Law School, Tudor Room, Preston Hall, White Plains. \$20 FCWC members, \$25 non-members, \$10 students and seniors. Call 914-422-4053 or visit www.fcwc.org.

8: 2004 Advocate Awards, Environmental Advocates' annual gala. This year's honorees are Marjorie Hart, Marianna Koval, and Mathy Stanislaus and Jody Kass. The Yale Club, Manhattan. Contact Patti Kelly at 518-462-5526 ext. 224.

8: Public hearing on MTA service cuts and MetroCard fare increases. The Michael J. Petrides School, 715 Ocean Terrace, Bldg. "C", Staten Island. 4:00PM. Also: 11/9, The Hilton Long Island/Huntington Hotel, 598 Broadhollow Rd., Melville, 4:00PM; 11/9, El Museo del Barrio, Teatro Heckscher, 1230 Fifth Ave. at 104th St., Manhattan, 4:00PM; 11/10, Franklin K. Lane H.S., 999 Jamaica Ave., Brooklyn, 4:00PM; 11/10, Westchester County Center, The Little Theatre, 198 Central Ave., White Plains, 4:00PM. Visit: www.mta.info/mta/news/hearings/index.html.

9: 4th Annual Southeast New York Stormwater Conference and Trade Show, sponsored by the Lower Hudson Coalition of Conservation Districts. The Grand Hotel, Poughkeepsie. Call Lauren Miller at 518-966-8499.

10: *Climate Change Impacts On New England and Upstate New York*, DEC's 2004 Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources Seminar Series. Conference Room PA-129, first floor, 625 Broadway, Albany. 11:00AM-12:00PM. Email: fwinfo@gw.dec.state.ny.us.

12-14: *Eco-Metropolis 2004: Toward a Green, Just, Sustainable Greater NYC*, a co-production of NY Open Center Continuing Education & Public Programs, The Graduate Center, CUNY & Bioneers Conference. CUNY Graduate Center, 365 5th Ave., at 34th St., Manhattan. Fees vary. Visit: www.opencenter.org/Eco.

14: 4th Annual MA & New England Grassroots Climate Action Conference. M.I.T.'s Stata Center, 32 Vassar St., Cambridge, MA. Visit: www.massclimateaction.org.

15: America Recycles Day, sponsored by Recycle America Alliance, Ford, EPA and others. Visit: www.americarecyclesday.org to find an event near you.

16: *The Challenge of Congestion in the New York Region*, free conference sponsored by the NY Metropolitan Transportation Council and the Rudin Center for Transportation Policy & Management at New York University. Kimmel Center, 10th floor, 60 Washington Square South, Manhattan. 8:00AM-3:00PM. Call 212-998-7545 or visit: www.wagner.nyu.edu/rudincenter.

16: *Human/Nature: Art & the Environment*, sponsored by The Nature Conservancy, The Audubon Society, and Nurture New York's Nature and Ecoartspace. Exhibition and discussion with artist Alexis Rockman. The Carriage House Center Gallery, Manhattan. 7:00PM. Visit: <http://nynyn.org/humannature>.

18-19: *Energy in Schools - A Conference for Educators, School Administrators & Facility Professionals*, sponsored by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority. Albany Marriott, Albany. Visit: www.nyserda.org or call 1-866-NYSERDA.

For Your Information



River Guide: A newly published guide is available to help anyone concerned about the future of the Hudson River understand the complex process set up to restore injured natural resources and learn how to effectively participate in the effort. Scenic Hudson's *Citizens' Guide to Hudson River Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration* provides a step-by-step review of the restoration program and tips and strategies for proposing projects. The guide offers lessons learned and case studies from other restoration projects as well as online and other resources for keeping up-to-date with the Hudson River program. For a print copy of the free guide, contact Scenic Hudson at 845-473-4440, ext. 272, or dlenhart@scenichudson.org. An electronic copy is available online at: www.scenichudson.org.

Chemical ID: Cornell University's Program on Breast Cancer and Environmental Risk Factors has an online searchable database containing information on 42 chemicals identified by the National Toxicology Program as causing mammary tumors in laboratory animals. The EnviroChem and Cancer Database (ECCD) is meant to provide a snapshot of information for these chemicals. The ECCD can be found at: <http://envirocancer.cornell.edu/ECCD>.

Bad Breath: When it comes to air pollution impacting kids, New York City ranks third out of 50 US cities, according to a new report from Environmental Defense. *The Dangerous Days of Summer* recognizes the serious impact poor air quality has on the health of children, especially on those with asthma, and lays out a plan to reduce the most important sources of air pollution. For the complete ranking and a copy of the report, visit: www.dangerousdays.org.

Good Job: A new report demonstrates how smarter environmental policies can lead to significant job creation. *Smarter, Cleaner, Stronger: Secure Jobs, Clean Environment, and Less Foreign Oil* details the economic benefits that will result from energy policies that stimulate the development of clean energy technologies. Produced by Redefining Progress, the report has been endorsed by labor and environmental groups, including the United Steelworkers, the Sierra Club, and the Union of Concerned Scientists. To read the report, visit: www.redefiningprogress.org/bluegreen.

Activists' Corner

Best Friends: Friends of the Bay (FOB) was founded in 1987 by a group of North Shore Long Island citizens who were concerned about the impact of proposed development on the Oyster Bay waterfront. FOB first made its mark by leading an extraordinary public process that resulted in the Land Use Plan for the Oyster Bay Western Waterfront. Today, FOB works for the protection, preservation, and integrity of the Oyster Bay and Cold Spring Harbor estuary and watershed.

Oyster Bay Harbor is a National Wildlife Refuge and a state Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife Habitat and an Outstanding Natural Coastal Area.

FOB works to preserve water quality and marine life, ensure that development within the watershed is compatible with the needs of a healthy ecosystem, and protect the economic, aesthetic and recreational value of the harbor.

Call Friends of the Bay at 516-922-6666 or visit: www.friendsofthebay.org.



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