

GRAIL INTERNATIONAL NEWSLETTER

December 2016

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This letter is intended to be a two-way communication channel for Grail members to fill up the gaps between Crossroads with short news items and an events calendar. You are encouraged to send in

- short impressions of international and national meetings and activities (maximum 10-15 lines)
- job advertisements, vacancies at your Grail center
- changes of address
- international events for the calendar

This letter is sent from iltsecr@thegrail.org to one contact person of every Grail country, who will make sure all members in their country get a chance to read it.

Update on Earth Network

Dear Friends,

May the love of God be with you all. Best wishes for Christmas and a happy new year to you. I am sorry for taking long before I made Earth Network communications after coming in as the new coordinator. I had to collect enough information from former coordinators.

Sibongile and Marilyn from South Africa have shared a lot with me, Mary Omedo and others have also communicated to me and I think we are now set to pick up from where my sisters left.

I appreciate our sisters Sibongile, Marilyn and others for the gradable Earth Network job they did. I was just going through our International Grail website and realized that my sisters had already done something on the "Ecological foot printing issues", I am sure this must have been communicated to you through our Grail Newsletters once or so in the previous years. They had also identified other issues that are affecting our environment like "water, climate change, Energy, sustainability, Biodiversity e.t.c. Thank you Marilyn and Sibongile for the good Earth Network plan. The above named calls for more sharing and discussions as part of our role in the Grail.

I understand that most of you from in and out of the Grail had also joined the Earth Network in small groups in your countries. I would wish that you continue participating as members and share with others more on this Network. Please urge others to Join and help guard our Earth as it is a special creation of God. We are all called as per our Grail vision statement to care for our creation. I would therefore request that we do cooperate by joining the Network.

I am not sure which address is available for the Earth Network. But I thought we should have one and I have created a Gmail account; grailearthnetwork@gmail.com just in case we don't have one which we can use to invite new members to join. I wish you all the best. Thank you.

I would therefore chose that our next theme /issue to tackle be the "CLIMATE CHANGE"

***Sarah Mabanja, Kenya
Earth Network Coordinator,***

Climate Change and Biodiversity Developments

"We are the first generation to really feel the effects of Climate Change and the last that can prevent its worst consequences," Ban Ki-Moon

Ongoing work is needed to save our Biodiversity and prevent the overheating of Planet Earth. I would like to suggest that all Grail members give Planet Earth a Christmas present by learning how their governments plan to implement their NDCs and Aichi Targets. And better still, become involved in developing these plans at national and local level.

Two crucial Conferences of Parties (governments) are happening at this time. The **22nd UNFCCC COP** ended in Marrakech, Morocco on 18 November. The **UN Convention on Biological Diversity COP 13** is being held in Cancun, Mexico from 4 -11 December. In Marrakech 55% of the Parties committed to reducing global carbon emissions by 55% to prevent Planet Earth from overheating to more than 2 degrees since the 1750s.

COP 22 produced the Marrakech Action Proclamation of the 2015 Paris Agreement, by which the Parties undertake to implement their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). These NDCs commit Parties to transform their economies and industries by reducing their carbon emissions drastically while moving towards low carbon development strategies. Fossil-fuels will be reduced as the use of Renewable Energy (RE) increases.

Some examples of developments in Grail-related countries. The **African RE Initiative (AREI)** aims to produce 10 Gigawatts of RE by 2020 and 300 GW by 2030 with the help of a large donation from the EU. The **African Adaptation Initiative** is working to get political and financial support for Climate Change Adaptation projects. **Germany** has committed to reducing its carbon emissions by 85-95% by 2050 as part of its Klimaschutz. (It would be great to hear more about Klimaschutz from German members)

Forty (40) countries, including the **Philippines and Papua New Guinea** have constituted the **Climate Vulnerable Forum**, which aims to achieve 100% RE over the long-term.

The **Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT)** fund was launched in Marrakech with projects already approved in Costa Rica, **Kenya and South Africa**. The CIT aims to equip the Parties to be able to monitor and evaluate their NDC commitments.

The **COP 13 in Cancun** will focus on the progress made in implementing the **Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets** which are aimed at mainstreaming and integrating Biodiversity into all aspects of the life of the Parties. Reducing deforestation and restoring ecosystems are two of the priority areas. There is great concern about the lack of progress in Aichi Target 11 which aims to protect the precious coral reefs.

There are of course many links between the work of the UNFCCC and the UNCBD, but the UNCBD is the Cinderella of the two Conventions and receives little or no media coverage. What is most alarming is that most Parties are below the requirements for meeting the Aichi Targets deadline in 2020, These include mainstreaming Gender in all the work. Only a few Parties have succeeded in involving local communities and Indigenous peoples and in incorporating Indigenous Knowledge. Funds for these projects have come from **Guatemala, Sweden** and Japan. Follow COP 13 on UNEP/CBD/COP13.

If what I have written above is Greek to you, **may I offer the Manual I have recently completed. It is called "Rewilding: the call of the 21st Century" and deals with Biodiversity, Water and Feminism as well as Climate Change.** Click on this link online to download the book:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/cdt4ln0wbnaztge/Emthonjeni%203%20manual.pdf?dl=0>

If anyone would like the cover send me an email; maitken@wltp.co.za

Marilyn Aitken, South Africa

UN Sustainable Development Goals – December 2016

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the month of December for Grail members to consider is:

December Goal 7: Affordable and Clean Energy

What is the Grail in your country doing to further these goals?

Social Methodology Change Program in Brazil

The Social Change Methodology Program in Brazil will take place as planned from January 14th to 29th at Belo Horizonte Grail Centre. It is a program mainly for Spanish and Portuguese speakers. Countries that will be sending participants to this program and which are involved in organizing it are Brazil, Canada, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Mozambique and Paraguay. Involved in facilitation also are some members from South Africa and USA too.

Calendar

2017

- January 26 – 28, UFER Board meeting in Quito, Ecuador
- January 14 – 29, Formation on social change methodologies in Belo Horizonte, Brazil
- February 17 – 26, Formators training program in Quito, Ecuador
- March 13 – 24, CSW61 in New York, USA
- **July 13 - 25, IGA in Fatima, Portugal**