

Spinifex

Newsletter of the Global Greens 2001 Conference

No 4

Charter takes shape



Group shot of participants at the Global Greens. Morning tea Sunday 15 April.
Photo: Tim Cole

THE FIRST plenary session on the Global Greens Charter held on 14 April marked another step on the way to one of the major goals of the Conference. The Charter has been developed over a number of years (see Spinifex 1) and its ratification is expected in the afternoon on Monday 16 April.

According to Louise Crossley, who has drawn together the draft Charter from many of the international foundation documents of the Greens, the Charter will represent an ongoing outcome of the Conference. "It gives us something concrete to work with, to work towards. When the wonderful experience that we're having here of meeting each other and enjoying each other has passed we will have something that tells us who we are, where we're going, what we've done together and what we hope for the future", she said.

Some key discussion points were raised at the open session on the Charter. One issue was how to express as one of the core beliefs of the Greens the relationship between humans and the rest of nature, that humans are part of nature and not above nature, as only one of many species that inhabit the planet.

Another major issue discussed was how best to reform the global economic system, particularly the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade

What is Spinifex?

Spinifex is the newsletter of the Global Greens 2001 conference. Web copies are available at www.global.greens.org.au

According to the Arrernte dictionary the Aboriginal word for Spinifex is Aywerte. Australia's indigenous people found **spinifex** useful in several ways. Spinifex resin was used as a binder in indigenous ochre paintings. Hector Chundaloo (Jandany) is 75 and is from the Kimberley region in northern West Australia. He is one of the last bush painters to still use spinifex as a binder in his natural ochre when possible.

According to the Rainforest Information Centre's *Good Wood Guide* **spinifex** grass "is a traditional material used by indigenous people on their dome-shaped shelters in north-west Western Australia. The grass tree (*Xanthorrhoea*) provided indigenous and the first non-indigenous Australians alike with durable thatching material." In more modern times Spinifex resin can be melted to repair things like jerry cans for carrying water and fuel.

The **Spinifex** team will be based in the media area or call 0419 266 110.

continued page 2

Organisation. The issue of climate change was also discussed.

Many sections of the Greens, including the Young Greens, have also had some ideas about the Charter. "The Charter is the code of fundamental ideas and values but also some amendments to the future of the Global Greens" said Kyryl Tomlyak of the Federation of Young European Greens.

"Therefore, it is really important, we realised during the Global Young Greens gathering that took place in Sydney last weekend, that we need to put forward some amendments that would basically guarantee more involvement of the youth in politics."

The Global Young Greens have put forward amendments to give specific recognition to the involvement of young people in politics.

"The youth has to be involved in all decision-making", said Kyryl, "regardless of whether it is a conference like the Global Gathering or it is a national Congress of the Party or it is the voting list of the party".

The discussion on the Charter at the first plenary was followed by over one hundred amendments being forwarded to the Charter Working Group, a subgroup of the International Reference Group. The Charter working group will use the process set out in the Conference procedures for considering the amendments.

The Charter, as amended, will then be put to the Conference for a decision. "It will become the current Global Greens 2001 Charter and a work in progress", said Louise Crossley. "The Greens constantly need to evolve our positions, particularly our political position, so the Charter needs to keep pace with that."

The final plenary is scheduled to commence at 2pm on Monday 16 April.

"For the last century we have received a lot of corruption, a lot of bad things from the politicians so we have to search, we have to find out, if there is something different about Green parties, is there something that makes a difference ... We are searching for a new paradigm, a new direction"

*Choi Yul Secretary General Korean Federation for Environmental Movement (KFEM)
(translated by Kim Choony, International Affairs, KFEM)*



Kerry Tucker, Greens Member of the Canberra's Legislative Assembly and Kath Moore Convener of the Australian Greens (pictured above) welcomed conference participants at a drinks session on Friday night.

Nnimmo Bassej took the opportunity to tell a welcome poem. SMILES ABOVE THE CLOUDS

People I welcome you to Canberra
City of the day where Green men Green women and Green youths meet
Come tap your feet to the beats 'cause you can always retreat
to your home beneath the trees of this green city We must keep green
Hide the cars beneath the roots Send your smiles above the clouds Spread hope
Across the world Welcome to Canberra
Welcome people welcome to a great green future today!

Global Greens on the web
www.global.greens.org.au



Conference 2001
14 - 16 April
Canberra Australia



Interview: Ingrid Betancourt Columbian Greens

Ingrid Betancourt is a Greens Senator in the Colombian National Parliament and is a candidate for the Presidency in 2002.

Founded in January 1998 the Columbian Green Party is a political organization of independent citizens that look forward to construct an alternative to corruption with a defined ecological and pacifist vocation.

In 1996 Ingrid wrote a book exposing corruption in her home country. As a result she recieved death threats and had to send her children to New Zealand for safe keeping.

“Today I feel that my children are very proud. They feel that they have contributed to this. They feel very Columbian and are spiritually strong”.

You have paid a great personal price. Are their times you thought it was not worth it?

“I have never thought it was not worth it. I think that if here in Australia you have the same problem, one day you are in a war that means you have to face that war and pay a price and we will always assume that. I feel that we are human beings as long as we have a direct link with where we are born — with the land, with the history of that land. You have to protect that home so you do. To protect what you are, what you feel you are, what you feel your values are, and what makes you a human being you have to make some sacrifices”.

Is there a contradiction between Green principles and the things you need to do to transfer people out of the drug economy?

“I don’t think so. I think Green policies in agriculture specifically for Columbia will be a great solution. For example, in the idea of substitution of crops, but it is not enough. Behind all this, there is the problem of the market. It is very difficult to tell our people to grow legal crops when they know the trade agreements are not fair.”

“We are now fighting against the transportation of nuclear waste, and on Sunday night, when we were already here, our friends succeeded in blockading the railway that was taking waste from Cherbourg to Germany. So we are really proud that for the first time the French people have succeeded in blockading the railway.”

French delegate

Green Bits

- **Sniff Australian plants** — Monday lunchtime guided tour of Australia’s National Botanic Garden. Bus leaves 15 minutes after the plenary. \$5
- **View Canberra’s lights** — Monday night bus trip of Canberra’s lights — the good, the bad and the ugly. Get to see light pollution, excellent lighting and a look at the southern stars. Book at reception. \$15. Leaves Convention Centre at 6pm you’ll be back around 8pm.
- **Visit the Australian bush** — on Tuesday you can take a trip to Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve and Burragai Aboriginal Rock Shelter. Leave 9am from Convention Centre or 9.15 from Macquarie Hotel. Return by 5p.m Make a booking at the Conference Office \$20.

Correction: In issue No 3 on page 4 we listed Green parties represented at the Conference. The details for the Ukraine should have been the Ukraine Green Party - XXI. We apologise for the mistake.

Media Clips

- CNN ‘Greens urge boycott of big US oil brands’ 14 April
- Canberra Times ‘Greens warn of more disease outbreaks’ 15 April
- AAP wire ‘Greens form global coalition’ 14 April
- ABC News ‘European Greens accuse Australia of selling out on Kyoto protocol’ 15 April



Speakers at the Opening Plenary on Saturday 15 April . Left to Right: Adamou Garba (Niger), Jorge Gonzales Torres (Mexico), Margaret Blakers (Australia), Senator Bob Brown (Australia), Satoko Watanabe (Japan), Arnold Cassola (Malta), Louise Crossley (Australia). Photo: T Cole

Greens announce campaign to protect New Caledonian coral reefs

NEW Caledonian indigenous leaders, the French Greens, the New Caledonian Greens and the Australian Greens will today announce a joint international campaign to have the coral reefs of New Caledonia nominated for World Heritage status.

Bruno van Peterghem of the New Caledonian Greens said that they needed to work together. "We fight against the French Government ... it wants to keep the resource - the nickel - in New Caledonia, the nickel first and then the petrol they find there".

"There is no regulation in New Caledonia now, so our fight is to participate in the growing of New Caledonia. But we want to do that helpfully and with regulations, good regulations to make all the people growing together."

He feels that by working together and communicating at conferences such as the Global Greens they can start to take on the big issues. He wants to "begin a reflection of an economical synergy because the World Trade Organisation is growing stronger and bigger and the Green movement is small".

"We strongly think that we need to protect this coral reef. We have been fighting in all the regions that are under French sovereignty for years in order to have these coral reefs protected and in order to assist this problem being taken into account" said one French delegate. "We are very glad that there is now a big mobilisation of this subject and that we could fight alongside French people who are concerned and with New Zealand people that are also concerned. So our interest in this meeting is that we can build our mobilisation in order to succeed."

"The salvation of the planet is the right to live if nothing else then it is the fight for core values. These values are those that all human beings share regardless of the colour of our skin or the name that we give our gods and - because they are essential values - they are not negotiable. Today we have an opportunity, there is still time for stopping the system of self destruction that they want to impose on us but this depends on our will, on our character, on our commitment and not on what they will grant us from their power. The future is green, and it will be Green."

*Ingrid Betancourt
Plenary Session
Sunday 15 April 2001*



Spinifex is designed and produced by Consensus Productions (PO Box 45, O Connor, ACT 2602, Australia) for the Global Greens 2001 Conference. All material is copyright © Global Greens 2001. Permission to reprint is easily given. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the Global or Australian Greens.