

# Spinifex

Newsletter of the Global Greens 2001 Conference

No 5

## Global Greens wrap up



**T**HE Global Greens 2001 Conference will conclude today with a host of achievements and a firm basis for building the global Green movement and Green Parties around the world.

Conference achievements include:

- Putting in place measures to establish a Global Green network;
- Forming a 'Green Shield' to assist in the protection of Green activists throughout the world; and
- Declaration of an international Green campaign to protect New Caledonian coral reefs (sponsored by the French Greens, the New Caledonian Greens and the Australian Greens).

The Japanese delegation also announced that they will take the campaign against woodchipping of Australia's native forests back to Japan. Tasmanian Green Peg Putt noted that no other political party in the world had the capacity to work in this way.

The Global Greens 2001 Conference also followed the first ever Global Young Greens gathering and that event has firmly located the

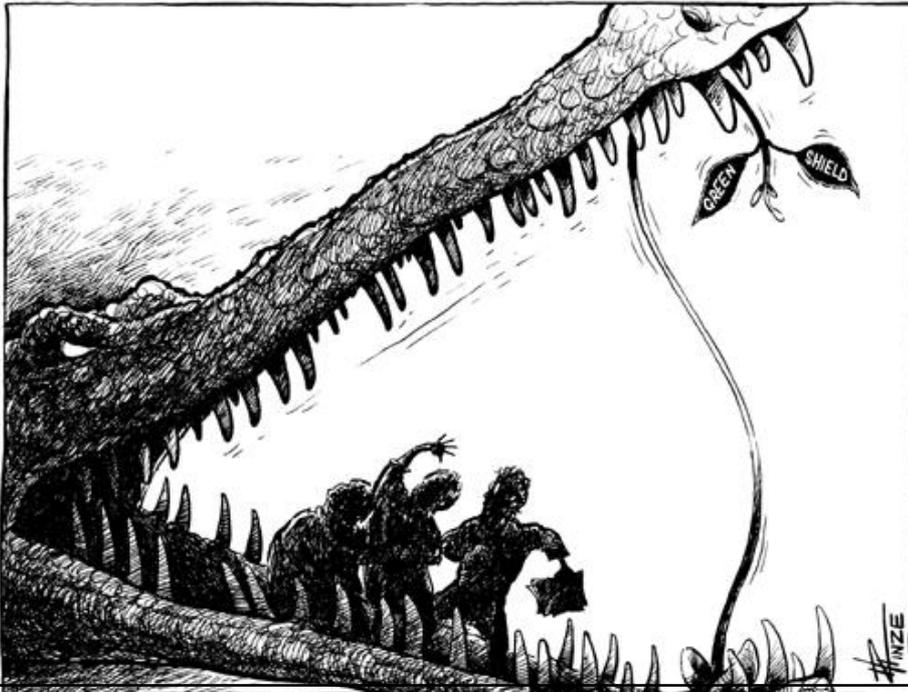
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### Spinifex production

**Spinifex** has been the daily newsletter of the Global Greens 2001 conference. Copies are available at [www.global.greens.org.au](http://www.global.greens.org.au)

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- David Pope (aka Heinrich Hinze) for wonderful cartoons drawn specifically for the conference. For more examples of his work go to: [www.scratch.com.au](http://www.scratch.com.au)
- Tim Cole for great photos and an enthusiastic and helpful approach
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- Indira and Bob for the use of audio and other material.
- the many contributors and those who gave their time and stories to *Spinifex*.



### Green shield to protect Greens from persecution

**A** GLOBAL strategy for protecting Green activists was launched on Sunday at the conference. The 'Green Shield' will be a watchdog on countries which are unsafe for Greens and their allies.

Senator Bob Brown said "Greens and environmentalists have been threatened, imprisoned and even murdered, but the assassins will think again when they know that the eyes of the world are on them".

Under the plan, Green Members of Parliament from safe democracies such as Australia and Germany will provide pressure to defend Greens under threat, even visting them to act as a human shield.

Senator Ingrid Betancourt of the Columbian Greens is under constant guard following threats on her life because of her anti-corruption stance.

Wangari Maatha, founder of the Green Belt Movement in Kenya said "the Greens have been put to the test and suffered in the cause of their environmental work. We will greatly benefit from the solidarity and network of the Greens worldwide".

"Greens in prison and under threat get a great source of encoragement when they know fellow Greens from around the world are supporting them. They don't feel so alone" she said. Wangari has just been released from prison and is a candiate for the forthcoming Presidential elections.

### Greens wrap up

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Greens as the Party for young people. The diversity and energy brought by young people was welcomed at the conference on many occasions.

The Conference will today address one of its major goals - the ratification of a Global Greens Charter. This will be the basis for future formation and acceptance of Green Parties. It will represent the current thinking of the Greens as a global force.

The Charter sets out a plan for equity, justice, democracy and environmental protection. Its prime aims include tackling global warming, poverty, violence and political corruption.

Over three hundred delegates from over 70 countries have also had the responsibility for the formation of Global Greens policy on matters such as climate change and trade.

The Conference has also been a major networking event with over 700 participants mingling over the three days. Not only have friendships developed, but links have been made, faces put to names, alliances and partnerships formed, and information and knowledge shared.

The conference has also carried a constant message of optimism as the Greens demonstrate that what drives them is not what is wrong with the world, but hope and vision for what is a wonderful planet.

There will be another Global Greens Conference at a time and place to be determined through the councils of the Greens in the months and years ahead.

*"It is important to get the international connection to the Greens. We are meeting here very famous Greens and they are very important. Young Greens are here and that is our future ... we are here to exchange information and to learn from each other."*

*Olzit Bhum-Yalogoh  
Foreign Relations Member of Board  
Mongolian Green Party*



**Conference 2001  
14 - 16 April  
Canberra Australia**



### **Interview: Nolin Pivini President Fly River Provincial Council of Women**

*What are the issues facing the Fly River?*

The Fly River system is polluted now. BHP and Ok Tedi have told the people that the environment has been destroyed now and they have told the people that they have done the damages already. The people living along the Fly River system and the Ok Tedi system are mostly

affected. The staple food is sago, and those sagos along the rivers are now dying away. The garden foods mostly of landholders who are living along the Fly River, and land right users, their gardens are not growing now because of the sediments that have been dumped into the river and because of erosion, floods, frequent floods that are not normal floodings. Floods come at any time and that destroys the home gardens. Women are the ones who do most of the work for the family. Women walk a long distance into the bush to look for well waters to get water for drinking. They also go into the deepest forests to make gardens and it's very hard now.

*Why did you come to the Conference?*

My friend, Kate Davies, visited New Guinea and Port Moresby. She asked me about the Ok Tedi and the environment and I thought maybe that there's an issue to be raised. She brought my name to this Global Greens. So far, Rio+10 and the Young Greens in Sydney and Global Greens now, I have learned so many things both political and the environment and the lives of people and how it should be protected. I have planned already, when I go back I will get the message across, especially to my people who are affected by the mine.

**Note: The Fly River is New Guinea's largest river and is the world's fastest-flowing river. BHP is one of Australia's largest mining companies and its gold mine at Ok Tedi was constructed without a tailings dam instead using the Fly River for disposal of tailings.**

### **Message from Ralph Nader**

Ralph Nader sent congratulations and a message of support to the Global Greens Conference. The statement was read to the conference.

It said: "Our common challenge is to facilitate the development of civic organisations that provide the tools by which people can organise, recruit, train, and inspire others to build a just, functioning democracy."

"We need people who are willing to stand up to those who routinely deny the sovereignty and will of the people."

"We need civic heroes who will seek to bridge the democracy gap that shuts civil society out of the halls of power."

"We need the sustained commitment of those who will move from being merely concerned to being serious about developing Green Parties and Green movements that, with organised communities, will institutionally challenge the forces that perpetuate or remain indifferent to gross injustices."



### **Pekka Haavisto, Finland**

Pekka Haavisto is the President of the European Federation of Green Parties. Pekka was a member of the Finnish Parliament from 1987 to 1995 and the Environment Minister from 1995 to 1999.

Pekka said "this is a very important meeting of the Global Greens. First of all is the Charter, secondly the coming network of the Global Greens. On a personal level this has been a very nice meeting ... I have met a lot of old friends but we have also made a lot of new contacts".

"It seems that the Green movement is alive and doing well in many countries, which we probably haven't heard very much about earlier."

"I think it is important that we do more in our countries to get the young people involved and to find the right working methods for them".

# Integrating the youth voice

**T**HE Global Young Greens workshop held on Sunday agreed that the 'young' component of the Greens needed to be integrated firmly into the Greens party structure.

The workshop was chaired by young Greens representatives from Mexico, New Zealand and various parts of Australia.

One of the main questions to come out of the forum was why the category of youth deserved special attention - was it somehow different to other categories of 'disadvantage' such as racial or other minority groups? Kate Walsh, one of the organisers of the Global Young Greens conference commented: "Viewing young people as a sector, or 'category of disadvantage' is an insult to me. I personally can't wait for the day when we no longer need a Young Greens conference". But that day will not come until young people are proportionately represented within the party. 'Youth' does not need to be a segregated category of special interest and attention, youth need to be integrated and fairly represented within the main party structure.

It seemed integral to many workshop participants that the Greens recognise there now exists a whole new generation of people who are already lifelong supporters of the party. That support does not come through blind party faith, but through a critical evaluation of how the party functions, and a calculated conclusion that the Greens appropriately address some of the vital issues concerning young people today.

There were certainly concerns amongst workshop participants as to the future integrity of the party. As New Zealand MP Nandor Tzancos commented: there is "a fear that the reason we got involved in the first place will be lost". The main concern is that parliamentary work will lull Green politicians into the illusion that parliament, rather than community activism, is where the answers lie. Parliament should remain merely a tool of our activism. He further echoed the thoughts of many of the workshop participants in remarking that "the Green party is just a vehicle", and the main emphasis of this movement should not be on the vehicle but on "where we are going and what we are trying to do".

*Marni Cordel. Email: marni@thepaper.org.au*

## Greens to campaign against woodchipping

On Sunday the Australian Greens and the Rainbow and Greens Japan announced a joint campaign against the woodchipping of Australia's forests.

As part of their trip to the Global Greens Conference members of the Japanese delegation visited the Glenbog State Forest, where Japanese companies are logging beautiful forests for woodchipping. They were worried by what they saw and are "now planning to appeal against the companies".

Kiyoshi Matsuya, a member of the Rainbow and Green Japan was appalled that Japanese consumption of paper was destroying Australian forests. Most of Australia's woodchip exports are sent to Japan for paper production. Peg Putt, Greens MP for Tasmania, Australia noted that no other political party has the capacity to work internationally in this way.

## Media Clips

- AAP 'Greens warn Labor must shape up to win preferences' 15 April
- *Canberra Times* 'Campaign aims to save reefs in New Caledonia' 16 April
- *The Age* 'Thinking Globally Green' 15 April
- *The Age* 'She's green and alive so far' 16 April
- *Sydney Morning Herald* 'Nader may have cost us Kyoto protocol says Swiss delegate' 16 April
- *The Age* 'Protests aim at Japan chip imports' 16 April

## Post Conference events

- A Multicultural Experience Melbourne Thursday evening 19 April - 21 April. A series of events focussing on whether Melbourne truly is the multicultural place that it claims to be. Includes: Public meeting on Thursday 19 April 6.30pm, Visit to the Immigration Museum on Friday 20 April, a trip to Healesville on Saturday 21 April. Contact Steven Luntz on 0438 667 787
- Visit the world's tallest hardwood forests (Tasmania) Thursday 19 April. Contact The Wilderness Society on 03 6224 1550.
- Nuclear and other Waste round-Table (Perth) Thursday 19 April. Western Australia is targeted for a nuclear waste dump, along with Argentina, South Africa and Russia. Contact Giz Watson on 08 9201 0582

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