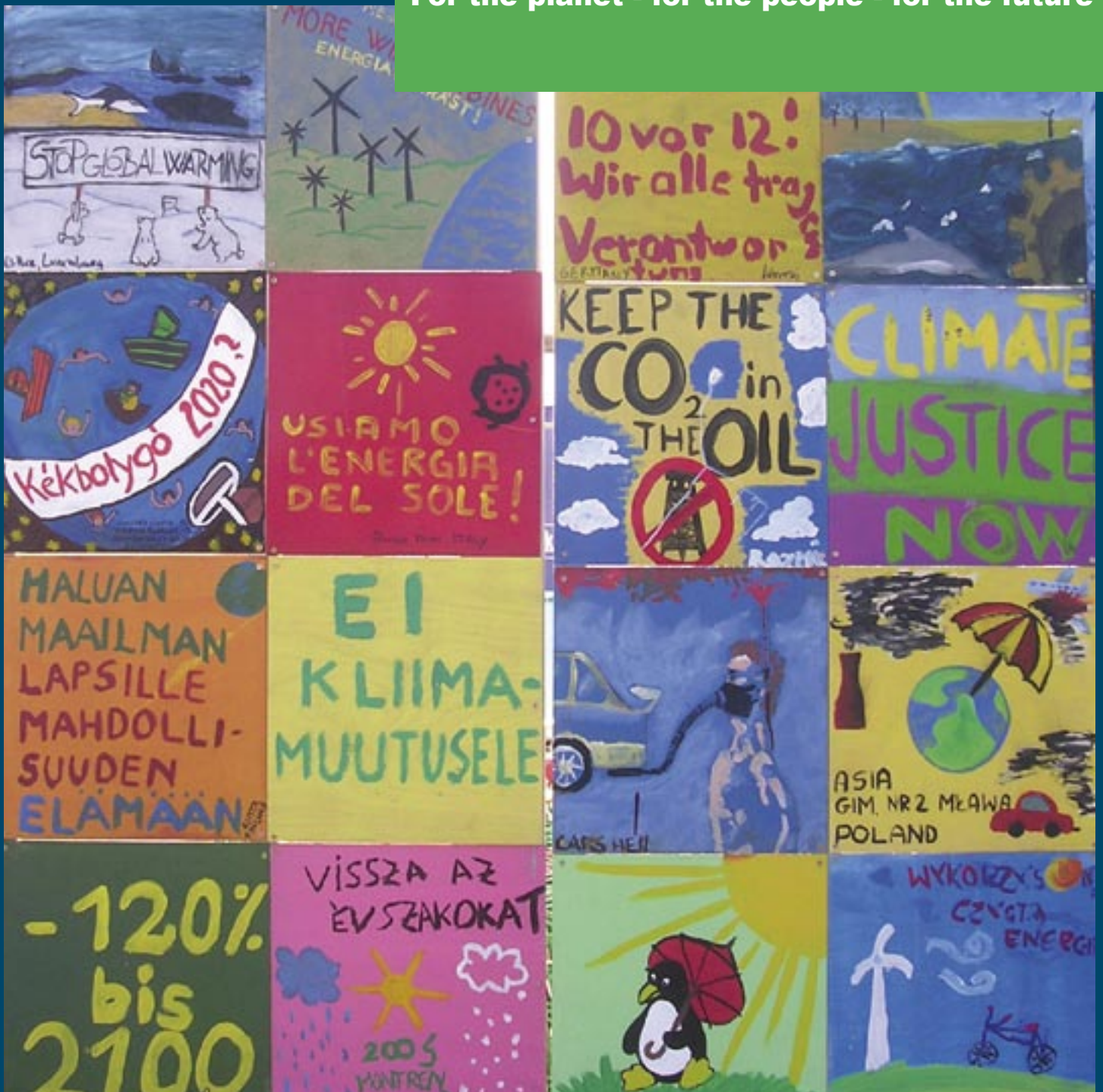




Friends of
the Earth
Europe

ANNUAL REVIEW 2005

For the planet - for the people - for the future





In 2005, European leaders realised the hard way that energy is the most urgent issue for the next decades. The world raced towards an energy crisis with prices skyrocketing and supplies stretched to the limit. Wealthy societies in the European Union, the US, Japan and elsewhere nevertheless kept on consuming and wasting energy at high speed. China, India and many others followed the same, unsustainable path. Remember the old question, “What will happen if every person in China wants a car?” Well, now they do. They want exactly that and much more.

Meanwhile in the capital of Europe, Brussels, officials felt increasingly uneasy. They know that too much oil is imported from the volatile Arab world and that the flow of Russian gas can be blocked by the Kremlin at a whim. In despair, they pledged to overcome this addiction and launched the slogan of the year, ‘energy security’. Friends of the Earth added pain to grief by reminding them that burning fossil fuels like oil and gas are destroying our climate, and that nuclear power is definitely not the solution. The time has come to radically cut greenhouse gas emissions and to massively invest in clean technologies – or face catastrophic consequences on a global scale.

The Brussels office of Friends of the Earth influences the environmental policies of the European Union. We ensure that people have a voice right in the heart of Europe. We raise awareness about how the Sustainable Development Strategy of the EU should be. This would impact all other continents and, for example, help develop mobility concepts beyond jammed highways and exhaust pipes emitting climate damaging carbon dioxide (CO₂).



Our experts counterbalance the industry lobby and participate in hearings in the European Parliament. We deliver critical opinions and solutions to the EU Commission. We ignite public debates on the role of the EU in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and demand fair deals with developing nations. We monitor how EU funds are being spent in the new member states. We publish criteria for the Sustainable Impact Assessment of the Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area. And we run capacity building projects with small Friends of the Earth groups to make every corner of Europe greener.

Together with nine environmental organisations based in Brussels – forming the Green 10 – Friends of the Earth Europe has maximum impact on EU officials. We join forces with other groups and develop alternative ideas for REACH, the legislation on toxic chemicals. REACH will again be debated at the end of 2006, and the EU Parliament will hopefully adopt it as historic legislation helping to replace toxic chemicals with safe alternatives.

With our 31 member groups in Europe, we are part of an international environmental justice network pushing for deep changes in economic policies, in consumption habits and in relations between rich and poor nations. With your support we will convince corporations to link profits with ethical behaviour. We will persuade the EU to stop pumping Euros into unsustainable projects. We will help prevent catastrophic climate change and avoid GM pollution of our crops and food. Thank you.

Fouad Hamdan
Director, Friends of the Earth Europe

PS: 2005 was a year of transition for us. We said goodbye to Martin Rocholl as Director and welcomed him as Chairman of the Board. Martin created the strong and influential campaigns we now have.



**Friends of
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Annual Review 2006



for the planet - **for the people** - for the future

Greening Europe - a realistic vision

In 2006, the European Union was shaken by dramatic scientific reports about the impact of climate change. Some European leaders reacted by pressing in good faith for solutions based on promoting energy efficiency and renewables like solar and wind power. Others paid lip services publicly while actually doing all they could behind closed doors to weaken EU-level solutions. Some supported either their coal or car industries. Others were quite content trying to deceive Europeans with the claim that nuclear power is the solution to the most serious environmental problem threatening life on Earth.

Adding insult to injury, Russian President Vladimir Putin used gas as a political weapon against Ukraine and Georgia, and temporarily halted oil supplies via Belarus to Germany and Poland. Given its growing dependence on imported energy, Europe's response has mainly been to panic and to sign bilateral energy deals with autocrats in Russia, the Caucasus and Central Asia. This is disturbing because so-called Putinism, or 'managed democracy', is an assault on Europe's entire system of values.

At Friends of the Earth's Brussels office, we play an important role in helping shape the EU's environmental policies. We are, at the heart of Europe, the voice of 31 European member groups representing hundreds of thousands of members and volunteers. Our campaigners confront a powerful business lobby constantly striving to weaken environmental legislation. But using our modest resources with stacks of creativity we apply pressure and uncover intrigues, and deliver critical opinions and solutions.

In 2006, we and other like-minded groups succeeded in convincing EU officials and national governments to agree to a new chemicals law that will for the first time see industry taking responsibility for its own products. This historic law will help replace toxic chemicals with safer ones. We shall monitor how well it is implemented.

We have also pressed EU officials to agree fair deals with developing nations when they sign trade agreements. In cooperation with CEE Bankwatch, we have monitored how EU funds are being spent in new Member States in Central and Eastern Europe. We have campaigned for transparent lobbying in Brussels and opposed the destructive practices of international corporations. And we have begun planning future work on nanotechnology and biofuels.

One of our great successes was in December 2006 when EU environment ministers rejected a proposal to force Austria to lift its ban on genetically-modified food and crops. We believe that every country has the democratic right to protect its citizens and environment.

To improve the impact of our campaigns, we initiated an Organisational Development Plan for 2007-2010. For the first time we also developed fundraising and communications strategies, and we hired our first fully-fledged communications officer in May 2006 and a professional fundraiser at the end of that year. As a result, our higher-quality communications have made our positions on EU policies more visible. This means we carry greater political clout with decision-makers.

Thank you for supporting us and for contributing to the pressure for change. I invite you to join us in making Europe greener.

Greening Europe



Fouad Hamdan
Director, Friends of the Earth Europe

PS: The EU celebrated its 50th anniversary in March 2007. I believe it is still the best democratic system available in the world. It is not perfect, but evolving slowly. And the EU is an amazing peace project since it provides the framework for 27 nations to debate and agree on policies impacting the lives of all its citizens, without bloodshed. Skeptical? Then just have a glimpse around the world at other regional systems.