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Sent: 16 April 2008 15:01
To:)
Subject: National Planning

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Dear Mr. Mackinnon

Thanks for your presentation at the NPF2 morning on 14th.

Afterwards, I spoke to you briefly about India and the ideal of community self-sufficiency rather than dependency on distant markets. I am hopeful you can continue this conversation 'on line', as it were.

Most UNSustainable development arises when communities are not self-sufficient and people must access distant places - for jobs, food, health services, schools and, sadly, if their own locality is unpleasant, a nicer place for a holiday.

1. Transport, energy needs. greenhouse gases and air pollution have grown cumulatively with the loss of common lands and self-sufficient local economies.
2. Large-scale agriculture and animal husbandry have caused environmental imbalances, destroyed communities and damaged soils and water. Historically, humans and wildlife have suffered incalculable damage - and will continue to do so if we carry on with the same kind of development which needs the distant market that was created with the industrial revolution.

I believe that climate change is a direct consequence of events like the Highland Clearances, the English Enclosure Act, the violent takeover of the Americas by Europeans, the destruction of traditional land tenureship and production systems in the Indian sub-continent and other parts of the British Empire, and, of course, the manic industrialisation and urbanisation of China. Everyone has been talking about many kinds of 'development' since the 1950s, but what has been achieved? Even 'development' has destroyed communities and impoverished locals when a resource-hungry outside Enterprise wants to 'develop' an area.

NPFs could be an opportunity to find out what we all mean by 'development'. These days, the Scottish Government wants 'sustainable development'. But, unless people everywhere - rural and urban - are self-sufficeint, growing their own food, producing their own stuff, trading locally for what they want to sell and buy, and able to compete locally with the Big Boys on the international scene (which Japan learnt to do; Taiwan too) - then true sustainability will be impossible - because our dependence on distant markets will continue to impoverish us, increase inequalities and stress us out with the competitiveness, unfairness and irrationality of it all.

Scotland's NPFramework should be about developing a 'framework' where the local is strengthened first, not the infrastructure; where economic growth occurs from the inside to the outside, not the other way round. Policies like requiring existing large businesses to contribute large percentages of their profits to the locality (in consultation with local people) rather than to shareholders would be a start.

Anyway, looking forward to your reply

Ariane Loening

