

**Date:** August 1, 2000

**Subject:** Greenpeace losing ground

As many of you are undoubtedly aware, Greenpeace has spearheaded a campaign of vandalism and fear in their effort to eradicate agricultural biotech. It goes without saying that this disregard for the law is not only offensive, but also very dangerous. Fortunately, many people have decried this tide of violence, including other members of the environmental movement (Friends of the Earth, e.g.). It looks like Greenpeace is feeling the heat - membership is dropping and funds are drying up. That said, Lord Melchett, executive director of Greenpeace UK and the instigator in the destruction of a test field last summer in England, remains unrepentant (see his quote at the end of the article).

I would encourage you to put more heat on them by visiting the Greenpeace parody site, <http://www.greenpeace.org>, and sending them a Harry Potter style Howler to let them know they've been bad. For every Howler email that is sent, the parody site will donate \$1 to the homeless.

(<http://www.greenpeace.org/howler/howlerframe.html>)

This is fun, and also supports a good cause.

Read the article below for details on Greenpeace's trials and tribulations.

Very truly yours,  
Jenny Lord

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Sunday Times says Ukraine office to close -  
Sunday Times, 30 July 2000

GREENPEACE, the environmental pressure group, is in crisis. The world's best known green campaigner has lost more than 1.6m members and seen its income plummet by £30m.

Greenpeace International's annual report, to be published shortly, will show that the organisation has had to slash spending, find millions of pounds to prop up its troubled American group and rethink its strategies to try to reverse the decline in its fortunes.

Its difficulties increased recently when Thilo Bode, 53, executive director of Greenpeace International which oversees the 30-odd Greenpeace groups around the world, announced his departure. This follows the resignation of the entire board of Greenpeace US, which was once the biggest national group but has been in disarray for several years.

In Britain membership is down to 200,000 - a 33% decrease from the mid-1990s.

In the past few weeks the organisation has also faced a virulent attack from one of its own founders. Dr Patrick Moore has accused Greenpeace of being "dominated by leftwingers and extremists who disregard science in the pursuit of environmental purity".

Greenpeace was born out of protests against American military testing in the Aleutian islands off Alaska in the 1960s.

At its peak in the mid-1980s the organisation had more than 5m supporters worldwide - including celebrities such as Sting, Sir Elton John and Tom Jones, who supported its save-the-rainforest campaigns.

Fifteen years later, however, the picture is very different. By 1994 the numbers had dropped to 4m and since then have fallen to 2.4m. In 1995 worldwide gross income reached £101m, but by 1998, the last year for which figures are available, this had fallen to £83m.

Meanwhile, say insiders, Greenpeace has assumed some of the trappings of the global corporations that it attacks. Recently it hired an Italian hilltop village and flew in the heads of its national operations for a week-long meeting on policies and campaigns.

In the face of such costs it has been forced to tighten its belt and the Amsterdam-based international office, which licenses every other affiliated group, has begun insisting that national groups must make a profit or face closure. The international office and the three ships it controls, including the Rainbow Warrior, are funded by a levy on national groups.

Last week Bode confirmed that Greenpeace International is to close its office in Ukraine. Similar closures have already been imposed on the offices in Ireland and Scandinavia, where national groups have been merged into a single one called Greenpeace Nordic.

In America things are even worse. At its peak in the early 1990s, the group there had more than 1m members, providing a cash cow for Greenpeace International. Membership has now plummeted to 300,000. This weekend Kirsten Engberg, the executive chairman, announced that she is to resign.

Instead of appointing a successor from within, however, Greenpeace plans to take over a separate environmental group called Ozone Action, highly respected in America for its campaigns against global warming, and rename it Greenpeace.

John Passacantando, Ozone Action's founder and executive director, will become head of Greenpeace US. Elsewhere, groups face increasing questions over tactics. "The public is bored with seeing us chaining ourselves to ships and cranes," said one campaigner. "The trouble is, that's what we do best."

Bode, who says he is leaving to seek new challenges before retirement, acknowledges that direct action "can now look a bit tired. We have to be careful of creating a certain fatigue".

In Britain four years ago such fears led to an intensive reorganisation of Greenpeace UK and an angry parting of the ways with senior campaigners. The credibility of the British organisation was also damaged by the campaign against Shell's scheme to dump the disused Brent Spar oil rig on the sea bed. Greenpeace made basic errors in its scientific analysis and had to apologise.

The consequent decline in the British group's profile was reversed last year with its controversial entry into the debate over genetically modified (GM) crops. Its decision to send activists into fields to rip up trial plots has, however, been questioned by other green groups who say such confrontational tactics belong in the past.

Tony Juniper, campaigns and policy director at Friends of the Earth, said environmental groups such as Greenpeace risked being a victim of their own success: "They helped put the environment on the agenda, but now we all have the more difficult task of finding solutions and that requires a more sophisticated approach."

Greenpeace's critics are, however, agreed that it would be wrong to write off the organisation. Only last week it revealed the results of a sophisticated investigation into illegal logging which exposed the British Museum and Heal's, an upmarket furniture store, as purchasers of illegally felled tropical hardwoods from the Amazon.

Lord Peter Melchett, executive director of Greenpeace UK, said the organisation's fortunes were improving. "People are increasingly aware that the environment is at risk as never before. Membership has turned the corner and the latest figures show that it will start rising both globally and nationally from this year."