



Kvekersamfunnet

The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Norway

23rd September, 2016

To FWCC-EMES and FWCC World Office

Dear Friends,

In response to IRM 16-20 on Sustainability, the Executive Committee of Norway Yearly Meeting hereby submit our response to the recommendations of the Plenary Meeting gathered in Pisac, Peru, in January this year.

Our representatives submitted a report to our Yearly Meeting Gathering in June.

Ethical investment: Several years ago, Norway YM decided to do the majority of our banking with a bank called “Cultura” here, and which is a member of Global Alliance for Banking on Values. Similar banks might be available in most countries.

Sharing Quaker experiences with other faith groups: We have joined with other churches in The Norwegian Council of Churches, in an initiative known by various names over the years, e.g. *Climate Pilgrims*, and *Creation and Sustainability*. This work also has an inter-faith component, and many Norwegian Muslim groups are members of *Green Jihad*.

Previous work: After a number of years of awareness-raising, the theme of Norway YM in 2008 was *A Quaker Perspective on Environmental Concerns*. Thereafter our Executive Committee worked out the following principles for the Yearly Meeting:

- We travel only when it is entirely necessary and on errands to which we feel strongly led; we choose the most carbon efficient means of travel;
- We do our best to save energy in our buildings and meeting rooms;
- We will be careful when using paper, while remembering that computers are not entirely environmentally friendly either;
- We serve vegetarian meals, sometimes with fish, at our gatherings, and buy Fair Trade products and organic products which have travelled as little as possible, when this is available.

At our Yearly Meeting gathering this year, the Pisac reps. and our young people produced a Call to Action which we plan to follow up in the years to come. This Call to Action is appended. We have previously sent the equivalent of CHF 575 and during the YM gathering collected and sent the equivalent of CHF 900 in support of QUNO Geneva’s Diplomatic Dinners for Sustainability.

In Friendship

Hanne Hognestad
YM Clerk

A Call to Action for Sustainability from Norway YM gathered in June 2016

This minute is in response to the minute on living sustainably and sustaining life on earth minute¹ produced at the World Plenary in Pisac, Peru 2016, which challenges all Yearly Meetings to, among other things, support or initiate at least two concrete either existing or new actions on sustainability with 12 months.

We recognize the importance of clearly defining sustainability in a holistic sense, including:

- social sustainability
- cultural/multi-cultural sustainability
- economic sustainability
- ecological sustainability
- spiritual sustainability (lasting inner transition)

Actions for sustainability are inherently long-term, and include the different elements of sustainability. No one kind of sustainability can stand alone without the others, and spiritual sustainability is core. It gives direction to the action.

In light of this, we call upon Friends in Norway to discern: how this broad sense of sustainability can be brought to light in their lives, in their meetings and local communities.

Norway Yearly Meeting is already investing ethically (by banking with Cultura Bank). We ask individual Friends to consider whether they also can change the way or the places their money is invested. This includes the products we consume. We boldly extend John Woolman's famous quotation to say, "How are your belongings contributing to the seeds of unsustainability?"

We ask Friends to consider if they can initiate steps for transition and sustainability, in their local community and in collaboration with others, for example in light of Transition Town – movement in Norway.

Consider where you feel drawn and what gives you joy, which is critical to our ability to sustain our work.

The Yearly Meeting will support local efforts and play its part. There will be a small working group to create a questionnaire that will lead to a mapping of the local efforts and opportunities we know about in all the places we live.

At the Norwegian YM in 2016 the youth group met to discern what young friends could do to follow up the sustainability minute. Six concrete suggestions came forth.

1. To have a campaign to pick up trash in nature. To take pictures of it, and to inform others.
2. Work to reduce food waste, perhaps through smart solutions, known as green nudging, e.g. use smaller plates, buy goods that are soon outdated and smarter overall plans for food shopping.
3. Purchase more ecologic fair trade products.
4. Start a meat free week each month in addition to meat-free Mondays.
5. Protest and to have silent vigils at relevant locations of concern, such as increased oil production and militarization of the society.
6. Give a helping hand to those that are in need, for example immigrant families.

Young Friends stress that sustainable development must be lasting and just, providing coming generations with the possibility to enjoy equal benefits as the current ones.

This call to action seeks to continue and strengthen the message from Yearly Meetings in Norway and elsewhere, that the focus on sustainability is a testimony that embraces the other Quaker testimonies: truth, simplicity, community, equality and peace.

¹ <http://fwcc.world/fwcc-news/living-sustainably-and-sustaining-life-on-earth-the-minute-from-the-plenary>