

A Just World Where People and Nature Thrive





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Message from the Director



“Think globally, act locally” is a slogan coined by the founder of Friends of the Earth, and it still captures much about who we are. Friends of the Earth Ireland is proud to be part of the world’s largest network of grassroots environmental groups, which celebrates its 50th birthday in 2021.

We are equally proud to be a community at the heart of the growing Irish climate movement, campaigning for a just world with zero pollution. The campaigning and the community go together. Both because we increase our power by acting collectively and because “the weight of climate change, like any weight, is easier to bear with others” as US writer David Roberts puts it.

That’s why our Solstice Sunrise Swims are as important as our protest marches and our book clubs are as important as our petitions. Of course, like every other community in Ireland and much of the world, the last year has been about staying apart to stay safe. Overnight, one day in March, we closed our office and all our activities went online. Our small staff team responded amazingly to this entirely unexpected challenge. That was not a surprise. They routinely combine creativity and commitment to enable spectacular successes, on a shoestring. Even the shoestring was under threat in

2020 as we paused our fundraising in the face of the first wave of Covid. But our community of donors remained steadfast despite everything, and along with our institutional funders, helped to keep the show on the road.

And then a surprising thing did happen. Participation in our activities sky-rocketed, as geographic, travel and time barriers to taking part fell away. Events that might have had 80 people in a hotel in Dublin or 40 in a hotel in Tipperary suddenly had 200, 300, 400 people online from all over the country. And it didn't stop, culminating in the Stop Climate Chaos mass lobby of TDs in December, with over 1,000 constituents meeting over 100 of their TDs during the course of a 13-hour Zoom meeting.

Central to the success of that event were the One Future groups that sprang up across the country when we launched "the people's campaign for faster and fairer climate action" before the General Election in February. Like so much of what we do that was a result of putting outcome ahead of ownership. We collaborated with partners in Stop Climate Chaos and beyond to create One Future and gave it brand that means it is beholden to none of us.

This campaigning had impact. The Programme for Government agreed by the new three-party coalition in June is, by some margin, the strongest we have yet achieved on climate action. There were commitments on issues we, and many others, have been on campaigning on for years, from a deposit and return scheme on plastic bottles, to a ban on offshore gas exploration and fracked gas imports, to a promise of a fair payment for micro-solar, to the flagship commitment to the climate law we have been campaigning for for 15 years.

The targets in the Climate Action Bill are both very challenging and not enough to be our fair share. As I write this, the Bill has just passed its first big hurdle in the Dáil by a 117 votes to 12. This is the end of a marathon campaign, and the start of a sprint: the race to zero pollution fast enough to prevent complete climate breakdown and fairly enough to leave no one behind.

Onward, together.



Oisín Coghlan, Director,
Friends of the Earth

May 2021

Our Mission

We campaign and build movement power to bring about the system change needed for a just world where people and nature thrive.

Our Role

Friends of the Earth supports people to come together to transform our world until social justice is the foundation of resilient and regenerative societies that flourish within the ecological limits of our one planet.

We have particular experience in participatory education, campaign strategy, shaping public debate and driving policy change. We are committed to joining forces with other organisations and networks, of diverse experiences and perspectives, to build our collective power. We support people and groups working autonomously to connect their local work to the bigger national and international picture. We work with others to try to make sure our focus is transformational change, often by creating moments that exert maximum pressure on decision-makers.

Our Values

- Solidarity, Participation & Inclusion
- Nature and Social Ecology
- People and Communities
- Science and Education
- Social Justice and Climate Justice
- Culture and Creativity
- Transparency and Accountability

Our Theory of Change

Our Theory of Change is rooted in a commitment to an ongoing process of educating ourselves, engaging and listening to those most impacted by the issues we work on, and in taking collective action to make change.

We are committed to a process of consistently learning and unlearning about the systems of power and oppression that influence our lives and the world around us. We believe that we need to understand systems in order to effectively change them.

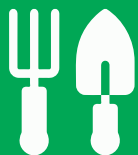
We believe that it is important to be clear in our messaging and so we don't shy away from occupying difficult conversational spaces. However, we believe that finding common ground is an important element of change-making, and so we strive to do so with all who want to make a positive difference in the world.

We believe in challenging ourselves to consistently create more welcoming spaces for people to engage in a process of interrogating the root causes of global injustice. By doing this we aim to help grow and work with a more critically informed network of change makers across Ireland.

When individuals and groups are nurtured to engage in a process of critically informing themselves as well as being supported to learn-by-doing, they are more likely to take effective collective action to bring about changes in their own communities and as part of a mass political movement.

When policy makers are the target of both mass movement campaigns and targeted, evidence based advocacy, they are compelled to bring about changes in policy and practice.

Impact Highlights & in the Media



Growing Together
delivered 51 activities
reaching **13,038** people

1,285

members of the public and over 100
TDs joined an online TD Lobby

One Future
achieved
443 people
organising
locally across 28
constituencies



10,000 people
took part in the
Sick of Plastic
postcard
campaign to
Supermarkets



800 people sent **10,000**
emails to election candidates
- resulting in 43 of the 160
TDs in the new Dáil signing
the climate pledge

Supported over
400 people
in making
submissions to
the Government's
Microgeneration
Consultation



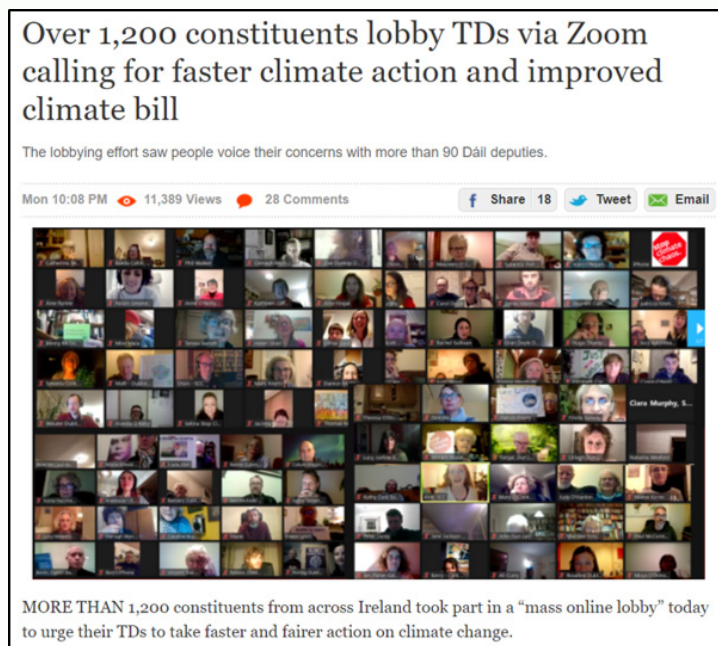
400 schools (10%
of all schools in
Ireland) applied to
our Solar Schools
competition - with
8 winners and 8
runners up chosen

1,965

people registered for a webinar
series with Stop Climate Chaos

Friends of the Earth in the Media

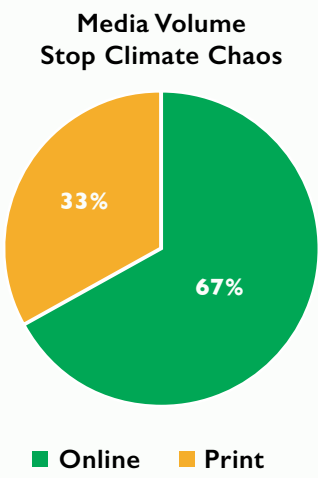
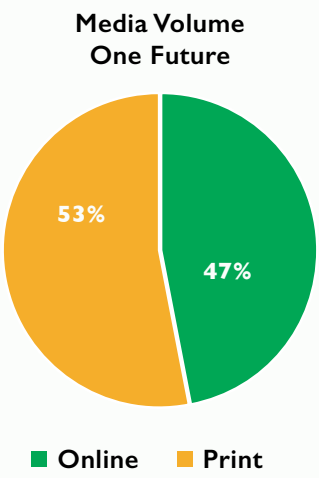
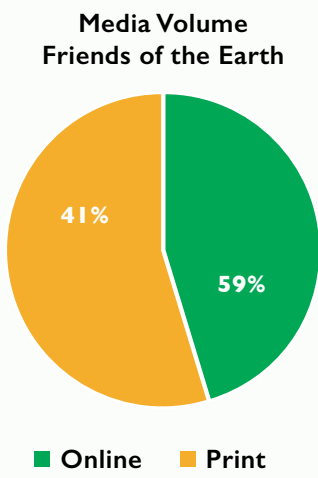
Over the years we have become go-to spokespeople for the media covering climate change and the environment. This year for the first time we commissioned professional analysis of our media performance in online and print.



- Friends of the Earth received 400 mentions across print and online in 2020. 59% of these came from online while 41% came through in print.
- Analysed print for Friends of the Earth amounted to 164 items. Of these, 87% was positive while 5% of coverage was what is categorised as "Prime Positive". Throughout the entire coverage, only 2 pieces came through as negative.
- Most coverage (71%) came through as significant, meaning that while Friends of the Earth was not the dominant feature in the article it mentioned enough to play a role in the how the content is formed.
- 'One Future' (the group) was mentioned 66 times and 'Stop Climate Chaos' (the group) 144 times. However, mentions of them in conjunction with Friends of the Earth mentions came to 5 and 8 respectively.
- Campaigns accounted for 46% of the coverage. Community Energy was the dominant campaign with 34 mentions within the analysed content, 23 of these contained its key messaging of "for the love of solar".
- Spokespeople featured 24% of the time with Oisín Coghlan appearing on 23 occasions.
- Media Score for friends of the Earth came to 83 out of a possible 100 – well above the industry benchmark of 50.

Headline Results

January - December 2020



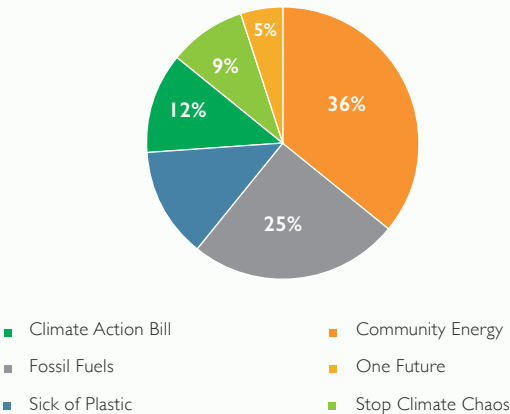
Media Type	Volume FoE	Potential Media Reach FoE	Volume OF	Potential Media Reach OF	Volume SCC	Potential Media Reach SCC
Online	236	39.90 M	31	7.53 M	96	27.03 M
Print	164	4.80 M	35	1.10 M	48	1.84 M
Total	400	44.70 M	66	8.63 M	144	28.86 M

Key Campaign Analysis

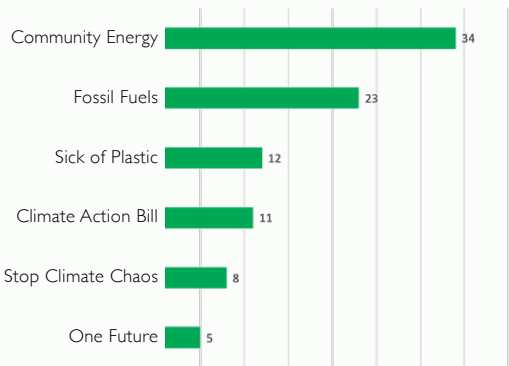
January - December 2020



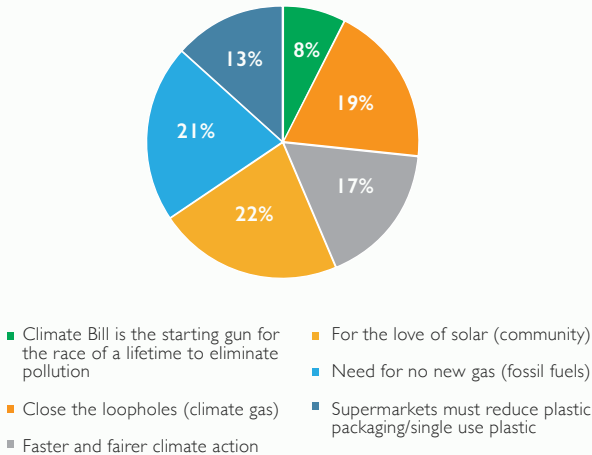
Key Campaigns of Voice



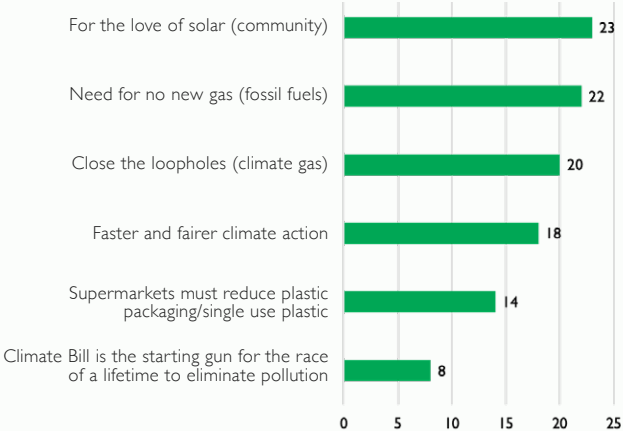
Key Campaigns by Volume



Key Messages Share of Voice



Key Messages Share by Volume



Our New Strategic Plan

Friends of the Earth's new Strategic Plan is the result of many reflective and explorative meetings and conversations between the staff team and the board throughout 2020. The plan reflects what we set out to achieve over the coming five years and how we hope to achieve it.

Our Organisational Goals

Friends of the Earth has four organisational goals to advance our mission, each with its own programme of work:

Building movement power

To contribute to building a diverse and inclusive movement strong enough to bring about system change in a way that supports others' social justice struggles and that aligns with our values.

Driving policy change

To drive a fair and fast transition to a zero pollution future.

Cultivating our community

To ensure Friends of the Earth supporters feel they are members of a mutually supportive community and present ways for them to participate in and sustain the work of the organisation for as long as it is required.

Developing our organization

To ensure Friends of the Earth has the robust governance and effective management systems, and the appropriate financial resources, to maximise our impact and to cultivate a positive working environment.

Our Priority Campaigns

2020-2022

We pursue our goals by adopting and implementing campaigns that draw on and integrate parts of all our programmes and their related strategies.

The campaigns we are committed to until 2022, and most likely beyond, are as follows:

Faster and Fairer Climate Action

This is the campaign to get to zero polluting emissions fast enough to prevent climate breakdown and fairly enough to leave no one behind. It includes our work on the Government's Climate Bill and Climate Action Plan. This campaign is often, but not exclusively, pursued through our coordination and participation in the Stop Climate Chaos Coalition.

One Future

One Future is the People's Campaign for Faster and Fairer Climate Action launched in the run up to the 2020 General Election. Our support for the burgeoning network of local One Future groups is part of our Movement Building programme to support activism.

Making Common Cause

This is our campaign to find common ground and make common cause with wider civil society networks, where our values align and our causes intersect, to maximise our collective impact. It includes our long-standing role in the Environmental Pillar of national environmental NGOs, as well as our recent role convening a group on Just Recovery to build

back better from the Covid-19 pandemic and our participation in Coalition 2030 on the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Power to the People

This is our campaign to put citizens and communities at the heart of transition to 100% renewable power. It includes our Solar Schools project and our participation in the community owned electricity supply company, CommunityPower.ie.

No New Gas

This is our campaign prevent Ireland being locked-in to dependence on fossil gas. There is no room for new gas if we are going to prevent complete climate breakdown. We need to "keep it in the ground". This includes our work to ban the import of fracked gas, prevent the building of LNG terminals and ban new licenses to look for gas in Irish waters.

Power Up

Power Up is the collective name for our programme of education and skills training, courses and projects.

Building Movement Power

Through our Movement Building programme we aim to:

1. Be a central and trusted hub for training and capacity building for individuals and groups who identify as being part of the movement for social justice and environmental sustainability. Our role is to train, mentor, promote reflection and develop increasing levels of ownership and leadership.
2. Support the development of opportunities and structures for local organising and campaigning that contribute to advancing the missions of Friends of the Earth Ireland and International
3. Collaborate directly and supportively with other groups and organisations whose work intersects with our mission and aligns with our values, and to participate actively in efforts to facilitate connections, coordination, collaboration and mutual support between intersecting causes in the climate movement and wider civil society.



Growing Together Project

Growing Together, which ran through 2019 and 2020, was a cross European project which aims to provide a voice for young people, particularly those

from rural areas, to engage with crucial debates on the future of food production, and the wider debates on the future of Europe.

The aim of the project was to support young activists and farmers to build skills and take action on issues relating to food and agriculture.

Growing Together delivered 51 local and national activities reaching 13,038 people and facilitated the first youth-

led agri-activist group in Ireland. The group is made up of 20 young people from across Ireland. These young people are farmers, urban growers, students, academics, educators, activists and workers and identify as male, female, non-binary, members of the LGBTQA+ community, asylum seekers, rural youth and urban youth (amongst other identities).

Other activities that Friends of the Earth facilitated through Growing Together include two political hustings events with MEPs and General Election Candidates, a Festival Roadshow and The Future is Rural Festival in Mayo - which was attended by over 1,000 people. The project produced a comprehensive piece of research on Food Sovereignty in Ireland that

includes reflections on the impacts of Covid on food & agriculture in Ireland. This publication is the first of its kind of Ireland.

Through the formation of the Growing Together Ireland agri-activist team Friends of the Earth have engaged a wide variety of underrepresented youth in the food sovereignty movement in Ireland. By supporting and training this group to be successful educators and campaigners for food justice in Ireland - they have been empowered to become change makers both as part of this group as well as taking their skills and knowledge into other areas and group to bring awareness to food sovereignty related issues amongst the wider public and with decision makers.

Friends of the Earth created new links with groups and communities across Ireland that are working on issues

relating to food and agriculture. Many of the activities run over the two year project served to connect people in local regions who are concerned about food sovereignty with one another, thus strengthening the movement.

Since the beginning of the Growing Together project the Food Sovereignty movement in Ireland has gained particular momentum. This is due to an increase in food sovereignty related events delivered by Friends of the Earth, the founding of a youth-led food sovereignty group 'Growing Together Ireland' and the founding of Talamh Beo, a grassroots farmer-led organisation. The interest in food sovereignty and the movement as a whole has been strengthened further by the impact of Covid.





One Future

One Future Campaign

The One Future Campaign for faster and fairer climate

action was launched by Friends of the Earth and the Stop Climate Chaos Coalition in January 2020 in the lead up to the General Elections. Ahead of the election a team of 30 volunteers mobilised people across the country to 'reverse canvass' election candidates - encouraging voters to talk about climate change with candidates and vote with climate action in mind.

The long-term vision for the campaign is to occupy a space within the climate movement for people to engage with elected representatives on an ongoing basis. One Future aims to frame climate action away from costs and towards benefits for communities and to integrate social justice demands into climate demands - faster and *fairer* climate action.

Following the election campaign Friends of the Earth continued to support local One Future groups as they grew in numbers and strength. Local groups didn't stop at the elections, they continued to engage with local TDs calling for faster and fairer climate action while elected representatives formed the Programme for Government and beyond.

As campaigning moved online, together with Stop Climate Chaos, we continued to support and engage people locally through educational webinars and call-a-thons where we facilitated people to chat with their TDs via Zoom in a supportive environment. This led to an online TD Lobby Day co-hosted by the One Future groups where the public were invited to join a day-long zoom meeting to speak to their TDs about climate.

70 organisations, from NGOs to grassroots activist groups across women's, youth, faith, environmental and overseas aid sectors signed up to support the One Future policy platform for faster and fairer climate action ahead of the 2020 General Election.

“The energy and momentum you have generated with this initiative is impressive. Keep it rolling. The forced use of zoom type technology has worked in our favour and brought people together from all over, who would otherwise never have driven to meetings. I remember what Áine said early on that this is so important we need to move out of our comfort zone. This spurred me on too.”

“It was brilliantly well organised well done to you all. A triumph of organisation, especially on the day.”

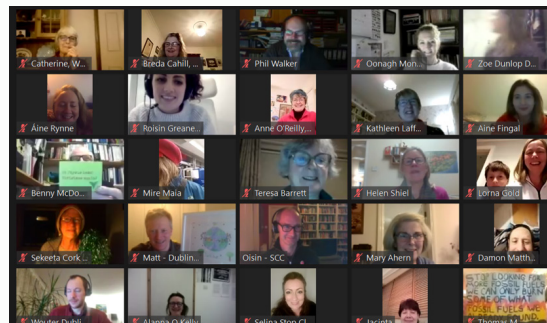
- Participants of our TD Lobby

Over 300 One Future ‘Canvass for Climate’ packs were sent out across the country for distributing materials in communities - kick starting many important climate conversations between friends, families and most importantly with election candidates.

800 people took the One Future online action - sending 10,000 emails directly to candidates asking them to sign the climate pledge. As a result, 43 of the 160 TDs in the new Dáil signed the pledge.



527 people registered for the 10 call-a-thon actions. The real impact of these was not numerical but the fact that a significant proportion of people became regulars and continued on to become core members in One Future groups. Many people also noted that calling their TD was something they would never have done alone but that this process gave them the confidence to do so.



Within the One Future Groups there are approx 30-35 people taking on leadership roles while there are 443 people organising locally within 28 constituency based groups. A major impact of this campaign is the increased national spread of people we are engaged with.

1,285 members of the public and over 100 TDs joined the TD Lobby Day - the first ever TD lobby hosted online and our biggest and most successful lobby ever.

One Future is one of our priority campaigns for the coming years - we are so excited for what comes next.

Learning Hub

The Friends of the Earth Learning Hub was developed on the back of our hugely popular Book Club in 2019. The Learning Hub is a carefully curated space for discussion, critical thinking, peer education and building a sense of solidarity. It involves a series of webinars and workshops that revolve around themes and issues that arise in a selection of books that have been voted for by our supporters. This is one of our efforts to deepen understandings of cross cutting issues and creating opportunities to explore these themes in more depth collectively.

“An understanding of citizenship and the multiple forms of prejudice which people face for different reasons. A deeper understanding of my part in climate justice”

- Participant of our Violent Borders Webinar

The first chosen book for 2020/2021 Learning Hub was 'Climate Justice: Hope, Resilience, and the Fight for a Sustainable Future' by Mary Robinson - for this book we explored what climate justice really means. For our most recent book 'Violent Borders: Refugees and the Right to Move' by Reece Jones we heard powerful testimonies from people with lived experience of migration and explored why migrant justice is an essential prerequisite for achieving climate justice.



System Change for a Just Transition

System Change for a Just Transition was our main educational and activism course for 2020. Through this programme we engaged 27 people on an intensive six-week course 'Mobilize. Resist. Transform.' exploring the environmental issues of our time, how they intersect, what some of the root causes are, and some tools and strategies for taking action.

This programme also involved a series of seminars, panel discussions and activist trainings to explore topics including Energy Democracy and Community Power, Justice in Financing the Climate Transition, Resisting Mining and Fossil Fuel Projects, and The Future of Food.

The highlight of this series was the Women Resisting Climate Change in the Global South webinar which was co-hosted by the Galway Feminist Collective. For this event we were honoured to be joined by Lolita Chávez and Zeinab Ghadhamfar - two women from the Global South on the front line of resistance to extractive projects that threaten the environment and exacerbate the impact of climate change.

Women in these communities that are faced with mining, mass hydroelectric infrastructure and biofuels often put their safety, freedom, livelihoods and lives on the line to protect the environment and Mother Earth.

Facilitators and Trainers Network

Friends of the Earth launched the Facilitators and Trainers Network in 2020 in a bid to connect, up-skill and support facilitators across Ireland.

At Friends of the Earth we value community and people power. We are always looking for ways to bring people together for peer support, skill sharing and collective action. Networks like this help activist feel a sense of support, partnership and community - critical for keeping going when the going gets tough.

The Facilitators and Trainers is not only a space for activists to receive training, it's a space for sharing skills and knowledge too.

Many of the Network members represented Friends of the Earth at local community events, facilitated Global Citizen Education workshops for third level students at Universities across Ireland and also took their newly developed skills to support and strengthen the grassroots groups they are involved with.



Sick of Plastic

Sick of Plastic is our campaign in partnership with VOICE Ireland to empower communities across Ireland to pressure industry and decision makers to take action on single-use plastic.

Despite Covid pulling the breaks on the our annual Shop and Drop direct action on Supermarket plastic packaging the campaign continued to grow and build momentum on putting an end to unnecessary plastic.

10,000 people took part in our Postcard to Supermarkets action where the following demands to Supermarkets were delivered both physically by post and digitally through a petition:

1. Reduce the amount of plastics in store
2. Offer loose fruit and veg at affordable prices
3. Offer more produce like loose washing detergent and dry goods
4. Support reuse by accepting reusable containers

Dear Supermarket Manager,

As a regular customer of yours I am asking you to:

Price loose items competitively vs packaged items
Lead the way by making your own brand packaging reusable, recyclable or compostable
Ensure your suppliers use less plastic
Allow us to use our own containers
Supply dry goods and cleaning products in bulk to reduce packaging
Eliminate plastic bags for loose produce and bread


Make it easy for me to reduce my plastic waste by adopting these demands.

Yours sincerely, _____
Name _____
Store Location _____

Circle the Supermarket you would like to send this card to:
Aldi Dunnes Lidl Supervalu Tesco

No Stamp Required

Sick Of Plastic Campaign
9 Upper Mount Street,
FREEPOST F3847
Dublin
D02K659



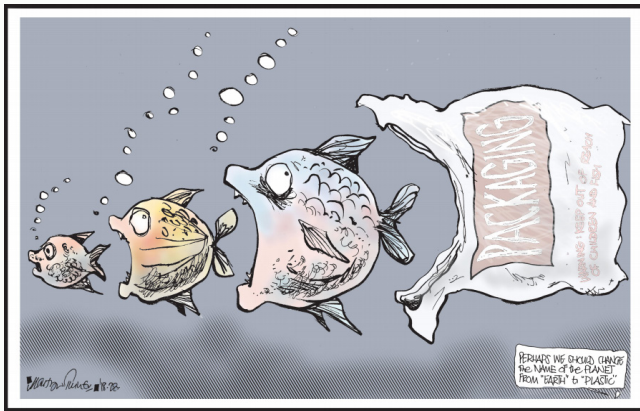
Instagram Twitter Facebook

Postcard illustration by Martyn Turner



The success of this action was largely thanks to the 30 hubs across the country that helped distribute physical postcards out to the public and to the dozens of local Sick of Plastic groups and activists inspiring their communities to take part.

Sick of Plastic hosted a screening of the documentary film 'The Story of Stuff' followed by a webinar with plastic and fossil fuel activists to explore the links between plastic production, consumption and the extraction of fossil fuels. This was a great opportunity to take a wider lens at the Break Free From Plastic movement and highlight the links between fracking for



shale gas in the US, LNG (liquified natural gas) Terminals proposed for the West Coast of Ireland and plastic production in Europe.

Through 2020 the campaign also saw progress for its demands to Government both at National and European levels. Ireland's Waste Action Plan for a Circular Economy has committed to the introduction of a 'latte levy' on single use coffee cups to be introduced in 2022. The Programme for Government has committed to introduce a Deposit and Return Scheme for plastic bottles and aluminium cans. Ireland's

Waste Action Plan is set to tackle other single use items through the EU's Plastic Strategy, due to become law in July 2021, which aims to ban single use items from plastic cutlery and straws to cotton buds.

These successes are all thanks to the thousands of people who have taken part in this campaign since it began in 2018, through the petitions signed at festivals, outside supermarkets and online to the many people who took direct action in their Supermarkets and joined us at our many demonstrations at the Dáil and the Department of the Environment and Climate.

More Movement Building Highlights:

- Hosted the Ayni Institute to run a two-session, four hour training on Social Movement Ecology for members of the climate justice movement.
- Provided the School Strikers with legal support in February 2020 by connecting them with the ICCL on their right to protest - our work with the school strikers meant that their protest was allowed to go ahead.
- Coordinated with groups involved in anti-gas campaigning to submit a policy briefing to Department officials on the development of a policy statement for LNG and fracked gas, which received media coverage. We also organised training and supported the development of other consultation submissions.
- Signed up to become a Code of Good Practice for Development Education member with IDEA. It is a quality framework that articulates how to strengthen good practice across all our Global Citizenship Education work. Over the coming year we will be undertaking a self assessment process and developing an action plan as part of becoming a CODE member.

Driving Policy Change

Through our Driving Policy Change programme we aim to:

1. Establish a new climate governance regime in Ireland that drives the development and adoption of policies to eliminate emissions in all sectors, based on legally-binding carbon budgets, expert-advice, and parliamentary accountability.
2. Ensure Ireland's climate-polluting emissions are on track for a 50% reduction by 2030, and Ireland's actual fair share of climate action is a key issue in the next electoral cycle.



Faster and Fairer Climate Action

Faster and Fairer Climate Action is our campaign to achieve our Strategic Objective on climate governance. Much of our work on this campaign is pursued through our coordination and participation in the Stop Climate Chaos Coalition.

Together with Stop Climate Chaos, Friends of the Earth was heavily involved in shaping the One Future Campaign for faster and fairer climate action in the lead up to the 2020 General Election. The campaign included a list of key demands, including reducing climate emissions by 8% a year, and a new climate law.

After the Election, all activity moved online due to the pandemic. While challenging, this actually facilitated participation by a broader group of people. As mentioned above we offered information, skills, and action webinars to members and prospective members of One Future groups, who then worked to ensure their local TDs, especially those whose parties were participating in the government-formation talks were aware of the desire for strong climate action among their constituents. All the time we were also providing policy briefing documents to TDs and advisers in all parties.

**I want faster and
fairer climate action**

**OnePlanet
OneClimate
OneFuture**

OneFuture.ie

#ClimateVote2020

I want a government that will:

**Reduce Ireland's greenhouse gas
emissions by at least 8% every year**

**Support the rural economy as farms reduce
emissions and become more sustainable**

Ban new fossil fuel projects

**End peat and coal burning for electricity and
ensure fair treatment of workers**

**Deliver an ambitious State-backed
home insulation programme**

**Advocate internationally for faster and
fairer climate action and justice**

Restore and protect nature and wildlife

**Ensure affordable and accessible
public transport for all**

**Enable and support community-owned
renewable energy projects**

OneFuture.ie

#ClimateVote2020

The Programme for Government adopted by the new three-party coalition in June 2020 was by some distance the most progressive Ireland has seen on climate action, with progress on many of the key asks in the One Future Declaration, including flagship commitments to reduce emissions by 7% a year on average and to underpin that target with a new strong climate law, to be published in the first 100 days.

Friends of the Earth and the Stop Climate Chaos Coalition accompanied the policy process around the drafting of the Bill very closely. When it was published on Day 101, 7th October, it was clear that the pressure to produce it quickly had left its mark, with a significant number of weakness and gaps where the stated political intention had not been faithfully translated into effective legislative language. At least some of this was down to inertia or resistance inside the administrative system.

While our movement building work supported hundreds of people to talk to their local TDs, Friends of the Earth, Stop Climate Chaos and the Environmental Pillar were preparing briefing documents and talking to Ministers, advisers, officials and TDs as the Oireachtas climate committee scrutinised the draft and the Government began work on a revised draft.

When the Oireachtas Committee published its recommendations, just before Christmas and two weeks after the online mass lobby, they included many of the changes proposed by Friends of the Earth and Stop Climate Chaos and supported by the One Future groups. In the New Year, local One Future groups continued to meet with TDs and we kept meeting officials, keeping up a drumbeat of support for the Oireachtas Committee recommendations to be adopted by the Government.

When the new version of the Bill was published on 23rd March it was indeed substantially stronger and incorporated many of the improvements advocated by Friends of the Earth, the Stop Climate Chaos Coalition and the network of local One Future groups. And on 12th May, after two weeks of mostly constructive debate in the Dáil, the Bill passed its first big vote by 117 votes to 12.

“Thank you for the webinar and all the information. It made submitting to the Micro-generation Support Scheme so much easier.”

“I just wanted to compliment you on your excellent, efficient user interface to help us react usefully to your campaign. Excellently put together. Keep up the good work!”

“Many thanks for that. I re-worded your submission to personalise it a bit and I’ve just sent it in. I was aware of some of the issues/short-comings, but it was an education to read about a lot of the more ‘technical’ issues.”

- Action Takers on the Microgeneration Consultation



Through our Run On Sun campaign and more recent Solar Schools project we have kept the pressure on the government to change legislation so households and communities can benefit from and access clean, renewable energy. The Programme for Government has committed to supporting microgeneration by changing planning laws to make it easier for the public to install solar panels so they can generate clean energy from their own roofs. This also includes a feed-in-tariff - allowing people to connect to the grid and receive fair payment for the energy they create.

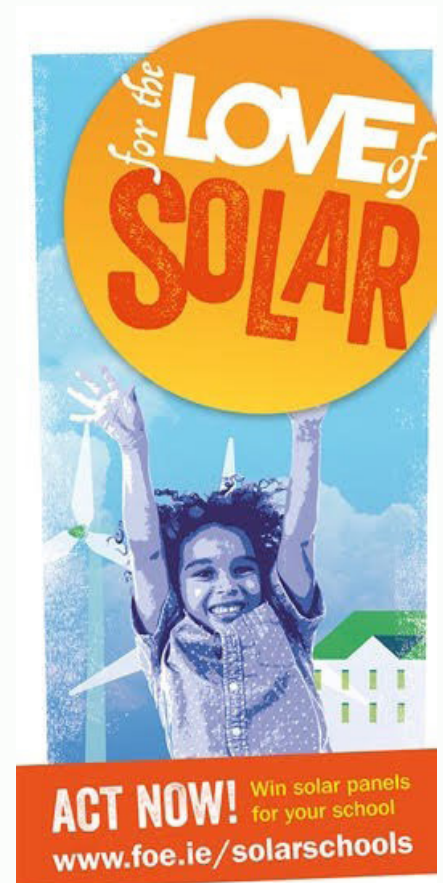
Because the scheme to support microgeneration may only attract private homeowners - Friends of the Earth supported over 400 people in making submissions to the Government’s Microgeneration Consultation through informative webinars and online resources. The objective was to pressure Government to make microgeneration accessible to all.

Our Solar Schools Competition ran for a second year - giving schools across Ireland the chance to win solar panels so they can generate clean energy straight from their roofs. Solar Schools is more than a competition - it’s a way for us to showcase how community powered renewable energy can work and to highlight the challenges in achieving it. These challenges include planning regulations and legislation that holds communities back from powering their own energy such as the lack of a feed-in-tariff where people can receive payment for excess energy created.

400 schools (10% of all schools in Ireland) applied to our Solar Schools competition - with 8 winners and 8

runners up chosen. Each of the winning schools received workshops from Friends of the Earth to learn about ways they can take action to make every school a Solar School.

Friends of the Earth supported the formation of Ireland's first ever 100% community owned and community powered renewable energy supplier in Ireland. Community Power is now generating clean electricity from local community energy projects into people's homes and businesses across Ireland.

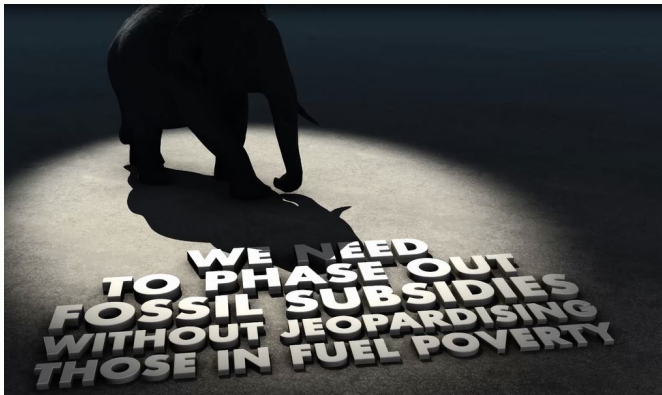


No New Gas

No New Gas is our campaign to prevent Ireland being locked-in to dependence on fossil gas. Its primary focus is on fracked gas, LNG infrastructure and new exploration licenses for oil and gas in Irish waters.

We are working to ensure that:

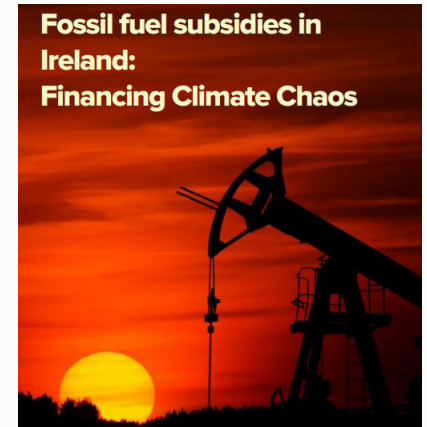
- No import terminals for liquefied natural gas (LNG) are built on the island of Ireland
- No new licenses for offshore gas exploration are granted



We commissioned and published a report titled 'Fossil Fuel Subsidies in Ireland: Financing Climate Chaos'. This report highlights how entrenched the Irish state is in propping up the fossil fuel industry, for example by funding a University body that partners with fossil fuel giants such as Exxon, Shell and BP. What's more, the European Investment Bank gave €100m to upgrade and expand the gas network, and our semi-state electricity board is planning to build 4 new gas power plants (costing €700m), mostly to power data centres.

Friends of the Earth developed and strengthened ties with anti-fracking groups and activists in the US to further the campaign against LNG (liquified natural gas) terminals.

The Programme for Government has committed to ending new licenses for offshore gas exploration and banning the importation of fracked gas, casting doubt on plans for LNG terminals. Friends of the Earth set out to ensure that this was followed up with formal Policy Statements to turn political promises into lasting regulation, writing briefings and talking to officials.



A big win came in early 2021 when the Government formally agreed that a ban on new offshore oil and gas exploration would be put into law, as an amendment to the Climate Bill. This progress is largely down to the tireless work of grassroots activists across Ireland. Friends of the Earth Deputy Director at the time, Kate Ruddock, spoke on RTE News about this win, saying it's "a huge success for climate activists. We started this journey with a ban on fracking, now we moved into the offshore. Next is to stay strong against LNG"

The Policy Statement to ban imports of fracked gas and LNG terminals has yet to appear and Friends of the Earth and grassroots campaign groups continue to keep up the pressure.

Making Common Cause

This is our campaign to find common ground and make common cause with wider civil society networks, where our values align and our causes intersect, to maximise our collective impact.

The highlight of this work over the last year was the collaboration to produce a Joint Statement on a Just Recovery. A cross-section of 20 organisations from across civil society were invited to 5 half-day sessions in September, discussing shared values, vision and messages.

In the context of Covid, participating organisations decided that the way to deepen collaboration was to build around the concept of Just Recovery. This is effectively a rebranding for the Covid era of the idea of a “Green New Deal” and is synonymous with “Build Back Better” which was later adopted as a slogan by Joe Biden. All of these phrases essentially reframe climate action as investment, opportunity and job creation rather than cost, sacrifice and job losses, and embed it in a call for wider reform of the state’s role to meet the needs of 21st century society.

On foot of those sessions Friends of the Earth coordinated a process to draft “A Shared Vision for a Just Recovery” which included Six Principles, one of which was Faster and Fairer Climate Action. Whereas the One Future policy platform was a co-creation between Friends of the Earth, the

Stop Climate Chaos and other strands of the climate movement, the Just Recovery “shared vision” was a co-creation with a far a broader cross-section of civil society. As such, among the close to 100 signatory organisations there were 14 national coalitions, double the number that signed-up to the One Future platform, including the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. It was launched in advance of the annual Budget in October.

As a follow-up, Friends of the Earth wrote to each of the Government party leaders asking for a meeting.



In January, a delegation from the signatories met the Minister for Climate Action to discuss the national economic recovery plan due later in 2021.

Cultivating Our Community



Our Supporter Care work aims to make Friends of the Earth supporters feel they are members of a mutually supportive community and present ways for them to participate in and sustain the work of the organisation for as long as it is required.

Sadly the breaks were pulled on our Sunrise Sea Swims and supporter events - just like all of our physical gatherings and actions in 2020. But that didn't stop us from connecting with each other and finding ways to build resilience and sense of community.

We hosted a number of cultural events to bring our supporters together more informally, creating space for reflection and connection. Considering we could not meet in person - this is something we felt was even more important through 2020 with Covid restrictions in place.

One of these events was a Book Club Webinar with Irish author Sinéad Gleeson in conversation with New York novelist Jenny Offill discussing Jenny's new book 'Weather' and exploring the emotional and daily reality of awakening to the climate crisis.

Another one of these events was our 'Hopeful Chats About Climate Change' which we hosted as part of our efforts to fundraise for the book 'A Short, Hopeful Guide to Climate Change'. We were joined by climate and psychology experts and youth activists to speak about eco-anxiety and grief in response to the climate crisis. We were particularly struck by this quote from youth activist Aiyana Hedler who joined our panel:



"I understand that many of you may be confused and even angry that we are trying to highlight hope and emotional wellbeing in such a hopeless existential crisis. But the main message is that no change can come about if hope doesn't exist and people are paralysed by inevitability."

"My best work started when I recovered from my crippling eco-depression and turned it to action because the sheer amount of people also fighting and creating little pockets of the future they want within the present, gave me hope. I am still terrified and furious almost all the time but hope fills the glass that I pour action from."

Friends of the Earth hired a new Communications Officer in 2020 - brining more capacity to our communications, outreach and media engagement work. The additional capacity is evident in the increased volume and more targeted emails, social media activity, higher attendance at our events and higher participation in our actions as well as wider and more strategic media coverage.

We ran our first ever crowdfunding campaign to secure the funds to help children's book publisher Little Island Books and children's author Oisín McGann to make 'Ireland's most environmentally friendly book about climate change for teenagers'. Thanks to the support of 279 donors we raised €13,431 to help publish the book, 'A Short Hopeful Guide to Climate Change' which is due to be released in May 2021.

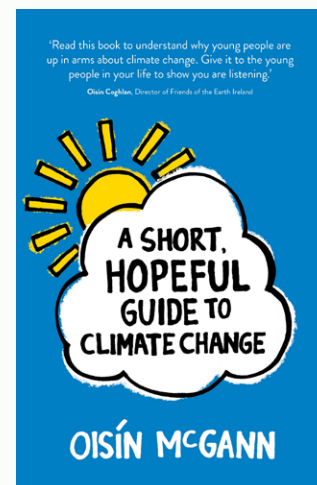
Covid impacted on our lives in many ways, for some it was harder than others. We recognised the need to check in with our regular donors about their capacity to give and we did so early on,

facilitating donors to pause, reduce or cancel their donations. We were so amazed to see some of our supporters step up by increasing their donations in response to this - as a way to balance out those who had to cancel.

Despite 2020 being such a hard year, we remained healthy financially - thanks to the continued support of our donors.

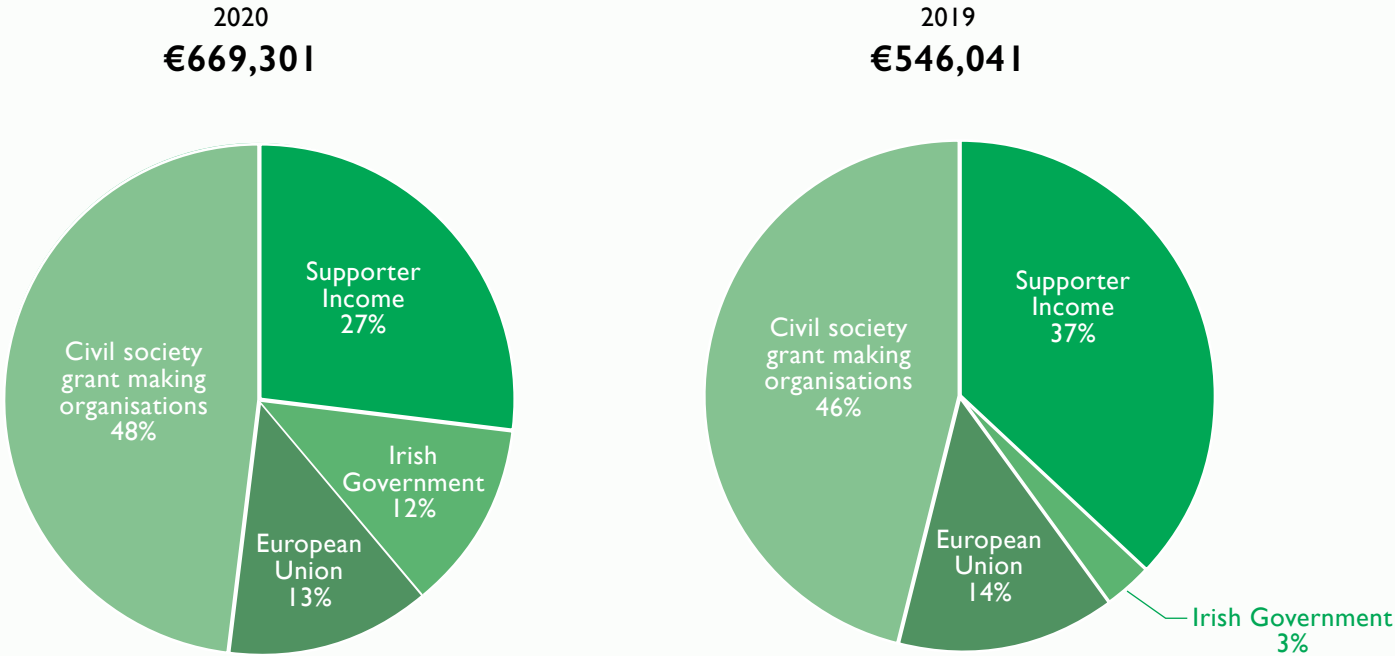
Friends of the Earth ran 13 fundraising appeals in 2020 which resulted an increase in the number of people who give monthly in addition to the increase of average monthly donations. Overall we achieved a 18% increase in the annual value of those who give monthly.

These donations contributed greatly to the success of our campaigns, and will ensure that we can continue our work into 2021 and beyond. We are so full of gratitude for our loyal and committed donor community.



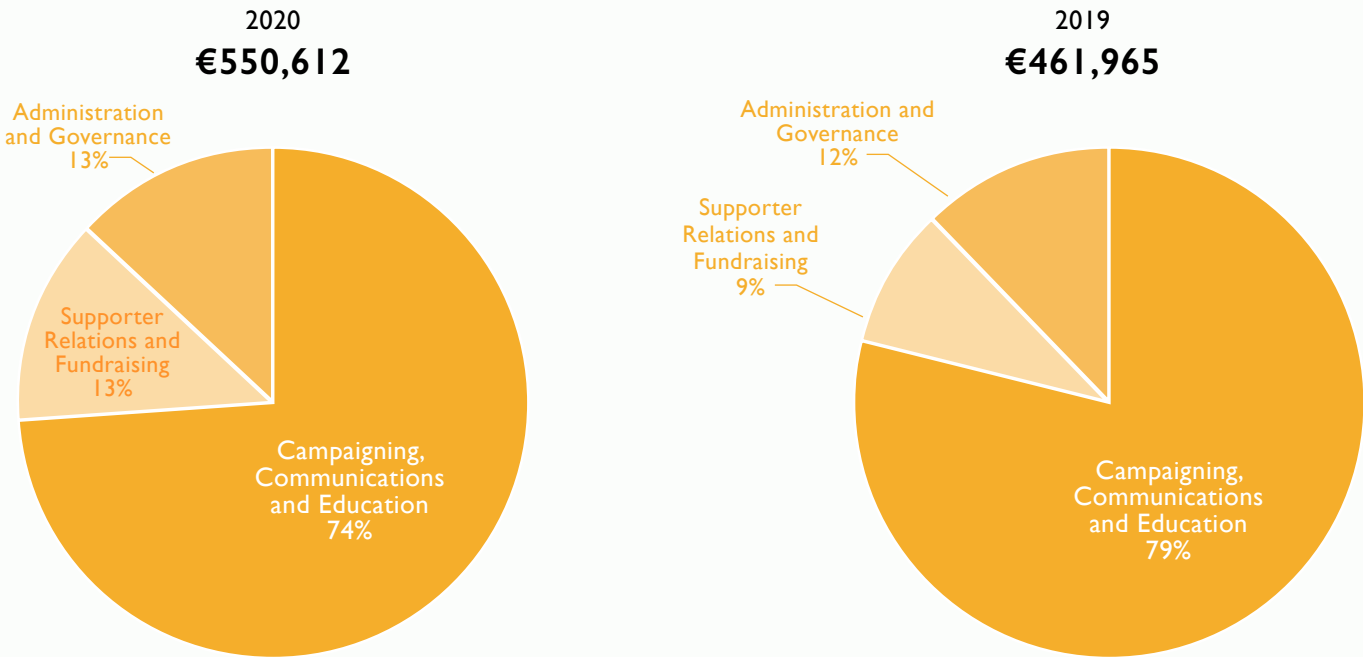
Financial Information

Income



	2020	2019
Supporter Income	€182, 128	€199, 817
Irish Government	€79, 148	€19,144
European Union	€88,108	€77,761
Civil society grant making organisations	€319,917	€249,319
Total	€669,301	€546,041

Expenditure



	2020	2019
Campaigning, Communications and Education	€406,571	€363,625
Supporter Relations and Fundraising	€73,108	€41,617
Administration and Governance	€70,933	€56,722
Total	€550,612	€461, 965

Thank you

All of this, our work together and our collective impact, would not be possible without you, the members of the Friends of the Earth community. However you contribute, whether it's taking e-actions, participating in webinars or courses, giving money, calling your TDs or organising in your local community, it all makes a difference. We each add our grains of sand to the scales and over time we tip the balance towards action, inclusion and justice.

At the heart of our community is our staff team. It's almost doubled in size over the last few years, from four or five to around eight to ten. Time and again, they go the extra mile to make something happen, to make something work. We are committed to prioritising staff wellbeing and we have made progress in the last year in improving our support structures, but we still have work to do.

Friends of the Earth is governed by a volunteer Board, who set our strategic direction and shoulder the legal responsibility for our duties as an employer, a not-for-profit company and a charity. Our mission is extraordinarily well served by the expertise and energy the Board dedicate to the task, under our Chairperson, Marion Briggs. Find out more about our Board on the website.



As well as subscriptions and donations from members of the Friends of the Earth community we sustain the organisation financially with grant income. We are grateful to our funders for their assistance, including Irish Aid, the Department of the Environment, the Community Foundation, the European Climate Foundation, the NTR Foundation and the European Union. Full details are in the annual accounts published on our website.

Together we campaign for a world where people and nature thrive. Together we are Friends of the Earth.

Our Staff Team

Oisín Coghlan, Director
Audrey Vallier, Head of Operations and Finance
Claudia Tormey, Head of Supporter Care and Communications
Jerry Mac Evilly, Head of Policy Change
Áine O'Gorman, Activism Support Coordinator
Sadhbh O'Neill, Climate Policy Coordinator
Deirdre Duff, Communications Coordinator
Emma-Jayne Geraghty, Education Coordinator
Lyndsey O'Connell, Sick of Plastic Campaign Lead
Del Thorogood, Accounts and Administration Officer
Karen Aguiar, Volunteer Administrator
Emily Meuleman, Volunteer One Future Groups Support

And thank you to our colleagues who moved on in the last year:

Kate Ruddock, Deputy Director and Head of Policy
Meaghan Carmody, Head of Movement Building
Triona Reid, Outreach Manager
Catherine Devitt, Climate Policy Coordinator

Our Board of Directors

Marion Briggs, Chairperson
Frances McMullin, Vice-Chair
Ciara Kirrane, Secretary
Sarah O'Suilleabhain, Treasurer
David Joyce
Celeste Roche
Valery Molay
David Heller
Emma Lane-Spollen
Colm Ó Cuanacháin

Friends of the Earth Ireland CLG is a company limited by guarantee (a not-for-profit company), registered with the Companies Office in Dublin (No. 383678). We are registered with the Charities Regulator and our Registered Charity Number (RCN) is 20205807.

Impact
Report
2021

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