



IFEES/Ecolslam– what can we learn & do differently in the future

We begin this message by expressing our sympathies for all those affected by Covid-19 and all of the surrounding impacts to our lives as individuals, families and communities. Our sincere thanks to all of the wonderful essential workers, in every occupation, who keep us safe, look after us, make and deliver us food and everything in between.

This is a time of incredible change, challenge and paradoxically opportunity. We know that human activity is impacting on our planet and we do know that annually @7million people die from pollution related illnesses*. We won't labour over our history, we do ask that we all reflect on the 'now' and think about what we can do differently in the 'future.'

If we are to make any good from the tragedies we see unfolding, we must look at our patterns of living, the choices we make, the investments made and see what they have done. We will not pretend to know what is the optimal calculation between economic development, poverty alleviation and industrial growth. When we look around in this "New Normal" we can see the tide receding and laid bare before us are the polluting impacts of mass travel, industry, power generation etc, as in their absence, we are awed by satellite images of clean air over our homes, where yesterday they were cloaked in choking smog*.

It is also evident* that our relationship with animals and the environment needs to change. Covid19 is a Zoonotic virus, there is increasing scientific evidence that like Ebola, it has arisen from humans trading and consuming wild animals. The harm done on these animals immune systems, by caging and farming them, permitted the jump from species to species; and then moving sick animals to an urban market allowed the transmission from animal to human. Like Avian Flu and Swine Flu, it is the factory rearing that is at the heart of the conditions that create stressed animal immune systems, this allows otherwise contained viruses (naturally carried by the hosts) to mutate and in turn jump to humans. With the dire consequences of these farming methods, we urgently call for people to stop supporting factory farming in general and caged farming of wild species in particular; otherwise the likelihood increases of new devastating viruses appearing again.

As an environmental charity we humbly request, that as we all race back to 'normality,' we ask everyone **"please think about what we can do differently, and how we can hold onto the good and definitely make efforts to reduce some of the harm?"**

This request was made in a meeting in which 6 trustees attended over a video platform instead of travelling to meet face to face, as we would have previously done.

We saved:

- 1. Over 1200 miles of travel – avoiding the wear and tear**
- 2. Over 30 hours of travel time which we could spend with our families (1200 miles / 40mph average)**
- 3. Over 288kg of CO2 emissions – with which we did not pollute our air (150g / km x 1.6 x 1200)**
- 4. Over £170 in fuel and expenses we did not incur – to be saved or spent on family, charity & home (£50/ tank = 400miles + food/drink for 6 people)**

References:

*National Geographic April 2020

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2020/04/pollution-made-the-pandemic-worse-but-lockdowns-clean-the-sky/>

*Guardian newspaper 12th April – 2.5bn tonne reduction in CO2 emissions estimated for 2020. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/mar/23/coronavirus-pandemic-leading-to-huge-drop-in-air-pollution>

* Critical Reviews in Microbiology. Vol 33 2007 issue 4. The Human/Animal Interface: Emergence and resurgence of Zoonotic infectious Diseases. Michael Greger PhD (for factory farming and virus spread)

<https://www.sciencealert.com/the-pangolin-is-now-a-suspect-in-the-coronavirus-outbreak> (on origins of Corona and factory farming of wild animals)

Professor Kate Jones, UCL Genetics, Evolution & Environment. and article in Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/mar/18/tip-of-the-iceberg-is-our-destruction-of-nature-responsible-for-covid-19-aoe>
(on factory farming and and corona)

American Journal of Public Health Sept 2007, The Chickens Come Home to Roost. David Benetar PhD (on zoonotic viruses and factory farming)
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/feb/25/coronavirus-closures-reveal-vast-scale-of-chinas-secretive-wildlife-farm-industry>
(on factory farming of wild animals and government closures in China).