

December 2021 Volume 6 Issue 6

Tools for Climate Action

Wednesday, December 8, 2021



ESRAG's December newsletter shares a wealth of ways Rotarians are carrying out climate action around the world. It's packed with resources for educating your community and catalyzing solutions.

Our lead story highlights solutions Rotarians can implement for the massive global problem of cooking over open fires. ESRAG members tell you how to organize watch parties for two powerful documentaries, and invite you to free online presentations on an array of environmental solutions. Reading this issue will connect you to the expertise of three ESRAG Task Forces: Cleaner Cookstoves, Plastic Solutions, and Plant-Rich Diet.

Here are the stories:

- Cleaner cookstoves: choosing the right technology
- Dec. 13: Sustainable Buildings in Sustainable Cities
- Dec. 15: Food waste solutions: composting without worms
- Dec. 16: How Rotarians can help countries keep their COP 26 commitments
- How to set up watch parties for *Earth Emergency* and *The Story of Plastic*
- Showcase your project through ESRAG's Biodiversity + seminar
- Jan. 13: Dr. Sailish Rao reveals a powerful solution at a Climate Task Force Meeting
- Rotary approves four RICON breakout sessions by ESRAG members

These stories illustrate the speed and breadth with which ESRAG members are equipping Rotarians' environmental action throughout the world. Make this work even stronger by [donating to ESRAG](#) today!

Photo by Maya Smeulders: Students carrying the chimneys for new mud stoves at Ntungamo Primary School in Uganda.

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Cleaner Cookstoves: Choosing the Right Technology

By Maya Smeulders on Thursday, December 9, 2021

Some 3 billion people, almost half the world's population, still rely on open fires and fuels like wood and kerosene to cook their food. The simple act of cooking is responsible for 4 million deaths per year and is a major source of global greenhouse gases. ESRAG's Cleaner Cooking Taskforce is ready to help you implement projects to reduce smoke exposure and burns, mitigate deforestation, and save families a tremendous amount of time and money that they are currently spending to obtain firewood, as well as providing enormous health benefits.

Solutions include cleaner and more efficient stoves, liquid- and biogas installations, electric-magnetic induction stoves, and solar cookers. The Taskforce can help you find a technology and implementation plan that fits the culture, wealth, climate, and other factors of each community. Click on the "read more" button for vivid examples from Africa and Central America.

Photo courtesy of Maya Smeulders: fitting pots to a new mud stove in Uganda before it dries completely.



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Sustainable Buildings in Sustainable Cities

By Ariel Miller on Sunday, December 5, 2021

A vertical event poster for a talk by Caroline Pidcock. The poster has a dark green background with white text. At the top, it says "CAROLINE PIDCOCK" in large, bold letters. Below that, it says "SUSTAINABLE BUILDINGS IN SUSTAINABLE CITIES, WHAT YOU CAN DO!". The date and time are listed as "Monday 13 December, 5:30 PM Sydney UTC +11 on Zoom". There is a small circular inset photo of Caroline Pidcock. At the bottom, it says "Hosted by the Climate Group of the Rotary Club of Sydney. Caroline will share her thoughts on sustainable buildings. She is passionate about architecture and regenerative design, and how she can joyfully co-create 'socially just, culturally rich and ecologically restorative' ways of living in Australia."

Australian architect Caroline Pidcock will give an exciting talk on mobilizing architecture and regenerative design to co-create "socially just, culturally rich, and ecologically restorative" ways of living in Australia. Winner of the 2021 National AIA Leadership in Sustainability Award and multiple other architectural awards, Caroline is a practicing architect and leader for an array of civic and professional organizations focusing on climate action and sustainability. She also teaches at universities in New South Wales. Born in Grafton, land of the Gumbainggir Nation, and raised in Sydney, land of the Eora Nation, she has been shaped by their mighty water systems. She is a Life Fellow of the Australian Institute of Architects. The Rotary Club of Sydney is hosting this free ESRAG Oceania online forum. [Register here.](#)

After COP 26: How Rotarians Can Help Countries Keep Their Commitments

By Ariel Miller on Sunday, December 5, 2021

What are the commitments countries made at the UN's COP26 climate conference in Glasgow, and what can Rotarians do to hold them to their promises? [Sign up here](#) for insights from the expert and passionate advocates who will speak at the Rotary Climate Action Team Dec. 18 forum at 4 pm Pacific Time (midnight Dec. 18 UTC. Also, you can view and share the ESRAG Oceania Chapter interview with ESRAG's COP 26 Delegate-Observer Karen Kendrick-Hands, in both a short (23 minute) and complete (55 minute) version. [Scroll way down at this link](#) to see both.



Here are the RCAT panelists for Dec. 16:

- **Karen Kendrick-Hands**, co-founder of ESRAG, an environmental lawyer who served as a Rotary Observer Delegate to COP 24 and COP 26, and advocated successfully with Rotary International for ESRAG's platform to make environment a Rotary Area of Focus. As ESRAG's current Director of Relationships, she's creating partnerships to connect business, civil society, and Rotarians to implement environmental solutions.

- **Rick Wayman** became CEO of the Foundation for Climate Restoration (F4CR) in 2021, after founding GeoComb Homes, a sustainable modular housing company. From 2007-20 he held several leadership roles including CEO at the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation. He served as part of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) team that received the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize for accomplishments including the successful negotiations leading to the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. He plans to leverage his experience in advocacy and coalition building to mobilize support for restorative technologies that will preserve a habitable planet for future generations.

- **Gary White**, Moderator, is a Climate Reality Leader and Rotarian who has given climate presentations to over 16,000 people in California's Bay Area. He also leads the San Mateo chapter of Extinction Rebellion. Currently retired, he spent his career as a human resources executive with Apple, Intuit, and Palm, and led corporate social responsibility over the last 15 years of his tech career.

You can view previous [RCAT monthly forums here](#). Recent topics include climate tipping points, climigration's impact on American cities, and blue carbon.

Upcoming Biodiversity+ Seminars Dec. 22-Jan.5

Monday, December 6, 2021

Waste to Wealth - composting without worms
A presentation by Lalit Vashista, Sujatha Krishnamurthy and Vaidehi Naik-Nandola, co-founders of Ekobarn

ESRAG Biodiversity - Circular Economy
Wednesday December 15, 2021
2:00pm UTC (7:30pm IST) via zoom

Join us for ESRAG's upcoming Wednesday seminars for insight on an array of environmental issues and solutions:

- **Dec. 15: Waste to Wealth: Composting without Worms**, 2 pm UTC, 7:30 pm IST, a talk by Lalit Vashista, Sujatha Krishnamurthy, and Vaidehi Naik-Nandola. More than 40% of the 2.2 billion tons of waste dumped by humans every year is organic, and can be easily upcycled into nutrient-rich compost. The co-founders of the Indian company [Ekobarn](#) will explain how individuals – given a little understanding of the chemistry behind composting and the aid of a few accessories – can do a lot to reduce the waste streams that are overwhelming landfills and causing irreversible land, water, and air pollution.
- **Dec. 22: Solstice Projects Review**, 1 pm UTC (8 am EST), a year-end celebration and discussion of the projects showcased in the last few months of Biodiversity+.
- **Jan. 5: Biodiversity and Ecology of Mangroves**, 2 pm UTC, 9 am EST: Botanist Christopher Puttock, PhD, will describe this vital resource in carbon sequestration and coastal resilience which will be a major project focus championed by Rotary during the presidency of Shekhar Mehta.

Biodiversity+ seminars take place weekly via Zoom. The 90-minute sessions are highly interactive and draw Rotarians from the entire world to learn and network. [Sign up here](#) to receive the Zoom link for any meeting that intrigues you, and to get on the list for email updates.

Hold a Watch Party Dec. 29 for Earth Emergency Premiere

By Melanie Wallace on Tuesday, December 7, 2021

ESRAG invites you to host watch parties for the new documentary *Earth Emergency*, featuring the Dalai

Lama and Greta Thunberg. With captivating illustrations and graphics, stunning footage, and interviews with leading scientists, the film reveals how environmental feedback loops are amplifying global warming, and issues a compelling call to action. Narrated by actor Richard Gere, the film premieres in the US on Wednesday, December 29, 8:00-9:00 p.m. ET. Invite your club and community to tune in, and host a discussion! Even astronauts at the International Space Station will be able to watch while gazing down at our planet.

ESRAG's delighted to team up with the film's production team on this environmental awareness initiative. Please check your local listings on [PBS.org](https://www.pbs.org) and the [PBS Video app](#). The film will stream simultaneously with broadcast and be available on all station-branded PBS platforms, including [PBS.org](https://www.pbs.org) and the PBS Video app, available on iOS, Android, Roku, Apple TV, Amazon Fire TV, Android TV, Samsung Smart TV and Chromecast.

If you are unable to access the film through the US-based Public Broadcasting System, you can watch the key points [online in five 8-15 minute segments](#). Each segment comes with [discussion group guides](#).

Send an [email query](#) for more information about the film and sharing its content.

[Read More](#)

The Dalai Lama with Greta Thunberg and Leading Scientists: A Conversation on the Crisis of Climate Feedback Loops



Official Launch of Climate Emergency: Feedback Loops film series

How to Organize a Story of Plastic Watch Party

By Lori Cloutier on Monday, December 6, 2021



The problem with plastic waste in our waters and lands is difficult to overstate. The sheer volume overwhelms existing disposal systems, yet the amount of new plastic manufactured per year is expected to double by 2040. Recycling is not economically feasible for 90% of plastics, so what can a regular person do to make any kind of impact on such a huge problem?

You can organize a party.

The ESRAG Plastic Solutions Task Force is challenging members to accept a challenge: To organize a “Story of Plastic” Watch Party for their club, family or community group. The Emmy Award-winning film is available with subtitles in 28 languages. Plastic Solutions has created a “Watch

Party Packet” with organizing and promotion tips, graphics and art, discussion group questions, and 2 case studies of Rotary Clubs with plastic reduction projects and policies. To request a packet or talk about the concept of a watch party, email Task Force Chair [Lori Cloutier](#).

[Read More](#)

Dr. Sailesh Rao Unveils Systemic Solution: Jan. 13 Climate Task Force Meeting

By Andrea Wotan on Sunday, December 5, 2021

Dr. Sailesh Rao will speak to ESRAG’s Climate Task Force General Meeting Jan. 13 at 7 pm UTC, 1 PM CST. Founder and Executive Director of the non-profit [Climate Healers](#), Dr. Rao was chosen by the Plant Rich Diet Task Force,

host of the January meeting, for his significant contributions in raising awareness of the need for society to rapidly shift to a plant rich diet in order to heal the Earth. He'll explain his analysis that the approach the world is taking today to combat climate change is unwittingly leading us down a disastrous path, because world leaders are missing two fundamental pieces of the climate change puzzle which, if not factored in, will result in climate catastrophe despite our best efforts. Dr. Rao will show us that embracing this truth and acting on it immediately will vastly improve our chance of effectively tackling climate change in the near term. Furthermore, you'll be uplifted to discover that a monumentally important piece of the climate change puzzle is easier than we think and available to us right now. [Register here.](#)



[Read More](#)

Showcase your project in ESRAG's seminar series!

By Christopher Puttock on Sunday, December 5, 2021



ESRAG's weekly Biodiversity+ Zoom seminars connect Rotarians around the world to share information about environmental issues and effective solutions. In 2022, we're starting a new strategy: alternating expert talks with presentations on club projects. We welcome your recommendations of speakers for both formats:

1. Biweekly seminar: a 30-minute talk by an expert on an environmental issue with solutions that Rotary or Rotaract clubs can implement. The seminar includes time for questions and discussion.
2. Panel of three presenters giving "lightning" talks on one of their club's environmental projects.

The project meetings provide club leaders with the opportunity to talk about club projects at any stage, from community assessment, to finding partners and finance, to implementation and evaluation. The project talks must be led by the home club champion who is/will be running the project in-country. International partners can be part of the presentation, but not the lead. In the project meetings, each project will have 15 minutes: 5 for the lightning project overview and 10 for discussion and brainstorming how the project could be connected to a cadre meeting for follow-up and replication.

To propose speakers for either format – seminar or project showcase – or to volunteer for the Biodiversity+ organizing team, email [Brian Braginton-Smith](#) or [Karen Tome](#).

Four ESRAG Members Approved for RICON Breakouts

By Patricia Armstrong on Thursday, December 9, 2021

We're thrilled to report that four breakout sessions proposed by ESRAG members have been approved for the 2022 Rotary International Convention in Houston, Texas, US:

- Carlos Montoya, Mexico, "Rotaractors and Rotarians Together Make an Impact"
- Dr. Chris Puttock, US, "Community Assessments for Environmental Projects"
- Michael Terrelonge, Jamaica, "Climate Adaptation for SIDS (Small Island Developing States)"
- Salvador Rico, US, "Our Rivers and the Environment"

This shows that environmental work - and ESRAG members' expertise - are increasingly recognized and embraced by Rotary.

Save Us From Your Spam Folder!

Remember! Please add mailservice@iMembersDB.com and membership@ESRAG.org to your address book so we can share valuable information with you without our messages landing in your spam folder. Please [email us](#) if you have project ideas or events you'd like to share with the worldwide ESRAG membership. We wish you a beautiful holiday season and a new year of health and fulfilling service!

The Environmental Sustainability Rotary Action Group

operates in accordance with Rotary International policy, but is not an agency of, or controlled by,
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