



THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR ECOLOGY AND CULTURE

2008 Annual Report



The International Society for Ecology and Culture (ISEC) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote systemic solutions to today's social and environmental crises. Our in-depth educational work seeks to reveal the root causes of those crises—from unemployment to climate change, from ethnic conflict to loss of biodiversity—while promoting grassroots and policy-level strategies for ecological and community renewal. What follows is a description of our major program activities in 2008.



GLOBAL TO LOCAL OUTREACH: our wide-ranging effort to inform the public about the need for policy shifts and local initiatives to protect cultural and ecological diversity from the impact of economic globalization; this includes our Roots of Change study group program, lectures, seminars and media events, as well as ISEC-produced books, articles, videos, comic books, audio tapes and Internet-based materials.

Educational Outreach In Autumn 2008, ISEC director Helena Norberg-Hodge was invited to South Korea and Japan, where she spoke at a number of conferences and other venues. She was also interviewed several times in the media, including KBS, the largest television station in South Korea, and in several newspapers including the *Seoul Daily*. In one interview she was joined by Seoul's mayor, who says that his work has been profoundly influenced by *Ancient Futures*. Helena also spoke at three high-profile conferences: Climate Change and the Role of Civil Society; The World Women's Forum; and The Global Forum on Civilization and Peace. The latter conference, which attracted participants from around the world, was opened by the president of South Korea. Seven hundred people attended the World Women's Forum, where other presenters included Mia Farrow and Robert Kaplan of the *Atlantic Monthly* magazine. In Japan, Helena spoke at the World Fellowship of Buddhists International Conference, at an Ecovillage Design workshop, and at the Interbeing Conference.

In September, Helena Norberg-Hodge participated in an International Forum on Globalization (IFG) seminar called "Is Capitalism Soon Over?" Other participants included David Korten (*The Post-Corporate World*), Richard Heinberg (*Peak Everything*), John Cavanagh (Institute for Policy Studies), Jerry Mander (co-editor of *The Case Against the Global Economy*) and Doug Tompkins (Foundation for Deep Ecology), who organized the meeting.

Steven Gorelick, ISEC's US Program Director, presented the *Ancient Futures* film and a paper on the impact of development on cultures in the Himalayas at the University of Texas at El Paso. He also continued teaching his economics class at Sterling College in Vermont.

In addition to helping organize and run Learning from Ladakh, Program Coordinator Alex Jensen spent several months at Deer Park, an ecological learning center in Himachal Pradesh in India. While there, he wrote and produced a play called the "Kingdom of Plastic." The play, which addressed the impact of globalization on traditional cultures, was performed for local high school students and in the public bazaar.

"I was reading *The Case Against the Global Economy* which led me to [your website]. I breathed a sigh of relief to actually come across an organization with such pragmatic suggestions for action and resistance to today's overwhelming (at times) global crisis. I am thankful to all of you for such insight and hope."

—Henry Maski

Publications and films A new edition of Helena Norberg-Hodge's classic book *Ancient Futures* is set to be published by Sierra Club Books in 2009. This version will be entitled *Ancient Futures: Lessons from Ladakh for a Globalizing World*, and will feature a new afterword by Helena that brings the work in Ladakh up to date, as well as establishing the story in the context of the current economic crisis.

Since a major goal of our educational program is to produce publications and films that will be used by groups worldwide as "education for action" tools, we were very pleased to see that the *Ancient Futures* film was translated into Turkish and screened as part of the 2008 Sustainable Living Film Festival in Istanbul. This year, the festival will travel to fifteen other locations in Turkey. Another ecology group is translating the film into Russian and Ukrainian, and will screen it in a similar film festival in Russia. *Ancient Futures* was also shown at the Sustainable Living Expo at Southern Cross University in Australia.

ISEC-France The Decroissance (literally "De-growth") movement is gaining ground in France in the wake of the global financial crisis. ISEC-France has joined this movement and is providing a crucial international view. This year, ISEC-France founders Nicolas Louchet and Jean-Marc Deltorn participated in an international conference on globalization in Paris. The conference, "Economic De-Growth for Ecological Sustainability and Social Equity", brought together 140 participants, including economists, sociologists, philosophers, ecologists and grassroots activists. Their presentation focused on how globalization is tied to unsustainable growth and the failing economic system. It also showed how globalized economics leads to a faster pace of life, greater insecurity, and an erosion of many of the social values the French hold dear. Their paper, "Globalization, Localization and the Cost of Complexity," can be downloaded from the newly created ISEC-France website, www.isec-france.org.

Economics of Happiness film During 2008 we continued work on our upcoming film, *The Economics of Happiness*. We produced a short version with Japanese subtitles, which was screened at the World Fellowship of Buddhists conference in Tokyo in November. Plans are now underway to show this version of the film all over Japan.

The message of the film is more crucial than ever in these economically unstable times. It was important to us to create a film that engagingly and accessibly conveys the root causes of our current crises, yet provides hope in the form of practicable solutions. It is clear from audience reactions that we are close to achieving that goal. Despite the many unforeseen complications we have encountered since beginning work on the film in 2006, we are pleased with recent progress and aim to complete the film this coming summer.



LADAKH PROJECT: encompassing our long-standing and diverse programs in Ladakh, including Learning from Ladakh, Tourism for Change and collaborations with the Women's Alliance and other Ladakhi organizations.

Tourism for Change Our Tourism for Change program emphasizes the importance of being aware of the impact we have when we travel – whether in Ladakh or elsewhere. We also encourage tourists to reflect on the ways in which their own communities are being affected by globalization.

This summer, ISEC volunteers conducted a follow-up survey of guesthouses and hotels in Leh, to assess the availability of eco-friendly amenities such as composting toilets, solar hot water, and local food. We will be collating and analyzing the data this spring, but have already been able to discern certain positive trends. For example, local food from home gardens has now become widely available in family-run guesthouses. However, use of renewable energy in those guesthouses is still relatively low, with the exception of small photovoltaic cell-powered lanterns that had been made available cheaply by the government. These results will help us target our efforts to the areas of greatest need in the future. Based on our findings, we also plan to create an "eco-guidebook," which will be available to tourists in Ladakh as well as on our website.

Alongside the *Ancient Futures* film, we are now also showing a range of other relevant documentaries including: *We Feed the World*; John Pilger's *New Rulers of the World*; the anti-Coca Cola film *1000 Days and a Dream*; and *Mother Earth*, an inspiring story of traditional agro-ecological regeneration in Andhra Pradesh.

Learning from Ladakh Our Learning from Ladakh program continues to be extremely popular, both with host families and participants. Every year we receive more requests from Ladakhi families, and the program attracts participants of different ages from all over the world. Three times each month, the participants joined together in Leh to share insights with each other and to take part in ISEC-led workshops. These workshops aim to put the experience of living in Ladakh in the wider context of globalization and localization issues.

LOCAL FOOD: a program to raise awareness about the hidden costs of the global food system, and to reveal the economic, social and ecological benefits of shortened distances between producers and consumers.

Roadshow ISEC's Local Food Roadshow first toured the UK in 2000 at a time when the local food movement was still in its infancy. Thanks in part to our efforts, farmers' markets have been established all over the country, and the value and importance of local food is far more widely understood.

In Spring 2008, the Roadshow was updated and taken around the country by UK Program Coordinator Ed Hamer. With both food prices and economic insecurity on the rise, it was an ideal time for a re-launch of this interactive slideshow and poster presentation. Ed brought the Roadshow to 25 village halls, schools, community events and festivals over the whole length of Great Britain, from northern Scotland to Cornwall. Audience numbers varied from ten to over sixty people, and feedback on the presentations was unanimously positive. Following on from this successful tour, we continue to receive regular enquires from community groups, schools and food events for presentations of the Local Food Roadshow.

"I recently visited Ladakh and purchased *Ancient Futures*. I am amazed at the author's understanding and the clarity with which she has written and communicated her thoughts on Ladakh."

–Seema Salil

Local Food Outreach Ed has also been working on updating the UK version of the Local Food Action Pack, first developed by ISEC in 2002. It is an integral part of the Local Food toolkit, which won the Derek Cooper Award for Investigative and Campaigning Journalism from the UK Guild of Food Writers in 2003. It is a valuable tool for groups and individuals alike to start up and get involved in local food movements, both locally and internationally. The new Action Pack will be in the easy-to-use format of a forty-page booklet and will be available from ISEC from Spring 2009.

Ed also attended the 2008 Via Campesina conference in Mozambique. The Via Campesina network has over 250 million members around the world, most of them indigenous and peasant farmers. His interviews with a dozen peasant leaders were the basis for an article in the April 2009 issue of *The Ecologist* magazine.

Ladakh Program Coordinator Alex Jensen promoted local food in Himachal Pradesh, India, by organizing 'local food fairs' in the main bazaar and distributing ISEC's educational materials. He continued ISEC's collaboration with Dr. Debal Deb at his center in West Bengal, which carries out research on organic farming and biodiversity. He also assisted with the Local Food Festival in Udaipur, organized each year by Shikshantar (the People's Institute for Rethinking Education and Development), and represented ISEC at the "Feeding the World" Conference, which was sponsored by *The Ecologist* Magazine and held in London, UK.



ISEC staff and volunteers 2008

International

Helena Norberg-Hodge, Director
John Page, Programs Director

United States

Steven Gorelick, US Program Director
Victoria Clarke, Administrative Coordinator

United Kingdom

Zac Goldsmith, Associate Director
Tracy Worcester, Associate Director
Linda Etherden, Administrator
Kristen Steele, Writer/Researcher
Marjana Kos, Assistant to the Director
Ed Hamer, UK Program Coordinator

Germany

Christian and Renate Storm, ISEC-Germany

France

Nicolas Louchet, ISEC-France

Ladakh

Alex Jensen, Ladakh Programs Coordinator
Rinchen Dolkar, Secretary, Women's Alliance of Ladakh
Tsewang Rigzin, ISEC Coordinator

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

January 1 to December 31, 2008

REVENUE

Donations ¹	\$180,816
Lecture fees	8,615
Royalties, writing and broadcast fees	4,600
Farm Project and Study Group fees	13,338
Sale of publications and videos	6,933
Miscellaneous income	135
Interest and dividends	15,675
Total Revenues	\$231,022

EXPENSES

Management and administrative	\$22,366
Fundraising	12,923
Programs:	
Global to Local Educational Programs	36,587
Local Food Program	11,608
Ladakh Programs	36,731
<i>Economics of Happiness</i> Film Project	80,156
ISEC Institute	8,440
Total Expenses	\$224,950

BALANCE SHEET

ASSETS

Cash and non-interest bearing accounts	\$22,373
Savings & temporary investments	545,663
Securities	25,000
Inventories	3,809
Total Assets	\$580,889

LIABILITIES

Accrued Expenses	\$16,505
Deferred Revenue	26,667
Total Liabilities	\$43,172

NET ASSETS

Current funds	\$70,723
Endowment fund	13,120
ISEC Institute capital fund	453,874
Net Assets	\$537,717
Net Assets and Liabilities	\$580,889

¹ Includes \$20,755 earmarked for organizations for which ISEC is the fiscal sponsor.



The International Society for Ecology and Culture (ISEC) is a non-profit organization concerned with raising awareness about the root causes of today's social, environmental and economic crises. Its primary goals are to challenge economic globalization and conventional notions of "progress", and to promote localization, thereby helping to strengthen community and restore the environment. ISEC is the parent organization of the Ladakh Project, which has been running a range of award-winning programs on the Tibetan plateau since 1975.

The International Society for Ecology and Culture www.isec.org.uk
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