



MARCH 2023

### WOMEN IN CRISIS

The earthquake in Syria has deepened trauma for women – discover how you can help

### 'LET LAKE VICTORIA BREATHE AGAIN'

17-year-old Rahmina Paullete shares her campaign and vision for Lake Victoria, Kenya

### CLIMATE JUSTICE

SHE Changes Climate on why sharing stories is a crucial element of climate justice

### THE CURRENCY OF LIFE

Dr Vandana Shiva says a food system at war with the Earth is also at war with our bodies



# INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

# CLEANER THAN YOUR AVERAGE POLITICIAN



THE ETHICAL ONLINE STORE

# Welcome to My Green Pod Magazine!



Katie Hill, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF  
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These days you'd be hard pushed to find anyone who hasn't heard of COP – but how many know about CSW (Commission on the Status of Women), the equivalent UN gathering for gender equality?

As a UN Women UK delegate for CSW67 (06-17 March), I was reminded of a shocking fact: at our current pace of change we are still around 300 years from gender equality.

The climate crisis brings that inequality into stark relief: 80% of climate refugees are women, and women and children are 14% more likely to die in a natural disaster.

Women are more vulnerable to – and vulnerable in – displacement; they are disproportionately impacted by the climate crisis, yet at the same time represent some of the most prominent leaders of the environmental movement.

This issue shares some of the human stories, lived experiences and examples of female leadership behind the stats and science more commonly used to illustrate the climate emergency.

Let's mark International Women's Day by celebrating these incredible women – and promising to accelerate change for a fairer future.



## ABOUT US

My Green Pod Ltd is an independent, family-run UK business, founded by Katie Hill and Jarvis Smith. We want to share the real stories behind the brands and people working tirelessly to offer ethical alternatives to mainstream products and services. You might not see these options on the high street and they may not be the first to appear in on-line searches. But they are on mygreenpod.com.

Use the search bar to find conscious lifestyle inspiration – and you could save some cash along the way!

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Women's  
representation  
in UN-led peace  
processes stood  
at **19%** in 2021

**80%**  
of climate  
refugees are  
women



Women are paid  
**15% less**  
than their male  
colleagues in the  
UK fashion industry



**IMAGINE A  
WORLD WHERE  
YOU COULDN'T  
BUY TOXIC  
PRODUCTS**



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07



21



24



# CONTENTS

## NEWS

- 06** The earthquake in Syria has deepened trauma for women – discover how you can help
- 07** The Plan for Peace programme designed to resource UK changemakers
- 08** Why sharing stories is a crucial element of climate justice
- 09** Meet the 17-year-old climate activist conserving the environment and improving livelihoods in Kisumu, Kenya
- 10** Why Helena Lindemark, founder of the 2022 Initiative, has shifted ‘from words to action’
- 11** Dr Vandana Shiva explains why a food system at war with the Earth is also at war with our bodies

## CONSCIOUSNESS

- 12** For the World Upshift Movement, deep transformational change starts from within

## BUSINESS

- 14** How equality drives efficacy in business – and is ‘win-win-win’
- 15** My Green Pod Heroes for March, plus our Top 5 Switches
- 16** All aboard Oceandiva London for this year’s P.E.A Awards ceremony

## ARTS & FASHION

- 18** Model twins Brett and Scott Staniland explore how the fashion industry can promote equality
- 19** Safia Minney explains why female leadership is essential for a just transition

## FOOD & DRINK

- 20** Two inspiring women from Yeo Valley Organic share advice to mark International Women’s Day
- 21** Introducing Positive Spirits – the event that’s set to cause a stir this June

## ENERGY

- 24** Meet the female engineers who are shaping the future of smart, green energy

## TRANSPORT

- 26** Why the energy transition away from dirty combustion technologies is our best hope for reinvention

## COMPETITIONS

- 27** Take a look at the latest competition giveaways featured on mygreenpod.com!



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The earthquake in Syria has deepened trauma for women – here's how you can help



Devastation caused by the earthquake in Idlib, north-west Syria

PHOTOGRAPHY KHALED AKACHA

# WOMEN IN CRISIS

**O**n 06 February 2023, two deadly earthquakes killed at least 36,000 people across Türkiye and Syria.

Women for Women International is working on the ground with partner Women Now for Development (WND), which says humanitarian aid is still not reaching war-torn regions of north-west Syria.

## EVACUATION AND RELOCATION

According to the UN, as many as 5.3 million people in Syria have been left homeless by this disaster, with many sleeping in sub-zero temperatures without food or medical attention.

Women for Women International has been working with Women Now for Development (WND), based in Aleppo, since 2020, helping Syrian women to rebuild their lives.

Colleagues are in constant touch and, thankfully, report that their team members are all accounted for and safe. Tragically though, many have lost family members as well as their homes and are seeking safe shelter.

WND and the women served in that region have already been displaced several times during the war and are mentally devastated by this latest trauma. The priority is to help them address their most urgent needs, including covering evacuation and relocation costs, emergency cash assistance and psycho-social support.

## WOMEN AND NATURAL DISASTERS

Earthquakes know no borders – and the Syrian people have a right to humanitarian aid. The international community must step up to allow aid to reach Syria through all border crossings and this aid must address the unique needs of women who, as caregivers, shoulder the highest burden of any crisis.

Women for Women International is raising funds to meet the immediate critical needs of members of the WND team who are severely impacted by this disaster, so they can continue to serve women survivors of the war.

Working with women in conflict-affected countries for 30 years, Women for Women International knows all too well that natural disasters only worsen the situation for people already facing unimaginable challenges. It is women – already deeply socially and economically marginalised – who have the hardest time recovering and rebuilding their lives in the wake of a crisis.

**‘It’s been only a very short period of time since our children began to feel settled in the homes to which we fled after the forced displacement we went through in late 2019. But their feelings of fear and terror returned after the massive earthquake, and the scenes of victims and debris again. My child, who is not yet six years old, said to me yesterday: ‘Get me out of here, I feel my heart will explode with fear.’**

## WOMEN NOW FOR DEVELOPMENT

STAFF MEMBER

### Find out more

- Donate to Women for Women International’s earthquake appeal at [womenforwomen.org.uk/donate-syria-earthquake](https://womenforwomen.org.uk/donate-syria-earthquake)
- Join the call for a coordinated and women-centred international humanitarian response to the earthquake by signing the petition at [support.womenforwomen.org/secure/earthquakes-know-no-borders-act-now](https://support.womenforwomen.org/secure/earthquakes-know-no-borders-act-now)

# Changemakers in turbulent times

**Madeleine Mosse, CEO of Plan for Peace,  
on the programme designed to resource  
UK changemakers**

I ended up on a Fine Art & Critical Theory course in Brighton almost by accident, not sure what else to study.

Instead of listening to my lecturers expounding on Damien Hirst and Roland Barthes, which to me seemed pointless, I would pretend that I needed to go to the bathroom and wander down the corridors, listening to music on my headphones.

When I got terrible marks at the end of the first year, my tutors pointed out that if I spent more time in the classroom I might stand a chance of passing my degree.

## DISCOVERING KOSOVO

Around that time, I met someone who had just returned from volunteering in Kosovo; the moment I heard the name I knew that I wanted to go. That's how my life changed.

As I drove into Kosovo for the first time, in a UN convoy, I was completely awestruck by the vast plains and the towering mountains. I felt as though I never wanted to leave.

This first visit wasn't long after the war, which had displaced almost 1.5 million people. Many had now returned and were beginning to rebuild their homes and lives.

Being with people from all communities whose lives were torn apart by war deeply affected me.

## THE POWER OF LISTENING

My biggest learning at that time was about the power of listening, and of simply being with people, without necessarily needing to do anything other than showing that you cared.

I had only planned to stay in Kosovo for a few weeks, but I ended up spending many extended periods there over the 10 years that followed – I even completed a PhD about the country.

My friendships and learnings from that time have been foundational to everything I've done – including in the UK, where I have spent many years supporting local groups in some of the most deprived communities and have advised local and central government on social integration.



## BUILDING GLOBAL PEACE

In autumn 2022 I took on a new challenge: leading the global charity Plan for Peace, founded by three-time Nobel Peace Prize nominee Dr Scilla Elworthy. Our goal is to build and strengthen peace infrastructures around the world, and ensure that peacebuilding is properly resourced and understood.

We're working with everyone – from small neighbourhood groups through to policymakers, major global corporations, the military and governments. It's an incredible team with some of the best peacebuilders in the world, including Nobel Peace Prize laureates and individuals with their own courageous stories.

The UK may not be the first place you'd think of launching a peacebuilding programme, but this March we'll kick off Changemakers in Turbulent Times. The initiative will resource those tackling some of the UK's most challenging issues – from knife crime to food poverty – in order to relieve the burnout, isolation and overwhelm that many are currently experiencing.

## A COMMUNITY OF PEACEBUILDERS

Changemakers in Turbulent Times will be a transformational 10-week journey led by some of the world's most inspiring activists, including incredible women such as Selina Hales and Jo Berry. Selina is a Glasgow mum who set up 'Refuweegee' from her living room after seeing disturbing images of the refugee crisis on the news. Her organisation ensures that no person arriving in Glasgow goes without the warm welcome they deserve, and it is now one of the leading providers of support to asylum seekers and refugees in Scotland.

Jo, whose father died in the 1984 Brighton bomb, has dedicated her life to building peace around the world, demonstrating the power of listening and empathy in building understanding across divides by working alongside Patrick Magee, who planted the bomb that killed her dad.

Participants of the programme will learn crucial skills from the field of conflict transformation, such as deep listening and non-confrontational communication, and will explore themes like 'heart-led leadership' and 'cleaning anger'. All those taking part can apply for a seed grant at the end.

This pilot is the first step in supporting, connecting and resourcing UK changemakers, drawing on skills from conflict transformation and building a community of peacebuilders worldwide. I hope everyone can experience the life-changing magic of peacebuilding – as I have.

## Find out more

Information about Changemakers in Turbulent Times can be found at [planforpeace.org](https://planforpeace.org)

**Participants of the programme will learn crucial skills from the field of conflict transformation, such as deep listening and non-confrontational communication, and will explore themes like 'heart-led leadership' and 'cleaning anger'.**

# ‘Climate justice is stories’

**Caroline Mair-Toby**, lawyer and chief empowerment officer at SHE Changes Climate, on why sharing stories is a crucial element of climate justice

**L**oss and damage. Adaptation. Insurance risk. Resilience. Carbon markets. Scope 2 emissions. These are such bloodless terms.

They are terms that mask the grief and the heartache that lie at the very end of those emissions. They elide and erase the beating up of a grandmother by thugs hired by a large multinational company or local industry, the harassing of a local community leader for challenging destructive environmental and human rights practices, the retributive and punitive rape of a woman, the murder of environmental leaders.

Berta Cáceres was threatened, stalked and harassed before she was killed in 2016. She had been battling the construction of a hydroelectric dam on the Gualcarque river, in the community of Río Blanco in her home country, in Indigenous Lenca territory in northwestern Honduras.

Berta was a well-recognised face and force in Western Honduras, for her work with Indigenous Lenca communities in many struggles to protect the land and water against exploitative and heavily polluting industry and development.

Berta was not an invisible person, by any means. She was a high-profile, internationally recognised Indigenous leader, the co-founder and coordinator of the Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH). She was the winner of the Goldman Environmental Prize in 2015, which was the equivalent of the Nobel Peace Prize for the environment, for the same work battling the Agua Zarca Dam at Río Gualcarque in Indigenous Lenca territory in northwestern Honduras.

## ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENDERS

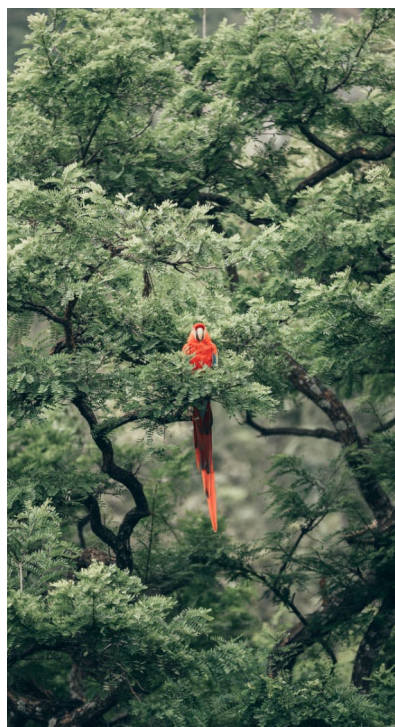
We know about the 2022 murder of the British journalist Dom Phillips and Indigenous expert Bruno Pereira in the Amazonian rainforest. They were teaching Indigenous defenders how to record abuses and to protect their territories.

What we don't know is how many Indigenous defenders were killed in the genocide against Indigenous communities and the attack on the environment that was committed under the far-right regime of Brazil's former president, Jair Bolsonaro. We don't all know that the hit was against Bruno Pereira for his work in protecting Indigenous peoples, as it affected profits. Dom Phillips was just in the way.

What we don't know is the absolute ferocity with which the Indigenous defenders searched for their



PHOTOGRAPHY ONU BRASIL



Berta Cáceres, a high-profile Indigenous leader in Western Honduras and winner of the 2015 Goldman Environmental Prize, was killed in 2016. She is among the Indigenous defenders whose stories we must tell, share and remember

PHOTOGRAPHY JOHANNIE RYAN, INSTITUTE FOR SMALL ISLANDS

bodies. They knew what was at stake in getting these stories out to the world; they must have seen Pereira and his associates, Phillips included, as lifelines to an outside world, sending testimonies and witness accounts as they fought for their lives. And they were right: their disappearance generated intense international outcry and pressure for action.

Climate justice is stories. It's getting the chance to tell our stories to the rest of the world. SHE Changes Climate knows this. We know that to support women at the forefront of climate collapse, we must listen to these women – hear these stories. We are throwing our full support behind environmental defenders, at the UN and

at the grassroots level. Because no one in this day and age should have to die for protecting the environment.

## HOPE FROM THE COURTS

What measures can help Indigenous peoples in their fight to protect their rainforest and ocean homes? There is finally hope at the domestic court level, though I never thought I would say it.

David Castillo, the former head of Desarrollos Energeticos (DESA), which ran the \$50m Agua Zarca hydroelectric dam project, was found guilty for planning the assassination of Berta Cáceres. He was sentenced to 22 and a half years in prison by a Honduran court. This year, the mastermind behind the killing of Dom Phillips and Bruno Pereira was arrested, and last year three men were charged for their murder in Brazil.

Regionally, there is the Escazú Agreement, the first international treaty in Latin America and the Caribbean concerning the environment. It is the first in the world to include provisions on the rights of environmental defenders, imposing requirements upon member states concerning the rights of environmental defenders.

It is also important to increase the participation of Indigenous governments in the UN, to allow for the recognition and respect of Indigenous rights and to enable their self-determination and sovereignty.

History will look back at these leaders in the light of Gandhi, leading as he did against the dark forces of imperial conquest. But until then, we have to learn their names, say their names, celebrate them as the heroes that they are and amplify their voices – in the media, at courts, at international tribunals and at the UN.

## Find out more

■ Discover how you can support Indigenous rights and women facing climate collapse at [shechangesclimate.org](https://shechangesclimate.org)



Lake Victoria has been hit by a series of environmental challenges

# LET LAKE VICTORIA BREATHE AGAIN

17-year-old **Rahmina Paultete**, climate activist at Fridays for Future, on her campaign to conserve the environment and improve livelihoods in Kisumu, Kenya

**L**ake Victoria, one of the African Great Lakes, is the second-largest freshwater body in the world. Over the last 40 years, it has been hit by a series of environmental challenges, including pollution, biodiversity loss, habitat damage and soil erosion. Each has further increased the human suffering already compounded by climate change.

Most livelihoods in the region depend on the lake, so preserving its biological richness and ecological integrity is inked to a wider objective of enhancing the lake's socio-economic benefits. Corporate water lines and most sewage lines are directed to the lake, forcing people to drink unsafe water. This pollution is increasing the spread of waterborne diseases such as cholera.

## EMBODYING CLIMATE ACTION

After analysing the lake's current challenges, I created a local youth-led organisation named Kisumu Environmental Champions, which focuses on environmental issues, wildlife conservation and climate change awareness.

The group brings teens and children together to make change in the world, and make a difference through advocacy for the environment and in the fight against climate change.

We conduct climate strikes and peaceful protests to demand local climate action and hold our leaders to account. We are calling for a collective commitment towards climate justice through climate reparations.

Saturday For Environment has scaled community engagement by taking part in tree planting

projects, with which we are keenly involved, and community clean-ups in the lake and environment. We are witnessing an increasingly positive community response; our county, Kisumu, is one of the cleanest in Kenya.

We are on a roadmap to increase tree cover, carbon sinks and biodiversity. We plant bamboo, fruit trees and indigenous trees through projects with local communities and schools, in areas such as Kajulu Forest.

## REIMAGINING THE WATER HYACINTH

We launched a campaign named Let Lake Victoria Breathe Again with a goal to restore, conserve and protect Lake Victoria's biodiversity and ecosystem as well as raising awareness of its challenges at a grassroots level.

I believe that there cannot be effective environmental management without improving the livelihoods of millions of people who live and work in the catchment. All environmental interventions must be underlined by broader goals of poverty reduction and sustainable growth.

Our primary source of income in our region is the lake, but because of the ongoing climate change, which has adversely affected our community, along with other reasons like pollution and an increase in water hyacinth, the lake is now complex to navigate, making it challenging to catch fish.

Water hyacinth has historically been a menace to the entire Lake Victoria region. It chokes the fish, reducing economic opportunities for fishermen, and hinders the navigation of boats.

Our solution to this problem involves recycling waste paper and using water hyacinth to make eco-friendly cards, bookmarks, hair bands, trays, coasters, chairs and bags. The sustainable products support and protect the health of Lake Victoria while creating youth employment.

The goal of this project is to turn the water hyacinth into an environmentally friendly solution, while raising awareness of the need to preserve the lake and strengthen community resilience to the effects of climate change on sensitive ecosystems.

## WHY YOUTH MATTERS

The challenges around the lake are more than just environmental – they are about people's food security, employment and fears about sustainability. We hope our water hyacinth project grows and increases youth employment and economic vibrancy; we have already helped to address youth involvement in drug abuse and early pregnancies.

We intend to hold additional climate strikes, engage in advocacy work and lobby to increase public support for a safer environment. Our goal is to further raise awareness about climate change and hold politicians accountable for taking action in conservation.

We feel that as a group of young people, we are knowledgeable about how to address today's global concerns and challenges.

## Find out more

■ Support and follow Rahmina's project on social media: **#LetLakeVictoriaBreatheAgain**

# TIME to ACT



We caught up with **Helena Lindemark** to find out about her latest projects – and why she's shifted 'from words to action'

**A**head of International Women's Day, we spoke to female founder and sustainability entrepreneur Helena Lindemark, the founder of the 2022 Initiative Foundation who, in our June 2022 issue of My Green Pod Magazine, told 'the real story behind Stockholm+50'.

The 2022 Initiative Foundation has worked closely with Greta Thunberg and the Fridays For Future (FFF) network; thanks to a lot of hard work and dedication – in particular from Helena's side – the foundation managed to raise the funds to help around 20 youths from Fridays for Future's Most Affected People and Areas (MAPA) – from Africa, Latin America and Asia – to attend the Stockholm +50 UN conference.

At the conference several of the youths gave speeches; Rahmina Paullete spoke at Spotify and Morris Ngaruya performed two of his songs. He has now also recorded an album.

During Stockholm+50, My Green Pod co-founder Jarvis Smith released the fundraising cover version of Swedish House Mafia's *Save The World*, featuring Rita Morar. MAPA youths and Greta Thunberg appear in the video, which is helping to save the world in a very tangible way. Artist royalties are donated to Fridays For Future's MAPA; the more you play the song, the more money will be raised.

The 2022 Initiative Foundation has been accredited by UNEP since 2021; in January 2023 it was selected to be granted consultative status with ECOSOC, allowing further engagement and advocacy work to accelerate action for sustainable development and support involvement of youth – in particular from MAPA. The foundation also continues to raise funds to help MAPA's voices to be heard – in international meetings, through music and by shining a light on specific projects, such as the Let Lake Victoria Breathe Again campaign, spearheaded by Rahmina Paulette.

## CONCRETE ACTION

'After Stockholm+50 I felt it was time to move from words to action', Helena tells us. 'Training



PHOTOGRAPHY COLIN DUNLOP

personnel and helping companies to integrate sustainability into their core business is one approach, but I felt that even more concrete action is needed.'

Instead of going to COP27, Helena decided to focus on setting up 'a concrete project' in the Amazon. Following a project formulation mission to Bolivia in November, a major pilot project has been developed and is now close to being fully funded.

'The Amazon represents over half of the planet's remaining rainforests and comprises the largest and most biodiverse tract of tropical rainforest in the world', Helena shares, 'but severe deforestation means time to save the Amazon is running out.'

Scientists have warned the Amazon is close to a tipping point after which the humid, biodiverse rainforest will not be able to recover, and will instead degrade into a dry savannah. This would cause a domino effect that could catalyse other tipping points, accelerating climate change and biodiversity loss. 'The tipping point of the Amazon

## CLOCKWISE

Helena at the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) banners outside the United Nations Headquarters in New York; the Amazon in Bolivia, where Helena has launched the Amazon for Life project

rainforest is estimated at 20-25% deforestation', Helena tells us. 'The current deforestation rate is 17%, with an additional 17% degraded. Bolivia has the second-highest deforestation rate in the Amazon region, after Brazil, with 300,000 hectares of primary forest lost in 2021.'

## AMAZON FOR LIFE

Helena co-founded the Amazon for Life project in a bid to change the current trend, starting with a series of pilot projects. One focuses on fruits and berries of the Amazon and is developed in close collaboration with researchers, Indigenous communities and Bolivian and internationally renowned entrepreneurs and impact investors.

Other projects target the conservation of over 200,000 hectares of forest within forestry concessions threatened by illegal logging and fires, and the restoration and reforestation of degraded private farmland. An additional Amazon for Life pilot, in collaboration with Indigenous communities, targets the conservation and reforestation of forests and the commercialisation of sustainably produced products in up to 13m hectares, all owned by Indigenous communities.

Helena is also involved in impact investment and has collaborated with the authors of the recently published *Principles of Intrapreneurial Capital* to help integrate sustainability into 'methods for transformational innovations' within organisations.

'Training, awareness-raising and a new digital tool – an ESG Index focusing on facilitating and accelerating sustainability within small- and medium-sized enterprises – are other ways I'm trying to change the situation', Helena says.

## Find out more

Information about the Amazon for Life project is at [amazonforlife.com](https://amazonforlife.com)



# FOOD: the currency of life

**Dr Vandana Shiva shares why a food system that is at war with the Earth is also at war with our bodies**

**T**his May I will be in London to speak at Compassion in World Farming's Extinction or Regeneration Conference. The important meeting will bring together many of my peers, who are fighting for diversity conservation and regenerative farming around the world, to discuss how we drive transformation of the world's food systems away from industrial farming and corporate greed for better human, animal and planetary health.

Factory farming/industrial agriculture is not farming, it is a war against the land, small farmers and food democracy, destroying biodiversity and poisoning the land.

## CORPORATE CONTROL

I have dedicated my life to saving seeds and promoting organic farming as an alternative to a world dictated and controlled by corporations.

In 1987, at a big conference, the biotech industry laid out its plans – to patent life, to genetically engineer seeds, crops and life forms and to get full freedom to trade through the General Agreements on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) negotiations, which culminated in the creation of the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

## OUR HIGHEST DUTY

The idea of life forms, seeds and biodiversity being reduced to corporate inventions and, hence, corporate property, was abhorrent to me. Further, if seeds become 'intellectual property', saving and sharing them becomes intellectual property theft!

Our highest duty, to save seeds and look after our biodiversity for the next generation, becomes a criminal act. The legalising of owning and monopolising life through patents on seeds and plants was morally and ethically unacceptable to me.

## FOODS OF THE FUTURE

So I started Navdanya, which promotes biodiversity conservation, and seed-saving and sharing among farmers. An Earth-centred, women-centred movement, Navdanya has created over a hundred community seed banks through which seeds are saved and freely exchanged among our 300,000 members.

We have brought back forgotten foods like jhangora (barnyard millet), ragi (finger millet), marsha (amaranth), naurangi dal and gahat dal. Not only are these crops more nutritious than globally traded commodities, they are more resource prudent, requiring only 200-300mm of rain compared with 2,500mm for chemical rice farming. Millets could increase food production 400-fold, using the same amount of limited water.

These forgotten foods are foods of the future, and farmers' seeds are the seeds of the future. For the farmer, the seed is not merely the source of future plants and food; it is the storage place of culture, of history. The seed is the first link in the food chain, it is the ultimate symbol of food security.

## Find out more

■ Register or discover more about the Extinction or Regeneration Conference by visiting [extinctionconference.com](https://extinctionconference.com)

In 1991, Vandana Shiva founded Navdanya, a national movement to protect the diversity and integrity of living resources – especially native seeds, the promotion of organic farming and fair trade. In 2004 she started Bija Vidyapeeth, an international college for sustainable living in Doon Valley, in collaboration with the UK's Schumacher College.

## PROTECTING CULTURAL DIVERSITY

The free exchange of seeds among farmers has been the means for maintaining biodiversity as well as food security, and is based on cooperation and reciprocity. A farmer who wants to exchange seed generally gives an equal quantity of seed from her field in return for the seed she gets. But this exchange goes beyond seeds; it involves an exchange of ideas and knowledge, of culture and also of heritage. It is an accumulation of tradition, of knowledge, of how to work the seed. Farmers gather knowledge about the seeds they want to grow by watching them grow in other farmers' fields, by learning about drought and disease and pest resistance. In saving seeds and biodiversity we are protecting cultural diversity.

I helped write laws that recognise that plants, animals and seeds are not human inventions. We fought cases on biopiracy, the patenting of our biodiversity and Indigenous knowledge.

Through participatory research, we showed that when you intensify biodiversity instead of chemicals, and measure nutrition per acre instead of yield per acre, we can grow enough nutrition to feed the world twice over.

## HOW TO EAT CONSCIOUSLY

Across the world, especially during the pandemic, there is a growing consciousness that the multiple energies we are living through have their roots in an unjust, non-sustainable, industrial-globalised food system. And solutions to all the crises lie in creating local, biodiverse, poison-free, chemical-free food systems that increase nourishment for all beings while reducing our ecological footprint.

Eating consciously can be a big contributor to the solutions. What we need to keep in mind is that food is the currency of life.

Avoid processed food, eat fresh. Avoid anonymous foods where you do not know what went into the manufacture.

All beings are living, all beings are sentient. Eating is a conversation with other living beings. Anonymous foods disrupt that communication and our health.

At the Extinction or Regeneration Conference I will be on a panel with Olivier de Schutter, co-chair of IPES-Food and UN special rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights; Philip Lymbery, global CEO of Compassion in World Farming; Lyla June, Indigenous musician and scholar and others discussing these ideas. Come and join us 11-12 May 2023, either at the event in London or live online.

# All we need is LOVE

For the World Upshift Movement, deep transformational social change starts from within

**W**hat difference would it make if it turned out we only need one thing to bring about a change in global consciousness – and that thing is love?

It would be a game-changer, according to the World Upshift Movement (WUM). 'Sustainable change comes from the heart', explains Maria Antinori, chair of WUM. 'We know that from our own lives; why should it be different for humanity as a whole?'

At a reception at the House of Lords on 21 February, WUM gathered supporters from around the world to thank founding members and present its plans for the coming year.

My Green Pod spoke to some of the women leaders and activists involved both at the reception and remotely for this special issue to mark International Women's Day.

## RETAKE THE STREETS

Sveva is an activist with Retake Roma. Every Saturday she joins teams of people picking up rubbish and taking care of their neighbourhood. How is this miracle possible? 'We don't do this because anybody tells us to', Sveva explains; 'we want to do it! We love our city and feel responsible! This is our home and it's up to us to take care of it.'

Alejandra works for Retake nationally, encouraging new Retake groups to emerge. 'I really want to show people they

can be part of the solution', Alejandra tells us, 'that their voices count and that they can make a difference. Retake's impact goes far beyond cleaning up the streets.'

As Sveva and Alejandra point out: 'We encourage local people to plant flowers and shrubs, to water them regularly. We are working for an upshift in awareness, a change in attitude towards the local environment. It's inspiring, it's energising and it's fun.'

## PEACE IN OUR COMMUNITIES

The London event's guest of honour was H.E. Dr Justina Mutale, Africa's Woman of the Year in 2012 and president of the Justina Mutale Leadership Foundation.

'Peacebuilding requires us to treat each other, despite our differences, with a degree of tolerance and respect', Justina said. 'That starts with the heart, with an awareness of our common humanity. The world desperately needs such an upshift and we need to recognise that there are things we can do in our daily lives to bring this about.'

## EVERY VOICE COUNTS

Refugee leader Maysa Ismael, a Chevening scholar, coordinator for the European Coalition of Migrants and Refugees and member of New Women Connectors, spoke at the reception about the need to create a more inclusive and equitable environment for migrant women to thrive.

'We need people to listen to our stories with their hearts, to really understand what we are saying and why we are saying it', Maysa said. 'That is why an upshift in awareness is so important – it helps create a safe space which can lead to transformational change in our lives and the contribution we can make. Sharing experiences is a powerful way to help the deeper understanding of issues such as migration, which will be needed even more in the future if the world is to be able to adapt to much higher levels of international migration due to climate change.'

## EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

Mirela Sula is helping women to find their voice and unlock their potential by connecting with their inner self, and by developing networking skills and offering professional training.

Through her organisation Global Woman Club, Mirela has created a unique community that helps women build their confidence, make friends and create a positive impact in the world. 'We do all this from the heart', Mirela says; 'that is why we can leave a legacy in the lives of the women whose lives we





PHOTOGRAPHY MICHAEL G. SPAFFORD



CLOCKWISE  
Justina Mutale,  
Africa's Woman  
of the Year 2012; the  
talisman for the Upshift  
movement, unveiled  
at the House of Lords,  
is Tao calligraphy by  
Master Sha; Maria  
Antinori, chair,  
World Upshift  
Organisation;  
Karen Stenning,  
Spirited Futures;  
Alejandra Alfieri Alfaro,  
Retake Roma

touch and of all those around them, and it is why we are delighted to be partnering with the World Upshift Movement.'

### YOUNG PEOPLE'S INNER WISDOM

Karen Stenning is the founder of Spirited Futures, a leadership academy for young trailblazers. She is working with young people to give them the skills they need to start new initiatives and bring lasting change to their communities.

As Karen told My Green Pod, 'The world is changing ever so fast, and we need brilliant new leaders who are connected with their individual and unique skills, with their inner wisdom.' 'Our academy is about giving them the courage and resilience to tackle some of the world's toughest challenges', Karen continued. 'Our future leaders also want to work in partnership

with current leaders. Working with the World Upshift Movement will help us bring these two groups together.'

### CHANGE FROM WITHIN

As a heart-led organisation, the World Upshift Movement places a lot of emphasis on taking care of our inner lives – our conscious human experiences.

UNIFY, one of WUM's partner organisations, facilitates engagement in global unity events and meditations, including for International Peace Day and Earth Day. Welcoming the creation of the World Upshift Movement, UNIFY's executive director, Tammy Scarlett, said, 'As well as uniting us across borders, synchronised collective experience such as our mass meditations can really help to inspire and mobilise community action which can have a really positive impact on people's lives.'

Whether through meditation, mindfulness, prayer, singing or any other personal ritual, the team at World Upshift Movement believes that what really matters is that people can find a moment of inner peace to focus on their inner self, and the here and now.

As Maria Antinori explains, 'We do believe that such an approach can benefit physical and emotional wellbeing, while giving a new sense of energy and purpose. That's a valuable resource for the grassroots projects we want to promote.'



### Find out more

■ You can contact, join or partner with the World Upshift Movement by visiting [worldupshift.org](http://worldupshift.org)

# EQUALITY IS WIN-WIN IN BUSINESS

**Andrew Thornton**, co-founder of Heart in Business and former owner of Thornton's Budgens, shares how equality drives efficacy in business



I've spent the last 10+ years working out how businesses can become more effective at delivering a socially useful purpose.

I started this journey after a midlife crisis caused me to buy a couple of supermarkets in London and set up Thornton's Budgens (TB). Today, I can look back with real clarity on my strategic process.

## BRINGING PURPOSE TO BUSINESS

First off, you need to understand your driver for being in business. Mine was about showing the world that there was a better way to run a business than the short-term profit focus that dominates most businesses – an open-hearted way. Then, you can develop a meaningful purpose – ours was ‘we are the community supermarket that really cares about people and planet’.

That was actually the easy part! We then engaged the whole team in developing a set of values, which we called 'heartsets', that would deliver our purpose. Without realising the significance, we developed a set of habits that would shape our behaviour to deliver those heartsets – which included 'we acknowledge and appreciate' and 'I listen and learn'. It wasn't about the words; our focus was on how we were going to live these habits day in and day out.

## ACTIVE LISTENING

The habits we identified to drive our behaviour included 'giving appreciation daily', 'active listening' and 'being on the pitch, not in the stands'. The last one was my personal favourite; it meant everyone was encouraged to take responsibility.

In our weekly operations meeting, the deli manager could take one of two approaches: he could say, 'I'm aware that the sales in my area are down and we need to do something. I'm not

sure what the issue is, and I'd love your help in coming up with some ideas.' Alternatively he could say, 'Yes, I know sales are down – Fred and Mary aren't up to the job and now that Morrisons also has a deli, what can we do?' Can you feel the difference?

Again, you could argue that this was the easy stuff; it's easy to say we are going to get in the habit of 'active listening', but far harder to do it!

## AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP

In parallel with setting up TB, I had founded Heart in Business – the purpose of which is ‘to help you discover the habits you need to develop to become a more effective leader’. We had developed our ‘Stepping into your Authentic Leadership’ training programme – which, guess what, was designed to teach leaders the habits they needed to open their hearts and be more effective!

Among other things, we taught the team active listening – again easy to say, really hard to do, as us humans seem to much prefer to talk than to listen!

What gets measured gets done, and the final piece of the jigsaw was to track how leaders change,

The Thornton's Budgens team with founder Andrew Thornton (centre, back)



which we did with our HEART Culture Model. What actually happened during this process was quite extraordinary.

## STAKEHOLDER WINS

As with many supermarkets, Thornton's Budgens was highly culturally diverse; at one point, with two stores and 150 employees, over 50 different nations were represented on the team.

Everything we did was a real leveller; everyone had the chance to shine and bring the best of themselves to work every day.

We ended up with an approach we called self leadership: two female co-leaders and a leadership team that was 75% women, with me as the only white man on it.

It turned out that this team was highly effective, and we were able to make a positive impact on each of our key stakeholders – our customers, suppliers, employees, shareholders, community and the planet.

We changed, to quote former Tesco CEO Dave Lewis, 'the relationship between supermarkets and plastic globally' through our plastic free campaign, and inspired some of our smaller suppliers to change as well.

We won loads of awards in the process and found we were loved by our customers. I, as the 100% shareholder, made a good living, and the team got the chance to share in our rewards by receiving 50% of our profits.

We achieved what I now believe to be the end game – a win-win culture. Well actually, it's a win-win-win-win-win-win culture – one win for each stakeholder!

## Find out more

■ Discover how to step into your authentic leadership at **heartinbusiness.org**

# HERO PRODUCTS

Introducing our March Heroes!

We've picked these products because we believe they are all best in their class for people and the planet. They represent simple, sustainable switches that will help to keep you, your home and the planet healthy – without compromising on performance!

View all our Heroes at [mygreenpod.com/heroes](https://mygreenpod.com/heroes)

## ARTS & FASHION



### WUKA PERIOD PANTS

These pants are your complete tampon and pad replacement, and can be worn for up to eight hours depending on your flow. They are machine washable for a completely fuss-free period. [mygreenpod.com/heroes/wuka-period-pants](https://mygreenpod.com/heroes/wuka-period-pants)



## HOME & GARDEN



### FILL REFILL LAUNDRY LIQUID

Designed to work great, look cool and eliminate waste. [mygreenpod.com/heroes/fill-refill-laundry-liquid](https://mygreenpod.com/heroes/fill-refill-laundry-liquid)



### COLDSTREAM UNDERCOUNTER WATER PURIFICATION

Enjoy great-tasting water straight from your tap! [mygreenpod.com/heroes/coldstream-undercounter-water-purification-system](https://mygreenpod.com/heroes/coldstream-undercounter-water-purification-system)



### HELIOMOTION

Generate your own energy with this solar tracking system. [mygreenpod.com/heroes/bee-solar-technology-heliomotion](https://mygreenpod.com/heroes/bee-solar-technology-heliomotion)

## TOP 5 MARCH SWITCHES

1

With organic hair care you shouldn't need to wash your hair as frequently, meaning less water, shampoo and packaging! Try Tabitha James Kraan's Clean Shampoo.

@TabithaJK

[mygreenpod.com/heroes/tabitha-james-kraan-clean-shampoo](https://mygreenpod.com/heroes/tabitha-james-kraan-clean-shampoo)

2

Switching to organic wine is good news for the farmers, the soil, biodiversity – and you! Try the mixed case of six Organic Everyday wines from Vintage Roots.

@VintageRootsLtd

[mygreenpod.com/product/vintage-roots-organic-everyday](https://mygreenpod.com/product/vintage-roots-organic-everyday)

3

Natural and organic skincare products will help get your skin in tip-top condition so your natural beauty can shine through. Try Weleda Skin Food for an instant and all-natural glow.

@WeledaUK

[mygreenpod.com/product/weleda-skin-food](https://mygreenpod.com/product/weleda-skin-food)

4

If you like dairy, go for one of the simplest switches and opt for Yeo Valley Organic milk. Nature is at the centre of this family-run farm, where there's a strong focus on soil health and biodiversity.

@yeovalley

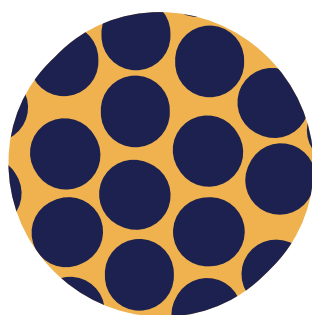
[mygreenpod.com/heroes/yeo-valley-1-litre-semi-skimmed-milk](https://mygreenpod.com/heroes/yeo-valley-1-litre-semi-skimmed-milk)

5

If you're about to buy a product you don't really need, you can save some cash by putting it back and planting a tree instead!

@treesisters

[mygreenpod.com/heroes/treesisters](https://mygreenpod.com/heroes/treesisters)



# 2023 P.E.A. AWARDS

IN ASSOCIATION WITH  
**OCEANDIVA**  
— LONDON —



## All aboard Oceandiva London for this year's green-carpet awards ceremony

**N**ow in its 13th year, the P.E.A. (People. Environment. Achievement.) Awards, in association with Oceandiva London, is the UK's leading sustainability and climate awards, honouring the individuals and teams behind the products, services and businesses that are changing our planet for the better.

Previous winners include Juliet Davenport OBE, Cat Fletcher, Polly Higgins and many other amazing Earth ambassadors who have committed their lives to revolutionising old models and systems, so we can all look forward to a more sustainable future.

Across sectors ranging from money and energy to nature and art, the P.E.A. Awards identifies and celebrates the green heroes who are taking matters into their own hands and providing inspiring alternatives to business as usual.

### OCEANDIVA LONDON

The 2023 P.E.A Awards ceremony will take place aboard Oceandiva London, the event's new headline sponsor and the first carbon-neutral event venue on the River Thames. The three-deck venue has over 2,625m<sup>2</sup> of unimpeded event space for sensational events on the river, whether static or sailing, in the heart of the City.

Oceandiva London is a certified member of isla, which is helping the events industry transition to a sustainable future.

Oceandiva London uses technology to track and measure the carbon impact across the entire lifecycle of events that are held on board. Working with isla it identifies where any carbon emission reductions can be made – from sourcing, energy used, food and beverage choices to audience travel and everything else in between.

### P.E.A. AWARDS 2023 CATEGORIES

- **ARTS** (sponsored by Encore)
- **CLIMATE PIONEER** (sponsored by Deloitte)
- **DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY** (sponsored by Krystal)
- **DRINK** (sponsored by Avallen)
- **ELECTRIC VEHICLE** (sponsored by myenergi)
- **ENERGY** (sponsored by Puredrive)
- **GREENEST FAMILY** (sponsored by My Green Pod)
- **GREEN PIONEER** (sponsored by Weleda)
- **INFLUENCER** (sponsored by Ethical Influencers)
- **LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT**
- **MONEY**
- **NATURE** (sponsored by Yeo Valley)
- **PRODUCT**
- **TRAVEL** (sponsored by Delphina Hotels & Resorts)
- **VEGAN**

### Find out more

■ Book Early Bird Tickets and discover more about the event at [peaawards.com](https://peaawards.com)



## 2023's ALL-FEMALE JUDGING PANEL

The judges for 2023's P.E.A. Awards come from all backgrounds and interests, but they share a strong desire to preserve the fragile environment we live in

### Carys Taylor

Carys Taylor is the director of albert, the home of sustainability for the TV and film industry. Prior to taking up the role, Carys worked on solutions to decarbonise transport at National Grid. Carys also spent some time working in UK parliament and studied international politics, where she examined the role of media in shaping international attitudes to debates.

### Fiona Horton

Fiona has spent around 30 years working in marketing and communications, specifically within HR, resourcing and recruitment. She co-founded Planet People Ltd, which she believes is unique in the sector. It helps the HR community lead the change in measuring and reducing carbon emissions at corporate and individual levels, and communicating this internally and externally to make a business an employer of choice.

### Helen Brain

Helen is a strategist with 16 years' experience solving business challenges in multiple industries. As head of sustainability at MediaCom, Helen supports clients, the business and the wider advertising industry in creating a sustainable future. Helen is also co-founder of the IPAs Climate Charter and contributor at Purpose Disruptors.

### Cat Fletcher

Cat is a waste activist and all-round resource goddess. An Australian mother of three, she is also a founding member, director and head of media

for Freegle, a UK online reuse network with 2.6 million members. Cat is a much-loved face on the P.E.A. Awards judging panel thanks to her no-nonsense take on sustainable living.

### Emily Cromwell

Emily is a director in Deloitte's Sustainability practice. She is a lawyer and a regulatory specialist, with deep expertise in helping her clients manage complex, multi-jurisdictional obligations and designing programmes that meet strategic goals and legal requirements.

Emily leads Responsible Business for the Consumer Industry in the UK and advises clients on sustainability issues including decarbonisation, TCFD, human rights, sustainability strategy and circularity. She leads the ethical value chain ecosystem for Deloitte UK – internal capabilities augmented by an external network of innovative tech companies.

### Jayn Sterland

Jayn is managing director of Weleda (UK/Ireland) and acts as global spokesperson for the company. Joining Weleda was, she says, 'a culmination of everything I had learnt up until that point – having grown up on a farm, learnt how to make medicines from my herbalist gran, whilst watching mum care for her patients and the family as a community doctor – I found all this at Weleda and I feel as though I have come home.'

An energetic environmental activist and a campaigner for responsible business, Jayn consistently appears in

the top five of the Top 25 'Who's Who in Natural Beauty' list, and is chair of the British Beauty Council's Sustainable Beauty Coalition.

### Jordan Brompton

Jordan bubbles with enthusiasm for anything to do with renewable energy or electric vehicles and is extremely passionate about doing her bit to create a more sustainable future.

With several years' experience within the industry – and a whole career in sales and marketing – Jordan is the driving force behind the myenergi brand and a key player in bridging the gap between renewable energies and electric vehicles.

### Jo Wood

Jo is a pioneer and committed supporter of all things organic and natural. She is the founder of Jo Wood Organics, a successful and award-winning organic fragrance and beauty range, and recently moved to a home she has taken off grid. Jo says her philosophy 'is about respecting our bodies and our Earth. If we work with Nature, rather than abusing it, we will all reap the benefits'.

### Katie Hill

Prior to co-founding My Green Pod with Jarvis Smith, Katie was a senior writer, researcher and a deputy editor at Which?, and headed up the Indian equivalent from Mumbai.

With My Green Pod, Katie has combined her experience in investigative and independent journalism with passions for climate

justice, women's rights, clean living and the environment. Katie is also a senior board member at Sustory, a speaker and a judge for the Beauty Shortlist Awards and Mama & Baby Awards.

### Ruth Easter

A qualified solicitor with over 15 years' experience, Ruth is the legal lead for the UK's largest (fiercely!) independent web host, Krystal Hosting. As a champion of inclusivity and environmental awareness, Ruth devotes her career to promoting and codifying principles central to Krystal's ethos.

Ruth's passion for ethical leadership keeps her involved in all sustainable initiatives at Krystal, including its upcoming B Corp accreditation and its Living Wage Employer status. She applies her legal skills and environmental knowledge to help Krystal staff understand the power of pensions, change to 100% renewable providers and make the switch to sustainably made products.

### Stephanie Jordan

Born in London and raised in Burgundy, Stephanie's upbringing sparked her passion for the drinks and hospitality industry. Following an eight-year stint at Diageo she established drinks brand consultancy Drinking Out Loud, with clients such as Schweppes. Stephanie co-founded award-winning Avallen Spirits, a calvados brand on a mission to save bees and become the world's most planet-positive spirits brand. Stephanie was named 'Woman of the Year 2020' by The Drinks Business.

**2023's P.E.A. Awards ceremony will be held in London on 13 September**

# What's fashion got to do with it?



Model twins **Brett and Scott Staniland** explore how the fashion industry can promote equality this International Women's Day

**B**rands have become increasingly vocal in their celebration of International Women's Day, and fashion is no exception. Last year, we saw limited collections with proceeds donated to charities, lots of buy-one-give-one campaigns and Saks Fifth Avenue partnered with *Women's Health* for an event to support frontline healthcare workers.

The fashion industry relies on women; while purchase frequency is reportedly down on last year, it's estimated that women shop 59% more often than men. But the sector is known for exploiting women, too – particularly in supply chains and the garment-making industry.

According to the British Fashion Council, the UK fashion industry employs over 800,000 people, the majority of whom are women, yet women occupy less than a third of the top jobs and are paid 15% less than their male colleagues.

Climate change also disproportionately affects women. The Natural Resources Defense Council stated women's livelihoods are more likely to be damaged by extreme weather events and climate disasters than men's as they are at greater risk of poverty and occupy less crisis-resilient jobs. When those jobs are making garments for us, we really need to weigh up our need for new things at the expense of the female garment maker.

Times are changing though, and hope is on the horizon. Sustainable fashion startups come in many shapes and sizes but have one thing in common: they care about people and planet.

## WOMEN IN FASHION

We asked female founders with brilliant, slow, sustainable or ethical companies why International Women's Day is important to them – this is what they said.

### NGONI CHIKWENENGERE Founder, [wearekin.co](https://wearekin.co)

'International Women's Day this year comes at a time where women's rights are being restricted, reduced and reversed more than ever before. As a female founder it makes me want to do more for womankind. For me, that means celebrating other women and my customers, raising awareness to causes and taking action where I can.'

### HASNA KOURDA Founder, [Save Your Wardrobe](https://saveyourwardrobe.com)

'I wish female leadership would be celebrated more often and outside of IWD, especially as we are navigating through times of crisis. Women leaders have shown incredible resilience and power and yet we only receive less than 2% of institutional funding. At SYW we aim to reduce the impact of an industry that is otherwise extremely wasteful. An industry manufactured by and designed for women, but widely led by male executives. It's time we saw more women taking leadership positions and celebrated their accomplishments throughout the entire value chain.'

### JOSEPHINE PHILIPS Founder, [SoJo](https://sojo.co)

'With running a startup, you get so wrapped up in the day to day that things like IWD are a chance to really pause and ensure we have the much-needed discussions around gender equality: appreciating how far we've come and the women who've paved the way and also ensuring space is created to discuss how far there's still to go.'

'As a founder, you're responsible for the culture of the company and in my eyes that should mean a culture where there's a common understanding of the inequalities of society and the experiences of others.'

That isn't and shouldn't be restricted to one day. We have these conversations regardless, especially with a team of 75% women, but there's something in the intentionality of the whole world thinking about it simultaneously that really emphasises its importance.'

### FANNY MOIZANT Founder, [Vestiaire Collective](https://vestiairecollective.com)

'I co-founded Vestiaire Collective with Sophie Hersan to offer a tangible solution for the unused items in all of our wardrobes. We wanted to offer a solution to a problem, democratise fashion for a better future and reduce waste.'

'After having my two daughters, I was inspired to start my own company. Female leadership and empowerment is in our DNA; as a company we are always looking to give equal opportunity and nurture talent across the globe. Our employees are 56% female across our business, and we really focus from here in our Paris office to working with innovative female leaders including Elizabeth Ricketts, co-founder of the OR Foundation.'

'This year we are very focused on gender equality overall and applying to The French Gender Equality Index, addressing pay gaps, promotion gaps and the number of women in top management. We are engaging in the Parity Pact with Le French Tech because we believe we need women at every level, especially governmental.'

'Internally we have launched five taskforces, including a Parent Taskforce and a Women's Empowerment Taskforce, to support women in the workplace to establish programmes and develop themselves. We focus on training female employees to be more confident speaking in public and provide daycare for all parents.'

## Find out more

■ Stay up to date with Brett and Scott on Instagram: [@twinbrett](https://www.instagram.com/twinbrett) and [@twainscott](https://www.instagram.com/twainscott)



# FEMALE LEADERS

**Safia Minney MBE, founder of Fashion Declares and REAL Sustainability, on why female leadership is essential for a just transition**

**S**napping at our heels, the dysfunctional, growth-driven, fossil-fuel dependent, misogynistic economy goes round and round like a scratched record. Little wonder that female leadership's full potential is yet to be set free for the benefit of humanity and all species.

We need an urgent shift from our fossil fuel-driven economy to 'ecological economics'. This means promoting degrowth and redesigning every industry to fit within planetary boundaries, and redistributing wealth to meet everyone's needs in a flourishing society. It means doing the opposite to what we do in our current economy.

The new economy will pay to reduce inequality, protect and restore nature and strengthen communities – and it will radically benefit.

## FEMININE QUALITIES

Ecological economics means redistributing voice and power, too. The so-called feminine attributes of communication, collaboration, caring, creativity and systems thinking are key to raising the wellbeing, quality of life and economic empowerment of

women, girls, ethnic minorities and Indigenous people around the world.

'Feminine' attributes are present in men, too; coaching male leaders, I've come to appreciate just how difficult it is for men to express themselves with authenticity. Many hold back from showing those 'feminine' qualities of expressing themselves emotionally and showing how deeply they care.

Men can hold back from championing collaborative partnership, fearing ridicule in a system that admires and rewards toxic masculinity and ostentatious materialism.

## WOMEN ON BOARDS

We urgently need to liberate female and male leaders if we are to ensure we have the best chance of pulling ourselves back from the brink of climate, ecological and social collapse – or at least mitigating the worst of it.

Women make up 40% of today's board positions, but why aren't things changing faster? Is it because there are still too few women in significant decision-making roles like CEO and chair?

Are companies trying to meet their targets but not willing to create a process to encourage new thinking or better practices and attitudes? Is the undercurrent of misogyny through social media, porn, advertising and cultural bias, despite running under a supposedly woke society, just too strong?

We need to build a new culture that makes bullying and toxic behaviours unacceptable; Claire Braund of Women On Boards has put together eight superb tips for boards (see link below), but I'm concerned that very real invisible hands are dragging female leaders down, exhausting them and sapping their energy away from transforming their organisations – just when we need them most.

## SHARING POWER AND PRIVILEGE

For women, now is our time to lead change. We must raise our voices with courage. For women in every sector, now is the time for truth, for new models of production and consumption.

It's time for new terms of trade that empower rather than exploit workers in supply chains; partnerships with suppliers that can bring about decarbonisation and regeneration of their environment and communities and the financial systems that strengthen that ecosystem.

We must imagine organisations and societies designed to regenerate natural systems, re-distribute wealth and support those who champion these ideas and have the expertise in each sector. Our ideas and lived experience deserve investment.

We must bring marginalised and less privileged people forward with us, and give them voice and power. We must demand that the entitled elite share their power and privilege – that they are accountable and pay their taxes.

## A JUST TRANSITION IN FASHION

In the fashion industry, where we need to cut production and consumption by 75%, paying living wages to all workers helps by slowing down the extraction of natural resources as prices rise.

Garments workers reportedly earn half what they need to cover their living costs. In addition, about two-thirds of our clothing comes from fossil fuel-derived synthetics. Prices need to go up; then, with legislation and greenwash accountability, cheap clothing would become untenable and low-impact materials would replace polluting synthetics.

We must buy more secondhand and less new, but more value-added handcrafted products, if we are to see the birth of a just transition in the fashion industry.

We need a universal income, functioning government and new legislation; each industry will develop its own pathway, but in each sector women's leadership will be essential.

This International Women's Day, let's celebrate all the amazing women, everywhere, using their skills to bring about the positive change we desperately need.

## Find out more

- More about award-winning social entrepreneur Safia Minney is at [Safia-Minney.com](https://www.safia-minney.com)
- Read Claire Braund's 8 Tips for Women on Boards at [REALsustainability.com](https://www.realsustainability.com)

# CELEBRATING WOMEN

Two inspiring women from Yeo Valley Organic share advice for International Women's Day



## MARY MEAD OBE CO-FOUNDER OF YEO VALLEY ORGANIC

### Has there been a particular female role model who has inspired you?

The most influential female who has inspired me most has been my mother-in-law, who was an outstanding farmer in her own right.

### Are there any personal achievements that you are proud of?

I have been fortunate to receive the BBC Radio 4 Food and Farming Award, plus an honorary MA and OBE for services to sustainable dairy farming. I am particularly proud to have been made a Fellow of the Royal Agricultural Society of England, for the breeding of pedigree British Friesian cows on our organic farm.

### What advice do you have for other women in your field?

My advice to other women would be to have the courage to follow your passion – but don't be afraid to ask for help.

Mary Mead OBE (left) has received the Food and Farming Award from BBC Radio 4; women, including Zelah Cornealius-Richards, in Yeo Valley Organic's gardening team outnumber men three to one

## ZELAH CORNEALIUS-RICHARDS YEO VALLEY ORGANIC GARDENER

### What advice do you have for other women in your field?

We are often called the 'weaker sex' – don't believe it! Physiologically we may be slightly different from men, but we still have our own physical strength, and we are no different when it comes to our intelligence and mental capacity.

### Are female gardeners supported?

Attitudes towards women in traditionally male roles are definitely changing. There are loads of amazing women in all areas of horticulture, but it would be good to see more – especially in head gardener roles and higher up the horticultural ladder in general.

Yeo Valley Organic's head gardener is a woman and we have a women-heavy gardening team now that we have just hired a new female gardener. We currently outnumber the men three to one!

### What does International Women's Day mean to you?

This is a day to admire the brilliant women in my life and to celebrate the achievements of women around the world.



### Why do you think we should celebrate International Women's Day?

Women have had to struggle to assert their right to equality with men in society and that struggle is still going on, to greater and lesser degrees, around the world.

To be able to vote, get an education, choose what field I work in and decide if I want to marry and have children is something I take for granted, but I am very aware that I am lucky.

So International Women's Day is a reminder to keep pushing for those rights for all women and to champion women and their ideas.

### Has there been a particular female role model who has inspired you?

Pretty much all the women in my life, but especially my mother. She raised me single-handedly with the most extraordinary kindness, love and compassion and instilled in me the idea that I should have my own career and be able to support my own independence.

This is an idea that I hope I have passed on to my own daughter.

### Find out more

■ Discover Yeo Valley Organic's approach to people and planet at [yeovalley.co.uk/people-planet](https://yeovalley.co.uk/people-planet)



Find out why Yeo Valley Organic is a My Green Pod Hero at [mygreenpod.com](https://mygreenpod.com)



PHOTOGRAPHY ISTOCK

# Positive Spirits

**My Green Pod** has partnered with an event that's set to cause a stir this June

**T**he UK's sustainable spirits sector is booming as shoppers continue to seek ethically sourced products that don't put undue stress on the environment or exploit workers.

In tandem with growing demand, many distilleries are choosing to focus on sustainable production methods – from powering their processes with renewable energy to reducing waste and looking for new ways to improve their packaging.

## BIG NAMES GO GREEN

This sector-wide shift towards sustainability has been buoyed by the actions of some major players in the market.

Diageo's 10-year sustainability plan includes a target to become net zero in its operations by the end of the decade. Four of its famous Scotch whisky distilleries have been awarded gold certification from Green Tourism for initiatives including biodiversity enhancement, energy efficiency, local sourcing, community engagement, plastics reduction and sending zero waste to landfill.

Similarly, the world's only distillery for Absolut vodka, in the seaside town of Åhus in the south of Sweden, has been carbon neutral since 2013. Based on the latest BIER benchmark (2017 figures), the distillery is 60% more energy efficient than the average distillery. Absolut, owned by Pernod Ricard, is on track to completely phase out fossil fuels by 2025; according to BIER, CO2 emissions

from production per litre of alcohol distilled are already 98% less than those of the average distillery.

These are just two of the household names helping to demonstrate that sustainability is possible, desirable and can be achieved at scale. The Absolut distillery alone produces 100 million litres of vodka per year, meaning improved efficiency is already making a tangible difference.

## CHEERS TO CHANGE

At the same time it has never been more important for independent spirits and non-alcoholic spirits to be part of the conversation – to push for improved sustainability and transparency in the industry and to collaborate to share knowledge.

Positive Spirits (Saturday 17 June) will be the first event to showcase the greenest and most exciting drinks businesses on the market. The new one-day event experience, from sustainable events agency Legacy Events, will bring the world's best sustainable spirits to White Rabbit Studios in London's Shoreditch.

Dubbed 'the tonic to your gin', the event invites drinks enthusiasts – from distillers, buyers, bartenders and venue reps to ambassadors and conscious consumers – to mix with peers, learn

where their sustainability journey could go next and network with industry leaders who have expertise to share.

Attendees can expect tastings and live mixology stations, sustainable world food, live music and entertainment, drinks, networking, interactive workshops and a future-looking programme of conference sessions. Those attending will get a chance to win a goodie bag with an assortment of special gifts and discount codes.

'We're excited to announce the launch of Positive Spirits, a drinks event with a difference – with a dedicated focus on sustainability', said Legacy founder and CEO Abena Fairweather. 'We look forward to showcasing high-quality innovators and changemakers, as well as an exciting day for both trade and the public.'

Positive Spirits will feature a selection of top-quality sponsors who are driving change in the ever-changing market. 30 handpicked sustainable and ethically conscious drinks brands and products will also be exhibited.

Now's the time to celebrate all the positive changes in the drinks market, and raise a toast to the distillers and brands working hard to reduce their impact on the planet.

## Find out more

- If you'd like to get involved with Positive Spirits as an exhibitor, contact [positivespirits@legacy-events.com](mailto:positivespirits@legacy-events.com)
- Information about the event is at [positivespirits.events](https://positivespirits.events)

# TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR ENERGY

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# WOMEN IN

Octopus Energy's Samsam Farah on the female engineers shaping the future of smart, green energy

# POWER

**H**ardware engineers have a key role in the fight against climate change: creating the building blocks of a clean, green future to challenge our reliance on fossil fuels.

At Octopus Energy, a team of smart product engineers is hard at work developing tools that could come to transform the way society uses and understands energy.

Senior engineers Derya and Carmen work alongside product manager Jess in this crack team. They are pioneers in their field: one of them laid the groundwork for game-changing tech like mobile phone payments and the Hive thermostat.

In an industry where men make up almost 85% of the workforce, it's time to meet the women building a smart future.

## TECH TO TRANSFORM OUR ENERGY SYSTEM

Senior engineer Derya started her career in Turkey, where she designed mobile phones in the pre-internet days. She then moved to Nokia to develop tech like Bluetooth and wifi – and made the world's first wifi call (via 'SIP') on a mobile phone.

Derya also helped to develop the technology that allows us to make payments with our mobile phones today (NFC) – tech so advanced it influenced developments in Silicon Valley. Then Derya moved to Hive, where she was the key engineer behind its cutting-edge, multiple-award winning smart thermostat.

Next, looking to join the most innovative players in the green energy space, Derya went to Octopus. She's been with us for over two years, using tech and engineering to transform the UK's energy systems and help us to move away from fossil fuels.

'I have always been drawn to companies that are leading the industry and changing the world for the better', Derya says. 'I love creating efficient, easy-to-use products that are sustainable and drive down costs for customers'.

## SMART HOMES OF THE FUTURE

Derya's brainchild is the Octopus Home Mini – a true game-changer in the industry. When plugged in at a home with a smart meter, it beams readings to an Octopus customer's mobile app every 10 seconds. This offers customers incredibly detailed, up-to-date information about their energy use, which they can see and analyse in real time in their Octopus app.

'Knowledge is power, and I want to empower people with all the knowledge they need when it comes to their consumption, data and bills', Derya explains.

Her next big feat: making electric heat simple and user friendly, by creating a product that will allow people to control their hot water and heating via smartphone – wherever they are. One of the people to first bring boiler heating controls to the UK at Hive, Derya was uniquely placed to drive this project at Octopus.

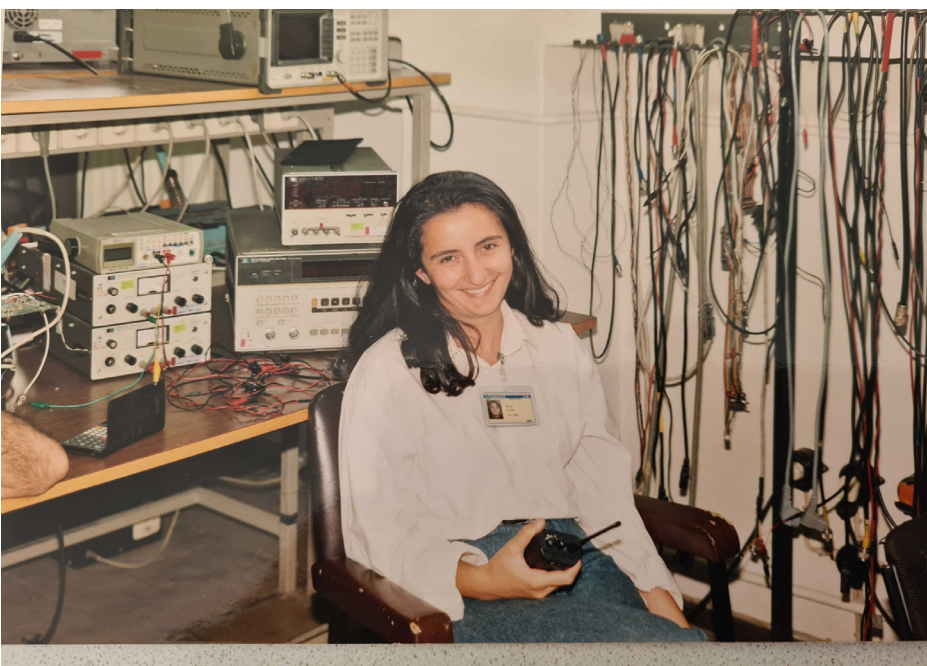
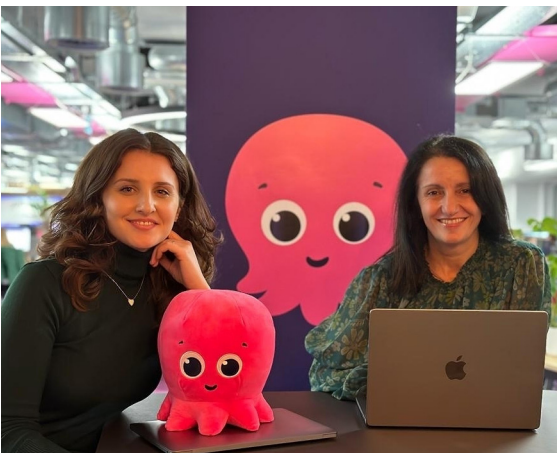
'My products are intended for smart homes of the future – homes where people control their heating using an app, whether they're home or not', Derya shared. 'Where the solar panels are connected to the electric car's charging station and home battery. Where a simple app gives customers 100% control over their usage so they can save money and stay sustainable.'

Derya's next challenge has been to optimise battery storage to speed up the transition to renewable energy. 'Electrification is the way of the future', she said. 'With batteries, solar power, electric vehicles and heat pumps, we can drastically reduce our reliance on fossil fuels. My goal is to make this possible for every home in the UK – and to make it a seamless transition'.

Derya is a true pioneer – and her achievements are doubly impressive in an industry where almost 85% of the workers are men. That hasn't always been easy; 'As a woman, and as someone from Turkey working in the UK engineering world, I know what it's like to feel like an outsider, or like you don't belong', she said. 'But I quickly realised that it doesn't matter who I am or where I come from; if I'm good at what I do, I'll be accepted anywhere.'

## A CONNECTED TEAM

Derya had never worked with another female engineer until her career at Octopus, when she started working with research and



development engineer Carmen. Today they work closely together on the Octopus Home Mini and heat pump controls projects.

Becoming an electronics engineer hadn't been Carmen's original plan; she made the spontaneous decision days before her admissions exams at the Politehnica University of Bucharest.

'Young girls need to be told they can do whatever they set their minds to', Carmen says. 'Had I known this path was an option for me, I could have been far better prepared'.

A polyglot, Carmen speaks her native Romanian and English, as well as some French, Spanish and Mandarin. At Octopus, she focuses primarily on firmware development, rigorously testing and certifying every product to a high standard so customers get the best experience possible.

Carmen also looks after the devices fleet, resolving any bugs and making sure the smart products Octopus Energy has sent out in the world are functioning as they should. 'I love how incredibly fast-paced and challenging our work is', she says. 'It gives me the chance to prove what I can do and broaden my horizons'.

The team is constantly innovating new products, improving features, developing technical software, connecting with suppliers and building hardware. 'While we work closely with other departments, we have a tiny core R&D team that is super connected', Carmen explains. 'Of course working with new tech all the time is challenging, but this supportive environment has been amazing. My advice to others is: there are no dumb questions and never put any limits on what you're capable of.'

### FINDING FEMALE ROLE MODELS

The engineering sector is in desperate need of more female and BAME representation – but the Octopus engineering department is an anomaly. 'Working with Derya as our senior engineer, Jess as project manager and Rebecca as our director of product and marketing has been a tremendous experience', Carmen shares. 'I know some women have difficult experiences in our field, but I never did. And now I feel privileged to be surrounded by such amazing female role models.'

Carmen is also working round the clock on a controls project, which kicked off in the middle of the pandemic. Despite delays and challenges with disrupted supply channels, she and the engineering team have managed to compile the components, create a prototype and transform it into a product that will radically change the way heating works.

'Our mission is to use tech to make clean energy affordable', Carmen says. 'But to solve a problem, you first need to understand it. That's why we want to offer customers a simple way to monitor, understand and control their energy use.'

This kind of tech is the key to a better future. In the wake of the current energy crisis, we must find innovative solutions that reduce our carbon footprint and save customers money.

Carmen and Derya have a clear vision of creating smart energy products that are accessible to all. To that end, they spend much of their time optimising their creations and ensuring the interfaces are easy to use. Ultimately, they say, the job of a smart product engineer is to provide the best and easiest possible experience for the end user.

### A CUSTOMER-OBSESSED TEAM

As project manager, Jess provides an insight into how customer-obsessed this smart product engineering team is. Her role is to make things happen; she brings the teams together to finalise the products and deliver a simple-to-use, intuitive and customer-friendly product – while making it all look very easy.

'Customers are always at the forefront of my mind when it comes to our smart products', Jess explains. 'The products need to be user friendly, intuitive and deeply useful to customers. I often ask myself, 'would my mum be able to use this product?'



Jess works across the different tech, engineering and marketing departments to ensure the smart products are built efficiently and with a shared vision. On any given day, Jess can be in meetings with manufacturers around the world, working with the in-house design team or, of course, catching up with the engineers. 'I love working so closely with Derya and Carmen', she says. 'They're both incredibly strong women and they make me feel very empowered as a woman in a male-dominated field. My advice to anyone wanting to work in this field is: never turn down an opportunity, because you never know where it might lead you'.

### A GREEN ENERGY REVOLUTION

The smart energy industry has evolved heavily over the last few years, and customers are more engaged and informed about energy than ever before. They're far more likely to want to switch energy suppliers and keep on top of their usage to save money, meaning that products like those managed by Jess are crucial.

'My ultimate mission for the department is to pave the way for the green energy revolution', Jess says. 'A world of zero-bills homes, where customers have smart products and tariffs that allow them to be sustainable and self-sufficient.'

Engaged, empowered customers are the key to upending the old ways of the energy industry, maximising renewable energy when it's abundant, avoiding fossil fuels when it's busiest and balancing the energy grid. With Octopus' tech platform Kraken, innovative smart products, flexible tariffs and the hard work of these inspiring women, this reality is closer than ever.

CLOCKWISE  
Carmen and Derya  
work together as  
senior engineers at  
Octopus Energy;  
Samsam Farah,  
article author;  
Derya designed  
mobile phones in  
the pre-internet days;  
project manager Jess  
brings the teams at  
Octopus together



Find out why  
**Octopus Energy's  
Super Green  
Octopus Tariff is a  
My Green Pod Hero  
at mygreenpod.com**

# DUMPING THE PUMP

Fully Charged's **Dan Caesar** explores why the energy transition away from dirty combustion technologies is our best hope for reinvention

**W**e are firmly in the era of cleaner energy and transportation and the next few years will see a paradigm shift towards cleaner technologies.

This switch will have a profound effect, not only on how we live, work and travel, but on the fabric of society itself.

The irony of these technologies – like wind, solar, batteries and electric vehicles – is that they were all invented in the 1800s, but humanity chose a different path.

Combustion has had societal benefits of course, but it has also had some serious side-effects, and air pollution and global warming have been known problems for decades.

Against that backdrop, now that we have indisputably better technologies they must be deployed as fast as possible – but fossil fuels are profoundly interwoven into our lives.

## THE SPIDER'S WEB

This scene from Danny Boyle's *Trust*, starring Donald Sutherland as petroleum magnate J. Paul Getty (talking to his grandson), sticks with me; the (imagined) dialogue puts into stark perspective precisely how we have constructed a world around fossil fuels.

**J.P.G.:** *They still think oil is just stuff that makes their cars go. Oil is everything. Everything. You got up this morning and washed your hair. The shampoo was derived from oil. Your toothbrush is made entirely of oil-based plastic. This jacket's polyester. Made from ethylene. Your sneakers: plastic tops, synthetic rubber soles. All stuck together with an oil-based adhesive. Cotton underpants? And they got to the store, how? By donkey or diesel truck?*

**P.G. Jr:** Damn.

**J.P.G.:** *You try doing anything, or being anything, young man, without oil. It's impossible.*

**P.G. Jr:** Granddad?

**J.P.G.:** *So, Sarah Getty, your great-grandmother. This is her trust. I buy oil fields. The money from which I invest in shipping. Why pay someone else to transport your own oil? The money from which I invest in refineries. Why pay someone else to process your own oil? The money from which I invest in gas stations. Why pay someone else to pump your own gas? The money from which I invest in hotels, to house my workforce. The money from which I invest back into the trust. The money from which I invest in... Buying more oil fields. You see the beauty of it?*

**P.G. Jr:** It's like a spider's web.

**J.P.G.:** *Exactly. For the money spider that just keeps getting bigger and bigger and bigger. It's a self-sustaining system that never pays a cent in tax because it never goes a cent into profit.*

*For the purposes of accounting, Getty Oil runs at a loss, my boy. At a loss. We're so poor, we could get milk tokens from the goddamn British government.*



PHOTOGRAPHY ISTOCK

## IMPROVED TECHNOLOGIES

A decisive shift away from oil and gas will likely be the biggest single transfer of wealth in human history. As such it's easy to see why Big Oil would have us drill and burn indefinitely, and explains the dirty tactics that this incalculably large industrial complex will employ to delay, delay, delay. So what benefits can we expect to see if we deploy, deploy, deploy instead?

Well, we might still be able to slow down the looming climate crisis, and we would certainly see the huge health benefits that come with 'clearing the air', but there's much more to it than that.

Firstly, this is progress. These technologies are much better. Electric cars are a vast improvement on what has come before. Don't believe me? Just try one.

Secondly, these technologies 'connect'. There are efficiency and cost benefits of course – but imagine when your home can become a resilient and smart virtual power plant (VPP).

Energy generation, storage and shifting are here-and-now technologies, while most electric cars over the coming years will come equipped with vehicle-to-grid capability. If the opportunity to 'dump the petrol pump' appeals, then think how liberating it will be to be on the grid, but no longer reliant on it.

But if tech doesn't turn you on, there are other benefits, too.

## DEMOCRATISING ENERGY

A huge percentage of the world's wealth is concentrated in a vanishingly small number

of people. In fact, many of those who have profited from petroleum are so obscenely wealthy, the value of their estates are opaque or even undisclosed.

The digitisation of the world offers us the opportunity to literally break down the existing systems that society is built around into 'smaller bits'.

Generating energy locally on your property, with solar photovoltaics (electricity) or solar thermal (heat), moves value away from institutions and towards individuals.

And then there's the small matter of equity; it is true that new technologies normally come at a premium, and it takes a little time for mass adoption to drive costs down.

However, these technologies needn't necessarily be for those who are lucky enough to have larger disposable incomes.

Electric car sharing, micro-mobility, heat-as-a-service and community power are but a few of the app-enabled benefits that will make these technologies increasingly accessible.

But imagine the transformative effect that solar and batteries could have for settlements in the sub-continent that use kerosene, for example.

These communities can leapfrog oil and gas entirely. Simply stated, these technologies are much better, more democratic and more inclusive, too.

It could certainly be argued that the world has seemed a little darker of late, but if we can unhook ourselves from our unholy alliance with fossil fuels, it's pretty clear that a brighter future is still entirely possible – and in fact very much within our reach.

## Find out more

- The Fully Charged SHOW has a global audience on YouTube and in 2023 will also have a second channel dedicated to Home Energy, six LIVE events around the world and an international Awards event. Discover more at [fullycharged.show](https://www.fullycharged.show)

# COMPETITIONS

We've got our hands on two very special prizes from fantastic companies that are doing things differently. We love them and we want to give you a chance to get to know them, too – so we're running these competitions so you can see for yourself!

This issue we've got a prize for kids and a giveaway for the grown-ups – the one thing they have in common is their inspiring use of paper! Take a look and, if you're one of our winners, let us know what you thought of your prize. Good luck!

To enter and view any Ts & Cs, visit [mygreenpod.com](https://mygreenpod.com)



## A ONE-YEAR SUBSCRIPTION TO NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC LITTLE KIDS

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Deadline for entries: 01.07.23



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## **DATE:**

12-16 June 2023



**'Leading with purpose in today's world is very challenging; for me, Spirited Business has been the missing support that I needed to deeply empower real change within me as a leader and consequently within my business.'**

**TABITHA JAMES KRAAN** FOUNDER AND CEO, TABITHA JAMES KRAAN ORGANIC HAIRCARE