Don’t Despair!

by Helena Norberg-Hodge

From all reports following the recent election in the US, it now seems appropriate to refer to that country as the Divided States of America – a nation split roughly into two camps, each of which demonizes the other. In these difficult times, it’s important for us to try to understand our opponents, to understand the ‘other’ – not only among our neighbors at home, but everywhere. For many Americans, this will mean trying to uncover the roots of religious fundamentalism, whether Christian or Muslim.

As we at ISEC have been pointing out for over a quarter of a century, the rise of fundamentalism is to a great extent the consequence of an ever-more globalizing economy that threatens individual self-esteem, cultural identity, and economic security worldwide. The deregulation of global trade and finance is ultimately responsible for mass migrations all over the world: in the South, people are being drawn off the land by the millions and into urban slums; in the North, smaller towns, villages and cities are being emptied in favor of growing urban sprawls. In both cases, these migrations are associated with a breakdown of family, community and job security, all of which lead to a search for more solid values and foundations. They also lead to a fear of outsiders and those that are different. Even in my native country of Sweden, I’ve seen a rise in racism and fundamentalism over the last 20 years.

I myself was thrown into this work because I witnessed the economic pressures that led to

continued next page
fundamentalism and violent conflict in both Ladakh and Bhutan. To my horror, Buddhist elders in Ladakh were convinced by their angry young grandsons that “we have to kill the Muslims off before they eradicate us.” *Ancient Futures* outlines the various factors that led to these crises. Alleviating those pressures by strengthening self respect and the local economy – thereby contributing to the restoration of peace and cooperation – has been a cornerstone of the Ladakh Project’s work. Please read Becky’s Tarbottón’s article in this newsletter, which describes the poignancy and urgency of our work in Ladakh today.

In America, as in much of the West, the resistance to looking at the bigger picture is partly fuelled by a sense of guilt and self-blame. Western consumers are told again and again that it is because of their greed and selfishness that people are starving in Africa, that seas and soils are polluted, that the climate is changing. They are even told that Muslim anger stems from ‘envy’ of their lifestyle. It is no wonder that many are reluctant to think deeply about global issues.

But we need to remind ourselves that the root of the problem is not so much our individual greed as a *system that generates greed*. The shocking truth is that our taxes are spent to support giant corporations that in turn employ society’s brightest minds to generate unhappiness and insecurity. Advertising uses sophisticated psychology to turn the needs for love and belonging – of even our 3-year old children – into voracious consumerism. The message is, “if you want to be loved, if you want to be seen, buy this”. So it is that children from Tibet to New York, from Kenya to Cairo become desperate to have Nike sneakers, Barbie dolls and McDonald’s hamburgers. The desires of these children do not emanate from some sort of innate western greed. They are the product of a system that is making us all less content, more insecure, more fearful of one another and the future.

Blaming ourselves and feeling guilty does not help us to change this system. We need instead to see through the misinformation and manipulation, to understand the structural pressures that are leading to greed, fear and fundamentalism worldwide. Only then can we help to turn things around. Even the tiniest step at the level of policy would have a positive ripple effect on people and the planet.

Despite all the turmoil that’s so evident today, I continue to feel optimistic about the future of our war-torn and polluted world. But if we are to bring about real and lasting change, a massive education and information campaign will be needed, one that can counter the effects of an advertising and media machine that now affects us all. This will require broadening the base of activists and voters who have a grasp of economic issues. In other words, we need economic literacy campaigns that help debunk some of the central myths of our time, lies that are propelling us ever faster toward economic, social and environmental collapse. We can no longer afford to believe that what is good for corporations is good for society, that economic growth is more important than local self-reliance, that all trade is good and that more trade is always better.

Debunking these notions is what we have been doing at ISEC for the past 30 years. And we have made a difference. We have helped not only to change the direction of development in Ladakh, but to launch the local food movement in the west. We have alerted thousands upon thousands of people to the systemic nature of our crises, while emphasizing that economic decentralization or localization is the key lever that will solve a multitude of problems simultaneously. Please help us to continue this work.
Unfair and Lovely
by Becky Tarbotton
International Programs Director

There are moments in this work where the impact of so-called ‘progress’ leaves one breathless. This summer I was in Hemia village in Ladakh, sitting at a small table with Dolma Tsering and Ama Putit from the Women’s Alliance and ISEC volunteer Alex Jensen, as the women of the village gathered around. Many of them had just walked up from the fields, and greeted each other while brushing grass from their sulmars and smoothing their windblown hair. Our visit to Hemia was part of a tour of the traditional kitchens we set up last year with the Women’s Alliance – both to generate some village income from trekkers, and to raise the status of the local cuisine. But so far there was nothing traditional about this kitchen. Phuntsog Tsering, the Woman’s Alliance member responsible for running the venture, was explaining to us that tourists are not interested in Ladakhi food. “They want Lipton soup and Nescafé,” she said. “What can we do?”

It soon became apparent that the women hadn’t really advertised the Ladakhi food, and what’s more, they didn’t have a menu on display. It was also clear that they didn’t believe that any self-respecting tourist would actually want to eat local food. You can’t blame the women for believing this. The media is full of images of westernized Indians eating packaged, sterilized foods, and most tourists do very little to disavow this notion that ‘modern’ equals ‘packaged’.

While we were discussing these issues, a young girl began asking her mother plaintively for something and then broke free and ran into their nearby house. She couldn’t have been more than three years old, with fine short hair framing a beautiful face. When she returned she was clutching a tube to her chest, and as she drew close to the group I saw that it was “Fair and Lovely” cream. My heart sank. What could this little girl possibly want with skin whitening cream? As I watched, she took the tube, opened it and began to smear liberal amounts of the bleaching cream onto her face while her mother continued talking. Alex, sitting beside me, drew a sharp breath, and a horrified look dawned on Dolma’s face.

Fair and Lovely (produced by the multinational conglomerate Unilever) advertises itself as a product that “gives you noticeably fairer and more radiant skin with its new 4 step holistic fairness process”. Marketed throughout the South, the cream is used by a large number of Ladakhi women – particularly the younger generations, which have been exposed to a relentless ad campaign equating fair skin with beauty, financial success and happiness.

We watched in stunned silence as the little girl buried her face under layers of white cream. Then Dolma began to speak quietly and confidently about the health hazards of skin bleaching, and stressing that Ladakhis are beautiful just the way they are. She pointed out that changing the color of one’s skin was NOT modern, or better, or desirable, and that the company producing the product was only interested in profit: what other possible reason could there be for selling a cream to change the color of one’s skin? As she spoke, the mother of the little girl tried to wrest the tube of cream from her daughter’s hands, meeting wails and protestations and finally a full-fledged tantrum.

In that moment, the cranking, interlocking mechanisms of the consumer monoculture couldn’t have been more clearly exposed. Here was a group of strong, capable, attractive women, made to feel ashamed not only of their skin, but also of their traditional food while a single multinational company offered ‘new’ ‘modern’ ‘improved’ products (Lipton soup is also a Unilever brand) to replace what was home-grown and naturally beautiful.

Dolma, cheeks flushed with emotion, finished talking and glanced over at me with tears in her eyes. In hundreds of conversations like this, the Women’s Alliance carries on its work of raising respect for women, for local agriculture and culture. The urgency of these efforts is magnified by the incredible pressure that bears down on Ladakhis every day of their lives. They are being pushed to conform to a system that is not only foreign, but absolutely devoid of any connection to place, a system which lacks respect for what is local, indigenous and ancient, and actively works to destroy it. Without access to information about where this pressure comes from and why it is exerted, Ladakhis would be unable to make informed decisions crucial to their health, their environment, and the very survival of their culture.

As the impacts of economic globalization spread, the task of helping communities preserve and safeguard their own cultural and ecological well-being has become ever more important. For 30 years now, the Ladakh Project has served as a wonderful example of what can be achieved to support the local despite tremendous pressure from the global monoculture.
The Ladakh Project

Reality Tours
• The sale of products like skin-whitening cream in Ladakh and other parts of the South depend on a deep-seated belief that western, urban ways are somehow better than indigenous life. One method we have used to counteract this notion is to bring groups of Ladakhis on “Reality Tours” that give them a more complete and realistic picture of life in the west – not only revealing problems like unemployment, drug addiction, poverty and alienation, but showing that many Westerners are rejecting the consumer culture in favor of more sustainable, ecological ways of living.

Tourism for Change
• The Tourism for Change program focused around the daily screening of the Ancient Futures video, drawing 35 to 40 tourists daily to the Ecology Center. After the video, ISEC staff shared information and tools for community resistance and renewal in both Ladakh and the West. Because of growing interest in these issues, we have also started screening ISEC’s three other films – Paradise with Side Effects, Local Futures and The Future of Progress – on alternate evenings after Ancient Futures.

• In an exciting development this year, the State Tourism Department agreed to distribute our ‘Guidelines for Tourists’ brochure at the airport and all road entries to Ladakh. Every tourist entering Ladakh will now receive vital information about cultural and ecological “do’s and don’ts”, as well as tips on how tourists can make positive contributions during their stay. Our only obstacle is finding the funds to print enough brochures: two plane-loads of tourists arrive each day from June through September and there is a total of 18,000 visitors to Ladakh annually! (The ‘Guidelines’ brochure can be viewed and downloaded from our website.)

Women’s Alliance
• Thanks to the Women’s Alliance Handicrafts training program, another group of women was trained in tailoring, weaving, knitting and dyeing, bringing to ten the number of villages actively producing textiles for the Women’s Alliance shops. WAL also opened a new handicrafts shop in the Leh bazaar, providing another outlet for the crafts these women produce.

• The Women’s Alliance Center continues to be a vibrant office, education center and gathering place, with a lush vegetable garden and a constant bustle of activity. The Annual Festival of Local Skills and Knowledge was held in September at the Center, with guests of honor Thubstan Chewang, former director of The Ladakh Ecological Development Group and former head of Ladakh’s regional government.

• In the coming year, the Women’s Alliance will be setting up four ‘cooperative production groups’ in villages around the region to meet the growing Ladakhi and tourist demand for local food products, including mustard oil, lentils, apricots and dried fruits.
Farm Project

- The Farm Project had 50 participants this summer – all of whom lived and worked with a Ladakhi family for one month and participated in ‘Global to Local’ workshops. The workshops focused on the impacts of economic globalization and conventional development, and explored systemic solutions.

Here are some comments from this year’s participants:

“For me the experience has been rich, incredibly rewarding and will inform my work and life at home in ways that will manifest over many years to come. Thank you!”

-Nic Drever, Australia

“I learnt a sense of confidence in my ideas and ideals; a sense of peace in myself.”

-Ryan Boyle, USA

“Thank you ISEC for making possible a key experience that I am sure will carry on working through my life. Please keep it up!”

-Lizzy Gilbert, UK

LEDeG

- The Ladakh Ecological Development Group is living up to its reputation as the foremost promoter of renewable energy in Ladakh. This year they are working on a project in the very high-altitude Changtang region, towards the Tibetan border, involving the construction of a solar power station and the training of local Ladakhis to maintain and repair the equipment.

- In the Zanskar area LEDeG is working on a micro-hydro project and a handicrafts program, and in the Chumatang region they have begun a watershed development project.

A Big ‘Thank-You’ to Our Volunteers:

We would like to extend our deep gratitude to Nic Drever, Donna Troy and Alex Jensen – volunteers and interns who made the work in Ladakh possible this year. A special thanks to Alex, whose commitment, ideas, impressive Ladakhi language skills and good humor (in spite of relentless teasing by the Ama-les) were invaluable.
California is Ripe for Change

by Katy Mamen
Program Coordinator

California is well-known for many things: Hollywood, the Pacific coastline, Disneyland, surfing. It is also justifiably famous for its agriculture: California is the biggest food exporter in the United States, and its products can be found in virtually every American supermarket; its wines are legendary, and its dairy production is larger than any other state.

For reasons like these, most people will be surprised to learn that California is actually a net importer of food. This is among the revelations in ISEC’s latest publication, Ripe for Change: Rethinking California’s Food System. Researching, writing, publishing and disseminating Ripe for Change has been one of the major activities of our US-based Local Food program over the past year.

At first glance, the case for a shift towards local food might seem difficult to make in California – a state considered the ‘poster child’ for success in the global food economy, the model that policymakers across the US and the world are desperately trying to emulate.

As it turns out, even California would greatly benefit from a shift to local food. Our research clearly showed that most Californians actually pay a steep price for the state’s role in the global food economy; most of the benefits, meanwhile, flow to a relative handful of agribusiness corporations.

Consider a few other facts gleaned from the report:

- The dirtiest air in the country is now found in California’s agricultural heartland, where the asthma rate for children is three times the national average.
- California’s food trade is often redundant, with the same products being simultaneously imported and exported. For example, the state’s ports receive $50 million worth of fresh strawberries annually – even though California is a major strawberry exporter. Most of the imports arrive during peak strawberry season in California.
- It is estimated that the value of food shipped to, from, and within California will more than triple by 2020, exceeding the value of all other transported goods. Much of this transport is needless, wastes fossil fuels and adds to pollution and global warming.
- One-fourth of direct farm subsidies in California go to the largest one percent of the state’s producers. Huge agribusinesses get plenty of indirect subsidies as well, such as $90 million annually to promote California food products overseas.
- Shifting to the local would help diversify the state’s farms, reduce agrochemical use, provide more jobs and more opportunities in farming, revitalize the state’s impoverished rural economies, and provide Californians with far healthier food.

The report was formally launched in San Francisco in May with a press conference, a reception with local wine and food, and a panel presentation with Helena Norberg-Hodge, Anuradha Mittal of the Oakland Institute, and Kristie Knoll, a local farmer. This discussion is available at www.radioproject.org.

Ripe for Change is already being used as a tool for education and advocacy across California., and ISEC is collaborating with other organizations to promote local food as the centerpiece of sustainable food systems in the state. A summary of the report can be downloaded from ISEC’s website (www.isec.org.uk), and the full report can be ordered from our Berkeley office.
American Dreamland

ISEC has often focused attention on how rural villagers are being pulled by the millions into the South’s rapidly expanding urban slums – lured in part by idealized images of western, urban life that are as ubiquitous as advertising, but are forever out of reach for the vast majority. We sometimes describe those unfortunate people as “living in the shadow of the American Dream”.

In Beijing today, that description may be literally true. The following list, which originally appeared in the March 2004 issue of Harper’s Magazine, includes some of the names of residential high-rises built in Beijing in the past few years under a government campaign with the slogan, “Development is the only principle.” Imagine what the names on these expensive high-rises say to impoverished and dispossessed Chinese villagers, many of whom live in the slums these huge buildings loom above:

- American Rock
- Bank Landscape
- CEO
- European Culture Park
- Glamour International
- Ideal Life
- Latte Town
- Manhattan Garden
- Merlin Champagne Town
- Palm Springs
- Paris Station
- Park Avenue
- Top Aristocrat
- Upper East Side
- Wonderful Digital Jungle
- Yuppie International Garden

Local Food Toolkit

As part of our Local Food Program, we continue to disseminate our “Toolkit” materials in both the US and the UK. It includes the “Local Food, Globally” slideshow, our poster exhibit, the book Bringing the Food Economy Home, factsheets, and other resources). These materials have proved to be tremendously effective in raising awareness about the central importance of local food. The Toolkit materials have already been the basis for hundreds of presentations – not only by ISEC staff, but by environmental groups, food activists, teachers, students and civic bodies in communities across the country.
The Flow Fund Circle

ISEC has had the honor of participating in the Flow Fund Circle for several years. The circle was established by the visionary philanthropist Marion Weber as a way of supporting grassroots projects around the world. The funds we receive through this program are not intended to support ISEC’s work; instead the money is redistributed through a circle of friends. In this way, we have had the pleasure of helping to encourage and strengthen more than a hundred inspiring initiatives on five continents - involving artists, poets, musicians, alternative economists, holistic doctors and ecological farmers. Here is a sampling:

USA
Maria Gilardin is the founder of TUC Radio, which produces and distributes radio programming on subjects generally ignored by the mainstream media. Over the years she has produced programs on the social and environmental abuses of the IMF, The World Bank and large corporations. Our grant helped her produce a four-part series on the impact of giant superstores like Wal-Mart on the economy and social fabric of small communities.

MEXICO
La Cristalina is a small Zoque community in the foothills of Chimalapas, on the border between the states of Oaxaca and Chiapas. This grant helped to launch an organic community farm, with the objectives of achieving self-sufficiency in food, improving diets, encouraging forest conservation, and creating employment. The organizers also hope that the farm will act as a catalyst for other community initiatives, and as a model for neighboring villages to follow.

SOUTH AFRICA
Ocean View is a low-income township south of Cape Town, where a Flow Fund grant was used to establish a community currency. The aim of the alternative currency is to provide a form of purchasing power that can only be used in Ocean View, and thus encourages residents to set up businesses that provide each other with a wider range of local goods and services.
INDIA
A young man in Paddar, in Jammu and Kashmir state, was inspired by the work of the Ladakh Project to establish a training program in carpentry and tailoring in his village. Though natural resources in this region are much more abundant than in Ladakh, people here are poorer because colonialism and inappropriate development have hit harder. The project enables farmers to earn a supplementary income without being forced to leave their villages.

SPAIN
La Ortiga is a CSA and community education group in Sevilla. They operate from a wonderful old building serving not only as a pick-up point for farm produce, but as a community resource as well, with classes and office space for other activist groups. We visited La Ortiga several years after this grant was made, and it was wonderful to see how successful it had become. The atmosphere is as lively as a farmers’ market, with children running around the cobblestone courtyard, music playing, and people talking, eating and drinking.

IRELAND
The Convergence Festival of the Sustainable Ireland Co-operative is a celebration of green, healthy and ethical living, and serves as a platform for groups and organizations working towards social justice and ecological sustainability. It provides information and entertainment, celebrates achievements, and offers fantastic networking and educational opportunities.

UNITED KINGDOM
Flow Fund grants to the Soil Association helped launch the Local Food movement in the UK. In 1993 we collaborated with The Soil Association to organize a large community agriculture conference in London, for the first time focusing the public’s attention on the many benefits of local food.

BULGARIA
The Community Genetic Resources Center is a small rural seed network for open-pollinated plant varieties in Bulgaria. The organizers are working to encourage gardeners and farmers to participate in plant conservation and to develop varieties of plants appropriate for regional conditions.

THAILAND
The Chiang Mai Creative Media Project uses participatory approaches to produce theatrical performances on issues of relevance to village communities. The themes vary according to current events in each village, and cover topics ranging from war and peace to love and politics. The long-term goal is to create a space for alternative art and to create a people’s theatre network in the region.
Global to Local Outreach

Much of our Global to Local Outreach involves lectures, workshops, seminars and speaking engagements by Director Helena Norberg-Hodge and other ISEC staff. Last year Helena was invited to South Korea as part of a lecture series called “Great Thoughts for the 21st Century”. Amazingly, she was treated like a rock star – getting even more media coverage than Britney Spears! Everywhere she went she was greeted by hordes of media people and throngs of adoring crowds. It turns out that Ancient Futures is a big bestseller in South Korea, having sold over 300,000 copies.

There were many other high points during the year. Among them was a “Global Women’s Gathering” in Menla, New York. The meeting brought indigenous grandmothers

Gross National Happiness

by Steven Gorelick
US Programs Director

Along with many others, ISEC has often pointed out the absurdity of using Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to measure societal and economic well-being. One problem with GDP is that it only counts monetized transactions, ignoring all the unpaid exchanges typical of healthy families and communities. Nor does GDP account for the myriad benefits of a healthy environment: a forest, for instance, adds nothing to GDP until it is cut down for lumber or pulp. Meanwhile, expenditures linked to a decline in the quality of life – prison construction, cancer care, war – are added to GDP as though we are better off when they’re on the rise.

One of the few political leaders to question GDP is the King of Bhutan, who declared in 1972 that Gross National Happiness (GNH) would be a far more appropriate measure of his country’s well-being.

In February 2004, an international conference on “Operationalizing Gross National Happiness” was held in Thimphu, Bhutan’s capital. More than 80 activists, researchers, economists and scholars from around the world were invited to participate, many of them members of a new initiative entitled “Gross International Happiness”. ISEC Associate Director Tracy Worcester and I were among them. Tracy presented a paper pointing out the heavy costs borne by the poor in the South as their leaders pursued growth-maximizing policies, while I described the many symptoms of social breakdown – including rising rates of depression and suicide among the young – that have accompanied a steadily rising GDP in the US.

Despite the Bhutanese government’s avowed support for GNH, some of its policies – in particular those pertaining to education and the media – are leading the country down the same unsustainable and unhealthy path trod by other nations. On a winding mountain road south of Thimphu, a small billboard nailed to a tree by the Ministry of Education reads: “Be Somebody!” – with images beneath of a mechanic, a hairdresser and a computer technician. The unmistakable message to Bhutanese youth is that traditional farmers are “nobodies,” and that young people should strive to be something better. At the same time the Bhutanese are increasingly exposed to glamorized images of urban consumer culture broadcast by MTV, Star TV and others – images that are extremely damaging to cultural self-esteem.

So far, Bhutan has retained much of its culture and self-reliant economy, and as a result the rural villagers I met seemed incredibly confident, strong and happy. One can only hope that Bhutan demonstrates what can be accomplished when human happiness and environmental sustainability, rather than economic growth, are truly the cornerstones of public policy.
from around the world together with western women elders who have been leaders in challenging the dominant system.

Helena was invited to be on the panel of Western Women Elders, an honor she shared with Gloria Steinem, Alice Walker and Carol Mosley Braun. The fact that this conference sought to strengthen the voices of grandmothers was very significant. In our modern culture, elders are too often forgotten and their wisdom neglected. In more traditional cultures, grandmothers were respected and honoured, and their wisdom and advice helped shape identities and values in a profound way. As a result, both men and women in those cultures had a very real connection to the feminine. Even in seemingly ‘macho’ and male-centered Muslim or Latin cultures there was an intimate relationship between children and their grandmothers.

Another wonderful event was a gathering of 5,000 small farmers and food artisans in Turin, Italy. Organized by Slow Food and the Italian government, “Terra Madre” (Mother Earth) was an historic meeting to honor and celebrate the oldest and most important of our cultural activities: growing and preparing food.

The conference drew participants from every continent – all with different clothing, languages, and foods, and yet united by their respect for the land and their common struggle for survival. Workshops and presentations were held over four days on a huge range of topics, from protecting local economies to growing grains at high altitude. Helena Norberg-Hodge and Becky Tarbotton, ISEC’s International Programs Director, were invited to the event, as were Dolma Tsering and other members of the Womens’ Alliance of Ladakh.

The color, diversity, and spirit of the event vividly revealed the difference between agri-business and agriculture. Here was a demonstration of the incredible diversity of culture on our planet, borne of small scale, truly sustainable methods that not only provide nourishment, but offer a sense of identity, place and community for millions of people around the world.

Prince Charles closed the conference with a speech highlighting the vital importance of protecting sustainable agriculture from the pressures of globalisation, economic growth and ‘efficiency’. Importantly, Prince Charles recognized that ‘slow food’ is ‘local food’. Hopefully, more people will see this connection, enabling the Slow Food and Local Food movements to join together, thereby creating enough momentum to reverse not just agricultural policy, but the trade agenda that is destroying more productive, smaller scale agriculture worldwide.

The voices of other ISEC staff are also being heard. In Portland, Oregon, Becky Tarbotton presented a keynote speech at the BALLE (Business Alliance for Local Living Economies) conference. Other keynote speakers included David Korten and Michael Shuman.

In Boston, US Programs Director Steven Gorelick anchored a workshop at the Food Security Coalition’s annual conference. Many felt that this should have been the opening talk for the conference, since it linked together so well every issue on the conference’s agenda.

Steve’s presentation of ISEC’s Local Food slideshow was the opening event at the annual conference of Northeast SARE (Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program). Even though the participants at this conference have been involved in the sustainable food movement for many years, ISEC’s local food message was new and welcome to most of them.

The Global to Local program also encompasses our Roots of Change Study Group Program. Dr. Denise Ames, a teacher, writer, and past participant of the study group program, has volunteered to serve as ISEC’s Roots of Change Assistant Coordinator. Denise is working on a ‘short course’ condensed curriculum, and is soliciting feedback and input from people who have participated in the program in past years.

Some other events over the past year included:

- A series of lectures at University of California campuses as part of their “Education for Sustainable Living” course.
- Workshops in Santa Barbara along with Fritjof Capra, Satish Kumar, Vandana Shiva and Charlene Spretnak.
- Keynote speech, workshops and presentations at a New Mexico conference organised by the Institute for Non-
violent Economics. Helena’s lecture was titled “The Power of Localising in a Globalising World”.

- Keynote speech at the BALLE (Business Alliance for Local Living Economies) conference in Philadelphia.

- Keynote speech in London on “Science, Culture and Society: Perspectives from Tibet, Ladakh, India and the West”, with Satish Kumar and Samdhong Rinpoche, the Prime Minister of the Tibetan Government in exile.

- Keynote speech on “Ancient Futures: Towards an Economics of Happiness”, at the Great Rethinking conference in Oxford, which included Vandana Shiva, Rupert Sheldrake, Satish Kumar and Ervin Laszlo.

- Presentations and workshops at an inspiring conference in Thailand on spirituality and development, alongside Buddhist monks, writers and activists from Burma, Laos, India, Vietnam and Japan.

ISEC Publications

ISEC’s publications continue to be important grassroots resources and teaching tools. In addition to our new video, Paradise with Side Effects and our new report, Ripe for Change, our other materials still generate interest around the world. This year Local Futures was translated into Japanese and is available on both DVD and video, while the Japanese version of the book is going into its second printing. Our report, Small is Beautiful, Big is Subsidised, has been translated into Polish, while a Brazilian organization is in the process of translating our Local Food toolkit into Portuguese.

Primetime Television Program in Europe Features ISEC’s Work

“Paradise With Side Effects”, a documentary produced for German and French television, focuses on an ISEC Reality Tour to the UK for two members of the Women’s Alliance – depicting an old people’s home and a conversation with a homeless person, as well as a visit to a farmers’ market. Powerful, poignant scenes are coupled with the Ladakhis’ thought-provoking reflections. The film also covers our Farm Project work, the Ecological Development Group, the Women’s Alliance, and other ISEC work. Copies are available from our Berkeley and UK offices.