

## 2009 Comhar Sustainable Development Media Fund

The Irish media have a key role to play in informing public debate on sustainable development. The Comhar Sustainable Development Media Fund was established in 2008, with the aim of securing more and better coverage of sustainability and related issues. The fund is open to all media organisations and journalists in Ireland.

Comhar received 11 applications for the Media Fund in 2009, and seven projects were successful in securing funding. The quality of applications being funded is very high, with projects ranging from a documentary series following people trying to live more sustainable lives to a feature on how the Maldivian islands are in danger of disappearing due to climate change. Comhar SDC provided funding assistance ranging in amount from €850 to €2,500 to the seven successful projects. In addition to mainstream broadcast and print media, a number of special interest and photographic projects also received funding.

All funded projects had to address at least one of four themes chosen by Comhar SDC to reflect their work priorities:

- Climate change and clean energy.
- Building sustainable communities.
- Building the green economy.
- Biodiversity and natural resources.

The seven successful applicants also committed to employing sustainable practices in delivering their projects.

The projects that received funding under the Comhar Sustainable Development Media Fund in 2009 were:

- Frank McDonald, Environment Editor with The Irish Times, received funding to assist in researching and producing an article on the impact of climate change on the Maldivian Islands for publication in The Irish Times (<http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/weekend/2009/1205/1224260125257.html>).

- Freelance journalist Clare Taylor received funding towards a project exploring the impact of empty housing developments on local communities, that was published in the Irish Independent (<http://www.independent.ie/lifestyle/property-plus/what-do-we-do-with-all-the-ghost-estates-1994706.html>).
- El Zorrero Films received funding to produce 'An Bealach Glas', an Irish-language documentary series following people trying to live more sustainable lives, for broadcast on TG4 (<http://www.vimeo.com/channels/71222>).
- Bioenergy specialist Barry Caslin received funding to produce a series of articles on biomass, biofuels and energy crops for publication in The Irish Farmers' Journal.
- TV Producer Maud Hand received funding for a multimedia project on sustainable communities. The project focuses on the community based at the foot of Cnoc Meadh and the Headford Hinterlands, in particular around Campbell's Tavern in Cloughanover, about 16 miles from Galway City. The project outputs included a website, a programme on Galway Bay FM and a feature article in the Connacht Tribune (<http://www.maudhand.com/#/cnoc-meadha-jic/4535330947>).
- Freelance photo-journalist Eileen O'Leary received funding towards a media project exploring sustainable development initiatives in Lesotho.
- Zucca Films received funding to produce 'Transition Tweens', a series of programmes aimed at under-12s and focusing on life for young people in Ireland's first Transition Town, Kinsale.