

NEWS and VIEWS

of the

Sustainability Working Group

14TH JULY 2005

Politician Sustainability Dialogue What are the Ground Rules?

The Sustainability Group's *Politician Sustainability Dialogue* held on Tuesday evening was an unmitigated success.

Keith Wedlock, the 2nd Vice-President of the Institute of Chartered Accountants introduced the 170 attendees to the Chair, Dr Morgan Williams, Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment. Morgan was well placed to provide additional comment and add to the humour evident throughout the evening.

All those who attended obtained useful insights in to the nature, depth and breadth of thinking within seven political parties regarding the very complex, diverse and huge areas that comprise, or do not comprise, 'sustainability'; and what is it anyway?

The politicians were given a 'big ask' to outline their thinking on three subjects in their allocated six minutes. Those insights were expanded when every politician provided responses to questions. Their level of knowledge and what it meant to them was, as may be expected, varied. There was recognition improvements need to be made on a wide range of social and environmental issues within New Zealand and beyond. Opinions differed on the "What" the "How" and the "When". But overall there was more cohesion than some may have expected.

The Sustainability Group is indebted to the support provided by Principal Sponsor Corporate Express and Supporting Sponsors; Martinborough Vineyard, Victoria University of Wellington, asnet Technologies, Audit New Zealand, Deloitte, ecoStore, New Zealand Business Council for Sustainable Development, Phoenix Organic, and The Royal Society of New Zealand. In addition there was service support from number of people within the Institute of Chartered Accountants.

The opportunity to re-ignite contacts, make new contacts and discuss the dialogue was enjoyed by the large percentage of people who remained after the event and took advantage of the refreshments. ❖

In preparing for the Sustainability Group's "*Politician Sustainability Dialogue*" held 12th July, it was appropriate for the organisers to consider and establish some ground rules for managing the event. An article "*What are the Ground Rules*" by Michelle Maiese was discovered and very useful – and it may be useful to others. Some extracts follow.

"Nearly every kind of dispute management process relies on some form of ground rules. Ground rules are the standards of conduct for mediation, arbitration, and consensus building. Though often unspoken, they are usually used in direct negotiation processes as well.

"Ground rules may cover the behaviour of the disputants, the role or behaviour of any third party (e.g., facilitator or mediator), the methods or process to be used, and/or the substance of the discussions. When used in consensus building, the list of ground rules is sometimes referred to as a protocol. This is an initial set of rules that are negotiated before or during the first meeting and establish common rules of engagement regarding project organisation, group decision-making,

Some Sample Ground Rules:

- Parties agree to take turns speaking and not interrupt each other
- Parties agree to call each other by their first names
- Parties agree not to blame, attack, or engage in put-downs. They will ask questions of each other only for the purposes of gaining clarity and understanding
- Parties agree to stay away from establishing hard positions and express themselves in terms of their personal needs and interests and the outcomes that they wish to realise
- Parties agree to listen respectfully and sincerely try to understand the other person's needs and interests. While in mediation or negotiation, parties will refrain from adversarial legal proceedings

[Available at; www.mediate.com/articles/med_amed7.cfm]

EVENT DATES

9th Aug – Sustainable Business Practices of SMEs in New Zealand, Professor Stewart Lawrence, Waikato University AND Climate Change and Carbon Tax, Leah Murphy, Senior Advisor, Climate Change Implementation. Chris Livesey Senior Operator, Climate Change Policy and Gerald Dreaver, Advisor, Policy Advice Division, IRD will assist with questions.

13th Sept – Watch this Space! ❖

and technical information.

More at:

www.beyondintractability.org/m/groun_rules.jsp ❖

Star Wars and Organics

A clever video using the *Star Wars* story to talk about organics. Lots of

fun. Note: Slow dial up line not ideal. **Visit:** www.storewars.org. **Source:** Malcolm Rands. ❖

Sustainability Group Events sponsored by;



SDR Committee – Opportunity

Expressions of interest are being sought for people to serve on the Sustainable Development Reporting Committee and about 15 other national committees during the 2006 calendar year. Brief details in the June and July issues of the *Chartered Accountants Journal*. The Sustainability Group encourages people to consider this opportunity and to put themselves forward and 'make a difference' by contributing to an exciting world class project. Contact a local branch of the Institute before 4th August.

Source: *Chartered Accountants Journal*, June & July editions. ❖

More Reports, Little Imagination

"Why the lack of courage from companies in engaging the customer, asks Steve Hilton in an article dated 6th July 2005.

"Ping! Here come the corporate responsibility reports, popping into my inbox as the reporting season gets underway. Ping! Another year of "sustained progress". Ping! "Highlights include ... strategic this ... integrated that ..." Oh dear, I think. Do I really have to read this one? But gamely I plough through it; and the next one, and the next one. My attitude is: if you're going to write or write about the blasted things – and I do both – you do actually have a responsibility to read them.

"What's really annoyed me about the latest corporate responsibility reports I've read is the terrible waste. No, not of paper or ink, or any of that stuff. But the waste that arises when all the fantastic information and fascinating stories contained within these reports is reserved for corporate responsibility nerds like me, instead of being communicated to the wider world – especially customers. Consumer brands spend millions on sophisticated marketing and communications campaigns based on tortuous and often entirely bogus "consumer insights", when all the raw material they could wish for to establish authentic and inspiring connections with their customers is contained within the pages of their corporate responsibility reports.

This article goes on in a very interesting vein.

Visit: www.ethicalcorp.com/content.asp?ContentID=3755

Source: Leanne Holdsworth. ❖

Sustainable Building Assessment Tools

The Sustainable Building Cluster of the Auckland Branch of the Sustainable Business Network had a very successful event on 6th July at which about 60 people were present including the Minister of Housing and the Mayor of Auckland. A follow-on event will be a workshop looking at assessment tools and will cover;

- What assessment tools are
- How they work
- What they are designed to achieve
- How are used in a project
- In-depth look at the 3 Major Tools
- Case studies.

When: 21st July, 9.30–2.30

Where: Central City location to be announced

How Much: \$160 – includes lunch

Register: Judah at northern@sustainable.org.nz before midday Monday 18th July.

More about the cluster at:

www.sustainable.org.nz/project.asp?id=43. ❖

Shaping the Nation: Aotearoa/ New Zealand 2025

A series of public discussions on the future of this nation. Following on from the highly successful series last year on the Treaty of Waitangi, and in an election year, the Cathedral Chapter of the Holy Trinity, Parnell (Auckland) has designed this series to look beyond narrowly partisan politics to the politics of aspiration – who we are as peoples, the land we live in, and the role we can play in our global village.

Remaining sessions in the series;

- **Sunday 17th July, 2pm: State of the Nation, the Place** An overview of environmental, social and economic trends by **Morgan Williams**, Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment, and **David Skilling**, Chief Executive of the NZ Institute. **Chair:** Pauline Winter, Pacific Business Forum
- **Sunday 24th July, 2pm: State of the Nation, our Purpose** An assessment of the goals, policy settings and values New Zealand might aspire to in its internal life as well as on the international stage. Speakers are **Colin James**, journalist, and **Sir Paul Reeves**, internationalist. **Chair:** Dr Jenny te Paa, Theologian, Educator.

More at: www.anewnz.org.nz/attachments/docs/anez-nz-cathedral-2005-series-1.doc

Source: Rod Oram and Anew NZ. ❖

Risk Radar for Smash Repairers

Insurance Australia Group (IAG) Insurance in Australia recently won a 2005 United Nations Association of Australia, World Environment Day Award.

Arises from development of an Australian waste strategy for smash repair industry.

The strategy proposed includes a combination of standardised waste pick-up and recycling processes, 'cleaner production' training for smash repairers and an 'on-the-ground' change management programme that will see suitable change agents working directly with smash repairers to improve waste management practices. The Group's Preferred Smash Repairers network has been overwhelmingly supportive of the strategy with 95% of PSRs surveyed.

The programme includes;

- Interactive CD-Rom which helps smash repairers manage their Environmental, Health & Safety obligations
- Smash Repairers self-assess their performance against 'compliance' and 'best practice' criteria
- Action plans are auto-generated
- Smash Repairers who achieve compliance will be eligible for commercial insurance discount
- Support from 3M, DuPont and St. Johns.

Visit:

www.oceanwatch.org.au/sysfiles/media/UNAA%20Award%20Winners.pdf

www.iag.com.au/pub/iag/results/media/1H04_IAG_Investor_report.pdf

www.cgu.com.au/workers/media/pdf/WOR0180_1004.pdf

Source: Ethical Investor Newsletter. ❖

Contributions, input and feedback are welcomed.

Send your news items, handy hints, case studies, suggestions, comments and questions to Ray Skinner.