

Sustainability Matters

11th Dec. 2008

A fortnightly selection of topical **news and views** about economic, social and environmental issues.
Designed especially for accountants and those who use the services of accountants.

Sustainability Matters is:

- Partly sponsored by members of the **Sustainability Working Group**, a special interest group attached to the New Zealand Institute of Chartered Accountants (NZICA).
- Compiled and published by Ray Skinner of *Sustainability Matters*, providers of specialist services relating to sustainability and business support. **Business achieving a tomorrow for tomorrow's children.**

Energy Efficiency is the Key

"The world's biggest untapped energy source, according to energy expert Amory Lovins, is efficiency. But don't call it 'conservation.'

"In an interview conducted by science writer Carole Bass for *Yale Environment 360*, Lovins, the co-founder and chairman of Rocky Mountain Institute, says that word connotes 'privation, discomfort and curtailment.' By contrast, 'efficiency' means 'doing more and better with less energy and money, but with more brains and technology,' he says.

"The long-time renewable energy advocate and author says retooling for energy efficiency will require 'barrier-busting' at many levels. And government, Lovins says, 'should steer, not row.'

e360: How do you find people respond to it?

Lovins: Generally, very well. I talked to a wide range of audiences and for some it is not appropriate. You have to speak to people's concerns in their language.

e360: How do we get people to focus on these issues right now, given everything else that's going on in the country and the world?

Lovins: By speaking to their concerns in their language. If they are concerned about national security, energy efficiency is probably the best way to get it. If they are concerned about education, they may like to know that students learn 20 odd percent faster in well day-lit classrooms and efficient schools have money left to hire teachers and buy books. If they are concerned about climate protection, they may like to know that energy efficiency can provide it not at a cost but at a profit. There are arguments here for essentially every constituency and political view. I think it is important to get the result, not to get it for the reason you want. That is, the core truth of today's energy dilemma is that whether you care about security, climate or prosperity, you should do exactly the same things about energy. There is no trade-off or compromise required. Any one or more of those motives would lead to the same actions, and for that matter the same is true, if you care about peak oil and other depletion issues.

More: www.e360.yale.edu/content/feature.msp?id=2091

Source: Yale Environment 360. ❖

SUSTAINABILITY GROUP EVENTS

10th February 2009. Watch out for announcements in the later part of January.

Other 2009 dates to be announced. ❖

The Prince's Accounting for Sustainability Project

"The New Zealand Institute of Chartered Accountants has recently become a founding member of the Accounting for Sustainability Forum, which brings together an international grouping of accounting bodies.

"Established by HRH The Prince of Wales in 2004, the Project is developing practical tools to enable environmental and social performance to be better integrated into organisations' core strategy and financial performance.

"Currently, the Project is piloting the 'Connected Reporting Framework' and the A4S Decision-Making tool with key public, private and third sector partners. Accountants have a key role to play in helping organisations effectively measure and account for their environmental and social performance, and the Institute is delighted to be at the cutting edge of developments in this area through its work with the A4S Project.

Members of the forum are;

- American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA)
- Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)
- Chartered Accountants of Canada (CICA)
- Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA)
- Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA)
- Consultative Committee of Accountancy Bodies (CCAB)
- Global Accounting Alliance (GAA)
- Hong Kong Institute of Certified Public Accountants (HKICPA)
- Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia (ICAA)
- Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW)
- Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland (ICAI)
- Institute of Chartered Accountants of New Zealand (NZICA)
- Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland (ICAS)
- South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA)

New shorthand!

'A4S' = Accounting for sustainability

More at:

www.nzica.com/AM/Template.cfm?Section=News&Template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=14633

which links to www.accountingforsustainability.org/home/

Source: NZICA e-newsletter, 2nd December 2008. ❖

Holiday Reading

Continuing on from the list of resources provided in the 13th and 20th December 2007 editions of *Sustainability Matters* here are a few more items you might put on your wish list or borrow – and of course it is just a smattering of what's available;

Here's some from New Zealand

Governance for Sustainability: Issues, Challenges, Successes; Klaus Bosselmann, Ron England and Prue Taylor, Sept 2008

Reinventing Paradise: How New Zealand is starting to earn a bigger, sustainable living in the world economy; Rod Oram, July 2007

The Principle of Sustainability: Transforming Law and Governance; Prof Klaus Bosselmann, University of Auckland, Sept 2008

Wa\$ted! Save Your Planet, Save Your Cash; Francesca Price, 2007.

And here's a 'few' from other places

Biomimicry: Innovation Inspired by Nature; Janine M. Benyus, September 2002

Buried Treasure: Discovering and Implementing the Value of Corporate Social Responsibility; Caleb Wall, August 2008

Cities for a Small Planet; Richard Rodgers, 1997*

Common Wealth: Economics for a Crowded Planet; Jeffrey D. Sachs, March 2008

Corporate Governance and Sustainability : Challenges for Theory and Practice, edited by Suzanne Benn and Dexter Dunphy, November 2007

Cradle to Cradle; William McDonough and Michael Braungart, 2002*

Globalization A Critical Introduction; Jan Aart Scholte, Aug 2005#

Making Sustainability Work : Best practices in managing and measuring corporate social, environmental, and economic impacts; Marc J. Epstein, January 2008

Plan B 3.0: Mobilizing to Save Civilisation; Lester R Brown, 2008. Downloadable*

Post Carbon Cities: Planning for Energy and Climate Uncertainty; A Guidebook on Peak Oil and Global Warming for Local Governments; Daniel Lerch, October 2007*

Reporting Non financials; Kaevan Gazdar. Chichester, 2007

Sustainability Accounting and Accountability; Jeffrey Unerman, Jan Bebbington, Brendan O'Dwyer, July 2007

The Economics of the Coming Spaceship Earth; Kenneth E. Bolding, 1966#

The Weather Makers: The History & Future Impact of Climate Change; Tim Flannery 2005

*= Ann Magee # = Robert Howell

More at: www.intersect.org.nz/Resources.htm, www.earthangel.co.nz/shop/bookstore (Has many children's books and 2nd hand books), www.greenleaf-publishing.com, <http://greenplanetfilms.org>, www.sustainableinsight.com.au, www.amazon.com

Source: Editor's imagination! ❖

Qualified Accountant Required

Greenpeace, Auckland, needs a qualified accountant with at least three years experience for their busy finance team. Reporting to the Organisational Manager the appointee will be responsible for the monthly accounting function with the help of an assistant who is in charge of accounts payable and payroll. Ideally the appointee will be experienced with Comac/MYOB Payroll and Financial Edge Accounting Software. Previous Experience with not-for-profits an advantage. A commitment to the Environment and Greenpeace is essential.

Closes: 19th December.

More at: www.greenpeace.org/new-zealand/jobs/accountant.

Source: Craig Fisher, Hayes Knight/Bunny Mcdiarmid, CEO ❖

GRI Basic Reporting Template

"The 'Let's Report!' template was created in order to offer an easy way for organisations to prepare a basic (Level C) GRI sustainability report.

"The template was prepared to show exactly what a basic GRI report should contain and is based on the requirements in the GRI G3 Guidelines for the basic Application Level C.

"It contains 16 pages and can be downloaded, completed, published and sent back to GRI to be recorded in our databank. It is a 'pdf' file and it is available for free.

"Reporting will not get easier than this!

"To complement this new tool, we also offer a 1 page text containing summarised instructions on how to fill in the template, also available for free.

More at:

www.globalreporting.org/Learning/LetsReportTemplate/

Source: GRI's November Newsletter. ❖

USA Farmers Against Proposed 'Cow Tax'

"This summer, the EPA issued an 'advanced notice of proposed rulemaking' that called for public comments on the idea of regulating GHG emissions. The comment period ended last week but before that farmers were lobbying fiercely against a 'cow tax' which would tax them for the methane that livestock emit, New York Times [Reports](#).

"Last week, the New York Farm Bureau issued a statement ([PDF](#)) saying that such a tax could reach (US)\$175 per cow, \$87.50 per head of beef cattle and upwards of \$20 per hog. The bureau says the new law may require any operation with more than 25 dairy cows, 50 beef cattle or 200 hogs to obtain permits, and would cover more than 90 percent of dairy, beef and hog production in New York.

"Similar livestock taxes were proposed in New Zealand and Estonia but Plenty magazine [notes](#) the plans were shelved due to widespread protests.

More: www.environmentalleader.com/2008/12/03/farmers-against-proposed-cow-tax

Source: Environmental Leader, 5th December. ❖

Contributions and feedback are welcomed.

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