

Sustainability Matters

28th April 2016

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;

- 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.**

Project Litefoot: New Zealand's Gamified Green-sports Movement

"..... Project Litefoot, in consultation with the government agency in New Zealand that measures climate change, came up with a number of ways their athletes could reduce their carbon footprint – energy efficiency, driving smaller cars ('seeing the very tall Conrad Smith in a hybrid was actually a funny sight', said Reid), turning lights off, powering their homes with electricity generated from 100% renewable sources (#Go100Percent), etc. Every two months, Project Litefoot collected and published the data and a table of standings was established to see which athlete was reducing his or her carbon footprint the most.

"As of this writing, Smith is clearly in the lead, having reduced his carbon footprint an astounding 72.91%. The battle for second is a tight family affair between the Olympic double gold medal winning rowing team of sisters Georgina Evers-Swindell (58.18%) and Caroline Evers-Swindell (57.62%). Tennis player Marina Erakovic holds down fourth (38.41%).

"So in 2011, LiteClub was created as an extension of Project Litefoot to help local sports clubs institute sustainability and energy efficiency measures. The club has visited over 730** of 3,000 Sport New Zealand clubs, instituting a greening regimen similar to that of the athletes that included the installation of LED lighting, upgraded insulation, along with recycling and composting. Free to the clubs and funded by a combination of philanthropies and foundations (70%), federal government (20%) and state government (10%), LiteClub has been a hit: The clubs are reducing energy usage and saving money – [US?]\$2.6 million and counting. Basically, for every \$1 invested, \$2.40 in savings have been realised.

"Even better, New Zealand's larger neighbour and rival has noticed: 'We're hoping to launch Project Litefoot in Australia. It's much bigger market – it has about five times the population of New Zealand, with over 23 million people', said Reid, 'and their energy mix is much more carbon intense than ours: 80% of New Zealand's electricity is generated through hydro-power, while 90% of Australia's is from coal'. Down the road, Project Litefoot hopes to work with the United Kingdom and perhaps Canada.

More: www.greenbiz.com/article/project-litefoot-new-zealands-gamified-green-sports-movement, plus www.projectlitefoot.org/

Source: *GreenBuzz*, 18th March 2016

Note: ** Clubs visited, 775, Carbon saved 4,261 tonnes, \$4,366,974 as of 26th March 2016. ❖

SUSTAINABILITY GROUP EVENTS

Next event – Date of webcast yet to be 'sorted'.



Announcements in 'due course'. ❖

Polluted Inheritance

"The parlous state of our freshwater ecosystems is just one signal that we face a more widespread, and unprecedented, environmental crisis.

"New Zealand's dairy industry is big business. But what are the hidden – and not so hidden – costs of intensive farming? Evidence presented here by ecologist Mike Joy demonstrates intensive dairy farming has degraded our freshwater rivers, streams and lakes to an alarming degree. This situation, he argues, has arisen primarily through governmental policy that prioritises short-term economic growth over long-term environmental sustainability. This BWB Text is a call to arms, urging New Zealand to change course or risk the wellbeing of future generations.

"*Comment:* 'This is a necessary book. Every New Zealander needs to read it, but unfortunately those who won't will inevitably be those who really should. Bridget Williams Books has made a reputation producing 'short books on big subjects', and *Polluted Inheritance* by Massey University lecturer Mike Joy is exactly that. In 61 pages, Joy, himself a former dairy farmer, takes off our collective blindfold and very simply lays out some very startling facts about our rivers, streams and swamps – and it is worse than we ever suspected.' David Herkt, Fairfax.

More: <http://bwb.co.nz/books/polluted-inheritance>

Source: *Tieke: ECO Alerts & Events*, 23rd March 2016. ❖

Ten Things NZ Should be Doing Now to Combat Climate Change

"New Zealand can and must do more to fight climate change on the home front, say authors of a high-level report out today [27th April].

"In the second of two major papers published by the Royal Society of New Zealand, researchers have laid out a range of actions they say the country could start taking now.

"An initial report, issued last week, warned several degrees of temperature increase by the end of century would put the country further at risk of flooding, drought, storm surge and put even greater pressure on waterways and ecosystems.

"A follow-up being launched in Wellington today provides a blueprint for shifting to a low-carbon economy through improvements in energy, transport, building, agriculture, industry and land use.

"Massey University sustainable energy expert Professor Ralph Sims, who led the panel of authors, said there were already many options that were well understood, achievable and likely to have flow-on benefits. Business-as-usual approaches will

Not get us where we need to be; ambitious action is needed now by all New Zealanders."

More: www.royalsociety.org.nz/expert-advice/papers/yr2016/mitigation-options-for-new-zealand/ www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=11629045

Source: *NZ Herald*, page A12, 27th April 2016. ❖

A-CSEAR Conference 2016

"The Centre for Accounting, Governance and Sustainability, University of South Australia will host the 2016 annual Australasian - Centre for Social and Environmental Accounting Research (A-CSEAR) Conference in Adelaide, South Australia 7th to 9th December 2016

"The theme of the conference is 'Connecting with Nature' as participants will have the opportunity to connect with flora and fauna at the beautiful Adelaide Zoo venue.

"Papers are welcome in any area of social and environmental accounting research, but particularly in areas of ecology, biodiversity, water, justice & equity, integrated reporting and innovative methodological approaches. The conference is specifically designed to be a place where emerging researchers can discuss their ideas and papers with more established colleagues in a supportive environment.

"A full Call for Papers and details of the conference website will be released soon.

Paper Submission Deadline: 4 September 2016

Enquiries: Professor Carol Tilt: Carol.Tilt@unisa.edu.au

Where: Adelaide Zoo Sanctuary Conference Centre.

Source: Carol Tilt, 21st April 2016. ❖

AMP Capital Opens up Responsible Investment from \$2,000

"AMP Capital has launched a platform for smaller investors online.

"The new platform gives access to AMP Capital's responsible investment funds with as little as \$2,000. The minimum investment had been \$100,000. It's aimed at those wishing to invest directly, rather than via a financial advisor. The website also provides guidance on investment basics and successful investing.

More: <http://sustainable.org.nz/sustainability-news/amp-capital-opens-up-responsible-investment-from-2000/>, plus www.ampcapital.co.nz/investing-with-us/direct-investment and www.ampcapital.co.nz/investing-with-us/responsible-investment-leaders

Source: SBN, 19th April 2016. ❖

The Someday Challenge

"The challenge is to make a short film about sustainability.

"You can make your film individually or in a team.

"And it's up to you how you interpret 'sustainability'. What does that word mean for you? The list of Special Awards [listed] may give you an idea.

"Anyone up to the age of 24 can enter the Someday Challenge.

"In 2016 that means anyone born in 1992 or later who is a citizen or resident of New Zealand or studying or working lawfully in New Zealand.

"If you have a question about the film challenge the first place to look is the FAQ page. If the answer isn't there please contact us or ask your question in the Forum or on Facebook.

Entry Deadline: 9th September 2016.

More: www.theoutlookforsomeday.net/about/film-challenge/

Source: Editor, 21st April 2016. ❖

Reality Bites the Dairy Industry: De-intensify or Sell, Dairy Farmers' Choice

"... What does this mean to the industry? ... [Well worth a read]

More: www.stuff.co.nz/business/farming/77364162/deintensify-or-sell-dairy-farmers-choice

Source: Ron Shaw, LinkedIn Sustainable Business Leaders in NZ, 10th March 2016. ❖

From Finance to Farmer – 'Incredible' Permaculture Farm Created in 3 Years!

"The Steve Irwin of Permaculture"

"Andrew Martin once worked in the finance industry, but after leaving that life, he and his wife Beth moved to New Zealand and developed an amazing permaculture property in just 3 years!

"This film was made as part of our Living the Change series. For this series we're traveling around New Zealand making short documentary films about permaculture farms, tiny houses, and sustainability.

Andy is a 'former' Aussie who is now convinced Bay of Plenty is the place to be, showing what can be done with 5 acres. He says various permaculture sites have picked up the video.

Video published 12th April; 15 minutes with 23,265 views as at 26th April 2016.

More: www.youtube.com/watch?v=3jh1481J6qw

Source: Andrew Martin, 14th April 2016. ❖

It's How You Pitch It

"Young Conservatives for Energy Reform was formed in 2012 to promote a green energy agenda for Republicans. But the phrase 'climate change' isn't one you'll find on the organisation's website. Instead, it points to other issues, such as national security, as reasons to support renewable energy. Angel Garcia, the group's national outreach coordinator, says there are also libertarian-based reasons that conservatives should be pro-green energy. 'Do we have to be tied to the grid? Why not make it easier to put solar panels on one's house?'

"Garcia, a Chicago attorney in private practice, admits pushing renewables in conservative circles is an uphill battle.

"We have an ideology that seems like it's 'Drill, baby drill,' with nothing else. So we have to fight against stereotypes that if you're for clean energy, then you are not really a Republican.'

"In an interview with *Yale Environment 360*, Garcia says the Republican Party has a vested interest in embracing clean energy since the issue resonates with young conservatives. 'As demographics shift, this is becoming a more important issue', he says. 'This is an issue that will move people to the polls. [And it] is only going to become more important. So it's better to get in front of the issue now and embrace it.'

"I am a Republican and Hispanic. So I have advocated for issues that are important in the Hispanic community. Now I'm going to advocate for clean energy. And these are sometimes issues that do not come into the mainstream. If you don't advocate, they never will be. So we need numbers, both financial and at the polls, to be able to move people. Politicians from either party don't move unless they are pushed or prodded. And we have data. Young people more than older people think that this is an important issue. Younger people more than older people believe that clean energy is something that needs to be talked about for various reasons.

"As demographics shift, this is becoming a more important issue. This is an issue that will move people to the polls. As we move forward, this issue is only going to become more important. So it's better to get in front of the issue now and embrace it. If you want to get in touch with these younger voters, this is something you can't ignore.

More:

http://e360.yale.edu/feature/how_to_talk_clean_energy_with_conservatives/2973/

Source: *Yale Environment 360*, 18th March 2016. ❖

Integrated Reporting Swells Britain's Soft Power

"The emergence and rapid uptake of the voluntary Integrated Reporting framework across the world is an unexpected manifestation of the UK's highly influential global soft power base. And the potential of Integrated Reporting (<IR>) is perhaps more than many yet realise. Companies and public sector organisations across the world are adopting the <IR> framework as a voluntary addition to their external reporting in increasing numbers. One major consequence is that this UK-led and inspired international initiative is becoming a source of comparative advantage that other countries will struggle to match in terms of comparable global commercial influence – in particular the USA, hamstrung by its fundamentally different approach to corporate reporting. This is also one small example of Britain's likely continuing global success post any conceivable Brexit. Indeed, with a reported ongoing review of how Britain is disbursing its enormous foreign aid budget the British government would do well to look at how it could help the International Integrated Reporting Council expand its sphere of influence.

"Integrated Reporting is an idea that is right because its time has come. That it is still not just an idea but is now a snowballing success is due largely to the tireless energy and efforts of Paul Druckman, former President of the UK's leading accounting professional body, and his relatively small international team. ... [Paul Druckman was in NZ mid-March 2016]

"If corporate reporting is rapidly becoming Britain's equivalent of Hollywood and the movie industry in terms of its global influence, then the USA is still learning how to make movies. US adherence to a rules-based approach to corporate reporting, largely to satisfy its litigious culture, makes its SEC-driven reporting model unloved internationally and unsuitable to wider propagation. The Americans are not in the game, other than as adherents and supporters of the <IR> reporting framework. Perhaps as Britons we should also take some comfort that, in the possible event of Brexit, we have yet another remarkable source of soft power comparative advantage that will endure and might perhaps even shine even more brightly, unfettered by Brussels diktat. ...

More: <http://futurevalue.co.uk/blog/integrated-reporting-swells-britains-soft-power/>

Source: CSEAR Newsletter, 18th March 2016, page 10. ❖

Australia and New Zealand's Ethical Fashion Companies for 2016 Revealed

"Three years have passed since the Rana Plaza building collapse which killed 1136 garment workers. The event sparked the collective conscious of retailers and consumers alike about unsafe working conditions within fashion supply chains. So have companies improved their practices since? Baptist World Aid assessed 87 Australian and Kiwi [Not those which trade solely in NZ] fashion brands to find out.

"The report was released to coincide with the third anniversary of the Rana Plaza factory collapse.

"The tragedy brought the often unsafe working conditions of the apparel industry to the forefront of the public consciousness, with many horrified consumers, investors and governments spurred into action.....

"Companies have been awarded a grade ranging from A to F, based off their abilities to monitor the risk of exploitation in their supply chains. [Tables]

More: <http://theregister.co.nz/news/2016/04/new-zealands-ethical-fashion-companies-2016-revealed-who-passed-test>

Source: Malcolm Rands, Facebook link, 22nd April 2016. ❖

World's Largest Sovereign Wealth Fund Drops 11 Companies Over Deforestation

"Norway's Government Pension Fund Global (GPGF), the world's largest sovereign wealth fund, dropped 11 companies in 2015 over their connections to forest destruction.

"The GPGF, which manages \$828 billion worth of funds, released its annual report for 2015 on Wednesday [9th March], revealing six palm oil companies, four pulp and paper companies, and one coal company were dropped from its investment portfolio.

"Four companies – Daewoo International Corp, Genting Bhd, IJM Corp Bhd, and POSCO – were formally excluded by the fund's Council on Ethics after investigations showed their palm oil plantations cause severe environmental damage.

"Last month [February], Norges Bank Investment Management, which manages the GPGF, announced a new policy making it clear companies it invests in must also address human rights issues in their business practices. The GPGF has funds invested in some 9,000 companies in 75 countries.

"The GPGF's managers have been pursuing a 'risk-based divestment' strategy for the past few years. The fund divested its shares in more than 100 companies between 2012 and 2015 over concerns around global warming, deforestation, and sustainability.

"50 companies were dropped because of their connection to deforestation, while eight companies were formally excluded due to severe environmental damage in rainforest areas caused by their operations. ...

More: www.eco-business.com/news/worlds-largest-sovereign-wealth-fund-just-dropped-11-companies-over-deforestation/

Source: eco-Business.com, 16th March 2016. ❖

Auckland Sustainable Housing Summit 2016: Scaling up Sustainably

"Housing in New Zealand faces many challenges – not least reversing the health impacts of low-quality homes while meeting exploding demand. How do we resolve these thorny issues to create resilient, liveable homes and communities?

"The biennial Sustainable Housing Summit is your opportunity to hear about inspiring international and local projects, innovative solutions, and models that work. Join us to be informed and inspired, and to network with like-minded peers around the critical challenges and opportunities facing housing in New Zealand.

"Speakers include:

- International Keynote Speaker: Deputy Mayor Andrea Reimer, City of Vancouver, 'Greenest City on Earth: Glimpses from Vancouver'
- Adam Beck, Director, Centre for Urban Innovation, Brisbane, 'A New Code for Sustainable Neighbourhoods: Glimpses from North America'
- James Legge, Director, Six Degrees Architects, Melbourne, 'The Nightingale Model: Upsetting the status quo of the speculative multi-residential housing development'
- Kristian Edwards, Project Manager, Snohetta Architects, Norway, 'ZEB Pilot House: Net positive energy house in Larvik, Norway'
- Daiman Otto, Group Manager for Architecture, Hampton Jones

When/Where: 8:00 am - 5:00 pm, 15th June 128 Albert St.

More: <http://sustainable.org.nz/sustainable-business-events/auckland/auckland-sustainable-housing-summit-plus-www.nzgbc.org.nz/events/upcoming-events/Auckland-Sustainable-Housing-Summit-2016>

Source: SBN, 19th April 2016. ❖

The Great Denmark to Become A 100% Organic Country

"What could be more fascinating than an entire country going 100% organic? The Danish government has announced it will convert the entire country's agriculture into organic and sustainable farming, making it the first country in the world to become 100% organic.

"Denmark is the most developed country in the world when it comes to organic products and their trade with the world but that's not what the Danish government is settling with. The government has raised a whopping 53 million euros in 2015 in an effort to turn the country into an organic country. This is probably the most ambitious plan of the century but considering Denmark has already proved it's love for organic food, this seems to be achievable.

"Denmark is also way ahead of other countries in terms of producing organic food. The country's national organic brand will be celebrating 25 years in business, which makes it one of the oldest organic brand in the world. As a result, the organic exports have increased by a whopping 200% since 2007.

"Who will lead the change? Once again the public authorities, naturally.

More: <http://organicveganeearth.com/the-great-denmark-to-become-a-100-organic-country/>

Source: Jae Mather, LinkedIn Sustainable Business Leaders in NZ, 21st April 2016. ❖

Climate Hypocrisy: JP Morgan's Empty Promises on Coal

"JP Morgan recently said it will stop financing new coal developments, but this is an announcement with many loopholes, and is an act of climate hypocrisy, says Sindicatum Sustainable Resources chief executive Assaad Razzouk.

"In an inspired take on the forked tongue of American Indian lore, JP Morgan has just announced that it will stop direct financing of all new coal mines and new coal power plants in rich countries.

"There are at least three major holes in that plan.

"What JP Morgan really means is that it will not stop 'indirectly' funding coal – the bulk of what it and every other bank does – through, for instance, intermediation in capital markets.

"Neither will it stop funding existing coal mines and power plants around the globe. The world's entire existing coal infrastructure can take a deep breath because it may still benefit from JP Morgan's largesse.

"And it will not stop funding coal in developing countries where as it happens pretty much all new coal plants are being built.

"One wonders what it is that JP Morgan is in fact stopping. Funding new coal mines in the UK? There aren't any. Funding new coal-fired power plants in France? There aren't any either.

"As luck would have it though, the JP Morgan bankers are by no means alone.

"Among other requirements, this means emissions from coal should be phased out by 2050. It is, however, hard to escape the impression the climate commitments of 195 nations at the Paris UN meet weren't but a choreographed sham.

More: www.eco-business.com/opinion/climate-hypocrisy-jp-morgans-empty-promises-on-coal

Source: eco-Business.com, 30th March 2016. ❖

Wind Turbine of the Future

"SheerWind announced yesterday [5TH January] it had signed a licensing agreement to enable its novel Invelox wind power technology to be marketed and deployed in the Netherlands.

"The creators of the Invelox wind power system claim it has a cut-in wind speed of just over 3 km/hr and under the right conditions, can generate electricity just a few cents per kilowatt hour at utility scale.

"Invelox uses a large omnidirectional intake to capture wind, which is then funneled down tapered pipes leading to a concentrator ending in a Venturi section; where the dynamic pressure is high and the static pressure low. Turbines within this section generate electricity. Wind exits from a diffuser, which slows the wind speed down.

"SheerWind says the design of the Invelox system enables it to be constructed in built up areas. The system is wildlife-friendly, produces minimal noise or vibration and has 50% less operating and maintenance costs than traditional wind power. It can be constructed at a CAPEX of USD 75¢/watt at utility scale, with an OPEX of \$3/MWh. How SheerWind works

More: www.energymatters.com.au/renewable-news/wind-sheerwind-invelox-em5279/, plus see the diagrams <http://legacy.kare11.com/story/news/local/2015/06/29/sheerwind-designs-wind-turbine-of-the-future/29450105/> and www.triplepundit.com/2016/02/big-hawaii-accelerator-backs-little-wind-turbine/

Source: Mike Finlayson, Facebook share, 31st March. ❖

Workshop: Create Tangible Business Value through Life Cycle Assessments

"Be part of an interactive workshop with Autex, Downer, Tork and Life Cycle Assessment NZ and find out how you can get most value out of your existing Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) studies. Get first hand expert insight on how to master the internal hurdles in getting LCA and EPD project approvals.

"Network and exchange ideas with industry peers on the different use of LCAs to support business decisions, revenue growth, identifying efficiencies, external communication, marketing and the development of Environmental Product Declarations.

"Hear from industry experts how LCAs are used in different ways to support the business, including identifying efficiencies, external communication, marketing or the development of Environmental Product Declarations.

"Sustainability champions, marketing managers, product and material manufacturers, and procurement officers will discover in the interactive workshop discussion the business case, lessons learned and how LCAs can be used.

When/Where: 4pm-6pm Thurs 12th May, Level 14, PwC Tower, Quay St, Auckland

More: www.eventfinda.co.nz/2016/create-tangible-business-value-through-lcas/auckland

Source: Barbara Nebel, President LCA, 25th April 2016. ❖

Disobedience: Courage to Break Free

"Disobedience is a new film about a new phase of the climate movement: courageous action that is being taken on the front lines of the climate crisis on every continent, led by regular people fed up with the power and pollution of the fossil fuel industry. Run Time: 35 Minutes. Release Date: 29th April

More: <http://watchdisobedience.com/>

Source: 350.org 23rd April 2016. ❖

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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