

# Sustainability Matters

Compiled and published by Ray Skinner, FCA

Business achieving a tomorrow for tomorrow's children

24<sup>th</sup> January 2019



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## Wanted – An Economic Fairness Campaigner!

"A Future to Fight For

"Building and Economy that Puts People First

"Are you looking to use your communications and organising skills, creativity and ability to get (sh)it done to radically transform our economic system to one that puts people and planet before profits?

"Are you hungry to work with a small, fast-moving, outcome-focused team to help harness the power of the crowd for good?

"Are you looking for the opportunity to turn your best ideas for people-powered change into reality and to help other New Zealanders do the same?

"If so, this [ActionStation role] is for you! .....

**Applications close:** 31<sup>st</sup> January 2019

**More:** <https://medium.com/@actionstation/were-hiring-an-economic-fairness-campaigner-bec3ab5d9bd6>

**Source:** ActionStation, 18<sup>th</sup> January 2019. ©

## 7 People Who Stood Up for Our Planet in 2018

"In a year in which the likes of Donald Trump, Jair Bolsonaro and Scott Morrison cut the environment adrift, others tried to protect it. Here are seven people from government, business and civic society who stood up for our planet this year.

"The world became a hotter, more dangerous, more divisive place in 2018.

"Some powerful people played a big role in slowing climate action this year. United States president Donald Trump did everything in his power to roll back the environmental protection measures of his predecessor Barack Obama, while Southeast Asian leaders, from Indonesia's Joko Widodo to Vietnam's Nguyen Xuan Phuc, pursued their passion for climate-changing coal while doing relatively little to boost clean energy.

"Australia's premier Scott Morrison told students protesting against climate change to go back to school, and Brazil's president-elect Jair Bolsonaro threatens to turn the world's largest tropical rainforest into a cattle ranch.

"But some people fought to make the world better. *Eco-Business* has picked out seven of the many who championed climate action and sustainable development this year;

1. Climate kids, protesting for their future ....
2. Joan Carling, indignant for the indigenous ....
3. Yeo Bee Yin, 'sue us if you dare' [Malaysia] ....
4. Imran Khan, reforester [Pakistan] ....
5. Rose Marcario, boardroom benefactor [Patagonia, CA, USA] ....
6. Dr Jiang Kejun, sounding the alarm with science [IPCC report lead author, China] ....
7. Søren Toft, tanker turner [Maersk, Denmark] ....

**More:** [www.eco-business.com/news/7-people-who-stood-up-for-our-planet-in-2018/](http://www.eco-business.com/news/7-people-who-stood-up-for-our-planet-in-2018/)

**Source:** eco-Business.com, 12<sup>th</sup> December 2018. ©

## The Worst Time in History to Be Alive, According to Science

"The ninth plague of Egypt was complete darkness that lasted for three days. But in 536 A.D., much of the world went dark for a full 18 months, as a mysterious fog rolled over Europe, the Middle East and parts of Asia. The fog blocked the sun during the day, causing temperatures to drop, crops to fail and people to die. It was, you might say, the literal Dark Age.

"Now, researchers have discovered one of the main sources of that fog. The team reported in *Antiquity* that a volcanic eruption in Iceland in early 536 helped spread ash across the Northern Hemisphere, creating the fog. Like the 1815 Mount Tambora eruption – the deadliest volcanic eruption on record – this eruption was big enough to alter global climate patterns, causing years of famine.

"What exactly did the first 18 months of darkness look like? The Byzantine historian Procopius wrote 'the sun gave forth its light without brightness, like the moon, during this whole year.' He also wrote that it seemed like the sun was constantly in eclipse; and that during this time, 'men were free neither from war nor pestilence nor any other thing leading to death.' ....

"This period of cold and starvation caused economic stagnation in Europe that intensified in 541 when the first bubonic plague broke out. The plague killed between one-third and one-half of the population in the Byzantine Empire, or Eastern Roman Empire. ...

**More:** [www.history.com/news/536-volcanic-eruption-fog-eclipse-worst-year](http://www.history.com/news/536-volcanic-eruption-fog-eclipse-worst-year)

**Source:** NEHGS, 13<sup>th</sup> December 2018. ©

## A Novel Way of Offsetting Carbon

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of January the Editor met up with a friend and colleague. We had not seen each other for several years.

Without prompting he said he had travelled about 700km by car to and from Auckland. To offset the carbon entailed in this journey outlined his novel approach. He had fitted an insulation wrap to his host's hotwater cylinder and turned down the thermostat which was set way too high. You might say 'Hang on a minute NZ's electricity generation is sourced from renewable sources'. While that is substantially so, about 36% of North Island power is from gas 28% and 8% from coal (variable). A second impact of course providing his host a long term reduction in household electricity costs.

**Question:** What carbon reducing and cost reduction actions have you, actioned during these summer holidays wherever in the world you have holidayed or are holidaying?

**Source:** Editor, 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2019. ©

## Rising from the Earth

A house design based on an innovative spiral design and a green roof which may capture your imagination. Located in Japan.

**More:** <https://renew.org.au/sanctuary-magazine/house-profiles/rising-from-the-earth/>

**Source:** Editor, 10<sup>th</sup> January 2019. ©

## 'Paris to Pittsburgh' Environmental Documentary

"Paris to Pittsburgh" Bloomberg Philanthropies' newest environmental documentary, premiered on 12<sup>th</sup> December on the National Geographic channel, with input from Pittsburgh Mayor Bill Peduto, according to a news release.

"The documentary shows the real-life effects and threats of climate change to cities, states and communities, and how Americans are choosing to respond, the release adds.

"It explains the urgency of lowering carbon emissions through the Paris Agreement, the release adds, and shows viewers what climate scientists know now, along with future predictions if more action is not taken.

"According to the release, the documentary's premise is based on a Twitter response from Peduto to President Trump as the president announces he will pull the U.S. out of the Paris Agreement, declaring, 'I was elected to represent the citizens of Pittsburgh, not Paris.'

"Peduto relives that moment in the documentary.

"Headlines tend to focus on the lack of leadership in Washington on climate change – but not enough attention gets paid to how much the rest of the country is doing, in red and blue states, to confront this challenge', Michael R. Bloomberg recently told NBC News. 'By telling that story, the film drives home the message that fighting climate changes makes our economy stronger, creates jobs and saves lives by cleaning the air we breathe, and hopefully that will encourage even more people to act.'

**More:** <https://triblive.com/aande/movies/14394049-74/national-geographic-premieres-paris-to-pittsburgh-environmental-documentary> plus [www.paristopittsburgh.com/](http://www.paristopittsburgh.com/) and [www.bloomberg.org/press/releases/national-geographic-documentary-films-announces-bloomberg-philanthropies-paris-pittsburgh/](http://www.bloomberg.org/press/releases/national-geographic-documentary-films-announces-bloomberg-philanthropies-paris-pittsburgh/)

**Source:** National Geographic, 13<sup>th</sup> December 2018. 

## How China's Big Overseas Initiative Threatens Global Climate Progress

"This week at *Yale Environment 360*, journalist and China expert Isabel Hilton examines how China's colossal overseas infrastructure plan, the Belt and Road Initiative, could eliminate any chance of reducing emissions and tip the world into catastrophic climate change. The ambitious initiative involves building roads, railways, bridges, and seaports in 70 countries across the globe, as well as energy infrastructure that is dominated by coal-fired power plants. Chinese companies are now involved in at least 240 coal projects in 25 of the Belt and Road nations, from Bangladesh to Serbia to Zimbabwe. As Hilton writes, the fossil-fuel focus of the Belt and Road Initiative threatens to lock developing nations into the high-emissions growth that China is trying to exit.

**More:** <https://e360.yale.edu/features/how-chinas-big-overseas-initiative-threatens-climate-progress>

**Source:** *Yale Environment 360*, 4<sup>th</sup> January 2019. 

## How to Implement the TCFD Recommendations: A Step-By-Step Guide

"As climate change impacts increase, more transparent risk assessment for companies is going to be demanded by those with a financial interest. This helpful article distils how to report using the recommendations from the Taskforce on Climate-related Financial Disclosures – which are likely to underpin any new mandatory reporting standards.

- Governance ....
- Strategy ....
- Risk management ....
- Metrics and Targets ....

**More:** [www.greenbiz.com/article/how-implement-tcdf-recommendations-step-step-guide](http://www.greenbiz.com/article/how-implement-tcdf-recommendations-step-step-guide)

**Source:** Simon Harvey, LinkedIn share, 15<sup>th</sup> Jan. 2019. 

## New Report Confirms BlackRock's Big Fossil Fuel Problem

"A report 'Who Owns the World's Fossil fuels?' released 10<sup>th</sup> December by the UK-based NGO Influence Map shows BlackRock, the world's largest asset manager, owns more oil, gas and thermal coal reserves than any other investor. The data shows BlackRock holds reserves in fossil fuels amounting to a staggering 9.5 gigatonnes of CO2 emissions – or 30% of total energy-related carbon emissions from 2017. BlackRock has the highest ratio of coal investments compared to its overall size among the ten largest fund managers.

"This comes less than a week after a separate report from the German NGO Urgewald showed Blackrock is the largest investor in companies building new coal power capacity across the world with a total investment of over \$11 billion USD.

"BlackRock's Big Problem, a campaign of climate, environment and human rights groups committed to shifting Blackrock away from climate destruction, weighed in on the significance of these findings:

"No amount of greenwashing can erase the fact BlackRock is financing the destruction of our planet and escalating the climate crisis', said Lukas Ross, Senior Policy Analyst at Friends of the Earth. 'As long as BlackRock is the top investor in fossil fuel development, Larry Fink's sustainability claims will remain hollow and hypocritical. If BlackRock is as concerned for the environment as they say, then they must immediately transform their investments.' ...

**More:** <https://foe.org/news/new-report-confirms-blackrocks-big-fossil-fuel-problem/> plus [https://influencemap.org/site/data/000/381/Who\\_Owns\\_the\\_Fossil\\_Fuels\\_Report.pdf](https://influencemap.org/site/data/000/381/Who_Owns_the_Fossil_Fuels_Report.pdf) 34 pages, 2.38Mb

**Source:** Wei Henk Pok, LinkedIn, 15<sup>th</sup> December 2018. 

## Radical Environmentalists are Fighting Climate Change – Why Are They Persecuted?

"Climate change, deforestation, widespread pollution and the sixth mass extinction of biodiversity all define living in our world today – an era that has come to be known as 'the Anthropocene'. These crises are underpinned by production and consumption which greatly exceeds global ecological limits, but blame is far from evenly shared.

"The world's 42 wealthiest people own as much as the poorest 3.7 billion, and they generate far greater environmental impacts. Some have therefore proposed using the term 'Capitalocene' to describe this era of ecological devastation and growing inequality, reflecting capitalism's logic of endless growth and the accumulation of wealth in fewer pockets.

"As social inequality and ecological breakdown escalate, steady change may no longer be enough to avoid civilizational collapse. Environmentalists cannot rely on timid appeals to power any longer.....

**More:** <https://theconversation.com/radical-environmentalists-are-fighting-climate-change-so-why-are-they-persecuted-107211>

**Source:** *Carbon News*, 13<sup>th</sup> December 2018. 

## Global Warming of Oceans Equivalent to an Atomic Bomb per Second

"Global warming has heated the oceans by the equivalent of one atomic bomb explosion per second for the past 150 years, according to analysis of new research.

"More than 90% of the heat trapped by humanity's greenhouse gas emissions has been absorbed by the seas, with just a few per cent heating the air, land and ice caps respectively. The vast amount of energy being added to the oceans drives sea-level rise and enables hurricanes and typhoons to become more intense. ...

**More:** [www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/jan/07/global-warming-of-oceans-equivalent-to-an-atomic-bomb-per-second](http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/jan/07/global-warming-of-oceans-equivalent-to-an-atomic-bomb-per-second)

**Source:** *Eco-News*, 10<sup>th</sup> January 2019. 

## Climate Passport, Anyone?

"Nearly half a million people lost their countries during World War 1 and had to use the Nansen Passport till they could get citizenship of one country or another. A higher number may lose their countries as the sea level rises due to climate change. They should get a climate passport, said Dirk Messner, Director of the United Nations University Institute for the Environment and Human Security and Co-chair of the German Advisory Council on Global Change.

"Messner and his colleague Robert Oakes at the Bonn-based institute agree it is still difficult to single out climate change as the cause for migration in many cases, such as the move of many Africans to Europe.

"Nevertheless they point out environmental impacts related to climate change are affecting countries around the world with approximately 25 million people newly displaced every year. In the Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS), the issue is especially pressing, as both livelihoods and the islands themselves are threatened by sea level rise, floods and changes in rainfall patterns. Already, people are being forced to move. 'Innovative solutions, such as climate passports, are needed to enable people to migrate with dignity.'

"Even if governments can agree on stricter control of greenhouse gas emissions which are warming the atmosphere, 'it will be necessary to adapt to a changing environment', Oakes said, speaking with Messner on the sidelines of the December 2-14 UN climate summit in Katowice, Poland.

"Their idea has been published as part of a policy paper to the German Advisory Council on Global Change. ...

"The need now is for a 'new generation of climate policies', Messner added, 'which go beyond technological solutions and innovations triggering decarbonisation. Global justice problems caused by global warming require normative innovations. In times of 'growing our country first' movements, the idea of a climate passport seems to be a counter-intuitive suggestion. But it is a simple, plausible concept, building on the polluter pays principle and protecting the dignity of the most vulnerable people affected by severe impacts of global warming.'

**More:** [www.thethirdpole.net/en/2018/12/14/climate-passport-anyone/](http://www.thethirdpole.net/en/2018/12/14/climate-passport-anyone/) plus <https://theconversation.com/the-nansen-passport-the-innovative-response-to-the-refugee-crisis-that-followed-the-russian-revolution-85487>

**Source:** *Carbon News*, 18<sup>th</sup> December 2018. 

## Seven Charts Show the World is Becoming a Better Place

For the first time ever since the Industrial Revolution, the world has seen half of its population rise as the global middle class, indicating improved living standards and prosperity that is more shared across the globe.

[Graphs]

**More:** [www.eco-business.com/news/seven-charts-that-show-the-world-is-actually-becoming-a-better-place/](http://www.eco-business.com/news/seven-charts-that-show-the-world-is-actually-becoming-a-better-place/)

**Source:** *eco-Business.com*, 9<sup>th</sup> January 2019. 

## Tankulator

Tankulator is a free online tool which calculates what size [domestic] rainwater tank best suits your needs.

**More:** <http://tankulator.ata.org.au/index.php>

**Source:** Indirectly via *Tieke: ECO Alerts & Events* 10<sup>th</sup> Jan.

**Editor:** This is an Australian tool which may or may not be applicable in your country. It could though be a useful starting-point for right-sizing your water tankage. The tool overlooks the possibility of 'bladder' storage – perhaps for good reason. 

## Waste of 70 billion Coconuts a Year is Not Waste at All

"Amsterdam based company CocoPallet is pressing husk waste from coconut plantations into pallets. This can save millions of trees.

"Pallets: Waste products offers coconut farmers extra income. It is left behind like garbage: the hard, hairy husk that surrounds the coconut and gives it a soft landing. A small part of it is used to make coco mats, the rest is left to rot. The plantations are happy when you come to collect it, according to Amsterdam native Michiel Vos.

"He started CocoPallet five years ago with the idea to make good use of coconut waste. From Wageningen University, he learned the husk can be used as a raw material to make wood-like boards. Vos decided to make pallets for the container ships which take Asian products all over the world. Not without success: last month in Paris, CocoPallet was chosen as one of the ten winners of the start-up award Hello Tomorrow. This coming year CocoPallet will build its first factory on Sumatra.

"The advantage of the coconut husk is it contains a natural binding substance, which eliminates the need for polluting synthetic glue. To compress it, however, the right amount of pressure and temperature had to be found. 'If one of the twelve parameters is not correct, the material will fall apart. At a certain point, we were unable to open the press at all, because too much glue substance was released.

**More:** [www.youtube.com/watch?v=PfUpyzw4AwU1:58](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PfUpyzw4AwU1:58) plus [www.cocopallet.com/](http://www.cocopallet.com/) and [www.cocopallet.com/single-post/2017/03/29/Stacking-coconut](http://www.cocopallet.com/single-post/2017/03/29/Stacking-coconut)

**Source:** Craig Skinner, 13<sup>th</sup> December 2018. 

## Climate-related and Other Emerging Risk Disclosures: Assessing Financial Statement Materiality

The [Australian Accounting Standards Board](http://www.aasb.gov.au/) and [Auditing and Assurance Standards Board \(AASB\)](http://www.aasb.gov.au/) have issued a bulletin on Climate-related and other emerging risks disclosures: assessing financial statement materiality using AASB *Practice Statement 2* which guides directors, preparers and auditors when preparing and auditing financial statements for their next half and full year ends.

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"If you are in an industry impacted by climate-related risks your financial reporting considerations have now changed as a result of your investors publicly stating that their decisions are being impacted by climate-related risks.

"The AASB and AUASB has issued a bulletin on Climate-related and other emerging risks disclosures: assessing financial statement materiality using AASB Practice Statement 2 which guides directors, preparers and auditors when preparing and auditing financial statements for their next half and full year ends. Even though the guidance is not mandatory, it represents the IASB's best practice interpretation of materiality and entities in Australia are already being subject to law suits regarding lack of disclosure.

"Given investor statements on the importance of climate-related risks to their decision making, the impact of the materiality definition and AASB Practice Statement 2 Making Materiality Judgements is that entities can no longer treat climate-related risks as merely a matter of corporate social responsibility and should consider them also in the context of their financial statements.

**More:** [www.aasb.gov.au/News/Climate-related-and-other-emerging-risks-disclosures--assessing-financial-statement-materiality-using-AASB-Practice-Statement-2?newsID=301982](http://www.aasb.gov.au/News/Climate-related-and-other-emerging-risks-disclosures--assessing-financial-statement-materiality-using-AASB-Practice-Statement-2?newsID=301982)  
10 pages, 521kb

**Source:** Karen McWilliams, LinkedIn 17<sup>th</sup> Dec 2018. 

## What Do You Say When Young People Ask if There is Hope?

"This last weekend one of my students asked if we might talk...? (I teach the next generation's business leaders at the [Bard MBA](#).)

"Sure

"It's my daughter...", she said, her eyes moistening. 'She asked me this week if she is going to have a future.'

"It's heartbreaking our children have to deal with these fears. But in many ways, they are being more adult about it than we have been. They see speeches such as [David Attenborough's](#) at the recent global climate conference in Poland where he stated: 'The end of civilisation is on the horizon.' Our children realise grownups have made a mess, that their future is in peril, and they want answers.

"A young veteran asked me the same question several weeks before. His daughter is angry and wants to know, 'Is there hope?'

"Hope is not a strategy, but my answer is, 'YES', your daughter *is* going to have a future. And it is up to us to determine if it is a finer one. We have all of the technologies we need to solve the worst of the challenges facing us. Whether we will implement these is up to us, but I believe we will, and here's why....

"I outlined the exciting progress we detail in our new book, [A Finer Future: Creating an Economy in Service to Life](#). For example, we are solving the climate crisis profitably, both through the rapid spread of renewable energy, battery storage, electric cars and autonomous cars. For the details on this see Tony Seba's [great speech to the World Affairs Council](#). Then we can use regenerative agriculture to pull carbon from the air and put it back into healthy soils where it becomes a nutrient, increasing the profitability of the farmers and ranchers doing this: see [Gabe Brown's description](#) of how this works. The book lays out how to reverse the crushing inequality facing us and ensure meaningful livelihoods for all. Here in Colorado, we have just elected an entrepreneur as Governor who has pledged to make the state 100% renewably powered, ensure a good education for all our children and protect our environment. The day after his election, he asked if I would serve on his Transition Team I told my student, 'We're doing it in Colorado. You can do it in your town, in your state.'

"Does your daughter like to read?' I asked.

"Oh yes. it's her favourite way to spend an evening.'

"Instead of buying her that latest plastic accessory, you might give her a copy of our book, [A Finer Future](#). She can discover for herself all of the ways people are building a world that works for everyone.

"As you hug your family these holidays, please remember the future our kids will inherit is in your hands. Will it be a world of failing economies, increasing violence from storms and conflicts, millions of miserable migrants and climate catastrophes? Or will it be a finer future of empowered entrepreneurs spreading shared prosperity on a healthy planet? Will our Regenerative Community Hubs and citizen activists create meaningful jobs and lives of wellbeing?

"This holiday season, help me give hope to our children....

"Thank you for looking young people in the eye and telling them that together we can make a finer future for all children.

"Hunter Lovins President, Natural Capitalism Solutions.

**More:** <https://natcapsolutions.org/what-do-you-say-when-young-people-ask-if-there-is-hope/>

**Source:** Hunter Lovins, 21<sup>st</sup> December 2018. 

## Number to Know – 0.002

"Over the course of human history, fuel for industry has come in many forms. But one of the major drivers of development in the current technological age is a highly volatile element that makes up only 0.002% of the Earth's crust.

"Such a rare commodity has become the bedrock of industry and may be the key to the future of civilisation.

"Lithium, a soft, silver-grey metal, is the third lightest element in the universe.

"Originally discovered in 1817 in a piece of volcanic stone, lithium was named after the Greek word for 'stone': 'lithos'.

"Ever since its discovery, lithium has been found to be incredibly versatile, including strengthening glass and refining metal alloys.

"But probably the most popular use of lithium is in lithium batteries. ...

"Lithium deposits are scattered around the globe; but over 75% of the world's entire supply of lithium is found in Chile and Bolivia. ...

**More:**

<https://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/science/101-videos/00000168-34fd-d3cc-a1e8-74ff72640000> 3:14

**Source:** National Geographic, 17<sup>th</sup> January 2019. 

## Sustainable Procurement: SBC Quick Guide

"Sustainable procurement is part of your value chain.

Understanding your value chain, mapping risks and opportunities, and incorporating sustainability into your purchasing decisions and relationships with suppliers can:

- Improve relationships and resilience through greater security of supply.
- Improve access to finance and lower-cost insurance.
- Lower operational, reputational and regulatory risks to your business.
- Provide a point of difference and competitive advantage.
- Realise opportunities for innovation.
- Fuel top-line growth and enhance productivity through efficiencies.
- Create new markets for products or services.
- Reduce resource consumption and waste.
- Enhance stakeholder relationships through better understanding.

"Tools, services, certification processes and guides used by SBC member organisations include: .....

"Example SBC member supplier codes and criteria ....

"Approaches to sustainable procurement ....

**More:** [www.sbc.org.nz/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0020/158501/SBC-Quick-Guide\\_Sustainable-Procurement.pdf](http://www.sbc.org.nz/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/158501/SBC-Quick-Guide_Sustainable-Procurement.pdf)

**Source:** *SBC Weekly Pānui*, 17<sup>th</sup> January 2019

**Editor:** There are numerous other tools available. 

## Report Warns Banks Increasing Exposure to Fossil Fuels Despite Climate Change Promise

"According to environmental campaign group Market Forces Australia's major banks have been getting back into fossil fuels over the past year, casting doubt on their seriousness in tackling climate change through their investments.

"The group's analysis compared the banks' reported exposures to fossil fuels and renewable energy over the past year.

"Since committing to supporting the United Nations sponsored Paris Agreement on climate change, the major banks' exposures to coal, oil and gas had been falling significantly year on year, it said. ...

**More:** <http://econews.com.au/59735/report-warns-banks-increasing-exposure-to-fossil-fuels-despite-climate-change-promise/> plus <https://www.marketforces.org.au/big-four-banks-increase-fossil-fuel-exposure/>

**Source:** eco-News, 16<sup>th</sup> January 2019. 