

Sustainability Matters

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Business achieving a tomorrow for tomorrow's children

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Zero Carbon – Submissions

Submissions regarding New Zealand's Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Bill close at 5:00pm on Tuesday of this coming week.

Numerous people, NGO's and others are preparing submissions. Some have already lodged them. Some NGO's are offering suggestions potential submitters may wish to consider. The most comprehensive, gathering ideas from other NGO's, is the NGO Our Climate Declaration. As it has not been posted to their website a copy is attached to this edition of *Sustainability Matters*.

More: www.ourclimatedeclaration.org.nz/

Source: Editor 10th July 2019.

1988 – "Global Warming Has Begun, Expert Tells Senate"

"The earth has been warmer in the first five months of this year than in any comparable period since measurements began 130 years ago, and the higher temperatures can now be attributed to a long-expected global warming trend linked to pollution, a space agency scientist reported today.

"Until now, scientists have been cautious about attributing rising global temperatures of recent years to the predicted global warming caused by pollutants in the atmosphere, known as the 'greenhouse effect'. But today Dr. James E. Hansen of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration told a Congressional committee that it was 99% certain the warming trend was not a natural variation but was caused by a build-up of carbon dioxide and other artificial gases in the atmosphere.

"Dr. Hansen, a leading expert on climate change, said in an interview there was no 'magic number' that showed when the greenhouse effect was actually starting to cause changes in climate and weather. But he added, 'It is time to stop waffling so much and say that the evidence is pretty strong that the greenhouse effect is here.' An Impact Lasting Centuries

"If Dr. Hansen and other scientists are correct, then humans, by burning of fossil fuels and other activities, have altered the global climate in a manner that will affect life on earth for centuries to come.....

"Several Senators on the Committee joined witnesses in calling for action now on a broad national and international program to slow the pace of global warming.

"Senator Timothy E. Wirth, the Colorado Democrat who presided at hearing today, said: 'As I read it, the scientific evidence is compelling: the global climate is changing as the earth's atmosphere gets warmer. Now, the Congress must begin to consider how we are going to slow or halt that warming trend and how we are going to cope with the changes that may already be inevitable.'

More: www.nytimes.com/1988/06/24/us/global-warming-has-begun-expert-tells-senate.html plus www.nature.com/articles/s41586-019-1364-3 and <http://econews.com.au/61534/to-limit-warming-to-1-5c-existing-and-planned-fossil-fuel-power-plants-must-be-retired/>

Source: eco-News, 8th July 2019

Editor: 31 years later and progress is at best is pedestrian

Essay Competition for Young People

"*THE ECONOMIST's* Open Future initiative was begun last year to make the case for political, economic and social freedoms at a time when these values are under assault. We want this exploration of ideas to involve our critics as well as our supporters.

"As part of the initiative we are holding an essay contest. It is open to people between 16 and 25 years old. Essays should be no longer than 1,000 words.

"Essays should answer the question by taking a stance and making a case based on arguments and facts. We will select the best essays based on the quality of their arguments, not the extent to which they align with our views. Though good writing is important, judges will make allowances for those for whom English is not their first language....

"The winning essay will be published on The Economist's Open Future website and the winner will be invited to attend one of the three Open Future Festival events, to be held simultaneously in Hong Kong, Manchester and Chicago on Saturday 5th October 2019. *The Economist* will pay for travel and accommodation; if the winner is under 18, we will pay for a guardian to accompany the winner as well.

"The essay question is: What fundamental economic and political change, if any, is needed for an effective response to climate change?

"Description: For decades the world has been aware human activity is heating up the planet to dangerous levels, with potentially calamitous consequences. Despite efforts by government, business and individuals to curtail the trend, carbon emissions are still rising. Perhaps new thinking is needed, since previous attempts to deal with the problem have failed. So what might be done?

Deadline: 31st July 2019

More: www.economist.com/open-future/2019/06/26/our-essay-competition-for-young-people

Source: *The Economist*, 3rd July 2019.

Saving Manapōuri: The Campaign That Changed a Nation

This lengthy account of what led up to the construction of the very large underground power station power at West Arm Lake Manapouri – NZ's largest hydro station – and the battles to stop the raising of Lake Manapouri and Lake Te Anau are stuff of legend. The eventual largest public campaign in New Zealand's history 50 years ago changed governments. It was one of the factors which lead to the world first of its kind Resource Management Act, helped create the Official Information Act and lead to a step change to the way New Zealanders regard, respect and treat the natural environment.

Some of those activists of 50 years ago are 'still in the game' on various similar quests and we are deeply indebted to them.

More: www.noted.co.nz/planet/manapouri-the-campaign-that-changed-a-nation/

Source: *Tieke: ECO Alerts & Events*, 10th July 2019

Editor: From May 1965 to July 1967 I was with the Power Division Ministry of Works head office. A substantial part of my minor role entailed matters related to the Manapouri project among other power projects.

Ireland's World-leading Citizens' Climate Assembly. What Worked? What Didn't?

"Comment: While the Irish assembly provoked a shift in government policy on climate change, there are important lessons to learn from this democratic experiment

"The UK House of Commons last week [3rd week of June] announced a plan to hold a citizens' assembly on climate change. Citizens' assemblies are gaining increasing attention worldwide as a means of tackling contentious policy issues.

"Ireland's Citizen's Assembly process has been praised internationally, including by Scotland's first minister Nicola Sturgeon and the Extinction Rebellion movement, but citizens' assemblies are not without their critics. A number of considerations are pivotal to their success. What can be learned from Ireland's approach?

"The Irish Citizens' Assembly was established by parliament in July 2016. It consisted of a chairperson and 99 citizens, randomly selected to be representative of the Irish electorate in age, gender, social class and regional spread.

"These citizens were tasked with deliberating on five topics, ranging from the contentious issue of Ireland's constitutional ban on abortion to making Ireland a leader in tackling climate change. They met for 12 weekends between October 2016 and April 2018.

"During each weekend, members listened to evidence by expert witnesses and were given the time and space to deliberate on the evidence they had received. At the end of each topic, they were asked to vote on proposed recommendations.

"The results were striking

"What can we learn from this process? ...

"The Irish case is interesting in this regard. On the climate change and abortion topics, special parliamentary committees were established to take forward the assembly's recommendations. Through this process, elected representatives gave due consideration to the assembly's recommendations, thereby enhancing democratic legitimacy.

"Those parliamentary committees' recommendations, in turn, have been followed by significant policy change.

"Overall, Ireland's Citizens' Assembly provides a model for others to replicate, but policymakers looking to do so should pay attention both to the strengths and weaknesses of Ireland's approach. If done well, citizens' assemblies can present significant opportunities to leverage societal buy-in, which has often been lacking in climate policymaking. They can facilitate the process of making tough policy decisions, enhance trust in public institutions and represent a successful and positive form of public engagement.

More: www.climatechangenews.com/2019/06/27/irelands-world-leading-citizens-climate-assembly-worked-didnt/ plus a slightly different and useful article with reference to England and Scotland *Why Citizens' Assemblies on Climate Change Work* at www.climatechangenews.com/2019/06/21/citizens-assemblies-climate-change-work/

Source: *Climate Home News*, 29th June 2019. 

5 Reasons Why China is the World's Sustainable Development Superpower

"When it comes to achieving the SDG's, you can argue that no country has made more progress than China. Although there is no shortage of critics of China – be it ethics and corruption, human rights, environmental management, or labour standards – there are actually many reasons why China's role in sustainable development should be taken seriously.

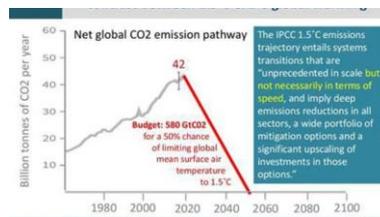
More: www.energyts.com/single-post/2019/06/06/SnippETS-for-6-June-2019

Source: *SnippETS*, 6th June 2019. 

How Nelson Businesses Can Take Climate Change Action

"Whatever we call it – global heating, climate catastrophe – we now know it's urgent. Many are calling it an existential crisis. Nelson City Council calls it a climate emergency, along with over 600 councils and governments worldwide.

"There are ominous signs. Research shows the oceans are being heated at 'the equivalent of one atomic bomb explosion per second'. Millions of people are being displaced and thousands of species are at risk.



"A rapid change of direction to cut emissions is needed. The later the cuts are made the more drastic these will need to be.

"To stay habitable, the world must cut carbon emissions to 'net zero' by 2050. But these are still rising, and per capita New Zealand's are among the highest. The later they start to drop the steeper the cuts will have to be and the more damage will be done.

"The cause of the problem is all of us. And for a safe future we all – individuals, councils, businesses, other organisations – have a part to play.

"For a local business, what can be done right now?

1. Measure emissions, and understand the various sources.
2. Manage emissions. ...
3. Disclose targets, successes and challenges. ...
4. Costs to emit will rise quickly. ...
5. Innovate. ...
6. Cut waste....
7. Collaborate. ...

"There are great examples of all of these in New Zealand right now. The Warehouse Group was certified as carbon-neutral this year. ...

"Milk processor Synlait is working with its supply chain to reduce emissions. ...

"Supermarket chain Countdown found refrigerants were almost half its greenhouse gas emissions, ...

"Wishbone Design Studio makes children's gear, such as a trike that can be adapted to grow as the child grows. ...

"Many businesses are cutting costs and emissions by

"There are useful groups for businesses to connect with. ...

What if your business does not act on climate change? Our brightest young people will not want to work for you. It will be harder to compete for contracts with progressive companies and councils. You will miss opportunities and pay higher costs as emission prices rise. And later, the rate of change will be steeper and more disruptive.

"For most of us, though, there is more at stake than that. We care deeply about this place we call home, and about those who will follow us here. For altruism or love, obligation or opportunity, it is time to act.

"We cannot 'solve' the climate crisis in Nelson Tasman. But we are still adding more than our fair share to the problem – at least we can fix that.

"There are big challenges. But the most worrying approach would be to do nothing. Make a start. It just got more urgent. ...

More: www.stuff.co.nz/environment/climate-news/113633571/how-nelson-businesses-can-take-climate-change-action

Source: Bruce Gilkison, 27th June 2019. 

Wellbeing and Public Policy

This 5th –7th September 2018 conference in Wellington was the third in the series of international conferences on Wellbeing and Public Policy;

- (1) Critically evaluated the rapidly expanding field of wellbeing research across a range of disciplines;
- (2) Shared the work of leading international organisations; and
- (3) Distilled ideas and practices which will aid governments in developing a wellbeing approach to public policy.

As indicated by the programme there were a large number of sessions over the three days covering a wide range of topics about wellbeing including for example about autistic children, building policy leadership on global learning, developing an ethos to look after each other, community wellbeing, Treasury's Living Standards Framework and much more.

A book of abstracts and the conference presentations have been made available at the conference web site.

More:

www.confer.nz/wellbeingandpublicpolicy2018/programme

Source: Graeme Colman, 9th April and Tim Marshall 20th June

Editor: This very interesting conference included a large number of presenters including Profession Mike Salvaris and Dr Kate Lycett of Australia's substantial wellbeing (ANDI) project. 

Productivity Commission: Councils Need Government Help on Climate Change

"Councils' calls for Government help to meet a potential \$14b climate change threat have been backed by the Productivity Commission.

"Just as a major OECD paper did this year, today's [3rd July] draft report singled out climate change as an increasing cost to councils, as well as a legal conundrum.

"The commission suggested the Government should widen the NZ Transport Agency's co-funding role to help councils facing climate-related risks, such as sea level rise damaging infrastructure.

"It also recommended a new agency and resilience fund that could work with councils to overhaul or even relocate vulnerable wastewater and stormwater systems.

"To help local government prepare for the impacts of climate change, central government should take the lead on providing high-quality and consistent science and data, standard setting, and legal and decision-making guidance', the commission said.

"Institutional and legislative frameworks also need to move from their current focus on recovery after an event towards reducing risk before an event.'

"Professor Ilan Noy, Victoria University's chair in the Economics of Disasters, said councils weren't often able to deal with climate problems, because they often lacked knowledge and resources, or appeared to find it more difficult to deal with local interests.

"Central government needs to be involved much more heavily than it currently is in both providing resources and guidance to local government, and in sometimes assisting it in making difficult choices.'

More:

www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=12246329 plus www.productivity.govt.nz/sites/default/files/ProdCom_Draft%20report_Local%20government%20funding%20and%20financing.pdf 306 pages, 5.52Mb

Source: *Carbon News*, 4th July 2019. 

Schools and Not-for-profits – Canon Grants Program

"Canon Oceania is excited to announce that its 2019 Grants Program is open for submissions. Over the past 13 years, the program has supported nearly 80 schools, not-for-profits and community groups across New Zealand and Australia, granting over \$390,000.

"This year over \$15,000 worth of grants, made up of both cash and Canon equipment, is up for grabs in New Zealand.

"Winners will be selected from three categories – environment, education and community – based on the positive impact their project makes in its community or environment, and the importance of technology for their success.

"Last year's winner of the environmental grant, Project Jonah, was acknowledged for the important work it does in education and emergency response to marine mammal strandings around New Zealand. ...

"The projector has travelled the length of the country, helping us to train to over 400 new marine mammal medics with life-saving knowledge....

"Located in semi-rural Kaiapoi, Clarkville School won the educational category. Principal Juliana Rae says they have used the equipment to document and monitor the water soil quality, plant regeneration and wildlife in the Silverstream Reserve. ...

"Hospice Wairarapa Community Trust was awarded the community grant to enable its Precious Memories programme, which has allowed them to continue to pair patients with volunteer photographers to create a permanent digital memory for their loved ones once they have passed. ...

More: www.canon.co.nz/about-canon/community/grants

Source: Canon NZ, 2nd July 2019. 

CEO Guide to Human Rights

"In the newest CEO Guide of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), over 30 top business executives from across the world call for urgent business leadership on respect for human rights. The *CEO Guide to Human Rights* was launched today [19th June], at the Bloomberg Sustainable Business Summit 2019 in London, and brings to life the business drivers for action and the tangible steps CEOs can take to ensure their companies go beyond compliance and drive transformative change in people's lives.

"Business has a fundamental responsibility to respect human rights, but also a huge opportunity to transform people's lives for the better. Realising universal human rights for all is one of the most powerful opportunities we have to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)', said Peter Bakker, WBCSD's President and CEO. 'The Guide puts forward a bold and unprecedented statement from business leaders, whose companies' actions and policies influence vast global supply chains. We hope their leadership will inspire other CEOs to take action in support of this important cause.'

"The CEO Guide highlights four drivers for action beyond compliance that make a compelling business case for any corporate leader:

- Regulation is making expectations enforceable;
- Public interest is high;
- Business relationships are in the spotlight; and
- Investor expectations are rising. ...

More: www.wbcsd.org/Programs/People/Social-Impact/Human-Rights/News/Over-30-CEOs-call-for-business-action-on-human-rights 28 pages, 2.11Mb

Source: SBC Weekly Pānui, 27th June 2019. 

Credit System to Incentivise Plastic Recovery

"... Additional measures are needed to promote the appropriate post-consumption destination of products and/or to reduce the impact of disposal of waste ...

"To assist companies in dealing with this challenge, the 3R Initiative is developing a crediting mechanism, which provides a financial incentive for the recovery and recycling of plastic and other packaging waste.

"Through the scheme, activities which result in the recovery of plastic waste, will receive credits which can be sold to businesses which need to reduce their residual plastic footprint. Activities which ensure the waste recovered is actually recycled, will receive a different type of credit, to reflect their contribution to plastic circularity.

"In early 2013, BVRio developed a system whereby companies could purchase waste recycling credits issued and sold by the waste pickers involved in waste collection, separation and recycling.

"The system ...involving more than a thousand independent waste pickers. Credits bought by companies funded the recovery of more than 1,600 tons of solid waste per year, generating over \$100,000 in revenue for the waste pickers who took part. For the waste pickers, the sale of credits increased their average income by 30%. For companies, the use of credits provided an efficient and cost-effective solution for their waste-management needs

More: www.ethicalcorp.com/how-big-brands-can-lead-tackling-global-plastics-waste-epidemic

Source: Ethical Corp, 28th June 2019. 

Investing Mindfully

"Mindful Money aims to switch investment funds from pollution and exploitation towards sustainability. It has just launched a new ethical investment platform which provides radical transparency for KiwiSaver funds and empowers users to invest for good. Founder Barry Coates explains.

"For too long the financial system has operated as if it was divorced from the real economy. The metrics have been all about financial returns and risks, not about the impacts on people, our natural world or the climate. How money is used has been irrelevant, allowing finance to flow freely into tax havens, weapons, pollution and exploitation. By contrast, investing in sustainability has been seen to be too risky, too long term and unproven.

"Most of us have gone along with this misguided view of finance, putting our hard-earned savings into KiwiSaver accounts without knowing how our money was used. In reality, only 1% of KiwiSaver funds have policies to avoid sectors like gambling, pornography and alcohol. And only 2% avoid investing in exploration and production of fossil fuels.

"Mindful Money's new platform can tell you whether your money is invested – in fossil fuels, weapons or in companies that violate human rights or test cosmetics on animals. All you need to do is enter the name of your KiwiSaver fund and Mindful Money will let you know what you're invested in.

"This transparency reveals

"There are better alternatives. As an individual, it is hard to have time to do the research and compare the options. But now Mindful Money has been set up as a charity to do objective research and identify funds which meet acceptable standards for ethical investing. You can use our website to find the fund that fits your values. It's free, quick and easy to shift your funds to a more ethical alternative.....

More: <https://sustainable.org.nz/sustainable-business-news/investing-mindfully/>

Source: SBN, 2nd July 2019. 

Guidance on Compostable Packaging

"The Sustainable Business Network has worked on innovations in composting, recycling and packaging, since its inception.

"Recently this has taken the form of our work on the Circular Economy, through our Circular Economy Accelerator Initiative. In 2018, we produced the first diagnosis of New Zealand's plastic packaging system. We are currently bringing stakeholders together to further clarify the situation and improve it.

"Detailed data on New Zealand's waste and recycling system is very poor, and there are many gaps and anomalies in the system itself.

"Compostables within a circular economy: Here's how compostable packaging fits within the three key principles of the circular economy, as defined by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation:

#1 Design out waste and pollution

#2 Keep products and materials in use

#3 Regenerate natural systems

"Compostability claims

"Compostable certifications

"Oxo-degradable plastics

"The challenges of appropriate management systems

"Why some composting facilities don't accept compostable packaging

"Compostable packaging may be seen as transitional solution to the use of problematic single use plastics.

"SBN is continuing to work with all stakeholders to eliminate and fundamentally redesign problematic plastic packaging, move from single-use to reuse models and recycling with radically improved economics and quality.....

More: <https://sustainable.org.nz/sustainable-business-news/sbn-guidance-on-compostable-packaging/>

Source: SBN, 2nd July 2019. 

UN Warns One Climate Crisis Disaster Happening Every Week

"Climate crisis disasters are happening at the rate of one a week, though most draw little international attention and work is urgently needed to prepare developing countries for the profound impacts, the UN has warned.

"Catastrophes such as cyclones Idai and Kenneth in Mozambique and the drought afflicting India make headlines around the world. But large numbers of 'lower impact events' which are causing death, displacement and suffering are occurring much faster than predicted, said Mami Mizutori, the UN secretary-general's special representative on disaster risk reduction. 'This is not about the future, this is about today.'

"This means adapting to the climate crisis could no longer be seen as a long-term problem, but one which needed investment now, she said. 'People need to talk more about adaptation and resilience.' ...

"One of the governance issues cited by Mizutori was while responsibility for the climate crisis and greenhouse gas emissions was usually held in one ministry, such as the economics, environment or energy department, responsibility for infrastructure and people's protection was held elsewhere in government.

"We need to take a more holistic view of the risks', she said.

More: www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/jul/07/one-climate-crisis-disaster-happening-every-week-un-warns

Source: eco-News, 9th July 2019. 