

Sustainability Matters

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Business achieving a tomorrow for tomorrow's children

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Environment Committee Confirms Upcoming 'Zero Carbon' Hearings

"The Environment Select Committee has confirmed hearings in several locations throughout the country.

"The bill received over 10,000 submissions, with nearly 1,500 requests from members of the public to speak to the committee in person.

"To hear from all of the submitters on the bill who wish to be heard, the committee will be splitting into two sub-committees and travelling to different regions throughout Aotearoa in August and September.

"The committee will also continue to hold hearings in Wellington. The hearings in Wellington will include videoconferences and teleconferences for those who cannot attend any of the hearings in person.

Hearings: 15th Aug to 9th September.

More: www.parliament.nz/en/get-involved/features/environment-committee-confirms-upcoming-zero-carbon-hearings/

Source: Editor

Editor: Snippets of some of the hearings already held have been reported in the Press and video clips of some presentations may be found at www.facebook.com/environmentSCNZ/. I was among those who presented in Auckland on 19th August. The clip can be seen 3hrs 09min into the video at www.facebook.com/environmentSCNZ/videos/2361718140821747/

Charity Severs Ties with Engineering Firm Over Adani Coal Mine

"Engineering consultancy GHD has had its long-standing ties to a prominent engineering charity group severed because of its work on Adani's Carmichael coal mine in central Queensland.

"Engineers Without Borders Australia, which has counted GHD as a sponsor for its community work at home and abroad, said it had decided to 'respectfully cease' its partnership with the firm.

"EWB is committed to using our role in the engineering sector to support the global transition to renewable energy as quickly as possible and reduce the market demand for fossil-fuel driven energy', the group told the *Herald* and *The Age* in a statement.

"Although GHD share this objective, EWB's view is GHD's involvement in the Adani Mining Carmichael coalmine project is at odds with this position', it said.

"The decision to cut ties with GHD is understood to have been an agonising one for EWB, requiring multiple internal meetings and discussions with GHD. ...

More: www.smh.com.au/business/companies/charity-severs-ties-with-engineering-firm-over-adani-coal-mine-20190809-p52ft.html plus www.marketforces.org.au/info/key-issues/theadanilist/#highrisk → See also the 'Who's Out?' tab and www.acf.org.au/call_ghd?utm_campaign=1908_ghdcalljamday

Source: ACF, 16th August 2019.

It's Farewell from TNS New Zealand

"A final farewell...

"Earlier this year the board of The Natural Step NZ resolved to close the NZ office. With no active projects on the go; and the option for Associates to connect through TNS international, there was no need to incur the costs and effort of running a local office.

"In honour of our good friend Maggie Lawton, remaining funds of \$737.12 were donated to SBN's Million Metres stream restoration project for Lake Wanaka. The donation was matched by Speights to bring the total funding to almost \$1,500.

"Keen to know what's new out there? The Natural Step's work continues around the world and Simon Harvey is a member of the global network – so get in touch with him for more info. The most exciting recent developments have been the *Future-Fit Business Benchmark v2.1* release and the SustainOnline platform.

"*Future-Fit* translates The Natural Step science and strategy framework into a practical business tool. It is aligned with the SDGs at an action level and gives a clear definition of the extra-financial break-even point which all companies must strive to reach for genuine sustainability.

"For those with colleagues wanting to know more about this and putting strategic sustainability into practice, point them towards the *Future-Fit Business Strategy* course being run in Auckland (28th August) and Christchurch (11th September).

"SustainOnline is an online academy which brings together almost 100 micro-courses for people to learn about the fundamentals of systems-thinking and sustainability. The training platform aims to make knowledge and learning more accessible throughout entire organisations.

"Thanks for your support over the years. Whilst TNS New Zealand has gone, those connected with it are still doing great things through different channels. We wish you well in helping to shape a future that is socially just, economically inclusive and environmentally restorative.

Source: The Natural Step NZ, 13th August 2019

Info about SustainOnline at www.sustainonline.com/platform

Subscription: €1/employee/month for access to Academy (online micro courses), Tools, and Insights.

Electric Scooters are Good for the Environment, Right? Here's Why it's Not So Simple

"Well, it's not that simple. North Carolina State University went a step further and looked at the nuts and bolts of what makes up a scooter, its life cycle and emissions compared to other transport modes. The results were quite surprising; although US based, there will certainly be some similarities when compared to electric scooters in NZ.

More: www.stuff.co.nz/motoring/114805082/electric-scooters-are-good-for-the-environment-right-heres-why-its-not-so-simple plus www.energyts.com/single-post/2019/08/15/SnippETS-for-15-August-2019

Source: *SnippETS*, 15th August 2019.

Campaign to Increase 'Product Take Back'

"A business campaign to increase 'product take back' schemes has won the support of the Government's Waste Minimisation Fund.

"Product stewardship is when producers, brand owners, importers, retailers and/or consumers accept responsibility for reducing a product's environmental impact.

"It involves greater oversight and control throughout the whole life cycle, from production through to end of use and beyond. It means avoiding wasteful products and eliminating unnecessary waste. It also means redesigning products and doing more to ensure products and materials are recycled or reused.

"The Government's Waste Minimisation Fund has granted \$160,000 to the Sustainable Business Network (SBN) for a two-year campaign to promote this. The work will include a national roadshow to explain and promote product stewardship. This aims to increase the number of businesses offering 'take-back' product stewardship schemes. The ultimate goal is to increase the product stewardship schemes accredited by the Ministry for the Environment. There are currently 13. ...

"This two-year campaign aims to stimulate 25 businesses to establish new or join existing product stewardship schemes.

"A national campaign will be backed with guidance, inspiration, technical expertise and resources to help business develop product stewardship schemes. ...

More: <https://sustainable.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Product-Stewardship-FINAL.pdf>

Source: SBN, 13th August 2019. 

Making Manufacturers Responsible for Their Own Rubbish

"New Zealand's growing waste problem could be slashed dramatically if manufacturers took care of their own rubbish, the Government says.

"New schemes being proposed could remove the burden of plastic packaging, bottles and electronic waste from consumers.

"On Friday [9th August], associate environment minister Eugenie Sage said New Zealand's current economy is a 'take, make and dispose' model, and she wants it to change.

"Regulated product stewardship is a step towards changing that and to designing waste out of production."

"To date, product stewardship in New Zealand has been voluntary and there are 14 schemes, but they have not significantly reduced waste.

"It's the first time the Government has seriously considered the potential for regulated product stewardship as allowed in the Waste Minimisation Act.

"Sage said banning plastic items individually wouldn't work. Instead, she hoped the schemes would encourage manufacturers to switch to more sustainable packaging.

"Container deposit refund schemes could provide a small financial reward for customers returning their packaging, she said.

"Products wouldn't be more expensive, she said. ...

Submissions Close: 5.00 pm Friday 4th October.

More: www.stuff.co.nz/environment/114870301/govt-schemes-could-make-manufacturers-responsible-for-their-own-rubbish plus <https://3r.co.nz/ministers-priority-product-announcement-groundbreaking/> and www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/waste/proposed-priority-products-and-priority-product-stewardship-scheme-guidelines, 56 pages, 9.19Mb

Source: *SBC Weekly Pānui*, 15th August 2019. 

Most Global Companies Have Modern Slavery in Their Supply Chains

"Slavery is the greatest of humanity's evils, yet it has permeated our daily lives, right down to the chopped spring onions in our salads and the tinned tomatoes in our children's pasta sauces.

"The UK broke new ground in 2015 when it brought in the Modern Slavery Act, requiring all large companies to report on whether they have modern slavery in their supply chains. But four years on, the Business & Human Rights Resource Centre (BHRRC), which has been monitoring the quality of Modern Slavery Act annual statements since its inception, finds the act has 'failed to deliver the transformational change' which many of us hoped for.

"According to the BHRRC's 2018 annual assessment of transparency statements by FTSE 100 companies, *FTSE 100 & the UK Modern Slavery Act: From Disclosure to Action*, the majority of statements continue to be vague or 'generic', omitting crucial details on how the company is working to stop cases of forced labour within its UK or international supply chains.

"Despite genuine efforts by many companies to identify and mitigate risks, the UK supply chains of some of our largest retailers continue to be infiltrated by traffickers, the mafia and gangs, who take advantage of weak human rights due diligence and recruitment in second tier suppliers, according to Rachel Wilshaw, ethical trade manager for Oxfam in the UK.

"She says there is no financial benefit for suppliers, producers or recruitment agencies to provide good practice. 'They cannot comply because the cheap labour conditions do not allow it', she said.

"When Oxfam conducted a human rights impact assessment study into the processed tomato supply chain for Finnish supermarket SOK Group, it found appalling working and living conditions of tomato producers in Italy ...

"When the long arm of the law starts to tap on the shoulders of senior executives whose companies are found to be non-compliant in their Modern Slavery Act statements and supply chain human rights obligations, we will start to see transformative change. Then the biggest cost will come from not doing the right thing.

More: [Pages 7- 11]

<https://events.ethicalcorp.com/reports/docs/239874/EC-Magazine-August-2019.pdf> 6.64Mb, 56 pages

Source: Ethical Corp, 9th August 2019. 

Editor: Another instance of laws with good intent but few teeth failing overall to achieve substantive change even though some entities pro-actively take up the inherent challenges. There is much more about human rights issues in other pages of the magazine.

Who Will Pay for the Huge Costs of Holding Back Rising Seas?

"Journalist Jim Morrison writes about the enormous costs facing U.S. coastal communities in the coming decades as they confront the prospect of steadily rising seas and intensifying storms. As Morrison explains, jurisdictions across the country will need to fund flood protection projects totaling hundreds of billions of dollars. Yet local, state, and federal authorities have little idea where that money will come from. Some particularly vulnerable cities, such as Miami, are creating special funding mechanisms to begin to grapple with the problem, but much more will be needed to build climate resilience.

More: <https://e360.yale.edu/features/who-will-pay-for-the-huge-costs-of-holding-back-rising-seas>

Source: *Yale Environment 360*, 9th August 2019. 

'Greta effect' Leads to Boom in Children's Environmental Books

"Some seek to convey the wonder of endangered animals while others give tips on how to tackle waste or tell tales of inspirational environmental activists.

"All are part of what children's publishers are calling 'the Greta Thunberg effect': a boom in books aimed at empowering young people to save the planet.

"The number of new children's books looking at the climate crisis, global heating and the natural world has more than doubled over the past 12 months, according to data from Nielsen Book Research shared with the Observer. ...

"Whether it's beautifully illustrated factual books like *A Wild Child's Guide to Endangered Animals*, apocalyptic climate catastrophe novels such as *Where the River Runs Gold* or how-to guides such as *Kids Fight Plastic*, publishers are targeting a plethora of new fiction and nonfiction titles at young readers inspired by Thunberg, the 16-year-old climate emergency campaigner.

"*Earth Heroes*, which features Thunberg on its cover, is one of them. A collection of stories by travel journalist Lily Dyu about 20 individual inventors and conservationists around the world, including Sir David Attenborough, Yin Yuzhen, Stella McCartney and Thunberg, it was snapped up in June by children's publishers Nosy Crow.

"I absolutely would say there has been a Greta Thunberg effect', says Rachel Kellehar, head of nonfiction. 'She has galvanised the appetite of young people for change, and that has galvanised our appetite, as publishers, for stories that empower our readers to make those changes.'

More:

www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/aug/11/greta-thunberg-leads-to-boom-in-books-aimed-at-empowering-children-to-save-planet

Source: *Carbon News*, 16th August 2019. 

Samsung Releases Pre-Installed App on Galaxy Note Series Touting SDGs

"Samsung said last week it will include a pre-installed app on the Galaxy Note 10 series – and will be available on other Galaxy Smartphones soon – that will give users information on the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as well as ideas on actions which they can take to help support those goals.

"The Samsung Global Goals app is also donation-based, enabling users to donate to the United Nations Development Programme by watching ads or by donating directly. The company says 100% of the app's ad revenue goes to the UN Development Programme.

"Samsung is also releasing special edition accessories, including a phone cover with a Global Goals-themed design and a wireless charger.

"The application will be available in 19 languages and will be available through Samsung.com and select stores in the US and Korea, the company says. ...

More: www.environmentalleader.com/2019/08/180517/

Source: *Environmental Leader*, 11th August 2019. 

Maybe the Next Great Human Achievement Will be Saving the World

"Together, we've achieved so much. Now we must go even further and faster to achieve a country where we are no longer contributing to climate change within a generation – to protect the places and people we love. 1:00 video.

More: www.theclimatecoalition.org/the-next-great-human-achievement

Source: Gerda Kuschel, 6th August 2019. 

Michael Moore: 'I Refuse to Let This Planet Die'

"What if alternative energy isn't all it's cracked up to be? That's the provocative question explored in the documentary *Planet of the Humans*, which is backed and promoted by filmmaker Michael Moore and directed by one of his long-time collaborators.

"The film, which does not yet have distribution, is a low-budget but piercing examination of what the filmmakers say are the false promises of the environmental movement and why we're still 'addicted' to fossil fuels.

"Director Jeff Gibbs takes on electric cars, solar panels, windmills, biomass, biofuel, leading environmentalist groups like the Sierra Club, and even figures from Al Gore and Van Jones, who served as Barack Obama's special adviser for green jobs, to 350.org leader Bill McKibben, a leading environmentalist and advocate for grassroots climate change movements.

"Gibbs, who produced Moore's *Bowling for Columbine* and *Fahrenheit 9/11*, didn't set out to take on the environmental movement. He said he wanted to know why things weren't getting better.

"But when he started pulling on the thread, he and Moore said they were shocked to find how inextricably entangled alternative energy is with coal and natural gas, since they say everything from wind turbines to electric car charging stations are tethered to the grid, and even how the Koch brothers are tied to solar panel production through their glass production business.

More:

www.nzherald.co.nz/environment/news/article.cfm?c_id=39&objectid=12256805

Source: *NZ Herald*, page A29, 9th August 2019. 

Have Your Say on Auckland's Climate Action

"Auckland's Climate Action Framework sets out a pathway towards a climate-ready Auckland and is a starting point for all Aucklanders to work together to deliver our climate action efforts.

"The framework sets out a plan to:

- Keep temperature rise within 1.5°C
- Get Auckland to net zero emissions by 2050.

"It lays out our key moves in achieving this goal, including using renewable energy, delivering clean, safe transport systems, and moving to a zero-carbon economy. It also sets out a range of actions for individuals, communities, organisations and businesses to help work toward these goals.

"The draft framework establishes 11 key moves to reduce emissions and to increase resilience to the impacts of climate change.

Submissions Close: 6th September 2019.

More: www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/have-your-say/topics-you-can-have-your-say-on/auckland-climate-action-framework/Pages/default.aspx

Source: Auckland Council, 17th July and SBC 8th August. 

Businesses 'Underestimating' Speed of Low-Carbon Transition

"Businesses seeking to future-proof themselves against the physical and societal impacts of climate change must set aside resources for scenario analysis – and treat the results of this process as real, rather than 'hypothetical'. ...

More: www.edie.net/news/6/Mark-Lewis--Businesses--underestimating--speed-of-low-carbon-transition/

Source: edie, 15th August 2019. 

EDS Workshops - Reform of the RM System

"There is an urgent and compelling need for New Zealand to rethink how it manages resources. Many indicators of environmental health are now rapidly declining, we are failing to achieve optimum social, economic and cultural outcomes, and our laws are becoming increasingly incoherent, complex and conflicted. Our resource management system – the collection of laws, regulations, institutions and incentives – is extremely important to the country's environmental, social, economic and cultural well-being. This system, and its significance, goes well beyond just environmental protection.

"There is now substantial political appetite for reform. EDS has completed Phase 1 of a project looking at reform principles (Reform of the Resource Management System – the Next Generation), which will be complete by year end. It has culminated in a final report, which provides extensive analysis and outlines three broad models for what a reformed system could look like.

"It is crucial to keep this momentum going.

"This work presents a rare opportunity to influence a once in a generation political appetite for change. Having laid a robust foundation for reform in Phase 1, Phase 2 is all about translating that into a practical toolbox for policy makers by constructing a specific and concrete model and outlining steps to implement it over time.

"Later this month [August] we are holding 3 workshops as part of Phase 2 of our large scale RM project;

"Phase 2, which is occurring over 2019, is about developing a preferred model from the choices presented in Phase 1....

Where/When: All 2:00-5:00pm

- Wellington: Tues. 27th August, [Register](#)
- Auckland: Wed. 28th August, [Register](#)
- Christchurch: Thurs. 29th August, [Register](#)

More: www.eds.org.nz/our-work/rm-reform-project/

Source: *Tieke: ECO Alerts & Events*, 21st, August 2019. 

Climate Change & Business Conference 2019

"Where the world is going to arrive is not clear: 1.5°, 2°, or 3° of warming are all still potential futures. Which one eventuates depends on how fast we act and how hard we work to change. What is clear, is a transition to a climate change-resilient future for New Zealand and its business community must happen.

"By the end of the year a Zero Carbon Act setting New Zealand's transition pathway is likely to be in force and an understanding of what it means at a business-level will be critical for effective future decision-making.

"The questions climate resilience and emissions reductions as part of that transition raise are numerous & complex.

- How do you make decisions when faced with an unknown and changing future?
- How do you plan and execute a physical and strategic adaptation plan?
- How do you secure multiple wins out of climate-related action?
- How do you help your workforce to transition to be effective and efficient in a new world?

"This October, with the help of international and national experts and businesses leading in climate change action, the 2019 Climate Change and Business Conference, New Zealand's premier climate change event, will explore the answers to your questions, and provide solutions to create opportunities from the transition for your business.

More: <https://web.cvent.com/event/ffa39c03-26d9-461a-8efe-a9f0977b11db/summary>

Source: *Tieke: ECO Alerts & Events*, 21st August. 

Nelson City Council - Climate Change Champion

"Nelson City Council became one of New Zealand's first local authorities to declare a climate emergency, recognising that human-induced climate change represents one of the great threats to humanity, civilisation and other species, and urgent action is needed to mitigate and adapt to this global challenge.

"An important first action for Council following the declaration is the appointment of a Climate Change Champion to advance climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies for Nelson. ...

Closing date: Sunday 25th August

More: <https://careers.nelson.govt.nz/job/Climate-Change-Champion/540462610/>

Source: Bruce Gilkison, 13th August 2019. 

Social License to Operate: Lecture Series

"Social licence to operate (SLO) is a term which has emerged in Australia and around the world over the last two decades. For the most part, SLO has been popularised within the mining and extractive industries where it has been used to describe the broad approval or acceptance of a resource development activity that is afforded by local communities or other stakeholders, who can affect the profitability of that activity. However, SLO importantly points to the changing nature of societal expectations that have influenced the way in which the development, management and use of natural resources is now being undertaken. Communities are increasingly demanding more involvement in decision-making

When/Where: All during October – 7th Perth, 8th Adelaide, 10th Townsville, 11th Brisbane, 14th Darwin, 15th Sydney, 16th Melbourne, and 17th Canberra

More: www.groundwater.com.au/events/1147 plus similar paper at <https://publications.csiro.au/rpr/pub?pid=csiro:EP155067>

Source: NGRT, 19th August 2019. 

Under Construction: Hidden Emissions and Untapped Potential of Buildings for New Zealand's 2050 Zero Carbon Goal

"The report is the first to explore the impact that constructing new buildings will have on these efforts at the national level.

"Constructing and renovating New Zealand buildings between now and 2050 could pump out climate change pollution equivalent to one million cars on the road every year, a new report has revealed today [19th August].

"This figure – around three million tonnes of carbon – only includes what's known as 'embodied carbon'. Embodied carbon refers to the climate change pollution emitted during the manufacture and construction of a building and its materials, and is separate from the carbon emitted during the buildings' operation for heating and lighting.

"However the report, written by international sustainability experts thinkstep, and based on publicly available data and information provided by concrete, steel, timber and other sectors, suggests the construction industry could slash emissions by around 1.2 million tonnes of carbon every year – the equivalent of taking almost 500,000 cars off the road.

"The year 2050 is significant as it's the year the New Zealand government is striving to make the country net zero carbon, in line with international agreements to tackle climate change.

"It will help to address many aspects of the Living Standards Framework, including creating and protecting local jobs, and creating a more resilient society through high-quality buildings that are less dependent on imported products. ...

More: www.thinkstep.com/content/constructing-new-buildings-could-pump-out-annual-climate-pollution-equivalent-one-million 55pages, 1.68Mb

Source: Mathias Nebel, thinkstep, 21st Aug 2019. 