

# Sustainability Matters

Compiled and published by Ray Skinner, FCA

Business achieving a tomorrow for tomorrow's children



Designed by  
www.vecteezy.com

## Greta Thunberg Is *Time* Person of the Year for 2019

"*Time* on Wednesday [11<sup>th</sup> December] named the young climate activist Greta Thunberg as its person of the year, in a nod to the next generation's surging prominence in worldwide efforts to prevent the worst effects of climate change.

"It was an irony, perhaps, that the designation, announced on television and online, is a ritual marketing stunt that is one of the last vestiges of an era when weekly print magazines were a major force in the news cycle.

"Speaker Nancy Pelosi, President Trump, the Ukraine whistleblower and the Hong Kong protesters were all on the shortlist for this year's selection, according to the anchors of the 'Today' show. ...

"Edward Felsenthal, the magazine's editor in chief, said Ms. Thunberg was the youngest individual ever named *Time*'s person of the year in the franchise's 92-year history. He praised her for 'sounding the alarm about humanity's predatory relationship with the only home we have, for bringing to a fragmented world a voice that transcends backgrounds and borders' and for 'showing us all what it might look like when a new generation leads.' ...

**More:** [www.nytimes.com/2019/12/11/business/media/time-person-of-the-year-greta-thunberg.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/11/business/media/time-person-of-the-year-greta-thunberg.html) plus [www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-50740324](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-50740324)

**Source:** *The New York Times*, 12<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

## Climate Commissioners Appointed

Whittled down from 200 nominations there have been seven appointments for between two and seven years to the newly formed Climate Change Commission per an announcement by Minister of Climate Change James Shaw on Tues. 17<sup>th</sup> Dec.

**More:** [www.stuff.co.nz/national/politics/118257732/powerful-climate-commissioners-appointed-including-harry-clark-and-james-renwick](http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/politics/118257732/powerful-climate-commissioners-appointed-including-harry-clark-and-james-renwick)

**Source:** *Carbon News*, 17<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

## Hit for Six Examines Threats to Cricketers

"Shane Warne has called for cricket to be 'proactive, not reactive' about the dangers the sport faces due to the climate crisis, after being shocked by a report that called on the authorities to act now against 'humanity's most pressing challenge'. ....

*Hit for Six* published 10<sup>th</sup> September, examines the threats cricket-playing nations face, many situated in areas of the world most vulnerable to the changing climate.

"At times in the past, it has been hard to know who to believe, but I think we all have to admit now that climate change is a huge issue', the former Australian leg-spinner said. Scientists with proven facts are telling us things we can't dispute about the rising temperatures, the rising sea levels. ...

**More:** [www.theguardian.com/sport/2019/sep/13/shane-warne-cricket-climate-crisis-dangers](http://www.theguardian.com/sport/2019/sep/13/shane-warne-cricket-climate-crisis-dangers) plus <https://basis.org.uk/2019/09/hit-for-six-report/> and <http://basis.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Hit-for-Six-The-Impact-of-Climate-Change-on-Cricket.pdf>  
38 pages, 2.63Mb

**Source:** ACF, 24<sup>th</sup> November 2019.

## Madrid: More of a Failure than a Success

Several key nations played hardball and prevaricated – to the detriment of the masses. Nothing much to be proud of although many worked long and hard to obtain the breakthroughs the people cry out for.

**More:** [www.facebook.com/350.org/videos/526606928195905](https://www.facebook.com/350.org/videos/526606928195905)

**Editor:** However, 177 large companies pledged to *Business Ambition for 1.5°C — Our Only Future* campaign  
[www.wemeanbusinesscoalition.org/press-release/1-5c-future/](http://www.wemeanbusinesscoalition.org/press-release/1-5c-future/)

## The Art of Alignment: Sustainability & Financial Transparency

"Corporate transparency has evolved and progressed considerably in the last three decades, due in part to shifting public expectations of the private sector and greater emphasis being placed on purpose beyond profit.

"While many frameworks have emerged with the intent of making aligned reporting useful to stakeholders, the variety of standards has not led to a unified process but instead resulted in a landscape fraught with uncertainty.

"For organisations ready to align their financial and sustainability reporting but unsure how and where to begin, *The Art of Alignment* helps practitioners understand the evolution of sustainability transparency and provides guidance on best practice, empowering them to approach aligned reporting with a clear sense of purpose.

**More:** <https://sustainability.com/our-work/reports/the-art-of-alignment/> 96 pages, 10.69Mb

**Source:** SustainAbility, 6<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

## A Chance for NZ to Lead the World in Cutting Back on Plastic

"The government will start phasing out polystyrene packaging and beverage containers in response to a major new report calling for a nationwide rethink on plastics in New Zealand, PM Jacinda Ardern announced today [Sunday, 8<sup>th</sup> Dec]. Here's what you need to know about the announcement, and the *Rethinking Plastics in Aotearoa* report.

"For much of the year, a panel of experts have been examining the role of plastics in New Zealand, and coming up with ways to reduce both plastic use and plastic waste in every sphere of life. Their report *Rethinking Plastics in Aotearoa* was released today, and in response the PM has announced the government will phase out more single-use plastics, including hard-to-recycle PVC and polystyrene.

"The report has six key recommendations:

1. Implement a National Plastics Action Plan ...
2. Improve plastics data collection ....
3. Embed rethinking plastics in the government agenda .....
4. Create and enable consistency in design, use and disposal .....
5. Innovate and amplify .....
6. Mitigate environmental and health impacts of plastics .....

**More:** <https://thespinoff.co.nz/science/08-12-2019/cheat-sheet-a-chance-for-nz-to-lead-the-world-in-cutting-back-on-plastic/> plus [www.pmcsa.ac.nz/our-projects/plastics/rethinking-plastics-in-aotearoa-new-zealand/](http://www.pmcsa.ac.nz/our-projects/plastics/rethinking-plastics-in-aotearoa-new-zealand/) Full report, 264 pages, 26.68Mb

**Source:** Eugenie Sage, 8<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

## Climate Lens to Examine Major Government Decisions

"Major government decisions will be required to go through a climate change assessment, thanks to new rule.

"A Cabinet circular instituted by the Greens means any legislation or government decision aimed at reducing emissions, or likely to greatly increase emissions, will have a mandatory 'climate impact assessment' attached.

"This will join mandatory assessments on how bills impact human rights, the Treaty of Waitangi, rural communities, the disability community, and gender equality.

"The Green Party won a commitment to some kind of climate assessment for new laws in its confidence and supply agreement with Labour.

"Climate Change Minister James Shaw said this change went one better because it applied to all government decisions, not just new laws.

"Ensuring ministers are aware of the implications a decision may have for New Zealand's future greenhouse gas emissions will be vital to ensuring we all playing our part in meeting the commitments we've made', Shaw said. ...

"Not every decision will have a 'Climate Implications of Policy Assessment (CIPA)' however. An early decision will be made on whether a policy has the potential to cause emissions of more than 250,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions in a year, or if it is intended to reduce emissions. If not, it won't get a full CIPA.

"This looks at direct impact, but not indirect impact, on introduction.

"It means that a new trade deal would likely not have a CIPA completed, despite the fact it may increase trade and thus freight emissions. ....

**More:** [www.stuff.co.nz/national/politics/117915652/climate-lens-to-examine-major-government-decisions](http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/politics/117915652/climate-lens-to-examine-major-government-decisions)

**Source:** *Carbon News*, 6<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

## IBM Hopes to Change Weather Forecasting Around the Globe Using Big Data and a New Supercomputer

"In a potentially historic marriage of supercomputing and big data, IBM goes live Thursday with a global weather model that it says can provide far more accurate forecasts for the entire world.

"Called GRAF – Global High-Resolution Atmospheric Forecasting – the new model offers high resolution weather forecasts globally with a detail for areas as small as 2 miles wide, compared with 6 to 9 miles for weather models covering parts of the world outside such advanced regions as Europe, the U.S. and Japan.

"IBM says its new supercomputer, DYEUS, built just to run the model, will issue 12 trillion pieces of weather data every day and process forecasts every hour, while many global weather models update only every six to 12 hours.

"We're actually getting down to the cellular level of the thunderstorms now, where we weren't able to do that before. And with that information, we can provide better support to critical decision-makers', said Kevin Petty, head of science and forecasting at The Weather Company. ...

**More:** [www.cnn.com/2019/11/14/ibm-hopes-to-change-weather-forecasting-around-the-globe-using-big-data-and-a-new-supercomputer.html](http://www.cnn.com/2019/11/14/ibm-hopes-to-change-weather-forecasting-around-the-globe-using-big-data-and-a-new-supercomputer.html) plus [www.wunderground.com/cat6/IBM-Introducing-Worlds-Highest-Resolution-Global-Weather-Forecasting-Model](http://www.wunderground.com/cat6/IBM-Introducing-Worlds-Highest-Resolution-Global-Weather-Forecasting-Model)

**Source:** *NY Times*, 28<sup>th</sup> November 2019.

**Editor:** See article on Page 4 *Decades of Detailed Weather Reports Pulled from Old Sailor's Logs*.

## CH4 Global Secures Provincial Growth Fund Grant for Seaweed Climate Change Solution

"Methane-busting seaweed technology developer, CH4 Global, has secured a grant of \$500,000 in the latest New Zealand Provincial Growth Fund (PGF) funding round.

"CH4 Global plans to aquaculture and process native *Asparagopsis* seaweed at significant scale at its operations in Southland, Marlborough and Northland in New Zealand and initially in the Port Lincoln area in South Australia. ...

"Our vision is zero methane agriculture and this PGF grant will bring us to that vision much sooner. We are grateful to the PGF for sharing our excitement in this prime opportunity for New Zealand's regional communities', explains CH4 director and co-founder, Nick Gerritsen, a New Zealand-based entrepreneur with particular expertise in bioscience and technology ventures.

"Trials in the USA and in Australia in sheep, dairy cows and feedlot beef cows show methane reduction effects ranging from 60 up to 90%+. CH4 Global is focused on growing at scale for markets in the USA (California initially), New Zealand and Australia.

"What many don't realise is for any market, selling the product to farmers will require a licence from CSIRO which holds patents on the use of *Asparagopsis* (and other species) for the purpose of methane reductions in ruminant animals. ....

**More:** [www.scoop.co.nz/stories/BU1911/S00610/ch4-global-securesgrant-for-seaweed-climate-change-solution.htm](http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/BU1911/S00610/ch4-global-securesgrant-for-seaweed-climate-change-solution.htm)

**Source:** Brenda Saunders for CH4 Global, 28<sup>th</sup> Nov.

## Join Iwi, Hapu and Community Native Plant Nurseries Network

"If you run, work in or plan to set up a native plant nursery in the Auckland region, please get in touch and join our Facebook. Individuals and organisations welcome.

"During our visits to various nurseries, we've learnt people would like more support with how to get started in setting up a native plant nursery, how to grow once they're up and running, and how different nurseries can better support each other.

"With funding from Auckland Council Biosecurity, Kaipātiki Project initiated Iwi, Hapu, Community Nursery Network in the Auckland region. In addition to ongoing learning and support, this work will help us identify who's growing which species, where and for what purpose, as well as what help people need in growing plants for their projects.

**More:** [www.facebook.com/Iwi-Hapu-Community-Nurseries-2659525660733981/](https://www.facebook.com/Iwi-Hapu-Community-Nurseries-2659525660733981/)

**Source:** Kaipātiki Project, 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2019

**Editor:** Similar connectedness could be valuable in other areas too and may already exist.

## Could Abandoned Agricultural Lands Help Save the Planet?

"Richard Conniff examines new research which finds agriculture's global footprint is decreasing, with more land globally now being abandoned by farming than converted to it. China has reported losing about 7,700 square miles of agricultural land each year. The U.S. has lost almost 98,000 square miles of farmland just from 1997 through 2018. Some scientists contend this trend presents an opportunity for ecological restoration which could help fight climate change and stem the loss of biodiversity, though researchers are divided over how effective massive tree planting campaigns on abandoned lands can be in sequestering large amounts of carbon.

**More:** <https://e360.yale.edu/features/could-abandoned-agricultural-lands-help-save-the-planet>

**Source:** *Yale Environment 360*, 13<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2019.

## 2020 Future Thinker of the Year

"Future Thinker of the Year is awarded annually to a student or recent graduate who has demonstrated environmental knowledge and leadership. This could be through activism, research, or achievements in and out of work. It recognises success and passion for green buildings, and offers an opportunity to make a real difference across Aotearoa's built environment.

"We're looking for someone who lives and breathes sustainability and is keen to champion the values of the NZGBC and help inspire change.

"Entries are now open for the next Future Thinker of the Year. It's open to apprentices and students from any tertiary organisation, as well as anybody who graduated in the last 4 years. Entrants must be aged over 18 years. ...

Kate Boylan, Sustainability Engineer at Tonkin + Taylor is NZGBC's first Future Thinker of the Year [2019]. The 2019 finalists and other insights are available at the web page.

**Entries close:** 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020

**More:**

[www.nzgbc.org.nz/futurethinkers/FutureThinkeroftheYear](http://www.nzgbc.org.nz/futurethinkers/FutureThinkeroftheYear)

**Source:** NZGBC, 12<sup>th</sup> December 2019. 

## Resources from Tim for Summertime Reading and Listening

### 1. *Birth of the Chaordic Age*: Dee Hock

In *Birth of the Chaordic Age*, Dee Hock argues traditional organisational forms can no longer work because organisations have become too complex. Hock advocates a new organisational form which he calls 'chaordic', or simultaneously chaotic and orderly. He credits the worldwide success of VISA with its chaordic structure – it is owned by its member banks which both compete with each other for customers and must cooperate by honouring one another's transactions across borders and currencies. The book shows how these same chaordic concepts are now being put into practice in a broad range of business, social, community, and government organizations.

[www.amazon.com/Birth-Chaordic-Age-Dee-Hock/dp/1576750744](http://www.amazon.com/Birth-Chaordic-Age-Dee-Hock/dp/1576750744) Also, see also reviews at [https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/463429.Birth\\_of\\_the\\_Chaordic\\_Age](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/463429.Birth_of_the_Chaordic_Age)

### 2. Cynefin – A Framework to Aid Decision-making

Created in 1999 by Dave Snowden when he worked for IBM Global Services, it has been described as a 'sense-making device'. Cynefin is a Welsh word for habitat.

Cynefin offers five decision-making contexts or 'domains' – obvious (known until 2014 as simple), complicated, complex, chaotic, and disorder – which help managers to identify how they perceive situations and make sense of their own and other people's behaviour. The framework draws on research into systems theory, complexity theory, network theory and learning theories.



[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cynefin\\_framework](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cynefin_framework) plus <https://hbr.org/2007/11/a-leaders-framework-for-decision-making> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-F4enP8oBFM>

### 3. Yanis Varoufakis: *Talking to My Daughter about the Economy: A Brief History of Capitalism*

In this letter to his teenage daughter, one of the world's most famous economists uses vivid stories to explain what economics is and why it is so dangerous. What is money and why does debt exist? Where do wealth and inequality come from? How come economics has the power to shape and destroy our lives? Economics is not a technical science, it is an epic drama: a battleground of ideas, a war between the powerful for our allegiance. ...

Drawing on history and literature, science fiction and personal memories, this intimate and inspiring book shines a light for readers of all ages on some of the most bewildering questions and important challenges which humanity faces.

<https://www.amazon.com/Talking-Daughter-about-Economy-Capitalism/dp/1847924441>

### 4. Reforming NZ's State Sector

Public Sector, Vol. 41, No. 3, Sep 2018: 5-7.

<https://search.informit.com.au/documentSummary;dn=869034537052249;res=IELHSS> [Paywall]. Also; [https://issuu.com/ipanz/docs/final\\_ipanz\\_september\\_2018](https://issuu.com/ipanz/docs/final_ipanz_september_2018)

### 5. Constitution

After years of work and over 250 hui involving thousands of people, Matike Mai Aotearoa (the Independent Working Group on Constitutional Transformation) launched its report on Waitangi Day this year.

Its recommendations are far-reaching and radical.

[www.rnz.co.nz/national/programmes/sunday/audio/201821049/moana-jackson-a-new-constitution-for-aotearoa](http://www.rnz.co.nz/national/programmes/sunday/audio/201821049/moana-jackson-a-new-constitution-for-aotearoa) Plus [www.converge.org.nz/pma/MatikeMaiAotearoaReport.pdf](http://www.converge.org.nz/pma/MatikeMaiAotearoaReport.pdf) *The Report of Matike Mai Aotearoa: The Independent Working Group on Constitutional Transformation*, 125 pages, 1.77Mb

**Source:** Tim Marshall, 5<sup>th</sup> November 2019. 

## Got eco Anxiety? Here are 10 Reasons for Climate Optimism

"Although global warming is on course to rise by 3-5 degrees Celsius by the end of the century and global emissions continue to rise, there are genuine reasons for hope for our planet. Even Assaad Razzouk, the CEO of Sindicatum, thinks that we are now winning the climate fight.

"Last week [last week of November] , a report from the World Meteorological Organisation found the world is warming faster than previously believed, and could warm by between three to five degrees Celsius by the end of the century – almost three times the goal set by the Paris climate agreement.

"But amid the doom and gloom, there are reasons for us to be optimistic. Even Assaad Razzouk, the outspoken chief executive of Singapore-based renewables firm Sindicatum, has started to believe there is hope for the planet. On his podcast *Angry Clean Energy Guy*, .... Razzouk highlighted 10 reasons for climate optimism. Those reasons are:

- Climate action is intensifying ....
- Oil and gas cost of capital is rising ....
- Renewables costs are still falling ....
- Transport is going electric – fast ....
- Climate litigation ....
- Banks are waking up to the climate reality ....
- The war on plastic ....
- Reforestation ....
- Peak emissions ....
- Citizen activism ....

**More:** [www.eco-business.com/news/got-eco-anxiety-here-are-10-reasons-for-climate-optimism/](http://www.eco-business.com/news/got-eco-anxiety-here-are-10-reasons-for-climate-optimism/)

**Source:** eco-Business.com, 11<sup>th</sup> December 2019. 

## A Film Festival by Activists for Activists

“SYRCL’s (South Yuba River Citizens League) *18<sup>th</sup> Annual Wild & Scenic Film Festival* brings together another incredible selection of films to change your world. Each year, *Wild & Scenic* draws top filmmakers, celebrities, leading activists, social innovators and well-known world adventurers to the historic downtown areas of Nevada City and Grass Valley, California.

“Considered one of the nation’s premier environmental and adventure film festivals, this year’s films will combine stellar filmmaking, beautiful cinematography and first-rate storytelling to inform, inspire and ignite solutions and possibilities to restore the earth and human communities while creating a positive future for the next generation. Festival-goers can expect to see award winning films about nature, community activism, adventure, conservation, water, energy and climate change, wildlife, environmental justice, agriculture and more. ...

“After the January festival, *Wild & Scenic* goes on tour around the country [USA], spreading the messages in the films at more than 230 events hosted by other organisations which use the festival as a platform to inspire activism in their own communities.

**What:** 100+ films listed at [www.wildandscenicfilmfestival.org/2020films/](http://www.wildandscenicfilmfestival.org/2020films/)

**When/Where:** 16<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> January in California

**More:** [www.wildandscenicfilmfestival.org/festival/](http://www.wildandscenicfilmfestival.org/festival/)

**Source:** Orion, 6<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

## Science Based Targets Initiative Releases First Ever Progress Assessment

“For the first time since launching in 2015, the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) published an assessment of its progress. The new report released this week shows nearly 300 companies have set emissions reduction targets in line with the Paris Agreement goals.

“Called ‘*Raising the Bar: Exploring the Science Based Target initiative’s progress in driving ambitious climate action*’, the report found a strong growth in the adoption of science-based targets (SBTs). As of 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019, 686 companies had publicly joined the initiative and 285 of them have had their targets officially approved. ...

“For anyone setting a science-based target there is an initial ‘wow this is big lift.’ Same for us, and the same for our suppliers’, Scott Vitters, senior director of sustainable manufacturing and sourcing for Nike said in the report. ‘But having a common methodology helps focus all stakeholders on the scale of change required based on the science, rather than arbitrary, company-led goals. It also ensures our collective attention is on the best levers for driving the scale of improvement needed.’ ...

**More:** [www.environmentalleader.com/2019/12/science-based-targets-progress/](http://www.environmentalleader.com/2019/12/science-based-targets-progress/) plus <https://sciencebasedtargets.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/SBTi-Progress-Report-2019.pdf> 42 pages, 2.76Mb.

“As of November 2019, more than 700 companies are setting science-based GHG emissions reduction targets – and many more are joining the movement every week.

“These companies represent 45 sectors – from chemicals to construction, and from textiles to telecom, spanning 46 countries around the globe. Together, their operational emissions total more than 1 billion tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e, more than the annual emissions of Germany. Their combined market capitalisation is over \$10 trillion USD.’

**Source:** *Environmental Leader*, 11<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

## Mental Health Benefits of Protected Areas

“Globally the mental health benefits of protected areas has been conservatively estimated at NZ\$9.8 trillion. In a paper recently published in *Nature Communications* the authors have calculated the economic value of protected areas derived from the improved mental health of visitors.

“The authors conclude ‘*there is a direct link between protected area visits and individual human mental health and wellbeing, which translates to a very substantial but previously unrecognised economic value for protected areas and conservation. This health services value already exists, since the costs of poor mental health would increase if protected areas ceased to exist, or if people could no longer visit them.*’

“The authors’ preliminary estimate for Australia is the costs of not having protected areas would substantially increase the costs of mental health by 7.5% of GDP from the current 10%.

**More:** [www.nature.com/articles/s41467-019-12631-6](http://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-019-12631-6)

**Source:** *Tieke: ECO Alerts & Events*, 27 November 2019

**Editor:** Has a flowchart of calculation pathways plus recommendations for insurers and others.

## Decades of Detailed Weather Reports Pulled from Old Sailor's Logs

A database created in part from 19<sup>th</sup> -century maritime records sharpens our view of climate change over the past 150 years and being used to help with current forecasting.

**More:** [www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2019/10/old-sailors-logs-sharpen-picture-of-climate-change/](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2019/10/old-sailors-logs-sharpen-picture-of-climate-change/)

**Source:** The Natural Capital Coalition, 29<sup>th</sup> November.

## Insurance Made Riskier by Climate Change

“California’s wildfires have grown so costly and damaging that insurance companies – a homeowner’s last hope when disaster strikes – have increasingly been canceling people’s policies in fire-prone parts of the state.

“On Thursday, however, California took the highly unusual step of banning the practice, a decision which exacerbates the insurance industry’s miscalculation of the cost of climate change.

“The new policy imposes a one-year moratorium preventing insurers from dropping customers in or alongside ZIP codes struck by recent wildfires. The moratorium covers at least 800,000 homes around the state. The state has also asked insurers to voluntarily stop dropping customers anywhere in California because of fire risk for one year. ...

“The past two years of wildfires have shown even insurers are struggling to predict the risks associated with climate change. The consequences of that failure could be profound, experts say: The very industry meant to stabilise society in the face of climate change is itself being destabilised by climate change, threatening to make it harder for people to cope with the rising tempo of disasters.

...

“As these extreme events change, insurance is going to become ever more important as a financial recovery tool and a climate adaptation tool’, Dr. Kousky said. ‘The question now is really, what can we do to protect that market before it becomes really problematic.’ [Long article.]

**More:** [www.nytimes.com/2019/12/05/climate/california-fire-insurance-climate.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/05/climate/california-fire-insurance-climate.html)

**Source:** *The New York Times*, 12<sup>th</sup> December 2019

**Editor:** California has very different rules for insurers than those which apply in New Zealand. However the same broad issues apply.