

# Sustainability Matters

Compiled and published by Ray Skinner, FCA

Business achieving a tomorrow for tomorrow's children



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## Your Company's Next Leader on Climate Is...the CFO

"If your chief financial officer is the last person you would think of to take charge on climate change, think again. Today, smart organisations are shifting their sustainability responsibilities toward the finance function.

"There are several reasons for this change. First is the basic math, which falls largely within a CFO's purview. Mitigating and adapting to climate change will require close to \$1 trillion in investments per year through 2030 for the economy as a whole, and is also expected to put at risk between \$4.2 trillion and \$43 trillion of tradable stock exchange assets by the end of the century, depending on the level of planetary warming. (The latter number is for a world that has warmed by 6 degrees Celsius.)

"Second, cutting greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions leads to cost savings. If you cut emissions, you cut energy, which is a massive organisational cost – something CFOs pay close attention to.

"Third, because investors are pushing to make climate-safe investments, they want climate risks to be integrated within corporate financial disclosures.

"Finally, the business opportunities for climate change solutions are blooming. According to Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada, 'As creators, enablers, preservers and reporters of sustainable value, accountants can make their organisations' adaptation efforts more effective.' Taken together, these shifts are leading finance teams to include what were formerly called 'non-financials' in their daily jobs. ....

**More:** <https://hbr.org/2020/01/your-companys-next-leader-on-climate-is-the-cfo>

**Source:** LinkedIn, Karen McWilliams, 30<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

## New Zealand Joins International Treaty to Slash Ship Emissions

"New Zealand is joining almost 100 other countries, with our government agreeing to sign an international treaty targeting ship emissions. The convention's regulations limiting sulphur emissions from shipping (new maximum being 0.5% by mass down from the current limit of 3.5%) came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> January for those already signed, but the limits would not apply to NZ ships until early 2022 as we won't be signing until late 2021, giving our shipping industry time to prepare.

**More:** [www.stuff.co.nz/environment/climate-news/117903195/new-zealand-joins-international-treaty-to-slash-ship-emissions#comments](http://www.stuff.co.nz/environment/climate-news/117903195/new-zealand-joins-international-treaty-to-slash-ship-emissions#comments) plus [www.marineinsight.com/tech/scrubber-system-on-ship/](http://www.marineinsight.com/tech/scrubber-system-on-ship/) and [www.businessinsider.com/shipping-companies-fit-vessels-scrubbers-dump-pollution-sea-2019-10](http://www.businessinsider.com/shipping-companies-fit-vessels-scrubbers-dump-pollution-sea-2019-10)

**Source:** *SnippETS*, 29<sup>th</sup> January 2020

**Editor:** Some companies use cheat systems to discharge offending particles directly in to the sea – circumventing the goal. Only 23 of 3,756 ships in operation and on order early October 2019 do not discharge to sea. Plus, see 'Fuel Blunder' about 10% – 85% increase in harmful black carbon emissions in the Arctic [www.climatechangenews.com/2020/01/27/imo-under-pressure-to-regulate-new-ship-fuels-over-arctic-warming/](http://www.climatechangenews.com/2020/01/27/imo-under-pressure-to-regulate-new-ship-fuels-over-arctic-warming/)

## People and Performance Lead

The SBN is looking for a 'people' person. This senior role is all about creating a team culture which delivers well on purpose, strategy, projects and plans.

**More:** <https://www.seek.co.nz/job/40804882>

**Source:** SBN, 4<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

## There is An Antidote to Demagoguery – It's Called Political Rewilding

[George Monbiot](#)

"This form of radical trust devolves power away from top-down government, often with some very unexpected results.

"You can blame Jeremy Corbyn for Boris Johnson, and Hillary Clinton for Donald Trump. You can blame the Indian challengers for Narendra Modi, the Brazilian opposition for Jair Bolsonaro, and left and centre parties in Australia, the Philippines, Hungary, Poland and Turkey for similar electoral disasters. Or you could recognise what we are witnessing is a global phenomenon.

"Yes, there were individual failings in all these cases, though the failings were very different: polar opposites in the cases of Corbyn and Clinton. But when the same thing happens in many nations, it's time to recognise the pattern, and see that heaping blame on particular people and parties fixes nothing.

"In these nations, people you wouldn't trust to post a letter for you have been elected to the highest office. There, as widely predicted, ....

"But in some parts of the world, towns and cities have begun to rewild politics. Councils have catalysed mass participation, then – to the greatest extent possible – stepped back and allowed it to evolve. Classic examples include participatory budgeting in Porto Alegre in Brazil, the Decide Madrid system in Spain, and the Better Reykjavik programme in Iceland. Local people have reoccupied the political space that had been captured by party machines and top-down government. They have worked out together what their communities need and how to make it happen, refusing to let politicians frame the questions or determine the answers. The results have been extraordinary: a massive re-engagement in politics, particularly among marginalised groups, and dramatic improvements in local life. Participatory politics does not require the blessing of central government, just a confident and far-sighted local authority.

"Is this a formula for a particular party to regain power? No. It's much bigger than that. It's a formula for taking back control, making our communities more resilient and the machinations of any government in Westminster less relevant. This radical devolution is the best defence against capture by any political force. Let's change the nature of politics in this country. Let's allow the fascinating, unpredictable dynamics of a functioning society to emerge. Let the wild rumpus begin.

**More:**

[www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/dec/18/demagogues-power-rewilding-party-trust-power-government](http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/dec/18/demagogues-power-rewilding-party-trust-power-government)

**Source:** Mike Finlayson, Facebook, 21<sup>st</sup> December.

## International Student Summit on Climate

"This is an invitation for students and recent graduate working on climate change.

"From July 6 to 9, Université Laval (Québec City, Canada) will host the first International Student Summit on Climate Change. This event will bring together some 300 students from across the world.

"Students will have the opportunity to participate to various activities (including conferences, training, debates, workshops, and visits) on student actions related to climate change. They will discuss diverse issues, including university disinvestment from fossil fuel, climate mainstreaming in university programs, research communication, student-run NGOs, the design of university campuses, the expertise needed to address climate change in 2030, access to technologies developed by universities, etc. More importantly, this will be an opportunity for participants to meet other climate leaders and to create a network to exchange ideas, practices and expertise. A number of collaborative projects, including a student-run journal, a video series and podcasts, will be launched at the summit to help structure the network for the years to come.

"Université Laval will cover the cost of meals, accommodation, and carbon offset for all participants. We will also cover transportation costs for some participants.

To submit send a short video explaining motivations.

**Close: 12<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

**More:** [www.ulaval.ca/en/about-us/media-centre/press-releases/press-releases-2019/university-students-around-world-invited-quebec-city-discuss-climate-action-summer-2020](http://www.ulaval.ca/en/about-us/media-centre/press-releases/press-releases-2019/university-students-around-world-invited-quebec-city-discuss-climate-action-summer-2020)

**Source:** CSEAR, 28<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

## New NZ Houses Emitting 5 Times Too Much Carbon – Study

"Researchers have calculated how much carbon dioxide a typical new three-bedroom home can afford to emit in its lifetime and still keep the world within 2C warming\*\*. The bad news is, New Zealand houses are five times over-budget. The good news is, we can fix it (probably).

"A typical new Kiwi home emits five times as much carbon dioxide as it can afford to, if the world is to stay inside 2C\*\* warming.

"A first-of-its-kind New Zealand study says housing must shrink its carbon footprint by 80% to do its bit to meet the Paris climate accord.

"The researchers say their findings are a relief. 'I was actually surprised it wasn't worse', says Sarah McLaren, a carbon-budgeting researcher and professor in life cycle management at Massey University, who helped lead the study. 'Reducing to 20% of what we've got now, I feel it's doable. If the target was a thousandth of what it is now, it would make you want to give up. This feels like a challenge that can be taken up', she says.

"The study was supported by the Building Research Association of New Zealand, whose principal scientist, David Dowdell, also helped do the research. ...

**More:**

[www.newsroom.co.nz/@greenroom/2020/01/15/986487/new-houses-emitting-five-times-too-much-carbon-and-thats-good-news-study](http://www.newsroom.co.nz/@greenroom/2020/01/15/986487/new-houses-emitting-five-times-too-much-carbon-and-thats-good-news-study) plus <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0360132319307723?via%3Dihub> NZ\$35.95 for public access

**Source:** *SBC Weekly*, 16<sup>th</sup> January 2020

**Editor:** \*\* NZ's goal is 1.5<sup>o</sup>C which is the focus of the recent Zero Carbon Bill (Act).

## Webinar: Supercharge Your Sustainability Strategy with the Global Goals

"Join us to learn about how the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#) are essential for your business to align actions with impact for sustainability.

"Understand more about the Goals, the business imperative for alignment, the key steps for successful integration and see examples from organisations which have started on the journey.

"Hear from Toitū Envirocare's SDG expert – Sophia White, along with Amy Hughes, Wellington Zoo's General Manager Communication, Experience and Conservation, and Gary Walker, Auckland District Health Board's Project Manager – Sustainable Development Goals Alignment.

**When/Where:** 12:00 –1:00pm Tues, 18<sup>th</sup> Feb, online

**More:**

[https://toituenvirocare407.clickmeeting.com/supercharge-your-sustainability-strategy-with-the-global-goals/register?\\_ga=2.76572949.1825522361.1578972168-1390722544.1578972168](https://toituenvirocare407.clickmeeting.com/supercharge-your-sustainability-strategy-with-the-global-goals/register?_ga=2.76572949.1825522361.1578972168-1390722544.1578972168) plus [www.toitu.co.nz/news-and-events/training-events/webinar-supercharge-your-sustainability-strategy-with-the-global-goals](http://www.toitu.co.nz/news-and-events/training-events/webinar-supercharge-your-sustainability-strategy-with-the-global-goals)

**Source:** Bronwyn Cook, Toitu Envirocare, 20<sup>th</sup> January.

## Air Bubble Barrier Traps Plastic Waste in Amsterdam's Canals

An interesting way of removing rubbish from Amsterdam's canals is simple in its design but ultimately very effective (80% of plastic waste is diverted) – barrier made of air bubbles, which allows wildlife through, but contains and redirects rubbish to be more easily removed. A clever, yet relatively simple way to stop rubbish flowing from rivers and canals into the oceans.

**More:** [www.theguardian.com/world/2019/nov/07/bubble-barrier-launched-to-keep-plastics-out-of-oceans](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/nov/07/bubble-barrier-launched-to-keep-plastics-out-of-oceans)

**Source:** *SnippETS*, 5<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

## New Meat-packing Foam Dissolves In Sink

"Perdue Farms will start packaging some of its meat products in a more earth-friendly way with compostable foam made of cornstarch which disintegrates under running water.

"The company said the new packaging is part of its commitment to a 30% reduction by 2022 in greenhouse gas emissions per pound of its product. The Salisbury, Maryland, family-owned business, which turns 100 years old this year, is one of the largest chicken, turkey, beef and pork processing firms in the United States. ...

**More:** <https://edition.cnn.com/2020/01/07/business/perdue-farms-recyclable-foam-packaging/index.html>

**Source:** *Environmental Leader*, 10<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

## Bead and Proceed

"Educating people about the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals and to inspire action towards them through creativity!

"The United Nations are calling 2020 the start of the 'Decade of Action' why? Because we have 10 years left to achieve the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). If you're a business, organisation, school or an individual that wants to understand and action the goals then *Bead and Proceed* is here to help. Check out the video to find out more about what we do and how you and your business can make authentic impact towards the SDGs because the time is NOW!

**More:**

[www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6628753642566623232/](http://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6628753642566623232/)

**Source:** Tony Moore, LinkedIn, 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020.

**Editor:** A 9 minute video from Christchurch explains/shows the SDG's – very watchable and listenable.

## Should I Ditch My Fossil-fueled Car?

“Yes. Reducing the number of cars in your household, or switching from petrol/diesel to electric, will dramatically reduce your greenhouse gas emissions. It’s one of the easiest and highest-impact climate steps you can take.

The New Zealand vehicle fleet is increasing rapidly. In the five years 2012-2017, 1,420,000 vehicles were imported and 660,000 were scrapped. The fleet increased by 760,000 vehicles: they would fill all lanes of State Highway 1, from Cape Reinga to Bluff, bumper to bumper. The fleet increase of 22% exceeds population growth of 9% and has given New Zealand the highest rate of car ownership in the OECD. Because of a shift to higher-emission utes and SUVs, and the lack of a fuel efficiency standard, the average fuel efficiency of the fleet has not improved. Road transport contributes 45% of all emissions from the burning of fossil fuels in New Zealand and is up 78% since 1990. The fleet is almost entirely fossil-fueled. ....

“Lifecycle analyses include the energy and resources needed to make, use, and recycle a car. Most of the environmental impact of making a car is from mining, metal processing, and electricity used in the factory. Emissions from use include not just those from burning the fuel but also those from extracting, refining, and transporting it. These add a quarter to total fuel emissions. ....

“The extra emissions associated with the battery are recouped in 10 months of driving a small petrol car, or 6 months of driving an average petrol car.... [Longish article]

**More:** <http://wiseresponse.org.nz/2019/12/05/should-i-ditch-my-fossil-fueled-car/>

**Source:** Duncan Dugald via Robert Howell, 6<sup>th</sup> Dec. 

## Chernobyl is the Highest-rated TV Series Ever

“AT TWENTY-THREE minutes past one in the morning of April 26<sup>th</sup> 1986, a safety test at a nuclear reactor in Soviet Ukraine went catastrophically wrong. The resulting steam explosion at the plant near the city of Pripyat, 70 miles north of Kiev, spewed out so much radiation that much of the surrounding area will be uninhabitable for 20,000 years. Harmful isotopes were carried by the winds as far as Ireland within a week. According to some accounts, first responders who were exposed to large doses of radiation suffered agonising deaths. These events, as well as the political intrigue of the Soviet government’s actions, are the subject of HBO’s historical drama series, *Chernobyl*.

“Following the final episode, which aired in America on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, it is the highest-rated television series of all time, according to crowd-sourced reviews on IMDb, a film and television rating site.

“Reviewers have given the miniseries stellar ratings. ...

**More:** [www.economist.com/graphic-detail/2019/06/04/chernobyl-is-the-highest-rated-tv-series-ever](http://www.economist.com/graphic-detail/2019/06/04/chernobyl-is-the-highest-rated-tv-series-ever)

**Source:** *The Economist*, 19<sup>th</sup> December 2019

**Editor:** Also shown on NZ free-to air TV – ‘riveting’. 

## Could Boycotting be the New Boycotting?

“Consumers have a certain amount of power to change the behaviour of companies. In particular, their purchasing power and how they spend their money has a direct impact on a company’s success. Boycotting is a well-known use of this power. However, new research suggests that boycotting (or buying products to reward a company’s good behaviour) could be an underused, but effective tool for consumers.

**More:** <https://en.grenoble-em.com/news-could-boycotting-be-new-boycotting>

**Source:** Editor, 11<sup>th</sup> January 2020. 

## Winner of Australia’s Leading Sustainability Award Spotlights SDGs

“A social, not-for-profit enterprise enabling progress towards 15 of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has won gold at Australia’s foremost sustainability awards.

“The 2019 Banksia Gold Award was won by Infrastructure Sustainability Council of Australia (ISCA) at the Banksia Sustainability Awards ceremony in Sydney in December.

“ISCA is a member based NFP and social enterprise operating across Australia and New Zealand. Its Infrastructure Sustainability (IS) Scheme provides a common framework and language for sustainability requirements, which are now included as standard in all highly competitive project tenders.

“ISCA took out the Banksia Not-For-Profit Award early in the evening, before claiming the ‘best of the best’ Gold Award.

“The Banksia judges admired ISCA for walking the talk when it comes to the sustainable development goals’, said Banksia Foundation CEO Graz van Egmond.

“Twenty-three IS Scheme registered projects have recorded an impact reduction of 18% in energy, 31% in water and 29% in materials. The Scheme is now working on quantifying how infrastructure can affect better social outcomes.

“The Scheme isn’t just an overarching system, but dives down to an operational level, so it is delivering outstanding outcomes. It’s clear that ISCA are open to sharing their success with others because they are truly committed to creating long-term and ongoing change.’

“The Banksia Awards are in their 31<sup>st</sup> year and are the longest-running sustainability awards in Australia. Each year, the Awards bring together and celebrate the most innovative and effective contributions to sustainability in Australia.

“This year saw an increase in small business entries, especially ones which demonstrated alignment to the SDGs, which is a priority for Banksia.

“Each year we’re seeing stronger alignment to the SDGs and much stronger understanding of what they’re about, and how they can guide businesses to have a positive impact’, said Ms van Egmond. ....

**More:** <http://banksiafdn.com/winner-australias-leading-sustainability-award-spotlights-sdgs/> plus [www.ecovoice.com.au/here-are-the-2019-banksia-sustainability-award-winners/](http://www.ecovoice.com.au/here-are-the-2019-banksia-sustainability-award-winners/)

**Source:** *ecoVoice*, 6<sup>th</sup> January 2020. 

## Nepal’s Road-Building Spree Pushes into the Heart of the Himalayas

“Author Broughton Coburn, who has lived and worked in Southeast Asia for four decades, examines the impact of an ambitious initiative in Nepal to build thousands of miles of roads to every town and village in the mountainous nation. The new roads have already expanded access and economic opportunity in populated lowland regions.

“But in remote areas of the Himalayas where traditional livelihoods and trek tourism rely on unspoiled natural resources, some local officials and residents fear the social and environmental costs of this road-building spree will be high. ‘What do we mean by ‘development?’’, says one local critic. ‘On whose terms are we going to transition into the future?’

**More:** <https://e360.yale.edu/features/paving-the-himalayas-a-road-building-spree-rolls-over-nepal>

**Source:** *Yale Environment 360*, 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2020. 

## Churchill Fellowship Awarded to Council's Waste Specialist

"Auckland Council's Senior Waste Planning Advisor for Construction and Demolition Waste, Mark Roberts, has been awarded a 2020 Winston Churchill Memorial Trust Fellowship.

"Mark will be travelling to North America to investigate how community-led deconstruction hubs successfully divert construction and demolition waste materials from landfill for beneficial use. ...

"Evidence from the US shows the advantages of deconstruction hubs extend far beyond environmental gains and create wider social and economic benefits. The US Environmental Protection Agency estimate for every 10,000 tonnes of waste, 6 jobs are created if it is landfilled, 36 jobs if recycled, and up to 296 jobs if the material is refurbished and re-used.

"If we can replicate the same potential on New Zealand soil, it could be a real game-changer for our country", says Roberts.

"Community hubs can be set up to fill the gap and provide a valuable service where industry has not yet developed solutions. These hubs can recover, sort, disassemble, reprocess and sell on valuable materials such as timber, fixtures and fittings.

### More:

<https://ourauckland.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/articles/news/2019/12/churchill-fellowship-awarded-to-councils-waste-specialist/> plus [www.communitymatters.govt.nz/winston-churchill-memorial-trust-2/winston-churchill-memorial-trust-2020-fellowships-and-their-research-reports/](http://www.communitymatters.govt.nz/winston-churchill-memorial-trust-2/winston-churchill-memorial-trust-2020-fellowships-and-their-research-reports/)

Source: SBN, 17<sup>th</sup> December 2019. 

## Academics to Showcase to Research to Scottish Parliament

"The Scottish Parliament Academia Network (SPAN) aims to formalise, coordinate and encourage knowledge exchange between the Scottish Parliament and academia via a network of knowledge exchange/brokering professionals in Higher Education institutions based in Scotland and the rest of the UK. ....

"In the run up to COP26 – the 2020 United Nations Climate Change Conference, which is taking place in Glasgow, this year's theme is the Climate and Ecological Crisis. ....

"We are seeking expressions of interest from academics who would like to showcase their research at the event. We are particularly interested in solutions focused work, with applicability in Scotland, and innovative and interactive knowledge exchange in the following topics:

- Finance and budgeting solutions
- Land management for people, nature and climate
- Planning, and delivery of green infrastructure
- Behaviour change and community leadership
- The journey to net-zero transport
- Decarbonising our food system
- Decarbonising heat
- Circular economy
- Post-EU exit environmental governance.

### More:

[www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/113659.aspx](http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/113659.aspx)

Source: CSEAR, 1<sup>st</sup> February 2020

Editor: The concept could merit consideration in NZ and other countries and of course for other themes. 

## Passive House: 154 Unit Apartment Block in New York

"Park Avenue Green, designed and built to Passive House Institute US certification standards, provides sustainable housing in an innovative fifteen-story building. The project's 154 apartments provide much needed low-income housing to the Melrose neighbourhood while incorporating state-of-the-art building technology to create a community of environmentally comfortable homes.

"Along with its highly insulated and thoroughly sealed building envelope, the design incorporates storm resiliency features and includes cogeneration, an extremely efficient variable refrigerant flow (VRF) heating and cooling system, and an array of photovoltaic panels on the roof. The ground floor houses a 4,300-square-foot community facility for the not-for-profit Spaceworks, providing affordable studio spaces and a gallery visible from the street to local artists.

More: [www.environmentalleader.com/2019/12/bronx-building-named-largest-certified-passive-house-in-north-america/](http://www.environmentalleader.com/2019/12/bronx-building-named-largest-certified-passive-house-in-north-america/) plus [www.architectmagazine.com/project-gallery/park-avenue-green\\_o](http://www.architectmagazine.com/project-gallery/park-avenue-green_o) and [www.onyllc.com/](http://www.onyllc.com/)

Source: *Environmental Leader*, 18<sup>th</sup> December 2019. 

## New Technology Helping Shoppers Offset Carbon Emissions

"PlaceMakers, New Zealand's leading and largest supplier of building materials and hardware, has partnered with the Auckland-based startup CarbonClick to help customers offset their carbon emissions.

"Now, when shoppers make a purchase from PlaceMakers' online store, they'll be given the opportunity – in the shape of a big green button at checkout – to offset their purchases' carbon emissions.

"PlaceMakers joins several high-profile early adopters of CarbonClick's technology, including AA Smartfuel, Mighty Ape and Karma Drinks (formerly Karma Cola).

"The problem CarbonClick solves isn't, in itself, unique. Air New Zealand, for example, allows its flyers to offset their emissions via the FlyNeutral scheme. CarbonClick's link with Air New Zealand isn't coincidental. Co-founders Jan Czaplicki and Paul Brady first met while working at the airline.

"Now, both men are using their skills to make it easier for brands, which might not have the same level of resource as Air New Zealand, to offset their carbon emissions ....

More: [www.stuff.co.nz/business/119173035/new-technology-helping-shoppers-offset-carbon-emissions](http://www.stuff.co.nz/business/119173035/new-technology-helping-shoppers-offset-carbon-emissions) plus <https://carbonclick.com/>

Source: Rob Skinner, 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2020. 

## At Berkeley, A Student-led Class Takes a New Approach

"It's no secret that concerns about climate change and environmental degradation are growing on college campuses. That's led students and professors alike to explore novel ways to teach the subject in the classroom.

"This semester at the University of California, Berkeley, one of the college's most popular courses is, remarkably, being taught by a 21-year-old senior, Sage Lenier. ....

"The course has struck a nerve. When it started in the spring of 2018, 25 students enrolled. But word spread quickly ... Lenier is expecting 300 students. ....

More: <https://messaging-custom-newsletters.nytimes.com/template/oakv2?uri=nyt://newsletter/77cbc972-b33b-41fa-80c0-7efdf9e6b34a&te>

Source: *NY Times*, 30<sup>th</sup> January 2020. 