

Sustainability Matters

Compiled and published by Ray Skinner, FCA

Business achieving a tomorrow for tomorrow's children



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Don't Waste Time

"As he approaches his 94th birthday, David Attenborough finds himself on a very different planet to the one he grew up on. We need to reconnect with nature, he tells Nick Rufford, for our own health – as well as the Earth's.

"After a lifetime of bringing nature into our living rooms, David Attenborough wants us to get out of our armchairs and help save the natural world we've enjoyed watching on television. Decades of relentless industrialisation, urbanisation and intensive farming have driven a wedge between us and our animal ancestors, he warns, and the disconnection between modern families and nature is getting worse.

"I think it's terrible that children should grow up without knowing what a tadpole is. Just awful', he says. 'I can't criticise other people how they bring up their children, but in my time I could, and did, get on a bicycle and cycle 15 miles to a quarry and spend the day looking for dragonflies, grass snakes and newts, as well as fossils.'

"Losing touch with nature not only affects the way we treat the planet, but also affects us on a primal level.

"We are now recognising clinically that it is important to have contact with the natural world, for people's sanity," he says. 'Anybody will recognise that in moments of both exultation and deep sorrow that that's where you go. That's where you grieve and that's where you contemplate real things, the natural world. Psychologists recognise this, and I think it's the case for everybody. If you lose contact – emotional contact – with the natural world, you're badly deprived.' ... [Long article and worth every minute invested reading it]

More: www.nzherald.co.nz/canvas-magazine/news/article.cfm?c_id=532&objectid=12319370 [Paywall]

Source: *NZ Herald, Canvas*, pages 16 and 17, 28th March

Editor: Long article and worth every minute invested reading it including: 'No iPad, no iPhone, no email. I use the post & telephone.' His one concession to modern technology, he added, was that in addition to longhand, he sometimes wrote on a computer.'

Climate-related Risk Management and Modern Slavery Disclosure

"Deloitte are offering online half-day Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainability training courses. Among them are;

- Climate-related risk management and disclosure. Expectations are mounting that businesses will address their climate-related risks and identify opportunities arising from climate-driven changes. It's essential to be prepared. 7th and 21st April and later
- Human rights in the supply chain – including modern slavery responses. Many organisations are grappling with the need to produce their first Modern Slavery Statement. This course is designed for those who will be involved in producing the statement. 7th May and later

Source: Paul Dobson, Deloitte Australia, 25th March 2020

More: <https://content.deloitte.com/au/csr-training>

Editor: Go down the page to see 'Program of Interest' and dates.

Towards Transparency – Proxima's Annual Guide

"The future of corporate reporting is forward looking and bound by conditions for social and ecological success. Sound farfetched, idealistic, even a bit out there? Take a look at New Zealand's corporate leaders who are already disclosing this kind of sustainability-related information in their reports. *Towards Transparency* is Proxima's annual review of New Zealand Reporting, including statistics, insights and trends.

More: www.proxima.global/thoughts/the-future-of-reporting#blog 32 pages, 2.91Mb

Source: *SBC Weekly Pānui*, 19th March 2020

Editor: As in prior years this is an excellent guide and gets better every year. It is a must read for anyone in any type of entity who has a role in entity reporting.

Introducing the Forever Project: Lasting, Meaningful Coverage of the Climate Challenge

"Today [25th March], Stuff launches the Forever Project – our way of saying we're committed to clear-eyed, insistent coverage of the epoch-defining challenges of climate change and sustainability.

"We want to do more than articulate the scale of the peril – we want to share solutions and help our readers hold on to hope.

"Things have changed in ways we couldn't have imagined since we first conceived this project - a major boost to Stuff's climate coverage.

"It has always been hard to treat climate change urgently, when many people are worried about immediate threats to their jobs, housing security and the health of their loved ones. Thanks to the Covid-19 outbreak, that tension is more acute now than we would have believed a month ago.

"One thing we do know is that this rapidly heating planet of ours will still be here a year from now. The pressing need to find a way live on it more lightly – and still live good lives – isn't going away. We have just experienced a shock transition to a society that flies less, drives less, and buys more cautiously (pasta and toilet paper aside). We will all be better off if we can make the transition to net zero emissions kinder than this has been. Despite the urgency of the problem, we still have time.

More: www.stuff.co.nz/environment/climate-news/120169658/introducing-the-forever-project-lasting-meaningful-coverage-of-the-climate-challenge plus www.stuff.co.nz/environment/climate-news/

Source: *SBC Weekly Pānui*, 26th March 2020.

Donations – Are Welcome Here!

Sustainability Matters

It's the end of the financial year

The cupboard is almost bare

It's clear what needs to be there

Should you have \$46 or so to spare

It would be most welcome here;

A/c No. 123 011 0249104 00

Sustainability Matters

ASB Bank, Queen Street branch, Auckland.

Special Tribunal Recommend Springs be Protected by Order

"A world-famous freshwater springs, its associated water bodies, and the aquifer that feeds them should have the highest national protection, a long awaited report says.

"A Special Tribunal has been deliberating for nearly 20 months following a hearing for a Water Conservation Order for Te Waikoropū Springs in Golden Bay.

On Tuesday [17th March], the tribunal released its recommendations to Environment Minister David Parker.

"In its report the tribunal recommended the application for the Water Conservation Order be granted over both the confined and unconfined Arthur Marble Aquifer, and over Te Waikoropū Springs.

"This includes the main spring, Dancing Sands Spring and Fish Creek Springs. ...

"The Tribunal recommended that the order be declined for the Anatoki River and the Waikoropū River, as these were not hydraulically connected to Te Waikoropū Springs.

More: www.stuff.co.nz/environment/120340616/special-tribunal-recommend-te-waikoropu-springs-be-protected-by-order

Source: *Tieke: ECO Alerts & Events*, 18th March 2020.

More: in TOKO's message of 19th March 2020 → NB: The environment court has determined cut-off for lodgement of any appeal deferred to 1st May.

Developers 'Must Go Beyond Biodiversity Net-gain Requirements': Report

"Ecology consultancy EPR has unveiled a new support package for developers striving to meet the UK Government's housing targets while going beyond compliance with the new Environment Bill's biodiversity net-gain requirements.

"Called '*Building Biodiversity*', the package will consist of a string of reports containing best-practice advice on operations, supply chains and policy engagement – the first of which has been published this week.

"This first report argues that the tools which developers have been given to measure biodiversity and implement net-gain are 'fundamentally flawed', in that they permit external offsetting and that they 'are built on generalised assumptions of the importance of habitats that, in many cases, do not adequately take into account factors such as the wildlife that rely on them and regional variations in the habitats themselves'.

"These flaws, the report warns, could lead to developers investing in 'ineffective' habitat enhancements that 'add little true value to the environment'. ...

"In its current form, the Bill will require the builders of all new homes – no matter where they are located or how large the development is – to prove their projects have enhanced nature 'for local communities'. The Bill also contains the establishment of a UK-wide Nature Recovery Network, overseen by local authorities. For such a measure to be established, the Bill includes measures to give local councils and citizens more funding and say in conservation and restoration of forests, woodlands and peatlands. ...

More: www.edie.net/news/12/Developers--must-go-beyond-biodiversity-net-gain-requirements---Report/ plus www.pbctoday.co.uk/news/planning-construction-news/housing-biodiversity-crisis/73324/ → Important issues for NZ and elsewhere and www.buildingbiodiversity.co.uk/#download Sign-in required

Source: edie, 19th March 2020.

The Bankruptcy of Responsible Investment: How can We Invest Ethically?

"Are your investments, and the bank and insurance company that you use, destroying or enhancing the capacity of the Earth to support human and other life, and acting fairly and justly? There are many attempts to define social and environment responsibilities. Many by their definitions and processes are unethical relying on an application of environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors without any adequate inclusion of moral concerns. A four step process instead describes how to invest ethically.

"Definitions of Social and Environment Responsibility

"Human-Human and Human-Earth Responsibilities

"Four Steps

"Divestment

More: <http://a-resilient-world.blogspot.co.nz/>

Source: Robert Howell, 19th March 2020.

SBN Collaboration will Help Businesses Take Urgent Climate Action

"Climate Action 20-25 is a collaboration of influencer organisations that will deliver expert, independent, simple-to-use guidance to businesses on how they can take climate action in a meaningful way.

"The programme is designed to meet the needs of small and medium-sized enterprises at all stages of their climate action journey – from the bulk of NZ business that are just starting out, to those which want to be climate leaders.

"Right now we're looking for other active organisations which are keen to help suppliers, clients and Kiwi business, in general, by investing and collaborating with us on Climate Action 20-25.

"SBN's Project and Advisory Lead Phil Jones is already conducting interviews and researching existing tools and resources to prepare a simple, low cost and comprehensive climate change toolkit. He stresses in many cases the toolkit will link to existing resources.

"The toolkit will include:

- Educational elements to demystify the issues
- Guidance to understanding carbon footprinting and reducing a business's greenhouse gas emissions
- Resources on adapting business activities to a changing climate
- Systems for measuring the collective impact of the programme

More: <https://sustainable.org.nz/sustainable-business-news/sbn-collaboration-will-help-businesses-take-urgent-climate-action/>

Source: SBN, 9th March 2020.

Organic Products Bill

"Parliament's Primary Products Select Committee is calling for submissions on the Organic Products Bill. The objectives of this bill are to increase consumer confidence in purchasing organic products, increase certainty for businesses making claims that their products are organic, and facilitate international trade in organic products.

"The Bill has an explanatory note providing some background, and the 2018 consultation document with background documents are available on the Ministry for Primary Industries website.

Consultation closes: 29th April 2020.

More:

<http://disclosure.legislation.govt.nz/bill/government/20/221>

Source: *Tieke: ECO Alerts & Events*, 25 March 2020.

The Gray Rhino: How to Recognize and Act on the Obvious Dangers We Ignore

"A 'gray rhino' is a highly probable, high impact yet neglected threat: kin to both the elephant in the room and the improbable and unforeseeable black swan. Gray rhinos are not random surprises, but occur after a series of warnings and visible evidence. The bursting of the housing bubble in 2008, the devastating aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and other natural disasters, the new digital technologies that upended the media world, the fall of the Soviet Union...all were evident well in advance.

"Why do leaders and decision makers keep failing to address obvious dangers before they spiral out of control? Drawing on her extensive background in policy formation and crisis management, as well as in-depth interviews with leaders from around the world, Michele Wucker shows in *The Gray Rhino* how to recognise and strategically counter looming high impact threats.

More: www.thegrayrhino.com/the-gray-rhino/ St Martin's Press, April 2016, 304 pages plus www.marketwatch.com/story/what-is-a-gray-rhino-and-why-are-they-so-dangerous-to-investors-5-questions-for-michele-wucker-2019-01-23

Source: <https://e360.yale.edu/features/coronavirus-holds-key-lessons-on-how-to-fight-climate-change> 27th March, 2020.

Glass, Metal, Plastic: The Story of New York's Canners

This 8:45" video explores a day in the life of two entrepreneurs who make a living by cleaning the streets of New York from empty cans and other 'waste'.

Discusses merits of increasing container deposit amounts.

More: www.youtube.com/watch?v=cTeZRz75wyU&feature=youtu.be

Source: Story of Stuff, 15th March 2020.

Note: "Storytelling that illuminates critical issues and offers viewers opportunities to create a better world."

Insuring Fossil Fuels but Not Insuring Our Homes

"Insurance is supposed to be there for us when we need it most – that's why we pay for it, right? So just imagine an insurance company refusing to cover your home after you've lost it. Even worse, imagine an insurance company that's insuring fossil fuel projects but NOT your home!

"Well, that's exactly what Liberty Mutual is doing. This Insurance giant has more than \$8.9 BILLION invested in fossil fuel companies around the world. But when climate-fueled fires wiped out homes in Paradise, CA, Liberty Mutual started pulling coverage in the state. Ironic, right?

"Well, that's not all. Liberty Mutual is insuring tar sands projects that threaten Indigenous communities. These tar sands projects and pipelines risk polluting the water supply these communities depend on, putting the health and well-being of entire communities in jeopardy. These pipelines are being built without the consent of Indigenous peoples and against their sovereignty. Their land, sovereignty, and health are impacted daily while companies like Liberty Mutual continue to profit.

"Tar sands are one of the dirtiest and most carbon intensive types of fossil fuels. So why is Liberty Mutual still insuring these destructive projects?

More: <https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/sign-the-petition-liberty-mutual-must-stop-insuring-tar-sands> plus www.ran.org/press-releases/liberty-mutual-adopts-coal-policy-in-response-to-public-pressure/

Source: Rainforest Action Network, 27th March 2020.

thinkEPD is here!

"think-EPD is a new specialised microsite by thinkstep-anz featuring all things EPD. An EPD is an Environmental Product Declaration – it tells the environmental story of a product over its life cycle by considering numerous energy, waste and emissions factors. It is accurate, independently verified and globally recognised. ...

"Moreover, thinkstep-anz aims to bust the myth that EPDs are only for building materials and big businesses. In fact, the first EPD to be registered under the local EPD program was for renowned designer David Trubridge, who runs a company of just 20 people. Now, with over 180 product categories organisations of all sizes and across all sectors can benefit from developing an EPD.

"For companies beginning their sustainability journey thinkstep-anz sets out 9 reasons they should consider developing EPDs.

More: www.think-epd.com/news/thinkepd-website-is-here/ plus www.think-epd.com/

Source: *SBC Weekly Pānui*, 12th March 2020.

Energise Ōtaki

"Energise Ōtaki: is the name chosen by the Ōtaki community to represent the goal of becoming a net producer of clean energy and to act as a focal point for community action.

"Helping Ourselves to A Smart Future: is the by-line. Change will be achieved through community action, projects large and small, and alliances with key partners.

"How Energise Ōtaki Works: Energise Ōtaki is primarily a broad 'umbrella' under which a range of organisations and individuals come together to achieve change.

"The Energise Ōtaki vision involves action across many areas: reducing electricity consumption; reducing reliance on fossil fuels; giving people choices about what energy they consume and how they purchase it, how it is generated and how they can reduce their overall energy use and household costs. It involves local clean energy generation. On the way, the town will reduce its contribution to long-term human-induced climate change. It is a holistic social, environmental and economic vision built around the idea of sustainable development, crafted to fit the Ōtaki culture and way of doing things.

"Seven broad Focus Areas for Action have been identified.

"The idea is not owned by any one group but relies on individuals, businesses and organisations becoming involved.

"What we want to achieve on the way;

- All Ōtaki households, organisations and businesses take action in some way to conserve and produce energy.
- Average residential energy use per capita declines year on year.
- Local clean energy production increases year on year.
- Emissions of greenhouse gas emissions from energy use in Ōtaki declines year on year
- No-one is living in energy poverty in Ōtaki.
- Jobs in energy conservation and clean energy generation are created in Ōtaki.
- Ōtaki is internationally recognised as a town where research on energy conservation action and local scale clean energy production can be advanced in partnership with the community.
- People have fun on the way to achieving the vision. ...

More: <https://energise.otaki.net.nz/about-energise-otaki/> plus <https://energise.otaki.net.nz/big-picture/> and www.scoop.co.nz/stories/AK1908/S00028/energise-otaki-announces-solar-farm-project.htm [2nd August 2019]

Source: *Carbon News*, 23rd March 2020.

People, Power, and Profits: Progressive Capitalism for an Age of Discontent

by [Joseph E. Stiglitz](#)

"We all have the sense that the American economy – and its government – tilts toward big business, but as Joseph E. Stiglitz explains in his new book, *People, Power, and Profits*, the situation is dire. A few corporations have come to dominate entire sectors of the economy, contributing to skyrocketing inequality and slow growth. This is how the financial industry has managed to write its own regulations, tech companies have accumulated reams of personal data with little oversight, and our government has negotiated trade deals that fail to represent the best interests of workers. Too many have made their wealth through exploitation of others rather than through wealth creation. If something isn't done, new technologies may make matters worse, increasing inequality and unemployment.

"Stiglitz identifies the true sources of wealth and of increases in standards of living, based on learning, advances in science and technology, and the rule of law. He shows the assault on the judiciary, universities, and the media undermines the very institutions that have long been the foundation of America's economic might and its democracy. ...

"An authoritative account of the predictable dangers of free market fundamentalism and the foundations of progressive capitalism, *People, Power, and Profits* shows us an America in crisis, but also lights a path through this challenging time.

More: www.goodreads.com/book/show/43726589-people-power-and-profits 366 pages, published April 2019

Source: Editor; 31st March 2020. 

Social Enterprise in New Zealand: A Legal Handbook

"Written by Stephen Moe and published in September 2017 to coincide with the Social Enterprise World Forum held in Christchurch.

"This short book compiles together a lot of information which is relevant for those involved with Social Enterprises in New Zealand. It is not trying to be more than what it is – an attempt to speak the language of social enterprise, raise awareness and stimulate discussions.

"You may not agree with every point made here or position taken – that's a good thing. For the sector to advance and grow we need a diverse range of voices speaking out about their experiences. That includes not just advisers like me but also the practitioners who are out getting their hands dirty with these concepts and business models. What works and what doesn't?

"Let's tell the stories that will encourage each other and ensure that this movement is more than just a passing fad but instead becomes the new reality demanded by the next generation who will follow us.

More: <https://theseeds.nz/books/> plus <http://sei.org.nz/files/docs/social%20enterprise%20book%202017.pdf>. 83 pages, 1.011Mb

Source: *The Good Investor newsletter*, Nov. 2019. 

The 10,000-Mile Cod and Insane Global Trade

"What do Scottish cod, rubber duckies, rock phosphate, and shipping containers have in common? They all ride the oceans in really big boats as part of the insanity of today's global trade. Trade seems like it should be a simple thing. I give you something, you give me something else in return ...

More: www.postcarbon.org/crazytown/ 39:07" podcast

Source: Post Carbon Institute, 28th March 2020. 

'Coronavirus Capitalism': Naomi Klein's Case for Transformative Change Amid Coronavirus Pandemic

"Author, activist and journalist Naomi Klein says the coronavirus crisis, like earlier ones, could be a catalyst to shower aid on the wealthiest interests in society, including those most responsible for our current vulnerabilities, while offering next to nothing to most workers and small businesses. In 2007, Klein wrote *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*. Now she argues President Trump's plan is a pandemic shock doctrine. In a new video for *The Intercept*, where she is a senior correspondent, Klein argues it's vital for people to fight for the kind of transformative change which can not only curb the worst effects of the current crisis but also set society on a more just path.

More:

www.democracynow.org/2020/3/19/naomi_klein_coronavirus_capitalism Video 27:40, audio and transcript

Source: SumOfUs, 31st March 2020. 

End of First Life of Solar and Wind Power Equipment

Two stories curated by CarbonEMS in their latest SnippETS;

- Part of any Green New Deal will have to be PV. Solar power systems generally last about 25 to 30 years. Although their power capacities may dip by about 20% over the course of a quarter-century, there is still potential to deploy them in regions starved of electricity supply, where they can be used for another 10 to 20 years. This extension of their useful lives has implications for a world staring at a potential 78 million tonnes of solar panel waste by 2050.
- Although wind power helps to reduce emissions associated from electricity generation, wind turbines still have a limited working life. After about 25 years they need to be decommissioned, but instead of going to landfill they can be used for plastic pellets, glue, paint, concrete, fertiliser and can even be repurposed as a children's playground! Reduce, reuse and recycle applies to renewable electricity as well.

More: www.carbonems.com/single-post/2020/03/26/Snippets-for-26-March-2020

Source: *SnippETS*, 26th March 2020. 

Top French Court Deals Blow to Uber by Giving Driver 'Employee' Status

"France's top court has recognised the right of an Uber driver to be considered an employee, a ruling which could upend the U.S. firm's business model and potentially require it to pay more taxes and benefits such as paid holidays.

"The decision by the Cour de Cassation could also have ramifications for France's wider 'gig economy', as other taxi and food delivery apps from Deliveroo and Just Eat-Takeaway to UberEats rely heavily on self-employed riders to conduct their business without having to meet a range of employee costs and benefits.

"The Cour de Cassation upheld a previous decision by a court of appeal, saying the Uber driver could not qualify as a self-employed contractor because he could not build his own clientele or set his own prices, making him a subordinate of the company. ...

"The decision also follows a series of legal challenges to Uber and similar companies from Brazil to Colombia and the United States itself.

More: www.reuters.com/article/us-uber-court-idUSKBN20R23F

Source: Topio Networks, 12th March 2020. 