

Sustainability Matters

Compiled and published by Ray Skinner, FCA

Business achieving a tomorrow for tomorrow's children



Designed by
www.vecteezy.com

University of Auckland Tops Global Sustainability Impact Second Year In a Row

"The University of Auckland has topped the world for its impact on achieving sustainable development goals for the second year in a row.

"Announced overnight by London-based Times Higher Education, the rankings measure the performance of universities against the United Nations goals.

"Auckland University came first in the overall rankings against 850 institutions, ahead of the University of Sydney and the Western Sydney University.

"Vice-Chancellor Professor Dawn Freshwater said the University of Auckland was ranked in the top 25% for each of the goals it was measured against among the institutions from some 89 countries.

"Its top areas were among four categories: life on land, involving the sustainable protection of ecosystems, life below water, involving sustainable use of the oceans and marine resources, good health and wellbeing and partnership for the goals, a mandatory qualifying Sustainable Development Goal.
....

More:

www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=12326837

Source: SBN, 29th April 2020.

Our Regenerative Future Launch

"Regeneration in the ecological sense encapsulates the renewal, restoration and revitalisation of our natural systems to ensure we live within our natural planetary boundaries. The drastic social and economic changes currently being wrought by the COVID-19 pandemic are an opportunity for the world to get the balance right at last and pursue a regenerative future grounded in deeper connections between people, food and the land.

"Nature has called upon us to think differently and tell a new story.

"Our Regenerative Future looks at this opportunity through the lens of regenerative agriculture (regen ag) and highlights the recognition that conventional methods of farming, while efficient at maximising production, are doing a great deal of harm. However, there is a fast growing movement in Aotearoa that is reshaping our productive land use industries towards systems that work with the natural environment to regenerate the land.

"Dig deep into this new content series featuring case studies of farmers, business leaders and scientists who are leading from the edge in regen ag. We hope this work is a positive antidote to the current situation, one that provides hope and opportunity – after all, farmers are some of our most essential workers.

More:

<https://pureadvantage.org/ourregenerativefuturecampaign/>

Source: Pure Advantage, 6th May 2020

Editor: There is a considerable amount of material at the web site to be read, considered and acted upon. Content includes 14 articles.

Tessa Meyer Named NZGBC Future Thinker of the Year

"Tessa Meyer, a corporate responsibility advisor at Auckland Council's development arm Panuku Development Auckland, has been crowned the 2020 Future Thinker of the Year.

"Now in its second year, the Future Thinker of the Year is awarded to a student or young professional who demonstrates environmental knowledge and leadership, and recognises success and passion for greener, better buildings.

"I'm ecstatic to receive this recognition. It's a chance to contribute to the green building industry and help grow our movement at a critical time', Tessa Meyer said. ...

"This year's finalists included PhD candidate at the School of Architecture at Victoria University of Wellington, Ged Finch, University of Auckland civil engineering student Hannah Wu, and graduate building services engineer at WSP Rochelle Kirby.

"I'd like to firstly thank all the applicants who have taken the time out of their schedules to apply for this year's Future Thinker awards. Even though there can only be one winner, we learn a lot from the applications you put forward and it does challenge the thinking of even the most advanced environmental thinkers in our panel'....

More:

www.nzgbc.org.nz/KNOWLEDGEHUB/Story?Action=View&Story_id=554

Source: SBN, 29th April 2020.

John Houghton, Who Sounded Alarm on Climate Change, Dies at 88

"John Houghton, a climate scientist and influential figure in the United Nations panel that brought the threat of climate change to the world's attention and received a Nobel Prize, died on 15th April in Dolgellau, Wales. He was 88.

"The cause was complications of the novel coronavirus, according to his granddaughter Hannah Malcolm, who announced the death, at a hospital, on Twitter.

"A key participant in the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Dr. Houghton was the lead editor of the organisation's first three reports, issued in 1990, 1995 and 2001. With each report, the evidence underpinning global warming and the role humans play in causing it grew more ineluctable, and the calls for international action became more pressing. The group received the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize jointly with Al Gore, the former vice president and climate campaigner.

"Speaking about climate change in 1994, Dr. Houghton said that delay served no one. 'We should start to do what we can do now and also begin to plan to do more', he said, and 'not wait 10 or 20 years till things are more clear.'

"Mr. Gore recalled Dr. Houghton in a statement as 'a critical voice bringing the urgency of the climate crisis to the attention of policymakers'. ...

More: www.nytimes.com/2020/04/23/climate/John-Houghton-dead-coronavirus.html

Source: NY Times, 30th April 2020.

Source: eco-Business.com, 18th March 2020.

Research Opportunity into Finance Function

"The Association of International Certified Professional Accountants, the unified voice of CIMA and the AICPA, is currently engaged in a worldwide research project to identify the future direction, role and form of the finance function.

"CIMA, through its General Charitable Trust, is making funding available for academic research projects to explore this theme further with a view to informing a Research Executive Summary which accountants in business would find informative and practical.

"We invite research proposals from anywhere in the world which investigate the impact these disruptive technologies are having on the finance function and on management accounting practice.

"For example: Grants of up to £30,000 are available to experienced research teams globally to undertake research into specific areas of management accounting.

"2020 Call for Proposals: In 2020 we are launching a two stage call for proposals on the following broad topics;

- The links between management accounting concerns and practices and contemporary developments in technology (e.g., big data, blockchain, social media, machine learning, artificial intelligence).
- The links between management accounting concerns and practices and contemporary developments in climate change reporting and sustainability.

"The second stage, open from 1st July, will offer up to £30,000 to experienced researchers.

More: www.cimaglobal.com/Research--Insight/Research-Funding/News-and-updates/

Source: CSEAR, 1st May 2020.

Improving Nature's Visibility in Financial Accounting

"Today [29th April], we are launching a report on [Improving Nature's Visibility in Financial Accounting](#). This report will feed into a new EU-funded project with the [Value Balancing Alliance](#) to develop Environmental Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (E-GAAP) and build an accounting system fit for purpose (more on this soon).

"Accountancy as an institution must evolve continuously as new questions are asked of it: the fact that a broader gamut of issues must be taken into account by businesses reveals that the existing accounting framework needs to adapt. This report – *Improving Nature's Visibility in Financial Accounting* – offers the potential first steps to change the trajectory of sustainability reporting's evolution and build an accounting system fit for purpose.

"Why is this work relevant? There is no longer any doubt that nature's degradation threatens businesses. The case for change is there: now is time to move into action. Businesses must demonstrate leadership for positive change – and be accountable for achieving it. Disclosure and accountancy, therefore, play a crucial role to build trust in this transformation.

"Advanced businesses recognise that thinking about their resources and relationships in terms of capitals can bring significant advantage. There are thousands of companies around the world conducting capitals assessments but there is not yet a standardised way to include assessment outputs in financial accounts.

"Given that financial accounting is a key decision-making tool, linking natural capital data with financial accounts is an obvious route to examine. ...

More: <https://mailchi.mp/naturalcapitalcoalition/capitals-coalition-march-newsletter-1351173?e=92762cc1f8> plus <https://naturalcapitalcoalition.org/projects/improving-natures-visibility-in-financial-accounting/> 83 pages, 2.20MB

Source: Capitals Coalition, 1st May 2020.

Inequality and the Ecological Transition

"January 14th, 2019

"Last month Branko Milanovic published a blog post about the Yellow Vest movement against the fuel tax in France. He was worried – like many analysts – that the uprising proves it will be virtually impossible to roll out the policies necessary to reduce carbon emissions. He's convinced that people simply won't accept it.

"He also took the opportunity to hit out at myself and Kate Raworth. 'Proponents of degrowth and those who argue that we need to do something dramatic regarding climate change are singularly coy and shy when it comes to pointing out who is going to bear the costs of these changes. As I mentioned in my discussion with Jason and Kate, if they were serious they should go out and tell Western audiences that their real incomes should be cut in half and also explain to them how that should be accomplished.'

"Let's deal with these issues one at a time.

"First, the Yellow Vests. Don't get it twisted: the French began rioting not because of the fuel tax as such, but rather because it was extremely regressive. ...

"The Yellow Vests are not against environmental policy. In fact, they highlight ecology as a top priority, and have even called for stronger climate action ...

More: www.jasonhickel.org/blog/tag/degrowth plus www.jasonhickel.org/about

Source: Editor, 9th May 2020.

Climate Action 20/25: Accelerating Climate Action by New Zealand SME's

"Today [7th May] I [Rachel Brown] am excited to launch our new Climate Action 20/25 project to help smaller businesses act on climate over the next five years. We're kicking it off with the publication of a report that examines the issues and opportunities, and provides a pathway for action.

"New Zealand's small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) need an easy-to-use programme to lower their greenhouse gas emissions. Much of the work to date on climate resources is best suited to larger organisations. Yet SMEs face a range of barriers to their involvement such as time and cost constraints – more so now than ever. Covid-19 is posing additional challenges, yet the need to act on climate hasn't gone away. ...

"To make it super easy, cheap and practical for SMEs to act we are creating:

- A toolkit of practical resources, including links with existing quality tools and resources
- A series of training programmes called CO2LABS, run regionally and online
- Inspiring local case studies and recognition of leaders at our Awards

"This is a collaborative effort. We will continue working with a range of private and public sector stakeholders, including existing service providers, to ensure the programme complements and enhances existing initiatives.

"We're really excited to be kicking off this project! We look forward to working with our members and partners on it over the next few years.

"If your organisation would like to be involved in Climate Action 20/25 or to find out more, please contact phil@sustainable.org.nz

More: <https://sustainable.org.nz/climate-action-20-25/> <https://sustainable.org.nz/climate-action-20-25-report-download/> 28 pages 64.11 MB

Source: SBN, 7th May 2020.

Covid-19 Has Nothing on What's Coming

"Janet Stephenson has written a cogent and compelling blog with the title of Covid-19 has nothing on what's coming. Her first paragraph sets the scene.

'The current nationwide pause as a result of Covid-19 is an extraordinary opportunity, and probably the only one we will get, to redesign our economy so that it no longer threatens life on this planet.'

"Noting the *'untold misery and trauma'* caused by Covid-19 and its aftermath, she says the economic, social and health impacts *'will be trivial'* compared to the consequences of *'climate action failure, biodiversity loss, extreme weather, human-made environmental disasters and water crises'*

"She identifies and discussed seven well accepted goals which if adopted to reconfigure our systems, noting that achieving them all together is critical to changing course successfully.

"The article is well worth reading.

More: www.newsroom.co.nz/2020/04/20/1133127/covid-19-has-nothing-on-whats-coming

Source: *Tieke: ECO Alerts & Events, 22nd April 2020.*

Reviving the Economy

"You will have been following the discussions around how the NZ economy is to be revived following the devastation wrought by the Covid-19 shutdown. There has been much talk around government funding of 'shovel ready projects' as part of the economic stimulus package. Unfortunately the criteria put out for such projects makes no reference to climate change, curbing emissions or the 2050 zero carbon target. Even allowing for imperfections due to urgency this omission is surprising and disappointing.

"LCANZI has written to the Prime Minister and members of the Budget Ministers' Group setting out our view that the Government is legally obliged to take account of climate impact when making decisions about use of the fiscal stimulus funds and seeking their assurance that this will be a core part of their assessment of all post-COVID-19 stimulus spending, including the 'shovel ready' projects.

"That letter builds on our earlier 17th April letter to the Prime Minister in which we supported the views of the Climate Change Commission and a joint letter to the government from Ecologic, EDS, Generation Zero, Forest & Bird, Greenpeace NZ and WWF-NZ calling for climate change issues to be at the forefront of decision making around the economic recovery package and urging the government to use this opportunity to put NZ on a path towards zero carbon emissions and an environmentally sustainable future. Copies of both letters can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

Source: Lawyers for Climate Action NZ, 9th June 2020

Editor: Personal comment re 'shovel ready'. To me that means no less than all resource and other consents are in place, detailed construction/project plans are in place and things are ready to roll within a few weeks. There are probably a wide range of activities which fit that description such as insulating homes, ensuring income and other benefits are fair and equitable, removal of wilding pines, Predator Free NZ and much else.

Unilever's Alan Jope on Repairing Capitalism, Covid-19 and Sustainable Living Plans

"Providing an update to Unilever's flagship Sustainable Living Plan as it enters its 10th and final year, chief executive Alan Jope reflects on the need to double down to protect the planet and society during the pandemic by "driving a new model of capitalism.

More: www.edie.net/news/12/Unilever-s-Alan-Jope-on-repairing-capitalism--Covid-19-and-Sustainable-Living-Plans/

Source: edie, 6th May 2020.

A Satellite Lets Scientists See Antarctica's Melting like Never Before

"New data from space is providing the most precise picture yet of Antarctica's ice, where it is accumulating most quickly and disappearing at the fastest rate, and how the changes could contribute to rising sea levels.

More:

www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/04/30/climate/antarctica-ice-climate-change.html plus <https://science.sciencemag.org/content/early/2020/04/29/science.aaz5845>

Source: *NY Times, 7th May 2020*

Editor: Maps show changes in stunning detail.

Amsterdam to Embrace 'Doughnut' Model to Mend Post-coronavirus Economy

"A doughnut cooked up in Oxford will guide Amsterdam out of the economic mess left by the coronavirus pandemic.

"While straining to keep citizens safe in the Dutch capital, municipality officials and the British economist Kate Raworth from Oxford University's Environmental Change Institute have also been plotting how the city will rebuild in a post-Covid-19 world.

"The conclusion? Out with the global attachment to economic growth and laws of supply and demand, and in with the so-called doughnut model devised by Raworth as a guide to what it means for countries, cities and people to thrive in balance with the planet.

"Raworth's 2017 bestselling book, *Doughnut Economics: Seven Ways to Think Like a 21st-Century Economist*, has graced the bedside table of people ranging from the former Brexit secretary David Davis to the Guardian columnist George Monbiot, who described it as a 'breakthrough alternative to growth economics'. ...

"Raworth scaled down the model to provide Amsterdam with a 'city portrait' showing where basic needs are not being met and 'planetary boundaries' overshot. It displays how the issues are interlinked.

"It is not just a hippy way at looking at the world', says Van Doorninck, citing the housing crisis as an example. ...

"The world is experiencing a series of shocks and surprise impacts which are enabling us to shift away from the idea of growth to 'thriving', Raworth says. 'Thriving means our wellbeing lies in balance. We know it so well in the level of our body. This is the moment we are going to connect bodily health to planetary health.'

More:

<https://amp.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/08/amsterdam-doughnut-model-mend-post-coronavirus-economy>

Source: Hunter Lovins, 6th May 2020.

Webinar: Small is Mighty! – SMEs, Science Based Targets and Systemic Carbon Shifts

"Since April 2020 a streamlined approach for organisations with less than 500 employees is available to set science-based climate targets. SMEs are the backbone of Australia and New Zealand's economies and play a critical role in the global response to Climate Change. However, they often have fewer resources to set carbon targets.

"Join WWF Australia and thinkstep-anz for a 30 minute webinar and discover how the new speedy and simplified approach developed by the Science Based Target initiative (SBTi) to enable SMEs to grasp the benefits that climate action offers.

When/Where: Thurs 21st May at 3 pm NZST; webinar

More: www.thinkstep-anz.com/webinar-registration-2/

Source: Mathias Nebel, thinkstep, 12th May.

Is Asparagopsis Seaweed the Answer to NZ's Methane Emissions?

"To save the planet, we don't have to go vegan, says international climate change activist David Wallace-Wells. We just need cows to eat seaweed.

"Add algae to their feed and they'll belch out up to 95% less methane, he says. So that's New Zealand's climate emissions problem one-third solved.

"Unfortunately, the reality is a little more complicated.

"At the root of the excitement is the red seaweed Asparagopsis. It comes in two varieties, a warm water species, Asparagopsis taxiformis and a cold water species, Asparagopsis armata. The cold water version grows wild around New Zealand, hence the global rush to commercialise the seaweed's production includes two Kiwi efforts. ...[Long Article].

More: www.stuff.co.nz/environment/climate-news/120190057/is-asparagopsis-seaweed-the-answer-to-nzs-methane-emissions

Source: Whoops – not recorded!

General Mills Advance Regenerative Agriculture Practices on One Million Acres of Farmland by 2030

"General Mills today [4th March 2020] announced its commitment to advance regenerative agriculture practices on one million acres of farmland by 2030. The company will partner with organic and conventional farmers, suppliers and trusted farm advisors in key growing regions to drive the adoption of regenerative agriculture practices. A contributor to climate change, it is estimated the global food system accounts for roughly one-third of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and 70% of water consumption. ...

"Regenerative agriculture is a holistic method of farming deploying practices designed to protect and intentionally enhance natural resources and farming communities. These practices focus on pulling carbon from the air and storing it in the soil in addition to helping the land be more resilient to extreme weather events. General Mills will partner with key suppliers to drive adoption across key ingredients including oats, wheat, corn, dairy feed and sugar beets.

"Our first on-farm training and education academies will focus on North American growers ...

More: www.generalmills.com/en/News/NewsReleases/Library/2019/March/Regen-Ag

Source: ReportAlert, 21st April 2020.

Packaging: Rewriting the Narrative

"Packaging often gets a bad reputation with the environmentally conscious. But is it really the villain it is hyped up to be? Or do we need to change how we think about packaging and sustainability altogether? It is time to ask the latter question and help to shape the narrative around packaging and sustainability. Wider systems thinking and life cycle thinking are the key to a sustainable packaging sector. Tools cemented in the life cycle approach such as Life Cycle Assessment studies provide a more holistic view of the environmental impact of packaging options.

"Another proponent of systems thinking and life cycle thinking in the packaging sector, a new report by UK based thinktank Green Alliance calls for a more rounded approach to sustainable packaging and plastic pollution by using a life cycle approach. The report warns that the UK Government's ban on unnecessary single-use plastics could triple packaging emissions. ...

More: www.thinkstep-anz.com/resrc/blogs/packaging-rewriting-the-narrative/

Source: SBC Weekly Pānui, 7th May 2020.

A 'Feminist Economic Recovery Plan'

"A universal basic income. Special emergency funds for marginalized groups, including undocumented immigrant women, domestic workers, women with disabilities and sex-trafficking survivors. Waived co-payments for covid-19 tests and treatment, including for incarcerated women. A 20 percent pro rata share of the covid-19 response funds the express recovery needs of the indigenous population. A \$24.80/hour minimum wage for single mothers. Free, publicly-funded child care for all essential workers.

"None of these proposals have come from the [USA] federal government. These proposals instead come out of Hawaii, the first state to propose a what it's calling a 'feminist economic recovery plan'. Rather than restoring the economy to the old normal, the state is looking to seize the opportunity 'to build a system that is capable of delivering gender equality.'

"The plan, produced by the state's Commission on the Status of Women, is designed for 'deep cultural change' by explicitly incorporating the unique needs of indigenous and immigrant women, caregivers, elderly women, femme-identifying and non-binary people, incarcerated women, unsheltered women, domestic abuse and sex trafficking survivors, and women with disabilities.

More: <https://social-human-capital.org/this-state-says-it-has-a-feminist-economic-recovery-plan/>

Source: Capitals Coalition, 1st May 2020.

Vietnam and the Indian State of Kerala Curbed Covid-19 on the Cheap

"Their secret is quick and efficient public-health systems. ...

"By March 24th, when Narendra Modi, the prime minister, declared a nationwide lockdown to combat the disease, Kerala accounted for a fifth of India's cases, more than any other state. Just six weeks later, it ranks 16th. As India's active caseload has risen by a multiple of 71, Kerala's has fallen by two-thirds (see chart). It has suffered just four deaths. Many of Kerala's 35m people work abroad; 20 times more of them have died of the illness in another country than have at home.

"With 95m people, Vietnam is a much bigger place. In dealing with covid-19, however, it has followed a strikingly similar script, with an even more striking outcome. Like Kerala it was exposed to the virus early, and saw a surge of infections in March. Active cases also peaked early, however, and have since tumbled to a mere 39. Uniquely among countries of even remotely similar size, and in contrast to such better known covid success stories as Taiwan and New Zealand, it has not yet suffered a single confirmed fatality. The Philippines, a nearby country of roughly the same population and wealth, has suffered more than 10,000 infections and 650 deaths.

"Like Kerala, Vietnam has recently battled deadly epidemics, during the global outbreaks of SARS in 2003 and of swine flu in 2009. Vietnam and Kerala both benefit from a long legacy of investment in public health and particularly in primary care, with strong, centralised management, an institutional reach from city wards to remote villages and an abundance of skilled personnel. Not coincidentally, communism has been a strong influence, as the unchallenged state ideology of Vietnam and as a brand touted by the leftist parties that have dominated Kerala since the 1950s. ...

"Before the end of January Vietnam had declared a national emergency, ...

More: www.economist.com/asia/2020/05/09/vietnam-and-the-indian-state-of-kerala-curbed-covid-19-on-the-cheap Sign-in required

Source: The Economist, 8th May 2020.

NZ Should Lead Move to Fossil-fuel Reduction Treaty

"The new decade has arrived with what seems like the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse in tow: catastrophic bushfires, torrential rain and flooding, wild and destructive winds, and even a pandemic to remind us of the interconnected nature of our global system.

"Sometimes it's hard to work out whether these are just part of an incremental shift in climate-related events, or is this in fact our new normal?

"In his recent book *The Uninhabitable Earth*, David Wallace-Wells presents a stark view of the future, and the reality of a world with a 2, 3 or 4 degree Celsius rise in average global temperatures.

"How are we as humans to respond to this? Despair? Denial? Or hope for some technological fix to tame the current trajectory? ...

"The time has come for a radically different approach, focusing on fossil-fuel supply.

"In 2008, two proposals were put forward that focused on the production and supply of fossil fuels. One was my own paper, *Climate Control*, which proposed a Global Energy Agency to manage all global fossil fuel production, something like an expanded OPEC, in order to manage supply to match an agreed emissions path.

"The other was a proposal by Oliver Tickell, *Kyoto2*, which also argued for a system of finite production rights.

"Both focused on the supply side of the equation, arguing that the sole focus on demand-side management would not provide either the certainty required or, more importantly, a serious shift in consumer and industrial behaviour.

"Neither got much traction because of the lack of political will and the sense that it was a much easier sell to put the onus on individuals, talk about renewable energy and promote new technologies. Essentially, anything except addressing the root cause of the problem.

"One way to understand this is to imagine the Earth as a bathtub, where water coming out of the taps represents carbon emissions.

"The bath has been overflowing for 100 years but particularly in the last 30 years or so. Our approach to dealing with that is using lots of towels to mop up the overflow, with buckets and cups to bail.

"Unfortunately, it's not working. Perhaps the slightly easier and more successful approach would be to turn the taps off!

"It's been done before.

"In 1987, the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer came into effect. This agreement led the way for the phasing out of ozone-depleting substances, which also contributed to climate change as well as causing a massive hole in the ozone layer. This was a supply side response, and it worked.

"It did not ask consumers to use their fridges less, or switch to using iceboxes. It simply phased out the offending substance and replaced it.

"One of the advantages of this type of agreement is that it did not involve a huge number of parties. Only 20 nations signed the initial Vienna Convention in 1985, and this included most of the chlorofluorocarbon producers.

"The same approach could be taken with fossil fuels, given that the majority of global fossil-fuel production is controlled by countries within the G20 grouping, with three of the permanent five from the Security Council – the United States, China and Russia – being key players.

"The security aspect is important, since the impacts of climate change will be, and are, a serious matter of national

security, a point noted in a paper by Doug Randall and Peter Schwartz commissioned by the Pentagon back in 2003. All the big players have geo-strategic reasons for solving this problem....

"Limiting supply would enable the required structural shift and provide the right price signals, incentives and investment opportunities.

"New Zealand has a long history in the nuclear disarmament field and it has experience in leading the world in major social shifts. Although its own emissions are negligible, it has major potential as an exemplar country, as it copes with its own challenges.

"Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern has defined climate change as her generation's nuclear moment.

"With a possible fossil fuel non-proliferation treaty on the table, now is the time to step up and lead the change again.

More: www.stuff.co.nz/environment/climate-news/119374872/nz-should-lead-move-to-fossilfuel-reduction-treaty

Source: The Fore Ever Project, 17th April 2020.

How Noise Pollution Threatens Ocean Life

"Noise pollution has led to multiple whale-strandings and poses a threat to thousands of ocean creatures. Meet the scientist who is mapping ocean noise in a bid to dial down the volume. 10:01 video. 'Brilliant film'.

More: www.woi.economist.com/how-noise-pollution-threatens-ocean-life/ plus <https://theday.co.uk/video-articles/2020-03-30>

Source: *The Economist*, 9th April 2020.

The Sustainability Reporting and Communications Handbook 2020

"Launched during edie's Engagement Week (4-8 May), the *Sustainability Reporting and Communications Handbook 2020* provides readers with expert advice when it comes to relaying the importance of sustainability to key stakeholders; along with fresh insights to create, deliver and share a compelling sustainability report.

"The way sustainability is reported and communicated has changed. Gone are the days when an organisation's CSR progress is confined to a single annual document, and during the uncertainty caused by the coronavirus, precise engagement has never been more important.

"The coronavirus pandemic has massively changed the way sustainability can and needs to communicate. We've entered a temporary state of a stay-at-home economy which could change working patterns for many organisations going forward. As such, sustainability professionals need to utilise more innovative approaches to engagement to keep sustainability high on the minds of staff during this challenging backdrop.

"This report features best-practice case studies of how corporates have engaged key stakeholders on the topic of sustainability, as well as outlining all the key frameworks and considerations to putting together a compelling sustainability report.

"Featuring a foreword from the World Benchmarking Alliance and a pullout of top tips to engaging on sustainability during the lockdown, this report is a timely reminder that communication the importance of sustainability is a year-round task.

More: www.edie.net/downloads/The-Sustainability-Reporting-and-Communications-Handbook-2020/467
14 pages 1.57Mb with links to additional information

Source: edie, 6th May 2020

Editor: This seems to be an excellent document well worth reading by anyone interested in reporting, strategy and similar.

The Regenerative Farming Revolution

"Right now, we have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to turn one of our biggest environmental problems into one of its biggest solutions.

"As the Government works to smooth the economic downturn caused by Covid-19, we're calling on them to set up a billion-dollar regenerative farming fund, to transform agriculture into a cleaner, higher-value and more resilient industry.

"With Government investment we can shift the nation to regenerative agriculture — a way of farming that will help reverse the damage done to our water, soil, climate and biodiversity. We can diversify and add value to the food, fibre and timber we produce, allowing us to reduce ruminant livestock numbers, while taking advantage of the global market growth in environmentally sustainable products and plant-based foods. We can build a more resilient agriculture sector, able to weather the oncoming environmental and market storms of the 21st century.

"Around the world, many Governments have already recognised the environmental and social benefits of regenerative farming and increased public spending and policies to support it. It's time for the New Zealand Government to follow suit. Here's how the Government can back Kiwi farmers and support the regenerative farming revolution:

1. Provide one-off grant funding for agroforestry, cover-cropping and reduced tillage
2. Construct plant-based food manufacturing facilities and more small-scale, value-added food, fibre and timber processing facilities.
3. Invest in R&D, training and advisory services for regenerative organic farming
4. Construct organic compost and seed production facilities
5. Finance the fencing and replanting of streams, wetlands and marginal land.

"Here's the full and detailed [policy proposal](#) [11 pages] and more on the [science behind regenerative agriculture](#) [11 pages].

"For over a century the New Zealand Government poured millions into the uptake of chemical-intensive, monoculture farming agriculture. They gave out subsidies to farmers to increase their stocking rates and synthetic fertiliser use, drain wetlands and cut down forest to turn into pasture. Then there was the hundreds of millions spent building the synthetic nitrogen fertiliser factory and financing think-big irrigation schemes.

"From now on, government funding must no longer go towards heavily polluting intensive agriculture. The way New Zealand farms affects all of us, and it's time for public money to go to the public good. Any work the Government does to invest in regenerative agriculture must be done in partnership with Māori to transform the land-use sector in ways that honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi. There are several Māori-led initiatives and organisations already working in the food and farming sector and they should be integral to any Government planning or work on the agricultural sector....

More: www.greenpeace.org/new-zealand/campaign/regenerative-farming-revolution/

Source: Greenpeace, 7th May 2020.

Plus: See Fonterra's job advert for a 'Productive Landscapes Transformation Manager' who's role will seemingly include regenerative farming; <https://www.seek.co.nz/job/41303058> per *SBC Weekly Pānui*, 7th May 2020.

'We Need a Radically Different Form of Leadership to Come Out the Other Side of Covid-19'

"By John Elkington on Apr 15, 2020

"Prior to lockdown, the eminent sustainable business author John Elkington revisited the ancient site of Delphi in Greece. In this column for Ethical Corporation he draws on lessons from a plague that struck during the Peloponnesian War to assess how capitalism can be transformed to heal the ravages of coronavirus

"A copy of an ancient Apple ad graces the walls of our Somerset House office, now stilled and silent in lockdown. Against a black background, the poster features an energetic shock of white hair, framing the mischievous face of Mark Twain, and reruns one of his provocative dictums: 'Whenever you find yourself on the side of the majority, it is time to pause and reflect.' A lifelong mantra of mine.

"But a very different Twain-ism was rattling around my brain as we walked around the ancient temples of Delphi a few weeks ago, with Covid-19 literally snapping at our heels, with each successive hotel closing its doors immediately after we left.

"So that second Twain aphorism? You may have heard various versions of this second quotation, but it runs along the following lines: 'History doesn't repeat itself, but it often rhymes'. I confess that over the years I have sometimes souped it up by rendering that last bit as '... but by God it rhymes!'

"Having looked into history, it is clear there are now a number of rhyming patterns at work.

"As Cov-19 disrupted and then ultimately truncated our trip, I was left both a little breathless and intrigued to know whether the ancient wars between Athens and Sparta might hold clues for today's superpower rivalries? Having looked into the history a bit, it was very clear that there are now a number of rhyming patterns at work.

"So, for example, when the plague hit ancient Greece in the midst of the bitterly fought Peloponnesian War it wounded more open, more urban Athens much more severely than it did the more dispersed and yet disciplined Sparta, with the result that the latter leapfrogged over the former to become the dominant regional power.

"Might we now see similar dynamics as Covid-19 disrupts today's power blocs, with the closed outcompeting the open?

More: www.ethicalcorp.com/we-need-radically-different-form-leadership-come-out-other-side-covid-19

Source: Ethical Corp, 18th April 2020.

How to Link the GRI Standards with the SDGs

"An updated resource is now available [11th May 2020] to assist companies to report on progress in support of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Standards.

"The new document – *Linking the SDGs and the GRI Standards* – covers the 17 SDGs and maps them against the Standards and disclosures that apply for each. This makes it easier for organisations to use their reporting through the GRI Standards to assess how they impact the SDGs.

"Revised to cover all new and updated GRI Standards, the document replaces a previous version from 2016 ...

More: www.globalreporting.org/information/news-and-press-center/Pages/How-to-link-the-GRI-Standards-with-the-SDGs.aspx 64pages, 491kb

Source: Editor, 13th May 2020.