

Sustainability Matters

Compiled and published by Ray Skinner, FCA

Business achieving a tomorrow for tomorrow's children



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First Climate Change Risk Assessment Lays Out Long List of Threats

"New Zealand's first climate change risk assessment shows the current, gradual pace of preparations is too slow – something Climate Change Minister James Shaw acknowledged when he released the report.

"For the first time, the Government has released an exhaustive list of every major climate-related risk – ranked by urgency and severity – including threats to drinking water supplies, insurance markets, the financial system, the shellfish industry, kiwifruit, ports and airports.

"Shaw said it was a relief to have the risks laid out in detail, after years of knowing what they were, but lacking in-depth information.

"Under the Zero Carbon Act, the Government has until August 2022 to respond with an adaptation plan for coping with the risks laid out in the report.

"Scientists behind a landmark study of the links between oceans, glaciers, ice caps and the climate delivered a stark warning to the world: slash emissions or watch cities vanish under rising seas, rivers run dry and marine life collapse.

"But Otago University's Centre for Sustainability director, Janet Stephenson, said two years was 'too far away'.

"We need serious political attention to be paid to taking action on this impending crisis long before then', she said.

"New Zealand's successful Covid response has shown the advantage in moving 'fast and hard' to solve an impending crisis... investing now for mitigation and adaptation is far more cost-effective than waiting.'

"Government fumbling could worsen all these problems, as the report makes clear.

"The assessment notes many impacts could be worse than they need to be if laws, financing and Government institutions aren't changed, so they're better adapted to helping New Zealand cope.


"Even the threat from the political process itself was singled out for attention. The risk assessment says unregulated lobbying on behalf of narrow interest groups, including property developers, coupled with the three-year election cycle and political reluctance to make 'hard calls', might further delay government action and make it hard to get bipartisan support for action – ultimately increasing the impacts New Zealanders suffer. ...

"In New Zealand, warming of 1^o C was recorded between 1909 and 2018.

"The report says work on the adaptation plan, for responding to the biggest risks, is already underway.

More: www.stuff.co.nz/environment/climate-news/122326534/first-climate-change-risk-assessment-lays-out-long-list-of-threats plus <https://www.mfe.govt.nz/climate-change/assessing-climate-change-risk> 133 pages 5.08Mb

Source: Editor, 4th June 2020.

Editor: [Page 8] The NCCRA identified 43 priority risks across five domains; human, natural environment, economy, built environment and governance. 

The Future of Nature and Business

"The Future of Nature and Business, the second of three reports in the World Economic Forum's New Nature Economy series, provides the practical insights needed to take leadership in shifting towards a much needed nature-positive economy.


"As the world prepares to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting crisis, we are presented with an unprecedented clarion call, and opportunity, to change the way we eat, live, grow, build and power our lives to achieve a carbon-neutral, 'nature-positive' economy and halt biodiversity loss by 2030. Business as usual is no longer an option.

"The report highlights the need for a fundamental transformation across three socio-economic systems, which represent over a third of the global economy and provide up to two-thirds of all jobs. These systems are: food, land and ocean use; infrastructure and the built environment; and extractives and energy. Together they drive the threats which endanger almost 80% of the total threatened and near-threatened species. These systems, therefore, have a significant opportunity and responsibility to reverse nature loss. But they also have tremendous upside benefits to gain by embracing this transformation now.

"The Future of Nature and Business sets out how 15 transitions across the three systems can form the blueprint of action for nature-positive transitions which could generate up to US\$10.1 trillion in annual business value and create 395 million jobs by 2030.

More: www.weforum.org/reports/new-nature-economy-report-ii-the-future-of-nature-and-business 111 pages 9.77Mb

Source: *The Aotearoa Circle Update*, 4th August 2020.


Editor: [Page 8] Fighting climate change is essential but not enough to address the nature crisis – a fundamental transformation is needed across three socio-economic systems: food, land and ocean use; infrastructure and the built environment; and energy and extractives. 

Climate Change is the Most Important Mission for Universities of the 21st Century

"This article discusses how universities see climate change as being the most important mission of the 21st century. And education comes in a variety of ways, whether it being through social dialogue, course material, promotion of awareness, research and by walking the talk, in having campuses strive to be as sustainable as possible. Networks such as the International Universities Climate Alliance, the Global Alliance of Universities on Climate and Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability, are pushing for change in and by the sector.

More: www.carbonems.com/single-post/2020/07/30/Snippets-for-30-July-2020 plus <https://theconversation.com/climate-change-is-the-most-important-mission-for-universities-of-the-21st-century-139214>

Source: *SnippETS*, 30th July 2020.

Editor: A focus on climate change although laudable is insufficient – it should encompass planetary boundaries. A consideration for peak bodies for all trades and professions. 

Report Recommends RMA Repeal and Overhaul of Resource Management System

"Following a comprehensive review, the Resource Management Review Panel has recommended the repeal of the Resource Management Act 1991 as part of an overhaul of New Zealand's resource management system.

"The recommended reforms would, among other things:

- Change the system from being effects-based to outcomes-focused, under a new Natural and Built Environments Act (NBEA);
- Better integrate planning with infrastructure under a new Spatial Planning Act;
- Have 14 combined plans replace the existing regional and district planning documents;
- Introduce specific legislation to address the challenges of climate change adaptation;
- Make resource consent applications easier and more predictable;
- Centralise enforcement powers and strengthen penalties;
- Centralise other matters and give iwi/Māori matters greater weight.

"Chaired by retired Court of Appeal Judge Tony Randerson QC, the Panel's report *New directions for resource management in New Zealand* potentially sets the stage for transformative changes to resource management law.

"The Panel identifies a range of failures in the RMA and the broader resource management system – that the system is unnecessarily complex; inconsistent across the country; and fails to recognise the positive effects of urban development.

"The Panel's recommendations respond to three key challenges facing the resource management system;

1. The natural environment is under significant pressure from the effects of climate change, threats to biodiversity and wider environmental decline.
2. Local government is struggling to provide development capacity and infrastructure to support urban growth.
3. Changes to rural land use is placing increased pressure on ecosystems.

[And much more.]

More: www.minterellison.co.nz/our-view/report-recommends-repeal-of-the-rma-and-overhaul-of-the-resource-management-system plus www.newsroom.co.nz/rma-repeal-and-replace-recommended and www.mfe.govt.nz/news-events/new-directions-resource-management-new-zealand 531 pages, 14.7Mb


Source: MinterEllisonRuddWatts, 31st July 2020. 

Battery Power Comes to Construction Equipment

Here are some recent findings triggered by one news release;

- <https://electrek.co/2019/01/29/caterpillar-electric-excavator-giant-battery-pack/>
- www.environmentalleader.com/2020/07/doosan-bobcat-north-america-launches-electric-excavators/
- www.hitachicm.com/global/environment-csr/environmentally-friendly-products/electric-construction-machinery/
- www.ruralnewsgroup.co.nz/dairy-news/dairy-machinery-products/electric-excavator-a-world-first
- www.volvoce.com/global/en/news-and-events/press-releases/2019/volvo-ce-unveils-electric-compact-excavator-and-wheel-loader-at-bauma/

More: This is a taste – there are others

Source: *Environmental Leader*, 31st July 2020. 


SBC's Pre-election Brief 2020

"From a survey of its members the Sustainable Business Council of NZ has developed what it sees as priorities for the government in the context of the September 2020 elections;

1. Climate Action is SBC members' top priority: SBC will work in partnership with the Climate Change Commission and Government to shape carbon budgets, the shared plan, and policies to fast-track progress to transition New Zealand to a zero-carbon economy leading out on the ambition set out in the Zero Carbon Act.
2. Backing business to be leaders in sustainability. In partnership with Government, SBC will support, inspire and champion businesses to be at the leading-edge of economic, social and environmental sustainability. We will build ambition for more businesses to take action. More than 33% of sustainability professionals say their organisation has had a sustainability focus for more than 10 years, with the majority using sustainability to transform their business. ...
3. A future which works for everyone. SBC will work in partnership with Government to enable businesses to support the wellbeing of their employees and positively impact their communities and society. 72% of youth say it's important their future employer is socially and environmentally responsible. ...

More: www.sbc.org.nz/resources/reports/sbc-reports/pre-election-brief-2020/_recache

Source: *SBC Weekly Pānui*, 30th July 2020.

Editor: SBC which comprises over 100 businesses notes its members represent \$87 billion of collective turnover, 28% of GDP, and nearly 160,000 full-time jobs. 

SBN Changes Focus

"The Sustainable Business Network is changing! After 18 years as a membership organisation, we are transitioning to a network of Investors for Impact, starting from 1st August 2020. ...

"Investors for Impact invest in people and nature by funding our essential work on system change. This enables us to influence and transform the climate, waste and water systems together.

"Our system change work involves diagnosing the issues, co-creating solutions, collaborating with influencer organisations, mainstreaming solutions, encouraging wider adoption, and supporting new rules. ...


"The issues we want to address have become more urgent than ever.

"Greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise, our water is getting sicker, and we send a growing mountain of waste to landfill each year. Time is running out!

"The best way to have greater impact on these issues is to work together to shift the system. Until now, much of our focus has been on individual organisation development, but from now on, we will focus on collective impact, addressing the climate, waste and water systems. This will enable businesses' sustainability solutions to flourish and aspirations to be met.

"Our system change work involves diagnosing the issues, co-creating solutions, collaborating with influencer organisations, mainstreaming solutions...

More: <https://sustainable.org.nz/sustainable-business-news/new-strategy-sbn-is-all-about-impact/> plus <https://sustainable.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/SBN-a-network-of-Investors-for-Impact.pdf>

Source: SBN, 27th July 2020. 

Auckland Council's Hard Calls on Climate and Cash

"The Auckland Council has had a big couple of weeks. On 16th July it adopted a new emergency budget with just three councillors dissenting, and last Tuesday it voted unanimously for a brand-new climate action plan, known officially as *Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri: Auckland's Climate Action Framework*.

"The new version, ushered in by her successor, Cr Richard Hills, and the council's new chief sustainability officer, Alec Tang, has clear targets and a framework for achieving them. But it's still not an actual plan, because nothing is costed, as yet.

"And the targets are massive: Auckland – the whole city, not just the council – is now officially committed to a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and zero emissions by 2050. ...


"The framework outlines three approaches;

- To change what's in the council's direct control. It can, for example, replace the diesel bus fleet with electric buses.
- To use the 'levers' at its disposal, especially regulations and fees. The higher the fee for car parking, the less people will drive, for example.
- Advocacy: a PR campaign to encourage people to drive less, say. The trick is to turn advocacy into levers: not merely to encourage us to drive less, but to incentivise it.

More:

www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objektid=12350541 [Paywall] plus <https://ourauckland.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/articles/news/2020/07/te-taruke-a-tawhiri-auckland-s-climate-plan-reaches-milestone/> and www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/environment/Pages/auckland-climate-action-plan.aspx and www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/environment/Documents/te-taruke-a-tawhiri-auckland-climate-plan.pdf 173 pages 3.07Mb

Source: *NZ Herald*, Page A6, 24th July 2020.

Editor: Costed actions will be put forward for consideration as input to the 10-year Budget that Aucklanders will be asked to provide feedback on in Feb/Mar 2021. 


Business Guide to Buying EVs in NZ

"Making the shift from internal combustion 'easy' vehicles to electric is hard. If it wasn't hard then everyone would have made the shift already. There are lots of new moving parts to consider; driving range, recharging, higher capital cost, lower operating costs, residual value, charging infrastructure. It can be incredibly confusing. But it's not going away – the shift to electric vehicles is a global trend, not a fad.

"This guide has been written after spending time with fleet, procurement, and business managers looking to build EVs into their fleet. I have experienced many reasons why businesses are looking to make the shift and these include: overall company-wide sustainability targets, the rising cost of liquid fossil fuel, the boss has brought a Tesla (on more than one occasion), through to staff have started bringing EVs to work and running extension leads out of their windows. It's also written from the perspective of someone who has brought an EV, gone through the buying process, installed EV chargers at home, and driven more than 70,000 kilometres (43,000 miles) in 18 months. ...

"So while the perfect time was definitely not 10 years ago, depending on what your drivers are, it is the right time now.

More: <https://mailchi.mp/chargesmart/business> 2:42Mb 24 pages; registration required

Source: ChargeSmart, 30th July 2020. 


Creating City Portraits: A Methodological Guide from the Thriving Cities Initiative

"Through the COVID-19 crisis, city leaders have taken decisive action to support their people. Longer-term recovery efforts are a chance to innovate and build healthy, sustainable and resilient urban communities, and better lives for everyone. Cities leaders will need to work across divisions and in partnership with local community and business leaders to open up new insights and possibilities for transformation, and to shape the economic recovery effort. The needs of people, health and wellbeing, labour and human rights must be at the centre of planning and implementation of recovery efforts to rebuild resilient, sustainable communities.

"The Thriving Cities approach provides a starting point for holistic thinking, to foster an economic recovery that not only secures lives and livelihoods, but also builds resilient communities in ecologically-safe and socially-just cities. The City Portrait, which downscales economist Kate Raworth's Doughnut of social and planetary boundaries, is the key starting point for cities interested in taking the Thriving Cities approach.

"The City Portrait fosters big-picture thinking, and cross-departmental collaboration within the City and with a wider network of city change-makers, to co-create the city's transformation. ...

More: www.c40knowledgehub.org/s/article/Creating-City-Portraits-A-methodological-guide-from-the-Thriving-Cities-Initiative 7.21Mb, 42 pages plus www.kateraworth.com/2020/07/16/so-you-want-to-create-a-city-doughnut/ – with feedback

Source: Mark Kroening via Clare Feeney, 31st July. 

14 Billion Cooling Appliances Could be Needed by 2050: Why Cooling Must Be a Part of Post-pandemic Recovery


"Coordinated international action on energy-efficient, climate-friendly cooling could avoid as much as 460 billion tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions – roughly equal to eight years of global emissions at 2018 levels – over the next four decades, according to the *Cooling Emissions and Policy Synthesis Report* from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the International Energy Agency (IEA).

"Reductions of between 210 and 460 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide-(CO₂) equivalent emissions can be delivered over the next four decades through actions to improve the cooling industry's energy efficiency together with the transition to climate-friendly refrigerants, according to the report.

"The report says countries can institutionalise many of these actions by integrating them into their implementation of the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol. Signatories to the Kigali Amendment have agreed to reduce the production and use of climate-warming refrigerant gases known as hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), which has the potential to avoid as much as 0.4°C of global warming by 2100 through this step alone.

"Nations must deliver massive cuts in their greenhouse gas emissions to get on track to limit global temperature rise this century to 1.5°C. ...

More: www.eco-business.com/news/14-billion-appliances-could-be-needed-by-2050-why-cooling-must-be-a-part-of-post-pandemic-recovery/ plus www.unenvironment.org/news-and-stories/press-release/climate-friendly-cooling-could-cut-years-greenhouse-gas-emissions

Source: eco-Business.com, 22nd July 2020. 

Let's Talk About a New Economy

"One of the ways we would like to honour the memory of Jeanette Fitzsimons is to continue her work in promoting an Economy of Enough. From her maiden speech in Parliament Jeanette talked about this idea and continued to raise consciousness about its benefits long after she left politics.

"The idea is catching on and scholars have now provided various models about how such a new economy could actually work. Our Climate Declaration has planned a series of webinars on this topic and would like to invite you to participate.

"The flyer provides some details of the first webinar. More details below [at web page]:

When/Where: 7:30 – 8:30pm 12th August

RSVP: Please let us know if you can attend this discussion by sending an email to jack.santabarbara42@gmail.com

More:

www.ourclimatedeclaration.org.nz/how_to_promote_a_sustainable_wellbeing_economy_webinar

Source: Our Climate Declaration, 30th July 2020. 

Understanding and Navigating Climate Risk at the Asset Level

"Need to manage increasingly complex and urgent climate-related risks and opportunities?

"Find out how an approach aligned with the recommendations of the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) can help you:

- Pinpoint asset exposure to wildfire, flooding, drought, heatwave, coldwave and hurricane
- Understand company and portfolio alignment with the goals of the Paris Agreement to minimize global warming by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- Assess financial exposure to >130 carbon pricing plans alongside future pricing scenarios

"Read our recent whitepaper ...[S&P Global]

More: www.spglobal.com/marketintelligence/en/news-insights/research/understanding-and-navigating-climate-risk-at-the-asset-level

Source: Eco-Business Partnerships, 4th August 2020. 

Ireland's Supreme Court Damns Climate Policies

More: <https://climatenewsnetwork.net/irelands-supreme-court-damns-climate-policies/>

Source: *Carbon News*, 4th August 2020. 

Reminder: CPA Australia – Integrated Reporting Awards for NZ Entities


"The CPA Australia New Zealand Integrated Reporting Awards recognise those organisations which have embraced the concept of 'connectivity of information' by developing their strategy, governance, performance and prospects to create sustained and sustainable prosperity through Integrated Reporting.

"Three awards will be presented in 2020, one for each of the following organisations:

- For-Profit
- Not-for-Profit
- Public Sector

"Entries close: 31st August 2020; opened 1st July.

More: www.cpaaustralia.com.au/training-and-events/new-zealand-integrated-reporting-awards

Source: Mark Hucklesby. 9th July 2020. 

Why Gas Engines are Far from Dead – Biggest EV Problems


"Why are car manufacturers still improving and spending money on combustion engines in the year 2020? Should all development research be going into electric cars and electric vehicle technology? Unfortunate news if you think ICE transportation is going away in the near future to be solely replaced by electric vehicles (EVs).

"The internal combustion engine is still incredibly relevant today, and can still use further improvements in order to reduce global emissions. In this video we'll discuss scientific issues facing electric cars, environmental problems with ditching combustion engine research, how cost impacts customer decisions and manufacturer profits, and ultimately how consumer choice plays a large role in this industry. If you've ever wondered why combustion engines are still being developed, this video breaks down all the details.

More:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hatav_Rdnno&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR26VTfnA1xaKi7Tdf4FXjRLa1e6vj14:31, 5th Feb 2020, 1,865,000 views as at 3rd August

Source: Craig Skinner via Facebook 2nd August 2020.

Editor: Some very good points are made. It does though not consider; (a) The environmental impacts of manufacturing, storing and transporting and using the fuel whether that be petroleum based or electricity based. (b) The life-cycle of the different categories of vehicle (i.e. with different fuel types), or (c) the health impacts on living things (people other creatures, or plants/trees etc.) 

How to Mix Old Tyres and Building Rubble to Make Sustainable Roads

"Researchers have shown how a blend of old tyres and building rubble could be used as a sustainable road-making material, in a zero-waste solution to boost recycling and support the circular economy.

"Construction, renovation and demolition account for about half the waste produced annually worldwide, while around 1 billion scrap tyres are generated globally each year.

"The new material, developed by researchers at RMIT University, is the first to combine recycled rubble and rubber in a mix that is precisely optimised to meet road engineering safety standards.

"Designed to be used for base layers, the recycled blend is more flexible than standard materials, making roads less prone to cracking. ...

More: www.ecovoice.com.au/how-to-mix-old-tyres-and-building-rubble-to-make-sustainable-roads/

Source: *eco-Voice*, 4th August 2020. 

350 Aotearoa Banks Table 2020

"Some of our major banks in Aotearoa are propping up the fossil fuel industry by lending and investing billions of dollars of our savings in coal, oil and gas, while one major bank has cut all ties with fossil fuels. Is your bank funding climate change?

"Today [5th August] we have released our 2020 Banks Table. For over 5 years we've been tracking our banks' ties to coal, oil and gas and leading campaigns to call on the banks to go fossil-free. Our Banks Table has been an integral part of this – to ensure each and every one of us knows which banks are doing the most harm by funding the climate crisis.

[See table at web site.]

More: <https://350.org.nz/fossil-free-banks/>

Source: 350.org Aotearoa, 5th August 2020. 