

Sustainability Matters

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Business achieving a tomorrow for tomorrow's children

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Celebrating the Anniversary of *Silent Spring*

"Last Sunday [27th September], we celebrated the anniversary of Rachel Carson's 1962 publication of *Silent Spring*** by traveling with writer Stephanie Hunt to Carson's cabin on the coast of Maine, a place central to her developed passion and devotion for ocean life, and for all life. Read *Visiting Rachel* on the Orion Blog.

Note: ** Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* was first published in three serialised excerpts in the *New Yorker* in June of 1962. The book appeared in September of that year and the outcry that followed its publication forced the banning of DDT and spurred revolutionary changes in the laws affecting our air, land, and water. Carson's passionate concern for the future of our planet reverberated powerfully throughout the world, and her eloquent book was instrumental in launching the environmental movement. It is without question one of the landmark books of the twentieth century.

More: <https://orionmagazine.org/2020/09/visiting-rachel/> plus <https://bookshop.org/books/silent-spring/9780618249060>

Source: *Orion*, 2nd October 2020.

Editor: Well worth reading the blog.

Securing the Wellbeing of Future Generations

"IPANZ and SOLGM hosted this webinar with Dr Jane Davidson (a former Minister for the Environment and Sustainability in Wales) and Jacob Ellis (from the Office of the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales).

"This inspiring conversation brought together the political and administrative perspectives of planning for future generations, enabling us to draw lessons for Aotearoa/New Zealand. It covers how the Wellbeing Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 was established, and progress in implementing its aspirations.

"These are critical issues for public sector professionals in local and central government, in our shared worlds where embedding effective, systemic, long-term thinking and action is of utmost importance. For IPANZ members, the principle of stewardship in our new Public Service Act and our wellbeing framework, makes this even more important.

"You can view the full recording of the webinar and a PowerPoint presentation prepared by Jane and Jacob.

"If you would like IPANZ to take up further, more in depth, deliberation on this topic, do not hesitate to contact us at Shenagh@ipan.org.nz

More: https://ipan.org.nz/Article?Action=View&Article_id=150257 1hr 27min plus https://ipan.org.nz/Attachment?Action=Download&Attachment_id=150381 52 pages, 7.67 Mb

Source: IPANZ, 1st October 2020.

Nature is Everyone's Business

"Today [9th October] ACF launched *Nature is everyone's business: How businesses can protect nature and our climate, and help Australia Recover, Rebuild and Renew* – a guide for business of all sizes – small, medium and big – to take action and help Australia #RecoverRebuildRenew so we protect nature and our climate.

More: www.acf.org.au/nature_is_everyones_business_agenda 18 pages 3.83Mb

Source: ACF, 9th October 2020.

People, Planet and the Corporate Balance Sheet

"Can accountants link profit and the fate of our planet? Corporate reporting could help shift us to a low-emissions economy.

"In brief

- Much of the push for businesses to move on climate change has come from investors.
- Taskforce on Climate-related Financial Disclosures guidelines are a framework for reporting how climate risk affects assets.
- A 2019 AASB/AUASB guidance recommends companies with significant climate exposure also report on climate risk in their financial statements.

"In December 2019, chief executive of Goldman Sachs, David Solomon penned an opinion piece in the *Financial Times*, writing there was 'a powerful business and investing case' for the banking giant to take steps to address climate change.

"Goldman Sachs announced it would spend US\$750 billion in financing, advisory services and investments for initiatives which fight climate change, and ruled out financing projects which didn't, such as drilling for oil in the Arctic or developing new coal mines.

"It was a huge moment: a show of support from a business conglomerate that set both government and corporate leaders' tongues wagging.

"Despite – or perhaps because of – the global pandemic, climate change is back on the business agenda, with momentum steadily building locally, too. ...

"Will Steffen, executive director of the Australian National University Climate Change Institute, gave a presentation in 2017 which predicted a world in which the temperature had risen 4 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels would have a maximum carrying capacity of about 1 billion people. That's compared to today's population of 7.8 billion.

"If he's right, it's safe to say not many of today's companies would thrive. ... [Long article. The printed version is accompanied by an abbreviated 20 year timeline.]

More: www.acuitymag.com/business/people-planet-and-the-corporate-balance-sheet

Source: *Acuity*, 6th October 2020.

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Sustainability Matters

ASB Bank, Queen Street branch, Auckland

How much? As a suggestion \$46.00

UK Supreme Court Hears Climate Heathrow Airport Expansion Case

"In February, campaigners claimed a historic victory in the Court of Appeal, which quashed plans for a third runway at Heathrow on climate grounds. The case was brought by litigation charity Plan B and campaign group Friends of the Earth.

"Three appeal judges ruled that government approval of the expansion plan was unlawful because, among other reasons, it failed to consider the Paris Agreement on climate change. To pursue the project, the transport secretary would have to review how it could fit with the country's climate commitments. The transport department accepted the ruling and said it would not appeal.

"In a two-day virtual sitting of the Supreme Court this week [2nd week of October], Heathrow argued the government was not legally required to consider the Paris Agreement.

"At the same time, the airport owners claimed a third runway was compatible with Paris, so a government review would ultimately conclude it could go ahead. ...

"De Kauwe said that if the Supreme Court agrees with the previous ruling the government's airports national policy statement will remain a "zombie policy" until the government reviews it. Without political will, the expansion plans are unlikely to happen, she said. ...

"The verdict is expected in January. ...

"This case is being closely watched by lawyers around the world who want to see how much impact a country's signature to the Paris Climate Agreement has on actual decision-making' Michael Gerrard, an environmental law professor at Columbia University in New York, told Climate Home.

"The ruling by the Court of Appeal seems to give at least some teeth to Paris. The Supreme Court will either cement or pull those teeth', Gerrard said. ...

More: www.climatechangenews.com/2020/10/08/uk-supreme-court-hears-climate-case-heathrow-airport-expansion/

Source: *ClimateHome News*, 10th October 2020. 

NZ's Climate-related Disclosures Plan is Good News

"The accounting profession has a significant role to play in supporting businesses with climate-related financial disclosures.

"Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand welcomes the New Zealand Government's plan to mandate climate-related financial disclosures for some organisations....

"Accountants will be able to help organisations make climate-related financial disclosures

"CA ANZ is a strong advocate for appropriate climate-related disclosures and reporting for decision making.

"This is a world first but a sensible first step for New Zealand. Many jurisdictions are considering how they can implement mandatory climate-risk disclosures.

"The details of the standards the XRB will develop are critical to ensure they will be useful to investors and to avoid boilerplate responses.

"However, as we noted in our submission to the consultation, comprehensive education is absolutely critical to raise awareness and ensure the reporting entities fully understand their climate risks', McWilliams said. ...

More: www.charteredaccountantsanz.com/news-and-analysis/news/nzs-climate-related-disclosures-plan-is-good-news

Source: *Acuity*, 6th October 2020. 

Seven Ways to Inform Better Decisions with TCFD Reporting

"Mandatory Climate-Related Financial Disclosures have been proposed in New Zealand which will impact a large number of organisations. The purpose of these disclosures is to improve decision making in warming world and changing regulatory environment. But how can this information lead to better outcomes? This article looks at seven ways Climate-Related Financial Disclosures can inform better decisions around capital expenditure, procurement, operations and risk

More: www.greenbiz.com/article/seven-ways-inform-better-decisions-tcf-reporting

Source: *SnippETS*, 8th October 2020. 

Product Stewardship – End of Life Solutions

"There's been a sudden surge of interest in product stewardship since we launched our new website in August. It was set up to promote businesses which offer end of life solutions for their products while encouraging others to do the same.

"We're thrilled to see more businesses listing their initiatives in our product stewardship directory which is split into 11 categories. They cover everything from consumer goods to the primary sector. The most popular category is clothing and textiles. Meanwhile, the packaging section is expanding rapidly, with three new initiatives added in just the last week [Last week of September].

"Check out all the categories and support businesses which are taking responsibility for the products they make and sell so they're not ending up in landfill.

More: www.sbnproductstewardship.org.nz/

Source: *SBN*, 1st October 2020. 

Course for Corporate Directors Overseeing ESG Risks

"The sustainability nonprofit Ceres and the Business in Society Institute at the University of California, Berkeley, School of Law, are proud to announce the launch of a new executive education course *ESG: Navigating the Board's Role* designed for directors of corporate boards. ...

"Companies are increasingly taking the financial risks and opportunities associated with ESG factors into consideration. This momentum has been propelled by a growing focus on ESG from investors, as well as other stakeholders including employees, customers, and regulators. Investors are increasingly demanding that boards focus on ESG risks, and have demonstrated their concern by pouring \$45 billion globally into ESG-focused funds in this year's first quarter. But ESG is a complex landscape. From diversity to supply-chain due diligence to reducing carbon emissions, ESG issues cut across vastly different corporate functions. As this course will reveal, ESG is not a discrete set of issues, but a powerful process that board members can leverage to manage risk and increase business advantage.

When/Where: Open on 9th November 2020, and remain available until 15th January, 2021; online.

More: www.ceres.org/news-center/press-releases/ceres-and-berkeley-school-law-announce-new-executive-education-course

Source: *Ceres*, 2nd October 2020. 

China's Top Climate Think Tanks Push for More Cuts to Coal Use and Emissions

"China's leading climate think tanks are pushing for cuts to carbon emissions and coal use over the next five years ...

More: www.reuters.com/article/us-climate-change-china/chinas-top-climate-think-tanks-push-for-more-cuts-to-coal-use-emissions-report-idINKBN26X0SV

Source: *eco-News*, 14th October 2020. 

New Swedish Grocery to Price Goods Based on Carbon Footprint

"Felix, a Swedish food brand, has opened a climate-conscious store which will guide buyers to make informed decisions when purchasing food items. In the newly opened store, items are priced based on their carbon footprint. To help buyers understand the impact of their choices on the environment, products in The Climate Store will be bought using carbon equivalents currency (CO2e). The store has allocated each customer a weekly budget of 18.9kg CO2e. This means customers will have to choose foods carefully, avoiding options with higher carbon footprints to avoid blowing their budgets.

"Pricing foods based on their climate impact shows the difference between plant-based foods and animal-derived foods. Many of the foods we consume are greatly contributing to the pollution of the environment. Although many people would love to make a difference by avoiding such foods, it's not always clear which items are worse for the planet. Food production is responsible for about one-quarter of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. If customers can be aware of the foods that contribute most carbon, they can make decisions that will help reduce these emissions.

More: <https://inhabitat.com/new-swedish-grocery-to-price-goods-based-on-carbon-footprint/>

Source: *Carbon News*, 9th October 2020.

The Grim Truth behind Stately Homes

"Grand buildings replete with turrets, picture windows and kitchen gardens. Perfectly manicured lawns. And hundreds of rooms stuffed with antiques and objet d'arts from across the globe.

"Few things are as quintessentially English as a stately home. Tourists love them. And they're a guaranteed box office draw, as 'Downton Abbey' and 'Pride and Prejudice' can attest.

"But there's a more disturbing side.

"Many of these country estates are indelibly linked to brutal legacies of slavery and colonialism. And while their grim origins may have been previously overlooked, they're now facing a new level of scrutiny that – amid raging debates over how Britain reckons with its imperial past – has exploded into its own cultural conflict.

More: <https://edition.cnn.com/travel/article/national-trust-colonialism-slavery/index.html>

Source: National Geographic, 30th September 2020.

Editor: Similar probably applies in other countries.

Sustainable Business Council and Climate Leaders Coalition – 5 year Strategies

"In joint announcements on 24th September SBC and CLC each announced their strategic plans for 2020-2025 under the by-line 'New Zealand where business, people and nature thrive together'.

"They have developed a shared vision with CLL becoming a subgroup of SBC which is a division of BusinessNZ. SBC will supply support services to CLC.

"The SBC strategy focuses on three key pillars: leadership, climate action and thriving people while CLC is 'on a mission' to reduce emissions in New Zealand' with a purpose to build irreversible momentum in NZ towards a zero carbon future. Supporting the strategies of both are detailed work plans.

"SBC is closely aligned to WBCSD which has a vision to create a world where more than 9 billion people are all living well and within the boundaries of our planet, by 2050.

More: www.sbc.org.nz/about/how-we-work/sbc-strategy-2020-2025 20 pages, plus www.climateleaderscoalition.org.nz/about 6 pages

Source: *SBC Weekly Pānui*, 24th September 2020.

Reuters Events Responsible Business Awards Winners Revealed...

"This year we had just shy of 500 entries – which is a 25% increase on two years ago. If that didn't make the judges work a little harder, then the increased standard of entries certainly did. ...

More: www.reutersevents.com/sustainability/chipotle-dbs-thai-union-verizon-olam-international-renew-power-and-maersk-among-winners-2020

Source: Reuters Events, 14th October 2020.

How to Measure & Monetise your Shovel-ready Training Outcomes

"The pressure is on for Shovel-Ready and other government projects: broader outcomes and construction skills and training are in the limelight. Bidders will be asked to describe their skills development and training practices and to consider broader outcomes; the secondary environmental, social, economic or cultural benefits that are generated from their project.

"But exactly how do you measure the outcomes of your technical, environmental, quality and health & safety training? How will you measure and report the broader outcomes of the projects your people are working on?

"Strategic environmental trainer Clare Feeney is running a free 1-hour webinar on *ROI – How to measure and monetise the Return on Investment of your training*. It will deliver real business value you can use right away.

When/Where: 12:30 - 1:30pm, Tues 20th Oct; Online.

More: www.eventbrite.co.nz/e/webinar-how-to-measure-monetise-your-shovel-ready-training-outcomes-tickets-123572878807

Source: Clare Feeney, 5th October 2020.

Editor: See also *CIP Shovel Ready Projects (New Zealand)* a August 2020 webinar (1hr 16min) at www.youtube.com/watch?v=IofyiwAkg9A in which Dan Stevens (business director of Water at Beca) and Clare Feeney (director of Environmental Communications Ltd and founder of the Environment and Sustainability Strategic Training Institute) and Graham Mitchell (CEO of Crown Infrastructure Partners) presented their findings and discussed the issues and challenges with the proposed plans from an infrastructure, staff training and capability perspective.

Wellbeing Approach to Public Policy – Where To?

"Dr Karacaoglu also holds the position of Professor of Policy Practice. He comes to Victoria after five years with the New Zealand Treasury as Chief Economist and Deputy Secretary (Macroeconomics, and International Economic Research).

"In his roles at Treasury, Dr Karacaoglu's focus was on promoting an integrated economic, environmental and social approach to policy advice that aimed to improve the standard of living for current and future New Zealanders on an equitable and sustainable basis.

"Dr Karacaoglu was involved in the initial thinking behind the current Wellbeing Budget Process in the NZ Treasury, a world leading initiative to expand Treasury thinking beyond a sole economic and financial perspective.

"Join us for a discussion of how this initiative came about, what the challenges were, how far we have come, and where the process is heading. Dr Karacaoglu will make a presentation and respond to questions from participants.

When/Where: Wed. 21st Oct, 2020, 7:30 to 9:00pm. Online

More: www.ourclimatedeclaration.org.nz/economy_of_enough_webinar_4

Source: Our Climate Declaration, 5th October 2020.

AUT Business School Wins 'Ideas Worth Teaching' Prize

"Four scholars who teach an AUT Business School course have been acknowledged for their focus on ethical business practices, global sustainability, and the integration of indigenous wisdom into the realm of business.

"A core part of the Bachelor of Business degree, the course 'Ethics, Responsibility and Sustainability' has been awarded the '2020 Ideas Worth Teaching Award' by the US-based Aspen Institute.

"The Aspen Institute is a global non-profit organisation committed to realising a free, just, and equitable society. The institute's Business and Society Program (Aspen BSP) works with business executives and scholars to align business decisions and investments with the long-term health of society – and the planet.

"The undergraduate course (BUSS604) provides students with the tools to evaluate and address ethical issues at an individual and organisational level and examines different approaches to doing business in a socially and environmentally responsible way. ...

"I congratulate our awardees, whose teaching and research expertise helps shape the way we live and work today, tomorrow and in the years to come. By instilling in our students the ability and confidence to care, question and act, courses like Ethics, Responsibility and Sustainability can help ensure a better future for us all', says Professor Kearins.

More: <https://news.aut.ac.nz/news/aut-wins-ideas-worth-teaching-prize>

Source: Amber Older, AUT, 30th September. 

Supporting Young Entrepreneurs in Africa

"African Entrepreneur Collective works in Rwanda. AEC is a collection of incubators, accelerators, and investment funds supporting young entrepreneurs in Africa. AEC supports existing entrepreneurs through capacity building, mentorship, and direct financing, which enables them to create and grow enterprises and ultimately provide jobs for themselves and others in their communities. To date, AEC has helped create about 5,500 jobs.

"Mission Statement: African Entrepreneur Collective identifies and supports high potential local entrepreneurs and provides them with capacity building services, mentorship, technical assistance, and access to affordable capital.

More: www.skees.org/story/african-entrepreneurship-collective/ plus <https://africanentrepreneurcollective.org/what-we-do/>

Source: Editor, 29th September 2020.

Editor: The model may be of value in other countries. 

An End to Endless Growth

"Written in 2018 and published July his year in *International Journal of Political Economy*, two economists warned meeting the Paris Agreement was likely to require negative economic growth.

"Their paper, has not received much public attention – possibly because the COVID-19 pandemic and other matters have been dominating headlines, but more likely because it is a message no-one wants to hear.

More: www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/08911916.2020.1778866 *Economic Growth and Carbon Emissions: The Road to 'Hothouse Earth' is Paved with Good Intentions* Pages 153-173, published 30th July 2020.

Source: *Carbon News*, 14th October 2020

Editor: It's a long paper which concludes with optimism, pessimism, and realism. 

Decarbonising Heat: Pathways to the Decarbonisation of Heating and Industrial Process Heat

"This conference is a first for New Zealand.

"*Decarbonising Heat* is a unique conference which focuses on the decarbonisation of industrial and process heating. With governmental investment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, societal pressures and innovation in mind, it is now more crucial than ever for industries to take up incentives and lower emissions.

"The conference will explore the available fuels, technologies and processes to determine the options for more sustainable outcomes. Offering a blended approach, presentations include three panels evaluating a variety of topics including a leadership perspective, engineering insights and evaluating the logistics of transition.

"*Decarbonising Heat* will also explore case studies from Fonterra, Oji Fibre Solutions, the University of Waikato and Danone Nutricia NZ. These studies will review their plans, outcomes and challenges when transitioning toward more sustainable processes, fuels and technologies.

When/Where: 8th/9th Dec 2020, Auckland and online plus an all day workshop on 10th December.

More: www.conferenz.co.nz/events/decarbonising-heat

Source: Conferenz brochure rc'd in post 24th Sept. 

Cutting the Grass? Cut it Out!

"We are heading towards summer, and the warmer weather which goes hand-in-hand with fortnightly lawn mowing for lots of New Zealanders. But a number of ecologists are encouraging Kiwis to cut down on cutting the grass.

"William Ray investigates how a 'no-mow' movement might be a win for people, plants, animals – and the climate. ...

"Of course, lawns are mostly grass but there are other plants like forbs, mosses and ferns which will spring up alongside the grasses if they are given a chance.

"Our lawns in Auckland, in particular, are really diverse', Bec says. 'Every lawn will be different and that will be based on whether it's dry or wet, fertile or infertile, sloped or flat, sunny or in the shade.'

"Reducing pollution isn't the only advantage of meadows. Bruce says studies in the United States have found increased numbers and diversity of invertebrates the longer grass is allowed to grow.

"And Bec says that, in turn, is good news for native lizards and birds which eat those bugs.

"There are some good arguments against turning every lawn into a meadow. Long dry grass is a very significant fire risk, so they aren't a good option for places which are drought-prone. Especially near houses.

"Meadows also make good habitat for rats and mice so it's important to keep on top of predator trapping.

"And, of course, we need to keep lawns short in some areas for recreation. It's hard to play backyard cricket if the grass is knee high.

"But probably the biggest barrier is public opinion.

"We've aligned close clipped lawns with care and tidiness', Bec explains. 'It's the way we've decided gardens and urban settings should look.' ...

More: www.rnz.co.nz/national/programmes/ourchangingworld/audio/2018765320/cutting-the-grass-cut-it-out plus <https://ourauckland.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/articles/news/2020/09/no-mow-pilot-at-grey-lynn-park-will-see-slopes-returned-to-wilderness/>

Source: *SnippETS*, 8th October 2020. 