

Sustainability Matters

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Business achieving a tomorrow for tomorrow's children

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Designed by
www.vecteezy.com

Thank You – 20th Birthday

A hearty thank you to those readers who sent birthday messages upon the 20th birthday of *Sustainability Matters* and its precursors. Each was much appreciated providing reflections and encouragement; one for instance looking forward to continuance for another 20 years.



Source: Ray.

Climate Change Commission Insights

"It's been a busy month here at the Commission, with the team working hard to process and analyse the submissions we received during consultation, and to finalise our advice to government on the actions Aotearoa needs to take to reach its climate targets.

"As we have worked through submissions, opening and reviewing each response, the count has increased from around 10,000 to more than **15,000**. We are pleased so many New Zealanders took the opportunity to have their say, and to those reading this who took the time to prepare and send a submission – a big thank you from me to you.

Preparing for 31st May

"Our advice will be delivered to the Government on Monday 31st May – then it's over to them to respond, develop a detailed strategy and take action on our recommendations.

"What is the process from there?"

- The Minister of Climate Change must table the Commission's advice in Parliament within 10 working days, as set out in the Climate Change Response Act 2020.
- We will publicly release the advice on our website once it has been tabled in Parliament, and we will then progressively publish all our supporting information throughout June and July, including submissions and the source code for our models.
- By the end of 2021, the Government must have set the first three emissions budgets out to 2035 and released its first emissions reduction plan.

"International speaker series [There is a lot of info here.]

"Insights from our Commissioners [And here also.]

More:

<https://climatechangecommission.cmail19.com/t/ViewEmail/t/961B5CD43CAB30C72540EF23F30FEDED/0BF1D0C8478BA62B419C69E1CEBE89F9>

Source: Climate Change Commission, 12th May 2021.

Advert Ban to Wean Dutch Off Fossil Fuels

In the first week of May Amsterdam took a serious step into the future. It sought to wean the Dutch off fossil fuels by banning many advertisements for the pollutants.

"Fossil-fuel adverts will no longer be seen in Amsterdam's subway stations.

"The city says it's the first in the world determined to keep fossil fuel advertising off its streets. Never before has a city decided to ban advertising solely on the basis of climate change, it insists.

More: <https://climatenewsnetwork.net/advert-ban-tries-to-wean-the-dutch-off-fossil-fuels/>

Source: SnippETS, 20th May 2021.

Free Sustainability Communications and Reporting Handbooks

"With Covid-19 in mind, there has never been a time in living memory whereby business's communications plans, engagement approaches and sustainability conversations have had to evolve more rapidly.

"The communications handbook is designed to help you relay the importance of sustainability targets and initiatives to key stakeholders, and to build lasting engagement. Stakeholder groups covered include consumers, colleagues, investors, board members and suppliers.

"This download is packed with a combination of advice from experts, top tips and updates on key legislation.

"The second handbook in this series, developed in partnership with UL, covers sustainability reporting. Amid a perfect storm of new environmental science, changing legislation on climate action and corporate disclosure, and increased interest from investors, staff and consumers, businesses of all sizes and sectors are changing their approaches.

"This handbook provides the advice and expert insight you need to implement modern, best-practices approaches to the development of your organisation's sustainability reporting, regardless of where you are on your reporting journey. It covers major reporting trends including integrated reporting, alignment with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and the disclosure of climate and nature-related risks. ...

More: www.edie.net/news/7/edie-launches-free-downloadable-sustainability-communications-and-reporting-handbooks/ Registration required. Reporting Handbook 2021, 10 pages, 883kb. Communications Handbook, 9 pages 882kb

Source: edie, 6th May 2021.

Trends in Chief Sustainability Officer Roles

"The CSO (Chief Sustainability Officer) role is undergoing profound shifts, including expanding beyond the 'E' of ESG and the climate crisis to include social justice and equity, recognising the intersectionality of enormously complex challenges', says Ellen Weinreb of the Weinreb Group [USA], an established leader in sustainability recruitment firm. ...

"In their 2021 report, *The Chief Sustainability Officer 10 Years Later: The Rise of ESG in The C-Suite*, the Weinreb Group discusses the evolving and expanded role of the CSO. A key finding is 2020 saw a boom in CSO appointments

"The report also captures key attributes for CSO success, including influencing through collaboration, ability to deal with ambiguity, translating the complex, embracing risk and innovation, and demonstrating humility.

More: www.environmentalleader.com/2021/05/the-elevated-role-of-chief-sustainability-officer/ plus <https://weinrebgroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Weinreb-Group-Sustainability-and-ESG-Recruiting-The-Chief-Sustainability-Officer-10-years-Later-The-Rise-of-ESG-in-the-C-Suite-2021-Report.pdf> 22 pages, 3.16Mb

Source: *Environmental Leader*, 21st May 2021.

Editor: Has job descriptions.

A Watershed for Climate Change Diplomacy?

"Watershed moments don't come around too often in the slow world of climate diplomacy. But the International Energy Agency's first comprehensive scenario to align the energy sector with limiting global heating to 1.5C is a major turning point.

"It found all new oil, methane gas and coal exploration projects must stop now if the energy sector is to reach net zero emissions by 2050, precluding gas as a 'bridge fuel' in the energy transition.

"The message itself is not novel, researchers have warned of the need for a fossil fuel phase out for years. Last year, a UN-backed report found global fossil fuel production would have to decline by 6% per year between 2020 and 2030 to be consistent with a 1.5C pathway.

"But coming from the IEA, which is funded by oil-producing nations, the report is a call to action for investors and policymakers to face the inevitability of a managed decline of dirty energy. ...

"The IEA's net zero scenario certainly puts pressure on the G7 group of rich nations to agree strong language on the need to phase out fossil fuel financing as they meet in Cornwall, UK, next month [June].

More: <https://mailchi.mp/climatehome/the-cop-to-end-coal-2686862> plus www.climatechangenews.com/2021/05/18/iea-end-fossil-fuel-expansion-now-net-zero-energy-emissions-2050/ and www.iea.org/reports/net-zero-by-2050 *Net Zero by 2050: A Roadmap for the Global Energy Sector*, 224 pages, 4.65Mb

Source: *Climate Home News*, 22nd May 2021.

Editor: NZ and Australia are listed as being IEA members.

PostScript: G7 agrees to stop international funding for coal www.reuters.com/business/energy/g7-countries-agree-stop-funding-coal-fired-power-2021-05-21/

Pandemic as Portal: Creating a Just Future

"As the pandemic presses on, our democracy is challenged, and unprecedented fires and floods devastate communities around the world, it is clear we won't be returning to 'normal' life. So much of what we hold dear is threatened – a livable planet, our health, hard-fought progress toward social and environmental justice. There is a lot to mourn in the unfolding wake of the pandemic, yet there are also great opportunities and choices.

"As the world reconfigures, Spring Creek Project invited visionary thinkers to imagine the world anew. Starting in January 2021, the organisation hosted a nine-week lecture series, *Pandemic as Portal: Creating a Just Future on Earth*, in partnership with the Environmental Arts and Humanities Initiative at Oregon State University.

"The speakers in the series come from many perspectives, from writing, philosophy, and history to architecture, music, and filmmaking. Each speaker explores their highest vision of environmental and social justice, thinks about the crucial steps we can take as individuals and communities to bring that vision to life, and shares stories of how this new paradigm is already taking shape.

"The series explores questions like: If the pandemic is a portal between two worlds, what ideas do we need to carry over the threshold to build a just society? How can we seize this moment, even as we grieve, to re-image a world that is deeply rooted in environmental and social justice? What principles and stories will guide us? How might the natural world be a source of courage and inspiration for the long journey ahead?

More: <https://liberalarts.oregonstate.edu/feature-story/pandemic-portal-creating-just-future-earth-0>

Source: Post Carbon Institute 22nd May 2021.

Pathfinder Ethical Funds: Are they Ethical? Lessons to be Learned

"Pathfinder is a fund manager based in New Zealand, promoting investment in high integrity, actively managed, carbon light funds. It is predominantly owned by New Zealand-based shareholders (including senior management) and is part of the global wealth management company, Alvarium. This is a London based wealth manager with operations in the UK, Europe, USA, South East Asia including Australia.

"Pathfinder claims to be an ethical fund. Is it?

"For a Fund to be ethical it should be investing in companies dealing with the substantial threats to the Earth's systems and life forms identified by the world's leading scientists, and using validated ethical principles for assessing human-human behaviour. It can exclude those companies which do not meet these standards, or engage with them and report on that engagement.

- How to Evaluate Investment.....
- Use of Other Ethical Frameworks or Rules
- A Definition of an Ethical Organisation
- Evaluation of Pathfinder's Values, Exclusions, Engagement and Reporting
- Evaluation of Pathfinder's Selection of Investment Options
- Pathfinder Evaluation

More: <http://wiseresponse.org.nz/2021/05/21/pathfinder-ethical-funds-are-they-ethical-lessons-to-be-learned-by-dr-robert-howell/>

Source: Robert Howell, 21st May 2021.

Infrastructure Strategy for New Zealand

"The New Zealand Infrastructure Commission, Te Waihanga is developing an Infrastructure Strategy for Aotearoa New Zealand. According to their consultation document, they have already done one round of consultation and this latest consultation document sets out for feedback, ideas and views on the proposed direction for the Strategy.

"In the document they say they have taken the following messages from that first consultation round of consultation.

"They say New Zealanders told them:

- Our environment is the top priority when it comes to making infrastructure decisions.

Submissions Close: 24th June 2021

More: <https://mailchi.mp/eco.org.nz/tieke-eco-news-alerts-events-19-may-4763758> plus <https://infracom.govt.nz/strategy/have-your-say/>

Source: *Tieke: ECO News, Alerts & Events*, 19th May 2021.

Bringing the Farming Life to Heal

"Fifteen hundred kilometres away from Savor Group's Auckland head office, outgoing chair Geoff Ross is mustering away at his lakeside farm, scoping out plans for his next venture.

"The farm is no typical farm. It shears its sheep on demand, puts animal welfare front and centre and is focused on farming the old school way; using no chemicals, no regular stock feed and ensuring its animals live wholesome lives in their own right. ...

"The farm has gone further than that and is 'carbon-positive' - sequestering two times the amount of carbon than it emits. ...

"It is a complete myth that it costs more to operate a farm like that, he says.

More: www.nzherald.co.nz/business/42-below-founder-outgoing-savor-chair-geoff-ross-on-his-next-chapter/IRAG33TGAWO6PDLYO3WRGJABTO/ [12 minute read. Paywall]

Source: *NZ Herald*, page C5, 15th May 2021.

NZ Budget 2021 – Climate Change Funding for External Reporting Board

“Development of climate reporting standards: As expected, this year’s Budget allocates \$17.29 million to the External Reporting Board (XRB) over the next five years to support its now expanded mandate to introduce standards and guidance for climate reporting, and to progress the integrated reporting project.

“This funding is to equip the XRB to ensure climate risks are accurately reported by large financial institutions and accurately priced by investors to improve the macroeconomic stability of the financial system and contribute to Aotearoa New Zealand’s carbon-zero 2050 target. In particular, the upcoming financial year includes an additional \$4.17 million, which could potentially translate directly into additional XRB staff – a substantially bigger team of people.....

“Further investment for climate action:

- \$13.9 million has been earmarked to support communities in a just transition to net-zero by 2050 over the next five years ...
- \$67.4 million will be used to support and implement the Carbon Neutral Government Programme (CNGP) (including \$41.8 million for the Low Emission Transport Fund and \$19.5 for the State Sector Decarbonisation Fund).
- \$131.79 million will be used to support the Resource Management System reform (notably expected to be completed by 2024), and the Climate Change Commission (CCC) has been provided with an additional \$9.58 million for the next five years, as the complexity and scope of the CCC’s role had been underestimated. ...
- \$19.7 million will be used to relieve urgent cost pressures in the Ministry for the Environment’s (MfE’s) climate change work programme to support the Government’s policy response to the final advice received from the CCC ...

“At face value, the allocation of funding for all things climate is not to be sniffed at. The various areas of investment signal a commitment by the Government to create a foundation for real and ongoing mitigation and adaptation. But is it enough?

More: www.charteredaccountantsanz.com/news-and-analysis/news/nz-budget-2021-climate-change-funding-for-external-reporting-board

See also: *CAs take key role in assuring climate risk reporting* at www.charteredaccountantsanz.com/member-services/technical/audit-and-assurance/audit-and-assurance-in-focus/cas-take-key-role-in-assuring-climate-risk-reporting and *NZ’s climate-related disclosures plan is good news* at www.charteredaccountantsanz.com/news-and-analysis/news/nzs-climate-related-disclosures-plan-is-good-news

Source: CA ANZ, 20th May 2021. 

Environmental Trade-Offs of Autonomous Vehicles: Convenience vs Cost

“Optimistic predictions expect reliable autonomous vehicles to be commercially available by 2030, at a time when mobility is undergoing a profound shift away from traditional modes of transportation and towards door-to-door services. Previous analysis suggested public transport will lose market share to autonomous vehicles, but the environmental impact of changing transport use has hardly been considered. New research shows the convenience of autonomous vehicles would likely come at an environmental cost. ...

More: <https://scitechdaily.com/environmental-trade-offs-of-autonomous-vehicles-convenience-will-likely-come-at-a-cost/> plus <https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/abf6f4> 12 pages, 1.18Mb

Source: Topio Networks, 26th May 2021. 

Carbon Zero Transport Strategy Proposed

“The [NZ] government is starting to roll out proposals to reduce carbon emissions to meet the proposed Climate Commission budgets and the Zero Carbon Act.

“The discussion paper has a range of proposals to meet the next three 5 year climate emission budgets to 2035.

“The Minister of Transport, Michael Wood has released *Hikina te Kohupara – Kia mauri ora ai te iwi - Transport Emissions: Pathways to Net Zero by 2050*. A Ministry of Transport report, it outlines potential policies and pathways to a net zero emission transport sector.

“The Transport Sector makes up 47% of our carbon dioxide greenhouse gas emissions and its emissions increased by 90% between 1990 and 2018. In the same period emissions across the whole economy increased by 24%.

“The strategy identifies opportunities to reduce emissions across three themes, based on the ‘Avoid, Shift, Improve’ framework:

- Theme 1 – Changing the way we travel: this includes the shape of our towns and cities, opportunities for public transport, walking, and cycling and reducing dependence on private motorised vehicles.
- Theme 2 – Improving our passenger vehicles. Decarbonising the light vehicle fleet is crucial including use of biofuels, shift to ‘cleaner vehicles’ and emissions reductions in aviation.
- Theme 3 – Supporting a more efficient freight system: 23% of our transport emissions come from heavy vehicles (mostly trucks). This includes decarbonising trucks ‘through the uptake of alternative fuels such as biofuels, electrification, and/or green hydrogen.’

“The Government wants to ensure a just transition in the transport sector. [Also refers to NZ Rail Plan.]

Submissions Close: 5pm Friday 25th June 2021.

More: <https://mailchi.mp/eco.org.nz/tieke-eco-news-alerts-events-19-may-4763758> plus www.beehive.govt.nz/release/govt-rev-reductions-transport-emissions and www.transport.govt.nz/area-of-interest/environment-and-climate-change/climate-change/

Source: Tieke: *ECO News, Alerts & Events*, 19th May 2021. 

Accounting Advisory - Climate Change and Sustainability Senior/ Asst Manager/Mgr

“Our [Deloitte] Auckland Advisory Solutions team is looking for individuals to join our dynamic team in the Climate change and Sustainability side of the business. As the team experiences an exciting period of growth we are keen to speak with people who are passionate to build successful careers.

“You will apply core accounting and sustainability knowledge in an advisory context to assist our clients in enabling or improving their sustainability journey. Our projects, which span a wide range of industries, include:

- Providing practical and pragmatic sustainability solutions
- Supporting the development of climate change and sustainability reporting with our clients (GRI, Integrated reporting <IR>, TCFD)
- Assisting our clients with assurance over their sustainability reporting (GHG, GRI, TCFD)

“As a result of the diverse nature of the work you will often find yourself working with Deloitte colleagues in our other functional areas (tax, corporate finance, risk advisory, or consulting). You will have the opportunity to genuinely help our clients and make a real contribution as we grow by bringing your point of view and energy to the team.

More: www.seek.co.nz/job/52302490

Source: *SBC Weekly Pānui*, 20th May 2021. 

The Story-makers

"The *Religion & the Environment Story Project* (RESP) [at the University of Boston] trains journalists, editors, and public-facing scholars interested in the intersection of the environment and religion. Our goal is to bridge the divide between the religion and science beats, and to promote new thinking and new narratives which will inform and educate the public, especially on the climate crisis.

"The climate crisis is the story of the century. Religions are the story-makers of all time. Many view climate change as a matter of science alone, but scientific facts have not translated to meaningful action. Why? Because most human beings are motivated more by stories than by data. We need new narratives about the nexus of religion and the climate crisis, stories that reach new audiences and help change the conversation....

"RESP helps journalists on any beat to see the connections between the ultimate concerns of ordinary people and their environmental action (and inaction) in their homes and communities, and at the ballot box

"The RESP Fellowship Program gives journalists the skills to recognise these stories as they unfold on the ground ...

"We want to help journalists find these missing stories and tell them well, so ordinary people can see the climate emergency as both a global challenge and a mirror onto their own lives.

"Stories which enchant or enrage, but always inform.

More: <http://sites.bu.edu/resp/about/> plus <http://sites.bu.edu/resp/news/>

Source: Orion, 14th May 2021. 

Fight for the Wild

"Acclaimed documentary film maker, Peter Young of Fisheye Films along with conservation writer/researcher David Hansford have produced four stunning documentaries on the threats of rats, stoats and possums to native wildlife and the response from the Department of Conservation, iwi, conservationists, and conservation volunteers.

"Peter Young produced the documentary *The Last Ocean* – about the protection of the Ross Sea marine area from fishing.

"*The Fight for the Wild* TV documentaries are combined with four Podcasts presented by Dave Hansford which are available from Radio NZ. The video documentaries are on TVNZ1 over 4 weeks from Saturday 15 May 2021 at 7.35pm...

More: <https://mailchi.mp/eco.org.nz/tieke-eco-news-alerts-events-19-may-4763758>

Source: *Tieke: ECO News, Alerts & Events*, 19th May 2021.

Editor: The 1st and 2nd – both are 'eye opening'. 

Handy One-pagers for Clubs and Similar

"There are lots of areas that allow for a more sustainable lifestyle than most Kiwis realise. Small actions can add up and have a substantial impact on our environment. For this reason, we have collated a database of topics guiding both your club and you personally towards a more sustainable future. ...

"Each page provides general information on different systems and devices which are relevant to a club environment, as well as private homes. ...

"Downloadable fact sheets on each topic, as well as ...

More: www.litefoot.nz/resources

Source: Editor 24th May 2021

Editor: "Our ambition is to inspire NZ'ers to be environmental champions. We use the spirit of sport teamwork +competitiveness as the foundation for doing so". 

NZX Climbs on Environmental Bandwagon with Carbon Indices

"The NZX has launched New Zealand's first carbon-efficient indices to tap into growing investor demand for environment-friendly stocks.

"The exchange said it had launched the indices in partnership with S&P Dow Jones Indices to recognise investor interest in reducing carbon emissions in addressing climate change.

"Two new indices, S&P/NZX 50 Carbon Efficient Index and S&P/NZX 50 Portfolio Carbon Efficient Index, use a Trucost environmental dataset to weigh companies listed on the NZX according to their carbon intensity and sector impact.

"NZX said the objective behind the new indices was to incentivise New Zealand companies to compare their carbon intensity to their industry group peers around the world.

"Based on the carbon intensity of each constituent company, a company's weight may be adjusted positively or negatively, however, it will not screen out a company from the index solely due to its carbon intensity, the exchange said.

More: www.nzherald.co.nz/business/stock-takes-nzx-climbs-on-environmental-bandwagon-with-carbon-indices-til-placement/POAGZZFVBJQDUKXZXBXJFYLRWY/ [Paywall]

Source: *NZ Herald*, 4th May 2020.

Editor: Note the indices are based on carbon intensity rather than absolute carbon footprint; that means entities can still increase their total carbon rather than reducing to net zero or less. 

From Promise to Action: Decoding Climate Disclosure

"The need for businesses to understand climate-related risk and opportunity is critical to their survival. Although not currently mandatory in every geography or jurisdiction, climate-related financial disclosure is central to maintaining license to operate and increasingly becoming obligatory across the world. It is also essential to strategy, planning, and competitiveness.

"For many this is driving a shift from promise to action faster than anticipated. To support organisations with this shift, the SustainAbility Institute by ERM has released a new report which details how businesses can approach and bolster their disclosure journey.

"This disclosure journey is guided by bodies such as the prominent Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) which was established to develop recommendations for more effective climate-related disclosures which could promote more informed investment, credit, and insurance underwriting decisions. Since its release in 2017, some 2,085 companies representing a market capitalisation of over \$22.4 trillion are now TCFD supporters. Whilst many have begun to implement its recommendations, most have yet to do so comprehensively and can still move towards further disclosure and action.

"This report details:

- The fast-moving climate-related disclosure agenda and the forces driving the surge in demand.
- The corporate response, with best practice examples of the cutting edge.
- How to decode disclosure, discussing how companies should approach climate disclosure and the key obstacles they might face.

More: www.sustainability.com/thinking/from-promise-to-action-decoding-climate-disclosure/ 15 pages, 722KB

Source: The Sustainability Institute, 5th May 2021.

Editor: Includes references to NZ. 