

Sustainability Matters

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Business achieving a tomorrow for tomorrow's children

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A Future with Dangerous Warming Locked In

"Over the three decades that scientists with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change have been issuing major reports about the state of the climate, they've gradually expressed more certainty about what is happening and why.

"The latest report by the panel, which is convened by the United Nations, is the most certain yet. The more than 200 scientists involved, who perused thousands of climate studies, dispensed with even the slightest doubt that Earth's climate is changing and that humans are the cause of it, through emissions of carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gases.

"Unequivocal' is one of the words they used, as I reported with my colleague Brad Plumer.

"With that out of the way, the scientists then delivered some grim news. Humans, they wrote in the report, made public on Monday, have poured so much of these gases into the atmosphere over the last century-plus that no matter what happens now, the world will keep warming until at least until 2050, reaching 1.5 degrees Celsius of warming, the ambitious limit which was a goal of the 2015 Paris Agreement, well before that, perhaps even by the end of this decade.

"The report detailed what that will mean: For the next 30 years or longer, there will be more, hotter heat waves, longer and more intense droughts, and more episodes of heavy downpours which result in flooding.

"Grim, indeed. But there was a glimmer of hope in the report as well. The scientists' analysis showed if humans make immediate, rapid and widespread cuts in emissions, warming could be limited to 1.5 degrees, with the climate stabilising after the middle of the century.

"So if the scientists were certain about what humans have done to the climate, they were also certain about a way out of the mess. The uncertainty now, and it's huge, is whether humans will act soon enough and fast enough to heed what the scientists have said.

"Five takeaways: The report, based on the analysis of more than 14,000 studies, is the clearest and most comprehensive summary yet of the physical science of climate change.

- Human influence has unequivocally warmed the planet.
- Climate science is getting better and more precise.
- We are locked into 30 years of worsening climate impacts no matter what the world does.
- Climate changes are happening rapidly.
- There is still a window in which humans can alter the climate path. aggressive, rapid and widespread emissions cuts, beginning now, could limit the warming beyond 2050. In the most optimistic scenario, reaching 'net zero' emissions could even bring warming back slightly under 1.5 degrees Celsius in the second half of the century.

More: <https://envnewsbits.info/2021/08/11/climate-fwd-a-future-with-dangerous-warming-locked-in/> [paywall] plus www.nytimes.com/2021/08/09/climate/un-climate-report-takeaways.html and www.nytimes.com/2021/08/09/climate/climate-change-report-ipcc-un.html

Source: Climate Fwd (NY Times), 11th August, 2021.



Management Commentary: Exposure Draft

"In May 2021, the [IFRS] Board published the Exposure Draft Management Commentary. The Exposure Draft seeks feedback on the proposed framework for preparing management commentary which meets global capital markets' needs.

"Management commentary – also known as management discussion and analysis in some countries – is a report which complements a company's financial statements.

"The proposed framework builds on innovations in narrative reporting and would enable companies to bring together in one place the information investors need to assess a company's long-term prospects – such as information about the company's intangible resources and relationships, and about sustainability matters that affect the company.

"Management commentary would thus not only explain a company's financial statements but also give investors insights into factors that affect a company's ability to create value and generate cash flows, including in the long term. This commentary would be based on information used to manage the business, including financial and non-financial metrics used to monitor performance. [Includes a video]

"The Board is seeking investors' views on its proposals for information that should be provided in management commentary. ...

Consultation closes: 23rd November 2021.

More: www.ifrs.org/investor-centre/investor-update-hub/august-2021/

Source: IFRS, 27th August 2021.



Climate Action Toolbox Workshops Go Nationwide

"The new toolbox is a free, easy-to-use online tool which shows businesses how to reduce emissions. It is hosted on business.govt.nz and was created by the Sustainable Business Network together with our partners.

"Over the past four months more than 5,500 businesses have completed the toolbox assessment which identifies the key areas for taking action.

"We're now working with regional business networks and local councils to develop a nationwide series of Climate Action Workshops for Businesses. They are designed to help businesses find out how to get the most from the toolbox so they can develop a climate action plan and put it into practice.

"The first workshop was held in Tauranga last week [last week of July] and was attended by more than 25 businesses. ...

"We're now fired up to get cracking with some additional initiatives in our offices. It also got us thinking about how we can help our clients to share their sustainability stories too and encourage a few on their own sustainability journeys.'

"To find out how you can help bring the workshop series to your region please contact phil@sustainable.org.nz

More: <https://sustainable.org.nz/sustainable-business-news/climate-action-toolbox-workshops-go-nationwide/> plus <https://sustainable.org.nz/climate-action-toolbox/>

Source: SBN, 4th August 2021.



Go Circular 2025 Launch

“Join us for the launch of a state of the nation report into the circular economy in Aotearoa New Zealand. This pivotal report marks the start of a campaign to accelerate the shift to a low carbon circular economy.

“Join SBN and our partners to learn how you can be part of this growing movement.

“Go Circular 2025 is a nationwide campaign to provide practical tools and inspiration for businesses to implement circular economy practices.

“The report will reveal how New Zealand is tracking towards a circular economy. It will identify six key areas where businesses need to take action.

“Companies already using circular practices will join a panel and provide insights to inspire action.

“A circular economy is based on the principles of designing out waste and pollution, keeping products and materials in use, and regenerating natural systems.

“This event is brought to you by SBN and our partners, Ministry for the Environment, New Zealand Trade and Enterprise, Waste Management and Āmiomio Aotearoa.

When/Where: Noon to 12:45pm, Wed, 22nd Sept. Online

More: <https://sustainable.org.nz/sustainable-business-events/go-circular-2025-launch/> plus <https://www.waikato.ac.nz/research-enterprise/research-with-waikato/amiomio-aotearoa>

Source: SBN, 26th August 2021. 

New Zealand's First Undergraduate Sustainability Degree

“Protest is just one way to take action and create change when it comes to social and environmental sustainability. Graduates of the University of Canterbury's innovative new qualification will help businesses to make change across a wide range of sectors.

“One of the lead creators of the University of Canterbury's new multi-disciplinary Bachelor of Social and Environmental Sustainability, Professor Bronwyn Hayward says she enjoyed working with colleagues from Arts, Business, Science, Law and Aotahi School of Māori & Indigenous Studies to co-design the qualification. Professor Hayward co-lead the drafting of the degree with Associate Professor Ann Brower of Earth sciences. The three-year degree will prepare students to understand the ethical, social, business and environmental justice issues that impact sustainability decision-making, in the context of Treaty of Waitangi principles in Aotearoa.

“As a lead author on Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports, Professor Hayward's experience extends from international forums to local youth and climate change projects. ...

“Employees with knowledge of social and environmental sustainability and low-carbon transitions will be needed in diverse fields, from tourism to manufacturing and human services, event management, the creative sector and health, according to the consultation feedback

“Sustainable Business, Enterprise and Economics' is one of four majors in the new degree; the others are 'Environmental Policy, Governance and Social Justice', 'Indigenous Knowledge and Sustainable Partnerships', and 'Social Action, Community and Global Development'.

“The Bachelor of Social and Environmental Sustainability is informed by and supports mātauranga Māori - Māori and Indigenous knowledge systems

“The qualification will begin in February 2022 (subject to CUAP approval).

More: www.canterbury.ac.nz/news/2021/business-sector-welcomes-nzs-new-sustainability-degree-.html

Source: Carbon News. 17th August 2021. 

13 New Books About Pollution – and How to Fight It

“Pesticides, sewage, mining waste, air pollution and trash – these new books address the toxic elements in our society.

“It's a dirty world out there – but it doesn't have to be.

“That message rings out from a slate of important new books covering the fight against various pollutants around the world. They examine everything from pesticides to air pollution and from mining waste to the trash that accumulates all around us. Along the way these books shine a light on some bigger stories – like our food system and human effects on complex ecosystems. They also dive deep into the racism, indifference, greed and ignorance that allow these toxic compounds to flourish in our world and in our bodies.

“One group of pollutants didn't make it onto this list: greenhouse gases. We'll look at them in September's column, covering timely new books on climate change.

“But for now, here are 13 new dirty books about filth for your perusal, along with their cover descriptions. ;

- *The World We Need: Stories and Lessons From America's Unsung Environmental Movement* edited by Audrea Lim
- *The Monsanto Papers: Deadly Secrets, Corporate Corruption and One Man's Search for Justice* by Carey Gillam
- *Breathless: Why Air Pollution Matters — and How It Affects You* by Chris Woodford
- *Pollution Is Colonialism* by Max Liboiron
- *Playing With Fire: The Strange Case of Marine Shale Processors* by John W. Sutherlin and Daniel Elliot Gonzalez
- *Herbicides: Chemistry, Efficacy, Toxicology and Environmental Impacts* edited by Robin Mesnage and Johann G. Zaller
- *Earth Detox: How and Why We Must Clean Up Our Planet* by Julian Cribb
- *The Water Defenders: How Ordinary People Saved a Country From Corporate Greed* by Robin Broad and John Cavanagh
- *Planet Palm: How Palm Oil Ended Up in Everything — and Endangered the World* by Jocelyn C. Zuckerman
- *Homewaters: A Human and Natural History of Puget Sound* by David B. Williams
- *Plastic: An Autobiography* by Allison Cobb
- *Pipe Dreams: The Urgent Global Quest to Transform the Toilet* by Chelsea Wald
- *Castaway Mountain: Love and Loss Among the Wastepickers of Mumbai* by Saumya Roy

More: <https://therevelator.org/pollution-books-august-2021/>

Source: Center for Biological Diversity, 27th August 2021. 

Channeling Your Shareholder Power

“If you own shares in listed companies, are interested in corporate democracy or want to find out more about ACCR's work, join us for a webinar with our Climate and Environment Company Analyst Fiona Deutsch and Shareholder Engagement team, Emma Batchelor and Vanessa Mai. ...

“This session is part of a planned program of webinars which will explore ACCR's research and shareholder advocacy work focusing on how shareholders in Australian-listed companies can exercise their ownership powers. ...

“This session is for people who own shares in listed companies and are interested in corporate democracy or who want to find out more about ACCR's work.

When/Where: Wed 15th Sep, 6:00pm - 7:00pm AEST; Online

More: <https://events.humanitix.com/accr-shareholder-webinar-september-2021> plus www.accr.org.au/

Source: ACCR, 31st August 2021. 

BlackRock's Expectations Go Higher

"BlackRock's 2021 Investment Stewardship Annual Report (pdf), released this week [4th week of July], summarises the firm's stewardship engagement and voting record for the reporting period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021.

"BlackRock and other large institutional investors play a role in shaping the global governance agenda. BlackRock has US\$9.5 trillion in assets (up from \$7.3 trillion a year ago) under management across the globe. It voted on more than 165,000 management and shareholder proposals across 71 voting markets.

"BlackRock's Global Principles cover seven key corporate governance themes relating to voting:

- Boards and directors
- Auditors and audit-related issues
- Capital structure, mergers, asset sales, and other special transactions
- Compensation and benefits
- Environmental and social issues
- General corporate governance matters and shareholder protections
- Shareholder proposals.

"BlackRock also has regional proxy voting guidelines including for Australian securities.

"Record high – votes against director re-elections: BlackRock voted on more than 64,000 director elections with over 6,500 votes (up from over 5,100 the last reporting period) against director re-elections, including for the following reasons:

"Even more engagement: BlackRock continues to prioritise engagement with company leaders (an activity which the firm had already doubled in 2019/2020). ...

"The biggest change in engagement has been around climate and natural capital. BlackRock has also expanded what it terms its 'climate focus universe' to over 1,000 carbon intensive public companies (that represent 90% of the global scope and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions of the firm's clients' public equity holdings) – this is up from 440 companies in 2020

More: www.iod.org.nz/news/articles/blackrocks-expectations-higher-than-ever/# plus www.blackrock.com/corporate/literature/publication/2021-voting-spotlight-full-report.pdf 74 pages, 2.19Mb

Source: eco-Business.com, 28th July 2021

DHL Express Orders 12 Fully Electric Planes

"Deutsche Post subsidiary DHL Express has placed an order for 12 all-electric cargo planes and is expecting them to be delivered in 2024.

"The firm, which is Deutsche Post's air cargo arm, announced the order for the 'Alice' model planes late on Tuesday (3rd August). Each plane will be able to carry a little under 1,200kg of cargo and has a range of 440 nautical miles.

"According to Eviation, the model is capable of charging to full range within 30 minutes. The charging process can be completed during loading.

"DHL Express is planning to integrate the Alice planes into its fleet in 2024, testing them, initially, on routes across California, currently served by piston and turbine aircraft. ...

"Deutsche Post DHL Group has committed to invest €7bn (£5.95bn) in decarbonisation measures by 2030. Investments will be made in electric aircraft and sustainable aviation fuels (SAFs); zero-emission vehicles for last-mile deliveries and technologies to reduce emissions associated with buildings.

More: www.edie.net/news/8/DHL-Express-orders-12-fully-electric-cargo-planes/

Source: edie, 5th August 2021.

10 Jobs which Will Help Shape a Zero-emissions Future

"One of the most common things said, by those who oppose action against climate change, is that 'so many of our jobs will be lost if we take action'. However, less talked about are the types of jobs which will be created by addressing the challenges faced ... and there will be a lot of them. The job market is being transformed. Check out this article for some examples. Your next career, or a good one for your kids, may be on the list.

More: www.carbonees.com/single-post/snippets-for-26-august-2021

Source: *SnippETS*, 26th August 2021

Editor: The jobs focus on; hands, heads and hearts.

Climate- and Employment-Proof Our Work with a Just Transition for Climate Ambition

"These are difficult times for many workers as the COVID-19 pandemic disrupts lives and livelihoods. Many of us have seen changes to our workplaces and our daily routines and are facing a convergence of crises – a pandemic with no known end date, the devastation of inequality and climate devastation with extreme weather events and changing seasons. ...

"You can join us by taking part in the biggest global conversation about our future with your employer, small businesses that you support, and local and national governments.

"Workers around the world will invite their employers to share a conversation to discuss the plans for resilience and sustainable business – safety, jobs, emissions, a secure pathway for the future. That's the strength of leadership needed from all of us.

"ITUC Global Poll 2020 – 79% of people think employees should have a right to know what measures their company is planning to climate-proof jobs and workplaces.

More: www.ituc-csi.org/climate-and-employment-proof-our-24636 12 pages, 2.33Mb Plus <https://petitions.ituc-csi.org/cepow?lang=en>

Source: Kit Withers, 25th August 2021.

We Won't Solve the Climate Crisis with a Growth-Driven Economy

"All you can talk about is money and fairytales of eternal economic growth' - Greta Thunberg

"May I begin with two propositions:

- Economic growth is incompatible with holding the temperature under a 1.5 degree increase.
- Social inequality is incompatible with an adequate response to the climate crisis.

"I need to justify these propositions, but then I want to move swiftly on to examining alternatives to a growth-driven economy. For most of us, the current economic system has been the unquestioned background to our lives. The only alternative we've known has been authoritarian state communism, whose failure in our times seemed highly desirable. What else could there be?"

"Endless economic growth is logically nonsensical. Three per cent per annum is conventionally said to be a desirable rate of growth in our global gross domestic product (GDP). This entails doubling the size of the economy (national or global) every 23 years, producing more and more stuff, providing more and more services. Our world is finite, with diminishing productive land, fish in the ocean, materials that can be mined, sand and aggregate for construction.

More: www.ourclimatedeclaration.org.nz/we_won_t_solve_the_climate_crisis_with_a_growth_driven_economy

Source: Our Climate Declaration, 23rd August 2021.

What is an EV Like After 100,000km?

"It is an almost immutable law of nature that any article about EVs on the interweb will inevitably attract at least one commenter loudly proclaiming that no-one ever talks about the fact its batteries will be utterly dead within five years and will cost more money than your house is worth AND your first-born child to replace.

"Of course the reason no-one talks about it isn't because it is all a big conspiracy, rather it is because it is utter nonsense.

"Sure, batteries do degrade and, yep, brand-new ones are still quite expensive, but they don't actually degrade quite as quickly as the hand-wringers would have you believe.

"Contrary to what might feel the natural thing to do, constantly keeping you battery at a full charge will increase the rate of degradation, while rapid charge and discharge cycles and exposure to high temperatures are also likely to reduce battery performance. While the causes of battery degradation are more complex than just those things, poor thermal and charge management will quickly accelerate performance losses.

"This would be why most people's yardstick for battery degradation – a used import Nissan Leaf – is a particularly poor example. The Nissan Leaf's thermal management is largely regarded as its weakest point, relying on an air cooled system, rather than the more sophisticated liquid cooled systems used pretty much all EVs these days, and the used imports have likely spent their lives charging quickly on fast chargers, neither of which are good for the battery.

"So what about a used New Zealand new EV which has racked up a lot of kilometres in a relatively short time? Will it be tired and shagged out after a long squawk? Well, we just happened to find out recently when Kia offered us a unique opportunity – a test of a two-year-old Niro EX 455 EV with 104,000km on the clock. ...

"A recent state of health (SOH) report on the battery done at the 101,000km mark showed it retained a full 100% capacity and, indeed, when I picked it up, it was saying it had 453km range available on a full charge. ...

More: www.stuff.co.nz/motoring/evs/125677607/what-is-an-ev-like-after-100000km

Source: Forever Project, 6th August 2021.

The Science of Strong Business Writing: Lessons from neurobiology

"Brain scans are showing us in new detail exactly what entices readers. Scientists can see a group of midbrain neurons – the 'reward circuit' – light up as people respond to everything from a simple metaphor to an unexpected story twist.

"The big takeaway? Whether you're crafting an email to a colleague or an important report for the board, you can write in a way which delights readers on a primal level, releasing pleasure chemicals in their brains.

"Bill Birchard is an author and writing coach who's worked with many successful businesspeople. He's drawn on that experience and his review of the scientific literature to identify eight features of satisfying writing: simplicity, specificity, surprise, stirring language, seductiveness, smart ideas, social content, and storytelling.

"In this article, he shares tips for using those eight S's to captivate readers and help your message stick. [Abstract from author]

More: <https://hbr.org/2021/07/the-science-of-strong-business-writing> 6 pages, 1.36Mb

Source: CA ANZ, *What's new in the CA Library?*, 13th Aug. 

Supply Chain Sustainability Contributed to Resilience During the Pandemic

"As the pandemic played out around the world, sustainability – far from taking a backseat – increased in prominence. In fact, respondents to a survey conducted for the annual Sustainable Procurement Barometer showed a significant majority believed sustainability contributed to resilience and helped them endure the Covid-19 crisis.

"Executives are increasingly recognising the business benefits of their companies' sustainable practices, according to the new report from Ecovadis and Stanford Graduate School of Business. However, while supply chain objectives relating to the environment may have been reconfirmed, ways of achieving them remains a significant challenge for many companies.

"But one thing is clear, the report states: sustainable procurement is not something which should be done after processes to run your supply chain efficiently are in place. Rather, these practices are integral to managing a supply chain effectively and should now be essential practices of supply chain management',

More: www.environmentalleader.com/2021/08/supply-chain-sustainability-contributed-to-resilience-during-the-pandemic-report-finds/ plus <https://resources.ecovadis.com/covid19/2021-sustainable-procurement-barometer> Sign in required. 54 pages, 9.593Mb

Source: *Environmental Leader*, 6th August 2021. 

Superhome Owners Opened Their Doors

"Healthy, warm, dry and cheap to run – Superhomes are among the most energy-efficient homes in New Zealand.

"Owners and designers have paved the way for others to learn there are alternative ways to build for a better end result, and during weekend of 14th – 15th August, many of them opened their homes to the public.

"Co-founder and designer Bob Burnett's own home renovation in Runswick Lane, Broadoaks, Christchurch was one of the 14 open homes. Burnett says he felt compelled to act after first-hand experience of the impact of housing on health. ...

"And so the Superhome Movement was launched in 2015 with the aim of creating 'transformative change' in the building industry....

"And while the movement was initially focused on new builds, Burnett applied the idea to the renovation of his earthquake-damaged family home. Repairs were delayed over nine years by the insurer, but the designer says they have now been completed and the home is 'better than ever'.

"Burnett's first new Superhome build at 11 Church Square, Addington – New Zealand's first 10 Homestar-rated house – was also open. The house, which has served as the designer's office is for sale.

"Special features of Superhomes include super-insulation, thermal bridge-free construction, triple glazing in many homes, airtightness, heat exchange fresh-air ventilation, solar PV and batteries, rainwater and greywater recycling.

"Superhomes opened were in Auckland, Nelson, Canterbury and Otago.

More: www.stuff.co.nz/life-style/homed/sustainable-living/126010668/open-homes-for-superhomes-as-owners-open-their-doors-to-all plus www.superhome.co.nz/events/superhome-tours-2021/

Source: *Neighbourly*, 10th August 2021

Editor: Although the tours are over, obtain inspiration by joining the movement www.superhome.co.nz/ 