

Sustainability Matters

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5 Key Points from the King's COP28 Speech

"At the beginning of our special week of content on COP28 on Monday, we asked who would make the strongest moral case for progress in the fight against climate change. It turns out the answer to that is none other than King Charles.

"But the highest-profile intervention so far has been from King Charles, addressing his first COP as king. As Prince of Wales he was an ardent environmental campaigner, before it was fashionable, so brings with him an extra layer of credibility. He made his COP debut at the 21st summit in Paris, where the landmark Paris Agreement was signed off.

"The great privilege (and balancing act) of being a British monarch is you can be apolitical but speak frankly. You're not seeking re-election, after all.

"Here are the key points of his speech.

"Humans Are the Problem. 'The human race is conducting a huge and dangerous experiment which is overwhelming the natural world', he said. 'We're changing every ecological system at once and nature can't cope'.

"Nature is the Solution. The Earth is our 'ultimate sustainer' with its own precious economy. 'Unless we rapidly repair and restore nature's economy, based on harmony and balance, which is our ultimate sustainer, our own economy and survivability will be imperilled.'

"He referenced indigenous people's view of nature: 'we are all connected. Not only as human beings, but with all living things and all that sustains life [.....]. The Earth does not belong to us, we belong to the Earth.'

"He described the planet as a 'grand and sacred system'. Years gone by this would have been seen as starry-eyed idealism, but now environmental summits – attended by oligarchs and hard-headed business types as much as green campaigners – are increasingly focusing on biodiversity, deforestation and climate impact. As our COP 28 previews show, these issues will be top of the agenda.


"We're (Nearly) Doomed. It's clear 'our own economy and survivability will be imperilled' if the status quo prevails, the king said. We're all aware 'alarming tipping points' have already been reached. Previous COP summits may have focused on 'preventing' climate change, but the global sense of urgency has jumped in the last few years. Now delegates will talk about 'adaptation' to the worst effects.

"But Hope is Important. Charles then called on delegates to keep hope alive that something can still be done. 'If we act together to safeguard our precious planet, the welfare of all our people will surely follow', he told them.

"This challenge of saving the planet is an important responsibility for world leaders: 'I can only urge you to meet it with ambition, imagination, and a true sense of the emergency we face.'

"Next Generations Will Either Thank Us Or Curse Us. Our grandchildren (Charles has five) will ask us not what we said at COP, but will be 'living with the consequences of what we did or didn't do', he stressed.

More: www.morningstar.co.uk/uk/news/243409/5-key-points-from-the-kings-cop28-speech.aspx

Source: Editor, 3rd December 2023. 

Recloaking Papatūānuku (Recloaking Mother Earth)

"Pure Advantage is thrilled to share the details about Recloaking Papatūānuku, one of the most ambitious national scale environmental restoration initiatives, which aims to restore and enhance more than 2 million hectares of indigenous forest over the next 10 years.

"That's 8% of our land area, approximately the size of the Waikato.

"It is a bold proposal which can help New Zealand reduce our reliance on offshore carbon offsets while also restoring biodiversity and enhancing landscape resilience.

"Recloaking Papatūānuku is not a substitute for urgent and deep gross emissions reductions. It is an essential natural forest conservation and restoration project which could make a major contribution to tackling the climate and biodiversity in tandem with greenhouse gas emissions being slashed as well.


"Recloaking Papatūānuku has been developed by McKinsey & Co. and a range of experts including Tane's Tree Trust as well as a wide range of cross-industry leaders, many of whom have outlined their reasons for support here. (<https://pureadvantage.createsend1.com/t/r-l-tiyujhd-xvyukjuu-t/>)

"Recloaking Papatūānuku recognises enduring, high-integrity, co-beneficial carbon sequestration and storage will be needed alongside urgent fossil reductions to draw down historic and hard-to-abate emissions.

"The indicative cost of Recloaking Papatūānuku is in the region of NZ\$8.5 - \$12.1 billion by 2050 through a 10-year programme starting in 2024 including fencing, planting, maintenance and animal and plant-pest control.

"By comparison, the Treasury estimates the costs of Cyclone Gabrielle and the Auckland floods in early 2023 were between \$9 - \$14.5 billion. ... [and much more via several web pages.]

More: <https://pureadvantage.cmail19.com/t/r-e-tiyujhd-xvyukjuu-jr/> and www.carbonnews.co.nz/story.asp?storyID=28941

Source: Pure Advantage, 28th November 2023. 

How to Talk to a Climate Change Sceptic

"What is the single most important thing any individual can do to help alleviate the climate crisis?

"Katharine Hayhoe believes only if we all talk about climate change will humanity take the right paths to tackle it. Katharine has practical advice.

More: www.weforum.org/podcasts/radio-davos/episodes/climate-science-katharine-hayhoe/ 25:41 podcast plus transcript

Source: SBC Weekly Pānui, 23rd November 2023. 


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CA ANZ Launches New Guide: *Measuring Social Impact for Better Reporting*

"In response to requests from members for assistance, Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand (CA ANZ) has published this guide. It provides a glossary, explanations, insights, practical examples and links to a range of in-depth resources to set accountants and the organisations they support on an impact measurement and reporting journey.

"Included in the guide are practical tips to maximise the benefits of impact measurement while avoiding common pitfalls. Also included is a step-by-step process towards enhanced reporting, including an introduction to developing a theory of change, tools to assist in identifying outcomes, and tips on measurement and reporting, with worked examples....

More: www.charteredaccountantsanz.com/news-and-analysis/insights/research-and-insights/ca-anz-launches-new-guide-measuring-social-impact-for-better-reporting 34pages 1.08Mb

Source: CA ANZ *Regional News*, 27th November 2023. 

Couple Plants 2 Million Trees in 20 Years to Turn Destroyed Forest Back Into a Wildlife Haven


"In 2001, the legendary photojournalist Sebastião Salgado had a dream of restoring the forest near his home in the state of Minas Gerais [Brazil]. Now 20 years later, his family property is a biodiverse paradise.

"His work over long years saw him, his wife Lélia, and volunteers plant 20 million trees from 290 different species across over 1,500 acres of desiccated hillsides, recreating a natural forest ecosystem into which rare animals have now come to live.

"Today, the property is officially titled Private Reserve of Natural Heritage Bulcão Farm, and hundreds of animal species have returned to the Rio Doce, including ocelots, purple-breasted parrot, and the Atlantic titi.

"173 bird species alone have been identified;

More: www.goodnewsnetwork.org/couple-plants-2-million-trees-in-20-years-to-restore-a-destroyed-forest-and-even-the-animals-have-returned/

Source: atAdvocacy, 2nd December 2023. 

The Other Greenhouse Gas

"How methane from food waste contributes to global warming and why small efforts to stop it can make a big difference.


"There are countless ways we're advised to live more sustainably – drive an electric car, fly less often, don't eat meat, shop local. And yet, there's another environmental action that's relatively unintrusive and low-cost: reducing food waste.

"When it comes time to let go of that mouldy peach or questionable leftover noodles, we typically turn to the trashcan and bid our foul food farewell. But climate scientists ask us to think twice before condemning our food to landfills where it breaks down and releases a significant portion of human-made greenhouse gases.

"Viable food is lost at each point in the production chain as it travels from seed to supermarket. However, most wasted food journeys all the way to restaurant kitchens and homes, only to end up uneaten in the garbage. The EPA, USDA and the United Nations have each set goals to address household food waste, aiming to cut it in half by 2030. [Has very good graphics and simple explanations of the science].

More: www.reuters.com/graphics/FOOD-WASTE/METHANE/gdpzwqwgqovw/

Source: *Reuters Sustainable Switch*, 29th November 2023.

Editor: The focus is solely on food. 

Nitrate Contamination Map

"Rising nitrate contamination - particularly in rural areas of New Zealand - is concerning, and that's why we have collated the data to present the Know Your Nitrate Map.

"Please have a look, and if you have friends or family living in rural areas, please send it to them as well. Here's the link: <https://greenpeace.nz/nitrate-map>


"Scientists warn 800,000 New Zealanders are at risk of exposure to hazardous levels of nitrate. Up to 100 cases of bowel cancer and 40 deaths every year could be attributable to nitrate contamination of drinking water. Families in rural areas impacted by intensive dairy and high synthetic nitrogen fertiliser use are more likely to be exposed.

"That's one of the reasons we have been campaigning for stronger government regulation to cut cow numbers and the use of synthetic nitrogen fertiliser.

"Many rural New Zealand families in high-risk areas could be drinking water from their kitchen taps without knowing whether it's contaminated with nitrates or how high those contamination levels are.....

"PS: This map is the first of its kind, and the dataset behind it is the biggest of its kind. It's based on data we've gathered over two years of community events and mail-in testing, combined with publicly available datasets we have been able to compile.....

More: <https://maps.greenpeace.org/maps/aotearoa/know-your-nitrate/> plus www.greenpeace.org/aotearoa/freshwater/nitrate-contamination-in-drinking-water-what-you-need-to-know-and-some-frequently-asked-questions/

Source: Greenpeace, 27th November 2023. 


A New Type of Geothermal Power Plant

"Earlier this month [Nov 2023], one corner of the internet got a little bit greener, thanks to a first-of-its-kind geothermal operation in the northern Nevada desert. Project Red, developed by a geothermal startup called Fervo, began pushing electrons onto a local grid which includes data centres operated by Google. The search company invested in the project two years ago as part of its efforts to make all of its data centres run on green energy 24/7.

"Fervo drilled two wells which each extended more than 7,000 feet down before turning fully horizontal. It then connected them by fracking, producing cracks in the rock which connected the two boreholes. Water enters one borehole cold and exits the other at a temperature high enough to drive turbines and generate power.

"Fervo announced its experiment had been a success this summer after a monthlong testing period which saw temperatures at the bottom of the boreholes reach 191^o C and enough water torrenting through the system to produce an estimated 3.5 megawatts of electricity.


More: www.wired.com/story/new-geothermal-power-plant-made-the-internet-a-little-greener/

Source: atAdvocacy, 3rd December 2023. 

18 Book Recommendations for the Young Bookworm

"Did someone say tiny pet glaciers, three-eyed foxes, fainting possums, beaver ponds, and beret-wearing snakes? That's right, we're back with more tried and true environmentally-engaged children's book recommendations for your favourite young ones. Consider picking up some of these charming, funny, beautiful, moving, thoughtful, goofy, and creative titles today.

More: <https://orionmagazine.org/article/18-book-recommendations-kids-childrens-literature/>

Source: Orion, 1st December 2023. 

Collecting Scope 3 Data Webinar Series 2024

"For many businesses, measuring, reducing, and reporting on the organisation's Scope 3 emissions is the most challenging aspect of achieving a science-based net zero target. Collecting robust and accurate data can be difficult, yet it is a critical process to understand the company's true impact on the climate, present trustworthy information to customers, investors, and suppliers, and back-up net zero claims and targets.

"The UN Global Compact Network UK is hosting a four-part webinar series to support businesses to efficiently collect Scope 3 emissions data from across their value chain. This series will explore how companies can collect Scope 3 data using a variety of tools, surveys, and software and will feature case studies and insight from businesses on good practice in this area;

- Supplier Engagement 1 Feb, 10:00-11:30am GMT
- Upstream Emissions 8 Feb, 10:00-11:30am GMT
- Downstream Emissions15 Feb, 10:00-11:30am GMT
- Employee Engagement22 Feb, 10:00-11:30am GMT

More: www.unglobalcompact.org.uk/scope-3-emissions/

Source: Debbie Kandau, CA ANZ, Weekly Digest for Climate & Sustainability, 1st December 2023.

Editor: Recordings of 9 earlier webinars are available. 

As Temperatures Rise, Dengue Fever Spreads and Cases Rise

"Mumbai-based journalist Vaishnavi Chandrashekhar explores how climate change is fueling the warm, wet conditions favoured by mosquitos which carry dengue fever. From 2000 to 2019, dengue cases reported to the WHO grew from half a million to 5.2 million, with infections both rising in the tropics and spreading to new regions.

"This year, amid a prolonged monsoon season, Bangladesh saw its largest and deadliest outbreak on record, while Chad recorded its first-ever cases of the disease. A WHO official calls the recent outbreaks a 'canary in the coal mine of the climate crisis.'

More: <https://e360.yale.edu/features/dengue-fever-climate-change>

Source: *Yale Environment 360*, 1st December 2023.

Editor: Dengue fever is expected to arrive in NZ. 

Can we Save the World Without Free Will?


"Many articles on environmental topics are secular homilies, bristling with shoulds and shouldn'ts. Don't use a gasoline-powered leaf blower. Buy an electric car instead of a gas-powered car. Eat organically grown food. Use less water. Put solar panels on your roof. Recycle your old stuff, and be sure to put it in the right bin. If you don't behave right, we will all go to climate hell.

"But what if we humans actually don't have free will – the ability to act without constraints of circumstances, necessity, or fate? Is it possible to organise mass behavioural change in its absence? Those are the questions I'm asking myself as I read Robert Sapolsky's new book, *Determined: A Science of Life Without Free Will*.

"Sapolsky is a professor of biology, neurology, and neurosurgery at Stanford University. You may know him as the author of the bestselling *Behave: The Biology of Humans at Our Best and Worst*, which summarises what science has revealed about why people do what they do.

"In *Determined*, Sapolsky takes on possibly the thorniest question in philosophy, psychology, and behavioural science: does free will exist? [Long article]

More: www.resilience.org/stories/2023-11-17/can-we-save-the-world-without-free-will/

Source: Post Carbon Institute, 1st December 2023. 

NZ Corporates Committed to Sustainability

"SBN's report, *Sustainability in Aotearoa New Zealand's Corporates*, examines the prioritisation of sustainability and is based on insights gathered from interviews with senior executives from almost 30 organisations.

"Sustainability was a key focus for almost all the organisations interviewed. It has retained or even increased its importance, during a turbulent period. The corporates interviewed confirmed their ongoing focus on sustainability over the next 18 months.

"Report author and SBN's Head of Advisory and Impact Tori Calver says the primary drivers for sustainability action were market pressure and regulation.

"Organisations exporting to Europe are seeing strong pressure to prioritise action in emissions reduction', she says. 'Plus, new regulations like the Climate-related Disclosures, which makes it mandatory for big companies to report on climate risk, are having an impact.'

"Another factor driving the growing focus on sustainability is the increasing expectation from customers and investors for products and services that are more sustainable.

"Some businesses see sustainability as a competitive advantage, while others have noticed an increase in job seekers wanting to work for purpose-driven companies', she says.

"The main areas corporates are focusing on include climate action, circular economy practices (such as waste reduction) and supply chain sustainability. Other topics include water management, employee engagement and indigenous partnerships. An area of emerging interest is the impact of businesses on nature.

More: <https://sustainable.org.nz/learn/news-insights/business-survey-nz-corporates-committed-to-sustainability/> 9 pages 4.2Mb

Source: SBN, 5th December 2023. 

Climate Commons

"The new documentary film *Climate Commons* offers a fascinating and hopeful glimpse into the stories of climate action in Aotearoa. From indigenous solutions to community action and grassroots initiatives, the film showcases diverse approaches which blend scientific knowledge and practical wisdom.

"A first-time filmmaker, Sija Soman was inspired and motivated by what she saw on a trip to Matatā, the site of New Zealand's first managed retreat.

More: www.scoop.co.nz/stories/CU2308/S00019/from-crisis-to-solutions-documentary-film-ignites-climate-commons-movement-in-aotearoa.htm plus <https://climatecommons.co.nz/>


Source: Our Climate Declaration, 24th November 2023. 

Clearing Skies: Opening a New Path on Climate and the Future

"Longtime environmentalist James Gustave Speth writes that reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to climate change, while essential, will not get at the root causes of the climate crisis.

"What's needed, he says, is 'systemic adaptation' which fundamentally changes America's [And not only America's?] economy, politics, and priorities in ways which put community and the planet first – from redefining our definition of growth to reconsidering our materialistic culture. 'Systemic adaptation looks beyond preparing for floods and extreme heat and asks what type of societies will fare best in the future', Speth notes.

More: <https://e360.yale.edu/features/systemic-adaptation>

Source: *Yale Environment 360*, 1st December 2023. 

Nature Strategy Handbook: A Practical Guide for Business

"The Nature Strategy Handbook is a practical guide to support all businesses in developing a nature strategy. The Handbook builds on guidance from the ACT-D High-Level Business Actions on Nature to show the key components of a credible nature strategy, taking into account the requirements of various frameworks, guidance and regulations.

"It provides a set of guiding questions, recommendations and resources for how to develop a strategy for nature – whether that is as a stand-alone document or included in your business, climate or sustainability strategy.

"Using the handbook to set a credible nature strategy can help your business reduce its negative impacts on nature, boost its resilience to nature risks, access new commercial opportunities, create long-term value and strengthen your climate and sustainability goals. This in turn will help your organisation make a meaningful contribution towards the global goal to halt and reverse nature loss by 2030.

More: <https://nowfornature.org/read-the-handbook/> 14 pages 1.38Mb plus www.businessfornature.org/high-level-business-actions-on-nature

Source: Capital Coalition, 1st December 2023.

Editor: Each segment has links to external resources. 

How I Combat Climate Despair

"Five ways we can empower ourselves and tackle the climate crisis – effectively

"Yes, it's real: that cold mass in the pit of your stomach when you realise we might not make it. The climate crisis could end it for you, your family, all of humanity, oh, and life as we know it.

"Yet, as they say in the movies, it doesn't have to end this way. Yes, the earth, and all we hold dear, is threatened. But we know how to get through this.

"How can we address the Climate Crisis effectively and with some optimism, rather than falling into despair? Here's what I do;


"Recognise the real problem – and the solution

- Join the Majority
- See the good news
- It's happening
- You're not alone
- Getting traction

"Five steps to empowerment;

- Face reality,
- Have courage,
- Care for you – and your people so together, you can help care for all
- Find your voice. You have a unique view on the challenges facing us and others need to hear it.
- Find your power. What you do inspires those around you. One empowered person empowers others. Every day, ask yourself, what is my DOT: Do One Thing. Will recycling save the planet? No. But your commitment to be a force of change will inspire others. But what can I do? I'm just one person said eight billion people.

More: www.climateandcapitalmedia.com/how-i-combat-climate-despair/


Source: Capitals Coalition, 29th November 2023. 

Coca-Cola Bottler Cuts Carbon with Returnable, Resealable Glass

"Coca-Cola HBC, a strategic bottling partner to The Coca-Cola Co., invested €12 million in a reusable, refillable, resealable bottle packaging line at its Edelstal, Austria plant. The investment was supported by a €4 million grant from the Austrian government

"The new line, which the company says is more water and energy efficient than traditional packaging lines, will produce a new 400-mL returnable and resealable glass bottle for the Austrian market. This is a first across Coca-Cola HBC's 29 markets and is aimed at the on-the-go market and at-home consumption.

More: www.packworld.com/design/materials-containers/article/22874549/cocacola-bottler-cuts-carbon-with-returnable-resealable-glass

Source: Story of Stuff, 5th December 2023. 

When to Give Up on Climate

"Facts: What Matters is Now.


"There's a common misconception we are committed to decades or centuries more global warming from CO2 already in the atmosphere, no matter what we do now.

"Happily, current science says this is not true. The main cause of ongoing warming is CO2 emissions humans continue to produce, not past emissions, as climate scientist Damon Matthews wrote in a recent article in *Frontiers in Science*.

"A new study led by Sofia Palazzo Corner illustrates current scientific understanding beautifully.


"When human emissions of CO2 go to zero (≈ we leave fossil fuels in the ground and stop destroying nature):

- The concentration of CO2 in the atmosphere will gradually decline (as natural land and ocean sinks take up carbon)
- The ocean will continue to take up heat, but this will slow down and eventually stop
- Global temperature will basically stabilise.

"Hey, this is all good news! 

"Humans have the power to stop warming and prevent many of its dangerous impacts from getting worse.

"Yeah, then there's some bad news [In the very informative graphic], in the purple part at the bottom of the figure.

"Some changes in the Earth system, like sea level rise, will continue even after global warming stops. 

"Still, it's a big deal the most important driver of how much warming we live through, and leave behind, depends on how fast we stop emitting CO2.

"This illustration shows CO2 emissions going to zero overnight, which is not possible. Our planet will continue to warm until we shut down the very last car and factory and power plant belching out carbon.

"But! How fast we bend the emissions curve by phasing out fossil fuels is up to us.

"It's the inertia in human systems of politics, business, and society, not the laws of physics, which determine how much more warming is unavoidable.

"Action: Real rest. Okay, so we don't get to give up on the only home we have.

"But we are human beings, not machines. We cannot exist in a constant state of frantic doing. We must rest.

More: <https://wecanfixit.substack.com/p/when-to-give-up-on-climate>

Source: Climate Club, 5th December 2023. 