



Environment and Conservation Organisations of NZ Inc

Annual Report 2011-2012

Photo: Presentation at the ECO Conference 2011



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ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION ORGANISATIONS OF NEW ZEALAND INC 2011-12 ANNUAL REPORT

1.0 Introduction

It is with pleasure that we present the annual report for the year June 2011 – June 2012, prepared by the Co-chairs of ECO, with input from members of the ECO Executive Committee and with the help of the Executive Officer, Debby Rosin.

The 2011 ECO AGM gave the Executive Committee the priorities of working on ways of increasing membership; improving communication methods such as setting up the new website; developing and implementing a new project; making better use of the member groups and friends through encouraging their participation in Working Groups; and increasing fundraising efforts. Work on these priorities has advanced so we are now much better positioned.

We have a very much improved facility for communication in the new website which is now functioning, and it has many extra functions such as the Forum for members which will soon be operative. Our Facebook facility has brought in interested people including a younger following, and the Twitter facility has also attracted users and active engagement.

This last year has been demanding with the government proposing a number of policy changes to the RMA, to the EEZ and Continental Shelf law and regulations, to the Crown Minerals Act, to the Emissions Trading Scheme, Local government, and much more. Funding cuts to Conservation and pressure on the Department of Conservation to grant consents to mining and other activities has worried us.

Anthropogenic climate change and associated global change have underscored the urgency of action on greenhouse gas emissions and regearing the economy, but have been met by short term thinking from the New Zealand government whose extractivist short term economic growth strategy continues to defer necessary changes for decarbonising the economy. A government strategy of marginalizing and excluding civil society from much of its policy development and law making is increasingly pronounced. The government's willingness to take short cuts with due process and to centralize power to Ministers is of deepening concern.

The Canterbury earthquakes have complicated and damaged the lives and properties of many New Zealanders including several of our Executive Committee, our members and associates. We extend our sympathies and our profound thanks to all who have struggled with this and continued their efforts for the environment and community.

ECO and its member groups have responded to the government and the privileging of business interests by speaking out, pressing forward ECO's policies, making submissions to the extent capacity allowed, writing press releases, and attending meetings where opinions can be expressed and decision-making influenced. We have also engaged with the rest of the world where ideas and practices are developing that look to a low carbon future and have new development strategies in preparation.

The continuing emphasis of the government on promoting and enabling the extractive industries, both on land and at sea and on the seabed, is of great concern because of the environmental damage that exploration and mining causes, and their contribution to climate change.

Conservation efforts by the Department of Conservation have suffered yet another round of deep cuts, with another \$8m cut for 2013. DoC's ability to withstand this pressure and its decision to cut conservation staff and to instead set up regional business relationship managers is of acute concern.

2.0 Working Groups:

2.1 Climate change and energy.

Climate change remains a critical issue of deepening concern as the science reveals that the planet is on track for the most dangerous scenarios presented by IPCC. Rather than show leadership on these matters, the government has worked both through the ETS review and international negotiations to avoid taking action of significance and to protect its agricultural and business friends from pressure to take action. ECO has made ongoing efforts to persuade the government to stiffen not weaken the ETS, and to take more responsible positions internationally, but these have not been successful. Regrettably, once again, the government has promoted and/ or implemented a range of policies with counterproductive impacts: the Roads of National Importance programme, encouragement of oil and gas exploration and exploitation, the fast tracking of projects, the ramping up of minerals and mining activities, and promoting the mining and processing of lignite.

ECO's work in this area is ongoing, especially in partnership with the members of the Climate Defence Network and the Coal and lignite action groups.

The denial of the right under the RMA to raise issues related to the climate effects of the combustion of coal was a point of contention in this case, and ECO believes that the direction of the Commissioners that disallowed consideration of ocean acidification effects was wrong.

The Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf Bill also has a provision disallowing consideration of the Climate effects of greenhouse gases from marine activities, and ECO has unsuccessfully opposed this provision, as we did in the case of the amendment to the RMA. These pernicious and irresponsible clauses in these laws must be a target for change in the future. The original rationale was that there would be a greenhouse gas emissions tax or an emissions trading scheme (ETS) which would do the job, but the ETS has not proved effective, and anyway, the mining and or export of fossil fuels is not covered by the ETS. With the government promoting the exploration and extraction of fossil fuels, including methane hydrates, from the seabed, the prohibition on the consideration of the climate impacts of these activities is especially deplorable.

2.2 Mining

Of particular concern is the government's apparent determination to facilitate coal and lignite mining, and associated processing, and the impetus and subsidies it is giving to mineral mining and oil and gas. ECO has worked with other groups on the issue of lignite and coal mining, oil and gas exploration and extraction and minerals exploration and mining.

Crown Minerals Act and Programmes

ECO made a submission on the Crown Minerals Act and the Minerals Programmes.

Mt William coal

ECO made submissions to the Buller District Council and the West Coast Regional Council at the RMA hearings on Mt William North relating to coal mining on the West Coast. We are grateful to

all those who assisted with this, particularly Quentin Davies and Geoff Keey and others who stood ready to help. We have not heard the outcome of this.

ECO remains in touch with other groups and communities with concerns about mineral exploration and mining, particularly but not only in the Coromandel, and has presented to some community and land owner groups on the law and what to expect. We expect this work to ramp up if we can find resources for this.

2precious2mine

The 2precious2mine group and website is in the process of being revived by ECO. ECO will coordinate the website which formerly was administered by Federated Mountain Clubs.

World Heritage Areas

The lack of wisdom in the Government's promotion and subsidy of prospecting in South Island World Heritage areas has been underscored by the recent report for IUCN and the International Council of Mining and Minerals (ICMM) and other international mining players. Called "World Heritage Sites and Extractive Industries", it calls on all governments to refrain from issuing any permits for oil, gas, coal, minerals or other prospecting, exploration and mining in World Heritage areas. It also urges governments to cancel any existing permits and on industry players to relinquish such permits as they may hold. This report, dated 20 June 2012, is unequivocal. In June 2012 Prime Minister John Key defended the government's subsidising of minerals activity in the World Heritage areas but promised that no mining would be allowed there. The lack of legal protection for over 300,000 hectares of World Heritage land in New Zealand from minerals activity is unwise and should be remedied, especially if it is government policy that these areas will not be mined. Such protection needs also to be extended to marine mammal sanctuaries and to Ecological Areas.

2.3 Open government and society

Last year we commented on the government's willingness to scrap or diminish due process and public consultation in its activities. Most egregious was been the suspension of the rule of law in Canterbury, the misuse of Parliamentary Urgency and the avoidance or curtailing of Select Committee hearings of new laws such as the suspension of Environment Canterbury and local elections there, and the loss of public participation and consultation with changes to the RMA and in many other aspects of public governance.

We have made a variety of submissions this year which oppose the centralization of ministerial power, and we have pressed the case for the inclusion of civil society and NGOs in decision making. What we have seen is that many agencies have adopted a policy of consulting business, iwi and local government but not civil society. We know there are a number of business advocates and Ministers who support this practice.

We do not begrudge consultation with other parties but we continue to insist that civil society must be consulted and we will continue to press for that. Reasons are both the intrinsic and democratic reasons for public consultation and that better policy and government results.

It is regrettable that the Ministry for the Environment has allowed the oil and gas and mining interests into the inner process of policy making but has been very stand-offish in relation to most environmental groups, particularly in relation to the EEZ and Continental Shelf law and regulations. In these the industry interests have been allowed the inner running. MfE may gain in the eyes of

industry and the current government from such behaviour, but it risks both the environment and its reputation with, and trust of, the population.

2.4 International & Antarctica

2.4.1 ECO's work with IUCN

ECO is proud to be an active member of IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) one of ten in New Zealand. IUCN is the oldest and largest global conservation and environment network (see www.iucn.org/). Executive Member Diana Shand is currently an Oceania Regional Councillor (2004-2012), chairs the Private Sector Task Force and is one of four IUCN vice-presidents. Diana Shand this year will complete her second term on the Council of IUCN, and she deserves our thanks for her tireless work at the international level, in Oceania and for the New Zealand committee of IUCN.

ECO has made input to the preparations for the IUCN World Conservation Congress both in relation to governance issues and Council proposals for changes to the Statutes and Regulations, and in relation to the policies and programme of the Union.

ECO has made contact with and has worked with other member groups both in New Zealand and widely around the world to offer, coordinate or support draft motions for consideration at the September 2012 Jeju, Korea Congress. Such motions will become available on the IUCN website on 9 July 2012 at www.iucn.org and we invite member groups and others to give us feedback on the many proposed motions that will appear then.

Cath Wallace and Barry Weeber, co-chairs of ECO, are members of IUCN expert commissions, including the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) and the Commission on Environmental, Economics and Social Policy (CEESP) the latter which is chaired by Aroha Mead, of Wellington.

2.4.2 Rio + 20

ECO Exec members Diana Shand and Betsan Martin have both made major contributions to the preparations of policy and other aspects of the Rio+20 Conference in Brazil which they also attended. Diana contributing both via IUCN and as Chair of the New Zealand NGO platform. Several member groups and members of the Executive committee have been involved in preliminary paper writing and negotiations with government. We are grateful to all for these efforts and for what progress was made at Rio+20, short as it fell from the hopes of many around the planet.

2.4.3 High Seas and South Pacific Fisheries Management

ECO has reason to celebrate as the efforts we and many others have made to see better governance in the high seas start to show fruit. The South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation is about to come into being with Chile's ratification instruments expected TO BE deposited any day. Barry Weeber, Cath Wallace and Duncan Currie (Deep Sea Conservation Coalition and Greenpeace International) played various roles in the negotiation meetings, expert consultations, New Zealand meetings and other work.

Governance and control of adverse human impacts in the high seas has remained an area of key interest for ECO and we continue to work as part of the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition (DSCC) and with IUCN on these matters.

2.4.5 Antarctica and the Southern Ocean

ECO is a long standing member of the Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition, and remains active within it, working for better management and protection of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean, including the Ross Sea. Barry Weeber attended the 2011 meeting of the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) in Hobart in November 2011. Barry Weeber is both a member of the Board of ASOC and a contractor to ASOC. Cath Wallace is ECO's representative on the ASOC Council but in 2011 Qantas's lock out of workers disrupted her attendance at the 2011 Hobart meeting and she had to attend by phone not in person, stranded in Melbourne, however Barry Weeber was able to attend in person.

ECO and ASOC have both joined the Antarctic Oceans Alliance which is a major new coalition to press for the world's largest network of marine protected areas, with the Ross Sea an immediate target for protection. ECO has worked with the Last Ocean Trust, Greenpeace, Forest and Bird and WWF to promote this. We continue to meet stiff opposition from the New Zealand fishing industry and officials and others who want to protect the toothfishing in the Ross Sea from conservation closures that would move toothfishing north and off the Ross Sea shelf and slope.

2.4.6 Economic Integration and Trade - Trans-Pacific Partnership

The highly secretive negotiations on the Trans Pacific Partnership remains a major concern to ECO as it is to many other groups with a concern for New Zealand's ability to regulate to protect the environment, health and pharmaceuticals, labour laws and other aspects of our life. ECO has tried to keep abreast of what is known about these negotiations which are conducted in secrecy, with a blackout on release of drafts and pernicious provisions that would extend that secrecy for four years after the agreement is signed and would bind signatories in perpetuity. New Zealand is likely to be required to compensate foreign investors for loss of expected profits as a result of regulatory or other action. This is already being played out in Australia and other countries with similar elements in trade agreements that have resulted in companies suing governments for controlling tobacco packaging, contaminating industries and the like. From what is known about the TPP, this economic integration and investment agreement will have a very serious and chilling effect on measures to protect communities, health and the environment.

2.5 Coastal and Catchment, Land and Water Management.

2.5.1 LAWF & collaborative Governance

ECO continued participation in the Land and Water Forum (LAWF). Diana Shand and Barry Weeber participated for ECO, and but we remain part of the "outer" group in this process, not involved in direct negotiations. The process had some strengths but also weaknesses, most notably the lack of timely sharing of drafts and the gagging of participants. The strength of the process has been the agreements made, but we have yet to see much action from the government to implement them.

2.5.2 Forests

ECO is intensifying our work with other environmental groups and affected New Zealand communities to reduce the adverse impacts of exotic forestry. Communities are coming to ECO and other members of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) for help in getting FSC certified forestry companies to live up to the FSC rules and standards. We expect this to be on-going work and are working with others to try to gather accurate information on which forests in New Zealand have FSC certification and where these are so that local groups can hold companies to the FSC standards.

The FSC internationally has also revised its Priorities and Criteria so the Environment Chamber of FSC in New Zealand is inviting other chambers to engage with us in the necessary process of revising the recently agreed New Zealand National Standards of FSC.

We have not seen revisions on the Proposed National Environmental Standards for Plantation Forests that the forestry industry and the Ministry for the Environment were developing and we are unsure whether these have been shelved. Cath Wallace and Shane Orchard had worked on this during 2010-11 but MfE has not kept us abreast of any developments.

Members of the ECO Coastal and Catchment Working Group, particularly Shane Orchard and Jenny Baker, have worked with a range of people including local groups and officials on a case study of the Ngunguru area logging and other forestry impacts after an alert from Wade Doak, but this work is still in process. We thank all those ECO and non-ECO people who are working on this case study.

ECO remains a member of the New Zealand Forests Accord 1991, and has periodic meetings as needed with the other organisations and companies that are part of the Accord.

2.5.3 NZ Coastal Policy Statement

We reported in 2011 on the issue of the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement. ECO's Shane Orchard of the Coastal and Catchment Working Group developed guidelines for community groups and others on the implementation of the NZCPS. The guide has been provided to the community via our website and in some cases hard copy or disk, and we are glad to report that this is proving to be helpful to community groups.

2.5.4 Rivers and Water

Thanks to Shane Orchard, Diana Shand, and others for their work on the wild rivers campaign and other water quality and catchment related work.

2.6 Oceans and Fisheries

2.6.1 Ministry of Fisheries/Ministry of Primary Industry Processes

ECO has worked on a variety of aspects of oceans and fisheries.

Barry Weeber has attended a variety of science and sustainability meetings convened by the Ministry of Fisheries/Ministry of Primary Industry working groups, including the Deepwater, the Aquatic Environment Working Group, the Biodiversity, and Antarctic working groups.

In 2011 the Ministry of Fisheries declared its intention to reduce public participation to the legal minimum. Since then while the science working groups have continued, there have been few consultations on policy decisions. The Ministry in 2012 has been merged with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry emerging as the Department of Primary Industry, and it has had major reorganisations and staff changes.

Meetings at an ENGO leader's level with the CEO of Fisheries stopped as well as did more technical meetings.

ECO met with and/or submitted on the Ministry's fisheries issues on SPRFMO, and on a range of other issues, stock sustainability matters, as well as on MPAs (consulting also with the Department

of Conservation), and on species or groups of species or areas, Maui dolphin, NZ sea lions, and seabirds.

2.6.2 Aquaculture

During the past year we continued to work on Aquaculture “reforms” that ECO considers are ill-conceived because they suspend and bypass regional coastal plans for Waikato and Tasman developed by due process and substitute ill-confined and badly conceived ministerial powers.

ECO submitted in opposition to proposals to expand salmon farming in the Marlborough Sounds. Due to other issues ECO was not able to actively participate in this process organised by the Environmental Protection Agency.

2.6.3 Governance in the EEZ , oil and minerals

The government’s EEZ and Continental Shelf bill to provide for consents to be issued in the EEZ for activities such as minerals activity, oil and gas and marine power generation that have no environmental regime at present was needed but is unlikely to prove adequate and may be worse with its deplorable purpose of “balancing” economic growth with environmental protection so that, contrary to the UN Convention on Law of the Sea, environmental protection can be sacrificed in the interests of economic growth or a host of other considerations. We made submissions on the Bill and on the proposed Regulations. ECO continues to press for integrated spatial management at sea within an ecosystem and precautionary framework and that recognises and protects non-extractive values, vulnerable marine ecosystems and other such.

We are especially concerned that the government has issued a number of minerals and energy consents in the EEZ with no public input and no public (or in some cases any) environmental assessments.

2.6.4 Rena Wreck

The *Rena* grounding revealed the huge public concern about the marine environment and the difficulties of responding adequately to oil spills and the other releases of debris, especially the small plastic beads used in the manufacture of plastic products and the many silver packets of condiments from instant noodles that washed out of the containers from the wreck. ECO will reflect on the wonderful public response and the strengths and inadequacies of the official response at the IUCN Congress in September. We have long urged the government to ratify all the MARPOL agreements, and other International Maritime Organisation (IMO) environmental agreements and hope that the *Rena* disaster will provide the impetus for this, including the liability protocols.

2.7 Conservation, biodiversity and biosecurity.

2.7.1 NZCPS, Proposed Biodiversity NPS

The NZCPS discussed above is welcome, as is the proposed National Policy Statement on Biodiversity, though ECO has submitted that the connections between the two need further work, and we are unhappy that the NPS on Biodiversity excludes public land and makes land ownership a key criterion for its application though the RMA does not.

2.7.2 Biosecurity

In 2011 ECO submitted on the Biosecurity Law Reform Bill, and presented to the Select Committee in April 2011. We support the concerns of biosecurity officers about the elevated risks from the

failure properly to resource the inspections of people and containers at borders and earlier. We are convinced that the government is cutting public spending in the area of conservation and biosecurity beyond the bone and that this is a very short term strategy that will stack up large costs and economic and environmental damage in the future.

2.7.3 High country and pest species management

The work of Fred Murray and Leslie Shand on high country and pest species management has been of vital importance to ECO and is much appreciated.

ECO has made submissions on the National Park Management Plans for Aoraki Mount Cook and Arthur's Pass, and also the Fiordland National Park concessions.

2.8 The Green Economy

The poverty of the Government's approach to economic strategy and decarbonising the economy have led this year to ECO largely focusing our efforts in the international rather than national arena on greening the economy. We have engaged with the IUCN and Rio+20 discussions and papers about how to lighten the human impact on the planet, to improve well being and to safeguard natural and social capital. The international debate is vibrant, engaged, and developing fast even though New Zealand's Cabinet is stuck somewhere back in the 1960s in its thinking on these matters. A long term view, informed by modern ecological economics, social and natural capital thinking is required, as is an ability to measure progress in a way that counts losses of capital and adds-in contributors to well being that go beyond National Income. We were heartened that the debate on well being is also alive in New Zealand's academic and some public service quarters, even though the Cabinet is seemingly unaware of or unconvinced by these ideas.

2.9 Environmental Management, RMA, Local government

2.9.1 RMA, Environmental Protection Authority

The government merged the Environmental Risk Management Authority into the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) which is charged with regulatory functions under several statutes including the EEZ and Continental Shelf Bill, the RMA, HaSNO the Climate Change Response Act and various Antarctic Acts. We have not been party to any hearings before the EPA so far.

2.9.2 The Local Government Act 2002 Amendment Bill 2012

This was given its first reading on 13 June 2012 and seeks to remove the direction in the 2002 Act to councils to consider the four well beings, environmental, social, cultural and economic, introduced by former Minister Hon Sandra Lee in 2002. It also imposes fiscal and other restraints on Councils. The agenda to restrict Councils to provision of utilities and the like and to disallow pursuit of other sources of well being is regrettable, and ECO welcomes contributions for submissions on the Reform Bill. The government has also removed the requirement for Long Term *Community* Council Plans. ECO regards these as retrograde steps and will make submissions, but more generally we have taken opportunities to contribute to the public debates on models of development and measures of progress.

The government intends to pass the Amendment Bill in September and has a further set of changes to local government planned for 2013. These and earlier changes are aimed to drive council amalgamations and other changes, and may remove or alter development contributions to councils.

ECO notes the departure of Hon Nick Smith, long time environment minister with National and his replacement by Amy Adams, the new Minister for the Environment.

In November 2011, ECO made a submission on the Review of the Incorporated Societies legislation.

2.9.3 Minerals and Mining, coal and lignite

The promotion of minerals activity, including mining, by this government has highlighted the sharp differences of view of the appropriate path for New Zealand between the government and ECO. In particular we see the best strategies to be demand management, recycling, reuse, and a low carbon path with protection of protected areas.

The government's continued insistence that it might allow minerals activity on the seabed, in the Coromandel and in other designated special areas such as parts of the conservation estate, and forest parks and reserves remains a continued threat to our ecosystems and to our climate. We welcomed the retraction and declining of all the Grey Wolf minerals and oil and gas applications.

Particularly of concern are the proposals for new coal mines and lignite mining and processing and the active promotion of these by both Solid Energy and the Minister and Associate Minister of Energy and Resources. In recent days we have been highlighting the lack of protection for over 300,000 hectares of world heritage land and the mineral permits granted or being processed from a number of mining companies.

3.0 Activities: Ongoing liaison

3.1 Meetings with government agencies

ECO has met during the year with:

- The Department of Conservation,
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- The Ministry of Fisheries
- The Ministry for the Environment

3.2 Participation in external Working Groups

ECO was a member of:

- The plenary group of the Land and Water Forum
- Various Fisheries Working Groups
- The second round of Proposed National Environmental Standards on Plantation Forests working groups.
- Sub-Antarctic Marine Protected Areas Working Group

3.3 Non-governmental and international organisations

ECO is a member of the following:

- The Antarctic and Southern Oceans Coalition
- The Antarctic Oceans Alliance
- The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), with Diana Shand, ECO's nominee, one of the Oceania regional councillors to the world body, and Chair of the Oceania Regional Committee. Several other ECO people serve on expert IUCN Commissions.
- New Zealand Committee of IUCN-NZ

- Association of Non-government Organisations of Aotearoa (ANGOA)
- Climate Defence Network (CDN)
- Coal Action Network (CAN)
- Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition (ASOC)
- Deep Sea Conservation Coalition (DSCC)
- Wild Rivers Coalition
- The 2precious2mine coalition.
- The Forest Stewardship Council New Zealand Environment Chamber
- The NZ Forest Accord.
- An alliance of groups working on sharks.
- An alliance of groups working on marine issues.
- An alliance of groups working on forestry issues.

As well as these, ECO maintains relations with a range of other New Zealand and international organisations on many domestic and international environmental issues.

ECO has also participated in a Union-Environmental organisation forum, hosted by the Combined Trades Unions which has helped to work on matters in common such as climate change.

3.4 Meetings with Ministers and MPs

We met with a number of politicians to discuss matters of mutual concern and to suggest ways forward.

4.0 Activities: Outreach

4.1 Publications

The quarterly newsletter *ECOLink* was published in September 2011, December 2011, March 2012 and June 2012.

4.2 SeaNet

The SeaNet website provides information; skills and contacts for groups engaged in coastal and marine issues but is in need of updating to reflect the legislative changes since it was developed.

4.3 Website update

We thank the Positive Futures Trust for funding a better communications network for ECO. Following the discussion at last year's AGM, the website has been changed to a "Content Management System" which allows us to edit content ourselves, to add news items, link our resources and connect with our members through the forum and on-line forms. This will allow ECO to be timely with news and to reduce costs. Each Friend and Member Group will receive a login and password to enter the ECO forum, where you can see information, such as ECO's submissions, and contribute to the discussion strands on the Key Issues.

We welcome contributions from Members to advise events and news on the Home page, though this and other functions will be moderated by ECO. The events calendar allows you to import items into your own Google calendar, and you can get news updates automatically if you click on the orange RSS (real simple syndication) button to add "ECO News" to your browser bar.

4.4 Media and public commentary

ECO often asked to comment by the media and in speaking events. We frequently are asked to analyse and comment on events and issues. We also take the initiative to highlight issues, policy and law, and generally to participate in the public life and debates in New Zealand. Most such work has been done by the co-chairs of ECO, Barry Weeber and Cath Wallace.

4.5 Projects - Communications Hub, Kete, website, GIS training

ECO is setting up a communications hub which includes an updated website with forum, a 'Kete' digital repository and a Moodle on-line learning environment to provide tutorials in monitoring and data collection tools. We have funding for the hub, and are now seeking funding from various sources to compile training modules and run workshops nationwide. Topics include advice on standards and accepted channels for meaningful data sharing which underpin collaborative approaches to addressing environmental issues.

ECO has a proposed project to help and train members and community groups to access, use, share and present spatial and other data and information, using GIS and other online systems. We wish to see community data have greater value in planning and decision making. We have applied for funds (so far unsuccessfully) for skills development to include data collection methods and national standards, and the use of on-line tools to support community-based environmental initiatives. For this, ECO wants to establish an on-line learning environment to assist access to supporting resources and wishes to run training workshops nationally, in partnership with other agencies. This project would improve data management and analysis skills and awareness and assist groups to strengthen their capacity, effectiveness and partnerships with the community, business, iwi and local authorities.

Elise Smith and Shane Orchard developed the above significant geographic information system (GIS) project proposal to assist ECO member bodies and other community organisations to understand the scope of GIS tools and to load their data so that it would be available to members and others. Regrettably, despite many grant applications we have not been able to proceed with this project to date for lack of funding. Thanks to people and organisations that have helped to develop the project.

4.6 Submissions

July 2011

Review of the Amateur Set Net Ban for a Defined Area of the ECSI to Manage Fishing Related Threats to Hector's Dolphins, Ministry of Fisheries.

Review of inshore sustainability measures and other management controls for the 2011-12 fishing year, Ministry of Fisheries.

August

Review of deepwater sustainability measures and other management controls for the 2010-11 fishing year, Ministry of Fisheries.

Review of highly migratory species sustainability measures and other management controls for the 2011-12 fishing year, Ministry of Fisheries.

September

Conservation Management Strategy – Gazetted Wilderness Areas, Department of Conservation

October

Reforming the Incorporated Societies Act 1908, to the Law Commission.

Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf (Environmental Effects) Bill, to the Local government and Environment Select Committee.

December

Aoraki Mount Cook National Park Management Plan – proposed amendments, Department of Conservation.

Arthur’s Pass National Park Management Plan – proposed amendments, Department of Conservation.

2012

March

Draft conservation services programme strategic and research plan: 2012-17, Department of Conservation.

Resource Consent Applications: WCRC RC11181/1-10 and BDC RC11/132A and B West Coast Regional Council and Buller District Council, Mt William North Mining Project (written submissions)

April

Crown Minerals Act 1991 regime Review, to Ministry of Economic Development.

Proposed interim extension of the West Coast North Island marine mammal sanctuary
Interim set net measures to manage the risk of Maui’s dolphin mortality, – Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
Game Animal Council Bill, to the Local Government and Environment Select Committee.

May

ETS Review Consultation: Updating the New Zealand Emissions Trading Scheme

King Salmon Proposal under the Resource Management Act , to The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA)

Resource Consent Applications: WCRC RC11181/1-10 and BDC RC11/132A and West Coast Regional Council and Buller District Council, Mt William North Mining Project (hearing).

June

Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf (Environmental Effects) Bill and Regulations, Ministry for the Environment.

5.0 Administration and Governance

5.1 ECO Executive Committee

The members of the Executive Committee during 2011/12 included:

Jenny Baker (Baywatch Hawkes Bay, Napier)
 Tony Dean (ATLA, Wellington; Treasurer)
 June Graham (Baywatch Hawkes Bay, alternate to Jenny Baker, Napier)
 Hannah Griffin (Gecko, Wellington)
 Zoe Heine, Wellington
 Elizabeth Lee (*ECO Secretary*; National Council of Women, Wellington)
 Harriette Mangin (*ECO Vice-chair*, Wellington)
 Betsan Martin (RESPONSE, Wellington)
 Fred Murray (Friends of Lewis Pass and Hurunui Catchment, Christchurch)
 Shane Orchard (Sustainable Otautahi Christchurch, Christchurch)
 Diana Shand (*ECO Vice-chair*, Wellington)
 Elise Smith (Envision Environment, Taranaki)
 Cath Wallace (*ECO Co-chair*, Wellington, Environmental Futures)
 Barry Weeber (*ECO Co-chair*, Wellington, Environmental Futures)

5.2 ECO Staff and volunteers

Many thanks to all the volunteers who gave up their time and expertise to help ECO over the past year:

- Elise Smith for her work on the ECO website
- Tiffany Matisis, for helping to update our local groups database
- Indigo Freya, for assistance in updating the grants and funding list and for equipment.
- Sally Patterson, Katherine Kooistra, Hanh Phuoc, and Betty Weeber for helping with ECOLink mail-outs.
- Elizabeth Lee for help in the office and organising the Wellington Street Appeal and many other services.
- Treasurer Tony Dean for expert advice on the accounts
- Jenny Baker for her excellent work helping with policy and organisation of the annual conference
- Hannah Griffin for help with various administration tasks
- Zoe Heine for her work on the ECO website and research
- Harriette Mangin for help with the conference and assisting with administrative tasks
- The various Wellington Friends and others who volunteered during the Street Appeal
- Quentin Davies, ECO's honorary solicitor, who, as ever, gave us invaluable support.
- All those who contributed to submission writing.

We are also grateful to Gillian Cross, our professional auditor.

6.0 ECO Members and Friends

6.1 ECO Membership

As usual ECO's membership ebbed and flowed with some organisations completing their mission or simply choosing to move on, and others joining, some new, some old. The recession has made it difficult for most organisations and we have noticed a net decline of membership. ECO now has the following member organisations, with at least one membership application pending.

Action for the Environment
Appropriate Technology for Living Association
Auckland Civic Trust
Bay of Islands Coastal Watchdog
Bay of Islands Maritime Park Inc.
Baywatch Hawkes Bay Environment Group
Buller Conservation Group
Clean Stream Waiheke
Coromandel Watchdog of Hauraki
Cycling Advocates Network
East Harbour Environmental Association
Eastern Bay of Islands Preservation Society
EcoMatters Environment Trust
Engineers for Social Responsibility
Environmental Futures
Friends of Golden Bay
Friends of Lewis Pass and Hurunui Catchment
Friends of Nelson Haven and Tasman Bay
Friends of the Earth - NZ
Gecko, Victoria University Environment Group
GE-Free New Zealand
Greenpeace NZ
Guardians of Pauatahanui Inlet
Initial Volco Trust
Island Bay Marine Education Centre
Kaipatiki Project
Lincoln Environment Group
Marlborough Environment Centre
Monarch Butterfly New Zealand Trust
National Council of Women of NZ
Nelson Environment Centre
North Canterbury Branch Forest & Bird
Orari River Protection Group
Organics Aotearoa New Zealand
Pacific Institute for Resource Management
RESPONSE Trust
Save the Otago Peninsula
Soil and Health Association of NZ
South Coast Environment Society
Students for Environmental Action
Surfbreak Protection Society

Sustainable Otago Christchurch
 Sustainable Whanganui Trust
 Te Aroha Earthwatch
 Thames Coast Preservation and Protection Society
 The Sandy Walker Group
 Wellington Botanical Society
 Wellington Tramping and Mountaineering Club
 Whaingaroa Environment Centre
 Wildlife Society, NZVA
 Yellow Eyed Penguin Trust

6.3 Friends of ECO

The number of subscribing individual supporters or 'Friends of ECO' is approximately 140. The Executive would like to expand the number of Friends of ECO over the coming year. We have rather higher numbers of friends and followers on Facebook (445) and Twitter (422). We value you all and would love to extend our networks.

7.0 Financial Situation

7.1 Overview

The Treasurer's Report and Financial Statements are presented separately and will address this matter.

7.2 Fundraising, Grants and Sponsorship

7.2.1 Sponsorship

Sponsorship of the 2012 ECO conference has been gratefully received from Gascoigne Wicks Lawyers and from the Antarctic Ocean Alliance which also sponsored the Antarctic Workshop. Sponsorship of the GIS workshop by the Wellington City Council and the School of Geography, Environment and Earth Sciences (SGEES) at Victoria University is also gratefully acknowledged, as is the latter's sponsorship of students to the conference and workshop. June Graham and Elizabeth Lee also sponsored students: many thanks to all.

7.2.2 Donations, gifts and fundraising

We reported last year the donation of the Resource Monitor Trust which wound up of an \$85,530 capital fund for environmental research and advocacy. This income from this fund will be used in accordance with the Trust's wishes for those purposes.

ECO received a donation of \$5,000 from the Benson fund to assist with fund raising and advocacy.

The Special Appeal in September 2011 raised \$3,757.50

The ECO Annual Appeal in March 2012 raised \$2315

The Wellington Street Appeal in March 2012 raised just over \$1000.

ECO also receives a variety of general donations and auto-donations. There are 30 auto donors who contribute through regular automatic payments. We are grateful for the support of all donors and particularly to the auto donors since continuing funds are critical to the operation of ECO.

ECO continues its fundraising partnership with online research panel Buzz Channel Ltd.

Overall, ECO had just sufficient income from donations and fundraising in the 2011/12 year, and we are thankful to those who have contributed. However, ECO remains under-funded and desperately needs financial help to cover increasing costs. Donations of time, expertise, and money and in-kind contributions are greatly appreciated.

8.0 Outlook for the coming year

As an organisation, ECO has several challenges ahead:

- To increase income and place the organisation on a stronger financial footing;
- To further develop our web presence, capability and scope for member body interaction;
- To develop effective working groups with both Exec members and member body representatives on these;
- To ensure adequate financial and volunteer support for our hard working Executive Officer and Executive members;

ECO and its member bodies have been stretched beyond capacity by the many changes to public policy, law and in practice that are impacting on the environment and decision making about the environment and economy. We expect this to continue. We know that by all working together in various different ways we can make a difference, at least in the longer term. The challenge is to find means of engaging with those in the community, in the public sector and in the political and business realms who understand the challenges. We can then work together to make those who wish to dismiss environmental matters or to regard them as of little consequence pay more attention to the potential for improvement and the benefits.

ECO will work hard for the voice of the community and the environment, and the incoming Executive Committee will be taking strength from the community and the knowledge that the international community engaging with the issues even when New Zealand is dilatory.

