

FINAL including edits from AGM



Environment and Conservation Organisations of NZ Inc.

Annual Report August 2014 - August 2015

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ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION ORGANISATIONS OF NEW ZEALAND INC

2014-15 ANNUAL REPORT

1.0 Introduction: Goals, Objects and Priorities.

The Annual Report for August 2014-August 2015 is presented to you by the Executive Committee of ECO, and the ECO Executive Officer, Michael Pringle.

This year's annual report is formatted to report against our Objects to make it closer to the requirements for future reports set by the Charities Commission and changes in requirements for incorporated societies.

The Environment and Conservation Organisations of Aotearoa/N.Z Inc. , ECO, is "the national alliance of organisations concerned with conservation, natural resources and environment whose function is to promote the protection and enhancement of all elements of the natural environment for the benefit of present and future generations" as defined by our constitution.

ECO's Goals (s2) include the:

- (i) Protection and restoration of the environment including its physical systems and cultural heritage.
- (ii) Minimisation of the environmental impacts of human activity and the sustainable management of natural and physical resources.
- (iii) Safeguarding the interests of future generations.

Our Objects (s3) include:

- (i) To provide a forum for debate, policy formation, organising coordinated action on issues, and promoting co-operation and collaboration to achieve its goals for the environment.
- (ii) To promote agreed policies to government, statutory and other official bodies and state departments through advocacy and submissions.
- (iii) To provide information and support to its members, through regular newsletters and other publications.
- (iv) To initiate and encourage research and the publication of the results of such research.

- (v) To take all possible steps to inform and encourage the public on ways to achieve goals for the environment.
- (vi) To establish and maintain (working) co-operative relationships with official and non-governmental bodies with similar interest at international, regional and national level.
- (vii) To create a sense of community for those organisations and individuals with a shared concern for the environment, conservation and ECO's other goals and objects.

Priorities

The 2014 ECO AGM gave the Executive Committee these priorities for the past year:

B External Priorities

Collaborate, co-ordinate and catalyze policies and actions in relation to:

1. Antarctica and Southern Ocean
2. Coal, oil and gas mining
3. Marine and fisheries management
4. Climate change
5. Open society, participation, due process and Aarhus Convention
6. Election issues – Vote for the Environment - political party positions
7. Exotic Forestry
8. Environmental Management including RMA and EEZ legislation

A Internal Priorities:

1. Developing a plan over the next year to increase ECOs funding base;
2. Strategic assessment of ECO including agreed tasks from the Conference Discussion (regional wananga; ECO Structure; Treaty Partnership and Wai262; Electronic Forum; and Review Office Arrangements)
3. Strengthen use of internal communications
4. Strengthen the network functions of the umbrella
5. Engaging with Maori
6. Capacity building

Following the 2014 AGM, ECO maintained both formal and informal working groups, using those that had been set up in 2014 and earlier. Some are formally constituted with approved Terms of Reference, some have continued as they were without setting out their formal ToR.

The Executive Committee met monthly (except in June when many of us were travelling), with administration meetings filling in between and ad hoc meetings on specific issues (such as constitutional changes). A conference Committee was also established.

The Executive Committee met for a day and a half in Wellington as a planning retreat on 25-26 April 2015. At this retreat, we furthered our strategic plan and reviewed our working group activities and the priorities from the 2014 AGM.

2 ECO Executive Committee

The members of the Executive Committee during 2014/15 included:

Barry Weeber, ECO Co-chair. (Wellington and Tairua, Environmental Futures)

Betsan Martin, ECO Co-chair (RESPONSE, Wellington)

Cath Wallace, ECO Vice-chair (Whenuakite and Wellington) Environmental Futures)

Diana Shand, ECO Vice-chair (Christchurch and Wellington)

Bruce Anderson, ECO Treasurer from July 2014 to March 2015 (Wellington)

Tony Dean, ECO Secretary, (ATLA, Wellington)

Jim Kebell, Treasurer from March 2015 (Wellington)

Catherine Iorns , (Wellington)

Geoff Keey, co-opted to Exec in September 2014, (Arthur's Pass and Wellington)

Chris Livesey, co-opted to Exec in June 2014 (Wellington and Wairarapa)

Maiki Marks, Northland (Bay of Islands Coastal Watchdog)

Fred Murray (Friends of Lewis Pass and Hurunui Catchment, Canterbury)

3 Reports against our objects:

We report here against our objects, and below that, against our working groups, followed by reports relating to our internal work.

3.(i) To provide a forum for debate, policy formation, organising coordinated action on issues, and promoting co-operation and collaboration to achieve its goals for the environment.

ECO's fora for debate include our conferences, regional gatherings, ad hoc seminars, working groups, email networks.

Our policy formation is done partly using these mechanisms and using email consultations such as the circulation of proposed policies on fracking, and particularly in the conferences and regional gatherings. Within this framework, ECO's Executive Committees and working groups have elaborated these, with the authority of the Executive Committee. For instance, the ECO Environmental Governance and Management Working Group has a number of sub-groups, such as one on mining, one on exotic forests, another on land and water.

ECO cooperates and collaborates in a number of directions and promotes such to achieve our goals.

Coordination of actions on these matters has been in concert with a range of like-minded organisations, and includes the 2precious2mine group, the Climate Action Network of Aotearoa, the Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition (ASOC), IUCN NZ, the Forest Stewardship Council NZ (FSC) and others. The FSC NZ involves ECO trying to influence forestry companies and to engage cooperatively with foresters, though we are not always like-minded.

ECO uses subject specific networking such as within ASOC, the marine and fisheries, forests, climate, water networks and so on.

ECO has ongoing dialogues and collaborations with members and others with shared concerns such as marine mammal protection, fisheries management, forestry, biosecurity and climate change. We collaborate with organisations such as IUCN's NZ Committee, and internationally with IUCN's Oceania Members, IUCN's Commissions and with groups such as the High Seas Alliance, the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition and ASOC.

Regional Gathering in Taranaki

In partnership with our member bodies, Climate Justice Taranaki and the Whanganui Sustainability Trust, ECO convened a Regional Gathering at the Muru Raupatu Marae. This gathering of Members and others (over 20 groups and some eighty participants including local iwi) met to raise awareness of the issues of living amid a gasfield, and to discuss and develop plans for a movement to a fossil fuel free future NZ. Catering was undertaken by the Friends of Waitara River, under pressure to find court costs for challenging the plans to fell 80 pohutukawa trees on the river.

The gathering heard from a variety of speakers about the effects of fossil fuels on the climate, human health, and the extraction of oil and gas by conventional means, and fracking's impacts on the communities of Taranaki. Field trips to meet hapu and other affected residents, workshops, and a round of meetings and discussions examined both the problems and the pathways to change. Particular thanks to our hosts at the Marae, , to Diana Shand, Catherine Cheung, Emily Bailey Lyn and Graham Pearson Michael Pringle and Urs Singer, and many others from the various groups for a very successful gathering.

3(ii) To promote agreed policies to government, statutory and other official bodies and state departments through advocacy and submissions.

ECO's promotion of agreed policies is done via several different means. These include meetings with officials – such the Ministry of Primary Industry on fisheries and forests management; politicians, Select Committee and other hearings, and to international bodies such as the IPCC and the IUCN.

The ECO Executive Committee presented submissions to officials and Select Committees, other official bodies such as the Environmental Protection Authority and the independent Review of the Intelligence and Security Legislation. We have participated in scientific and stakeholder meetings relating

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to marine and fisheries, the spatial management of the Hauraki Gulf, the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO), the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting in Sofia, Bulgaria in June 2015 and the Commission for the Conservation of the Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) in Hobart October-November, 2014.

Submissions Made

ECO made the following submissions not previously reported on:

- Submission on the proposed Aotea Conservation Park: April 2014 (omitted from the last annual report).
- Proposed Changes to the Direct Referral consenting pathway: May 2014 – (omitted from the 2014 annual report)
- Submission to the MFE on direct referral under the RMA, June 2014
- Submission on the 2014 Review of Sustainability measures and management controls for fishstocks ; June 2014 EPA Hearings on Chatham Rise Phosphate phosphorite mining project, July 2014

In the period August 2014-August 2015

Detailed ECO response to *International Tax review* magazine on the Green Party's plans to introduce a carbon tax, at the 2014 general election.

- The Environmental Reporting Bill October 2014 (oral submission made in addition)
- Health and Safety Reform Bill, November 2014
- On Countering Foreign Terrorists Bill, December 2014
- To the Minister of Conservation, Maggie Barry on Haast-Hollyford Road, January 2015
- The Human Rights UN special rapporteurs on TPPA , May 2015
- To the Ministry of Transport Maritime Treaties consultation in support of the ratification of the Cape Town Agreement and STCW-F Convention 1995 of 2012, May 2015
- Climate Change (Intended Nationally Determined Contribution) Consultation, June 2015

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- To the Ministry of Primary Industry re the Proposed National Environmental Standards – Plantation Forestry, August 2015
- To the Ministry of Primary Industry re the Improved Permanent Forests Sinks Initiative, August 2015
- The Independent Review of the Intelligence and Security Legislation, August 2015.

ECO participated in the National Plan of Action on Seabirds and National Plan of Action on Sharks as part of the implementation of these plans.

ECO also made submissions to IUCN on various motions relating to governance and other matters, and developed a major proposal for the implementation of Resolution 2012 -003 calling for raising Membership awareness and support.

As part of ASOC, ECO participated in the preparation of information papers to the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties Meeting and to CCAMLR, and the production of the ECOs at the ATCM in Sofia, Bulgaria.

3 (iii) To provide information and support to its members, through regular newsletters and other publications.

ECOLink, our quarterly newsletter provides reports on events, conferences, government policy and proposed legislation and activities of member bodies.

Thanks to Michael Pringle that *ECOLink* has been complemented by the weekly electronic news brief *Tieke* which is designed to give more regular short notes and notifications of impending events and submissions and interesting publications. This has been met with considerable appreciation by those working in the environment and conservation sector. It provides a brief synopsis of New Zealand and global items of interest, and provides alerts of submissions, meetings, campaigns, as well as providing a mechanism for notifying ECO activities.

It is now sent to approximately 800 subscribers, including all ECO member groups and friends and those outside ECO.

Our Facebook site and Twitter accounts continue to be followed with active engagement and commentary not only from members but from the interested public. Facebook has over 1200 “likes” while Twitter has more than 1400 followers, is often re-tweeted, and keeps an active engagement with those whom it reaches.

We also use *mailchimp* for irregular emails to the whole membership and to Friends of ECO.

Loomio has been used by Executive members for internal decision-making but has not yet been extended to the ECO membership. This is possible in the future.

ECO is completing a guide explaining the principles of the Forest Stewardship Council and how FSC certification works in New Zealand, and how the community can use this to ensure sustainable management of FSC forests. This reflects our concerns that these mechanisms are not widely known and could be much better used. ECO appreciates the co-operation with HECUA¹ which enabled an intern, Erin Roth to work in our office contributing greatly by researching the information for this guide.

Our website, www.eco.org.nz is an on-going source of information to members but also to many others. It continues to be revamped, and we are considering whether to revive SeaNet, our guide to navigating marine and coastal laws, policies and controlling authorities.

3(iv) To initiate and encourage research and the publication of the results of such research.

Research

Given our slim resources, ECO consumes more research than we produce, despite the aspirations of the Goal (iv). We attend to research from a variety of sources, including terrestrial, freshwater, marine and Antarctic research, and social and legal research.

We have taken note of and reported on climate research and the reports of the IPCC and the critiques of these by scientists who are more up to date than the IPCC.

Sociological and psychological research on how to effect planet-friendly behaviour change and environmentally effective, socially just governance have been followed and at times included in ECO reporting and events.

Research on fisheries, on pest control, on pathogens such as kauri die-back, water quality and much more has been of particular interest, and to the extent it has resources, ECO tries to stay informed, to alert member bodies and others of seminars, conferences and reports of interest and significant.

Research has been done for ECO to help gain a national picture of the extent, location, type and value of environmental enhancement and conservation work in New Zealand being done by ENGOs and community efforts. The research is based on a survey of non-governmental environmental organizations to find out about the nature and location of their work and to gain an estimate of the expenditure and amount of voluntary time put into their work in 2014. We have

¹ HECUA is an international environment and social justice study programme working with colleagues here on the interconnections of society and the environment in New Zealand.

in the past surveyed groups engaged in coastal and marine matters, but this survey, initiated and supervised by Executive Member Chris Livesey and conducted by intern Valentine Noreve, covers terrestrial work as well.

The results are not yet available but it is anticipated that they will provide new information about the scale of New Zealanders' efforts to care for their environment and about the range of activities that they are undertaking. Hopefully they will be a source of 'good news' stories for wider dissemination and will add weight to the environment movement's arguments that New Zealanders do care about their environment and that central and local government, and businesses, should do more to assist and complement private citizens' actions to secure the integrity of our environment. If the results warrant it, this research could be updated every few years.

Co-chair Barry Weeber has extensively collated research results on New Zealand fisheries, and this work is fed into several external publications as well as informing ECO's work.

Barry Weeber and Cath Wallace are members of scientific review groups for a broad range of marine protection, fisheries, Antarctic and other subjects.

3 (v) To take all possible steps to inform and encourage the public on ways to achieve goals for the environment.

ECO employs a range of methods to inform and encourage the public and others on ways to protect the environment. Our Website, twitter, Facebook, ECOLink have been covered above. We also have an on-going media commentary role and are frequently asked for comment as well as how people such as members of the public, officials, academics, media and others can connect to others and to information and expertise.

ECO Members, Friends and Exec members have participated in a range of seminars and conferences, round table discussions, lectures (such as Catherine Iorns's TED talk in Tauranga) and public events such as rallies in support of transition to a fossil-free future and in opposition to the Investor-State chapter and secrecy of the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP).

We continue to liaise with various groups about the environment, such as the Environment – trades union group, to respond to public inquiries, help students and others seeking information, and are involved in media commentary and press work.

Members of the ECO Executive Committee and our member bodies and Friends engage in a wide variety of actions to protect the environment and often use reports on these efforts to promote an awareness of these, tips, and to help establish social norms for conservation promoting, energy conserving and biosecurity preserving actions. These include actions and tips on pest control, biosecurity and pathogen hygiene, beach clean ups, restoration, climate action

and energy efficiency and other practical activities. We also have promoted an awareness of the problems of fisheries mis-management and overfishing.

3(vi) To establish and maintain (working) co-operative relationships with official and non-governmental bodies with similar interest at international², regional and national level.

Participation in external Working Groups

ECO was a member of:

- The plenary group of the Land and Water Forum
- Various Fisheries Working Groups and plenaries
- The second round of Proposed National Environmental Standards on Plantation Forests working groups.
- Sub-Antarctic Marine Protected Areas Working Group.
- National Plan of Action on Seabirds Implementation Group
- National Plan of Action on Sharks Working Group
- Union and civil society - Environment liaison meetings
- A Community – University liaison forum supporting an application for a United Nations University Regional Centre of Expertise in the Waikato
- Thar Working Group

Non-governmental and international organisations

ECO is a member of the following:

International

- The Antarctic and Southern Oceans Coalition (ASOC)
- The Antarctic Oceans Alliance
- The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- Deep Sea Conservation Coalition (DSCC)
- High Seas Alliance

New Zealand

- New Zealand Committee of IUCN-NZ
- Association of Non-government Organisations of Aotearoa (ANGOA), now known as Hui-e'
- Climate Defence Network (CDN)
- Coal Action Network Aotearoa (CANA)
- Wild Rivers Coalition
- The 2precious2mine coalition
- The Forest Stewardship Council New Zealand Environment Chamber
- The NZ Forest Accord.
- An alliance of groups working on marine issues.
- An alliance of groups working on forestry issues.
- NZ Shark Alliance

² None of the international work has been at ECO's cost, being either paid for by the individuals doing the work, or by the international organisations to which ECO belongs.

We also have cooperative relations with many others. In 2014-15 we worked with IUCN, Taranaki Climate Justice, Forest and Bird, Coal Action Network, FSC, DoC, pest control groups, various councils, MPI, the Hauraki Gulf Forum, some recreational fishing groups and others.

At an international level, in addition to IUCN, we work within the Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition (ASOC), the Antarctic Oceans Alliance (AOA), and Antarctic Treaty system meetings including attending the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM) and the Scientific Committee and Commission of the Convention for the Conservation of Marine Living Resources, CCAMLR and at the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation, SPRFMO.

On high seas and oceans governance we work with the High Seas Alliance and the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition (DSCC). We are involved as members and contributors to the discussions that DSCC Representatives have in relation to the UN processes of developing rules for governance of the High Seas – Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction, ABNJ. We are pressing for (and making progress on) rules to protect Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction. Duncan Currie, international lawyer extraordinaire, is leading much of this work.

IUCN – the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources - Working for people and nature.

ECO is a long standing member of IUCN, and both Cath Wallace and Diana Shand have served in the past as Oceania Regional Councillor on IUCN's council.

Diana Shand is chair of the Theme on Social Environmental Accountability of the Private Sector (TSEAPRISE) within the IUCN Commission for Environmental Economic and Social Policy (CEESP). She is leading a project on Certification and Biodiversity.

Cath Wallace has served on an IUCN subcommittee giving input into the drafting of governance motions relating to the rights of IUCN members in decision making and the limits of the Council's powers. related to governance and the relative powers of the Council vis-a-vis the authority of the members of IUCN. Within IUCN

Catherine Iorns, who is a member of the IUCN World Commission on Environmental Law, has undertaken a variety of seminars and lectures to push the intellectual legal ideas to develop the notions of the legal standing of nature and its ethical consideration, as well as for the inclusion of and respect for indigenous people and their knowledge. She is currently organising a public seminar on biodiversity offsetting for the IUCN NZ National Committee Wellington meeting on September 11, 2015.

Several ECO Executive Committee and members of ECO members are members of one or more of the IUCN's six expert Commissions.

Diana Shand, Catherine Iorns, and Betsan Martin all attended and all were involved in presentations at the IUCN World Parks Congress in Sydney, November 2015.

IUCN's global One Programme and ECO involvement

The IUCN Programme 2013–2016 aims to mobilize communities working for biodiversity conservation, sustainable development and poverty reduction in common efforts to halt biodiversity loss and apply nature-based solutions to conserve biodiversity, enhance resilience, strengthen equity, reduce poverty and so improve the wellbeing of people on this planet.

The Programme builds upon IUCN's niche as the world's authority on biodiversity conservation, nature-based solutions and related environmental governance. It has three Programme Areas:



1. Valuing and Conserving Nature enhances IUCN's heartland work on biodiversity conservation, emphasizing both tangible and intangible values of nature.

Throughout ECO's work we continue to articulate the case for recognition and incorporation into decision making of non-market and passive use values, both instrumental and ethical. In our work to reshape the thinking of politicians, we have circulated papers to parties to give them frameworks for thinking through these values, including the analyses from ecological economics and ecological ethics, as well as acknowledging matauranga Maori.

2. Effective and Equitable Governance of Nature's Use consolidates IUCN's work on people-nature relations, rights and responsibilities, and the political economy of nature.

ECO with member body Response continues to promote discussion of responsibility for our actions and effects on nature, and an awareness that with rights come responsibilities. We have supported and promoted this concept in a variety of fora, from New Zealand discussions of law and policy to IUCN's Oceania Regional Conservation Forum.

In our work we continue to press that any use of or impacts on nature be clearly understood to need to engage not only with nature's limits but also to recognise that biophysical systems are the foundations of cultural, social and economic systems and that governance should recognise the future and the legacy of the past, but without entrenching damaging behaviours. These themes infuse our work

3. Deploying Nature-based Solutions to Global Challenges in Climate, Food and Development expands IUCN's work on nature's contribution to tackling problems of sustainable development, particularly in climate change, food security and social and economic development.

Recognition of the need to protect and maintain the biophysical systems of the planet New Zealand and the biodiversity and ecosystems is at the heart of our work to press for renewable and/or non-extractive uses of the environment.

We have pressed the NZ government to step up to take more, and more effective action on climate change, to revamp the Emissions Trading System to establish an effective price for carbon, and we have pressed for Fonterra and other industrial users of coal to switch to wood-based fuels. ECO contributes submissions to a number of national and international bodies including on New Zealand's emissions reductions (and lack of

these) in the INDC

ECO delegates, Barry Weeber, Betsan Martin, Cath Wallace and Diana Shand attended the IUCN Oceania Regional Conservation Forum, mid-July 2015, with others from IUCN National Committee. ECO contributed to those discussions and, amongst other things, advocated for an approach of responsibility to be developed at the Oceania and Global Programmes and Oceania Regional Plan. A short paper was circulated to elaborate responsibility as a public good approach. The tendency to work with rights, and the entitlement focus of rights, needs to be balanced with the responsibility. At the IUCN Forum, we developed a range of ideas including that of an “Ice-to-the-Equator” event as it is now known. We hope this will be a collaborative science and policy event with Antarctic and Pacific science and policy communities in dialogue.

Land and Water Forum (LAWF)

ECO is a member of the Forum, a collaborative process involving a wide range of stakeholders in providing advice to the Government on the management of freshwater in New Zealand. LAWF received a third mandate from the Government in March 2015 and since then ECO Executive members Chris Livesey, Betsan Martin and Catherine Iorns have participated in the LAWF plenary sessions as well as the Science to Policy Workshop and the Economics Workshop organized by the LAWF Secretariat.

When it gave LAWF its new mandate, the Government indicated that it would like advice on various issues by various deadlines. The first set of issues, with a deadline of 30 September 2015 were: “How to maximize the economic benefit of freshwater while managing within water quality and quantity limits that are set consistent with the NPS-FM 2014” and within that, “Policy design of a regulatory requirement to fence streams to exclude dairy cattle”. On the same timeframe the Government asked for advice on “Mechanisms to manage the transition from the current regime to effectively manage within limits”.

LAWF continues to operate by having a Small Group to develop consensus positions that they then report to the Plenary for consideration and final decision. ECO is not a member of the Small Group (but Forest & Bird, EDS and Ecologic are).

To help it grapple with the first set of issues, LAWF established seven ‘flexi-groups’ whose task was to ‘unpack’ the issues for the LAWF Small Group and subsequently, the Plenary, to consider. ECO Executive member Chris Livesey participated in the Urban Issues flexi-group.

The draft advice to Government on the first set of issues became available in mid-August. Plenary sessions to consider and adopt the advice to Government on these issues are scheduled for 24 August and 25 September 2015.

National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2014 (NPS-FM)

Regional councils have begun implementing the NPS-FM. The December 2014 issue of ECOLink carried an article “Information to assist community involvement in the implementation of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2014” written to help members of ECO and other interested parties participate effectively in the implementation process and identifying issues that needed to be given priority in the process in order to achieve good outcomes for freshwater.

Liaison with the trade union movement

Several members of the ECO Executive have participated in the regular liaison meetings between environmental NGOs and the trade union movement and have thereby strengthened that relationship. Issues of mutual concern include the Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) and the transition to a low carbon economy in NZ/Aotearoa.

This group is developing a promising initiative on transitions to low carbon economies, in which union priorities on labour interests are integrated with environmental matters

Forest Stewardship Council

ECO continues to be a member of the New Zealand Environment Chamber of the FSC. Bill Gilbertson has led this aspect of ECO’s work, particularly on the FSC Standards Development Group which has done intensive work, particularly but not only to engage farm foresters and other small scale forest operators.

Cath Wallace led the work on our response to applications by FSC forestry Company members for derogations relating to a range of chemicals used in forestry including controls on pests, diseases and weeds. This was informed by input by Forest and Bird, Greenpeace and others.

Other

ECO has met with a range of officials from the Ministry of Primary Industry, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Department of Conservation and others.

(vii) To create a sense of community for those organisations and individuals with a shared concern for the environment, conservation and ECO’s other goals and objects.

Much of our work on this has already been reported on above. Key elements of our work on this include our 2014 and August 2015 conference, the Regional gathering in Taranaki. Much of the community is on line in email conversations and the networks reported above.

Convening regional gatherings focused on Members’ concerns is another major way in which ECO can support members. ECO has also published Member reports and publicised Members’ events through Tieke and ECOLink, and

contributed to Members' activities when called upon. For example, ECO was able to publicise the Food Matters Conference, provide transport for the visiting international scientists in the South Island speaking tour, and bring participants to the Wellington 14-15 February Conference and related Speaking Tour and meetings in Hawkes Bay, Hamilton, Auckland and Wellington.

Betsan Martin, Diana Shand and others worked with GE Free NZ in relation the Food Matters Conference and the issue of GE food and other matters, a conference which did much to alert people to the significance of industrialised food production, pesticides in food and GE food.

The 2015 Regional meeting in Taranaki was co-hosted by ECO, Climate Justice Taranaki and Sustainable Whanganui but it engaged a much wider community and group of people and groups, including Tangata Whenua, in a shared concern about the impacts of the oil and gas industries and the opportunities to decarbonize while also gaining strength from each other.

4 ECO's Policies and External Working Groups:

4.0 The External Working Groups are:

Working Group 1: Improved environmental management and laws.

Working Group 2 Conservation, Biosecurity and Biodiversity

Working Group 3: Marine, Fisheries and Oceans

Working Group 4: International, Antarctica and the Southern Ocean

Working Group 5: Climate Working Group

Working Group 6: Open Government and Participative Society

Working Group 7: Policy and Promotion of our vision for NZ and the wider environment.

ECO's working groups remain the core of our substantive work, and have been very busy in the last year. Some have several subgroups.

The Working Groups have had variable success in being moved from informal to formal status with Terms of Reference and agreed membership. Some did that diligently, others have continued to work as before but have not yet formalized their Terms of Reference and Work Plans and recruitment to working groups is unfinished business. Working Group coordinator Cath Wallace was unable to do as much as promised and apologises for that.

4.1 Improved environmental management and governance;

This working group has been coordinated by Cath Wallace.

It remit includes the RMA, EPA, EEZ & Continental Shelf Act (in association with the marine and fisheries Working Group), mining, water and land use.

RMA

We have continued to follow the proposals for changes to the RMA, and to work to understand and raise awareness of the government's plans to unpick environmental protections and to change aspects of the Act.

Forests

We made submissions and met with MPI officials on the National Environmental Standards for Plantation Forestry and then on proposals to improve the Permanent Forests Sink Initiative. This work, in association with the members of the ECO Exotic Forestry Working Group, various member bodies, Exec members and others was led by Cath Wallace, with Bill Gilbertson leading some of this work and the FSC Standards Development Group and other aspects. Bill is the coordinator of the Exotic Forests Working Group. Chris Livesey has contributed to our critique of the NES-Plantation Forests. Others who have contributed include for Greenpeace Grant Rosomon, Gordon Jackman, Jenny Baker, and various others.

EPA

ECO's experience with the EPA in this and last year has been primarily in relation to the seabed mining applications. We were pleased that in each of the two seabed mineral mining applications, the Decision Making Committee turned down the applications. We know mining interests want the government to change the EEZ & CS Act, and we will watch as closely as we can.

Labour's Meka Whaitiri has had a Private Member's Bill drawn from the ballot and we intend to support this very short bill which makes environmental protection be the purpose of the EPA and its Act. Submissions are due on the 10 September 2015.

Water

Exec members contributing to ECO's work on water include Chris Livesey, Diana Shand, Betsan Martin, Barry Weeber and Catherine Iorns.

ECO Member bodies and Friends involved in the Ruataniwha Dam case, the Waitara river, the control of intensive farming all over the country, and other cases about water, intensive farming and water quality, and those involved in protecting water from mining impacts and fracking are just some of the many in ECO who have pushed for water protection.

Diana Shand has led much of the programme development, the local Canterbury and organizational work on the 2015 ECO Conference, *Dialogues on Freshwater - Navigating impasses & new approaches*. She has been greatly helped by volunteers Clay Mosolinio, Terra Dumont, Matthew Hanson, Geoff Keey and by a conference Team led by Michael Pringle and other members of the Executive and volunteers. Betsan Martin has brought Sir Edward Taihakurei Durie and Iwi and academic speakers to engage us all with new ways of working.. Betsan has contributed funds via a UNESCO grant. *Freshwater Dialogues* exemplifies ECO's role in convening groups in wider networks and engaging with a variety of parties on these matters.

Mining

ECO's main engagement on this matter has been this year in relation to fracking, coal mining, and to minerals mining and related activities, both at sea and on land. We have participated in the discussion about impacts of mining, related legislation and raising awareness of alternatives to fossil fuels and a just transition away from these.

We continue to engage on the legislative side and in strategic cases such as the Chatham Rock Phosphate mining application.

Responsibility

ECO is receptive to *responsibility* as an approach to environmental governance and management for public good, this idea is promoted by the Response Trust. Responsibility has the added dimension of corresponding with traditional knowledge frameworks of tangata whenua/Iwi and the principle of obligation. This derives from the well developed collective focus of indigenous knowledge, or Mātauranga Māori. Responsibility therefore serves a Treaty of Waitangi interest.

4.2 Conservation, Biodiversity and Biosecurity

We have approached biodiversity conservation and biosecurity protection on several fronts. This work has involved many member bodies, and many in the Exec as well as Friends and volunteers.

We continue to press for more public spending and more cost-effective spending on marine and terrestrial biodiversity protection, biosecurity, and conservation. Diana Shand, Barry Weeber, Fred Murray, Tony Dean and Cath Wallace have attended DoC meetings; Geoff Keey would normally have done so but had the misfortune to have his house burn down and has been much occupied in its reconstruction.

Maiki Marks continues to challenge the Far North District Council to protect a legally public coastal esplanade that has been progressively taken over by a boatyard. Members all around New Zealand have undertaken coastal protection and other revegetation and biodiversity protection. Coromandel Watchdog,

KASM, Greenpeace and several of our South Island members such as West Coast Environment Network have worked, often with others, to protect the environment from mining impacts.

Barry Weeber has done a lot of work on Marine Protected Areas, within the New Zealand Territorial Sea and EEZ, in the high seas and in the Ross Sea and Southern Ocean. Cath Wallace, Diana Shand and others have contributed to these efforts which have frequently been done in a collaborative manner with groups with similar goals or within official processes. We continue to await the government's marine protected areas legislation.

Some of our marine work is in relation to Antarctica and the Ross Sea, Areas & Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ, BBNJ), and of course climate change, though with the good work of IPCC, Greenpeace, Generation Zero, 350.org, WWF and so many others, we have not tried to participate at the Climate talks and have no plans to go to the Paris meeting in December.

We attend stakeholder meetings with DoC, NIWA and other agencies about these matters.

Our biosecurity work has included raising awareness of kauri dieback, puriri crown contraction and die-back, pest control options and research; marine biosecurity and species protection.

Betsan Martin, Catherine Iorns, Diana Shand, Cath Wallace and others are active with many others to deepen and broaden the intellectual conceptions of the environment globally, and with application of these to New Zealand experience.

4.3 Marine, Fisheries and Oceans.

ECO continues its work pressing for improved fisheries management, protection of marine biodiversity and endangered species, for a coherent and effectively scaled, designed and managed network of marine protected areas in our Territorial Sea, in the EEZ and in the high seas and in the Southern Ocean.

We have had particular involvement in the push to achieve this in the Ross Sea, and 18 other sites in the Southern Ocean, despite the opposition of powerful fishing nations and fishing interests. This effort is not guaranteed of success, but we owe it to the future to keep pressing. The Ross Sea was identified as the least modified complete marine ecosystem on the planet.

We gave support to the organisations challenging two applications to mine the seabed, and have liaised with national and international colleagues, scientists and affected communities to support protection of the marine environment.

ECO rarely participates in the Marine Stewardship Council processes because the incentives for integrity are flawed and the outcomes we believe are

misleading consumers as to the sustainability of many fisheries, especially those caught by bottom trawling and other damaging methods.

We note the Government's announcement that there is to be a review of the New Zealand Quota Management System. We have long urged reform of this, particularly to provide ecosystem-based management, protected areas, incentives to reduce impacts of fishing and to ensure that the science on which it is based is both ecologically focused and that it is free of control or undue influence by the fishing industry.

The Marine Reserves Bill has been sidelined for many years, and we await some sort of replacement.

Barry Weeber is our lead on fisheries with others such as Cath Wallace and Catherine Iorn, Geoff Keey and others contributing to the marine management debate. Member groups such as Greenpeace, Yellow Eyed Penguin Trust, KASM, all the groups that work on climate change, the coastal protection and watchdog groups and many more contribute to these efforts, as do non-member bodies such as Forest and Bird, WWF NZ and EDS, some iwi and hapu, and many others.

4.4 International & Antarctica and Southern Ocean

To a great extent we have already reported on these aspects of our work above in our discussion of our international, marine and climate work.

Antarctica

ECO is an active member of the Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition and the Antarctic Ocean Alliance. We continue to press for improved conservation and environmental management in the Antarctic and Southern Ocean via the Antarctic Treaty System. We do this through multiple channels including the Treaty Consultative Meetings and CCAMLR and its associated processes and by direct representations to New Zealand government processes and others.

Barry Weeber is on the Board of ASOC, Cath Wallace is on the Council of ASOC, and Geoff Keey is a former New Zealand organiser for the Antarctic Ocean Alliance.

Cath Wallace and Barry Weeber attended the May 2015 ATCM in Sofia, Bulgaria where we worked with some other members of the IUCN NZ Committee and with other IUCN member states and bodies. ECO did not have to shoulder any of the costs of this.

ECO continues to contribute to those process and the NGO coalitions that work for marine protection and attention to climate change and reduction of the impacts of fishing and indeed of fishing effort in the Southern Ocean, especially the Ross Sea.

ECO will closely watch how New Zealand implements its obligations under the convention and protect vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs) from bottom fishing and manage demersal fisheries (E.g. orange roughy) in a sustainable way.

SPRFMO

ECO earned an entitlement to attend the meetings of the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation by attending the negotiations of this fisheries management agreement. We note with great regret the death of Robin Allen who served as the inaugural Director of the SPRFMO secretariat, and who occupied a series of national and international fisheries management positions, including with the Fisheries Management Division of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries in New Zealand before Fisheries was separated off into the then Ministry of Fisheries in New Zealand.

CAN

As noted above, ECO is in the process of applying to join the Climate Action Network, as a way of keeping further in touch with the international NGO network and adding our voice to their work.

4.5 Open government, Open society, Democracy

Jan Rivers has done much in this field, and we are grateful for her input for the Open Government – Participative Society Working Group and the networks involved in this issue. We continue to press for open government, due process, and the rights of civil society. We contributed to the various attempts to open up the TPP, to defend and to enhance open government, civil society's rights of transparency and rights to participate, of individual privacy. We have contributed to discussions and submissions about the roles and powers of covert agencies, particularly the SIS and the Government Communications and Security Bureau.

We see this work as part of our work for the environmental NGO sector, and for a healthy participatory democracy.

4.6 Climate change, coal and energy alternatives;

ECO participated in a variety of events, discussions and actions about fossil fuel and GHG emissions reductions, transition to a low carbon world; awareness of climate disruption, ocean acidification, and ice melt, ocean freshening and sea level rise. The scenarios forecast and pathways in response were discussed, and ECO continues to press the NZ government, relevant corporates, international bodies and society at large to engage in climate-friendly behaviour.

ECO made submissions on the New Zealand Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC).

ECOs and many member groups including Climate Justice Taranaki, Greenpeace NZ, Response Trust and others have pressed for climate action.

ECO has begun the process to apply to join the international Climate Action Network.

ECO is engaging with IUCN and partner science organisations in exploring the scope for an “Ice to the Equator” symposium to take and exchange science and policy and community understandings between the Antarctic, climate and oceans sciences and the Pacific. This is early days in the exploration stage to scope it out and to see what the appetite is for this in the light of the many other events underway.

4.7 Open and participative government, Open society, Democracy

Working Group Leader, Jan Rivers has done much in this field, and we are grateful for her input for the Open Government – Participative Society Working Group and the networks involved in this issue. We continue to press for open government, due process, and the rights of civil society. We contributed to the various attempts to open up the TPP, to defend and to enhance open government, civil society’s rights of transparency and rights to participate, of individual privacy. We have contributed to discussions and submissions about the roles and powers of covert agencies, particularly the SIS and the Government Communications and Security Bureau.

We see this work as part of our work for the environmental NGO sector, and for a healthy participatory democracy.

4.8 Policy and Promotion of our vision for NZ and the wider environment.

In many ways this working group is cross cutting, in that it encompasses the work of ECO’s policy compilation and development, and our intellectual work such as developing and /or promoting the conceptual side of our work.

This working group also encompasses ECO’s outreach work to the public, to official agencies, politicians, iwi, stakeholders and corporates.

Our media and publications fall within this working group, as does our work to promote adoption of our policies, recommended practice and much more.

In 2014 ECO was part of a group of environmentally minded organisations who worked together to understand New Zealander’s values, to develop effective messages and to find means to promote these.

In 2014-15 we have built on work done by Jenny Baker and Barry Weeber to assemble and collate our past policies from AGMs and from the Vote for the Environment campaigns.

Our work has been greatly assisted by Environmental Studies graduate, Kudzai Mvere, who has taken on the task of sorting the policies into subject order. This

will allow us to bring our compendium up to date, and it will help the Working Groups to build on previous work. We are hugely grateful to her for her work.

5 Work within ECO:

5.1 Treaty of Waitangi and engagement with Maori

Betsan Martin, Chris Livesey, Cath Wallace, Catherine Iorns, Diana Shand and others have contributed to the work on our constitutional changes in this regard and to our discussion of how to improve our engagement with Maori, which for some years has been ad hoc rather than systematic.

This work continues, and will be the subject of discussion at the AGM 2015. Many of the contributors to the conference and the regional gathering (late January) in 2015 are tributes to this work.

5.2 Developing our Funding

Developing a plan over the next year to increase ECO's funding base: ECO aims to increase its funding base so that our regular funding from non-grant sources meets our regular outgoings. We take occasional advice from two professional fundraisers on a *pro bono* basis, for which we express our thanks.

We are indebted to Bruce Anderson, our former Treasurer, for his analysis and the new reporting systems he developed. He has been very helpful in explaining the new NGO reporting systems that we can expect under the new laws, and he has helped us with understanding our fund raising needs.

Appeals:

The frequency of appeals has increased over the year and this has resulted in increased donation revenue from appeals, although overall donation revenue has remained static. The street appeal was not undertaken this past year.

A written appeal was sent out in November 2014 and an email appeal in May 2015. The November 2014 appeal nearly doubled the amount raised from donors compared to 2013. The May email was good for an email appeal.

We plan to increase the number of appeals to at least three per year.

Automatic payments:

We are asking all AP payers to consider if they can increase their AP, and others – Friends and supporters – to start an AP.

Givealittle:

ECO's account with Givealittle was re-activated during the year and promoted on Facebook, the website and in Tieke as the primary means to donate to ECO. The advantage to ECO is that we pay no fees. Givealittle has raised about \$1,500 so far (independently of responses to appeals).

Grants:

We received a grant of \$4,000 from the Methodist Church PAC fund towards our communications, notably ECOLink, for which we are grateful. Other grant applications were unfortunately not successful but we persist in identifying sources of grant funding and will apply as appropriate.

Other revenue sources:

ECO promotes Buzz channel and payroll giving, from which we receive small commissions, and we partner with Craig Potton Books and ECOsteam products for a percentage of sales. All these bring in a small amount of revenue. They are promoted on our website and in Tieke and in ECOLink.

5.3 Internal Communications

See our reporting under our Objects.

5.4 Administration

Bruce Anderson took over the task of chairing the Administration Committee from Diana Shand who however has continued to provide a vital underpinning of our organization, but she has been embroiled in post-earthquake reconstruction in Christchurch.

Bruce, having replaced Tony Dean as Treasurer, put us onto a new footing and new reporting, in anticipation of the new rules from the government.

Jim Kebble kindly stepped in to replace Bruce when the latter decided to pursue various other interests, and Jim prepared with Michael our annual accounts for submission to the AGM and for audit.

Michael Pringle joined ECO as our new Executive Officer in May 2014. He received an excellent hand-over from Alison Davis for which we are grateful. Michael has installed new systems: Civicrm database, Xero accounts, Loomio discussion tool. These have improved our effectiveness and our fundraising. He is a dynamo, and has reinvigorated many of our processes and systems.

The resource centre: our library and archives: has been weeded, reorganised and catalogued by a dedicated team of librarians and others. We are most grateful to the volunteer librarians, and to Aubanie Raynal who has worked tirelessly on the periodicals collection, for all their work over the past year. Very soon the periodicals catalogue will be online on the ECO website and we hope to do the same with the books catalogue in the coming year.

6 Honorary Solicitor

Particular thanks to our Honorary Solicitor, Quentin Davies who continues to support us with donations and with *pro bono* legal advice.

7 ECO Members and Friends

7.1 ECO Membership

ECO's membership represents a wide range of organisations. They cover a wealth of issues and provide endless expertise and effort covering many localities. As is usual, some of our members have finished their work or run out of steam, while others have formed and flourished. Collectively, their work is huge, and they are unsung heroes.

ECO Members include:

- Appropriate Technology for Living Association
- Auckland Civic Trust
- Baywatch Hawkes Bay Environment Group
- Buller Conservation Group
- Civic Trust Auckland
- Clean Earth League New Zealand
- Clean Stream Waiheke
- Climate Justice Taranaki
- Coal Action Network Aotearoa
- Conscious Consumers
- Conservation Volunteers New Zealand
- Coromandel Watchdog of Hauraki
- East Harbour Environmental Association
- Eastern Bay of Islands Preservation Society
- ECOmatters Environment Trust
- Engineers for Social Responsibility
- Environment Network Manawatu
- Environmental Futures Inc.
- Far North Environment Centre
- Friends of Golden Bay
- Friends of Nelson Haven and Tasman Bay
- Friends of the Earth New Zealand
- GE Free New Zealand
- Greenpeace New Zealand
- Guardians of Pauatahunui Inlet
- Initial Volco Trust
- Kaipatiki Ecological Restoration Project
- National Council of Women National Office
- Nelson Environment Centre
- Orari River Protection Group
- Public Good New Zealand
- RESPONSE Trust
- Royal Forest and Bird North Canterbury branch
- Save the Otago Peninsula
- Soil and Health Association
- South Coast Environment Society
- Sustainable Otautahi Christchurch
- Sustainable Whanganui
- Te Aroha Earthwatch

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Thames Coast Preservation and Protection Society
Wellington Botanical Society
West Coast Environment Network
West Coast Penguin Trust
Yellow Eyed Penguin Trust

7.2 Friends of ECO

ECO continues to value the support of loyal life and subscribing Friends of ECO and we pay tribute to their help and support. We have lost some Friends through natural attrition and welcome others joining.

The number of our supporters and friends on social media (Facebook and Twitter) has grown significantly over the past year and all these supporters are valued and we'd welcome them as ECO Friends.

8. Finance

8.1 Overview

Bruce Anderson served as ECO Treasurer from July 2014 to March 2015 and we are very grateful to him for the enormous amount of dedicated work he put in to sort out documentation and get our financial reporting on a stronger footing. His knowledge and high degree of skill was a great asset to ECO and we were very sorry to see him go.

Jim Kebbell stepped in to take over the Treasurer position and we are grateful to him for taking over at short notice from Bruce. Jim brings a wealth of experience from his many years as a businessman.

The accounts are now on the Xero accounts system and are run very accurately with improved reporting functions.

8.2 Donations, automatic payments

ECO is grateful to those who respond so generously to our appeals. These form an essential part of our income and we could not manage without the support of our donor base. A huge thank you to you all. Also to the people who make regular automatic payments to ECO: thank you! You are truly sustaining ECO.

ECO continues its fundraising partnership with online research panel Buzz Fundraising, and gains commissions of sales through Ecosteam products and Craig Potton Books.

Payroll giving is encouraged: ECO is set up with IRD for this.

Despite some improved success with fundraising ECO remains under-funded and in need of additional help to cover our costs. Donations of money, time, and in-kind contributions are all very welcome.

We are grateful to all those who have contributed donations to ECO of time or of money.

9 Volunteers who have helped ECO 2014-15

We have many wonderful volunteers to thank this year. Without them, our work at ECO would not be possible.

- Elise Smith for her work with the Moodle and the website
- Tom Anderson for his assistance with IT in the ECO office
- Betty Weeber and Suilva McIntyre for their help with the ECOLink mailout
- Bruce Anderson for his work as Treasurer, Tony Dean for his work assisting us with financial matters and Jim Kebell for taking over as new ECO Treasurer at short notice in March this year
- Quentin Davies, our honorary solicitor, who has given us invaluable support and advice
- Nathanael Yew for his help with cooking at conference and the ECO planning weekend and office help
- Robert Lomas for his help in formatting ECOLink and other ECO documents
- Maddy van der Poel for her research work
- Aubanie Raynal for her work on reorganising the ECO library and research work
- Linda Pears for her library cataloguing work and help with ECOLink
- Briar Wyatt for her research work
- Daniel Swildens for his help with the database and much else besides
- Gillian Cameron for her help with the library
- Elizabeth Lee for her help at Home Shows
- Juliette Irwin for her tremendous research work and help with Tieke
- Zahir Ahmad for his help with Home Shows, ECOLink and much else besides
- Walaa f Mansaan for her help with the library
- Kudzai Mvere for help with policy work
- Wharehuia Hemara for his help with the library
- Salila Jayaneththi who has helped with library cataloguing
- Elvina Eugene for her help with communications advice
- Thiagaraj Mahalingam who has also helped with communications and design

ECO thanks all who contributed to our efforts in the last year.

Michael Pringle

Our Executive Officer, Michael Pringle, has proved to be extraordinarily good at finding and motivating volunteers, designing and implementing new administrative systems, at executing plans rapidly and bringing in sponsorship and funds. He is a great asset to ECO and we warmly thank him for his efforts.

10 Looking Ahead

ECO's work on strengthening and streamlining our internal organisation continues, and needs ongoing support and input from member bodies and supporters, as does our commitment to strengthen our links with tangata whenua.

We will continue to develop our policy portfolio and increase our outreach.

At this time of the election cycle, policies and laws that have been developed since the last election or carried over from the last term of government start to become a torrent, and we will need to engage with whatever emerges regarding the RMA, marine protected areas, changes to the EEZ&CA, and possible reconfiguration at DoC and more.

New Zealand's biodiversity remains at risk, and we will do what we can to help reduce the losses – and even to get recovery.

Antarctic marine protection will be considered again at CCAMLR in October 2015 but may get bogged in geopolitics once again.

The Paris Climate meeting in December 2015 will reveal whether political will can be summoned to tackle greenhouse gas emissions.

In September 2016 the IUCN World Conservation Congress will take place in Hawai'i.

ECO welcomes help and collaboration. There is much to be done.
