Greenpeace Reacts to Antarctic Whaling

ON 14 DECEMBER Greenpeace announced its presence in Antarctica to protest whaling. Its vessel, the MV Arctic Sunrise, with a crew from 16 countries, engaged the Japanese whaling factory ship the Nisshin Maru.

A Japanese Greenpeace campaigner, Yuko Hirono, radioed to request the whaling fleet to stop and inform them that Greenpeace would be taking non violent action to prevent whaling. For the first time ever the whalers seemed to be listening as the message was relayed through the Nisshin Maru’s intercom to all the crew.

“When even the International Whaling Commission (IWC) has urged the Japanese Government to end this catch there is no justification whatever for the whaling to continue,” said Hirono. “Greenpeace will continue its campaign until whaling has been stopped.”

This action follows an IWC resolution, passed in July 2001, on Southern Hemisphere Minke whales and special permit whaling, saying: “Concerned that the Scientific Committee report cannot rule out that the Southern Hemisphere Minke whale population may have suffered a precipitous decline over the past decade; now therefore the Commission ...strongly urges the Government of Japan to halt the lethal takes of Minke whales.”

In an effort to control IWC decisions the Japanese Government has paid overseas development aid to buy some nations votes. In May 2002 (the next meeting of the IWC) this blatant vote buying could spell the end of protection for the whales and bring back commercial whaling.

The Japanese Government claims to be taking Minke whales in the Antarctic for scientific research. But of the 2000 metric tonnes of meat roughly provided by the 440 whales the whalers hope to catch this year only a few grams are claimed to be used for science. The Fisheries Institute of Japan claim they need earplugs to determine age, sex organs to examine reproduction rates, and stomachs to understand food consumption. None of this is necessary. For example, of the 5000 Minke whale stomachs so far ‘sampled’ in the Antarctic, everyone has contained krill and only krill, a fact that was known long before the ‘research’ began.

This take of whales is based purely on profit and is intended as the forerunner of a much larger hunt. The meat will bring a wholesale return of at least 3.5 billion yen (US$28 million).

It’s wrong to think that because we have a temporary ban on commercial whaling the whales are saved – they’re not. Unless the Governments of the world act to stop them Japan will overturn the ban and full-scale whaling will begin again!

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Antarctic Policy Review: NZ’s Strategic Interests

ECO and other Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition (ASOC) members in New Zealand have engaged the Government on its policy position in relation to Antarctica, especially in relation to the Southern Ocean and the Ross Sea area.

ASOC NZ’s irritation with the extent to which the officials had become simply the proponents of fishing company plans led to some serious words from ECO to the Government. To their credit, the Government responded with a Cabinet paper to review NZ’s strategic interests. ECO made submissions suggesting a much more conservation, peace and science focus than the previous policy - left over from the National government policy of 1995 which stressed economic interests.

ECO has yet to see what the Government’s decision on this will be - but there will be further policy development early in the new year.

Regrettably there has been strong pressure from fishing interests to ride roughshod over the diplomatic positioning of New Zealand. Since the negotiation of the Environmental Protocol to the Antarctic Treaty in 1990-91 (and much earlier) New Zealand stressed the need to preserve peace and science and to avoid conflict, including conflict over resource extraction.

The fishing companies have some allies in Cabinet.

Photo: Antarctica

Imperatives for protecting Antarctica and the Southern Ocean

ECO has put forward the following set of NZ Strategic Interests for Antarctica and the Southern Ocean: The maintenance of the intrinsic values of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean and the comprehensive protection of the Antarctic environment and dependent and associated ecosystems and its status as a natural reserve devoted to peace and science.

To this end, New Zealand will engage in active and responsible stewardship, under the Antarctic Treaty System and other relevant international agreements, that promotes New Zealand’s interests in:

- National and international peace and security through a commitment to keeping Antarctica as peaceful, nuclear free, and its environment protected;
- Continued influence in Antarctic governance through maintaining an effective and credible role in the Antarctic Treaty System and a civil governmental presence in the Ross Sea Region;
- Comprehensively protecting, and understanding the biodiversity of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean, in particular the biodiversity of the Ross Sea region, including protection of special areas;
- Protection and conservation, of the marine living resources of the Southern Ocean, and in particular the Ross Sea, in accordance with CCAMLR and the Protocol to the Antarctic Treaty on Environmental Protection;
- Supporting and where appropriate leading, high quality Antarctic and Southern Ocean science that benefits from the unique research opportunities provided by Antarctica;
- Demonstrating and advocating for best practice in environmental stewardship and all other activities throughout Antarctica, and in particular the Ross Sea region;
- Ensuring that all activity is undertaken in a manner consistent with Antarctica’s status as a natural reserve devoted to peace and science, and, within this context support only those Antarctic related activities that ensure the comprehensive protection of the Antarctic environment and dependant and associated ecosystems.

Action: You can write to Prime Minister Helen Clark, Fisheries Minister Pete Hodgson and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Phil Goff at Parliament Buildings, Wellington or email Pete.Hodgson@parliament.govt.nz Helen.Clark@... or Phil.Goff@... ECO has available copies of a variety of papers and the consultation document


The SOE report for the Ross Sea region addresses some key aspects of human activities. The report provides an analysis of current understanding of the environment, including an appraisal of the effects of global warming, ozone depletion, and exploitation of living resources in the region.

The report, published by the NZ Antarctic Institute (Antarctica New Zealand), is now available for purchase. Visit: www.antarcticanz.govt.nz
Wake up! Act now on Climate Change

IT IS NOW extremely urgent that we voice our opinions on the need for action on Climate Change.

One of the hazards of a Government with some environmentally inclined Ministers is that the environmental community takes those inisters for granted and doesn’t keep pressing its views.

There is a considerable risk that the greenhouse gas polluters’ lobby will triumph because we all left it to each other to make submissions on Climate Change and very few people did.

It is imperative that the environment movement gets busy and communicates to the Government, the Opposition and the public strong support for the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol to the Rio Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC). The greener Ministers in Cabinet also need support, in this context especially Energy Minister Pete Hodgson and Environment Minister Marian Hobbs, and of course Prime Minister Helen Clark. They are under intense pressure from their much less environmentally concerned colleagues and the anti-ratification lobby.

The Government has just concluded a travelling consultation on Climate Change and ECO was chagrined to discover how few of the environmental and recreational groups had spoken at the Climate Change Summits. We think this is in part because we have all been leaving it to the others and to the Government. In part it seems that the climate change office did not have the contact details for the bulk of the environment and recreational groups. Written submissions on the consultation documents close on 21 December 2001.

The consultation documents include a core policy consultation paper, “Kyoto Protocol: Ensuring our Future” which poses a set of questions for response, and a set of other documents. Some of these are slim fact sheets, others background papers on a range of subjects. There is also a set of economic modelling papers. Copies of the papers can be obtained from the NZ Climate Change Programme, or from www.climatechange.govt.nz.

The Issues

It is very important that both groups and individuals convey urgently to the Government their support for the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol.

Key points to make include:

- Support for ratification of the Kyoto Protocol;
- The criteria proposed for deciding which policies to implement: ECO can support the criteria of economic efficiency and the heading of “equity” but NOT the portrayal of what needs to be considered under this heading. Make the point under the criterion of equity, that this should refer to the implementation of the Polluter Pays Principle (which amazingly is not mentioned in the document, even under “equity”). Also that equity over time requires us to take effective action.
- Environmental effectiveness of the measures should be a criterion, and so should the Precautionary Principle, but neither is mentioned. The measures should be easily adjusted and that this may mean that tradable permits, though efficient, may not be so good. The criterion of competitiveness should be opposed since this simply is a way of justifying not taking action. It is neither efficient, effective nor equitable to allow competitiveness as a criterion.

Phase 1 of the consultation sought views from the public on the question of ratification, and on the environmental, social, cultural and economic implications of ratification. It also seeks views on Part I of the proposed legislation and on what policies might be included in Part II of the legislation.

The address for submissions is Consultation, Climate Change Programme, Box 55, Wellington or for an electronic version of the form, email consultation@climatechange.govt.nz.

If you can commit to be part of the Climate Change campaign over the next 3-9 months, please contact Cath Wallace via ECO or at ecowatch@paradise.net.nz

ECOLINK DECEMBER 2001 • PAGE 3
Minning

Waihi: Sink Big

THE 50M WIDE and 15m deep hole that “swallowed” the Barry Road house, vehicles and caravan in Waihi early on 13 December was not far from the former house of the late Maurice Cowan, plumber and environmentalist in Waihi.

Maurice Cowan campaigned vigorously about subsidence and the impacts of mining on Waihi and the effects of mining in his immediate area. When he died of a heart attack about six years ago, his wife sold the house to the mining company and the family moved. Maurice had fought for the environment, the town and his neighbours. It is little consolation that he was right: we remember his contribution with affection and appreciation and we still miss him.

We are thankful that the family whose house fell down the crater survived. Many others are left financially “trapped” in houses that have been evacuated and/or are over the Royal Reef and the rest of the 150km of underground tunnels and stopes that date from the old days of underground mining.

The land owners are likely to find it impossible to sell - except to the mining company. As the impacts of the modern open pit mining with its dust, noise, dewatering and twice daily blasting have spread, more and more people have reluctantly sold out to the company. ECO has heard unconfirmed reports that in some cases the mining company has on-sold the houses with a condition attached that indemnifies the mining company against mine-related damage.

The Waihi Gold Mining Company began open pit mining at the Martha Mine in 1988, and instead of closing in 2000, gained a new resource consent to continue until 2007. The new consent takes the mine 60m deeper and almost double the daily dewatering to 15,000cu m from 7776cu m.

Much more recently in 2001, the Waihi Gold Mining company has revealed its interest in a deep underground mine at the Favona gold deposit. This new area of interest is conveniently situated where the portal to the proposed underground mine would be close by the existing processing plant which is located close to the tailings dam east of Union Hill, some distance across town from the Martha Mine. The mined ore is taken across town to the processing plant. The company says that it would back-fill with waste rock tunnels created in the underground mining which it anticipates to produce large quantities of high quality ore.

There have been two earlier major cases of subsidence, the first in the 1960s, before the open pit began, then in 1999. In that subsidence the Hauraki District Council spent $1m to move six pensioner flats.

Waihi Gold Mining Company claims that the subsidence is not caused by its open pit operations, just 200 m away, but this is contested by many locals.

All along, the environment and the locals have been at a disadvantage. The succession of mining companies involved in the Martha Mine have been able to command large numbers of lawyers and expert witnesses and mountains of paper reports designed to obscure the main issues in the plethora of technical detail.

The Waihi case is a good case study of the disadvantage of local communities and environment when ranged up against huge moneyed interests. This occurs throughout New Zealand.

The cast of the Hauraki District Council, Waikato Regional Council, and the Environment Court has changed over the years, but the syndrome has not. The syndrome has been the equation of mining with “progress” and the apparent belief by the hearing committees of the council for a succession of approvals and expansions, consent variations and so on that the companies’ experts should be believed ahead of the locals.

Ohinemuri Earthwatch, including Mark Daniels and others, have campaigned tenaciously. Denis Tegg, Thames lawyer and environmentalist, for years acted without charge for local people.

It is increasingly hard to believe that the huge open cast Martha Mine workings just 200m away had nothing to do with it. It seems increasingly improbable that the current mining operation with its de-watering of the pit and twice daily blasting for 13 years has nothing to do with the collapse. An independent inquiry is sorely needed where the evidence and reports of the mining company experts can be tested.

In 1997 at the application hearings for the Enlarged Martha Mine Application (known as EMMA), Denis Tegg warned that the mine extension would have more than the “minor adverse effects” that counsel for the Waihi Gold Mining Company, Rob Fisher, suggested was all that would result from the expansion. Tegg warned of serious defects in the Assessment of Environmental Effects presented by the company and pointed to the lack of any risk assessment. His main concern was with the tailings dam rather than subsidence.

When the main shopping street of Waihi opened up with a huge crack in 1999, causing enormous disruption to the business community and its customers in Waihi, the ratepayers had to fork out $600,000. A Technical Working Party on Underground Workings was established. Delays meant that that report was not submitted in November 2001 as intended but is expected in February 2002. The debate in the immediate aftermath of the recent collapse has not revealed what the tentative conclusions of the Committee are.

At this stage the exact cause of the Waihi collapse is unknown. As Jeanette Fitzsimons, Green MP, has observed it is increasingly hard to believe that the huge open cast Martha Mine workings just 200m away had...
nothing to do with it. It seems increasingly improbable that the current mining operation with its de-watering of the pit and twice daily blasting for 13 years has nothing to do with the collapse. An independent inquiry is sorely needed where the evidence and reports of the mining company experts can be tested.

Social impacts of mining have been considerable but systematically suppressed. The method of suppression has been the mining company, often the only available buyer of affected properties. As people have struggled and finally given up coping with the mine’s impacts, they have had to sell to the company – but at the price of a gag. Part of the price has been a condition imposed by the company that they may not speak out about the impacts and they have had to sign away their rights to participate in planning hearings (Waithi Leader, 16/12/97), so denying the hearings panels of testimony about social impacts.

Despite the jobs and prosperity promised to Waithi from the Martha Mine and the Golden Cross mine (down the road at Waitekauri), Waithi has one of the highest rates of unemployment in the region.

Crown Minerals Amendment Bill – Cause for Concern

THOSE who own or may buy land should pay attention to the Crown Minerals Amendment Bill 2001. Amongst a slew of changes to the Crown Minerals Act – some welcome and some not so – is a provision that the grant of minerals permits should not have to be registered against the land title as it now is.

The argument put forward by the Ministry of Economic Development (MED, formerly Commerce) is that such registration on the title leads to needless anxiety and expensive attempts by landowners to secure legal advice to explain the implications of such a permit when they suddenly discover the permit on their title.

MED argues that since for most situations landowners have to give permission in the form of an access consent before exploration or mining permits can be exercised, the existence of a minerals permit does not in itself imply access to the land. Since access agreements to permit minerals activity do have to be registered on the title, landowners or potential buyers need not know about the existence of minerals permits relating to the land.

ECO is not entirely convinced of this argument. Landowners and others dealing with land titles should be informed via the title, or directly in the case of landowners.

ECO suggests the real solution is that the landowner should be informed when minerals permitting is underway and or when a permit is issued. Clear information in plain English should be provided to as notes to the land titles so that all concerned are informed that landowner consent will be required.

In fact many people will want to know that land they own, occupy or might consider buying is the subject of a minerals permit. Those whose land is affected should be notified of the consideration and issue of minerals permits. The proposed measures seem to be being done to make life easier and cheaper for minerals companies (including oil and gas, coal and other minerals interests) while leaving those with interests in land in the dark.

Already “limited impact activities” under the Crown Minerals Act can occur without any access consents and with only ten working days notification of intention to enter. Where applications cover large areas and the costs of notifying so many people would be very high, access agreements are not required, despite the right of those with such permits to undertake a variety of sampling and other activities.

In the case of petroleum permits, landowners’ refusal to consent to access can be overruled in a compulsory arbitration process: so the existence of a minerals permit for petroleum is especially significant for landowners or prospective landowners.

Astonishingly, MED appears not to have consulted Federated Farmers or other landowners.

The Bill has a number of other provisions that require careful study – which ECO has not been able to do yet. Some provisions seem welcome and are to reinstate provisions that officials thought were already in place that relate to the transition from the old Mining Act and the Coal Mines Act.

The Bill has been made public but has not yet been referred to a Select Committee. It will presumably be open to public submissions. (See Parliamentary Watch article for more details).

Who has the Most Experts, Wins!

A thesis by Ong SuWuen for the Victoria University Masters of Public Policy programme canvasses all cases in the Environment Court that included experts. The results show that the strongest explanatory variable for success in the Environment Court is having more experts than the other side. This is more important than having more lawyers. The community and environmental groups in the Waithi case have never been able to match the experts put forward by the mining company. The same holds true for most cases.

The money voted in 2000 by the Government, at the Green’s behest, to provide money for legal aid for environmental organisations is designed to begin to address this problem of disparity and disadvantage of environmental groups.
Sea Sense Survey: Fishing Impacts Major Concern

THE LAST ECOLINK featured an article about ECO and Forest & Bird working together on a national programme to develop ideas for the Ministry of Fisheries on controlling the impacts of fishing on the marine environment.

Funding for this programme, including a series of nationwide workshops and survey in November, was provided by Ministry of Fisheries after Green MP Jeanette Fitzsimons persuaded Fisheries Minister, Pete Hodgson, to enable environmental non-governmental groups to participate in fisheries management processes.

Responses to the joint ECO and Forest and Bird survey reveal widespread concern about the impacts of fishing on the marine environment. The survey, undertaken to gauge members' views on fisheries management and provide input into the Ministry of Fisheries’ Environmental Management Strategy (see Ecolink, October 2001), shows a high degree of dissatisfaction with current fisheries controls.

Using a ranking scale of 1 (low priority) to 5 (high priority), members were asked to indicate the impacts or issues they thought should be given priority for management. Depletion of New Zealand's fish stocks emerged as the top priority with 96.3% rating it a “5” — the highest priority.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact/Issue</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Depletion of fish stocks</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>96.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trawling on seamounts</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>91.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marine mammal bycatch</td>
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<td>1.9</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>79.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trawling on seafloor</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>79.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dredging for shellfish</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>79.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-target fish species bycatch</td>
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<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>78.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seabird bycatch</td>
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<td>0.9</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>78.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setnetting</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invertebrate bycatch</td>
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<td>1.0</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>73.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longlining</td>
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<td>1.9</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>66.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marine farming</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>53.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There was also a high level of concern about the impacts of trawling on seamounts. Seamounts support a wide range of fish species and macro-invertebrates such as corals, starfish, brittle stars and sea urchins. Despite their biological importance, they are routinely trawled mainly for orange roughy and oreos: 91.6% of respondents identified trawling on seamounts as a high priority for management.

Marine mammal bycatch emerged as the third highest ranked priority, with 79.6% of respondents rating it a 5. Bycatch of other marine species was also a concern; 78.9% rated bycatch of non-target fish species a 5; 78.7% of respondents thought seabird bycatch was a high priority and 73.1% rated invertebrate bycatch a 5.

**Table 1: Fishing impacts on the marine environment - priorities for management**

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**Questionnaire identifies six main issues**

The questionnaire also asked respondents to identify key problems with current fisheries management processes.

**Lack of reliable information, monitoring and research**

With population estimates available for less than 15% of fish stocks within the quota management system, members identified the lack of information and research available to inform decision-making as a key concern. There was a widespread view that fisheries research has focused largely on a small number of commercially important fish species with little funding available to assess the impacts of fishing on the marine environment.

"The Ministry has failed in the past to target research widely enough to form a comprehensive picture of the marine environment."

"Most research to date has been based around major commercial stocks. We need much more ecosystem research."

**Lack of recognition of non-extractive use values**

Failure to recognise and provide for non-extractive use values was seen as major problem of current fisheries management. Many respondents identified marine reserves as one of the most important mechanisms to protect non-extractive uses. There was strong support for the establishment of a comprehensive area of marine reserves, covering at least 20% of the marine environment.

"If we protect 50% of our marine environment, catches from the remaining 50% would increase for both commercial and recreational fisheries."

"Rahui [are needed] to protect stocks."

---Continued over page---
Lack of environmental assessment in decision-making

Respondents identified environmental impact assessment as an integral part of effective marine management. Environmental impact assessment is recognised in the Resource Management Act 1991 as a key component of decision-making processes designed to ensure sustainable management. The absence of any comparable requirement in the Fisheries Act was identified as a major barrier to the management of fisheries-related impacts on the aquatic environment.

"Environmental impact assessment is essential if fish stocks [and] ecosystem health are to be maintained"

"Environmental impact assessment should be a requirement of every type of fishery"

"If we do not assess environmental impacts, we will destroy not only the resource but many other parts of the environment."

Lack of integrated environmental policy and planning

The principle of integrated environmental management is a key part of New Zealand's legislation relating to land-based activities. In practice, integrated management means decisions about resource use need to take into account the likely effects on the surrounding environment. Under the Fisheries Act, however, there are no requirements to put in place policies and plans to ensure an integrated approach to management. Without this framework, the majority of respondents felt fisheries management has focussed on managing single fish stocks with little recognition of how decisions impact on the other parts of the marine environment.

"Community and conservation groups should have the same rights in marine management as they have under the RMA for land management."

"Kia ora tonu te mauri o te moana mo ake tonu – Do you want the sea to die?"

Dominance of private property rights approach

Since the 1980s, commercial fishing access has been controlled primarily by the quota management system (QMS). When the QMS was introduced, it was argued quota ownership would give fishers a greater stake in the future of the fishery and act as an incentive to manage the resource sustainably. In practice, most respondents felt the property rights approach has meant commercial interests have dominated decision-making. Recognition of concerns held by environmental interests, tangata whenua and others has been minimal.

"QMS [is] based on historical catches which bear little relevance to sustainability."

"The QMS was an economic model... It never was a biological model."

Limited opportunities for public participation in fisheries management

Lack of opportunities and resources to take part in decision-making processes under the Fisheries Act also emerged as a key concern. Unlike the Resource Management Act, which extends the right to participate in policy and planning processes to anyone who wants to take part, participation under the Fisheries Act is generally restricted to "approved parties". The majority of respondents were of the view that the Fisheries Act should be amended to provide opportunities for public participation similar to those under the RMA.

"We need a more open public process that recognises that all New Zealanders own the fisheries resource."

"We need an open process that anyone can participate in."

"Oceans are a common resource therefore [the] public should be able to participate in [decisions about] usage – where, how much, when and who."

If you are interested in ongoing involvement in marine fisheries issues please contact ECO.

Peter Blake mourned

SIR PETER BLAKE'S death in Amazonia is a huge loss to the global environment and is mourned in many circles.

In a statement made on the day we heard he died, ECO said: "Blake's work to focus attention on water quality and to protect the sea was sorely needed. It remains a major priority and New Zealanders can all contribute to his legacy."

"We can all take Sir Peter's message into our lives. We can blow the whistle on pollution and damaging farming and forestry practises that hurt water quality and defend the Resource Management Act against attacks."

"We can support the Government's Oceans Policy reform and press for the public to have input to decision making."

"Most of all, we can challenge destructive fishing methods such as trawling and the damage that these methods do to the corals and other life on the seamounts."

"It would be a fitting memorial to Sir Peter Blake to have a major network of marine reserves dedicated to him. It could be our equivalent of the red socks campaign to show in a tangible way the legacy from him."

ECO received a letter of protest about this press release from a person who is prominent in northern fishing industry circles. We stand by our sentiments and suggest that people write to Prime Minister Helen Clark to support the idea of a marine reserve or some similar marine conservation memorial to Sir Peter.
Oceans Policy: Stage 2

THE GOVERNMENT continues to follow through with its promise to develop an Oceans Policy – but the vision developed is disappointing and should be the subject of further public submissions.

Following the report of the Oceans Policy Ministerial Advisory Committee (MAC), Healthy Sea, Healthy Society – towards an Oceans Policy for New Zealand, a vision statement was developed and officials are to design Stage 2 of the process, reporting to Cabinet by 31 March 2002. The original timetable requires a report from the Stage 2 process to Cabinet in October 2002 – only seven months, while planning the work is allowed 3-4 months. Cabinet directed officials to develop terms of reference for the governance structure of Stage 2. It agreed to establish a five-person Oceans Reference Group as an external reference group for Ministers, and a Chief Executives’ Advisory Group to retain the Oceans Policy Secretariat, all to advise the ad hoc Oceans Ministerial Group.

ECO doesn’t know who will be on the five-person Reference Group but you can bet your life on the fishing industry and the oil and gas industry going into overdrive to influence the composition of this group including getting their own representatives onto it. It is important for the environment that the Government does not give in to this pressure.

The Ministerial Advisory Group’s report is available on the Oceans Policy website, www.oceans.govt.nz. So too is (or will be in later December) a copy of the Cabinet Paper which was endorsed by Cabinet on 3 December 2001.

Regrettably, instead of proposing a “vision” for public consultation, the officials put to Cabinet a “vision” which we think falls well short of what most people wanted and what the Ministerial Advisory Committee suggested (see box). The result is disappointing. We think most of those who made submissions will find it inadequate and unacceptable.

The “vision” approved by Cabinet is:

“Healthy Oceans: New Zealanders understand marine life and marine processes and, accordingly take responsibility for wisely managing the health of the ocean and its contribution to the present and future social, cultural, environmental and economic well being of New Zealand.”

This looks innocuous but the language is not the language of ecosystems, intrinsic values, governmental responsibility, constraints on economic benefit by preserving the health of the oceans, and the future. All these were themes explicitly mentioned in the Ministerial Advisory Committee report. The officials’ language is instrumental, present-focused, self-serving and makes no mention of a role for Government.

The language of “take responsibility” is designed to further the Luxton-Industry-Ministry agenda of devolution of fisheries management to extractive interests. Most people will miss this since it looks bland and unobjectionable, even dutiful. That is far from the case. It is language that will neatly assist the Seafood Industry Council (SeaFic) and the big companies to further their devolution agenda.

“Wise management” is also code that will be seized on by the fishing industry, since this is akin to the language of the “wise use” movement, those who insist on using and modifying and who resist protection.

At the beginning of the Oceans Policy development, ECO was informed by Carolyn Risk, head of the Secretariat of the Oceans Policy, that the Ministerial Advisory Group would not include sectoral representatives. Those of us active on marine environmental issues could not be appointed because no sectoral representatives would be. In fact at least two people with fishing industry links and another from the oil and gas industry were on the Committee. Two people with environmental experience were on the Committee, but neither had any experience with deepwater fishing or ocean issues.

Reports suggest that fisheries and other officials are fierce champions of the devolution of management to extractive interests and the “rights based” approach to marine management.

The Cabinet paper says that Stage 2 of the Oceans Policy process will be to “Design the Vision”. This involves analysis of the existing arrangements and the selection of means to achieve the vision, including selection of policies and the policy tools and instruments to achieve this, and the design of new institutions and law.

In a 31 March 2002 report to Cabinet, the officials are to identify “some common values emerging from the consultation process”.

The Cabinet paper identified “seven key high level issues” as the focus for the Stage 2 work:

- Models for integrated management. Identify goals, develop processes to determine priorities for particular activities, systems for integrated and consistent decision making across the range of operational processes and activities.

- Holistic management. Develop management systems, taking account of the range of values held in relation to the marine environment and management systems that reflect the physical reality of the marine environment.

- Compliance and enforcement. —Continued over page
Develop compliance and enforcement models consistent with the nature and extent of our responsibilities and developing policies and processes consistent with ensuring high degrees of voluntary compliance.

**Decision making models:** Determine when, how, and by whom decisions are made and implemented (nationally, regionally, locally).

**Treaty of Waitangi:** Develop a framework to address Crown responsibilities under the Treaty of Waitangi in relation to the marine environment.

**Information management:** Develop a framework to identify what information is needed to allow effective management of our interaction with the marine environment and models for managing information about the marine environment.

**Monitoring and measurement:** Develop effective systems to monitor implementation of management systems and processes for making changes as necessary.

The recommendation from the officials mentions the need to reassess the timetable to ensure a range of opportunities for Maori, stakeholders and the public to have input.

The process followed in Stage 2 of the Oceans Policy will be crucial to the outcomes.

In Stage 1 the industry was given preferential treatment with the MAC visiting industry enterprises and meeting with industry in the absence of others. No environmental interests were allowed such preferential contact. The fishing industry and other extractive interests will no doubt try for such privileged access again.

The Ministerial Oceans Committee is chaired by Pete Hodgson and includes Conservation Minister Sandra Lee; Environment Minister Marian Hobbs; Pete Hodgson as Fisheries Minister; Paul Swain, Minister of Energy (Crown Minerals); Minister of Maori Development Parekura Horomia; and Finance Minister Michael Cullen.

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The Government agencies that are part of Stage 2 of the process are Customs, Defence, DoC, the Dept of Prime Ministers and Cabinet, Land Information NZ, MAF, the Maritime Safety Authority, the Ministry of Economic Development, the Ministry for the Environment, the Ministry of Fisheries, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Ministry of Research Science and Technology, the State Services Commission, Te Puni Kokiri, the Ministry of Transport, the Office of Tourism and Sport, Treasury and Local Government.

Ominously, the paper notes that the project is currently funded as part of the Biodiversity package with funding to 30 June 2001. It notes that officials will develop a budget for Stage 2 and will consult Chief Executives whether there will be implications for the budget.

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**Action:** Organise a network in your area of environmentally minded people and organisations who will write to the Ministers asking that people with fishing industry and oil and gas links should not be on the 5 person reference group. Ask that the Oceans Policy report: vision statement be changed. Set up a network for further work on the Oceans Policy issue and send us details of your network so that we can keep you informed. Tell us what you can do to make a difference on this.

Contact Cath Wallace at ecowatch@paradise.net.nz or ECO, P O Box 11-057, Wellington 04-385-7545.

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**Marine farming moratorium Bill introduced**

**The Government** has introduced legislation to establish a two year moratorium on marine farming applications. The Resource Management (Aquaculture Moratorium) Bill was introduced in early December.

This Bill implements the Government's decision to apply a two year moratorium on marine farming applications from 28 November 2001.

The Bill is designed to put the brakes on the current gold rush and allow time for new legislation to be passed and arrangements that will better regulate marine farming under the Resource Management Act. The Bill does not affect marine farm applications which have got to a hearing before the local authority or have been appealed to the Environment Court.

The marine farming industry is now squealing that several recent applications are caught but this does not recognise the scale and magnitude of the gold rush which already exceeds the industry target for 2020. In the last year over 30,000ha has been applied for marine farming, nearly all for mussels. This compares to 3,000ha of mussel farms that currently exist and the industry target is only 17,000ha by 2020. There have been major applications for offshore farm in the Hauraki Gulf, Bay of Plenty, Hawkes Bay, Jackson Bay, and Clifford Bay/Cloudy Bay, plus the largest application applied days before the moratorium was announced of over 10,000ha off the Canterbury coast.

This Bill is the first of two pieces of legislation to change the way marine farming is managed in coastal waters. The second Bill will be introduced to amend the Fisheries Act 1983, repeal the Marine Farming Act (to bring all marine farms under the Resource Management Act) and further implement wider aquaculture reforms aimed at strengthening the RMA provisions.

At writing it is unclear which select committee the Bill will be referred to or when the closing date for submissions on the Bill. Interested readers should check the Parliamentary website for further information (www.clerk.parliament.govt.nz/programme/committees/submissions).
GM Amendment Bill Introduced

The Government has introduced the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms (GM Organisms) Amendment Bill.

The provisions of this Bill will be a major disappointment to many ECO members. The Bill is very much a 'Clayton’s Bill' as no-one has indicated a desire to release a GE organism into the wild in the next 2 years until October 2003. It is the first of several Bills to implement some of the key outcomes of the Government's decisions on the use of GMOs in New Zealand. The last Bill is unlikely to be introduced until early to mid-2003.

The Bill establishes:

1. A two year moratorium (until October 2003) on the import for release or release from containment of genetically modified organisms. Exemptions apply to: medicines approved by the Minister of Health or trials approved by the Director-General of Health; veterinary medicines for therapeutic or prophylactic purposes approved under the Agriculture Compounds and Veterinary Medicines Act (proposed new section 73C); or in foreseeable emergencies under section 47 of the HSNO Act. This does not apply to section 49 which allows the release of any new organism (apart from pests listed in the second schedule) in unforeseeable emergencies. A loophole for the release of GMOs in the HSNO Act should be cleaned up in this Amendment Bill.

For any medicine or veterinary medicine, the Bill requires the applicant to include information demonstrating that the organism cannot persist viably in the environment beyond the human being or animal (proposed new section 73D). Surprisingly, this new information requirement is not made an additional matter which ERMA must consider under section 73E, or added to the minimum standards for new organisms under section 36 of the HSNO Act. Section 73E requires ERMA to take into account safety and ecological effects and the efficacy of the new organism as a medicine when compared to current medicines, or veterinary medicines used to treat the same condition.

Once the two-year moratorium is up these information requirements and the additional matters which ERMA must consider are repeated. Questions have to be asked about the efficacy of the Government’s approach in doing this.

1. Additional tests for the approval of field trials — including the safety and ecological effects and alternative methods for achieving the research objectives (proposed new section 44A).

2. Additional requirements for containment that include controls to ensure GE material is not released into the environment.

The Bill is very much a creature of the Labour part of the coalition Government. The Alliance has indicated that they would support a longer moratorium that would extend until questions about health and environmental safety are answered if this took longer than 2 years that Alliance would propose an amendment to this effect. The Greens have indicated that they will continue to strive for a GE Free New Zealand. National and ACT have indicated they only support the Royal Commission’s recommendation which did not include any moratorium.

On the moratorium, the Government assumes that all the unanswered questions about GE can be answered within two years. Even their Cabinet timetable for decisions (see MFE website www.mfe.govt.nz) raises key policy issues, which are unlikely to be resolved until well into 2003.

The Government has yet to make a commitment to fund the research requirements identified by the Royal Commission to assess the environmental impacts of GE organisms, in particular on soil and ecosystems (recommendation 6.12). The Royal Commission identified this as needed prior any release of GM crops. Extra funding for this is only to be looked at as part of the 2002 budget process, which means it is ridiculous to expect this information to be available by October 2003. If these questions haven’t been answered after 20 plus years of GE research how are they supposed to be answered in less than two years? In addition the Government wants to legislate to regulate the genetic modification of human cell lines and tissue culture, which means additional legislation will be required over the next 2 years. Given the past records of Governments not meeting legislative timetables due to competing demands this is a tall order.

Nelson’s EcoFest

OVER 5000 people attended an intensive fortnight of environmental events during the inaugural Nelson EcoFest in early November (that’s about 5% of the Nelson/Tasman population).

The EcoFest was organized by both Tasman District and Nelson City Councils as part of their environmental education efforts and included more than 120 events – from concerts to farm visits. High profile national figures were featured, including ethical businessman Dick Hubbard and singer Shona Laing.

2000 people visited a weekend long Nelson Expo at the end of the festival to browse and talk to over 50 stallholders (as well as 6 school displays) who were selling or promoting a wide range of practical environmental products and information. Surveys conducted over the two day EcoExpo showed a unanimous approval for the initiative by the region’s two councils. Comments included: “it's great to see Councils actively promoting practical information about caring for our environment, instead of dishing out fines and bad news”... “a really good idea...hope to see it happen again next year.”

Another EcoExpo visitor commented that the festival was a great opportunity to build on Nelson’s image and with three national parks and a green reputation.

The jury is still out on the success of the event in influencing the long-term behaviour of people in the region. However it certainly raised the profile of environmental issues in the region and local groups, businesses and agencies involved in working on them provided heaps of information on actions people can take to improve the environment. Hopefully these efforts will be continued with another EcoFest in Nelson next year.

For further information contact Brian Walsh at Nelson City Council ph. (03) 548 2662 or Susan Corry at the Tasman District Council ph. (03) 544 8176.
Strategy development in full-swing

BIOSECURITY is becoming an increasingly important issue for New Zealand's environment, economy and society. In response to this fact, the Government has committed funding to develop a Biosecurity Strategy for New Zealand. A Strategy Development Team has been appointed to oversee the development of the strategy.

In order to identify a full range of issues, the Strategy Development Team set up nine stakeholder groups representing the different sectors that have an interest in biosecurity. Each group met to raise and discuss biosecurity issues relevant to their sector, and wrote a paper for the Strategy Development Team. The environmental stakeholder group met in Auckland at the start of July.

The papers for all those groups have been compiled into a Biosecurity Issues Paper, which was released for public consultation in September 2001. Between October and December 2001 a series of nationwide meetings and workshops was held, and the public is encouraged to make written submissions on the issues paper (by 31 December 2001). The Strategy Development Team will then consider these submissions and write a draft strategy, at which point they will undertake further public consultation (May-July 2002).

This is your chance to have a say on important biosecurity issues. When you make your submission think strategically and focus on the big picture, but illustrate this with specific examples. The Forest and Bird website offers some ideas on environmental biosecurity issues that you might want to include in your submission.

The Biosecurity Strategy will be launched in December 2002.

Karlo Thomas, Biosecurity Awareness Officer, Forest and Bird (Wellington)

Government’s New Dioxins Plan will not Eliminate Dioxins

THE GOVERNMENT agreed to eliminate dioxins under the Stockholm Convention, and this must be the overall policy goal of the dioxin action plan. Unfortunately it does not. What is the Stockholm Convention?

The Stockholm Convention is an international treaty which has the ultimate goal of eliminating dioxins. New Zealand has signed the Stockholm Convention and is therefore required to implement an action plan to achieve the goal of dioxin elimination.

The Government’s Action Plan on Dioxins

The Government has released a draft Action Plan on Dioxins, but it falls well short of the mark, and only addresses discharges to air. The action plan does NOT address discharges to land and water.

It gives the green light to waste incineration, which produces incinerator ash. Incinerator ash is a dioxin that ends up in a landfill. Waste incineration is actually listed as a priority source of dioxins under the Stockholm Convention.

What must the Government do?

Greenpeace believes that the Government must formulate a comprehensive policy framework to address all dioxin sources and then take steps to eliminate all preventable sources of dioxins.

Greenpeace has created an information pack so that you can write a submission, which you can download from www.greenpeace.org.nz or ph 09 630 6317 / 0800 22 33 44.

Greenpeace has created a photographic and testimonial exhibition of people in communities affected by dioxin. View the exhibition online at http://www.greenpeace.org.nz/exhibitions

• WRITE A SUBMISSION

The Government is consulting with the public until the end of January so please ACT and write a submission to the Government to ask them to implement an action plan that will outlaw and eliminate deadly dioxins.
ECO and the Forest Stewardship Council

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM in the consumer markets of the USA, Europe and Oceania in the 1980s and '90s had a positive impact on natural forest preservation around the world and in some cases closed off access to those markets to certain timbers and timber suppliers.

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is an organisation that was set up by World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and others. The official account is that the organisation was created in order to provide proposed standards and an accreditation scheme for timber production. The idea was that consumers wanted to be able to tell what was responsibly grown timber and companies who matched the standards should be able to signal that to consumers. According to this rationale, the FSC is designed to harness consumer demand for better production processes and to provide industry with an incentive to do what it does with more respect for indigenous people, for society and the environment. The expectation is that when a forest company has become certified its products are far more marketable around the world, whether or not it gains a price premium.

Another view is economic opportunity was being lost by the forest industry and some indigenous groups. These wanted to regain access to closed markets by gaining a "green certification" using the internationally recognised forest operation standards developed using the FSC model. See www.fscoax.org

At an international level the FSC has three "chambers": social (including indigenous people), economic (consisting of wood producers) and environmental. It also has a board and other institutions. Greenpeace, WWF and various others belong to it at the international level.

The FSC, like the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), uses professional accreditation certification companies as the basis for its certifications. These assessment companies are required to consult with members of the local "chambers" that match those at an international level – that is, social, environmental and economic.

In New Zealand, forestry companies at first vacillated about whether to engage with FSC (which they found expensive and which many thought would be too demanding) or whether to set up their own verification processes. Most that wanted certification have now decided to opt for FSC certification since it is internationally organised rather than local and so may be expected to gain greater recognition than a New Zealand only variant.

In New Zealand the NZ Forest Accord (the agreement between various forestry interests and ECO, FMC, Forest and Bird and a range of other environmental groups) means that many major companies will not log native forest or establish plantations on regenerating areas. In return, the environmental groups undertook to promote exotic plantation timber.

In the rest of the world FSC applies to forestry (=logging) in wild natural forests and to plantation forests. In New Zealand most of the environmental organisations (with the exception of Ecologic, previously known as Maruia Society) are united in their view that since there should not be logging of native forests, FSC should not certify any such logging and seemingly endorse such logging.

The FSC system provides that the context of local environmental, social, and economic conditions be taken into account via due process, usually through lots of negotiation. A primary means to achieve this is the development of FSC national standards.

In New Zealand an initial meeting was held in Rotorua in May 2001 that brought as many people as possible together from the environmental, social, economic and indigenous peoples (Maori) groups with an interest in the forest industry, society and the environment. (Bad weather prevented an ECO representative from attending). The objective was to form a Plantations Technical Committee and a New Zealand Working Group to formulate a NZ National Initiative to develop NZ FSC standards. A decision was made to set up four rather than the three traditional chambers: social, Maori, economic, environmental.

The chambers meet individually and participate in the formulation of the draft national FSC standard via the Plantations Technical Committee meetings.

The catalyst for the May meeting was the surge, due to markets, in demand by plantation forest growers to gain FSC certification. Environmental groups also wanted to reduce the impossibly large demands being placed on environmental NGOs (eNGOs) for a series of individual certification assessments of many companies by the Netherlands based international certification company SGS and their New Zealand agents, Forme Consultants. These agents stand to gain large fees for their professional services from the client forestry companies.

The forest standard development process requires input from the four chambers (Social, Economic, Environment and Indigenous peoples) via the Plantations Technical Committee before any draft standards can be ratified.

ECO is represented on the environment chamber Plantations Technical Committee by Rick Barber and since the initial May meeting they have met four times to tune the draft standards to the NZ context. Other members of the environment chamber are Bill Gilbertson from Forest and Bird, and Grant Rosoman of Greenpeace NZ.

The environment chamber decided early on not to encourage any indigenous wild natural forest or indigenous forest FSC standards because of the risk that native forest logging would be encouraged. Since environmental chamber participation is
required, the result is that FSC indigenous forest standards will not be developed in New Zealand. This is consistent with ECO’s position, and as the whole process requires the engagement of the major national NGOs of the country, this position is appropriate. Guy Salmon’s Ecologic dissented and has tried to encourage a number of people who ECO believes belong in the economic chamber to attempt to join the environment chamber.

ECO’s August 2001 annual conference and AGM in Wanganui discussed the whole process of our engagement with FSC. Member group, the Buller Conservation Group (BCG) urged ECO to withdraw from FSC on the grounds that there have been a number of certifications that are indefensible, including that of Timberland’s plantation operation. ECO too deplors those certifications, which we believe have set the standard too low. Though ECO recognises that FSC is far from perfect, indeed is very flawed, we have so far stayed involved. ECO depleors the fact that undeserving certifications have gone through. ECO has “voice not vote” as Pete Lusk of BCG puts it, so the Timberland’s certification went through despite our protests. Often ECO has been unable to have any input at all because the input demands are too hard and we have simply not been able to participate.

Despite these flaws after extensive discussion ECO decided to continue with participation in the development of national FSC standards, conditional on preconditions passed in resolution at the AGM. One reason is the hope that the incentive scheme might truly improve standards, another is that ECO is mindful of its commitment to promote exotic plantation timber. Further, if the mainstream environmental organisations were to withdraw from the environmental chamber, then Ecologic and its pro-logging friends would give sanction to the logging of native forests.

The formulation of the NZ FSC standards has involved long meetings and dialogue between the four chambers to distil a draft standard. These meetings have been often difficult with the intrinsic conflicts between the needs of industry, the environment and society requiring to be reflected in the final outcome.

The FSC process has given the NGOs the opportunity to influence the way the forestry industry operates in NZ: the final outcome is yet to be realised.

The latest position is that the draft FSC standards are about to be released for the three month public submission process. Those wanting to stay involved should notify us of their interest and we will try to keep you informed, within available resources. Contact ECO at eco@reddish.co.nz

**ECO AGM FSC resolution**

That ECO only participate in FSC processes, certifications and standards setting on condition that industry and its member organisations desist from their attacks on the RMA and its plans, policies, standards and implementation. And also conditional on improving to our satisfaction with certification standards, outcomes and processes.

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**Terrorism Bill Erodes Civil Liberties**

**THE EROSION of New Zealand civil liberties in the name of security goes into overdrive in the Terrorism (Bombings and Financing) Bill, which was introduced to Parliament with little publicity well before the acts of terrorism in New York and Washington. It was introduced as a response to a UN Security Council Resolution (1368).**

The Government introduced a set of amendments to the Bill in the wake of the US events – and initially tried to have these inserted into the Bill with no scrutiny by a select committee. This is a worrying tactic that the Government has tried several times – and we are expecting it again with the introduction of a Supplementary Order Paper to the Resource Management Amendment Act.

The Terrorism Bill is considerably flawed, so it is a good thing that various people prevailed in their argument that it should go forward to the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Select Committee. Submissions were heard in Wellington in the latter part of December from a variety of organisations including ECO.

ECO supported a carefully crafted submission from Greenpeace NZ that proposed changes to the definition of “terrorist act”. The suggestions were made in order, amongst other things, to limit the definition to acts requiring violence. It also suggested that the definition should not be cast in terms of motives, especially not political motives, but rather to focus on actions.

ECO also opposed the process for the “designation” of a terrorist organisation. The Bill provides for this to be done by the Prime Minister and checked by a High Court judge. ECO suggested that the Prime Minister is too political a figure for this task. It also suggested that natural justice requires the right of disclosure to those affected of the information used and a chance allowed of rebuttal.

ECO’s main concern is that as it stands, the Bill could easily make criminals of many activists in New Zealand and many who support those in other parts of the world who are resisting oppressive regimes in other parts of the world. Examples are the peasant farmer environmentalists in Mexico, Teodoro Cabrera and Rodolfo Montiel, who were peacefully resisting logging of old growth forests, and those in New Zealand who assisted Ken Saro-Wiwa, Ledum Mittee and others in the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People.
Parliamentary Watch

Since October only one Bill of an environmental aspect has been passed - the Tuatea-La-Wetoweto Forest Act which relates to conservation of part of South Island Landless Natives Act (SILNA) land. This Act covers the Lord’s River block on Stewart Island.

New Bills:
Resource Management (Aquaculture Moratorium) Bill
This Bill implements the Government's decision to apply a two year moratorium on marine farming applications from 28 November 2001. For more details see associated story.

Hazardous Substances and New Organisms (Genetically Modified Organisms) Amendment Bill
This Bill is the first of two Bills to implement some of the key outcomes of the Government’s decisions on the use of GMOs in New Zealand.

A major surprise is the referral of this Bill to the Finance and Expenditure Select Committee rather than the Local Government and Environment Select Committee. Submissions close on 1 February 2002 and this Bill is due to be reported back to Parliament by 19 March.

Crown Minerals Amendment Bill 2001
This Bill has been introduced to make two key changes so as to correct an important error in the transitional provisions of the Crown Minerals Act, and secondly to remove the requirement to advise the District Land Registrar that a mineral permit has been granted.

At time of writing it is unclear which select committee the Bill will be referred to or the closing date for submissions on the Bill.

Bills before Parliament:
Resource Management Amendment Bill, and Resource Management (Costs) Amendment Bill
The RM Amendment Bill was reported back to Parliament in April and a debate on the Bill is yet to take place. The Government is also considering further amendments to the Bill in light of the report of the Business Compliance Cost Committee.

The Resource Management (Costs) Amendment Bill
This Bill was not reported back with the Resource Management Amendment Bill and is still before the Local Government and Environment Select Committee.

New Zealand Nuclear Free Extension Bill
This private members Bill introduced by Green MP, Jeanette Fitzsimons, proposed to extend the provisions of the Nuclear Free legislation to cover shipments of plutonium. The Bill has recently been reported back with the Government and the Opposition (apart from the Greens) recommended the Bill not proceed further and not be passed.

International Treaties Bill
The Foreign Affairs and Defence Select Committee have provided an interim report back on this private members Bill introduced by Green MP, Keith Locke. The current provisions requiring Parliamentary scrutiny of treaties has been in place since 1999.

Biosecurity Amendment Bill
The Biosecurity Amendment Bill has been reported back by the Primary Production Select Committee. The main features of this Bill are of a technical nature. Clause 4 of the Bill will also enable wildlife with undesirable effects which are covered by the Wildlife Act to be listed as unwanted organisms.

Local Government (Rating) Bill
This Bill has been reported back by the Local Government and Environment Select Committee. It reforms the provisions of a number of rating Bills and is part of the Government’s changes to local government administration.

Disappointingly the Bill still fails to consider environmental charges and the ability of rates and other charges to reduce environmental bads. It will be interesting to see whether these provisions are introduced in the omnibus rewrite of the Local Government Act.

Resource Management (Marine Farming and Heritage Provisions) Amendment Bill
The main features of this Bill are the repeal of the Marine Farming Act and leaving the management of marine farms under one legislation, the Resource Management Act.

Bills before Select Committees:
Forests Amendment Bill
This Bill proposed by the last Government would open up exports of indigenous woodchips, entrench the unsustainable forestry of Timberlands and not improve the public processes under the Forests Act. ECO hopes that most of this Bill is dropped and the Government review the effect of the Act on private land. The public processes in the Forest Amendment Bill are nearly non-existent and have never been used since the Bill was passed in 1993. The Select Committee is yet to progress this Bill despite submissions closing in 1999. It is understood it is awaiting a Government decision on South Island Landless Natives Act (SILNA) land.

Te Uri o Hau Settlement Bill
This Bill implements the deed of settlement between the Crown and Te Uri o Hau. Te Uri o Hau is a Hapu of Ngati Whatua and the settlement involves an area east and north Kaipara. Submissions on the Bill closed in November with the Maori Affairs Select Committee.

Private members:
Road Traffic Reduction Bill
This Bill which is based on similar UK legislation and has been introduced by Green’s Jeanette Fitzsimons.

The Government or Opposition parties position on this Bill is not known.
Youth Environment Summit 2002
Braunwald, Switzerland
Session 1: 13-27 July 2002
Session 2: 17-31 August 2002
Invitation to students from around the world to participate in Y.E.S. 2002.

Y.E.S. is neither an exclusively academic seminar nor just a summer camp but incorporates elements of both. Under the lead of an international team of facilitators, student participants are offered:

• Lectures and workshops on the environment and sustainable development with a focus on the “Agenda 21” in its global and local orientation;
• A “values and responsibility” component which will address the challenge of how to affect the behaviour of individuals and societies;
• A “field experience” in the form of group case studies appropriate to the Swiss location which reinforces the environmental ethic;
• A forum to discuss the role of science, industry and public institutions in the frame of sustainable development; and
• The opportunity for various outdoor and mountain sport activities and excursions.

The Alliance for Global Sustainability (AGS) organises the Youth Environment Summits. For information about the 2001 Summit, visit: http://globalsustainability.org/education/YES2001. Online application forms for the Y.E.S. 2002 sessions will be available at the AGS website early in the New Year. The deadline for all applications is 15 April 2002.

Parliamentary Watch cont’d

Anti-environment Bills:
ACT’s two anti-environment private members Bill have yet to be debated by Parliament. These Bills have made it through the private member Bill ballotting system. These Bills are:

Resource Management (Controlled and Discretionary Activities) Amendment Bill
This Bill has been introduced by ACT’s Owen Jennings to further undermine public processes under the RMA. Debate on this Bill introduction has yet to be completed, it is number 8 on the private members Bill order paper.

Conservation (Fallen Timber Sale to Fund Programmes) Amendment Bill
This Bill was introduced by Gerry Eckhoff and would downgrade the prohibition on indigenous forest logging in conservation land. The Bill, which is yet to be debated by Parliament, fails to consider the benefits of fallen trees to surrounding ecology. This is number 10 on the private members Bill order paper.

Civil Society Forum
ON 23 AND 24 NOVEMBER a forum was held in Wellington focusing on ‘civil society’ and strengthening the United Nations. It was organized by the United Nations Association, which is an apolitical non-governmental organisation whose aim is to promote the activities and values of the United Nations within New Zealand.

The purpose of the forum was to give ordinary people who make up a ‘civil society’ a chance to investigate ways to strengthen and improve the effectiveness of the United Nations. It was envisaged that representatives from many groups would attend and discuss issues with a view to preparing recommendations for future action.

The audience was a good cross section of society but inevitably some groups were not represented. However, the age range and variety of opinions expressed left the organisers hopeful of progress being made even if the rate was ‘slow and steady’ rather than immediately obvious. The young people present showed a genuine concern to be involved and made a useful contribution.

There was much discussion on what was meant by ‘civil society’. Probably the majority accepted the straightforward “We, the peoples…” from the preamble to the United Nations Charter, meaning all individuals. If individuals feel strongly enough about something, they will probably find like-minded folks and form a group to pursue the cause. But even individuals, with enough passion about an issue can make a difference. There was also the more academic approach, which wanted to analyse ‘civil society’ as a more esoteric topic without relying too much on possible actions to take.

The guest speakers were all experts in their particular field and provided a solid platform for discussion. This ranged from the work of an individual policeman seconded to East Timor, through to a young student ‘activist’. Dr Ian Prior, one of the original founders of ECO, also featured. There was a wide ranging session on the environment and sustainable development which offered opinions from perspectives of trade liberalisation, biosecurity, the environment, local government and Maori. The details of the proceedings will be published in the near future and available from UNANZ, PO Box 12 324, Wellington.

An overall outcome of the forum was the widely, and strongly, held view that basic human rights of all people is the basis for a civil society. Where these are respected and promoted, many of the conflicts from poverty to wars can be averted. When all people can live in a secure environment and basic infrastructure can be put in place, normal civil and social interaction can take place, including trade. From those working in the middle of strife torn countries, this message was loud and clear. Care of the environment and the sustainable use of finite resources can be tackled when mere survival is not the only focus. Then the various groups within civil society can evolve and work together, with the emphasis on working together to ensure a better quality of life for all.
Submissions
- NZ Climate Change Programme: Consultation Paper on Climate Change, submissions due by 21 December 2001
- MFAT: PrepCon II for the establishment of the new Pacific Fisheries Commission envisaged under the Convention for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific (WCPFC), comments sought by 18 January
- DoC: Draft Te Urewera National Park Management Plan - submission extension, submissions by 25 January.
- ERMA: Review of public notification - call for submissions, comments by 31 January

Recruiting and Retaining Volunteers
With the support of the Lotteries Grants Board’s International Year of the Volunteer Fund, ECO conducted workshops on how to improve what we do as volunteers and in our recruitment and retention of volunteers, in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin. The workshops were highly interactive and are designed to inform us and to critique some of the material that Lynda Sutherland assembled and to provide hints to people in environmental groups on recruiting and retaining volunteers. Many thanks to those people who came and shared their insights.

- I would like to support ECO by:
  • □ subscribing as a ‘Friend of ECO’
    - $35 per annum (GST incl.)  ‘Friends of ECO’ receive this quarterly newsletter, mailings and invitations to ECO gatherings.
  • □ subscribing as a sustaining ‘Friend of ECO’
    - $112.50 per annum (GST incl.)
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