“Moving Through the Climate Crisis, and Water Matters”

ECO’s Annual Conference is Sat-Sun, 13-14 August, Wesley Community Centre, Mt Roskill, Auckland

Actions and strategies to tackle water quality, habitat and allocation problems, and to deal with climate change will be the focus of ECO’s Auckland gathering. The annual conference on 13-14 August gives us a chance to really work on the how to achieve change, rather than restating the problems.

Actions and policies for water will be discussed on Saturday 13 August, followed by the ECO AGM and workshops, including on non-violent direct action, media strategies, and getting your message across. Sunday will be devoted to climate change and effecting change.

Water Matters – Sat 13 August

The Water session opens with Power, Politics and Prices – topics essential to designing our strategies.

The nature of the water crisis, the scope and limits of prices and other policy measures, rights and obligations, and practical steps in river protection will start the day. Speakers include, in order, Dr Mike Joy, Cath Wallace, Daniel Hikuroa, and Millan Ruka.

Getting to Swimmable Rivers moves from how we get
the national framework right to agriculture’s new reality, raising public awareness, and Fresh Water for Life. Speakers include Kevin Hackwell, Marnie Pickett and Gen Toop.

Organising for Change follows, with facilitated discussion.

Take part in workshops on working with the media, direct action and/or making your online presence more effective. These run parallel to the ECO AGM.

Moving through the Climate Crisis, Sunday 14 August

After coffee and registrations, introductions for those newly arrived, the substantive Climate sessions begin.

Climate change NZ: nature and the law examines both the impacts on nature and how nature-based solutions to climate change can be adopted (Geoff Keey), with a discussion of a new climate change law and other measures (Generation Zero).

Divesting from Fossil Fuels follows with a video presentation by Bill McKibben, founder of 350.org, a panel discussion and participant engagement.

Trades Union speakers and Jeanette Fitzsimons (Coal Action Network Aotearoa) present Just moving on: a just transition to a fossil fuel free world. The CTU has had policy on climate change since 2007. Internationally unions have been working on the impacts of responding to, and the effect of, climate change on workers and industries. This has included opposition by some unions to major new fossil fuel projects and fracking in the US.

The formal part of the conference then wraps up in the early afternoon.

Each day coffee will be available on arrival. Teas/coffee and edibles are provided at breaks and lunches will be provided.

Enjoy the company, the strategic thinking, the practical ideas and the working together. The Water sessions are partly funded by a grant from the Working Together More Foundation and we thank them for that. We are grateful to all who contribute to the conference, including everyone who has chipped in with time, energy, money, donations in kind, and practical support, and of course, good ideas and organisation. During the conference, volunteers will be called for to help with various tasks – be ready to help. That way we keep costs very low – and provide good speakers and catering.

Also on Saturday afternoon the ECO AGM will be held.

The conference will be held in Auckland from Saturday 13 to Sunday 14 August at the Wesley Community Centre in Mt Roskill, Auckland.

Coffee & registrations begin at 8.30am both days, and the Conference sessions begin at 9.00am sharp.

You can register and find out more about the conference, including the conference programme on the ECO website - www.eco.org.nz.

See you there!

Open Government Action – ECO’s Survey

“Open government makes it harder to govern, but even harder to govern badly”. That was the pithy observation that inspired the campaign in the 1970s and early 1980s for a seismic shift in government attitudes to citizens knowing what governments were doing. It culminated in the replacement of the Official Secrets Act by the Official Information Act 1981 (OIA).

The OIA ushered in a much more open style of government, of public access to official information. It included the presumption in law that official information could only be withheld on specified grounds and that the presumption was to be openness.

As so often, the practice has often not matched the law. Government agencies and ministerial offices have gamed the system. Many officials and citizens still think you have to actually cite the Official Information Act for it to apply, rather than it automatically applying if the request is written. Some agencies and ministers are brazen in their disregard for legal deadlines for the supply of information. Either that or they try to discourage applicants by charging money for the supply of information or raising difficulties so that the time costs for applicants make it too difficult or untimely.

In the light of this, ECO was initially very glad to hear that the government had signed up to the international Open Government Partnership and was developing the first Action Plan. That was in about 2014. Our optimism was dashed by a feeble process, and unambitious goals for the 2014-2016 Action Plan. The govern-
ment gave virtually no publicity to its processes and there was little engagement with the community. Our concern intensified when nothing much seemed to be happening for the development of the 2016-18 Open Government Action Plan.

ECO’s frustrations with the government’s apparent lack of commitment launched us into ECO’s own survey of what should be in an Open Government Action Plan for 2016-18. The survey of people and organisations’ wishes for the Action Plan is now being analysed. Michael Pringle, Jan Rivers of Public Good and of ECO’s Open society and Democracy Working Group and Cath Wallace of ECO recruited Richard Miller, an able volunteer, to the team.

The survey was launched in early July and closed three weeks later, and received 318 responses from individuals and some organisations. Thank you to all who submitted responses.

Of the feedback we have looked at so far one question was an assessment of the importance of the OGP core principles of transparency, citizen participation, accountability of government to the public, and technology and innovation. In responses transparency and accountability were ranked as the most important with participation third and technology and innovation trailing well behind.

Participants were also asked to offer additional core principles. Honesty and truthfulness, equality and fairness, and accessibility were identified by numerous participants. Going further than participation, a number of respondents identified joint government and civil society decisions on desired outcomes as being important themes.

The level of awareness of the OGP action planning was low which is hardly surprising given the low profile of the project. More than 60% had been unaware of the 2014-16 action plan and a similar number unaware of the current process for the 2016-8 Action Plan.

The process to analyse results is underway but some information stands out. Over 78% of respondents or 247 people thought there should be minimum consultation standards for legislative, regulatory and policy changes. We are still analysing the results but first indications show that people are concerned that 3-4 week consultations do not allow for considered responses from civic society organisations i.e allowing for response development followed by consideration by the internal democratic processes of the organisation.

The survey research used what is known as the “rolling snowball” distribution method. That means that we sent it out to individuals and organisations and asked them to fill it in and also to send on the survey link to others. We used mainly civil society groups and to a small extent local government organisations to help send it around.

Our interest was primarily about getting ideas and suggestions for actions, and rankings of the importance of various principles and options. We have not aimed at a random sample. There is no attempt to develop a profile of the views of all New Zealanders. Rather, we wanted those who are interested to engage and to share ideas, and to pass the survey on to others with interest in open government and good suggestions.

We hope to have an early draft report with some of the suggestions and analyses available in August, but the full report will come later. We understand that the State Services Commission will be launching focus groups, workshops and an expert group to develop their ideas. Look out for these and give them your ideas and suggestions.

Contribute to New Zealand’s Action Plan for Open Government

The State Services Commission has engaged the independent group engage2 to facilitate the co-creation of recommendations for New Zealand’s second National Action Plan. Throughout August, there are a number of online and other ways to get involved. You can register for updates and see how you can participate here: http://engage2.co.nz/projects/
MSC Orange Roughy Certification Appealed

ECO has joined with the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition, Greenpeace and the BLOOM Foundation to appeal a decision by a Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certifier MRAG to approve the certification of three of New Zealand’s orange roughy stocks (Chatham Rise (NW and NE and South) and Challenger. A separate appeal was raised by WWF internationally as well. The MSC is based in London and has previously controversially certified the New Zealand hoki fishery.

The certification process started over 3 years ago. Amongst the grounds of appeal are that certifiers used an old version of the criteria rather than the most up-to-date criteria agreed by MSC.

The grounds of the appeal are that certification is inconsistent with the Principle of sustainable target fish stock; that the environmental impacts of the trawl fishery are incompatible with certification; and that the Principle of effective management of the fishery has not been achieved. Further, the certification assessment gave incorrect scores. Overall the effect of the MSC certification of the three orange roughy stocks would bring into disrepute the entire MSC certification system, according to the appeal.

Bottom trawls in the New Zealand orange roughy fishery target these very long lived fish on seamounts on which vulnerable marine ecosystems have formed over thousands of years. Bottom trawlers destroy corals, sponges and other species and vulnerable marine ecosystems. These impacts are a central concern for the Submitters, in whose view are an insurmountable problem for the applicant’s desire to be certified.

Coral bycatch from the orange roughy fisheries on the Chatham Rise includes black corals, stony branching and cup corals, and dead coral rubble. There are relatively smaller catches of bubblegum coral, precious coral, other gorgonians (such as primniods and Plexaurids) and hydroid coral. The overlap of coral distribution and the fishing activities, combined with corals’ low productivity, and hence long recovery period, makes deep-sea coral populations especially vulnerable to damage by fishing gear. At issue are the vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs) that are damaged and destroyed by orange roughy fishing, not the areas that are not impacted by fishing.

A hearing is likely on the appeal in Mid-October in London.

ECOLink Back Copies and other material

ECOLink back copies and conference presentations from early ECO conferences can be found online.

We have scanned in back copies of ECOLink going back to 1999 and loaded these up on to our website as downloadable PDFs. You can read them at this link: http://www.eco.org.nz/what-we-do/publications/ecolink.html

A dedicated volunteer is working through the conference papers of ECO Conferences from 1972 and scanning in keynote and other addresses presented at these gatherings over the years. They make for fascinating reading! We’ve just started, so keep checking back at the Past Conferences page to look for material: http://www.eco.org.nz/about/past-eco-conferences.html

Volunteers Welcome at ECO Office

If you are in Wellington and would like to help with one or more of the above projects, we’d love to hear from you! There is more archived to be done on more recent material (from 2000) so that we can add that to our online catalogue too. Please email the ECO Office or call us to discuss. We have a fantastically dedicated team working at the Office now and there is quite a buzz – come and join us.

ECO Archives collection

Work has been completed to catalogue the contents of ECO’s extensive archive of environment, campaigning and conservation records. Thankas go to a team of volunteers who cataloged the material onto The Community Archive, an online catalogue of archives held by community and non-governmental organisations, including local museums.

You can access the Community Archive at http://the-communityarchive.org.nz/

Access is by application to the ECO Office in Wellington at 04 385 7545 or eco@eco.org.nz. Applications to inspect material will be considered on a case-by-case basis, so do give us at least a week’s notice if you wish to look at the archives.
IUCN World Conservation Congress  

by Cath Wallace

In the first ten days of September, IUCN, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, will, in Hawai‘i, hold its four yearly World Conservation Congress. The Congress will be attended by thousands of people representing governments and non-government organisations, six IUCN expert commissions, and non-member observers from all over the world.

Not all attendees will support conservation and for the sustainability of any use of resources: extractive industries such as mining, oil and gas, loggers, fishers and often those they influence or use as cover, attend IUCN meetings. They and some government representatives and agencies often oppose conservation, measures for reducing environmental harms, and to achieve greater justice to the future and the present.

Four ECO Executive Committee members will attend the Congress: but not at ECO’s expense. They are either covering their own costs or have been assisted by other (ECO-compatible) organisations. Diana Shand is launching an IUCN book about certification schemes; Betsan Martin is representing RESPONSE and hosting an event. Barry Weeber and Cath Wallace will focus on policy negotiations with governments and other NGOs, and all will attend various learning and other events.

At the World Congress there will be much dialogue over policies, underpinning goals and methods of conservation, analyses of human and social behaviour, and exchanges of practice and ideas.

DoC, the lead state party and several other New Zealand IUCN members and members of IUCN’s expert commissions will also attend the Congress.

Some events will be live streamed. For more information, see http://www.iucnworldconservationcongress.org/

LAWF Update

Matters that the Land and Water Forum (LAWF) is currently working on to provide recommendations to government include:

• incorporating the macro-invertebrate community index (MCI) into the National Objectives Framework (NOF);
• incorporating dissolved inorganic nitrogen (DIN) into the NOF;
• incorporating ‘primary contact’ into the NOF;
• ensuring that consent granting by regional councils is consistent with water quantity and quality limits that have been set by those councils;
• how ‘good management practice’ re water and land use is best implemented;
• practicalities of how best to implement the National Policy Statement on Freshwater Management.

The Government has established a process involving officials, the Iwi Leaders Group and a Technical Advisory Group to address allocation and pricing of water, and discharges to water, over the period 2016-18. The Minister for the Environment (Nick Smith) and the Minister for Primary Industries (Nathan Guy) have said that they would welcome LAWF’s input.

The Ministers have also indicated that regulations requiring the exclusion of stock from water bodies are likely to be in place by the end of this year.

Pohutukawa Steam Cream

Now at half price as a special for ECO Friends and Supporters.

$15 per 80g jar (plus $3 p and p anywhere in NZ).

All proceeds go to ECO.

This excellent moisturising cream contains fresh, natural ingredients: Pohutukawa extract, harakeke extract, Jojoba seed oil, Sweet almond oil, Shea butter, Avocado oil, Rosemary leaf extract, etc. The ingredients are fused with steam instead of chemicals.

The manufacturers also manufacture leading brands such as Trilogy and Wild Ferns.

You can order by emailing ECO at eco@eco.org.nz and making a payment directly to our bank account: 38 9016 0185477 00 or phone 04 385 7545

www.eco.org.nz
Proposed Sth Taranaki District Plan - bending backwards for oil and gas?

By Climate Justice Taranaki Inc.

How close to a fracking oil and/or gas wellsite are you prepared to live?

In the Proposed South Taranaki District Plan, the council put forward a mere 200 metres setback between a significant hazardous facility such as an oil/gas wellsite and sensitive land-use such as homes and schools. At the public hearings with the South Taranaki District Council in June 2016, Climate Justice Taranaki (CJT), Taranaki Energy Watch (TEW) and other submitters argued that a far greater setback is needed to protect human health and safety.

But what has this got to do with people living outside South Taranaki? This has far reaching implications because the proposed district plan is the first of its kind that includes specific rules on oil/gas activities and how these relate to sensitive land-use. The plan could become the blueprint for other districts and regions nationwide.

Over the last few years, hundreds of scientific studies concerning unconventional oil and gas development have been conducted internationally. The database maintained by the Physicians Scientists & Engineers (PSE) revealed that 84 percent of original research studies on human health risks found signs of harm or indication of potential harm (Concerned Health Professionals of NY and PSR, 2015).

Oil and gas setback distances

Notably a study conducted by researchers from the Colorado School of Public Health focussing on air emissions concluded that residents living within 800 metres from wells are at greater health risks from natural gas development than are residents living further away (McKenzie, et al. 2012). The sub-chronic non-cancer hazard for residents living nearby was driven primarily by exposure to trimethylbenzenes, xylenes, and aliphatic hydrocarbons. Cumulative cancer risks were nearly doubled for residents living less than 800 metres from wells, with benzene as the major contributor to the risk. These chemicals, notably BTEX, are common in emissions associated with flaring and/or venting and other fugitive discharge, as pointed out by TEW expert witness, Senior Air Quality Specialist, Ms Louise Wickham. To date, fugitive emissions from New Zealand’s fossil fuel industry are largely unaccounted for, a major failing in itself.

At the hearings, CJT reminded the district council of its duty to “improve, promote and protect public health within its district” (Health Act 1956 Part 2), as well as its specific function in the “control of any actual or potential effects of the use, development and protection of land” (RMA Section 31(1)(b)).

Based on the overwhelming evidence of the health risks that oil/gas activities pose to local communities, CJT proposed a minimum setback of 800 metres between sensitive landuse and oil/gas exploration, production, field development, fracking or reinjection activities. Within this setback, all petroleum associated activities should be prohibited. CJT argued that this prudent distance is needed following the precautionary principle and in the absence of robust, detailed local health studies.

Beyond the setback, CJT and others recommended that detailed quantitative risk assessment must be conducted before issuing any consent for oil/gas activities. This view is in line with that of TEW international industry explosion expert, Ms Jenny Polich, who stated: “Major hazardous facilities... should not be “permitted” in any location or any zone. This type of facility should always require some form of formal assessment with sufficient accompanying information to demonstrate that effects to all receptors (not just sensitive receptors) in a particular location have been adequately assessed …” (Polich evidence, 2016).

CJT further recommended that within 1,600 metres or further (depending on the scale and intensity of the

---

Donate to ECO
You can donate to ECO via our “givealittle” page

www.givealittle.co.nz/org/ECO

or directly via internet banking

38-9016-0185477-00

(donations over $5 are tax deductible)
hazardous activities and the actual level of risks), all landowners/occupiers should be notified. As a reference, EPA West Australia stipulates a separation distance of 2,000m between oil or gas extraction/production and sensitive land uses within which “a scientific study based on site- and industry-specific information must be presented to demonstrate that a lesser distance will not result in unacceptable impacts.”

Oil & Gas “Landfarming” proposed to be permitted

In addition to a grossly inadequate setback, the district council proposed “landfarming” – the spreading of petroleum wastes on farms – to be a ‘Permitted’ activity in the rural zone. Council claimed that it is “effectively earthworks” and considered to have similar effects to other forms of earthworks used in agriculture. Council emphasized that the effects of any discharges into the environment, its potential contamination is not within its jurisdiction, but is a regional council responsibility.

CJT argued that although contaminant discharge is mainly managed by the regional council, all territorial authorities are required to give effect to and enforce the requirements of the NESCS – National Environmental Standard for Contaminated Soils (MFE, 2011). The Resource Management (NESCS) Regulations 2011 directly affect oil and gas activities including “landfarming”. The regulations are triggered when there is a change of land use such as when a “landfarm” is used to graze stock on or produce food from. Yet the NESCS was barely touched upon in the s42A Officers’ report or the proposed plan itself.

For council to perform its duty properly under the NESCS Regulations and Section 31 of the RMA, “landfarming” (and increasingly worm-farming) of petroleum wastes must be strictly regulated through the consent process, involving quantitative risk assessment and monitoring of landuse and environmental effects. The issuance of a consent should trigger the NESCS – National Environmental Standard for Contaminated Soils (MFE, 2011). The Resource Management (NESCS) Regulations 2011 directly affect oil and gas activities including “landfarming”. The regulations are triggered when there is a change of land use such as when a “landfarm” is used to graze stock on or produce food from. Yet the NESCS was barely touched upon in the s42A Officers’ report or the proposed plan itself.

CJT and many other submitters were appalled by the practice of “landfarming” and the drastic post-hoc reduction of the CPA. Notably, Te Runanga o Ngati Ruanui Trust has requested the retention of Lake Kairuku in the CPA due to its obvious coastal origins and its cultural ties with the coast. Council rejected the request, stating that the intervening area between the lake and the coastal cliff tops has been subjected to extensive modification for pastoral grazing and oil and gas exploration. Ngati Ruanui responded, “Referring to oil well activities, that Ngati Ruanui has objected to in the past, as reasons why our suggested changes to the coastal protection area should be dismissed boarders on the offensive and shows no regard for the cultural and spiritual connection to the land that Ngati Ruanui holds” (Ngati Ruanui statement, 27 June 2016).

CJT argued that this planning approach is counter to the NZ Coastal Policy Statement under the RMA which requires councils to: adopt a precautionary approach to use and management of coastal resources potentially vulnerable to effects from climate change (policy 3); preserve and protect the natural character of the coastal environment (policy 13); and restore or re-habilitate degraded or contaminated areas (policy 14). If council continues with its current approach, we can expect further degradation of our coastline, with devastating consequences as extreme weather events are becoming more frequent, the result of climate change.

Critically, the continued extraction and burning of
by Chris Livesey

In mid-July 2016 the Government released a Discussion Paper seeking input into the development of a proposed conservation and environment science roadmap. The idea is that the roadmap will identify the areas of scientific knowledge needed by government over the next 20 years to support decision-making for conservation and environmental policy and management to achieve the most desirable future for New Zealand.

It is designed to assist core government departments (eg DoC, Ministry for the Environment, and MPI) on their own research priorities. It will also support the National Statement of Science Investment produced by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) in 2015. This involved funding of over $116m (2016-17 financial year).

In their joint Foreword the Minister of Conservation (Maggie Barry) and the Minister for the Environment (Nick Smith) state “good scientific evidence and advice underpins good decision-making, whether those decisions are made by central, regional or local government. Evidence-based decision-making is particularly critical for big, cumulative issues relating to conservation and the environment. 'Science' in this respect includes not only biological and natural sciences, but also mathematical, engineering, and social sciences, economics and mātauranga Māori. Policy-makers at all levels of government, irrespective of political ideology, need to have access to high-quality, scientifically-derived evidence to inform regulatory and policy development, management practices, and evaluation.”

“The consultation will determine whether the themes and research questions identified in this document are broadly the right themes and the right questions to consider, and what the more focussed priorities should be.”

Based on an assessment of drivers, trends and issues, the Discussion Paper clusters research areas into 12 proposed themes: climate change; integrated ecosystems and processes; freshwater ecosystems and processes; land ecosystems and processes; coastal and marine ecosystems and processes; urban ecosystems and processes; populations and species; biosecurity; Mātauranga Māori; social and economic dimensions; informatics, modelling and monitoring; and new and emerging technologies.

Under each theme the Paper proposes ‘enduring research questions’, a vision or goals, specific research questions (there are 50 of these in total) and new or emerging capability needs.

The discussion paper does not attempt to prioritise the 50 research questions that it proposes, but it does seek

**Proposed 5th Taranaki District Plan (Cont)**

fossil fuels for energy, transport and industrial agriculture, has pushed us to dangerous climate disruptions. Section 7 of the RMA requires “all persons exercising functions and powers under it” to have particular regard to “(i) the effects of climate change” and “(j) the benefits to be derived from the use and development of renewable energy”. We urge the council and the government take their responsibilities re climate change seriously.

TEW is preparing vigorously to legally challenge the proposed district plan. See the Taranaki Energy Watch website. [http://taranakienergywatch.org.nz/](http://taranakienergywatch.org.nz/)

**References & Further reading:**

Climate Justice Taranaki website: [https://climatejusticetaranaki.wordpress.com/](https://climatejusticetaranaki.wordpress.com/)


PSE study citation database on shale & tight gas development: [http://www.psehealthyenergy.org/site/view/1180](http://www.psehealthyenergy.org/site/view/1180)
comment on some criteria that have been suggested for establishing priorities in the final roadmap to be developed later this year, namely:

1. Irreversibility of issue (either damage or loss of opportunity);
2. The size of the impact on human (or natural) welfare;
3. The probability of damage;
4. The extent to which risk and impact can be mitigated – or opportunity enhanced;
5. The extent to which research could contribute.

Comment

Better understanding of pathways to a low carbon economy, how to adapt to climate change, ecosystems and processes (and the interactions between them), Mātauranga Māori, new and emerging technologies, etc., are indeed all necessary for better environmental management. But as someone with a social science background who has worked for many years on environmental policy, I believe that a much improved understanding of the trade-offs between restoring and maintaining environmental integrity and human well-being (including jobs and income in the primary industries and the wider economy) is essential. This is not only in the short term, but also in the medium term and the long term, if we are to build the social and political mandate that is necessary to achieve the visions or goals proposed under each theme.

At present it is the short term trade-offs that invariably predominate in the public debates (and one suspects, around the Cabinet and council tables too). The decision-makers’ conclusion is often that halting environmental degradation and substantially improving environmental integrity in the near future would cost the country too much in foregone primary production, in flow-on jobs and in public expenditure (rates and taxes).

Yes, there would be financial costs to some people and there may well be an economic cost in the short term and it may be a significant cost, but how do such costs compare with the likely benefits (economic and otherwise) in the long term? And how do they compare with the likely costs (economic and otherwise) in the long term if we keep dragging the chain regarding improving environmental integrity? In my experience, societal preferences regarding the different answers to these questions are seldom sought, or heeded, by our politicians.

In my reading of the Discussion Paper I detected hints that these issues had not been totally overlooked. But it was not at all clear to me that either the need for research that helps to better illuminate the medium and long term benefits and costs of actions to improve and maintain the environment, or the need for research into societal preferences regarding short term pain for longer term gain have been identified.

This is clearly an area of overlap with the separate but aligned roadmap – The Primary Sector Science Direction: A roadmap for the primary sector’s future science and technology needs (Ministry for Primary Industries, in progress) – that is being prepared in parallel with the Conservation and Environment Science Roadmap.

Following from the above thoughts, perhaps the following should be added to the five proposed criteria for establishing priorities for research:

- the extent to which the research will inform estimates of medium and long term benefits and costs of actions to improve and maintain the environment;
- the extent to which the research will help illuminate and articulate the community’s preferences regarding alternative scenarios regarding the scope and timing of actions to improve and maintain the environment (where the scenarios include estimates of short, medium and long term costs and benefits).

Learning more and making your views known

The government is holding a series of hui and meetings on the proposals, including the proposed Conservation and Environment Science Roadmap.

The locations and dates are: Auckland, 8 August; Hamilton, 10 August; Lincoln, 15 August; Dunedin, 16 August; Wellington 22 August. At each location the morning session is intended for Māori organisations and iwi and the afternoon session for general stakeholders. There are no evening meetings.

For more information: phone: +64 4 439 7400; Email: cesroadmap@mfe.govt.nz; Postal: Conservation and Environment Science Roadmap, PO Box 10362, Wellington 6143.

The website information can be found at https://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/about-us/conservation-and-environment-science-roadmap-discussion-paper

Submissions on the Discussion Paper close 5pm Wednesday 7 September 2016.

ECO welcomes thoughts and feedback on these proposals, contact eco@eco.org.nz.
The 1991 vintage: Environmental successes 25 years on

In 2016 it can feel desperately difficult to get environmental gains, but if we look back 25 years to the gains from 1991, there is much to celebrate, much to build on, and many environmental successes to defend. ECO was active and influential – with others - in achieving huge gains. It is worth pausing to celebrate, to assess and press forward with improvements as well as trying to fend off the current attacks on some of these gains.

Environmental gains can be so hard to get that it often feels as though there is no progress at all, or worse, regression. It is galling when hard-won gains are deliberately unraveled, such as the present government’s undoing of the Resource Management Act, removing sustainability criteria from the Local Government Act, its undermining of public participation and of democratic due process.

But we also have a lot to celebrate, and 1991, in many ways a vintage year, marked the culmination of years – and decades in some cases - of environmental and conservation work in several areas.

Environmental gains made in 1991 were numerous, and some so significant that today many people take them for granted. In the case of native forests, work for their protection had been underway for decades – so much so, that when we had a reunion of native forest protectors in 2002, we had four generations present.

High among milestone achievements in 1991 are the New Zealand Forest Accord, which aimed to protect native forests from conversion to pine forests; the agreement on the Antarctic Environmental Protocol with its minerals ban, and the passage of the Resource Management Act 1991 and the Crown Minerals Act, both 1991.

It can be profoundly depressing that we have to spend such a lot of time defending our environmental laws and democratic rights from regressive forces, but some of the gains have become so embedded that to younger folks it can seem unimaginable that we had to fight for these gains, just as young women take for granted their rights to pursue birth control and previously male only careers and other activities.

The New Zealand Forest Accord - 25 years on

On August 14 1991, after several years of work, the New Zealand Forest Accord was signed by significant conservation organisations of the time, many forest owners, forestry industry organisations, timber processors and others. It is significant is that this Accord remains intact and as a vehicle for dialogue between the parties.

Its greatest gain was its provision that those signing agreed that exotic timber plantations would not be established at the expense of indigenous forest species and that, if sustainably done, exotic forestry was supported, so long as it did not displace indigenous forest areas above certain minimum areas. The NZ Forest Accord was done between civil society groups and industry at a time when the government was unwilling to end native forest logging.

The late Kevin Smith, then with the Forest and Bird Protection Society, initiated the negotiations with the industry but ECO and others were part of the negotiations. The text of the agreement is on the next page.

It took another decade of campaigning to achieve the end of enormously damaging logging of native forest on Crown land – and we owe thanks to those in Helen Clark’s Labour government which eventually brought most of this logging to an end on the West Coast between 1999 and 2003.

On Tuesday 9 August 2016, signatories to the original NZ Forest Accord will gather in Wellington to mark the 25th anniversary of the original commitments to the Accord. It will be an opportunity to assess how we can work to:

- tackle some of the continuing adverse impacts of plantation forestry;
- examine and work on the challenges ahead such as weed controls and other biosecurity issues;
- reduce impacts on biodiversity and water quality;
- consider the implementation of and debasement of forest certification schemes; and
- assess the deficiencies of the government’s climate policies.

Since the signing of the original Accord, ECO has joined other Accord parties in agreements on and policy recommendations to government on:

- the importation to New Zealand of the products of illegally logged forest products from abroad; and
- on climate change policies.

Sadly, governments have done little in response to these matters. We, with the NZ Forest Accord Partners, intend to continue to press for action on these matters, just as ECO will press the industry to improve its environmental performance.
The Antarctic Environmental Protocol 1991 & the indefinite ban on mining
by Cath Wallace

How times have changed. At the May 2016 Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM), in Santiago, Chile, the Antarctic Treaty Parties marked with pride the 25th anniversary of the conclusion of the negotiations for the Environmental Protocol to the Antarctic Treaty and its land-mark ban on mining.

The USA introduced a formal resolution to affirm the ban on mining. This was done with the support of many of the Antarctic Treaty Countries, including New Zealand, and passed by consensus, as the Antarctic Treaty requires.

The passage of this resolution follows concerns that some countries, such as China and Russia, showed signs that they might want to pursue minerals (think oil) in the Antarctic.

The resolution is designed to reassert political support for the mining ban and to remind those interested that the ban is to be in place indefinitely and that any attempt to lift it would be unlikely to succeed. Resolution D (2016) Confirming ongoing commitment to the prohibition on Antarctic mineral resource activities, other than for scientific research; support for the Antarctic Mining Ban noted that the Environmental Protocol was signed in 1991, and that the indefinite ban on mining in Antarctica (Article 7 of the Environmental Protocol) had provided “benefits to the Antarctic and dependent and associated ecosystems”.

It reaffirmed Treaty Parties’ commitment to Article 7 (the mining ban), and declared “their firm commitment to retain and continue to implement this provision as a matter of highest priority to achieve the comprehensive protection of the Antarctic environment and dependent and associated ecosystems”.

As the 2016 final report on the 39th ATCM recorded, the nature of the minerals ban in Article 7 of the Convention is widely misunderstood and mis-reported as terminating in 2048, 50 years from the Environmental Protocol taking effect in 1998.

The truth is that the mining ban is indefinite, and cannot be reviewed until at the earliest, some time after 2048, if a Treaty Party wants to trigger such a review. Even if that is done, a three-quarter majority of the Treaty Parties, including all of the Parties that originally signed the Environmental Protocol in 1991, would have to approve any recommendation to lift the mining ban. Thus any such original signatory could veto any


The Crown Minerals Act and the Resource Management Act 1991 were developed together but separated when they passed through Parliament. Since 1991 both have been substantially changed so that they have lost coherence, the original simplicity of language and design, and many of the provisions for environmental protection, public and local participation, and the presumption that public involvement will improve outcomes.

With the changes already wrought and those in the Resource Legislation Amendment Bill 2016, including national template provisions, the clarity of purpose, of process, and of public participation have been severely diminished. So too have the environmental protections, the scope and sense that we must live within limits. Undermine too our commitments to improve the quality of the environment, respect and provide for the needs of the future, and maintain quality public participation and democratic values.

Provisions for iwi participation have been improved, but our concern is that this may not last as the role of the Maori Party in supporting the government in power shifts and diminishes.
attempt to lift the mining ban. If, within 3 years of any decision to review the ban, any review is not ratified, (that is, approved by all the required parties) then those who want to go mining can leave the Protocol. Even then they would have to embark on mining in defiance of the Treaty and Protocol members.

The history of the mining ban is this. In late 1989 the Antarctic Treaty Parties abandoned their ill-conceived attempt to negotiate rules (known as the Minerals Regime) for governing – and in ASOC’s view, so encouraging - mining in Antarctica. A major campaign by the Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition (ASOC) from 1982 – 1989 succeeded in toppling the Antarctic Minerals Regime. That campaign was for a declaration of Antarctica as a mining-free World Park. At issue were rules that would provide countries who wanted to pursue giant or super giant oil fields with secure rights to what they found, though the negotiations were presented as being designed to limit environmental damage. ASOC considered that the rules instead would enable mining and all the damage and risks that come with that.

ASOC led the campaign, with Greenpeace a hugely important part of that. From the beginning of the negotiations in 1982 ECO became a core member of the campaign. New Zealand’s senior diplomat, Chris Beeby, chaired the negotiations which began in Wellington and ended there in 1988.

ECO and ASOC found themselves campaigning against David Lange, Labour Prime Minister of New Zealand. It was not until Jim Bolger supported our case from Opposition, and then (the now) Sir Geoffrey Palmer as the new Labour PM, shifted the New Zealand position from that of Lange’s, that New Zealand decided to shift away from lending New Zealand support for the minerals convention it had masterminded.

During the period 1982-89, we were regarded as outlandish and far too idealistic in our push to outlaw mining in Antarctica and to get environmental protection rules instead. These days almost everyone agrees mining was a bad idea and that environmental protection is essential. The global campaign worked. Belgium, France and Australia decided against the minerals convention, despite pressure from NZ, the USA, the UK, Germany and the then USSR.

The 2016 ATCM considered a range of other issues, including procedural issues. The big question now is:

- whether, with the Convention on the Protection of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, a network of large marine protected areas with no-take areas will be agreed on and rapidly implemented, or whether, once again, extractive interests will push back against environmental protection.

For the text of the Environmental Protocol to the Antarctic Treaty, see http://www.ats.aq/documents/recatt/Att006_e.pdf

For more on the Antarctic Treaty and May 2016 Treaty Meeting report, see http://www.ats.aq/e/ep.htm For more on ASOC and its work, see http://www.asoc.org/

To donate to ECO for our work on Antarctic matters go to: https://givealittle.co.nz/donate/org/eco

Stonearrow Jewellery

Nick Feint of Stonearrow in Takaka makes beautiful jewellery from glass taken from the waste stream.

By using the code ECO2016 when you shop via the online store, 20% of your purchase price will go to ECO.

Shown are the beautiful harakeke flax earrings. Take a look at Nick’s website to view the jewellery and to make an online order: http://stonearrow.co.nz/
Urban Development Capacity NPS: Never Waste a Good Crisis to smuggle in bad policy

by Cath Wallace

Never waste a good crisis! This political maxim is a well recognised device for the introduction of usually unacceptable policy measures using the excuse of a crisis. The Proposed National Policy Statement for Urban Development Capacity is just such a measure. We all know there is a housing crisis, though John Key cannot admit it. The National-led Government is using precisely the urgency of providing housing to the dispossessed as an excuse to by-pass most of the Purpose of the Resource Management Act and virtually all its Principles.

The government wanted to change the Purpose and Principles of the RMA but National’s supports parties refused to agree. The Urban Development Capacity Proposed National Policy Statement is a clear attempt to bypass the RMA Purpose and Principles, and is probably ultra vires – outside the law – as a result.

The Proposed NPS takes one part of the Purpose of the RMA, that of enabling people and communities to pursue their social, economic and cultural well being, but fails to apply in any meaningful way the other aspects of the Purpose. This includes the environmental requirements and it mostly fails too to apply the provisions of most of the Principles, except those that stress the economic benefits of the provision of development capacity – provision for business and housing.

The broad approach is to disregard most other considerations and to privilege business and housing development over all other considerations. This is achieved by directing councils to provide for these developments and requiring them to do so with no extra funding, little regard for the value of any other land use, and very little regard for environmental matters.

This Proposed NPS would mean huge costs for councils, heavy research and projection requirements, and almost sole responsibility for the provision of development capacity when many of the drivers of demand for this capacity are in the control of central government.

The government has made much of the idea that regulations and lack of land and infrastructure is behind the housing crisis. Though that may be a factor, other drivers are probably significant. The government’s own tax policies (lack of a capital gains tax on investors), its monetary policies (E.g., low interest rates which tend to have an inverse relationship with house prices), its own spending and taxation policies, and its immigration policies, have contributed to the situation.

The government’s disdain for local democracy and due process, and disregard for values that are not business-related, has been demonstrated many times. Most notable was its dismissal of the Canterbury Regional Council, and it has threatened the Auckland Council and others when they make decisions with which the Ministers disagree. Mayor Tim Shadbolt has called for resistance to Better Local Services Bill on the same grounds as it undermines local democracy.

The many amendments done already to various Acts and the proposals in the Resource Legislation Bill to alter laws to allow Ministerial over ride of due process, and to vet and direct council policies and plans have already demonstrated the centralization of power that the government wants. The massive tilting of the RMA, EEZ and Continental Shelf Act, and other Acts in favour of Ministerial direction and of business, at the expense of the environment and other parties, also give expression to this centralisation of power.

The Proposed Urban Development Capacity NPS has been open for submission to the Ministry for the Environment, but there is little expectation that the Minister for the Environment will pay much attention to these submissions.

It will be interesting to see how far the Ministry is prepared to write free and frank advice about the submissions and the extent to which the Proposed NPS on urban development capacity is compliant with the RMA and constitutes good planning.

Submissions and documents

To see the Proposed NPS see https://www.mfe.govt.nz/more/towns-and-cities/proposed-national-policy-statement-urban-development-capacity.

To see the ECO submission, see http://www.eco.org.nz/what-we-do/submissions.html

Urban planning Auckland style. Auckland is the main focus of the Government’s proposed NPS but it is unclear how much notice is being taken of the Act’s environmental principles.
Protection of the Deep Sea

How much longer will it take to protect high seas special areas?

A lot has been achieved in the last 10 years to provide for protection of special areas on the high seas but implementation has been limited. A new report reviewing ten years of international commitment to conserve biodiversity in the deep sea was released at the end of July 2016.

The analysis by the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition (DSCC), presented at the International Marine Conservation Congress in Canada, examines implementation of several vital resolutions.

The report will be provided to the UN General Assembly’s (UNGA’s) formal Review of progress towards the implementation of UN Resolutions 59/25 (2004), 61/105 (2006), 64/72 (2009) and 66/68 (2011) taking place in New York on August 1-2. These important Resolutions commit high seas fishing nations (including New Zealand) to prevent damage to deep-sea ecosystems via a series of well-defined actions. They represent a decade’s worth of political commitment to prevent fisheries damage to deep-sea ecosystems.

The study finds significant improvements in measures to reduce damage from destructive fishing practices over the last decade, but concludes that implementation of the Resolutions falls short and leaves vast parts of the ocean unprotected from destruction by deep-sea bottom trawling.

A region-by-region analysis of the actions taken by states, highlights important developments, which have undoubtedly resulted from the UNGA Resolutions. These include three new international agreements establishing regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) entering into force to manage high seas bottom fisheries. These are in the North Pacific, South Pacific (SPRFMO) and Southern Indian Ocean (SIO-FA). Several RFMOs have restricted certain destructive bottom fishing gear and/or adopted measures to protect vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs).

There are significant areas of sea where the requirements of the Resolutions remain either partially or entirely unfulfilled, leaving vast areas of the ocean unprotected. Many of those impact assessments that have been done for bottom fisheries in the high seas are not consistent with UN FAO established criteria. Cumulative impact assessments have not been conducted in any region.

Many areas where vulnerable marine ecosystems are known or likely to occur remain open to bottom fishing. Trawling continues to be the most pervasive form of bottom fishing on the high seas. This despite concerns repeatedly highlighted by science regarding the destructive impacts of deep-sea bottom trawling on species, ecosystems, biodiversity and - more recently - the capacity of deep-sea species and sediment ecosystems to capture and sequester carbon.

Matthew Gianni, lead author of the report said: “We’re saying progress has been made in protecting deep-sea ecosystems from the harmful impacts of fishing but much more needs to be done. It has been ten years since the first of the landmark UN resolutions was adopted and eight years since the UN called on States and RFMOs to adopt and implement the actions called for in the resolutions or else prohibit deep-sea bottom fisheries on the high seas.”

“We are also saying “don’t give up” because the job must be done. For the most part, failure to fully implement the resolutions is due to a lack of political will to apply the precautionary approach to the management of deep-sea fisheries in the face of scientific uncertainty, as required under international law. We all recognize that the deep-sea is poorly studied but at the same time [it is] a global reservoir of biodiversity and it is important that we protect the oceans from unnecessary destruction.”

Recommendations to States and RFMOs, include a sharper focus on impact assessments and a keener approach to vulnerable marine ecosystems which are still overlooked by some regions, meaning protective measures are not taken.

Susanna Fuller, of the Ecology Action Centre and co-author of the report, said “At the upcoming review of actions taken to protect deep sea ecosystems and fisheries from the impacts of fishing, we will be making a strong case for commitment of States to fully imple-
High Seas Biodiversity Protection moves closer

Encouraging progress was made at the first UN preparatory meeting for a new international marine biodiversity agreement. The 28 March - 8 April 2016 negotiations in New York, which those involved hope to conclude with a draft agreement in 2018, are being done under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, UNCLOS. The negotiations follow a ten-year series of “informal” UN meetings.

Throughout the meeting, PrepCom Chair, Ambassador Eden Charles (Trinidad and Tobago), encouraged full participation from civil society representatives, including the High Seas Alliance, of which ECO is a member. IUCN is also a member of the Alliance.

High Seas Alliance Legal Policy Advisor, Duncan Currie noted that “I am very encouraged that after 10 years of discussions, we are in formal negotiations for a legally binding instrument, and that the negotiations are very serious. It was also very encouraging to hear the broad support for public participation, and endorsement of the High Seas Alliance and its members’ contributions, from the Chair and from many member States.”

Political Advisor at Greenpeace International, Veronica Frank said, “We are encouraged by the open, transparent and inclusive discussion, and by the common understanding that the status quo is no longer acceptable. Greenpeace and the millions of supporters around the world will be following this process closely and expect governments to take the right decisions for healthy, productive and resilient oceans for the billions of people who depend on them and for the rights of future generations to continue enjoying the critical services the ocean provides”.

ECO congratulates all those who got these negotiations off to such a constructive beginning.

For more information, see http://highseasalliance.org/news

**KIWI KARMA**

Do you travel for business or pleasure?
Book your accommodation with Kiwi Karma and up to 8% of your spend will support our work at ECO.

It’s an easy way to support us, simply by doing what you were going to do anyway.

Book now with Kiwi Karma and use the promo code from your booking confirmation to sign up to Uber. They will give you a free first ride of up to $25.

http://kiwikarma.co.nz/

**Donate to ECO**
You can donate to ECO via our “givealittle” page
www.givealittle.co.nz/org/ECO
or directly via internet banking
38-9016-0185477-00
(donations over $5 are tax deductible)
The government has announced more funding for predator control and a “refresh” of our Biodiversity Strategy.

The government’s broad vision for New Zealand being free of stoats, rats and possums by 2050 and the announcement of $28m for a Predator Free New Zealand Ltd joint venture company to boost predator control over four years is welcome but inadequate. The funding is intended to leverage contributions from business and elsewhere. Far more money public money is needed including the restoration of money previously cut from DoC.

The Government’s “stretch goals” for Conservation in 10-years are:

- 50% of New Zealand’s natural ecosystems are benefiting from pest management
- 50 freshwater ecosystems are restored from ‘mountains to the sea’
- A nationwide network of marine protected areas is in place, representing New Zealand’s marine ecosystems [no mention here of MPAs in the EEZ]
- 90% of New Zealanders’ lives are enriched through connection to our nature
- Whanau, hapu and iwi are able to practise their responsibilities as kaitiaki of natural and cultural resources on public conservation lands and waters.

There are no specific threatened species goals – eg development of active recovery plans for 50% of all threatened species and changes to marine and wildlife law to protect threatened species. Nor is there consideration of climate change, yet that was a major recommendation of the 2005 Review of the NBSAP.

By 2025, the Government has set four interim goals, which include:

- Having 1 million hectares of land where pests are suppressed or removed;
- The development of a scientific breakthrough, capable of removing entirely one small mammalian predator;
- To be able demonstrate that areas of 20,000 hectares can be predator free without the use of fences like the one at at Wellington’s Zealandia sanctuary;
- And the complete removal of all introduced predators from offshore island nature reserves.

New Zealand’s Biodiversity Strategy, done 16 years ago and not reviewed for a decade, is required by the Convention on Biodiversity.

The announcement is for a “targeted update of the New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2000 (NBSAP).”

The focus is on “high level and significant national actions underway or planned over the next four years that will make a difference to New Zealand’s Biodiversity”. “It will include national targets that contribute to the achievement of the global Aichi Biodiversity Targets.”

Information on these targets can be found on the Convention on Biodiversity website - https://www.cbd.int/sp/targets/ There is no commitment to broader public engagement that occurred during the development of the NBSAP.
Biosecurity 2025: New Directions?

The Government has issued a discussion paper on proposals for a Biosecurity 2025 “direction statement” for New Zealand, to replace the existing biosecurity strategy – Tiakina Aotearoa: Protect New Zealand. This one is called Biodiversity 2015: Proposals for a direction statement for biosecurity in New Zealand. The paper is designed to guide the biosecurity systems in New Zealand for the next 10 years.

What is proposed?

The Biosecurity 2025 document includes:

- A Mission Statement and guiding principles;
- Five strategic directions, designed to meet significant biosecurity challenges;
- Some proposed actions by the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI);

The last ECOLink questioned the current approach to Biosecurity issues. Of particular concern are MPI’s approach to marine biosecurity and to pests that affect non-commercial species more than commercial species. The lack of prompt action on guava moth has allowed the spread of a devastating pest to many different fruit and nut species grown by households.

MPI focuses on commercically significant pests and too often fails to attend to control pests and pathogens on native species and non-commercial crops.

The mission statement, New Zealanders, our plants and animals, and our unique natural resources are kept safe and secure from harmful pests and diseases, is based on the vision in the 2003 Biosecurity Strategy, Tiakina Aotearoa: Protect New Zealand.

The guiding Principles in the proposed strategy are:

1. Biosecurity is everyone’s responsibility.
2. Decisions take into consideration economic, environmental, cultural and social values.
3. Risk-based decision-making is informed by the best available science and information.
4. Decisions are transparent, taking into account the integrated nature of the system, and [aim to ] ensure resources are prioritised to achieve greatest benefit for biosecurity outcomes.
5. Biosecurity operates in an environment of continuous learning and system improvement.
6. Collaborative approaches and wide participation are enabled and encouraged.

Will the strategy stop guava moth type incursions in the future and require action on non-commercial incursions?

7. The role of tangata whenua as kaitiaki, and matauranga Maori are recognised and provided for.
8. Biosecurity takes account of our trade and travel context, including the need to facilitate safe imports, support assured exports and meet international obligations.

MPI plans public meetings and hui around the country during August. Submissions close at 5pm Friday 9 September 2016. Submissions forms can be emailed to biosecurity2025@mpi.govt.nz, include in the email subject line: ‘Biosecurity 2025 consultation’.

Obituary: Andy Dennis

Energetic champion of New Zealand conservation, particularly wilderness and landscape values, lawyer, specialist in old Icelandic law and tour guide leader in Iceland, marathon runner, poet, literature and language lover, and friend of many, died on 27 July 2016 in Nelson from cancer.

Andy made an enormous contribution to conservation and recreation in New Zealand.

He was a passionate advocate for wilderness, and a key player in the establishment of the South-West World Heritage Area, Paparoa National Park, Kahurangi National Park, and Horoirangi Marine Reserve. He had a long involvement with Forest and Bird, Federated Mountain Clubs, and the Molesworth Steering Committee.

Trained in law, Andy was not in the least a corporate lawyer. Peripatetic by nature, his talents were numerous and his erudition deep. He applied his talents for the public good.

The family request that well-wishers make a donation to the West Coast Penguin Trust or to the Nelson/Tasman branch of Forest and Bird in lieu of flowers.

Messages can be sent to Andy’s sister Sarah Dennis, or Derek Shaw at 118 Rutherford St, Nelson 7010.
Reflections on the Marine Sciences Society Conference 2016, in July

One of the stand out features of the NZ marine sciences society were the various papers on the exploration of and application of ecosystem based management in the Science Challenge marine theme. What a breath of fresh air!

For decades the idea of doing ecosystem based fisheries management has been dismissed as too hard or unnecessary by many of those in the Ministry of Fisheries (now part of the Ministry of Primary Industry) science and management teams. There have been notable and honourable exceptions, but ECO’s attempts to get research and management practice to focus on ecosystem based management were frequently denied and derided, particularly by the fishing industry but also by many in the Ministry. Indeed, one former head of the Ministry of Fisheries called the environmental and future-regarding elements of the Fisheries Act “the religious bits” and made it clear this was not core Ministry business.

At the conference, held in Wellington at Victoria University in early July, there was much other good science, in poster, and short talk presentations. Side events and workshops also included a session on citizen science, many posters and a day long workshop on Ocean Acidification.

The disappointing aspect of the conference was the extent to which Plenary and keynote presentations were devoted to commercial interests. There were PR presentations from Chatham Rise Rock Phosphate and the fishing industry body, with very little science. At these and most of the plenary and keynote presentations, and most of the regular presentations, little or no time was allowed for questions, critiques or any of the usual elements of peer review. Thus vested interests put their case with no challenge and got away with all sorts of assertions that should have been challenged or at least critically explored.

A major opportunity for a genuine assessment of the fisheries Quota Management System on its 30th anniversary was missed. The fishing industry and the Ministry provided their spin on the QMS but none of the critics was invited to speak in keynote or plenary positions. Again there was little or no time for questions or critiques of the QMS presentations.

The QMS has strengths and weaknesses, and MPI purported to canvass these, but the assessments failed to examine whether the harvest targets were acceptable for non-harvest goals. The audience was treated to assertions that the management of fish stocks is successful, with little attention to whether 20% of the un-fished stock size (Bo) “soft” limits and 10%Bo “hard” limits (at which the Ministry deems cessation of fishing should be considered) is acceptable to the community. The Ministry did however acknowledge that a large percentage of the QMS fisheries management-significant fish stocks have little or no recent research information or fishery independent stock assessments.

The assessment of the QMS also ignored the question of the evolution of the power of the fishing industry over decision making and of science pursued and done. The erosion of the contributions to the cost of science and management by the fishing industry, the marginalisation of the non-industry interests, and the losses of environmental capital and functions because of fishing impacts were also left unexplored.

The work done by Glenn Simmons, of Auckland University, and Daniel Pauly, of the University of British Columbia, on the apparent under reporting of fish catch and the failures of compliance and enforcement was casually dismissed and not examined. Conflicts of interest of some of the dissimers were painfully apparent.

The Marine Sciences Society conference 2016 was in many ways a triumph and presented much good science but some of the programme keynotes and plenaries failed to match the exacting standards of impartiality and peer review that characterises good science. The Conference also held a number of very important and interesting associated workshops:

• Coastal citizen science – the use of citizen scientists in collecting information and assisting in analysis is a growing field globally.

• Ocean acidification – the 9th Annual Workshop. Ocean Acidification is the result of increasing carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere being absorbed into water and causing chemical processes that reduce the pH (that is getting more acidic). There is now a national monitoring programme of sea-water pH levels and research trying to identify the impacts on New Zealand species.

• Mixed modeling techniques.

All in all an interesting conference.
Payroll Giving
ECO is registered as a charity with IRD. This is a painless way to make regular payments to ECO and claim tax rebates as you go. Email: eco@eco.org.nz for more information

Follow ECO
on Twitter: @ECONewZealand

on Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/econz

Disclaimer: While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of information contained in this publication, ECO, its executive and editorial staff accept no liability for any errors or omissions. Views and opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the policy options and views of ECO, its executive or its member organisations.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ECO MEMBER ORGANISATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate Technology for Living Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auckland Civic Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buller Conservation Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean Stream Waiheke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coal Action Network Aotearoa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate Justice Taranaki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscious Consumers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation Volunteers NZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coromandel Watchdog of Hauraki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Harbour Environmental Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Bay of Islands Preservation Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EcoMatters Environment Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineers for Social Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Futures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment Network Manawatu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends of Golden Bay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends of Lewis Pass and Hurunui Catchment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends of Nelson Haven and Tasman Bay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends of the Earth NZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GE-Free NZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenpeace NZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guardians of Pauatahanui Inlet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marlborough Environment Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial Volco Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaipatiki Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiwis Against Seabed Mining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Council of Women of NZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nelson Environment Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Canterbury Branch Forest &amp; Bird</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NZ Sea Lion Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orari River Protection Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESPONSE Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Save the Otago Peninsula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soil and Health Association of NZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Coast Environment Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surfbreak Protection Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable Otatuhui Christchurch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable Whanganui Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Te Aroha Earthwatch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thames Coast Preservation and Protection Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellington Botanical Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Coast Blue Penguin Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Coast Environment Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whaingaroa Environment Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife Society, NZVA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife Conservation Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow Eyed Penguin Trust</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**www.eco.org.nz**

**JOIN US!!!**

---

Sent by ECO
PO Box 11057
Wellington
Aotearoa/New Zealand

New Zealand
Permit No. 221318

---

ECOlink June-July 2016 20 www.eco.org.nz