



Mining company could start mining Karangahake Gorge soon

Government agencies and the Hauraki District Council have granted consent without public consultation for a gold mine in the Karangahake gorge near Paeroa.

New Talisman Gold Mines has announced it has all the consents and permissions necessary to start mining operations on 13 December of this year thanks to the 'Authority to Enter and Operate' and Access Arrangement granted by the Department of Conservation and the resource consent from Hauraki District Council.

Hauraki District Council issued the resource consent without public notification and local Karangahake residents were not aware of New Talisman's plan to start extracting 20,000m³ per year from the Karangahake mountain until August this year when Coromandel Watchdog alerted them.

The resource consent is for exploration but the Hauraki District Council Mayor, John Tredgida, has admitted that what is planned is mining and the company is call-



Karangahake gorge mining proposal protests

ing it 'small scale mining in preparation for fuller production'. There is no consent from Waikato Regional Council as the company claims it will be using a 'closed circuit' water system although earlier

IN THIS ISSUE:

Mining Company could start mining Karangahake Gorge soon	1
ECO Regional Summer Gathering	1
Southern Ocean Marine Protection blocked	3
Climate Change, renewable energy and other matters at SIDS in Samoa	4
Food Matters Aotearoa Conference	5
EPA must refuse phosphate mining application	6
Hauraki Gulf - Sea Change consultation	7
ECO Conference - Achieving Genuine Progress for the environment	8
Climate Change lack of action coming to haunt New Zealand	10
Extent of Puriri Dieback	11
Open Govt Partnership - more work needed	12
East Harbour Environmental Association	13
Exclusive Book Offers	13
Wellington Botanical Society	14

ECO Summer Regional Gathering in Taranaki 30 Jan - 1 Feb

ECO member bodies Climate Justice Taranaki and Sustainable Whanganui Trust are organising an ECO Regional Gathering - **Taranaki's Beauty and the Beast** - community issues with oil and climate. There will be a full field trip on Saturday to learn what it is like to live amidst a gas field.

Dates: Friday 30 January to Sunday 1 February.
Where: Muru Raupatu Marae, Brixton, New Plymouth.

Contact: Climate Justice Taranaki, Email: climatejusticetaranaki@riseup.net or ECO Office Ph/Fax: 04-385-7545, Email: eco@eco.org.nz.

Karangahake Gorge Mining

Mining in Karangahake Gorge (cont)

studies of the mine suggest that would be impossible.

This is in a conservation area that has won the International Green Flag award for two years in a row in recognition of its high recreation and conservation value and has an over 70,000 visitors per year.

Winn Brownlee of Ngāti Tamaterā said local iwi were strongly opposed to mining in Karangahake.

“Talisman Gold did come to see me and we objected to the mine, just as our forebears did. They shouldn’t be touching anything close to our [river] as there is no guarantee that they’re are not going to pollute our waterways,” she said.

“All our forests [and birdlife] should be coming back - it’s a place where everyone should be able to go to and is very significant to Ngati Tamatera.”

Coromandel Watchdog spokesperson Ruby Powell said the consents should not have been granted. “This area suffered drastic pollution from mining historically and is now recovering and regenerating.”

“Today the area has a sustainable economy developing from people coming to enjoy the natural environment with many DOC walks and the Hauraki Rail Trail winding through the Karangahake Gorge.”

The Rail Trail is listed as one of the 14 wonders of New Zealand on the 100% Pure New Zealand website.

“Many iwi and locals are opposed to mining in the gorge and the Hauraki District Council and the Department of Conservation should never have given the New Talisman project the go-ahead.

“We were especially disappointed to find out that DOC has asked for compensation for the ‘intrusion of an industrial activity onto the land and for the loss of conservation values’ as we do not see monetary compensation remedies in any way the impacts and risks

A Protect Karangahake group has been established and more information can be found at www.protectkarangahake.org.nz

Coromandel Watchdog has a petition to Love the Karangahake Gorge - Help Stop the Mining at Avaaz https://secure.avaaz.org/en/petition/The_Hauraki_District_Council_Waikato_Regional_Council_and_DOC_Protect_Karangahake_from_mining/

Part of the Hauraki Rail Trail winding through the Karangahake Gorge threatened by the Talisman mine



Opposition to Karangahake mine grows

the activity poses.”

“We have had pledges of support from all over the globe of people wanting to support us in the bid to save the gorge,” said Powell.

A Protect Karangahake group has been established and more information can be found at: www.protectkarangahake.org.nz

“Short term our goal is to stop New Talisman mining Karangahake mountain, long term our goal is to protect the area in perpetuity from mining,” said Protect Karangahake Community Outreach Coordinator Rebecca Dove.

“Unfortunately it looks like our only chance of stopping New Talisman is to challenge their resource consent from the Hauraki District Council through a Judicial review at the High Court, which we are currently preparing to do.” Dove added.

The group is organising protests outside Hauraki District Council on Wednesday 26 November at 12 midday and on Saturday December 13th, when New Talisman have announced they are all set to go. A massive picnic on the mountain itself is being organised.



Southern Ocean Marine Protection Blocked by China and Russia

The Antarctic marine agreement was again unsuccessful in adopting measures to protect the Ross Sea and East Antarctica at its annual meeting in Hobart. The failure of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) to reach consensus for the fourth time calls into question CCAMLR's ability to deliver on its conservation commitments.

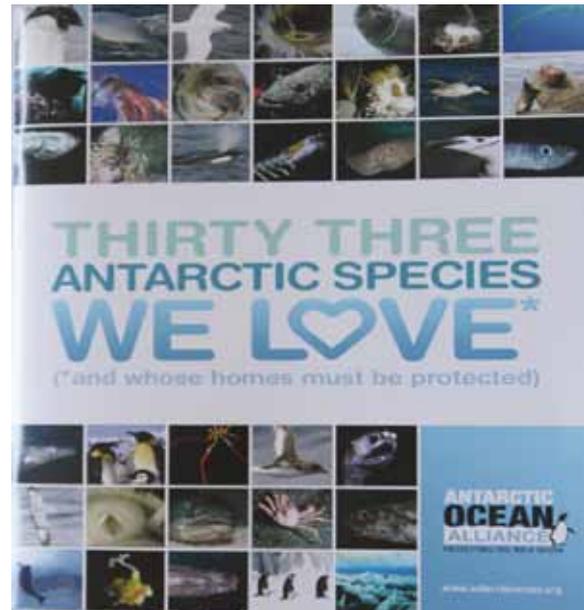
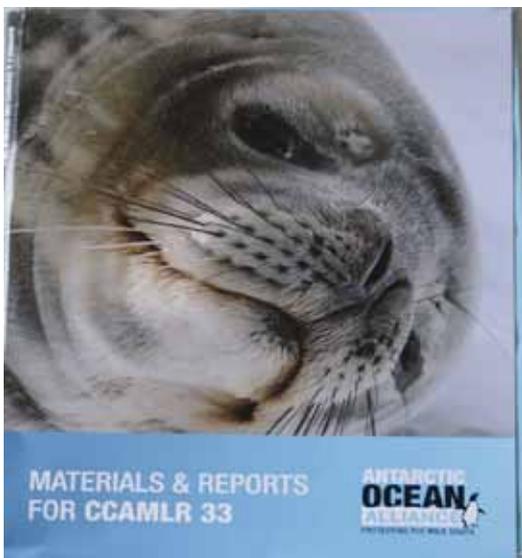
Two proposals for the protection of the Ross Sea and East Antarctic coastal region were on the table at the meeting. Consensus agreement from the 24 nations and the EU that make up CCAMLR membership was actively blocked by China and Russia.

"It is appalling that while the majority of CCAMLR Members are more than ready to create significant marine protection in Antarctic waters, China and Russia have again blocked all efforts to negotiate a successful outcome," said Mark Epstein, Executive Director of the Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition (ASOC).

ASOC commended the efforts of the United States, New Zealand, Australia, the European Union and France during the last four years to promote solid Antarctic marine protected proposals. Mr Epstein said ASOC hoped these countries continue to demand the urgent protection required for Southern Ocean ecosystems.

"Despite the continuing challenges, it has been encouraging to see the strong support for the MPAs from fishing countries like Korea and Norway, which we welcome."

"The question of whether CCAMLR can deliver on its conservation mandate is in very serious doubt after another disappointing failure at this year's meeting,"



Report on 33 special Antarctic species

said Richard Page, Greenpeace.

"Since 1959, Antarctica has been recognized as a special place for peace and science. It is regrettable that CCAMLR, faced with the objections from Russia and China, cannot live up to that promise," said Andrea Kavanagh, who directs Pew's efforts to protect penguins and the Southern Ocean.

A joint US-NZ proposal to designate a Ross Sea MPA of 1.32 million km² (with 1.25 million km² area proposed as "no take") was under consideration.

Australia, France and the EU once again proposed an MPA to protect 1.2 million km² of East Antarctic waters. Their proposal would allow for exploratory and research activities within the MPA if they are consistent with the maintenance of the MPA's objectives.

The Southern Ocean is home to more than 10,000 unique species including most of the world's penguins, whales, seabirds, colossal squid and the remarkable Antarctic toothfish – the main target of fishing companies in the region. The Southern Ocean is a crucial area for scientific research, both for studying how intact marine ecosystems function and for determining the impacts of global climate change.

The Antarctic Ocean Alliance partners, including ECO, will continue to press the countries to support Southern Ocean marine protected areas initiatives and will attend the next CCAMLR meeting in Hobart in 2015 to ensure that the convention delivers on its conservation commitments. The AOA has identified around 40% of the Southern Ocean that warrants protection.

Climate Change, renewable energy and other matters at SIDS in Samoa

By *Betsan Martin*

Climate Change, renewable energy, sustainable development and the “blue economy” were amongst the highlights of the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Conference held in Samoa in September.

The special needs and vulnerabilities of SIDS have been a global focus since the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992. In 1994 at Barbados countries agreed to a special programme of action to assist SIDS. This was again re-emphasised at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) at Johannesburg in 2002 and again at review of implementation of the action plan at Mauritius in 2005.

From observing the meeting you might have thought that SIDS was a climate change negotiation conference, you might also have thought it was a renewable energy conference. You knew you were in the centre of the Pacific universe with the eloquence and hospitality, the incredible generosity which came not only from a magnificent State occasion. Here you felt that every village, school, and church was on its toes to extend a Pacific welcome and ensure that visitors entered into the oceanic imagination and received the richness of the economy of giving at the heart of Samoa.

Pacific states prefer the term “blue economy”, rather than the “green economy”. The Blue economy refers to the oceanic world. Either way they are putting the ocean and land environment into the economic equation. Healthy oceans are essential to Island economies, as well as to the global economy. Christiana Figueres, Executive Director of the UNFCCC said the blue economy is the only guarantee for the future.

SIDS are at the forefront of the green/blue economy because they are natural resource economies. Most of the communities rely directly on fish, fruit, eggs, meat and vegetables grown in their own communities – so their livelihoods depend on healthy coastal and land management. You often heard ‘ridge to reef’ used to describe the direct effect of land use on coastal areas. If inland forests are felled the resulting silting will destroy coastal fisheries.

Talk of Green and Blue economies is rather suggestive and takes some inspiration from the sustainability initiatives and policy frontlines in the Pacific where environment is at the centre of economic development.

Small Island States are at the frontlines of climate change, with their security threatened by the impacts of climate change on food growing and fisheries, the effect of floods, droughts, and other weather disasters, and resulting population migration. Access to climate

finance is needed to safeguard against the worst effects, and to relieve debt burdens.

SIDS position on “common and differentiated responsibilities” is that it is a two way street. (This was first defined in Principle 7 of the Rio Declaration, and can be paraphrased as where all states take on the common burden for environmental protection but action is based on state of development, historical responsibility for the problem, and capacity to respond). They are mobilizing transitions to low carbon economies through renewable energy and economic frameworks that integrate livelihoods and food security into their policies. Climate finance will help with the costs of protecting oceans and fisheries, with water infrastructure, with agriculture and food security, and with training and education to meet climate challenges.

With regards to Oceans and fisheries management, the policies of subsidized fishing (eg China, EU) undermine local ocean and fisheries management. Partnerships are needed to develop the capacity to regulate and undertake ocean surveillance. SIDS countries need co-operation on subsidized and illegal fishing, and ocean mining. Partnerships between governments, private sector, and NGO’s are vital for the management, regulation and protection of oceans and fisheries.

The theme in Samoa of sustainable development through partnerships made sense because Governments cannot alone lead development and transitions to green/blue economies. Business investment is needed to catalyze innovation and provide expertise.

In the world of global interdependence, Pacific Islands are seen as hampered by distance. Yet in Pacific world



Small Island States conference in Samoa

Food Matters Aotearoa Conference - Our Farms, Our Food, Our Future - Ōku whenua, Āku kai, Ōku mō ake, tonu atu

14 and 15 February 2015 Te Papa, Wellington

Food really does matter, especially when it comes to addressing the problems of an increasingly vulnerable global system. Whether a consumer, farmer, scientist or government delegate, we invite you to listen to top scientists, both national and international; speakers with different indigenous and international perspectives on solutions to the challenges we face around future food production.

The conference and related events in major centres during February in Christchurch, Hawkes Bay and Auckland will feature overseas speakers include Dr Vandana Shiva, Prof Gilles-Eric Seralini, Prof Gu Xiulin and Prof Don Huber. For further information see www.foodconference.co.nz.

Speakers will address both traditional and modern farming methods: the use of pesticides, genetically engineered (GE) plants and the effects of these methods on the nutritional value and safety of the food produced. New Zealand speakers will debate regulation and policy, rarely designed with nutrition and sustainable production as a primary objective; and workshops give opportunities to discuss the issues and identify solutions.

Agriculture is a dominant force behind many environmental threats, UN Special Rapporteur on Right to Food, Hilal Elver, recently said that new scientific

Climate change, etc SIDS (Cont)

views, the oceans connect Islands. Oceans are an asset that bonds people together. Digital connectivity is seen as the way to overcome the tyranny of distance - that is one of the challenges of SIDS.

One idea that might sit uneasily with us, was proposed by Pacific leaders themselves to replace overseas aid with investment. Aid is often experienced as conditional and paternalistic, and susceptible to policy changes. It is also not clear that investment would be free from 'self interest' of investors but it could be mutually negotiated.

Betsan went to the SIDS conference representing ECO on the IUCN Delegation, which included IUCN Oceania Director Taholo Kami.



research increasingly shows how “agroecology” offers far more environmentally sustainable methods that can still meet the rapidly growing demand for food. Despite 70% of world food being produced by small traditional farmers, 80% of subsidies and 90% of research funding go to support conventional, industrial agriculture in the EU alone.

Our keynote speakers:-

Dr. Vandana Shiva, charismatic and highly respected educator, encourages governments, farmers and children to retain traditional, sustainable, organic farming as the best farming solution to a growing population, food scarcity and biological diversity. Renowned for her work for social justice, she advises small farmers how to grow and market safe food and preserve seeds to withstand storms and droughts.

Professor Gilles-Eric Seralini, gained worldwide attention after courageously publishing his laboratory research on animals fed GE foods and associated pesticides. Audiences will hear about his controversial research and his warning to regulators on the inherent dangers of dismissing the evidence.

Professor Don Huber, internationally respected microbiologist, has 50 years of knowledge of plant diseases. He exposes the effects of pesticide applications on soil micro-organisms, impacting nutrient uptake and pesticide residues in our foods.

Professor Gu. Xiulin researches and lectures on agricultural economics and globalization, whilst promoting the diverse traditional farming systems in China.

Please help us to make this event a success by putting a mention in your newsletter, posting on your website and to your networks. We have printed information available as flyers, poster and leaflets. Don't hesitate to contact us for more information at:

eventmanager@xnet.co.nz or
info@foodconference.co.nz

Supported by ECO members: GE Free NZ, PAN NZ, Safe Food Campaign, Institute for a Sustainable Society, and Pacific Ecologist.

EPA Committee must refuse phosphate mining application

New Zealand's biggest mining operation is currently before a decision-making committee of the EPA. Chatham Rock Phosphate are proposing to mine phosphate in an area of up to 5000 square km, in depths of up to 450m in the middle of the Chatham Rise.

Three groups, Greenpeace, Kiwis Against Seabed Mining and the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition led the environmental opposition to the proposal. ECO made a submission on the proposal and as a member of DSCC assisted in observing the hearing.

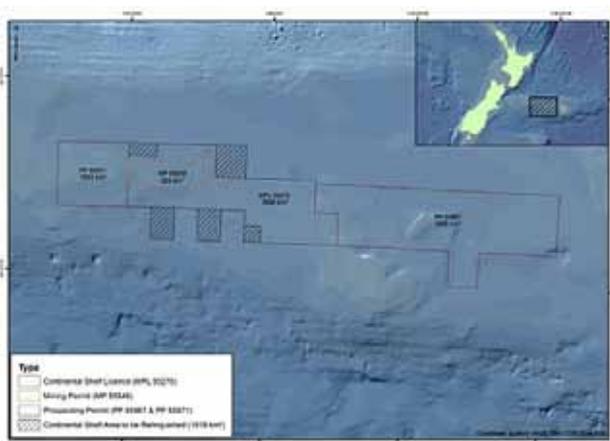
There is strong opposition to the proposal from environmental, fishing interests and iwi.

The New Zealand Environmental Protection Agency should refuse an application to mine phosphate from the deep seabed in the Chatham Rise, because of the damage it will cause to the marine environment, and because the EPA hasn't got enough information to give it the go-ahead, environment groups said.

The proposal would remove a protected coral species crucial to the local ecosystem according to benthic expert Professor Les Watling, a marine biologist with extensive experience – to the point of having seven new species named in his honour.

The company's sediment modelling shows that the mining waste would consist of small particles that, if pumped back into the water, would spread over a wide area, much larger than the area proposed to be mined. Professor Watling said, this would create a kind of "soup" where no coral could grow.

The coral, *Goniocorella dumosa*, was a protected species under the Wildlife Act, and "one of the most important structure-forming, and thus habitat-creating, species on the Chatham Rise," he said. It was the dominant coral in the area and was the reason it is a "sensitive environment" under the EEZ Act.



Chatham Rock Phosphate proposed mining area on the Chatham Rise.

The mining company suggested that artificial 'substrate' like concrete blocks could be placed, but Professor Watling calculated that it would take 164 million concrete blocks to cover only 20 per cent of the mined area, he said, making it prohibitively expensive, and nobody knew if the idea would work at all. One estimate was \$20 billion for this "restoration".

Lawyer acting for the groups, Duncan Currie, said in a closing statement to the hearing that the application was "premature," due to the lack of information in many areas.

"The Environmental Impact Assessment was far from adequate. There's a lot of information missing, but what we do know that this mining will destroy virtually all life on hundreds of square kilometres of the seabed, including rare, vulnerable and endemic species," said Currie.

The list of damage that it could cause included:

- The destruction of deep sea corals, sponges and other deep sea life, and the hard surface they need to survive,
- The mining will create a plume including toxic materials, with high levels of uranium, and the plume will smother everything for hundreds of square kilometres.
- The information on marine mammals is woefully deficient. The company did not even carry out a marine mammal survey. The evidence on noise was partial and incomplete, and the company did not even try to estimate the noise created by a 450 metre long pipeline carrying rocks and sediment up and down to the mining ship. The evidence, including the noise from pump motors the size of a ship's engine on the seafloor, still shows the mining operation's capacity to create lasting injury to marine mammals up to three kilometres from the mining site
- The effects of the uranium and its derivatives (including toxic polonium, which is known to accu-

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)

multate through the food chain) on the marine life and food chain are unknown, as was the effects on wider ecosystem, including fish and fisheries.

- The company had also overstated the benefit of the phosphates to New Zealand, since it will export 75% of the mined phosphates.

The groups also raised the issue of the uranium content in the phosphate. “New Zealand has a number of international treaty obligations, including the Noumea Convention, which have specific requirements about the dumping of uranium that is proposed,” said Mr Currie.

During the hearing it had also become clear that there were numerous enforcement and compensation issues, along with health and safety issues that arise with the proposed mining ship flying a foreign flag of convenience in New Zealand’s EEZ and outside territorial waters. New Zealand has banned foreign flagged fishing vessels in our waters from May 2016 following

concerns about breaches of labour and environmental laws.

“The company that Chatham Rock Phosphate says will do the mining, Boskalis, will itself use a ship that’s likely to be flying a flag of convenience – from Cyprus,” said Barry Weeber.

“Boskalis has a history of breaching environmental consents. If its ship is flagged to Cyprus, as its other ships are, how will the EPA be able to control it in our waters?” he asked.

Mr Weeber also pointed to the international protocols around the effect of another destructive practice – bottom trawling – on these sensitive ecosystems.

“International protocols aimed at avoiding all significant adverse impacts on vulnerable marine ecosystems. Yet this seabed mining proposal would see deliberate targeting of areas containing these vulnerable ecosystems,” he said.

Hauraki Gulf – Sea Change Consultation

Sea Change – Tai Timu Tai Pari is an initiative designed to secure a healthy, productive and sustainable future for the Hauraki Gulf. The Hauraki Gulf Marine Park is a special area acknowledged with its own legislation.

The area is much bigger than the Gulf and includes the Waitemata Harbour, Firth of Thames, the outer Gulf including Little (Hauturu) and Great Barrier Islands (Aotea) out to the Mokihinau, the Mercury Islands and down to Waihi Beach.

The Sea Change – Tai Timu Tai Pari process runs over two years. It started in August 2013 and the final plan is due to be delivered in September 2015. This plan will ultimately inform how the Hauraki Gulf is managed for future generations.

The process was established after successive State of Environment reports showed the area is an ecosystem under real pressure.

Mana whenua, Auckland Council, Waikato Regional Council, territorial authorities, the Department of Conservation, Ministry for Primary Industries and the Hauraki Gulf Forum are working together on this initiative.

A 14 member stakeholder working group (SWG) coming from different interest groups has been established to help develop the process. Katrina Goddard from Forest and Bird and Raewyn Peart from Environmen-

tal Defence Fund are members. The role of the SWG in the Sea Change – Tai Timu Tai Pari project is to develop a spatial plan that will achieve a Hauraki Gulf that:

- is vibrant with life and healthy mauri
- is increasingly productive
- supports healthy and prosperous communities.

In addition six Roundtables have been established to deal with particular issues:

- Water quality and catchments
- Hauraki Gulf fish stocks
- Biodiversity and biosecurity
- Infrastructure for the Economy and Gulf Communities
- Aquaculture in the Hauraki Gulf
- Accessible Gulf

ECO Co-chair Barry Weeber is on the fish stocks and aquaculture roundtables.

If you use the Gulf or are interested in its wellbeing, you can have your say through the Sea Change website www.seachange.org.nz. You can also sign up to a regular newsletter. You can view SWG updates, meeting notes, and the scientific presentations used to inform the group’s work on the website.

Once the plan is complete, the Project Steering Group will take the lead in recommending how the plan will be used.

ECO Conference - Achieving Genuine Progress

This year's ECO Conference had a theme of Achieving Genuine Progress for the environment and a range of speakers explored elements of this topic. Through Friday afternoon and most of Saturday attendees and invited speakers gave a range of excellent presentations around the core theme.

The Annual Conference this year was held at Toi Poneke in Wellington.

The conference was opened by Te Ati Awa. Liz Mellish from Te Ati Awa led off by taking attendees through various co-governance arrangements in the Wellington area, notably over the three harbour islands, including Matiu (co-managed with DoC), Parangarahu Lakes at Pencarrow (with the Regional Council) and Orouaiti Reserve at Point Dorset in Wellington (with the City Council). The lakes - Kohangapiripiri and Kohangatera are of national ecological importance. Michael Oates from Wellington City Council assisted in explaining the joint work involving the Council and the Tenth's Trust

There was a lively discussion with aspiring representatives of political parties on Friday night. Over sixty people attended the discussion and asked questions.

New Zealanders attitude to the Environment

Geoff Keey, a Friend of ECO, discussed New Zealanders' attitudes to the environment. Broadly, New Zealanders care about the environment and are proud of it, but are comfortable with its state (with the possible recent exception of fresh water). This led to a useful discussion on why this general view differs so markedly from that of most attendees at the Conference and the actual state and trends in the New Zealand environment.



Liz Mellish from Te Ati Awa explaining various co-governance arrangements in the Wellington area.

By Bruce Anderson



Politicians answering questions

Photos: Michael Pringle

Following on from this, ECO Exec members Cath Wallace and Barry Weeber led a discussion on ECO's draft policy briefing on environment and conservation issues. This aims to lay out ECO's policy basis and objectives as a key resource for conversations, influence, and actions.

On Saturday morning, Wokje Abrahamse from Victoria University talked about the psychology of environmental behaviour change, and what does and doesn't appear to work. Education and appeals to rational self-interest are likely to be less effective than championing, commitment-making, peer influence, and positive framing of issues and messages.

Catherine Iorns from ECO updated the Conference on the court challenge to the Electoral Commission's decision that the Climate Voter website was electioneering in nature (and hence subject to electoral law).

Paul Young from Generation Zero outlined the likely requirements for effective transition to a low-carbon economy. According to the UNFCCC, a linchpin for the wide range of necessary policy actions is domestic legislation (as in the UK's Climate Change Act 2008). Paul contrasted New Zealand's abundant clean energy resources with its lack of climate-change-friendly policies and high investment in road transport and mining.

The upcoming UNFCCC climate conference in Peru was highlighted by Tarsh Turner who is a member of the self-funded New Zealand Youth Delegation. The youth delegation has been attending the conference arguing for greater action to protect the climate.

Kevin Hackwell from Forest and Bird described the wildly variable progress being made in protecting New Zealand's biodiversity. For example Fonterra is slowly trying to change its pricing model to support adding value rather than maximising production,

meanwhile attempts are being made to introduce dairying into the Mackenzie Basin; the elimination of pests such as rats, stoats and ferrets on the main islands has now become a real possibility “within two decades”, but protection of marine life in the Exclusive Economic Zone is “abysmal”.

New Media

Loomio, an on-line open-source product for community groups was described by Ben Knight from Loomio. The free product aims to help groups trying to work cooperatively. He described it as his and his fellow developers’ current attempt to address the issue that: “If humans are getting collectively more intelligent, why are our biggest institutions getting so much dumber, and why isn’t the Internet helping?”

Meg Howie from Ask Away described this on-line youth voter initiative which gives people a chance to address questions to the political parties and compare their answers. The barriers Ask Away tries to address are that youth are not close to the formal democratic system, and that issues are usually complex and difficult to understand. Ask Away aims to act as a gateway to deeper engagement, supported by developing social norms through Facebook and Twitter.

Election debate

A highlight of the Conference was the question and answer session with representatives from the political parties.

National (Colin King), Labour (John Blincoe), Green (Eugenie Sage) and NZ First (Hugh Barr) accepted ECO’s invitation, and enjoyed a robust debate with delegates on the Friday evening. Each gave an introductory address, and then responded to questions from the floor.

The opposition parties’ opening addresses all appeared to come from the common base that environmental and related issues were a major challenge facing New Zealand, and they differed mainly in details and orders of priority. Eugenie Sage said New Zealand’s greatest challenge was to transform to a low-carbon economy, and Hugh Barr described the situation as a “difficult journey for home sapiens over the next 100 years”. Colin King’s approach was to provide a list of National’s environmental accomplishments over its previous 6 years in office.

Questions were asked and responded to on a wide range of environmental topics: next steps for the Resource Management Act, transport policy, irrigation, coal mining, deep sea mining, water policy, the ETS, the TPPA and GE, and climate change. They also covered process issues, such as Labour/Green relationships, how to move towards stewardship and educate for sustainability, democracy in Canterbury, and

whether NZ should be a “leader” on climate change.

A typical example of the range of positions taken came when John Blincoe was asked how Labour could continue to support coal mining. He replied that there would be no lignite mining, and beyond that there needed to be a quick transition to a low carbon economy (the question was therefore one of how quickly the mining of higher quality coal would be stopped). Following on, Eugenie Sage said that “coal should stay in the ground till it can be properly used”; Colin King said mining should continue, to support employment and exports; and Hugh Barr, having previously said that coal mining should be phased out, added that Fonterra was the biggest user of coal in New Zealand.

Most of Saturday afternoon was devoted to the ECO AGM, including presentation of the annual report.

The final round up

After the formal Conference wrap up and dinner, most delegates stayed on for a showing of “Hot Air”, Alister Barry’s outstanding documentary about the politics and lobbying which have prevented effective action on climate change in New Zealand over the last 20 years. Many in the room were familiar with some of the content, having been involved in various aspects of the process, but it was engrossing for all present.

Some of the key messages from the Conference were:

- a common theme was the need to support youth involvement – in environmental issues generally, and at gatherings and the Conference;
- successes can be and are being achieved, despite the strong opposing forces, at both local and national level, but more easily at local level.
- New Zealand still has numerous advantages over many other countries, and environmentalists’ actions can be more successful if we can work out how to tap more effectively into New Zealanders’ underlying care for the environment.



Some of ECO Conference attendance

Climate Change lack of action coming to haunt New Zealand

The recent deal over climate change between the top two carbon emitters US and China has created a new impetus for the development of a climate agreement in Paris in 2015.

President Obama committed the United States to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions 26-28% by 2025 compared to 2005. China agreed for the first time to slow emissions growth and ultimately reverse these after emissions peak “around 2030.” China also agreed to increase zero-carbon emission sources of energy to 20% by 2030.

In addition, the 28-state European Union, the third-largest greenhouse gas producer, has pledged to cut its emissions by at least 40% by 2030 from 1990 levels.

In contrast New Zealand Government has said it would only commit to reduce emissions to 5% below 1990 levels over 2021-2030. New Zealand has the sixth highest per capita emissions among OECD countries.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has published the latest estimate of a climate budget for the planet to achieve no more than a 2 degrees Centigrade temperature increase over pre-industrial levels. To achieve this, countries must cut CO2 emissions to zero by 2070. By 2100 all other greenhouse gas emissions – including methane, nitrous oxide and ozone, as well as CO2 – must reach zero. UNEP reminded countries, of the view of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) that without these changes “severe, widespread and irreversible” effects from climate change would occur.

This October was the warmest October on record globally. Five of the last six months have set monthly global heat records. The only exception was July so that 2014 is tracking to be the warmest year on record beating 2010 and 1998.

The latest Treasury and Ministry for the Environment (MFE) briefing papers to their new ministers show that New Zealand has one of the fastest rising emissions of OECD countries – MFE noted “our gross emissions have increased by 25% since 1990, and are projected to rise substantially in the time to 2050, based on current settings.”

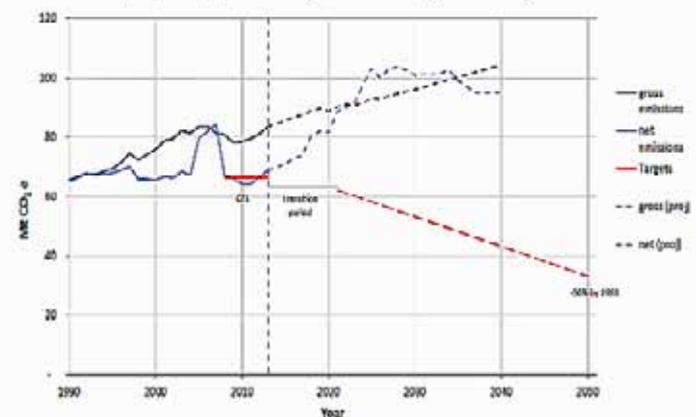
The Emission Trading Scheme (ETS) has been gutted by the Key Government and will only reduce emissions by about a half a percent by 2030. The standard government approach has been to rely on forest sinks but that is only a short term fix especially as planting has declined and the trees have to be cut down releasing carbon emissions. Now it looks as though even with tree planting New Zealand will have over 30 percent higher emissions.

Treasury is also warning that the price of carbon is “predicted to be significantly higher after 2020.” Treasury has asked Ministers that “when taking a post-2020 target, [to] signal the longer-term changes to ETS settings that will be required to meet the target.”

It is time the Government got serious about reducing emissions. MFE has advised its new Minister, Nick Smith, that: “We need to develop a stable and enduring policy setting that enables New Zealand to become a successful ‘low-carbon society’, which is resilient to climate change impacts and widely supported by society.” Treasury proposed that the government “institutionalise regular reporting on long-term targets and regulatory settings.”

It is time that the Government fronted up on what they propose to do to reduce emissions and do so publicly. Treasury suggests a public process is needed and certainty for the future. This should involve setting clear and binding staged targets.

New Zealand's projected greenhouse gas emissions against its targets



MFE and Treasury have identified the failure to reduce emissions especially in contrast to a Government commitment to a 50% cut by 2050 or 5% cut by 2030 over 1990 levels.

Climate finance

Progress is also building on the 2007 Copenhagen agreed climate fund to help developing countries to cut emissions and to prepare for global warming. At the recent meeting in Berlin 30 countries pledged \$9.3 billion for a fund, which was just shy of the \$10-15 billion target. This included pledges from the United States of \$3bn, Japan \$1.5bn, and Germany, France and Britain have promised about \$1bn each, and Sweden over \$500m. New Zealand has agreed to a miserly \$3 million and Australia has said it would not contribute.

If New Zealand was at the same GDP equivalent level as Sweden it should have been over \$180 million.

Extent of Puriri Dieback *by Madeleine van der Poel*

Puriri is an important indigenous species of Northern New Zealand and it can be affected by dieback problem. The species (*Vitex lucens*) is an endemic evergreen. Unlike numerous other New Zealand species, the flowers of puriri are large and range from red-brown to pale pink and it flowers year round. It is an important canopy species, which provides fruit, seeds and nectar all year round to native birds. Known bird species that are the main puriri pollinators are tui, bellbirds, hihi, silvereyes and rosella.

Puriri's seeds are encased in a large, nutritious fruit. Due to their size and texture, dispersers must swallow them whole. This allows for long distance seed dispersal for puriri but also provides an energy resource for dispersers. Kereru or kukupa are a key seed disperser. Kereru has a history of decline due to hunting and predation pressures. Puriri provides a year round food source which is vital for the survival of kereru during periods of limited food availability.

While the New Zealand Plant Conservation Network list puriri's current conservation status as '*Not Threatened*', in certain areas of Northland, a dieback has been detected, with no confirmed causes. There does appear to be a correlation between land use and the deterioration of puriri health depicted by the contraction of the crown and stem/root damage.

Trees that are affected by dieback tend to have thinning foliage and dead or dying branches. Crown contraction is common in mature puriri trees, either retreating downward or inward to the crown core. Both forms of contraction don't appear to cause the immediate death of the tree, but rather inhibit the replacement of old foliage. When a stand is affected by dieback, the trees undergo high stress conditions which can affect younger trees in the stand.

Little is known as to how dieback diseases are spread, however minimizing the spread of soil is a key initiative to the prevention of dieback. Hosking (1999) suggested that the stress produced by farming could be leading to puriri dieback through root damage, ground pugging and stem damage.

The recommendations from the Department of Conservation to stop the spread of dieback – in response to the deadly *Phytophthora* that has been affecting Kauri forests, are relevant to puriri:

- Make sure shoes, tyres and hunting equipment are clean and free of dirt before and after visiting a forest;
- Keep away from tree roots. Any movement of soil around the roots of trees has the potential to spread the disease.



In regards to protecting puriri in an agricultural environment, Hosking (1999) suggested several management options for landowners

- Fence individual trees to limit the interaction they have with stock;
- Plant native species to promote a forest edge which will allow a sub-canopy environment to re-establish;
- Support community groups with the necessary resources to preserve stands of national significance;
- Establish a riparian zone to aid water filtration around catchments to limit inundation.

Due to the slow onset of puriri dieback, this process can be reversible if tended to promptly. Hosking (1999) noted cases of tree death in Waihou Valley and around Waipu therefore it is imperative to halt any further spread of dieback. On a larger conservation scale, protecting areas to form interconnected corridors where birds can migrate between and disperse seeds could ensure populations don't decline to low numbers. New Zealand's Kauri has been subject to large scale declines. It would be a tragedy to allow another North Island species to become threatened.

References

- Anderson, S.H (2003) Reconstruction of seed dispersal via modeling, seedling recruitment, and dispersal efficiency of *Hemiphysalis novaeseelandiae* in *Vitex lucens* and *Prumnopyxis ferruginea* in New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Ecology* 27(2), 83-94
- Auckland Council (2014) Kauri dieback disease. Retrieved from <http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/environmentwaste/pestsdiseases/Pages/kauridiebackhome.aspx#protect>
- Hosking G. 1999: The health of puriri (*Vitex lucens*). Conservation Advisory
- Science Notes No. 245. Department of Conservation, Wellington. 24 pp.
- Nadolny, C., 1995, Causes of tree decline/dieback in NSW Kater, A. (ed.), Redressing Rural Tree Decline in NSW, Proceedings of the Greening Australia 'After Dieback' Conference, Orange, NSW, May 1995, Greening Australia, Sydney
- Southward, R.C.; Fountain, D.W.; McGill, C.R., and Outred, H.A., 2002. Biology, structure, and germination characteristics of seeds of puriri *Vitex lucens* (Verbenaceae). *New Zealand Journal of Botany*, 40(3), 427–435.

Open Government Partnership - more work needed *by Jan Rivers*

The New Zealand government joined the international Open Government Partnership (OGP) in 2013, and submitted an Action Plan to the OGP Secretariat in July 2014. In late October it was accepted and published.

There are now 65 countries involved in the OGP since its inception in 2011 ranging from the UK and US to Indonesia and Brazil. These countries have signed up to meaningful and aspirational goals: better oversight, greater transparency and opportunities to involve the public in decision making.

The themes our Government have selected are:

- Reporting on Better Public Services and the ICT Strategy and Action Plan;
- To adopt an, as yet undecided, recommendation(s) from the Transparency International 2013 assessment of New Zealand;
- A review of the Kia Tutahi Relationship Accord. This is an agreement between New Zealand's government and voluntary sector organisations to act inclusively and in good faith on issues of funding.

Implementing the Action Plan requires a civil society group to be established. Members are being selected by officials at the State Services Commission and the OGP has a built-in review mechanism for each two year iteration on the Action Plan. In addition to a self-assessment the OGP conducts an independent review and New Zealand's will be conducted by academic and lawyer Steven Price from the Law School at Victoria University.

The ideas behind the OGP internationally are laudable, but the small number of business and civil society organisations who were consulted about the NZ Action Plan gave a strong message that it needed to start from widespread consultation, openness and non-partisan ideas. Respondents were not excited about better re-

porting the government's Better Public Services and IT plans, which are after all highly ideological and have a focus on saving money.

Rather, interest was more focused on the overall performance of government openness and the possibility of developing some of the opportunities for improvements identified by the Transparency International 2013 assessment. These include problems with: the Select Committee and Official Information Act processes; the frequent use of urgency in Parliament; the funding rules for political parties; the problems that the Audit Office and Ombudsman's Office have faced with inadequate funding; the narrow ownership base of New Zealand's media.

Disappointingly the consultation did not result in any of these concerns being adopted into the plan.

In addition, recent research by Sandra Grey and Charles Sedgwick from Victoria University shows an increasing level of concern by NGOs about their independent advocacy role. There has also been the recent news that Official Information Act questions are regularly delayed to achieve government advantage, and the other developments of concern in our democratic processes.

Given this the Government must realise it is on shaky ground regarding openness and transparency. It's hard to see, therefore, how having New Zealand join up to the Open Government Partnership will be seen as upholding its integrity.

Rather than seeking to participate in the Action Plan's civil society group, the ECO Open Government Participative Society Working Group is proposing that part of its work plan into 2015 is to survey member organisations and the broader NGO sector. This is to identify the kinds of actions that civil society participants think should be the focus of a meaningful open government initiative.

If you are interested in commenting on the development of the survey or to suggest people or organisations who should be included in the consultation please contact Diana Shand diana.shand@xtra.co.nz 021 471 989 or Jan Rivers jrivers@paradise.net.nz 04 9773680

For further information:

Public Good Article on the Action Plan from August 2014 <http://bit.ly/PG-on-opengovt>

Bryan Gould on the Action Plan <http://bit.ly/BryanGould-on-opengovt>

Open Government Partnership Government <http://www.ssc.govt.nz/open-government-partnership>



NZ Open Government Partnership is still not a meaningful initiative

East Harbour Environmental Assn

The East Harbour Environmental Assn (EHEA) – is a local Wellington environmental group with a general watchdog role regarding issues relating to the natural environment in Eastbourne.

Founded in 1973 EHEA currently represents around 150 households in the Eastbourne area, with a smattering of members residing elsewhere. The EHEA has both a marine and land focus which is probably reasonably unique for a small environmental group.

Over the 40 years of its existence EHEA has worked on a wide variety of issues. To begin with a lot of work went into organising walks – including publishing two booklets on local walks: bush reserve tracks; and on the coastal walk to Pencarrow Head/Fitzroy Bay. Other activity involved plantings, beach clean-ups and mopping up after fires on the Eastbourne hills. EHEA also published a study on the Wellington Harbour which was intended to be the precursor to an application for a marine reserve within the Harbour, but the application never came to fruition.

Later submission writing was the predominant focus of our efforts. Submissions ranged from those on various local authority plans and policies to submissions on individual resource applications. EHEA had a very important role in ensuring that Hutt Valley sewerage was treated to secondary standard at Seaview rather than be pumped out untreated into Fitzroy Bay.

More recently, especially with changes to the RMA which meant that EHEA no longer has a role in individual resource applications, the focus has somewhat changed again, and we are now focusing quite a bit of our effort onto trying to reduce the weed infestations along various tracks in the East Harbour Regional Park. With this in mind we have an agreement with Greater Wellington for our Adopt a Track programme.

However we still keep up, as best we can, with our watchdog role – and have recently been involved in making our voice heard on proposed new track in the East Harbour Regional Park (EHRP), submission writing on the Parangarahu Lakes Co-Management Plan and on Greater Wellington's Key Native Ecosystem Plans for the EHRP.

We would particularly welcome hearing about how other local environmental groups are grappling with the issue of getting more active members.

Felicity Rashbrooke, Chair

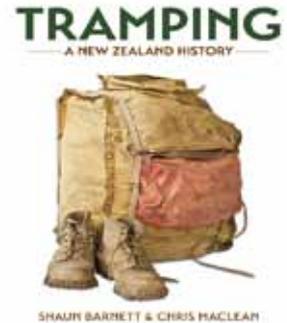
Email: rashbrooke@xtra.co.nz.

Exclusive Offer from Craig Potton Publishing for ECOLink readers

20% discount to members, 5% commission to ECO and free delivery in New Zealand.

The four books available now are:

Tramping: A New Zealand History by Shaun Barnett and Chris Maclean



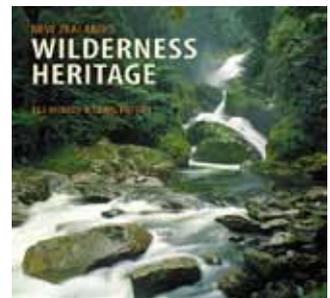
A comprehensive history of tramping in New Zealand from the 1890s to the 1990s. A highly readable and superbly illustrated book.

Land of Birds: An Illustrated tribute to the birds of New Zealand by Niels Meyer-Westfeld



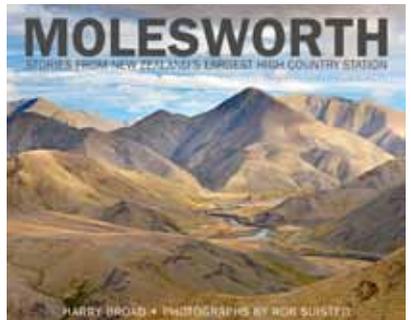
A stunning collection of NZ bird illustrations and accompanying text on each species.

New Zealand's Wilderness Heritage by Les Molloy and Craig Potton



A comprehensive record of NZ's wilderness from NZ's key wilderness experts with comprehensive photos.

Molesworth Stories from New Zealand's Largest High-Country Station by Harry Broad and Photographs by Rob Suisted



The book tells the stories behind the iconic Molesworth high country station with evocative photos of the area. Won the Nielsen Booksellers' Choice award at this year's NZ Post Book Awards.

To order these books and obtain this discount please order online at <http://www.craigpotton.co.nz/> and use the discount code ECO2014 at the shopping cart. This offer is for a limited time and will expire on 31st December 2014.

Wellington Botanical Society

'BotSoc', as the society is known, was founded in 1939, and now has about 250 members. Our activities include research, fieldwork, education, publication, advocacy and the provision of botanical advice.

'BotSoccers', as members are known, range from people learning to identify native plants, to skilled amateur and professional botanists. We run field trips on the first Saturday each month, except January, to areas of indigenous vegetation in the southern North Island, and in summer, for 7-10 days, alternating between the North Island and the South Island. We welcome non-members on our field trips.

During field trips, more knowledgeable members help others to identify plants, and to understand indigenous botany and plant ecology. We compile lists of indigenous and introduced plant species, or add to existing lists. The new lists, or expanded lists, are sent to the land-managing agency, eg Department of Conservation, regional council, or territorial local authority, or to the private landowner, and also to the NZ Plant Conservation Network www.nzpcn.org.nz. Our newsletter records field trips and finds made during them.

Since 1991, in partnership with Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC), we have run bi-annual workbees to Upper Hutt's Te Mārua Bush, in Kaitoke Regional Park. We remove weed species and plant locally appropriate indigenous species around the margins of this small remnant matai – tōtara - black maire forest.

On the third Monday each month, except December and January we hold public meetings featuring a guest speaker on some aspect of botany, ecological restoration, conservation, research, or the management of protected areas. These meetings start at 7.30 p.m. in Lecture Theatre MYLT101, ground floor, Murphy Building, Victoria University, Kelburn Parade. We welcome non-members.

Our constitution requires that we advocate for the conservation and protection of NZ native plants, so we:

- encourage the study of botany, the NZ flora in particular;
- create an interest in, and foster an appreciation of, NZ native plants, especially in the field;
- collect and disseminate knowledge of, and encourage the cultivation of, native plants;
- advocate for the protection of lands and waters under protected area statutes, in their natural state.

BotSoc has made submissions this year on on management plans, council annual plans and park proposals.



Of particular concern now are:

- proposed changes to the Resource Management Act 1991, which, if enacted, would undermine the protection of the natural environment;
- GWRC Regional Plan review;
- GWRC Natural Resources Plan draft;
- WCC Suburban Reserves Management Plan draft;
- WCC Biodiversity Action Plan review.

BotSoc funds the following each year:

- Jubilee Award - assists people to research and add to the knowledge of NZ's indigenous flora;
- Student travel grants - helps Victoria University School of Biological Sciences botany students doing field work;
- NIWA Wellington Science Fair Prize - an award for the pupil with the most impressive project involving native plants.

In addition, BotSoc administers the following:

- The Arnold & Ruth Dench NZ Botanical Award - aims to enhance understanding and awareness of NZ's indigenous flora, including the interactions between it and invasive species of flora and fauna.
- Tom Moss Student Award in Bryology - funds research on bryophytes and lichens.

BotSoc's publications include the Wellington Botanical Society Bulletin (published biennially) and the Wellington Botanical Society Newsletter (published three times per year).

Our web site, www.wellingtonbotsoc.org.nz. Lists our programme of field trips and evening meetings, and items of botanical interest.

You can view our permanent display of photographs from our field trips, in Te Marae o Tane / Otari-Wilton's Bush Information Centre, 160 Wilton Rd, Wellington. Society members lead tours of the Bush.

For further information, contact our secretary: bj_clark@xtra.co.nz.



ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION
ORGANISATIONS OF NEW ZEALAND

ECO • PO Box 11057 • Wellington

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Postcode _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

- Please place me on your e-mail list for tieke email news or contact us by e-mail eco@eco.org.nz

Groups - Join ECO:

- Please send information on becoming a member of ECO

Membership is by application for groups involved in the protection of the environment. Subscriptions for member organisations are determined by the size of the organisation:

- 1 - 100 members: \$85 p.a.
- 101 - 1000 members: \$130 p.a.
- 1001 - 4999 members: \$440 p.a.
- 5000 + members: \$1000 p.a.

Individuals - support ECO by:

- subscribing as a 'Friend of ECO'
-\$45 P.A. (GST inc.) 'Friends of ECO' receive this quarterly newsletter, mailings and invitations to ECO gatherings.
- subscribing as a sustaining 'Friend of ECO'
-\$120 P.A. (GST inclusive).
- subscribing as a corporate 'Friend of ECO'
-\$500 P.A. (GST inclusive).
- subscribing as unwaged 'Friend of ECO'
-\$25 P.A. (GST inclusive).
- making a regular automatic payment
-see details on opposite page.
- contributing services or goods:
- _____
- making a donation (*donations over \$5 are tax deductible*)
- \$20 \$50 \$100 \$200
- Other amount \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____

VISA/MASTERCARD PAYMENT

Cardholder name: _____

Expiry date: _____

Card number: _____

Volunteers:

Here at the ECO office things are humming, and there is much to do. The sorts of jobs we have for volunteers include assisting getting our library into order, data entry, online research. Please contact Michael Pringle (04)385-7545 or email eco@eco.org.nz

Follow ECO

on Twitter: [@ECONewZealand](https://twitter.com/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.

HELP ECO GO AROUND!

Why not share info about ECO with a friend or workmate? You could leave ECOLink in the breakroom at work, the doctor's waiting room, or the bus stop or pass it on to a friend who is interested in the environment

PASS IT

PUBLISHED BY ENVIRONMENT
AND CONSERVATION
ORGANISATIONS OF NEW ZEALAND

ECO, PO Box 11-057, Wellington
Phone/fax 04 385-7545
e-mail: eco@eco.org.nz
2nd floor, 126 Vivian Street, Wellington
Website: www.eco.org.nz
ISSN: 1174-0671
Printed on 100% Recycled Paper

Editing: Elizabeth Lee and Michael Pringle
Layout: Barry Weeber

ECO MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

Appropriate Technology for Living Association
Auckland Civic Trust
Bay of Islands Coastal Watchdog
Bay of Islands Maritime Park Inc.
Baywatch Hawkes Bay Environment Group
Buller Conservation Group
Clean Stream Waiheke
Coal Action Network Aotearoa
Climate Justice Taranaki
Conscious Consumers
Coromandel Watchdog of Hauraki
East Harbour Environmental Association
Eastern Bay of Islands Preservation Society
EcoMatters Environment Trust
Engineers for Social Responsibility
Environmental Futures
Friends of Golden Bay
Friends of Lewis Pass and Hurunui Catchment
Friends of Nelson Haven and Tasman Bay
Friends of the Earth NZ
GE-Free NZ
Greenpeace NZ
Guardians of Pauatahanui Inlet
Initial Volco Trust
Kaipatiki Project

Kakariki - Canterbury University Environment Group
Marlborough Environment Centre
National Council of Women of NZ
Nelson Environment Centre
Nga Uri o te Ngahere Trust
North Canterbury Branch Forest & Bird
Orari River Protection Group
Pacific Institute of Resource Management
RESPONSE Trust
Save the Otago Peninsula
Soil and Health Association of NZ
South Coast Environment Society
Students for Environmental Action
Surfbreak Protection Society
Sustainable Otago Christchurch
Sustainable Whanganui Trust
Te Aroha Earthwatch
Thames Coast Preservation and Protection Society
Wellington Botanical Society
Wellington Tramping and Mountaineering Club
West Coast Blue Penguin Trust
West Coast Environment Network
Whaingaroa Environment Centre
Wildlife Society, NZVA
Yellow Eyed Penguin Trust

www.eco.org.nz

JOIN US!!!



Sent by ECO
PO Box 11057
Wellington
Aotearoa/New Zealand

New Zealand
Permit No. 221318

Permit The permit logo consists of a stylized envelope icon inside a circle.