



Mining in National Parks or World Heritage Areas?

By Barry Weeber and Cath Wallace

The Minister of Energy, Gerry Brownlee, and the Minister of Conservation, Tim Groser, have decided to consider allowing mining and other minerals activity in national parks, reserves, marine reserves and other protected areas in a so-called “stock-take” of minerals on the conservation estate. These areas are covered by the protections in the Fourth Schedule of the Crown Minerals Act. Ministers have been lobbied by the mining industry to give greater access to conservation land.

Brownlee’s public rationale for this move is to increase New Zealand’s economic growth. What he did not say is that non-fuel mining last year returned well under 0.4% of the production value in royalties to the Crown according to the Crown’s own figures (Treasury Budget data 2009, MED 2009). The return on coal was only 1.5 percent.

Brownlee has relied on an apparently non-peer-reviewed paper by Richard Barker (2009) that cites the eye-watering figure of \$140b for the value of minerals, coal and lignite in New Zealand. The figures however are highly speculative and are not even held out by the author as anything other than in-the-ground gross estimates. Barker himself notes that the estimates are not of recoverable minerals and coal.



Oceana Gold rock dump and tailings dam, Victoria Conservation Park, near Reefton on the West Coast of the South Island.

The figures are distorted because there is no allowance for the costs of mining, the losses from tourism or to the environment or agriculture, or even whether the minerals are recoverable – a point the report itself notes. With foreign companies, mining experts and foreign capital likely to be involved, even the net benefit figures would have to be adjusted for flows to foreign mining companies, their financiers and to imported labour, so Brownlee’s citing of the figures is highly misleading. Barker also comments that much can be mined without going to environmentally sensitive areas, so even he is not advocating damaging conservation values.

The Fourth Schedule of the Crown Minerals Act came into force in 1997 under section 3 of the Crown Minerals Amendment Act (No 2) 1997. It prohibits mineral activity on conservation land gazetted as national parks, nature reserves, scientific reserves, wilderness areas, marine reserves, ecological areas (but not on the West Coast of the South Island), forest sanctuaries, wildlife sanctuaries, wetlands of international importance, and the Coromandel Peninsula, Hauraki Gulf, and most associated offshore islands.

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The legislation was passed by the National Government in 1997 and represented a compromise between environmental and minerals interests on the type of conservation land that should not be mined. While ecological areas were included in the fourth schedule, ecological areas on the West Coast of the South Island were excluded.

As Nick Smith, then Minister of Conservation, said in the third reading debate on the changes:

“This Bill sets out quite clearly very significant areas of conservation estate in which mining is not allowed. That is something that this House should welcome.”

He went on to say: “This is landmark legislation for the conservation movement in New Zealand. I welcome the Bill’s progress and, as Minister of Conservation, look forward to not having to consider mining applications in those areas where nature should be able to rule the roost.”

The then Minister of Energy, Max Bradford, said:

“Like so many things we do in life and in this House, there is compromise on this issue. But at the very least, the Bill does go a considerable way towards satisfying the desires of the people of the Coromandel Peninsula and it does provide a fair and reasonable basis for protecting the conservation values of that special part of New Zealand.”

The areas that Ministry of Economic Development officials have asked to be included in the review are: “conservation land within the Coromandel Peninsula (precious metals), Kahurangi (precious and base metals), Waitutu (petroleum and eastern Paparoa (coal)).” Waitutu is part of Fiordland National Park and is

part of the South-West World Heritage Area. The Government has so far removed part of the Oteake Conservation Park which contains a lignite deposit at Hawkdun.

This amounts to a direct subsidy to the minerals industry since DOC bought the area on the open market, and now the mining industry wants access to the land without having paid for it.

Contrary to the statements of the Minister of Energy, Gerry Brownlee, mineral activity is not having a rough deal. Mining has a special status and is not subject to the usual provisions for public notification and input that apply to other activity on Conservation land.



Oceana Gold tailings dam in Victoria Conservation Park. In order to extract the gold the ore is ground to the consistency of toothpaste and tailings and waste rock are dumped in valleys adjacent to the mine.

“...There is no allowance for the costs of mining, the losses from tourism or to the environment, or even whether the minerals are recoverable ”

Tourism activity, hut building, and roading is subject to the concessions provisions of the Conservation Act, which include environmental impact assessment and public processes. In contrast miners gain access under the secretive provisions of the Crown Minerals Act with no public process of granting access and there is no public notice or public input unlike the provisions of the Conservation Act.

The only real safeguards are the prohibitions on surface activity under the Fourth Schedule of the Crown Minerals Act. These provisions apply to only some of the categories of extremely important conservation land, including national parks, national reserves, and marine reserves.

The Fourth Schedule does not exclude mining from World Heritage Areas, most ecological areas nor marine mammal sanctuaries. This schedule does not prevent miners operating mines under areas listed in the Fourth Schedule, for example national parks, nor clearing native vegetation for service or emergency adits. Pyke River Coal Mine partly operates under these provisions.

In 2000 IUCN, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, at its general assembly, comprising government and non-government members, jointly called on all countries to stop mining on IUCN protected areas categories I to IV. These categories would include nearly all conservation land and certainly would include all World Heritage Areas.

At the World’s Parks Congress in 2003, representatives of Governments and civil society noted that: “the action of the International Council on Mining and Metals and Shell in declaring that they will treat World Heritage sites as ‘no-go’ areas for their exploration and extractive activities and calls on all other members of the mining, oil and gas industries to make the same commitment;”

Retrograde RMA Bill passed

By Barry Weeber

It is time that the Government included all World Heritage areas in the Fourth Schedule of the Crown Minerals Act. These are areas which meet international criteria for outstanding areas.

The Waitutu area is a part of the World Heritage Area and a mining proposal could lead New Zealand being taken to UNESCO for a World Heritage Area at risk listing. In 2003 the International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM) issued a Position Statement with regard to mining and protected areas. One of the significant commitments in this position statement is that "ICCM member companies undertake not to explore or mine in World Heritage properties". A number of additional commitments were also made.

So what value does New Zealand get for allowing mineral activity? The mining interests pay very little in royalties in exchange for digging up bits of New Zealand. The total payments for metallic minerals royalties averaged \$3.14 million over the last 5 years. This is much less than concessions paid by concessionaires to the Department of Conservation of about \$13.5 million annually. The rent of the Old Government Building in Wellington alone is an additional \$1.8 million.

DOC is looking at developing a national standard for assessing mineral proposals. In a move designed to give the Ministry of Economic Development a backroom secret veto on new protected areas, Ministers have directed DOC to advise MED of any changes to classifications at least a month prior to it being publicly notified. This will allow a secret process by which MED and economic ministers can veto proposals put forward by DOC.

Proposals for establishing or changing protected areas have previously occurred in public where all the information could be evaluated by Ministers, conservation boards and the New Zealand Conservation Authority. In the past areas have been removed from national park proposals eg Sam's Creek area from the Kahurangi National Park.

ECO considers that the process for establishing or changing protected areas should be open and transparent and should operate in the same way that applications for concessions under Part V of the Conservation Act. The Fourth Schedule should be enhanced to include World Heritage Areas and marine mammal sanctuaries, and all ecological areas. It is time we moved on from wanting to dig up conservation land for gold or coal which just add to greenhouse gas pollution.

DOC and MED were to report back by 30 October on the proposals.

Significant amendments to the Resource Management Act came into force on 1 October. These changes were the first part of the Government's agenda to reshape the Act and will seriously undermine public participation in local resource management.

Most of the changes in the legislation will make it harder for community groups to participate in the Act. ECO considered the changes are a retrograde step apart from some useful minor amendments. The Bill favours the powerful and those with champions in the government and is a major set back for sustainable management.

The changes are contrary to the intent and architecture of the RMA and are a throw-back to the discredited and repealed National Development Act and commit the same central error as the NDA in its assumption that big infrastructure projects should get priority. This approach is flawed on four grounds:

- it will damage the environment;
- it will suppress small-scale sustainable energy and energy efficiency options or alternative public transport options;
- it will depress community participation and well-being;
- it will demote smaller projects and applications that get put back in agencies' schedules, so in fact damaging the economy.

The passing of this Bill will see more applications non-notified and even less consultation with the community on applications.

The changes include greater powers for the Environment Courts to charge costs and removes the prohibition on seeking security of costs. This and other changes will increase barriers to public involvement in resource management.

The changes remove the ability of councils to include provisions to protect urban trees apart from those listed on a schedule. The scheduling of trees is a clumsy and complicated process and ignored the fact that there can be important ecological areas within urban limits e.g. the Waitakeres in Auckland. A late amendment introduced by the Minister for the Environment means that urban trees can be 'pruned' without a resource consent process which means that few urban trees will have protection after 1 October.

Only the Greens and the Maori Party voted against the Bill. Labour voted for the Bill despite their opposition to many of the provisions including the changes to urban tree management

International commitments, targets, cuts and negotiations

By Barry Weeber

New Zealand ended the recent Bangkok preliminary meeting in bad odour with developing countries and environmental NGOs which were monitoring the meeting.

New Zealand received two fossil of the day awards from NGOs at the meeting. The first award was for the UN climate talks after New Zealand delegates in Bangkok revealed that the Government's 10 percent to 20 percent target is actually more like a zero to 20 percent target. Further there was no date when emissions are proposed to peak and actually they could be still going up in 2020 given the proposed changes to the emission trading scheme.

As Geoff Keey, Greenpeace New Zealand's adviser at the talks, said, for this reason New Zealand is promoting favourable conditions for forestry and international carbon markets (where governments buy credits to allow businesses, and each of us, to pollute).

The second fossil was earned for New Zealand representatives telling the other countries that they proposed to meet any target by buying up to 70 percent of the emissions reductions through non-domestic offshore international offsets. Further restrictions on the use of offsetting would result in their target changing ie going down. At that time developing countries were arguing that 50 percent was way beyond the 'supplementarity' requirements of the convention.

During the talks New Zealand got a D for its efforts from the Climate Action Network.

CAN stated this was "For continuing to parade the graph showing that their planned harvest of forests creates an unacceptable hit on the national accounts. The graph on page 13 of their submission (not shown during the contact group) shows that these unacceptable forest management debits are balanced by credits from afforestation!"

The 10-20 percent emissions reduction that the New Zealand government is proposing is well short of the UK binding emissions reduction target of 33 percent, and much less than the 25-40 percent commitments made by developed countries at the Bali negotiations.

Norway has taken the message of the need to act seriously and has said at the Bangkok meeting that it would accept a 40 percent cut in emissions by 2020.

"...the Government's 10 percent to 20 percent target is actually more like a zero to 20 percent target"



Photo courtesy of Allan Lee

Several of the world's largest developing countries have indicated that they are ready to make significant emissions cuts. These include the major emitters China, India, Indonesia and Mexico. Brazil has pledged an 80 per cent reduction in deforestation by 2020 and Indonesia is developing policy to cut emissions by 26 percent below business as usual by 2020. China is working to reduce its carbon intensity to well below 2005 levels by 2020.

As Greenpeace's Geoff Keey said he couldn't help but compare Norway's stance with that of our own Government in these negotiations.

"We've got a weak target with selfish demands and our main area of 'leadership' is an agricultural research programme where we seem to be encouraging other countries to fund our research priorities."

"New Zealand is promoting favourable conditions for forestry and international carbon markets, where governments buy credits to allow businesses, and each of us, to pollute."

The talks amongst the 180 nations involved are due to be concluded in Copenhagen in two months time.



For further information see www.signon.org.nz and www.climatenetwork.org

Geoff Keey's blog at the meetings is found at www.signon.org.nz/blog/37770

National and Maori Party team up to bankrupt the future

By Barry Weeber

The Government's revision of the emissions trading scheme is currently being rushed through the Parliamentary process. The changes agreed by the National and Maori Parties are a major disappointment and will more than halve the effectiveness of the control of climate and ocean damaging pollution.

The changes are not going to help New Zealand meet greenhouse pollution reduction targets needed by 2020 or the 90 percent cut required by 2050.

The Finance and Expenditure Select Committee set aside two only days for hearing submissions on a critical Bill.

The changes introduced allow 65 large polluting companies long periods of subsidisation by taxpayers, particularly households, right out to 2050, with farmers and the fishing industry quota holders getting especially large subsidies. The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment has criticised the proposals and the level of subsidy for emitters. The Commissioner, Jan Wright, noted that taxpayers would still be paying a 55 per cent subsidy to high-emission industries in 2050.

In submissions ECO criticised the proposal for a cap on carbon prices as a short-sighted measure which would just end up putting more costs on taxpayers and away from polluters and further preventing forestry and other mitigation industries benefiting. The end result will be that taxpayers will pay billions to subsidise greenhouse gas polluting companies.

Under the Bill farmers do not have to even start paying part of the costs of their pollution until 2015, while the subsidy to the fishing industry rises from 50 percent to 90 percent of the costs of its emissions.

Struggling households and small businesses will

have either to pay for these subsidies in their taxes or to forego public services like health care and education. The government's own figures show an increase in taxpayer subsidy to polluters by at least \$400million.

The new subsidies will have trade implications too because they mean New Zealand will no longer be able to claim that farming and fishing are not subsidised. These subsidies are set to continue until 2050, rather than to 2030 as previously set by Labour, which was already too long.

“The government's own figures show an increase in taxpayer subsidy to polluters by at least \$400million”

The fishing industry is likely to be one of the most affected industries from ocean acidification caused by increased carbon dioxide levels and should be leading moves to reduce emissions. Shellfish fisheries (eg oysters, mussels and scallops) are likely to be among the most affected as ocean acidification reduces sealife's ability to make shells.

It is important that in promoting forestry there is a recognition of the perverse outcomes that could result in the loss of indigenous biodiversity. ECO considers all forest plantings should be subject to the provisions of the New Zealand Forest Accord and subsidiary agreements.

New Zealand's international standing, especially in Europe and the Pacific, will be seriously damaged by the failure to take a strong stand to reduce emissions and by this back tracking and subsidization. The effectiveness of the scheme will be at least halved.

ECO's key points on climate change are:

- Action must be taken as soon as possible to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. It is about time New Zealand acted since it is 15 years since the Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC) was signed and 10 years since the Kyoto Protocol was signed.
- Targets and timetables: Government must make strong commitments in the legislation, with staged milestones. New Zealand greenhouse gas emissions should be reduced by 40 percent by 2020 and by at least 80-90 percent by 2050.
- Taxpayers should not be left paying for the costs for polluters for the Kyoto and future obligations. All sectors should do their share of emissions reductions including methane and nitrous oxide reduction, and this includes agriculture and the New Zealand fishing industry in New Zealand waters and globally.
- There should be no subsidies to various sectors through providing free allocations or delaying the introduction of sectors into the ETS. It is essential that all sectors are introduced into the system.
- The ETS should ensure environmental integrity of the system by not allowing the bringing of Eastern Europe hot air allocations or nuclear energy into the system. The environmental integrity requirements should be included in the legislation.

EPA launched - but is it really an EPA?

By Barry Weeber

The 'Environmental Protection Agency - Te Mana Rauhi Taiao' or EPA came into existence at the beginning of October, but it is little more than a fast-tracking agency within the Ministry for the Environment. The EPA has no substance other than a few clauses in the Resource Management Act which is more a green light for large projects to go ahead.

The Government has yet to release a discussion paper on what the EPA might do in the future, and when you compare it to EPAs in Australia or the USA, it is not an auspicious start.

The 2009 amendments to the Resource Management Act established the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA). The EPA is housed within the Ministry for the Environment. Te Mana Rauhi Taiao translates as 'to protect the mana of the environment' or 'the authority to protect the environment'. Protection of the environment is not currently a function of the agency.

The Minister for the Environment, Nick Smith said. "The establishment of the EPA is about providing greater national leadership and enabling timely decisions on critical infrastructure."

He said "further Cabinet decisions on its broader role are being considered. These may include environmental responsibility for New Zealand's exclusive economic zone, oversight of hazardous substances and new organisms, and the administrative functions of the Emissions Trading Scheme."

"The Government's broader intent is for the EPA to be the national regulator on environmental issues and the Ministry for the Environment to be a smaller policy agency."

So far there is no clear direction for the EPA. The original EPA in the US has five goals and functions, listed in the box opposite.



Photo courtesy of Alan Kilgour

Goals of the original EPA in the US

1. Clean Air and Global Climate Change

Protect and improve the air so it is healthy to breathe and risks to human health and the environment are reduced. Reduce greenhouse gas intensity by enhancing partnerships with businesses and other sectors.

2. Clean and Safe Water

Ensure drinking water is safe. Restore and maintain oceans, watersheds, and their aquatic ecosystems to protect human health, support economic and recreational activities, and provide healthy habitat for fish, plants, and wildlife.

3. Land Preservation and Restoration

Preserve and restore the land by using innovative waste management practices and cleaning up contaminated properties to reduce risks posed by releases of harmful substances.

4. Healthy Communities and Ecosystems

Protect, sustain, or restore the health of people, communities, and ecosystems using integrated and comprehensive approaches and partnerships.

5. Compliance and Environmental Stewardship

Improve environmental performance through compliance with environmental requirements, preventing pollution, and promoting environmental stewardship. Protect human health and the environment by encouraging innovation and providing incentives for governments, businesses, and the public that promote environmental stewardship.

None of these functions are currently carried out by the New Zealand EPA. ECO looks forward to some future-regarding comments such as:

"As Administrator, I will ensure EPA's efforts to address the environmental crises of today are rooted in three fundamental values: science-based policies and programs, adherence to the rule of law, and overwhelming transparency. By keeping faith with these values and unleashing innovative, forward-thinking approaches - we can further protect neighborhoods and communities throughout the country."

But sorry, that was the new US EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson.

For further information on the EPA visit www.epa.govt.nz or at www.mfe.govt.nz

Printer Refuses Greater Wellington Unsustainable Paper Contract

By Cath Wallace

Masterton printer Lance Johnson has called Greater Wellington Council on its specification of paper for its Sustainability Report environmentally and socially irresponsible, and has refused a valuable contract printing on Sapphire Offset paper. The paper is sourced by Spicers paper from Asia Pulp and Paper (APP) which with APRIL, another Indonesian company, shares responsibility for stripping Indonesia of its peat rainforest, habitats for endangered animal species including tigers and orangutangs, and the CITES listed Ramban trees. The latter has been found in APP's paper by DNA testing in the USA.

Brett Sangster, Director of Communications for Greater Wellington Council, told ECO that he relied on Spicers to supply sustainably sourced paper and he "had to take their word for it". He also said that the more he investigated the more confused he became, but that he was trying to find sustainable paper sources.

ECO's own investigations leave little doubt. APP, one of the biggest pulp and paper companies, owned via rather obscure routes by Indonesian company Sinar Mas, is featured by several environmental and social monitoring sites as a poster child of unsustainable practice.

Chris Lang, forest industry monitor, observed this in July 2009: "Just twenty years ago, Riau Province in Sumatra, Indonesia, was 80 per cent forested. Today only 30 per cent is left. The deforestation is driven by the insatiable hunger for timber of two pulp and paper companies: Asia Pacific Resources International (APRIL) and Asia Paper and Pulp (APP). Recent analysis by Eyes on the Forest reveals that satellite data for the first six months of 2009 show that Riau Province holds the dismal record for the most fire 'hotspots' of any province in Indonesia, with almost 5,000. The company with the most fires in its concessions? Step forward, Asia Pulp and Paper." Worse, many of these fires are in an area of UNESCO Biosphere programme designation that APP said was protected and which it had used to try to offset criticism.

The APP Watch and Eyes on the Forest, both NGO monitors of forest industry and APP, report that indigenous forest communities are being badly affected by the roading and logging by APP and its associated companies.

Eyes on the Forests report, "In May this year, APP/SMG touted as a conservation achievement the designation of the Giam Siak Kecil-Bukit Batu forest (GSK-BB) as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. However, 20 percent of all fire hotspots in Riau for the first half of 2009 occurred inside the original GSK forest block and half of them occurred inside APP/SMG-associated concessions, according to Eyes

on the Forest. MODIS satellite data shows that 22 percent of Riau's hotspots are burning in the biosphere reserve and other APP/SMG-connected concessions."

APP's Environmental and Social Sustainability Report for Indonesia shows that in 2007 it employed a total of 71,684 people in mills in Java, Sumatra and Borneo and reports that 60 percent of the input to its paper is virgin material.

APP's report claims ISO certification - ISO 9001:2000 Quality Management System and ISO 14001:2004 Environmental Management System certified - but it was in 2007 that the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) which certifies companies on their environmental and social performance, delisted APP, the only company FSC has ever delisted.

APP reports in that 2007 report that it is in compliance with the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) requirements for sustainable forest management, but this is not regarded in environmental circles as a reliable indicator of environmental integrity or sustainable practice, since it is an industry devised system and lacks external credibility. Moreover PEFC itself says it has no certified forests in Indonesia.

APP escaped Indonesian prosecution for illegal logging when a police inquiry into the matter was controversially dropped with little explanation. It also controversially has failed to repay creditors a US\$13.9 billion debt. In a country renowned for its corruption, and the issue of logging contracts by dubious means, this is not an indicator of good standing.

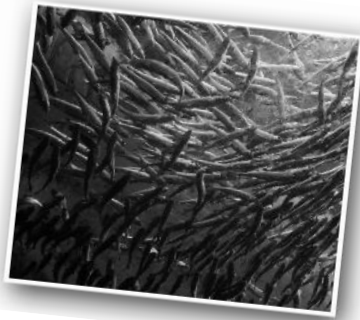
ECO congratulates Lance Johnson and the Wairarapa News for pursuing this issue and calls on both Spicers and Greater Wellington Council to drop APP papers. They will be in good company: many other companies globally have crossed APP (and APRIL) from their supply list.

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Roll out of Fish Plans

By Clive Monds

ECO has had major reservations about the current roll-out of Fish Plans since the processes started in 2005, but has participated. Much of that reservation has been that the plans were being developed before the standards that should guide them. Four years later we are still waiting.



Notwithstanding those reservations the process has proved useful, in part not always for the reasons the Ministry of Fisheries envisaged. There has been very useful interaction and dialogue between sectors which has been considerably enhanced because this was the first process that has substantially engaged Customary Maori. The joint environmental, recreational fisher's initiative on Ministry of Fisheries's 2030 strategy was certainly assisted by these dialogues.

Many of the outcomes have been different from what Ministry of Fisheries staff anticipated with their focus on single stock management. An example of this occurred in the West Coast North Island Finfish plan that is currently out for public consultation until the 16th October. Stakeholders agreed a No 1. priority was addressing land based impacts on the marine environment and fisheries, something the senior Ministry of Fisheries manager admitted they had never ever imagined as an outcome at the start of the process.

The Ministry of Fisheries has since dumped many of the staff involved in the fish plans process as they restructure and cost-cut to improve economic returns for the commercial sector.

While plans that have reached consultation stage will continue, the level of consultation and face-to-face dialogue that has proved so valuable will reduce considerably as will the number of plans, and will be mainly electronic. There will now be only four inshore finfish plans.

“The plans were being developed before the standards that should guide them”

For more information on revised Fisheries Plans visit <http://fs.fish.govt.nz/Page.aspx?pk=73>

Government cuts environmental education in schools

By Barry Weeber

As part of this year's Budget the Government axed funding for the Enviroschools Programme beyond 2009. The Ministry of Education stated that, “the quality of the programmes or services is not the issue – they are just not the most important ways of achieving the Government's goals.” It is not said how the Government will meet its goals or what those goals are. So much for Government commitment to the environmental education of future leaders.

The budget also saw the cutting of all major Education for Sustainability (EFS) initiatives funded by the Ministry of Education:

- The Enviroschools Foundation, which coordinates the Enviroschools Programme nationally;
- Education for Sustainability Advisors: a network of expert advisors employed by Universities to provide professional development support for teachers in mainstream schools;
- Maturanga Taiao: Professional development support for teachers in Kura Māori;
- The Environmental Education Guidelines Review Project: teacher resources.

In terms of national development of the Enviroschools Programme, initiatives affected include:

- development of the programme for use in Kura Kaupapa Māori;
- ongoing development and use of the Measuring Change internet tool for schools to track their progress and compare themselves with other schools nationwide;
- Ongoing development of ecobuilding and energy projects and resources;
- support for secondary schools through the Youth Jam and Regeneration projects;
- the national Enviroschools Awards Programme;
- opportunities for regions to collaborate and share best practice.

In terms of implementation of the programme, in some cases the national funding cuts could mean an end to assistance from Enviroschools facilitators in school communities. In other cases local councils are recognising the value of the Enviroschools programme and assisting where they can to ensure facilitators are available to support school communities as they make community links and implement long term sustainability strategies.

For more information see www.sosenviroschools.webs.com or e-mail sosenviroschools@gmail.com.

ECO Annual Conference 2009

By Amelia Luxton

The theme of this year's Annual Conference held in July at Karanga Camp in Waitakere was 'Greening our way out of the recession'.

Nandor Tanczos opened the conference and explained how the government thinks the current economic climate means we cannot invest in sustainability, but in reality we cannot afford not to. The global recession provides an opportunity to put the economy on a more sustainable footing, and while green capitalism is important, we must go beyond reform to a more fundamental economic transformation.

Professor Wayne Cartwright agreed. Most 'greening' initiatives seek to mitigate environmental damage while also improving business performance. This is useful, but it is not enough. Human society attaches overwhelming importance to economic outcomes, over environmental and social outcomes. If we aspire to a sustainable future we must shift urgently away from the 'business as usual' economic model and population growth towards 'strong sustainability'.

David Clendon of the Sustainable Business Network spoke about some of the things that businesses can do in response to challenges. The recession is an opportunity to maintain viability and 'future proof' business by embedding a strategic and operational commitment to managing the transition to a more sustainable (low-carbon) economy.

John Stansfield described some of the innovation we should be applying, using the waste industry as an example. Clean Stream Waiheke transfer station employs local people and choose solutions that maximise employment rather than costly technical facilities, and returns as much as possible to the community through reusing and recycling items brought to them as waste.



John Stansfield, David Clendon and Wayne Cartwright discuss sustainable business in New Zealand. Photo © ECO



Some conference attendees gathered at Karanga Camp, Waitakere

The conference also heard the political panel of Shane Jones (Labour), Nicky Wagner (National), and Metiria Turei (Greens). People were given the opportunity to ask questions on key issues, including green investment policies and developing green jobs as a way out of the recession.



Nandor Tanczos speaks at the conference Photo © ECO

Gareth Hughes of Greenpeace NZ discussed the Sign On campaign and why John Key must sign-on at Copenhagen to protect New Zealand's 'clean-green' brand.

The Resource Management Act (RMA) panel discussed the introduction of the Phase I reforms and beyond. Quentin Duthie (FMC) said that there was very little public input in the review. Craig Mallet of the MFE explained that Phase II covers some more complex issues and will have a slower time-frame and more consultation.

A series of practical workshops were held throughout the weekend, including the impacts of the recession on the community and voluntary sector, getting your message out to the media, and how to engage effectively on plans and consents.

A field trip run by Brendan Hoare was a chance to explore the local organic production. Conference attendees meet with local producers and saw first hand the way in which organic production systems give expression to sustainability and create local livelihoods.

Peter Horsley closed the conference with a talk on ecological politics. Peter said emerging perspectives indicate a shift is underway in the world view. We are moving towards broader perspectives and deeper understanding of the inter-relatedness of complex issues. This could be the start of the transformation we need to become truly sustainable.

For a copy of the conference proceedings on CD, please contact ECO on 04 385 7545

Introducing ECO's new Executive members

ECO is pleased to welcome four new members onto the Executive Committee this year: Diana Shand, Nandor Tanczos, Shane Orchard and Fred Murray.

Diana Shand



Diana has long been a Friend of ECO and involved in environmental and conservation issues. She was brought up in the South Island High Country and says her heart is still there. Graduating with an MBA from McGill University, Canada, Diana returned to New Zealand to lecture and then practice in marketing and business consultancy - with a particular interest in eco-tourism and sustainable development.

Having served as a Human Rights Commissioner 1983-1989, Diana continued in public office as a member of the Canterbury Regional Council 1989 – 2004. She chaired major committees and consents panels and was elected deputy chair in her final term. More recently she has been managing a programme working with local government to reduce GHG emissions

Diana has served as Oceania Regional Councillor since 2004. She chairs the Private Sector Task Force and Oceania Regional Committee and is a Vice-President of IUCN.

Nandor Tanczos

Nandor Tanczos has joined the ECO Exec with an enthusiasm for what he sees as its 'developmental and enabling' work. With environmental degradation becoming more and more apparent, more and more people are looking for answers about what to do and how to do it. Nandor believes ECO has a crucial role to play in helping answer some of those questions.

Nandor describes himself as a social ecologist and has been actively involved in environmental and social justice campaigns since he was a teenager. These have included the anti-nuclear and peace movement, civil rights, drug law reform, genetic engineering, transport alternatives and NFA. Although he has mostly been involved in direct action campaigns, he was also a Green MP from 1999 to 2008, with portfolios ranging from justice and constitutional issues to the environment and land management.

Nandor is of Hungarian and Cape Coloured descent and is a member of the Rastafari faith.

Fred Murray

Fred has always enjoyed the outdoors, being heavily involved in surfing, rowing and biking from an early age, but his involvement with conservation began in 1999 when he attended a meeting organised by Environment Canterbury, Hurunui DC, and DOC about vehicles on the beaches of North Canterbury.

Fred started in a small, local community group, but in 2001 was appointed to the Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board, and served for six years. In 2002 he took the position of convenor on the Planning Committee, and for the next five years was able to drive the Board's advocacy and community relations work.

He is currently deputy-chair of both the Mount Cass Ridge Preservation Society, and of Friends of Lewis Pass & Hurunui Catchment Inc. Fred has a strong background in conservation advocacy and a good understanding of the needs and aspirations of small conservation groups.

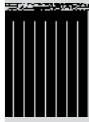
Shane Orchard

Shane Orchard is an environmental management researcher and educator who has studied biological sciences and resource management to postgraduate level. He works on conservation and sustainability issues with a special interest in the management of coastal and riparian areas.



His past experience includes work on habitat protection and invasive species, in addition to policy analysis and management planning roles in the tourism, recreational and agricultural sectors. Shane is based in Christchurch where he works for Te Ngahere Ltd's community ecology team, specialising in ecological restoration. He has a long involvement with the education sector and is particularly interested in the links between adult and community education and environmental management processes.

Shane contributes to several non-profit organisations active in engaging people on sustainable development and is keen to assist ECO in their role as advocates for better conservation and environmental management. Shane is a big believer in getting people out to experience and connect with natural environments. In his spare time he is often found organising sea kayaking, surfing, mountaineering and other wilderness trips, and doing a little photography along the way.



**ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION
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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:

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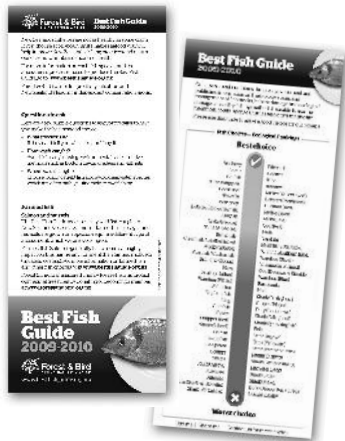
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Best Fish Guide 2009-10 launched

Enclosed with this ECOLink is a copy of the Forest & Bird Best Fish Guide 09-10, which ranks the ecological sustainability of seafood from our commercial fisheries.



This comprehensive guide takes into account the state of fish stocks, the amount of seabird, marine mammal and non-target fish bycatch, the damage done to marine habitats and other ecological effects caused by the fishing to decide on its rating.

Our combined buying power can help take pressure off the most over-exploited species and alleviate the harm caused by the most damaging fisheries.

www.bestfishguide.org.nz

ECO Annual Appeal



Threats to the environment are growing. To face these challenges, and to help local groups to be as effective as possible, we need your help.

The support of the Friends of ECO is extremely important, and your donation to help ECO's continuing work would be greatly appreciated.

Please give generously to ECO's Annual Appeal 2009.

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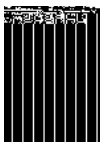
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ECO MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

Action for the Environment	Kaipatiki Project
Appropriate Technology for Living Association	Kakariki, Canterbury University Environmental Group
Auckland Civic Trust	Lincoln Environment Group
Bay of Islands Coastal Watchdog	Marlborough Environment Centre
Baywatch Hawkes Bay Environment Group	Massey Environmental Group
Biodynamic Farming and Gardening Association	Monarch Butterfly New Zealand Trust
Buller Conservation Group	National Council of Women of NZ
Clean Stream Waiheke	Nelson Environment Centre
Clean Water Clean Water Whangamata	New Zealand Institute of Forestry
Coromandel Watchdog of Hauraki	New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects
Cycling Advocates Network	Nga Uruora - Kapiti Project Charitable Trust
Dunedin Environment Centre	Orari River Protection Group
East Coast Bays Coastal Protection Society	Organics Aotearoa New Zealand
East Harbour Environmental Association	Pacific Institute of Resource Management
Eastern Bay of Islands Preservation Society	Save Mahinerangi Society
Eco Fest Educational Charitable Trust	Save the Otago Peninsula
Engineers for Social Responsibility	Soil and Health Association of NZ
Environmental Futures	South Coast Environment Society
Environmental Law Centre	Students for Environmental Action
Far North Environment Centre	Surfbreak Protection Society
Federated Mountain Clubs of NZ	Sustainable Otautahi Christchurch
Foundation for Environmental Education New Zealand	Sustainable Whanganui Trust
Friends of Golden Bay	Sustaining Hawke's Bay Environment Centre
Friends of Lewis Pass and Hurunui Catchment	Tasman Environmental Education Trust
Friends of Nelson Haven and Tasman Bay	Te Aroha Earthwatch
Friends of the Earth - NZ	Thames Coast Preservation and Protection Society
Friends of the Shoreline	Toxins Action Group
Gecko, Victoria University Environment Group	Wakatipu Environmental Society
GE-Free New Zealand in Food and Environment	Wellington Botanical Society
Greenpeace NZ	Wellington Tramping and Mountaineering Club
Guardians of Pauatahanui Inlet	Wildlife Society, NZVA
Initial Volco Trust	Yellow Eyed Penguin Trust
Island Bay Marine Education Centre	YHA New Zealand

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