Oceans Policy Ahoy!

ECO HAS CAUSE TO CELEBRATE at the announcement on 12 October 2000 by Pete Hodgson, that the Labour-Alliance government is calling for nominations of names of people for appointment to a Ministerial Advisory Committee on Oceans Policy. Nominations, which must be on the prescribed form, close 5pm Sunday November 12.

ECO has worked hard to map out the need for New Zealand to refocus our attitude to the sea. The SeaViews conference in 1998 publicly set the agenda for the management of human impacts on the sea. We then persuaded the previous government to identify Oceans as an issue – but under the influence of that government and certain officials the focus was on resource exploitation of the oceans. This was clearly signalled when Jenny Shipley opened a pro-exploitation conference just prior to the election.

What comes of the reforms launched by Oceans Minister Pete Hodgson will depend on the New Zealand community and our ability to assert our values against an array of special interests such as mining and commercial fishing.

The reform will begin with a phase of public consultation. This is the first of a three-stage public consultation. The Ministerial Advisory Committee will report to a committee of Ministers, which will also receive advice from an Officials Committee. The Ministers involved are Hons Phil Goff (Foreign Affairs & Trade), Sandra Lee (Conservation and Local Government), Parekura Horema (Te Puni Kokoriki), Paul Swain (Energy – minerals), and Marian Hobbs (Environment).

The Ministerial Advisory Committee members are to devise the public consultation. They may have to commit up to three days per week, be available for travel, be independent of particular interest groups and to have the capacity to facilitate debate and consensus within the (marine) sector and the wider community.

The government has undertaken to appoint the Committee by January 2001 and it must have devised a process for consultation with New Zealanders by 31 March 2001. It is expected to lead and manage the consultation process and to report to Ministers on the results by 30 September 2001.

Members of the Committee are to be paid fees and allowances.

Nominations with CVs and including the signature of the nominees must be sent to the Oceans Policy Secretariat, P O Box 5582, Lambton Quay, Wellington.

Nomination forms and the requirements for the people on the task force can be obtained from: any local authority, Department of Conservation or Te Puni Kokoriki office. The Oceans Policy Secretariat at the above address has them or you can free phone them on tel 0800 00 1461. This information can be downloaded at the Oceans Policy Website at www.oceans.govt.nz, if they have fixed various teething problems with the site.

According to the 18 September cabinet subcommittee paper, the Advisory Group is to distil New Zealand’s objectives for oceans management (really management of our impacts on the sea) by 31 October 2001. Stage Two will (apparently) revert to officials and Ministers “who will design...”

Continued over page
policies, processes and tools” to give effect to the agreed objectives, identifying any changes needed to the status quo and any changes to law and/or administration. This stage is to be completed by 1 October 2002 (about the time of the next election?). The third stage is to deliver “the policies, processes and tools” with changes to law or agencies as needed.

Completion is, heroically and unrealistically, aimed for 30 June 2003. We predict that this reform will take at least four years. We also foresee a danger that after the public consultation the officials will capture the process and departmental turf protection will set in, potentially thwarting achieving the vision. Considerable public vigilance will be needed to prevent this. It will also be needed to prevent laudable public sentiments being used to clothe the special interests of those more interested in sustained exploitation of the marine environment than in sustainable management.

The Government has directed that the Cabinet papers, Ministerial speeches and other relevant information be posted on the website: [www.oceans.govt.nz](http://www.oceans.govt.nz). As well, copies of this material can be obtained from the Oceans secretariat at tel 0800 00 1461.

ECO would appreciate hearing from people and organisations with an interest in this oceans policy. We would appreciate hearing your views and your ideas on who should be nominated for the Advisory Group. Contact Cath Wallace, ph 04 389 1696 (hm) or ecowatch@paradise.net.nz

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**Marine Reserves Act Review released**

**THE MINISTER OF CONSERVATION, Sandra Lee, has released the long awaited review of the Marine Reserves Act.** This review was a priority of the government’s Biodiversity Strategy which was adopted in March 2000.

The review puts forward a range of proposals to change marine reserves legislation. Questions are asked about whether the Marine Reserves legislation should:

• Extend to cover all of the EEZ and continental shelf.
• Make all marine reserves non-take zones – which is the general approach to most new reserves. There is contradictory advice in the discussion papers.
• Shift the focus to marine biodiversity rather than scientific study, similar to the Reserves Act on land.
• Create reserves to protect historic or geological features.
• Recognise the Treaty of Waitangi.
• Streamline the process for establishing marine reserves. This discussion is very limited and fails to recognise the costs and slow procedures for establishing reserves. Two marine reserves which were formally applied for over seven years ago have not been decided on – Kaikoura and Nugget Point.
• Set out how to manage commercial activity in reserves.

Issues missing from the discussion documents include:

• Analysis of the benefits of marine reserves for baseline research and management of fisheries.
• Discussion of whether decisions to approve reserves can be made by just the Minister for the Environment, or must also have the concurrence of the Minister of Fisheries, as is currently the case.
• The possibility of applying for reserves in several locations at the same time.

The outcomes from this process will also have implications for the wider review of oceans management.

**Action:**
Submission close on 22 December with the Department of Conservation, PO Box 10-420, Wellington. Email: marinereservesact@doc.govt.nz.

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**Volunteers needed**

If you can’t apply for the Marine Organiser position (page 3), but have an interest and would like to help, please send us details of yourself, your interests, skills and how you think you can help.

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**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 opinions of ECO or its member bodies.
Aquaculture Review awaits

SUBMISSIONS CLOSE at the end of October on a review of Aquaculture legislation. This review which is being managed by the Ministry of Fisheries and the Ministry for the Environment is looking at the relationship between fisheries legislation and the Resource Management Act.

Although there is a lot of hype in the discussion document about potential, unrealistic increases in marine farming, important questions are raised over the arrangements for aquaculture management.

Marine farming is one of the few activities which gains near exclusive use of coastal space but is not charged anything for it. Regional councils have been reluctant to charge rates and there are no resource rentals paid by farms for the use of coastal space. One reason for this is that iwi claims to ownership of the seabed have stopped councils and government from putting a rational charging regime in place. An option to get around this would be to charge resource rentals then put this money in trust until the issue of ownership is sorted out. This issue is mostly avoided in the review.

Currently two pieces of legislation govern management of aquaculture: Resource Management Act and Fisheries Act. There is a question over whether to continue this arrangement. The preferred option to maximise environmental quality is for the management the effects of aquaculture activities on aquatic fauna, habitat and the sustainability of fisheries to fall under the RMA. Should any residual functions remain under fisheries legislation then these need to be closely integrated with the Resource Management Act.

There needs to be improved integration between agencies so the impacts of marine farms on fishing, marine mammals, seabirds, potential marine reserves and other uses of coastal space are well considered.

If councils are to be given more responsibilities for managing aquaculture then the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement should be amended to recognise this changing role. Councils should be required to take a precautionary approach to marine management and ensure they retain resources to manage marine farm applications.

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Not enough Seamounts protected

THE MINISTER OF FISHERIES, Pete Hodgson, announced at the beginning of September the protection of 19 undersea hill and seamounts from bottom trawling.

While the protection is welcome because these seamounts are rich in species and communities, often not found elsewhere it is not enough.

There are over 600 seamounts in the New Zealand managed sea area, and many are being severely damaged by trawling for orange roughy and octopus. The announcement of the protection of 19 covers only 3 percent of known hill and seamount features.

The closures ignore the requirement of the 1996 Fisheries Act that any adverse effect of fishing must be avoided, remedied or mitigated.

The Ministry of Fisheries has not grasped that the 1996 Act requires them to develop controls to protect underwater features such as seamounts.

It is time for an end to the nonsense that all the sea is open to trawling or other fishing unless specifically protected. The 1996 Fisheries Act does not permit the open frontier fisheries management of the past. We need a proper fisheries management regime with comprehensive evaluation and protection.

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Marine organiser needed

ECO NEEDS an efficient, self motivated and driven person to do lots of hard work and organisation for our programme to improve management of the environmental impact of fishing and human impacts on the marine environment.

Good organisational skills, a strong interest in promoting the protection of the environment as well as patience, judgement and good interpersonal skills are needed. You will need to use a computer database (Access) and to have writing and (preferably) desktop publishing skills. The position is temporary but will last longer if you are a good fund raiser.

Eligibility for task force green funding is helpful. The position will involve fund raising.

Please provide us with a copy of your resume including any experience you have that relates to work in the not-for-profit sector or the environment, paid or unpaid.

ECO PO Box 11 057 Wgtn eco@redfish.co.nz
Cycling Symposium a Great Success

OVER 150 PEOPLE from NZ and Australia attended Making Cycling Viable - NZ Cycling Symposium 2000 in Palmerston North on July 14 & 15.

They came from a variety of backgrounds, including central and local government policy makers, councillors, transport planners, consulting engineers, health professionals, road safety co-ordinators, cycle industry representatives, cycling advocates and cyclists. The high attendance was probably helped by a relatively low fee ($80 for the two days), made possible by high levels of sponsorship from a variety of organisations.

The symposium, the brainchild of the Energy Efficiency & Conservation Authority, provided policy makers with a clearer insight into the various needs cyclists have, as well as the potential role increased cycling could play in the country’s transport task. It was pleasing to have officials from most key government agencies there, many of them presenting papers. One senior transport official wrote that he had found the symposium “mind expanding”.

Feedback from participants was extremely positive. The video link with Mayer Hillman (Policy Studies Institute, London) and John Grimshaw (Director of Sustrans, UK), and presentations from Bronwen Thornton (State Cycle Unit, Queensland Transport), Alix Newman (Christchurch City Council) and Roger Boulter (NZ Cycling Strategy Foundation Project) were often highlighted by delegates as most valuable.

Strong elements covered in the symposium were:

- Health - papers on speed reduction, public health and injury prevention highlighted the real health dangers of NOT cycling.
- National Cycling Strategy - there’s an urgent need to support the excellent work being done by Roger Boulter in his IPENZ-funded NZ Cycling Strategy Foundation Project (for a copy of the final report, contact roger.boulter@hcc.govt.nz, 07-838 6896) by lobbying the Minister/Ministry of Transport for a NZ Cycling Strategy as a subsidiary document to the NZ Transport Strategy.
- Integrated policy making - most Government policy making is currently handled within ministries, with few connections being made between different agencies. Effort is needed to ensure that transport policy (including a NZ Cycling Strategy) makes the links with other areas. Mayer Hillman’s paper “Cycling at the Top of the Policy Agenda” (NB not just at the top of the Transport Policy Agenda) addressed this problem very clearly.

The symposium proceedings are available on EECA’s website at www.eeca.govt.nz. Just follow the transport signpost. The next cycling symposium will be held in Christchurch in September 2001.

Liz Yeaman & Jane Dawson

How to make cycling viable

In the wrap-up session on Saturday, the symposium made the following recommendations:

1. Government engages with the cycling community in developing its long term, sustainable transport strategy.
2. The Ministry of Transport develops a separate national cycling strategy linked with the national transport strategy.
3. All roads have, as a minimum design standard, safe provision for cyclists.
4. The Ministry of Transport identifies suitable funding processes for on-road and dedicated cycle facilities.
5. The cycle industry develop a levy used to promote cycling.
6. The government recognises the health, environment, economic, safety and social benefits of greater cycling.
7. Local government recognises the overall benefits to their communities of greater cycling.
8. Individuals and organisations wishing to show their support for cycling join the Cycling Advocates Network.
9. Central and local government recognises and improves communication with New Zealand’s existing pool of cycling expertise and research capability.
10. Where central and local government rely on voluntary sector cycle groups for cycling expertise, a fee for service is provided.

Join CAN, the Voice for Cyclists CAN, the Cycling Advocates Network of NZ, has produced a new membership form and is embarking on a national membership campaign. CAN’s membership has increased steadily since its beginnings in 1996, and now includes local advocacy groups in several centres, individual members, and supporting organisations. An increasing number of local and regional authorities are joining, recognising the value of being part of CAN’s extensive e-mail network and of its newsletter, Chain Links.

CAN, itself a member of ECO, invites ECO members and your friends and workmates to join. A membership form is enclosed with this mailout.

For more information about CAN, check out our website www.kennett.co.nz/can, e-mail us at can@actrix.gen.nz or ring/fax us on 04-385 2557.

Robert Ibells CAN Campaigns Secretary
World Car Free Day

CAR BUSTERS, a Prague based organisation, called for a World Car Free day on the 21st September. The day was called to fall 24 hours prior to the ‘timid European car free day organised by cautious bureaucrats’. 200 community groups around the world were expected to take part in the day by reclaiming public spaces lost to car use by infusing colour, people and activity into the hearts of our cities.

The need to remind decision makers and private vehicles users of the adverse effects of car use has never been stronger. The facts paint a very bleak picture:

- Motor vehicles continue to be the biggest source of atmospheric pollution contributing an estimated 14% of the world’s carbon dioxide emissions.
- The cocktail of pollutants found in exhaust fumes cause acid rain and lead poisoning.
- The amount of energy used and waste product created in the manufacturing process of one car means that a car causes more pollution before its ever driven then in its entire lifetime of driving.
- The cost of continued road building and car use to our cities and eco-systems is massive and often irreparable.

In Wellington the threat of the ‘inner city bypass’ means we are, continuing the fight against outdated attitudes to transport. These attitudes continue to prioritise individual car use over other forms of transport - despite the growing global awareness of the negative effect on the environment and communities.

Campaign for a Better City helped organise events leading up to and on World Car Free day. A highlight was reclamation of a parking space on Lambton Quay the day before World Car Free Day. A picnic setting was created in the park complete with Astroturf grass, picnic table and daffodils! During the lunch hour leaflets were distributed to passersby, including Rod Donald who strolled by and was most impressed with the carpark occupation.

On the day fake parking tickets were issued that looked identical to a WCC one and fined you $17 000 for the use of a private motor vehicle. A hugely successful Critical Mass began at 5 p.m. in Civic Square with all manner of non motorised vehicles participating. It is great to see that Critical Mass is up and running again in Wellington. The turnout of about 80 people suggests it has probably been missed!

The day was a great success in reminding ourselves and those around us that the city we live in is still a living, breathing, fantastic place to be. It doesn’t take much to reclaim a bit of car space as your space so get some friends together and have a party in a car park - its good for your soul and its what our cities are for! Make every day a car free one.

Stephanie McNamara, Campaign for a Better City

Global extinction crises deteriorates

THE GLOBAL EXTINCTION crises is as bad or worse than previously believed.

According to the 2000 World Conservation Union (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species, released at the end of September, there have been dramatic declines in populations of many marine species, including birds and reptiles.

Sadly, New Zealand leads the list for the country with the greatest percentage of its indigenous birds species listed as threatened – 42%. Next on the list is the Philippines with 35% of its indigenous birds listed as threatened.

In the four years since the last Red List was released the number of critically endangered species has increased – mammals from 169 to 180 and birds from 168 to 182. These changes have come as a surprise even to those already familiar with today’s increasing threats to biodiversity. A total of 11,046 plants and animals are listed as being threatened.

According to IUCN human and financial resources must be mobilised at between 10 and 100 times the current level to address this crises. The major threats are habitat loss and degradation, exploitation (including hunting and collecting) and alien invasive species.

New Zealand examples of threatened species include Hector’s dolphin, including the North Island population which is critically endangered, several albatross and petrel species, kiwi species, and kaka.

Albatross have fared particularly badly, a large number of which breed in New Zealand waters, with the number of threatened species increasing from three to 16 due to long-line fishing between 1996 and 2000.
GE help needed urgently

A STRONG NATION-WIDE CAMPAIGN to encourage as many people as possible to express their views on GE before 1 December, is taking off.

Street-stalls will be the main focus, with supporting awareness-raising campaigns such as stickers, posters and other modes of publicity, eg community columns, and radio.

• IMPORTANT! A contact for and co-ordinator of stalls and activities is needed in each city/town/area.

• Volunteers to spend time on stalls are essential - even if it’s only for your lunch-break once a week.
• Can you paint banners, put up stickers, posters? We want to plaster the country.
• Is your house or your friend’s house beside a main street? Are you willing to be supplied with a banner/sign to hang outside it, raising awareness?
• Do you know of festivals, events in your town where there will be crowds gathered during November? Let us know, for effective targeting of people.

• Do you have email contacts? Join the list to receive a formatted easy-to-fill-in submission form to spread around.
• Do you know people that might be useful contacts, in any way imaginable?

Please respond immediately to volunteer yourself, or any information as you get ideas. Many thanks for your support at this crucial time!

Contact via Email:
anette.cotter@nz.greenpeace.org
Or call Fergus at GP on 09 630 6317

GE Commission Comes to Town

With the GE Royal Commission underway ECO is receiving news from around the country. Following are two reports from participants at the recent round of meetings the Commission organised to elicit public views on genetic engineering.

Nelson

LAST MONTH the Royal Commission on Genetic Engineering visited Nelson.

The advertising consisted of one small advertisement in the local paper.

The local GE Free Group augmented this with roadside billboards, radio and additional newspaper advertisements.

Close to a hundred people attended the meeting. These people came from Golden Bay and Blenheim as well as from the local Nelson area. Over seven thousand people in the area have signed petitions asking the Nelson City Council and the Tasman District Council to go GE free.

After a welcome for the Commissioners and a brief introduction by the chairman of the Commission, Sir Thomas Eichlebaum, the Commissioners left the room.

Participants were then asked to form groups to answer one of several questions pertaining to genetic engineering. Each person was to write their views on a card. These cards were then grouped and summarised onto a blue card. When the Commissioners reappeared, a person from each group reported back to the whole room. In this process it soon became obvious that the majority of the people attending the meeting were against the use of genetic engineering. Many times there was spontaneous applause after ideas were shared.

There was wide agreement that genetic engineering posed unacceptable risks. Risks to the health of the people and animals eating the engineered products and to the environment in the form of pollution, increased use of pesticides, uncontrolled spread of plants and possibly diseases.

Several groups spoke of the possible risks involved in using genetically engineered products as medicines. How would these products be contained? Many of our waterways and the drinking water in many of our cities are already polluted with currently prescribed drugs.

Another repeated theme was that many of the promised advances of the past have left us with huge problems - DDT, thalidomide, dioxins, nuclear technology etc. None of the genetic engineering currently used has actually proved to be safe. New Zealand’s clean and green image, which entices so many tourists and which helps to sell so much of our produce overseas was seen to be threatened by the use of genetic engineering in New Zealand. Many international supermarket chains have gone GE free. World wide the demand for organic and GE free food is increasing. If New Zealand went GE free then the name “New Zealand” would be synonymous with safe food. This would benefit the economy tremendously.

The brain drain. Many groups reported back that there was plenty of work for scientists. The need for research into soil organisms and how to increase soil fertility using organic methods would be extremely useful both in New Zealand and overseas. Our knowledge economy could be based on organics rather than genetic engineering.

Once the groups had reported back several people asked the Commissioners questions. One person expressed concern that they had left the room when, by remaining, they could have learnt a lot from talking with the groups. Other people criticised the lack of advertising. Sir Thomas said they did not have a huge budget and expected local councils and groups to help with advertising.

Talking with people after the meeting I heard many views, the most common was that people did not really feel as if they had sufficient chance to voice their concerns. Many were critical of the card system which reduced the breadth of the

---Continued over page---
Wellington

THE COMMISSION members stayed for the duration of the meeting in Wellington, and mingled with the public.

Disappointingly not many people seemed to take the rare opportunity to speak to them directly but focussed more on the complicated process of compiling their thoughts onto cards, for later reference by the Royal Commission.

I got a few points across to Sir Thomas when he unsuspectingly sat himself beside me. I enlightened him as to how they might better advertise the public meetings (he seemed really disconnected from how communities function, and welcomed suggestions such as community newspapers, radio community notices and posterings). He was a bit concerned to hear that the Royal Commission was losing credibility by people not hearing about the public meetings etc.

I managed to get an answer to whether they would still consider submissions that were not written in the strict form the Commission has requested (ie stating which terms of reference you are addressing) - YES, they will, although it will make their lives much more difficult, and they don’t want people to know because of that, but they will be just as valid, and will be considered as long as they can fit into the terms of reference.

He was very edgy about the question of labelling, and whether the Commission would make recommendations on that. He kept insisting on that being government policy etc. and was VERY reluctant to acknowledge that NZ could introduce mandatory full labelling without breaking any international treaty obligations. Utterances from the Commission have often mentioned that it is the Commission members themselves who are acting in the interest of the general public, and he kind-of-nearly-but-not-quite conceded that acting with the public’s interest in mind, they might be obliged to possibly make a recommendation about labelling.

Overall, a disappointingly small turnout, but to be expected considering lack of advertising and the formal, non-personal, non-approachable way the Commission is going about things. There was an overwhelming amount of support against GE, from many different angles, groups and individuals.

Melanie Nelson, Eco Action

Parliamentary Watch

Little new environmental legislation has been introduced since the 1999 election apart from the Forests (WC Accord) Bill.

Recently passed Legislation:

Wildlife Amendment Bill

The Wildlife Amendment Bill increases penalties under the Wildlife Act. This was a Private Members Bill promoted by Labour MP, Jill Peltis. The new Act brings the penalties for harming protected bird species into line with those in the RMA.

Legal Services Bill

Parliament in mid-October passed the Legal Services Bill. Provisions for environmental legal aid were not included in this legislation. The Government/Green’s funding for environmental legal aid is being used as a model for the development and future management of environmental legal aid.

Forests (West Coast Accord) Bill

This legislation implements Governments move to end native forest logging on Crown land on the West Coast of the 5th Island was passed on 18 October, after being reported back to Parliament by the Local Government and Environment Select Committee.

The Act enables the Government to transfer Crown owned forests to DoC and facilitates an end to native forest logging. The Government is still talking about allowing the development of the Pike River coal field which is found partly in Paparoa National Park. Conservationists will be concerned if the threat of native forest logging is replaced by another threat of mining.

Legislation soon to be passed:

Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Bill

This Bill has been reported back by the Local Government and Environment Select Committee at the end of September and is currently before Parliament awaiting the Select Committee’s report on the Bill.

Resource Management (Marine Farming and Heritage Provisions) Amendment Bill

The main feature of the Bill is the repeal of the Marine Farming Act which means the management of marine farms will now fall under the RMA. This passing of this legislation is long overdue. The original legislation was introduced prior to 1996 as part of an Resource Management Amendment Bill.

Bills before Select Committees

RM Amendment Bill

ECO hopes that most of this Bill will be withdrawn by the Government and instead replaced by provisions that enhance the RMA rather than reduce community involvement and environmental protection. Provisions to include historic places in the RMA should be enhanced and passed quickly.

Also being debated is the Resource Management (Costs) Amendment Bill. This Bill is a Private Members Bill introduced by Alliance MP Sandra Lee, now Minister of Conservation.

Forests Amendment Bill

This Bill proposed by the previous Government would allow for exports of indigenous woodchips, entrench the unsustainable forestry of Timberlands and fail to improve the public processes under the Forests Act. ECO urges that most of this Bill be dropped and the Government review the effectiveness of the application of the Act to private land. Public processes in the Forest Amendment Bill are virtually non-existent and have not been used since the Bill was passed in 1993.

NZ Nuclear Free Extension Bill

This private members Bill introduced by Green MP, Jeanette Fitzsimons, extends the provisions of the Nuclear Free legislation to cover shipments of plutonium. This Bill is before the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Select Committee.

ECOLINK OCTOBER 2000 • PAGE 7
ECO Conference 2000 report

MANY THANKS go out to the organisers, presenters and volunteers of the ECO Conference.

Spread over three days in rain drenched Tahunanui, the ECO Conference was a great mix of keynote speakers, workshops, field trips, delicious food and lively entertainment. The author fully recommends the experience to anyone involved in Green issues or activism.

The highlight of the conference for me was Friday night’s double act of Diara Shand and Peter Horsley. Both spoke on the big picture of environmentalism in today’s society. Peter soberingly observed that the 20th century has been the time of greatest strain on our planet. The last hundred years has seen the true birth of industrialisation, and now “at the end of the 20th century we have the power to destroy the fabric of life”.

Arguably, the real question is whether we have the power to save the planet. Peter offered both the problem and a solution. Capitalism, he stated, simply does not value the environment. Yet as others have noted, there can be no true economy without or in defiance of nature – our bankruptcy will be a planet unable to sustain life, let alone capitalism.

Peter’s challenge was to take the hawk’s eye view, to see the details as well as the big picture. In other words, we must keep on with our individual battles against roads, native logging, pesticides, GE foods et al, but we must connect with and support other battles until we create a paradigm change. We must break down today’s narrow economic view, and raise higher principles of ethical responsibilities as our new critical focus.

Peter cited environmental responsibility and social justice as the twin pillars of sustainability. The catalysts he offered us for this ultimate battle were “hope, creativity, truth, justice and compassion”. Perhaps we can learn a lot from indigenous perspectives which often embrace the pluralism of use and conservation.

Diana complimented this theme with a welcome commentary on winning our immediate battles. She introduced a marketing perspective to success in environmental campaigning. That is, we should remember the different audiences who can pick our ideas up along the way. This allows us to gather the support of innovators, then those with early uptake who will start the rush, followed by the popular mass, at which point the trend peaks, and after some time may decline.

I believe that we can all benefit from applying this idea to our campaigning, and seeing where other environmentalists, the public, businesses, local and central government, and the media fit. It is also honest to recognise that all campaigns will fade, and to create lasting results we too have to keep innovating, changing our pitch, and committing to promote our fundamental beliefs.

The weekend was a great way to recharge those jaded batteries by gaining insight and energy from the experience and dedication of others. The conference was an excellent networking and friend-making opportunity, not to mention a lovely trip away for most. A very special thanks to our fanatical Nelson Environment Centre hosts. There were a bevvy of other speakers and workshop groups, though they can’t all be named here – you’ll just have to find out for yourself next year.

Marty Taylor
Campaign for a Better City

Ozone hole

THE PRESENCE of the largest ever ozone hole over the Antarctic in September is further proof that pressure must be exerted to continue the rapid elimination of ozone depleting chemicals.

In September NASA reported that the hole had extended to cover over 28 million square kilometres – nearly six times the size of New Zealand’s EEZ. In early October Argentina and Chile were reporting that southern areas of their territories were being covered by lowered ozone levels and increased UV levels.

New Zealand must push for faster action to phase out methyl bromide and rapidly phase out HCFCs. These two ozone depleting substances are still in use and HCFCs can continue to be used until 2030 for developed countries and 2040 for developing countries. Currently developing countries can increase their emissions in HCFCs until 2016 while developed country emissions are frozen at 1996 levels.

While steps have been taken to eliminate the use of CFCs and halons in developed countries continuing use of CFCs in developing countries needs to be more rapidly phased out. While developed countries stopped using CFCs in 1996 developing countries can continue using these substances until 2010.

The European Union is promoting measures to speed up the phase-out for discussion at the upcoming meeting of parties to the Montreal protocol in Burkina Faso. New Zealand should be supporting stronger moves at the upcoming meeting.

Design for Sustainable Community

"Earthcare Education Aotearoa" will be holding a month long Sustainable Community/Ecovillage Design course in the Golden Bay bio-region of Aotearoa/New Zealand. The course gives attention to all facets of sustainability, by balancing & integrating physical and environmental design with cultural and economic design.

The course runs from Sun 25th Feb - Sat 24th March 2001, with each week being at a different venue: for example, social-cultural design at a mountain forest retreat centre, physical design at a river valley ecovillage.

For further information, contact: Juniper, Anahata Retreat Centre, Birds Clearing, RD1, Takaka, Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Email: anahat@voyager.co.nz
Introducing ECO’s New Executive

AT ECO’S conference in Nelson a new executive was elected. Along with the seasoned hands, a number of new people have been elected. In this, and the next few newsletters, we’ll be introducing the new executive members.

The full executive is: Tony Dean, Tricia Allen, Alan Carson, Elizabeth Lee, Berylla, Cath Wallace, Nick Young, Logan Pedley, Stephen Blyth, Barry Weeber, Jonathan Pauling, Quentin Davies, Richard Frizzell, Heny James, Rick Barber.

Elizabeth Lee
I come to ECO through the National Council of Women, one of its member groups. I have been a corresponding member for the Environmental Standing Committee of NCW for several years, and at the beginning of 1999 I took on the task of representing NCW at NGO meetings that a number of government departments hold a regular intervals. There I came face to face with ECO, about which I had previously know little, but further exposure has convinced me that ECO and I can have a mutually rewarding relationship. My special interests are: the maintenance of indigenous biodiversity, ensuring that agriculture and forestry are carried out in environmentally safe ways, and the maintenance of natural ecology systems.

Richard Frizzell
Greetings. I first got involved in the environment movement in 1981 by joining Native Forest Action Council, when I helped get a branch going in Blenheim and became active in the Nelson branch. In 1984 I spent 8 months in Tasmania working for The Wilderness Society and Greenpeace. Since moving to Nelson in 1985 I've worked with the Nelson Environment Centre and campaigned on native forest issues, peace issues (especially anti-frigates and Waihopai), Agenda 21, resource management and energy conservation issues ...and numerous other local concerns. I'm really keen to get some environmentally sound Councillors in next years Local Body Elections!

Berylla
It is only in the last few years that my childhood passion for nature has clearly reemerged as a central focus of my life.

Nine years ago I started a small herbal business and I currently teach introductory classes on herbs for health and enjoyment. I also make and work with flower essences.

In the last three years I have spent much time working with GE Free New Zealand to raise awareness of the issues involved with genetic engineering.

As member of the ECO Executive I have chosen to be a member of the genetic engineering, education and urban sustainability working parties. I welcome any input and information on these areas.

Jonathan Pauling
I am currently studying towards a Masters degree in Political Science at the University of Canterbury looking at the politics of food and green alternatives. I am a member of the student environment group Kakariki, and it is through this that I have come to be involved with the ECO executive. I am interested in issues surrounding sustainable urban development with a special interest in community gardens. I have been a member of Native Forest Action here in Christchurch as well as a trustee of the Organic Garden City Trust. Through working with the ECO executive I hope to focus on issues surrounding globalisation, GE, and the development of closer ties between iwi, ECO and its member groups.
Pesticides in Food: Why go organic

OUTLINED BELOW are the key points from recent analysis of New Zealand's latest Total Diet Survey by Alison White. Full copies of the analysis are available from the Pesticide Action Network/Safe Food Campaign NZ, P O Box 9206, Wellington.

The Ministry of Health assures us that "the pesticide residue levels found in [the latest Total Diet Survey] are unlikely to have any adverse health implications for the New Zealand population". Their conclusions are based on the assumption that pesticide levels below the Acceptable Daily Intake are safe. But this is based in turn on several unscientific assumptions, such as that are exposed to only one chemical at a time. Results from the survey are furthermore questionable with the very small sample sizes being analysed: 86% of the 114 foods tested had a mere two composite samples analysed.

Young children in New Zealand are getting about five times more pesticide residues than young American children. A sizeable proportion of young NZ children could suffer from acute organophosphate poisoning from the residues in their food. The young child, aged 1-3 years old, takes in more pesticide residues than older age-sex groups, more than two-and-a-half times more than men, for example.

The percentage of total samples with pesticide residues is significantly greater than some other countries, for example the UK and the USA. Wine, grains, especially wheat, and meat are more likely to contain pesticide residues than other food groups.

When ranked according to the number of pesticides in combination with the percentage containing residues, bread and wheat products, wine, fruit and salad vegetables come out worse.

Recent findings concerning the endocrine disrupting potential of certain pesticides, eight of which are found in this survey, are a matter of grave concern, with disturbing consequences for the future of the individual, the family and society as a whole. A group of fungicides of concern, the most common of which is mancozeb, a know endocrine disruptor, continue to be used of a wide range of fruit and vegetables.

Analysis of the latest Total Diet Survey reveals tragically unnecessary pesticide residues in the New Zealand diet. With cooperation from regulatory authorities and growers and farmers, New Zealand can become an organic nation by 2020.

Environmental Activists in Mexico tortured and convicted: Help Needed

TWO MEXICAN campesinos, poor landless farmers, have been jailed for opposing logging of forests. In early 1999 a group of farmers blocked logging roads with logs and led a non-violent revolt against the logging. Logs on the stopped trucks were released further blocking the roads.

-Rodolfo Montiel Flores and Teodoro Cabrera Garcia, both peasant activists, were detained by the army and imprisoned. Another farmer was shot dead. The two farmers were detained by the army in May 1999 and convicted in August 2000 on false charges that relied on confessions extracted after five days and nights of torture. Montiel had formed the Organisation of Campesino Ecologists of the Sierra de Petatlan and Coyuca de Catalan to oppose the rampant logging by foreign companies, with attendant environmental destruction and erosion.

Their detention was illegal. The charges are widely viewed by international human rights organisations as trumped up by the army. The large landowners on whose land the logging occurred, have close links with the military and corrupt government officials.

The human rights of the pair have been violated, with beatings and other torture continuing during their detention and trial. Although a Danish NGO, Physicians for Human Rights concluded there was strong evidence of abuse and negligent medical attention, such evidence was refused admission to the trial, and the Mexican Attorney General concluded that no human rights abuses occurred. Senator Bob Brown of Australia, a green and a doctor, joined three other eminent environmentalists in a delegation in August to Mexico, which included visits to the prison. The group met a range of authorities and the wife and other relatives and friends of Rodolfo and Teodoro. Dr Brown examined the medical notes and says those of the Mexican authorities were cursory and inconclusive, in contrast to the thorough and rigorous notes of the Danes.  

-Continued over page
sShell in Nigeria

IN THE AFTERMATH of the Sunday Star Time's expose of WWF's close relations with the corporate world and their extension of their already cosy relationship with Shell, we discovered that many people thought that the oppression of the Ogoni in Nigeria had stopped.

Many people think it stopped when Ken Saro-Wiwa and other Ogoni nine were hanged in 1996 or at least when President Abacha was overthrown in 1998. It has not.

Footage of the destruction of Ogoni villages, their crops, animals and the people themselves was recorded and shown on Britain's Channel 4 during the 1990s. Shell has admitted it asked the mobile police to take action against opponents of its presence in Ogoni. The footage shows ruins of burning houses, the slashed body of a toddler, a body in a burnt out house, a woman shot for resisting the destruction of her farm for Shell's pipeline and more. It tells how Saro-Wiwa's aged mother was horse-whipped.

People in Ogoni continue to be shot, terrorised, beaten and their homes burnt for their opposition to the impact of the oil industry including Shell who are still operating in Nigeria. News is intermittent and reports are too long to reproduce here. One April 2000 report of 11 pages details interviews with and corroborating evidence from eyewitnesses to a "mobile police" raid on K-Dere, the village in Gokana Local Government Area, Rivers State, where Ledum Mittee lives. He was a close colleague of the late Ken Saro-Wiwa and is now a leader of MOSOP.

The "mobile police" under instructions from the military dictatorship and at Shell's request raided and sacked villages under Abacha prior to 1998. The April 2000 raid by the same force was apparently aimed at people who had opposed the construction of a road, the Kira-Bean project, which Shell wants.

The account relates to events that appeared to begin with a raid at 5.00am by police and others. Most of the reports by residents are of being woken by gunshots as police entered houses arresting people and shooting those who tried to run away. They tell vivid and harrowing eyewitness accounts of the brutal events.

Ledum Mittee and two others who were arrested were released after an international outcry but the other two were almost immediately re-arrested. The case against Mittee has since been adjourned twice for lack of a case against Mittee and MOSOP and has now been adjourned until the 28 of December 2000.

Further reports relate to June 2000, where reports from MOSOP, are that Shell attempted to resume oil production in a place called Korokoro, in the Tai local government area in the Rivers State. In this case the local community apparently resisted the Shell attempt to resume production but there was yet another confrontation.

Since the conviction of the two in August, extremely disturbing reports have emerged that the prison chief was heard to say that he wanted to hire prisoners to beat the environmentalists. The apparent idea is to have them beaten but for the authorities to be able to pass their ill treatment off as inter-prisoner fighting.

Mexico has a new president elect after July elections. You can help Rodolfo and Teodoro by writing and asking that they be released and at the very least that the ill treatment by prison staff and others be stopped.

Cath Wallace, ECO

Write to: "Dear Mr Vicente Fox," or "Dear Mr President."
President-Elect Vicente Fox Quesada,
525 Paseo de la Reforma
Col. Lomas de Chapultepec,
Mexico, D F CP11000
Mexico.

Also write to the Mexican ambassador to New Zealand: Ambassador Jorge Alvarez Fuentez (Dear Excellency),
Embassy of Mexico, 111-115
Customhouse Quay, Level 8, Wellington.
Fax: (04) 496-3559; Tel (04): 472-5555.
Email: cmmbn@government.co.nz

For updates on this case, see www.goldmanprize.org

Please contact: Cath Wallace, at
ecowatch@paradise.net.nz

Shell's behaviour in a range of other countries has given rise to considerable concern. There are many accounts of their activities in Bolivia and elsewhere with similar accounts of gross environmental destruction and abuse of human rights.

In discussing the question of Shell's activities, WWF and the Shell PR man referred to Shell having "a PR problem in Nigeria". We think that the problem is rather more than a PR problem: rather it is one of gross violation of the environment and of human and civil rights. We suggest that people should not be taken in by the greenwash and the PR. Shell is busy buying environmental PR because it has not earned it.
Submissions

- MFISH/MfE: Aquaculture - join the discussion, submissions due by 31 October 2000.
- DoC: Draft Agreement on the Conservation of albatrosses and petrels, comments sought by 3 November.
- WCC: Notification of an application for Resource Consent under section 93(2) of the Resource Management Act - Land use consent for TSE Group Ltd, placement and compaction of material from quarry operation, submissions by 16 November.
- MFISH: Cast your line! Sounding out NZ views on the future of recreational fishing, submission by 30 November.

Special Thanks to:
Mrs S Bathgate-Hunt
We really appreciate feedback and encouragement from Friends and supporters. Thanks to recent comments from Mrs Bathgate-Hunt from the Hawkes Bay: it’s great to hear that you find ECOlink a useful resource. Hopefully, our combined efforts will some day put an end to barbaric whaling activities. Keep up the good work.

I would like to support ECO by:

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