

**Environment & Conservation Organisations of NZ Inc.
2008/09 Annual Report**



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1.0 Introduction

This annual report relates to June 2008 – June 2009. It has been prepared by members of the ECO Executive committee with the help of ECO Executive Officer, Amelia Luxton.

The 2008 ECO AGM gave the ECO Executive Committee the priorities of working on Vote for the Environment, Oceans, marine and fisheries policy, climate change, protecting the RMA, sustainable land use and water, and Antarctica. We have worked on these issues, but always have lacked capacity to give them the effort needed.

The year has been challenging with climate change, RMA, oceans and fisheries management. The Vote for the Environment work was complicated by the demands of the Electoral Finance Act and the very late withdrawal from the campaign of Forest and Bird due to their own capacity and communication issues. The many changes to environmental policy and the Resource Management Act and fisheries as the new National-Act-Maori Party government has repealed environmental measures and pursued its agenda of economic growth and infrastructure fast tracking have had us reeling at times since the election.

2.0 Activities: Campaigns

2.1 Climate change and energy.

Evidence of the seriousness of climate change has deepened. While New Zealand's policy instability and inaction compounds into the repeal of what few measures were in place, ECO continues to work with urgency for increasingly deep greenhouse gas emissions reductions both in New Zealand and globally, especially in the post 2012 agreement.

ECO made a submission to the Emissions Trading Scheme Review and works with Climate Defence Network partners and others for a meaningful price on carbon, and early introduction of responsibility for greenhouse gas emissions. We have pushed back against the many suggestions for New Zealand to back-slide. Geoff Keey with Greenpeace has been heavily involved in climate change matters, both in domestic policy and in the international negotiations that are leading to the late 2009 Copenhagen meeting on the post 2012 Climate Change agreement. His bulletins from the front have been gruesomely interesting but not such as to engender pride in New Zealand.

¹ The Annual Report relates to the work from 1 July 2008-30 June 2009. The Financial Report relates to the financial year, 1 April 2008-31 March 2009.

Georgi Hart and Liz Willoughby-Martin have worked with former ECO Exec member Aaron Packard on raising climate change action awareness, particularly in helping to organise the Bill McKibbin tour and the 350 [ppm CO₂ equivalent] Campaign which has become a national movement.

ECO participated in a number of official and Institute of Policy Studies and other workshops and lectures, policy discussions and debates in the media on these issues. We have pressed the case for effective, fair and urgent means to reduce greenhouse emissions, to provide for transport alternatives and energy efficiency and demand management and to avoid perverse impacts of policy on native ecosystems in New Zealand and elsewhere.

ECO continues to work collaboratively on policy and other matters with the Climate Defence Network and has been able to play a significant role in the Network. Liz Willoughby-Martin has been active with in the Climate Hui and camp.

2.2 Vote for the Environment

For the 2008 General Election, ECO worked with Greenpeace NZ in the Vote for the Environment campaign (Forest and Bird dropped out not long before the election). Policies partly directed from the 2008 AGM were put to political parties. They asked whether they would endorse these policies. The parties' responses were both published and reported, with each party scored. The results were reported and published at the Environment Vote website (www.environmentvote.org.nz). This was an important policy development process and a key element in informing the public and member groups about good policies and party positions on them.

ECO's Georgi Hart, Amelia Luxton, Geoff Keey, Cath Wallace and Barry Weeber did much of the work on policy and policy survey analyses while Nick Young did the IT work. Elizabeth Lee took on the legal responsibility as Financial Agent under the ill-drafted Electoral Finance Act and ECO's return as a Third Party was lodged in due time.

In 2009-2010 electoral finance is back on the policy and legislative agenda. ECO attended one public consultation on the matter in June 2009. It hopes to make formal submissions in the unfolding review and reform process which the government has now launched.

2.3 Oceans, Marine Matters & Fisheries Campaign

ECO has actively pursued our goals of improving the laws, policy and practice, marine, oceans, fisheries management and governance.

2.3.1 Oceans

ECO has continued to work on both domestic NZ marine issues and on South Pacific regional fisheries management, the Southern Ocean and on high seas governance and protection.

High Seas, South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation

ECO continues as an active member of the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition, with Barry Weeber, Clive Monds and Cath Wallace active along with Greenpeace and other partners and colleagues. The South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO) negotiations continue, with ECO providing inputs and comments, primarily via Barry Weeber's engagement with the negotiation process but in close collaboration with Greenpeace.

ECO initiated, and co-organised with the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition and IUCN partners a high seas governance Conservation Alliances Workshop in the October-November 2009 Barcelona IUCN World Conservation Congress. This was well attended, and was complemented by the successful negotiation and passage of an IUCN Resolution on high seas governance at the Members' Business Assembly. When the Director General of IUCN, Julia Marton-Lefevre, visited New Zealand, ECO took the lead on pressing for continued high seas conservation, management and governance leadership from IUCN.

Antarctic, Marine Biodiversity and Fishing

ECO has worked in association with colleagues and collegial organisations and others in New Zealand and elsewhere, particularly within the Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition, with IUCN the World Conservation Union and the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition. Barry Weeber has followed the scientific and policy meetings closely. Barry works with the Pew Foundation and ASOC on Antarctic krill matters including on climate change impacts.

We were encouraged by the Antarctic Treaty System's moves to integrate better the work of the Antarctic Environmental Protocol and the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, particularly in relation to fishing.

Illegal fishing continues to be a concern. We regret that the Cook Islands and Vanuatu are both apparently operating open vessel registers and allowing fishing vessels over which they exercise no effective control to fish under their flags, in the Southern Ocean and in the South Pacific and elsewhere.

As well as organising a High Seas Workshop at the IUCN World Conservation Congress, ECO initiated and co-organised a workshop on Antarctica and the Southern Ocean, and a 'Knowledge Café' on making IUCN more effective on Antarctica. This was complemented with a Resolution on Antarctica which was developed with the Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition, ASOC, of which ECO is a long-standing member.

One element of this effort has been the of marine protection in the high seas and in the Southern Ocean around Antarctica, with a particular and urgent need to achieve the

creation of a large marine protected area which is no-take in the Ross Sea. ECO ensured that this matter gained expert discussion and attention. We continue to work to this end.

2.3.1 New Zealand Fisheries and marine issues

ECO continues to press for better fisheries management, both with respect to the targets of fisheries management and in relation to the scope of fisheries management. In particular we have pressed for inclusion of a wider range of considerations than harvest values, and have pushed for more protection for the marine environment, both in formal terms and in on-going decision making within the Fisheries Act 1996 and related law such as that protecting marine mammals and the Marine Reserves Bill and Act. We supported better provision for the Precautionary Principle under the Fisheries Act (s10) but note that this has not been passed by Parliament due to opposition from some parties which may have been heavily influenced by contributions from fishing interests.

ECO belatedly was able to join a Ministry of Fisheries process called Fisheries 2030, which reflects considerable determination by some Ministry of Fisheries and fishing industry personnel that the Ministry of Fisheries manage by environmental standards with devolution of decisions to 'stakeholders' and 'rights holders' which ECO perceives as using deregulation as a cloak for devolution of fisheries management and research to the fishing industry. Regrettably, the Price Waterhouse Coopers' consultancy report is heavily weighted to the rights-based framework, and though there are a few environmental recommendations, notably missing are the new norms of fisheries management in the international realm of ecosystem-based management and the implementation of the Precautionary Principle. The paper has little in the way of environmental measures, yet this has become the main focus of the Ministry of Fisheries' attention. With dismay too, ECO has commented to the Ministry of Fisheries on that agency's internal restructuring which is explicit about their desire to reduce consultation to a minimum.

Fisheries Plans

Fisheries plans being developed by the Ministry of Fisheries were supported by ECO, since these seemed at last to provide some sustained planning and at least a limited degree of community input. Clive Monds and others have contributed to the Fisheries Plans process despite ECO's concerns from the beginning about shortcomings in the process. Despite these shortcomings there have been some benefits from the plan process particularly for inshore plans. Two major benefits have been the engagement of customary Maori to an extent not seen in previous Ministry of Fisheries processes, and the highlighting as a priority concern for all stakeholders of land based impacts on the marine environment and fisheries, the latter much to the surprise of Ministry of Fisheries staff, but not to stakeholders. Unfortunately any benefits gained are likely to be lost in the current retrenchment and reorganisation of the Ministry, which will centralise and reduce the dialogue between sectors that has been beneficial, particularly for customary Maori.

Barry Weeber has contributed to the Sub- Antarctic Fisheries Plan that was issued for public comment. It is with concern that we note that the Ministry of Fisheries is scaling

back these efforts and we remain concerned that the policy and ecosystem focus of fisheries management is weak. The Ministry is now trying to standardise fisheries planning and intends to reduce the rate of production of such plans to four new ones in the coming year. We do not agree that participation in the development of such plans should be restricted to those selected by government. We do consider the process should be run by government. We oppose any devolution of such processes to the fishing industry.

Aquaculture

There are proposals for yet more reforms in aquaculture. While the current framework is not working ECO has considerable concerns about new measures reducing public input to the process particularly in relation to allocation of space for aquaculture. We have been involved in some plan change processes under the current system to allow for finfish farming which potentially have much more adverse impacts than shellfish aquaculture. In particular ECO has been highlighting the issue of feed stocks for fish farming given the looming shortage world-wide of fish meal and fish oil and the potential impacts on wild fish stocks. In this we have had considerable support from the recreational fishing sector who recognise the potential impacts on the food chain for wild stocks.

Kermadecs Marine Sanctuary Project

Following dismal communications and progress, and many difficulties in the relationship with two of the Pew Foundation staff running an initiative for protection of the marine environment of the Kermadecs, ECO withdrew from the process since it was taking up a huge amount of time for little apparent conservation return and some risk to relations with affected parties. The project apparently continues and ECO hopes it will succeed.

2.4 Strengthening the RMA

The National-led government has launched an RMA reform process, with indecent haste in the case of its Phase I which is primarily about fast tracking applications, reducing community input and erecting barriers to public participation. ECO made submissions and was heard by the Local Government and Environment Select Committee but at the time of writing (mid June 2009) we had not seen the conclusions to that process.

ECO is especially concerned at what is rumoured to be in Phase 2 of the “Reforms”(sic) which seem to indicate massive centralisation of power, lessening of environmental protection and of community participation. We may all know more when this Annual Report is presented.

ECO continues to provide advice to the community on how to use the provisions of the Resource Management Act through www.rmalink.org.nz and via ad hoc advice.

ECO has made submissions on a few RMA cases including the Hurunui River and Mokihinui dam proposals. Rick Barber and Barry Weeber on our Executive Committee deserve our particular thanks for defending the West Coast in submissions on resource

consents, and we are grateful to Quentin Davies and to Forest and Bird for legal representation.

2.5 Water and Land Use

The Sustainable Land Management Forum process has now been renamed the Land and Water Forum and it now has the endorsement as a process from the Minister for the Environment and the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry. ECO is in the outer, non-core group and has been represented by Barry Weeber.

ECO has been represented at a few meetings of the NZ Business Council for Sustainable Development water management and allocation project. Members of the Executive Committee for the most part have not been able to attend these meetings but NZBCSD has sent us documents relating to the work.

We have continued to make it clear that we value innovative thinking and that water policy and practice must improve. We have also made it clear that we do not agree with any proposal to the effect that the community must compensate anyone for relinquishing water when the health of the environment is at issue or for public purposes.

Mike Joy, the limnologist and freshwater ecologist on the ECO executive has urged regional councils and the Ministry for the Environment to improve water quality and the habitat of native freshwater fish and eels. He has generated a stream of publicity around poor practice and declining water quality and species health. He has also launched a petition to have the commercial fishing of NZ's long-finned eels terminated.

Rivers

Quentin Duthie and Rick Barber represented ECO at the inaugural Wild Rivers campaign gathering in Murchison. A dozen environmental and recreational NGOs were present to analyse threats to Wild Rivers, and to strategise a campaign. The impetus is the sharp rise in individual applications to modify wild rivers, mostly with hydro dams, and the need to campaign to improve the default protection for rivers as well as to fight each battle. Quentin has kept ECO member groups informed of the developing campaign through ECOLink.

2.6 Education for Sustainability

ECO continues to support sustainability education funding. Various members of the Executive committee have worked on these issues both on the policy and in practice. ECO pressed the case for environmental education during the Vote for the Environment campaign and is pained at the rolling back of EnviroSchools and sustainability education funding. ECO has given talks to visiting groups of overseas tertiary students, including a class of Augsburg College Students.

Georgi Hart has in the first semester of 2009 been the Victoria University Student Association Environment Officer, and she and Liz Willoughby-Martin, Geoff Keey and Cath Wallace have maintained various links with students, with GECKO and others in the academic community.

Cath Wallace was one of several people who gave advice in the making of Kathleen Gallagher's new documentary film *Earth Whisperers* which had its premier in Wellington on June 12th.

2.7 Open society and Legal Aid

Like other members of the community, in 2009 ECO moved from promotion of a more open and participative society, to the defence of long-established norms of public participation. The new government is impatient with the community and participative democracy and we seem to be heading into troubled waters on this front.

Attendees at the 2008 ECO Annual Conference will recall that Nick Smith said National planned to maintain environmental legal aid – and we will continue to hold National to this.

2.8 Biodiversity

The decline of New Zealand's native biodiversity, terrestrial and marine, and the losses of tropical rainforests and Antarctic biodiversity continue to occupy ECO.

We have championed the protection of biodiversity on many fronts, in climate and biofuels policy and in Antarctica, the high seas and in New Zealand's marine areas.

Water policy is clearly a major front critical for aquatic ecosystems and species, as well as human welfare.

We continue to press for biodiversity protection on many fronts, including the RMA consent processes and in fisheries and oceans management. ECO's continuing presence at DOC/NGO liaison meetings allows us direct expression of our concerns to the departmental officials, although lack of capacity makes our representation irregular.

The budget cuts in the 2009 Budget have compounded the pre-existing underfunding of the Department of Conservation. Added to the losses in 2008 including of the Marine Policy Unit and significant marine policy, science and technical capacity, in 2009 the Budget removed \$54m over five years from DOC's Nature Heritage unit. ECO's calculation is that this amounts to about 30 species losing protection and some 45,000 ha of native forest losing possum control programmes.

2.9 Public Access

During the year the Walking Access Act became law and the Walking Access Commission was established. The Federated Mountain Clubs, an ECO member group, had a strong influence, and one member of the FMC Executive is on the Commission (although not as direct representative of FMC). It should be noted that FMC does however have statutory membership of the New Zealand Conservation Authority.

ECO has mostly left public advocacy for access to the terrestrial environment to the many vocal recreational organisations and to NZ Fish and Game who are articulate in the cause. We have taken advice on these issues and have from time to time been able to help them.

2.10 Biosecurity

Invasive species in New Zealand, in Antarctica and the marine environment continue to be of considerable concern to ECO.

As well as all the usual concerns about the funding and organisation of New Zealand's and Antarctic efforts (or lack of these) to reduce plant, animal, bacterial and fungal invasive species, ECO remains concerned at the potential for carbon sink, biofuels and biochar planting to introduce or spread invasive or weedy species. This potential set of risks is not confined to New Zealand but exists in other places.

At least one ECO member group is focused on the decline of insect life in New Zealand, again a circumstance not confined to this country, but a world-wide phenomenon. As insects are essential for pollination of most plant species, including crop plants, efforts must be made to determine what factors lead to this decline so that the trend can be reversed and the health of ecosystems maintained. It is possible that one of the factors is the presence of alien pathogenic organisms that have entered the country undetected.

2.11 Forests

Cooperation with the NZ Forest Owners, and other forestry and forest processing organisations within the frameworks of both the Forest Stewardship council informal process and the NZ Forest Accord continued through 2008-09. Climate change policy cooperation based on the Climate Change Agreement to the New Zealand Forest Accord continued. Agreement was reached with some relevant parties on a further declaration on policy with a joint call for a ban on the import of products from illegally logged forests. Since this is a trade measure, we called on New Zealand to impose controls domestically as well.

After informal talks, relations on the Forest Stewardship Council discussions over National Standards are reviving. Work is progressing on the question of forest reserve set-asides and on chemical derogations. ECO has participated in these meetings to the extent that work and other commitments have allowed, and it seems that confidence between the parties is returning.

ECO, Greenpeace and other groups made clear our unwillingness to endorse the Australian Forestry Standards when the chief executive of the institution responsible for those standards visited NZ trying to recruit NZ forest industry support. Our position is based on the fact that these standards allow logging and chipping of old growth Australian forest, including in World Heritage areas. The NZ Forest Owners Association report that while they do not oppose the AFS, neither are they interested in it.

2.12 International

World Conservation Union – IUCN

ECO remains an active member of IUCN – the World Conservation Union, and participated in 2009 in New Zealand Committee meetings and in 2008 in the World Conservation Congress in Barcelona, represented by Barry Weeber and Diana Shand. The IUCN community has been extremely well served by Diana Shand, Oceania Regional Councillor from New Zealand and by Aroha Mead, elected at the Congress as IUCN’s Chair of the Commission on environmental Economics and Social Policy. Cath Wallace and Barry Weeber are both members of the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas and maintain an active interest in Antarctica, Protected Areas and Marine governance and protection. Cath Wallace is also a member of CEESP.

As noted above, ECO organised two workshops and a knowledge Café at the World Conservation Congress in Barcelona, Spain, from 5-14 October 2008 and co-submitted resolutions on Antarctica and the High Seas which were passed after the usual process of negotiation and modification. Particular thanks to Barry Weeber and Diana Shand who did the leg work at the Congress and to Cath Wallace who initiated the Workshops and Café. Documentation from the Congress can be found at www.iucn.org.

As noted above and below in other sections, ECO is a member of, and works collegially with, other organisations including the Antarctic and Southern Oceans Coalition and its members, and with the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition. Barry Weeber is on the Board of ASOC, and Cath Wallace represents ECO on the Council of ASOC.

2.13 Antarctica

ASOC

The Antarctic and Southern Coalition is a body with which ECO maintains regular contact, and ECO continues to be an active member but raising an annual membership fee is difficult. Barry Weeber has worked in a 2-day per week position with ASOC and the Pew Foundation, working on an Antarctic Krill Conservation Project. As above, Cath Wallace has represented ECO on the ASOC Council and Barry Weeber on the ASOC Board.

ECO continues to press for improved Antarctic Treaty System management, including for a large marine reserve in the Ross Sea, as advocated by the World Conservation Union –

IUCN; for more active control of fishing, including illegal, unreported or unauthorised fishing in the Southern Ocean and for New Zealand to take a more conservationist stance. We support successful moves by ASOC to achieve better control and standards of tourism and of vessels in the Antarctic and applaud the recent successes at the Antarctic Treaty Meeting.

3.0 Activities: Ongoing Liaison

3.1 Meetings with government agencies

Over the past year, ECO has participated in meetings with these Government agencies:

- The Department of Conservation
- The Ministry for the Environment
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- The Environmental Risk Management Authority
- The Ministry of Fisheries

In some cases these are in ECO-only meetings, others are regular and/or stakeholder meetings and still others are broader policy debates or ad hoc meetings on particular international meetings or agreements or other matters.

3.2 Participation in Working Groups

ECO has been represented on a number of working groups, including:

- Sub-Antarctic Islands Marine Protected Area Working Group (Barry Weeber);
- The Fisheries 2030 process.
- The Sustainable Land Management Forum, re-named the Land and Water Forum (on the outer non-core group).

3.3 Non-governmental organisations

ECO is a member of the following:

- The International Union of the Conservation of Nature, IUCN and the New Zealand Committee of IUCN-NZ
- The Association of Non-government Organisations of Aotearoa
- The Climate Defence Network
- Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition (ASOC)
- Deep Sea Conservation Coalition

ECO maintains cooperative relations with a range of other New Zealand and international organisations, and has liaised with colleagues internationally in sharing concerns about the impacts of human activity on the marine environment, the oceans and fish stocks worldwide.

4.0 Activities: Outreach

4.1 Publications

'ECOLink' newsletter publications produced during the year included the following issues: September/October 2008, December 2008, March/April 2009, June 2009.

SeaNet

The SeaNet project web site has continued to be much used, but is now threatened with losing its Wellington Community Net base if the Wellington City Council decides to discontinue funding this for 2010.

RMAlink

RMAlink website is from time to time updated when additional information comes to hand. The Wellington Community Net is the web host. ECO needs to consider in the coming year whether to seek funding to upgrade the site to make it useful to members, friends, other community groups and the interested public given the major changes to the RMA that are in the offing.

4.2 Projects

ECO did not have any major projects outside of our campaigns in 2008-09.

4.3 Submissions

ECO made a number of submissions during the year, which included but were not limited to:

- Emissions Trading Scheme Review – Review on the Emissions Trading Scheme and Related Matters
- Local Government and Environment Committee – Resource Management Amendment Bill (2 submissions)
- Ministry for the Environment – on the Proposed National Environmental Standard on Ecological Flows and Water Levels
- Ministry for the Environment - Proposed National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation
- Ministry for the Environment – Proposed National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management
- Ministry of Fisheries – Review of Sustainability Measures and Other Management Controls for the 2008-09 Fishing Year
- Ministry of Transport – Amending the Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding 2009/10 – 2018/19

- Primary Production Select Committee – on the Fisheries Act 1996 Amendment Bill (No. 2)
- Regulations Review Committee – on the Resource Management (Forms, Fees and Procedure) Amendment Regulations 2009-06-19
- Special Tribunal – Hurunui River Water Conservation Order
- Wellington Regional Council – Draft Long Term Council Community Plan 2009-19

4.4 Website

ECO has continued to develop plans for a new website. Although much of the content for the new site is ready, a lack of affordable/free expert design help has delayed progress on this project. The future of hosting the site at Wellington Community Net (WCN) is also uncertain, as Wellington City Council plans to discontinue funding of the service next year.

5.0 Administration and Governance

5.1 ECO Executive Committee

The members of the Executive Committee during 2008-09 included: Jenny Baker (Napier), Rick Barber (alternate with Quentin Duthie), Max Crowe (Alternate to Sharon McKenzie, Dunedin), Tony Dean (Wellington), Quentin Duthie (Wellington), June Graham (alternate to Jenny Baker, Napier), Georgina Hart (Vice chair, Wellington), Geoff Keey (Wellington), Tushara Kodikara (Vice chair, Wellington), Elizabeth Lee (Wellington), Sharon McKenzie (Anderson's Bay, Otago), Clive Monds (Thames), Cath Wallace (Co-chair, Wellington), Barry Weeber (Co-chair, Wellington), Liz Willoughby-Martin (Wellington). Maiki Marks (Paihia) resigned during the year due to taking on a new job.

5.2 ECO Staff and Volunteers

Many thanks to all the volunteers who gave up their time and expertise to help ECO over the past year:

- Tim Jordan for his advice and help with SeaNet and ECO websites
- Nick Young for help with the ECO website
- Meghan Hughes for editing the ECOLink newsletter and contributing to the Information Review section.
- Richard Wallace (no relation to Cath Wallace) for maintenance work in the office
- Bayu Nugraha for help in the ECO office and with the ECOLink mail-out.
- Elizabeth Lee for all that she does, in particular helping with the Wellington Street Appeal
- Christine Lee for helping with ECOLink mail-outs;
- Clive Monds for taking care of the ECO website;

- Elizabeth Lee, Treasurer, and Tony Dean for expert advice on the accounts;
- The various Wellington Friends and others who helped with the Street Appeal

5.3 ECO Members and Friends

There are 66 member groups currently on the ECO database. Five new groups joined ECO during the year. These were:

- Kaipatiki Project
- Sustainable Whanganui Trust
- Soil & Health Association of NZ
- Clean Stream Waiheke Ltd
- Nga Uruora - Kapiti Project Charitable Trust

One group, Kapiti Environmental Action, closed down last year and consequently discontinued its membership.

The number of subscribing Friends of ECO is currently 365. There are 172 other 'complimentary' Friends, organisations or other supporters not formally affiliated. ECO has 32 auto donors who contribute regularly through automatic payments. The support of the auto donors is very important to ECO and we are grateful for their support which we need to expand.

6.0 Financial Situation

6.1 Overview

The Treasurer's report and the audit report will address this matter.

6.2 Grants, Gifts and Fundraising

Although we applied to several agencies, ECO did not receive any grants in the 2008/09 financial year.

ECO receives a variety of regular auto-donations and subscriptions, and ad hoc donations. The Wellington Street Appeal organised earlier this year raised approximately \$1,150, and the Annual Appeal Letter also collected a significant amount of donations. We are pleased to note that general donations received by ECO in the 2008/09 year were up by almost \$2,800 from the previous financial year. Still however, ECO remains under-funded and over-worked, and donations of time, money and kind are much appreciated, provided they fit within our guidelines and ethical expectations.

This year ECO began a fundraising partnership with online research panel Buzz Channel Ltd (www.buzzchannel.co.nz). There are over 30,000 New Zealanders on the panel who have agreed to take part in the occasional survey via email. Each time someone completes

a survey, Buzz gives a minimum donation of \$1 to the charity they nominate. Buzz Channel has recently donated \$140 to ECO. We hope to expand this in the future by encouraging more people to sign up and nominate ECO as the charity that receives their survey earnings.

The Treasurer's Report and Audited accounts are presented separately.

7. The Past and the Future

Since its inception, ECO has been actively involved in the legislative processes that have led to our present strong protections for the environment and the remaining native ecosystems. ECO can be proud of its past, but that is no justification for complacency; attacks insidious and overt continue to be made on New Zealand's natural capital, and the work must go on.