

Hector's Dolphin Decision Deplored

MOANA PACIFIC FISHERIES' Bruce Young crowed when the High Court rejected Pete Hodgson's measures to protect North Island Hector's dolphin. The Court found against the Ministry of Fisheries in the case brought by the Northern Inshore Fisheries Company Ltd against both the Minister and the Ministry of Fisheries. The measures were introduced on August 16 2001 to protect the critically endangered North Island Hector's dolphin population.



The judge in the case records that the population estimates vary from a low of 33-80 individuals to 100-150; that exact figures are unknown; and that there has probably been a decline from the 1985 figure of 134. He also records that Hector's dolphins are vulnerable to entanglement and death in set nets and that it is likely that there are 100 or less of the animals left.

On Kim Hill's National Radio Nine-to-Noon show Bruce Young called ECO's Cath Wallace and Eric Pyle of Forest and Bird "eco-terrorists". The attempt to slur environmentalists with the "terrorist" label appears to be a deliberate policy and was repeated in a press release by Young.

The removal of the protection is tragic for the North Island Hector's dolphin and may well lead to the collapse of the population if there are further deaths because of the reduced protection given to the population. The NI Hector's dolphin case is also fascinating for what it reveals about some fishing industry attitudes to protection for a critically endangered species and the environment and attitudes to public debate and policy discussion.

Set nets are used by commercial fishers on the North Island west coast for rig, also known as spotted dogfish and gummy shark, and warehou. NI Hector's dolphins live close to the coast in the inshore area. Various set net fisheries extend from the shoreline to 20 nm and are typically done by small-scale

Photo of Hector's Dolphin
courtesy of Dr Steve Dawson,
Otago University

fishers. There may be some amateur set net fishing too, but the coast is rough and exposed. The rig fishery is relatively close inshore with school shark set netters operating further out to 20nm.

A May 9-10 2000 workshop of scientists, officials, industry members and representatives and environmentalists discussed the situation. Almost everyone agreed that:

- "The population of NI Hector's

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dolphins is small and genetically distinct, its genetic diversity is low, distribution is restricted.

- Because their natural reproductive rates are low, they are highly vulnerable to human impacts.
- The animals are threatened.
- The main threat is bycatch in gillnets.
- Other threats include pollution, boat strikes and effects on food sources
- These effects are cumulative.”

It was also acknowledged that its recovery to non-threatened status would require exceptionally low levels of bycatch. For example to meet the USA’s National Marine Fisheries Service criteria for a population of 100, the maximum level of bycatch for this small population would be approximately one dolphin every five years. The workshop concluded that the target level of bycatch was zero.

Pete Hodgson’s regulatory measures under the Fisheries Act intended to prohibit all set netting within 4 nautical miles (nm) of the coast from Maunganui Bluff in the north to Parikariwa Point in the south.

This is a strip along the North Island coast from just north of Dargaville in the north, to White Cliffs, north of Waitara, in the south. Areas inside the harbours were excluded. There were also provisions for the carriage of observers on Danish seining and trawling vessels.

The Northern Inshore Fisheries Company proposed closures that covered a lesser area than Hodgson’s set net exclusion. It did not protect the full documented range of the animals and had a much smaller core of protection with other 2nm areas only seasonally closed to set netting. Their proposal was from Manukau Heads in the north to just north of Aotea Harbour in the south. This meant some fishers could continue set netting within the existing range of the animals. The industry sought compensation, though it is a well-established principle of NZ fisheries management that fishers should not be compensated for measures to protect the environment or fish stocks from the adverse impacts of their own activities.

In an affidavit to the court, a NIWA scientist testified that the Minister’s

measures had a considerably higher chance of population recovery. With low populations the industry proposal had an appreciable risk of extinction (in 12.44% of the modelled runs under various conditions).

Environmentalists, scientists and the hapu at Aotea Harbour led by the Davis family, pressed for stronger protection. At a likely 100 or less of the animals and genetically only just viable, we considered it reasonable that the set netters be asked to switch to different fishing methods or to move where their fishing efforts.

The judge found for the fishing company on the grounds that the Minister, on the advice of officials, made a mistake of fact in its interpretation of the USA formula (called the MALFIRM). It had been styled as a way of predicting probable extinction instead of its intended use to predict a level at which it is probable that the population will increase. Despite this, the judge agreed that the population was in fact vulnerable to

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The Definition of Terrorism

In recent submissions to the Terrorism (Bombing and Financing) Bill, Greenpeace New Zealand carefully explored what terrorism is and is not, putting to the Select Committee a number of suggestions for improving the very widely cast New Zealand Bill. When Bruce Young defamed Cath Wallace as an eco-terrorist, we asked the principal author of that submission, international law expert Duncan Currie, for a view on the matter. Here, we reproduce the core of that response with edits for length.

The essence of terrorism is violence. In the commonsense understanding, terrorism is 11 Sept - planes crashing into buildings, bombings, the use of weapons of mass destruction, etc.

There is no commonly accepted international definition, mainly because of the ‘one man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter’ debate. But there are relevant international definitions, mainly the financing convention (see below).

Even in the Patriot Act in the US, (1) an act must be an act dangerous to human life that is a violation of criminal law; (2) appear to be intended “(i) to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; ... (ii) to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or ... (iii) to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping; and ... (3) occur primarily within the territorial jurisdiction of the United States.”

That is, surprisingly to some, quite a good definition. The Terrorism Financing Convention (International Convention

for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism) is: “Any other act intended to cause death or serious bodily injury to a civilian, or to any other person not taking an active part in the hostilities in a situation of armed conflict, when the purpose of such act, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population, or to compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act.”

So terrorism requires violence, and specifically death or serious bodily injury to a civilian, and at the very least (if stretched), very serious damage e.g. to a bridge, building etc, but ALWAYS (even in the UK, European and Canadian legislation) with the purpose of intimidation of a population or compulsion of a government.

Eco-advocacy and eco-activism comes nowhere close. Even direct action, where the term has often come up, is normally directed at the issue itself - pulling up a GE crop is directed at the crop, not at intimidating a population or coercing a government.

The Kim Hill discussion was simply about lobbying for controls on industry - no violence involved in any sense whatsoever (except of course to the Hector’s dolphins caught and drowned in the set nets), and no intimidation of any population or coercion of any government. It fails on all 3 counts. The use of ecoterrorist to describe a person who calls for a boycott (for instance) or engages in consumer education or to advocate government action is not only wrong but defamatory.

New Climate Defence Network Opposes Hot Air

ECO IS INVITING organisations concerned to counter the irresponsible risk taking to fundamental biophysical systems on this planet, to join together to press for urgent and effective policy to reduce New Zealand's greenhouse gas emissions. The coalition, provisionally named the Climate Defence Network, is concerned to keep faith with the future, the environment, human health, the Pacific and the international community.

The coalition is still in the process of forming and inviting members to join. Organisations who have joined so far include environmental, medical, engineering and recreational groups. These include ECO, the Sustainable Energy Forum, Engineers for Social Responsibility, MedEco, the Pacific

Institute of Resource Management, the Environmental Defence Society, Cycling Action Network, Federated Mountain Clubs, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace and Forest and Bird. Many others are in the process of considering the invitation to join. Individuals are invited to associate themselves with the coalition as "friends of the climate".

The purpose of the network is to press the government to give priority to climate stabilisation, the environment, the wider community, and the global commitment to taking effective action to reduce greenhouse emissions, rather than caving into pressure from the big polluters. These include Comalco, the oil companies, road transport interests, steel manufacturers, farmers and dairy companies (that dry milk products).

Formed to counter the polluter's lobby, the "Pan Industry Group", the Climate Defence Network understands that the government will consider the official's paper on "preferred policy

options" and then, after consultations, open proposed policy to public scrutiny and submission in mid April and early May.

ECO is a founding member of the Climate Defence Network. ECO member organisations and others who would like to join, and anyone who wishes to support the campaign and to contribute money - which is sorely needed - should contact Cath Wallace at Cath.Wallace@vuw.ac.nz or Lynda Sutherland at eco@reddfish.co.nz



Hector's Dolphin Decision Deplored *continued*

extinction. Nevertheless he found that the decision was not properly made because of this technical issue.

The judge also decided that the Minister did not have the best available economic information because the Minister relied on information from May 2000 interviews with fishers. The judge argued that these were not comprehensive and conditions might have changed. Further, fisher claims the measures would cause bankruptcy were not properly reported or studied.

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The judge acknowledged "the clear evidence of the vulnerability of Hector Dolphin (sic) to extinction" and considered whether to allow the ban to stay. He decided that such a decision was a Ministerial decision and that this should be properly informed. He set aside the Minister's regulations.

ECO deplores the setting aside of the regulations. We regard the legal wrangling as totally unreasonable in the face of the plight of the animals themselves. We do not believe that anyone has a right to put any species or subspecies at risk of extinction and then prolong that risk in this manner. There have been 7 deaths of animals in the last two years that are thought to be human induced and some of these have set net marks on them. Bruce Young argues that these may have been from amateur set net fishers. There is evidence for this in only one of those 7 deaths.

We believe that Northern Inshore

Fisheries Company and its member companies and individuals (see the Seafood Industry Council website for more detail www.seafood.co.nz) should not put their economic comfort ahead of the Hector's dolphins survival. The fishers should change their method or place of fishing.

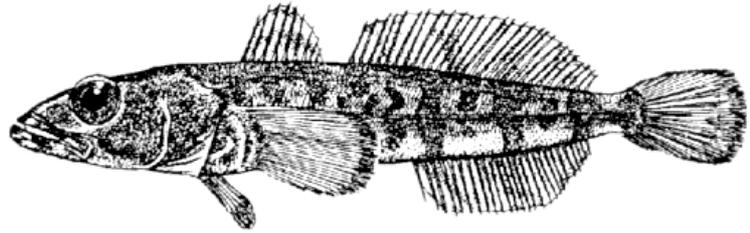
We suggested that people avoid fish in their fish and chips because it may be rig (gummy shark). Bruce Young called us "eco-terrorists" and "anti-commerce". We reject that. Consumers are entitled to know that further threats to Hector's dolphins could be a price of their purchase. Markets rely on participants having good information. It is pro-commerce to have well informed consumers.

The eco-terrorist charge is a disingenuous bully-boy tactic. It devalues language and the real experience of terrorism.

by Cath Wallace

The Ministry of Dead Fish

FOR YEARS ECO has battled the myopic approach to fisheries management of the Ministry of Fisheries that is painfully reminiscent of the old NZ Forest Service's approach to forests. The predominant viewpoint in the NZ Forest Service was that forests are for timber: it should really have been called the NZ Chainsaw Service.



In the same way, the Ministry of Fisheries is apparently culturally incapable of understanding the value of fish in the sea. It refuses to understand the idea that there are non-extractive uses or values of fish. The Ministry of Fisheries should really be renamed the Ministry of Dead Fish.

It's attitude is again revealed in its latest Draft Business Plan for 1 July 2002-30 June 2005 which relentlessly sees uses of fisheries resources as meaning "fishing".

Section 8 of the Fisheries Act 1996 states:

8. Purpose—(1) *The purpose of this Act is to provide for the utilisation of fisheries resources while ensuring sustainability.*

(2) *In this Act*

"Ensuring sustainability" means

(a) Maintaining the potential of fisheries resources to met the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations; and

(b) Avoiding, remedying, or mitigating any adverse effects of fishing on the aquatic environment:

"Utilisation" means conserving, using, enhancing, and developing fisheries resources to enable people to provide for their social, economic, and cultural well-being.

As the Ministry itself observed "Section 8 outlines the purpose of the Fisheries Act. It is a statement of the aim of the Act and the anticipated/intended results arising from the exercise of powers under the Act. The purpose statement reinforces the management system provided for in the Act. Having a pre-eminent single substantive purpose in the Act may avoid a situation in which Ministers, officials and the Courts decide, in Government policy statements and legal decisions, what the purpose might be" (paper on the policy interpretation of Section 8 of the Fisheries Act).

The Ministry's latest Draft Business Plan states (bold type by ECO):

"The Ministry's vision includes:

- the Crown working with Maori to achieve sustainable fisheries
- a healthy aquatic ecosystem in which **fishing** contributes to the social, economic and cultural well-being of New Zealanders and their communities, without limiting options for future generations, and in particular:

- customary Maori fisheries that contribute to the cultural healthy and well-being of iwi and hapu
- high-quality recreational fisheries that contribute to the social and economic well-being of the nation
- an internationally competitive fishing industry that makes a significant contribution to our economy
- **people with rights to harvest fisheries having responsibility, and being held accountable for the management of those rights**, within environmental limits and standards set by government.
- fisheries stakeholders recognising and respecting each other's rights, responsibilities and interests, and constructively resolving issues among themselves
- public support for the way fisheries are managed
- widespread voluntary compliance with the laws that underpin sustainable fisheries."

At first sight, this looks rather innocuous, but a close look reveals some very disturbing things. This is not a vision, it is a nightmare.

Firstly, they have taken in the second bullet point "use of fisheries resources" to mean fishing. They make no reference to or provision for in situ uses of fish – for snorkelling or ecosystem replenishment or any other non-lethal use.

Secondly, the discussion of the social, economic, cultural well-being of New Zealanders and the options for the future contains no reference to non-lethal uses.

Even more worryingly, it is clear from point three in this "vision" that the Ministry continues to be intent on handing over fisheries management to the harvesting sector. Elsewhere in the document it is plain that they want to allow the industry to do or commission research – and Pete Hodgson only committed to defer such an event. He has never promised that research would not be devolved. Only environmental controls will be imposed by the Ministry but it will get out of touch and the whole process of fisheries management and research will become privatised and done by harvesters for harvesters.

ECO emphatically rejects such a plan. We call on all people who care about the sea and ecosystems to write to Helen Clark and Pete Hodgson and to tell them that there is no way they should agree to this pitiful "Vision" held by the Ministry of Fisheries or to the companion proposals in the Ministry's Draft Business Plan.

Gondwana Forest Connections

THE GONDWANA Southern Forests project is an international initiative to conserve, restore and “reconnect” the southern forest ecosystems of the world, the relic Gondwanan forests.

Gondwana is a concept that has been in discussion for several years among conservationists and ecologists from Argentina, Chile, Australia, Aotearoa-New Zealand and North America. At meetings in Chile in April 1998, various experienced national and international grassroots forest conservation organisations committed to launch this endeavour. The Gondwana vision was consolidated at a re-convened meeting in December 2000 at Nelson Lakes National Park. The ECO executive committee has formerly expressed support for the project, as have Native Forest Action, the Buller Conservation Group, Forest and Bird, and the Federated Mountain Clubs.

The Gondwana Vision

The forests that once thrived in the ancient mega continent of Gondwana are now found scattered throughout the southernmost reaches of the planet, most notably in Chile, Argentina, Aotearoa-NZ and Australia, but also including New Caledonia, Papua New Guinea and South Africa. These Gondwanan countries share similar temperate forest types and genera, for example the Lenga (*Nothofagus pumilio*) and Coihue (*N. dombeyi*) forests in Chile bear remarkable similarities to Silver Beech/Tawhai (*N. menziesii*) and Red beech/Tawhai Raunui (*N. fusca*) in New Zealand.

The extreme southern location of these ancient forests has often limited their exploitation, for example in Patagonia. However, with the ever-expanding pressure of corporate globalisation, these forests are the final sparkle in the eye of the international timber industry.

The Gondwana initiative is not concerned with the creation of a whole “new” reserve system parallel to World Heritage or National Park status. The proposal aims to connect the significant “old growth”, “primary” and “frontier” forests in the southern Gondwana countries, by *enhancing* the existing conservation estate with joint NGO-Government initiatives and by building community relationships to these native forests. One proposed aspect of the project is twin parks, for example between the biodiversity hotspots of Kahurangi or Maruia and the Coastal Range forests in Southern Chile. Discussions with DoC are now underway to pursue this aim.

From Familiarity to Understanding

A New Zealander walking through the Lenga forests of southern Chile will marvel at the similarity with forests back home. This familiarity is telling of the antiquity of these forests, and reminds us of their origin many millions of years ago on the Gondwana super-continent. It is this feeling of familiarity and connectedness that we wish to tap into, when promoting the importance of these native forests. This is

especially important for those Gondwana forest remnants still threatened by industrial logging (and for the communities that dwell in these forest regions), especially those in the southern cone of Chile and Argentina, and those in Tasmania and Victoria, Australia. Aotearoa-New Zealand can take a proud lead in this regard, having committed to end the logging of publicly owned native forests on the West Coast by April 2002.

by Garrick Martin

Two New Wilderness Areas proposed for the West Coast

THE MINISTER of Conservation Sandra Lee has announced her intention to create two new wilderness areas on the West Coast of the South Island. They are the Adams Wilderness Area and the Paparoa Wilderness Area. There are only eight wilderness areas in New Zealand.

The proposed Adams Wilderness Area covers 56,136 hectares of public conservation land in the central Southern Alps Ka Tiritiri o te Moana. At the core of the proposed area are the vast snowfields of the Garden of Eden and the Garden of Allah, which drain to the Perth and Wanganui rivers in the west. The Bracken snowfield, which drains to the Whitcombe River is also included. Kea, rock wren, blue duck (kowhiowhio) and falcon (karearea) are some of the key native bird species found in the proposal area.

The proposed Paparoa Wilderness Area covers 32,439 hectares of public conservation land located along the northeastern side of the Paparoa Range. It includes rugged mountains that form the headwater catchments of the Ohikanui, Ohikaiti and Blackwater rivers in the northeast and the Otututu (Rough) River in the southwest. Mixtures of beech, broadleaf and podocarp forest prevail at lower altitudes giving way to pure beech forest, sub-alpine scrub and tussock grassland and herbfields at higher altitudes. The area supports populations of kea, great spotted kiwi (roroa), kaka and blue duck.

Paparoa Wilderness Area has been proposed for over 20 years and was part of the original Paparoa National Park proposal.

Action:

Submissions close by Friday 10 May 2002 with “Wilderness Area Proposals, The Conservator, Department of Conservation, Private Bag 701, Hokitika or email mrodd@doc.govt.nz. Further information on these proposals can be obtained from DOC’s website at www.doc.govt.nz.

Whaling Threat

IT IS NOW less than three months until the next annual meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC). Ironically, this year it will be held in Shimonoseki, Japan - the home port of the so-called 'scientific' whaling fleet.

The Government of Japan has pursued a determined and clever campaign to try and resume commercial whaling on a large scale. By the time of the 2001 IWC meeting the government of Japan controlled a blocking minority of votes - through this they could successfully block new conservation measures such as the bid by New Zealand and Australia for a South Pacific Whale Sanctuary. The threat this year is even greater now that they may have bought enough votes to swing the majority their way at this meeting. This could herald the undermining and unraveling of existing protection for whales.

During the summer months I was down in the Southern Ocean on the Greenpeace ship the *Arctic Sunrise*. Prior to leaving one of the truths we knew was that if we had a camera focused on the action hunting would stop. Very quickly we were proven wrong when the whalers continued a forty minute hunt firing 5 harpoons right in front of us. Later that evening while back on the ship it struck me just how sure Japan must be of its strategy for it to allow those photos to be captured and released worldwide.

Recently Japan has announced that not only do they intend to continue both of their 'scientific' hunts, but that they will expand them again this year. Already 440 minke whales are targeted each year in the Southern Ocean with a further 100 minke, 50 Bryde's and 10 Sperm whales in the North Pacific. This year Japan intends to expand the north Pacific hunt by an additional 50 minke and to include 50 Sei whales. Sei whales are listed by the IUCN (World Conservation Union) as endangered.

The world opinion on whaling and the need for conservation has not changed. Japan and Norway are the only two nations that currently whale. However the government of Japan has used their overseas development aid to secure the votes of developing nations at the IWC. At last year's meeting there were ten nations in the pay of Japan including six eastern Caribbean countries. The government of Japan has been actively trying to recruit further nations to join this year's IWC - however until the meeting begins it is unlikely we will know how successful it has been.



Greenpeace keeping watch outside the IWC meeting in Feyberg Square Auckland (c) Greenpeace

Should the majority of votes be swayed towards the pro-whalers at this coming meeting of the IWC it will a slippery slope towards resumption of commercial whaling.

By Sarah Duthie (Greenpeace)

What you can do:

- The New Zealand government has been very vocal in opposing the tactics of vote buying - they do need our support to remain strong. Write to the Prime Minister and tell her you support her strong stance against whaling.
- Join the Greenpeace Global Whales Action Team online at www.greenpeace.org.nz updates and action alerts will be sent out regularly
- Sign the enclosed postcard and return send to the fisheries agency in Japan (or return to Greenpeace and we will do a bulk mailing)
- Any marine scientists who want to sign a statement against 'scientific' whaling should contact Pia Mancia on 09-630-6317 or pia.mancia@nz.greenpeace.org

GreenPages

visit: www.greenpages.org.nz

Antarctic Policy Review

ANTARCTICA'S STATUS in New Zealand policy is being decided and it is vital that we make our voices heard.

New Zealand's conservationist stance of the late 1980s and early 1990s was hard fought for by tens of thousands of New Zealanders, but was quietly replaced with a more self-interested economic focus in 1995 by the National Government, with no public consultation. In the current review, the protection of Antarctica is under threat from the fishing industry and some officials. The question now is, what will the Cabinet and Government do?

In 2001 we discovered that some of the Antarctic officials had been having a snuggly relationship with the fishing industry interests who want to take increasing amounts of toothfish from the Southern Ocean. The officials were having regular meetings with the industry and not bothering to consult with environmental organisations or others with an interest in Antarctica. The relationship became so close that an official from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade thought nothing of using a fishing industry propaganda presentation slide show, complete with written messages promoting fishing in the Southern Ocean, in her own presentations. Other more senior officials and NGOs were shocked and are looking for change.

Ministers are deciding New Zealand's strategic interests in Antarctica in response to the concerns that we and others raised. ECO and other environmental groups are particularly keen to see the Labour-Alliance Government give effect to their own policies, rather than being tied into a weak statement much more reminiscent of National's policy of promoting economic interests which is what the officials have developed.

In a related move, on 10 July 2001 the Cabinet Finance, Infrastructure and Environment Committee also directed officials to "undertake a strategic review of New Zealand's wider interests in the Ross Sea and Southern Ocean

(including consideration of sustainable fishing regimes for toothfish or a global moratorium) with a view to setting a clear framework and direction for the future".

Deplorably, the paper officials have produced is very biased in favour of continued fishing. It makes only half hearted and cursory reference to the importance of maintaining peace, and fails to note the risk to peace from resource rivalry or to recognise the commitment of the public and of political parties to an Antarctic World Park. Labour committed in its policy to the 1999 election to:

advocate the protection of Antarctica as a world park, free from mining and other threats to its near pristine environment

The policy discussion and the options mention nothing about an Antarctic World Park and the threat that fishing has to that policy commitment.

The discussion in the paper of the economic benefits of the fishing operations is ludicrously exaggerated. It fails entirely to acknowledge the non-market economic benefits from the preservation of peace, an intact marine environment or the good reputation of New Zealand. It does not mention, still less assess, the value of the existence, option and bequest values that people attach to the protection of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean. The intrinsic value of Antarctica is mentioned but is then more-or-less forgotten. The section on environmental impacts is very weak, and even the legal section omits significant considerations such as IUCN-the World Conservation Union policy or the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea requirement that the marine environment be protected and preserved (Art. 192).

Still worse, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade did not consult the public on the new policy, only selected organisations, despite our urging. ECO was consulted and did make submissions, along with a few other environmental organisations.

The discussion in the paper of the economic benefits of the fishing operations is ludicrously exaggerated. It fails entirely to acknowledge the non-market economic benefits from the preservation of peace, an intact marine environment or the good reputation of New Zealand.

Most of the submissions came from the fishing industry and their crews who were clearly encouraged at work to append their names to letters, some written by their bosses. One man with fishing interests wrote three submissions, two under company names and one under his own – even in part reusing exactly the same words.

Other industry submissions were based on a draft that they shared so that curious repetitions emerged – with staff and others repeating a mantra about how proud they are of their fishing efforts, etc, again clearly using an industry ghost writer, with many letters emerging as a sort of "heads, bodies and legs" of the original.

In an insult to the wider community and the Antarctic community, very few others were consulted. There appears to have been no attempt to engage with people outside of the fishing industry and the environmental organisations who pressed for the review.

It is not possible because of the length of the paper on the Ross Sea and Southern Ocean to reproduce it or our submissions, but the texts on the next two pages give the statement of strategic interests in Antarctica that the officials negotiated amongst themselves and which we suggest be adopted instead. The officials' version is much improved on National's 1995 policy, but we still think it is not good enough since it smuggles in economic interests as "sustainable management" and has other flaws.

**ECO Street Appeal Collectors needed
19 July 2002 in Wellington Central
Contact: Elizabeth Lee on 04 476 9809**

Revised Statement of Strategic Interests

The Officials' draft:	Our Revision:	Commentary
<p>The maintenance of the intrinsic values of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean, for the benefit of the world community and for present and future generations of New Zealanders, reflected in active and responsible stewardship, under the Antarctic Treaty System, that promotes New Zealand's interests in:</p>	<p>The maintenance of the intrinsic values of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean and the comprehensive protection of the Antarctic environment and dependent and associated ecosystems and its status as a natural reserve devoted to peace and science.</p> <p>To this end, New Zealand will engage in active and responsible stewardship, under the Antarctic Treaty System and other relevant international agreements, that promotes New Zealand's interests in:</p>	<p><i>We have put new language in bold and deletions in [].</i></p> <p><i>This language is directly from the Treaty and the Protocol and introduces no new concepts.</i></p>
<p>I National and international peace and security through a commitment to keeping Antarctica as peaceful, nuclear free and environmentally protected;</p>	<p>I National and international peace and security through a commitment to keeping Antarctica [as] peaceful, nuclear free and its environment protected;</p>	
<p>II Continued influence in Antarctic governance through maintaining an effective and credible presence in the Ross Dependency;</p>	<p>II Continued influence in Antarctic governance through maintaining an effective and credible role in the Antarctic Treaty System and a civil governmental presence in the [Ross Dependency] Ross Sea Region;</p>	
<p>III Conserving, protecting, and understanding the biodiversity of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean, in particular the biodiversity of the Ross Sea region, including protection of special areas;</p>	<p>III [Conserving,] Comprehensively protecting, and understanding the biodiversity of Antarctica and the Southern Ocean, in particular the biodiversity of the Ross Sea region, including protection of special areas;</p>	<p><i>The amendment is made to ensure that the language conforms to the Protocol's language.</i></p>
<p>IV Conservation, including sustainable use, of the marine living resources of the Southern Ocean, and in particular the Ross Sea, in accordance with CCAMLR;</p>	<p>IV Protection and conservation, [including sustainable use,] of the marine living resources of the Southern Ocean, and in particular the Ross Sea, in accordance with CCAMLR and the Protocol to the Antarctic Treaty on Environmental Protection;</p>	<p><i>Our additions and deletions are intended to ensure that both instruments of the Antarctic Treaty are recognised in this section. The excision of the term "sustainable use" is designed to ensure that only the kinds of uses envisaged in CCAMLR and the Protocol are contemplated. "Sustainable use" is a notoriously slippery concept that has not been accepted in NZ and that has ominous meanings in many contexts. It is a term that has no place in the Antarctic conceptual and diplomatic portfolio. The insertion of the term "Protection and" is designed to recognise the Protocol and of course article 192 of UNCLOS.</i></p>

Revised Statement of Strategic Interests continued

The Officials' draft:	Our Revision:	Commentary
<p>V Supporting and where appropriate leading, high quality Antarctic and Southern Ocean science that benefits from the unique research opportunities provided by Antarctica;</p>	<p>V Supporting and where appropriate leading, high quality Antarctic and Southern Ocean science that benefits from the unique research opportunities provided by Antarctica;</p>	
<p>VI Demonstrating and advocating for best practice in environmental stewardship and all other activities throughout Antarctica, and in particular the Ross Sea;</p>	<p>VI Demonstrating and advocating for best practice in environmental stewardship and all other activities throughout Antarctica, and in particular the Ross Sea region;</p>	
<p>VII Ensuring that all activity is sustainably managed and undertaken in a manner consistent with Antarctica's status as a natural reserve devoted to peace and science, and within this context support Antarctic related activities that enhance social, cultural and economic benefits to New Zealand and the wider global community.</p>	<p>VII Ensuring that all activity is [sustainably managed and] undertaken in a manner consistent with Antarctica's status as a natural reserve devoted to peace and science, and within this context support only those Antarctic related activities that [enhance social, cultural and economic benefits to New Zealand and the wider global community] ensure the comprehensive protection of the Antarctic environment and dependant and associated ecosystems.</p>	<p><i>We suggested that point vii be dropped altogether. The manner of undertaking activities is already spelt out in the Protocol and CCAMLR. There is no good reason to limit the set of considerations and so on in this point. We do not agree that the considerations of the RMA and other New Zealand legislation should be spliced into our policy for Antarctica. We believe that Antarctica should be managed as a place of human forbearance for its intrinsic values, its ecological functions and not as a matter of strategic interest for its instrumental values. Our goal, subject to comprehensive environmental protection should be for the preservation of peace and for science. Any other activities must be subject to these goals and should not be the basis for smuggling into our policy objectives economic and other gains. For this reason we suggest that either vii be dropped or if that is not possible, it be reworded thus</i></p>

ECO strongly opposed the inclusion in New Zealand policy objectives of economic, social and cultural gains since these can be used as justification for a wide variety of damaging and other activity that could upset the major goals of human forbearance, peace, science and security.

The Problem of Antarctic Tourism

TOURISM is the fastest growing global industry.

Those involved in tourism are invariably advocates for continual growth. Its economic power is enormous, and generates ever-greater political influence nationally and internationally. It is now a major player even in Antarctica.

Antarctic tourism really took off in the early 1990s, but passenger numbers tripled by the turn of the century (c15,000 pa) and the trend looks set to continue.

Presently 95% of tourists travel in medium sized ships. As numbers increase and the Soviet-era vessels presently serving the industry reach block obsolescence, the industry will shift to mass tourism, probably air-supported. Numbers may then climb even more steeply.

This will place ever greater stress on the Antarctic environment, especially as most tourists go where most wildlife, vegetation, historic huts and operating stations are – the 2% of the continent that is ice-free. Whilst tourist

operators are required to complete EIA, this has generally been rather perfunctory, and the obligations are culled from experience with national programmes. They don't work well with tourism.

As tourism has become a lucrative industry it has become a player in Antarctic politics. Operating agencies and governments fall over themselves to facilitate tourism, don't ask awkward questions and celebrate the fact that finally Antarctica makes money for somebody. The Antarctic Treaty System has essentially subcontracted tourism management to the International Association of Antarctic Tour Operators (IAATO), the industry's lobby group. Not a bad prize – 10% of the planet.

Tourism, alongside fishing, has also roused the previously dormant sovereignty issue in Antarctica. Now that money is to be made, the seven claimants, which include New Zealand, want to make sure that they get a slice.

-Continued on page13

Potential Effects on Human Health in New Zealand

MOST CLIMATE SCIENTISTS AGREE that the globe is warming as a result of increased concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. The degree of future warming and associated other climatic changes for the next 100 years is still uncertain, but expected to be greater than the natural variability experienced over the last 10,000 years.

The health of New Zealanders living today reflects a range of social and environmental conditions in the past (for example, infections, smoking and diet). In the long term the health of New Zealanders - indeed of all human populations - is dependent on the stability of social arrangements and, more fundamentally, on the sustainability of natural systems. The effects of climate change on health include those that follow directly from changes in temperature, rainfall and other climate variables, and effects that are secondary to changes in other systems (such as agriculture or aquatic ecosystems). Direct effects of climate on health are more readily quantifiable, but probably of lesser importance than indirect effects. Indirect effects will be the result of a range of future climate impacts on social and environmental conditions that influence human health.

The impact of climate change depends not only on the extent and rate of warming, but also on how well individuals and society can adapt. New Zealand is a relatively affluent country and is generally well equipped to deal with the changes that are anticipated. However, vulnerability varies according to socioeconomic status, ethnicity and geographic factors. Also climate projections cover a wide time span, and most climate change-related impacts will only become apparent over a period of decades, but projections of

vulnerability to the projected changes are based on current health status and socioeconomic conditions. Over the last 50 years warming in New Zealand has occurred principally in the form of rising minimum temperatures, with fewer cold extremes. Daytime maximum temperatures have risen less than night-time minimum temperatures. This trend is projected to continue as a result of the greenhouse effect. An increase in heat-related mortality is expected, but this will probably be offset by a reduction in cold-related mortality.

In New Zealand indirect effects are likely to be more important. Dengue fever has been identified as a vector-borne disease that is likely to pose an increased risk to New Zealand as climate changes. The mosquito species *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* are the two principal vectors of dengue. If they were inadvertently introduced, a warmer (and possibly wetter) climate would increase the likelihood that they would survive and become established.

In terms of vector-borne disease risk, stabilising global greenhouse gas emissions would have quantifiable local benefits for New Zealand. However, we also need to develop complementary response measures to reduce our vulnerability. While climate change may increase the potential distribution of introduced dengue vectors, our ability to prevent the introduction of, or respond to and control, an introduced vector would decrease our vulnerability. Similarly, vulnerability to epidemics of dengue fever would be strongly influenced by socioeconomic factors, such as high population densities, crowded living conditions, poor-quality housing and poor living standards. Such conditions are not the norm in New Zealand, but do exist in some disadvantaged communities, and predispose these communities to a wide range of infectious diseases. The same factors would tend to accelerate the spread of dengue once an outbreak began.

The natural systems that sustain human health are subject to thresholds and complexities that we understand very poorly. The limits to adaptation may be closer than we think. Altering the world's climate could lead to surprising outcomes, with major effects of new and unexpected kinds.

Floods and droughts have important effects on health through social and economic impacts, although these secondary effects are difficult to quantify. Effects on human health may include repercussions arising from vulnerabilities in the agricultural sector (such as changing crop suitability, susceptibility to droughts and enhanced spread of some agricultural pests), vulnerabilities relating to water resources (such as impacts on water availability and quality, agricultural irrigation and power generation) and impacts in the coastal zone (such as loss of land, and damage to infrastructure resulting from coastal erosion and flooding). For example, the 1997/98 drought in eastern parts of New Zealand caused direct economic losses at the farm-gate of about \$425 million, concentrated in rural areas. Unless communities are well prepared, losses of this magnitude cause hardship that affects mental and physical health in many ways.

Food poisoning infections show marked seasonal patterns in this country, and most of the bacteria involved are known to be highly temperature-sensitive. A study in the UK found that the monthly incidence of food poisoning was associated with temperature (especially in the previous month). The authors estimated that annually there might be an additional 179,000 cases of food poisoning by the year 2050 as a result of climate change. The quality of monitoring and control of water supplies varies substantially across New Zealand. Parts of the country at greatest risk are likely to be relatively dry rural areas without reticulated supplies where household incomes are low. The East Cape is a

good example of a high-risk region. Areas that rely increasingly on irrigation and ground water sources, such as parts of Canterbury, will also be more vulnerable to the health effects of more frequent floods and droughts.

In terms of public health in general - and the planning and provision of health services in particular - it is important to look beyond our borders and consider the possible implications of climate change and sea-level rise on Pacific Island countries. These have been identified as being among the countries most vulnerable to climate change and associated sea-level rise. Many of the densely populated atoll islands, such as Tarawa in Kiribati and Funafuti in Tuvalu, have a maximum elevation of no more than 3 or 4 metres above mean sea level. Increased sea levels, especially if associated with an increased intensity of storms and tropical cyclones, would result in accelerated coastal erosion, inundation, and loss of land area in low-lying islands and coastal areas. Agricultural production, human health and in particular freshwater resources have also been identified as areas of concern in many Pacific Island countries. It is estimated that for Viti Levu (Fiji), an example of a high volcanic island, impacts would amount to between US\$23 million and US\$52 million a year by 2050 (or 2 to 4% of Fiji's GDP for 1998). For the low-lying Tarawa atoll in Kiribati, losses were estimated at US\$8 million to US\$16 million a year by 2050 (or 17 to 34% of the 1998 GDP for Kiribati). The economic losses associated with climate change would probably put additional pressure on the funding and extension of health services in developing countries.

It is anticipated that the impacts of climate change and sea-level rises would in many cases exceed the adaptive ability of natural systems and communities in Pacific Island countries. Population displacement from the Pacific may lead to a relatively rapid influx of new settlers. New Zealand has a long history of involvement in the Pacific Island region and consequently has developed significant political and, in some cases, constitutional links and responsibilities.

Considering this, our aid commitments, and the extensive cultural, community and familial ties with the region, it is likely that New Zealand would be expected to play a direct role in providing for environmental refugees from Pacific Island countries or increasing its assistance to those countries.

Responses

Mitigation - reducing emissions - is the primary response to climate change. However, it should be noted that there could be appreciable health benefits in the short term from many mitigation strategies. Transport policies to cut emissions may lead, for example, to lower levels of particulate and gaseous air pollution and increased physical activity. Climate change differs from the environmental health problems we are accustomed to dealing with because of its gradual onset, widespread rather than localised effects, and the fact that the most important effects will probably be indirect. These factors inevitably affect perceptions of the problem. In particular, there is a danger that the problem will not be recognised until it is too late to respond effectively, or a substantial cost has already been incurred.

Climate change may bring conditions that are more favourable for disease, but we may not actually see an increase in diseases as long as there is capacity to adapt to the changing circumstances. Does this mean that climate change is a non-issue in the health sector? A shift in average temperatures of several degrees over a hundred years might appear a trivial challenge compared with the variations that humans already cope with in different settings. Humans are unique in their ability to adapt to new environments, as shown by the spread of settlements across the globe (and even, for a short time at least, into space). But we should not be dazzled by human ingenuity: the challenge of climate change is a fundamental one. The natural systems that sustain human health are subject to thresholds and complexities that we understand very poorly. The limits to adaptation may be closer than we think. Altering the

world's climate could lead to surprising outcomes, with major effects of new and unexpected kinds. Examples are abrupt and severe 'flips' in climate as a result of reversals of ocean currents. Where we are reasonably confident we can foresee the general shape of the consequences of climate change at least in the relatively short term of the next 50 years, and that appropriate adaptation can occur, this does not mean it will. Many individuals and communities are likely to lack the resources required. Air conditioning is one way of coping with extremely hot conditions, but even in New Zealand there are many who cannot afford to heatproof their houses. And even if adaptation is affordable in the short term for some, it may not be sustainable as a global strategy. The environmental costs of air conditioning the whole population of continental Asia, for example, would be overwhelming. It would be shortsighted to imagine that adaptation provides a complete answer to the problem of climate change.

Nevertheless, adaptation must be part of the response: we are stuck with climate change to some extent, and mitigation cannot undo the effects of past carbon emissions. Moreover, there are many adaptation measures that are 'no regrets' or 'few regrets' strategies, as they bring other benefits that more than cover costs, whatever climate changes unfold. In this context, it would be sensible to gain a better understanding of the effects of current climate variability on health in this country, and also the factors that may limit adaptation. Climate change pressures provide further reason for developing and sustaining effective border control and other biosecurity measures, which are already seen to be on high priority to protect the country's future well being even in the absence of climate change.

*Simon Hales, Research Fellow,
Dept. Public Health
Wellington School of Medicine*

The full report prepared for MfE, available: www.climatechange.govt.nz/sp/resources/resource%20information/pdf/Climate%20Change-Health.pdf

Mangrove Mania

MANGROVES ARE ON THE MOVE – in many harbour and foreshore areas there has been a steady increase in density and extent of our iconic mangroves over the last couple of decades.

The most accretion would appear to occur in areas where human induced change is the most extensive: sedimentation from land-use changes associated with land-clearance for farming, the intensification of farming practices and urban development; and causeways built across estuary arms. This is not a new phenomenon.

However there has been a developing demand over the last twelve months by

community pressure groups for their local and regional authorities to “engineer” solutions. The result has been formation of a number of working groups within and between councils to address the issue.

A “Report on Mangroves – the need to manage mangroves” prepared for the Northland Regional Council questions the ecological value of mangroves and their role in estuarine/harbour ecosystems. There is major unsubstantiated questioning of the nursery role of mangroves for important fishery species.

The dialogue has primarily been between councils and those interests pressing for removal type solutions with little or no attempt to involve

environmental interests. This situation needs urgent attention if we are not to lose this issue by default.

In the Whangamata Harbour a “harbour-care” group has received consents to clear trial areas of accreting plants – in one case chain sawing a tree with 53 growth rings – an obvious newcomer.

The most disturbing aspect of these most recent cases of mangrove-bashing is the emphasis by some interest groups on dealing with effects rather than causes.

by Clive Monds

Action:

Contact your local Council to ascertain whether a mangrove working party is being established and request to be part of any working party as a representative of environmental interests.

Whangarei Harbour Marine Reserve

IN 1990, Kamo High School geography students, inspired by Dr. Bill Ballantine, world authority on marine reserves, decided to advance a proposal for a marine reserve in Whangarei Harbour.

The proposed marine reserve is made up of three different areas, all within Whangarei Harbour. The areas are at Waikaraka, Motumatakohe (Limestone Island) and Motukaroro Passage or Aubrey) Island. Each reserve makes a distinct and unique contribution to the overall ecology of the harbour’s marine environment.

The students of Kamo High recognise that marine reserves are an important tool for preserving biodiversity in the sea. It is hoped that the protection will improve the quality of the waters so that marine life is able to flourish and breed. Another goal sought by the marine reserve proposal is to increase public awareness and to create areas for both study and recreational enjoyment.

A reserve at Motumatakohe will complement the existing land reserve and go along way towards providing complete protection for an entire ecosystem. The proposed reserve will help to provide a secure breeding

ground for rare and endangered native birds, such as the New Zealand Dotterel and Caspian tern. Three quarters of the birds in the Whangarei Harbour are migratory wading species feeding over intertidal flats, yet none of these habitats are fully protected. The marine habitats associated with Motumatakohe will provide protection and breeding grounds for marine species such as leatherjackets, eagle ray, snapper, shrimp and mud crabs.

The proposed Waikaraka reserve includes tidal flats and salt marshes. Many organisms live and breed in the muddy clam waters around mangrove roots.

Areas of mangrove forest, mangals, are one of the most productive environments on earth. Mangals play a vital nursery role. The juveniles of many fish species use the mangrove roots for shelter. Fish like snapper, trevally, kahawai, kingfish and mackerel spend much of their early lives amongst mangroves. Birds also make use of them for protection and shelter. They are significant zones for many insects and spiders, which are all important parts of the food web.

Mangals also play an extremely important role in preventing erosion, flooding and pollution.

The marine life around Motukaroro

Island, the third area designated for the reserve, contains similar species to the Poor Knights Islands and in small areas actually rival it for abundance and diversity.

For more information, contact: Seventh Form Geography Class, Kamo High School, PO Box 4137, Kamo, Whangarei, or email: khs13geo@yahoo.com

Waiheke Island Marine Reserve Approved

In early March Conservation Minister Sandra Lee gave approval for the Te Matuku Marine Reserve on Waiheke Island. The Minister of Fisheries and the Minister of Transport have to give their concurrence until the proposal is approved.

This is the first marine reserve to make progress since 1999. The proposal was put forward by Forest and Bird.

Te Matuku Bay and the adjacent coastal waters form an outstanding coastal ecosystem. The proposal cover 700 hectares off the southern coast of Waiheke Island, and includes areas of saltmarsh and mangroves, large intertidal mudflats, superb shellbanks, and, in the deeper water, beds of horse mussels, large seaweeds and crayfish habitats.

Introducing ECO's Executive

TOWARDS THE END OF LAST YEAR, ECO was pleased to co-opt a new Executive committee member, Garrick Martin. Garrick, no doubt, will be known to many of you. We thought this ECOLink issue would provide a useful opportunity to introduce Garrick as well as put Nick Young on the spot too.

Garrick Martin

I am 28 years old, pakeha, born in Wanganui, and currently living in Christchurch. I have been a native forest activist for 10 years, involved locally with Native Forest Action in recent years. I am also a qualified medical herbalist, with a strong interest in community health and human relationship with the Earth (or 'nature'). I expect to be able to help ECO in particular with forest, biopiracy, and 'free trade' issues, and international networking.

I studied at the University of Canterbury in the early 1990's, but left to be a full-time environmental/social justice activist. In 1994 I moved to Australia where I worked on international and local forest campaigns with the Rainforest Information Centre, where I was influenced by the Earth-centred/'deep ecology' philosophy that we practiced.

Towards the end of 1996 I returned to Aotearoa-NZ, hoping to concentrate again on native forest issues here, and was able to help with the NFA campaign on the West Coast. However, from 1997-99 my primary focus became studies in herbal medicine in Christchurch. Throughout this time I was also the Aotearoa representative of the Native Forest Network (an international collective of temperate forest campaigners and NGO's) and as such I've continued working on international forest issues.

I have in recent years been involved with free-trade/globalisation issues, and in 2000 I organised an international conference which addressed trade liberalization and forest conservation. I am also working on the Gondwana project, which connects forest conservation throughout the southern Gondwana-relic countries of Argentina, Chile, Australia (and Tasmania) and Aotearoa.

I am also currently working on issues of 'biopiracy', especially patenting of flora and fauna and the theft of traditional knowledge. I see the human-'nature' relationship as being at the core of environmental politics, and biopiracy explicitly challenges and threatens those relationships. It is also an issue of responsibility for pakeha, as Treaty partner.

My contact details are: garrick.martin@paradise.net.nz, or PO Box 2771, ChCh Central and tel: 03 388 7377

Nick Young

Hi I'm Nick Young. This is my second year as a member of the ECO Executive, so my introduction is a bit overdue. But anyway, I'm about 32, I live in Auckland and I'm currently working for Greenpeace.

After a late start at university, where I spent 5 years studying psychology and organizational behaviour, I began working with Native Forest Action from Auckland in 1998. After about a year of postering, street stalls, submission writing and gathering, I moved to the West Coast to get amongst it. I was there for four months and had the most amazing experiences of my life.

I then moved to Nelson to take over the job of NFA national coordinator, which I did for about two and half years. During that time I also became involved with the Nelson Environment Centre and the beginnings of the Aotearoa Independent Media Centre (www.indymedia.org.nz).

Following the effective and triumphant end of the NFA campaign I remained in Nelson and began working as a freelance website designer. I have recently moved back to Auckland to take up a full-time position with Greenpeace as the website campaigner.

**ECO Annual
Conference on
28 - 30 June in
Wellington**

More info to
come...

**Stop
Press!**

- *Problem of Antarctic Tourism* article continued from page 9

This occurs against a background of an extremely thin legal regime, and none of the usual social constraints upon human activity that we expect elsewhere. So long as you can complete the formality of EIA (not the same as doing it properly), there is no way to stop you doing anything.

As Antarctic tourism has grown, it has diversified into endless forms of high end play. You can parachute onto the South Pole, do a marathon, jetski. You name it, so long as you can pay for it you can do it. Antarctica has become a theme park. As to whether this particular variant of globalisation is desirable in a continent nominally a natural reserve devoted to peace and science – nobody outside the NGO community cares to enquire.

ASOC¹ is calling on Antarctic Treaty states to impose constraints on the level and types of tourism and not just leave the industry to grow without end – and bequeath us the usual problems here too. In New Zealand, we are trying to persuade the Government, presently conducting a strategic review of Antarctic interests, that the environment and the political stability of the Antarctic Treaty system cannot afford growth without end.

by Alan Hemmings

¹ Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition comprises 200+ NGOs worldwide, including in NZ: ECO, Forest and Bird, Greenpeace and WWF

Parliamentary Watch

Bills Before Parliament:

Resource Management Amendment Bill

Reported back to Parliament from the Local Government and Environment Select Committee in April 2001. A debate on it has yet to take place. The Government introduced amendments which will undermine public involvement by removing the appeal on non-notification of resource consents and introducing a provision for limited notification.

Resource Management (Aquaculture Moratorium) Bill

Reported back at the beginning of March from the Primary Production Select Committee.

Introduction of part two of the legislation to better control aquaculture is still awaited. This Bill should amend the Fisheries Act 1983 as well as the Resource Management Act.

RMA (Costs) Bill

This Bill was not reported back with the Resource Management Amendment Bill and is still before the Local Government and Environment Select Committee.

New Zealand Nuclear Free Extension Bill

Proposes to extend the provisions of the Nuclear Free legislation to cover shipments of plutonium. The report back debate has yet to be held.

International Treaties Bill

The Foreign Affairs and Defence Select Committee has recommended that the Bill lie on the table until the current Parliamentary practices of reviewing treaties has had more time.

RMA (Marine Farming and Heritage Provisions) Bill

The original legislation was introduced prior to 1996 as part of the Resource Management Amendment Bill. This Bill is languishing at number 30 on the order paper.

Bills before Select Committees:

Forests Amendment Bill

The Local Government and Environment Select Committee is yet to progress this Bill despite submissions closing in 1999.

Hazardous Substances and New Organisms (Genetically Modified Organisms) Amendment Bill

The Finance and Expenditure Select Committee is due to report back to Parliament by 19 March.

Crown Minerals Amendment Bill 2001

This Bill is before the Commerce Select Committee and submissions closed at the end of February.

Private Members Bills:

Private Members Bills which have yet to be debated are:

Road Traffic Reduction Bill

This Bill is no.13 on the Private Members Bill order paper.

Anti-environment Bills: RMA (Controlled and Discretionary Activities) Bill

Debate on this Bill introduction has yet to be completed, it was no.8, but is now no.9, on the Private Members' Bills order paper.

Conservation (Fallen Timber

Sale to Fund Programmes) Amendment Bill

This was no.10, but is now no.11, on the Private Members Bills order paper.

International Treaties Review:

The Foreign Affairs and Defence Select Committee has reported back with no problems with ratification of two International Environmental Agreements.

Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants

The Government intends to ratify this convention by August. The Convention sets our measures to reduce of eliminate releases or emissions on POPs.

Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade

The Government intends to ratify this convention by August. The Convention allows for the management of international trade in certain hazardous substances in order to protect human health and the environment.

The Committee is also reviewing the Government decision to ratify the Kyoto Protocol to the Framework Convention on Climate Change. Submissions closed with the committee on 11 March. It is the Governments intention to introduce legislation to allow for the ratification of this important treaty in April or May.

Select Committee Membership

Local Government and Environment Committee

Jeanette Fitzsimons (Chair – Greens), Martin Gallagher (Deputy-Chair Labour), David Benson-Pope, Georgina Beyer, Ann Hartley, Joe Hawke (all Labour), Gerrard Eckhoff (ACT), Marie Hasler, Alec Neill and Eric Roy (all National).

Primary Production Committee

Damien O'Connor (chair – Labour), Gavan Herlihy (Deputy chair – National), Clayton Cosgrove, Martin

Gallagher, Mark Peck and Mita Ririnui (Labour), Ian Ewen-Street (Green), Shane Adern and Phil Heatley (National) and Doug Woolerton (NZ First).

Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee

Graham Kelly (Chair), Chris Carter (Deputy Chair), Harry Duynhoven, Ross Robertson (all Labour), Max Bradford, Wyatt Creech and Jenny Shipley (National), Keith Locke (Green), and Winston Peters (NZ First).

'Clayton's' Aquaculture Moratorium Bill Created

The Primary Production Select Committee has reported back a severely weakened Aquaculture Moratorium Bill.

The two year moratorium, which was announced by the Government on 28 November, was designed to allow a breathing space for councils to revise their coastal plans to better control marine farming.

The Select Committee has changed the "cut off" period meaning more than a third of current applications will not be affected by the moratorium. The amendment means that more than 14,500 ha of sea space or 110 applications will still have to be processed by regional councils. This is more than three times the area currently used for marine farming (4,725ha). Most of these applications are for farming mussels.

This will just add costs to regional councils and other parties and may result in more applications clogging up the Environment Court. The changes were supported by all parties including the Greens.

The Select Committee has given in to industry demand for change which can only undermine other interests and the environment. It has failed to give adequate consideration to impacts of marine farms on the marine environment, including marine mammals, other marine users and ecological sustainability.

ECO hopes that the Select Committee recommendations will be changed during the Committee stages of the Bill's debate. Unless there are changes the moratorium will exist

mainly in name only.

New research in the Marlborough Sounds has highlighted the impact of marine farms on dolphins. Offshore marine farms are not without impacts on a range of marine species including dolphins and whales.

Reform of the management of aquaculture still awaits the stage two amending legislation and it is unclear when this legislation will be introduced. The provisions of this Bill could include a requirement to tender resource consents within marine farming areas.

RMA Watch E-group

RMA Watch is a new email group set up to enable environment and community groups with an interest in the Resource Management Act to exchange news and views. The establishment of the E-group is part of ECO's RMA pilot project, which we hope will lead to increased sharing of skills and knowledge that can afford better protection of the environment. If your group has a special interest in RMA, then this initiative could prove particularly useful.

To subscribe to the group, email: rmawatch-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

To post messages, email: rmawatch@yahoogroups.com. If you want any more information about the group, contact: jessica.wilson@paradise.net.nz

Green Ribbon Award 2002

The Minister for the Environment, Hon. Marian Hobbs, is calling for nominations to be made to the Green Ribbon Award.

The categories for the award are:

Caring for the rural environment

Awarded for outstanding efforts to sustainably manage land or maintain healthy waterways and lakes, especially by those working in the agriculture, horticulture, and forestry sectors, and by community care groups.

Caring for the urban environment

Awarded for outstanding contributions to urban sustainability, particularly practical action to improve the environment in our towns and cities.

Caring for our biodiversity

Awarded for practical actions that will protect New Zealand's unique species and enhance our biodiversity,

particularly voluntary efforts by landowners, iwi and community groups to protect biodiversity on private land.

Raising awareness of environmental issues

Awarded for projects whose purpose is to improve understanding of New Zealand's environmental challenges and motivate people to become part of the solution.

Business caring for the environment

Awarded for outstanding efforts in reducing business impacts on the environment, such as reducing emissions, waste and energy use, implementing environmental management systems, environmental reporting, and encouraging other businesses to adopt good practices.

State of the environment reporting

Awarded for good practice by regional,

city, district and unitary councils in reporting on the state of our environment. This could be either through a formal 'state of the environment' report or in other ways such as the media, displays, or newsletters.

Kids who care - Youth Award

Awarded to school-age kids who show personal commitment to improving our environment. This could, for example, be through practical action at school or in the community, or through efforts they have made to increase the awareness of others, for example setting up an environment group at school.

Nominations close on 30 April. For more information on making a nomination, contact the Ministry for the Environment: phone (04) 917 7493, email publications@mfe.govt.nz or visit, www.mfe.govt.nz/management/awards.htm

