

THIS ISSUE

From the editor	1
From the executive	1
Exec profiles	2
Feature article	3
Annual conference	4
Ian Spellerberg Award	4
RMA reforms.....	5
Reply to Ross Cullen	8
Membership matters	9
Green Ribbon Awards	10
What's on and what's in the news?.....	10

NZ Chapter Newsletter

EIANZ

February 2009

FROM THE EDITOR

Erik van Eyndhoven

You'll find plenty of interesting and diverse material in this issue. Highlights include a synopsis of the proposed RMA reforms, Ian Spellerberg's prestigious award, Ross Cullen's regular article and a response to Ross's article from the previous issue of the newsletter. It's good to see healthy debate

coming out of the newsletter and we welcome any comments you might have on newsletter material.

The deadline for contributions to the next newsletter will be Friday the 15th of May – send your articles, news items or events to me at erik.vaneyndhoven@boffamiskell.co.nz.

FROM THE EXEC

Tom Burkitt (president@eianz.org.nz)

Although achieved last year and congratulations are overdue, I think it's important to recognise and congratulate Di Buchan and Sharon De Luca Abbott on achieving Certified Environmental Practitioner Status (CEnvP). The Executive and I recently made an important decision to appoint Simon Beale (NZ CEnvP Board Member) to the EIANZ NZ Chapter Executive team in a bid to pool resources to move the Institute and the CEnvP programme forward together at pace.

There has never been a more important time to seek professional and peer recognition for your work. I encourage you all to visit the CEnvP website (www.cenvp.org) and prepare, if eligible, for the next intake.

In the meantime, please know that the EIANZ Executive is committed to building capacity to support a professional development programme towards CEnvP status, and we are working hard to ensure that CEnvP is increasingly recognised in NZ. It is now a well established certification scheme with over 230 certified practitioners in Australia and New Zealand. EIANZ members are entitled to a significant discount on CEnvP application fees.



EXEC PROFILES

Tom Burkitt – NZ Chapter President

I have been in NZ now for 7 years having moved from the UK with my wife, Zoe. We both graduated in 1993 with degrees in Biological Science with a focus on zoology, and I went on to complete a Masters programme in Marine Environmental Protection. My career since then has been eclectic, and I have been fortunate to work in many interesting places. After a few years of marine conservation work in the red Sea and East Africa, I joined a company specialising in environmental restoration and wastewater treatment using engineered wetlands. I enjoyed the entrepreneurial nature of the team, but in 2002 it was time to move on and have an adventure overseas.



Neither Zoe or I had been to New Zealand previously so it felt like a big step, but it's been an easy transition. Upon moving here I joined MWH, a multidisciplinary engineering and environmental management company, and I now manage the Planning and Environmental Science team in the Christchurch office. This has been my role for the past 3 years, and I am proud of what is now a team of 18 has achieved in that period.

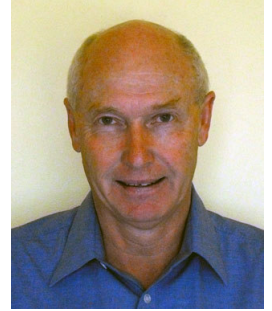
These days I get very little opportunity to focus on technical work, but when I do I am involved in implementation of information management systems for planning and environmental monitoring and occasional management consulting projects aimed at embedding sustainability principles in engineering design and infrastructure management.

As for an interesting fact about me, well, I was actually born in Kalgoorlie, Western Australia, and my British parents tell me that I was a pleasant surprise. Being a dual passport holder, I can move easily around Australasia and have worked now in several of the island nations.

My motivation for being involved in EIANZ is simple. I want to see our profession grow, prosper, and deliver sustainable outcomes for the NZ environment. It's an important Institute comprised of some excellent individuals with whom it has been a pleasure to work.

Cedric Croft - NZ Chapter Treasurer

I run a consulting business, Terrapacific Consulting Ltd, from my home in Christchurch. As a sole practitioner, I undertake a wide variety of mostly land and property based consulting, including undertaking professional valuations. I specialise in land investment consulting, the valuation of land and the Tenure Review process in the South Island high country, and I undertake rural valuations throughout the Canterbury Region, including lifestyle small holdings.



I am a fellow member of PINZ (Property Institute of NZ), a fellow of NZIV (NZ Institute of Valuers) and one of the founding members of the NZ Chapter of EIANZ. I served on the EIANZ Conference committee for the conference held in Christchurch in 2005.

I began operating as a sole practitioner consultant in 2003, after resigning from a position as senior lecturer of property studies at Lincoln University where I had worked on the academic staff for the previous 26 years. I served for four years on the national PINZ education committee from 2003.

In my mid fifties, I am married to Pauline and so far have three grandchildren. Pauline and I are slowly restoring and modernising a 1920s bungalow in the suburb of Somerfield in Christchurch.

I am part of the Coastguard movement of New Zealand, and to keep active I play golden oldies rugby for Suburbs Marauders and often push-bike in and around the city rather than take the car.

I run our two diesel cars on bio-diesel manufactured in my back shed from waste vegetable cooking oil, picked up from local restaurants.

I have made the commitment to serve the NZ Chapter EIANZ Executive as Treasurer because I have a strong interest in the global and local environment. I consider that our organisation has a very strong role to play providing professional services on the environment challenges that face us all in the future.



ARE WE FAILING ON WEEDS?

Ross Cullen

Humans have only lived in New Zealand since about 1280. Our impact on the land, species, and ecosystems during the intervening 730 years has been dramatic resulting in the loss of at least 53 vertebrate species including several species of moa, the Haast Eagle, Huia, and the South Island Kokako. Plenty more bird, reptile and invertebrate species are threatened by loss of habitat and by vertebrate pests including cats, rats, mustelids, and possums. Vertebrate pests are high profile villains in New Zealand, and attract large amounts of expenditure aimed at reducing their impacts on agriculture and threatened species.

Invasive plant species are not exactly forgotten but do not attract such attention, or opprobrium except amongst a minority, some of whom can become near fanatical about weeds. I may well be one of those people. I certainly note the spread of woody weeds such as gorse, broom, briar, and wilding conifers across grassy slopes and the ability of shade tolerant tree species to survive under the canopy of native forests. Observation out of the car window, and extrapolation of current trends in weed numbers and areas leads me to the pessimistic conclusion that we are indeed slowly wrecking the place.

Introduction of plant species has been going on quite a while in New Zealand. Maori introduced six crop species (kumara, taro, hue gourd, aute, yam and ti pore); early explorers planted potatoes and vegetable gardens (Rahman and Popay 2001). The expansion of agriculture following European colonisation in the nineteenth century brought plenty more new crops and seeds, including our first weeds. Weeds were introduced both as contaminants and as deliberately introduced species. Gorse and docks were amongst the first of those deliberately introduced species, and have been succeeded by 25,000 more species of which about 2,500 are now growing wild.

New Zealand has several systems in place to prevent entry, eradicate, contain, and provide surveillance of weeds. The success of those efforts is far less than some of us hope for and the numbers of naturalised weedy plants, and the areas they occupy, are in almost all cases still increasing.

Should we care? On agricultural land weeds impose costs for most landowners, either through reduced yields of crop, pasture or logs or through

increased weed control costs. Both effects reduce profitability and provide an incentive to landowners to prevent weeds becoming established and to remove them if they are established. Those incentives are clearly not strong enough to result in successful weed prevention, removal or control in many areas of privately owned land. In many cases no weed control effort is applied and weeds prosper untouched by herbicide or machinery. A similar situation seems to occur on much government (local and national) owned land.

There are reasons why financial incentives to control weeds do not call forth effective, or even any, weed prevention, removal or control. Weed control action is most likely to occur where the problem is clearly visible, control is readily achievable, control costs are low, and profit loss due to weediness large. If those circumstances do not occur landowners and managers may conclude weed control is not justifiable at present and weeds will bloom - often colourfully.

Decisions about weed control can have long-term consequences, and discount rates implicitly or explicitly enter calculations of whether it's worthwhile preventing, removing, or controlling weeds. Some basic calculations indicate that even for low productivity land, low cost weed removal annually that prevents weeds taking over land will generate a higher NPV than a 'let weeds go' stance, or a 'remove weeds in 25 years time' approach. Decisions by individual landowners can also affect neighbouring properties. My conclusion following those NPV calculations would be reinforced if I had included an external cost for my model property of spreading seeds to neighbouring properties. DoC staff comment that for wilding conifers the problem escalates 10 fold every 6 years if uncontrolled (and until some land limit is reached). Myopia due to high discount rates, lack of knowledge of the ecology of weeds, overconfidence in the likelihood of new controls being developed, and overlooking of external effects can all lead to faulty decision making about the merit of weed prevention, removal or control today. Landowners who decide not to suppress weeds annually and prevent them establishing, put at risk (perhaps permanently) use of the land for agriculture, forestry, recreation or conservation.

Are the current approaches to weeds by regional councils correctly targeted at those underlying



issues? Are more prescriptive policies justified to prevent the spread of weeds? Should we reintroduce subsidies for weed control? Will a fusillade of silver bullets – effective biological controls – deal to the problem? Comments welcomed.

References

Rahman, A and Popay, I (2001). Review of emerging weed problems in hill country pastures. <http://www.maf.govt.nz/mafnet/rural->

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Bourdot, GW, Fowler, SV, Edwards, GR, Kriticos, DJ, Kean, JM, Rahman, A, and Parsons, AJ (2007) Pastoral weeds in New Zealand: status and potential solutions. *New Zealand Journal of Agricultural Research*. 50: 139-161.

CONFERENCE 2010

Tired of missing out on attending the EIANZ conferences because they are too far away, too expensive to attend or not relevant to your particular environmental discipline? Well, this is your chance to change all that!

The New Zealand Chapter is going to host the EIANZ conference in late 2010 and your NZ Executive team is seeking your help. We would like to hear from you if you are interested in joining the 2010 Conference Committee. A professional conference organiser will undertake the administrative work, so the Committee will get the more enjoyable 'tasks' of selecting locations, topic

streams and key note speakers. We hope to have some of the team who organised the highly successful Christchurch conference on the Committee, because we want to repeat the success of 2005. Thanks to technology it doesn't matter where in NZ you are located or what your particular discipline is - the EIANZ is about diversity, so if you want to join the Committee or just find out more (in the first instance) then please email conference@eianz.org.nz or contact any member of the NZ Chapter Executive Team. Thank you!

TOP COMMUNICATOR AWARD FOR IAN SPELLERBERG

Lincoln University's Professor of Nature Conservation Ian Spellerberg has been awarded the country's top Science Communicator Award for 2008.

The award, made by the New Zealand Association of Scientists, is presented to practising scientists for excellence in communicating to the general public in any area of science or technology. The association is an independent body of scientists working to promote science in New Zealand, increase public awareness of science and encourage excellence in science. The award was made at the association's annual general meeting in Wellington on 1 December.

Professor Spellerberg's citation refers to his science communication efforts spanning "decades of research" undertaken in New Zealand and Britain.

"His numerous academic publications and books, newspaper columns and articles, public lectures, and community and education initiatives cement his place as one of the country's most respected scientists and science communicators," says the citation.

Professor Spellerberg has been a staff member at Lincoln University since 1994 and is a member of the Environmental Management Group within the Environment, Society and Design Division. He is also Director of the Isaac Centre for Nature Conservation.

Among his many books *An Introduction to Applied Biogeography*, published by Cambridge University Press in 1999 and co-authored with John Sawyer, is a standard text in New Zealand and UK universities and has been translated into Korean for recommended reading at some Korean universities.



His 1991 book *Monitoring Ecological Change* was translated into Czech. Recent books include *Going Native: making sense of New Zealand plants*, co-authored with the late Dr David Given and *Living With Natives*, co-edited with Michele Frey.

Professor Spellerberg founded the annual presentation of a Lincoln University State of the Nation's Environment Address, an event now in its 10th year.

The Director of Lincoln University's Environment Society and Design Division, Dr Stefanie Rixecker,

says the communicator award "rightly recognises" Professor Spellerberg's lifetime record of outstanding and sustained service to the science of nature conservation and environmental science.

"His efforts have enriched students, staff and the public for many years," she says.

Ian is the Vice President of the EIANZ and an active member of the NZ Chapter Executive Committee. Congratulations Ian on a well deserved award.

DEVELOPER FRIENDLY GOVERNMENT REFORMS KEY ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION IN NEW ZEALAND

Rachel Devine and Shaun McAuley (Partner and Senior Solicitor), Minter Ellison Rudd Watts

New Zealand's new Government is making good on its election promise to reform the country's primary development and environment protection statute - the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) - by simplifying and speeding up the resource consent (development approval) procedure.

Some developers have long been dissatisfied with the RMA because of the relatively easy ability for submitters to make submissions in opposition to their development projects. To address these concerns, and to better accommodate infrastructure works, the Government intends to undertake a two stage reform of the RMA. Phase one of the reforms will be contained in the *Resource Management (Simplify and Streamline) Amendment Bill 2009* (Bill) which was introduced into Parliament later in February with the goal of becoming law by September.

Phase two of the reforms will be undertaken separately, and is expected to be completed by 1 July 2010. These additional reforms will establish an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and address aquaculture issues, improve fresh water allocation and management, encourage urban design, and consider the relationship of infrastructure and public works legislation.

We outline the thrust of the phase one reforms below.

Improving resource consenting processes

The biggest winners from the reform package are developers, particularly in relation to applications of nationally significant developments. To reduce the

time involved in taking projects through the resource consent process, various streamlining changes to the RMA are suggested.

Notification

No amendment to the RMA is complete without addressing the existing presumption in favour of the public notification of resource consent applications. The Government says that the Bill will reverse this presumption which, in our view, will align the RMA with current practice. The Government has also cryptically said that it will amend the criteria for when public notification is required on projects with more than minor adverse effects on the "wider environment". Given the existing "limited notification" process where those directly affected nearby are notified, and proposals with effects wider than that are "fully" publicly notified, it is not clear, at this stage, how these proposals will substantially alter current practices.

Those developers with large projects that are publicly notified will have more choices than ever before.

Board of Inquiry hearings (call in)

Board of Inquiry hearings will remain available for nationally significant projects. Eligibility will be determined by the existing "national significance" criteria and a new criterion: the operational needs of a nationwide network utility operator. The latter criterion covers projects that might not be considered nationally important, but will contribute to a "nationally significant network". We expect debate over the meaning of these terms and suggest they may favour incumbents. Those



maintaining or extending roads, rail lines, pipelines and electricity transmission will celebrate this change.

Applicants may apply to the new EPA for such a hearing. The Board, to be headed by a current, former or retired Environment Court Judge, will be required to make a “final” decision within 9 months of the date of notification (or at a later date as nominated by the Minister for the Environment).

Environment Court hearings (direct referral)

The Bill will allow applicants to request that applications for resource consent and notices of requirement be directly referred to the Environment Court, subject to agreement by the council. This will save time and expense for everyone by removing the need for a council hearing when a matter is likely to be appealed to the Environment Court anyway. The Government has indicated this path will be available for large projects which do not meet the “nationally significant” criteria for a Board of Inquiry. There is no indication at this stage whether a council’s decision not to agree to this approach can be challenged. In any event the Environment Court will be bracing itself for an increase in hearings.

Council hearings

Applicants and submitters will have the right to choose to have an application determined by elected representatives or independent commissioners. Many local authorities currently use independent commissioners, but this amendment will ensure that there is no room for debate. Costs will be borne by the applicant.

Processing applications

Councils will have a more limited ability to suspend the statutory timeframe for processing an application for consent when it is awaiting further information from the applicant. The immediate effect of this is that councils will likely become more discerning about rejecting what they consider to be “incomplete” applications, and the onus will be on developers to ensure that they make full applications right from the outset of the process.

If a council accepts the application for consent, but does not process it within a 12 month period due to its own default, the expectation will be that it will discount the processing fees payable by the developer in accordance with its discount policy and complaints policy (which councils will be required to promulgate).

Changing the way rules are made

People often forget that the rules upon which a proposal is judged are created long before the proposal is ever considered. Rules in Regional Plans and District Plans are usually the first scrap in a long war between parties with foresight. The Bill will change how councils adopt new, and change existing, plans.

Limited appeal rights

Under the Bill there will be fewer rights to appeal against a council decision about plans put forward to the Environment Court. Only appeals on questions of law will be allowed. This means that for many stakeholders it will be “do or die” at the council hearing. This is likely to result in a greater need for early and effective legal advice, which, in turn, will mean that council hearings will become increasingly procedural and legalistic. This may also end the informal approach that is meant to encourage public participation.

Limited impact of proposed plans

The Bill will ensure that proposed rules in plans¹ will have no legal effect until council notifies its decision on the plan. This sensible change will be widely applauded. However, it is unclear what proportion of weight will be attributed to those rules once they given legal effect compared to rules in the transitional plan.

The ability to challenge an entire plan change will also be restricted, although the scope of this proposal is unclear. Those who can recall particularly unworkable plan changes initiated by councils and private individuals that were later withdrawn with good reason will be concerned by this restriction. This approach could encourage numerous focused changes (e.g. for favourable ‘spot’ zoning) so the Bill will need to be considered carefully to ensure an effective balance is maintained between encouraging amendments and facilitating coordinated, integrated planning.

Reducing the threshold needed to grant consent

The removal of the “non-complying” activity status from plans means that (full) discretionary activities will become the most restrictive activities for which applicants may seek resource consent. This also means that the so-called “gateway test” for non-complying activities will no longer apply, which perhaps calls into question the usefulness of many

¹ Except proposed rules relating to natural resources, historic heritage or aquaculture management areas or where a council obtains a ruling from the Environment Court that they may have legal effect.



of a plan's objectives and policies during the decision making process.

As a result there will effectively be two types of discretionary activities – those anticipated by a plan and those not. This may mean that developers may end up seeking consent on a discretionary basis for activities for which council is unlikely to grant resource consent. It is also possible that some councils will contemplate a greater use of “prohibited activities” in their plans: identifying those activities for which consent may never be sought.

Removing an opportunity to submit

Many procedural changes are suggested. Councils will not have to review their plans every ten years. The Government suggests that plans will be amended when people consider it necessary: private companies might have to more actively encourage less enthusiastic councils to change plan provisions or propose their own. The administrative burden on councils will be reduced by the removal of the mandatory requirement to summarise submissions on plans and to request further submissions. The removal of a right to comment in a further submission will be less favourably viewed by submitters.

Limiting Access to Justice?

Those who spend the most money pushing projects through RMA hurdles will widely applaud the proposed reforms to the RMA. However, there will be many who will focus on changes to the public's rights to participate in resource management processes: where rights seem to be reduced or processes made too expensive for individuals or community groups to participate.

Fees and Security for Costs

The National Party is concerned that RMA processes have been used by parties to protect private interests, or to achieve delay or cancellation of projects, rather than raising genuine environmental issues. To address these concerns, the Government proposes to increase the Environment Court's filing fee for appeals from \$55 to \$500, and to restore the Environment Court's traditional ability to award security for costs against appellants. The latter measure alone may discourage many appeals being taken in the first place.

Punitive damages for competitors

Trade competitors have been warned. The Bill will prevent trade competitors from participating, encouraging or financing action against their trade competitors if they are acting for trade competition motives. It will be interesting to see how loosely the concept of “motive” is addressed in the Bill. If the Environment Court finds sufficient motive combined with Court proceedings then it may require the person adversely affected to be compensated for all costs associated with the appeal. This new trade competitor focus will undoubtedly be used as a sword to discourage submitters from pursuing under pain of future damages.

Compliance

Even though the proposed reform favours the development community, the Government is certainly not going easy on “environmental crime”. The maximum penalties payable on convictions are being increased to \$300,000 for individuals and \$600,000 for companies, and offenders will risk having their resource consents reviewed on conviction. Although maximum fines are rarely imposed, councils will be pleased because the increase in potential fines increases the possible revenue available to councils when they undertake enforcement action. This, together with a new proposed ability to take enforcement action (including prosecutions) against the Crown, could result in a boom in council enforcement action being taken to address historical environmental contraventions.

Conclusion

Even though the Government has not yet released the draft Bill to the public, it has clearly signalled the nature and extent of the reforms that it intends to make. The reforms will reduce the extent of public participation in the planning and resource consenting procedures under the RMA. However, in New Zealand's current economic condition, such a reduction is welcomed by developers and investors who hope the reforms will result in an easier ability to undertake developments and to speed up the provision of new infrastructure. This, the Government hopes, will help stimulate the economy and reduce the negative effects of the recession.

The public will have the opportunity to make submissions to the Select Committee.

For more information, please contact Rachel Devine or Shaun McAuley on +64 9 353 9700.



ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT BASED ON RESEARCH, NOT MORALITY

A response to Ross Cullen's commentary "RESOURCE ENDOWMENTS, INCENTIVES AND FOOTPRINTS"

Mathis Wackernagel - Global Footprint Network

The Ecological Footprint is not separating the world into villains and angels. It is merely a response to one particular question: How much of the regenerative capacity of the biosphere is occupied by human activities? It depicts ecological realities: Who has how much biocapacity, and who uses how much for their own consumption?

Unfortunately, Ross Cullen's recent commentary published in this newsletter was full of misconceptions. Among other things, it insinuated that the premise of the Ecological Footprint is anti-trade. This is far from the truth. The Footprint is merely a description of human demand on nature.

Of course, Footprint results can never be completely accurate; nor can any model be in answering a research question. Still, it is important to remember that the accuracy of our answers are based not on opinion, but solely on research. This is why our organization, Global Footprint Network, encourages nations to work with us on reviewing our assessments. We want to make sure the answers are as accurate as they can be.

Our collaboration with the government of Switzerland is a good example. Switzerland was the first country wanting to test the validity of the results and commissioned one of its policy think-tanks to work with us. The Ecological Footprint report coming out of this collaboration was published by the Swiss Statistical Offices in 2006 (<http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/en/index/theme/n/21/03/blank/blank/01.html>). The report exists in English, French, German and Italian. In addition, they produced a more technical background report available in English only (available from the same website). Now Switzerland's statistical office features the Footprint among its sustainability indicators (<http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/en/index/theme/n/21/22/publ.Document.114912.pdf>).

You may also want to consult DG Environment's 350-page report on the Footprint tool released in June 2008 and entitled: "Potential of the Ecological Footprint for monitoring environmental impact from natural resource use" available at <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/natres/studies.htm>. Others in the process of reviewing the accounts are

Belgium and the United Arab Emirates. (Al Basama Al Beeiya Initiative <http://www.agedi.ae/ecofootprintuae/default.aspx>).

As Robert Cullen, some critics argue that the Footprint numbers are "hypothetical" because they are expressed in global hectares. However, global hectares are a standardized measurement to represent equal biocapacity. This is no different than a financial study of the New Zealand Economy being expressed in a standardized monetary unit like US dollars rather than local NZ dollars. It just makes results comparable, while still representing local realities. Also, the Footprint is designed to be static. It is a snapshot of a given time, not a dynamic extrapolation of what could be. It simply describes how much nature was "earned" and spent by humanity, and what the balance was.

In the *Living Planet Report* as well as in all our literature, we do not suggest that cities or countries need to live within their own boundaries. Nevertheless, it is becoming evident that more and more countries use, in net terms, more ecological services than are available within their borders. When I was born in 1962, about 60 percent of the world population lived in countries with more ecological capacity than they used for their own consumption. In 2005, only 20 percent of the world population lived in such "creditor" countries.

In a world that is moving into more and more ecological debt, or "overshoot", does it matter whether you are an ecological creditor, or not? Might there be a possibility that countries with ecological reserves will have a competitiveness advantage? Could it be that cities with resource-demanding infrastructure (such as Houston, Texas) will be at a disadvantage over less resource-hungry but livable cities such as Siena in Italy, which have a per-capita Footprint three to four times lower than that of Houston? These are all questions that bear asking.

That Ross Cullen quotes Nathan Fiala's recent article as evidence of methodological flaws is unfortunate, since that article, as pointed out by our letter to the editor (Kitzes et al, 2008, in press), is based on unsound arguments. If you want to know more about Footprint accounting works, please visit



our newest Footprint atlas at www.footprintnetwork.org/atlas.

A more constructive approach would be to tackle these issues in two steps: 1) Let's review in a transparent effort -- and if possible with the sponsorship of the NZ government -- to what extent the numbers Global Footprint Network produced with UN data sets accurately represent the regenerative capacity available to and used by NZ residents; also let's test to what extent the global assessment is within reasonable accuracy, and 2) let's explore what these trends might mean for the

competitiveness of New Zealand for the decades to come. In the end, it is what we do together, not apart, that will bring us all closer to creating a sustainable future.

Mathis Wackernagel, PhD, is the executive director for Global Footprint Network. For more information, go to www.footprintnetwork.org.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

A couple of requests from the Membership Manager:

Does anyone know a Tim Hewitt? An application payment from him was deposited to the Chapter's bank account in December but we never received the application for membership. If you know Tim Hewitt's contact details please pass them onto Eric

Scott (mescott@clear.net.nz) or ask Tim to contact Eric directly.

A number of members whose subscription was due on 30 June 2008 still have not paid their subscriptions for the 2008-09 year. If these remain unpaid at the end of February the Council will have to remove their names to the "Inactive" list.



TIME TO NOMINATE ENVIRONMENTAL CHAMPIONS

Environment Minister Nick Smith has announced the start of a search for New Zealand's latest batch of environmental champions, calling for nominations for the 2009 Green Ribbon Awards.

"For nearly 20 years these awards have acknowledged and thanked New Zealanders who put their commitment to caring for our environment into action.

"Nominations are open to all individuals, businesses and community organisations. The 2009 nomination categories reflect the many different areas in which New Zealanders contribute

to reducing the impacts we have on our environment."

"This includes a new category which has been added to the awards in recognition of New Zealand's successful hosting of World Environment Day in 2008. The award will honour an event or project which prompted action for the environment within the community on World Environment Day."

More details [here](#).

WHATS ON AND WHAT'S IN THE NEWS?

Australian branches

The NSW Division is holding a 'green tie' ball to coincide with Earth Hour on 28th March 2009. The event will be held at Taronga Zoo – more details [here](#).

Conferences and training

New Zealand Centre for Environmental Law - "Property Rights and Sustainability: The evolution of property rights to meet ecological challenges"

When: 16-18 April 2009, Where: The University of Auckland, New Zealand

This conference aims to stimulate debate about the evolution and re-conceptualisation of property rights to meet the objectives of sustainability. The conference will create an opportunity to move discussion beyond traditional property rights approaches to conflict resolution and regulatory intervention. The intention is to discuss how property rights and responsibilities can be reconfigured so that ecological problems can be addressed in a more coherent and sustainable way. More details [here](#).

6th Annual Water Sensitive Urban Design Conference – Perth, Australia: 5-8 May 2009

<http://www.keynotewa.com/wsud09/>

A reminder about the Social Assessment Training Course in Christchurch held by Taylor Baines and Associates. Registrations close on the 28th of February – more details [here](#).



Biodiversity Offsetting Workshop – 2 April 2009 – University of Canterbury.

EIANZ is a key supporter of this “just-announced” workshop to discuss ecological, planning and legal aspects of using Biodiversity Offsetting in New Zealand. The aim is to hear about strategic and site specific issues and to consider the options for developing biodiversity offsetting here.

Confirmed speakers include Kerry ten Kate from the UK. Kerry is a Director of the global “Business and Biodiversity Offsetting Programme”. Local speakers include Dr Bill Lee (Landcare Research), Dr David Norton (University of Canterbury), Mark Pizey (Solid Energy) and representatives from the Department of Conservation, Anderson Lloyd Caudwell, and Meridian Energy.

Further details will be sent to members over the next week or two.

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