

# NZ Chapter Newsletter

An Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand Publication



## EIANZ Conference Christchurch, New Zealand

### Working on the Frontier: Environmental Sustainability in Practice

29 March – 1 April 2005  
Hotel Grand Chancellor

**Make sure you put the  
2005 Conference dates in your diary!**

The executive committee finalised preliminary matters associated with the 2005 conference in Christchurch at its meeting held on 28 May 2004. Over the next couple of months you will receive more information about the conference and a call for papers. We are hoping that all NZ members will come to the conference to network and provide ideas about building the NZ Chapter.

## Membership Renewals

You should have received a notice that your membership renewal is due. The fee in NZ dollars is \$190 for full member, and \$ 85 for student (with journal) or \$40 (without journal). For ease of processing, please send your payment to our New Zealand office:

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## Annual General Meeting

EIANZ NZ Chapter AGM will be held on  
Wednesday, August 4  
at 5:30pm  
in Christchurch  
at Environment Canterbury,  
58 Kilmore Street in the Waitaki Room  
You will be receiving more information in an upcoming notice.

## Opportunities

### Executive Committee Secretary

The New Zealand Executive needs a secretary. The role of the secretary is to organise the agenda and minutes for the monthly meetings of the Executive. You can be located anywhere in New Zealand for this role. If you are well organised, energetic and keen to contribute to the development of our professional body please contact Ljubica at 09 815 4321 ext 7157 or email [lstojnic@unitec.ac.nz](mailto:lstojnic@unitec.ac.nz).

### Events Organiser in Auckland

The Auckland group needs someone to liaise with potential speakers, organise seminar dates and distribute email invitations. This is an ideal opportunity for a student to network with leading environmental professionals. If you are interested please contact Ljubica at 09 815 4321 ext 7157 or email [lstojnic@unitec.ac.nz](mailto:lstojnic@unitec.ac.nz).

Both of these positions are voluntary.

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## Activities Across the Country

### Wellington

Regular monthly meetings have been taking place during 2004 on every second Wednesday of the month since February.

Nick Potter from the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment's office spoke at the March meeting on the PCE's See Change report released in January. This 'think-piece' is designed to raise the level of debate about education for sustainability, and to stimulate action for and encourage sustainable ways of living as a society. Nick's audience included quite a number of those who are involved in education - mainly tertiary education. Encouragingly the audience included a number of accountants which reflects a growing awareness in that discipline of sustainability in business, reflected by growing interest in triple bottom line reporting and establishment of sustainability special interest groups (e.g. within ICANZ).

Deborah Hume and Victor Lenting from URS spoke at the April meeting. They provided an overview of the risk assessment and how it is applied to marine oil spills. The major issues discussed centred on how likely (how big, how often, where, etc) and how to assess the consequences should an oil spill occur.

Mike O'Connell from BRANZ spoke at the May meeting on the wider issue of buildings and climate change, and what steps need to be taken to 'de-carbonise' our buildings in order to meet national and international obligations. Questions focused on the degree of decarbonisation e.g. if 80-90% carbon reductions are technically possible, why aren't the policy makers and government taking more stringent action? Much discussion centred on the NOW Home, a first 'cut' at producing mainstream sustainable housing for the New Zealand market.

### Upcoming meetings

Karen Cronin will make a presentation about her GM research at Victoria University. Other planned topics include an update on the imminent Urban Design Protocol and release from the PCE on Primary Production and Sustainability. Details will be finalised and distributed following the June meeting.

### Auckland

Nick Potter from the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment's office spoke at the April meeting on the PCE's See Change report released in January.

### Upcoming meetings

In August Bruce Taylor from the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment's office will be presenting the latest report from the PCE on the role of science in environmental management.

Also in August URS will be presenting a case study on sustainable engineering design. This seminar is jointly organised with the Unitec Forum for Educating for Sustainability.

### Christchurch

Meetings are now taking place on the first Wednesday of each month at Environment Canterbury. Some of the topics so far have been:

MAY - Project Aqua and the RMA: Wrestling with the Hydra *Alan Seay - Communications and External Relations Principal, Meridian Energy*

JUNE - Delivering Christchurch City Council's Sustainability Vision under the new Management Structure *Dr Lesley McTurk - CEO Christchurch City Council*

JULY - Seminar on Resource Consent Notification, Non-notification and Adversely Affected Persons *EIANZ Seminar - various speakers*

### Upcoming meetings

AUGUST 4

Tourism and Climate Change: More emissions than agriculture! Do we need to do anything about it?

*Associate Professor David Simmons*

Followed by EIANZ AGM at 5.30pm

SEPTEMBER 1

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

Overseas Applications and New Zealand Opportunities

*Martin Ward - Environmental Advisor*

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## Contributions from the Members

### 'National and International Threats to Sustainability'

Mike O'Connell

One of the major environmental events, and challenge to achieving sustainability, impacting upon virtually every country (including New Zealand), is climate change. As readers will be aware, there have been a number of national policies created to combat climate change – e.g. the National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy.

Internationally, with regard to the Kyoto Protocol, it is up to Russia or the United States to tip the balance, breach the magic 55% threshold and formally bring the protocol into being. Russia is regarded as the key player given the US administration's withdrawal from the protocol in 2001 and refusal to rejoin the process.

The 2004 US Presidential election is arguably a key world event in terms of whether the Kyoto Protocol survives or not. If the Democrat candidate John Kerry is elected, he has indicated that he favours the US rejoining the Protocol. It will be interesting to see in the coming months how productively Bush and Kerry use the information contained in the recent Pentagon report which said '*would challenge the United States national security in ways that should be considered immediately*'. Will this be the issue that tips the voters minds? And help get rid of the US President with arguably the worst track record on environmental management?

Interestingly, and bizarre as it may seem, if Bush goes the White House may soon be guided by the principles of sustainability. John Kerry's wife Teresa Heinz Kerry appears to have a sustainability 'mindset' if this recent article is anything to go by (<http://www.culturechange.org/e-letter-54.html>). In addition, Heinz Kerry's son Andre works at the home of The Natural Step - in Sweden where it was founded by Dr Karl-Henrik Robèrt in 1989. The Russian administration, fully aware of its importance to the Protocol, may too at any time join and make the Kyoto process less dependent on the US election. The key issue here appears to be one of the European Union striking an acceptable deal over the value of Russia's credit surplus. But here again, while Putin has the numbers in the Duma to achieve Russia's ratification, economic advisers are saying Russia will be facing catastrophe if they sign up.

On a related note, in 2005, the New Zealand general election takes place. There are implications here also for 'derailing' of moves towards sustainability and undermining of climate change policy especially if the Labour government is not re-elected and/or the Green Party is not included as a partner in any resultant coalition. The recent Green Party conference encouragingly in-

dicated the Greens were seeking to repair broken bridges (e.g. fallout over GMO release) between themselves and Labour.

Recent comments made by opposition Members of Parliament, largely borne out of ignorance of convincing scientific evidence, have not been heartening in this regard – e.g. the Kyoto Protocol is damaging to business. Let's hope the climate policy package and sustainability initiatives (such as the Sustainable Development Programme of Action released in Jan 03) which exist now are robust enough to withstand tampering by a new administration. One also hopes that in the interim, opposition environmental spokespersons can somehow be persuaded, or are sensible enough to recognise, that these policies are not inherently anti-business but offer environmentally, and socially, acceptable alternatives to 'business-as-usual'.

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## EIANZ NZ Chapter and other Professional Bodies

### Environmental Risk Management Workshop

The NZ Chapter and the NZ Risk Management Society are jointly organising a workshop at the next Risk Management Society conference in Wellington being held at Te Papa from November 4 – 6. The workshop on environmental risk management will be held in the afternoon of November 5. Look for more information in the next newsletter.

### Lifefterwaste

This is an initiative initiated by the Waste Management Institute of New Zealand (WasteMINZ) to promote and facilitate resource efficiency. It aims to bring together industry, government and community sectors under one umbrella to steer towards a sustainable New Zealand. It is a unique opportunity for each sector and its representatives to openly embrace the principles of resource efficiency and sustainability through leadership and collaboration.

Lifefterwaste is identified in the NZ Waste Strategy as the key action for delivering public information and education on waste minimisation and management.

EIANZ will be represented on the steering group along with representatives from the Consumers' Institute, NZ Water and Waste Association, Ministry for the Environment, Ministry of Economic Development, Packaging NZ Inc., Recycling Operators NZ, WasteMINZ and Zero Waste NZ Trust.

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## Welcome back Jeff!!

Jeff McNeill has just returned from a three month Internship at the European Parliament (EP), Brussels. He is now recovering from POETS (Post-Overseas Experience Trauma Syndrome) with symptoms of a strong desire to be 12,000km away and an unreal Visa bill, but found the time to report back about the experience. Jeff is the third New Zealander to take up University of Canterbury's New Zealand Centre for Research on Europe (NCRE) sponsored internship.

*"It was an exciting time, with expansion of the EU (10 new countries, taking it up to 420 million people, and the second largest GDP in the world) and European Parliamentary elections looming. The first half I was located in a German MEP's office giving a very good introduction to the political workings. The second half was spent in the Environment Secretariat, giving a good background to the administrative workings. I even had my own dossier to work on*

*Many see the EP as an expensive talk-shop - grandiose buildings, junkets to Strasbourg, and straight bananas etc. And they are right. At the same time, Kiwis (or at least me) perhaps do not fully recognise the institution's historicity. Thus the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) was not primarily about efficient agriculture, but cultural maintenance, a strategic weapon to support European peace, and to avoid more Hungerjahren. No one (but the French possibly) wants to go to Strasbourg every month, but if this is the price to pay to establish the European Union then it is cheap. As many MEPs clearly allude to, no matter how inefficient and expensive, the EU is a much better way for Europeans to resolve their differences than their traditional way.*

*Some people questioned me at why I was going to the EP and not the Commission "where all the decisions are really made". I think that reflects lack of appreciation of how much things have changed in quite a short time, and all indications are that the EP's significance will continue to grow. I see the EU as an experiment in the making, undertaken without a clean lab-bench. The EP is a part of that, an attempt to redress the democratic deficit that increases its effectiveness and power with time. Its power*

*of codecision means the EP now has to be taken seriously.*

New Zealand also has to take the EP seriously; it's decisions on environmental matters do count, for example its Kyoto Linking Directive amendments which effectively cuts out use of carbon sinks, upon which we rely. Proposed Chemicals (REACH), and GM Directives also loom".



Jeff preparing an Impact Assessment on Bernkastel Rieslings in Mosel – hard work!!

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE EIANZ NZ CHAPTER

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