

# Sustainability Matters

Compiled and published by Ray Skinner, FCA

Business achieving a tomorrow for tomorrow's children

17<sup>th</sup> Nov 2022



Designed by  
[www.vecteezy.com](http://www.vecteezy.com)

## Accounting and Nature: Unpacking How Chartered Accountants Support Businesses to Protect and Restore Nature

"Every business in Australia and New Zealand interacts with nature, it is relied on for operations, employing those in the community, and ultimately deriving a profit. As recent years have seen, the environment continues to degrade at a rapid rate. Our connection with nature continues to wither and jeopardises the future generations' ability to inherit it.

"Join us as we dive into the role Chartered Accountants have in supporting the protection and restoration of nature. Through actively supporting investment and expenditure flows, to providing your key decision-makers with relevant services and meaningful advice, there are many ways that a Chartered Accountant can make change happen.

"Following this session, you will be able to:

- Understand how organisations and their client's impact and rely upon nature
- Understand how to integrate nature as an opportunity into policy, strategy, investment, and risk management decision-making
- Illustrate how advice and services provided by Chartered Accountants can contribute to an organisation's positive effect on nature
- Provide examples of how the efforts of an organisation, through innovation and scaling-up of products and technologies, can be done with a lower impact on nature.

**When/Where:** 1<sup>st</sup> December, NZST 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm, other times throughout Australia

**More:** <https://store.charteredaccountantsanz.com/product/33618>. NOTE: Restricted to CA ANZ members.

**Source:** CA ANZ, 10<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

## Environmental Decisions: Do we Know if We're Making a Difference?

"The Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment, Simon Upton, is calling for improved public accountability to get better outcomes for the environment.

"The Government spends over \$2 billion each year on the environment.

"We need to know how our actions are affecting the environment, and whether the actions we are taking to improve the environment are working' the Commissioner says in a report released today [18<sup>th</sup> October 2022].

"The report, Environmental reporting, research and investment: *Do we know if we're making a difference?*, completes a cycle of work .... undertaken over five years.

"The report found parliamentarians and the public cannot easily get the information they need to hold the Government to account for its environmental expenditure.

"Decision making needs to be better informed by evidence. And those decisions – and their consequences – need to be capable of scrutiny. ....

**More:** [www.pce.parliament.nz/our-work/news-insights/environmental-reporting-research-and-investment-media-release](http://www.pce.parliament.nz/our-work/news-insights/environmental-reporting-research-and-investment-media-release) 106pages, 2.7Mb

**Source:** Editor, 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2022.

## A TVNZ1 Climate Special

"A TVNZ1 Climate Special, in partnership with EECA and hosted by Miriama Kamo, aims to inform, inspire and mobilise New Zealanders who want to take a step towards a green, low-carbon future.

**When/Where:** TVNZ1, 7:30pm Wed, 16<sup>th</sup> Nov. and TVNZ+

**More:** <https://genless.govt.nz/1-climate-special> plus [www.1news.co.nz/2022/11/08/how-your-small-lifestyle-decisions-can-impact-climate-change/](http://www.1news.co.nz/2022/11/08/how-your-small-lifestyle-decisions-can-impact-climate-change/) and [www.1news.co.nz/tags/climate-change/](http://www.1news.co.nz/tags/climate-change/)

**Source:** Gen Less, 9<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

## Opportunities in Plain Sight

Outlines activities in a local neighbourhood seen every day but not register as meriting local activism and how within a matter of days a 'sure thing' for a consent extension sought by a large international conglomerate was turned upside down by a small group of locals who decided to get involved.

The newsletter also cavasses other topics on the world stage. See especially the graph showing doubling of global emission during the 27 years of COP discussions.

**More:** <https://mailchi.mp/31a2d8d67849/were-helping-lead-the-covid-response-in-colorado-and-around-the-globe-20187417>

**Source:** Hunter Lovins, 7<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

## Ancient Cultures May Hold the Key to Keeping Buildings Cool in Changing Climate

"While the summers may be getting hotter, there have always been people living in the deserts and the tropics, and some of their architectural designs from eras past could hold the key to keeping cool in today's changing climate.

"Emissions from buildings are the largest sources of anthropogenic CO<sub>2</sub> in society, and a large chunk of that comes from air conditioning. Prior to electricity however, India under the Mughal Empire, or the Ancient Persians had ways of keeping cool which combined simple physics with beautiful architectural design.

"Today, these cultures are providing inspirations to building managers and architects who want to design buildings that stay cool without as much reliance on air conditioning.

"One such method is the wind catcher ... which make use of the desert winds, and the basic differences between the properties of hot and cold air, to cool building interiors. ....

"The traditional lattice-work marble screens, or jaali, on the windows of the Taj Mahal and other ornate Indian buildings are gorgeous to behold, and cool to stand behind. The intricately-carved lattice actually prevents around 70% of thermal energy of the sun from entering the palace rooms.

"The Venturi effect shows as air moves from a large space into and through a narrow space, it must not only cool, but also speed up. The holes in the jaali not only let in air, but actively cool and push it into the interior. ...

"At night, air passing through the cooled holes deposits small amounts of moisture which is later expressed into the interior during the following day.

**More:** [www.goodnewsnetwork.org/our-ancestors-may-hold-the-key-to-keeping-buildings-cool-in-a-changing-climate/](http://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/our-ancestors-may-hold-the-key-to-keeping-buildings-cool-in-a-changing-climate/)

**Source:** *SnippETS*, 27<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

## ***Fen, Bog and Swamp: A Short History of Peatland Destruction and its Role in the Climate Crisis***

"One of *Time Magazine's* Most Anticipated Books' named a best book of the year so far by *The New Yorker* .

"From Pulitzer Prize winner Annie Proulx, this riveting deep dive into the history of our wetlands and what their systematic destruction means for the planet 'is both an enchanting work of nature writing and a rousing call to action' (*Esquire*).


"I learned something new – and found something amazing – on every page.' – Anthony Doerr, author of *All the Light We Cannot See* and *Cloud Cuckoo Land*.

"A lifelong acolyte of the natural world, Annie Proulx brings her witness and research to the subject of wetlands and the vitally important role they play in preserving the environment – by storing the carbon emissions that accelerate climate change. Fens, bogs, swamps, and marine estuaries are crucial to the earth's survival, and in four illuminating parts, Proulx documents their systemic destruction in pursuit of profit.

"In a vivid and revelatory journey through history, Proulx describes the fens of 16<sup>th</sup>-century England, Canada's Hudson Bay lowlands, Russia's Great Vasyugan Mire, and America's Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge. She introduces the early explorers who launched the destruction of the Amazon rainforest, and writes of the diseases spawned in the wetlands – the Ague, malaria, Marsh Fever.

"A sobering look at the degradation of wetlands over centuries and the serious ecological consequences, this is 'an unforgettable and unflinching tour of past and present, fixed on a subject that could not be more important' (Bill McKibben).

**More:** [www.goodreads.com/en/book/show/59366209-fen-bog-and-swamp](http://www.goodreads.com/en/book/show/59366209-fen-bog-and-swamp) 208 pages, September 2022, plus [www.theguardian.com/books/2022/sep/19/fen-bog-swamp-by-annie-proulx-review-history-of-peatland-destruction-and-role-in-climate-crisis-where-have-all-our-wetlands-gone](http://www.theguardian.com/books/2022/sep/19/fen-bog-swamp-by-annie-proulx-review-history-of-peatland-destruction-and-role-in-climate-crisis-where-have-all-our-wetlands-gone) and [www.nzherald.co.nz/lifestyle/books-wrap-jane-harpers-latest-page-turner-annie-proulx-delves-into-the-mysteries-of-wetlands-and-more/XO6IHDYJY2WJDYVSJABNIDLSE/](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/lifestyle/books-wrap-jane-harpers-latest-page-turner-annie-proulx-delves-into-the-mysteries-of-wetlands-and-more/XO6IHDYJY2WJDYVSJABNIDLSE/)

**Source:** *Canvas*, 12<sup>th</sup> Nov. 2022, Page 21. The print version refers to destruction of Hauraki Plains by drainage and NZ's 90% loss of wetlands since first European habitation and is not the same reviewer. 


### **Using Technical Vocabulary to Bust Myths**

Although specifically about the aviation sector the general theme and issues could resonate with numerous other sectors including accountants!

- A failure in communication between air traffic controllers and pilots has caused serious accidents in aviation. These accidents resulted in the implementation of language teaching, training and testing policies at an international level
- But those policies are based on a number of assumptions and consequently, do not adequately address the problems
- What can a technical vocabulary approach tell us about these assumptions and communication between air traffic controllers, pilots and other aviation personnel?

**When/Where** Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> December, 11:00am –12 noon NZDT, (9:00am - 10:00 pm AEDT). Online

**More:** [https://techcomm.nz/Event?Action=View&Event\\_id=339](https://techcomm.nz/Event?Action=View&Event_id=339)

**Source:** Technical Communicators Association of New Zealand Inc, 14<sup>th</sup> November. 

## **Why Scientists Are Rallying to Save Ponds**

"Humble ponds have a key role to play in fighting climate change and aiding conservation – but only if we protect them.


"Thomas Mehner's research team has spent the past few years wading through ponds in Brandenburg – the state surrounding Germany's capital city, Berlin. ...

"Northeast Germany is blessed with lakes, so if you talk with people about ponds, they say, 'Are they so important?' .... The answer, it turns out, is yes.

"Regardless of their origins, ponds have helped provide refuge for wild animals and plants. Unfortunately, despite decades of research showing ponds' importance to biodiversity, they're often overlooked by policymakers and the public. ....

"It's so easy to ignore a habitat if you don't know what kind of service it can offer humanity', she says. 'It's kind of a very profane, human-oriented point of view – but this is how policymakers and the general public work'.

**More:** <https://therevelator.org/ponds-biodiversity-climate/>

**Source:** Center for Biological Diversity, 11<sup>th</sup> November. 

## **ISO Launches Net-Zero Guidelines**

"The United Nations and standard setter the International Organization for Standardization launched a set of guidelines on Friday [11<sup>th</sup> November] to help organisations construct net-zero emissions plans.

"As regulators increasingly focus on tackling weak corporate environmental claims, and investors call for harmonised global standards, the U.N. and ISO said its work would act as a core reference text on what to include in their net-zero plans.


"It follows a U.N. report this week at COP27 climate talks in Egypt which said action was needed to tackle rampant 'greenwashing' in company net-zero plans, as it proposed new standards to tackle the issue.

"These Net Zero Guidelines... can be used as a core reference text on net-zero to bring global actors into alignment, ratchet up ambition and address greenwashing', said Nigel Topping, Britain's U.N. climate change high level champion.

"The ISO's guidelines were developed by a group of 1,200 organisations and experts from over 100 countries.

"While around 80% of global emissions are covered by net-zero pledges, many organisations lack a clear strategy, and the new ISO guidelines are intended to provide a practical guide. ....

**More:** [www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2022-11-11/u-n-standard-setter-iso-launch-net-zero-guidelines](http://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2022-11-11/u-n-standard-setter-iso-launch-net-zero-guidelines) plus [www.iso.org/netzero](http://www.iso.org/netzero)

**Source:** Reuters Events. 12<sup>th</sup> November 2022. 


## **Can we Regenerate Nature by Accelerating the Circular Economy?**

"Who are businesses really responsible to? Join Louise Nash as she outlines what the circular economy is and breaks down how to make it a reality. Louise will share real-life examples of the work Circularity is doing to help businesses design circular solutions to address the environmental challenges they face. Together, we'll ask the question: Can we regenerate nature by accelerating the circular economy?"

**When/Where:** Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> November 7:00 – 8:30pm

**More:** [www.ourclimatedeclaration.org.nz/regenerate\\_nature\\_circular\\_economy](http://www.ourclimatedeclaration.org.nz/regenerate_nature_circular_economy)

**Source:** Our Climate Declaration, 15<sup>th</sup> November.

**Editor:** Several references at the website provide additional information. 

## How to Talk to Your CFO About Sustainability

"Many CFOs still see existing sustainability efforts as a cost rather than a source of value. Although most recent research shows a correlation between sustainability and financial performance, there are barriers to CFOs making this link. The Return on Sustainability Investment (ROSI) analytic tool developed by the NYU Stern Center for Sustainable Business enables companies to measure the financial returns on their current sustainability activities, as well as assess the potential ROI of future initiatives.

"The ROSI tool addresses the main barriers to seeing sustainability as a benefit rather than a burden. First, the language and metrics of sustainability and financial performance don't match. CFOs talk about earnings before interest and taxes and ROI; sustainability people focus on measures such as reductions in wastewater or emissions. The separate reporting of sustainability and financial metrics both internally and externally only exacerbates the problem. In addition, few companies adequately track the returns on their existing sustainability investments or assess the potential returns of future initiatives. This is in part due to the difficulty of measuring intangible benefits and the limited availability of accounting systems designed to capture sustainability performance data. ....

**More:** [www.auckland.ac.nz/en/business/our-research/research-institutes-centres/centre-digital-enterprise/news-and-events/tech-talk/november-2022/how-to-talk-CFO-sustainability.html](http://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/business/our-research/research-institutes-centres/centre-digital-enterprise/news-and-events/tech-talk/november-2022/how-to-talk-CFO-sustainability.html) plus [www.stern.nyu.edu/experience-stern/about/departments-centers-initiatives/centers-of-research/center-sustainable-business/research/return-sustainability-investment-rosi/rosi-resources-and-tools](http://www.stern.nyu.edu/experience-stern/about/departments-centers-initiatives/centers-of-research/center-sustainable-business/research/return-sustainability-investment-rosi/rosi-resources-and-tools) and <https://hbr.org/2021/01/how-to-talk-to-your-cfo-about-sustainability>

**Source:** Debbie Kandaw CA ANZ Climate & Sustainability group 11<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

## Circular Economy and Construction

"In this webinar we'll launch our latest whitepaper which explores the circular economy in the construction industry. The circular economy is often seen as a potential solution that lowers waste and reduces carbon emissions. However, systems which keep materials in circulation can have a higher carbon footprint than conventional linear systems. The challenge is to achieve both outcomes, i.e. a low carbon circular economy. Minimising construction waste is an activity which ticks both boxes.

"James Griffin, the GM Circular Economy, Sustainable Business Network joins thinkstep-anz CEO Barbara Nebel for the presentation. They'll launch the whitepaper and give insights from the report.

"The webinar will cover;

- The potential of circular economy to lower costs, reduce waste and regenerate natural systems
- Finding the sweet spot of carbon reduction and circular economy
- On the ground examples of designing waste out of construction projects
- How circular economy relates to reducing carbon emissions.

**When/Where:** 3:00 – 4:00pm, Thurs 1<sup>st</sup> December 2022

**More:** <https://sustainable.org.nz/learn/events/circular-economy-and-construction-with-thinkstep-anz-and-the-sustainable-business-network>

**Source:** SBN, 15<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

## Big Power Companies – Excess Dividends

"Power companies have been paying out billions more in dividends than they've been making in profits, ....

**More:** <https://350.org.nz/homegrown-energy/#report>  
32pages, 1.9Mb

**Source:** 350.org, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

## Butterfly Extinction or Sponsorship Opportunity

"Now here's a sponsorship idea for a really important project which helps to put butterfly species on the world map.

"The Butterfly Discovery Project is launching a full scientific study to analyse the DNA of New Zealand's largest group of butterflies, the *Lycaena* species known as copper butterflies. The majority of NZ butterflies have not yet been described, according to the Moths and Butterflies of NZ Trust. In fact, less than 50 percent of our insects have a scientific description.

"The problem of unidentified butterfly species goes back to Cook's Endeavour voyage when specimens were misplaced. It appears the butterflies which had been collected from NZ were sold to a specimen trader on arrival back in London. Only a painting by William Jones in 1775 – known as an 'iconotype' – was used to identify the butterfly. No original specimen has ever been located so a DNA sample cannot be taken.

"The result is most of our copper butterflies have been grouped as 'common coppers' when there may be up to 20 or more species.

"Why does this matter? According to project manager Angela Moon-Jones, 'In order to save a species from extinction, like the copper butterflies, they first need to be named using scientific methods such as DNA.'

"Sadly, the scientific funding model in NZ does not support this type of work so we must raise money through crowd funding, and sponsorships just to be able to identify and name our important fauna. Only then can they be included in our national conservation programmes with the Department of Conservation Te Papa Atawhai.' ....

"By donating now, people can make a real difference. Donations up to a total of \$5,000 will be matched \$ for \$. Donations will be boosted by sales of the stunning MBNZT 2023 calendar; on sale now.'

"The Moths and Butterflies of NZ Trust are also seeking key sponsors for this 3 year project. Enquiries to;

- Angela Moon-Jones, project leader Ph (021) 622 247
- Email: [angelamoonjones@xtra.co.nz](mailto:angelamoonjones@xtra.co.nz)

**More:** [www.nzbutterflies.org.nz/project/butterfly-discovery-project/](http://www.nzbutterflies.org.nz/project/butterfly-discovery-project/) plus <https://givealittle.co.nz/cause/save-nzs-butterflies>

**Source:** Angela Moon-Jones, 4<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

## 'The Green Steel of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century'

"Cheap, strong and plentiful, bamboo has been used in Hong Kong for ages as an ultra-sustainable building material. Other countries are catching on. ....

"One company in the Philippines, for example, is set to house 10,000 workers and their families by 2023 in a modular housing system made from bamboo ...

"It has the potential to be the most affordable structural material on the planet', says David Sands, founder of Rizome, a company engineering bamboo products. 'And the potential it has to cut our emissions is absolutely enormous.' ....

"Rizome is currently producing hardwood replacements, but it needs to develop softwood replacements to do the job of concrete and steel, which will take time. But the gains could be huge: The company claims 12% of global construction could shift to bamboo — and in doing so, one third of global emissions could be wiped out through avoided emissions and carbon sequestered by bamboo plantations.

**More:** <https://reasonstobecheerful.world/bamboo-building-construction-hong-kong/>

**Source:** reasons to be cheerful, 16<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

## Building Carbon Literacy: Results from an International Survey

"Education is central to ensure the accounting and finance professions transition away from being a contributing factor to our climate emergency. Academics, students, professional bodies, higher education institutions and employers can strengthen existing connections to transform educational programmes and qualifications. To do so requires better understanding of where and how climate change and sustainability are considered. This evidence, alongside insights into educators' experiences, can lead to the identification of pathways to integrate climate change and sustainability, as systemic concerns, into educational programmes. By supporting students as citizens and future accounting and finance professionals to develop literacy, competencies and knowledge, academics will further contribute to global coalitions to realise aspirations for sustainable climate governance and stewardship.

"Building on long-term interest in social and environmental accounting education and supported by the Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE), this project launched a multi-language global survey designed to:

- Map the provision of climate change education in accounting and finance education across the world;
- Understand the dissemination of carbon literacy in accounting and finance programmes;
- Understand barriers and facilitators to teaching climate change;
- Build a supportive network and co-create resources to enable educators to mainstream climate change and sustainability in accounting and finance education ....

**More:** [https://csear.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/BuildingCarbonLiteracySurveyReport\\_Russell-et-al-2021.pdf](https://csear.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/BuildingCarbonLiteracySurveyReport_Russell-et-al-2021.pdf) 51 pages 762Kb

**Source:** Editor from CSEAR, 15<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

**Editor:** The issues could have wide applicability. ☺

## The 24 Best Climate Change Books to Read in 2022

"So far, 2022 has been a year of tremendous climate extremes. Humanity is learning the extent of the existential threats posed by climate change and ecological destruction the hard way. In a year of such tremendous transformation, leaders and innovators continuously come up with solutions and new ways of thinking that make us reflect and hope. In Earth.Org's best climate change books, we see a world which is ambitious about humanity's prospects, but humble about our place in nature. Extremely hopeful for our future, while realistic about what we might have to endure.

"So far, 2022 has been a whirlwind of a year. From a global health crisis that is still going to stalling economies and dysfunctional international supply chains, this year has taken us to extremes few thought imaginable, and climate is no exception. Devastating floods in South Asia, record-breaking heatwaves in Europe and India, and unprecedented wildfires across the planet made it truly incontrovertible that climate is everything, and the changes within it will impact every person, every sector, and every country.

"In 2022, we at Earth.Org revamped and significantly expanded our book review series to include regular talks with authors and more in-depth coverage of their books. Aside from the award-winning writers, world-leading climate scientists and thought leaders paving the way towards humanity's brighter future, these are our pick of the best books .....

**More:** <https://earth.org/8-must-read-books-on-climate-change-and-sustainability/>

**Source:** Editor, 5<sup>th</sup> November 2022. ☺

## Responsible Policy Engagement Analysis

"This is our second analysis of how the largest publicly traded U.S. companies performed against the Ceres Blueprint for Responsible Policy Engagement on Climate Change, which laid out expectations for how companies should incorporate their exposure to climate change risks into their decision-making on climate change lobbying. The Blueprint calls on companies to:

- Assess climate-related risks to the company, including physical and transition risks
- Systematise decision-making for climate risks, including climate lobbying, across the company
- Advocate in favour of Paris-aligned climate policies
- Engage their trade associations to support Paris-aligned climate policies.

"In 2021, we conducted a detailed review of the climate change risk assessment, governance, advocacy, and engagement practices of the companies listed on the S&P 100 in 2019. This year, we have again benchmarked the same cohort of companies against the Blueprint, as well as an additional eight companies that were added to the S&P 100 in 2020 and 2021, bringing this year's assessment total to 104.

"The report and accompanying database is intended to help companies find their voice to advocate for the policies which will advance sustainable growth, while giving investors actionable insight into which businesses are establishing best practices and which are falling behind.

**More:** [www.ceres.org/accelerator/responsible-policy-engagement](http://www.ceres.org/accelerator/responsible-policy-engagement)

**Source:** CERES, 15<sup>th</sup> November 2022. ☺

## A Building Material Which Consumes CO2

"A false association with drugs which banned 'hempcrete' from the US residential building code has been lifted, paving the way for widespread use.

"This fall, when parents dropped off their children at De Leertrommel, a school about 10 miles northwest of Brussels, the young pupils began their studies as they had for many years before.

"But while the U-shaped, seven-room school constructed in the 1960s looked much like any other, it represents a major leap forward in sustainable construction: it had been completely renovated in a €2 million (USD \$1.9 million) project to become the first Flemish school to ever be built with hemp.

"The project was to build well-ventilated classrooms where pupils can be comfortable and healthy throughout the year', says Charlotte De Bellefroid, a spokesperson for IsoHemp, the Belgian company which fabricated the school's hemp-based construction materials.

"IsoHemp's blocks, and alternatives made by many others, are made of hempcrete, a mix of hemp fibres, water, and lime or clay, which acts as a binder. Despite the simplicity of those natural ingredients, hempcrete .... has a dizzying array of benefits: ...

"Hemp is one of the fastest growing plants in the world, alongside bamboo, and can grow 50 times faster than wood, meaning enough biomass to build a small single-family house will grow in five months on one hectare of land.

"One of the few aspects where there is room for improvement is hempcrete's inability to work as a load-bearing material. ...

**More:** <https://reasonstobecheerful.world/hempcrete-construction-us-building-code-sustainable/>

**Source:** reasons to be cheerful, 16<sup>th</sup> November 2022. ☺