

# Sustainability Matters

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Business achieving a tomorrow for tomorrow's children

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## COP28 Success or Failure?

Science

Data

Information

Analysis

Reports

Knowledge

Insights

Commonsense

Politics

Decisions

Hypocrisy

~~Wisdom~~

~~Future generations~~

Vested interests

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Even so, not ALL the news is disappointing and just might end up surprising and delighting us.

**More:** The bucket overflows with potential sources.

**Source:** Editor 13<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

**Editor:** At time of writing deal-making not finalised.

## Government Releases Climate Change Commission's 2<sup>nd</sup> Emissions Reduction Plan

"The Government needs to encourage change, remove barriers and support investment that cuts climate pollution, He Pou a Rangī Climate Change Commission Chair Dr Rod Carr says.

"The Minister of Climate Change today [12<sup>th</sup> December] released the Commission's final advice to inform the Government's plan to meet Aotearoa New Zealand's greenhouse gas reduction goal for 2026–2030.

"While the Commission's analysis shows the country has made progress, it is not on track to meet its climate goals for the end of this decade. This risks missing out on benefits like new jobs, a more resilient economy and healthier communities.

"The Commission's advice makes 27 recommendations to the Government, focused on areas where there are critical gaps in action, or where efforts need to be strengthened or accelerated. This includes: .....

"The Government has until the end of 2024 to consider the advice, consult on policies to meet the country's emissions budgets and release the emissions reduction plan for 2026–2030.

**More:** [www.climatecommission.govt.nz/news/government-policies-must-add-up-to-achieve-climate-goals/](http://www.climatecommission.govt.nz/news/government-policies-must-add-up-to-achieve-climate-goals/) plus [www.climatecommission.govt.nz/public/Advice-to-govt-docs/ERP2/final-erp2/ERP2-Final-Advice-for-web.pdf](http://www.climatecommission.govt.nz/public/Advice-to-govt-docs/ERP2/final-erp2/ERP2-Final-Advice-for-web.pdf) 378pages 5.25Mb

**Source:** Climate Change Commission, 12<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2023.

## Collaboration and Sustainability Guidelines

"The Commerce Commission has issued guidance for businesses considering collaborating with their competitors to pursue sustainability goals.

"These Guidelines set out the factors which the Commission considers when assessing collaboration between competing businesses for sustainability objectives. We explain when collaboration for sustainability objectives is more or less likely to harm competition. We also explain how, through the clearance and authorisation processes, New Zealand's competition laws can accommodate collaboration between businesses even when it may harm competition.

"As businesses consider how to respond to New Zealand's climate change and sustainability goals, it may sometimes be necessary to collaborate with competitors to overcome the challenges individual businesses may face.

**More:** <https://comcom.govt.nz/business/avoiding-anti-competitive-behaviour/collaboration-and-sustainability-guidelines> 20pages, 417KB

**Source:** SBC Weekly Pānui, 7<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

## EU Criminalises Environmental Damage 'Comparable to Ecocide'

The European Union has become the first international body to criminalise wide-scale environmental damage 'comparable to ecocide'.

"Late on Thursday [16<sup>th</sup> November], lawmakers agreed an update to the bloc's environmental crime directive punishing the most serious cases of ecosystem destruction, including habitat loss and illegal logging, with tougher penalties.

"Marie Toussaint, a French lawyer and MEP heading EU efforts to criminalise ecocide, said the decision 'marks the end of impunity for environmental criminals' and could usher in a new age of environmental litigation in Europe.

"The environmental crime directive will be formally passed in the spring, and member states will then have two years to put it into national law. ....

"The revised EU law specifies which kinds of environmental activities are covered. These include water abstraction, ship recycling and pollution, the introduction and spread of invasive alien species, and ozone destruction. But it does not say anything about fishing, the export of toxic waste to developing countries or carbon market fraud.

"Having a permit to carry out listed activities will not automatically be an excuse. Individuals and companies will have committed a crime if authorisation was obtained fraudulently or by corruption, extortion or coercion, or if it breaches substantive legal requirements.

"Lawmakers did not agree to extend these obligations to offences committed outside EU borders on behalf of EU companies, but individual member states would be able to choose to do this. ....

"The law introduces new penalties, ....

**More:** [www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/nov/17/eu-criminalises-environmental-damage-comparable-to-ecocide](http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/nov/17/eu-criminalises-environmental-damage-comparable-to-ecocide)

**Source:** Climate Club, 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

## PetroStates of Decline: Oil and Gas Producers Face Growing Fiscal Risks

"An update of our 2021 Beyond Petrostates report, finds petrostates are facing substantial risks from the energy transition, as falling oil and gas demand is set to put downward pressure on commodity prices and place future government revenues in jeopardy. ....

**More:** <https://carbontracker.org/reports/petrostates-of-decline/>

**Source:** Carbon Tracker, 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

**Editor:** Possible implication for NZ: Oil/gas production arising from National Government's proposed new offshore exploration could result in stranded assets. 🌐

## Nature Given a Voice in Boardrooms

"In a significant move towards sustainability, House of Hackney [UK] recently appointed a 'nature guardian', marking a pivotal step in integrating nature's voice into corporate decision-making. Frieda Gormley, co-founder of the London-based interiors firm, regarded this as a natural evolution for a brand with a strong connection to nature.

"Gormley emphasises the role of the nature guardian, stating, 'If we choose not to take their advice, we're actually bound to give a reason publicly as to why we haven't. This is very much about accountability.' ....

"What once required explanation has now become an accepted habit in just a year. 'A year ago, we were having to explain the mechanics of this', Rose says, 'but already we're in a phase where this isn't weird anymore.'

"The inclusion of a nature guardian in corporate structures is a significant step toward a more sustainable and conscious approach to business, underlining that every action influences more than just the bottom line, but also on the world around us.

**More:** [www.optimistdaily.com/2023/12/another-uk-company-gives-nature-a-voice-in-its-boardroom/](http://www.optimistdaily.com/2023/12/another-uk-company-gives-nature-a-voice-in-its-boardroom/) plus [www.lawyersfornature.com/house-of-hackney/](http://www.lawyersfornature.com/house-of-hackney/) which in addition advocates for a Voice for Future Generations

**Source:** atAdvocacy, 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023. 🌐

## Energy Efficiency Could Offer Major Climate Wins. But What Is It?

"What if the world could quickly slash climate-warming emissions, without having to build so much new renewable energy capacity?

"That's exactly what some experts say needs to happen, by improving the efficiency of appliances and electricity grids through efforts like plugging leaks and stopping so-called 'vampire loads' from devices which pull power from wall sockets even when switched off.

"By lowering the amount of power needed to perform the same tasks, the world could burn fewer fossil fuels and spend less on expanding solar or wind capacity.

"We don't just need to change the way we generate electricity, we need to change the ways we use it', said Larissa Gross of E3G climate think tank.

"At least 118 countries at the COP28 climate summit in Dubai have backed a pledge to improve energy efficiency rates by 4% each year until 2030. That would be a doubling of the 2% improvement in efficiency rates seen in 2022. ....

**More:** [www.reuters.com/sustainability/climate-energy/energy-efficiency-could-offer-major-climate-wins-what-is-it-2023-12-05/](http://www.reuters.com/sustainability/climate-energy/energy-efficiency-could-offer-major-climate-wins-what-is-it-2023-12-05/)

**Source:** Reuters Sustainable Switch, 6<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2023.

**Editor:** In NZ why do new homes of all types not provide for outdoor clothes drying rather than by default encouraging electric clothes dryers? 🌐

## Is the Torrent of Climate Disinformation Still More Powerful Than Available Remedies?

"For decades, fossil fuel corporations and others with a stake in a continued fossil fuel economy have worked to sow doubt about the reality of climate change and the feasibility of addressing it. This disinformation campaign has had an effect.

"People around the world believe in climate change and want to act sustainably, but disinformation still affects their beliefs in climate change, their ability to discriminate true and false information about climate change, and their pro-environmental behaviour', says Tobia Spampatti, a graduate student at the University of Geneva in Switzerland who is studying how to use psychology and neuroscience to promote climate action.

"Spampatti and his colleagues have developed six psychological interventions to combat climate disinformation. Past research has suggested pre-emptively providing warnings about disinformation and counterarguments against it could serve as a psychological 'vaccine,' inoculating people to better resist denialists' messages.

"The new interventions, which Spampatti and his colleagues describe in the journal *Nature Human Behaviour*, are based on current research about how people develop and update their understanding of scientific information. The researchers devised messages emphasising: .....

**More:** [www.anthropocenemagazine.org/2023/12/is-the-torrent-of-climate-disinformation-still-more-powerful-than-available-remedies](http://www.anthropocenemagazine.org/2023/12/is-the-torrent-of-climate-disinformation-still-more-powerful-than-available-remedies)

**Source:** Orion, 8<sup>th</sup> December 2023. 🌐

## Hot Water, Low Emissions: Case Study Switch to Renewables

"Retirement and aged care living provider, Oceania, is upgrading to cleaner technologies in their facilities across New Zealand.

"The team decided to look at new hot water heating options at Te Mana after it became clear the existing cylinder system wasn't meeting the needs of the residents.

"We use a lot of hot water per shower especially for the hospital level patients and we were starting to run low on hot water. Resident quality of care was the driving factor to upgrade the water system', says Grant Johnson, Regional Facilities Manager - Northern, Oceania. ....

"The team investigated the options and found they didn't have the electrical capacity required to simply increase the hot water cylinders to meet the water required.

"We would have needed to add a further 50% increase in hot water cylinders taking the energy output from 24kW to 36kW. We would have been pushing it to the extreme to get that power and it would have allowed us no extra power for the future.'

"The new hot water heating system is made up of two 9kW heat pumps which feed into a 1000 litre holding tank. The system allows almost infinite hot water due to the set-up, which allows Te Mana to use the first 500 litres while the second 500 litres is heating up faster than the team can use it.

"We are getting more water than we can use at any given time - that's significant. So, it was a no brainer to go with two hot water heat pumps - use less power and get more hot water', says Grant. ...

**More:** [www.eeca.govt.nz/insights/case-studies-and-articles/hot-water-low-emissions-oceania-is-switching-to-renewables/](http://www.eeca.govt.nz/insights/case-studies-and-articles/hot-water-low-emissions-oceania-is-switching-to-renewables/)

**Source:** EECA, 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023. 🌐


## ***Cohousing for Life: A Practical and Personal Story of Earthsong Eco-Neighbourhood***

"How did a group of ordinary, extraordinary people turn a bold vision into thirty-two eco-homes in a flourishing community? What can we learn from their experience to create new housing which supports us to be good neighbours to each other and to the earth?"

"In *Cohousing for Life*, Robin Allison describes her journey from lonely mother-of-two in the suburbs to determined driver of the development of New Zealand's first cohousing community. It is a very personal story of a collective endeavour, a heroic journey of despair and triumph, as the obstacles mount and success at times feels far from certain.

"*Cohousing for Life* is also a distillation of what has been learnt: from formulating an inspiring vision, to community governance and decision-making; from community design principles to participatory design processes; from legal and financial structures to reflections on power and leadership. Robin details the key elements and structures which were critical to achieving their goal, allowing a group of diverse individuals with ordinary lives and skills to work together over many years to create a large, innovative, housing development.

**More:** <https://robinallison.co.nz>

**Source:** Bevin Fitzsimons, LinkedIn post 9<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2023. 

## ***Heart of Country: A Documentary and Truth Telling Journey Filmed Across Australia***

"Through the last year, I've journeyed across Australia.

"A crisis is unfolding here and every day it is getting worse. Water being fracked, contaminated and poisoned. Fossil fuel and nuclear projects risk fracturing First Nations communities' connection with their Country, while destroying nature and damaging the climate.

"But I've met incredible First Nations people and communities standing up for their Country. I've travelled from Gomeroi Country in New South Wales to Adnyamathanha Country and Barngarla Country in South Australia – and beyond. And they've shared their stories with us in *Heart of Country*.

"*Heart of Country* is a short truth-telling documentary which weaves together the stories and songlines of this huge and ancient continent, and the fight to protect it from damage caused by the fossil fuel and nuclear industries.

"And it makes my heart and soul full to finally share these beautiful stories with you now.

**More:** [www.acf.org.au/heart-of-country](http://www.acf.org.au/heart-of-country) 19:41

**Source:** ACF, 9<sup>th</sup> December 2023. 


## ***Finite: The Climate of Change Review – Powerful Case Against Climate Crisis Fatigue***

"Climate activist-turned-film-maker Rich Felgate brings us two victories from the frontline of the environmental movement. If nothing else, his documentary makes a persuasive and powerful case against climate crisis fatigue: the helpless feeling which whatever you can do as an individual is too little, too late; and besides what's the point when it's fossil fuel companies driving the crisis?"

"In County Durham, he joins locals who have been fighting off plans for a new open-cast coal mine in the gorgeous countryside of the Pont Valley for decades. ...

"Meanwhile, over in western Germany, Felgate visits one of Europe's biggest opencast mines in the ancient Hambach forest. ....

**More:** [www.theguardian.com/film/2023/feb/15/finite-the-climate-of-change-review-powerful-case-against-climate-crisis-fatigue](http://www.theguardian.com/film/2023/feb/15/finite-the-climate-of-change-review-powerful-case-against-climate-crisis-fatigue) plus [www.finite-film.com/](http://www.finite-film.com/)

**Source:** Coal Action Network, 8<sup>th</sup> December 2023. 

## ***Study Suggests Microplastics Could Trigger Cloud Formation and Affect the Weather***

"Microplastics are turning up in unusual places increasingly often as they filter into nearly every facet of life on Earth. They've been discovered in drinking water, food, air and even in blood. Now, scientists have found these tiny particles might even be able to influence the weather.

"Researchers reported Wednesday [15<sup>th</sup> November 2023] they detected microplastics in a majority of cloud samples taken from a mountaintop in China, in a study published in the *American Chemical Society's Environmental Science & Technology Letters*.

"The study traced how the microplastics ended up at their final location and discovered they could play a role in cloud formation. ....

**More:** [www.newshub.co.nz/home/world/2023/11/new-study-suggests-microplastics-could-trigger-cloud-formation-and-affect-the-weather.html](http://www.newshub.co.nz/home/world/2023/11/new-study-suggests-microplastics-could-trigger-cloud-formation-and-affect-the-weather.html) plus [www.acs.org/pressroom/presspacs/2023/november/microplastics-found-in-clouds-could-affect-the-weather.html](http://www.acs.org/pressroom/presspacs/2023/november/microplastics-found-in-clouds-could-affect-the-weather.html)

**Source:** Go Well Consulting, 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023. 

## ***Prepare for El Niño***

"This [New Zealand] summer, El Niño will increase the chances of more frequent and extreme adverse weather events. Now is the time to prepare your business.

"Putting time into planning for unexpected emergencies, including extreme weather, makes good business sense – it helps keep you and your workers safe and minimises downtime.

"Extreme weather events could happen throughout New Zealand this summer. Here's where you will find information and advice about:

- Having an emergency plan
- Looking after your employees
- Operating safely in extreme temperatures
- What to do if you are a farmer or grower.
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Insurance
- In an emergency
- Stay up to date with weather forecasts
- Forecast your cashflow

**More:** [www.business.govt.nz/risks-and-operations/extreme-weather-information-for-business/](http://www.business.govt.nz/risks-and-operations/extreme-weather-information-for-business/)

**Source:** Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023. 


## ***We Can Produce Our Own Power***

"*We can produce our own power: Community Energy Projects in Aotearoa* is a short film documentary featuring Community Energy Projects in Aotearoa and their benefits for people and the planet.

"The documentary comes at a time when Aotearoa New Zealand and the world are looking for innovative solutions to power down the fossil fuel industry and power up renewable energy for all. Despite the challenges which come with navigating an electricity market which favours large-scale utility providers, a number of communities in Aotearoa have been leading the way in creating a just transition.

"350 Aotearoa visited community energy projects in Te Ika-a-Māui (North Island) to talk to the unsung heroes who have been quietly redesigning their communities to improve energy access and resiliency, address energy poverty, create jobs, support the community, and tackle climate change. ....

**More:** <https://350.org.nz/we-can-produce-our-own-power> 18:15

**Source:** 350-Aotearora, 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023. 

## Board Game Gift Ideas for Nature-Loving Kids

"Bring the outside inside with these 10 children's game recommendations.

"Looking for the perfect gift for a child in your life this holiday season? Want to foster their love for and attention to the natural world, even on the bleakest of inside-only days? Then friends, look no further. Orion is here with ten family-friendly game recommendations for the youngins, and young-at-heart, in your life.

**More:** <https://orionmagazine.org/article/nature-board-games-gift-2023/>

**Source:** Orion, 8<sup>th</sup> December 2023. 

## 12 graphs Showing New Zealand is Doing Better than You Think

"We know there is a lot of negative rhetoric surrounding Aotearoa in the news right now, but what does the data really say about us? According to various studies, there's lots of room for improvement but things aren't as doomed as they seem. In fact, we might just be looking at a (slow) but steady upturn in progress.

**More:** <https://thespinoff.co.nz/society/20-11-2023/12-graphs-that-show-new-zealand-isnt-doing-as-badly-as-you-think>

**Source:** Go Well Consulting, 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023. 

## Using Locally Sourced Timber


"When passengers pass through the newly remodeled Portland International Airport in spring 2024, they'll be able to point up to specific Douglas fir beams around the oval skylights and know they came from the ancestral lands of the Coquille Indian Tribe in Southwestern Oregon.

"This will be the first major US airport to have a mass timber roof, and all the timber for the project came from sustainably managed forests located less than 300 miles away. The soaring, **nine-acre** ceiling — which will have lots of natural sunlight streaming in through the skylights and windows — will feel a bit like a forest. (The renovation will also include the addition of 70 or so living trees which will be growing in recessed and above-ground planters.)

"The process of sourcing the wood took six years of planning, research, forest visits and many, many phone calls between the Port of Portland, Portland-based ZGF Architects, regional tribes, family-run forests, mill owners and brokers. ....

**More:** <https://reasonstobecheerful.world/portland-airports-new-mass-timber-roof-all-local/>

**Source:** Reasons to be Cheerful, 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023.

**Editor:** A fascinating project the concepts of which can likely be applied elsewhere. 


## Winners of the UK Social Enterprise Awards 2023

"The winners of the UK Social Enterprise Awards 2023 were announced at a gala reception at the Roundhouse in London on 30<sup>th</sup> November.

"The UK Social Enterprise Awards are the country's biggest celebration of social enterprises showcasing the strength and diversity of the UK's social enterprise community across 15 categories. ....

**More:** [www.socialenterprise.org.uk/all-about-social-enterprise-uk/uk-social-enterprise-awards/winners-of-the-uk-social-enterprise-awards-2023/](http://www.socialenterprise.org.uk/all-about-social-enterprise-uk/uk-social-enterprise-awards/winners-of-the-uk-social-enterprise-awards-2023/)

**Source:** Social Enterprise UK, 5<sup>th</sup> December 2023

**Editor:** A wide range of enterprises which could be of interest in settings beyond the UK, from making socks, to mental health, first aid, property development. training homeless, dental services, a fascinating ferry service and much else. 

## The Activist Training Lab

"Biodiversity loss is so dire that an international panel of 145 scientists has estimated 1 million plant and animal species face extinction. We need bold policies, transformative institutional shifts, and systemic change to meet the extinction crisis at the scale of the crisis. We need our elected officials, government agencies, corporations, and powerful institutions to take action to protect biodiversity and ensure its benefits are shared equitably by all communities.

"One of the most powerful tools we have in our toolbox for advancing this change is grassroots organising. Grassroots organising is defined as building and using people power to address problems at their roots and create systemic change. The Activist Training Lab is a set of training programs, resources, and coaching and mentoring services for organisations and individuals who want to build the fundamental skills of grassroots organising.

"The Activist Training Lab helps organisations and individuals launch strategic grassroots campaigns and win those campaigns. The Activist Training Lab is building power within and increasing the effectiveness of the movement for conservation and biodiversity justice — and we want you to join us in that mission.

"Check out what the Activist Training Lab has to offer for our member groups, non-member organisations, and individual activists below; .....

**More:** [www.endangered.org/activist-training-lab/](http://www.endangered.org/activist-training-lab/) plus [www.youtube.com/@activisttraininglab](https://www.youtube.com/@activisttraininglab)

**Source:** Endangered Species Coalition, 12<sup>th</sup> Dec. 2023. 

## I'm a Climate Scientist. I'm Not Screaming into the Void Anymore.

"In the end, I said yes, but reluctantly. Frankly, I was sick of admonishing people about how bad things could get. Scientists have raised the alarm over and over again, and still the temperature rises. Extreme events like heat waves, floods and droughts are becoming more severe and frequent, exactly as we predicted they would. We were proved right. It didn't seem to matter.

"Our report, which was released on Tuesday, contains more dire warnings. There are plenty of new reasons for despair. Thanks to recent scientific advances, we can now link climate change to specific extreme weather disasters, and we have a better understanding of how the feedback loops in the climate system can make warming even worse. We can also now more confidently forecast catastrophic outcomes if global emissions continue on their current trajectory. But to me, the most surprising new finding in the Fifth National Climate Assessment is this: There has been genuine progress, too.

"I'm used to mind-boggling numbers, and there are many of them in this report. ....

"For the first time in my career, I felt something strange: optimism. And that simple realisation was enough to convince me that releasing yet another climate report was worthwhile. ....

"I could still tell you scary stories about a future ravaged by climate change, and they'd be true, at least on the trajectory we're currently on. But it's also true we have a once-in-human-history chance not only to prevent the worst effects but also to make the world better right now. It would be a shame to squander this opportunity. So I don't just want to talk about the problems anymore. I want to talk about the solutions. Consider this your last warning from me.

**More:** [www.nytimes.com/2023/11/18/opinion/climate-change-report-us.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2023/11/18/opinion/climate-change-report-us.html)

**Source:** Climate Club, 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023. 