

ANNUAL REPORT: THE WISE RESPONSE SOCIETY INC.
August 24, 2017.

This report covers the period following last year's Annual Meeting of August 4, 2016. Being the fourth full year of our operation since the launch in March, 2013, we have continued with some of our earlier exercises while responding to several new opportunities and challenges as they have been presented.

1. New Zealand Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) Review: A second round of so-called public hearings was held on March 3 at the Dunedin Centre for which a formal application was required and an ID presented at the door. Dugald and I attended the morning session which was described as "Supply setting", but not the "Forestry matters" session in the afternoon. We found to our dismay that the intention of the meeting was to convey MfE thoughts on updating the ETS rather than receiving views from the few in attendance: some seven public, outnumbered by officials from Wellington. We expressed serious concern with this situation and did make some points there, and indicated we would follow up with a written response, which we did. The essence of these comments were sent to the MfE's Senior policy Analyst on March 31; see:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/3hn46fdhlhi55ob/ETS.doc?dl=0>

Dugald and I responded with an opinion piece in the ODT of June 6; see: <https://www.odt.co.nz/opinion/big-spend-prolongs-carbon-party>

This was ahead of the Government announcement of a package of decisions "that will improve the operation of the NZ ETS in the 2020s. This email provides an overview of the decisions and where to find further information.

Four decisions to improve the NZ ETS

The Government has made in-principle decisions on a package of four changes to how the NZ ETS will operate in the 2020s. These are to:

- introduce auctioning of units, to align the NZ ETS to our climate change targets
- limit participants' use of international units when the NZ ETS reopens to international carbon markets
- develop a different price ceiling to eventually replace the current \$25 fixed price option
- coordinate decisions on the supply settings in the NZ ETS over a rolling five-year period.

Today's announcements will not change participants' interaction with the scheme

There will be no immediate changes to how the NZ ETS operates. The decisions are in-principle, and further work and consultation will be required before they are implemented.

Implementation decisions will be informed by New Zealand's wider climate change work programme. This includes, for example, work that is underway to determine options for meeting the 2030 target, and the outcome from the Productivity Commission inquiry for transitioning to a lower emissions economy.

Decisions on other issues considered as a part of stage II

Stage II of the NZ ETS also looked at forestry accounting, free allocation, and operational and technical improvements to the NZ ETS. We will report back to Ministers on these issues in the first half of 2018, and organise further stakeholder engagement and consultation to inform this further work.”

Here the situation rests for the present.

2. Otago Regional Council’s Draft Regional Policy Statement (RPS) Review.

Following the ORC’s decision on the proposed RPS announced 1 October 2016, we decided, in consultation with prominent Dunedin environmental lawyer, Dr Royden SomervilleQC, and Richard Reeve (Instructing), to lodge an appeal to the Environment Court. Dugald and I were most grateful of their offers of pro-bono legal services, and this has resulted in help in final wording of the appeal, several sessions with Royden and his assistant, Will Anglin, and some three weeks of mediation, with some 30 other appellants, before an Environment Court Commissioner and ORC staff.

While some strategic compromise has been necessary, considerable progress has been made towards having incorporated the key deficiencies we had identified in the ORC’s report. We are now confident that our contribution will enable much more genuinely sustainable provisions to be required in subordinate plans when they are reviewed.

We have yet to decide, in consultation with our legal advisers, as to whether we will proceed with an appeal to the Environment Court, but regardless, we wish to offer our sincere thanks to Royden, Will and Richard for their invaluable services associated with this challenging exercise.

3. Environment and Conservation Science Roadmap: Discussion paper: July, 2016.

I attended a meeting in Dunedin, convened by five Government staff from DoC, MfE and the Prime Minister’s Science Advisory group, in mid July, to discuss this Science Roadmap, along with some 20 other, mostly biological scientists. Most were generally highly critical of this 54-page document since it obviously presented a ‘Business-as-usual’ approach to dealing with these important issues of our time. I attach my submission since the issue is still current; see:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/2u3kx9bbc0d4t2d/EandCRoadmap.doc?dl=0>

The Government released its final report on the subject in February, 2017: The final 78-page report still implies heavy reliance on “innovative science”, clearly expressed in the joint introductory message from the Ministers for the Environment and of Conservation: “We view innovative science as critical to achieve our ambitious programme of goals like our 30 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, being predator free by 2050, and having 90 per cent of rivers and lakes being swimmable by 2040. ... The Roadmap will ensure our science investment across agencies is more strategic and better coordinated.”

4). Development of the Climate Coalition Consensus Aotearoa (CCCA) has been the major activity of the year.

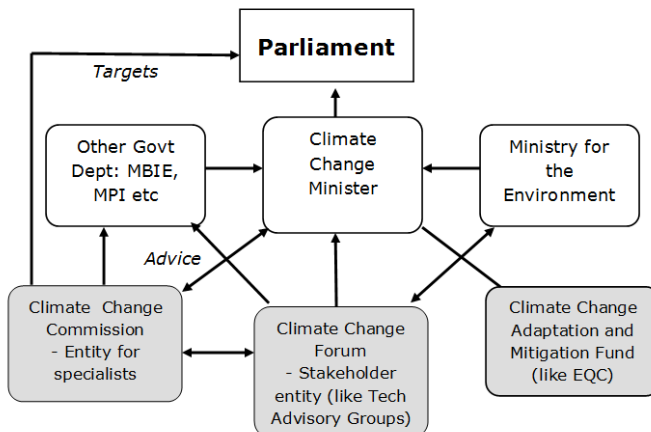
The CCCA statement and plan was put together by a number of concerned NGOs using the Loomio interactive programme and managed by our intern student Jule Barth, Nathan and Dugald, combined with a well-attended workshop held at Forest & Bird's central office in Wellington, over two days in mid February (substituting for one planned for November 14 which was thwarted by the Kaikoura earthquake).

The exercise arose because of frustration with the lack of central Government's action after the Paris COP21 agreement of December 2015. It was assumed Government would eventually arrange a collaborative process with "stakeholders" to develop an Emissions Reduction Plan, in which case it seemed highly desirable if NGOs could agree on baseline conditions ahead of time. The subsequent process of developing the Statement has been arranged and facilitated by our Society (WR) and was largely based on a discussion paper prepared by Prof. Jonathan Boston, Institute for Governance and Policy Studies, Victoria University.

In the event, central Government has preferred to establish direct "Technical advisory groups" rather than use a collaborative process. So the Coalition organisations decided to continue building support for a relevant statement. The CCCA website has been built by WR, notably Nathan Surendran, ably assisted by a second Otago University student intern, Hannah Milner. We have been inviting and collating support since late July and on the website (<www.climateconsensus.nz>) have said that anyone/organisation that endorses it becomes a member of CCCA. It is primarily aimed at NGOs and civil society as an acknowledged "sector" but we are not discouraging support from anyone.

So what this means is that CCCA is really just the people and organisations who have endorsed the Statement: it has no formal structure. Hence, Wise Response is the main voice for CCCA as we continue to promote public support, both organisations and individuals, to represent Civil Society, pursuant to presenting it to two meetings at Parliament on August 16, arranged by Green Party spokesperson and Convener of the GLOBE-NZ Group of MPs, Dr Kennedy Graham. We organised appropriate support for each of these meetings and both certainly achieved their purpose. Both Dugald and I attended, together with our intern student, Hannah Milner, with her travel costs generously provided by her Wellington-based parents. It was decided that both meetings should take a similar form, with Kennedy and me as co-chairs, and for me to offer a brief introduction to the Society, its history and purpose of this CCCA exercise, followed by Dugald with a 15 minute presentation of the Statement's key elements, complemented by our Patron, Sir Geoffrey Palmer and/or Prof. Jonathan Boston of Victoria University, and concluded with Hannah giving a brief summary of the responses to date: ~172,180 individuals and some 60 organisations. The following schematic, developed to help explain how the new entities would interrelate with existing entities, is shown below.

Concept of main information flows as proposed under CCCA (New institutional entities highlighted)



The first meeting with GLOBE-NZ MPs (9.30 - 10.30 am in Bowen House) was arranged to present to the GLOBE-NZ Group’s Executive members, to which we invited 20 supporters. This meeting ran 25 minutes over time, with a discussion session plus an unexpected but most sobering summary presentation by Prof Boston of his recent co-authored paper on: “The Case for New Climate Change Adaptation Funding Instruments”. We were delighted that Hannah could report that, to date, our Statement/Action Plan had received some 172,180 supporters through the formal endorsement of some 60 organisations.

The later meeting (12.30 – 1.45 pm in the Beehive Theatrette), was addressed by the same three Executive members as presented at our earlier public meeting in Dunedin (see below: Dr Graham, Hon David Parker (Labour) and Stuart Scott (National)), and attended by several other GLOBE Members and MPs, as well as some 34 invited supporters. Our presentation was supplemented by brief supporting statements by: James Drew-Young (GenZero), Adelia Hallett (Forest & Bird), Dr Roger Blakeley and Sue Kedgley (Wellington RC & Local Govt NZ), Gay Keating (Ora Taiao) and Katherine Peet (Network Waitangi Otautahi/One Voice Te Reo Kotahi). A discussion session followed ahead of concluding remarks by Sir Geoffrey (for WR), and Tracey Martin (NZ First), David Parker (Labour) and Kennedy Graham (Greens), for the GLOBE-NZ Executive. All present acknowledged and applauded the major and crucial role played by retiring MP, Dr Kennedy Graham, who was to deliver his Valedictory speech in Parliament later in the afternoon, which we were sorry to miss.

This special visit to Wellington for these two events has been a major but highly rewarding exercise for our Society, and I offer my sincerely thanks all the many others involved for their contributions and support.

5). Other activities during the year: In chronological order:

A). Attending Professor Jacinta Ruru’s Inaugural Lecture on September 12, following which I invited Jacinta, along with Law Prof., Andrew Geddis, her partner, to a Wise Response Committee meeting on October 5 to discuss Treaty issues in relation to the Climate Coalition Consensus Aotearoa.

B). I attended the launch of the book: “*A Constitution for Aotearoa New Zealand*” by our patron, Sir Geoffrey Palmer and co-author Andrew Butler, in Wellington on 21 September. This was a memorable occasion. This book has considerable relevance to the mission of Wise Response Society.

C). I joined several other University staff on 2 November, to celebrate the recent decision of the University of Otago to divest of its limited investments in the fossil fuel industry.

D). I was invited to chair a symposium on climate change impacts on nature in New Zealand: “**Climate change and conservation science**”, organised by Forest and Bird Protection Society at the Wellington Zoo on November 15, which proceeded despite the serious earthquake the previous day that had resulted in cancellation of the NGO Workshop we had planned in the CBD the previous day. This successful meeting passed the following resolution:

Wellington Declaration on Nature and Climate Change (Wellington Declaration)

At a climate and conservation symposium at Wellington Zoo on 15 November 2016, participants resolved:

Noting the urgency of responding to climate change and ocean acidification and the evidence presented today of how action now will influence the world’s climate and oceans for centuries

Noting the world’s carbon budget to limit global warming to less than 2 degrees c above pre-industrial levels will likely be used up by 2035 at present rates of extraction and use

Noting the evidence presented today on the impact of climate change on New Zealand’s natural heritage

Noting that the Government has signed the Paris Accord which commits New Zealand to effort to keep global warming below 2 degrees and preferably no more than 1.5 degrees below preindustrial levels and that we have options and choices in front of us.

Agrees that:

- *Urgent coordinated national action is needed to drive emission reductions based on current knowledge,*
- *There is sufficient information to integrate climate change impacts across local and central government actions including biodiversity and biosecurity policies and strategies,*
- *Funding and effort, however, is urgently needed to be directed to fill remaining important gaps in knowledge about the effects of climate change and ocean acidification on New Zealand’s natural heritage.*

E). I had the pleasure of launching Professor James Flynn’s book: “**No Place To Hide: Climate Change: A short introduction for New Zealanders**”, Potton & Burton Publishers, on November 22 at the UBS, in which he quotes me on the jacket: “A great read. A massive amount of information well organised and expressed.”

F). A contribution to a discussion on “New Zealand Futures” with Sir Geoffrey Palmer and Bryce Johnson, organised by Ministry for the Environment and held at their office in central Wellington on 14 February. It was attended by many senior

Ministry staff. I gave a power-point presentation entitled: “*Planning for a Sustainable Future.*”

G). I was invited to contribute as Chair of Wise Response to the International “**Earth Day**” meeting and “**Walk for Science**” at the Museum Reserve, Dunedin on April 22, and gave a talk on behalf of Wise Response; see:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/ajt2v1v7ykp3x3n/EarthDay.doc?dl=0>

H). I organised a public meeting, with three members of the GLOBE-NZ, cross-party parliamentarians, Convener Dr Kennedy Graham (Green Party), Hon. David Parker (Labour Party) and Stuart Smith (National Party; Kaikoura), which drew a large crowd to the University’s Dental School Blue Lecture Theatre. Brief excerpts: Dr Graeme: “*The Vivid Economics report reflects unprecedented cross-party collaboration. It provides an opportunity for developing an ambitious pathway to domestic emissions neutrality as called for in the Paris Agreement.*” Hon Parker: “*I know of no environmental problem to which there is not a solution. There is none.*” Stuart Smith: “*I have to say, and I am sure all the GLOBE-NZ members will agree, that it has been a great collegial exercise.*” I see our meeting has been acknowledged, in the first Globe New Zealand report: “Global Legislators for a Balanced Environment: New Zealand Chapter” released mid-August, as one of the four that have taken the debate around the country, following its release.

D). I joined a well organised 350.org demonstration in Dunedin on May 12, against the ANZ Bank for their continued investments in the fossil fuel industry.

J). I contributed to the nation-wide launch of “**Our Climate Declaration**” in Dunedin on June 18, which was held simultaneously in Auckland (where it was officially launched by Joanna Santa Barbara with a SKYPE connection), Wellington (with a SKYPE link to the talk by Dr James Renwick) and Christchurch. The Dunedin meeting was convened by Prof. Ralph Adler and involved 11 speakers, including Mayor Dave Cull. My talk follows; see:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/zfedxcwmbliesa4/OurClimateDeclaration.doc?dl=0>

K). Dugald and I spent an hour on June 21 being interviewed by Marvin Hubbard for Otago Access Radio on the role and concerns of the Wise Response Society. The link:

<http://www.accessradio.org/Player.aspx?eid=ae0ff69d-7ada-4711-9b5a-1a48eb0a519>

5). Committee meetings: Three committee meetings were held during the year, in the CSAFE Seminar room: 5 October and 29 November, 2016, and 26 April, 2017. Attendance was generally limited to local members, with a few outsiders on SKYPE, but useful ideas were generated and discussed. I wish to acknowledge the tireless and valuable contributions of our Secretary, Dugald MacTavish and also Deputy Chair, Prof. Liz Slooten, as well as Treasurer Rob Lawson, Nathan Surendran (IT specialist of Invercargill), and Prof. Janet Stephenson, who has provided valuable insight and also arranged the venue for our meetings. The continued support of committee members Brian Turner, Mark Jackson, Pat Scott, Jim Simpson, Philip Temple, Lisa Ellis, Donna Watson, Bob Lloyd, Jocelyn Harris and John Cocks, as well as Wellington member Peter Barrett and our two Student Interns, Jule Barth (2016) and Hannah Milner (2017), is also greatly appreciated, as is the complimentary use of the University facilities for our occasional public lecture.

Alan Mark, FRSNZ, KNZM. Chair. August 17, 2017.