



Jeanette Fitzsimons MP

Web Site: <http://www.greens.org.nz/people/jeanettefitzsimons>

Blog on activities <http://blog.greens.org.nz/tag/jeanette-fitzsimons/Fitzsimons> - [Keep coal in the hole](#)

Jeanette Fitzsimons was an MP from 1996 till 2010, and was Green Party Co-leader from 1995 until stepping down in June 2009.

Jeanette has been contributing to the energy debate in New Zealand since the nuclear power controversy of the seventies and has published on energy efficiency, sustainable energy and climate change. Her Energy Efficiency and Conservation Act, passed in May 2000, forms the framework for current policy on sustainable energy.

From 1980 until 1992 Jeanette taught in the Department of Planning at Auckland University, tutoring and lecturing in Environmental Studies and Energy Planning. During this time she published widely on the public policy aspects of energy and transport planning, management of hazardous substances, climate change, resource management and consumerism. She has also worked as a consultant for local authorities, regional councils and government departments on these issues, and worked with the government to develop the Land Transport Management Act.

First Talk - Saturday Morning

Sustainability: what are we trying to sustain?

- it's a question of values

Sustainability has become one of those words that can mean anything you want it to mean. Industry wants to sustain its profits. Politicians want to sustain (or increase) the rate of economic growth. Many take it to mean sustaining our current high consumption way of life - forever. Ecologists want to sustain the capacity of ecosystems to support life; the wealth of biodiversity; the geo-chemical processes on which we depend. For too many in poor countries, the best they can hope for is sustaining life itself.

Such flexibility of meaning allows us all to agree that sustainability is a Good Thing, while actually agreeing about nothing at all.

A sustainable economic and social system will be nothing like any system that exists today. Before we can sustain it we have to create it. That will be a product of both the limits of natural resources and what we collectively value. Let us start by being very clear about both.