

Quaker Climate Emergency Correspondent 10: 1 Here-turi-kōkā

He waka eke noa We are all in this canoe together

Kia ora f/Friends

Perfection. Horizontal rain; semi-frightening gusts; 6 degrees; icy computer keys. A wild Wellington southerly, just the way it should be.



Inspiration: A University of South Pacific law students' [campaign](#) became the Vanuatu call, which became the United Nations request for an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on the [obligations of States](#) in respect of climate change. I find the [Vanuatu Attorney General's call for support](#), and the work of [World Youth 4 Climate Justice](#) both inspirational and *an opportunity for Quaker action?*

The one sentence summary - from the Yearly Meeting Clerks' August Newsletter:

1. Would we like the Yearly Meeting Clerks to endorse the international call from [Faith leaders for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty](#), on behalf of our Yearly Meeting? and,
2. Help [QUNO \(Quaker United Nations Office\) – Human Impacts of Climate Change](#) via spiritual (holding in the light) and financial support -via the QPSANZ (Quaker Peace and Service Aotearoa New Zealand) account (38 9004 0795614 01), putting your name in the particulars, then send an email to QPSANZ Treasurer John Kavermann (john4qps@gmail.com) noting the amount donated, when it was deposited, and that it is for QUNO Climate Change work.

The Great Exotic Forest Debate

One of you asked about **carbon farming**. Here is my attempt:

Aotearoa New Zealand has a problem. We agreed to reduce **net** greenhouse gas (GHGs) emissions to 50 per cent below 2005 gross emissions by 2030 ([Paris Agreement 2015](#)), but we are lagging. Our total national emissions are fairly small by global standards, but around half of them come from our major export earner, [agriculture](#). This means keeping export dollars *and* reducing emissions gets tricky.

Enter exotic forests, or more specifically, pine trees.

Aotearoa NZ must achieve its **net 50%** reduction. **Net emissions** = Total Emissions minus the amount soaked up by [LULUCF](#) (land use, land-use change and forestry). Unlike agriculture, exotic forests can reduce our total emissions. So people (carbon farmers) get [carbon credits](#) or [economic benefits](#) from planting trees to soak up carbon dioxide or [sequestering carbon](#). The result is more farms being [converted to forestry](#) and more trees being planted (particularly fast growing radiata pine).

Back in 2005, we had a combined total of [9,500,000 dairy and beef cattle](#) and [10,600 hectares of newly planted forest](#), i.e. forest planted in the previous year; by 2022, that number had increased to just over [10,000,000 cattle](#) ([numbers have been falling in the last couple of years](#)) and [34,000 hectares of newly planted forest](#) - a 320% increase. Good?

My honest answer is - I am confused. Issues raised by others include:

- Worries about the [increasing abundance of pine forests](#) and land [sales to overseas investors](#)

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- Te Tiriti o Waitangi and forestry's importance for many Māori
- Why aren't we planting native species?
- Why don't we just do more to reduce emissions?
- NZ has far fewer total national emissions than most countries and reducing emissions is economically expensive
- Agriculture's intensity is harming both animal welfare and the environment
- All that slash from forestry made the impact of extreme weather events worse
- Problems around carbon credit stockpiling and reduced prices (making it cheaper to pollute); confused messages about carbon pricing; and the legal challenge resulting in the number of units being reduced and the price increasing



I finished the baby mat

We can all learn more and we can all have a say. There are two significant Government consultations on the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) - one on the scheme generally; the other on issues around forestry. Both are **due on August 11** (see video). Issues include pine trees, buying credits and/or reducing emissions, employment matters, and meeting our international agreements. We can make quick submissions here.

Nothing will happen about the consultation until after the election. Obviously different parties have different views on carbon farming. We will hear announcements over the next few weeks, but there are some hints from what parties have already said (in alphabetical order):

- **ACT** - tie New Zealand's emissions cap to main trading partners' emissions (China, USA, Australia, Japan, S Korea); "ditch" the Zero Carbon Act and the Climate Change Commission
- **Green Party** - want "right tree in the right place at the right time"; Mātauranga Māori; and, avoid harm to farmed animals and native ecosystems, as well as avoiding damaging intensification
- **Labour** - Are currently reviewing the scheme. They want to empower local councils to decide which land can be used for plantation and carbon forests, but avoid blanket planting of productive land.
- **National** - Want to help farmers and growers embrace new technology to reduce agricultural emissions, and avoid unlimited farm-to-forest conversions
- **Te Pati Māori** - Will be making announcements. They want regenerative agriculture and to avoid emissions from intensive farming practices.

Other issues:

Take part in: Online seminar from Motu on helping communities and organisations run their own just transition processes. Read the guidebook here. 7 August (thank you Gray).

Read: Global temperature rises; Concern about the oil and gas industries

Watch: Faith and the mission to protect our planet; Mana Moana – Pacific Voices; Antarctic ice sheets lecture (Victoria University).... And ... Bjørn Lomborg: Rising temperatures will save lives

Enjoy: relaxing stream music (hint - go to the loo first) and See the Big Picture (thank you Jillian)

Ngā mihi nui, Philippa

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