

Climate Emergency Correspondent 2024, No. 2, 20 Huitanguru

He iti, he iti kahikātoa

Though little, it is still a mānuka tree (small things can be very strong)

A story: A f/Friend, my son and granddaughter photographed this beautiful little mokomoko/ lizard at Kaitorete Spit. Next day, we heard that [Tāwhaki National Aerospace Centre](#) has opened [1km of tar seal runway](#) at Kaitorete. The idea is “to advance Aotearoa’s aerospace industry and rejuvenate the unique whenua (land) at Kaitorete”. I hope this little one will be ok.



Kia ora f/Friends

Thank you very much to Dorothy, Cam, Elizabeth, Joel, Marvin, Elizabeth, Jillian, and others for sharing your thoughts about the climate weekend. More on this soon.

Read this bit

[War and the Environment Online Course](#) 4 March – 14 April 1-2 hours per week minimum from [World Beyond War](#) – thank you Liz

What does humanity want to achieve? - Reduced emissions? Care for creation? Prevent environmental overshoot? Preserve our current way of life? Is the quest for renewables about to become a race for resources and profits? Anyone else confused?

An attempt to help us think about where we are going with these questions:

Internationally, [Cop 28](#) has us transitioning away from fossil fuel energy systems. **And,** it calls on us to accelerate *nuclear technology, encourage carbon capture, low carbon hydrogen production, rapidly develop suitable infrastructure, rapidly deploy zero and low emission vehicles; triple renewable energy capacity* and, double the global average annual rate of energy efficiency improvements by 2030 as we head towards zero emission energy.

A/NZ has many environmental problems which include: reducing net emissions of all greenhouse gases (apart from biogenic methane) to zero by 2050 under the [Zero Carbon Act](#) (we have managed a [6% decrease](#) in emissions since our 2006 peak); Rivers and lakes in poor health; 72 thousand people, 50 thousand buildings and 191 marae at risk of coastal flooding; Much water, transport, electricity and other infrastructure is either old or inadequate; Much high-quality land is either built on or degraded; Natural disaster adaptation and recovery challenges; Issues relating to Te Ao Māori; and, Pacific neighbours at the forefront of climate change (see [Ministry for the Environment Briefing to the Incoming Minister](#), handy chart on p.29).

Deep Breath

Here in Aotearoa NZ the Government’s focus is on productivity and economic growth; safety from crime; lifting educational achievement; improving housing affordability; improving government funded / public service efficiency and effectiveness; restoring price stability; and, providing income tax relief. The two new coalition agreements present (a) building our energy producing capacity;

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and (b) extracting raw materials useful for renewables as key parts of this focus on productivity and economic development growth ([National and ACT](#); [National and NZ First](#)).

There is a mention of climate change - *ensuring that climate change policies are aligned and do not undermine national energy security* ([NZ First](#), p.6).

The race for renewables, building renewable energy capacity and us - Globally, there is increasing demand for the resources, particularly the natural resources, required to build the renewables infrastructure and provide the chemicals required for renewable energy generation. Maybe this is a reason why our new government is proposing to rewrite the *resource management laws premised on the enjoyment of property rights as a guiding principle* ([ACT](#), p.6) and simplify the *planning processes including amending the Public Works Act and the Reserves Act* ([NZ First](#), p.5). The thinking appears to be that it will be easier to: *exploit renewable energy opportunities; allow farmers to farm; get more houses built; and enhance primary sector including fish and aquaculture, forestry, pastoral, horticulture and mining*. **But at what environmental cost and how will it help us meet our 2030 and 2050 commitments?**

The government is also bringing back offshore oil and gas exploration *to maximise future energy resilience; and moving to investigate new strategic opportunities in New Zealand's mineral resources including natural geological hydrogen, and vanadium* ([NZ First](#), p. 6). [Vanadium](#) is useful in renewables but involves seabed mining. There may be economic benefits, but how does exploiting new oil and gas sources fit with our climate change commitments; and will a simplified planning process ensure the environmental safety of seabed mining?

Finally, **Pacific neighbours** – At the UN COP 28 gathering in Nov/ December 2023, our new Climate Change Minister, [Simon Watts](#), announced that New Zealand is *committed to ... working with the private sector so they make transformative investments... [and] collaborating with our Pacific neighbours on climate change. It is the number one security threat to our region*. See, for example, developing issues around the Cook Islands and [deep-sea mining](#).

Where to from here? Contradictory questions and priorities in what we are trying to do result in conflicting answers. Expect more litigation like that initiated by Kaumatua [Mike Smith](#)'s Supreme Court case over the negative impact of major greenhouse gas emitters on his [family's and tribe's land, water and cultural values](#) (thank you Joel). Expect more collective calls for equitable responses to climate issues such as the [interfaith call](#) at COP 28 for *a new narrative to act against false market- and technology-driven solutions, short-termism, and economic models that do not prioritize the health of our communities and ecosystems* (thank you Lindsey). Expect more – er – odd? technical innovations such as an [underwater curtain for Antarctica](#), and a [giant sun umbrella](#).

Ideas here - [Pathways to Survival](#) (thank you Deborah)

Inspiration here - Thank you Alan Perry - [Manawa Karioi](#) is an ecological restoration project which Wellington Quakers have been involved in for over 30 years, and are currently helping to finance.

Cheering up here – [Rescuing Fiona the Sheep](#) (thank you Jillian)

I hope some of this helps, Ngā mihi nui, Philippa

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