



It was great to see New Zealanders embracing World Environment Day.

Throughout the country, hundreds of organisations including schools, councils and other community involved themselves with a wide range of World Environment Day activities.

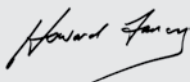
What impressed me was how the many people and organisations involved did not see the activities as one off events. Rather people saw the day as an opportunity for ongoing engagement, discussion and debate on environmental issues.

For example, at a number of business related events it was great to see the commitment to developing reporting on, and measurement of, the environmental impacts of different companies and sectors. It was good to also see the importance being attached to independent verification of such measures and reporting.

The wide range of events associated with World Environment Day can give us all more confidence about the future and the interest and growing commitment amongst New Zealanders to live more sustainable lives.

My thanks to the many people across New Zealand who helped set up, organise and support the many events that took place across New Zealand. You have all helped make a difference to the future of this country. My thanks also to Ministry staff for their hard work in helping to make the day a success.

Kind Regards



Howard Fancy

ACTING SECRETARY
FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
MINISTRY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

World Environment Day takes off

Support for New Zealand's hosting of World Environment Day on 5 June has exceeded coordinators' expectations.

More than 300 events nationwide took up the 'Kick the Habit' carbon reduction challenge. People cleaned up streams, planted native plants and trees, went carless for a day, debated, attended talks, displays, seminars and demonstrations, and even 'froze' (see picture).

The activities were many and varied. An Auckland zookeeper painted animals for an art exhibition. Free tree seedlings were offered to motorists filling their cars in North Canterbury. Students from Renwick School in Marlborough tried getting through a day without electricity.

Todd Kriebel, who oversaw the Ministry for the Environment's support and coordination, said: "The degree of community engagement has been tremendous. We couldn't have hoped for more." There were probably two factors in this – greater interest in sustainability

globally, and New Zealanders' own "ingrained" environmental awareness.

"We are seeing a big shift in social preference – people are now thinking about how to live their lives differently. What it means to be 'clean and green' is changing rapidly, and we need to keep ahead of the curve," he said.

The community events were complemented by national-level 'core events.' These included a major Art for the Environment exhibition at Te Papa, an International Children's Painting Competition, and a Hillary Commission Symposium, 'Leadership in Climate Change Solutions' (see story inside).

The Green Ribbon Awards in Wellington on 3 June honoured the outstanding contributions to New Zealand's environment by individuals, community organisations, business and local government.



> Green freeze: Wellington lunchtime shoppers came across a "frozen" group on World Environment Day, including the musicians and seated people. They "froze" for five minutes to promote the day's aims.

➤ Rising to the climate change challenge

Back in 1953, the year Sir Edmund Hillary first climbed Mt Everest, 'climate change' meant nothing more than a change in the weather.

These days, climate change presents an entirely different, Everest-like challenge for mankind – and the challenge is being taken up in Sir Ed's name.

The Hillary Institute, which promotes international leadership, has chosen climate change solutions as the focus of its first four years of operation.

Executive Director Mark Prain said the Institute's international board had chosen climate change because it was the "zeitgeist issue of the day" – and the board, like Sir Ed, was not going to duck a big challenge.

"Sir Ed did say he would be delighted if we took on a topic initially that was sympathetic to his particular interests. We believe that this choice fundamentally achieves that," he said.

The Institute is focused on climate change solutions. "We are not expecting as an institute to become experts in climate change. Our interest is in extraordinary mid-career leadership. We are saying to our climate change partners worldwide, you tell us who is worthy of investment, who deserves further support."

Each year the Institute awards an international laureate recognising emerging leaders. Every four years, it will make its premiere 'Hillary Step' award, currently worth \$200,000, and ultimately \$1 million.

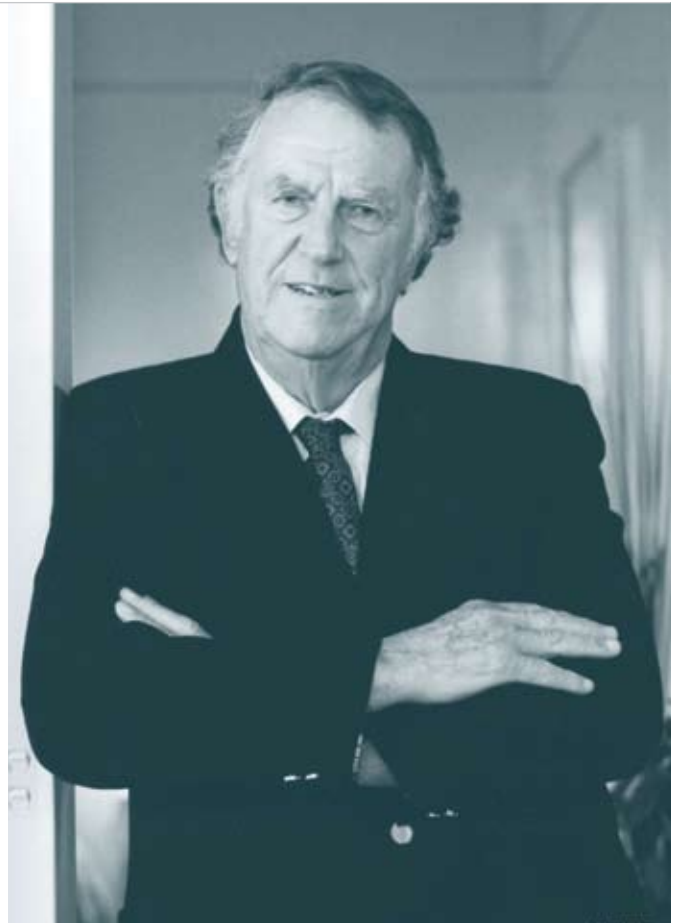
"The laureates will be people already active in climate change, at the mid-point of their careers and making a profound difference. We would look to leverage their work as an ambassador on the global stage for a year.

"The Gore climate change project is parallel to ours, training people from all over the world. This is smaller but higher level," Mr Prain said.

On World Environment Day, the Institute ran its first annual symposium on Leadership in Climate Change Solutions at the Christchurch Art Gallery. This was hosted by Dr Rajendra Pachauri, Chair of the Nobel Prize-winning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

Other participants included Prime Minister Helen Clark, President Anote Tong of Kiribati, and the Institute's recently-appointed Senior Fellow, Matt Petersen, CEO and President of Global Green (USA).

Mr Prain said that Matt Petersen, who was an acknowledged expert in the climate change field, typified the quality of mid-career leadership sought. He had worked on high-profile US sustainability programmes over many years alongside Mikhail Gorbachev, the Founding President of Green Cross International. His work included helping the rebuilding of the Hurricane Katrina-devastated New Orleans.



> Sir Edmund Hillary



HILLARY INSTITUTE

THE ASCENT OF GREAT LEADERSHIP

↘ Getting business on board

Business interest in sustainability is growing, based on the visitor numbers in the 'Sustainability Zone' at this year's Small Business Expos in Auckland and Christchurch.

Joanna McKay, coordinator of the Ministry for the Environment's collaborative 'Sustainable Business Support Services' stand at the expos, said there had been a steady stream of visitors, most of whom were at an early stage of the sustainability journey.

"There was a wide range of enquiries from people wanting to know as much as possible about sustainability and the opportunities it presented for their businesses," she said.

"Some had a limited view of sustainability in terms of only focusing on waste reduction and energy efficiency. They hadn't seen the other opportunities to include sustainable practice in their businesses, for example through staff well-being, community programmes, and greening their supply chains," she said.

Sustainability will also be prominent at the Wellington Small Business Expo in late June.



> Talking sustainability: Diane Winder of The Natural Step (right) chats with an Auckland Small Business Expo visitor.

↘ Switching on savings

Switching off appliances is good for the environment and the power bill – but keeping track of all the switches in a modern home can be difficult.

Now, an Auckland manufacturer has developed a range of 'IntelliSwitches' that turn appliances on or off as necessary if the user forgets, taking the hassle out of home energy use management.

The switches, made by eSource, can be programmed to turn off after a set time. Alternatively, the heated towel rail switch can be programmed to be on for four hours in the morning and four in the evening, saving 16 hours' usage a day while keeping towels dry. According to eSource, the switch pays for itself, including installation cost, within a year.

Managing director Michael Wake believes that the switches are the first of their kind anywhere.

"No electrical wholesaler in New Zealand has seen anything like it," he says. "I have researched it internationally and can't find any equivalent.

"There are other timers, but none is so ideal for intermittent use. You just push the button at any time to cancel it – it's easy to use for anyone of any age."

Between them, the five different IntelliSwitch products cover lights, heaters, ovens, and other appliances. Most of the switches have five preset on-off time options, ranging from 15 minutes to three hours.

The switches are made at eSource's factory in St Johns, Auckland and supplied through wholesalers, as they must be installed by an electrician. Mr Wake says there has been interest and repeat business from around the country.



> Michael Wake holds an IntelliSwitch.

↳ Sustaina-briefs

Greening Greytown

Wairarapa's Greytown has become a 'Greentown' for a month, starting on World Environment Day and ending on 3 July, the town's traditional Arbor Day. With support from the Ministry for the Environment, the town will encourage households and businesses to "kick the carbon habit" through information and materials. Greytown held New Zealand's first Arbor Day in 1890. Greater Wellington Regional Council's web page www.gw.govt.nz/greentown lists events and activities in Greytown's 'Greentown' month.

> Greytown school students delivering bags with master of deliveries Warren Field



Sustainability site gets thumbs up

The Ministry for the Environment's sustainability.govt.nz website has been praised on the *Stuff* news website, with reviewer Matthew Cutler-Welsh commending the site as "a good start for children or those wanting some basic ideas about what they can do to help the environment in everyday life." Cutler-Welsh highlighted the 'myth-busting panels' and real-life case studies on the site. His review is at www.stuff.co.nz/blogs/ecocentric/2008/05/26/next-step/

"Good" good to go

New Zealand's first carbon neutral sustainability magazine hit newsstands in early June, to coincide with World Environment Day. 'Good – New Zealand's Guide to Sustainable Living' will focus on "inspiring change in the way New Zealanders think about living and consuming," according to founding editor Francesca Price. The 130-plus page magazine will appear six times a year, and is accompanied by a website, www.good.net.nz

Environment second-top concern

A recent survey has rated the environment second behind child abuse as the issue of most concern to New Zealanders. The Cigna Life Insurance 'State of the Nation' survey of 1000 people found that two-thirds of New Zealanders believe life is getting harder overall, and rated child abuse, environment and the cost of living as their top three concerns. 91 per cent described themselves as 'very concerned' or 'quite concerned' about the environment. The survey also identified climate change among the top ten issues of concern.

First green search engine

A New Zealand website claiming to be the world's first 'green' search engine, offsetting carbon emissions at no cost to the user, was launched recently. The site, www.ecocho.co.nz sponsors up to two trees for every 1000 searches made through Yahoo and Google. Founder Tim Macdonald said ecocho aimed to reinvest 70 per cent of the site's revenue in forestry schemes. "As the site progresses, we'll begin to support similar carbon-offsetting schemes in other states and countries," he said.

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