

St Luke's Seminar – Climate Change 10 May 2017

Collated comments and opinions expressed at the Open Forum section of the Seminar

The need to address Climate Change

- We've signed up to the Paris Agreement!
- At Paris Agreement meetings, New Zealand is considered to have a bad performance and attitude.
- A NZ Post survey of about 8,000 respondents showed people want a clean, green, fair society. Prosperity was lower on the list.
- Society has a role in nurturing children & how they think about climate change
- Schools are moving on civic education.
- Check out Bronwyn Hayward's book – "Children, Citizenship and Environment – Nurturing a democratic imagination in a changing world" [*Refer to the reference section of this website.*]

Population

- Population growth needs to be addressed. It was a major issue in the 1970s; why don't we talk about it now?
- Improvement in quality of life doesn't necessarily lead to population growth. (*The evidence is that continuing economic growth is required to reduce poverty [See book by Mike Flynn, p53 – refer to the reference section of this website.] and to reduce population growth, particularly in Africa*)
- Once Africa has birth control, population will fall.

Actions to reduce emissions

- We need sustainable development goals.
- What motivates decisions? Pricing? Subsidising?
- Put a price on carbon.

Agriculture

- Cut down on red meat and dairy, both of which have a high carbon footprint. (*They are also currently a major cause of degradation of fresh-water lakes and rivers*).
- Shift from dairy to horticulture.
- Look at the work of Alison Dewes and Mike Joy from Massey University showing the dairy industry is a net cost for New Zealand.
- Dairy emissions could be reduced by de-intensification.

Transport

- Transport: The environmental difference between light rail and electric buses? The capacity of rail provides operational efficiency and reduces roading requirements.
- Or will autonomous electric cars take over?
- Need for transport: centralised shopping (supermarkets etc) has increased the need for cars. Should this trend be reversed?
- I bike as much as I can: it provides exercise, and can be re-charged by solar.
- We can get by without cars.

Is there any up-side to climate change?

- Can we explore the advantages of a warmer earth and more wind?
- Any advantage would be negligible compared to the disadvantages.

Leadership

- We need courageous leadership
- From the new French President Macron – “We are going to be leaders on climate change”
- There are encouraging political moves, such as Globe-NZ which is a cross-party group of politicians who have signed an agreement to work together on how to address climate change. *[Refer to the reference section of this website.]*

Action on policy

- “I have been to several similar meetings. I feel helpless. I need something ongoing and worthwhile, not just talk.”
- “Politicians know what to do, we just don't know what to do that will also get us re-elected.”
- Many people don't believe in man-made climate change. There's a need to convince voters.
- Older people aren't convinced about climate change. Young people don't debate the science – they accept that climate change is happening.
- Interesting work has been done *(by Bronwyn Howard?)* on the institutional void between science and policy.
- There is a lot of misinformation.
- The Wellington Branch of UN Association of NZ is working on questions for people to take to politicians regarding the Sustainable Development Goals and cross-party work. *(See <http://www.unanz.org.nz/>)*
- To influence change, we need enough people asking for the same thing, then making their position known, and asking and voting for leaders who share their position.
- Progressive countries like Germany, Sweden are more nurturing, less busy, can think globally.
- We have an inward-looking culture. Let's look outward, be community-focussed. Get involved in groups, make submissions.
- **Zero carbon Act**, led by Generation Zero, which promotes an apolitical flexible process for setting targets and plans . **NOTE** – a Meeting was held 20 May, at the Anglican Centre, Wellington, to consider the role of churches in the campaign for a Zero Carbon Act. **This is an active Work in Progress!**

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