

7 December 2007

New Zealand Society for Sustainability Engineering and Science (NZSSES)

Launch event for the 3rd International Conference on Sustainability Engineering and Science: *Blueprints for Sustainable Infrastructure*.

Speech delivered by Carol Boyle, Chair, NZSSES at the conference launch event.

Good evening ladies and gentlemen with a particular welcome to Vice Chancellor Stuart McCutcheon, Dean Michael Davies, John Blackham, Royal Society, John Cunningham IPENZ foundation and Society Members. For those of you who do not know me, I am Carol Boyle, Chair of the NZ society for Sustainability Engineering and Science. I would like to introduce the members of our committee, Ron McDowall, who has just flown in from Hanoi, Yassenko Krpo, Mark Smith, Dwayne Pretli, John Peet and, of course our excellent conference manager Vicky Adin. I offer apologies from Zoe Burkitt who is in Christchurch expecting a baby and Misty Skinner who is in Wellington trying to keep the politicians in line.

Our Society's second conference was held in February of this year and was highly successful, attracting 200 delegates and presenting over 90 papers. We were highly delighted with the quality of the papers and, indeed, six of the top papers are to be published in the journal *Civil Engineering and Environmental Systems*.

I have spent some time since that conference discussing our next step. It was agreed by all delegates that they would like to see our conferences continue and, as a learned society, we feel this is quite important. Trying to sort out the timing to suit both North and South has always been a problem and we have finally agreed that a conference in the second week of December would be best for everyone. It gives me great pleasure, therefore, to announce the Third International Conference on Sustainability Engineering and Science to be held Dec. 9 – 12, 2008.

The theme of this conference is 'Blueprints for Sustainable Infrastructure'. Infrastructure provides the basic needs for society, and sustainable infrastructure systems are essential for the survival, health and well-being of a society. These are complex, interdependent and dynamic systems in need of greater understanding and recognition. Key to this understanding is recognising the dependence on environmental systems and services, the interdependence on other infrastructure systems, and on social, technical and economic systems.

This is particularly pertinent considering the aging infrastructures found in many major cities, the increasing levels of storms and the resulting effects on places such as New Orleans and the expected effects of global warming on sea level rise and flooding. When I was in the US in July this year, they had a major bridge failure, an explosion of old steam pipes near Grand Central station and huge tie-ups in air traffic due to overwhelming use. The main issue being discussed in the media was the degradation of infrastructure. And of course just before I arrived in the UK they had some of the worst flooding in over 100 years.

For the third year running the International Centre for Sustainability Engineering and Research based in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering here at the University will be a principle sponsor. We are delighted at this point to announce a co-principle sponsorship with the Centre for Sustainable Development at Cambridge University UK, and a joint venture partnership which will see the Conference held in Cambridge on alternate years. The aim is to have these conferences seen as the primary engineering and science conferences on sustainability. We are also pleased to announce that Watercare has taken a green level sponsorship for the third time.

We would especially like to thank the University of Auckland and the Faculty of Engineering for the generous use of the School as a venue for the Conference for the second time. This venue has proved to be highly suitable and we are grateful that we are able to use these facilities.

Keynote Speakers:

- [Dr Jean Venables](#) OBE FREng. of Crane Environmental, England. Among Dr Venables' other credentials she is Chairman of the Thames Estuary Partnership and Chairman of the Expert Panel for the Thames Estuary 2100 Project.
- [Dr Peter Newman](#) is Professor of City Policy and Director of the Institute for Sustainability and Technology Policy at Murdoch University. He is also Chair of the Western Australian Sustainability Roundtable advising the Premier on how to implement the State Sustainability Strategy.
- [Prof. Terry Collins](#) is the Thomas Lord Professor of Chemistry at Carnegie Mellon University (CMU). Professor Collins is one of the founders of the field of Green Chemistry.
- [Jeanette Fitzsimons](#), Co-leader, New Zealand Green Party.
- [Prof. Peter Guthrie](#), Centre for Sustainable Development, Cambridge. We welcome Peter back to our shores. And ...
- [Dr Carol Boyle](#) is Chair of NZSSES and Director of ICSEER.

Workshop Presenters:

- Prof. Jorge Vanegas -- Sustainable Community Scenarios
- Dr Ron McDowall -- Frontier Design and Future Thinking Scenarios

We also announce the Call for Papers this evening. There are three main themes –

Developing Sustainable Communities, including:

- Governance, policy and planning
- Developed versus developing communities
- Innovative design
- Resource and needs management
- Measurement, metrics and modelling
- Other

Delivering Sustainable Infrastructure, including:

- Water
- Energy
- Buildings
- Transport
- Waste
- Other

Designing Sustainable Global Solutions, including:

- Addressing climate change
- Resource depletion
- Megacities (including population growth and consumption)
- Ageing infrastructure
- Conflict and disaster
- Other

I would like to introduce the Dean of Engineering, Prof. Michael Davies, who is a strong supporter of sustainability. He has only been here since March but I am sure he understands how important NZers view sustainability and value the clean, green image we have. Micheal...

Thank you, vice chancellor. I would like to ask you to take copies of the Call for Papers, the Call for Sponsors and vicky's card. She is always delighted to answer any questions you may have regarding the conference.

We expect this conference will help foster and develop the understanding of delivering sustainable infrastructure. Attending the conference will be invaluable to anyone involved in the disciplines of engineering, environmental and social science, and for consultants and business leaders amongst others. We look forward to seeing you there.

And for the rest of the evening, please enjoy the wine and food.