

New Zealand Centre for Ecological Economics

Ecological Economics now has a firm footing in New Zealand. On 26 April this year, the Minister for Research Science and Technology opened the New Zealand Centre for Ecological Economics. The NZ government is funding the Centre through a \$6million grant – a clear indication of its commitment to the need for innovative research in areas like Ecological Economics.

NZCEE is a joint venture between Massey University and Landcare Research Ltd. The Centre will focus on policy–relevant Ecological Economics research, as well as having an active teaching programme offering Masterate and PhD level degrees. Through Massey University’s distance teaching programme it is hoped that degree and certificate programmes will be available internationally as well as within New Zealand.

The Centre has two flagship research programmes: The *Sustainable Pathways* programme aims to assist cities and regions to manage economic development and plan for sustainable outcomes. This research will enable cities and regions to plan strategies for sustainable development by providing them with information on alternative scenarios. These scenarios will seek to illuminate and link the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

The other research programme, *Ecological Footprint Plus*, measures sustainability in the primary production sectors of the New Zealand economy. The initial years of the project will focus on measuring resource and material flows in these industries, and integrating this information into indicator frameworks such as the ecological footprint. The ultimate objective is to provide ‘what if’ type scenario projections to explore ways to minimise the impact of the primary industries on the environment while still retaining an efficient export sector – important for the social and economic future of New Zealand. The main end-users of the research are industry and business, which face increasing pressure to produce products that are ‘clean and green’.

NZCEE’s main areas of research include: industrial and urban ecology, sustainability of the tourism industry, environmental valuation, ecological foot-printing, economics of sustainability options, scenario modelling, ecosystem services, environmental accounting of the macro-economy, sustainability indicators and urban metabolism.

Staff members of NZCEE include: Professor Murray Patterson (NZCEE Director) , Dr Nigel Jollands, Dr Anthony Cole, Dr Nancy Golubiewski, Associate Professor Bruce Glavovic, Vicky Forgie, Garry McDonald and Kathy McGregor. Further details including staff profiles are available from our Website: <http://www.nzcee.org.nz>

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