

## Our Climate

Climate change is an issue that is important to us all.

New Zealand has an interesting position on the issue, one that grabbed my attention more when I sat down and talked to green activist, Graham Jury.

Jury is committed to saving Happy Valley on the West Coast of New Zealand.

I posed some questions to Jury about the coal coming out of Happy Valley.

My questions and his answers follow in this article on New Zealand's Happy Valley.

Cheers Don

aa. Do you have any hard data on the amount of coal being removed each day?

bb. Do you know what the carbon imession is from this coal being burnt?

cc. Do you know where the coal is going specifically? ie "China" is not the answer I'm looking for. Who's using it? What are they producing? What alternative source of energy could they use?

dd. What revenue is NZ bringing from this coal each week? What can be done to replace that income and give the people jobs that are easier to do and pay more?

ee. It is not ok to dig coal from the ground to polute other places around the earth and then sell those same nations 'a clean green New Zealand image'.

ff. Do you have any video of what's happening in these places for those of us who haven't visited? Have you put such video on YouTube so the world can see it?

gg. What do you know about electricity generation by wave currents? I understand there are two companies looking at the issue, however both are small and underfunded as I understand it.

hh. If we're not going to use coal to generate power, what are you suggesting we should be doing here in Canterbury to help the rest of the country?

Jury's responses follow...Hi Don,b. The Cyprus Mine planned for Happy Valley holds 12.5 million tonnes of coal, which when burned would emmit approximately 16 million tonnes of carbon dioxide. The concept of 'clean green New Zealand' is pretty contestible to begin with. This phrase was first coined regarding the clearfelling of native old-growth forest by white colonists, who were converting wilderness to pasture. Open grassy terraformed alien fields were appealing to the British, and hence were 'clean and green'. The term is now used in PR marketing of New Zealand to connotate environmental friendliness and pristineness. This connotation is grossly undeserved as our national environmental policy is fairly archaic compared to many European countries. At face value NZ looks quite pristine but this is largely because it has only been recently colonised by an industrial culture and still has a low population. We have simply not had enough time yet alter New Zealand's ecology as badly as many other countries. NZ is however a world leader in some aspects of conservation biology. Our developments in this field became necessary after a third of our endemic birds became extinct and most of the remainder endangered.SHVC consider the carbon footprint caused from burning New Zealand coal to be New Zealand's responsibility. It is utter hypocrisy to impliment public policy to cut down national CO2 emmisions when in fact the country is making money by exporting fossil fuels for other countries to burn. SHVC believe NZ should live up to its reputation of environmentalism by becoming a world leader in renewable, sustainable energy and technology. By failing to do so NZ's clean and green image provides negative reinforcement for more industrial countries to continue their destructive practices. If NZ arent doing anything... why should they? Though I have my own opinions on your other questions, my response awaits further feedback from the Coalition network. You can find a reasonably good outline of the Coalition and some accompanying images at [www.savehappyvalley.org.nz](http://www.savehappyvalley.org.nz)talk to you soon,Graham  
Hi Don,To continue my answersaa. Does SHVC have any hard data on the amount of coal being removed each day?Coal mined per day is 2.2 m tonne divided by 365. This figure is for Stockton Mine, the largest and only economically sustainable Solid Energy coal mine. Stockton Mine expanded last year into the Mt Augustus ecological district. The mine destroyed this unique 16 hectare ecosystem, leaving only half a hectare. Happy Valley is across a ridgeline from Stockton, but the planned Cypress Mine is essentially another extension of this same project.

cc. Do you know where the coal is going specifically? ie "China" is not the answer I'm looking for. Who's using it? What, specifically are they producing? Solid Energy export coal is sold to Japan, China, South Africa, Brazil and India. The Augustus coal, which is high quality, is mixed with other coal and being sold to Mitsubishi Chemical (Japan) 120ktpa, Baosteel (China) 180ktpa, Usiminas (Brazil) 120ktpa, Iscor (South Africa) 300ktpa, Steel Association of India 300ktpa (500 for 2005/2006), Mitsui Mining Corp (Japan) 180ktpa, Nippon Steel (Japan) 180ktpa

Our understanding is that these companies are primarily producing steel. Steel can also be made using electricity for heating, although a very small proportion of coal may still be required for the carbon content (one percent of the steel is carbon).

cc Video footage of Happy Valley and Stockton Mine used by SHVC can be viewed here:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O86nMP\\_YYQI](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O86nMP_YYQI)

(part 1)

then search for part 2

and also its here in one piece:

<http://video.indymedia.org/en/2007/01/685.shtml>

dd. What revenue is NZ bringing from this coal each week? What can be done to replace that income and give the people jobs that are easier to do and pay more? New Zealand exports approx 2m tonnes of coal per annum (just about all of which is from Stockton). (Total NZ production is 5m tonnes per annum or so). Solid's annual report will have information pertaining to the price of coal. This is an issue that is somewhat contentious within SHVC. We would not be so arrogant as to presume to speak for West Coasters who are financially tied to the coal industry. The New Zealand government has a serious responsibility, as indeed do all New Zealanders to set up infrastructure on the Coast to provide alternative employment. This process will not be easy and will need creative and serious thought from many parties. One note of import regarding this is that the West Coast have all of their produce delivered from Christchurch and elsewhere by trucking companies. The automotive industry tied up with supplying the Coast with food and commodities is quite large, and arguably pretty unnecessary. In the long run, everyone will benefit if the Coast have the means to sustainably develop their own agriculture and production. Sooner or later, this will have to happen, as West Coast coal is a finite resource. We do not want this to be later, we want to see developments in progress. The Save Happy valley Coalition by itself can be no more than a catalyst to prompt the necessary discussion and development required. With support and involvement from wider society there is potential for much more. We continue to pursue forums of discussion with any Coast platform that is keen to involve us.

gg What do you know about electricity generation by wave currents? I

understand there are two companies looking at the issue, however both

are small and underfunded as I understand it. Apparently tidal power (as opposed to wave) is the go for NZ and the govt has put \$8 million into research on this, and there is a company who are about ready to put in resource consents for a prototype in Cook Strait. We are keen for renewable, sustainable technology of this kind. Naturally, it is important to pick areas that are not ecological hotspots or of spiritual significance to nearby hapu.

hh If we're not going to use coal to generate power, what does SHVC suggest the community in Canterbury should be doing to help the rest of the country? Canterbury can be doing all the usual things - installing solar hot water heaters, insulating houses and discouraging dairy farm expansion.  
-regards, Graham (SHVC) Graham can be contacted at [savehappyvalley@yahoo.com](mailto:savehappyvalley@yahoo.com)