

Connect the dots between fossil fuels and climate change

3rd May 2012

On May 3rd Wellington was one of the first in the world to launch 350.org's Connect the Dots project. 350.org's Wellington group presented their petition "A future run on fossil fuels is no future at all" to MPs Gareth Hughes of the Green Party and Moana MacKey of the Labour Party at noon on Parliament lawn. 350.org's petition asks for the House of Representatives to support the transition away from fossil fuels to a renewable, clean energy future.

Over 2000 New Zealanders have signed the petition, demanding that Members of Parliament put in place an immediate 10 year freeze on all new coal mining in New Zealand, expand the current 90% renewable electricity by 2050 target to a target of 100% renewable and create an accompanying action plan, including interim targets every five years to make sure we stay on track.

The presentation of the petition "A future run on fossil fuels is no future at all" highlights 350.org's concern about the impact that New Zealand's current fossil fuel dependence will have on climate change. "New Zealand's coal mining agenda will be a real cause of climate change and result in extreme weather around the world," says Rachel Hay of 350 Aotearoa, "we have real responsibility to make rapid change now, for those feeling the effects of climate change and for the generations to come."

This marks one of the first of many demonstrations around the world on May 5th, Climate Impacts Day. This day launches 350.org's Connect the Dots project which aims to shine a spotlight on the links between fossil fuels, climate change and extreme weather being experienced around the world. Internationally, climbers will unfurl giant dots on glaciers in the Alps, villagers will carry dots to their drought stricken fields in Kenya, firefighters will hold dots in burn forests in New Mexico, and well as many others.

ENDS

Attached image: 350.org's Wellington supporters present their petition to Gareth Hughes and Moana MacKey

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

All events across the globe on www.climatedots.org

350.org Connect the Dots video:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=s5a5O2p0s5A

Recent NIWA article on Stuff - extreme flooding could be annual
<http://www.stuff.co.nz/environment/6832750/Extreme-floods-could-be-annual>

The costs associated with extreme weather events in NZ
<http://www.icnz.org.nz/current/weather/>

EVENTS HAPPENING IN NZ AND PACIFIC:

NZ Connect the Dots events

Auckland, NZ: Connect Auckland:

In Mission Bay a group of people will build a Human Wall of Dots roughly to the height of the Tamaki Drive Seawall representing the protection Auckland will need over the next 90 years if we continue to burn fossil fuels: the necessary height of protection from sea level rise and coastal storms.

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Golden Bay, NZ: 'One in 500 Year' Rain Event - Connect the Dots:

Connect the dots between climate change and the buried house that resulted due to a landslide from a 'One in 500 Year' rain event. Recognising the effects from this rain event with the resulting numerous landslides in this region, the record breaking flooding of the Aorere River and the dramatically changed landscape is Connecting the Dots of extreme weather and climate change.

Contact: Jo-Anne Vaughan, javn@xtra.co.nz, +64 226136185 or Karen +64 3 525 8874

Rotorua, NZ: Rotorua Goes Dotty!:

Displays using old painted 33 LPs marked with local or global extreme weather events will join the dots around Rotorua Lakefront! Some local information about the lake temperatures and alternatives to fossil fuels will be provided. Schools and the public are invited to join in making and connecting the dots at a fun filled event for a very serious issue affecting us all.

Contact: Justin Ford- Roberston, 350 Aotearoa, justin.ford-robertson@350.org.nz

Nelson, NZ: Connect the Dots Treasure Hunt and Art Exhibition:

The public is invited to "treasure hunt" at various Nelson businesses that will display different topics about climate change where a clue can be found. The Treasure Hunt will be launched on May 5 and include topics such as Sustainable Transport in Nelson; how Sea Level Rise affects our neighbours in the Pacific; what Climate Change Will Mean for our Native Fauna, such as the tuatara; and Clean Energy Solutions. Plus, check out Kush Cafe for a 350 Photo Exhibition.

Contact: Carlo Wiegand, c.wiegand@xtra.co.nz , +64 211229439)

Top 5 Connect the Dots Events in the Pacific

Palau: 'Ridge to Reef' – In Palau they'll be showing the impacts of climate change across the their land and ocean. They will start out holding up dots at the ridge of the local hills to highlight the impact of climate change in their landscape. Then they will travel down to a taro patch, which is suffering from saltwater inundation due to sea-level rise. They'll be holding the dots up high there. Then lastly, they will take their dots down to the coral reef, which is suffering from both the warming and acidification of the oceans.

Event URL: http://act.climatedots.org/event/impacts_en/2887

Nauru: Nauru's desalination plant will hang a big dot on its storage facilities because during draught, the plant lacks the capacity to supply enough to meet the national water demand. As well as that, the local power generator will turn off the generator for 350 minutes starting at 3.50pm on May 5th.

Event URL: http://act.climatedots.org/event/impacts_en/2578

Majuro Atoll, Marshall Islands: As one of the first nations to see the sunrise on May 5th, and as one of the most vulnerable countries to climate change, the 350group in Majuro will be meeting at sunrise to launch the global day of action, Climate Impacts Day. They also have a team of divers who are heading out to a bleached coral reef, where they will hold dots underwater to connect coral bleaching with climate change.

Event URL: http://act.climatedots.org/event/impacts_en/2399

American Samoa: The 350 Environment Club of American Samoa is running a billboard design competition across every high school in American Samoa to the theme of Connect the Dots. The young and local artists will incorporate their ideas using their artistic ideas about how climate change will change our lives. There will be five winners and their work will be displayed on billboards erected in five areas of the island.