

## news headlines...

### Net Balance Foundation and AccountAbility with LRQA launch final "What Assures Australian Consumers on Climate Change?" research.

The report builds on studies conducted in the US and UK, and explores the potential for Australian consumers to take a leading role in helping Australia mitigate its contribution to climate change impacts. It examines the impact climate change is having on consumer behaviour and purchasing patterns. Importantly, it also identifies four key barriers to further action.

The research finds that Australian consumers are informed, inspired and are demanding to be part of the climate change debate and provides clear recommendations for how business and government can effectively harness citizen power to help Australia become a climate change leader. The final report was launched in August at the 100 Mile Cafe in Melbourne.



An engaging panel discussion from a range of experts including Philip Sutton, author of "Climate Code Red"; environmentalist Rob Gell; Terry A'Hearn, Director, Sustainable Development, EPA Victoria; Angela Rutter, 'Climate Change Project Australia' Manager, with the ACF; and Lee Sargent, Insights Strategist, Foster's Group discussed the report's findings and implications. To access the research, please [click here](#). ...*Story continued on page 2.*

## about us

Net Balance Management Group is a leading provider of advisory and assurance services in Corporate Social Responsibility and sustainability of organisations operating in Australasia. Net Balance Management Group shares its resources with the Net Balance Foundation, a not-for-profit think tank specifically set up to work with small to medium enterprises, research groups, academia and not-for-profit groups in the pursuit of sustainable business.

**NetBalance**  
MANAGEMENT GROUP

**NetBalance**  
FOUNDATION

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# news headlines continued...

This report was extremely well received by both government and business, with Net Balance even receiving a letter of congratulations from the Victorian Minister for Environment and Climate Change, Gavin Jennings, on the quality and significance of the report.

Net Balance would like to acknowledge our partners AccountAbility and LRQA and our sponsors EPA Victoria, Foster's, Woolworths, Transurban, VECCI and the Australian Food and Grocery Council for their significant contribution in making this research a possibility.

To find out more, please contact [Ross](#) or [Rebecca](#).



## Net Balance Foundation partners with ACCA Australia/NZ to publish "Anti-Bribery and Corruption Reporting Disclosures" of the ASX50.

Launched in Sydney, this report analyses the reporting of processes to manage anti-bribery and corruption by the largest 50 Australian public companies. The report found that the majority of Australia's top 50 companies' disclosures lacked detailed information, due to either inadequate communication (i.e. companies have excellent anti-corruption programs in place, but they do not adequately report them publicly) or their procedures themselves are lacking (i.e. companies have very little corporate material to disclose). The report makes various recommendations for improving company reporting of countering bribery and corruption. To access the research, please [click here](#).

This is the first report in the second trilogy of research projects carried out by ACCA and Net Balance; the theme of this ongoing research is to analyse disclosures on specific areas of non-financial performance by the ASX50.



The second report to be published will analyse corporate governance disclosures and the third will investigate community investment; both these reports will be published in early 2009. For more information about both the published and upcoming research, please contact [Ross](#).

## Providing Business with Clarity: Energy, Greenhouse and Water Legislation.

Net Balance Foundation has updated its Resource Efficiency & Reporting Legislative Review and Online Tool to incorporate new programs and requirements. In order to provide business with clarity, the Report and Online Tool summarises Federal, State and Territory government legislation relating to energy, greenhouse gas, and water. The Online Tool provides companies with a quick way to identify which mandatory resource efficiency and reporting requirements apply to them. The accompanying Report can be used to identify the requirements of each applicable program. The Online Tool and Report is relevant to organisations that may trigger National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Scheme (NGERS), Energy Efficiency Opportunities (EEO), Environment and Resource Efficiency Plans (EREP), the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS) or other similar mandatory reporting and efficiency requirements. The Online Tool and the Review Report are available as open-source research [here](#). For queries and feedback, please contact [Natasha](#).



## Latest Climate Change Adaptation Research Published.

The release of the Risks and Adaptations report brings to an end the successful two year project commissioned by the Western Port Greenhouse Alliance and funded by the Australian Government's Department of Climate Change and the Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment. The project was co-managed by Net Balance Foundation in partnership with Marsden Jacob Associates, CSIRO, Broadleaf Capital and The Regional Development Company.

Through a series of workshops, the project found that councils in Western Port were particularly concerned about the potential impacts of sea level rise on coastal properties and assets, the ability of current infrastructure to deal with increased flooding and more intense and more frequent bushfires. Adaptation responses were discussed with other stakeholders such as State Government, and recommendations such as engineering solutions to future infrastructure issues and building community awareness and resilience were made.

More information can be found by clicking [here](#) or by contacting [Michelle](#).

# exciting new developments at net balance

## Introducing our new Melbourne-based Director...

In September 2008, Dr Robyn Leeson commenced as a Melbourne-based Director at Net Balance, joining Melbourne-based founding Directors, Terence Jeyaretnam and Ken Fung, and Sydney-based Director Ro Coroneos. Here are some of Robyn's thoughts on the future of environmental regulation in Australia:



"Until recently I was manager of EPA Victoria's Environment & Resource Efficiency Plans (EREP) program which requires the mandatory implementation of resource efficiency projects with a 3 year or less pay-back. Although State Governments across Australia have been ramping up such regulations for some time, a change of federal government has heralded the arrival of a new sheriff to our town. The Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS), supported by the National Greenhouse & Energy Reporting System (NGERS), is having a 'ripple effect' on the regulatory and voluntary programs of the States, but also on other federal programs such as the Energy Efficiency Opportunities program (EEO). All eyes are on the upcoming CPRS White Paper which may signal potential changes to existing programs or highlight design challenges to emissions trading arising from them. The 'silver bullet' status of a trading scheme is uncertain while less cumbersome measures in basic energy efficiency remain fruitful.

Given this volatile landscape, what should organisations do? To borrow from Donald Rumsfeld, we have "known unknowns" and "unknown unknowns" in climate change policy and regulation going forward. However, there are things that we do know:

- First, be aware of your existing legal requirements. A reality check on what currently applies to you is a good basis for working out what may also apply to you in future and what you need to prepare for. To do this you can make use of Net Balance Foundation's online Resource Efficiency & Reporting Look Up Tool (to access, please [click here](#)). Playing 'hide and seek' with regulators is a risky strategy.
- Second, get your energy and greenhouse inventory in order. Most organisations still have at least some issues with data, bill verification and monitoring. The old adage of "you can't manage what you're not measuring" still applies.

- Third, improving energy efficiency generally still saves you money. Allen Consulting Group recently released a report which claimed that mandatory implementation of energy efficiency projects with a 3 year or less pay-back would save Australian businesses around \$630 million (in NPV terms) over ten years (rising to \$710 million if a very modest carbon price of \$15 per tonne is adopted). (To access the report, please [click here](#).)"

To get in touch with Robyn, please [click here](#).

## Introducing the General Manager of Net Balance Foundation...

In July 2008, Ross Wyatt commenced as the General Manager of Net Balance Foundation. Ross also joined Net Balance Management Group as a Partner and Manager of the Social Sustainability practice. Here are Ross's thoughts on his vision for Net Balance Foundation:



"Net Balance Foundation is well poised to become a world-class not-for-profit entity in the sustainability marketplace. In its first years, it has already produced an impressive array of sustainability projects and research. Already considered a leader in its field, I feel fortunate to be working with the outstanding team to see Net Balance Foundation through the coming period of substantial growth. Demand for the Foundation's services are enormous and its work is only made possible by drawing on the resources of Net Balance Management Group and from the growing pool of volunteers from the sustainability industry who make it possible for SME's, NFPs, and industry bodies to move towards a sustainable future. A future which would not be accessible to them without Net Balance Foundation.

In the coming year, Net Balance Foundation will continue to produce more ground-breaking work in the sustainability field and will do more to provide solutions which help companies develop cohesive strategies integrating environmental, social, and economic sustainability. I welcome contact from any organisation looking to do more to operate in a way which enhances their own long-term sustainability and that of our society and environment."

To get in touch with Ross, please [click here](#).

# exciting new developments at net balance

## Environment Victoria Board Appointment.

Net Balance Senior Associate Amanda Nuttall was pleased to accept a nomination in September to join the board of Environment Victoria at the recent Annual General Meeting.



Environment Victoria is the peak non-government, not-for-profit environment organisation in Victoria, supported by over 100 member organisations. Amanda took up her new position and was elected Board Secretary at the September Board meeting.

**New Melbourne Office.** Net Balance's Melbourne team will move to a new city office by the end of 2008. Our new Melbourne address will be Level 4, 460 Bourke Street, Melbourne 3000. We look forward to welcoming you to our new office space soon.

## new net balance service offerings

### Climate Adaptation Assessment methodology developed.

Climate change, regardless of greenhouse reduction strategies in place now, will impact our lives over the coming decades due to the lag effect of greenhouse gas emissions in the atmosphere. This is not to say that reduction strategies are unnecessary. However, they must be coupled with adaptation measures to ensure businesses and communities stay viable in the long term.

Net Balance, together with the Western Port Greenhouse Alliance, government and other consultants, has developed an effective approach to assessing the risks of climate change to an organisation and determining appropriate courses of action to mitigate or reduce these risks. Recently released climate change adaptation reports that Net Balance was involved in can be accessed [here](#). For more information about our climate change adaptation services, please contact **Michelle**.

## Social Sustainability Practice Launched.

Net Balance is pleased to announce an expansion in the range of social sustainability services available to clients. Net Balance recognises that companies are becoming increasingly conscious of the need to manage, measure and report their social as well as their environmental performance. Our new Social Sustainability practice will give clients access to a unique range of specialised social sustainability advisory services, as well as the capacity for integrated social and environmental sustainability services.

### Services offered include:

- Review of existing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategies
- CSR strategy development
- Linkage of CSR strategies with core business objectives
- Measurement of social investment exchange
- Corporate/cause partnership establishment
- Staff engagement programs
- Community research and consultation
- Internal research
- Cause-related marketing
- Communication programs
- Corporate philanthropy

For more information, please contact **Ross** or **Rebecca**.

## National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Scheme (NGERS) Diagnostic Tool.

The Federal Government's NGERS requirements came into force on 1 July 2008. NGERS will require affected companies to measure and report their greenhouse gas emissions and energy production and consumption annually. The first reporting year will cover the 2008-2009 financial year, with registration to occur by August 31 2009 and reports to be submitted by 31 October 2009. To ensure adequate reporting by this time, energy and greenhouse data collection systems should therefore be set up and maintained now.

NGERS poses a significant compliance challenge for many businesses. With this in mind, Net Balance has developed a NGERS Diagnostic Tool to allow companies to map their areas of preparedness and perceived complexity of the NGERS requirements. For more information on the NGERS Diagnostic Tool or on any NGERS compliance assistance that Net Balance can provide your company, please contact **Natasha**.



## new net balance service offerings

**Environment and Resource Efficiency Plan (EREP) Team.** EPA Victoria's EREP program is a world first mandatory resource efficiency program for Victoria's largest water and energy using sites. The program requires participating industrial and commercial sites to identify and implement energy, water and waste efficiency actions with a three year payback period or less. The EREP program is intended to deliver a win-win outcome: financial benefits for industry and environmental benefits for wider society.

With Dr Robyn Leeson recently joining Net Balance after spending the past year as the manager of the EREP program, Net Balance is well placed to assist businesses participating in EREP to fulfil their requirements. If you would like further information on how Net Balance can assist, please contact **Robyn** or **Amanda**.

**Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS) Advisory and Strategy.** The Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme is a core part of the Australian Government's strategy for tackling Australia's contribution to climate change. The Australian Government has committed to commencing the CPRS by 2010. If you require assistance or advice as to how the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme could impact your business and/ or strategies for mitigating the impact, please contact **Grant**.

**Climate Emergency Presentations.** After having our eyes opened recently by Philip Sutton, co-author of 'Climate Code Red', to the climate emergency we face, the Net Balance team are completing training in October to deliver the Climate Emergency presentations to interested clients and other groups. Climate scientists are warning that the rapid melting of the arctic sea ice (one hundred years earlier than that predicted by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) indicates that we are already at a climate 'tipping point'. For more information, please [click here](#) and [here](#). There has never been a more crucial time to become informed on the most up to date climate science and to work together to generate innovative and sustainable solutions. If you or your company are interested in having Net Balance deliver a free Climate Emergency presentation, please contact **Natasha**.



## key sustainability news and publications in q3 2008

**Al Gore's Challenge to the US.** On 17 July 2008, Al Gore challenged the US to produce 100% of its electricity from zero emissions sources within 10 years. In his agenda-setting speech, Al Gore linked all three of the US's problems (increasing energy prices and financial instability; national security threats due to reliance on foreign energy reserves; and the threat of runaway climate change) to a single solution: a clean energy revolution. Such a goal is ambitious but technically feasible, requiring a massive rollout of electricity generation capability in wind, solar thermal, geothermal and photovoltaic, and requiring a unified national power grid. The 'We Can Solve the Climate Crisis' project, founded by Al Gore, is promoting and supporting this campaign. For more information, please [click here](#).

**G8 Declaration on Environment and Climate Change.** At the commencement of the July G8 Summit in Hokkaido, Japan, the G8 leaders issued a statement reaffirming the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) as the most authoritative assessment of climate change science and committing to working towards achieving a goal of 50% reduction of global greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. To read the Declaration, please [click here](#).

**Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme Green Paper.** The Australian government released its CPRS Green Paper in July 2008, outlining its preferred design components. The Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme is a core part of the Australian Government's strategy for tackling Australia's contribution to climate change. Various CPRS design aspects are outlined in the Green Paper, such as sector coverage, compliance thresholds, permit allocation, compensation arrangements, 'caps' and 'gateways', 'complementary measures' and 'international linkage'. Public submissions on the Green Paper closed on 10th September 2008. The Australian Government has committed to commencing the CPRS by 2010. The CPRS White Paper will be released by the end of 2008, outlining its finalised design elements. The Australian government will also announce by the end of 2008 its interim greenhouse gas emission reduction targets, which will strongly influence the 'carbon price'. To access the Green Paper, please [click here](#).

# key sustainability news and publications in q3 2008

**Garnaut Climate Change Review Final Report.** The Garnaut Climate Change Review was commissioned by the Australian Commonwealth, State and Territory governments to examine the impacts, challenges and opportunities of climate change in an Australian context. The much anticipated Final Report was released on 30th September 2008, which incorporates the previously released Draft Report and Supplementary Draft Report (Targets and Trajectories).

The Final Report outlined effective climate change mitigation policy options for Australia, incorporating both domestic and international components. The economic modelling completed as part of the Garnaut Review also found that the costs to Australia of transitioning to a low-carbon economy are manageable and can occur alongside a continued strong growth in living standards. The Report recommended a suite of policies that will ensure a smooth and equitable transition to a low-carbon economy, with emissions trading a core part. Various recommendations are made for the design of an effective emissions trading scheme, including the auctioning of all permits, as broad coverage as possible and no 'ceilings' or 'floors' on the price of permits after the transitional period.

The Report also controversially provides advice on potential greenhouse gas reduction targets by 2020 that Australia could commit to internationally. In order to contribute fairly to a global stabilisation of greenhouse gases at a concentration of 450ppm, Australia would need to reduce emissions by 25% by 2020. The Report argues that such a stabilisation is in Australia's economic, social and environmental best interest. However, the Report is pessimistic about the likelihood of international negotiations reaching a 450ppm agreement. Therefore, the Report recommends that in order to contribute to an international agreement to stabilise greenhouse gas concentrations at 550ppm, Australia should commit to reducing emissions by 10% by 2020.

To access the Garnaut Climate Change Review reports, please [click here](#).

**FutureMap: Melbourne 2030.** This report by the Committee for Melbourne's Climate Change Taskforce is the result of 12 months work in partnership with 80 Melbourne organisations. The report looks at how Melbourne could adapt to the inevitable impacts of climate change and serves as a blueprint for Melbourne-specific mitigation action. The report identified key areas of opportunity for Melbourne to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions, including Buildings, Low Emissions Energy, Transport, Social Equity, Business Procurement and Urban Resilience. To access the report, please [click here](#).

**Grant Thornton's Corporate Governance Review.** This report is Grant Thornton Australia's second annual review of the ASX 300 listed companies' corporate governance disclosures. The analysis utilises the ASX Corporate Governance Council's Principles of Good Corporate Governance and Best Practice Recommendations as the standard to measure the quality of the disclosures in the companies' 2007 Annual Reports. To access the review, please [click here](#).

**Carbon Offset Watch Launched.** Carbon Offset Watch is the first independent ranking of Australia's approximately 50 'carbon offset' providers. Carbon Offset Watch is a partnership between Total Environment Centre (to represent environmental interests), Choice (to represent consumer interests) and the Institute for Sustainable Futures (to provide academic input). The website also provides information and advice on carbon offsets. To access the Carbon Offset Watch website, please [click here](#).

**The ACCC successfully sues Saab for 'greenwashing.'** Serving as a stark warning to other companies pursuing green marketing strategies, the Federal Court has found that Saab's 2007 'Grrrrreen' advertising campaign was false and misleading to consumers in its environmental claims. The advertising campaign stated that Saab would plant trees to offset greenhouse gas emissions occurring in the life of each car sold. However, the number of trees to be planted only covered the greenhouse gas emissions of the car in its first year. GM Holden, Saab's parent company, has agreed to train its entire marketing staff on the requirements of green advertising and to plant 12,500 trees to offset the greenhouse gas emissions from the estimated total life of the vehicles sold during the advertising campaign. For further information, please [click here](#). In February 2008, the ACCC published the 'Green Marketing and the Trade Practices Act' Guidelines, aiming to provide guidance to businesses as to their obligations with respect to green marketing under the Act. To access the Guidelines, please [click here](#).

# new starters

**Net Balance had a very active recruitment period in the third quarter of 2008, with six new starters commencing. We now have twenty-two permanent members of staff, positioning us as the largest dedicated sustainability consultancy in Australia.**

**Ross Wyatt** commenced at Net Balance, Melbourne in July 2008 as the General Manager of Net Balance Foundation and as a Partner, New Balance Management Group. Ross joins Net Balance to strategically develop Net Balance Foundation into a world-class not-for-profit entity in the sustainability marketplace and to lead the development of the Social Sustainability practice in Net Balance Management Group. Ross Wyatt has over 25 years experience in senior marketing and sustainability roles which has included management of some of Australia's highest profile brands, and leadership of a major charity organisation, Starlight Children's Foundation. In this role he has worked with many major corporations, assisting them in the development and implementation of their corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategies. Ross holds a degree in Marketing from Monash University and has lectured extensively in the MBA program with James Cook University in Australia and Singapore in the fields of Marketing, Consumer Behaviour, International Marketing, Services Marketing, Marketing Communications, and Strategic Management and has also conducted research into the field of quantification of business ethics. At JCU, Ross headed the university's External Relations function and led the formation of numerous partnerships between corporates, research entities, government and regional economic development organisations.

**Megan Haines** joined Net Balance, Melbourne as an Associate in July 2008. Megan holds a first class honours degree in Environmental Science from Western Australia's Curtin University of Technology. Since graduating, Megan worked for three years as an Environmental Consultant at Cardno in Western Australia. During her time at Cardno, Megan specialised in Waste Management. Megan was responsible for project managing an Alternative Waste Technology project for the Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council in Perth. Her role involved assisting with community consultation within six Local Governments. Megan has also assisted the Pilbara Regional Council to develop Western Australia's first state endorsed Strategic Waste Management Plan. The Plan focused on the coordination of recycling in the Pilbara, increased public awareness of waste management and the acquisition of equipment and technology. She is also undertaking a Graduate Certificate in Business at the Curtin Graduate School of Business.

**Nicolle Joffe** commenced at Net Balance, Melbourne as a Project Consultant in August 2008. Nicole holds Bachelor degrees in both Commerce and Science (Hons) at Monash University. For the past seven years, the focus of her studies has been atmospheric sciences and more specifically, climate change. Nicole has spent the last 12 months completing her honours thesis, investigating the impacts of heat as a result of climate change on human health in the Melbourne region. In 2006, Nicole participated in the Tropical Warm Pool International Cloud Experiment in the Northern Territory. The experiment is a collaboration between the US DOE ARM project, the Bureau of Meteorology, NASA, the European Commission DG RTD-1.2 and several United States, Australian, Canadian and European Universities. As a member of this team of world renowned scientists Nicole worked to produce clear and actionable recommendations.

**Gareth W Evans** commenced at Net Balance, Sydney as a Project Consultant in August 2008. Gareth is recently graduated with a Bachelor in Environmental Management and Science from the University of Western Sydney. Gareth has a range of experience from bush regeneration, Bunnings retail, baggage handling and even a spot of labouring. The experience places him perfectly for the role of Sustainability Office Manager of the Sydney Office.



# new starters

**Robyn Leeson** commenced as a Melbourne-based Director at Net Balance in September 2008. Robyn has twenty years of experience in environment and sustainability-related fields for all levels of government, the private sector as a consultant and NGOs, with specific experience in the development and implementation of sustainability strategies, climate change, water efficiency and sustainability reporting programs. Robyn has spent the past year as the director of the EREP program at EPA Victoria, developing a world first regulatory program in resource efficiency (energy, water & waste) for the State's largest 300 businesses. Robyn was the Founding Director of the Centre for Public Agency Sustainability Reporting Centre for two years and worked with a range of public sector agencies on sustainability reporting. Robyn led environmental and sustainability initiatives at the City of Melbourne as Manager, City Sustainability, including setting up the Sustainability Fund, developing the greenhouse strategy in 1999, prepared the organisation's first sustainability report and contributed to planning the six green star Council House 2. Robyn was a member of the Global Reporting Initiative's Public Sector Working Group, and has also spent time prior to her last three roles at the City of Wyndham, CSIRO, Ministry of Planning and Environment, Monash University and URS.

**Camille Aylmer** commenced at Net Balance, Melbourne as an Associate in September 2008. Camille has over four years of international experience in sustainability consulting and socially responsible investing (SRI). Prior to joining Net Balance, Camille specialised in stakeholder engagement research and consulting work. She also gained expertise in measuring corporate sustainability performance as an equities analyst, project manager and communications manager for KLD Research & Analytics in Boston and its Melbourne-based partner firm SIRIS. At SIRIS, Camille conducted SRI research for global funds and developed internal and external communications programs. With KLD Camille analysed the environmental, social, and governance performance of Large Cap companies in the communications and technology industries. She also managed corporate communications for the Business Ethics "100 Best Corporate Citizens" annual list. Camille graduated with a joint degree in sociology and French from Wellesley College, the 4th ranked liberal arts college in the United States. As an undergraduate, Camille focused her coursework on CSR, including investigating CSR in advertising for the National Science Foundation's Awards for the Integration of Research and Education grant.