

Humankind at the start of the 21st century is facing enormous challenges on an unprecedented scale.

Climate Change and Peak Oil

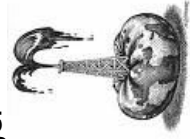
While Climate Change is well documented and very visible in the media, **Peak Oil remains under the radar for most people.**

Peak Oil is not about running out of oil.

Oil, like any other resource on this planet, is limited but we will never run out of it – there will always be some left that is too hard or too expensive to extract.

Peak Oil is about the end of cheap, easy-to-get oil.

The problem starts when about half of the recoverable oil (or any other resource for that matter), has been extracted: the production peaks. From this point on oil gets harder and more expensive to extract, of lower quality (e.g. tar sands as opposed to liquid). Yet the demand is still increasing and overtakes supply. The result: large and possibly catastrophic price increases and gaps in supply that could bring our oil dependent societies virtually to a standstill. Further more, economic and social stability may be challenged globally, just when it's most needed to address the threats posed by Climate Change.



According to numerous economists, including many from the oil industry, Peak Oil has been reached already, or will be reached by 2010.

How will New Zealand be affected?

According to the climate prediction models, New Zealand may be one of those 'lucky' countries that will - initially at least - face relatively minor direct impacts from climate change: more extreme events (storms), drier in the east, some lost coast line... minor compared with some Pacific nations that will literally lose their countries.

It's a different story however with Peak Oil. Developed countries are much more reliant on fossil fuels than poorer countries, and completely unprepared for a life with limited access to this resource. New Zealand is no exception. For instance:

- our main industries - agriculture and tourism - are both heavily dependent on fossil fuels for fertiliser, pesticides, machinery and transport
- we export a lot of agricultural products but import a lot of our everyday food, as well as many other crucial commodities
- we live in a large, sparsely populated land with minimal public transport options
- like people in all other developed countries, as individuals we are highly specialised in our work but have lost a lot of skills necessary to provide for our most basic needs.

Even in Southland we may be vulnerable to economic shocks. We are part of the global rat race more than we would like to think.

Government and industry have too much vested interest to want to break the bad news to the people, they want to keep the shareholders and voters happy.

The change will have to come from the communities.

So what can we do about it??!

It doesn't make much sense to look at climate change and peak oil as separate issues. If addressed separately, some solutions to one problem can aggravate the other.

We need to transition our communities from being so dependent on fossil fuels and ever increasing economic growth. We need to move to a future with lower energy consumption and a more local economy and lifestyle:

- Climate change makes such a transition **essential**
- Peak oil makes it **inevitable**
- **Transition initiatives make it feasible, viable and attractive ...** if we all put some thought, creativity and energy into it!

It's actually not all bad news!!

There is no reason why a lower-energy, more resilient future needs to have a lower quality of life than the present.

The future with less oil could, if enough thinking and action is applied sufficiently in advance, **be preferable to the present.**

A future with a more local economy could have advantages over the present, including happier and less stressed people, an improved environment and increased social stability.



Aims of Transition Town Invercargill:

- To inform about climate change and peak oil and how these issues relate to Southland
- To bring together and support local community groups, individuals and organisations which have similar aims
- To bring together all who foster skills important for such a transition e.g. growing and preserving food, 'traditional' skills, eco building, alternative means of energy and transport, education, art...
- ... regardless whether their motivation is sustainability, conservation, community wellbeing, heritage, religion, or it is a pastime.
- To help transition our communities from being dependent on fossil fuels, to a future of lower energy consumption, but quality lifestyle.
- To instigate, co-ordinate, support and lobby for projects that will allow our community to achieve this in a peaceful, positive and creative manner.

We would like for Invercargill and Southland to be resilient, TRULY SUSTAINABLE, vibrant community of happy and healthy PEOPLE that will live in a way that will protect the environment and ultimately enhance the quality of human lives everywhere.

Transition Town Invercargill



TRANSITION TOWN
INVERCARGILL

If you or your organisation would like more information about Transition Initiatives, get involved, or if you want to network with other people and groups please contact:

Judith Robinson
03 217 8987
transitioninvercargill@gmail.com

For more about our activities and events check our website:

www.transitiontowns.org.nz/invercargill

Other hubs of Transition Initiatives and related activities in Southland:

Invercargill Environment Centre

P: (03) 218 4404 – E: iec@paradise.net.nz

Eastern Southland Sustainable Living Group, Gore – John Adams

P: (03) 208 0865 – E: esslg@kinect.co.nz

South Coast Environment Centre,

Riverton – Robert and Robyn Guyton
P: (03) 234 8717 – E: office@sces.org.nz

Information about Transition Initiatives in NZ and elsewhere:

www.transitiontowns.org.nz

www.transitionaotearoa.org.nz

www.transitiontowns.org

(Original UK wiki site, lot of resources)

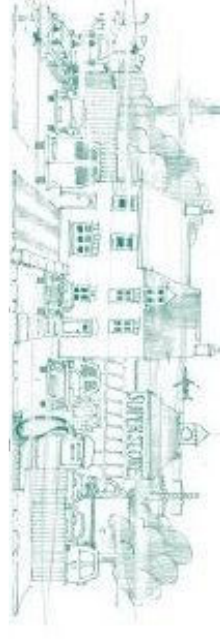
Transition Towns Southland Google Group
<http://groups.google.co.nz/group/transition-towns-southland>

Is our community resilient enough to stand up to energy, climate and economic shocks?

Perhaps not.



Transition Initiatives In Southland



Nobody has all the answers - and they rarely come on a plate - but we believe we have the skills, innovation and energy within our Invercargill and Southland community to turn challenges into opportunities and create solutions.