

TOM FOOKES

I'm Tom Fookes and I'm a planner from New Zealand, teaching at the University of Auckland, and I'm also a commissioner on the Environment Court, part of New Zealand's legal environmental system.

If we look ahead, one of the things we have to appreciate is this factor of climate change. Climate change is integrally linked to sustainability issues, and if you deal with sustainability you're starting to deal with the specific things of climate change, in terms of emissions and that sort of thing. But what we're going to have to do is look much more at the way in which we can constrain the physical expansion of our settlements horizontally. We are growing our cities onto our best agricultural land. We are increasing traffic travel times, people are *having* to use cars; we're building our cities on the North American model. And the green plan provides an opportunity, and the legislation provides an opportunity to change that approach, and that's already starting to happen. So we are now already in a phase of intensifying our major cities, of trying to get people out of their single family bungalows into higher density, medium density types of development, to build this development around transit points, to put in a better transit system, to move people out of their cars and into buses and trains and onto bicycles. So these are all things that are starting to come through in the plans that are made under the legislation that we have in New Zealand.

Well, what we are calling a green plan is, in fact, a legal document, one of our acts of parliament—it was passed in 1991—and which served the purpose of bringing together in an integrated and holistic way some fifty-odd pieces of previously existing legislation. So the Green Plan aspect really, it's on this as law, which is integrated and has sustainability as its objective.

People often say to me 'it's easy for you folks because you're only 4 million people, you're tiny, you're a drop in the bucket, you can do these things because you're just a big family'...and that's true, but at the same time, the structures that we have—of families and neighborhoods and communities—are the same. And so much can be done in a Green Plan context with people working at the level of their local community. And so the rather hackneyed phrase today "think local, think global" is just as applicable in Green Plan organization. You can achieve a great deal by having your Green Plan concept working at your local level and you can build those into a larger thing by collaboration across your district or your state or whatever. But you start essentially with the home unit."