

## **Can't afford it**

Mr Arun Chaudhari, CEO of Taranaki Chamber of Commerce, in his Daily News opinion piece (12 April 2018) appears to want to 'have his cake and eat it'.

He wants 'a country and a world which is sustainable, where clean air, clean water and a pristine environment are not compromised'. Yet he also advocates for continued mining of fossil fuels, the combustion of which completely compromises those worthwhile aspirations. There's no longer any argument that our planet's climate, ocean chemistry and sea level are heavily disrupted by the greenhouse gases we've pumped into the atmosphere.

In the past century, global emissions have increased from less than one to 36 gigatonnes annually. In 2017 we put more into the atmosphere than in any previous year, at a rate that dwarfs natural sources. We are simply nowhere near addressing this overarching issue, made worse for future generations by decadal lags in the climate system, and increasing positive feedbacks – loss of polar albedo, melting permafrost and ice gas, among others.

We simply cannot afford to burn most known fossil fuel reserves, let alone waste more time and money searching in deep, offshore waters, a risky enterprise that resulted in the Deepwater Horizon catastrophe on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2010.

We also cannot continue with business as usual, and have wasted decades in the transition, largely thanks to political inaction and premeditated dissembling from industry.

Sure, we are a minor player, but should be a leader not a laggard. This government has made a start.

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