

Regional Council and Climate Change

Collaboration Bay of Plenty
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Climate Change

- Complexity – everything is connected to everything
- Can we forecast/predict direction well enough?
- What values predominate?

But

- Infrastructure decisions can lock in futures
- Significant costs at stake
- Future proofing versus retrofitting?
- Good urban design is good!



Global warming affects numbers

OPOTIKI hunting veteran Butch McKay says climate change is the reason duck numbers keep getting lower in the Eastern Bay.

In the same way that fruit trees get confused by a lack of frosts, so, too, does the duck breeding cycle.

Mr McKay said the absence of early frosts had resulted in some ducks breeding in autumn, with the energy reserves that the hens had saved up being used as they sat on their eggs.

"This means they have no energy left for winter," he said.

"And the ones who survive don't breed in spring, because they only breed during one period of the year."

Chicks being hatched during the wrong season meant they, too, were less likely to survive.

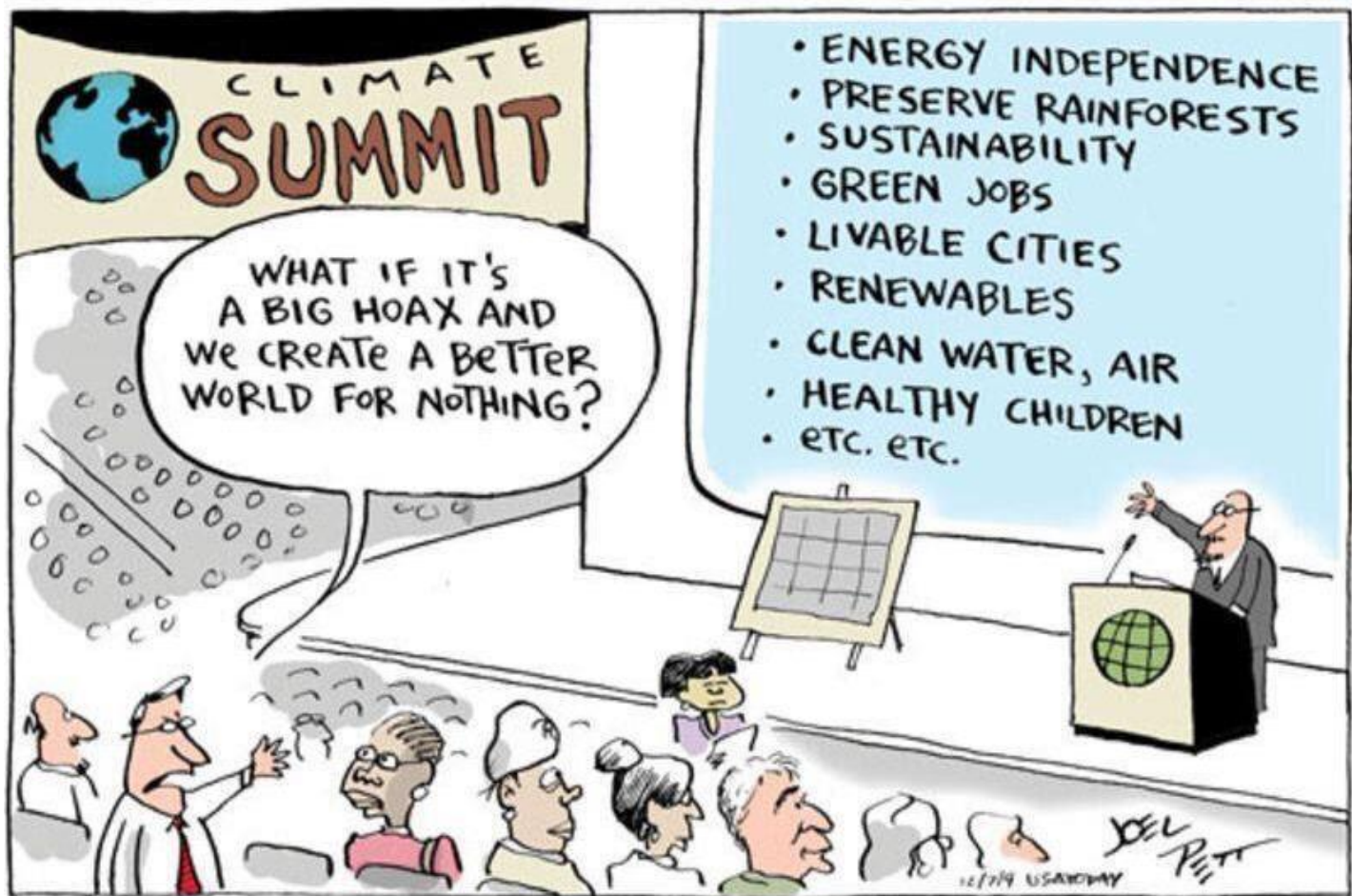
The warmer climate thus led to fewer ducks in total, but also an imbalance between male and female numbers.

"Last year I watched about 40 ducks getting chased up from the river by a passing motorcycle," Mr McKay said.

"There were five drakes for every hen." As a result, hens being chased to death by drakes was not uncommon.

Mr McKay said the absent or delayed frost problem was not happening in the lower part of the South Island.

"That's why their duck numbers are still strong," he said.



Priority Areas

The interplay of climate change with:

- Transport
- Urban Growth
- Freshwater Management
- Natural Hazards – particularly coastal, high hazard areas
- Community resilience (starting....)



Regional Council's role?

- Raising the issue! – adaptation and mitigation
- Understanding Central Government policy impacts on region
- Providing known scenarios – such as inundation zones, flood risk, sea level rise – hard science
- Providing some services – public transport
- Community connection (information, developing understanding)
- Adaptation conversations – where are the current risks that should not be exacerbated? where should we tread carefully?
What opportunities exist?



What else could we be doing?...

- Developing better more robust pictures of climate change impacts and low emission economy
- Engaging with local councils on where mitigation/adaptation actions interact with growth decisions
- Debating and engaging with Central Government on policy direction – proving a Bay of Plenty conduit and network
- More with the community and sectors – helping them make their contributions

But of course first comes:

- Action planning.....

