

Climate Change Champions meeting

Date: Friday 9 May 2025

Attendees: Jane Ough (Chair), Liza Schneider, Samuel Maxwell, Sonja Kamphuis, Caroline Twentyman

Apologies: Francesca Brown

Chatting about topics of interest for us

What topics can we cover that would help you all?

Talking to people about climate change can be hard –

Some ideas that we chatted about -

Reward systems – Jane offered a coffee voucher for the best recycler

Talk about things that appeal to people

Be an example – ride your E-bike to work

Rewiring New Zealand – a great site to look at <https://www.rewiring.nz>

Here is a link on How to talk about climate change

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UHPZw0zbHNE>



[The Secret to Talking about Climate Change](#)

Talking about climate change with friends and family can be intimidating. Here's the secret to making it easier and more effective. This video was inspired by the research of Dr. Renee Lertzman, an expert in the psychosocial aspects of climate change communications. Learn more about her work at <http://reneelertzman.com> Subscribe to Action for ...

www.youtube.com

Strategic thinking – Jane talked about a letter that she has written to NZVA and VCNZ regarding the need for medium and long-term strategy for our profession. Do you think she should persevere? Maybe Jane to talk to MAG & board at the strategy day in July? This letter is attached here. Please send feedback to Jane.

Jane would like us to think about how we are going to vote in the next election. Liza suggested including info in next bulletin to show what different parties policies are.

Sonja mentioned – would like to get more products into clinic with LESS packaging; wants to know if anyone has tried the compostable surgical gloves

There are lots of ways to get good messaging in without confronting people.

Find other people who feel the same and collaborate

How can we find out how engaged our Champions are? Maybe a little survey asking our members. Jane to speak to Chelsea.

Current actions

Action	Who	When
Please suggest any topics of interest for 2025 meetings	All	Ongoing

Next meeting: Friday 13 June 2025

If you would like to chair a future meeting, please email jane.ough@vets.org.nz.

Strategic thinking for the Veterinary profession:

A strategy focused plenary proposal for the 2025 Conference.

Today there are multiple disrupters for our profession.

- Climate Change
- Artificial intelligence
- Financial market shifts in direction to avoid risk
- How society and individuals manage threats and opportunities

Our current NZVA member priorities are

- Workforce sustainability
- Leadership, advocacy, and communication
- One Health / collaboration

Our NZ Veterinary Council has the theme:

Future scanning: VCNZ (Veterinary Council of New Zealand) will be ready for new challenges facing the veterinary profession and the public.

All these priorities and themes are significantly impacted by:

- ★ Our rapidly changing climate,
- ★ the accelerating advance of AI (Artificial Intelligence),
- ★ the impacts of financial markets avoiding risk
- ★ how society and individuals react to these threats and opportunities.

These matters are all interlinked.

Collaborative action now to identify and strategize our response to these threats and opportunities is essential, we cannot afford to wait to see what happens.

There are many examples of once leading companies and professions that did not act in time to stay relevant. We do not want to be another KODAK, who did not see the impact of digital photography on film.

Vets are deeply embedded in global food production. Production methods and outcomes are changing fast. Processed foods manufacturers can now switch out dairy products without changing taste or consistency. For example, Ferrero, makers of Nutella, have just switched out 6.7% of the recipe (skim milk powder) and replaced it with a plant-based alternative. The shift towards plant-based food and precision fermentation can bring production efficiency, reduced costs, and lower environmental impacts, particularly if GHGs and water demands are minimised. What impact will this have on the demand for meat and dairy products?

GHG reductions in livestock industries, empowered by AI will lead to major changes in livestock diets and management. AI will revolutionise animal health and welfare – where do production animal veterinarians fit into this?

Companion animal vets are enabling clients to own high carbon footprint animals, and encouraging feeding food that is as emission intensive as our own. As the climate crisis worsens all emissions will be scrutinized more intensely.

NZ has significant obligations under the Paris Agreement. We need to consider all options today to reduce our emissions significantly before 2030. What emissions can we reduce to play our part in meeting these obligations?

Emission reduction is the first of the two essential responses needed to our changing climate - and there are cost effective options for veterinary businesses given their relative energy intensiveness.

The second response is rapidly becoming essential. It is **how to adapt to the changes now under way** - many of which are already impacting the lives and businesses of our clients.

Put simply we need to plan and act for resilience to climate impacts with urgency.

Destructive extreme weather events are occurring more frequently. Infrastructure damage, energy supply disruption, and supply chain breakdown impact our ability to operate effectively both directly and indirectly. Are our own houses in order and resilient to the direct effects of extreme weather? Will insurance cover us in the event of an extreme weather event? Is our clinical team strong enough to come together in a disaster? Can we respond to the accumulating impact of climate on supply chain issues, needed land-use system changes of our clients and so on.

There are serious animal welfare implications in a warming world, our profession should be leading the way on managing and reducing risk to animals both wild and in our care. Do we have adequate systems in place to monitor for disease vector spread as climate changes. Mosquito-borne diseases such as malaria and dengue fever are spreading across the globe, and particularly in Europe, as global warming has given them the more humid conditions they thrive in. Are we equipped to recognise, report, and treat equivalent novel diseases in our patients? How do we ensure we remain relevant.

A strategy focused plenary proposal for the 2025 Conference.

The NZVA and VCNZ must lead the way for our profession in these challenging times, our member priorities demand this. We can lead by facilitating an interactive strategy focused plenary session for the 2025 Conference that looks at, for example:

1. **Climate Change.** The effects of this rapidly changing, increasingly extreme and turbulent climate both directly (for example animal welfare – heat stress, loss of productivity) and indirectly (for example spread of disease vectors, infrastructure failure, supply chain disruption, food production and supply challenges, change in consumer food preference)

2. **Financial investment** is often risk driven, Banks are already denying finance to businesses that are not implementing sustainable initiatives as they are scanning the markets and seeing that big consumers want to purchase from sustainable producers. Stranded assets will be a reality if climate risks are not fully understood.

3. **Artificial intelligence.**

Combined with real-time monitoring of livestock vital signs and behaviour, is an opportunity for empowerment of production animal farmers – where do vets fit in?

4. **The science of societal and individual change**

How do we manage the threats and opportunities?

How do we assist our clients to respond to change?

Collaborative action now, across the profession and related industries is key to a resilient profession. It is essential that we identify and strategise our response to these threats and opportunities, we cannot afford to wait to see what happens.

We need to gather industry and scientific leaders, and veterinary special interest groups for a high-level engagement and facilitated dialogue around strategic topics such as those we have enumerated. A conference interactive strategy session - minimum of a half day in four facilitated working groups under each of these topics, and or others, as identified by industry and the veterinary profession.

How do we enable this?

We look forward to your thoughts

Jane Ough BVSc, NZVA Climate Change Ambassador

Dr J Morgan Williams, former Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment 1997 - 2007, Chair of WWF NZ and WWF International Council Member 2012 to 2020 and member of the Fonterra Sustainability Advisory Panel August 2020 to Sept 2023