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Resourceful thinking

With a much-heralded boom in resources demand and production on our hands, it's an opportune time to consider the progress the resources sector has made in embracing the priorities of more sustainable thinking and practice.

As the Focus on pages 24 reflects, it has only been relatively recently that sustainability principles and the now-central concept of corporate, social and environmental responsibility have truly muscled their way onto resources companies' 'must-do' lists. Steve Davidson reports that we're now beginning to see some real traction from those companies who've realised that committing comprehensively to these principles directly translates into sector leadership – leaving those still only playing with these imperatives in a dust plume. Beyond that, there's great promise in the rate at which targeted innovation is emerging on the cutting edge of the industry.

Related to this is some good correspondence from Misima Mines Ltd following recent articles about reported concerns over operations of the Misima Island gold mine in Papua New Guinea (see Issue 126). Misima Mines Ltd's Managing Director reported the company's intention to make the central Porgera Environmental Advisory Committee (PEAK) more administratively independent of the main Porgera Joint Venture company operating in New Guinea. PEAK is expanding its role to deal with social issues surrounding the operation.

The company also expects to appoint an international NGO to review its move towards compliance and ultimately becoming a signatory to the UN Guidelines on Human Rights and Security.



We look forward to that example.

On page 12, the profile of the burgeoning Fairtrade labelling scheme brings to light a small shift that's occurring in western consumers'

thinking and choices. It's a shift that is having a significant effect on both the lives of Third World producers and the broader motivations behind the current global trade mechanisms. Look out for Fairtrade goods when you are shopping.

Richard Mogg's report from Bangkok (page 18) on King Bhumibol Adulyadej's leadership in sustainability practice at home and across Thailand makes interesting reading. The Royal family's involvement in the many Chitralada regional programmes is reinforcing the King's international reputation as an intelligent, innovative statesman, dedicated to his people.

Finally, thanks go to readers of the last issue who provided feedback on the Focus on Aboriginal knowledge for sustainability. It seems the subject and discussion was well received. We'll follow the evolution of this involvement and provide further articles down the track.

Enjoy your reading.

James Porteous
Managing Editor



Karen Grotzinger

Next, in issue 127

The forthcoming October–November issue features Focus sections on the pros and cons of the burgeoning organic agriculture industry and the development of the economic marketplace for ecosystem services.