



Kia ora tatou, to all the young people of New Zealand.

I feel privileged to be asked to visit your country in July 2006 to take part in a series of forums that have a very bold theme: “Growing a Well Future for all our Grandchildren.”

It will be a great honour to be able to meet many of you, and to hear about and celebrate some of the innovative projects you have underway in your schools and communities. In other countries I work mainly with politicians and business leaders who usually are far removed from the local action. You are pioneering a positive new approach.

It is excellent that the New Zealand Government is putting more money into environmental education and supporting more local enterprise projects in schools and communities. You, who are the future, must help everyone else make the right decisions; to bring humans living in balance with the world and nature. We must learn quickly to stop making the same assumptions and repeating our mistakes again and again.

On this visit we will talk a lot about respecting our world and nature; seeking out the lessons it can teach us. Biologists now call this “Biomimicry”. Native peoples have practiced Biomimicry for millennia. Many more people are now using this to develop sustainable new products and grow profitable organisations.

I understand Maori call our earth Papatuanuku and see it as a Taonga - a priceless and irreplaceable treasure of which we humans are just but a part. We must behave as kaitiaki, taking responsible for guarding this, the life force of all future generations.

Few of us in the older generations had the advantage of learning at school about the cycles of nature and how everything is interdependent and balanced. No change or action can be separated from its spin-off effects elsewhere. Scientists call this approach “Systems Thinking.” Nature has its own regeneration but we are stressing them beyond their ability to handle our growth and waste. Our world is approaching a tipping point. We need your help to do something now.

When countries, governments, businesses, farmers, communities and individuals consider nature as a treasure that we must all maintain, rather than a resource that we can selfishly exploit as we wish, vast opportunities open. In business terms we realize that our “Natural Capital” is the source of all our future health and wealth; rather than just a limitless resource for our economy to exploit wastefully and use in our business processes, fuel our transport and homes, then dump our toxic waste into.

To the young people who are part of the team of volunteers from many different organisations, thank you for making this programme happen. I look forward to sharing the stage with some enthusiastic and knowledgeable Kiwis. I hope that many of you will be able to attend the Free Public events in Dunedin, Christchurch, Auckland, Hamilton, Hastings and Wellington during July break. Please encourage your teachers, parents, family, friends, farmers, business people and even your politicians to come with you. All the details are at www.kaitiakitanga.net/hunterlovins.

I look forward to visiting New Zealand and meeting many of you.

