



What is The Sustainability Trust?

The Sustainability Trust - subtitled *Rotarians for sustainability and carbon reduction* - is a global Rotary Club project and a registered charity, initially funded by eleven Clubs on five continents. It provides an interactive online forum for Rotarians to address the growing challenge of how we create a planet that can support human life indefinitely. Sounds dramatic doesn't it? Regrettably the problems are already appearing and the stark predictions are turning into reality. We are using the resources of 1.4 planet Earths to support our life-style and WWF's 2006 Living Planet Report estimated that by 2050, this demand will rise 50%. That need for the resources of two planet Earths won't be sustainable and in the short-term, at the very minimum, we must find new ways to reduce, re-use and re-cycle.

But there's another vital aspect of the sustainability equation. We're going to need so many Shelter Boxes due to natural disasters that we won't be able to fill them fast enough. Hurricane Katrina, the Brazilian and Pakistan floods, Chinese mud slides, fires in Russia, Britain's Cumbrian deluge and Australia's drought - it's happening everywhere with increasing frequency. The climate is changing, and Rotarians at every recent International Convention have confirmed problems in their own nation. A warming climate is bringing ever more dramatic weather to every part of the world.

Whether you believe this warming climate is human related or not is immaterial. The trustees accept the overwhelming evidence that burning 3 billion years of stored fossil fuel in a few hundred years is overheating the planet. But regardless of whether this view is universally accepted, the other facts are irrefutable: the planet is getting warmer, sea levels are rising, natural disasters are becoming more frequent and our resources are getting used up fast.

So what should Rotarians do? As one of the world's largest NGO's our first duty should be to understand the issues and get involved. On the website we have started to record all relevant Club projects from all over the world, to provide a source of information for Clubs seeking an environmentally beneficial project. We are explaining how Club projects can be made sustainable. We are also providing downloads of reports presented at RI conventions where these help Clubs to understand the relevance of sustainability in their activities. We encourage Club members to sign up for a monthly e.mail and so far have over 600 Clubs and Rotary magazines world-wide on our database. The Trust recently won an award for its success in using e.mail to contact Rotarians and our target is to link **all 34,103 Clubs** into the database. **Your Club can easily get involved** – click onto the red button at www.TheSustainabilityTrust.org to become part of this growing project. And once there, you'll find a range of Club ideas, from solar cookers to string bags, to how to offset your carbon emissions through a Rotary project.

Finally, here's a key question. **What should be the 5th Test in the Four-Way Test?**
Answer – 'Is It Sustainable?'

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