



## From despair to hope...Educate! Educate! Educate!

### An interview with Jenny Clad, Executive Director of The Climate Project

*Jenny Clad is the Executive Director of The Climate Project, a non-profit organisation founded by Al Gore in 2006 to increase public awareness of the climate crisis in the United States and globally. She was trained as a lawyer and has worked as a consultant, lecturer & tutor in law, Mediator-Dispute Resolution Specialist and Attorney/Mediator in private practice in a range of different countries throughout the Asia/Pacific and North America. She has a BA in Political Science and Anthropology from Canterbury University and a LLB (JD) degree from Victoria University of Wellington (NZ). The Climate Project has now evolved into [The Climate Reality Project](#).*



**Date of interview: 29/11/2011**

**Interviewer: John Wiseman**

**John Wiseman: Can you begin by describing your role in developing and implementing Al Gore's The Climate Project and talk about what you feel have been the most important legacies and impacts of that work?**

**Jenny Clad:** I was there, the morning after the release of the film *An Inconvenient Truth*... [Gore] was asked in a morning television show 'What next? What is he going to do next?' and he just said 'I'm going to train a thousand people'. There was nothing set up to do that of course. So I agreed to get it started. It was really just an idea, [a] concept. And we had two and a half months to pull off the first training. We had no idea what the material would be, other than his slide show..., how long it would be, what kind of people we would want to invite or select to come. Anyway, the whole thing fell together very quickly. We've likened it to running the fifty-yard dash while you're putting on your shoes, because that's how it felt.

It was a classic start up. Obviously it was very heady, mistakes were made and a lot of successes. My role was Executive Director. We had 10,000 applications for the first training – that was all word-of-mouth, we had nothing except a makeshift website which had an application form on it. We were overwhelmed by the response that we got. The first training was only 50 people so from there we learned a lot and went on fast forward to something like 17 trainings, [in] 9 countries. We have branches now, more than 4,000 people have been trained.

So my role was in starting it, growing it, developing it and running it. [It had a] small staff initially. We had some seed money from Al Gore from the royalties of one of his books which got us going and the rest of it was

fundraising by me or by people who just volunteered. Do you want me to talk about what The Climate Project was?

**JW:** Sure, absolutely.

**JC:** What it turned out to be was Al Gore training for an entire day based on the slide show that formed the movie *An Inconvenient Truth*. Something like 400 slides. He is an exacting man. He had been working on it for many, many years. You know, agonising over each slide. [It was] obviously effective in its story telling capabilities. He would spend an entire day with the group that was selected.

Let me back up and say, [for] the group that we selected the parameters were diversity – in all ways: geographic, age groups, sector, background, and level of expertise. Initially it was only US, but very quickly I realised, why keep it to the US? Others from outside the country wanted to come, so some of them were allowed to come to the US to take the training. But as opportunities arose we started having trainings in other countries, as I said, nine of them altogether. So the idea was to spread out, after two and a half days of training, to go back to their communities and then find groups of their own to be able to give the training to that they had learned in the intensive two and a half days, and educate and engage their peers.

So Al Gore gave the first day of training. It was all based on the slide show, how to give it, how to try to do as good a job as he did, which was amazing! I mean, people were mesmerised by his lecture. He would keep it up for eight hours at a time. He was incredible! The second day would be some workshops, practicing it, we'd have other experts, we'd have climate scientists and political people come and lecture. Towards the end it evolved so that you could pick two or three workshops out of maybe ten or a dozen that were available. So it was a very inclusive, full-on intensive two and a half days.

Now one of the good things about the length of time was that you formed a lot of networks and a sort of sense of community started to develop very early there. That is one of the things that kept it going. I likened it the other day to almost like a university of Al Gore. You would be closest to people who were in your class. And each group was maybe two to three hundred people. But overall you were bonded by the fact that you were 'oh which session were you?' 'Oh I was session three' 'I was session nine', 'I was Australia session two'. It was a binding experience for people. I found what really kept us going, kept them going, was the fact that they had committed time and money to be trained. They had to come to the town, in the US it was always Nashville, to be trained. They had to pay for their own hotel. We gave the course for free, the materials for free. Entertainment, which was a big part of it, letting your hair down, getting to know other people in a relaxed setting and food for free.

In return we asked them for a commitment of a minimum of ten presentations, within a one year period. Now obviously there is no enforcement mechanism on that. But it was moral and for the most part, most people did fulfil their commitments of at least ten. Some people 'drank the Kool-Aid', the entire bottle, and are still doing it now, two hundred presentations later. So there was a full spectrum of commitment there. But there was a sense that they belonged somewhere. And I find that when doing a grassroots organisation, that the people there are there because they have a common purpose, and they have a common goal too. And the role of the organisation, of my organisation, in The Climate Project, was and should continue to be keeping that community fed, supported, listened to, and somehow or other keep the energy going that way. If you just send them out, then it's better than just having provided a seminar for them and wishing them luck, off they go. But what was unique about The Climate Project is that we kept this community alive. Online, by having real life meet ups and reunions, and by having continuing education opportunities for them.

**JW:** How defined was the target audience for the project and for the messaging? Was that largely up to the presenters to talk to whoever they felt they could reach? Or was there more of a specific targeting of who they would talk to?

**JC:** I think the goal of it was not to be too controlling about the target. One of the very important factors in the success of this was the selection process. And we learned very quickly to push the comfort zone as much as possible. If you get yoga teachers training other greenies, then you're not going to move that ball uphill very quickly. So we did, to the extent that we could, reach for people who tended to be more sceptical in their political leanings – people who wanted to be convinced but were leaning towards being sceptical.

So once you pick a range of people like that, especially from middle to more right, if I can politicise it – unfortunately the figures show that right leaning people tend to be more sceptical and left leaning people tend to be less sceptical. So we kept pushing it, and we would then ask them, 'well - what audiences would you assume you are going to give these presentations to? What is your network? How wide is it? Once you run out of friends or peers, within your world, how would you then think about extending it?' So that was part of the selection criteria – the fact that they were able to be self-starters and put together their own presentations and were inventive enough and creative enough to figure out how to keep going. And I think that's worked really well – knowing that it is a peer-to-peer model. I think that the fact that it is peer-to-peer was also part of its success, because as we know peers are more willing to listen to and buy into what their peers tell them is a fact than if some expert is preaching to them.

You know, the Australian Conservation Foundation, who was the host of The Climate Project Australia put together, a couple of years ago, a great film called *Telling the Truth* in which they picked a cross section of seven people who were trained as The Climate Project presenters and the one that stands out to me most of all was a 28 year old hulky, good looking rugby player who was giving a presentation to his fellow rugby team in the dressing room and all these guys are sitting there in rapt attention and the interviewer asked a couple of people their impression after the presentation was over and the consensus was, 'well if John here says it's a problem, it must be a problem' and therein lies the power of peer-to-peer.

**JW:** Have there been any formal or informal evaluations or analysis of impact? Is there either a formal or informal sense of how many people were reached?

**JC:** We had a study completed at the beginning of 2009. Basically, it showed... about 8 million people have seen a presentation. It's more than that now, but that was the last official survey that I know of that was done. I know here in Australia it's 1 in 60. It's probably more than that again, because I don't know how old that survey was. And then of course the questions were: what did those people who were in the audience go out to do? And there is a whole breakdown on that too.

One of the shortcomings, I think of the project was that there really wasn't a lot of thought given to what does the audience take away from it? Other than the knowledge. Or, you know, the 'Ten things you can do to green your life'. How about giving them some jobs? Or some options? We did that ad hoc. but it was not as effective as it could have been I would have liked to have seen it evolve into more of a 'train the trainer' situation, or what we called here in Australia a 'connectors program' where the best of trainers would then train groups in a much smaller, reduced area, that was focused on their work, or their sector, say the health sector, or the built environment sector, or regional and then have these people go out and give a smaller training or

presentation to their peers, there by effecting a ripple. One of the issues was, [since] it's the IP [Intellectual Property] of Al Gore..., the control that he was keen to retain over the original material.

**JW: What was the link between *Our Choice* and The Climate Project?**

**JC:** The production of the book *Our Choice* by Al Gore was delayed several times because of other really pressing commitments of his. I think the intention was to have it published quite a lot earlier than it actually was. It caused me a whole lot of consternation, because once the presenters got confident and under way and the machine of The Climate Project started to roll there was a constant clamouring for it: 'We need solutions, we need solutions'. We are now at the point where our audience, we get 10 minutes in to the presentation and they say 'We know all that! What can we do?' and we were waiting for this book and unfortunately not able to provide anything other than general solutions because we kept waiting for that. When it did come out eventually Al Gore integrated some of those solutions into his updated training material so that the original slide show evolved throughout time and each of the trainings, to the point where now it has a lot more of the choices from *Our Choice* in it, but it still retains 50 or 60 or even 70 percent of the original science – the problem; we're in trouble; what are we going to do about it? Then a little bit of the solutions. Also, when we do training in China there is obviously... the Americanisation is taken out of it and it's regionalised.

**JW: On that experience of running the project in other cultures, I guess China is probably the most challenging?**

**JC:** The hardest thing about China was doing it right and getting government approval and making sure we were going through the right portals to not just have it marginalised. In order to do that I worked with a fantastic group called the *China-US Sustainable Development Center* based out of Portland, Oregon and worked with their Executive Director, Rick Sholberg, who was incredibly helpful. So we were introduced to the right ministry, which turned out to be the Ministry of Science and Technology known as MOST, and they have a training appendage to that called 'Agenda 21' and we worked through that. We wanted to leave a legacy and have that work as well. I would say, and much to our incredulity, it's universal! I mean people in China were enraptured by it; people in India, Spain, UK, Indonesia, you name it... everybody... it's a universal story, it's our planet. So provided that some of the images were geared towards their cultural references or geographic references then obviously there was a nod to that. Obviously the American flag and the slide about the revolutionary war wouldn't resonate all that well in Beijing, but Mr. Gore was careful to substitute a lot of that. But it had universal appeal.

**JW: What's your view as to the impact and the effectiveness of the *Our Choice* book and the film as a solutions package and the impact of both on the general public – and also on key decision makers?**

**JC:** On the general public initially, I can honestly say I think it had a huge impact - huge. The movie's been seen by more people than have seen a presentation and of course it's a drop in the bucket, whether its 50 million people... whether it's 20 million people. I know at least 8 million people have seen a presentation by their peers that came out of the same science, but I think the timing of it was brilliant. I think, in the United States that's the first time people were actually listening to the possibility that there may be something in this talk about global warming, climate change. And by the way, you've noticed that the reference has moved right away from global warming. Al Gore doesn't even use it any more. But in those days it was global warming. I think the movie and the slide show that the movie came out of, both that and in tandem with the work of The Climate Project presenters resonates really strongly with people, it doesn't talk down to the public. It

assumes a level of intelligence but it's also very easy to digest and to get your head around. It's the right pace – there's despair...there's hope.

**JW: Fear budget... hope budget...**

**JC:** Exactly and I think the pace of it is a work of art. I think between what Al did and what David Guggenheim did to turn it into a watchable film that people took their parents to or took their kids to, is genius! And I think the Academy Award people thought so too.

And I think obviously he got another nod of approval from the Nobel Peace Prize Committee. So I saw it as a non-issue, in the general public, that the scientists and the general people like yourselves were beating their head against a wall, trying desperately to get people to listen. And he put a voice to that, a picture, a story and people started to listen. Mid-2006 – I think that's when people started to prick up their ears and say 'stop making fun of it'. Just a few years before Bush won, deriding Al Gore being 'Ozone Man' as a big joke, and suddenly a few years later there he is, winning international prizes all over the place. He just found the right pitch. So I think it was a tipping point in terms of public awareness and I think that's what it set out to do.

**JW: What is your assessment of the impact of this work on people in positions of power?**

**JC:** Well, it's easy to be despairing about that because you know in the United States it came to nought, absolute nought, on a federal level. The timing...maybe if they had gone for it in 2007/ early-2008, we may have had a different result but what with the global economic crisis which has been felt very keenly in the United States, people's minds and issues and efforts turned to survival and paying the mortgage or figuring out where they're going to live if they lose their house and so forth, and their jobs. It went off the radar. There's still a lot of people talking about it but it was no longer a priority issue and remains that way in the United States. So you could say it had very little effect on them, at least in terms of results, as positive legislation for climate change goes.

But, having said that I don't think it's going to go away. I don't think people make fun of it any more, even in the United States which is a lot less aware...you hear about it a great deal less in the United States than you do here in Australia. But it is still much more spoken about. I haven't done any analysis of the media, but I know just empirically that it's spoken about a lot more so it's there, the steady drum beat, of what's going on. Whenever there's an extreme weather event there is speculation – 'is this climate change? Is this climate change?' It's given legitimacy now. On local levels I think it has had an impact. I do believe in the power of grassroots, whether we've reached a tipping point to the point where legislators at all levels – local, regional or state, federal. Legislators want to stay elected and they're going to listen to the electorate. When the clamour is loud enough, about whatever the issue is and in this case it's "climate change – do something! ...We are worried about this.' Then, politicians start listening. They're in the business to want to get elected so basically until they hear that clamour loud enough to feel threatened in their jobs I don't think they're going to change...

**JW: What do you feel are the greatest sources of obstacles or barriers to significant action, particularly in the United States and what needs to be done to begin to overcome that?**

**JC:** Well... a very simplistic answer to a very complicated question. I think its vested interests of the fossil fuel industries, oil and coal. There is a lot to be lost by phasing them out and they make an awful lot of money so make a formidable adversary in terms of their ability to buy eyes and ears and the media. And so as long as

they continue this campaign, I don't believe that the climate change, green movement, or however you would like to characterise the other side can compete... not in the media. And the second point is of course they also have a lot a lot of lobbying influence with politicians. The second thing is media is not just paid media, but earned media. That's one of the biggest obstacles. In the United States we're still putting both sides of the issue on climate change on a split screen on a television on an interview saying 'here to represent pro-climate change action is so-and-so. And here is the denier on the other side' as if 50/50! That's it's a balance, that their views are to be weighted and...

**JW: Which we don't do on the question of a flat earth.....**

**JC:** The flat earth example is fantastic. The other example is the anti-smoking campaign. It took 20, 25 years for that to turn around for the phony science and the fake scientists/doctors to be discredited. How does that happen? This is what we're all looking at. How do you reach the point where the media should be ashamed of itself for putting a flat earth guy against somebody who believes the earth is round? So until people are either more informed to realise that that's just hogwash, or until the media itself becomes a little more knowledgeable itself and the same goes for politicians. You hear politicians saying things that are just ridiculously untrue! And they're just parroting what right wing commentators are hearing from the information they're being fed by fake scientists. So, I mean it comes down to education. Which is what The Climate Project was all about, educate, educate, educate. To the point where people can no longer, with a straight face say 'well, you know maybe there's this other side. Maybe these deniers have a point'. But they're still doing that far too much. It's a little discouraging...it's a lot discouraging

**JW: Can I ask you to put on your optimistic hat? In thinking about the world in 2030 – over the next 20 years – in which the journey to a post carbon future that's reasonably fair has well and truly begun, what would that look like in the United States? What would the US economy and society look like that is different to today? What would it feel like to live there? And what were the key actions that got us there?**

**JC:** A lot of it depends on, 20 years from now what the US economy is going to be like, what the US position in the world, as a world leader, will look like. At the moment there seems to be a fear, almost a terror that they're losing their number one position in the world, and some of these fears may be grounded. But nonetheless it's not going to disappear as a powerhouse altogether. My hope is that, more and more, the 20 years that it took the sceptics and the deniers of smoking, using that example again, to become discredited and silenced and even ridiculed the other way. In other words we're heading towards tipping it the other way so that it's no longer equal validity, the pro and the con side. Little by little, every year, the evidence, the talk the increased education of the public, of the politicians, the work from businesses who are feeling corporate responsibility, who are looking to the bottom line profit of the next quarter, but also looking for ways to do that in a more socially responsible and sustainable way. All of this inch-by-inch is going to have the effect of making the deniers and those who profess to do nothing and put more money into drilling oil, digging out coal, more and more marginalised.

So I would hope that, gradually, in 20 years we are going to be moving much more towards renewable energies. We've got it. It's doable. We've dropped the ball. But just because we did not start it as early as we should have or put as much resources into it in the United States as we should have 10-15 years ago. We're still here now. And 10-15 years from now we'll be there. So I would say we've got to start step-by-step. It's the only way I can keep up any hope that you just think: 'OK, tomorrow what do we do?' And the day after

'what do we do?' Don't think [about] 20 years from now. Because if we did a lot of us would just throw up our hands and say 'it's a waste of time!' I think you just keep your feet to the fire, you just keep plodding along, we keep doing what we're doing, doing what you're doing John, finding ways to do it, getting to people one-by-one.

You know in this country your independent MP Tony Windsor, his mind was changed by one of The Climate Project Australia presenters. She was tenacious, she got to him, she gave him the presentation, she drilled and thumped the table until he rolled over and said 'OK, I'm a believer' and he was willing to risk his political future, and put everything on the line because of something he believed in. Now we need some more courageous politicians.

**JW: There always have been people who have been prepared to take a stand on tobacco, or apartheid, or the Berlin Wall. There's a range of examples where people in high places, have been prepared to stand out from the crowd. I'm really interested in why that happens. Do you have any views on that?**

**JC:** Well...I have some experience of it with all of the people that were trained in The Climate Project. Let me digress for a second, because one of our trainings was a faith training and by definition in the US they tend to be more Republican and yet there's one thing that everybody had in common which was that they wanted to look at what's in this problem, because they believe that man has a stewardship of God's planet – that it's our responsibility to look after this planet. So a lot of them were prepared, with an open mind, to listen, And I've seen many "Tony Windsors" who went from being a complete sceptic and making fun of it, to a complete believer. I've seen that transition happen. How does it happen? It's obviously to some extent individual make-up: how deeply do they think? How much do they actually study? You say they have the information...how many of them read it with an open mind? How many of them have the sceptics on one page and the proponents on the other and they say 'these don't add up, but I'd prefer to believe this because it's too scary to believe what the scientists/alarmists are telling us. Denial you know is not just being stubborn. I don't think many people want to believe it, do you?

**JC:** I'd much rather put my little head in the sand! You know, I saw that movie last night *The Ides of March*, where George Clooney is running for President he said 'I'm tired of us putting our heads in the sand, the sands of Saudi Arabia, the sands of Iran.' Which means oil, you know?

Basically I think the person has personal courage to put their own career, their own credibility on the line...that person has actually been educated...taken the time to have an open mind and receive the education, and process it, accept it, believe it, and then on top of that to have the courage to believe it. Because that takes courage too, because it's a lot of fear. As you mentioned before 'the hope-budget, the fear-budget', that is something we have to negotiate, those of us who are trying to work in climate change education, all the time because there is a burn-out, there is a turn-off rate that you wouldn't believe. Even among people who know it. They say 'I know it but I've got a baby now, I have to pay the mortgage, I'm not going to think about this anymore.' So again its two steps forward, one step back.

**JW: And there's the step from 'yeah I get it' to 'yeah I'm going to act on it' ...**

**JC:** And is that enough? Yes I'm recycling, yes I'm carpooling, yes turn the tap off when I brush my teeth etcetera. All these personal things. But, is that enough?

**JW:** So the next step...to give one example, say I'm the head of a large corporation, a car company: Am I prepared to speak publicly? Am I prepared to go on TV?

**JC:** Some of them are...

**JW:** The question then is...so why some and not others?

**JC:** They care. I think some of them care. Maybe they saw *An Inconvenient Truth*...I've heard many people say: 'that changed my life' and therefore now I started this small grassroots {climate organisation}...I mean the woman who started [community climate action group] Lighter Footprints, [Carolyn Ingvarson], she said that was a direct initiative from Al Gore. So something clicks in their brain and they go for it. Maybe there aren't distractions, maybe they have the time to focus on it.

I think everybody is different... but I mean why do some take that initiative? Why do some not? I've talked to a CEO who was in charge of Australia and all of Asia of one of the largest PR-media organisations in the world called Egis Media, he's a Swede, he was based in Singapore, and he said 'I got to Singapore and I didn't like the way things were being done'. Now his job is to do PR and marketing and media, it's not to 'green' his organisation. But he put down the gauntlet and said 'look I think you guys are'... he's Swedish maybe that's something, he comes from a background of conservation and so forth...but he said 'you're using too much. Why don't we have a competition and I challenge you all to reduce your carbon footprint by 10% in 6 months' and they all got into it. Apparently, it became a huge competition and the net result is 6 months later it was 30% down. So why can't we have more of those kind of CEOs? Why can't we have....an Al Gore training of like-minded CEOs who could do something like that, who could go back to their companies and say: 'we're going to do this.'

**JW:** It would be interesting to get your thoughts on whether there are some senior corporate people, or government people in the United States who would be prepared to have a discussion about this issue?

**JC:** I've got countless examples of that. I know a guy who was chief of marketing for iPod, for Apple, hugely senior job, and his boss who came to a meeting we had in Amsterdam, and this guy quit his job. He was French, making zillions of dollars in London, but working all the time, went back to join his family to live in France and started a green consulting business in his little home village. And many, many, many stories like that of people who say 'I've got to do something'.

**JW:** In addition to Mr. Gore, which individuals or groups of individuals do you feel have provided the most valuable or inspiring examples of effective action on climate politics in the last 4 or 5 years?

**JC:** Rather than groups of individuals, it's long been my belief that without the triangle of people, business and government working interchangeably all around you're not going to get a lot of movement forward. Everybody's got to be working together, pressure from up, from above and from the grassroots up. I think there is a noticeable change in a lot of businesses – you only have to search Google about sustainability in companies and the fact that it's in their mind set now. They're doing things. And it's not just brain washing because it's so patently obvious to be able to see through these days, before it wasn't so much, but 'what can we do to green our business? What can we do to have an edge with our competitors so that our consumers feel good about making the choice for us versus the less sustainable company?' People like Lee Scott who was CEO of Walmart deserves a hell of a lot of credit. Obviously he did it with the eye to making money, but he was courageous, he went around speaking to lots and lots of groups. I first heard him in London with a group

that was put together by Prince Charles' group for business leaders, the Cambridge Program for Industries. There was a lot of senior leaders there...there was Lee Scott preaching how it needs to be. He set the legacy even though [there are] a lot of other bad things about Walmart, they are working really hard. Other groups that I've worked with, even luxury manufacturers Louis Vuitton, they are working hard at doing what they can to make themselves less bad. So I think a lot of businesses, there are countless groups that are doing it. I have a lot of respect for teachers. There are countless initiatives in this country and all over the place that are being worked on within the schools. Politically...I'm drawing much more of a blank here.

**JW: It's harder to spot...**

**JC:** So I think with the people on the business side there are initiatives that are working. Maybe, hopefully they will pressure government too...because without legislative change I mean this change is too slow. The Chinese have in some ways... totalitarianism, if its benevolent or at least wise in certain ways, has a real advantage over democracy in that, 'if we deem this is good for China, and also may be good for the world, then we're going to do it.' And they're going to do it tomorrow.

**JW: Though it is also interesting to look at the two or three other developed countries which are providing a degree of leadership. I'm thinking of Germany and perhaps the UK alongside some of the Scandinavian countries. But it's interesting that Germany and the UK both have conservative governments and have been prepared to go out in front of others...**

**JC:** There's a lot of reasons for that. The Germans and the British...they have the legacy of World War Two and being left with virtually nothing. So conservation and non-wastefulness has been part of their culture for a long, long time so I think in terms of being sustainable, recycling and getting that mentality going with people, that has been an easy sell for a long, long time. But yes I agree the leadership they're showing is laudable...

**JW: A more cynical response is that they also don't have the same sort of level of mineral resources and fossil fuel resources as...**

**JC:** But we'll take what we can get! I mean if it's an example that we can follow or feel slightly embarrassed that we're not [doing] then all the better for that.

**JW: One of the striking features of looking through the range of both government and non-government post carbon economy plans and strategies is the difference between those which fundamentally, when you boil it down, say 'The answer is renewables. If we can just get enough solar, enough wind, that's going to do the trick' and those which say 'well that's obviously critical but, we've also got to change consumption patterns and therefore that will require some shift in the way consumers operate and the way in which the economy operates.'**

**What's your view on that debate? To what extent do you believe it is possible to achieve the required reductions in greenhouse gas emissions without significant changes in the structure of the economy? What's made? How it's made? How it's governed?**

**JC:** Well, those are the two things that have to shift. Hard as it is I think the first one: shifting to renewable energies, or gradually shifting that way and shutting down coal plants and coal mining operations – that sadly is an easier sell than getting human beings to say 'oh, I don't need so much'. Unless, of course, that's for other reasons, because the whole economic consumerism system breaks down because of a prolonged recession or

even a depression. Therefore manufacturing and distribution ceases or slows significantly.... I mean look at developing countries now, emerging economies. They want what America has been so good at showing them they could possibly get and what we're screaming about not having so much of. People tend to be gluttonous as a society and I think if it's there, they want it. So changing that paradigm or the mentality is going to be very difficult. Now it may happen because the economies may just simply, for one reason or another – that have nothing to do with climate change or very little to do with climate change – may slow or grind to almost a halt, in which case so will consumerism. So that could be the silver lining to that problem I suppose.

**JW: How has your experience of the last six years in this educational work changed your own choices about where you want to choose to put energy over the next five to ten years?**

**JC:** I think I always had environmentalist leanings. I wasn't educated that way. I wouldn't describe myself as a 'greenie' necessarily, but having been brought up partly in New Zealand I think it was second nature to me not to waste. I've always been a little appalled about how much waste I see going on in the United States. It really almost makes me sick, so it was a natural fit when I did fall into the job as the Executive Director of The Climate Project. But having said that, it has definitely changed me. There is no way I could go and feel good about myself in a work effort that was not sustainable in terms of the output.

My background before this apart from law was in conflict resolution and mediation, so I have those kinds of leanings. I like to make things better rather than increase the divide from a lawyers' point of view. Sustainability is where my interests lie, whether it is working, which I am doing, with start up companies that are working towards putting on the market better building products that are made from renewable products, that have positive health effects, that are lighter weight, or that decrease footprints overall and increase efficiency...energy efficiency, building efficiency and all that. Those are the kinds of things that make my heart feel better. So I know I will continue along this way. Whether I'll continue in the educating area or not, I don't know. Right now I'm focused more on business and what I can do to help business jump over that divide and get in that space and start working towards a more sustainable future for themselves as a company and for us overall.

**JW: One last question. If you had the opportunity to communicate one really effective, cut through message to the most influential people in the world at the moment about climate change – if you had the proverbial one minute in the lift – what would that message be?**

**JC:** I would say what I said to my old, old friend who lives outside of Sydney who is a very intelligent man, a lawyer, who's been a sceptic, who's a little less sceptical this time than he was two years ago when I saw him before. I would say, and when he's saying 'yeah, well it might be true, but we've got a hundred or two hundred years don't we? I'm not going to worry about that.' And I said to him 'Paul, go away and spend a day reading about this first from credible sources, educate yourself, read up, just spend a day or even half a day and then when you've done that, come back and let's talk because I can't talk to you like this now. It's not going to be me that changes your mind.' It's got to come from them. And they've got to start out by listening with an open mind and believing that...you know what? The world might actually be round after all? And so what are we going to do about that? How is that going to affect our businesses, our future? And how we do business from now on? So educate yourself.