

#### ACCA's contribution to

Social and Environmental Accounting Research (and Practice)

past, present and future



# RESEARCH REPORT 17

Professor John R. Grinyer

# THE GREENING OF ACCOUNTANCY: The Profession After Pearce

(... following a suggestion from Roger Adams, ACCA)

The Chartered Association of Certified Accountants

Rob Gray

# **ACCA** timeline

1990 "The greening of accountancy" by Rob Gray

1991 ACCA's UK Environmental Reporting Awards

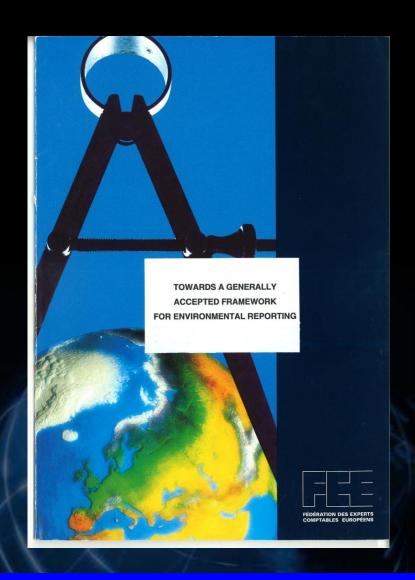
1991 founding sponsor of CSEAR

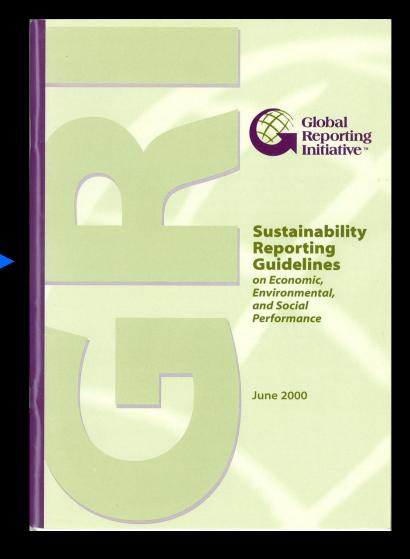
1995 ACCA represented on FEE Sustainability Working Party

1996 ACCA co-launches European reporting awards

1997 becomes a member of AccountAbility's Council

1997 member of the GRI steering committee





Towards a Generally Accepted Framework for Environmental Reporting (FEE, 1998 et seq)

"G1" Guidelines 2000 (GRI)

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1996 ACCA, co-launches European reporting awards

1997 becomes a member of AccountAbility's Council

1997 member of the GRI steering committee

1998 expert adviser at UNCTAD-ISAR

1998 full-time sustainability staff employed

1999 ACCA UK social reporting awards are launched

1999 Social and Environmental Committee is convened

2000 member of the GRI board of directors



reporting award schemes launched in Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand, North America, Pakistan, Ireland

2002 UNEP Rio + 10 survey report on the global accounting profession.





# Industry as a partner for sustainable development

#### Accounting

Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)



Developed through a multi-stakeholder process facilitated by:



2001 to 2003

reporting award schemes launched in Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand, North America, Pakistan, Ireland

2002 UNEP Rio + 10 survey report on the global accounting profession.

2003 accounting and sustainability e-newsletter launched

2006 IFAC's Sustainability Working Group (Chair of Sustainability Framework Project)

2006 HRH Prince of Wales' Accounting for Sustainability' project

2007 revised professional exam syllabus with significant sustainability content

2008 member of the Carbon Disclosure Standards Board advisory group

2009 Climate Change e-newsletter launched



#### **ACCA Research Reports**

Roberts, 1990
International trends in social and employee reporting

Owen, Humphrey, Lewis, 1994

Social and Environmental Accounting Education in British Universities

Spencer-Cooke, 1994

Where silence is not golden: towards the strategic use of corporate environmental information for company valuation

Adams, Hill and Roberts, 1995

Environmental, Employee and Ethical Reporting in Europe

Bebbington and Thomson, 1996

Business Conceptions of Sustainability and the Implications for Accountancy

Gonella, Pilling and Zadek, 1998

Making values count:contemporary experience in social and ethical accounting, auditing and reporting

Adams and Harte 1999

Towards corporate accountablity for equal opportunites performance

Jones and Matthews 2000

Chambers and Lewis, 2001

Ecological Footprinting Analysis - Towards a Sustainability Indicator for Business

O'Dwyer, 2001

The State of Corporate Environmental Reporting in Ireland

Kreander, 2001

An Analysis of European Ethical Funds

Bebbington, Gray, Hibbitt and Kirk, 2001

Full Cost Accounting - An Agenda for Action

Miles, Hammond and Friedman, 2002

Social and Environmental Reporting and Ethical Investment

Ball, 2002
Sustainability Accounting in UK Local Government - An Agenda for Research

Verma and Dewe, 2004

Valuing Human Resources

Zadek and Raynard, 2004

The future of sustainability assurance

Cobb, Collison, Power and Stevenson, 2005 FTSE4Good - perceptions and performance

Owen, Shaw and Cooper, 2005

The operating and financial review: a catalyst for improved corporate social and environmental disclosure? (Owen, Shaw and Cooper, 2005)

Kreander, Beattie, and McPhail, 2006

UK charity ethical investment - policy, practice and disclosure

Spence and Gray, 2007

Social and environmental reporting and the business case

Campbell & Slack, 2008

Narrative Reporting: Analysts' Perceptions of its Value and Relevance

Grosser, Adams and Moon, 2008

Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace: A Study of Corporate Disclosure

#### **Work in Progress includes:**

Juliana Jetty and Vivien Beattie

Narrative Reporting by UK Charities: A Study of Disclosure Practices and Policies

Ciaran Connolly and Alpa Dhanani
Investigating the discharge of accountability by UK charities

Jill Solomon

Sustainable pensions: myth or reality?

Nick Barter and Jan Bebbington

Barriers to business's actions for sustainable development

Gloria Agyemang, Jeffrey Unerman & Brendan O' Dwyer Improving the effectiveness of NGO accountability: evidence from Ghana

David Owen

Understanding the Business-Society Interface: a Case for Sustainable Assurance?

Ken McPhail
New Professionalism? The renewal of ethics & professionalism

George Tanewski & Peter Carey

Competence, Trust and Professional Ethics in the Supply of Advice to SMEs



From ACCA's Social and Environmental Committee 2008

Going Concern? A Sustainability Agenda for Action

# Going Concern? A Sustainability Agenda for Action

- ACCA believes that few organisations are capable of achieving true sustainability in the short or medium term. ... Most organisations, however, have both the desire and the capability to be, and be seen to be, socially responsible
- Recently there have been an increasing number of legislative requirements for organisations to report, although we acknowledge these are too few and lack the depth preferred by many stakeholders (e.g. the *UK Companies Act 2006*)
- ACCA supports moves by FEE to promote the standardisation of sustainability assurance processes in the form of a generally agreed international standard

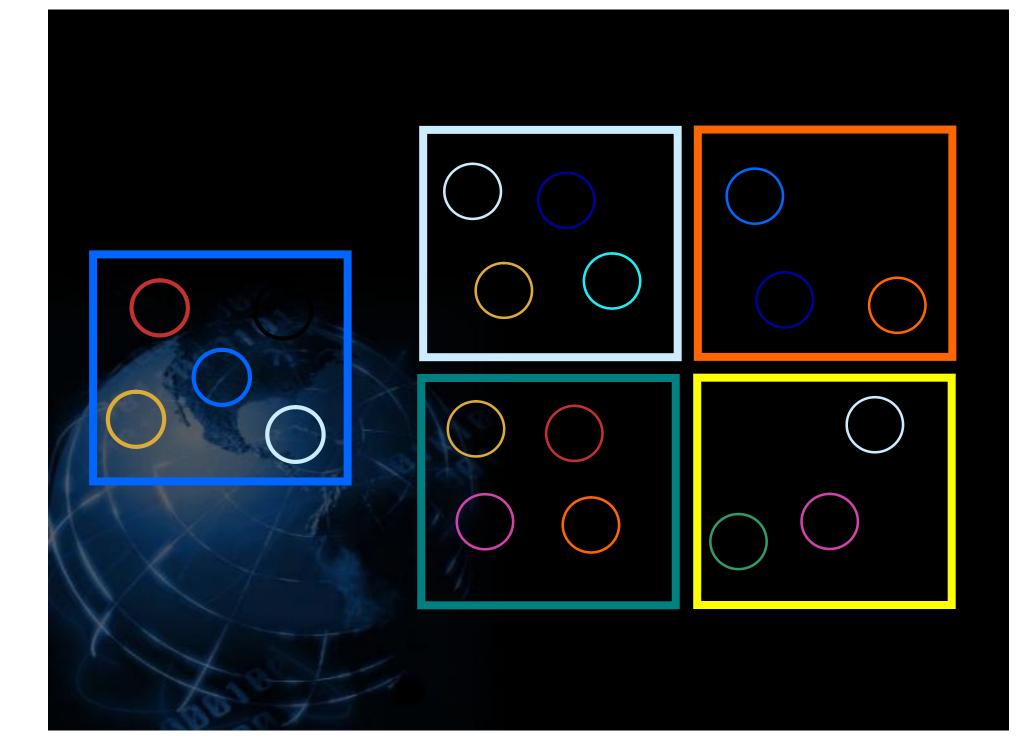
### ACCA UK Awards for Sustainability Reporting 2008



# 2008 Report of Judges

- Example 2 Lack of a clear and credible articulation of the meaning of SD, consideration of the implications of pursuing SD and any tensions that emerge.
- A significant reporting development during 2008 was the UK government's disappointing decision to reject Clause 80 within the Climate Change Bill, which called for mandatory greenhouse gas emissions reporting for around 50,000 UK organisations

(2009 THEME will be focusing on water reporting)



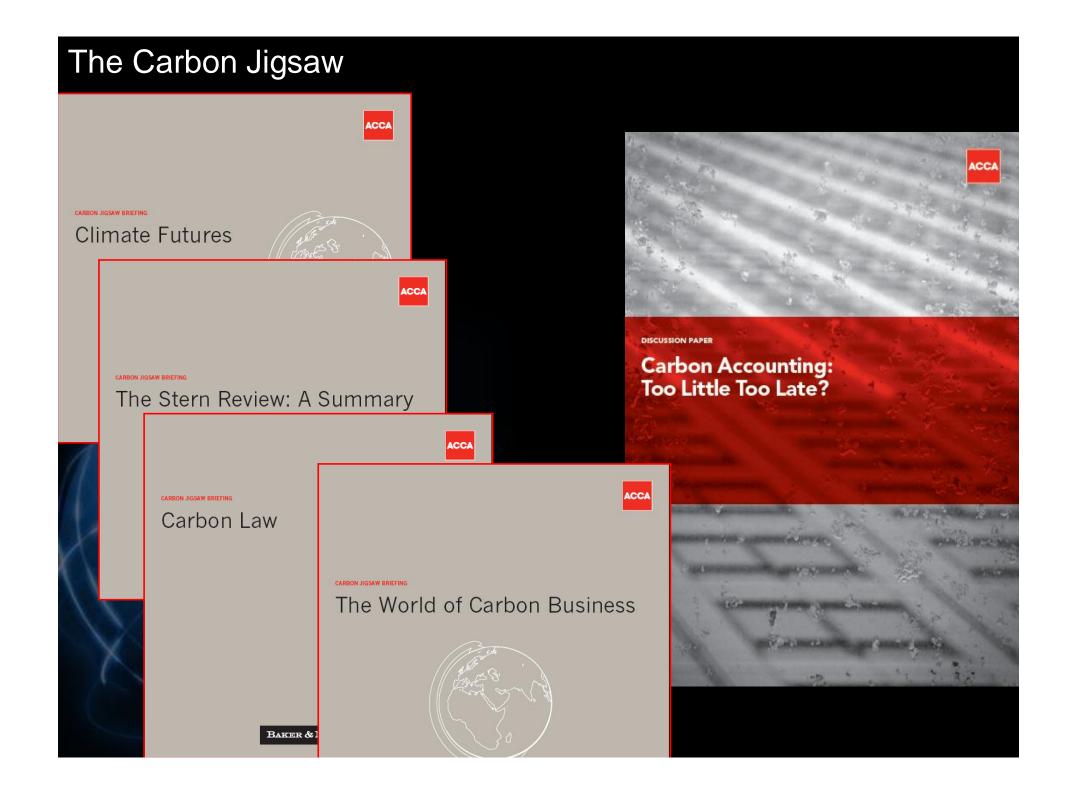
#### The six categories are as follows:

- 1) Organisational context and strategy
- 2) Opportunity and innovation
- 3) Stakeholder inclusion and materiality
- 4) Governance, management processes and performance
- 5) Assurance
- 6) Communication

ACCA has decided that, of the main SD issues, we should prioritise consideration of climate change



www.accaglobal.com/climatechange





COP15
Copenhagen
December 2009

ACCA remains certain that the accounting profession's most significant contribution – and one of the most influential for the business world – would be for its own accounting standard-setter body to publish a carbon accounting standard.

#### Carbon in the academic accounting literature

European Accounting Review

Vol. 17, No. 4, 2008

Special Section: Accounting and the Market of Emissions

Accounting, Organizations and Society

Volume 34, Issues 3-4, 2009

Special section: Accounting and Carbon Markets

Accounting Auditing and Accountability Journal Forthcoming special issue

