

This article examines the potential for visionary small-enterprise to operate with a fundamentally different conception of nature from the environmental management mode offered within the business case for sustainable development. Corporate environmental management is critiqued for not offering any fundamental reassessment of the business—nature relationship, which would be required to achieve ecological sustainability. Three contrasting cases of visionary small-enterprise in New Zealand are described in terms of the entrepreneurs' expressed understandings of nature and constructions of the business—nature relationship. The entrepreneurs in this study readily made connections between nature and their businesses and were aware of value judgments they made either in favor of nature, or with some regret against it where supporting infrastructure was absent, or economic rationalities prevailed. A nature-centered and not overly growth-focused outlook appears an essential element of business aligned with the new ecological paradigm.

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