**Dr Ron McDowall ONZM**

Ron is a Distinguished Fellow of Engineering New Zealand and is a Chartered Professional Engineer. He is a mission specialist scientist/engineer with the United Nations (UNEP & UNFAO). This work is generally focused on developing countries involving substantial in-country project management of large complex toxic and hazardous chemical waste projects. In total he managed more than 250 significant toxic chemical waste projects in 126 different countries.

Ron will talk specifically tonight about the 2006 Cote D’Ivoire toxic chemical waste incident. The 2006 Ivory Coast toxic waste dumping was a [health crisis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Health_crisis) in [Ivory Coast](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ivory_Coast) in which a ship registered in [Panama](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panama), the *Probo Koala*, chartered by the Singaporean-based oil and commodity shipping company [Trafigura Beheer BV](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trafigura), offloaded 500 tonnes of toxic chemicals waste to an Ivorian waste handling company which disposed of it at the port of [Abidjan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abidjan).

The local contractor, a company called Tommy, dumped the waste at 12 sites in and around the city in August 2006. Ron and his UN team arrived on site three days after the dumping and he was the technical Scientist in charge of the incident. The dumping, which took place against a backdrop of instability in Abidjan as a result of Côte d'Ivoire's first civil war, allegedly led to the death of 57 and 20 hospitalized long term and more than 100,000 presented with severe symptoms of poisoning.

