As part of Natural Innovation's mission to improve the climate for technology innovation, Mitra has been trying to get the message out that the Social Entrepreneurship / Impact Investment space needs to address the serious gap between the mostly late-stage, risk averse, investors with high minimum amounts and the mostly early stage entrepreneurs, needing small amounts of money and lots of help.

This gap is particularly evident when an entrepreneur is in a developing country, where US$200,000 will fund a team of 10 for a year, and all the prototyping and development. But to US based investors, $200k is too small to be worth the cost of the due-diligence! At the recent SoCap conference, this gap was finally being recognised and talked about by investors, while incubators like Natural Innovation met with entrepreneurs and those few funders who understand to explore possible solutions.

SoCap has rapidly become the conference to pay attention to for the sector we work in. I found both Investors Circle and Cleantech Open interesting and valuable, however Investors Circle is in practice only available to US entrepreneurs and we also heard from two companies that the venture capital investors they met throught their pitches at Cleantech Open had tried to get them to drop their social missions and just focus on profitable western markets.