



Newsletter May 2022

Tēnā koutou,

This newsletter is an update of recent activity and planned developments within Climate Health Aotearoa (CHA). We profile the recipient of our first Māori Post-Graduate Scholarship, we promote a current Māori Masters scholarship opportunity, we introduce our new CHA members, outline emerging research initiatives, and provide an update on recent climate advocacy. Ngā mihi o te wā.

CHA celebrates first Māori Postgraduate Scholarship Recipient



Sade Gilbertt-Perenise (*Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Ngāti Raukawa te au ki te Tonga, Ngāti Kahungunu*) is the recipient of the 2022 Climate Health Aotearoa Māori Post-Graduate Scholarship. In 2021 Sade graduated with a Bachelor of Health Sciences majoring in Māori Health. Through this she learnt that incorporating mātauranga Māori and other perspectives of te ao Māori is essential for the health and wellbeing of Māori. She is now enrolled in a Postgraduate Diploma in Public Health with a focus on Māori health, environmental health and research methodologies as a pathway towards the Masters in Public Health degree next year. She has experience as an intern with the HRC, Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga and Toi Tangata, which gave her the chance to scope the relationship between the environment and human health. According to Sade, “It was through my upbringing within te ao Māori, undergraduate studies, and research experience where I developed a great interest for the health of the environment and its importance to sustain Māori health”. Her plans

for the future are to be an agent of change through exploring research opportunities, creating sustainable solutions guided and informed by our tūpuna and their mātauranga.

Māori Masters Scholarship Opportunity

Applications are invited for a Masters scholarship to undertake research on sustainable and healthy kai for Māori. The research aims to identify policies and interventions that could shift dietary intake towards more sustainable and healthy ways of eating through consultation with key stakeholders. This research will provide policymakers and practitioners with information on how best to improve population dietary intake to maximise health and environmental co-benefits and decrease health inequities between Māori and non-Māori in Aotearoa. The Masters research can draw on any aspect of the overall project so the work can be tailored to specific research interests, but we envisage a project focused on Māori perspectives on sustainable kai.

The Masters student will be supervised by Dr Christina McKerchar (University of Otago, Christchurch) and Dr Cristina Cleghorn (University of Otago, Wellington). The scholarship includes a stipend for one year, a fees rebate (excluding student services fees and insurance) and some research expenses (including travel). There may also be the opportunity for the student to take up some paid work on the project. For more information on the scholarship see the attached advertisement, or for more information on the project follow the link below, .

<https://www.otago.ac.nz/wellington/departments/publichealth/research/otago839652.html>

For further scholarship details contact:

Dr Cristina Cleghorn: cristina.cleghorn@otago.ac.nz

Dr Christina McKerchar: christina.mckerchar@otago.ac.nz

Bridgette Masters-Awatere joins CHA Steering Group

CHA would like to welcome Bridgette Masters-Awatere (*Te Rarawa, Ngai te Rangī, Tūwharetoa ki Kawerau*) to the Steering Group. Bridgette is a registered psychologist and Associate Professor in the School of Psychology at the University of Waikato. Her research focuses on Māori health outcomes with a particular focus on the connection between environmental health factors to human health and wellbeing. She is



currently leading several projects related to Māori health and is always looking for ways to explore the connection to climate health. She is leading the Haumanu Hauora project, funded

by the Deep South National Science Challenge, that is focused on exploring the intersection of health policy development from a Māori health equity lens in the context of climate change.

Our new Research Fellow/Co-ordinator



Ken Taiapa (*Ngāti Porou/Rongowhakaata*) has been appointed the new Climate Health Aotearoa coordinator and Post Doctoral Research Fellow. His research interests centre on the relationship between healthy environments and healthy people, with a focus on Māori values and eco-health, and kai sovereignty. His PhD work told the story of a hapū mārakai initiative and the healing that occurred through connecting people to whenua. He is also a Post Doctoral Research Fellow with the SHORE and Whariki Research Centre, Massey University, working on the HRC funded Tangata Whenua Tangata Ora research programme.

Lancet letter calling for an end to fossil fuel support

In February, the Guardian UK newspaper published this article about Elsevier's hidden publishing subsidies and supports for the fossil fuel industries, particularly the oil and gas industries. Because Elsevier publish the Lancet group of journals, including Lancet Planetary Health, the CHA steering group felt it was important to take a collective stand as climate health researchers, by writing a letter to the editor hopefully to be published in the Lancet. The letter calls on the Lancet editorial Board to demand that Elsevier end its publishing relationship with, and support for, the fossil fuel industry. Should this be unsuccessful, we call on the Lancet Group to find another publisher.

[Revealed: leading climate research publisher helps fuel oil and gas drilling | Climate science | The Guardian](#)

Ngā Pae o te Maramatanga Ngā Matakiteanga Grant

Guided by the principles of te tiriti o Waitangi, CHA is committed to forging and nurturing relational pathways based on the coming together of the *rangatiratanga* and *tangata tiriti* spheres. One of the key domains for this to happen is through research - *with* and *by* our Tangata Whenua Caucus members. In line with this Rhys Jones and Ken Taiapa recently led the development of a Ngā Pae o te Maramatanga Matakiteanga Grant application to explore understandings of how mātauranga can transform climate health outcomes. The proposed research brings together a multi-institutional group of tangata whenua including

Rhys (University of Auckland), Ken (Massey University/University of Otago), Assoc Prof Bridgette Masters-Awatere (University of Waikato), Dr Christina McKerchar (University of Otago), and PhD candidate Summer Wright (Massey University). If successful the research will provide context on the rangatiratanga sphere within CHA, and help to strengthen CHA relationships with tangata whenua.

Looking to the Future

As part of the strategic development of CHA, the decision was made by the Steering Group to apply for a Health Research Council Programme Grant in 2023. As a multi-institutional research group, the HRC Programme Grant offers CHA the chance to draw on the diverse skills and expertise of its membership to develop a focused investigation into climate change and climate health. To do so is another opportunity to provide more context on the relational work that CHA is committed to building and maintaining across its existing and future networks. The Grant would also support wider capability-building processes both within and outside of CHA in the form of post-graduate scholarships, internships, and community-based research training.

Climate case against NZ's largest polluters heading to the Supreme Court

Māori leader, environmental advocate, and CHA member Mike Smith, (Ngāpuhi/Ngāti Kahu), is taking legal action to the Supreme Court against some of the largest climate polluters in Aotearoa. The case, which is against Fonterra, Genesis Energy, Dairy Holdings, NZ Steel, Z Energy, NZ Refining Company, and BT Mining, is based on the claim that ongoing emissions from these corporations compromise his health along with the health of current and future generations. Our collective concern is that this situation is further aggravated by the vested interests of these corporations who profit from these emissions of greenhouse gases. The case highlights the question of whether it is the courts' duty to make rulings on climate change, or if it remains the domain of national regulations. Nō reira, koinei ngā mihi manawanui kia a koe e te rangatira.

[Supreme Court Agrees To Hear Climate Case | Newsroom](#)