

# CLIMATE HEALTH AOTEAROA

## NGĀ MIHI O TE WĀ KŌANGA

### GREETINGS IN THE SEASON OF SPRING

Tēnā koutou,

We're excited to present the latest edition of our CHA Kawerongo (newsletter). Within these pages, we explore the dynamic interplay between our environment, and well-being, shedding light on promising developments. First, we look at ō mātou tāngata (our people) from our Matike Mai-inspired Tangata Whenua and Tangata Tiriti caucuses and our new coordinator. We share an opportunity for a student to join us here. Then we will share some highlights of ō mātou mahi (our work), before highlighting he kawepūrongo (news) from the broader community.

Amidst today's concerns, our community hopes to highlight avenues for progress. If you're interested in joining our research network, please send us a message at: [climatehealthaotearoa@otago.ac.nz](mailto:climatehealthaotearoa@otago.ac.nz)

Ngā mihi nui,  
katy Carlson, CHA Coordinator

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# Ō MĀTOU TĀNGATA OUR PEOPLE



## SUMMER WRIGHT

RESEARCHER - *TANGATA WHENUA CAUCUS*

Summer, a proud Ngāti Maniapoto descendant, has been an active member of CHA.

Raised in Waitākere, she now finds herself anchored in Papaioea (Palmerston North). As an early-career researcher, she is currently working on a PhD at Massey University and is involved with work at Ngā Pae o Te Māramatanga. Her interests are in food systems and the interplay between food and justice.

Summer is also co-convenor of OraTaiao: NZ Climate & Health Council, a role which CHA's co-directors Rhys and Alex have also held. Beyond the academic realms, Summer loves animals and enjoys the artistry of raranga, drawing, and painting. Her affinity for sustainability and the natural world is mirrored in her newfound passion for cycling, wherein she traverses the Manawatū river highway on her commute.

## CONTINUING THE FOCUS ON MĀTAURANGA MĀORI

In our March 2023 newsletter we introduced the research by Ken Taiapa and Summer Wright on the contribution of mātauranga towards climate health outcomes in Aotearoa. Now, interviews and data analysis have been completed and it is in its final writing stage which they are co-authoring with Helen Moewaka Barnes. Among the findings, we learn that mātauranga-derived action for climate health is ultimately about how we relate to each other and to the environment. It is about reclaiming and instituting those understandings. Enabling these healing potentials of indigenous relationships will require a paradigmatic power shift.

We'll see this addressed in the next part of this work that Ken and Summer have begun. With the continued rōpū tautoko support of Rhys Jones, Bridgette Masters-Awatere, Helen Moewaka Barnes and Christina McKerchar, they are analysing policies within government ministries and regional councils to investigate the incorporation of mātauranga Māori. Subsequently, six key informant interviews will be undertaken with individuals involved in te taiao initiatives, possessing knowledge, insights, or expertise pertaining to relevant policies. The findings will contribute to strengthening the utilisation of mātauranga, aligning with the efforts of Climate Health Aotearoa (CHA) for climate health recovery through indigenous knowledge.

# CRISTINA CLEGHORN

RESEARCHER - *TANGATA TIRITI CAUCUS*

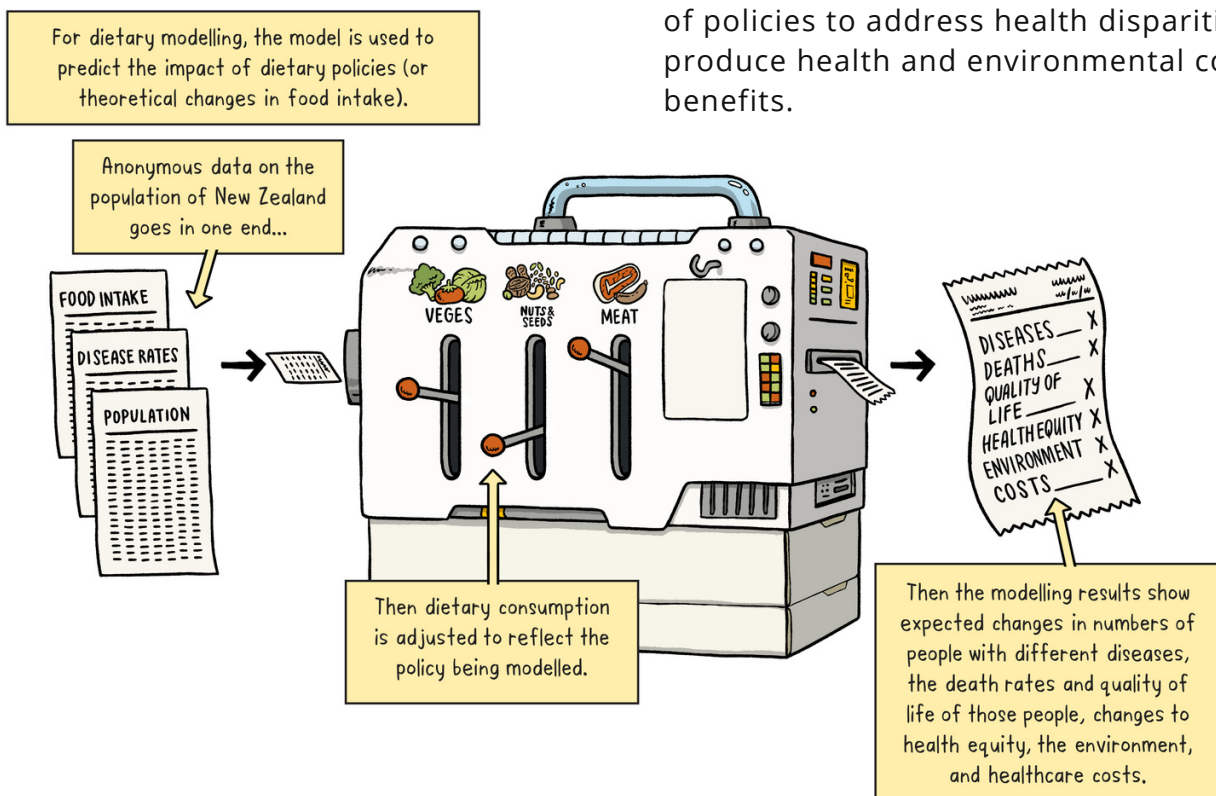
Dr. Cristina Cleghorn is a senior research fellow at the Department of Public Health at the University of Otago in Wellington. She focuses on public health nutrition with an interest in sustainable kai and how dietary policy can improve population health and reduce health inequities.

She currently leads a Healthier Lives funded project which employs simulation modelling (illustrated in the image below) to assess the health and environmental benefits of sustainable kai in NZ.

The team has formed a New Zealand version of the EAT Lancet diet: a diet which meets our dietary guidelines, contributes emissions deemed safe for New Zealand, and is no more expensive than diets in the last nutrition survey. Another model included incorporating plant-based protein sources and decreasing meat consumption. Both scenarios resulted in large health gains, health system cost savings, and reduced emissions. These diets would also reduce the health inequity between Māori and non-Māori and even result in higher per capita health gains for Māori.



Conversations have taken place with Māori stakeholders, the ministries of Health, Primary Industries and the Environment about their definitions of sustainability and ideas for policies that support New Zealanders to consume more healthy and sustainable kai. The next step involves modelling impacts of the favoured policies if they were implemented. The project emphasises the government's role in promoting policies that facilitate accessible, nutritious, and eco-friendly diets for New Zealanders. The results could guide the selection and implementation of policies to address health disparities and produce health and environmental co-benefits.



## KATY CARLSON CHA'S NEW COORDINATOR

Kia ora, my name is Katy and I'm not only new to CHA but also to Aotearoa New Zealand. I grew up in the US (Illinois and Michigan), but I've spent the majority of my last 10 years abroad. Now I'm giving NZ its turn and I've chosen Te Whanganui a Tara (Wellington) as my base. I have an MSc in Public Health for Development and a professional background in public health development and humanitarian response. In addition to coordination, I'm excited that this role will allow me to explore research as a further career path. Feel free to reach out for assistance or collaboration.



## JOIN US IN OUR WORK POST-GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY



Applications are invited for a post-graduate scholarship designed to help develop and apply skills in a research programme that contributes to understanding on oranga taiao/hauora tangata (healthy environments/healthy people), with a focus on climate change and health.

The scholarship is funded by the Institute of Environmental Science and Research (ESR). It will provide one year of research funding for a Māori and/or Indigenous Pacific student enrolled at at one of CHA's partner Universities (Te Whare Wānanga o Ōtākou, Waipapa Taumata Rau / University of Auckland, Massey University, University of Waikato).

The successful applicant will have the opportunity to join the CHA team, and develop relationships with leading tangata whenua and tangata Tiriti climate change and health researchers. In addition, the scholarship provides the opportunity to develop relationships with researchers at ESR learning about the Institute and networking for further research opportunities.

For more information on the scholarship and how to apply follow [this link](#).

Note: Applications due by 5pm 1 November 2023

# Ō MĀTOU MAHI OUR WORK

## CHA'S APPLICATIONS TO HEALTH RESEARCH COUNCIL

Two Climate Health Aotearoa teams recently submitted project applications to the Health Research Council. They are the result of a sustained process within CHA that built on research priorities identified by the Tangata Whenua Caucus, followed by a relational process to develop specific project ideas and build research teams.

### 1) EXAMINING FOOD-CLIMATE POLICYMAKING TO INFORM TIRITI-BASED PUBLIC HEALTH ACTION

A team led by Associate Professor Rhys Jones developed this proposal, which is focused on the policy barriers to healthy, equitable climate action in the food system. The research is grounded in a decolonial approach that seeks transformation of food systems to centre Indigenous values, knowledges and practices.

In Aotearoa and globally, food systems threaten both human health and environmental sustainability. There are well-evidenced solutions that would advance climate change mitigation and adaptation as well as improving hauora and contributing to health equity. Yet policies that would help realise these multidimensional benefits are consistently avoided by New Zealand governments. This raises questions about what is blocking healthy, pro-equity climate-food policy.

In this project we are trying to better understand food-climate policy inertia in Aotearoa and to identify leverage points and effective strategies to address it. Findings will be used to inform public health action towards a just transition, with a focus on Indigenous rights and Māori health equity.

## 2) EXPLORING THE INTERSECTION BETWEEN KAI, CLIMATE CHANGE AND MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Mental health, food insecurity and climate change intersect. However to our knowledge they have not been explored in the context of hauora Māori.

Christina McKerchar and Ken Taiapa led the development of a Health Research Council project proposal exploring the intersection between kai, mental health, and climate change in the Te Tairāwhiti region on the East Coast of the Te Ika a Maui. Along with support from Summer Wright and Hemi Enright, and guidance from Tim McCreanor, the proposal applies an integrated lens towards understanding how climate change is impacting those who grow and gather kai, as well as providing insight on the way kai sovereignty practices can support healing and recovery in regions most impacted by climate change. Here, as elsewhere around the globe, indigenous people will be disproportionately affected by climate change.

Proposed data collection methods draw on participatory action principles to rebalance power into the hands of community members. With the support of the research team, individuals will conduct interviews and photovoice projects in three communities along State Highway 35 in Te Tairāwhiti. As Christina and Ken both have whakapapa links to Ngāti Porou, it's a chance to offer research as a tool for voice and story to support mental health outcomes and promote kai sovereignty initiatives in the rohe. In the first instance, the Māori kai growers, gatherers, and their communities will benefit from this research as it will provide new understanding on the nexus between climate health, kai, and mental health and wellbeing.

This research will help to advance new thinking on the way mental health in coastal and rural Māori populations is conceptualised and understood.

# IN CASE YOU MISSED IT...

## CLIMATE HEALTH AND SUSTAINABLE HEALTHCARE IN AOTEAROA CONFERENCE 2023

The theme for this year's conference *Taiao. Tangata. Hauora. Advancing Planetary Health* was developed by Ken Taiapa and Rhys Jones in acknowledgement of the strong interconnections between environmental health, human health, and healthcare. The concept of mauri was used as a framework to conceptualise the different challenges and opportunities of viewing this through an integrated lens.

Held at Victoria University from 5-6 July in Wellington and streamed into remote hubs in Auckland, Christchurch, and Dunedin, the conference brought together a wide range of researchers, health professionals, policymakers, architects, consultants, sustainability professionals, operational managers, suppliers, procurement agencies, board members and students – all keen to create a healthy planet with healthy people. Presentations covered a broad range of kaupapa related to planetary health, the impacts of climate health and healthcare on the well-being of all New Zealanders; and ensuring the health sector in Aotearoa New Zealand is equitable, and delivers high quality, patient, and whanau-centred services within existing planetary boundaries.

Placing an emphasis on mātauranga Māori, the theme was a deliberate challenge to delegates to become more connected and engaged in sustainable healthcare thinking and planning. It was also about celebrating the contribution of kaupapa in this space by showing the different ways Māori concepts are being applied to support healthy environments and healthy people. Presentations from Dr Anna Rolleston, Dr Dan Hikuroa, Johnnie Freeland, Summer Wright, and others highlighted the need to disrupt dominant approaches to health care and climate change to ensure our mokopuna and tamariki flourish in the future. There was consensus this is about trusting the accuracy of concepts such as mauri, rāhui, pūrākau and whakapapa to inform our measurements and understandings of te taiao and hauora.

This was echoed by Minister of Defence Peeni Henare with a challenge that hospitals don't feel like places of wellbeing, and any work in the healthcare and climate space must include Te Tiriti. For Climate Change Minister James Shaw, the government's plan to decarbonise the health system is an opportunity to build low carbon healthcare buildings that rely on natural light and fresh air and ambient heating, to create health benefits and encourage people to recover more quickly in a space that's nicer for whānau to be in.

Although only a snapshot on the excellent range of presenters it gives a sense of the range of concepts, kaupapa and approaches covered in the 2 days. Collectively it showed that, by taking *Taiao. Tangata. Hauora.* for granted we get an integrated view into the challenges facing planetary health, and the opportunities of a health system grounded in sustainable principles that weave together environmental health and human health.

- *Reflections by Ken Taiapa*

***Recordings from the conference can be accessed [here](#).***

# PUBLICATIONS FROM OUR MEMBERS

"PARTICIPATORY SYSTEMS MODELING APPROACHES MAY SUPPORT CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATIVE LEARNING ABOUT THE COMPLEX, DYNAMIC INFLUENCES ON HEALTH AND WELLBEING IN THE CONTEXT OF LOCAL CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION. THESE SHARED, HOLISTIC UNDERSTANDINGS ARE ESSENTIAL TO INFORM DECISION-MAKING THAT PROMOTES POSITIVE HEALTH AND SOCIAL EQUITY OUTCOMES."(1)

"IF COLLEGES ASPIRE TO BE LEADERS IN HEALTH, THEY MUST SHOW LEADERSHIP ON CLIMATE"(2)

THE FIRST 2 MONTHS OF 2023 BROUGHT UNPRECEDENTED RAINFALL AND FLOODING TO THE NORTH ISLAND OF AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND, ESPECIALLY TĀMAKI MAKAUROU, THE COROMANDEL, TAIRĀWHITI AND HAWKE'S BAY.(3)

(1) Sarah Harrison, Alexandra Macmillan, Sophie Bond, Janet Stephenson, Participatory modeling for local and regional collaboration on climate change adaptation and health, *The Journal of Climate Change and Health*, 2023, 100235, ISSN 2667-2782, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jocl.2023.100235>.

(2) Oakley H, Shaw C, Gale J. How colleges should lead on climate. *Med J Aust*. 2022 Nov 7;217(9):474-476. doi: [10.5694/mja2.51738](https://doi.org/10.5694/mja2.51738). Epub 2022 Sep 29. PMID: 36176192; PMCID: PMC9828111.

(3) Rhys Jones, Alex Macmillan, Alistair Woodward, Superheated storms: climate drivers, health effects and responses, *The New Zealand Medical Journal*. 2023 Apr 14:136(1573). <https://journal.nzma.org.nz/journal-articles/superheated-storms-climate-drivers-health-effects-and-responses>.

## TAUTOKO | SUPPORT FOR CHA COLLABORATION

CHA aims to generate new, member-led research. If you need additional support for member-led research CHA may be able to help. Whether that may be:

- administrative support
- peer-review
- networking opportunities
- collaboration opportunities
- dissemination in our newsletter or listserv

Contact us and we will help where we can!



# HE KAWEPŪRONGO IN OTHER NEWS

## BEYOND GROWTH AOTEAROA CONFERENCE

- SEPTEMBER 16-17 2023
- RUTHERFORD HOUSE, PIPITEA CAMPUS, VICTORIA UNIVERSITY IN WELLINGTON AND ONLINE
- REGISTRATION AND MORE DETAILS:  
[HTTPS://WWW.DEGROWTH.NZ/](https://www.degrowth.nz/)

## INTERNATIONAL INDIGENOUS CLIMATE CHANGE RESEARCH SUMMIT

- NOVEMBER 13-17 2023
- ONLINE ONLY
- DETAILS AND REGISTRATION: [HTTPS://WWW.IICCRS.AC.NZ/](https://www.iiccrs.ac.nz/)

## ONE HEALTH AOTEAROA SYMPOSIUM 2023

- DECEMBER 5-6 2023
- THE MUSEUM OF NEW ZEALAND | TE PAPA TONGAREWA, WELLINGTON AND ONLINE
- ABSTRACT SUBMISSIONS FOR ORAL AND POSTER PRESENTATIONS WHICH FIT INTO OUR SYMPOSIUM THEMES ARE INVITED BY THE CLOSING DATE OF 5.00PM ON WEDNESDAY, 14 SEPTEMBER 2023.
- AMONG SEVERAL THEMES ARE: TE AO MĀORI AND ONE HEALTH CLIMATE CHANGE AND ONE HEALTH
- MORE DETAILS AT:  
[HTTPS://ONEHEALTH.ORG.NZ/SYMPIUM2023/](https://onehealth.org.nz/symposium2023/)

Tēnā, whakapā mai.  
Get in touch. Ngā mihi!

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