

Tiakina te Taiao | Climate Action Network Pānui

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Conference Report

New rules for TEU were passed at our National Conference. We are delighted to have Mana Taiao enshrined as one of five mātāpono (purposes) for our Union. Mana Taiao reflects what has already been in our rules since 2021, and now sits alongside four other guiding mātāpono (these are: Mana Tiriti, Mana Mahi, Mana Taurite, and Mana Mātauranga).

Mana Taiao: The Union will work to foster ahikā – the interrelationship of people and the land, including supporting a sense of tūrangawaewae for all which fosters a sense of belonging. The Union will take action to transform the relationship of the Union and the tertiary education sector with Te Taiao

(Papatūānuku and Ranginui) by supporting climate justice, just transitions and kaitiakitanga of the natural environment, in relationship with mana whenua and mana Tāngata.

Something else to celebrate in the new rules is that National Networks, including Tiakina te Taiao, will have a clearer role in representative structures. For example, each National Network will be entitled to two (2) votes at the National Conference and National General Meeting.

TEU Council member Rachel Bolstad offers further reflections on Conference:

There was some discussion from the Conference floor about Mana Taiao and whether climate action is a relevant purpose for our union, as well as concerns that managers may resort to using climate-related factors as justification for reducing education provision. However, members who spoke in defence of this mātāpono highlighted the importance of our workplaces and our working conditions responding to a changing environment and a low emissions future. They also spoke to the importance of curricula and teaching reflecting climate and environmental concerns and that it would be tertiary education that would provide many of the needed solutions for the future. Additionally, it was noted that unions always consider the future generations of workers. Hence, this aspect of the rules was passed. There are many complexities and nuances when it comes to climate and environmental justice, and we should not be afraid to tackle these.

We would love to hear your thoughts about:

- How can we, as a Network, help to ensure Mana Taiao is visible in our everyday conversations and work as unionists, and education sector workers?
- How can we engage our colleagues who aren't already engaged with Mana Taiao, and create space for engaging with the complexities of climate and environmental justice?

Read more about Conference [here](#), and feel free to [get in contact](#) with your thoughts on the above issues.

Call for Expressions of Interest: Tiakina te Taiao Branch Committee Reps

One of our goals for this year is to establish Tiakina te Taiao positions on each TEU branch committee.

In broad terms, the responsibilities involved with these roles will include:

- acting as the central point of contact for Tiakina te Taiao members at your branch
- liaising the Branch President and committee regarding branch -specific climate-related issues
- leading advocacy/lobbying actions on branch-specific climate-related issues
- expanding the TEU and Tiakina te Taiao membership by building relationships and coordinating recruitment at your branch
- reporting back to the Tiakina te Taiao Steering Group

For more information or to register your expression of interest, feel free to [email us](#).

Budget 2023

The \$521m for tertiary education, including a 5% increase in 2024, was a pleasant surprise that likely came about following the recent actions by TEU members, particularly the university strike actions in 2022 – well done everyone!

While certainly not enough, with our sector in desperate need of better financial support, one argument we heard was that tertiary education should be eligible for money from the Climate Emergency Response Fund (CERF) announced in 2021 with an initial budget of \$4.5b.

Funding and initiatives related to tertiary education were [announced pre-budget](#) by Minister Shaw. These include, among other things, the increased use of LED lighting and the end of fossil fuel boilers.

Further reading about the Budget is available at the following links:

- [Spending from the Climate Emergency Response Fund](#)
- [A Disappointing Budget for the Climate](#) (Newsroom) – N.B. this piece was published prior to the government's announcement that they would be investing to upgrade the Glenbrook Steel Mill and cut its emissions by 45%
- [Govt Offers NZ Steel \\$30m More in Bonuses for Bigger, Faster Emissions Cuts](#) (Newsroom)

Upcoming events

- **Plastic Free July** – this is a great opportunity for members and workplaces to take up the challenge and be part of the solution to plastic pollution. For more information and to sign-up, see the [Plastic Free Foundation website](#).

Recent items of interest

- [Working together–talking partnerships](#) – sustainability podcast with VUW Sustainability Director and STENZ member Andrew Wilks
- [Go Green, AI!](#) (Times Higher Education)
- [Unions can – and will – play a leading role in tackling the climate crisis](#) (The Conversation)
- [Environmental sustainability in education abroad the subject of book edited by EIT | Te Pūkenga researcher](#) (Te Pūkenga)
- [Methane-munching microbes could cut harmful emissions](#) (University of Canterbury)
- [University of Canterbury going ‘wild’ to protect campus critters](#) (RNZ)

Future Tiakina te Taiao Hui Dates

We have a number of hui planned for 2023 – Outlook invites will be sent closer to the time, but we suggest keeping the dates/times free:

- Thursday 1 June, 2:00pm
- Thursday 3 August, 2:00pm
- Thursday 12 October, 2:00pm

Talk to your colleagues about the work we do and encourage them to [join TEU](#).

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