

**Rachel Bolstad**

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**From:** Jared Commerer <jared.commerer@teu.ac.nz>  
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**To:** Rachel Bolstad  
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TE HAUTŪ KAHURANGI**

# Tiakina te Taiao | Climate Action Network Pānui

August 2023

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### **Message from Tina Smith, TEU Immediate Past President**

*Below is a message from Tina Smith, TEU Immediate Past President. Tina is leaving the sector so will be stepping away from Tiakina te Taiao – she will miss the great people and the mahi.*

*Rachel and Jared would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to Tina for her tireless work as TEU President (2021-2022) and for establishing Tiakina te Taiao. We wish her all the best with future endeavours.*

The evidence confirming climate change is now rarely disputed, with broad consensus not only from the science community, but also from international political institutions and governments. The media regularly comments on the effects of climate change as we face unprecedented floods, record high world temperatures and devastating fires, to name but a few of the recent consequences.

Less common is agreement that we face an ecological crisis, fuelled through scientific and technological evolution and humans' thoughtless exploitation of the planet and its resources. While ecological alterations have always occurred and new balances created, the rapid pace of change and humans abuse of power over nature and animals has already led to countless disasters and lasting implications, such as the Chernobyl and Fukushima nuclear disasters. A [new study](#) has confirmed that pumping groundwater, along with melting glaciers, is causing a shift in the distribution of mass across the globe and has caused the Earth's axis of rotation to shift. Hence, groundwater extraction doesn't just deplete a valuable resource, but is just one activity of many that has unintended global consequences.

As we already face the unmitigated effects of our shortsighted actions, greater investment in research and education are imperatives, along with policy that

requires consideration of the planet, every species, and all possible long-term implications. This in turn requires political support and courage. We face a general election in October, with the focus appearing to be the short-term, the cost-of-living crisis. As members of TEU's Tiakina te Taiao | Climate Action Network, we need to ensure support for research, education, and sustainability are part of every conversation with colleagues, whānau, and students.

Other actions could include working with your Branch President and branch committee to include these perspectives in all pre-election actions. Consider writing an opinion piece for your branch newsletter; invite local politicians for a public debate or panel discussion; or produce a 'score card' or similar on your local politician's, or their party's, policies on these points. Create local resources to encourage everyone to 'get out and vote' and key considerations for who to give their vote to – pro-union, pro-education, pro-research, and pro-planet. Voting is a right and an obligation. Let's get active and encourage everyone to vote, and to vote for policies that foster long-term sustainability, reduce CO2 emissions, and ensure respect for nature and our planet.

Taking action around the election was one of Tiakina te Taiao's three agreed goals for 2023. We have achieved Mana Taiao and our network being part of TEU's new rules, and having Tiakina te Taiao representatives on branch committees is in progress. As I reflect on the achievements of Tiakina te Taiao, in the short time since its inception in 2021, it clearly is a force within TEU.

—Tina Smith (TEU Immediate Past President)

### **Equitable Transitions Strategy**

The Government's draft Equitable Transitions Strategy has not been released at the time of this newsletter. We are hoping it will be available soon. Visit the [MBIE website](#) for more information and to register for updates.

### **Submission to the Climate Change Commission**

In June, Tiakina te Taiao led TEU's feedback to the Climate Change

Commission's second package of advice to Government for the second emissions reduction period, 2026-2030. Our key messages were that the Commission's advice must recognise and account for the role of tertiary education as a key enduring lever for enabling, supporting, and sustaining climate transitions and adaptation.

- We urged the Commission to strengthen its advice by including recommendations for a strong, stable, and well-funded tertiary education sector, recognising that quality tertiary education is essential if the government is to invest in Aotearoa New Zealand's social, cultural, environmental, and economic future.
- We argued that tertiary education is essential for equipping people with the knowledge, critical thinking skills, understanding of research and science, and ethical frameworks that empower them to play a role in climate mitigation and adaptation, and is also fundamental to supporting our research, science, innovation, and technology systems.

Read our [full submission](#).

## **Election 2023**

Aotearoa New Zealand's national elections are coming up on 14 October. What can we do to ensure that climate action and investment in high quality education are on the agenda? [Climate Shift](#) is calling on all political parties to engage in urgent climate action. However, this Ten-Point Action plan does not discuss the role and contribution of education.

We look forward to discussing ideas about actions we can take in the lead-up to the elections.

## **Tiakina te Taiao Hui Agenda – 10/08/23**

Below is the agenda for our Tiakina te Taiao hui on Thursday 10 August, 4:00pm

1. Karakia
2. Whakawhangaungatanga
3. Updates
4. Andrew Wilks – update on recent cross-sectoral STENZ workshop
5. Ehsan Jacobi – update on sustainability at Te Pūkenga
6. Election 2023 – climate and tertiary education sector messaging
7. Karakia

### Upcoming events

- [International Indigenous Climate Change Research Summit](#) – 13-19 November

### Recent items of interest

- [Where's education in the Climate Change Commission's second \(draft\) package of advice?](#) – Rachel Bolstad for New Zealand Council for Educational Research
- [We need an economy that doesn't choke the Earth](#) – James Renwick for Stuff
- [The innovation initiative asking local students to think for the world](#) – Ben Fahy for The Spinoff
- [Second book on international education by Tiakina te Taiao member Dr Pii-Tuulia Nikula published](#) – EIT | Te Pūkenga
- [Rain, rain, and more rain: What it's doing to our mental wellbeing | RNZ News](#) – Rayssa-Almeida for Radio New Zealand
- [Surprise decision restores Climate Commission's legitimacy](#) – Marc Daalder for Newsroom

- [Be the voice for the climate at in-person election campaign meetings \(substack.com\)](#) – Some practical guidance from Climate Club

### 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 10 August, 4:00pm
- Thursday 12 October, 12:00pm

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

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