



## Co-convenors' annual report

November 2023

**Dermot Coffey & Summer Wright**

E ngā mana, e ngā waka, e ngā karangatanga maha, tēnā koutou katoa. We are delighted to bring this year's co-convenor's report to summarise a year of climate action by OraTaiao. Every year is critical for climate and health, and this year has had its fair share of wins and challenges for climate justice. With the first ever 'Health COP' coming up this month, it is a good time to reflect on our achievements and activities over the year and focus on the upcoming year. We will welcome new individual and organisational members, to greet new members of the Executive Board and to make some farewells, including to some very long-standing exec members.

We have continued to follow our [strategic plan](#) for the period 2022-2024, which will be updated mid next year. The priorities this year and for the next six months have been as follows:

- Advocate for a much faster just transition to a low emissions, climate-resilient Aotearoa, that: fairly contributes to limiting global warming within 1.5°C as a good global citizen; and grows health and gains equity in ways that are fast, fair, and founded on tikanga and Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
- Add our unique climate-health and equity expertise to the work for climate justice and improve Aotearoa's contribution to global climate action.

Significant pieces of work this year involved lengthy submissions to what was probably a more receptive Government. These included a massive submission on the Emissions Trading Scheme, which was led by our executive member Liz Springford and supported by our friends in NZCAN.

We urged the Minister of Foreign Affairs, as well as the Opposition, to ensure that the COP28 delegation includes dedicated expertise from members who have public and planetary health experience, as well as the presence of a health minister.

The election has dominated the latter part of the year, both in terms of our work in producing our Climate and Health Scorecard and in terms of the uncertainty it inevitably creates as to our country's climate response. With a new Government and its potential to be a "coalition of climate chaos" we will be taking stock of our advocacy strategy.

The election saw some unprecedented outcomes for Te Pāti Māori and The Green Party, who did better than ever before. Our 2023 Climate & Health Scorecard had the Greens rank the highest. Te Pāti Māori was acknowledged as having 'best' climate policies alongside the Greens in another scorecard by the Climate Shift campaign (our method this time around was to rank responses, not policies). Clearly, climate justice is not only of utmost importance, but is also popular among voters- the Labour Party's "policy bonfire" earlier in the year, which included several climate policies, is likely to have cost them significant numbers to the Green Party and Te Pāti Māori.

We will be briefing incoming Ministers and expect to build alliances in the Opposition. We also see in 2024 opportunities to strengthen intersectoral and grassroots relationships, and to reduce partisanship that currently surrounds climate justice. This will build on the advocacy work we have done directly over the past year with organisations as diverse as Te Whatu Ora, Te Pou Hauora Tūmatanui – the Public Health Agency, NZNO, RNZCGP, the Council of Medical Colleges, the Rural Health Network and Pegasus PHO.

We have continued to work directly with the Climate Change Commission to improve the specific incorporation of health and equity within their advice and have acted as an intermediary between the Commission and other groups. A dedicated health advisory group has not yet been established by the Commission however, and it is likely that their relationship with the incoming government will be different to that with the last.

We welcomed new organisational and individual members, continued our online kōrero series across the year, and maintained and built on our extremely useful relationships with NZCAN membership.

OraTaiao provided organisational capacity to the 2023 Taiao Tangata Hauora, Climate Health & Sustainable Healthcare Conference. We also ran workshops at the NZMSA Clinical Leadership Forum in July.

Our website has an extensive library of our submissions, media work, position statements and activities over the year. Below is some more detail (with clickable links) on the various pieces of work over the year.

## Media presence

- ☉ [Healthy choices for voters – the OraTaiao election scorecard](#)
- ☉ [NZ failing to protect health from climate change impacts](#)
- ☉ [New protections for children’s rights](#)
- ☉ [Keep Auckland Airport in public hands](#)
- ☉ [Price agricultural climate pollution fast, well, and right now](#)
- ☉ [Good climate policy is good mental health policy too](#)
- ☉ [Liberate the Lane - supporting Bike Auckland’s campaign for the Harbour Bridge](#)
- ☉ [Maximum heat standards needed to protect children and elderly - climate researcher](#)

## Submissions

- ☉ [Draft Government policy on Land Transport 2024](#)
- ☉ [Critical Infrastructure - enhance resilience](#)
- ☉ [Emissions Trading Scheme - ‘radically reform or dismantle it’](#)
- ☉ [E-scooter declaration renewal decision- they don’t belong on footpaths](#)

- ☉ Climate Change Commissions  
Draft Advice to Government 2023
- ☉ Waka Kotahi Cycling Action Plan
- ☉ Global cooperation to limit to 1.5  
°C warming
- ☉ Climate Change Response  
Amendment Bill - don't  
undermine the ETS!
- ☉ Healthy streets for Wellington
- ☉ Land Transport 2024
- ☉ Future of Local Government -  
stronger focus on wellbeing

## Other advocacy

- ☉ Throwing fuel at the bonfire no  
substitute for climate action
- ☉ Letter to the Minister of Foreign  
Affairs ahead of COP28
- ☉ Prescribing a Healthy Planet
- ☉ Free Fares Petition

## Other highlights from the year

We continued to host Climate Action Kōrero. Many thanks to Quentin Atkinson, who [spoke](#) to the human psychology of the climate crisis.

We continue to explore how best to enact Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a health NGO, and have regular hui with our Te Tiriti Rōpū, a working group to lead these conversations and actions, alongside our Māori caucus.

We are fortunate to be able to work with NZCAN and have found this to be an extremely productive way of widening our advocacy, accessing media, and getting a very broad base of expertise to tap into.

We updated and readopted our Memorandum of Understanding with Sustainable Healthcare Aotearoa and continue to have a mutually supportive and highly productive relationship.

## Acknowledgements

- ☺ A massive thanks to the Exec Board for their work over the year, particularly so with the added stresses of Cyclone Gabrielle.
- ☺ We could not do the work we do without the support and efforts of our fantastic coordinator, Grant Brookes. He puts in a huge amount of work behind the scenes, and has strengthened our regular newsletter to the extent that it's now essential reading for anyone with an interest in climate and health in Aotearoa.
- ☺ We thank our many individual and organisational members, who provide the basis for a strong voice for climate health in Aotearoa. We deeply value our continuing relationships, and welcome those to come.
- ☺ Thank you to non-exec members who helped with submissions, advice, meeting attendance and advocacy throughout the year. We thank Liz Springford for leading the ETS submission. Many thanks to Dr James Hamill, Liz Springford, and Dr Matt Jenks for their work on transport-related submissions. Thank you to Romelli Rodriguez-Jolly for their work on Free Fares and for ongoing advocacy with other Occupational Therapists. We also acknowledge Tess for her work on healthy Wellington streets. Thanks again James for his work on advocacy for local governments.
- ☺ Thank you to those members who carry out the always tricky roles of Secretary (Romelli Rodriguez-Jolly), Treasurer (Peter Bernhardt), International Coordinator (Penelope Milsom), Organisational Membership Rep (Summer Wright) and Sustainable Healthcare Aotearoa rep and individual membership coordinator (Matt Jenks).
- ☺ A huge thanks to the Māori Caucus, with a special mention to George Laking for his advice and wisdom over the year.
- ☺ Many thanks to our Te Tiriti Rōpū, which has progressed our thinking and policies relating to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
- ☺ Thank you to Graeme Lindsay for his ongoing and extremely patient support with the website

- 🕒 As always, we have farewells to make from the board, which this year include Bruce Tsai, Tess Luff, Sylvia Purdie and Ingrid Mulder. Thank you all for you time, effort and work over the last few years.
- 🕒 We give a warm welcome to our new Exec members joining today.

Nā māua noa, nā

Dermot Coffey & Summer Wright

29/11/2022