

Kia ora Friend,

This month we have focused on making a submission to the Climate Change Commission with a huge input from our members. Some members also joined the School Strikes for Climate. Thank you!

Look out for two events this week: An international seminar tomorrow on reducing health care emissions with speakers including OraTaiao member Dr Debbie Wilson – see info in the newsletter below – and publication of a new book “Climate Aotearoa” with a chapter co-authored by OraTaiao members Dr Rhys Jones and Kera Sherwood-O’Regan.

We are looking for a coordinator for a three month contract from mid-May for 12 hours per week. Please see job description [here](#) and get in touch with me (co-convenor@orataiao.org.nz) if you are interested or know someone who could fill this role.

Ngā mihi,
Dermot

April 2021 Newsletter

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Update on OraTaiao activities

OraTaiao members join climate strikers

OraTaiao members in Auckland and Dunedin were among thousands of people who marched for climate justice in the [School Strikes 4 Climate events](#) last Friday.



Natasha Myers and Rebecca Sinclair hold OraTaiao banner. Photo by Olivia Devoy.

Submission shows health opportunities missing in Climate Change Commission first package of advice

OraTaiao members provided evidence on how transport, food systems and Nationally Determined Contributions can be changed to improve health and health equity as well as reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This evidence was presented as part of OraTaiao's submission to the Climate Change Commission.

Thank you to the volunteers including Liz Springford, Penelope Milsom, James Hamill, Matt Jenks, Sarah Welch, Summer Wright, Bruce Kidd, Anne-Thea McGill, Hone McGreggor, Balakrishnan Nair, Brian Dixon, David Menkes, Julie Kidd and David Sinclair who worked together on the submission alongside Dermot Coffey, Julia Crosfield and the exec board.

- OraTaiao submission: ["Climate Change Commission's first package of advice to the Government 'Climate action for Aotearoa'"](#)

Promote OraTaiao, climate and health with our leaflet

Please share OraTaiao's leaflet promoting actions on climate and health. It can easily be printed out as an A5 flyer for conferences or as an A4 poster to put up on a notice board at your work. You can download a leaflet [here](#).



RMA reform working group

A select committee process will take place in the middle of this year looking at Resource Management Act reforms, and we will be putting together a working group. Please look out for an email if you would like to be involved.

Job advert: We are looking for a Coordinator for three months from mid May

We are looking for a part time Coordinator for 12 hours per week to help with checking incoming emails, updating the website and writing a newsletter. Please get in touch if you can help or know of someone. See the job description [here](#).

Change over of membership officer

A big thank you to Dr Hayley Bennett for all her work as membership officer for the past several years. She will be taking a break from this role and Bruce Tsai will take over processing membership applications and making the call for subscriptions. Hayley was also one of the founding members of OraTaiao and has contributed to reducing health sector emissions as well as to raising awareness of the health and equity impacts of climate change. See [here](#).



Dr Hayley Bennett

Also, farewell to Greer Smit who is stepping down from the board due to other commitments - thank you for your contribution to exec meetings.

National happenings

Climate change minister must make urgent health appointment

Twelve health organisations wrote to Climate Change Minister James Shaw asking for a public health expert to be appointed to the Climate Change Commission. In response to questions, Minister Shaw told Stuff news, "I do raise public health issues with the Climate Change Commission on a regular basis, but there are no plans at this stage to appoint new members to the Climate Change Commission... However the commission can, if it chooses, establish advisory groups to cover particular areas of interest."

Minister Shaw's responses show that work still needs to be done to demonstrate to the government the importance of health expertise for creating healthy and just climate policy.

- Stuff news: ["Climate change: Calls for public health expert to be appointed to commission"](#)
- OraTaiao: [Letter to Climate Change Minister March 2021](#)



Help shape transport in Auckland – make a submission!

Help New Zealand’s most populated city reduce car use and endless traffic jams by making a submission to Auckland Council. Ask them to make car use less attractive, to develop high quality cycling infrastructure, and to improve and electrify public transport. The Council is **consulting now until 2 May** on its 10-year Regional Land Transport Plan which outlines a programme of activities and investments for Auckland’s transport.

- Auckland Transport: [“Regional Land Transport Plan”](#)



Photo from <https://ourauckland.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/>

Should public transport be free?

See opinion piece by environmental sociologist Kirsty Wild on the pros and cons of free public transport.

- The Spinoff: [“Why doesn’t New Zealand just make public transport free?”](#)

Ensure dignity and stability in a just transition

According to India Logan-Riley, Co-founder of Te Ara Whatu, “as the window for meaningful climate change action is rapidly closing, transforming the social security system into one that leaves no-one behind has to happen urgently. Industry and working environments are

anticipating major changes, which means we must get support in place before these shifts happen.”

- Stuff: [“A just transition is more than just retraining workers”](#)

Canterbury locals and GP concerned over water nitrate levels

At a public meeting locals and GP Robin Barraclough expressed concerns over plans for a new irrigation consent which could raise nitrate levels in local waterways. Nitrates in drinking water have been shown to increase the risk of bowel cancer.

- Radio New Zealand: [“Meeting hears concerns over nitrate levels in Canterbury water”](#)

Coal boiler phase out needs to be quicker

The government has announced a ban on new low and medium temperature boilers from the end of this year and plans on phasing out existing ones by 2037. In our submission to the Commission we proposed a target of 2025 of phasing out all coal boilers in the health sector.

- Radio New Zealand: [“Coal boilers to be phased out by 2037”](#)



Greymouth hospital boiler

International news

New report serves as a roadmap to decarbonise health care

The global health sector’s two gigaton annual climate footprint will triple if it continues with business as usual, according to this new road map. Join the online launch tomorrow at 4pm

to find out ways the health sector can align with the Paris Agreement's ambition to keep warming below 1.5 degrees. Speakers include OraTaiao member Dr Debbie Wilson.

- Launch webinar: [Road map to healthcare decarbonization](#) – 16 April 4-5pm NZST
- Forbes: ["New report serves as a roadmap to decarbonise health care"](#)



Child health highlighted ahead of leaders' climate summit

Children in All Policies 2030 is being launched on 21 April ahead of the Leaders' Climate Summit. It was born out of a World Health Organization-UNICEF-Lancet Commission, *A future for the world's children?* and the launch event will highlight the impacts of the climate crisis on child health and well-being and what urgently needs to be done.

- See here to join the global launch: [Children in all policies](#)
- SDG Knowledge Hub: [Leaders' Climate Summit](#)



Photo by Larm Rmah on Unsplash

Oil industry actively lobbied against regulations which would improve human health

"The oil industry knew at least 50 years ago that air pollution from burning fossil fuels posed serious risks to human health, only to spend decades aggressively lobbying against clean air regulations, a trove of internal documents seen by the Guardian reveal."

- The Guardian: ["Oil firms knew decades ago fossil fuels posed grave health risks, files reveal"](#)

Indigenous groups relocating to higher ground

Native American communities faced with threats to traditional and contemporary ways of life

from sea level rise are being forced to look at adaptation options such as moving houses and schools to higher grounds.

- Stuff: [Native American communities confront painful choice - move away, or succumb to rising waters?](#)

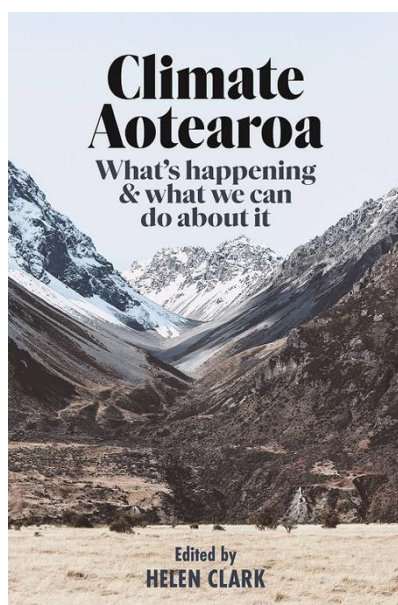
To find out what is happening around climate change adaptation in Aotearoa see briefing released under Official Information Act [here](#).

Good news, interesting links, books

New book: “Climate Aotearoa: What's happening and what we can do about it”

This new book is from a range of leading New Zealand climate scientists and commentators, and is edited by former prime minister Helen Clark. One of the chapters is co-authored by OraTaiao members Dr Rhys Jones and Kera Sherwood-O'Regan. It is due for release next week. See below for an extract from the book:

- NZ Herald: [“Covering Climate Now: Can eating greener make a difference to emissions?”](#)



Get creative for Mother's Day and show love for our 'other mother'

Join a global initiative supported by Parents for Climate Aotearoa and celebrate mother's day in a new way. "If you are a teacher, parent, youth, aunty, uncle, grandparent, friend etc we would love for you to share your images, stories, poems etc and encourage your whānau to join in and feel inspired and re-energised by the love and care we have for each other and Papatuanuku." See more [here](#).



Illustration by Jim Field

OraTaiao: New Zealand Climate and Health Council
<http://www.orataiao.org.nz/>