E-pānui

NGĀ PAE O TE MĀRAMATANGA
Kaupapa Māori Research Centre

www.maramatanga.ac.nz

WHERINGA-Ā-NUKU | OCTOBER 2023

Kua raumati, kua kaha te rā.

It has now become summer, and the sun has acquired strength.

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TE PŪRONGO O NGĀ POU MATARUA CO-DIRECTORS UPDATE

The wider NPM whānau have been preparing for a busy November with two major events on the calendar - the virtual International Indigenous Climate Change Research Summit that will take place 13 - 17 November (read more below) and the four-it-day for the PAS national Māori and Indigenous postgraduate network that will be held at Massey University, 15 - 18 November. We are still taking registrations for D&D, with a very minimal fee for students, communities and NGOs thanks to the generous sponsorship of the Royal Society Te Apārangi.

Some of our readers will recall the Indigenous data sovereignty and universities connectivist from the D5Soc collab at our International Indigenous Research Conference last year, calling on universities to address specific issues relating to Indigenous data ownership, control, access, analysis and storage. Following on from that, the Global Indigenous Data Alliance has just released the Indigenous data governance and universities toolkit. This toolkit is based on the work undertaken by universities in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Norway, Sweden, Finland and the Pacific (Lalepa Aotearoa). It calls on universities to work with Indigenous Peoples to take a number of actions including identifying Indigenous Peoples' data currently held by their institution and implementing D5Soc-centred Indigenous data governance principles.

NPM supports these global efforts to advocate for more just, ethical and culturally-grounded research data practices and systems, and for Indigenous Peoples to have authority over research data involving their communities, cultures and territories. We look forward to future developments here in Aotearoa and further afield.

Ngā Pou Matarua | Co-Directors

- Professor Taiu Kukutai
- Professor Linda Waimarie Nikora

KAUPAPA MATUA : IICCRS

By Cindy Simpkins-McQuade

This month NPM is hosting the International Indigenous Climate Change Research Summit and one of our organisers, Dr Shaun Awatere (Ngāti Porou), is keen for it to begin.

"Lists of different Indigenous research and ideas from around the world are being profiled in the summit. I am really interested to see how other people are tackling the issues that are specific to their own cultures and lands," he says.

Shaun says the summit is an opportunity for Indigenous people to learn from each other, share ideas, and adapt solutions to our own specific cultures and environments. It's also a chance for policy makers to become better acquainted with Indigenous solutions and thinking on climate health.

Shaun believes anyone who is interested in a future for their tamariki and mokopuna needs to educate themselves about climate change and the health of Papatūānuku. "It's easy to think this is someone else's problem and this is not my area of expertise as a researcher, but climate change affects everything. It affects our health, our food and our biodiversity, the ability to move goods and services and to do business. Every researcher and every maker, irrespective of their specialty, needs to become conversant with the massive implications of climate change and extreme weather," he says.

Shaun believes if people leave it up to others to do the research, then it is unlikely the necessary changes will be made. "It's crucial that we come up with our own solutions. We need our own people to be involved in the research. It's important to do the research and get good adaptation policy as well as climate health policy.

"We all saw what happened early this year which was devastating for affected whānau and communities. We need our communities to be resilient and ready for the next event, and people's ability to earn a living and do business in these areas. Climate change means we need to adapt our housing, our bridge building, the way we move goods, the way we educate our children and most of all the way we use our land. Indigenous researchers need to be involved," he says.

Shaun says there is a sense by the policy makers and researchers to upskill and become more active in addressing globally in the climate health space. "An important aspect of any Indigenous summit is that we are showing tauiwis for each other in the face of what sometimes seems an endless attack on our lands and cultures. Indigenous Peoples don't often get the chance to share ideas and solutions so it's important that we amplify every opportunity we get."

RANGAHAU | RESEARCH

RE-STORYING THE WAIAPU

Pā taurere with kōpenga ascent from harakeke and kanaus (supplejack), looking towards Pīhauāne. September 7th 2023. Photograph: Natalie Robertson.

By Cindy Simpkins-McQuade

The ecological collapse of the Waiapu River due to sedimentation is an environmental disaster. However, it is a disaster that has occurred largely away from the gaze and awareness of most New Zealanders due to the isolation of the Tairāwhiti region. The people who live alongside the Waiapu River and who fish and hunt in it have borne witness to the catastrophic impacts of deforestation and farming on the region's steep ranges which have become highly eroded over the past century.

As a result of erosion, the Waiapu has the highest suspended sediment yield of any river in the country and one of the highest in the world, according to researcher and photographer Dr Natalie Robertson from Auckland University of Technology.

The waters that once quivered with abundant fish life are now barren. When rain scours up in the hills, the people downstream wait for the collapsing hills to wash down into their rivers, appearing as brown tide that smothers and destroys everything invest in its banks. Natalie says that the changing ecosystem over the past century has impeded the ability of whānau to use the river and surrounding land, and with that has come a loss of cultural knowledge.

Natalie has pored over more than 700 handwritten pages from the Waiapu Minute Book at the Māori Land Court, as well as historic photographs and film archival material. Her aim has been to understand the impacts of the environmental catastrophe, and to uncover insights about her whanua, awa, and tīpuna who lived in the lower reaches of the Waiapu valley area.

Natalie has unearthed fascinating information about the customary practices of her tīpuna including planting practices and long-lost place names. "Together with the kaumātua, people from home, we are combining my research skills with their lived experience. We are trying to uncover the mystery of where these places were and what might have happened at these places," she says.

A pivotal finding was a series of photographs taken by James McDonald in 1923 showing Te Rangitīhia and Paratene Ngata (father of Sir Apirana) using a customary stone fish weir (pā taurenu) to catch ika in the Waiapu River. The fish weir has become a focus for Natalie's research, connecting the river and the surrounding whenua. Natalie has joined forces with restoration ecologist and fellow urt of the Ngāti Pīkai hapū of Tikapa, Graeme Atkins, whose whānau she has been connected with since the nearby nearly decades. Their project called the Uru Pāmuka — Creative cultural mapping and 'restoring' networked relations on the Waiapu River. An essential part of the project is the replication of pā taurenu depicted in the 1923 photograph.

But why build a fish weir when there are no longer any fish to catch? One reason, says Natalie, is that it allows the Waiapu River to have a voice. Instead of catching fish, the weir houses specialised equipment that enables the research team to record the sounds of the environment, in turn enabling the sediment running through the water. "Waiapu is our ancestral river, but we need to ask ourselves 'what do we really know about what's happening inside our awa' and then to tell that story so future generations will know."

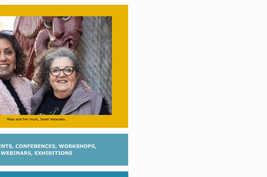
As well as gathering data, the replication of the stone weir is helping to revive the use of customary fishing and construction methods. Thanks to the 1923 photographs and film which showed the size and shape of the weir, Graeme and his whānau are replica to scale. "That is the power of photography," says Natalie. "It captures information that can't be explained in words."

Ngāti Pīkai carver and weaver, Lionel Matenga, was able to replicate a 4.5m-long kōpenga (fishing net) based on the 1923 photograph. The use of nīkoukou and kānuka poles holding the weir in place was another important detail because, like the fish weir itself, this construction technique was depicted in 1923 photographs. Kānuka and nīkouka are also under threat due to the widespread incursion of myrtle rust.

One crucial focus of Natalie's research is relationships. Over the many decades she returned home she has nurtured deep relationships with the kaumātua. Graeme's widespread networks, especially his work with Ruakīnaroa Pae Maunga, and Lionel's work at Ngata College has meant word spread quickly and widely throughout the community. Rapiki Ngāti Porou are documenting their stories, creating a community archival record of the process, and more people are keen to be involved in building the next weir in December. "Wānu, local weavers are interested in weaving baskets from the harakeke that is growing in the old photographs," says Natalie.

"For me, my photography is not just about the outcome. It is everything that leads up to it. It is the time I spend in the traditional and my approach really requires talking to a lot of people long before I get the camera out. It requires building deep trusting relationships with others, really understanding the whānau I am on, the awa, and trying to communicate an issue."

Natalie will be presenting research at this month's International Indigenous Climate Change Research Summit and next year will exhibit her work in an international art exhibition. Her work has also recently been invited to exhibit as ANA — Artists for Waiapu Action - in the 11th Asia-Pacific Triennial in Brisbane in late 2024 to highlight their research. It will include underwater video by Alex Monteith and sound by Maree Sheehan.



Natalie Robertson standing in the Waiapu River at Matawhairiki, with Koranga and Hauangi maunga inland, 2023. Photo credit: Alex Monteith.

RANGAHAU | KŌRERO WITH NPM RESEARCHERS

Each month we feature one of our NPM researchers. This month we talked with Dr Maia Hetaraka from the University of Auckland. Maia is leading the research 'Combating bias in schools: A Kaupapa Māori study into students' experiences of racism by Māori, with Māori, for the benefit of Māori.'

Ko wai tō ingoa, nō whea koe?

I te taha o tōku Pāpā, ko Te Tai Whakarara, no Whangaroa ahau, ki Ngāti Wai te iwi. I te taha o tōku Pāmā, ko te Tai Whakarunga, no Wairewa ahau, ki Ngāi Tahu te iwi. Ko Maia Hetaraka taku ingoa.

What are your areas of research?

My broad key areas of research interest are mātauranga Māori, Māori education, policy and practice, and the ways history continues to impact on current realities for Māori.

What excites you about your work?

I'm excited by the many ways Māori research highlights the strength, courage and resilience of our communities. I'm also excited by the ways it shows us the joy in collaborating with researchers and our communities. When working in communities I always feel so humbled with the knowledge people are willing to share, there is also a sense of responsibility in taking care in that sharing.

Our NPM vision is flourishing Māori futures. What does that mean for you?

To me, flourishing Māori futures means the development of generations of Māori who are completely safe in their identities, it means a confidence in self and the collective – confident that we have the abilities and skills to solve any problems we encounter. Flourishing Māori futures to me is about sitting firmly in our strength, knowing that our future as Māori is beautiful, that it is being a people who are enriched, who are enriching, who are valued and valuable.

Lastly, can you tell us something surprising about you?

Something people won't know about me and might be surprising is that I once lived (as a pāpā) with my whānau in a car crate in the Rangiriangina Forest. This was a necessity born from being skea kore (not that I ever knew that!), but now everybody wants that off the record. I'm sure there is a long story about me you then might not be surprised to know that I'm not very keen on camping now!

Maia and her mum, Kahai Hetaraka.

HUI, EVENTS, CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS, WEBINARS, EXHIBITIONS

International
INDIGENOUS
Climate Change Research Summit

Monday 13th
Friday 17th
November 2023
(Online)

Hosted by Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga

It's happening next week!!
Keynote speakers:

Paulina Fedoroff (Finnish Sámi Sámi),
Professor Kyle Whyte (Citizen Potawatomi Nation),
Mike Smith (Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Kahu),
Associate Professor Yvonne Underhill-Sem (Cook Island, Niuean and Pākehā).

Panel Discussions

- Indigenous Peoples' engagement with the COP (Conference of the Parties for the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change).
- Pacific-led initiatives that elevate sustainable Pacific-led futures.

Over 60 presentations will discuss the following themes: traditional knowledge and climate change, Indigenous rights and climate justice, Indigenous-led climate action, collaborative partnerships and knowledge sharing.

The programme and schedule of papers are available now!!
See: https://www.iccrs.ac.nz/

Register:
https://www.iccrs.ac.nz/iccrs-registration/

HE PITOPITO KŌRERO
NEWS, EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

NEW RELEASE

Professor Graeme Hunter has just released The Catalyst's Way ebook – the product of her work as a Leader-in-Residence at the Atlantic institute based at Dalhousie University. Download for free.

BOOK LAUNCH

Hāl of the press is Ki Muia, Ki Muri - 25 years of Toshi ki Āpiti, a richly illustrated book traversing the last 25 years of Massey University's Toshi ki Āpiti programme. The kaupapa (Māori-led programme and its contribution to Māori flourishing) around key concepts of Manu Whakapapa (inheritance rights), Mana Tiriti (treaty rights), Mana Whenua (land rights) and Mana Motuhake (self rights) are explored and graduates include some of Aotearoa's most exciting and influential figures in contemporary art with the likes of Bob Jahnke, Shane Cotton, Brett Graham, Rachael Rakena, Kura Te Waru-Rewiri, Israel Birch and Ngatai Taepa.

Pre-orders can be made here:
https://www.masseypress.ac.nz/ki-muia-ki-muri/

Kāti rā ngā kōrero mō tēnei wā,

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