



Kia ora Friend,

A warm welcome to our latest newsletter after an extremely busy month in both healthcare and climate change advocacy. Aotearoa's current Covid wave and the scandalous invasion of Ukraine have dominated the news. However, major floods in Australia and extreme heat in Antarctica are evidence of the ongoing and worsening climate crisis. This month has news of the most recent IPCC report on climate impacts, and advice on making a submission on a crucial consultation on Auckland Council's annual budget, which includes a targeted climate rate.

The health sector reform date of July 1 is fast approaching, and OraTaiao will continue to advocate for a clear and effective decarbonisation and sustainability plan incorporated into the new health sector structures. This will need to work at every level of our health service, and interweave with other sectors more widely. It is the ideal time to contact your peers, professional colleges, unions and teaching institutions to impress on them the importance of advocating health sector decarbonisation in any upcoming consultation work they undertake with the Ministry of Health.

Ngā mihi,  
Dermot and Summer,  
Co-convenors, OraTaiao: NZ Climate & Health Council

## March/April 2022 Newsletter

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### Update on OraTaiao activities

#### Show your support for a climate friendly Auckland!

We encourage you to show your support for Auckland Council's proposed climate action

package by making a quick submission using our guide. The package would see targeted funding to reduce emissions by investing in Auckland's active and public transport and urban forest canopy. If successful, it could be a turning point for Auckland to reduce climate emissions and improve the daily lives of many by making the city's transport more accessible, safer and healthier. Please support this action!

- [Guide to making a quick submission: "Show your support for a climate friendly Auckland"](#)

OraTaiao Co-convenors Dr Dermot Coffey and Summer Wright, along with Auckland-based OraTaiao member James Hamill, made an oral submission to the Council and we are preparing a written submission.



### **Human physical and mental health already affected by climate change – IPCC report**

“In Aotearoa there is evidence about the effects of heat including lost hours for outdoor workers, and about heavy rain events causing flooding damage and drinking-water contamination with infectious disease pathogens,” said OraTaiao Co-convenor, Dermot Coffey, on the publication of the latest report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Hundreds of experts worldwide prepared the report which highlights the damage already occurring to nature and people from climate change, and is a stark warning of the impacts on our communities from climate breakdown.

“Something which the IPCC has increased its focus on is mental health. There’s evidence from Australia about climate impacts on farmers’ psychological wellbeing, and also stress and anxiety from climate change particularly for children, adolescents, elderly, and those with underlying health conditions,” said Dr Coffey.

According to the [NZ Association of Psychotherapists](#), the report, “paints a disturbing picture of coming worldwide disruption. This includes a profound, long-term impact for collective mental health.”

The report itself is thousands of pages long – thank you to OraTaiao’s International Coordinator Dr Penelope Milson for pulling out some key messages, and see a short health summary [here](#) by the Climate and Health Alliance.

- OraTaiao: "[Human physical and mental health already affected by climate change – IPCC report](#)"
- IPCC Sixth Assessment Report: "[Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability](#)"



### **OraTaiao highlights Aotearoa NZ’s failure to uphold children’s rights**

“OraTaiao is deeply concerned about Aotearoa New Zealand’s contribution to the rights of children and young people to thrive within a humanly adaptable climate, and to inherit the same environmental taonga as previous generations have enjoyed....This country is not taking the necessary actions to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of children to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.”

OraTaiao members, Liz Springford, Dr Alison Blaiklock and Dr Penelope Milson, submitted the above to the UN Committee on Rights of the Child which is developing guidance on what governments must do to uphold the human rights of the child in the face of climate change and other environmental challenges.

- OraTaiao: "[Children's rights and the environment](#)"



*Photo by Charlein Gracia on Unsplash*

### **Welcome to new members, and a new signatory to the joint call to action!**

We are delighted to welcome many new individual members this month, as well as a new organisational member, the New Zealand Association of Psychotherapists.

We also have a new signatory to the [joint call to action on climate and health](#) - the Council of Medical Colleges New Zealand. CMC chair Dr John Bonning wrote, "We are all aware of the health implications of climate change and its disproportionate impact on our most vulnerable populations."

**Te Kaunihera o Ngā Kāreti Rata o Aotearoa**  
**COUNCIL OF MEDICAL COLLEGES**  
NEW ZEALAND



### **OraTaiao joins the Climate and Health Alliance**

This month, OraTaiao joined the Climate and Health Alliance which is an Australian organisation made up of a coalition of healthcare stakeholders. Their stated mission is, "to build a powerful health sector movement for climate action and sustainable healthcare". The alliance is also aligned with OraTaiao's focus on equity and justice. For more info see [here](#).



### **Survey about our website**

Do you have 5 minutes to help with our [website](#)? We would like to make improvements to ensure it is useful and usable for our members and visitors. To do this we need your feedback. Click [here](#) to go to the survey. Please fill in before the 22 April. Thank you!

## **National happenings**

### **Have years of cycling network submissions paid off in the capital?**

Wellington is due to have almost 166km of cycling network which will put the city in the lead on cycling infrastructure. This is on the back of years of cycling network submissions from OraTaiao members and other advocates, and it seems the council understands the value of healthy positive climate action.

"Having a well-connected walking and cycling network is a crucial part of building a city fit for future generations. These are big changes, examples of positive action to reduce emissions, respond to the climate and ecological emergency, improve people's health and make sure Wellington remains a world-class city that's a great place to live," said Wellington Mayor Andy Foster. "Wellingtonians want action on climate change and with 34 percent of our emissions coming from road transport, changing our streets so more trips can be taken by active and public transport is the best place to start," and "The Council's Pūroro Āmua Planning and Environment Committee considered some of the additions people wanted and chose to increase the bike network from 147km to 166km."

- Wellington City Council: ["Bike network to expand"](#)



### **Te Tiriti-based futures + Anti-racism 2022 on now!**

Join this [Te Tiriti-based, anti-racism and decolonisation event](#) in Aotearoa. Over ten days, speakers and leaders will discuss topics including institutional racism and anti-racism, decolonisation, building Te Tiriti-based futures and transforming our constitution. Overseas presenters will also discuss their experiences with these issues from their contexts. The event started on 19 March and goes until 28 March.

### **Healthcare decarbonisation needs a top-down approach**

Health sector reforms are due to happen this year and in an interview with NZ Doctor, OraTaiao Co-convenor Dr Dermot Coffey said, "The healthcare sector should be on the way to net zero carbon emissions by 2050, but you wouldn't know it... Decarbonisation has to happen across the sector, and it needs a top-down approach because, otherwise, DHBs and general practices will make changes in a 'Wild West', ad hoc way."

- NZ Doctor: ["Climate change urgency nowhere to be seen"](#)



*OraTaiao Co-convenor Dr Dermot Coffey*

### **Budget 2021 had climate change shortfall**

According to the Minister for Climate Change, the 2021 Budget left a “shortfall for what is needed to deliver the climate change work programme in 2021/22 that was agreed by Cabinet”.

Budget 2022 is due to be announced on 19 May. OraTaiao wrote to the Finance and Expenditure Committee recommending that the focus of the Budget have Aotearoa’s response to climate change as the main point.

- Stuff: ["Climate programmes delayed after failed Budget bid"](#)
- Cabinet paper: ["Reprioritisation of the climate change work programme"](#)
- OraTaiao: ["Letter about Budget 2022"](#)

### **Include disabled people in climate justice**

According to Áine Kelly-Costello, a blind and chronically ill storyteller, and campaigner for disability and climate justice, disabled people are “expert adapters – we spend our lives figuring out how to live and thrive in a world which was not designed for us”. And according to Kelly-Costello, disabled people must be included in how we, “collectively act not only to curb emissions and adapt, but co-create an accessible, inclusive, sustainable, climate-friendly future.”

- Stuff: ["The missing conversation about disabled leadership in climate justice"](#)

### **Upcoming consultations - get involved**

Public consultation over local city, district and regional council annual plans are likely to start soon. These are a great opportunity to influence local infrastructure priorities to make our net zero future easier, fairer and healthier. Check in with your local council to find out when their public consultation will start.

For example, this link [here](#) is to register for contact about upcoming Wellington City Council consultations. Most local council meetings are also open to the public, including opportunities to speak. This link [here](#) explains how to apply to speak at Wellington Council meetings.

We encourage our members and supporters to get active at your local level, exploring opportunities like this to influence decisions in a healthy equitable climate-protecting



direction. Resources to support having your say include recent submissions, archived submissions, and a growing set of position statements, all on the [OraTaiao website](#).

If you'd like to join with other members at a local level, contact us on [info@orataiao.org.nz](mailto:info@orataiao.org.nz)

Upcoming national consultations:

- Ministry for the Environment: [Technical amendments to the NZ Emissions Trading Scheme](#) – open now until 28 April.  
N.B. On 4 April, the Climate Change Commission are offering an “[Open Zoom – our annual advice on NZ ETS settings](#)”
- Ministry for the Environment: [Have your say on transforming recycling](#) – open until 8 May.

## International news

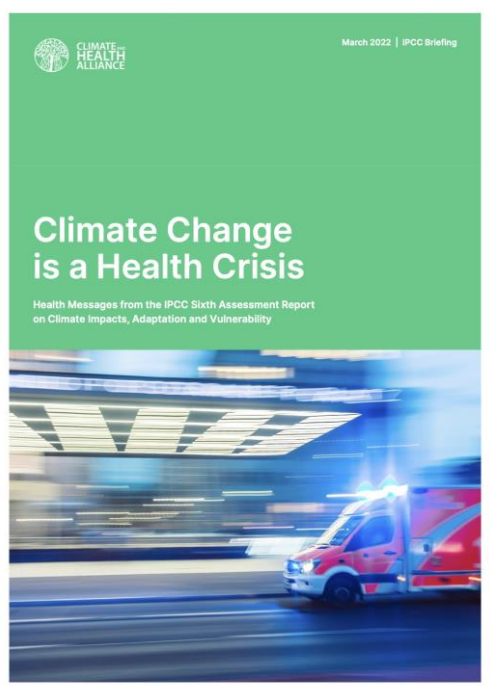
### **IPCC Sixth Assessment Report: Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability**

“Human ingenuity can't get us out of suffering from climate change – but preparing fast could seriously limit the damage, says the latest authoritative report on global heating,” writes Eloise Gibson in Stuff news.

“Even in wealthy countries, adapting to worsening floods, fires, droughts, heat waves and other disasters – sometimes hitting back-to-back – will get much harder once the planet tops 1.5 degrees Celsius of heating, concluded the hundreds of authors who traversed 34,000 studies for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).”

- Stuff: “[Prepare now for climate turbulence or pay extra when it hits, says mammoth global report](#)”

For a summary of key health messages from the IPCC report see [here](#).



### **Deadly pollution ‘sacrifice zones’ include oil and petrochemical areas**

According to the Guardian, “A United Nations expert has warned of the creation of pollution ‘sacrifice zones’ across the world, where tens of millions of people are suffering strokes, cancers, respiratory problems and heart disease as a result of toxic contamination of the environment.”

One of these zones, ‘cancer alley’, is in Louisiana, United States, where there are over a hundred oil refineries, petrochemical plants etc. It is also where poor, predominantly black communities live. Yet another reason to end the use of fossil fuels.

- The Guardian: "[Millions suffering in deadly pollution ‘sacrifice zones’, warns UN expert](#)"





*House near an oil and chemical complex in Norco, Louisiana, the day after Hurricane Ida hit.  
Credit: Julie Dermansky*

### **Health needs to be more deeply embedded in the Paris agreement**

The Global Climate and Health Alliance are calling on the United Nations to include health in its global stocktake and make health an outcome of the collective work of the Parties.

- Global Climate and Health Alliance: "[GCHA and HCN Joint Submission to the Global Stocktake](#)"

### **Impacts of poverty alleviation on national and global carbon emissions**

According to authors of a new study published in Nature, "Wealth and income are disproportionately distributed among the global population," and "To ensure global progress on poverty alleviation without overshooting climate targets, high-emitting countries need to reduce their emissions substantially."

- Nature: "[Impacts of poverty alleviation on national and global carbon emissions](#)"

### **Tackling the politics of intersectoral action for the health of people and planet**

"Kent Buse and colleagues argue that unlocking the potential for intersectoral action on climate and health requires thinking politically about its facilitators and barriers."

- British Medical Journal: "[Tackling the politics of intersectoral action for the health of people and planet](#)"

## **Good news, interesting links, books**

### **World health day – our planet, our health – 7 April**

"Are we able to reimagine a world where clean air, water and food are available to all? Where economies are focused on health and well-being? Where cities are liveable and people have control over their health and the health of the planet?"

On [World Health Day 2022](#) the World Health Organisation is focusing on actions needed to keep humans and the planet healthy and foster a movement to create societies focused on

well-being.



### Health professionals – look after yourselves!

See a Stuff article here about [“how to stay sane and helpful in an extremely overwhelming world”](#) with a 1 minute mindfulness exercise for while you’re on the go.



And if you are in a hurry and want a quick plant-based meal, try one of these [15 minutes dinners](#).

This newsletter was written by Julia Crosfield.

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

OraTaiao: New Zealand Climate and Health Council comprises health professionals in Aotearoa/New Zealand calling for urgent and fair climate action - with real health gains now and for our future.