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New Zealand
National Commission

Te Kōmihana Matua o Aotearoa mō UNESCO

**NEW ZEALAND NATIONAL
COMMISSION FOR UNESCO**

ANNUAL REVIEW 2023



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25




28

A Tale of TWO CITIES

EINE GESCHICHTE ZWEIER STÄDTE




JUNGES VOKALENSEMBLE HANNOVER (GERMANY)



AUCKLAND YOUTH CHOIR

7:30pm | Saturday 22 July 2023
St Matthew-in-the-City
Free tickets: ayvc.org.nz/tickets



41



Contents

4

Message from the Chair

7

Vision, Mission and Mandate

8

2023 Highlights

12

Our Priorities

24

Our Programmes

Creative Cities

30

Chairs Programme

35

Memory of the World

36

Global Geoparks

39

Projects we Supported

42

Youth Leaders

49

International Connections

52

Farewell to Robyn Baker
and Zuleika Chang

54

Contact Details



He kōrero nā te Heamana | Message from the Chair



The past year has seen a strong performance by the National Commission, with its many activities delivering value for Aotearoa New Zealand. The impact of our work illustrates the old adage that Aotearoa New Zealand excels in “*punching above its weight*”, especially internationally.

In my first year as Chair of the National Commission I have been honoured to lead a team of dedicated and talented individuals — our Commissioners, our UNESCO Aotearoa Youth Leaders and our Secretariat. They are all driven by the Commission’s mission to deepen connections between the people of Aotearoa New Zealand and UNESCO globally through the sharing of ideas and building capability for a sustainable, healthy and more peaceful future.

Taking the lessons from global conflict endured in World War II, UNESCO was founded to promote international cooperation in education, the natural and social sciences, culture and communication and information. Accordingly, our work reflects the importance UNESCO places on improving education and science capacities, advocating evidence-based knowledge, promoting cultural understanding and respect and harnessing the beneficial uses of technology.

World events in 2023 have highlighted just how important it is for UNESCO and its 194 member

states to keep working hard to prioritise work that fosters peaceful co-existence, contributes to the eradication of poverty, and supports sustainable development and climate resilience.

For the Commission, 2023 saw changes in personnel, a refinement of focus, and renewed effort to ensure value for all investments of time, effort and money.

I was honoured to become Chair last April, following on from Robyn Baker. It is a pleasure to acknowledge Robyn’s outstanding leadership during her tenure from which the Commission continues to benefit. Her legacy has been to leave a highly professional, strategically focused and well-functioning Commission. We also welcomed a new Commissioner (for Natural Sciences) and the return from secondment of our Secretary General, Vicki Soanes.

We have honed the strategic focus of our four priority areas to make the most of our modest resources. All activities are considered against their potential to benefit New Zealanders, make progress on the strategic priorities and ensure a return of appropriate value.

We have been able to highlight New Zealand successes and expertise through the international platform that is UNESCO. This knowledge-sharing enhances New Zealand’s reputation and has opened up opportunities for participation in important arenas of international cooperation.

The access to UNESCO as a global knowledge-hub has enabled us to draw down best practices, innovations and insights relevant to New Zealand’s interests and needs. Whether in the form of research, policy guidance or shared experiences, this knowledge is highly valuable as it is derived from the learnings of 194 countries and distilled by international experts.

2023 was the 42nd UNESCO General Conference year. This is the paramount governance body, comprising representatives of 194 Member States. We were delighted to be able to send an Aotearoa New Zealand delegation, allowing us

to contribute to the development of UNESCO's priorities going forward, to monitor past progress, to vote in the elections to the Executive Board and UNESCO subsidiary bodies and to kōrero with, learn from and share with our international colleagues.

In our plenary country statement, we were able to tell UNESCO what we value and what we think they could do better and share our priority areas, in particular our approaches to the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and the UN International Decade of Indigenous Languages.

We shared how in Aotearoa New Zealand ocean science draws from many bodies of knowledge and practices including those of Māori and the Pacific and how recognising these knowledge systems has created a unique approach to how we undertake research and how we collaborate. We talked about how this multidisciplinary approach is particularly important given the urgent need to implement adaptation strategies and responses to the impact of climate change on the oceans. Our contribution to the UN Ocean Decade has been recognised by the appointment of our Science Commissioner, Linda Faulkner, to the global advisory board on the UN Decade.

We also stressed the importance of indigenous languages and urged the international community to protect languages, especially those of Indigenous communities, to ensure that the rich diversity of world views that capture thoughts, perspectives and understandings, are not lost forever.

2023 has seen us continue to promote the UN Decades of Ocean Science and Indigenous Languages through many facets of our work, including activity grants, through our websites and social media and by sharing our expertise within Aotearoa New Zealand and across the globe at conferences such as the Pacific Islands Conference on Ocean Science and Ocean Management; FIFA World Indigenous Day celebrations; Australia's launch of the International Decade of Indigenous Languages; and Festival for the Future, among many others.

We were pleased to celebrate a very special milestone in 2023, the official designation of Aotearoa New Zealand's first UNESCO Global Geopark – Waitaki Whitestone UNESCO Global Geopark (in fact this is the first

UNESCO Global Geopark in Australasia). This international recognition was the culmination of many years of sustained work by the Commission and productive partnership with local stakeholders and Iwi.

UNESCO Global Geoparks have educational and scientific objectives and are known to increase visitor numbers both domestically and internationally; they raise awareness of the importance of the area's geological heritage for scientific research and in history and society. They give local people a sense of pride in their region and strengthen their identification with their community, and the land; as well as stimulating the creation of innovative local enterprises and new jobs as new sources of revenue are generated through sustainable geotourism.

It was a privilege to travel to Waitaki in May to celebrate the official designation with those who had been a part of the designation journey over the past few years. Our Education Commissioner Prof. Carol Mutch summed up the occasion beautifully: *"Imagine visiting a place that weaves the past, the present and the future into a compelling story. Waitaki Whitestone Geopark is one such place — a rich geological, natural and cultural past, a tapestry of thriving community activity in an awe-inspiring landscape, and a lesson to us all about how to be kaitiaki of the future"*.

Many of our other UNESCO programmes also made an impact globally in 2023, with our Creative Cities Network meeting with their Australian counterparts, as well as hosting delegates from other international Creative Cities in Aotearoa New Zealand. Our UNESCO Chairs programme has been active across the globe, as was evident by the praise for the international work of our Chair of Open Educational Resources, Dr Wayne Mackintosh, during the UNESCO General Conference.

My first year as Chair has provided me with the greatest appreciation of the work that the New Zealand National Commission undertakes to realise UNESCO's mandate. In these uncertain times, it is important to continue focusing on those things that can help build more long-term and durable foundations for peace and well-being, and a more sustainable and resilient future for all those in Aotearoa New Zealand, and world-wide.

LIZ LONGWORTH



Te Pae Tawhiti | Vision

Toitū te māramatanga,

Toitū te ora,

Toitū te whenua

Our vision speaks to the notion of a connected world underpinned with knowledges, our responsibility for kaitiakitanga and ensuring a sustainable future, and the enduring permanence of our land.

Te Pae Tata | Mission

Kia renarena te taura here i Ngāi Aotearoa me ngā whānau o UNESCO huri i te ao, mā te tiri whakaaro me te waihanga raukaha, e toitū ai, e ora ai, e taurikura ai tō tātou anamata haere ake nei.

Deepening connections between the people of Aotearoa New Zealand and UNESCO globally through the sharing of ideas and building capability for a sustainable, healthy and more peaceful future.

Te Mana Whakahaere | Mandate

The National Commission ensures the permanent presence of UNESCO in New Zealand. As a country founded on the Treaty of Waitangi and as a foundation member of UNESCO the Commission represents and promotes New Zealand's interests while contributing to the development of UNESCO strategic priorities and programmes. The National Commission contributes to the building of peace, equitable and sustainable development, and intercultural dialogue, paying particular attention to the needs and interests of the Pacific region.



Ngā Tino Tutukinga 2023 Highlights

Aotearoa's first UNESCO Global Geopark



Aotearoa New Zealand's first UNESCO Global Geopark was officially endorsed in May 2023 by the Executive Board of UNESCO.

Our Commissioners and Secretariat attended Waitaki Whitestone Geopark's official celebrations in late May, which included a speech from our Chair, Liz Longworth, to mark the significance of this international recognition.



"The Waitaki Whitestone UNESCO Geopark is the complete experience – spectacular vistas, awesome geological phenomena, rich cultures. It affords the very rare opportunity to see amazing things through different eyes – adroitly blending science and culture to create the richest of experiences," said Culture Commissioner, Dr Dan Hikuroa.

UNESCO 42nd General Conference



A New Zealand delegation attended the 42nd UNESCO General Conference which took place in Paris in November.

The General Conference is the ultimate governing body of the 194 member organisation. Our participation provided an opportunity for us to influence in areas of UNESCO's mandate pertinent to New Zealand's interests, to share our work and priorities, as well as learn more about the work being undertaken across all UNESCO areas globally.



Building Youth Connections

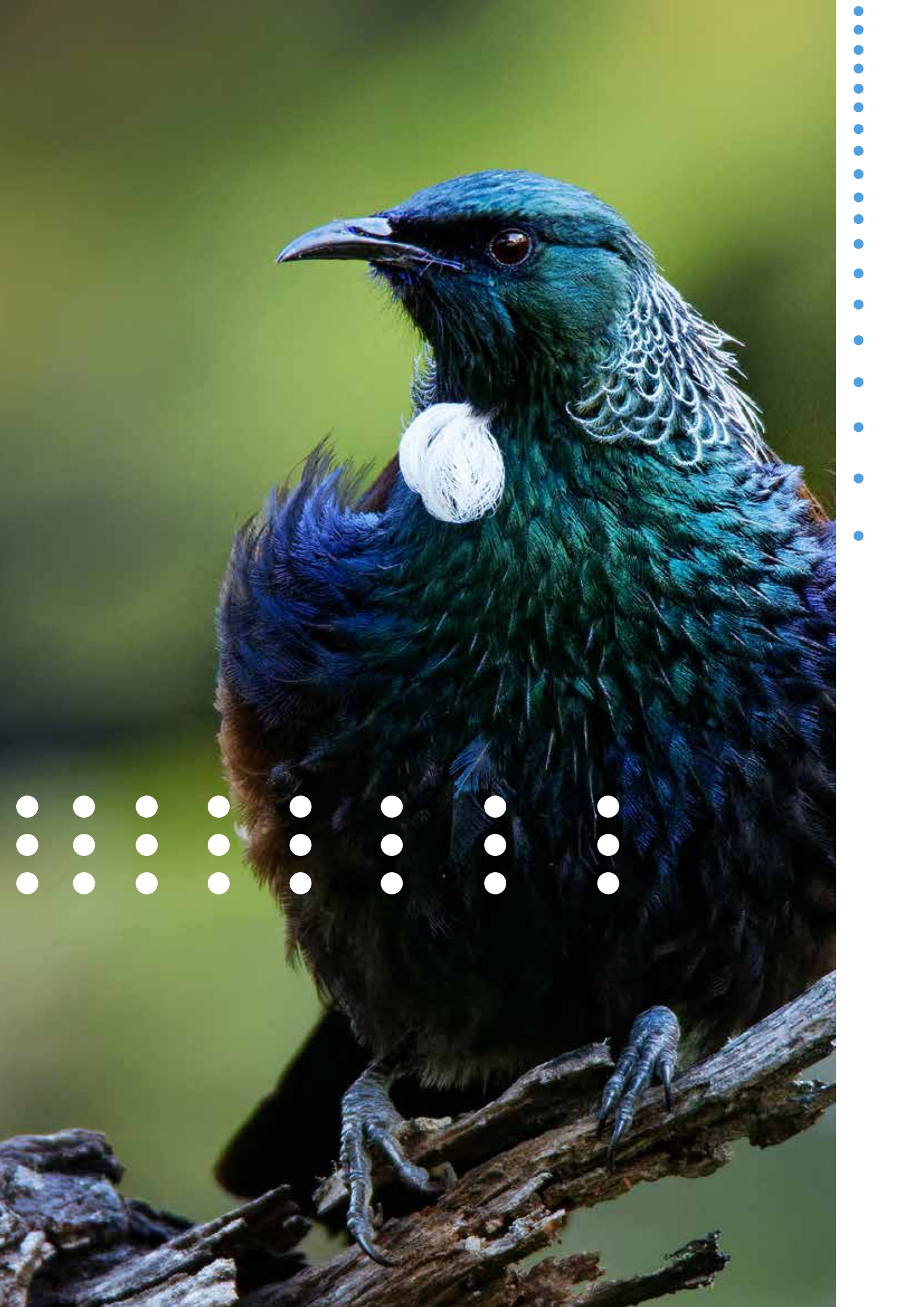


Our UNESCO Aotearoa Youth Leaders spent time in the Pacific, Korea and France this year, forming relationships with other global youth leaders, and engaging in productive knowledge exchanges. The Special Advisor Youth and her deputy also participated in the Commission's deliberations throughout the year, bringing a valuable youth perspective.

Deputy-Chair Adriana Bird participated in the UNESCO Global Youth Forum, where she was one of three young leaders (picked from over 170 youth delegates) to deliver the final recommendations on the social impacts of climate change and the need to achieve an equitable climate transition at the General Conference.

New Chair and Commissioner

2023 saw us welcome a new Chair, Liz Longworth and Natural Sciences Commissioner, Linda Faulkner. Both bring considerable talents, experience and knowledge to the National Commission whānau.



Representing Aotearoa in FIFA World Indigenous Day celebrations

Our Natural Science Commissioner, Linda Faulkner, was a panellist at the FIFA World Indigenous Day celebrations in Sydney.



"My focus was a short discussion about the work of the NZ National Commission for UNESCO in breaking down barriers and creating spaces for the leadership of Māori and partnership of Pasifika peoples within Aotearoa," said Linda.

Connecting with Canada



In April we signed a letter of cooperation with the Canadian National Commission for UNESCO. Over the past year we have worked closely with the Canadian Commission on promoting the Decades of Indigenous Languages and Ocean Science, and the signing of this letter demonstrates the value of that relationship.



Sharing Knowledge at Pacific Ocean Conference

Our Natural Sciences Commissioner, Linda Faulkner, and Senior Advisor, Romeo Tevaga, attended the Pacific Islands Conference on Ocean Science and Ocean Management (PICOSOM) in Fiji in September. The Conference allowed us to share the work we are doing on the Ocean Decade in Aotearoa New Zealand, as well as to grow potential research relationships and learn from our ocean science peers in the Pacific.

Our Priorities

In order to focus our work and make the most effective use of our resources, the Commission has adopted four strategic priorities. These are multidisciplinary and intersectoral thematic areas or pou highly relevant to New Zealand's interests or needs. They are chosen from the suite of UNESCO programmes being actioned globally to address significant challenges adversely impacting member states. The issues that lie at the heart of these global problems could be significantly mitigated through international cooperation or the sharing of solutions.

During this past year we have refined the framing and scope of our priorities and undertaken a number of activities, including:



Ngā Mātauranga me ngā Reo Taketake | Indigenous Knowledge and Language

We have used our participation in the UN Decade of Indigenous Languages as a springboard to deepen understanding of the significance of indigenous knowledge. Our work in this area is underpinned by the recognition that indigenous knowledges, languages and practices including mātauranga Māori are a taonga and should be valued. We recognise the importance of te reo Māori for Aotearoa New Zealand and the shared whakapapa and links through language to the people of the Pacific.

Adding our voice to the Australian Launch of the Decade of Indigenous Languages



Our Commissioner for Culture, Dan Hikuroa, took part in an international panel discussion *Forging Common Ground* in Darwin in August. The panel was part of the PULiiMA Indigenous Language and Technology Conference and the Australian launch of the International Decade of Indigenous Languages.

Forging Common Ground acknowledged the many paths travelled, the different challenges faced and the varied state of language loss and revitalisation efforts. It celebrated the powerfulness in diversity and the unique opportunity to traverse lived experiences, exchange best practice, and share successes within respective journeys.

Dan joined global indigenous-thought leaders Aluki Kotierk (Canada); Cygnet Repu (Torres Strait Islander); Gabriela Perez Baez (Mexico); Ngahiwi Apanui (Aotearoa NZ); Richard Littlebear (USA) and Candace Kaelimamoowahinekapu Galla (Hawaii) on the panel.

Representing Aotearoa at the FIFA International Day of Indigenous Peoples Celebrations

On the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, our Natural Sciences Commissioner, Linda Faulkner, travelled to Sydney/Gadigal to speak at a special celebratory event hosted by FIFA and the United Nations Human Rights organisation.

The International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples is held every 9 August to spread awareness about the Indigenous population around the world and to protect their rights. The FIFA Women's World Cup 2023™ was used to convey these messages with "*Unite for Indigenous Peoples*", one of the seven social causes promoted during the tournament.

Linda was among a panel of Indigenous speakers from Australia and Aotearoa who joined FIFA Secretary General Fatma Samoura, to discuss how to drive change, and how football can play its part.



Speaking at Aotearoa's First Pacific Language Conference



Our Social Sciences Commissioner, Emeritus Professor Tagaloatele Peggy Fairbairn-Dunlop, presented at Aotearoa's first Pacific Language Conference – Koloa – held in Manukau.

Koloa (the Tongan word for treasured goods) brought together language champions, community leaders and members, government officials and educators. The day was filled with information sharing, panel discussions and talanoa (conversation) on the state of Pacific languages in the past, present and in the future.

Tagaloatele Peggy co-presented with Ministry for Pacific Peoples Principal Advisor, Dr Salainaoloa Wilson-Uili, on the importance of data and evidence to support objectives and rationale for resourcing and valuing Pacific languages education in Aotearoa.

Te Manawhiri Whakapuaki Kōrero | Freedom of Expression

The Freedom of Expression priority area is driven by a vision of enhancing an appreciation of diversity and an increased understanding of human rights to support a more tolerant, respectful and inclusive society for all. This theme encompasses some of the current challenges arising from the use of digital media platforms and other technologies.

In 2023, we funded a variety of activity grants, and participated in a number of events, in support of this priority area.



Supporting the Race Unity Speech Awards and Hui



The National Commission continued its support of the annual Race Unity Speech Awards and Hui. 2023 was the 21st anniversary of the Speech Awards which are a platform for senior high school students to express their ideas on how we can improve race relations in New Zealand. The speech awards and hui were attended by our Communication and Information Commissioner, Vanisa Dhiru, and the deputy chair of the UNESCO Aotearoa Youth Leaders, Adriana Bird, who were both inspired by the high standard of speeches given at this year's awards.

Being Human in the age of AI

In August we supported the Diplosphere conference which had the aim of engaging New Zealanders from different fields on issues related to AI through an informed public debate. It explored the ethical, political, societal, and economic ramifications of integrating artificial intelligence into our daily life.

Our National Commission Chair, Liz Longworth, chaired a session on *"Being Human in the Age of AI: An Existential Conversation."* She used the opportunity of the discussions on ethical guardrails to share UNESCO's international experts work that has developed guidelines on the ethics of AI for use by Member States.

Holocaust Remembrance Day



On January 27th we joined with many others across the motu and the globe in acknowledgment of Holocaust Remembrance Day. Our Communication and Information Commissioner, Vanisa Dhiru, attended and spoke at the Wellington event which was held at Parliament, while our UNESCO Aotearoa Youth Leaders joined commemorations in Auckland, Christchurch and Wellington, reading out a special statement written by UNESCO's Director-General.

"It is not hard to make the connection between events like the Holocaust and the rise in hate, disinformation, xenophobia, antisemitism and discrimination that we still see in society today. However, we are also witnessing the next generation of young people standing up to challenge this behaviour and the rise of intersectional and inclusive movements which fight for a more equitable world," UNESCO Aotearoa Youth Leader Aimee Clark reflected on the day.

Contributing our voice to the Ensuring Human Rights and Democracy Panel at UNA-NZ Conference

Our Communication and Information Commissioner, Vanisa Dhiru, spoke at the UNA-NZ Advancing Agenda 2030 Conference held online in September. Vanisa was part of the Ensuring Human Rights and Democracy Panel and with the Conference taking place on the International Day for Universal Access to Information, this provided a good basis for her speech.



Ko ngā Moana hei Oranga mō Papatūānuku me ōna Uri | Oceans for the Wellbeing of People and the Planet

In this priority area we support the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021 to 2030) which enables us to celebrate, nurture and value our oceans, and contribute to improving our ocean's health and thereby the wellbeing of people and the planet.



Pacific Islands Conference on Ocean Science and Ocean Management (PICOSOM)

The Natural Sciences Commissioner, Linda Faulkner, and Senior Advisor, Romeo Tevaga, travelled to Fiji in September to attend PICOSOM. The conference provided an excellent opportunity to learn from our Pacific neighbours and understand Pacific priorities and needs.

The National Commission contributed to several sessions, with Linda presenting on Traditional Knowledge and Ocean Science for Pacific Ocean Management — Te Au o Te Moana (The Voice of the Ocean); and exploring mātauranga Māori and relational marine governance and management. Romeo presented on New Zealand's approach to the Ocean Decade and the role of National Decade Committees (NDCs) including examples of NDC milestones from Aotearoa.

Linda and Romeo also took part in the official opening ceremony of the newly established Pacific Islands Decade Collaborative Centre (DCC) of which New Zealand is a full member.



National Ocean Decade Committee

Aotearoa New Zealand's National Decade Committee is one of 37 global National Decade Committees (NDCs). NDCs play an important role in the governance structure of the Ocean Decade facilitating national contributions, engaging national stakeholders and acting as an information conduit from the Decade structure to the national science and sustainable development community to promote awareness and interests.

In 2023 the Aotearoa New Zealand NDC grew its connections with the Canadian Ocean Decade champions within the Canadian National Commission and Fisheries to share knowledge and to discuss common approaches and opportunities for collaborations.

The Committee, which is chaired by our Natural Sciences Commissioner, Linda Faulkner, met four times during 2023, including one in-person meeting on World Oceans Day.

We are delighted that the quality of the Commission's work on the UN Decade, and of our Natural Sciences Commissioner, has been tacitly recognised through the appointment of Linda to the Decade's Global Advisory Board.



Highlighting the Decade at NZ Marine Sciences Society Conference



Our Natural Sciences Commissioner, Linda Faulkner was the keynote speaker at the NZ Marine Sciences Society (NZMSS) annual conference in June. Her keynote provided an overview of the Ocean Science Decade, Māori concepts relating to ocean management, and the benefits of registering research within the Decade mechanisms.

She was joined in her presentation by two members of the National Decade Committee, who outlined their respective work recognising kinship links to the ocean in the Pacific and the important role of community, including iwi, in emergency management and tsunami warning systems.

The NZMSS 2023 Conference was successfully registered as a Decade Activity after receiving endorsement from the Decade, raising its profile globally.

Hapori Toitū, Hapori Manawaroa, Hapori Whakamarohi | Sustainable, Resilient and Regenerative Communities

This priority area builds on our initial insights gained under our Global Citizenship Education mahi. We have an important role as a catalyst for New Zealanders to engage in intergenerational lifelong learning and to be innovative and responsible global citizens, within the context of the Sustainable Development Goals. This commitment was the driving force behind the decision to fund and/or participate in the following initiatives.



Kaipatiki project event highlights important role of communities in ensuring a sustainable future for all



At the National Commission, we encourage and empower New Zealanders to engage in lifelong learning to contribute to a more peaceful and sustainable future for all. In 2023 there was much learning to be had at the Kaipatiki Project's UNESCO Aotearoa Titiwai Glow Worm Walk and UNESCO Aotearoa Plant 500 Trees events.

The events saw people come together to learn about Titiwai and their importance within our eco-system, as well as to plant 500 native trees in the grounds of Auckland's Eskdale Reserve.

Linda Faulkner, our Natural Sciences Commissioner, spoke at the event about the power of our communities and the role that communities play in enabling a sustainable future for all.

We firmly believe that achieving sustainable development requires the active involvement of communities because our communities hold a wealth of knowledge, wisdom, traditions and practices that have been passed down through generations. These practices often embody sustainable approaches that are harmonious with the local environment and culture".

Encouraging the Youth Voice at Global Citizenship Education conference



What do you value in life? Where do you see your place in the world? What does it mean to be a global citizen?

These three questions were at the core of what was explored at the 'Step up to the World: Tū māia ki te ao' forum on Global Citizenship Education. Held in mid-September in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland, the event was hosted by the Centres of Asia-Pacific Excellence and featured a line-up of influential speakers including the then Minister of Foreign Affairs Hon Nanaia Mahuta and Chlöe Swarbrick MP.

UNESCO Aotearoa Youth Leader Kauri Tearaura facilitated a workshop at the forum alongside Councillor Sophie Handford of Kāpiti Coast District Council.

"Sophie and I were interested in the perspectives of the young people who were present. We concluded that young people are not receiving a clear and consistent definition of global citizenship as a concept, and unless we can decide as a collective on what it means as an Aotearoa New Zealander, little will progress," said Kauri.

Joining the Greening Education Partnership

Following the Chair's visit to UNESCO Headquarters in May 2023, the National Commission was made aware of the UNESCO Greening Education Partnership initiative which seeks to support countries in accelerating the implementation of climate change education in response to the climate crisis. The National Commission raised the profile of this initiative with the Ministry of Education and provided advice and support as the Ministry explored the opportunity to join the Partnership. As a result of this collaboration, New Zealand joined the Greening Education Partnership in August 2023, and have since contributed to the development of the Greening Curriculum Guidelines.

Showcasing our Pacific contribution to the Mondiacult conference.

Following the UNESCO World Conference on Cultural Policies and Sustainable Development – Mondiacult, which took place in Mexico City in 2022, we came together with UNESCO Pacific in 2023 to produce a captivating and colourful video showcasing our Pacific contribution to the conference.

Mondiacult aimed to shape a more robust and resilient cultural sector, fully anchored in the perspectives of sustainable development as well as the promotion of solidarity, peace and security.

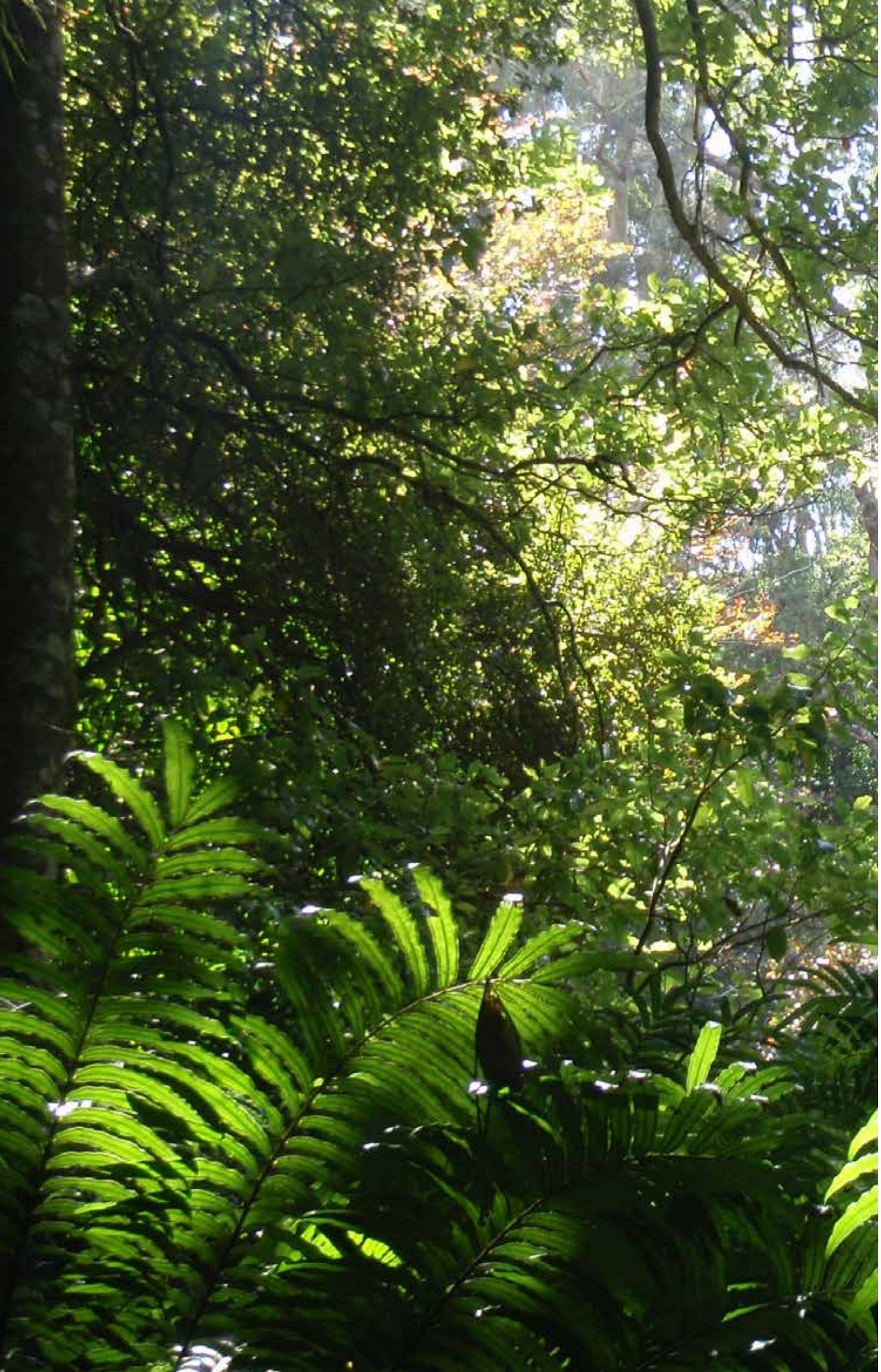
The video captures the interventions of the eight Pacific countries that contributed to Mondiacult.

It concludes with the Pacific countries' joint closing statement — affirming that culture is valued by the People of the Pacific, as it forms the backbone of our societies and remains a source of resilience and social cohesion.

The video can be viewed on our YouTube channel:

www.youtube.com/@UNESCONEWZEALAND





● ● ● Our Knowledge Hub (found on our website) is a commitment to UNESCO's mandate to foster the free flow of ideas and knowledge sharing. In 2023 we added a number of resources and publications to the Knowledge Hub, relating to the work we prioritise at the National Commission, as well as the wider work that UNESCO undertakes globally. These included: international experts work on policy guidelines for educators on combating hate speech; ethics of artificial intelligence recommendations; a research report on *Racism in Football in Aotearoa* (which we funded); *Access to Information (a guarantee of inclusion and disability rights) Report*; and many others.



Our Programmes

Tāone Auaha | Creative Cities

The UNESCO Creative Cities Network is made up of almost 300 cities around the world driven by an aim to support an international dialogue on cities that are resilient, inclusive and sustainable. The international network covers seven creative fields: Crafts and Folk Arts, Media Arts, Film, Design, Gastronomy, Literature and Music. The National Commission is proud to share Aotearoa New Zealand's four Creative Cities 2023 highlights.

Dunedin UNESCO City of Literature

Caselberg Trust Margaret Egan Cities of Literature Writers Residency



The *Caselberg Trust Margaret Egan Cities of Literature Writers Residency*, run jointly and collaboratively by Caselberg Trust and Dunedin UNESCO City of Literature, was launched in March 2023 to mark International Writers' Day. The Residency, the result of a generous bequest by the late Margaret Egan to the Trust, is offered annually for a period of six weeks to writers from the other 52 UNESCO Cities of Literature, and solely to applicants from Aotearoa every other year.

The aim of the Residency is to provide international and Aotearoa writers an opportunity to work on a substantial piece of creative writing and to foster connections among creative writers in Aotearoa and internationally.

In October 2023, we welcomed the inaugural recipient, award-winning writer Shu-Ling Chua 蔡淑玲 from Melbourne UNESCO City of Literature. The judges were impressed by the high standard of all the applications but Shu-Ling's work stood out for them in a talented field. Shu-Ling lived in the beautiful Caselberg House for six weeks working on her essay collection on 'art, intimacy, longing, and the blurry boundaries between private and public'.

Celebrating UNESCO International Days

Dunedin UNESCO City of Literature enthusiastically embraces the spirit of UNESCO International Days, while also showcasing our wonderful writers through vibrant and diverse celebrations.

Dunedin was thrilled to be a part of a Cities of Literature chain poem created by Manchester UNESCO City of Literature for **International Mother Language Day**, 21 February 2023. Two versions of Words from the Childhood Home were exhibited in Manchester's Central Library during March: one in indigenous languages and one in English, including a stanza written in te reo Māori (and translated into English) by Waiariki Parata-Taiapa.

To mark **World Poetry Day**, 21 March 2023, UNESCO Dunedin City of Literature was proud to film and share a reading of 'What the future holds' by David Eggleton (New Zealand Poet Laureate 2019-22).

To celebrate **International Youth Day**, 12 August 2023, Nottingham UNESCO City of Literature led a Cities of Literature collaboration that highlighted youth projects organised and run in eight other cities around the world. Dunedin UNESCO City of Literature showcased Emma Wood and her royally famous Tulip and Doug books and Jenny Powell's Ted Talks and Teddy Poems.

Captivating poem graces a head-turning mural



Dunedin UNESCO City of Literature was proud to collaborate in July on a special City art project. To celebrate Dunedin's role as a FIFA Women's World Cup 2023™ host city, Dunedin City Council's Events team commissioned a mural, which was painted outside the Municipal Chambers in the Octagon during the FIFA Fan Festival™.

Six talented wāhine artists teamed up to respond to toikupu poem 'Intuit'. They created an artwork inspired by images in the poem, drawing a cohesive thread that united their works across the expanse of the wall. The collective artwork will grace the hoardings for some years while the heritage building is renovated, and it is intended that the mural will then find a new life, repurposed in a different space in the City of Literature.



Helping see more diversity on our world stage



UNESCO Wellington City of Film supported producers from underrepresented communities to attend a WellingtonNZ hosted workshop by Emmy Award winning US Producer Jon Kroll (The Amazing Race, Gordon Ramsay Uncharted) who has relocated to Wellington.

The workshop's purpose was to help local producers develop their ideas for unscripted format TV series — and then get them ready to pitch to international networks and streamers.

“As a UNESCO City of Film, we funded specific places at the workshop so we can see more of our diverse stories on the world stage,” said Wellington City of Film’s Tanya Black.

Indigenous Collaboration: Making Films that Heal

Wellington UNESCO City of Film partnered with Māoriland Film Trust to present a panel *“Indigenous Collaboration: Making Films that Heal”* at Sydney’s SXSW film, music and technology festival.

The Kiwi contingent comprised filmmakers Libby Hakaraia (Ngāti Raukawa), Chelsea Winstanley (Ngai te Rangi), and Tainui Stephens (Te Rarawa), each of whom are known for their impressive careers in producing, directing and championing indigenous stories on screen.

Panelists shared their experiences and insights, as well as discussing challenges faced around improving opportunities and outcomes for indigenous filmmakers and others working across the screen industry.





Sharing knowledge with Sister Cities

Tanya Black travelled to Wellington's sister cities in Asia, Xiamen and Beijing in China, Sakai in Japan and Seoul in South Korea with Wellington Mayor Tory Whanau and a delegation from education, sport and film.

Wellington City of Film sponsored a screening of Red White and Brass at Xiamen University, where Tanya also presented on Wellington's strategic focus areas and programmes as a UNESCO City of Film.



Supporting the local film industry

Wellington City of Film supported a number of film festivals in 2023, including the Wairarapa Film Festival, Māoriland Film Festival, the Ngā Whanaunga Māori and Pasifika short film stream at the NZ Film Festival, the Aotearoa Poetry Film Festival and the South Wellington Intermediate School film programme and community festival.

Partnership with France helps local film ecosystem thrive



In late 2023 Wellington celebrated its special relationship with Annecy, France through an event hosted by Screen Wellington, the French Embassy, and the Creative Aotearoa France Exchange (CAFÉ). Film-makers Raqi Syed and Arieto (pictured), had recently returned from Annecy and shared their experiences and discussed the development of their animated horror film.

Music Cities Events

Auckland City of Music Director Mark Roach travelled to Alabama in October to attend the Music Cities Convention and Awards. Mark was a finalist for *Best Individual or Organisation Supporting their City*, as selected by an international jury. The Convention featured presentations, panels and roundtables to showcase the latest best practices exploring the use and importance of music in the development of cities all around the world.

Equaliser (EQ)

In December AJA (Aja Wairere Ropata — Ngāti Raukawa, Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai, Ngāti Toa Rangatira, Ngāti Porou) released her Equaliser-funded video, True Love. The video is directed by Jessica Sanderson (Ngāti Kahungunu ki Heretaunga, Te Ātiawa, Pākehā). EQ supports UN Sustainable Development Goal #5 (Gender Equality).



A Tale of TWO CITIES
EINE GESCHICHTE ZWEIER STÄDTE

JUNGES VOKALENSEMBLE HANNOVER (GERMANY)

AUCKLAND YOUTH CHOIR

7:30pm | Saturday 22 July 2023
St Matthew-in-the-City
Free tickets: ayc.org.nz/tickets

Tale of two Cities

Two UNESCO Cities of Music - Hannover and Auckland — came together for a special evening of music in July. Junges Vokalensemble Hannover performed alongside the Auckland Youth Choir at St Matthew-in-the-City, Auckland.

“It was wonderful to forge friendships between the choirs as well as underscore our global partnerships. Auckland City of Music extends their thanks to all who made it possible, and for inviting myself to speak at the event,” said Auckland City of Music Director Mark Roach.

Whanganui Mumu

Among the highlights for Whanganui UNESCO City of Design was the opening of the exhibition Whanganui Mumu – Whanganui By Design at the Whanganui Regional Museum, which ran for all of 2023. The exhibition highlighted the creativity, innovative spirit, cultural integrity, and strength of the tradition of art and design in the Whanganui region.



Hosting the Wuhan City of Design Delegation



Whanganui was delighted to host a delegation from UNESCO City of Design Wuhan who travelled to Whanganui to learn about Whanganui’s design strengths and make new connections. The delegates were welcomed to the city with a mihi whakatau by Te Rūnanga o Tupoho and mayoral reception by Acting Mayor Helen Craig, at innovative centre The Backhouse. Delegates took in a walking tour of the Drews Ave Arts Precinct, visited the Sarjeant Gallery, NZ Glassworks and UCOL’s School of Creative Industries, and met with local designers and creatives.



Presenting the work of Whanganui designers at the Wuhan Design Biennale

Whanganui was one of 12 cities in the UNESCO creative cities network invited to Wuhan to participate in the 7th Wuhan Design Biennale. The theme was 'the role of design in urban development'. Whanganui City of Design's Emma Bugden was a keynote speaker at the Wuhan Design Biennale Roundtable Conference. She also curated a selection of Whanganui designed products for an exhibit in the Biennale which was an exciting opportunity to showcase local designers to Chinese markets. After two days of presenting, the creative cities delegates were taken on a tour of Wuhan Design Business Parks and design schools.

"It was an incredible opportunity to learn and share from established creative hubs all around the world. While some of the cities were huge (Seoul and Wuhan) and some small (Whanganui) what binds us all is the shared commitment to putting creativity at the heart of our city's development. And while each city has their own unique situation, we found there are many shared challenges and approaches," said Emma.





UNESCO UNITWIN Chairs Programme

Launched in 1992, the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme promotes international inter-university cooperation and networking to enhance institutional capacities through knowledge sharing and collaborative work.

Aotearoa New Zealand has **four Chairs**. Some of their highlights are captured below.

UNESCO Chair on Dance and Social Inclusion



**Co-chairs Associate Professors
Ralph Buck and Nicholas Rowe**

In March 2023 Prof. Buck was invited to participate in the Asia Pacific Regional consultation for the UNESCO Framework for Culture and Arts Education. Further to this, Prof Buck as a member of World Alliance for Arts Education (WAAE) Executive Council, led an international arts education consultation on behalf of UNESCO Cultural and Education Sectors. This consultation included presentations at the WAAE Global Summit in Madeira and also at the UNESCO Summit in Paris in May.

Prof. Rowe is creating an Indigenous, Creative, Wellbeing and Communities Research Centre at the University of Auckland with a key focus on the Pacific region. This Research Centre builds upon Prof. Rowe's award-winning research and artistic practices concerning displaced and marginalized communities.

Both Prof. Rowe and Buck championed the role of dance and social inclusion in China in partnership with Chinese academics. Their work also focused on building curriculum infrastructures and partnerships that look to maintaining sustainable change and regional calm.

UNESCO Chair on Sustainable Livelihoods



Professor Stuart Carr

Prof. Carr’s work with Project Glow (*Global Living Organizational Wage*), a unique global network of research service and teaching hubs, included the publication of the collaborative ‘*Tackling Precarious Work: Toward Sustainable Livelihoods*’ and the development of a new inter-institutional, cross-regional course on Sustainable Livelihoods.

Prof. Carr also worked on a collaborative project on what Community Based Tourism looks like and how it works to sustain livelihoods in the same countries.

UNESCO Chair on Open Educational Resources (OER)



Dr Wayne Mackintosh

Established in 2009, the OER Foundation (OERF) is a small independent not-for-profit organisation that provides collaborative networking opportunities and practical support to governments and institutions to achieve their strategic objectives via open education. New Zealand’s UNESCO Chair in Open Educational Resources, Dr Mackintosh, is based at the Foundation.

In 2023, Dr Mackintosh participated in UNESCO’s Dynamic Coalition and various international awareness activities. He also provided support to the Samoan Ministry of Education, Sports, and Culture in establishing an OER course portal using its open-source digital learning ecosystem.

He also aided the French localisation initiative, translating the OERF’s capacity development course on Open Education, Copyright, and Open Licensing in a Digital World. This was done in partnership with UNESCO, the International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE), and L’Université Numérique (The Digital University in France) for Francophone countries.

The Foundation also supported The Outreach Partnership providing free membership to institutions in developing societies noting established memoranda of understanding with institutions in Botswana, Fiji, India, Namibia, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, and Zimbabwe.





Ngā Puna Mahara o te Ao | Memory of the World



Two new inscriptions were added to the New Zealand Memory of the World Register in 2023, bringing the total number of inscriptions to 51.

New Zealand's register encapsulates a wide range of archives which allow Aotearoa New Zealand to share the essence of its humanity, both domestically and globally.

Many of its inscriptions and the culture and history that they capture, align with other areas of the National Commission of UNESCO's work.

The new inscriptions were formally included in the Memory of the World register during a ceremony in Christchurch in November. The ceremony included a speech from Communication and Information Commissioner Vanisa Dhiru, as well as remarks from the inscription nominees.

The new inscriptions include a joint nomination from Auckland Libraries and Auckland Museum for Henry Winkelmann's photography of Tāmaki Makaurau, a significant visual record of the changing landscape and maritime views, and the extensive archives of the Canterbury Provincial Government, 1853-1877, held in the Christchurch repository of Archives New Zealand.

Taiao Ahurei Huriao | Global Geoparks

Official Launch of New Zealand's First
UNESCO Global Geopark



In late May the New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO Commissioners, Chair and Secretariat headed down to Ōamaru to officially celebrate Aotearoa New Zealand's first UNESCO Global Geopark – Waitaki Whitestone.

The day provided an opportunity to celebrate those that have been part of the Waitaki Geopark journey for more than 20 years and to acknowledge the work of the many volunteers and community groups as well as the support of the many organisations without which the UNESCO designation would not have been possible.

The day began with speeches, followed by lunch and a guided tour of the Geopark in the afternoon.

Our Chair Liz Longworth was among the speakers, which also included Helen Jansen, Chair Waitaki Whitestone Geopark Trust; Gary Kircher, Mayor for Waitaki, and the Hon Peeni Henare, then Minister of Tourism.

Below our Commissioners share their experiences of the celebrations and the impression that Waitaki Whitestone UNESCO Global Geopark left on them.

"It was definitely our privilege to share this achievement with the totally committed band of community pioneers who have worked so long to realise this dream and, the younger converts who are growing the vision. Malo Aupito Ōamaru. A totally beautiful and inspiring occasion," said Social Sciences Commissioner, Emeritus Professor Tagaloatele Peggy Fairbairn-Dunlop.

"Totally inspired by the Waitaki Whitestone UNESCO Geopark — the first of its kind in Australasia and an amazing exemplar reconnecting community to their phenomenal landscapes full of nature, culture and history."

"In the words of the Hon. Peeni Henare, people come to Aotearoa New Zealand to see nature and hear culture. He uttered those words at the launch of the Waitaki Whitestone UNESCO Geopark — a wonderful example of stunning and unique landscapes, etched by the history and cultures of its inhabitants across time."

"Totally humbled by the diversity, generosity, energy and vibrance of the landscapes and people of the newly launched Waitaki Whitestone UNESCO Geopark," said Natural Sciences Commissioner Linda Faulkner.

Reflecting on her Waitaki Whitestone Geopark experience Chair Liz Longworth said:

"What I found fascinating was the interweaving of the stories and legends of tangata whenua with the history of the land and each geological feature. That gave special meaning to the significance of what we were seeing and hearing."

"Waitaki Whitestone UNESCO Global Geopark offers a model for sustainable tourism, grounded in education, steeped in cultural heritage, and driven by the local community."

"Waitaki Whitestone Geopark demonstrates what is possible when passionate people come together in a community of locals with a vision, Iwi who are willing to share their knowledge and traditions, scientists who persevere, a district council actively backing a vision, and disparate supporters and funders prepared to step up and make it happen."





Aotearoa New Zealand's UNESCO Global Geopark visited by Minister

The Hon Jo Luxton, Minister responsible for the National Commission for UNESCO (at the time), travelled to Waitaki Whitestone UNESCO Global Geopark in August to experience Aotearoa New Zealand's first UNESCO Global Geopark and to meet the community behind the Geopark first-hand.

The Minister's visit included a trip to Moeraki and Kakaunui, accompanied by David Higgins, Te Rūnanga o Moeraki, Sasha Morriss, Waitaki Whitestone UNESCO Global Geopark Geo-educator and NZ National Commission for UNESCO Education Commissioner Prof Carol Mutch (pictured).

Following her tour, Minister Luxton, met with members of the Geopark Trust at Ōamaru Opera House where she learnt more about the development of the Geopark, the UNESCO assessment visit in 2022, and the next steps for the Waitaki Whitestone Geopark and the Geopark programme in Aotearoa New Zealand.

"The Minister extended her congratulations to the Geopark Trust on being designated as Australasia's first UNESCO Global Geopark, was very engaged in all aspects of the Geopark and was keen to hear more about other areas of Aotearoa New Zealand that had shown an interest in becoming a UNESCO Global Geopark," said Prof Mutch.

Geopark Festival highlights importance of park to local community

In October Waitaki Whitestone UNESCO Global Geopark held its first Geopark Festival bringing the Geopark alive for locals through a fun, diverse and inspirational programme of activities, celebrating Waitaki's treasures.

Our Education Commissioner, Prof. Carol Mutch, represented the NZ National Commission at the opening and highlighted the international significance of New Zealand joining the Global Geopark Network, the Commission's involvement, the opportunities for future Geopark initiatives and the need to become self-sustainable.

Ngā kaupapa i tautokona e mātou | Projects we Supported

The National Commission funds projects, events, programmes and initiatives with a strong connection to our mission to: Deepen connections between the people of Aotearoa New Zealand and UNESCO globally through the sharing of ideas and building capability for a sustainable, healthy and more peaceful future.

In 2023 we supported more than 20 projects, including the following events and initiatives:

Red White and Brass School Screening



We joined forces with Wellington City of Film and Auckland City of Music to bring Tongan Kiwi film Red, White and Brass into the lives of school children through funding the school screenings in Te Whanganui-a-Tara and Tāmaki Makaurau in March.

Our Senior Advisor Romeo Tevaga attended the Tāmaki Makaurau screening, alongside a group of excited and engaged young students.

"It was a great experience to watch and feel the happiness of the school students who were singing, and draped in the national flag colours of Tonga, joining together with other primary and high school students who reciprocated māfana with all the emotions of excitement, resilience and encouragement in the cinema."

Int Crustacean Congress

The International Crustacean Conference brought together 181 international delegates at the National Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa in Wellington. It included keynote speakers, symposia, talks and poster sessions which covered a wide spectrum of crustacean research topics. Our Programme Officer Silke Bieda chaired a well-received session entitled 'UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development: crustaceans helping us work together.'

The ICC was successfully registered as an Ocean Decade Activity after receiving endorsement from the Decade.



Communities come together for sustainable development



We worked with the Kaipatiki Project on two incredible events in June 2023 — the UNESCO Aotearoa Titiwai Glow Worm Walk and UNESCO Aotearoa Plant 500 Trees.

The events brought the community together to learn about Titiwai and their importance within our eco-system, as well as to plant 500 native trees in the grounds of Eskdale Reserve in Auckland.

Linda Faulkner, our Natural Sciences Commissioner, spoke at the start of the tree planting about the power of our communities and the role that communities play in enabling a sustainable future for all.

“We firmly believe that achieving sustainable development requires the active involvement of communities because our communities hold a wealth of knowledge, wisdom, traditions and practices that have been passed down through generations. These practices often embody sustainable approaches that are harmonious with the local environment and culture”.

Whanganui Celebrates Jazz Day

Whanganui once again became the first city in the world to celebrate International Jazz Day in April. As part of the celebrations Whanganui hosted a special panel event – *Making Better Cities. The Role of Culture and Creativity* — exploring how culture contributes to a sustainable and inclusive society. Our Communication and Information Commissioner, Vanisa Dhiru, was a panelist, alongside representatives from the New Zealand Creative Cities Network and Whanganui-based experts in culture and music.



Other celebrations included a jazz concert featuring the Roger Fox Band.

Justice for Rabi: The Story of Banaba Event and Exhibition



Held at Silo 6 in Auckland in early 2023 the Justice for Rabi: The Story of Banaba exhibition shone light on the forced displacement of the Banaban community and their ongoing human rights struggles.

The successful exhibit ran for three weeks and included a special event with performances from a visiting Rabi delegation. At the conclusion of the exhibition all of the works and recordings which were part of the exhibition were catalogued in the form of a virtual exhibit which was viewed by a global audience.



Manukura Mātātahi | UNESCO Aotearoa Youth Leaders

Representing Aotearoa at the 2023 UNESCO
Global Youth Forum in Seoul



Our Special Advisor Youth, Sabrina Manū, was invited by the Korean National Commission for UNESCO to attend the 2023 UNESCO Global Youth Forum in Seoul in late July.

The purpose of the forum was to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Korean War Armistice. Seventy young people (both in the Republic of Korea and across their war-allied countries) were selected to take part and split into eight project groups — education, culture, science and technology, people, media and information literacy, climate, international organisations, and military.

Each project group spent two to three months virtually engaging in lectures and research to prepare a thematic presentation to deliver to member states at the forum.

Sabrina was a member of the People (Saram) group, where she and eight others created a short visual documentary which explored the stories of Korean War orphans and children.

“My favourite thing about these experiences is always the people. It’s the conversations outside of the conference room — on the bus, during kai, in the elevator. This is where the beauty of whakawhanaungatanga really comes into play.”

Pacific Mission – Gaining Knowledge and Sharing Skills

In April our Special Advisor Youth, Sabrina Manū, was honoured to be part of the Pacific Mission 2023 delegation led by then Deputy Prime Minister of New Zealand, Hon. Carmel Sepuloni.



The trip consisted of three Pacific travel destinations — Solomon Islands, Fiji and Tonga. The delegation was split into Economic Development or Human Development rōpū. Sabrina was part of the Human Development group, which saw her visit several community spaces — including schools, youth spaces, local workplaces, and grassroots organisations.

“The most meaningful thing for me was being able to just sit, listen and plant my feet on the fanua (land) alongside its people doing their bit as kaitiaki of their homelands,” said Sabrina.

“I was grateful to connect with many experienced leaders who have contributed powerfully to positive change within Māori and Pacific communities in Aotearoa, especially considering that I had previously looked up to several of them.”

Sabrina described the Pacific Mission as a valuable experience that consisted of knowledge-sharing and skill-sharing opportunities for her to bring back to Aotearoa New Zealand. She was honoured to be able to provide a youth perspective for the delegation.

“Many relationships were developed over the week, and I’m excited to continue to support the incredible initiatives taking place across the Solomon Islands, Fiji and Tonga,” said Sabrina.

“Pacific stories are powerful — from their challenges and realities to their hopes for the future — and I am so humbled to have been welcomed into many spaces. There is so much that we can learn from small island nations, and there are so many ways to authentically support them,” Sabrina concluded.

Festival for the Future – Our Stories Our Moana



A major highlight for our UNESCO Aotearoa Youth Leaders was the annual Festival for the Future.

“Festival has a broad and diverse audience of individuals across business, government and community sectors. Although diverse it was primarily youth centric with all attendees showing passion for creating a better future, offering a platform to connect, learn and be inspired while strengthening one’s sense of purpose and hope,” said UNESCO Aotearoa Youth Leader Isaac Morunga.

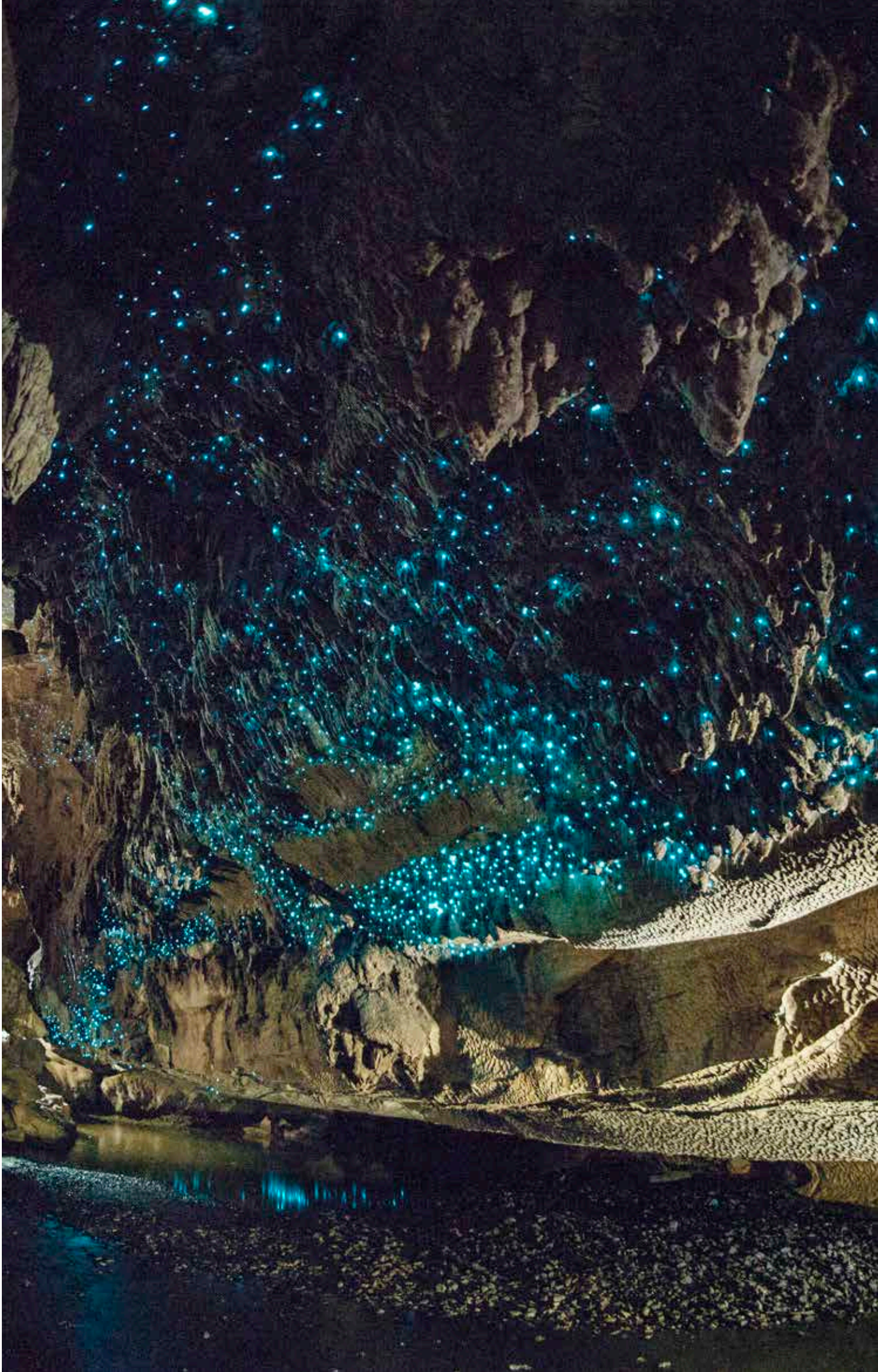
This year the UNESCO Aotearoa Youth Leaders collaborated with the Cook Islands National Youth Council (CINYC) to present two workshops – Our Stories Our Moana — and to promote the National Commission and their respective rōpū.

Their workshop, which focused on the intersectionality between the Decade of Ocean Science and the Decade of Indigenous Languages, was a massive hit with the Festival attendees with packed out audiences for both sessions.

“The room was full of passion and hunger to keep discussing the important issues at hand,” said CINYC representative Jean Nootai.



“The opportunity to hold space for youth voices to be heard especially around the importance of preserving our traditional knowledge, language and our moana is an opportunity I hope other Pacific Youth groups get to experience,” said Jean of their experience of hosting a workshop at Festival.



Farewell and Thank You

As 2023 came to an end, we farewelled a number of our youth leaders, including our Youth Leader Chair and Special Advisor Youth, Sabrina Manū. It has been an honour to work alongside these incredible young people. Each youth leader has brought a unique and valuable perspective, which in turn has strengthened our mahi at the Commission and our impact across the motu and internationally.

A special thank you goes out to departing Chair Sabrina Manū, for her hard work and dedication during her time as a UNESCO Aotearoa Youth Leader in 2021/22 and in particular as Chair and our Special Advisor Youth in 2023.

Sabrina brings a deep passion for authentic and meaningful ways for youth to engage and participate in various spaces. She made lasting impressions in her engagements including most notably Deputy Prime Minister's Pacific tour and the Korean National Commission youth exchange. Sabrina's leadership is defined by her sense of responsibility and care for the Manukura Mātātahi as a collective whole, rather than a sum of individuals.

Sabrina Manū (Chair)



Rana Arif



Te Aho Jordan



Sophia Newton



Lotima Vaioleti



Aimee Clark

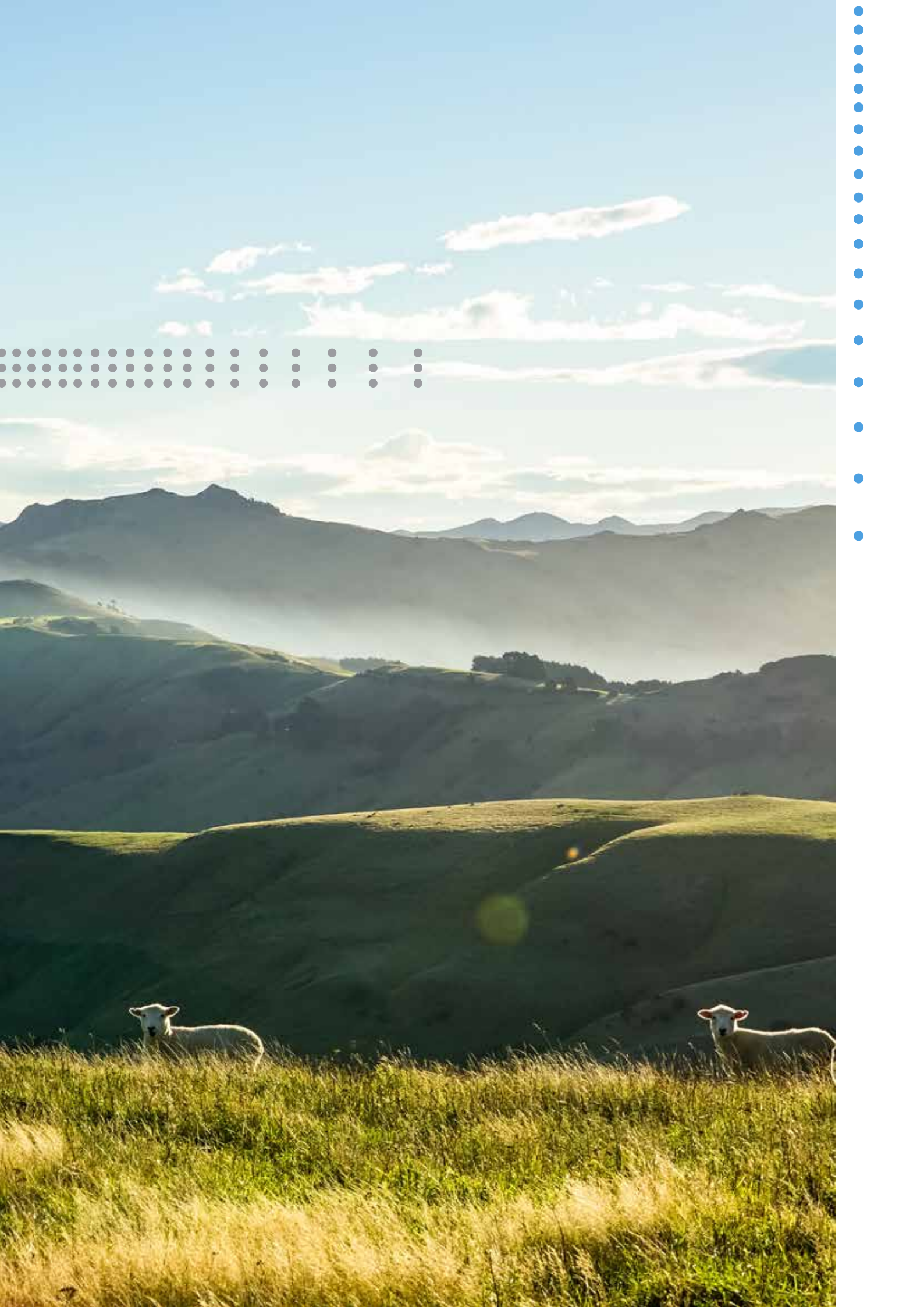


Kauri Tearaura



Katja Phutaraksa Neef





Ngā piringa huriao | International Connections:

BRINGING AOTEAROA TO THE WORLD AND THE WORLD TO AOTEAROA



Building and retaining international connections is a critical part of our work. A multitude of opportunities presented themselves in 2023 to add an Aotearoa New Zealand lens to UNESCO's future work, and to take knowledge and learnings from our international counterparts to further our mission in Aotearoa New Zealand.

UNESCO 42nd General Conference



In November a New Zealand delegation travelled to Paris to attend the 42nd UNESCO General Conference, the gathering at which UNESCO Member States consider and approve a range of issues including UNESCO's priorities and the programme and budget for the next biennium.

The General Conference comprises 194 Member States and is the paramount governance, accountability and monitoring mechanism for UNESCO and each of its global programmes.

The delegation was led by our Chair, Elizabeth Longworth and included Paris based Nikki Reid, NZ Permanent Representative to UNESCO, UNESCO Aotearoa Youth Leader, Adriana Bird; Education Commissioner, Carol Mutch, and Secretary General, Vicki Soanes.

"The General Conference provided an opportunity for us to influence in areas of UNESCO's mandate and share our work and priorities here in Aotearoa New Zealand, as well as discuss the work being undertaken across all UNESCO areas, globally, in particular those of significance to Aotearoa New Zealand.

It provided a platform to contribute to UNESCO's priorities going forward, to vote in the elections

to the Executive Board and UNESCO subsidiary bodies and to meet, learn and share with our international colleagues, (in particular other members of the Pacific delegation) in a variety of settings," said Vicki.

During the Conference our Chair, Liz Longworth, presented New Zealand's plenary statement which emphasised two of our current priorities, the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Management and the UN International Decade of Indigenous Languages.

Watch the full plenary at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W0AfeWFAQU4&t=8920s>

The 13th UNESCO Youth Forum, which focused on the social impacts of climate change, was held during the General Conference. Our UNESCO Aotearoa Youth Leader deputy chair, Adriana Bird, contributed significantly to the forum.

Formalising our Canadian Relations

In April we signed a letter of cooperation with the Canadian Commission for UNESCO.

Over the past 18 months we have worked closely with the Canadian Commission on promoting the UN International Decade of Indigenous Languages and the Decade of Ocean Science, as well as our Youth Leader programme.

The Canadian National Commission for UNESCO's Natural Sciences Programme Officer and the lead of the Canadian Ocean Decade working group joined one of the New Zealand National Decade committee meetings to discuss common approaches and explore opportunities for future collaboration, especially in the context of the UN Decade of Ocean Science and recognising multiple knowledge systems throughout the Decade Action Framework.

This has led to a collaborative partnership and the endorsement of a joint project by the Canadian and New Zealand Commissions for UNESCO, the Pacific Community (SPC) and the Great Barrier Reef Foundation. The four partners developed a side event for the 2024 UN Ocean Decade Conference in Barcelona highlighting Indigenous-led approaches to marine management and outlining models of meaningful engagement for the science community.

We look forward to continuing to deepen our working relationships and showcasing the value of National Commission collaboration both domestically and internationally.

Pacific National Commission Meeting

Secretary General Vicki Soanes travelled to Fiji in September for the 9th Consultation with the Pacific National Commissions for UNESCO.

The three-day meeting provided Vicki with the opportunity to catch-up with colleagues from around the Pacific and to learn more about the work of the Pacific Commissions and to share our work especially within the following meeting discussion areas:

- › Our Pacific cultures;
- › nature, oceans and languages; and
- › how we work together and with UNESCO in the region.



Farewell and Thank You to Robyn Baker and Zuleika Chang



Robyn Baker

In early 2023 we farewelled Chair Robyn Baker with sadness but appreciation.

Over her six years as Chair, Robyn has led the National Commission with integrity and compassionate leadership, bringing the Commission into a new era. Robyn has a gift for leadership and a drive to achieve sustained, effective impacts.

Robyn has laid an impressive platform of strategy, policies and relationships essential to the work of the National Commission.

Under Robyn's leadership the Commission developed its long-term view and collective way of working. This has resulted in a truly multidisciplinary approach to its priorities, leading to a strong vision for the future that we are working towards together.

Robyn represented the National Commission internationally on many occasions, including leading the New Zealand delegation to two UNESCO General Conferences in Paris, delivering the New Zealand country statement, and representing the National Commission in an inter-regional meeting in Kenya. She enhanced our strong reputation with UNESCO as an engaged and constructive Member State and National Commission.

The Secretariat are grateful to Robyn for her generosity, her strong but kind leadership and for sharing her deep expertise with us all. Robyn will be missed, but her legacy remains.



Zuleika Chang

We also farewelled Zuleika Chang, who led the Secretariat as acting Secretary General from July 2022 to her departure in August 2023.

Zuleika joined the Secretariat for the second time in 2018 and has been responsible for establishing some of our most impactful programmes, including our engagements with the Decade for Ocean Science and the Decade of Indigenous Languages.

Zuleika has made a significant contribution to the work of the National Commission and is highly respected by the Commission, Secretariat and our partners, both within Aotearoa New Zealand and internationally.

We were sorry to see Zuleika go but wish her all the best for her future endeavours.



Contact Details

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Peggy Fairbairn CNZM**

Special Advisor Youth: **Sabrina Manū**

Secretariat – Ministry of Education

Acting Secretary General (*until July 2023*):
Zuleika Chang

Secretary General (*from August 2023*):
Vicki Soanes

Senior Advisor: **Romeo Tevaga**

Senior Advisor: **Yana Selyuk**

Programme Officer: **Silke Bieda**

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UNESCO Youth Aotearoa Leaders

Chair: **Sabrina Manū**

Deputy-Chair: **Adriana Bird**

Aimee Clark

Isaac Morunga

Katja Phutaraksa Neef

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Lotima Vaioleti

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Whanganui: UNESCO City of Design

www.discoverwhanganui.nz/news/unesco-city-of-design

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