



New Zealand Association for
Environmental Education

Annual Review

For the period 1 July 2020
to 30 June 2021

Welcome from the Chair

Welcome to the ninth Annual Review about the New Zealand Association for Environmental Education.

It is sometimes said that adversity opens the door for opportunities and this has certainly been the case for our Association during this year. While the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic brought unanticipated changes into our lives, opportunities have opened for NZAEE. With the election of new members on the National Executive, we managed in September 2020 between the lockdowns to have a planning session with Billy Matheson, which helped us to appreciate the history and heritage of our organisation. It also helped us to focus on priorities for NZAEE going forward into the future.

In his report about our thinking for the day, Billy commented that,

“Clearly New Zealand needs a strong advocate for Environmental Education. The problem is that everyone (yourselves included) thinks that this is NZAEE’s job.”

It was obvious that continuing to operate as we had been was not an option. When faced with the choice between closing down or reinvention, we decided that we wanted to progress forward. We realised that we needed to develop a clear vision and plan, and began work to enable this to happen. Also, we knew we could not do this work on a voluntary basis as had happened in the past. People would need to be paid to do professional work. However, finance was a key issue because membership subscriptions were insufficient to cover increasing costs.

Timing was on our side. Not long after we had completed this planning, there was an opportunity to apply for funding from the Ministry of Education to be a Network of Expertise (NEX), which supports subject associations and other peer-to-peer networks to deliver support for teachers and kaiako. The Request for a Proposal (RFP) was issued in December 2020. We worked on it over the holiday break, submitted it in January 2021, and were notified in March that we had been successful.



This success has given us the much-needed funding to pay people to do professional work and set about implementing the plan that we had developed in the RFP, which centred around connecting people and resources; building connections for collaborative action, and building knowledge and capability among teachers and environmental education providers.

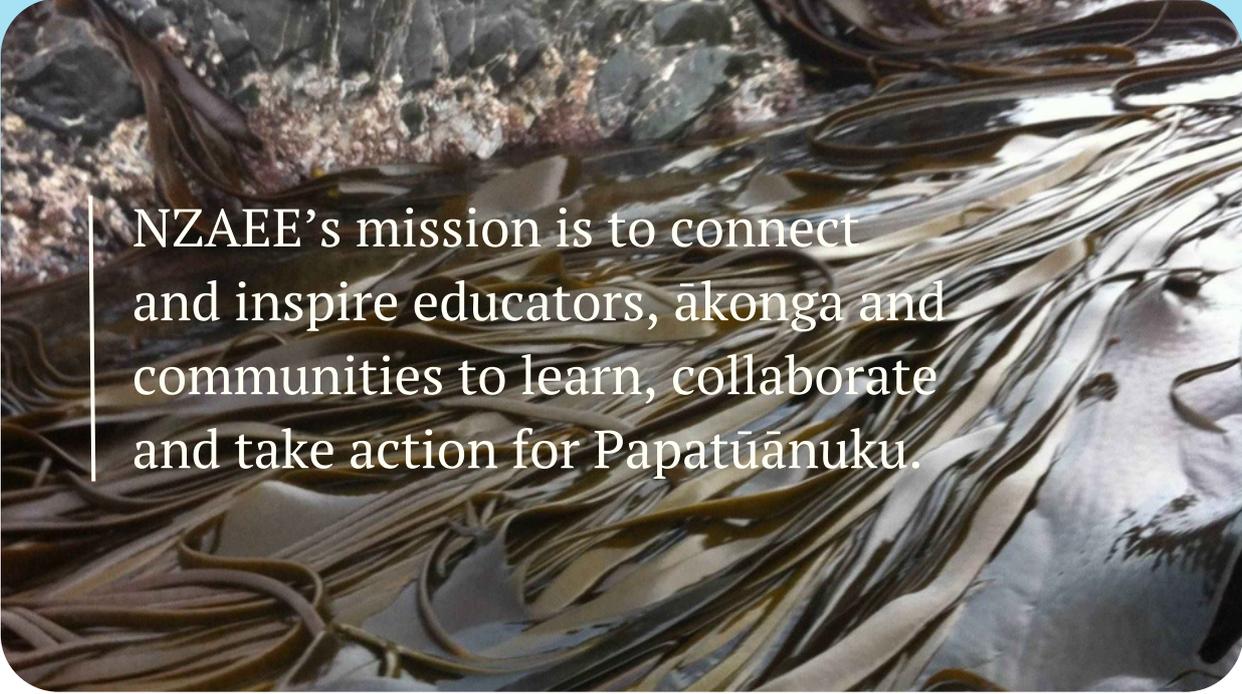
We have spent the first half of 2021 doing a lot of groundwork, developing plans and seeking input from members and others in the sector, setting up systems and building momentum. As we write this in the 2021-2022 year we are now seeing our plans being implemented with a webinar series underway, a new website under development and a conference being planned for 2022.

Our thanks go to many people. Firstly, to the members of the National Executive who have spent a lot of time thinking about our strategic direction and contributing ideas for its movement forward. Thanks to Chris Eames, Elspeth McMillian, Gill Stewart, Pam Crisp, Annie McDonald, Anzac Gallette and Robyn Zink for their time and ideas. A special thanks and acknowledgement goes to Morag Vasilaki for her work in Northland and as the Junior Co-chair over the year. Thank you to Debbie Courtney for her work as the coordinator keeping our finances organised and finally, a huge thanks to Chris Montgomerie. Chris has become an invaluable member of our Association and because of her untiring work, we have made a tremendous amount of progress towards being a more viable Association that will be more responsive to the needs of the environmental education community in Aotearoa-New Zealand.

Ngā mihi nui

Sally Birdsall

Review of the Year



NZAEE's mission is to connect and inspire educators, ākonga and communities to learn, collaborate and take action for Papatūānuku.

The twelve months of July 2020 to June 2021 can be summed up with the cliché, 'a year of two halves'.

The 2020 year was spent taking stock after the first wave of lock-downs, and allowed some time for planning, then articulating what we would like to do as a sector organisation as we applied to be a Network of Expertise (NEX). When we learned we were successful, the first half of 2021 was spent on set-up as NZAEE moved from a volunteer-led organisation, to one that had funding to pay for the RFP work to be undertaken, on connecting with members on the strategic direction, and on implementing our plans.

A core element of the planning work meant examining our organisation's commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi. We know that there are many members who are on personal and professional journeys in this space, and as a representative sector group with funding from the Ministry of Education to provide networking, connections and learning opportunities for teachers, it has been important for us as an Executive to clarify our approach.

We value Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and are committed to fostering and modelling partnership relationships between Tangata Whenua and Tangata Tiriti, recognising that environmental and sustainability education provides an entry for Tangata Tiriti to understand Te Ao Māori.



As a sector group, we need to model best practice. Through the NEX network, our executive has been working with Les Hoerara from Teacher Development Aotearoa | Whanaketanga Kaiako Aotearoa, to develop deeper personal understandings of Te Ao Māori, so that we can move forward more comfortably on a professional level.

We know that the Education Act (2020) requires schools to give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi by: working to ensure its plans, policies and local curriculum reflect local tikanga Māori, Mātauranga Māori and Te Ao Māori; taking all reasonable steps to make instruction available in tikanga Māori and te reo Māori; achieving equitable outcomes for Māori students.

This requirement is reflected in some of the recent Ministry of Education resources. Pūtātara, which aligns sustainability education and global citizenship around three Te Ao Māori concepts, was released by the Ministry in 2020 but not promoted widely. This year NZAEE has begun to promote and highlight it as a resource. The three concepts that it is separated in to provide a good framework for describing NZAEE's own strategic planning process:

- Tūrangawaewae
- Kaitiakitanga
- Whakapuāwai

The following pages outline our strategic plan, and the actions and impact that we have achieved.

Tūrangawaewae

Understanding where we stand

Kia whakatōmuri te haere whakamua.

I walk backwards into the future with my eyes fixed on my past.

Planning in 2020 helped focus on priorities. We looked at our heritage, what had changed and what had stayed the same.

When the New Zealand Association for Environmental Education began in 1984, it was to agitate for change, and to get more environmental education happening and integrated into schools. Over thirty years later, we have the same Kaupapa, and it feels more urgent than ever before.

1984	New Zealand Association for Environmental Education Formed
1992	Rio Earth Summit First Seaweeek event in NZ
1999	MoE Releases National Environmental Education Guidelines
2002	First National, Biennial NZAEE Conference
2009	National Government ends EfS Advisor roles and stops EfS PLD Funding
2015	Sector advocacy for new national EE Strategy
2017	Mātauranga Whakauka Taiao – EEfS Strategy and Action Plan launched by DOC, MfE and MOE
2019	School Strikes for Climate
2021	NZAEE receives Network of Expertise Funding to provide PLD

Kaitiakitanga

Caring for people and place

The idea of environmental education has grown to include sustainable living and regeneration, and has expanded from the school setting to whole communities. And as the effects of climate change and biodiversity loss have moved from an abstract concept to reality, people are realising that the human-centred view of the planet needs changing.

We need more young people - and their whānau - to understand how interdependent and interrelated everything in our natural world is. A connection with and love for nature is needed so that we can all feel motivated to protect it. Environmental education in schools and communities can play an important role here, and in doing so, in climate change mitigation and regeneration.

These thoughts helped to develop our Purpose Statements:

Our Kaupapa

That people of Aotearoa are empowered to be in sustainable relationships with the natural environment and each other, to regenerate our world.

Our Collaborators

We support a community of educators - teachers, programme providers and communities - and keep all ākonga (and their children's children) at the heart of our mahi.

Our Impact

We want our community of educators to:

- Have access to resources and learning opportunities | Capability
- Feel connected, informed and inspired anywhere in Aotearoa | Networking
- Have a louder, respected and united voice | Advocacy

Whakapuāwai

Flourishing ever forward

Our three Impact areas provide a structure to our work programme, and keep the mahi firmly focussed on outcomes for our community of educators.

Impact Area 1 - Capability

Our community of educators has access to resources and learning opportunities

The Need

Teachers who are new to EEfS can find it difficult to know where to start, or how to compare providers and resources. There are resources available, but they often not easily found, and links to classroom learning are not clear. Existing training and PLD is often only promoted in small/closed networks leading to lost opportunities for teachers as well as employees of providers.

The Opportunity

NZAEE can be the central point for teachers and providers to connect and learn together. The NEX funding provides an opportunity to gather all resources, identify any gaps, and to build collective knowledge for teachers and providers.

The Solution

Identify and collate all existing resources (providers and materials); develop a webinar series that will combine expert providers and in-school examples; and resume biennial conferences in 2022.

Progress to end 2021

- Webinars – planning in July, x 2 in Term 4
- Planning conference for 11 and 12 October 2022
- Collection of material – connection with existing members and others in sector to create more collaborative community
- Employment of Content Curator who will manage the collection of materials, and identify any gaps

Whakapuāwai

Flourishing ever forward



Impact Area 2 - Networking

Our community of educators feel connected, informed and inspired anywhere in Aotearoa New Zealand

The Need

There is currently no central place that teachers and educators can go to access resources, and find out about providers of programmes for EEfS, and training in their area. NZAEE branches are few and often not highly active, though there are EEfS groups in some other areas, though often working in isolation. Stories of great EEfS learning are ad hoc, and connections with Māori groups and providers are dependent on individual relationships.

The Opportunity

There is an opportunity to create a central point for EEfS, drawing together teachers, educators and resources into a collaborative, open source environment, both online and in local networks or areas of interest. A higher profile and more exemplars will profile how learning in the natural environment can be a launch-pad for all areas of the curriculum, from literacy and numeracy, to supporting Mātauranga Māori, local history and student wellbeing.

The Solution

Develop/promote a free, open access platform (website) that collates all existing resources and profiles all providers and players in the EEfS space; constantly and proactively profile resources, providers, school and community stories; promote events to encourage networking and collaboration; and enable events in areas where none are occurring.

Progress to end 2021

- Developing a communications plan that will position NZAEE as synonymous with environmental education. New branding to signal a new energy.
- Scope and select provider for total website redesign so that it will become the central place where resources are collated and providers are profiled
- Connection with local groups working in environmental education, as well as existing NZAEE branches.
- Collaboration with PhD candidate who collated a directory of environmental education providers, adding more providers to the website.

Whakapuāwai

Flourishing ever forward



Impact Area 3 - Advocacy

Our community of educators will have a louder, respected and united voice

The Need

Little cohesion and collaboration in the industry, as NZAEE resourcing (membership income and volunteer hours) has diminished over recent years. However, externally the increased profile of: climate change; benefits to wellbeing of time in nature; and emphasis on engagement with Te Ao Māori makes EEfS more relevant and urgent than ever.

The Opportunity

NZAEE, through historical industry leadership, and with a recent boost in funding, can become a voice of the industry once more.

The Solution

Strengthen NZAEE's position as a proactive industry voice on policy and issues. Create connections amongst members; knowledge of each others' strength and expertise creates a more varied sector voice. Review and amend the constitution and membership structure to better align with practice.

Progress to end 2021

- Raising awareness of NZAEE brand and communications has raised profile of the organisation, and also increased membership
- Better, and more regular member communications
- Regular connections with other groups working in the environmental and education areas
- Submission made on behalf of members to the Emissions Reduction Plan in December 2021, and a template sent to members to assist with their own submissions
- Constitution review in 2022, to be put to a Special Meeting in October 2022, at the Conference.

We will continue to push for more. More funding for environmental education providers; more professional learning opportunities for teachers, and more integration into classrooms and communities if we, as a country, are to make progress towards a low carbon future, to heal and regenerate our planet.

Seaweek



One aspect of our year that was almost business as usual was Seaweek

A new Seaweek website was launched by our delivery partner, Sir Peter Blake Marine Education and Recreation Centre (MERC), and over 140 public events across the motu were listed on it.

While Covid-19 was making itself felt just as the official week of Seaweek launched, a lot of activity was still able to occur. The 'pivots' that were required last year have shown that moving from one intense week of awareness raising to a range of events throughout the year is actually better for sustained learning and deeper connections.

Seaweek highlights:

Tāmaki Makaurau | Auckland

- 30+ independent events
- 3 online engagement events - moved online due to Covid, but ended up with higher attendance due to easier accessibility
- Many clean ups held across the region, with Sustainable Coastlines and other community groups



The Hauraki Gulf Monitoring Project

, using the Marine Metre Squared tool to gather information on seashore ecology, continued to build on the Seaweek brand. Seven schools were involved, and the focus was on identifying and locating invasive species, and looking at the wider health of the catchment. Lock downs meant that the initial classroom sessions were done via Zoom, before students could get out into the environment in April.

When further lockdowns occurred later in the year, a variety of online educational opportunities were made available to the schools involved, and worksheets and teaching notes were put together to encourage home learning.



Seaweek



North Island:

- 50+ public events outside Auckland
- 4 workshops on topics from water quality monitoring to sustainable living
- 10+ public talks and seminars on the impact of climate change, Antarctic sea ice, bird migration and eOceans
- Participation from Libraries in Wellington and Hawke's Bay hosting story times, documentary screenings and seminars
- Locally organised clean ups

South Island:

- 35 events in Ōtautahi | Christchurch, including library talks, storytimes and movie screenings
- NZ Marine Studies Centre hosted public events and took the Aquavan to several schools in Southland
- 'Marine Science Night' and 'Local stories of our Big Blue Backyard' brought community and researchers together at Akaroa Boat Shed
- Port Nelson Cable Bay Snorkel Day hosted by Experiencing Marine Reserves enabled 152 participants to enjoy the marine environment. It was a successful collaboration between many groups.

Online engagement:

- MERC administers the website and Facebook page, which has seen a steady increase in numbers of engagements as it becomes more active.
- In the 2020-21 year, the annual Bill Ballantine Memorial Lecture, a collaboration with University of Auckland, was held online, and attracted a large audience via Zoom.
- This online engagement has led to further developments of webinar series, and MERC now hosts the Ngā Kōrero webinar series, exploring ocean kaitiakitanga in Aotearoa New Zealand.





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