

NZMSS-AMSA 2016 Conference

INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT PANEL DISCUSSION

1 Ngā kaikōrero (Panellists)

AUSTRALIAN PANELLISTS



Melissa George: Chief Executive Officer, North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA)



Duane Fraser: Community Engagement and Indigenous Project Specialist

AOTEAROA PANELLISTS



Sarah-Jane Tiakiwai: Waikato, Te Rarawa, Academic Director at Waikato-Tainui College for Research and Development



Caine Taiapa: Ngāti Ranginui, Ngai Te Rangī, Te Rarawa, Ngāti Pikiao, General Manager, Manaaki Te Awanui Charitable Trust, c.taiapa@manaakiteawanui.co.nz



Anaru Luke: Ngāti Rārua, Deputy Chair of Te Rūnanga O Ngāti Rārua, Kaihautu - Te Tohu Huarahi (Manager - Strategic Positioning/Planning), Department of Conservation, New Zealand, anaru.luke@gmail.com

2 Kaupapa (Abstract)

He moana pukepuke, e ekengia e te waka – Mountainous seas can be navigated in a canoe

Nā Kingi Ihaka, Te Ao Hou, No. 22 (April 1958)

This Māori proverb highlights that working together to achieve a common and agreed objective is the most effective way forward. Meaningful engagement between indigenous peoples and the science sector provides many opportunities to resolve some of the complex issues we face today, but these must be founded upon an open and genuine desire to work together. Following on from the Plenary delivered by Rawiri Smith, and the presentation session on cross-cultural research, this panel discussion aims to open up a dialogue between indigenous peoples (practitioners, researchers and leaders) and the marine science community. It also aims to strengthen learnings and relationships across the Tasman.

Over many generations, indigenous communities have developed a deep and enduring connection to, and custodial relationship with the marine ecosystems that support their livelihoods and well-being. Recent shifts towards ecosystem-based management have emphasised the unique and vital contribution that indigenous peoples, values and knowledge bring to the conversation about socio-ecological systems. Engaging with indigenous communities is often a significant component of marine science, and cultural competency can often be the key to successful and meaningful research. Cultural competency and responsiveness requires learning, identifying challenges, and seeking solutions to improve both indigenous engagement with science and science engagement with indigenous communities.

Indigenous engagement within the New Zealand science system is promoted through national governmental policy (the Vision Mātauranga Policy¹) that seeks to support “unlocking the potential of Māori knowledge, resources and people,” by “supporting research that concerns distinctive issues and needs arising within Māori communities.” This means that in New Zealand a great deal of research moves past engagement and into a collaborative and co-production space. This is not always the case, or an easy journey, and our panellists will provide insight into the challenges and successes of their journey from an experienced iwi (tribal)/Māori perspective. As a tribal people, one framework for engagement does not fit all, meaning it is often through shared learning, experiences and open communication that research succeeds.

In Australia, Indigenous engagement within the science system is currently promoted through a number of different mechanisms, including Traditional Owner driven processes, agencies, working groups, and ethical committees across the country. Australia differs to New Zealand as there is no national policy to help ensure Indigenous values, Indigenous knowledge systems and community priorities are recognised and responded to meaningfully through research that is inclusive, relevant, and beneficial. In Australia, we need to move on from having the same repetitive discussions about improving Indigenous engagement to actually establishing an Indigenous driven and led research agenda that establishes the guidelines for building collaborative partnerships across Australian Indigenous communities. For best practice to spread across Australia, important messages about cross-cultural research needs to be recognised and shared amongst all relevant bodies in order to grow those existing collaborative partnerships beyond a few Australian Indigenous communities. The Australian Indigenous panellists will share their experiences and insights into strengthening and advancing collaborative relationships. This panel discussion will lead into a further workshop to be held during the AMSA conference in Darwin, Australia, during July 2017.

We hope that by beginning the discussions in this panel session between indigenous peoples who have been engaged in the science system from both countries, and involving the audience at the conference, we can highlight the successes and consider some of the issues that have arisen in the past, to enable us to navigate the mountainous seas ahead.

¹ <http://www.mbie.govt.nz/info-services/science-innovation/pdf-library/vm-booklet.pdf>

3 Kōrero (Introductions)

Key points from each of the panellists introductions:

Melissa George –

- Been a part of land and sea management for 25 + years
- Worked on both sides of the research fence – as a researcher and as an indigenous person engaging with researchers, especially in the Great Barrier Reef area
- Researchers and scientists are notoriously bad – and often have misconceptions or concerns about engagement with traditional owners – “they are scary, who do we speak to, what do we do?”
- A key to appropriate and meaningful engagement is remunerating people for their time and contributions appropriately
- In Australia, there has been four iterations of national research hubs and there is still a long way to go with meaningful engagement
- We are younger than our elders, and perhaps in a modern context more impatient with a system that doesn't work but believe that Science and research needs to consider how to manage whole estates in a modern context and stop looking at things in a binary way of “pre” and “post” contact. We have endured through it all so we need to look at this in a more modern way

Duane Fraser –

- Speaking for the indigenous youth voice/perspective in science space
- There are very limited numbers of youth engaging in this across time and space, often an issue is capacity of science to engage, and while young indigenous people are inspired into land and sea management there are a lack of pathways to carry them forward into the science sectors
- Saltwater foundation is designed to help create pathways in academic spaces
- We also need to identify that traditional owners and indigenous rangers (on country managers) are the end-users of science and so develop it with & for them
- Need to focus on expanding to 100% co-management

Sarah-Jane Tiakiwai –

- A key point in this space is noting the validity of indigenous science, and especially mātauranga Māori in science, in its own right. What is “true” science, there is a need to unravel the concept.
- Another key issue is the protection of our knowledge, which is often misinterpreted to mean “withholding” of that knowledge. This is not the point, it is about the lens through which mātauranga and indigenous contributions are viewed
- Both of these link back to who sets/drives the research agenda?
- Engagement in the Sustainable Seas National Science Challenge (NSC) set-up, governance structure and current member on the Kāhui Māori for the Sustainable Seas NSC –
 - There has been general frustration across the NSCs that Māori were not engaged in the process and the agenda was set before Māori were engaged. This creates

disappointment at the loss of opportunity of Māori aspirations to be part of the process.

- We (Māori) want to create ways to engage in research but also influence the research agenda of the science we engage in. What that looks like for us, what our priorities look like compared to what national priorities look like? How can we work towards our own, as well as national aspirations and priorities for the growth and development of Aotearoa?
- Noting that Māori are an integral part of the process, not ONLY the end-user or a participant in a survey, but posing, developing and seeking the answers to questions of importance to us and of benefit to Aotearoa as a whole.

Caine Taiapa –

- Coming from a more hapū level focused research background as an iwi researcher
- We look to our hapū and consider where does local research spring from? – The discussions at a local hapū based level influence the way we work [at the Manaaki Te Awanui Charitable Trust].
- Consider ourselves the “membrane” – because we provide the way for the research that comes from our people to be delivered into the science space, sit the science alongside the mātauranga our people hold and seek the benefits from the science and research occurring to come back through to the hapū we work alongside.
- Our work has a focus on Co-management and co-governance and asking our people “if we were going to manage this what would “co-” look like for us?
- Us a researchers are in the back-ground working to full-fill the funder outputs (e.g. reporting, milestones etc.) but ultimately with the focus to enable our people to ask their questions and take the time to answer them as well – we work to bring mana back to the hapū and whānau who should ultimately be driving this work

Anaru Luke –

- Background in the Ngāti Rārua claims process (1992), brought up by my grandmother who was hugely knowledgeable around catching, preparing and cooking kai moana (sea food), I learnt these practices and tikanga (customs)
- I was asked to give evidence to the iwi-grievance against the crown and questioned this due to my youth, but was informed by my whānau that I was one of the few who understood and still practiced the knowledge of our tupuna (ancestors).
- Ngāti Rārua settled in 2013 and this along with other legislation e.g. Fisheries Settlement (customary, commercial and non-commercial) have left us thinking long term and looking further ahead than most.
- Within this framework we know that we [iwi in general as well as Ngāti Rārua specifically] are Treaty Partners to the Crown – which is a key point when considering working with indigenous people/Māori/iwi in Aotearoa – this is a status above stakeholders
- Because we are looking to the future and planning for ourselves – science needs to “let us set our own priorities” so that the research agenda we seek is one that we have set, but also keeping in mind the timeframes of processes (e.g. 1992 – 2013 in claims mode, now we are ready to set our priorities and research agenda). A need to focus on improving conditions for the generations to come.

4 Ngā Pātai (Attendee questions)

Question 1: Is the Vision Mātauranga (VM) policy working given that it has been in place for over 10 years? Why is it misplaced? (KR, RS)

- The VM policy is a *policy* and therefore conceptual in nature, we need to elevate this from conceptual to actual and practice the implementation of this policy → success has to start with the people
- It is unable to be utilised effectively by our communities, and therefore the potential within that policy document and opportunities surrounding it are not accessible to our people
- We are all still working to elevate outside of it as a policy and implement it in a real way, but also needs to build on successes for e.g. kaupapa Māori research methodologies
- There are other avenues to access e.g. Kura Taiao funding that specifically funds opportunities to reinvigorate and restore cultural practice

Question 2: Is there any similar policy in Australia? (CH)

- We are still convincing the government that we are the first nations in some places
- There isn't any independent funding for environmental work in Australia, but there are national guidelines for engaging with Indigenous peoples (not always used effectively)
- The funding structure is set up in "Science Hubs" (e.g. Marine Biodiversity hub sponsored this panel discussion) and some are doing great work with indigenous peoples, others are doing nothing.
- Research agendas need to be matched to community aspirations otherwise science will always be "playing catch up"
- Comes back to the key point that → we need to set the research agenda to be fully engaged in research, driving it and providing outcomes from it

Question 3: What principles of values apply when looking at issues of global biodiversity? (J. Booth)

- Principles [for Māori] are the same – Manaaki Whenua, Manaaki Taiao, Manaaki Tāngata – because you cannot have one without the other, we are all inextricably linked.
- Indigenous peoples are the oldest conservationists in the world and we are hugely concerned about biodiversity issues
- Communities set their goals of what and why they do what they do – it is about cultural survival and also dependent on the biodiversity upon which they survive
- Cultural survival is not just identity, but everything that entails inclusive of cultural practice, knowledge, language etc.
- There needs to be consistency from National and international policy and conventions that countries sign up to (e.g. biodiversity convention) and what is being implemented in reality within countries/regions and locally. Indigenous peoples are doing it every day, country leaders are signatories to these conventions but not actually implementing the convention to make change.
- In Australia, national changes need to occur but waiting for this leads to disappointment and some communities see it as a waste of effort so instead they focus on local initiatives. This means national change is often left in the hard to reach box.

- In Australia, community organisations are trying to set up the practices for sustainable management but are always at the whim of governments and this leaves some organisation closing their door due to poor support.

Question 4: Who should be footing the bill for indigenous researchers?

- The research group/people asking for indigenous engagement
- Indigenous peoples are often asked to contribute knowledge and expertise – [question asked back to the question asker by panellist] “so what would you pay an “expert (science)” to provide you with expert advice?” → the remuneration should be the same as indigenous peoples and practitioners are doing exactly the same thing.
- Also – outputs should be able to be taken back to the people and not just as a “deadly 300-400 page report” – tangible outcomes (which will come if the partnership and engagement has been meaningful) not just outputs.

Question 5: As an emerging indigenous researcher, what advice would you give when faced with people challenging our stance on indigenous engagement?

- Don't let anyone dismiss or diminish who you are as a researcher or as an indigenous person
- You bring to your organisations, research settings – what non-indigenous people don't have and stay true to that.
- Engagement where possible should be indigenous led

Question 6: How do we pragmatically go about consultation with indigenous groups [specifically targeted at Australian context] more efficiently (cost/time effective)?

- People are available on governance boards, but there is often conflict about “who speaks for who?”
- It comes down to good front end support for indigenous groups to set up good governance structures and processes that allow for them to be representative
- Some of the onus also falls on those representatives to ensure that they have the mandate of their people (this is not static or a one-off). This is an ongoing process that involves filtering back to the people outcomes and decisions, but also making sure that you as a representative are filtering up in these representative roles the desires and agenda of the people you represent → again key is good governance structures and processes
- It is the responsibility of traditional owners on advisory bodies to be there on “correct cultural terms”

Question 7: As the Vice President of the NZMSS – one of our main objectives is to support students – How do we start to build capability and capacity, as well as awareness of our young people around engagement so that they can do a better job from the start?

- There are some great initiatives out there that have been used - one example being having young science researcher living on the marae, for a 6 month period (?) so that they begin to spend time with the tāngata whenua, marae community and get “attached” or embedded in the issues that they have – from this arises opportunities to deliver on research projects of meaning with tangible outcomes

Put the call out there – we have students who are keen to participate in research of meaning

- Waikato-Tainui College for Research and Development provide summer internship opportunities for students to partake in research projects that the college (and the iwi) have identified as important providing meaning to the work that these students are involved in and context about where they have come from
- – and where there are mutual benefits iwi will respond
- Raising cultural competency of emerging researchers through exposure (e.g. marae program mentioned above)
- Cultural competency can be dangerous when attendance at a one day cultural awareness workshop is assumed to provide all the cultural understanding. Who is assessing who is competent and what is the criteria for competency?

5 Ara whakamua (Pathway forward)

All of our panellists were asked one final question –

“Looking forward into the future, how would you like to see science engagement with indigenous peoples into the future, what would be the ideal?”

These were the key points made by all of the panellists:

Panellist 1

1. Indigenous peoples need time to be clear on what they want, and they need to do this first themselves
2. We need to be setting the agenda and leading the work
3. Moving past “consultation” (current/historic business as usual (BAU)) to having meaningful engagement & partnership as BAU
4. Building relationships with indigenous peoples first, researching second
5. Policy shifts from “organization led engagement” to “whānau/hapū/iwi led engagement” so that we can navigate this space on our terms too

Panellist 2

1. Having indigenous people more visible → being the agenda setters, doers AND users of research in the science space
2. Academia (e.g. universities and research organisations) having a clear vision and encouraging students to take a better approach to indigenous worldview, engagement and partnership
3. Increased trans-Tasman learning and sharing
4. Getting scientists to agree on standards of engagement that are set by indigenous peoples. Need best practice standards for engagement.

Panellist 3

1. Whānau/hapū have a firm base centred and governed through kawa and tikanga and guided by their aspirations, and are a part of the whole process
2. Uplifting cultural integrity and environmental well-being above economic gain to align research priorities with what iwi/hapū/whānau often seek

Panellist 4

1. Having a National Indigenous Research Hub [in Australia] focussed on indigenous priorities
2. Indigenous managed research institutes; and
3. Indigenous researchers

Panellist 5

1. Re-conceptualising the VM in science to lift it out of the policy framework and into a practical implementation space
2. Whānau have the key to unlock the door [funding] and are leading the way in terms of their research priorities
3. Mātauranga is a valued AND valid knowledge form and not an “other”, that is not needing to be validated

Ngā mihi mahana, mihi maioha atu ki a koutou e rau rangatira mā kua whakatakotohia ōu ake whakaaro mō te kaupapa nui nei. Ko koutou ngā kaiarahi, e takahī nei i te huarahi hei painga mā tātaou.

Contact:

Dr Cass Hunter

Indigenous social ecological researcher | Coastal Development and Management Program

Oceans and Atmosphere

CSIRO

cass.hunter@csiro.au