



PPTA TE WEHENGARUA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2024

Climate Justice Committee Report to Annual Conference 2024



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RECOMMENDATION

- 1 That the report be received.

INTRODUCTION

A conference paper entitled “Embracing Kaitiakitanga” was presented to the 2019 Annual Conference. Conference passed the following recommendations:

1. THAT PPTA purchases carbon offsetting from a reputable organisation for all flights that are booked by the organisation.
2. THAT PPTA implements environmentally responsible actions immediately.
3. THAT PPTA sets up a working group to look into the more complex actions that could be taken to reduce the PPTA’s environmental impact.
4. THAT PPTA publicly supports student climate action.
5. THAT PPTA develops advice for those teachers wishing to support students in climate action.
6. THAT PPTA coordinates with other unions to support nationwide action over climate change.

PPTA Actions

Several of these recommendations have been actioned, in the following ways:

Recommendation 1. PPTA Te Wehengarua Executive passed a paper in 2022 that supports connecting with Conservation Volunteers NZ to engage in a carbon offsetting project, planting NZ natives at Ātiu Creek Regional Park. PPTA has donated \$28,000 to Conservation Volunteers NZ since 2022. This has enabled CVNZ to grow 3,100 native plants from seeds. CVNZ volunteers planted 890 of these in 2023, there are 2,210 remaining to be planted in winter 2024.

Recommendation 3. PPTA established a sustainability working group in 2020, named Ira Tangata, Ira Taiao by its members. The group sought to prioritise PPTA ‘cleaning up its own house’ by first focusing on internal sustainability measures (**recommendation 2**). A national office Green Team was subsequently established, which oversaw changes which led to waste reduction and other measures. In 2022, Executive passed recommendations to establish an ongoing ‘Climate Justice Committee’ to continue the work of Ira Tangata, Ira Taiao.

Recommendation 6. PPTA Te Wehengarua connected with two climate coalitions in 2021/2022. Fossil Free State Sector (FFSS), which through the Fossil Free Schools Campaign led to the commitment from the previous government, in 2022, to remove all remaining coal boilers in schools.

The second coalition was a Climate Education Coalition (NZEI/PPTA/TEU) which led to Emissions Reduction Plan submissions and contribution to NZEI Te Riu Roa Climate Justice training pilot, 2022. The PPTA also attended a CTU Just Transitions working group in 2021-2022.

Awaiting further action

Recommendations 4 and 5 await further action, although PPTA has provided some financial and strategic support of School Strike 4 Climate actions since 2021. PPTA staff and Executive have provided informal responses in response to members’ pātai regarding participation in climate action, but there has not been a formal approach to developing official guidance or policy in this area. This work will be a next step for the committee.

CLIMATE JUSTICE COMMITTEE MAHI

Since the formation of the Climate Justice Committee, PPTA has engaged in specific actions around climate action, education and sustainability. Each action has generally required individual approval from the PPTA Te Wehengarua Executive. In 2024, this has included the inaugural TEACH (Teachers' Environmental Action Conference/Hui), which was a cross-union opportunity to connect, learn, and create climate education resources.

The Climate Justice Committee has specific aims and next steps, for climate action for PPTA Te Wehengarua.

CLIMATE JUSTICE COMMITTEE AIMS

Our mission: Accelerate sustainability in what we **value**, **know** and **do**, as PPTA Te Wehengarua.

As PPTA Te Wehengarua, we seek to understand our **values** in relation to Mātauranga Māori and how they relate to sustainability. This includes values such as tiakitanga (responsibility), manaakitanga (generosity), kotahitanga (unity), and hūmarietanga (humility).

Moreover, we seek to integrate these values in stories and whakataukī in multiple languages to help fellow PPTA members, kaiako, and ākonga to understand.

For example:

- 'He ururākau, rākau taumatua.' - 'A stand of trees, the assembly of life'
- 'Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini' - 'My strength is not the work of the individual, but of the collective'
- 'He waka eke noa' - 'We are all in this together'

We seek to **know** the facts, by researching best practices with respect to climate change education. This includes:

- Understanding causes and impact, using differential impact to vulnerable communities and exploring the relative cost of mitigation (reducing CO2 emissions) versus adaptation (changing society to adapt to a new climate) versus disaster response (climate crisis response, e.g. to climate-caused weather events such as Hurricane Gabrielle).
- Understanding effective civic activism and engagement. Promoting civics and sustainability education, unpacking the bridges and boulders/barriers that support and prohibit sustainability action in our places of learning, workplaces, cities and nation. Promoting a sustainability lens across learning areas within our curricula.

We seek to **do** sustainable action as PPTA Te Wehengarua. Action that affirms and advances Te Tiriti.

We seek to support schools to become models for action and sustainable living, interwoven in a culturally appropriate way, and as community hubs (for example, during disaster response). This could involve advocating for sustainable water, energy, food and waste systems in our schools.

We seek to share the sustainability mahi that is already being undertaken in our schools, so that others may be inspired to do the same.

NEXT STEPS

Highlighting and celebrating examples of climate education and sustainability best practice in schools/kura, and share our sustainability values.

Throughout Aotearoa New Zealand, kaiako and kura are using current and emerging practices to improve their own sustainable practices and to teach ākonga to take meaningful climate action. We want to celebrate and share these stories using images, video, text and infographics, through our various communication channels, including PPTA News, PPTA's website and social media, and through conferences and hui.

We believe that sharing these stories can inspire and encourage others to take up this important mahi, and to highlight and celebrate the excellent efforts of our members.

Advocating for, promoting and supporting civics and sustainability education in schools/kura.

There is power in teaching rangatahi to engage with their democratic rights, to understand their place in Aotearoa and the world, and to look after the wellbeing of the people and the planet. Civics education includes understanding the historic and ongoing impacts of colonisation, including the environmental impacts, and the importance of Te Tiriti o Waitangi for Aotearoa New Zealand. This education aligns with the UN Convention for the Rights of the Child.

While resources exist for civics and sustainability education, we want to ensure that all learners have access to this important education. For example, we can advocate for the Ministry of Education to develop an overarching strategy around climate and sustainability education across learning areas, and we can share resources and examples of impactful teaching and learning outcomes across Aotearoa.

Developing guidance around supporting student/ākonga and member climate activism.

This recommendation ties in with recommendations 4 and 5 of the Embracing Kaitiakitanga 2019 paper to annual conference. While some financial support and informal advice has been given since 2019, there has not been a formal approach to developing guidance in this area. We believe that it is important to develop guidance for members regarding democratic engagement and for those supporting their learners to do so.

Considering how sustainability fits into our strategic 'Vision for Secondary Teaching'.

In 2021, PPTA created a 10-year Vision for Secondary Teaching, as reported in the annual conference paper 'Revisiting Our Vision for Education'. The member consultation process revealed that PPTA members wanted the teaching profession to be well-paid, with teachers who were trained to a high standard and continuously supported. They wanted teachers and schools to be Te Tiriti-led and culturally responsive, and properly resourced for curriculum and pastoral care. The ten-year vision sets up a framework from which collective agreement claims may be developed. The Climate Justice Committee aims to support the Executive to consider the measures by which sustainability may be included in our Vision for Secondary Teaching.

Advocating for incentives and/or resourcing for sustainable practices that support schools/kura as community hubs.

Schools/kura are important to their communities. Beyond the teaching time in and out of classrooms, they are used as hubs for community hui – places to meet, gather, connect, vote, and in times of great need, to shelter. Advocacy for more sustainable practices, such as renewable energy collection and storage, waste recovery, and water catchment, will ensure that these hubs can be more resilient and sustainable into the future.

Providing advice to Executive about the impact of our union's sustainable practices.

While PPTA Te Wehengarua has been making steps towards sustainable practices, we believe that it is crucial to continue to measure the impact of our actions on this whenua and continue to provide advice to Executive. This may include ongoing measurement of carbon footprint and offsetting, waste management and any other relevant factors.