

2025 Environmental Sustainability Mahere

Whatungarongaro te tangata toitū te whenua:
while people come and go the land remains

Environmental sustainability mahere at NZCER

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Our Guiding Principles

Te Tiriti o Waitangi provides a basis for ongoing, power-sharing relationships between tangata whenua and all others who come to Aotearoa. Central to this power-sharing is a commitment to live together in the spirit of honourable relationships and to take the best possible care of each other (NZCER strategy 2021-25).

This mahere sets out how we prioritise environmental sustainability initiatives which honour the reciprocal relationship between people and the environment, reflecting our commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, our responsibilities of kaitiakitanga, and taking the best possible care of each other, and of the whenua. We also acknowledge that environmental sustainability does not stand alone and is inherently connected to social and cultural sustainability.

Environmental sustainability is relevant to Board governance and is implemented by kaimahi through climate change action across our workplace, our wellbeing, and all our work programme and strategic priorities: Decolonising education; Upholding mana Māori, whakamana Māori, Improving equity for ākongā and equity in education; and Influencing the future of education.

We take a strengths-based collective approach to sustainability, and we embody a culture of openness and inclusivity about sustainability. All kaimahi are warmly encouraged to participate in sustainability activities through:

People & Partnerships

- We draw on the leadership of our Green Team rōpū to influence our organisation and foster environmentally sustainable practices within our teams.
- We actively engage kaimahi, encouraging participation and ownership of initiatives and actions in our journey towards becoming a more sustainable organisation.
- We value whanaungatanga and reciprocal partnerships, particularly with groups and suppliers who share our environmental sustainability values.
- We connect with broader sustainability and climate change initiatives and groups, contributing to the collective pursuit of a more sustainable future.

Place

- We engage in local environmental actions that contribute to tānga whenua our local community and the values of mana whenua.
- We hold ourselves accountable for our sustainability commitments as part of our responsibility towards kaitiakitanga and future generations.

Practices

- We advocate for practices aligned with our values, ensuring they are integrated into our mahi and decision-making processes.
- We are committed through our Collective Employment Agreement to actively reduce our environmental footprint and champion sustainable practices within our workplace.
- We contribute to national and global sustainability conversations, particularly in education, by advancing research and sharing best practices.

Projects

- We bring an environmentally sustainable lens to our core work in education research, products, and services, promoting innovation and contributing positively to climate change efforts and climate education.

Actions

The NZCER Green Team Rōpū has developed a set of actions to help us realise our sustainability aspirations.

Gathering data to inform our decisions: Measuring our carbon footprint and other metrics through tools such as Toitu, Workplace Travel Survey and bike garage counts.

Leading by example: Taking a proactive role in introducing and implementing environmentally sustainable practices throughout our organisation and serving as a model for others in education and broader communities.

Fostering innovation: Encouraging and sharing innovative ideas and initiatives that promote sustainability and creative solutions to environmental challenges.

Advocating for change: Providing feedback/input to, or making submissions on matters of local, national, or global environmental concern. Kaimahi membership to Tiakina te Taiao, the TEU Climate Action Network

Building collaborative partnerships: Establishing partnerships with other organisations, including those within our premises and like-minded groups, including local iwi and hapū.

Cultivating a culture of sustainability: Encouraging new kaimahi to embrace the aspirations of the Green Team Rōpū, thereby fostering a culture where sustainability is valued, embraced and actively promoted across the organisation.