



Te Tira Whakamātaki biographies for the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) 7th Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in Bali, Indonesia

Who is Te Tira Whakamātaki?

Te Tira Whakamātaki is a Māori environmental not-for-profit, which is also home to the Māori Biosecurity Network, and the National Iwi Chairs Forum's biosecurity technicians. We aim to protect our natural heritage through the use of indigenous knowledge and solutions.

With te ao Māori (Māori worldview) at the heart of our work we aim to ensure Māori communities, and indigenous peoples, have access to information, advice and training that supports and enhances their environmental aspirations.

We work to reverse the decline of our biodiversity, to restore balance to our natural world, and re-establish a reciprocal relationship with Papatūānuku (Mother Earth) embedded in our ancestor's knowledge of the environment, our indigenous philosophies, and science.

We start from the position that indigenous peoples are the best guardians of not only their own lands but of all nature, and that indigenous knowledge (in our case mātauranga Māori) is a legitimate knowledge system, that is far more complex than science.

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Sponsor & Patron

Hon Ron Stanley Mark, OSRE (Oman), DSPA (MFO)

Ron Mark (Rongowhitiao Maaka) is a former New Zealand politician of the New Zealand First party, and former soldier/officer who served as New Zealand's 40th Minister of Defence between October 2017 and November 2020. Ron is Māori from the tribes of Ngāti Kahungunu, Rangitane, Ngāti Porou, Te Arawa, Ngāti Raukawa, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Whakatohea, Te Ati Awa.

Political career: Ron's political career includes roles as the Mayor of Carterton District, in Aotearoa New Zealand from 2010 to 2014, as a Member of Parliament for the New Zealand First Party from 1996–2008 and 2014-2020 and was a Member of the New Zealand Labour Party from 1990 to 1994. In his six Parliamentary terms he served as the NZ First spokesperson for a number of portfolios including; Police, Law & Order, Local Government, Defence, Veteran's Affairs, Environment, Firearms, Mental Health, Primary Production, Housing, the Parliamentary Service Commission, the Parliamentary Security Committee, the Parliamentary Privileges Committee, the Government Business Committee, & the Legislative Committee.

Military career: At the age of three Ron became a ward of the state, he was raised by six different foster parents until he became a Regular Force Cadet at the age of 16. He graduated into the Royal New Zealand Electrical and Mechanical Engineers as a Vehicle Mechanic serving in numerous RNZEME units and serving with 2/1 Infantry Battalion, 3 and 10 Tpt Regiments and Queens Alexandra's Mounted Rifles. In 1975 he completed the NZ Army Parachute Course earning his Paratrooper Wings. In 1978 he entered the NZ Officer Cadet School, graduating as a 2nd Lieutenant. In 1982 he attended and passed the NZ Special Air Service selection course, and was immediately deployed to Israel Egypt to help establish the newly constituted Multinational Force and Observers (Sinai) as Staff Officer Maintenance G3. Between 1982-83 Ron served thirteen months in the MFO – Sinai completing two back to back tours. In 1985 Ron led the NZ Army and joined the Sultanate of Oman's Land Forces (SOLF). In 1986 he joined the Sultan's Special Force as the Regimental Electrical and Mechanical Engineering Officer, Commanding their Maintenance Support Operations. During this time he was promoted to Major. He returned to Aotearoa New Zealand in 1990. As the Minister of Defence and Minister for Veterans (2017-2020) Ron is widely regarded as having effected the greatest modernisation of the New Zealand Defence Force since the 1960s and the biggest reformation of the New Zealand Veteran's Act since 1954.

Tribal work: Ron has served on a number of tribal entities including, but not limited to roles as the; Trustee and Lead Negotiator for the Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairarapa Tāmaki Nui a Rua Treaty (of Waitangi) Settlement Trust; Trustee of the Paparua Māori Charitable Trust (youth development); Deputy Chairman of the Wairarapa Moana Trust (education); Deputy Chairman of the Wairarapa Moana Incorporation (dairy, sheep, beef & forestry); Deputy Chairman of the Pouakani No2 Trust (farming sheep, beef and dairy) ; Deputy Chairman of the Mangakino Township Incorporation (forestry

and residential property); Advisory Trustee of the Makirikiri Māori Aggregated Lands Trust; Advisory Trustee of the Horowhenua Māori Land Trust; and CEO of the Federation of Māori Authorities. Ron, whose Māori nae is Rongowhitiao Maaka is a direct descendent of the paramount Chief of Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairarapa, Tawhao Tawhirimatea Ngatuere and the famous Raukawa and Te Arawa Chief Rongowhitiao Arekatera Te Wera Te Puni Maaka.

Charitable and other work: Ron is currently working as a consultant for Bridgewest (US), Leonardo Helicopters (UK) and has become involved in working with Humanity New Zealand and the UK Evangelist group the Great Commission Society, organising Humanitarian aid and assistance for the people of Ukraine. He is also the Chairman of the Wings Over Wairarapa Charitable Trust and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Wings Over Wairarapa Limited. He is a mentor of foster children through L'Oréal NZ's 'Face Your Future' programme and supports and mentors foster parents and children through Caring Families Aotearoa (formally Foster Kids NZ).

Awards: New Zealand Operational Service Medal; New Zealand General Service Medal (Sinai); New Zealand Defence Service Medal; Multinational Force & Observers Distinguished Service for Peace Award; Multinational Force & Observers Service Medal and Bar; Order of the Special Royal Emblem Oman; the Oman Peace Medal; and the Glorious Fifteenth National Day Medal – Oman.



Co-Founder, Trustee and CEO (Pouarahi)

Melanie Mark-Shadbolt

Melanie Mark-Shadbolt (Ngāti Kahungunu, Rangitane, Ngāti Porou, Te Arawa, Ngāti Raukawa, Tūwharetoa, Whakatohea, Te Ati Awa), is an indigenous environmental advocate who is a co-founder and the CEO of Te Tira Whakamātaki, a Māori environmental not-for-profit and home of the Māori biosecurity network. She is also the Deputy Secretary Māori Rights & Interests at the Ministry for the Environment.

Melanie specialises in understanding and applying mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge) to biosecurity and biodiversity issues. She has a specific interest in decolonising ideologies of conservation and restoration in order to address injustices and harm caused to indigenous peoples and our planet. Her work has covered research in stakeholder values, attitudes, and behaviours; social acceptability of environmental management practices and risk communication; the wider human dimensions of environmental health; and community disaster responses and preparedness.

Melanie won the Public Policy award at the Westpac Women of Influence Awards in 2021, and was a finalist in the Innovation, Science & Health category at the 2019 Westpac Women of Influence Awards. Under Melanie's leadership the Ministry for the Environment won the 2021 Diversity Works - Mātauranga Māori Award and was a finalist in the Māori Crown Relationships section of the Governments Spirit of Service Awards in 2021. Alongside her Te Tira Whakamātaki team she has won a number of biosecurity awards including the inaugural Dave Galloway Innovation Award from the NZ Biosecurity Institute in 2016, the inaugural Māori Biosecurity Award from the Ministry of Primary Industries in 2017, and Science Excellence Awards at the NZ Biosecurity Awards in 2018 and 2019.

Melanie currently serves on the boards of; the Resilience to Nature's Challenges National Science Challenge, Project Crimson and Tāpui Aotearoa; the B3 Better Border Biosecurity's Collaboration Council; Kauri Dieback & Myrtle Rust Knowledge Advisory Group; Wallaby eradication governance group; Fit for a Better World Science Accelerator Bundle; Predator Free 2050 Leadership and Kaitiakitanga working groups; as well as a number of advisory panels / kāhui for research programmes.

Melanie has served on a number of other boards and advisory groups including; the Prime Ministers Chief Science Advisors Plastics Panel; the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinets Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Terrorist Attack on Christchurch Masjidain academic outreach group; the 2020 & 2018 International Indigenous Research Conference organising committees; and a number of Biosecurity 2025 working groups and incursion governance/science groups; and until June 2021 she was the Kaihautū Ngātahi Director Māori of New Zealand's Biological Heritage National Science Challenge.

Melanie is dedicated to working with organisations who are committed to meeting their Treaty responsibilities and addressing indigenous rights and racial equity.



Chief Scientist (Kaitohutohu Mātanga Pūtaiao Matua)

Associate Professor Dr Simon Lambert

Simon is from Aotearoa New Zealand and is a member of the Tūhoe and Ngāti Ruapani tribes. He is an Associate Professor at the University of Saskatchewan in Canada, and acts as the Chief Scientist for Te Tira Whakamātaki.

His doctoral research was on small-scale Māori horticulture and he was awarded his PhD in 2008 from Lincoln University. Prior to that he was awarded a MA (Hons) degree from the University of Canterbury after researching the assessment of environmental vulnerability in the Pacific.

Following the 2011 earthquakes in Christchurch, Simon's research has focused on disaster risk reduction and emergency management with Indigenous communities with particular interest in urban Indigenous groups. He has been collaborating with international Indigenous colleagues to promote Indigenous voices at the UN Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction. He is a member of the Advisory Board for the Pan-American-Health Organization's Indigenous Knowledge and Disaster Risk Reduction network, and his other research interests included biosecurity, climate change, biodiversity and stakeholder values, attitudes and behaviours.

Simon has taught a variety of courses in Indigenous environmental management and development including Aboriginal Development, International Indigenous Disaster Risk Reduction at the University of Saskatchewan.



Policy & Research Analyst (Kaitātari Rangahau me ngā Kaupapahere)

Phoebe Fordyce

Kia ora, my name is Phoebe Fordyce, and I am a researcher and postgrad student from Aotearoa New Zealand.

I whakapapa/descend from Māori tribes/iwi Ngāti Raukawa ki te tonga. I am working as a research and policy analyst for Te Tira Whakamātaki (TTW), home of the Māori biosecurity network. I am also finishing up my doctoral thesis in History at the University of Canterbury.

My work for TTW involves assisting with research/policy projects and providing consulting services on environmental issues with an Indigenous worldview. This has included helping to put together submissions on government policy, and creating guidance on research methodologies, kaupapa, and ethics for our team and communities of interest. My thesis is on the outreach work of Māori and Pākehā women in the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) in New Zealand between 1892 and 1918. I also studied History for my undergraduate and Honours degrees at the University of Canterbury.

I'm looking forward to meeting everyone and learning about what other groups are doing in this space!



Policy & Research Analyst (Kaitātari Rangahau me ngā Kaupapahere)

Marcus-Rongowhitiao Te Puni Shadbolt

Kia ora, my name is Marcus-Rongowhitiao Shadbolt, and I am an indigenous researcher and postgrad student from Aotearoa New Zealand.

I whakapapa/descend from Māori tribes/iwi Te Arawa, Ngāti Kahungunu, Rangitane, Ngāti Porou, Whakatohea, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Te Ati Awa, Ngāti Raukawa and Ngāi Tahu. I am working as a research and policy analyst for Te Tira Whakamātaki (TTW), home of the Māori biosecurity network. I am also finishing my master's thesis at the University of Canterbury in seed collection and storage.

My work for TTW involves assisting with research/policy projects and providing consulting services on environmental issues with an Indigenous worldview. Specifically, this has included creating protection plans for wildfire responses in small communities, recording indigenous names and stories related to local flora, and working across the pest management space, all of which focuses on helping and assisting Indigenous communities in the science and environmental risk/hazard space. My undergraduate degree was in Biological Sciences and Philosophy at the University of Canterbury, and I have a Postgraduate Diploma in Applied Sciences from Lincoln University.

This conference provides an exciting opportunity for me as a young indigenous researcher to meet other indigenous researchers and groups from around the world doing similar work.