

A photograph of a forest scene with several children in the foreground. The children are wearing blue shirts and caps, and are looking towards a large, textured tree trunk. The forest is lush with green ferns and other vegetation. The text is overlaid on the upper part of the image.

New Zealand Association for
Environmental Education

Annual Review

For the period 1 July 2024
to 30 June 2025

Welcome from the Chairs

Tuia ki te rangi

Tuia ki te whenua

Tuia ki te moana

Tuia te here tangata

Ka rongo te pō, Ka rongo te ao

Tihei Mauri Ora

Tēnā tātou katoa

As we write this, we are coming to the end of the school year and thinking “what a year it’s been!” and we’re sure that many of you are feeling the same. When casting back to NZAEE’s 2024–25 reporting year, it is very much a year of two halves:

In July 2024 we had a Networks of Expertise (NEX) contract with the Ministry of Education expiring on 30 September. This meant our focus was firmly on delivering our online national conference in October 2024, ahead of an uncertain future. The conference was a highlight of the year with a wide range of topics and speakers that set the direction for our 2025 work programme.

When our NEX contract was extended to December 2025 it allowed us to plan ahead, with confidence, supporting contractors and funding for webinars, local professional learning events and stories for our website. Our webinars this year centred rangatahi voices and profiled educators deepening their connection with te taiao. We also launched a Climate Change Education Community of Practice, an online space for educators from across the motu to connect, share and learn together.

Our Executive team gathered kanohi-ki-te-kanohi in Tāmaki Makaurau in May, focusing on Te Tiriti partnerships and strategy, ensuring that our mahi continues to reflect our commitment to equity and cultural responsiveness.

We also undertook a more detailed evaluation programme, led by Thea DePetris, as part of our NEX contract extension. The evaluation project included an online survey in May 2025 and focus group sessions with classroom teachers and environmental educators. A huge mihi to everyone who contributed to these activities, we look forward to sharing the full report in early 2026.

Welcome from the Chairs

In addition to delivering quality professional learning and development, much of our attention has been on responding to the continued changes in education across Aotearoa. Our deepest thanks to Becky McCormack, our Learning and Content Curator, who has navigated the many announcements, proposed changes and mapped the implications for environmental education.

We acknowledge how difficult the current climate is for teachers, and for the environmental sector.

NZAEe remains committed to ensuring that young people across all curriculum areas and stages of learning have access to engaging, relevant, and future-focused education.

Other key achievements include our new membership framework, presented and approved at the AGM in November 2024, and successfully rolled out this year. Thank you for your feedback and continued support during this transition, and to Sarah Mills, our Networking Coordinator, for managing these changes so smoothly. Additional contractor support this year has enabled us to reconnect with local groups (formerly branches), providing both funding and guidance for local professional learning.

Special thanks:

We farewellled Chris Eames from the National Executive in 2024 and are very pleased that he continues to contribute through our Advocacy subcommittee. Chris has long been a pillar of NZAEe serving as Chair, Treasurer and championing advocacy for environmental education. We also farewell Annie McDonald who served as Co-Chair, bringing rigor, warmth and energy to the team. Finally, our heartfelt thanks to Debbie Courtney, who stood down as administrator in February 2025. Ka nui te mihi ki a koutou katoa.

Looking ahead, we're especially excited to be planning our 2026 National Conference as an 'in person' event, for the first time in 8 years! There remains some uncertainty around Ministry of Education funding for 2026. However, our commitment to the sector remains steadfast. As a membership-based organisation representing environmental education across Aotearoa, we will continue to build capability through our website and webinars, support local groups, and provide leadership and advocacy for the sector.

Ngā manaakitanga

Erana Whaiapu and Paul Murray
November 2025



NZAEE's Strategic Focus



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

We have described our wider network, or collaborators, as:
A community of educators, with ākonga at the heart of our mahi.

**Our areas of focus that will have the most impact
for our community of educators are:**

CAPABILITY BUILDING

LOCAL SUPPORT

**SECTOR CONNECTION
AND LEADERSHIP**

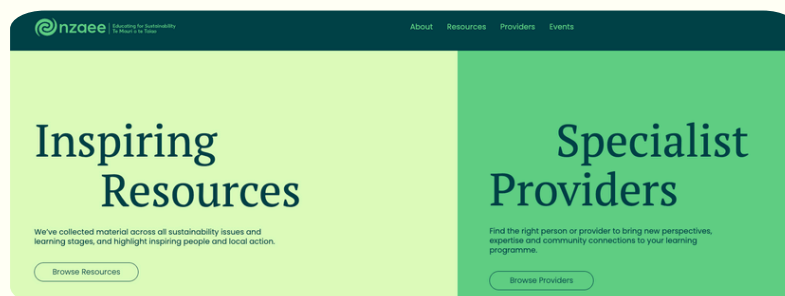
Capability Building

We will support and highlight best practice research and resources, and provide high quality PLD and training in ways that are accessible for our community of educators.

This annual review coincides with NZAEE nearing the end of a 3 ½ year contract with the Ministry of Education through the Networks of Expertise (NEX). The NEX programme provides funding to subject associations to deliver professional learning and support for educators and schools. This funding has enabled us to improve both the depth and breadth of support we provide in our Capability Building and Local Support impact areas.

In this financial year we have continued to focus on building capability through our website resources and stories, webinars and newsletters. We also hosted our 2024 national conference online in the October holidays and established a new community of practice focused on climate change education in 2025.

NZAEE Website



Our website is a central place to find support for environmental education, including a wide range of resources, a catalogue of environmental education providers, events and stories.

Our Learning and Content Curator, Becky McCormack, is an experienced educator who regularly updates the website and works with a range of people to share diverse stories.

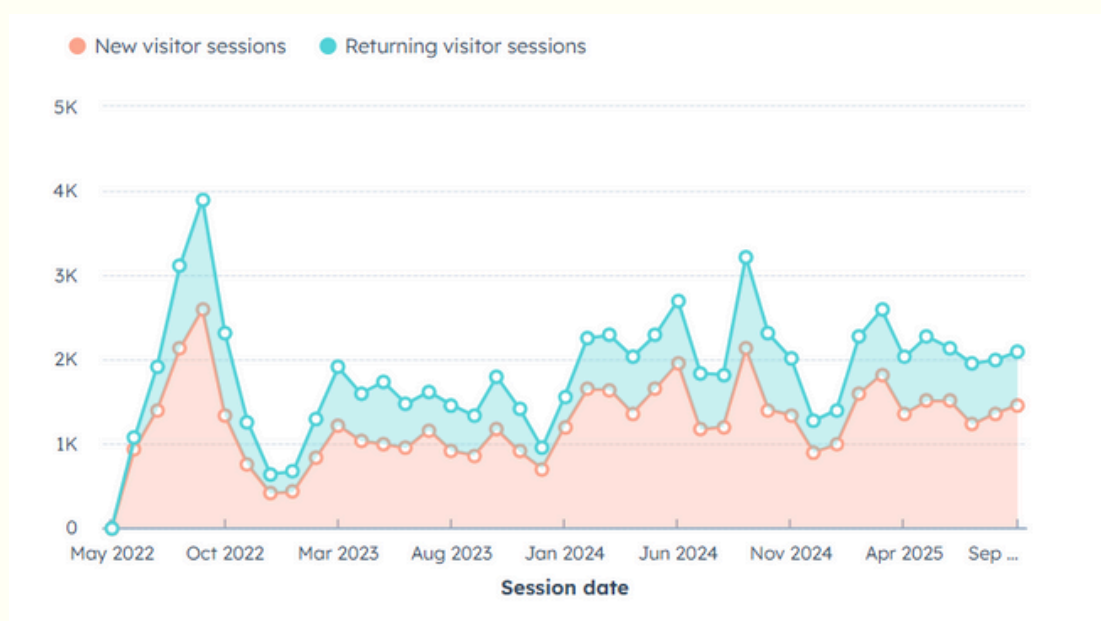
Since our new website launched in May 2022 we have seen steady growth in new users, while maintaining engagement with regular users.

The most popular teaching resources have continued to be related to climate change education, mātauranga Māori and seasonal, place-based learning. Our Spotlight collections and stories are always popular and regularly feature in our top ten most viewed pages.

NZAAEE Website

The 2024 – 2025 financial year has seen a slight increase overall in website users (20,000) compared to the previous year (16,000), with peaks related to seasonal newsletters and webinars. Our national conferences in Oct 2022 and Oct 2024 led to peaks in user numbers and there is an expected drop in numbers over the summer holidays each year.

NZAAEE Website Users May 2022 - Oct 2025



In this reporting period we had **20,000 users** with an average engagement time of 1 min 11 secs.

Resources landing page: 3,000 views **Resource catalogue: 1,800 views**
Providers catalogue: 1,800 views **Events: 2,000 views**

Popular Spotlight articles have included our maths curriculum series, along with seasonal collections related to Seaweed, Matariki and nature connection.

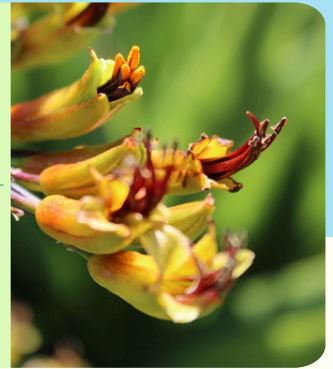
We now have a total of **183 classroom resources** in our catalogue, **62 professional learning resources** and **37 spotlights**, which include collections and stories.

“I think the resources are really good, whether for unit plans or simply ideas that you can pick bits out of. It is all very helpful for planning.”

2024 Conference

MANAWA TAIAO MANAWA ORA

Sharing hope and action



Our online conference in October 2024 provided an inspiring and accessible way for educators to connect, learn and share ideas.

Manawa Taiao, Manawa Ora: Sharing hope and action was the guiding theme for our online national conference in 2024. The event included inspiring keynotes, concurrent workshops and opportunities to discuss relevant issues, research and teaching resources. We welcomed live attendees from across every region, including classroom teachers, environmental education providers, academics and representatives from community and environmental organisations.

250 Registrations

140 Live attendees

2 keynotes

16 concurrent sessions

Highlighting diverse perspectives from teachers, tangata whenua, rangatahi, research and community.

“As a teacher it is important to be able to network and gather ideas from experts and others in the same situation as yourself. The workshops were relevant and interesting.”

Feedback collected after the conference (survey size = 63) found that:

88% found the conference relevant or very relevant to their work

84% were likely or very likely to incorporate ideas and learning into their work

Many participants valued the focus on te ao Māori across keynotes, workshops and the overall conference structure.

“I always love the online conferences as they are really energising and inspiring and provide a great opportunity to connect with the website.”

17 recorded sessions

available after the conference

203 video views

Webinars



We host free webinars throughout the year, with a range of topics and guest speakers including teachers and providers.

All of our webinars are recorded and made available in our Professional Learning catalogue so that educators can access the content when it suits them. Across Term Four 2024 to Term Two 2025 we offered six webinars.

Webinar	Registered	Attended Live	Video Views
Rangatahi and da Taiao Tyra Begbie and Quack Pirihi (Dec 2024)	80	32	48
Nature Connection for Aotearoa Educators (March) Sharlene Maoate-Davis, Sarah Hopkinson, Thea DePetris	69	32	31
Nature Connection in Early Childhood (March) Gwenda Jones and Ramona Millen	24	9	45
Mate Whenua, Mate Tangata (May) Part One: Orini Rokx-Taratu and Santino Morehu Part Two: Rangatahi from Future Unity and Papa Taiao	48	17 12	46 36
Nature Connection in Primary and Intermediate (June) Waikato Enviroschools facilitators and schools	51	18	53
TOTALS	272	120	259

Our webinars included a focus on elevating and sharing rangatahi voice as part of three webinars during this period, including a collaboration with Papa Taiao and Future Unity during Youth Week in May 2025.

We also had a Nature Connection focus, which connected with our Spotlight article [Nature Connection for Aotearoa Educators](#). This collection provides further reading, videos and suggestions for professional learning and classroom resources.

“The support offered is fabulous. I love getting my **newsletter** and seeing what **webinars** are on offer next. You are so good at choosing things that are topical and relevant to curriculum changes and working with what teachers actually need.”

Newsletters:

Seasonal & Curriculum



Our termly newsletters highlight new resources and seasonal learning ideas.

These are sent just before the start of each school term and we receive a lot of positive feedback about how useful they are, for both teachers and environmental educators.

Our newsletter subscriber numbers have grown steadily, with increases related to our conference and webinars. The numbers below show an overview of the increase and engagement levels, but note they do not capture the number of teachers who are also forwarded the email by our Provider members, which would increase the total reach.

Date	Delivered to	Open Rate	Click-Through Rate
2024 Term 3 July	985	49% 475 people	28% 133 people
2024 Term 4 Oct	973	48% 467 people	25% 115 people
2025 Term 1 Jan	1,045	42% 438 people	30% 118 people
2025 Term 2 April	1,087	23% 250 people	51% 127 people
2025 Term 3 July	1,044	42% 440 people	28% 125 people

“The newsletters are great for seeing examples of what other people are doing in other areas and what’s working for people. The whole seasonal alignment is wonderful too.”

Curriculum Updates

We have been closely tracking the curriculum and assessment changes and have a specific newsletter to provide interested educators with updates ([sign up here](#)). Previous newsletters can be found in our **News and Publications** section.

We have focused on how the changes might impact or support environmental education and have worked with the Advocacy subcommittee to share submission guidance with educators.

These newsletters are sent to about 90 people and have high engagement and open rates.

Community of Practice

Climate Change Education



In 2025 we hosted our second online Community of Practice with a focus on building climate literacy and confidence for Aotearoa educators.

Following our pilot Community of Practice in 2023 focused on Nature Connection, this year we invited educators with an interest in climate change education to join our group, which was facilitated by Becky McCormack (NZAEE) and Sian Carvell (Future Curious).

Our core group of 22 educators met regularly online to learn and discuss.

Working online enabled the group to include teachers and environmental educators from across the motu, with 12 different cities or towns represented. Everyone works directly with either students or teachers to support the delivery of climate change education in authentic contexts that relate to Aotearoa and focus on hope and action through empowering young people.

Sessions included guest speakers and discussions covering a range of ideas including:

Climate literacy, Te Tiriti o Waitangi, Indigenous worldviews, Wellbeing and nature connection, Rights of children and young people, CCE models and research, Case studies and Resources, and advice from young climate leaders.

“With regards to my work, working with other teachers [...] being braver to discuss climate literacy and share resources supporting the thoughtful inclusion of mātauranga in school programmes.”

Climate Change Learning Programme

NZAEE continues to host the **Climate Change Learning Programme** on our website and we now ask teachers to complete a short registration process to access the resources. This continues to allow free access to the programme, while helping us gain insights that can be used to provide further support including targeted professional learning.

There are currently about **160 teachers from about 120 schools** who have access to the programme and the resource page continues to receive hundreds of views each month.

Local Support

We will grow and strengthen local connections for mutual learning, understanding and support.

NZAEЕ provides funding and support to help local initiatives including events and collaborative groups.

With our latest NEX contract extension we were able to create a work plan for 2025 that included specific funding allocated to in-person professional learning for educators across the motu. This funding certainty allowed us to contract Sarah Mills as our Networking Coordinator, bringing much needed logistics and event planning support. We reached out to experienced and established groups to offer part or full funding for a range of inspiring events. Some of these took place within this reporting period (6 locations with 95 educators), while many others were in Terms 3 and 4, 2025.

Local Event Overview for October 2024 – November 2025:

480 Educators
22 Events across 12 Locations

This year we prioritised using our NEX funding, but local groups can also access capitation funding (30% of membership fees) to help support local events. In the 2024/25 year we started trialing a contestable fund that groups across the motu can apply for. Projects need to align with the NZAEЕ strategic objectives and may include professional learning and development, networking events, community events, resource development, and building local collaboration. This process will continue into 2026 with information sent out in our email updates at the start of the year.



Sector Connection and Leadership

We will represent the Environmental Education sector, providing leadership, support, and by sharing knowledge and expertise with more New Zealanders.

New Membership structure roll out

Following member endorsement at the November 2024 AGM, NZAEE commenced the transition to a new tiered membership structure (see page 12 for final structure). The updated framework provides clearer distinctions between membership categories, pricing, and benefits, ensuring greater transparency and long-term sustainability for the organisation.

The transition process has been guided by a 12-month implementation plan designed to ensure clear communication, minimal disruption, and strong member support. Key activities included early planning and testing, targeted communications aligned with renewal dates, and the development of updated process that work to explain the changes. Administrative systems, including database system HubSpot and financials via Xero, were reconfigured to streamline renewals and invoicing within the new structure.

As at November 2025, nearly half of all members have transitioned to the new system, with completion expected by June 2026. Member feedback to date has been positive, highlighting the clarity and ease of the process, and the improved alignment of membership options with levels of engagement. NZAEE acknowledges and thanks all members for their cooperation and support throughout this transition.

“I see NZAEE's role as holding space and pushing action. Important role as an impartial "umbrella" which can help strengthen local groups through support and professionalism.” - NZAEE member

Confirmed New Membership Structure as of July 2025

Following the 2024 membership review, NZAEE introduced a new tiered membership structure to provide clearer categories, pricing, and benefits. The updated framework creates a more transparent, equitable, and sustainable model that better reflects the needs of members and supports future growth.

Membership Type	Contacts registered	Conference discounts	Annual cost
SUPPORTER MEMBER	<i>Basic membership for individuals: receive member news and conference discount</i>		
Students, retirees, individuals	1	1	\$60
Like minded business or industry peers	1	1	\$60
EDUCATOR MEMBER	<i>Schools: supporting the sector / conference discount Providers: detailed profile on website and promotion of your work through stories and newsletters</i>		
Teacher or school/centre	1	All staff	\$60
Providers: 1 to 3 educators/FTE staff	3	3	\$120
Providers: 4 to 6 educators/FTE staff	6	6	\$240
Providers: 7 or more educators/FTE staff	10	10	\$300
PARTNER MEMBER	<i>We value partnering with organisations who share our sector leadership goals and have aligned kaupapa.</i>		
Partner: small	10	10	\$420
Partner: Medium	15	15	\$600
Partner: Large	20	20	\$900

Advocacy

We engage with a range of kaupapa that have an impact on environmental education, including submissions and wider advocacy for educators.

Our Advocacy Subcommittee includes Cami Carty-Melis, Jocelyn Papprell, Chris Eames, Katrine Pringle and Almaz Berenike Bergk, with contractor support from Becky McCormack.

Our work this year has mostly involved external advocacy, with a key role in elevating the voice of environmental education in Aotearoa New Zealand. We have sent advice and templates to members and submitted on a number of consultations including:

- Maths curriculum
- English curriculum
- Education and Training Act Amendment Bill
- Proposal to replace NCEA
- Regulatory Standards Bill
- Inquiry into Climate Adaptation

We have also continued to support the [Aotearoa Climate Education Coalition](#) in their work, alongside other subject associations who we align strongly with, such as Education Outdoors New Zealand.

We continue to work with international partners including the Australian Association for Environmental Education, including giving feedback on [Catching the Wave](#): Australian and Aotearoa NZ educators' perceptions of environmental and sustainability education practices.

You can find copies of our past submissions and member newsletters in the [News and Publications](#) section of our website.



NZAEE National Executive 2024-25

The progress in the reporting period would not have been achievable without the time and expertise of our appointed National Executive members and the experts that we have been able to contract.

National Executive (elected and appointed) in November 2024:

Erana Whaiapu	Co-Chair
Paul Murray	Co-Chair
Kim Tabrum	Treasurer
Chris Montgomerie	Secretary
Cami Carty-Melis	
Annie McDonald	
Katrine Pringle	
Almaz Berenike Bergk	

Contractors to NZAEE:

Becky McCormack	Learning and Content Curator
Sarah Mills	Networking Coordinator and Administration
Thea DePetrus	Evaluation Lead

ORGANISATION DETAILS:

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