



RESTORING
BALANCE
COLLABORATIVE

For the Wellbeing of Humanity & the Environment

Strategic Plan 2025-2028



Our journey began with water.

Water is the living source, the lifeblood of all ecosystems, flowing through rivers and streams, forming lakes and oceans. We are water; it connects us. Water is sacred.



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Remembering Balance Into Being

On behalf of the Restoring Balance Collaborative, I invite you to step into a written space of thought that is stewarded by Indigenous peoples. Through our work, we are not just creating change; we are remembering it into being – reactivating ways of knowing meant to ensure our collective survival and flourishing.

Guided by the Māori proverb, *Ā Mua, i Muri ō Kōrero* – “Walking Backwards into the Future”, this strategic plan reflects a process of looking back to understand our future directions. The [Advisory Council and Project Team](#) participated in a series of virtual meetings that culminated in March 2025 when we met in person at Hairini Marae in Tauranga Moana, Aotearoa (New Zealand). Together, we distilled who we are, the values that guide us, and defined the potentiality that exists when we work together - head, heart, hands. You’ll find the distillation reflected in this plan.

Our Collaborative reflects a living ecosystem of committed individuals seeking reinforce systems of healing and self-determined wellbeing through Indigenous stewardship practices. We invite you to learn more about how we are leading change for collective impact.

By entering this space with the turn of the page, you are agreeing to uphold the values needed to restore balance - respect, reciprocity, relational accountability and collective will.

(Photo Credit: With abundant gratitude, we acknowledge Ngāi te Ahi hapu in Tauranga Moana for allowing us to remember the changes we are creating into being at Hairini Marae. You welcomed us, nurtured us and connected us with the land and waters of your beautiful homelands.





**A global learning space for Indigenous land and water stewards
who are actively leading systems change in our communities.**



About the Collaborative

The Restoring Balance Collaborative (Collaborative) is dedicated to advancing Indigenous-led systems transformation to meaningfully address critical responses to climate challenges and their health impacts.



Launched in 2023, the Collaborative is a global stewardship community that connects people and ideas. It expands and strengthens local, regional, and national networks by creating a global learning space to innovate and generate solutions in a collaborative environment. Over 40 Indigenous Nations, organizations, and communities across Turtle Island, Aotearoa (New Zealand), Australia, and the Pacific are represented in our practice community.

The Collaborative is led by a [team of Indigenous thought partners and practitioners](#) who serve as the backbone of the organization. This coordinating body carries the work forward at the guidance of its [international Advisory Council](#) to provide a global learning space, or 'hub', for people to:

- Generate and explore ideas in a collaborative environment.
- Solve challenging problems through dialogue and exchange.
- Connect with people who share similar aspirations.
- Create new, mutually beneficial opportunities to network.
- Contribute individual strengths to support collective impact.



Our Vision

Restoring Balance for the Wellbeing of Humanity and the Environment

Our Purpose

Advancing Indigenous-led systems change to meaningfully address climate challenges and their health impacts.

Our Values

Our principles and values underpin the Collaborative in all its activities as we seek to restore balance for us all:

Self-Determination

Respect Indigenous peoples' right to determine their future.

Indigenous Wisdom

Prioritize local knowledge, values, and practices.

Relational Accountability

Nurture relationships built on mutual respect and cooperation.

Collective Will

Uphold shared aspirations through dedication and perseverance.

Guardianship

Protect and care for the well-being of humanity and the earth.

The concept of restoring balance is rooted in Indigenous ways of knowing and living, which calls for sustainable and systemic change to reverse the climate crisis and ensure an abundant future.



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Our Purpose and Goals

Our Purpose

Advance Indigenous-led systems change to meaningfully address climate challenges and their health impacts.

Goal I

Strengthen ecosystem resiliency by realigning systems, values, and practices with Indigenous ecological stewardship.

Goal II

Reinforce systems of healing and self-determined wellbeing through Indigenous steward practices.



“Indigenous resilience for a sustainable environment – the diversity that sits amongst the collective group and shared experiences – it all has value – it is a recognition of Indigenous values and laws.” - Collaborative Member



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Systems thinking is inherently Indigenous.

It is rooted in place-based knowledge and emphasizes relationality and the Interconnectedness between humans and the natural world.

The colonial systems, structures and practices that are negatively impacting the land and the people are the SAME. Rapid changes in climate are disrupting social, cultural, political, and environmental systems at every level—from local to global—placing our collective wellbeing at risk. Indigenous Peoples' relational approaches are needed to re-establish sustainable solutions to the climate crisis. Now is the time to restore balance and reinforce systems of healing and self-determined wellbeing through Indigenous stewardship practices



Challenges at the Interface

Systemic and institutional barriers severely limit Indigenous peoples' ability to sustain and transmit traditional knowledge and practices.

Failure to recognize sovereignty

Ongoing impacts of colonization

Lack of meaningful collaboration Dismissiveness

Differential investments

Our Ripple Effect

Building a Practice Community for Collective Impact

Most modern threats to climate are due to human actions. Unfortunately, climate solutions rarely focus on changing the systems that perpetuate the values, perceptions and behaviors that contribute to the problem. To create change, we need to work together to find common ground and better align existing systems with an Indigenous worldview and knowledge that are tied to place.

By uplifting Indigenous agency to lead systems change at the local level, we raise awareness and inspire people to change in a way that ripples out beyond our local community and contexts to surrounding and distant ones, ultimately leading to global impact.



First Ripple: Uplift Indigenous Agency

Build the will, motivation, and capacity to enact systems change based on Indigenous values.

Second Ripple: Share + Learn Together

Increase awareness, understanding, and commitment to systems change.

Third Ripple: Amplify Indigenous Solutions

Broadcast Indigenous-led solutions, shaping the terrain and changing mindsets about what is possible.



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Uplift Indigenous Agency

The Collaborative is an Indigenous-led space for co-learning, abundant sharing and strategizing. Sharing diverse knowledge systems generates an enriched understanding of the issues. This leads to innovative ideas and solutions, and supports decision-making at multiple levels.

To uplift Indigenous agency, we:

- **Connect people** who might not otherwise have the opportunity to interact.
- **Introduce collaborative processes** to encourage the free flow of ideas and exchange.
- **Create collaborative partnerships** to address shared aspirations.
- **Leverage resources**, training, and materials to take the work to the next level.



Share + Learn Together

Indigenous-led spaces shift power dynamics and facilitate opportunities to create ethical space to engage non-Indigenous allies within an Indigenous context, worldview, and values. Ethical spaces are created to enable dialogue and intercultural exchange that inspires and builds commitment to enact change.

To share and learn together, we:

- Support **innovative approaches** to address health and environmental vulnerabilities.
- Convene **gatherings** to discuss and explore strategic topics.
- **Enable dialogue** to explore possibilities and solve challenging problems.





Amplify Indigenous Solutions

We seek to recenter the public discourse and change mindsets about what's possible. We do this by providing a platform to amplify Indigenous voices and solutions. Coming together as a global community broadens our understanding of the issues, helps us to think differently and sparks innovation.

To amplify Indigenous solutions, we:

- Seed and sow **Indigenous storytelling** to inspire and recenter the public discourse.
- **Utilize multi-media** to create awareness and increase representation of Indigenous perspectives on health equity and climate.
- Convene **global gatherings** highlighting Indigenous solutions and impactful practices.
- **Reinforce Indigenous worldviews and values** focused on relationship, accountability and generational impact.



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Advancing Indigenous-led Systems Transformation

Ripple Effect	UPLIFT INDIGENOUS AGENCY		SHARE & LEARN TOGETHER		AMPLIFY INDIGENOUS SOLUTIONS
Priorities	Build the will, motivation, and capacity to enact change.	Increase awareness, understanding, and commitment to systems change.	Broadcast Indigenous-led solutions to inspire and change mindsets.	Synchronize efforts to build sustainability.	
Strategies	Grow an Indigenous practice community to facilitate collective impact. Build capacity (knowledge, skills and resources) of stewards to implement and measure systems change. Create opportunities for place-based learning experiences and exchange. Increase access to culturally and contextually relevant tools, resources, training and technical assistance for Indigenous stewards.	Create ethical, intercultural learning spaces through global webinars, virtual roundtables, and relational convenings. Utilize an Indigenous framework for systems change to create structural shifts in policy, law and resourcing. Provide a space for Collaborative members to share their stories and impact with others. Prepare emerging leaders who are advancing community-based stewardship efforts.	Build narrative power through multimedia storytelling. Nurture strategic alliances to forge new pathways for story sharing with a broad array of audiences. Provide a platform for sharing Indigenous-led solutions occurring globally. Recenter the public discourse on climate solutions to emphasize the power of relationships, connection, and accountability.	Grow funding opportunities to seed and grow Collaborative initiatives. Evaluate impact guided by Indigenous methodologies and change theory for systems transformation. Resource a dynamic project team to provide backbone support and strengthen Collaborative impact. Identify and acquire the technological resources to support and grow the network	

**“When we speak all together,
we are more powerful. Future
generations will benefit.”**

- Collaborative Member



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Give Rise

**Your generous contribution
plays a vital role...**

Build Capacity for Systems Change

Grow funding opportunities to seed + grow Collaborative initiatives + leadership development.

Invest in Emerging Leaders

Create place-based learning experiences to cultivate and prepare the next generation.

Support a Global Storytelling Strategy

Nurture strategic alliances to recenter public discourse on climate on relationships, connection and accountability.

Strengthen Internal Capacity & Sustainability

Resource a dynamic project team to provide backbone support.

Make a
donation





Connect with us!

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