



# Energy and Innovation Wānanga

*Turning strategy into action ... an invitation to shape our future*

**23-24 May 2023**

**Ascot Park Hotel**

**Invercargill**

**Presenters**

# Meet our MCs

## Dr Michael (Mike) Stevens



Mike is a Ngāi Tahu historian who grew up in Bluff. He and his whānau are stalwarts of the annual tītī (muttonbird) harvest and are well-known for maintaining he mahi pōhā: kelp receptacles which hold preserved tītī.

Mike has published widely on Ngāi Tahu history, in recent years through his work with the Ngāi Tahu Archive at Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu.

Long involved with Te Rau Aroha Marae and Te Rūnaka o Awarua, he is the Alternate Representative for the latter to Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu.

## Jo Brand



Jo oversees the Education portfolio at Hokonui Rūnanga and brings a diverse experience range to the role.

Born in Hokonui and raised in the Catlins, Jo also spent several decades working in several NZ provinces and overseas.

Prior to returning to Murihiku, Jo worked within the FMCG industry with brands such as YUM, KFC, Starbucks and Pizza Hut within operations and human resources.

Jo has also studied Psychology and Communication whilst enjoying representing Murihiku & Otakau in rugby.

# Meet our Hosts

## Terry Nicholas



Terry is the Manager of Hokonui Rūnanga and the Programme Director for Murihiku Regeneration. Terry has been involved with Hokonui Rūnanga and has been the Hokonui Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu representative since January 1999. His special interest is building succession out of settlement - "mo tatou, a, mo ka uri a muri ake nei". Terry is also a member of the Just Transition oversight group, to ensure the rights and interests of Murihiku hapū are being represented.

Terry works tirelessly to protect and enhance spiritual, cultural, organisational, educational and economic aspirations of Hokonui Rūnanga and Murihiku Regeneration.

## Mayor Nobby Clark



Nobby Clark became Mayor of Invercargill City in 2022, after joining the council in 2019 and serving as Deputy Mayor from 2020.

Nelson-born, Nobby moved to Auckland after leaving school and was a Vietnam veteran by the time he arrived in Invercargill in 1975 to work in public service jobs.

He would later say that 20 years in the Navy, Prison Service and Department of Labour had given him a background in discipline and a moralistic outlook, and 14 years in the social services brought a more humane perspective on the disadvantaged in the community.

# Keynote Speakers

## Tā Tipene O'Regan



Tipene was born to his Ngāi Tahu mother, Rena Ruiha O'Regan (nee Bradshaw) in Wellington in 1939. His father was Rolland O'Regan, a surgeon of West Coast Irish descent. His mother had been born at Kōpūtai but raised in Awarua (Bluff).

Tipene's personal scholarly interest is largely in traditional history and ethnology of Ngāi Tahu and Te Waipounamu. As well he has a major academic interest in general New Zealand history and the Māori political economy. Tipene has published and lectured extensively over many years on Ngāi Tahu traditional history, Polynesian migration, Treaty issues and the evolution of biculturalism.

## Hon Dr Megan Woods



Hon Megan Woods is a Christchurch local and has been the Member of Parliament for Wigram since 2011.

Megan was sworn in as a Minister of the Crown following the 2017 election with portfolio responsibilities including Housing, Energy and Resources, Research, Science and Innovation, and Associate Finance.

Megan enjoys her diverse set of portfolios and has a particular interest in where they can complement each other, such as how research and innovation can be applied to new applications in the energy or housing sectors.

# Global session

**Dr Regina Eisert**

*Session Chair*



Regina Eisert was born in Germany and re-located to Christchurch for a PhD at Lincoln University.

Regina has a science consulting firm, Kosatka Consulting, and is an Adjunct at Victoria University of Wellington.

Since 2018, Regina has been contracted to MBIE to serve as the New Zealand-Germany Research and Innovation Coordinator and facilitate cooperation with German partners.

For Murihiku Regeneration, Regina supports the Energy Workstream as a member of the Clean Energy Team and acts as the Science Advisor to the new Murihiku ki Te Tonga – Ross Sea Sector Research Programme.

**Jason Crusan**

**Vice President New Energy Solutions  
Woodside Energy**



Jason Crusan is Woodside Energy's Vice President New Energy Solutions, bringing to the role more than 25 years' experience accelerating technology advancements across multiple industries.

With Woodside Energy since 2019, he leads technology and business solutions across the entire New Energy value chain, including hydrogen, ammonia and carbon capture and utilisation (CCU). He is responsible for overall system modelling to optimise the production and operations of Woodside's New Energy solutions to deliver low cost, lower emissions energy for customers globally.

Prior to joining Woodside Energy Jason worked for NASA, primarily in human spaceflight.

## Global session cont.

**Dr Jitendra Joshi**

**Head of Technology New Energy Solutions  
Woodside Energy**



Dr Jitendra Joshi serves as the Head of Technology for New Energy Solutions at Woodside Energy in Perth, Australia. Jitendra's responsibilities include formulation of strategy for converting Greenhouse gases to value-added products and integrating renewables in Carbon transformation and Hydrogen generation.

Jitendra's team at Woodside Energy implementing combination of biological and thermo-chemical pathways to realize the full potential of Greenhouse utilization and Hydrogen production.

Previously, Dr Joshi was the Lead for Technology Integration within the Human Exploration and Operations Mission Directorate (HEOMD) at NASA.

He has over two decades of Science and Technology project management experience with leadership roles in several research and technology development projects.

# Empowering partnerships

**Dean Ford - Session Chair**  
**GM Economic Development and  
Transitions, MBIE**



No Kaikoura ahau  
Ko Kaikoura te moana  
Ko Manakau te maunga  
Kei te Whanganui-a-Tara e noho  
ana

Dean lives in Wellington with his wife and their two children. He grew up in a railways family in Kaikoura, with his experience of the 1980s reforms heavily influencing his policy career.

Dean is the General Manager of MBIE's Economic Development and Transitions Branch. This Branch includes teams focused on entrepreneurship and business growth, investment settings, industry policy, and Just Transitions partnerships.

Prior to joining MBIE Dean spent two years at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and before this many years at the Reserve Bank.

**Carolyn Tremain**  
**CEO MBIE**



Carolyn has over 20 years' experience leading large, complex service delivery organisations, and substantial change management programmes.

As well as her Chief Executive responsibilities, Carolyn is Chair of the Public Sector Auckland Career Board, and a member of the Victoria University of Wellington Business School Advisory Board.

Prior to 2011, Carolyn held the roles of Deputy Commissioner Service Delivery and Deputy Commissioner People, Capabilities, and Governance at Inland Revenue.

Earlier in her career, Carolyn worked for Air New Zealand where she was head of the Human Resources and Organisational Change. Carolyn holds a Bachelor of Arts from the Victoria University of Wellington.

# Climate session

**Dr Mike Stevens**

*Session Chair*



Mike is a Ngāi Tahu historian who grew up in Bluff. He and his whānau are stalwarts of the annual tītī (muttonbird) harvest and are well-known for maintaining he mahi pōhā: kelp receptacles which hold preserved tītī.

Mike has published widely on Ngāi Tahu history, in recent years through his work with the Ngāi Tahu Archive at Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu.

Long involved with Te Rau Aroha Marae and Te Rūnaka o Awarua, he is the Alternate Representative for the latter to Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu.

**Professor David Frame**

*Climate change expert*



Professor Dave Frame has a background in physics, philosophy, and policy.

Prior to joining the NZCRI Dave spent the bulk of his career at the University of Oxford, working in the Departments of Physics and Geography, and later at the Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment.

He also has policy experience, having worked at the New Zealand Treasury, and served on secondment at the UK Department of Energy and Climate Change.

He has been a Lead Author on the Fifth and Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and his research has often been published in the world's leading scientific research journals, as well as in the specialist climate literature.

## Climate session cont.

**Greg Bodeker**  
Director Bodeker Scientific



Originally from South Africa, Greg came to New Zealand in 1994., and founded Bodeker Scientific in 2009.

Greg's expertise is in atmospheric and climate science and has published more than 130 papers in these fields. He has held international leadership roles in climate science, including for the World Climate Research Programme and the Global Climate Observing System.

In addition to being the director of Bodeker Scientific Ltd, he is also the co-founder of Red Sky AI, and is the director of Kentron. In addition to his primary work in climate science, he has also worked as a professional software developer. Since 2009 he has been an adjunct professor at the New Zealand Climate Change Research Institute, in the School of Geography, Environment and Earth Sciences, at Victoria University of Wellington.

**Lee Chambers**  
Groundwater Modeller, GNS



Lee is a numerical groundwater modeller with a background in hydrogeology and environmental geochemistry, now applying himself to forward and inverse modelling of groundwater systems.

Lee's applied research at GNS Science has focused on uncertainty quantification for decision-support, primarily in response to the emerging threat of rising groundwater levels and saline intrusion due to sea level rise.

Prior to joining GNS Science (2017 – 2021), Lee was employed by the Scottish Government funded 'Climate Justice Futures (CJF)' Programme as a Research Scientist. Lee was primarily involved in groundwater supply and management projects in Sub-Saharan Africa, including advising government on improved water well drilling practices, academic research, humanitarian, and international development.

# Regional infrastructure

**Ross Copland – Session Chair**  
CE NZ Infrastructure Commission



Ross Copland is the Chief Executive Officer of the New Zealand Infrastructure Commission (Te Waihanga).

Prior to joining the New Zealand Infrastructure Commission, Ross had a career in construction and tourism infrastructure development.

He is passionate about renewables and sustainable building and has taken part in development engineering and disaster relief assignments across the Pacific. Ross has degrees in civil engineering, commerce, and an MBA.

**John Clarke**  
GM Grid, Transpower



John was re-appointed General Manager Grid Development in 2020, following a period as General Manager Operations which he held from 2014. John was General Manager Grid Development from 2008-2014 and had previously spent ten years in senior roles within our System Operator division. His earlier career in the New Zealand electricity sector has included roles in distribution and electrical engineering consulting. John holds a BE in Electrical Engineering.

Responsibilities: Developing the Grid – planning the national transmission grid, developing grid upgrade plans, managing the regulatory approval processes, and working with customers to develop their connection points.

## Regional infrastructure cont.

**James Flannery**  
GM Strategy, Contact Energy



James is the General Manager of Strategy at Contact Energy.

James has worked at Contact Energy for over 20 years and prior to his current role he has held a number of senior electricity trading, risk management and gas trading.

**Jason Franklin**  
CEO PowerNet



Jason has led PowerNet and its group of companies through significant change and growth during the past nine years.

His experience in the electricity and global mining industries spans commercial, operational, workplace safety and governance roles.

Jason is recognised as a leader within the electricity industry and is a director of the Electricity Networks Association. Jason is also a director of the Southland Regional Development Agency (Great South) and Rugby Southland.

## **Regional infrastructure cont.**

**Stuart Harris**  
**CE Invercargill Airport Ltd**



Stuart joined IAL as Chief Executive in November 2022, with extensive business and leadership skills focused on driving strategic growth and development.

Stuart has been working in the building industry for over 20 years on projects within NZ and overseas. Stuart has over ten years' involvement and experience with airports large and small, designing terminal and commercial building developments from planning stages through to construction and commissioning. Stuart has a BE and ME from University of Canterbury and an MBA from Auckland University.

**Nigel Gear**  
**CE South Port**



Nigel is the Chief Executive for South Port NZ.

He has 25 years' experience in the port industry and has held positions in commercial, operations and finance at South Port.

Nigel is currently an appointed board member of the Southland Chamber of Commerce and represents business interests on the New Zealand Oil and Gas Southern Community Panel.

Prior to joining South Port, Nigel worked in the meat and oil sectors.

# Social regeneration and innovation

**Steph Voight– Session Chair**  
MSD Regional Commissioner



Steph is a proud Southerner, growing up in the small town of Kurow and now living in Ōtepoti/Dunedin.

Steph has held various leadership roles in the Southern and Wellington Regions, as well as MSD's National Office – and has also been supported to gain an Executive Masters Public Administration from Australia New Zealand School of Government (ANZSOG).

Steph left MSD in 2019 to take up the role of Manager Justice Services at Te Tāhū o te Tūre | Ministry of Justice – in Otago and South Canterbury. Working across the Justice Sector, supporting our judiciary and enabling greater access to justice in our hapori expanded her mind and passion for the spirit of public service even more.

**Professor James H Liu**  
Massey University



James H. Liu (刘豁夫) is Professor of Psychology at Massey University in New Zealand. His work is in social, cross-cultural, and political psychology, where he has co-authored over 250 publications, and is currently co-Editor-in-Chief of Political Psychology.

James specializes in intergroup relations, especially as seen through history and identity. He has also investigated the relationship between social media and societal trust. His capstone book published by Cambridge University Press is *Collective Remembering and the Making of Political Culture*. He has served the roles of regional representative, treasurer, secretary general, and president for the Asian Association of Social Psychology. An advocate of New Confucianism, his dream and vision is to see the peaceful advance of Global Consciousness. In everyday life, he describes himself as a "Chinese-American-New Zealander".

## Social regeneration and innovation cont.

**Professor Darrin Hodgetts**  
Massey University



Professor Darrin Hodgetts is a societal/community psychologist at Massey University (Albany). Prior, Darrin was Professor of Community Psychology at the University of Waikato, a lecturer in community and communications at the London School of Economics and Political Sciences, and a Postdoctoral fellow in Community Medicine at Memorial University in Canada.

Darrin has held 6 Health Research Council and 4 Marsden major grants for research into urban poverty, homelessness, decent work, social inclusion, and health inequalities.

He has been involved in a range of community initiatives, from designing social services to providing research based professional development training to NZ Judges regarding poverty related offending and sentencing.

**Gareth Williams**  
GM System Performance, MSD



Gareth is the General Manager of System Performance at the Ministry of Social Development.

He is responsible for overseeing a diverse range of analytical, insight and modelling teams that support MSD's delivery and policy, Ministers, Iwi, and wider government.

# Energy innovation

## Rod Drury – Session Chair Innovator



Rod Drury founded global small business accounting platform Xero leading it to a top performing \$AU15B+ ASX100 company employing over 5000 people in 25+ locations.

Rod remains as largest shareholder and non-executive Director.

After creating a number of successful technology businesses Rod was named by Investopedia as one of the World's Top 10 Serial Entrepreneurs.

Rod's success is reflected in the following :

- AMS 2017 Global Marketer of the Year
- 2017 Deloitte Top 200 Visionary Leader
- 2013 EY New Zealand Entrepreneur of the Year
- NZ Herald Business Leader of the year in 2012
- NZ Hi-Tech Hall of Fame
- NZ Hi-Tech Entrepreneur of the Year in 2006 and 2007
- World Class New Zealander for ICT in 2008
- Honorary Fellow of the Institute of IT Professionals NZ.

# Māori and Iwi partnerships

**Arihia Bennett**  
*Session Chair*

**CEO Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu**



Arihia Bennett (Ngāi Tahu, Ngāti Porou, Ngāpuhi) has been the Chief Executive Officer of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu since 2012.

Arihia oversees the operations of the entire Te Rūnanga Group to deliver a range of programmes and initiatives designed to create intergenerational wellbeing for over 78,000 iwi members.

**Mike Pohio**  
*Chair Ngāi Tahu Holdings Corp*



Mike Pohio (Ngāi Tahu, Ngāti Pikiao) began as Chair of Ngāi Tahu Holdings Corporation Limited in December 2021.

Previously, Mike held the Chief Executive role for 23 months and achieved a legacy of success across the commercial units.

Mike is the former Chief Executive of Tainui Group Holdings and has governance and management experience in property, financial services, agricultural and infrastructure sectors.

## Māori and Iwi partnerships cont.

**Andy Macfarlane**

Director Fonterra



Andy is a Director of Fonterra, ANZCO and chairs the SFFF Plantain project and Edgewater Hotel Lake Wanaka.

Andy is a past New Zealand President of the New Zealand Institute of Primary Industry Management, past Chairman of Deer Industry NZ, past Director of AgResearch, past director of Ngāi Tahu Farming, and spent 12 years as a councillor of Lincoln University.

Andy and his wife Tricia, and their family farm in Canterbury, focused mainly on dairy and also deer and beef production. Andy is passionate about the food supply chain.

**Helen Rogers**

Chief Strategy and Sustainability Officer  
KiwiRail



Helen leads KiwiRail's collaboration with Government agencies on transport policy, funding, and investment frameworks.

She joined KiwiRail in 2014, working in senior finance, funding, and strategy roles.

Prior to KiwiRail Helen worked as a consultant leading finance transformation programmes, after several years as Financial Controller for Wellington City Council.

# Māori and Iwi partnerships *cont.*

**Tupara Morrison**  
**Head of Māori Development**  
**Air New Zealand**



As Head of Māori Development, Tupara works with the Executive to develop Air NZs Māori Strategy, incorporating it into our overall organisational strategy.

The role is also responsible for integrating Te Ao Māori into our customer and employee propositions and for external engagement with Iwi, Hapu, Māori Authorities, Māori entities and related partners and stakeholders.

# Regional leaders panel

## **Neil McAra – Session Chair**

**President  
Southland Business Chamber**



Neil is a Chartered Accountant and is Managing Partner for Findex (NZ) Ltd.

He has 25 years experience in accounting and advisory services. Industry focus includes agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism. He is experienced in estate and succession planning, corporate finance, governance and business advisory.

## **Tom Campbell**

**Deputy Mayor ICC**



Best known locally as a former GM of Tiwai, and more recently as leader of SoRDS, Tom has held many governance positions including as Chair of Electricity Invercargill, and as a Director of PowerNet, and Venture Southland.

At national level Tom has been Chair of NZ's Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA) and Chair of NZs natural hazards institute (GNS Science).

He has also served on governance boards in the fields of disability services, education and crime prevention.

# Regional plans and priorities

**Chami Abeysinghe**

**Session Chair**

**CE Great South**



Chami heads Great South - Southland's Regional Development Agency and moved into this position after serving 12 years at the Southern Institute of Technology (SIT). Hailing from Sri Lanka, Chami has extensive commercial experience working for large multinational Fortune 500 manufacturing organisations. Prior to moving to New Zealand in 2010, she was responsible for managing global teams while driving organisational excellence at the businesses she worked for.

International marketing, management, strategic leadership, logistics and operations, and relationship management are core to Chami's capabilities. These are augmented by an in-depth ability to implement operational strategies to grow business opportunities and simply, get the job done.

**Bobbi Brown**

**Project Lead – Beyond 2025 Regional Long-Term Plan**



Bobbi is currently leading the development of the Beyond 2025 Southland regional long-term plan. With over 20 years' experience in the local government, community development, sporting, rural and tourism sectors, she has extensive experience in strategy and policy development and stakeholder engagement and management.

A proud Southlander born and bred, Bobbi grew up in Gore and has dairy farmed with her husband and son in Clinton for the past 20 years. Her 15-year career as an international netball umpire ensures she brings a diverse range of skills and experience to her current role.

## Regional plans and priorities *cont.*

**Stephen Canny**  
GM Strategic Projects  
Great South



Stephen is leading the Southland Regional Energy Strategy and has recently completed 11 technical papers supporting the establishment of the Southern Green Hydrogen Project.

He is also in his third year as chairman of the NZ Hydrogen Council and was a founding member. He has a strong view that Green Hydrogen will be the Carbon Zero fuel of the future.

Stephen has designed and implemented the Carbon Neutral Advantage program aimed at creating a positive climate change response by reducing emissions and insulating business against the cost of Carbon while providing abatement pathways for all sectors to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

**Lynden Prebble**  
Farmer



My wife, Sandra and I farm sheep and beef at Dipton. We have four adult children and one grandchild. I have an Agricultural Science degree from Lincoln, then worked as a farm management consultant before farming.

I am the Chief Fire Officer of the Dipton Fire Brigade, play bass guitar in a band, ride an adventure motorbike, and have just bought a race car.

## Regional plans and priorities *cont.*

**Mervyn English**  
Murihiku Regeneration



Mervyn grew up in Dinton, after a period farming and mountaineering he went to university gaining an MBA with distinction.

He went on to the NZ Treasury, overseeing the Crown's commercial assets; moved to a senior executive role in the energy sector and set up and ran the NZ electricity market regulator.

Amongst other senior roles he was an Assistant Commissioner at the State Services Commission. Mervyn now lives back in Southland.

**Richard Gray**  
Fonterra



General Manager Operations – Lower South Island for Fonterra.

Richard has been in his current role for six years, responsible for Fonterra's Edendale and Stirling's manufacturing operations as well as milk collection activities across Otago and Southland. The Edendale site is Fonterra's largest manufacturing site and exports over 400,000MT of dairy products to over 70 markets annually.

Prior to this Richard was involved in the development of a Greenfields manufacturing site in from 2010 to 2014. Richard's 22-year career in the dairy industry has seen him work across a large number of roles and manufacturing sites within New Zealand. Richard has been a Southland Chamber of Commerce board member for the last five years.

# Developers – existing and new

**Terry Nicholas – Session Chair**  
Murihiku Regeneration



Terry is the Manager of Hokonui Rūnanga and the Programme Director for Murihiku Regeneration. Terry has been involved with Hokonui Rūnanga and has been the Hokonui Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu representative since January 1999. His special interest is building succession out of settlement - "mo tatou, a, mo ka uri a muri ake nei". Terry is also a member of the Just Transition oversight group, to ensure the rights and interests of Murihiku hapū are being represented.

Terry works tirelessly to protect and enhance spiritual, cultural, organisational, educational and economic aspirations of Hokonui Rūnanga and Murihiku Regeneration.

# Southern Green Hydrogen

**Gabrielle Pennock**  
Project Lead  
Woodside New Energy



Gabrielle has been working in Major Projects and leading operational teams in the energy industry for more than 20 years. Previous roles at Woodside include Vice President for Subsea & Pipelines and Strategy & Governance Manager for Developments. She has led global teams on numerous Subsea Tie-Back Projects and the \$5bn North Rankin Redevelopment Project.

Gabrielle is a Fellow of Engineers Australia, Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and holds Bachelor Degrees in Engineering (Mechanical Honours) and Science (Materials Chemistry).

**Murray Hill**  
New Ventures  
Meridian Energy



Murray leads the New Ventures Team at Meridian Energy and is currently focused on the Southern Green Hydrogen project.

Murray has twenty plus years working across the energy and resources industries both here in New Zealand and overseas, mostly in roles spanning business development, operations, and project management.

**Nozomu Ohki**  
Deputy General Manager  
Energy Department, Mitsui & Co



# NZAS: Tiwai Smelter Future

## Aimee Kaio

Ngāi Tahu, Te Arawa, Ngā Puhi



Aimee is a proud Southland, Bluff and Awarua woman. She is based in Bluff with her extended whānau, husband, four children and one mokopuna.

Aimee was part of the establishment and implementation of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu Tribal Economies, and contributed to the vision of Haea te Awa, the Ngāi Tahu Regional Development Strategy.

Aimee currently works with the Ngāi Tahu Regional Investment Fund, a mechanism to support Papatipu Runanga investments in their regions; and in recent years, Aquaculture opportunity has been a key part of her portfolio.

## Jacqui Caine

Group Head Strategy & Environment  
Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu



Jacqui Caine (Ngāi Tahu, Kāti Māmoe, Waitaha) joined Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu in 2019 and is the Group Head of Strategy & Environment. The role is charged with protecting and advancing the Ngāi Tahu settlements, engaging with the Crown across a range of kaupapa and protecting te taiao. Jacqui leads stakeholder engagement, strategic relationship development and the alignment of strategic workstreams, and manages our Te Whakaariki/Strategy & Influence and Te Ao Tūroa teams.

Jacqui grew up in Bluff and in Rakiura and is a Trustee of Te Rūnaka o Awarua. Jacqui is also a member of the Tiwai Advisory Group for Ngai Tahu and the Awarua Working Group on Tiwai.

## NZAS: Tiwai Smelter Future cont.

**Chris Blenkiron**

CE NZAS



Chris joined NZAS in 2022 and is a NZAS representative on the Advisory Komiti. He was previously the President of NS BlueScope Indonesia, a joint venture between BlueScope and Nippon Steel and has over 15 years' experience in various leadership roles in manufacturing and building products businesses across New Zealand, Australia, and the wider Asia-Pacific region. He has a strong commercial background and people focused approach to leading business outcomes and holds a BCom from Otago University. He is passionate about the community, having previously served on the board of Youthtown, an organisation empowering young people across New Zealand.

He serves on the Boards of the Southland Chamber of Commerce and the NZ Business and Parliamentary Trust.

**Nicole Atherton**

Closure Readiness General Manager  
Rio Tinto



Nicole is a Rio Tinto representative on the Advisory Komiti. Nicole has worked for Rio Tinto for over 15 years across various commodities including Coal, Copper, Diamonds and Aluminium. In her current role, Nicole is accountable for closure planning and readiness across Rio Tinto's aluminium operations in Australia and New Zealand.

She is passionate about people engagement and working with stakeholders to deliver optimal outcomes for both the business and the community.

Nicole has worked closely with the NZAS team for the past five years and enjoys frequent visits to Tiwai and the Southland region.

## NZAS: Tiwai Smelter Future cont.

**Darren Schwass**

Manager Closure Readiness  
NZAS



Darren is a NZAS representative on the Remediation Advisory Working Group. Darren has worked at NZAS since 1994 when he started as a graduate engineer in the Carbon department.

Since that time Darren has held a range of technical and leadership roles covering the various operational areas of the business.

In 2020 Darren moved into the newly created Closure Readiness Manager role to support the closure study work occurring at that time. Since the start of 2022, the focus of the team has pivoted towards leading remediation activities for the site.

Darren is a Chartered Professional Engineer and brings an improvement focused background to bear in all of the roles he has undertaken.

# Southland aquaculture update

**Aimee Kaio**

**Ngāi Tahu, Te Arawa, Ngā Puhi**



Aimee is a proud Southland, Bluff and Awarua woman. She is based in Bluff with her extended whānau, husband, four children and one mokopuna.

Aimee's career has predominantly been in hapū and iwi developments; she was part of the establishment and implementation of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu Tribal Economies, and contributed to the vision of Haea te Awa, the Ngāi Tahu Regional Development Strategy.

Aimee currently works with the Ngāi Tahu Regional Investment Fund, a mechanism to support Papatipu Runanga investments in their regions; and in recent years, Aquaculture opportunity has been a key part of her portfolio.

Aimee is an emerging Governor, currently a Trustee of Community Trust South, Kahui Māori Co-Chair Antarctic Science Platform, Kahui Māori member Deep South Challenge, Board member of COIN South and EAT NZ, a member of the NZAS/Ngāi Tahu Remediation Advisory Working Group and Co-Chair of Southland Just Transitions.

She has a particular interest in climate action and the collective role leaders, science, mātauranga māori and the economy plays in regional futures, regional resilience, inter-generational wellbeing.

'Mauri tū, mauri ora'.

# Blue Float offshore wind

**Nathan Turner**

**Country Manager**

**Blue Float**



After starting his career as a lawyer in Brisbane, Nathan has worked in the energy sector for the last 12 years.

During this time, Nathan has worked on a variety of gas, LNG and power projects in Australia, Asia and New Zealand.

While based in Singapore with Shell, Nathan was responsible for market development in Asia where he oversaw the establishment of new energy businesses as markets deregulated and investments into renewables were increasing significantly.

Nathan moved to New Zealand in early 2021 with his young family.

After nearly two years with national grid operator, Transpower, Nathan joined Blue Float as Country Manager for New Zealand in November 2022.

## Regional case studies

**Prue Halstead - Session Chair**  
**Executive Officer**  
**Invest South**



Prue is Invest South's Executive Officer. She works closely with management teams of investee companies, helping them to define the vision, planning and execution linked to their strategic direction. Having established a valuable regional and national network, her focus is to enable outcomes required for commercial success.

Prue has an extensive background of business development, marketing and general management experience across a diverse range of industries, working in New Zealand and overseas. She graduated with a BA Hons from the University of Otago and an LLB from Victoria University of Wellington.

**Karyna Young**  
**CEO EnPot Ltd**



Karyna Young is the CEO of Yunca Group and the CEO of Enpot Limited, a revolutionary technology that enables Aluminium Smelters to offer deep modulation to increase the uptake of renewable energies.

Karyna comes from a background of Law and Commerce, having studied at the University of Otago. Since graduating Karyna practiced Commercial Law and has held directorships and CEO positions in private equity firms in fields such as Finance, Production Engineering and Manufacturing.

Having held Chairperson roles in LPH Energies and Energia Potior Limited, Karyna has been able to explore green technologies in both Hydrogen and Primary Aluminium Production.

## **Regional case studies cont.**

**Anthony Jones**  
CEO HW Richardson Group



Anthony is CEO of HW Richardson Group (HWR), a large Southland-based transport company with operations across New Zealand and Australia.

Prior to joining HWR, Anthony was CEO of LINX Cargo Care Group, an Australian logistics infrastructure and solutions giant that operates across the transport industry and employs more than 3300 people on both sides of the Tasman. He spent 23 years across various areas of the business, with the last five serving as CEO.

Anthony can see Southland's potential is immense with growth and development opportunities ready for the taking to strengthen and future-proof the Southland business community for years to come.

**David Simpson**  
Director T3 Gropu



David is the Director at T4 Group, a company established in 2021 with the vision of providing regional New Zealand with access to colocation data centres and reliable, secure, green, and economically viable data network solutions.

In addition to their current Tier 2 and Tier 3 offerings, plans are underway to build New Zealand's first Tier 4 data centre located in Southland, which will provide unparalleled security, infrastructure, and uptime for businesses.

David brings a diverse range of skills to his role, including strategic planning, operational management, and team leadership.

# Innovation and Bluff re-imagining

**Jane Stanton**

**Owner**

**Seriously Good Chocolate Company**



Her grandfather's treasured recipes were handed down through the family over the years and Jane shared her grandfather's passion for making delicious chocolate treats.

From her home kitchen in Te Anau Jane first began making chocolates for family, friends and school students using her grandfather's old-time recipes.

Infusing her famous chocolate truffles with Gibbston Valley pinot noir was when her seriously good chocolate journey began.

Everyone loved Jane's chocolates and as more and more people tasted her fabulous truffles word of mouth grew. So too did people's appetite for more new flavours and textures using New Zealand's unique natural ingredients.

Jane moved to Invercargill and soon was in the business of selling chocolates with a mission to promote the unique flavours of New Zealand to the world through her chocolate. One bite at a time.

*Murihiku Tītī a Kai, Tītī a  
Manawa*

Murihiku, a land of resource, a  
people steadfast

*Tauarutia ka aho ratarata*

Follow our Southern Lights

