



## TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE *PEOPLE'S INQUIRY 2020*

### **Introduction**

A People's Inquiry into the Impacts and Effects of Toxic Chemicals and Poisons on our People, Wildlife and Environment - *He Uiuinga e pā ana ki nga Pātanga me nga Tukinotanga a nga Matū Tāoke me nga Paitini ki ngā Tāngata, nga Kararehe Kōwao me te Taiao* will take place over the course of 2020, with a Public Hearing in Auckland, New Zealand in early 2021.

The *People's Inquiry 2020* is being managed by an alliance of people and organisations that came together in 2019 to look for ways in which people and communities could share their experience of the impacts of toxic chemicals and poisons on their lives, and to investigate positive solutions.

Researchers and activists have been working tirelessly over many decades to create change and raise awareness around the issues of harm from toxic chemical exposure. However, little has changed and the use of toxic chemicals and practices continues and the harm created is largely ignored by those in positions of authority.

The PI 2020 Executive Committee agreed this must change and see a *People's Inquiry* as a catalyst for that change. The Committee see strength in a broad cross-disciplinary alliance focused on a paradigm shift towards a truly clean, safe and sustainable environment for all.

Giving people an opportunity to tell their story and share their experience in a respectful safe environment is fundamental to the *Inquiry*, and submissions will be open to everyone in New Zealand. The *Inquiry* will also have a solutions-based focus. It will invite, encourage and welcome testimony from those working with established and newly developed solutions and innovations that will help the shift away from harmful practices to non-toxic sustainable ones.

### **Objectives of the People's Inquiry 2020 - to include but not be limited to**

1. The empowerment of the community through having their experiences heard and taken seriously, and the opportunity to positively influence research directions and the development of solutions.
2. To produce a report and comprehensive analysis of the impacts of toxic chemicals and poisons on the health, economic, social and human rights of people and the wildlife and the environment of Aotearoa New Zealand.
3. To make recommendations for dealing with *Inquiry*-identified health, economic, social and human rights impacts of toxic chemicals and poisons.

4. To make recommendations for future action to include but not be limited to:
- Further in-depth analysis of information reported to the Inquiry
  - Mitigation of adverse effects both short and long term
  - Models for community participation/partnerships with government and science in ongoing and future projects that directly impact the community and environment
  - Improved methods of managing or eliminating the use of toxic chemicals and poisons in urban settings, using a sustainable people-centred approach.
  - Changes to government policy and legislation and the use of hazardous substances.
  - Inquiry-identified research directions and projects.

**Scope of the People's Inquiry 2020 - to include but not be limited to**

1. The Inquiry will consider information presented to it by people and communities negatively affected or harmed by toxic chemicals or poisons, or have observed the effects first hand
  2. The Inquiry will consider information presented to it by scientists, researchers and other experts wishing to share their knowledge and expertise on the impacts and effects of toxic chemicals and poisons.
  3. The Inquiry will consider information from those working with or wishing to present non-toxic sustainable solutions and alternatives
  4. By agreement of the Steering Committee, the Inquiry may consider information presented to it by relevant overseas experts
  5. Every attempt shall be made to ensure that each person who wishes to present information has the opportunity to do so in a way that is appropriate for their needs.
  6. Evidence presented to the People's Inquiry, both written and oral, will be recorded and retained, and with the permission of the submitter, will be lodged for universal access on the People's Inquiry website.
  7. The Commissioners will produce the final Report and Recommendations, with the Steering committee being responsible for its printing and publication.
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