



November 2020, Newsletter

The People's Inquiry - Te Uiuinga a te Tāngata

The People's Inquiry into the Impacts and Effects of Toxic Chemicals and Poisons on our People, Wildlife and Environment – *Te 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*

Recent News & Updates

Auckland City Council's move to 'harmonise' the roadside weed management by reintroducing glyphosate based chemicals across the city has been halted because of the efforts of many submitters, campaigners and residents who showed up to the Council meeting on Thursday 12th. A huge thank you for their efforts! You can read more further on and watch the submissions [linked here](#).

Members of our Inquiry Committee joined the Social Movements, Resistance and Social Change Conference for 2020 also on Thursday 12th November. The Conference was held in Wellington and streamed online to people throughout the country and international participants. We facilitated a discussion on the use of toxic chemicals and poisons in Aotearoa, the impacts and effects and pathways forward to a sustainable, healthy, poison free environment.

We will be holding this discussion session again via zoom on Thursday December 10th at 6:30pm, with a Q&A session afterwards. This will be recorded and shared online for those unable to join us live. The details for this session will be shared soon with all those who are registered with the Inquiry.

Thank you to those who have recently sent in their submissions. Recent submissions include those from scientific researchers, gardeners affected by spray drift and comprehensive reports on the effects of 1080 poison. Have you started writing your submission yet? We've tried to make the process as simple as possible including accepting submissions through email or post. Read more about [making your submission here](#).



Committee Members: Stephanie McKee and Ursula Edgington at the conference in Wellington. Bee Hive in the background.

The Executive Committee - peoplesinquiry2020.nz / contact@peoplesinquiry2020.nz

Glyphosate standardisation is rejected by Auckland Councillors – new funding flexibility adopted for street vegetation control

Report from Hana Blackmore

In a marathon session, Councillors at the meeting of the Environment & Climate Change Committee on November 12th 2020 voted unanimously for Chair Richard Hills recommendations for ‘standardising’ funding for weed and vegetation control instead of by methodology. This effectively gives local decision making back to the local boards allowing them to customise the methodology they want to use.



Stop glyphosate alliance of people outside the Auckland town hall

It is so much more complicated than that – and we are still working through the sessions for the detail – but budgeting and costing anomalies revealed at the meeting means thermal technologies were cost-effective and capable of being used throughout the entire region.

“So what we do have now is a [standardised] budget. We still don’t know what the precise amount of budget is and that’s something that we need to get a handle on. But I’m quite confident that the budget that is available for weed management across the region is going to be sufficient, based on competitive pricing, to allow methods like hot water to be used everywhere.” Cllr. Wayne Walker quoted in [The Spinoff](#).

A full report of the meeting and the possible implications is underway – but in the meantime we have posted below the links to the agenda papers and the minutes with tabled submissions. The videoed debate is also linked. [Read more and watch video presentations.](#)

Work Safe - Safe Guard Magazine

In the latest issue of the [Work Safe magazine](#) they talk about workplace exposure, cancer agents and more. While it doesn’t do much to address the use of toxic chemicals and poisons in agriculture and conservation, it’s still worth while reading and a positive step towards acknowledgment of the regular breaches of the Health and Safety at Work Act and other laws that are designed to protect the public from harm.

EPA - Chemical management changes coming in 2021

Read the full [article here](#).



Reflections on Activating Collectivity: Aroha and Power Conference, Wellington.

by Stephanie McKee

The grey dome of the beehive looms through the window from where the People's Inquiry gave its presentation at the recent Growing Collectivity: Aroha and Power conference. The Conference hummed with animated conversations between people deeply engaged in working for and calling for social, economic and environmental change.

Our team each gave their specialist perspective using a hybrid in-person and online delivery. The People's Inquiry is about gathering the unheard voices – about providing a space for the voices that those in that beehive so far appear to be unwilling to listen to nor consult with.

My segment of the People's Inquiry presentation was about the history of poison use in NZ going back to colonial times. Addressing the injustices and bitter legacies of colonialism and looking forward to imagining transformation of our society towards a poison-free Aotearoa.

If we don't learn from history we are wilfully blind, as we repeat the same mistakes.

So when we zoom out the lens to see the landscape of the decades, we see repeated patterns. We see poisons that were promoted to solve an often inflated threat, until overwhelming evidence of harm demanded that the chemical be banned. So-called "clean, green" New Zealand always lags behind other parts of the world in banning dangerous ecotoxins, eg 17 years behind the USA in banning DDT.

Why aren't we leaders in the international poison-free movement as we once were in the nuclear free movement, you may ask?

The legacy of toxic contamination is bad enough, (50,000 sheep dips, toxic soils in orchards, pesticides detected in waterways) but a cocktail of poisons continues to contaminate the whenua, ngahere, wai and moana. Arsenic, DDT, 245-T, I080, brodifacoum, PCPs and chromated arsenicals wood preservatives, glyphosate and more recently PFAS – firefighting foams that are worse than DDT and don't break down for 1000s of years.

The risks of serious health effects with this "forever chemical" detected in groundwater was known about by the Defence Force 3 years before the public found out. This is another repeated pattern. There seems to be no duty of care to citizens, but more a care to Deny, Delay and Diminish the concerns of the citizens. *continued...*



Stephanie at the conference in Wellington

The Covid scare and the lockdown response from the government showed that politicians can listen to the scientists, and can act quickly in an emergency. Also the word “precautionary” has been repeated frequently lately, so let’s finally apply the Precautionary Principle to NZ’s normalisation of poisoning.

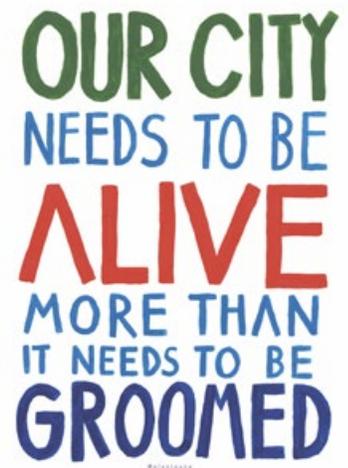
The People’s Inquiry is calling for a truly “clean green” Aotearoa where pesticide reduction policies are urgently put in place, where testing regimes are not 30 years out of date, and where the voices of the communities and marae across the country are finally heard.

This is an exciting time of transformation towards true not pseudo kaitiakitanga, protecting and caring for all our interconnected ecosystems in Papatūanuku. The organic foods and regenerative farming sectors are booming, and innovative safer methods in predator control are being successfully trailed with more and more landowners choosing to go poison-free. Councils are starting to listen to ratepayers who are demanding spray-free streets and parks. This collectivity of aroha is being activated!

CALL TO ACTION - Thursday December 10th

December 10th is International Human and Animal Rights Day

A number of groups including The Weed Management Advisory and Flora and Fauna of Aotearoa are putting out a call to action for you to “Make your Voice Heard.” Make your voice heard by putting up a sign on your verge for all to see. Imagine if on Dec. 10th we see signs on the roadsides everywhere calling for an end to toxic chemicals and a return to a safe healthy environment! A variety of wonderful posters can be downloaded from [here](#), and of course you can always get creative and design your own. Get your friends, family and neighbours on board and make a statement with your message on the verge.



OUR CITY
NEEDS TO BE
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MORE THAN
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For the Love of Bees & Weed Management Advisory Podcasts

In The Weeds; Finding a Solution for Managing Our Cityscape

[Regenerative Conversations](#) seeks to be a living archive of current and past sustainability issues, future solutions and the voices leading and supporting a path towards a more sustainable Aotearoa.

Monthly, we will look into the core sustainability issues, seek to find thought leaders, locally affected peoples [manawhenua and tauwiwi alike], alternative vision holders and those just doing the mahi in their field to help solve Aotearoa’s sustainability issues.

We will inquire into our country’s innovations, our collaboration and what it means to restore wellbeing, wairua or hauora, to our ecologies. We will look into 12 different areas over the course of the series, so keep an eye out to find out more. - [For the Love of Bees](#)

Non-Toxic Neighbourhoods Northland

A non-toxic neighbourhoods group is forming in Northland. If you are in the Northland area and want to collaborate or network with like-minded people, join the [Non-Toxic Neighbourhoods Northland facebook group](#). Is there a group near you? Let us know about it so we can share.



SUPPORTED BY
THE WEED MANAGEMENT ADVISORY
FLORA AND FAUNA OF AOTEAROA

CALL



TO



ACTION

THURSDAY DECEMBER 10th

International Human Rights and Animal Rights Day

Stick your message on the Verge.
Make OUR voices heard!

WE ARE
PLANET
PEOPLE
NOT TOXIC
SYNTHETIC
CHEMICAL
SHEEPLE

PROTECT
OUR
CHILDREN
Healthy
Safe &
Poison-Free


Dangerous
decision makers
at work

OUR CITY
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PI2020 Resources

Help us share knowledge of this Inquiry with people in your area. We need your help to let as many kiwis as possible know about this Inquiry and the opportunity to make a submission and have their voice heard.

Resources to promote and share information about The People's Inquiry are now on our [website for downloading, sharing online and printing](#). There is also a banner than can be downloaded and put on your website or newsletter. We have also printed cards, posters and flyers. For those wishing to help but are unable to print their own, get in touch and we will post some out to you.



If you are interested in doing a letterbox drop or putting up posters on noticeboards in your area let us know and we'll send you a stack of flyers/posters. Get in touch with Asha on 021 181 9919.

Submissions from people who have experienced harm

Thank you to those that have recently sent in their submissions and for the many messages of support and encouragement for the Inquiry. We have received submissions from around the country concerning harm from organophosphates, 1080 poison and agricultural chemical drift. They each recount the harmful impacts that these chemicals had on people's lives and health and the frustrating lack of accountability and concern from government officials.

Sitting down to write about, or even just recounting traumatic experiences that have left us feeling vulnerable and hurt can be a very difficult thing to do, but it can also be a step toward healing and empowering oneself. If you are writing your submission, take your time and remember there is always support available if you need it. Find out more about [Support and Advocacy](#).



How to make your submission

Once you have prepared your written submission in word format, with any accompanying documents, go the [Submission Guide](#) for clear steps on what to do. It's simple and involves emailing your submission through to us then completing the relevant form linked in the Submission Guide. Once we receive your submission we will be in touch to confirm we have received it, along with your details. If you have any questions you can email us at - contact@peoplesinquiry2020.nz