

# MOANA AUCKLAND SUSTAINABILITY EXPO

AS PART OF MOANA AUCKLAND FESTIVAL 2025

## SPEAKER SERIES

**Saturday, 22 February**  
**3pm - 5pm**

On Saturday afternoon, Moana Auckland Sustainability Expo will host its inaugural Speaker Series. We are all connected to the Moana, and the Moana connects us all. The state of its mauri, or health, can affect us in multiple and unexpected ways, just as our actions have impacts upon the Moana in ways that may surprise you.

Bringing together a diverse range of organisations, thinkers and practitioners, the Saturday Speaker Series will highlight some of the fantastic mahi going in to revive our waters through engaging presentations and discussion.

The 3 themed sessions will consist of 10-15 minute long presentations followed by a short panel discussion between participants (10-15 minutes each).

**MC**

**Te Aroha Grace**

Te Aroha Grace is a true Auckland blue-blood hailing from Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei, the tangata whenua of the city. As someone with a deep technology and deep cultural pedigree, he is a storyteller that loves to weave together optimistic threads of New Zealand's legacy to narrate a bright future. Te Aroha considers himself ancestrally driven with a focus on our future grand children.

**Session 1**

**Intergenerational Perspectives:  
Rangatahi making a difference**

Two presentations by Rangatahi Scientists and Regenerative Practitioners making a difference

1. Anushka Dissanyake from Epsom Girls Grammar School will present her research on the importance of environmental DNA and water quality testing in restoring local streams.
2. Waiheke Marine Project is a treaty-based marine regeneration project on Waiheke Island. Two of its rangatahi coordinators will give an overview of the Project and outline different schemes, including the upcoming Kōura Dive Survey.

**Session 2**

**A snapshot of local innovation  
in regenerating our Te Taiao -  
environment**

A cross-section of people making good on regenerating our environment through science, design, and governance.

1. Dr Gabriela Nuri Baron, senior lecturer at the University of Auckland, introduces Design for Conservation and how we are redefining our relationship with the moana.
2. Alexandra Whitcombe is a design strategist who helps empower communities and broaden our approach to regenerating cities through the lenses of Taiao (environment), Tāngata (people), and Whenua (the land).
3. Alex Bonham is a Waitemātā Local Board councillor who will explain how Local Boards can connect the dots, from some of the city's most significant infrastructure projects to hyper-local community actions.

**Session 3**

**From an extractive to a creative  
Blue Economy**

Charting behaviour changes in the economy from viewing the moana as a resource to be extracted to a Taonga – a treasure to be valued.

1. Laura Torre is a conservation biologist, marine educator, and wildlife researcher who will present on the historic catches from the Whangaparapara Whaling Station on Aotea, Great Barrier Island – lessons from the past.
2. Cerasela Stancu is the Sustainability Director of Envirostrat, a global sustainability consultancy and impact investment manager based in Tāmaki Makaurau, and will outline new tools for capturing value from the Blue Economy while leaving it better for future generations.
3. Claire Bradley is CEO of AgriSea New Zealand, an award-winning, family-owned seaweed company that has, for over 25 years, assisted farmers and growers in boosting production while improving their environmental footprint through sustainably harvested, fermented seaweed products.