



The contributions of Indigenous knowledge to public health and how to integrate them in research and practice

- Sione Tu'itahi
- IUHPE and Health Promotion Forum of New Zealand
- September 28, 2023
- Keynote address
- Scientific Conference of the Centre for Public Health Research
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- Montreal, CANADA

Three major parts and summary

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- The contributions
- The context
- How to incorporate IK

Summary of talk

- There are many contributions but the most significant is how to live with Mother Nature, how to flourish within Mother Nature's rhythmic cycle of sustainability, and how live in harmony with your fellow human beings
- Integrate IK into research and practice by working as equal co-workers and co-learners with Indigenous People with an open mind and inclusive heart

Part 1: Contributions





21ST CENTURY HEALTH PROMOTION RESPONSE

Creating well-being societies requires coordinated action in five areas:

1 VALUE, RESPECT AND NURTURE PLANET EARTH AND ITS ECOSYSTEMS

A healthy planet is essential for the health and well-being of current and future generations and for enabling all to flourish. Well-being societies prioritize a rapid, just transition to a low-carbon economy to keep rises in temperature below 1.5°C this century. They provide access to clean energy for all, enhance biodiversity, reduce resource depletion and pollution, support harmonious relations between humans and nature and center indigenous knowledge and leadership. They promote water and food systems that reduce harm and promote healthy nutrition (including breastfeeding). Well-being societies have strong links to “One Health” and planetary health, including enhancing pandemic preparedness and improving health and equity.

2 DESIGN AN EQUITABLE ECONOMY THAT SERVES HUMAN DEVELOPMENT WITHIN PLANETARY AND LOCAL ECOLOGICAL BOUNDARIES



Tiohtià:ke Statement ¹

Catalysing policies for health, well-being and equity

We endeavour through this statement to honour and carry forward the messages of the 2019 IUHPE companion [Waiora](#) and [Rotorua](#) Legacy Statements calling on health promotion communities and other global communities to make space for and privilege Indigenous peoples' voices and knowledges in taking concerted action to promote the health of all people, of Mother Earth and all life, now and for the future. Our health promoting actions emphasise promoting policies for health, well-being and equity.

The 2022 IUHPE conference opened with a protocol to welcome participants to the host Indigenous territory. A respected Kanien'kehá:ka (People of the Flint, Mohawk) knowledge holder offered '*Ohénton Karihwatéhkwen - the words that are said before discussing matters of importance*' which serve to bring our minds together as one by expressing our profound gratitude and appreciation to: the natural world; the People; our Mother Earth; the Waters; the Fish life, the Roots, the Plants, the Insects, the Foods that sustain our lives; the Fruits; the Medicines, the Animals; the Trees; the Birds; the Four Sacred Winds; the Thunders; our Grandmother Moon; our Elder Brother Sun; the Stars; the Four Sacred Beings, and the Creator.



IUHPE

23rd World Conference
on Health Promotion

7 - 11 APRIL 2019 ROTORUA,
AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND



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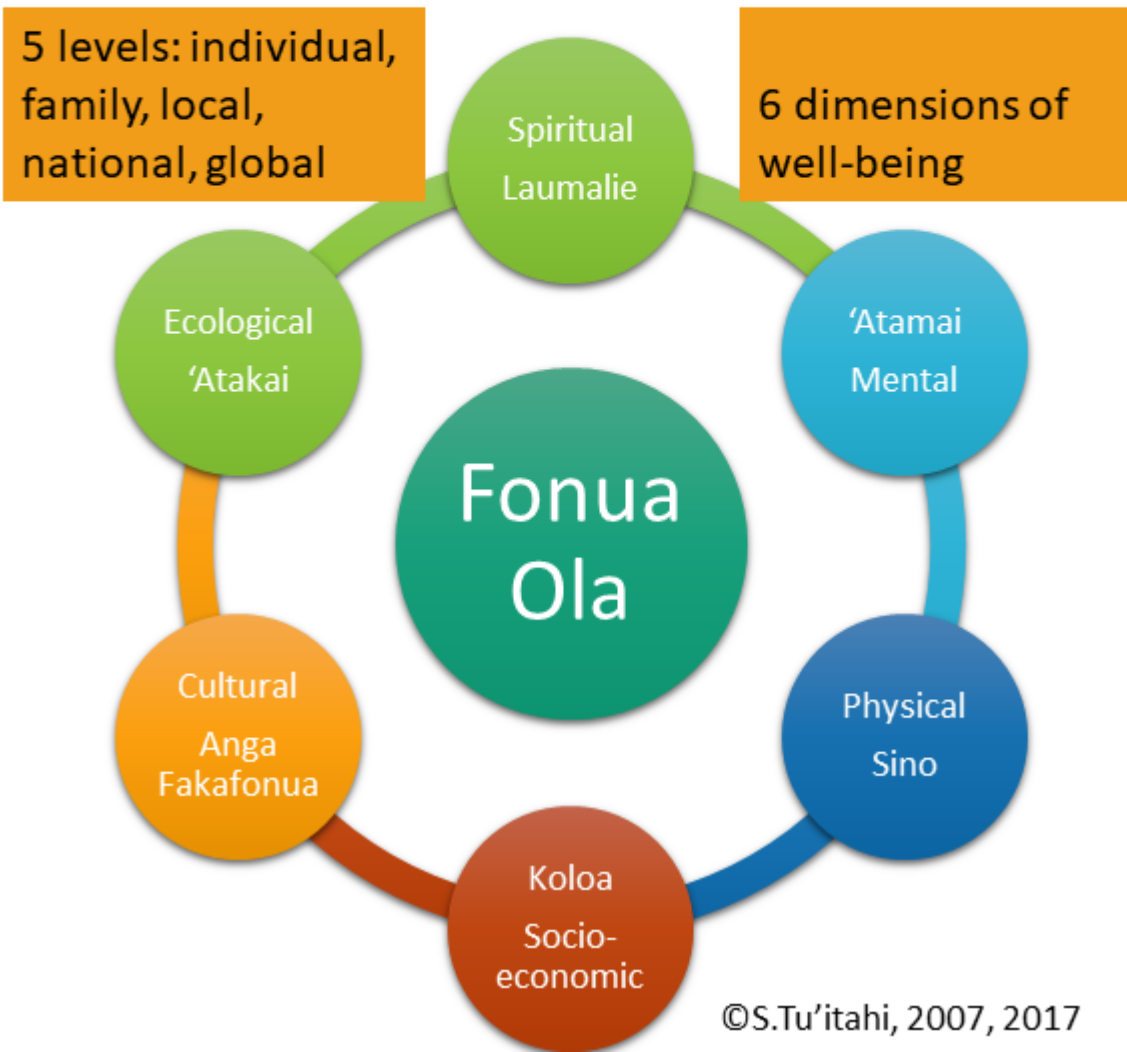
Waiora – Indigenous Peoples’ Statement for Planetary Health and Sustainable Development

This Statement from Indigenous participants in the 23rd IUHPE World Conference on Health Promotion (Rotorua, Aotearoa New Zealand) is a call on the health promotion community and the wider global community to make space for and privilege Indigenous peoples’ voices and Indigenous knowledges in promoting planetary health and sustainable development for the benefit of all. It should be read alongside the Rotorua Statement from all participants in this Conference.

Indigenous peoples are diverse and our worldviews, which have developed over millennia of human experience, are specific to peoples and place. However, there are fundamental commonalities in these worldviews that have provided the basis for Indigenous peoples’ movements that draw us together around our shared interests. Core features of Indigenous worldviews are the interactive relationship between spiritual and material realms, intergenerational and collective orientations, that Mother Earth is a living being – a ‘person’ with whom we have special relationships that are a foundation for identity, and the interconnectedness and interdependence between all that exists, which locates humanity as part of Mother Earth’s ecosystems alongside our relations in the natural world.

Pacific/Moana Indigenous knowledge

Fonua Ola Health Promotion Framework



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- **Four major strategies for all levels, dimensions and stages**

1. Kumi : Research, identify & address health issues and its determinants
- 2. Langa : Develop capacity
- 3. Tauhi : Build healthy principles and guidelines
- 4. Tufunga : Distribute resources equitably; Re-conceptualise

- **Some Guiding Values and Principles**

- Fetokoni'aki: Reciprocity – compassion, care and share
- Mo'ui kakato: Collective wellbeing, health for all
- Fakakatoa: Holistic approach; consider all levels, dimensions and phases
- Fakapotopoto: Ethical, prudent, wise, service- leadership

Part 2: The context of the contributions...

Contributions despite domination...

- Colonisation
- Land, people, resources
- Neo-colonisation
- Economic
- Political
- Cultural

...despite losses

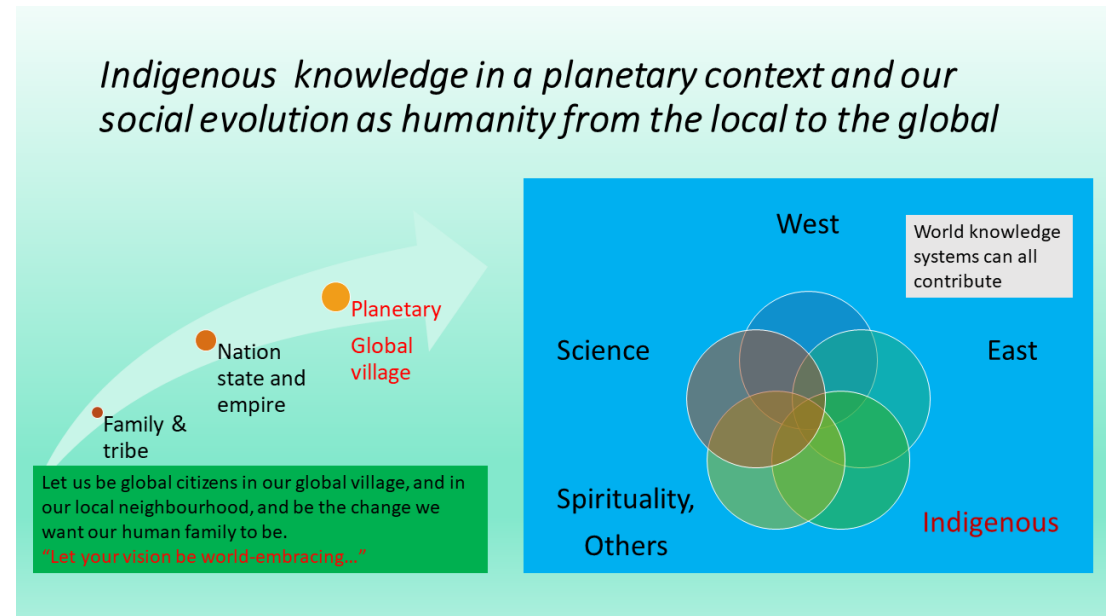
- Loss of lives
- Loss of land and other resources
- Loss of knowledge
- Loss of language
- Loss of identity
- Total cultural diversity loss, like biodiversity loss

The context: *Efforts of the five advocates to address losses and restore rights and wellbeing*

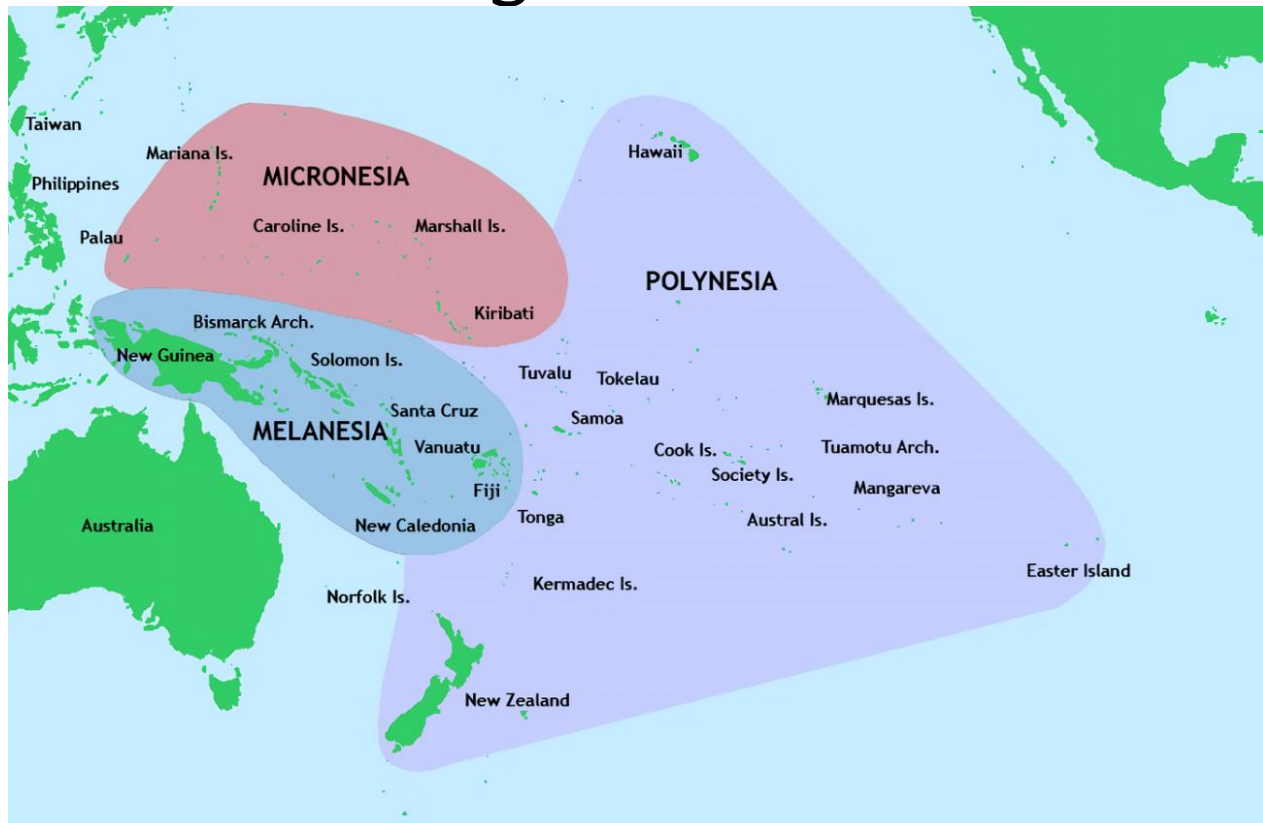
The role of the international community

- Article 4
- Indigenous peoples, in exercising their right to self-determination, have the right to autonomy or self-government in matters relating to their internal and local affairs, as well as ways and means for financing their autonomous functions. – UNDRIP 2007

The role of states, institutions, communities and individuals



Environmental crisis in the Pacific: *The convergence*



- Japan plans to release wastewater from the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant into the Pacific Ocean...
- *“It’s just horrendous to think what it might mean,” says Henry Puna, the secretary general of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), a regional intergovernmental organization.*
- *“The people of the Pacific are people of the ocean. The ocean is very much central to our lives, to our culture, to our livelihoods. Anything that prejudices the health of the ocean is a matter of serious concern.” (Time, Feb 06, 2023)*
- USA – (1946-1957) = 67 tests
- France – (1966-1996) = 197 tests

Part 3: How to integrate IK into public health research and practice

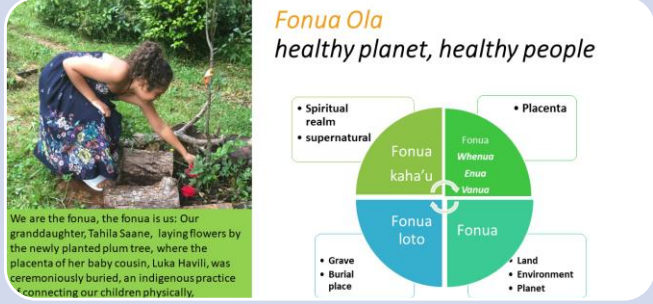
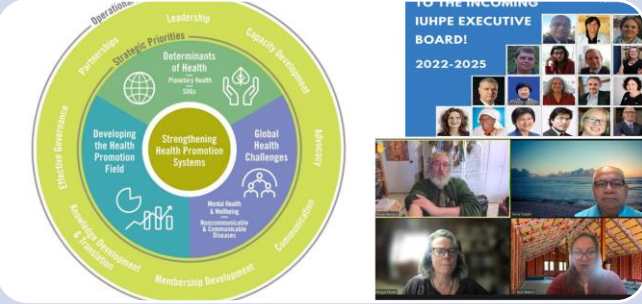
An analysis

- Whose public health?
- By whose methods?
- For who's wellbeing?
- What considerations given to Indigenous Peoples rights, wellbeing, resources, and IP etc?
- How prepared and ready are the 5 advocates and their collaborators?

Are the five protagonists prepared?

- Build cultural competency and capacity
- Build policies and resources
- Build relationship
- Consult and conduct business
- Maintain relationship
- A posture of learning and humility
- Contextualise – relate to the social and natural reality you work with

Types of integration and practices



Relevance
 IK used
 Low participation
 Low trust
 Minimal outcomes

Collaboration
 IK used
 Indigenous involvement
 Increased trust
 Some collective outcomes

Indigenous governance,
 ownership,
 Increased leadership,
 partnership
 High trust
 Wellbeing for all

How to incorporate: Our changing realities

*Nothing about us without us, there is enough for our needs,
and together, we can learn, love, live and flourish with Mother Nature*



Other Charters, Declarations and Legacy Statements

Thank you, Kia Ora, Mālō 'aupito

Indigenous Knowledge systems

- A way of knowing, of being, of doing, of living
- A whole inter-connected system, a web of life
- Can collaborate with other knowledge systems
- Best way to integrate IK is to be prepared first, then build relationship, consult and do business, and maintain relationship

Our social reality changing

- One planet, one humanity, common future
- Diverse knowledge systems collaborating, including IK
- Re-think and re-imagine value system and ways of knowing, being and doing if we are to survive

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