



Climate Change Group
WATER NEW ZEALAND



Johnnie Freeland (Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua, Ngai Tūhoe)

Project Specialist – Iwi Māori partnerships Oranga Tamariki – Ministry for Children



Johnnie belongs to Ngāti Te Ata Waiohua, one of the kaitiaki iwi of Tāmaki Makaurau/ Auckland and Ngai Tuhoe and brings together more than 30 years' experience of serving community and in guiding and navigating a range of Iwi, Māori community and public sector organisations in working to achieve better outcomes with Māori. He was formerly the General Manager for Māori Strategy and Relations for the Auckland Council and is currently the Senior Māori Advisor for Oranga Tamariki/ Ministry for Children within Tāmaki Makaurau/ Auckland

He is a traditional knowledge holder and practitioner and plays a leadership role within his own tribe. Johnnie is helping navigate a whakapapa centred response to climate change within Tāmaki Makaurau, through the Mana Whenua Kaitiaki Forum. In partnering with the Auckland Council, together they are looking to harness the benefits of drawing on mātauranga Māori knowledge and western science to navigate a way forward for Auckland.

“We’ve been applying ‘whakapapa centred design’ methodologies anchored in Indigenous/ Māori systems thinking practice with our mana whenua iwi in Tāmaki Makaurau in the climate resilience response as well as other mahi, centred on the regeneration of ecological, social, cultural and economic well-being of catchments, such as Te Puhinui in South Auckland.

COVID-19 and Auckland’s current water challenges has further reinforced both the challenges and opportunities of navigating and creating futures anchored in mātauranga Māori and kaitiakitanga.”