



Media Release

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Government Recognises Environmental Education

Yesterday the Government announced a further six years' funding for Toimata Foundation, totaling \$11.4 million. The announcement was made by Minister for the Environment, Hon. Dr Nick Smith, during an event at Waitakiri School, an Enviroschool in Christchurch.

At the event, Associate Minister of Conservation Hon. Nicky Wagner also announced a refreshed National Strategy for Environmental Education for Sustainability (EEfS), which is open for public comment until 10 October.

"We are delighted that the Government has recognised Toimata Foundation as a leading enabler of environmental education. The continued funding will ensure that Toimata, through our two main programmes, Te Aho Tū Roa and Enviroschools, will be able to continue to support children and young people in over 1000 schools, kura, and early childhood centres to realise their vision for the future," said Heidi Mardon, Chief Executive of Toimata Foundation.

"Toimata Foundation's kaupapa is to bring about sustainability through learning, creativity and action. We believe that strengthening our connections – people-to-people and people-to-place, is essential for sustainability. We are pleased that the newly drafted National Strategy for EEfS has a greater focus on whanaungatanga and collaboration and the broader aspects of sustainability," she said.

The further funding is endorsement of the significant work done by Te Aho Tū Roa and Enviroschools Programmes.

"Tens of thousands of young New Zealanders are taking action through real-life projects as part of curriculum-linked and community-based learning with Te Aho Tu Roa and Enviroschools," said Ms Mardon. "They are working on environmental restoration, energy efficiency initiatives, ecological building practices, growing food and reducing waste going to landfills to show that sustainability makes good sense economically and socially, as well as environmentally."

"Of course, we couldn't do this without the strong relationships we have with over 100 partners - from small community organisations, through to iwi, and Local Government," she added. "This ongoing Central Government funding will ensure that we can continue to build these relationships and our programmes."

Ms Mardon made special mention of the Māori Party, which has been a strong supporter of the kaupapa of Toimata Foundation, and recognised the benefits of the Enviroschools and Te Aho Tu Roa Programmes.

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The Enviro FERNs from Waitakiri School sharing their place. Pictured is a structure for their planned grape vine, which forms part of their vision for food gardens. From left: Joanne Hayes MP, Hon. Nicky Wagner, Hon. Dr Nick Smith. Waitakiri is a Bronze EnviroSchool.

BACKGROUND:

- Toimata Foundation, in collaboration with founding partner Te Mauri Tau, works with a large and diverse number of organisations, to support young people to work widely and creatively in the area of sustainability.
- Through its Te Aho Tū Roa and EnviroSchools programmes Toimata has around 100 partners and growing community involvement. The programmes aim to bring together many different skills, perspectives and resources to create sustainable, resilient communities
- Te Aho Tū Roa is a programme in te reo Māori working with kōhanga/puna reo, kura, wharekura and communities that embraces Māori culture, language and wisdom.
- EnviroSchools is an action-based education programme where young people plan, design and implement sustainability projects and become catalysts for change.
- Over 1000 participating schools, kura and Early Childhood Education (ECE) centres are involved in the EnviroSchools and Te Aho Tū Roa programmes. This is 32% of schools, including 30% of kura Māori, and 5% of the ECE sector.
- Participants range from young children to secondary school students, post school youth and communities, in both English and Māori settings.
- Over 10,000 environmental and sustainability projects are now being undertaken throughout the Toimata network.
- Toimata Foundation signed a Deed of Funding with the Government in 2012 that was a result of the November 2011 Relationship Accord and Confidence and Supply Agreement signed between the National Party and the Māori Party. This Deed has now been extended to 2020.
- The Draft National Strategy for Environmental Education for Sustainability is open for public comment until 5pm 10 October, information about the strategy and feedback links are available on <http://www.doc.govt.nz/eefs>