

# Indigenous Biodiscovery Wānanga

30–31 March 2026 - JetPark Hotel, Hamilton



## SUMMARY REPORT



AUTHENTIC TAONGA FOODS



## 1. Introduction

The Indigenous Biodiscovery Wānanga held on 30–31 March 2026 at JetPark Hotel, Hamilton, brought together around 60 researchers, Māori representatives, community leaders, government officials, and industry experts to explore the intersection of Indigenous knowledge, biodiversity research, and commercialisation.

This two-day event provided a forum for in-depth discussion on key challenges and opportunities in Indigenous-led biodiscovery, with a focus on protecting taonga species, ensuring Māori rights and interests are recognised, and building sustainable pathways for commercialisation that benefit both communities and ecosystems.

## 2. Purpose and Objectives

The wānanga was designed to bring together diverse stakeholders to:

- Explore the concept, practice and ethics of Indigenous biodiscovery
- Examine challenges related to protecting taonga species and recognising kaitiaki Māori rights and interests
- Discuss pathways from biodiscovery research to successful commercialisation
- Explore access and benefit-sharing frameworks, intellectual property protections, and non-monetary benefits associated with Indigenous biodiscovery and commercialisation
- Identify capability and training gaps for scientists and entrepreneurs in biodiscovery
- Build networks and collective approaches to scaling ethical Indigenous biodiscovery initiatives
- Co-create next steps and future directions for the sector

## 3. Attendees, Presenters, and Sponsors

### 3.1 Attendance Overview

The wānanga attracted around 60 participants, including 25 speakers and attendees from diverse sectors. Participants represented research institutions, Māori trusts and organisations, government agencies, commercial enterprises, and independent experts, reflecting the multi-stakeholder nature of Indigenous biodiscovery.

### 3.2 Participant Categories

- Iwi/Māori Trusts & Communities including representatives from Ngāti Kuia, Ngāti Hauā, Te Kawerau-ā-Maki, Ngāti Hinerangi, Ngāti Pūkenga, Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei and other iwi and hapū entities, as well as kaitiaki-led entities involved in the protection of taonga including Wairuakohu Charitable Trust, Mānuka Charitable Trust, Kānuka Charitable Trust, Pekepeke Kiore Charitable Trust, Tuhoe Tuawhenua Trust.
- Research & Science: Biotech research organisations BSI (Plant & Food Research Group, AgResearch Group, Manaaki Whenua Research Group, Scion Research Group) and PHF Science.
- Government: Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI), Ministry of Health.

- **Commercial Entities:** Private companies including Garage Project, Ōku Tea, Hikurangi Bioactives Limited Partnership, Wakatū Incorporation,
- **Universities:** University of Waikato (Te Kotahi Research Institute, Waikato Field Station), Victoria University of Wellington, University of Auckland, Massey University
- **Funding & Investment:** Representatives from Toroa Private Credit Fund, and other investment funds and grant-making organisations

### 3.3 Funding & Sponsorship

The wānanga was hosted by Te Kotahi Research Institute and Kānuka Charitable Trust supported by generous sponsorship from the Authentic Taonga Foods initiative at the Bioeconomy Science Institute, along with Kanapū and a number of research projects including MBIE Endeavour Grants (UOWX2346; PFR2432; UOWX2308), Vail Moran Community Fund (MA-006644), Wellcome Trust (328785/Z/25/Z) and AgResearch Flagship 2.



## 4. Programme and Presentations Summary

### **Day One: Monday 30th March 2026**

The first day of the wānanga opened at 9:00am with karakia, waiata and whakatau. This was followed by an introduction to the biodiscovery kaupapa led by Maui Hudson and Manu Caddie, who framed Indigenous biodiscovery within its national and international context and outlined the purpose and aims of the two-day gathering.

Participants then engaged in the first of seven structured group discussions to explore a foundational question: *"What is Indigenous Biodiscovery and what are the key challenges for biodiscovery research with taonga species?"* This early conversation set the stage for deeper exploration over the two days.

The morning continued with two substantive presentations establishing the national and international context. Aroha Mead provided critical grounding in the national framework, examining Te Tiriti, Wai 262, and Indigenous rights in Aotearoa. This was followed by KatieLee Riddle and Manu Caddie's presentation on international biodiscovery practices and protocols, offering comparative insights from global experiences. A second group discussion then allowed participants to explore *"How should we recognise kaitiaki rights and interests in taonga?"*

After lunch, the wānanga shifted toward case studies and applied examples. Miriana Stephens and Meika Foster discussed biodiscovery and Wakatū Incorporation, providing a concrete example of Indigenous-led approaches. This was followed by presentations on TKRI-aligned projects, where Peter Bircham shared work on optimising yeasts, Mike Algie presented fish cell production systems, and Marie Magnusson discussed seaweed polysaccharides research. Pita Turei and Silua Ettles also presented work from Wairuakohu, showcasing community-engaged biodiscovery initiatives. The third group discussion invited participants to consider *"How should we deal with provenance and non-monetary benefit sharing within biodiscovery research?"*

The afternoon continued with presentations on broader BSI (Bioeconomy Science Institute) biodiscovery partnerships. Moana Hamana, Isabel Moller, as the Authentic Taonga Foods team presented BSI partnerships with kaitiaki and Māori communities, followed by Louise Hennesey, Selai Letica, Bevan Weir, and Stefan Clerens showcasing additional BSI biodiscovery initiatives across the research landscape and key capabilities within the new Public Research Organisation. A fourth group discussion explored critical questions around *"Intellectual property and benefit sharing in biodiscovery research."*

The day concluded with an informal networking dinner that provided opportunities for continued wānanga and relationship-building in a social setting.

### **Day Two: Tuesday 31st March 2026**

The second day began with a commercialisation case study presented by Kristen Kohere-Soutar from the Mānuka Charitable Trust, providing real-world insights into moving biodiscovery initiatives toward market.

Stacey Whitiora and Richard Newcomb then outlined the MBIE/BSI Biodiscovery Platform, presenting the national infrastructure and policy framework aimed at advancing Indigenous biodiscovery. The fifth group discussion invited participants to grapple with *"Key challenges in moving from biodiscovery research to commercialisation"* – building on the case study and platform overview.

Following a brief break, participants heard from two additional charitable trusts advancing Indigenous-led work. Nikki Harcourt and Damian Skinner from the Kānuka Charitable Trust shared their industry development journey, followed by presentations from Helen Paul-Smith (Ōku Tea) and Mark Henderson (Harakeke Alliance), showcasing how commercial enterprises and partnerships support Indigenous biodiscovery. A sixth group discussion explored *"Capability building and training needs for Indigenous biodiscovery research and commercialisation"* – identifying critical gaps and opportunities.

Before lunch, participants were introduced to emerging tools and frameworks that support Indigenous biodiscovery practice. Manu Caddie presented Te Pūnaha Taonga, an online platform for kaitiaki to register interests in taonga and deliberate on taonga utilisation, while Maui Hudson, KatieLee Riddle, and Natalie Kusabs presented on He Tohu Arahi, Local Contexts, and the Benefit Sharing Compass. These presentations highlighted practical mechanisms and resources available to communities and researchers seeking to implement best practices in benefit-sharing and data governance.

After lunch, the final substantive session focused on Māori investment in the bioeconomy. Leah Davis, Kristen Kohere-Soutar, and Ryan Johnson-Hunt discussed strategies for unlocking Māori investor confidence and participation in bioeconomy innovation. A seventh and final group discussion invited participants to synthesise their learning and articulate *"Keys to unlocking Māori investment in bioeconomy innovation."*

The wānanga concluded with a discussion of pathways forward and next steps, followed by poroporoaki that honoured the relationships formed, knowledge shared, and commitments made across the two days.



## 5. Participant Contributions and Key Themes

Seven structured group discussions formed the backbone of the wānanga, allowing participants to explore critical issues in Indigenous biodiscovery. The themes below synthesise key points, challenges, and insights from these discussions.

### 5.1 Defining Indigenous Biodiscovery

Group Discussion 1: *What is Indigenous Biodiscovery and what are the key challenges?*

Key Points:

- Protection of the Indigenous aspect through commercialisation and distinctions between "Indigenous", "endemic", and "native" species
- Critical debates on terminology: "biodiscovery" vs "biopiracy" vs "bioprospecting" vs "bioactivity"
- Recognition that taonga species require different approaches than general biodiversity
- The importance of Māori leadership and self-determination in defining what "Indigenous biodiscovery" means for their communities
- Consideration of microorganisms and novel applications of Indigenous resources
- Protection of traditional knowledge and the distinction between science-directed vs Māori-directed discovery
- Need for clear, shared understandings across diverse stakeholders, with each group defining what the term means for them

Notable Quotes:

- *"Just because we can, doesn't mean we should"*
- *"Rangakura – curiosity, rangahau, insights, discover, test, rediscovery" (Kupu Māori for Biodiscovery)*
- *"The default is misuse as opposed to integration and understanding"*

### 5.2 Kaitiaki Rights and Taonga Recognition

Group Discussion 2: *How should we deal with kaitiaki rights and interests in taonga?*

Key Points:

- Diversity of kaitiaki and geographic distribution of taonga requires case-by-case approaches
- Informed consent, fair and reasonable benefit-sharing as foundational principles
- Institutions must take the lead in relationship-building rather than individual researchers
- Need for proper identification of relevant kaitiaki through databases
- Resource allocation for relationship building and "kanohi kitea" (face-to-face engagement)
- Having conversations before anything happens – establishing trust and understanding
- Kaitiaki rights and interests are encoded in Te Tiriti (Article 2)

- Existing tools and frameworks (40+ years of research) should be leveraged rather than reinventing

Notable Quotes:

- *"Co-decision making"*
- *"Build a waka for those who want to get on"*
- *"Just do it – get on with it"*
- *"We don't need to recreate the wheel"*

### 5.3 Provenance and Benefit-Sharing

Group Discussion 3: *How should we deal with provenance and non-monetary benefit sharing?*

Key Points:

- Understanding provenance and repatriation of data and resources to kaitiaki
- Non-monetary benefits including co-authorship and publication
- Utilising collective interest entities and iwi chairs forums
- Licensing and IP transfer arrangements for commercial use
- "Know-how" protections through controlled disclosure
- Reciprocity for knowledge collection and sharing
- Importance of biodiversity conservation and giving back to taiao alongside commercial activities

Notable Quotes:

- *"Respect and reciprocity for the knowledge collection and sharing"*
- *"Biodiscovery is discovering about ourselves"*

### 5.4 Intellectual Property and Benefit Distribution

Group Discussion 4: *How should we deal with IP and benefit sharing in biodiscovery research?*

Key Points:

- IP agreements tied to iwi, hapū, and trusts
- Ensuring benefits go back to the taonga itself and ecosystem wellbeing
- Tikanga approach to benefit-sharing: "If we are taking from Papatuanuku – how are we giving back?"
- Non-monetary benefits including co-authorship and publication recognition
- European examples of provenance-driven customer behaviour (local/regional branding)
- Benefit-sharing should occur even if research does not result in commercial outcomes
- Organisational benefit-sharing around the organism's identity and integrity

Notable Quotes:

- *"Tikanga approach: if we are taking from Papatūānuku, how are we giving back?"*
- *"Co-authorship – publication authorship (non-monetary benefit)"*

## 5.5 Research to Commercialisation Challenges

Group Discussion 5: *What are the key challenges moving from biodiscovery research to commercialisation?*

Key Points:

- Balancing economic gain with ethics and ensuring benefit-sharing supports Indigenous biodiversity
- Partnership approaches combining science with whakapapa and mātauranga
- "Valley of death" – 70% of ideas don't make it to market
- Funding challenges: co-investment needed but upfront and long-term resources required
- Resistance to geographical indicators as barriers to collective action
- Scaling challenges including land use, harvesting, crop maintenance, and climate adaptation
- Lack of infrastructure investment and need for unified industries
- Narrative reframing: commercialisation as supporting species wellbeing, not extraction
- Building Indigenous capability in commercialisation rather than relying on external partners

Notable Quotes:

- *"Commercialisation should support 'giving back' to Nature"*
- *"Narrative: can we imagine a future where commercialisation supports the wellbeing of taonga species?"*
- *"Building our own capability in the commercialisation space"*

## 5.6 Capability and Training Needs

Group Discussion 6: *What capability building & training needs are there?*

Key Points:

- Multi-dimensional capacity needs: cultural, intellectual property, commercialisation, marketing, and sustainability
- Training should target different system levels – from high school to government-to-government
- Place-based capacity-building alternatives to formal education models
- Building interest in research and business from rangatahi (youth) level
- Tuakana-teina (mentoring) relationships and succession planning
- Multi-disciplinary teams needed with expertise in Te Ao Māori, science, commerce, and regulatory
- Horticultural skills, taiao monitoring, certification, and wānanga contexts all valuable
- Making space for smallholders and alternative commercial models
- Ensuring research supports community and Māori priorities with two-way navigation

Notable Quotes:

- *"Rangatahi understand the opportunities and mahi available to them"*

- *"The Biodiscovery Platform should focus on building multi-disciplinary teams with expertise in Te Ao Māori, science, commerce, regulatory, biodiversity/sustainable land and water use"*
- *"Supporting early career researchers with tuakana – experienced people who can provide guidance"*

## 5.7 Māori Investment in Biodiscovery/Bioeconomy Innovation

Group Discussion 7: *What are the keys to unlocking Māori investment in bioeconomy innovation?*

Key Points:

- Moving from a value-based to profit-based approach requires careful negotiation
- Addressing accessibility and support for whānau without existing resources
- Power-sharing and equity in partnerships and governance
- Utilising Māori-led frameworks and tools for benefit-sharing and data governance
- Increasing rangatahi involvement in decision-making and succession
- Securing iwi mandates for representation on governance structures
- Transparency and clear expectations around investment returns and social/environmental benefits



## 6. Proposals for Next Steps and Recommendations

Participants identified the following priorities and actions to move Indigenous biodiscovery forward:

- a) **Develop a Sector Overview and Summary:** Create a one-page summary of the wānanga and biodiscovery landscape to share widely with stakeholders.
- b) **Establish a Private Investment Platform:** Develop mechanisms for Māori investment groups and whānau to access and track biodiscovery opportunities, with accessible entry points for those without existing resources.
- c) **Create a Biodiscovery Hub:** Establish a network connecting researchers and communities to facilitate knowledge-sharing and collaboration.
- d) **Develop Training and Capability Pathways:** Create "Te Ara Pōtiki" and other tailored support and capacity-building programmes for Māori scientists, early career researchers and graduate students, entrepreneurs, and community leaders.
- e) **Produce a Biodiscovery Guide/Map:** Develop a one-page visual guide or landscape map showing biodiscovery activities, opportunities, and connections.
- f) **Advance Multi-Trophic Regeneration:** Link commercialisation efforts to regeneration and "giving back" to taonga and taiao.
- g) **Build a Landscape of Biodiscovery Activities:** Map existing and emerging biodiscovery initiatives to identify gaps, synergies, and opportunities for collaboration.
- h) **Plan Future Wānanga:** Schedule regular gatherings to maintain momentum, deepen relationships, and refine strategic direction.
- i) **Strengthen Collaboration and Synthesis:** Link biodiscovery initiatives to commercialisation and trade with sustained coordination and communication.
- j) **Fund Relationship Building:** Allocate resources for the "1000 cups of ti" – essential conversations and relationship-building with whānau, hapū, and iwi.
- k) **Develop Industry Standards and Playbooks:** Co-create overarching principles, guidelines, and case studies for Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS), Indigenous IP protection, and commercialisation.
- l) **Establish Governance and Representation:** Form an Indigenous Biodiscovery Charitable Trust or steering committee with iwi representation and clear mandates.
- m) **Leverage Existing Tools and Frameworks:** Utilise established resources including Rauika Mangai guide, Te Pūnaha Taonga, He Tohu Arahi, Local Contexts BC/TK Labels, and Benefit Sharing Compass.
- n) **Create Māori-Led Biodiscovery Platform Focus:** Ensure the BSI Biodiscovery Platform prioritises multi-disciplinary teams with Te Ao Māori expertise.
- o) **Build Communication Strategies:** Develop clear, jargon-free communication for whānau, landowners, government, and international stakeholders.
- p) **Support Institutional and Industry ABS Policies:** Encourage research institutes, and companies to adopt robust Access and Benefit-Sharing policies.
- q) **Promote Cross-Disciplinary Engagement:** Facilitate more wānanga and networking events bringing together diverse expertise in science, business, governance, and mātauranga Māori.
- r) **Establish Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E):** Develop frameworks to track progress, outcomes, and impact of biodiscovery initiatives on communities, species, and ecosystems.
- s) **Address Regulatory Barriers:** Work with government to clarify and streamline regulatory frameworks that currently impede innovation while protecting taonga and rights.

## 7. Key Recommendations

1. **Put Mātauranga and Kaitiakitanga at the Heart:** All biodiscovery initiatives must centre Indigenous knowledge, rights, and taiao stewardship. Decisions should reflect tikanga and ensure the wellbeing of taonga species and ecosystems.
2. **Prioritise Māori Leadership and Self-Determination:** Move beyond consultation to co-decision making and Māori-led processes. This requires institutions to shift power and invest in relationship-building.
3. **Build Sustained, Inclusive Networks:** Create structures and platforms that bring together diverse stakeholders – scientists, kaitiaki, entrepreneurs, investors, and government – in transparent, equitable partnerships.
4. **Invest in People and Relationships:** Fund the conversations, mentoring, and relationship-building essential to Indigenous biodiscovery. Time and face-to-face engagement ("kanohi kitea") are non-negotiable.
5. **Link Commercialisation to Conservation and Regeneration:** Develop commercial models that benefit taonga species and ecosystems, not just extract from them. Benefit-sharing should flow back to nature and communities.
6. **Standardise ABS Practices and IP Protection:** Create industry-wide standards and templates for Access & Benefit-Sharing, intellectual property, and commercialisation protocols to ensure consistency and protect communities.
7. **Expand Capability and Training Across the Sector:** Invest in multi-disciplinary capacity-building for Māori scientists, entrepreneurs, and community leaders at all levels – from high school to government.
8. **Secure Long-Term, Flexible Funding:** Biodiscovery requires patient capital and sustained investment over long timeframes. Funding cycles must align with relationship-building and commercialisation realities.
9. **Establish Clear Governance and Accountability:** Create transparent governance structures with Māori representation and accountability mechanisms to ensure decisions reflect community interests and values.
10. **Use Data and Evidence for Continuous Improvement:** Implement monitoring and evaluation frameworks to track progress, identify barriers, and adapt strategies based on real-world learning.
11. **Leverage and Build on Existing Tools:** Rather than reinventing, utilise and expand proven frameworks like Te Pūnaha Taonga, Local Contexts labels, Benefit Sharing Compass, and established ABS protocols.
12. **Foster Cross-Sector Communication:** Develop clear, accessible communication strategies in te reo Māori and English that resonate with whānau, scientists, investors, and policymakers.



## 8. Conclusion

The Indigenous Biodiscovery Wānanga 2026 successfully brought together a diverse, dedicated community of researchers, kaitiaki, entrepreneurs, and policymakers to explore the future of Indigenous-led biodiscovery in Aotearoa. The wānanga affirmed that biodiscovery must be grounded in mātauranga Māori, guided by tikanga, and centred on protecting taonga species and recognising Indigenous rights and interests.

While significant work has been done over the past 40 years in access and benefit-sharing, intellectual property protection, and commercialisation, many challenges remain. These include navigating regulatory barriers, securing sustained funding, building Indigenous capacity in commercialisation, and ensuring power and resources flow back to communities and ecosystems.

The proposals and recommendations outlined in this report provide a roadmap, or at least some signposts and reference points, for the next phase of Indigenous biodiscovery in Aotearoa. Success will require commitment from all stakeholders – kaitiaki collectives, researchers, institutions, government, investors, and communities – to move from aspirations and good intentions to meaningful partnership, shared decision-making, and collective action. There is an urgency to get frameworks in place given the regulatory vacuum offering no protection for Māori rights and responsibilities, let alone the rights and interests of taonga and ecosystems.

Around one third of participants completed post-event surveys (summarised in the Appendix), providing overwhelmingly positive feedback. The majority rated overall satisfaction as 5 out of 5 and gave strong recommendation scores. They particularly appreciated the real-world case studies from Mānuka and Kānuka Charitable Trusts, the balance between presentations and discussions, and the cultural grounding of the event. The venue arrangement supported valuable networking and relationship-building. Constructive suggestions included earlier notification and clearer briefing, stronger iwi/hapū and Kaitiaki Māori representation, more interactive group discussion formats, and dedicated sessions on legal frameworks. Respondents requested ongoing connection mechanisms including an attendee list, regular newsletters, and future in-person wānanga. As one participant noted: *"In person wananga are very valuable - they create an opportunity to pause and reflect and move kaupapa forward."* Participants expressed strong interest in continuing the kōrero and building collective approaches to protecting taonga species.

Overall, participants expressed strong commitments to this kaupapa and to working together to realise a future where Indigenous biodiscovery supports the wellbeing of taonga species, strengthens Māori communities, and contributes to a thriving, regenerating Aotearoa. Each of us – particularly those who have influence in government, industry and research organisations – has a responsibility to do what we can to progress the proposals and recommendations contained in this report.

This event is intended to be an annual fixture, hopefully with support from the Biodiscovery Platform hosted by the BSI, we will be able to do a stock-take each year of progress or regress on the issues and recommended actions moving forward.



# Appendix 1: Post-Event Participant Survey Responses

## Overall Satisfaction and Engagement

Approximately 30% of participants completed post-event feedback surveys, providing valuable insights into their experience of the wānanga. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with participants expressing high levels of satisfaction and strong intentions to recommend the event to others.

Overall satisfaction ratings demonstrated strong approval: 75% rated their satisfaction as 5 out of 5 ("extremely satisfied"), 17% rated it 4 out of 5, and only one respondent rated it 3 out of 5. When asked about likelihood of recommending the event to a friend or colleague, the response was equally enthusiastic: Half of the respondents gave it a perfect score of 10/10, a quarter gave it 9/10, and another quarter gave it a rating of 5 to 8/10, reflecting strong overall endorsement with very few reservations.

## Highlights and Strengths

Participants identified several elements of the wānanga that were particularly valuable:

### Most Interesting Presentations

Respondents highlighted a strong interest in real-world case studies and commercialisation examples:

- Mānuka Charitable Trust and Kānuka Charitable Trust presentations, with particular praise for the deep insights into moving from research to commercial products
- Harakeke Alliance and Ōku Tea presentations showcasing practical industry partnerships
- Wakatū Inc. case study demonstrating Indigenous-led biodiscovery approaches
- Aroha Mead's presentation on national context and Māori rights frameworks
- Emerging tools and frameworks sessions (Te Pūnaha Taonga, He Tohu Arahi, Local Contexts, Benefit Sharing Compass)
- Cross-sector presentations spanning science, business, and cultural frameworks

### Event Structure and Organisation

Participants praised multiple aspects of how the wānanga was organized:

- Balance between presentations and group discussions, maintaining engagement throughout
- Diverse representation of stakeholders (research, Māori trusts, government, commercial, investors)
- High-quality hospitality and venue logistics
- Sufficient time for both formal sessions and informal networking
- Incorporation of cultural elements (karakia, mihi, poroporoaki)
- Opportunity for side conversations and relationship-building during meals and breaks

### Representative Quotes

*"This was one of the better conferences I've been to so no other feedback at this point."*

*"This was a wonderful event juggling room interaction with opportunity to discuss with individuals well."*

*"Personally, I believe it was structured very well and having time to discuss after presentations kept everyone engaged."*

*"The content was consistently interesting but the foundations, emerging tools, and mānuka and kānuka trust sessions provided excellent framing and top-level view."*

*"It was useful to have the space to wānanga as Māori around our tables about the issues discussed. We need more spaces like this to develop our whakaaro and collective approaches to biodiscovery as researchers, entrepreneurs, and tangata whenua."*

## **Areas for Improvement**

While feedback was predominantly positive, participants offered constructive suggestions for future events:

### **Communication and Preparation**

Several respondents requested earlier notification and clearer briefing materials:

*"I think the preparation could have come a bit earlier than the actual event date, a clearer explanation of what the event is about and its objectives. For example I was given 2 weeks notice that the event was taking place and was informed that I would be speaking but wasn't given a brief on what I was to speak about."*

**Recommendation:** Provide 6-8 weeks advance notice, detailed event briefing documents, speaker briefs, and clear session descriptions to help participants prepare.

### **Participant Representation**

One respondent noted that travel constraints meant the event was "a little science heavy" and suggested more Kaitiaki Māori representation:

*"When discussing taonga species perhaps we need more Kaitiaki Māori in the room, people who mahi in te taiao with the taonga to bring a more grounded perspective."*

Another noted concerns about BSI representation: *"BSI felt overrepresented."*

**Recommendation:** For future events, ensure intentional balance across sectors, with stronger iwi/hapū and kaitiaki representation from different regions.

### **Group Discussion Format**

One participant suggested enhancing engagement in group discussions through interactive tools:

*"Change up the format of some of the group kōrero. To keep people engaged with the task. e.g., dot voting/prioritisation, Prompt cards, Live polling tools, visual mapping."*

**Recommendation:** Introduce interactive facilitation techniques, visual recording, and varied breakout formats for future discussions.

### **Presentation Duration**

One respondent suggested: *"20min presentation slots as a min"* to allow presenters more depth.

### **Access to Legal and Policy Expertise**

Two respondents specifically requested more in-depth discussion from lawyers and Māori legal experts:

*"There were two lawyers from BSI there. I would have liked to hear more kōrero from them / or independent Māori law experts. They had strong knowledge of systems and*

*process, what Māori rights were and what to look out for. This would be very helpful kōrero for protecting Māori interests moving forward."*

Recommendation: Establish dedicated sessions or working groups on legal frameworks, IP protection, and regulatory navigation.

## **Suggestions for Network Development & Ongoing Engagement**

Participants expressed enthusiasm for maintaining connections and building on the momentum from the wānanga:

### **Participant List and Communication**

Multiple respondents (3) specifically requested an attendee list and regular communication channels:

*"A participant list would be really useful; there were a lot of new faces."*

*"An email list of all attendees to get in contact with people from the wānanga. It would be great to receive updates on the various kaupapa discussed at the wānanga. There are so many exciting and impactful projects underway."*

*"Taonga protection"*

### **Ongoing Hui and Engagement**

Respondents advocated for regular in-person and online engagement:

*"Starting a regular engagement mode e.g. bi-monthly Zoom/Teams to disseminate info, increase exposure, update kaupapa."*

*"A periodic newsletter would be great when there is an update from a project or maybe if there are questions arising a participant could be asked to respond?"*

*"Could make it a regular occurrence and tie it in with the Biodiscovery Platform."*

### **Value of In-Person Wānanga**

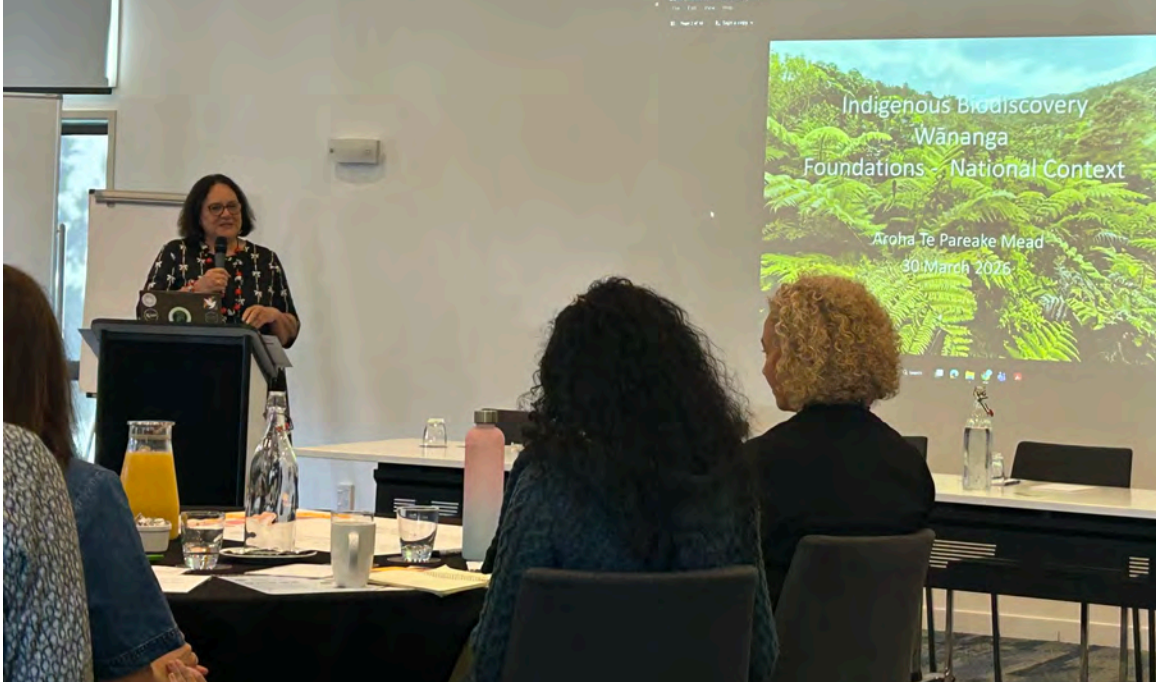
One respondent eloquently described the unique value of face-to-face gatherings:

*"In person wananga are very valuable - they create an opportunity to pause and reflect, progress 'group think' and move kaupapa forward. Having the conference at a venue where people were staying and eating was also beneficial as it increased opportunities for side kōrero and pushing forward other kaupapa."*

### **Strengthening Iwi and Hapū Engagement**

One respondent called for deeper iwi engagement and ongoing dialogue:

*"I would encourage follow up hui/wānanga from this, with increased iwi/hapū representation. I would be interested in continuing the kōrero online or kanohi kitea. It is a contentious topic for some and we need to unify and collectivise to continue protecting our taonga species, especially with the proposition of Gene Tech and foreign interest in our biodiversity."*



## Appendix 2: Participant List

Anna	Edwards	Maiangi Taiao (BSI) Agresearch
Aroha	Mead	Independent Expert
Bevan	Weir	Maiangi Taiao (BSI) Manaaki Whenua
Bruce	Hickman	Maiangi Taiao (BSI) Plant & Food
Christophe	Collet	Maiangi Taiao (BSI) Scion
Damian	Skinner	Kānuka Charitable Trust
Dan	Buchanan	MPI – Te Uru Rākau
Debashish	Munshi	UoW/TKRI FCPS
Essie	van Zuylen	Pekepeke Kiore Charitable Trust
Eva	Briggs	Maiangi Taiao (BSI) Manaaki Whenua
Helen	Paul-Smith	Ōku Tea
Hema	Wihongi	Wai262Taumata Whakapūmau Board
Hinewai	Doherty	Tuhoe Tuawhenua Trust
Isabel	Moller	Maiangi Taiao (BSI)
Jacqui	Wardle	Victoria University of Wellington
John	Te Maru	Wairuakohu Charitable Trust
Kathryn	Jansen	Wairuakohu Charitable Trust
KatieLee	Riddle	Te Kotahi Research Institute
Kim	Pickering	University of Waikato
Kristen	Kohere-Soutar	Mānuka Chartiable Trust
Leah	Davis	Ngāti Whātua Whai Rawa
Louise	Hennessy	Maiangi Taiao (BSI) AgResearch
Maddison	Barber	TKRI / Maiangi Taiao (BSI)
Manu	Caddie	Te Kotahi Research Institute
Marie	Magnusson	University of Waikato
Mark	Henderson	Ngāti Ruapani
Mary Jane	McCarthy	PHF Science
Maui	Hudson	Te Kotahi Research Institute
Meika	Foster	Edible Research
Michela	Anderson	University of Waikato (Seaweed)
Mike	Algie	Maiangi Taiao (BSI) Plant&Food FCPS
Miria	Koia	Pekepeke Kiore Charitable Trust
Miriana	Stephens	Wakatū Inc.
Moana	Hamana	Maiangi Taiao (BSI) Plant & Food
Nancy	Garrity	Maiangi Taiao (BSI) Manaaki Whenua
Natalie	Kusabs	Te Kotahi Research Institute
Nicki	Hemi	Ngāti Kuia
Nikki	Harcourt	Maiangi Taiao (BSI)
Peter	Bircham	Garage Project / VUW
Pita	Turei	Wairuakohu Charitable Trust
Poia	Rewi	Kanapū
Priya	Kurian	UoW/TKRI FCPS
Rata	Muda	MPI – Te Uru Rākau
Richard	Newcombe	Maiangi Taiao (BSI)
Ryan	Johnson-Hunt	Toroa Fund
Sandy	Morrison	University of Waikato
Sandy	Morrison	University of Waikato (FCPS)
Selai	Letica	Maiangi Taiao (BSI) AgResearch
Silua	Ettles	Maiangi Taiao (BSI) Plant & Food
Soraya	Hendesi	Biotenax Ltd
Stacey	Whitiora	Maiangi Taiao (BSI)
Stefan	Clerens	BSI Smart Foods & Bioproducts
Tania	Jones	Ministry of Health
Tanu	Gupta	Maiangi Taiao (BSI)
Te Hunanga	Ngapo	University of Waikato
Tredegar	Hall	Te Kotahi Research Institute – Tauhokohoko
Wallis	Oldham-Malcolm	Te Kotahi Research Institute

## Appendix 3: Indigenous Biodiscovery Resources



### [Te Kotahi Research Institute](#)

A Māori-led research institute that explores and develops frameworks, tools, and guidance to support Indigenous data sovereignty, biodiscovery, and equitable access and benefit-sharing grounded in mātauranga Māori.

### [Te Pūnaha Taonga](#)

A secure, Māori-governed digital platform that enables kaitiaki to register interests in taonga, connect with others, and collectively make decisions about taonga protection, use, and benefit-sharing.

### [Tiaki Taonga](#)

A national Māori-led movement building on the Wai 262 claim to establish a tikanga-based framework for protecting taonga and mātauranga Māori through law, policy, and collective action.

### [Local Contexts](#)

An international initiative providing digital tools such as Traditional Knowledge and Biocultural Labels to recognise Indigenous rights, provenance, and governance over data, collections, and genetic resources.

### [Frevia](#)

An international research programme (hosted by the University of Iceland) exploring ethical, legal, and social dimensions of genetics and data, with a focus on Indigenous perspectives and responsible governance of biological information.

### [Authentic Taonga Foods](#)

A collaborative research initiative of Maiangi Taiao partnering with Māori to develop high-value taonga-based food products by integrating Indigenous knowledge, science, and access and benefit-sharing principles.