

Climate Action through Civic Engagement

What will be the impact on children and future generations if we take no immediate action on climate change? This is the question asked by the Intergovernmental Panel (IPCC) on Climate Change in Working Group II Impacts Adaptation and Vulnerability Report, 2022. The answer highlights the implications for children aged ten or younger in the year 2020 who are projected to experience a nearly four-fold increase in extreme events under 1.5°C of global warming by 2100, and a five-fold increase under 3°C warming. Such increases in exposure would not be experienced

by anyone aged 55 in the year 2020 in their remaining lifetime under any warming scenario. The catastrophic consequences for children and future generations of failing to act on climate is of profound concern to Prof Hayward who has contributed as an author to several reports in the Sixth Assessment cycle of the IPCC.

However, action is still possible, and cities emerge as a key site for change. Recent IPCC estimates suggest cities are sites of over 70 percent of global CO₂ emissions, therefore cities provide an obvious place for solutions and community action. By 2050, around 70 per cent of the world's children will be living in urban areas, many in informal settlements. Hayward and her IPCC co-authors highlight that climate impacts will be felt disproportionately in urban areas, with marginalized communities, including young people, being most affected.

About Bronwyn

- PhD in Political Science and Environmental Planning
- Founder, Hei Puāwaitanga research group
- Visiting Senior Fellow, University of Surrey
- Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit
- Fellow of the Royal Society Te Apārangi



In her work as a political scientist for approximately 25 years, Bronwyn has focused on the central role of democratic processes in promoting sustainable and equitable societies. Heavily featured in this work are her local, national, and international collaborations in urban communities with a particular focus on aspirations of young people and Indigenous communities. These themes are seen clearly in Hei Puāwaitanga: Sustainability, Citizenship and Civic Imagination, an international research team and 'civics-lab' she founded at UC. The aim of the civics lab is to identify, understand and strengthen the long-term conditions of intergenerational justice that sustain democracies through environmental, social, and economic change.

"If our carbon footprint is our way of thinking about our negative effect on the environment, then in a lot of my work I'm thinking about what is our social handprint? How can we make a difference, not as individuals, (although we desperately need individuals to take responsibility) but particularly as collectives, as communities, cities, businesses, tribal organisations, and schools? When we act in solidarity, we can make a powerful far-reaching difference."

Research Impact

The issue: Prof Hayward's research prioritises democracy and sustainability for intergenerational justice, particularly in urban contexts. Her research and advocacy call for greater action to support communities and young people through integrated and inclusive policy and 'good relations'.

The research: Prof Hayward's impact strategy embodies the **SEEDS** model of strong ecological citizenship developed in her research. The core elements of the model highlight the skills and strategies citizens need to be active citizens and to promote equitable and sustainable futures and include: **Social agency, Environmental education, Embedded justice, Deliberative Democracy, and Self transcendence.** Bronwyn's research processes and impact outcomes are intertwined. In her research, agency is embodied and developed through participatory and action-oriented research methods with young people, particularly Indigenous youth who are most affected but typically excluded from research and decision-making. Her research includes leading a seven-city global study of low-carbon ways to support young people to flourish, focusing in particular on high energy domains of food, housing, transport, recreation, education, and employment.

The impact: Prof Hayward's work and impact is widely recognised and evidenced by being made a Member of the Order of New Zealand (2021) and a Fellow of the Royal Society Te Apārangi (2023) and receiving awards such as being named a Kiwi Bank Local Hero (2019) and Westpac-Stuff Media Supreme Woman of Influence (2022) for research into climate change, sustainability and youth studies. She was the first political scientist to contribute to the IPCC reports, including the 2023 Synthesis report and the only New Zealand author on the groundbreaking special report of 1.5 Degrees (2018). She's been cited in 45 policy documents in 11 countries, and she features heavily in public conversation in the media, for example contributing to more than 125 Radio New Zealand (RNZ) articles since 2007. Two former Children's Commissioners have noted Bronwyn's emphasis on listening to children's voices has changed policy practice. Her 2012 book *Children, citizenship and environment* was reproduced for a second #schoolstrike edition (2021), which is held in 137 libraries on 6 continents.

