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# Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Voices of the Future Peru 2024



**APEC**  
Voices of the Future

*Empower, Include, Grow*

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## Kia ora!

### *Voices of the Future, Aotearoa delegation, 2024*

- Sarah Williams, Christchurch, Bachelor of Industrial Product Design at the University of Canterbury
- Alana Chhour, Auckland, Graduate Analyst, Asset Allocation at NZ Super Fund
- Johannah Kātene-Burge, Te Ūpoko o Te Ika, People & Capability Business Partner at Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira Incorporated
- Flynn Rosie, Hāwea, Wānaka, Student Adviser at Ōtākou Whakaihu Waka

From the exceptional hospitality of Peruvian cultural immersion in Cusco, to participating in the APEC CEO Summit amongst leaders of the Asia-Pacific, this enriching haerenga to Peru has strengthened our relationships and belonging across Te Moana nui ā Kiwa, as active participants of Regional economy.

We have had the privilege to represent Aotearoa at an international level, navigating complex social, cultural and economic aspirations for young people of the Region. We came away from the programme with immense pride to celebrate the economic success of the Māori economy with our counterparts, and with a deep sense of interconnectedness across the young voices of the Asia Pacific future.



# Cultural Immersion

As part of the pre-APEC Voices of the Future program, we had the opportunity to participate in hononga taketake (indigenous connection) in Cusco, which offered a profound opportunity to connect with the heritage of one of Peru's largest indigenous groups. Guided by a Quechua tour guide, we explored iconic landmarks such as Sachsaywaman, the Maras Salt Mines, the agricultural Moray and the historic town of Ollantaytambo.

Our journey continued to Aguas Calientes, the gateway to the renowned Machu Picchu. We delved into stories of the Incan Empire and fascinating theories about Machu Picchu's origins, such as its role as a university. These insights highlighted the ingenuity and wisdom of the Inca civilisation and fostered a deeper understanding of Indigenous contributions to history and culture.

Throughout this experience, we felt a profound sense of safety and hospitality. The warmth and care of our Quechua hosts created an environment where we could immerse ourselves fully in the region's culture and traditions.



Macchu Picchu with our tour guide, Wilson, a local from Aguas Calientes



Flynn doing a hongi with Rodolfo, our tour guide in Cusco



NZ delegation at Moray, Cusco.

# Voices of the Future

## Introduction

The Voices of the Future (VOTF) programme nestled together the lived realities and united prosperity of 15 of the 21 member economies across the region in Lima, Peru. A resounding sense of hope encased the day of economic and well-being aspirations for the APEC region, with hopes to ensure all economies are able to shift to an equity-based economy that are respective of the natural environment.

On the first day, each of the economies were tasked with preparing a presentation to introduce their economy. To start, we played an introductory video from NZ Story showcasing New Zealand's natural beauty, innovation and Māori culture. We then stood with pride as Flynn represented the interests of Aotearoa, particularly to rangatahi Māori and rangatahi Tiriti, and the role we continue to play as valued, recognized and enabled participants of the Aotearoa economy. We concluded the mihi with everyone getting up to sing the waiata Tūtira Mai Ngā Iwi.

The programme was spent connecting with other economies and building relationships with young, passionate and intelligent people from many different cultures. It was interesting to learn about different cultural backgrounds through thought-provoking discussions and conversations, with everyone offering unique perspectives and contributions to the table.



After Flynn's speech and mihi, the entire New Zealand delegation got up and sang Tūtira Mai Ngā Iwi.



New Zealand, Russia and People's Republic of China, and Japan as a group going to lunch at USIL's nearby campus.

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# Voices of the Future

## Youth Declaration

Johannah and Alana navigated disagreement and debate with inclusion to privilege the Indigenous voice, representation and perspective now centred in the VOTF Youth Declaration Peru 2024. We highlighted three core themes from this year's discussions: Empower, Include, and Grow. These themes reflect our commitment to uplifting Indigenous voices and economies, enhancing digital safety, and fostering the transfer of cultural knowledge.

The opportunity for Aotearoa remains in the potential of the Māori economy and our increasing Māori workforce. Whereby 50% of Māori are aged 25 years and under, and the Māori economy has an estimated worth of \$100 Billion by 2030 - tools such as the VOTF Youth Declaration Peru 2024 are designed to bring attention to the need for investment in education, research and development, and the removal of barriers for indigenous, women and minorities alike to participate in the formal economy. In this spirit of hope, Aotearoa may continue to be a world leader that champions indigenous economic excellence, should our economy continue to transition to an intergenerationally-designed and purpose-built vehicle centered on equitable wellbeing for place and people.



Alana and Johannah in the Youth Declaration drafting group with the other drafters each representing the 15 economies after the declaration was signed.

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# Voices of the Future

## Breakout Sessions

In afternoon sessions, both Flynn and Sarah played key roles in facilitating and reporting back discussion to the VOTF body in areas of Sustainability and Youth Empowerment respectively. From these sessions, we observed the complexities of negotiations between multiple cultures, languages and government bodies.

Sarah's breakout group focused on the challenges and opportunities for achieving sustainability and resilient development across APEC economies.

Flynn's breakout group discussed generating a form of accountability throughout the APEC region that local and national governments needed in order to make decisions for the future and the youth generation.

## Cultural Performance

On the final evening of the VOTF programme, each economy showcased their culture through a cultural performance. In the spirit of unity, collaboration, and empowerment, we were able to showcase two waiata Māori, Tūtira Mai Ngā Iwi and Tōia Mai.

Performing alongside every other economy, the laughter and smiles were a reminder that all APEC member economies are intrinsically connected. In wrapping up our performance, Johannah provided context and a translation of these songs, and Flynn led an acknowledgement to James and Aileen for their mahi.



Sarah presenting on behalf of the Sustainability for Resilient Development breakout session



Sarah, Johannah and Alana presenting a koha to Aileen after the cultural evening.



Johannah explaining the meanings behind the waiata that we performed.

# NZ Relations

## Indigenous Peoples Economic and Trade Cooperation

The IPETCA Reception allowed us to network with policymakers, indigenous group leaders and indigenous business owners from Chinese Taipei, Australia, Canada, the USA and New Zealand. From this evening, both Flynn and Johannah were invited to discuss the potential of speaking about indigenous youth at the Métis Global Summit Policy Forum 2025 in Ottawa.



IPETCA Reception with attendees from Canada, USA, Australia, Chinese Taipei and New Zealand.

## Trade Minister Meeting

We had the opportunity to meet New Zealand's Trade Minister, Hon. Todd McClay, along with representatives from MFAT and New Zealand's Chief Negotiator, Vangelis Vitalis, in Peru. This meeting was invaluable in helping us better understand New Zealand's role in trade within the APEC region. Minister McClay's insights highlighted the importance of trade for our economy, which supports 1 in 4 jobs in New Zealand.

Our discussions focused on critical topics such as the role of youth, the importance of indigenous voices in trade, and the broader impact of free trade agreements. These conversations reinforced how crucial it is to ensure youth perspectives are considered in shaping trade policies that align with the values of inclusion and sustainability.



Discussions between the NZ delegation and Hon. Todd McClay.



Photo at the APEC CEO Summit Reception.

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# Presenting Youth Declaration to ABAC

## APEC Business Advisory Council Meeting

Alana was chosen alongside a Peruvian youth delegate to represent APEC VOTF as one of the youth delegates at the final ABAC meeting to present this year's youth declaration. In her speech, we emphasized the importance of youth as active contributors in shaping a future that is fit for purpose in the APEC region, as well as highlighting indigenous voice.

There was immense support from the New Zealand delegation, Rachel Taulelei, Stephanie Honey, Brett O'Riley and Anna Curzon. We are extremely grateful to be able to represent New Zealand and youth voice at a global scale to ensure our voices are heard.



New Zealand delegation with Julia Torreblanca, ABAC Chair 2024 and Peruvian Delegate at the ABAC meeting.



Alana presenting the youth declaration at the ABAC meeting.

## CEO Summit

The APEC CEO Summit was a thought-provoking experience that brought together world leaders, business executives, and policymakers to address critical issues affecting the APEC region. APEC VOTF were privileged to attend this conference and hear from these influential speakers.

Key highlights included insights from global leaders like Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Thai Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin, alongside influential figures such as JPMorgan CEO Jamie Dimon and TikTok CEO Shou Zi Chew. Topics ranged from artificial intelligence and sustainability to geopolitics and the impact of Donald Trump's election victory on global trade.

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# Acknowledgements

E hiahia rawa ana mātou ki te mihi maioha ki ngā pou tāngata nāna i tautoko mai i te kaupapa nei.

We would like to give a massive mihi and thank you to all of those who made this incredible opportunity possible. It wouldn't have been in any way possible, and it would not have been the experience that it was without the invaluable people and organisations supporting us.

Thank you to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT), Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI), APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC) and Ministry of Housing and Urban Development for sharing your knowledge in our pre-departure briefing in Wellington.

A huge thank you to the VOTF team, Courtney Davies, Jessica Smith, Tracy Han, Isabella Mory, and Lee-Arna Nepia for everything.

A special thank you to Jessica and Courtney, our educators who came with us to Peru, ensuring we were well prepared for meetings, presentations and represented Aotearoa as best as we could.

Additionally, a massive thank you to the Voices of the Future Team, Aileen Yap and James Soh, and the Peruvian delegation for organising a wonderful VOTF programme in Lima.

Finally, all of this would not be possible without our sponsors APEC Voices Trust NZ, Te Puni Kōkiri (TPK) and the Centre of Asia-Pacific Excellence (CAPEs), whom we would like to give a huge thanks to making this trip to Peru possible. We again extend our gratitude for your support in this kaupapa and for giving us the opportunity to have a voice at the table.

