

Navigating the future

This period of unprecedented change requires a robust and resilient response.

The Sport NZ Futures Project outlines mega-trends and drivers of change that will shape the future of play, active recreation and sport. Its objectives are:

- Expand awareness
- Challenge assumptions
- Provide direction and
- Improve the sector's ability to respond to the challenges it faces.

The highly participative process included workshops, environmental scans, parallel conversations with Māori, and surveys. It engaged thought-leaders across play, active recreation, and sport, including Recreation Aotearoa members. A suite of published reports distils deep-thinking and research, and includes imagined futures, the challenges these pose and potential responses.

Specific reports include:

- [Future Leisure Influences](#)
- [Demographic Change](#)
- [Climate Change](#)
- [Maori Environmental Scan](#)
- [System-Level Opportunities](#)

All Futures reports are available on the Ihi Aotearoa - Sport NZ website [here](#).



Figure 1 <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20131115-green-wonder-your-park-in-2050>

Implications for recreation

These identified **areas of change** have clear implications for recreation.

- **Technology:** increasing influence on physical activity – what, how and where
- **Data:** Insights into wellbeing require sensitivity including issues of [data sovereignty](#)
- **Demography:** a population that is ageing, and increasingly diverse; the changing nature of work, including the age profile of the workforce and volunteers
- **Inclusion and equity:** inequality will increase if left unchecked, requiring collective effort to address issues
- **Bi-cultural partnership:** Full commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi through policy, planning and provision
- **Localism:** **community** responsiveness and involvement; developing resilience, and enhancing autonomy
- **Climate change:** increase sustainable practice [reduction, mitigation, response]; building infrastructure resilience
- **The sharing economy:** investing in collaborative consumption; leveraging services, use rather than own

Challenges for recreation identified in the Futures process [are:](#)

- Declining participation in traditional sport and increasing active recreation participation
- Barriers to participation still exist – social, physical, financial
- Pressured lifestyles and conflicting demands reduce people's free time
- Lack of integration and coordination across the sector, with many groups competing for the same resources
- Risk averse governance keeping organisations stuck with underperforming operational and service delivery models
- Mono-cultural dominance that is blind to our bicultural and superdiverse nation
- Volunteer contributions continuing to be undervalued.

Review – are you...?

Building a just society that is inclusive, equitable and safe – now and for future generations?

Empowering communities and devolving decision-making to community providers, whānau, hapū, iwi and Māori?

Honouring Te Tiriti by working in genuine partnership, protecting Māori culture and promoting culturally distinctive ways of being active?

Improving people's **relationship with their environment** by safeguarding natural resources, enabling universal access, and mitigating and adapting for climate change?

Promoting the wellbeing of New Zealanders by acknowledging the value that physical activity brings to our personal and community wellbeing and our nation's identity?

Principles in action

What actions do you need to take?

1. No one misses out

ACTION: Understand and deliver.

- **Know your community** : find out who they are, what they need and what we can offer.
- **Identify bright spots** that are going well and support these.
- **Expand knowledge and insight:** research to understand changing communities and needs
- **Pro-actively partner:** *with* Māori and under-represented communities to deliver recreation.

EXAMPLES

1. Discounted free access to recreation for higher needs communities, such as and Sport NZ's partnership with the [Variety Club](#) and [Playing Palmy programme](#).
2. [PHAB Pasifika](#), co-designed with Pasifika youth, a range of programmes for young disabled Pasifika are on offer including dance and exercise.

Further reading and resources

For an extended discussion about the Futures Project, listen to a range of leaders on the Recreation Aotearoa's Futures [webinar](#) or other reports and insights are also available on the Sport NZ website.

2. Moving outside the Box

ACTION: reflect on current practice, ask questions, engage, plan and innovate

- **Seek clarity:** Where are our resources focused right now?
- **Build relationships:** with leaders and fresh thinkers. Link with groups doing it well. Develop partnerships with Māori (iwi, hapū, whanau) and establish bi-cultural practice.
- **Respond:** develop programmes and services that change over time – what is on offer, when, and how it is offered

EXAMPLES

1. [Te Arawa Journey](#) retraces the tupuna journey, and seeks to develop leaders and encourage understanding of self
2. [Equip'd](#) (Harbour Sport) are working to develop the latent talents of young Auckland Pasifika women

3. Creative leadership

ACTION: principled, creative leadership that reflect [Papa Noho](#) values and principles

- **Identify and engage:** under-represented leaders – youth, female, Māori. Reflect the communities you serve. Recruit fresh thinkers.
- **Develop:** build capability at all levels
- **Value people** – volunteers, non-traditional providers, motivated individuals: as facilitators, enablers, and innovators
- **Collaborate:** work in partnership with others towards common goals. Link with traditional and atypical partners.

EXAMPLES

1. [MaraeFit](#): Sport Hawkes Bay working with Maori to offer inter-generational activities based on marae
2. [Tangata Atumotu Trust](#) a founding member of the CCPHO in Christchurch offers programmes like Siva Samoa dance and Fiji Flavour Zumba.