



ITD Alliance

Global Alliance for
Inter- and Transdisciplinarity

The ITD Alliance Oceania Regional Network presents:

"Talanoa and Community Engagement Partnerships: Indigeneity and Science Lessons from the Pacific"

**Adi Vasulevu
Merewalesi Levu**
Indigeneity &
Peacebuilding
Fiji



Leo Dutra
CSIRO Oceans &
Atmosphere
Australia

May 7, 2026

The 60-minute webinar will be followed by a 30-minute open discussion - a "Talanoa" - where you can connect with others across Oceania who are passionate about inter- and transdisciplinarity.

Webinar Details

Date: Thursday, May 7, 2026

Time: [Convert to your time zone](#); Perth: 10:30am-12pm, Canberra: 12.30-2pm, Fiji and Aotearoa New Zealand: 2:30-4pm

[Register at Humanitix](#) (Zoom link sent to registered participants)

Description

This talk brings together an Indigenous iTaukei (Fijian) practitioner, Adi Vasulevu Merewalesi Levu, and a Brazilian scientist based in Australia, Leo Dutra, to reflect on how meaningful community engagement creates the foundation for long-term relationships through their experiences working across the Pacific. Through shared stories and practical lessons from their extensive collaboration since 2016, they will discuss what it takes to build partnerships that are grounded in trust, reciprocity, and local priorities—moving beyond short-term projects toward sustained collaboration. The speakers will explore how Indigenous knowledge and scientific approaches can complement one another, leading to effective impacts and will offer reflections on what respectful, enduring partnerships can look like in practice for communities, researchers, and institutions working in the region. Moderation will be by Giedre Kligyte of the Transdisciplinary School at the University of Technology Sydney. This hour-long webinar will be followed by a 30-minute open discussion – a Talanoa – where you can connect with others across Oceania who are passionate about inter- and transdisciplinarity. A recording of the webinar will be available from the [ITD Alliance Oceania Regional Network](#) web page after the event.

ITD Alliance Oceania Regional Network

Contact: info@itd-alliance.org Web: <https://itd-alliance.org/oceania-regional-network/>

Speakers

Adi Vasulevu Merewalesi Levu is a prominent Fijian woman leader; a peacebuilding practitioner with over 20 years of experience across the Pacific region. As a co-founder of the Pacific Center for Peacebuilding and Transcend Oceania, she has been instrumental in advancing justice, non-violence, and community-led transformative development. Her work focuses on bridging indigenous traditional knowledge with Western concepts through initiatives like the Oceania Peacebuilding Institute (OPI). Specializing in mediation, trauma-informed healing, and restorative justice, she has led regional missions in Fiji, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and in other countries in the Pacific & beyond. Through partnerships with global networks like GPPAC and scientific organizations like CSIRO, she continues to elevate indigenous-led, evidence-informed approaches to sustainable peace and social research. *Key Roles:* Executive Director of Transcend Oceania 2017-2025; Co-founder and Program Coordinator of the Pacific Center for Peacebuilding 2007-2012. *Regional Impact:* Extensive peacebuilding and mediation work across Fiji, Melanesia, and Polynesia. *Innovation:* Co-founded/ Established the Oceania Peacebuilding Institute (OPI) to provide regional education and training. *Approach:* Integrates indigenous relational practices with restorative justice and in partnership with scientific research. [Online profile.](#)

Dr Leo Dutra is a Senior Research Scientist with the Fisheries Assessment and Marine Ecology Team at CSIRO Oceans & Atmosphere, working at the nexus of marine resources and people. His transdisciplinary research centres on co-designing applied science with government and non-government partners, industry, and First Nations peoples to support sustainable marine livelihoods and resilient ocean industries. Leo has partnered with practitioners and communities across Australia (including Commonwealth fisheries, Torres Strait, Kakadu, and the Great Barrier Reef) and internationally in the Pacific, with recent work on blue carbon livelihoods in Fiji and food system transformation in Kiribati and Solomon Islands. Across these settings, Leo focuses on governance, climate impacts, and adaptation in socio-ecological systems, often requiring careful translation between scientific methods and local cultural worldviews. [Online profile.](#)

ITD Alliance Oceania Regional Network

Inter- and transdisciplinarians often have a hard time finding each other to share insights and experiences. The [ITD Alliance Oceania Regional Network](#) provides regular online networking opportunities (talanoa), following stimulating webinars that aim to showcase some of the best educational and research practices in the Pacific, New Zealand and Australia. We also ensure that the unique characteristics of the Oceania region are represented on the global stage. [Visit the network web page](#) and subscribe for notice of future activities.

We are grateful to [NITRO-Oceania](#) (Network of Leaders of Interdisciplinary and Transdisciplinary Research Organisations – Oceania) for support.

[Register to participate](#) in the “**Talanoa and Community Engagement Partnerships: Indigeneity and Science Lessons from the Pacific**” webinar, May 7, 2026.