

## When I'm surrounded by nature, I feel grounded and at peace...

**Ananya Tariyal**  
**Hastings Girls' High School**

*Ananya was one of five young speakers invited to address the new HBRC councillors on Wednesday 12 November 2025. Their brief: to talk about what the environment means to them, their hopes for Hawke's Bay a generation from now – and the message they want councillors to take with them.*

Kia ora koutou katoa  
Ko Ananya tōku ingoa  
He ākongā ahau Hastings Girls' High School

Hello everyone and thank you for having me here today. The environment is important to me because it makes me feel connected to my roots. Both the land I was born in and the land I now call home.

The place I feel deeply connected to is the hills. They remind me of my ancestors and the stories that have flowed through generations. When I'm surrounded by nature, I feel grounded and at peace. It reminds me of manaakitanga – showing care, kindness and respect to all living things. And kaitiakitanga – our role as the guardians of the land and the water that sustains us.

In 25 years, I hope our region will be full of life, with clean rivers, thriving native forests and communities that live with kaitiakitanga at heart. I want Hawke's Bay to be a place where people from all cultures stand together to protect our environment with manaakitanga and unity.

My message to the councillor is to lead with courage, compassion and connection. To make the decisions grounded in kaitiakitanga and listen to the voices of young people who hope for a better and more caring future.

Thank you.