

New-look boards will get the best from CRIs

New appointees on Crown Research Institutes boards will place the CRIs at the forefront of innovation and economic growth, Minister of Research, Science and Technology Wayne Mapp said.

"The CRIs are central to the science that is a cornerstone of economic growth," he said.

"The CRI boards now have a much higher degree of accountability. They must have the drive and leadership to make a significant contribution to the economy.

"The people we are promoting or appointing in this round have all demonstrated exceptional skills in science or business and in many cases both," the Minister said.

Changes to the CRIs were announced in March, after the CRI Taskforce had reported to the Government. The report set out how CRIs can best deliver on national priorities and meet the needs of research users, especially business and industry.

Eighteen new appointments have been announced, including the promotion of two current directors to chair positions and four other current directors to deputy chair positions. The appointments include new chairs for the New Zealand Institute for Plant and Food Research Ltd (Plant and Food), Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences Ltd (GNS Science), and New Zealand Forest Research Institute Ltd (Scion).

The new chair of Scion is Tony Nowell, an Auckland-based professional company director. Mr Nowell has a strong commercial background, particularly in the food and manufacturing industries, and an ongoing involvement in research in New Zealand. In New Zealand he has most recently been the CEO of Zespri and Griffins. During the 1990s he held senior roles in the Sara Lee Group, culminating in the role of Regional Vice-President for Asia.

Michael Ahie takes over as chair of Plant and Food, after having served a term as deputy chair of IRL. Mr Ahie has held senior executive roles in some of New Zealand's major agribusinesses such as PGG Wrightson and the New Zealand Dairy Board. He has had considerable involvement in plant-based businesses and biotechnology. He will be the first Maori chair of a Crown Research Institute.

At GNS Science, current director Tom Campbell is being promoted to chair. Mr Campbell formerly managed the global research and development division of Rio Tinto and this makes him well qualified to take on the challenges facing GNS in the immediate future.

"I would like to acknowledge the contribution of the former chairs, Jim McLean (Plant and Food), Dr Russ Ballard (Scion) and Con Anastasiou (GNS Science), and thank the new chairs and directors for agreeing to serve on these boards," Dr Mapp said.

The full list of appointments is below. They take effect on 1 July.

CRI	Appointee	Designation	Appointment/ Reappointment	
Industrial Research Ltd	David Henry	Deputy Chair	Reappointment (promotion)	
	Professor Jan Evans-Freeman	Director	New appointment	
Institute of Environmental Science and Research Ltd	Ross Peat	Deputy Chair	Reappointment (promotion)	
	Tahu Potiki	Director	New appointment	
	Patricia Schnauer	Director	New appointment	
	Professor Bill Denny	Director	New appointment	
Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences Ltd	Tom Campbell	Chair	Reappointment (promotion)	
	Dr Claire McGowan	Director	New appointment	
	Professor Steve Weaver	Director	New appointment	
	Hon Ken Shirley	Director	New appointment	
Landcare Research New Zealand Ltd	Peter Schuyt	Deputy Chair	Reappointment (promotion)	
	Professor Grant Guilford	Director	New appointment	
New Zealand Forest Research Institute Ltd (Scion)	Tony Nowell	Chair	New appointment	
	Alison Andrew	Deputy Chair	Reappointment (promotion)	
	Judith Stanway	Director	New appointment	
The New Zealand Institute for Plant & Food Research Ltd	Michael Ahie	Chair	New appointment	
	Mark Stuart	Director	New appointment	
Research and Education Advanced Network New Zealand Ltd	Gillian Heald	Director		

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