



## **ANNETTE TE IMAIMA SYKES**

### **Director, Annette Sykes & Co Ltd**

Annette Te Imaima Sykes is of Ngāti Pikiao and Ngāti Māhino descent who focuses on Māori law in her own law firm. She has been actively advocating for human rights for over 35 years and is dedicated to bringing about constitutional change. She has also been involved in the Waitangi Tribunal Claims process, which addresses issues related to the cultural and intellectual property rights of Māori communities affected by government policies. She is an adjunct professor at the Faculty of Law at Auckland University as part of a commitment to ensuring the reclaiming of Māori law, Tikanga Māori as the first law of this nation.

Annette was one of the first members of the Māori Broadcasting Agency, which was established after successful court claims regarding the Māori language. She also served as a founding member of Aotearoa Fisheries Ltd and was appointed Deputy Chairperson as part of the Māori Fisheries Settlement in 1989.

Annette has represented Māori in various United Nations forums and has provided advice on issues such as human trafficking, promoting a nuclear-free Pacific, and advocating for Indigenous rights. She has held important positions in several organisations dedicated to sustainable Māori development.

Currently, she is a member of Te Tai Kaha Māori Collective and acts as an advisor to the Government in promoting Māori rights, interests and responsibilities in freshwater and taking part in the Resource Management reforms. She recently became the main lawyer representing Māori in claims against the government regarding the CPTPPA, ensuring that Te Tiriti o Waitangi is respected in free trade negotiations. Above all, she is a mother and grandmother and is deeply connected to her tribal communities who have supported her throughout her career.

Since 2022, Annette has held the position of trustee on the Crown Forest Rental Trust, succeeding Tā Taihakurei Durie. More recently, in December 2023, she was nominated to serve as a trustee on the Rotoiti 15 Trust. She manages her own firm of five lawyers, and she has mentored a number of young members of the profession into pathways in academia and litigation roles.

In recognition of her significant contributions to the legal field, Annette has recently been honoured with two prestigious awards. In August 2024, she was conferred the Access to Justice Award by the New Zealand and Australian Bar Association. This was followed in September 2024 by the bestowal of the Lifetime Membership Award from Te Hunga Rōia Māori, the Māori Law Society.