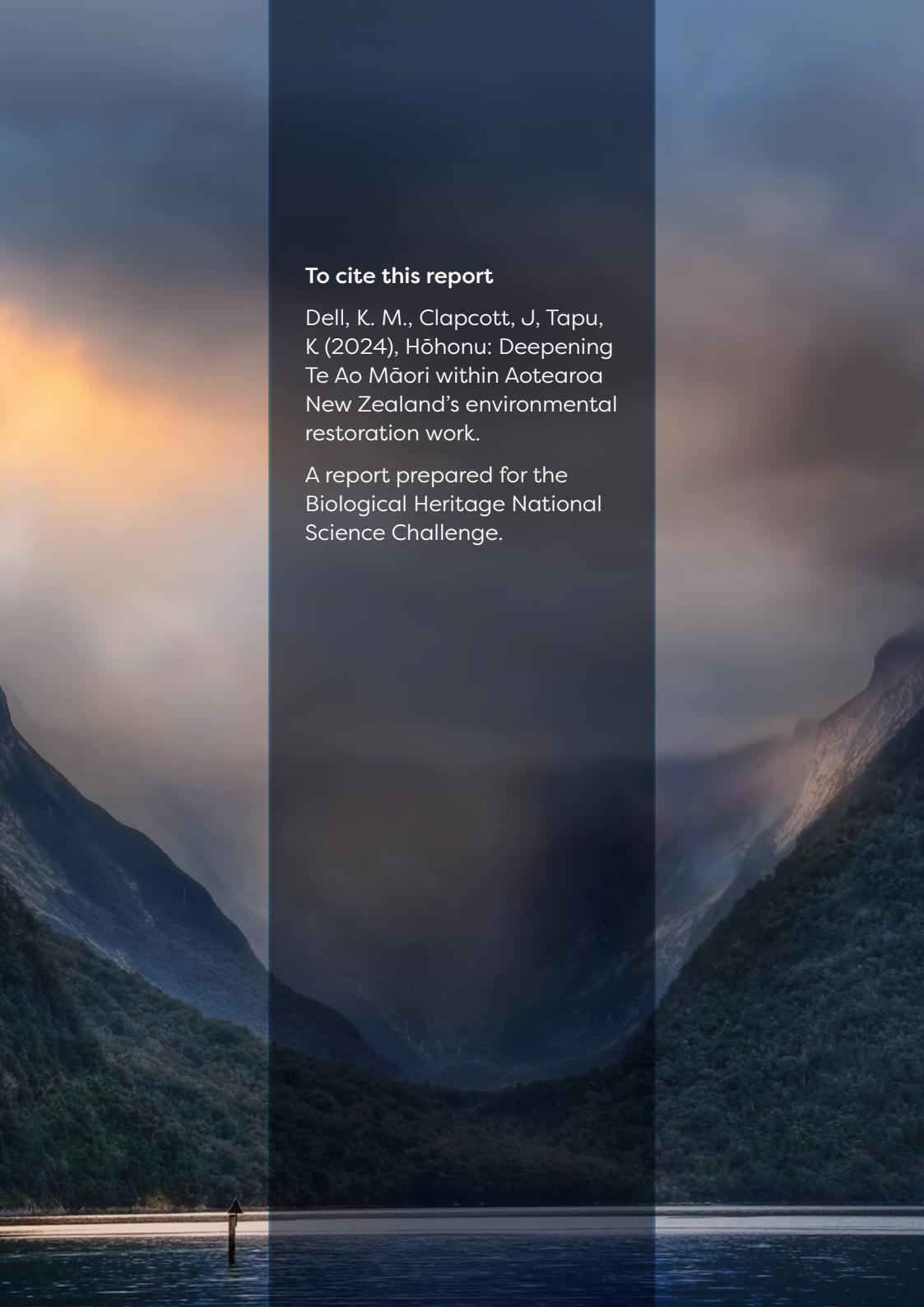




HŌHONU

Deepening Te Ao Māori
within Aotearoa New
Zealand's environmental
restoration work



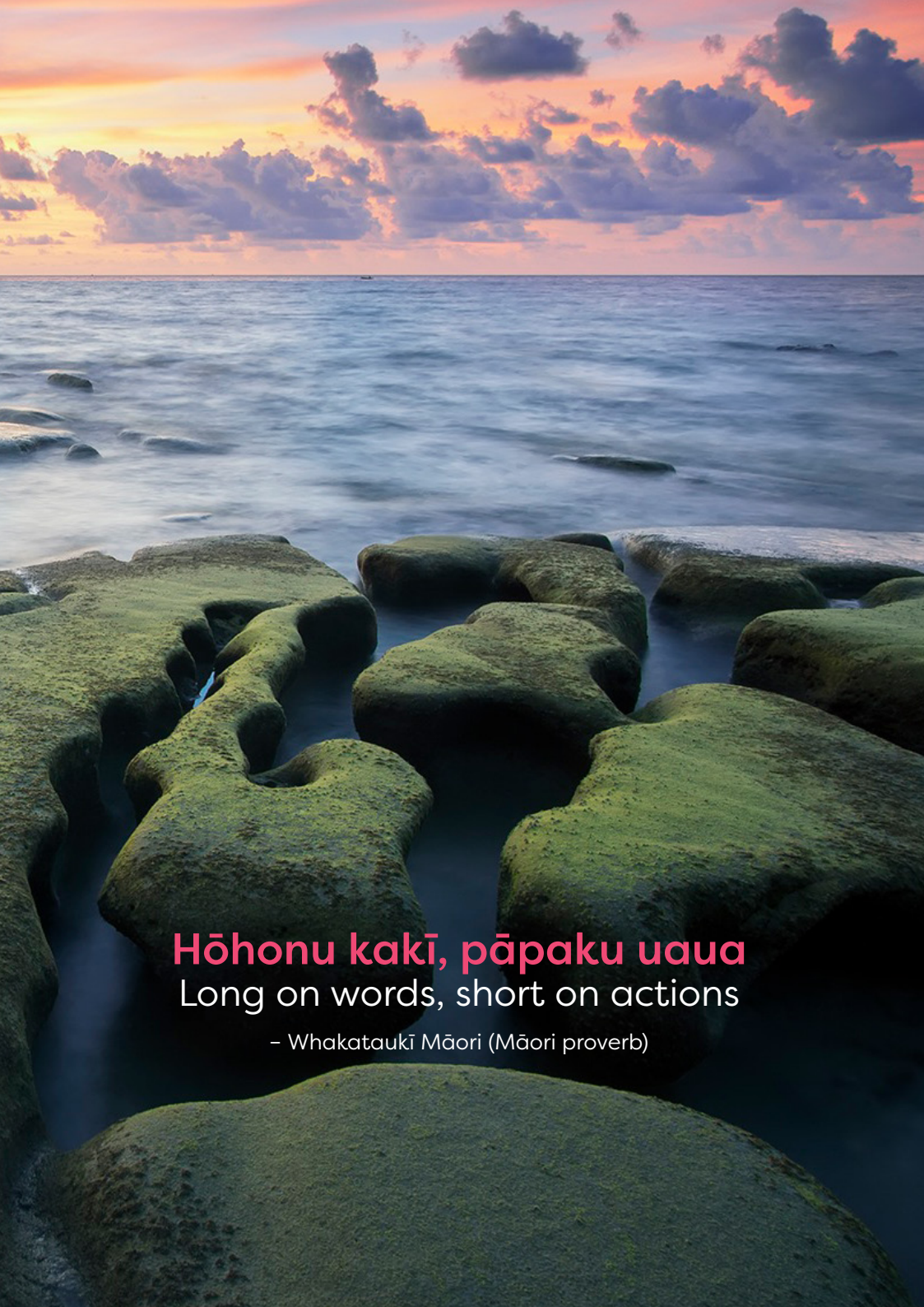
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Hōhonu kakī, pāpaku uaua
Long on words, short on actions

– Whakataukī Māori (Māori proverb)

Executive summary

I te timatanga, ko Māori te mātauranga tuatahi o Aotearoa.

Te Ao Māori was the first lore of environmental caretaking in Aotearoa New Zealand.

We can think about deepening our experience with Te Ao Māori as layered and continually expanding. The relationship is not finite or ever complete.

This report identifies several indicators for those in environmental restoration kaupapa to consider and assess the depths of how Te Ao Māori is influencing their environmental work. These indicators are outlined in a new tool called Hōhonu.

E rua ngā kaupapa matua o Hōhonu.

The two main objectives of Hōhonu are to:

1. Create positive impacts for the environment
2. Strengthen partnerships between Māori and Pākehā.

I hangaia a Hōhonu hei tautoko i te hunga tiaki taiao.

Hōhonu was developed to support those working in environmental stewardship, and specifically environmental restoration, to consider the skills, knowledge and awareness needed to embrace Te Ao Māori. Hōhonu allows environmental restoration projects to understand how deeply they are integrating with Te Ao Māori.

Hōhonu draws on information gathered through an analysis of websites, interviews with practitioners engaged in environmental restoration, and online opinion pieces. This research identified seven inter-related themes that describe people’s motives driving Te Ao Māori engagement.

E rima ngā pou, hei hiki te kaupapa.

From this, we have identified five dimensions that compose Hōhonu:

Mātauranga:	Philosophies, epistemologies and worldview
Tikanga:	Processes and practices
Te reo:	Language
Tangata:	Inclusion of Māori people in the environmental restoration project and activities
Moemoeā:	Vision

When these five elements are being practised, *kia hōhonu ai te mōhiotanga*, a deepening towards Te Ao Māori occurs. We also mihi and acknowledge that these dimensions represent typical categorisations that environmental restoration groups are already trying to enact within Aotearoa New Zealand’s Tiriti environment.

Introducing Hōhonu

The need for global participation to reverse widespread global declines in biodiversity and address the scale of restoration needed requires collective action. More recent recognition of the important role of Indigenous peoples in environmental stewardship has been steadily elevating. Kei ngā iwi taketake ngā mātauranga no mai rā anō, hei hāpai te taiao. Hence, we need to broaden paradigms to be more inclusive and to amplify collective efforts.

Over the last 30 years, Aotearoa New Zealand (hereafter New Zealand) has experienced tremendous growth in community-led ecosystem regeneration – in some cities, as many as 50% of residents are involved in ecosystem regeneration work. Of the thousands of communities across New Zealand that are now working to regenerate ecosystems, each has its own goals, its own unique cultural and ecological setting, and its own range of economic, social and biological enablers and barriers to success. Increasingly, these communities are coming together within wider collaborations seeking to achieve much broader landscape-scale impact. These collaborations involve iwi, hapū and whānau, community groups, businesses, farmers and many other sectors of society.

Effective communication is key to engaging communities, developing shared understanding and maintaining commitment to collective objectives in restoration initiatives. As New Zealand is a multilingual country, effective communication includes the use of te reo Māori. Current restoration discourse includes Māori loanwords (e.g. whenua, kaitiakitanga, mauri), hybrid expressions (e.g. taiao collectives, kaitiaki ranger) and English translations of Māori words (e.g. rāhui becomes ban, mauri becomes ecological integrity).

Māori words are arguably being used to build a national identity that signals an increasing awareness of Māori culture. This is specifically true of the environmental focus, signalling a growing consideration of a Māori worldview, beliefs and practices such as kaitiakitanga.

In this shift towards a more human-environmental ethic, which is aligned with, and draws from, Te Ao Māori, it is imperative that the centrality and legitimacy of te reo Māori, Māori cultural concepts and mātauranga Māori are maintained. Kia mau tātou ki tēnei taonga. Therefore, identifying, enabling and empowering the pathways to ecosystem regeneration requires a critique of how te reo Māori is being used in the restoration discourse and to what ends.

Deepening Te Ao Māori within environmental stewardship

There are myriad ways to work on enhancing Te Ao Māori paradigms in environmental systems, including, but not limited to, the use of te reo Māori. At the individual level this can take the form of increasing personal awareness, and uncovering bias and blind spots, while at an organisational level it requires a change in policies and strategies. Often, a lot of ‘undoing’ needs to occur to address and change the way we have been doing things. We recognise that facing and digging into this work can be overwhelming – a kind of ‘*where to start?*’ situation or ‘*what is the right way to do things?*’

Koinā te take o Hōhonu. This is why we’ve created Hōhonu.

Hōhonu is designed to help New Zealanders engage in environmental restoration by working through a process, and then assessing where they are on their Te Ao Māori journey and identifying potential areas for future work. The metaphor of depth, or hōhonu, is used to describe this journey.

What went into creating Hōhonu?

To develop this tool, we sought to examine how environmental restoration collectives and groups currently express their relationship with Te Ao Māori. We undertook a qualitative assessment using kaupapa Māori discourse analysis. Discourse analysis is a way to understand the meaning we make from language. Overall research questions included:

- ? What te reo Māori is being used by environmental restoration groups and how is it being used?
- ? What types of restoration groups are using te reo Māori and why?
- ? What is the effect of deepening Te Ao Māori into environmental restoration work?

E rua ngā wāhanga o te rangahau.

Our research took a two-phased approach.

Wāhanga tuatahi: Phase 1

In the first phase we systematically examined the websites of 15 environmental restoration groups. These restoration groups were identified for their existing work and relationships in the environmental restoration space. This meant manually scanning each web page for online content. Where an instance of te reo Māori content or a reference to Māori arose, we categorised the occurrence. Categories were then thematically organised to create the final characterisations: te reo kore / bereft of language, kotahi te kupu / single word usage, te reo kāwana / policy and political language, te reo tikanga / ritual and ceremonial language, te reo maha / language proficiency. These themes began to contribute to the conceptualisation of Hōhonu.



Wāhanga tuarua: Phase 2

Te reo Māori usage and references to Māori online informed the second research phase, which involved semi-structured interviews of environmental restoration groups (n = 11). Interviewing participants and recording their different viewpoints enabled us to enrich our understanding and flesh out how and why engagement with Te Ao Māori occurs.

We also analysed the discourse of several opinion pieces by Pākehā who are experts on Tangata Tiriti and on engaging relationships with Māori. The opinions of these Pākehā authors were sought to access their crystallised thinking on issues, challenges and solutions to working successfully with Te Ao Māori. Exemplar quotes were purposefully extracted as ‘Kōrerohia: Talking points’ for the tool, provoking thinking and discussion.

We then identified seven discourses, documented in this report. These discourses contributed to a multi-dimensional tool that reflects the complex ways that Te Ao Māori is expressed in organisations.



Ngā kaiuiui: Participants

We interviewed people engaged in collective approaches to ecosystem regeneration in New Zealand, including partnership initiatives, agency-led approaches, project-based initiatives, community networks and Indigenous collectives. These collectives are located around New Zealand, in both rural and urban areas, and many of the groups formed to address environmental issues. They include people engaged in pest control, revegetation, cleaning up litter along beaches and streams, and addressing land-use practices to improve local waterbodies. There is a mixture of Māori participation within these groups, from being Māori-led to having limited Māori participation. In addition, some participants belonged to constituent environmental groups that were members of collectives.

Participation in the project was voluntary and anonymity was offered. Participants were given the choice to withdraw data from the study one month after the interview and to access a summary of the findings once concluded.



Seven discourses: why should organisations even use Hōhonu?

From the restoration and restoring point of view, there's a lot to be gained from working with Māori. – Pākehā

Discourse (how and what we communicate with language) can give legitimacy to some ideas and not others. Particular discourses can privilege one type of knowledge over another and give priority to one group voice over others, consequently swaying resources and energy in a particular direction. Hence, the most persuasive discourses can become replicated and propagated through society to dominate the way populations and communities think about particular causes. Equally, it is through discourse that power can be shifted or changed. Hence, how New Zealand goes about restoring the environment is designed, implemented and resourced based on particular discourses.

The following discourses advocate for Te Ao Māori and show that when Te Ao Māori is well embraced, restoration work leads to better outcomes for the environment and relationships with Māori. There are seven discourses that feature in promoting Te Ao Māori within the environmental restoration space.

On the ground: literally and figuratively

We got a real understanding of Te Ao Māori and just a touch on what Mātauranga Māori really meant, and what kaitiaki really was – they were living it. – Pākehā

Te Ao Māori is informed by place-based understandings of the environment. Even when land features are situated close to one another geographically, there can be a huge amount of ecological difference between sites. Engagement with Te Ao Māori forces a place-based relationship of people to the land. The implementation of policy aimed at restoring the environment needs to consider place-specific issues, recognising that the starting points of each place will be different depending on context and need.

Environmental restoration theories may be produced outside of New Zealand, risking a danger of projecting these as universal theories scalable across the globe. Hence, more contextual-based frameworks and understandings are required. Adoption of Te Ao Māori minimises the risk of overly homogenising universalistic understandings of environmental restoration theories and policies that miss the mark of New Zealand's unique context.

Otherly realms: spiritual sense-making

Te Ao Māori enhances spiritual relationships with the whenua, moana and te taiao. Te Ao Māori understands and relates to the environment from the perspective of atua and spiritual dimensions. Atua, or Māori deities, are used as a form of spiritual expression in connection to the environment. Māori use spiritual constructions of reality to enrich types of storying and sense-making. Sense-making operates as a narrative mechanism through which individuals and communities can acquire comprehension of environmental phenomena. Spirituality typically views a person as part of a wider whole. Hence, spiritual notions help the process of decentring the self, giving people a stronger sense of connectedness to the wider world. Many environmental restoration efforts do not account for human and spiritual interactions with ecological systems, but Māori naturally use spiritual expressions to connect with the environment. This kind of wisdom-seeking can reach people on deeper levels of the psyche.

Unseen dimensions of reality: re-energising the environment

If you're looking after the kauri you can't [just] look after the kauri, you've got to look after the whole of the forest, because it's all intermingled, intertwined and interconnected. – Pākehā

Māori view environments as a form of dynamic 'unseen' energy. Collectively termed matangaro, some of these unseen dimensions of reality go by the names of mauri, mana, wairua, hau, ihi, wehi and wana. These unseen energies are often used as focuses for discussion by Māori to assess and analyse the nature of a particular environmental issue. For example, Māori notions of the world are imbued with an existence principle known as mauri. The concept of mauri is that everything is infused with a life essence, with mauri being the energy that binds all things in the physical world. All things that have this life energy can be expanded, diminished or transferred. Without mauri, life cannot flow into a person or object. The environment is thus imbued with a mauri. When the environment is framed as having a mauri, discussions and decision-making may take a very different trajectory and include issues or consequences that are otherwise not considered and often missed.

Who me? Personifying our external world

Whakapapa, typically translated as genealogy, is a classification system that highlights the relationship between things, including the environment and people. Te Ao Māori organises, interprets and explains all phenomena as having a source, connected through relationships. This style of genealogical thinking acts like a map, helping people locate themselves and nature's phenomena within the world and express their relationships to others. Thus, the world is a network of kin-based relationships that include inanimate and animate things, such as animals, trees, food and environmental phenomena, linking past, present and future. From this idea, everything, everyone and all phenomena are held together by connections. A deep understanding of connections from a whakapapa perspective assists with understanding ways to approach environmental restoration work. For example, the tohorā (whale) and

the kauri tree are said to share close whakapapa, and lived side by side and were inseparable. One went to the land, while the other went to the ocean. The kauri is now a threatened species and Māori take tohorā remnants to place under kauri in an attempt to cure and heal the trees. Scientists are exploring the bioactive connection of this whakapapa relationship.

Righting wrongs: seeking restorative justice

They are tangata whenua, they are the first owners of this land, it's been mucked up by many, by colonisation. – Pākehā

When discussing the natural environment, New Zealand and Māori people, it is impossible to separate the political and historical context by which Māori aspirations for the environment were subsumed. Although they resisted full assimilation, Māori were colonised by the British from the early 1800s. Capitalist Western ideologies accompanied and indeed drove British colonisation of New Zealand, and are now reflected in the mainstream or dominant New Zealand economy and relationships to the environment. Significant disruptions to Māori traditional systems of kaitiakitanga occurred. Māori environment caretaking is rooted in the understanding that the Earth is not merely a commodity but contains vital aspects linked to culture, identity and spirituality. Massive deforestation occurred and clean waterways were disrupted. Thus, within this context, how environmental restoration work is dealt with can carry political baggage because it represents a disruption of imposed systems. Including Te Ao Māori paradigms helps to address restorative justice.

Paradigm differences: offering new ways to rethink

Do we understand what Mauri is? Do we understand its depth? I don't think we do. – Pākehā

Māori worldviews are often renowned for qualities that promote holistic relationships with the environment, a connectedness to land and an intertwined sense of belonging to a universal life force. Therefore, the socially constructed worlds of Māori are often explored to provoke ways of thinking that might create more sustainable environmental

practices and harmonious living with the Earth. A powerful dimension of Indigenous insights in relation to Western perspectives is the ability to reconceptualise and open up new ways of seeing the world. The ways in which the world is habitually seen can be constrained by limiting and narrow images of those who are doing the seeing. Indigenous ways of being can challenge ways of thinking that are taken for granted and assumed, allowing new ways of knowing and understanding the world to be reimagined and perceived. Sometimes, Indigenous concepts may be so unique that they can offer a whole new rethink about issues. For example, giving natural features the status of personhood such as the Whanganui River elevates the environment to a hierarchical level equivalent to that of humans.

Mātauranga: special, unique and inimitable knowledge

I think that environmental work is pointless, without guidance from Mana Whenua, because I don't know nothing about this place, it's very hard to access that knowledge. I feel really privileged when I have access to that knowledge. – Pākehā

Currently circulating the environment discourse is the notion that mātauranga Māori is inimitable knowledge. This means that mātauranga is very specific and unique, and cannot easily be imitated. This is due to how mātauranga arises and accrues, which is from the intergenerational experiences of Māori who are living and have lived in the environment of New Zealand for generations. Knowledge related to rivers, plants, astronomy and horticulture accumulates over generations, so it often has a temporality that is context specific. Within this discourse perspective, connections to Māori communities are important because the knowledge needs to be shared and integrated under Māori guidance. Mātauranga supports biodiversity and ecological resilience, and also promotes community well-being to include respecting the cultural, spiritual and ecological relationships that Māori have with their traditional territories. Intergenerational transfer of mātauranga through sustained practices reinforces human and other-than-human links and whakapapa, and reciprocal relationships that are important for long-term commitment to taiao.



Five dimensions: what is Hōhonu?

Ka āwhina a Hōhonu i te reo ngātahi. Hōhonu provides a shared language.

Hōhonu describes positive environmental advocacy characteristics at different points along a continuum for five different dimensions of Te Ao Māori: tangata, moemoeā, mātauranga, te reo and tikanga. We arrived at these categories from both Wāhanga tuatahi: Phase 1 and Wāhanga tuarua: Phase 2 of this research. When these five elements are being practised, movement towards deepening levels of Te Ao Māori integration occurs for environmental restoration kaupapa.

Environmental restoration groups and individuals that are successfully embracing Te Ao Māori will be actively engaging with these five dimensions within their restoration work.

How can environmental restoration kaupapa use Hōhonu?

We have struggled. As a true Pākehā I have struggled with understanding Te Ao Māori. – Pākehā

Remember that deepening your relationship with Te Ao Māori is a process, and that learning occurs on a continuum and over a lifetime. For this reason, we have avoided creating rules or instructions to be replicated across environmental restoration projects, and have chosen not to provide prescriptive lists such as the '10 best things to do' to deepen relationships with Te Ao Māori. We want to work towards shaping the minds and hearts of those who advocate for the environment and who are willing to work more effectively at deepening their interactions with Te Ao Māori. Hence, Hōhonu is a tool that tries to teach kaimahi to use their own knowledge and critical thinking to make meaningful decisions about engaging with Te Ao Māori.

The Hōhonu spectrum can identify areas of strength and areas that need further development to help environmental restoration projects relate to Te Ao Māori at deeper levels. Hōhonu has the goal of assisting people to extend their thinking around what they can do to become more effective in deepening their Te Ao Māori relationships. The further you move along the Hōhonu spectrum, the more deepening is your developing relationship.

Inclusion of Te Ao Māori is complex, and every environmental restoration project has a Te Ao Māori journey that is unique. Try to minimise a sense of value judgement, which may be implicit when doing Te Ao Māori integration work. The goal is to be realistic without judging one another or the project about where they are on the spectrum. Hōhonu can be used as a baseline for growth and to recognise where current strengths and opportunities lie – although in many organisations work towards deepening Te Ao Māori is not linear and does not fit neatly into straightforward process.

Where to start?

The Hōhonu activation process involves a three-step method required for each dimension: Pānuihia – Read, Kōrerohia – Talk, and Whakaarohia – Think.



Pānuihia: Read

For preparation work, begin the process by reading the seven discourses. Then choose a dimension and begin with the identified reading component.



Kōrerohia: Talk

The talking points may appear confrontational and therefore uncomfortable. If this is the case, just sit with that feeling. Ko te kai o te rangatira, he kōrero. This should be done in groups because the work of talking should collectively shape group psyche. Use the quotes in each section to provoke discussion and hence gain a sense of where you may be situated cognitively and emotionally. These quotes have been accessed from Pākehā who work to understand positionality and identity as Pākehā. Don't be surprised when you discover that individuals on your team have different perspectives on where they land in certain areas, or when your constituents point to something that you had not yet considered. Don't shy away from this complexity. Instead, dig in and use it as an opportunity to deepen your collective understanding of Te Ao Māori and how it relates to your environmental restorations mission and the way you operate.



Whakaarohia: Think

Next, go through the Hōhonu evaluation tool. Situate yourself or your environmental project at the appropriate stage on the Hōhonu spectrum. There are five stages:

► **Tahuri ki uta / Back to the shore**

This stage represents people who have their back turned away from the kaupapa. They are people who perpetuate climates of exclusion and actively work against environmental aspirations and participation that seeks to engage Te Ao Māori. These may be people who are exhibiting traits of defensiveness and denial. However, we recognise that many environmental kaupapa are made up of advocates who demonstrate a high degree of willingness to participate meaningfully with Te Ao Māori. And those engaging with the Hōhonu tool are also unlikely to fall into this category. However, we have opted to include this stage to remain mindful that these attitudes make up a small portion of our nation's reality, and we still need to remain vigilant and aware of these actions and behaviours, which can prohibit meaningful relationships with Te Ao Māori.

► **Wai papa / Standing at the shore**

This stage represents those who may be on the fence towards making change to deepen their relationship with Te Ao Māori. It may reflect those who are fearful of change or who worry about getting things wrong. People in this category are not anti-Māori but typically take a bystander's stance, and they are yet to move towards activating their journey to integrating Te Ao Māori perspectives.

► **Wai perepere / Stepping into the waters**

This stage signals behaviours where initial steps are being made towards deepening Te Ao Māori into environmental restoration work.

► **Wai marama / Swimming towards understanding**

At this stage, activities will be exemplified and demonstrated through practices of inclusion, collaboration and co-design, leading to deepening of Te Ao Māori into environmental restoration work.

► **Hōhonu / Diving into the depths**

Finally, at this stage, actions demonstrate an active stance to be a good Tiriti partner. Behaviours will show up as championing, empowering and challenging others to proactively work towards Tiriti obligations of Māori and Pākehā.



Whakaarohia encourages individuals to turn inwards. We suggest that those in environmental restoration kaupapa ask themselves where they think and feel they are on the spectrum in each of the five dimensions listed in the tool. You might ask each individual group member to do this exercise on their own first, with an emphasis on reflecting and processing, and then host conversations to activate discussions and actions. You might also want to gather input from your members or constituents to get their take. As part of using the tool to generate project conversations about where you think your environmental restoration groups lands along the Te Ao Māori spectrum, you may identify areas where you need to prioritise efforts to move forward.

Revisit

Finally, you could revisit the tool regularly – maybe once a year – to help you and your environmental restoration projects track your Te Ao Māori progress over time.

Where to next?

It may feel difficult to tackle all five dimensions listed in the tool at once and with the same intensity. One suggestion is to consider the areas you are already having some success in and build upon them by going deeper into these areas. Another suggestion is to look at where you see gaps. If you notice a big gap in one area – for example, the Moemoeā dimension – and you have made some attempts to address this, you may need to set some learning goals to figure out how other organisations have been successful and why your approach has not yet worked. Set short- and long-term benchmarks and track them along with your other organisational goals.



How can we expect our progress to play out over time?

Again, there is no one answer to this question, but you will find that progress is slower at first and speeds up over time, with many opportunities for learning along the way. At the same time, as your environmental restoration group's Te Ao Māori integration deepens, you will discover entire blind spots that you didn't recognise at the beginning of your journey. When you make these discoveries, you may suddenly realise that you are not as far along as you thought you were in a particular area, and you may place your environmental restoration kaupapa back a step on the spectrum. Don't despair when this happens; instead, realise that the path to Te Ao Māori integration is not one way.

Big organisational changes – staff or leadership changes, or a funding challenge – have the potential to disrupt or slow progress. However, the more mission-critical Te Ao Māori becomes to your work, the less likely it will be that external changes will derail your progress.



HŌHONU

THE TOOL



TAHURI KI UTA
Back to the shore

Perpetuates climates of exclusion and actively works against Māori environmental aspirations and participation. Exhibits traits of defensiveness and denial.

WAI PAPA
Standing at the shore

Efforts towards making change may be stifled here, possibly due to a fear of getting things wrong. This position is not anti-Māori but behaviours could be 'frozen', typically leading to adoption of a bystander's position.

WAI PEREPERE
Stepping into
the waters

Signals for the need to change are being indicated. Initial steps to move in a new direction are being signalled.

WAI MARAMA
Swimming towards
understanding

Activities exemplify and demonstrate practices of inclusion, collaboration and co-design with Te Ao Māori.

HŌHONU
Diving into the depths

Behaviours champion and empower Tiriti obligations. Actions take an active stance that pushes towards being a good Tiriti partner. Proactively takes a stance against Tiriti breaches.

Tangata: Inclusion of Māori people in the environmental restoration project and activities

How are Māori people placed and related to within the environmental restoration project?

The relationships that our river group has with mana whenua, it waxes and wanes and it's hard and easy at different times. – Pākehā

Pānuitia: Read

Integrating Māori 'people' into organisations both internally and externally faces three major trends. First, inclusivity and diversity strategies have taken more precedence globally as awareness has increased around how marginalisation and exclusion can be systemically perpetuated, both intentionally and unintentionally. Second, and conversely, resistance to inclusion and diversity has become a highly political and contentious issue. Some groups holding divergent ideological views on issues related to diversity, equity and inclusion create political polarisation, leading to barriers to meaningful dialogue and collaboration on inclusivity initiatives.

The third trend refers to the changing identities of Māori. After generations of colonisation, Māori now have diverse identities, existing within a range of cultural realities. Some Māori are deeply enculturated into traditional Māori practices and language (te reo me ngā tikanga Māori), while others identify as Māori yet culturally appear indistinguishable from Pākehā and other New Zealanders. Māori people are diverse in how they relate to their 'Māoriness'. Māori are in situations where they are negotiating two sets of cultural norms, possibly trying to maintain a focus on 'internal' development and traditional cultural restitution, or a focus outward, becoming more 'mainstream' and moving away from a distinctively Māori focus. The term 'Māori' refers to anyone who claims descent from the Indigenous peoples of New Zealand. The most literal sense



requires blood ancestry to other Māori. Negotiating these tensions requires a shift towards more nuanced approaches that recognise the complexity in how people view themselves. This then raises a number of issues for how Māori may engage in the process of deepening Te Ao Māori within restoration organisations, depending on factors of their cultural expertise, their actual role in the organisation, and their inclination and desire or capacity to actively progress Māori aspirations.

Genuine collaboration involves empathy, which is an ability to understand and feel what another person experiences. This propels initiatives and projects that take approaches such as co-design and contribute to a more harmonious integration with Māori. Many environmental restoration groups are taking steps to be inclusive of Māori people by providing initiatives that include roles requiring knowledge of Māori or deliberate efforts to work with mana whenua. A challenge to navigate in this space is the cultural safety of individuals who may often be the only Māori within an organisation, and as mentioned earlier, will be on their own deepening journey with Te Ao Māori. Another challenge to navigate is the way in which organisations engage with iwi and whether iwi priorities align sufficiently to facilitate engagement; this is sometimes incorrectly labelled as a 'lack of capacity'.

Kōrerohia: Talking points



'It's hard to build real relationships between environmental groups and tangata whenua at hapū or iwi level when the taniwha in the room – the issue of sovereignty – isn't acknowledged by Pākehā.' 1



'in many places, "white life is a standard for normal life". Whiteness is seen as "neutral, nonpartisan, and normal", ... we're encouraged to think that "white people are The People"' 3



'When I say "whiteness", I'm not just talking about skin colour. I'm talking about the power, privilege, and patterns of thinking associated with white people.' 3



'Māori shouldn't always have to carry out the intellectual and emotional labour of educating people, especially Pākehā, about what happened in New Zealand history. We as Pākehā need to educate ourselves and have conversations with other Pākehā.' 3



'But I had no idea how to integrate these two amazing people into our board meeting. So it was super awkward. We kind of bumbled along on goodwill and with open hearts. You can go quite a long way on goodwill. But only so far.' 6



'I didn't know how we could, or should, work together, nor what a reciprocal relationship looked like. If we'd done that, instead of copying others, we would've realised that we shouldn't have been asking for the expertise of kaumātua.' 6



'The fad of asking around for kaumātua has passed, which is a good thing. But what we often do now is hire Māori and expect them to do all the cultural heavy lifting, even though they're often employed to do another job entirely.' 6



'Many of us have been in that situation as a Pākehā where we go to a hui and everybody stands up and does their pepeha. You think: "Oh, I can't do mine. I should have one too." That was me. I thought I needed this thing called "cultural competency", which everybody was talking about at the time.' 6

(The number at the end of each talking point indicates the source in the Bibliography.)

Tangata

Whakaarohia: Think

I do not know how
to bridge gaps
between Māori and
Pakeha.

I respect Māori
authority,
especially active
members of
localised iwi,
whānau and hapū.

I support and
advocate for
contributions and
interests of Māori
systems & practices
in environmental
restoration work.

TAHURI KI UTA
Back to the shore

WAI PAPA
Standing at the shore

WAI PEREPERE
Stepping into
the waters

WAI MARAMA
Swimming towards
understanding

HŌHONU
Diving into the depths

I have
fractionated or
non-existent
relationships with
Māori.

Although historical
injustices exist, I
cant do anything
about that.

I want more visibility
of Māori people
and less tokenistic
representation.

I am part of
mutually beneficial,
accountable
and equitable
relationships with
multiple Māori voices
and community
leaders.

Moemoeā: Vision

Can you and the members of your group / collective succinctly articulate the visionary relationship between Māori and Pākehā?

Tangata Tiriti spaces are becoming contested spaces, while people try to actually put concerted effort into describing what that is. To identify as Tangata Tiriti, what does that mean? Does that mean that you acknowledge that hapū never ceded sovereignty? Or is it just something that means that you're anti racist? Or is it all of those things? – Pākehā

Pānuitia: Read

Māori are mana whenua and Tangata Whenua, which gives them unique rights and relationships to whenua. New Zealand is a multicultural country on a bicultural platform, with Māori as one partner and non-Māori as the other. Colonisation undermined the aspirations of Māori and has often disrupted their relationships to be stewards of the land and environment. We challenge environmental restoration groups to think about their own bicultural vision for New Zealand and to really know how to articulate this. While this statement may seem simple, there are multiple ways to conceive of Māori and Pākehā relationships. Early European settler ideologies of these relationships took the form of superiority and dominance, then assimilation, and then paternalism. More modern-day articulations take the preferred description of partnership. Sometimes, new versions of old thinking are repackaged and make reappearances under slogans of 'one law for all' or 'we are all one people', wrongly promoting the idea that acknowledging two people in the nation of New Zealand creates segregation.

As New Zealand evolves and we navigate traditional values, modern lifestyles and the impacts of colonisation, so do the complexities of Māori and Pākehā relationships evolve. Understanding the nuances of Māori and Pākehā relationships sheds light on the multiple intersections of culture, identity and contemporary realities in New

Zealand society. We need to move past simplistic thinking. We are all part of an entangled space and a murky middle area. We have Māori. We also have Pākehā. We also have those that are Māori and Pākehā. Then we have Pākehā who are raised by Māori or who live with Māori. And then we have Māori who have been disconnected from Māori. We must take a much more nuanced approach to our bicultural context.

Some Māori seek to gain autonomy to reshape the lives they want for their whānau. There is a desire by some Māori to live as Māori, embraced and nourished by Māori ways of living, without political agitation, and without the social and cultural deprivations caused by colonisation. This view sees Māori independence as a pathway to national unity and harmony (not separatism). New Zealand is at a point in our history that is somewhat unique, and as we progress our Māori-Pākehā relationship aspirations for the country, we are opening up big questions around how we work through this as a nation. We are running into new situations we have not experienced before. We are uncovering different relationship dynamics between Māori and Pākehā. To deepen Te Ao Māori requires a clear vision of Māori and Pākehā relationships to each other.

Kōrerohia: Talking points



*'This isn't to denigrate the essential work we do and the issues we fight for, but our defensiveness and control issues have limited our ability to even see the visions or the sacrifices that tangata whenua are making to try to protect their ravaged whenua, awa, and moana.'*¹



*'The diverse space that is the Pākehā nation is critically shaped by the Māori world, an equally diverse place. The Pākehā nation exists only in relation to the Māori world; it is of this place – however poorly it has adapted to the conditions.'*⁴



*'Pākehā need to be clear in our identity – to embrace it, not escape it.'*³



'Ninety-five percent of Māori land was taken and the culture was forcibly suppressed. So when I think about what decolonisation means, there's some really tough stuff in there. In some countries, what it means is that the coloniser has to leave. We're fortunate that this isn't something being asked of us in Aotearoa, for which I am very grateful.' 6



'For many Pākehā, not understanding the history makes it difficult to understand the contemporary world. Māori poverty, for instance, is difficult to understand if you don't know the historical context.' 7



'Doing anything to stand up to breaches of Te Tiriti and racism against Māori is immediately labelled as racist against white people. Doing these things is seen as destroying "unity".' 8



'There are a few words in my definition of Pākehā which challenge many Pākehā. White ("I don't see colour"). Privilege ("I'm not privileged"). Colonisation ("I didn't do it").' 6



'[As a Pākehā, I am] struggling to understand my own default racism and narrow cultural assumptions about the natural world.' 1



'I've been part of endless debates which assume that we Pākehā can't trust tangata whenua to look after the environment as well as we can.' 1



'Some of the barriers we hide behind are invisible to us because we cling to strong feelings of entitlement regarding our role as the rightful saviours of the environment.' 1



'We have a sense of urgency and panic around the collapse of nature which can lead to the dismissal of Indigenous rights issues.' 1



'We'll often refer to kaitiakitanga as something we approve of, providing it's not connected to rangatiratanga.' 1



'we wax lyrical about embracing mātauranga Māori perspectives, but always within the existing framework of power.' 1

(The number at the end of each talking point indicates the source in the Bibliography.)

Moemoeā

Whakaarohia: Think

I do not allow
space to articulate
a vision of Te
Ao Māori in the
environmental
restoration mahi.

I see the Treaty
as an aspiration
for something
better than one
party perpetually
dominating
another.

I advocate Māori
authority for the
intergration of
Te Ao Māori.

TAHURI KI UTA
Back to the shore

WAI PAPA
Standing at the shore

WAI PEREPERE
Stepping into
the waters

WAI MARAMA
Swimming towards
understanding

HŌHONU
Diving into the depths

I think that viewing
Māori and Pākehā
independently,
is not a good
visionary base
upon which to
build a country.

I have an
awareness that
Māori and Pākehā
relationships have
obligations to each
other.

I envision a Te Ao
Māori future and
use this vision to
guide my work.

Mātauranga: Philosophies, epistemologies and worldview

How are Māori philosophies being reflected within environmental restoration work?

If you go back to Mātauranga Māori, it [the environment] was well looked after. – Pākehā

Pānuitia: Read

Rooted in centuries of Indigenous wisdom, mātauranga Māori – the traditional knowledge system of Māori – encapsulates a holistic understanding of the world, encompassing cultural, spiritual and ecological dimensions passed down through generations. Deeply interconnected with the whenua (land), moana (sea) and wider cosmos, mātauranga is not just old knowledge, but also encompasses how new knowledge develops and manifests. Mātauranga Māori recognises the inherent value of nature beyond its utilitarian aspects, emphasising the importance of maintaining harmony and balance with the environment.

In environmental management, collaboration between Māori communities and government agencies has led to the incorporation of mātauranga Māori in resource management practices. This involves drawing on traditional ecological knowledge to inform conservation strategies and sustainable land use, recognising the intrinsic value of Indigenous perspectives in safeguarding ecosystems.

This resurgence, however, has not been without challenges, particularly in navigating the complex interplay between mātauranga Māori, conventional Western scientific paradigms and anti-Māori rhetoric. Mātauranga is often held in contrast to reductionist approaches that are commonly inherent in Western scientific methodologies. Tensions persist in reconciling its principles with the methodologies and paradigms of Western science. Western science often adheres to positivist and empirical approaches,



emphasising objectivity, reproducibility and quantifiability. In contrast, mātauranga Māori is rooted in a more relational and contextual understanding of knowledge. This distinction can lead to challenges in validating mātauranga Māori within the conventional Western scientific framework, as the criteria for evidence and validation may differ.

Moreover, in the political sphere the hierarchical nature of scientific discourse, with its roots in colonial history, has at times marginalised Indigenous knowledge. The tendency to prioritise written documentation and peer-reviewed publications may exclude valuable insights from Māori oral traditions and other non-textual forms of knowledge transmission.

Efforts to integrate Te Ao Māori face challenges and the risk of tokenism, where Māori knowledge is superficially included without genuine partnership. This raises concerns about cultural appropriation and reinforces power imbalances. In some instances, the incorporation of Te Ao Māori into the environmental restoration space has been selective, with certain aspects chosen while others are overlooked. This selective incorporation can lead to a reductionist interpretation, diluting the holistic nature of Te Ao Māori and reinforcing the dominance of Western ‘knowledge’.

Kōrerohia: Talking points



'We [Pākehā] have a deep disconnection from specific lands as a source of life, food, medicine, or genealogy.' 1



'The white murmurings about kaitiakitanga don't indicate the depth and complexity of a concept which is outside our experience, let alone Pākehā being ready to call for the passing on of resources for the actual kaitiaki to do their work.' 1



'If we dig deeper, we have to acknowledge that Pākehā culture isn't whakapapa based. Our dislocation from our original villages, stories, and traditions of caring for resources, means we find it hard to credit the power of a culture which, despite the best efforts of colonisation, is still shaped by whakapapa and relationships with specific rohe.' 1



'The difference between "I love the forest" and "We are the forest" underlies the tension.' 1



'Only a culture that's divorced itself from nature can seriously propose the preservation of some places while trashing the rest.' 1



'We don't have very old bones in this country and we have painful history around the theft of the land which can't be avoided. The land we seek to protect was named through stories which aren't our stories. We can't claim those stories.' 1



'In some ways, Pākehā environmental thinking is stuck in preservationism, as if the natural world was a museum or a magical depopulated Narnia where the plants and animals are waiting for the white ecologist rescuers to come and save them from evil. It's not a pātaka kai for feeding our families.' 1



'[Māori have the] mechanisms of resource sustainability which have been developed, through trial and error, by the people of the land in this place over time.' 1



'[Māori] names should lift the institutions to radically new Māori-knowledge-informed places, to give life to their given names.' 2

(The number at the end of each talking point indicates the source in the Bibliography.)

Mātauranga

Whakaarohia: Think

I am making cognitive shifts and actively integrating understandings of Māori concepts and mātauranga at a deeper levels of my psyche.

I have normalised the integration of Māori knowledge and philosophies, and I implicitly accept them as naturalised forms of knowledge.

I am guided by mana whenua and their place-based understandings of nature.

TAHURI KI UTA
Back to the shore

WAI PAPA
Standing at the shore

WAI PEREPERE
Stepping into the waters

WAI MARAMA
Swimming towards understanding

HŌHONU
Diving into the depths

I dismiss and ignore mātauranga Māori.

I know that philosophical understandings of the environment are dominated by Western-centric positioning, but I don't know how to make change.

I am opening up to the benefits and richness of mātauranga Māori, and support its full integration into operations.

I accept that knowledge comes in the form of pūrākau, whaikōrero, mōteatea and other transmissions, which sometimes differ from Western methods.

Te reo: Language

How integrated is te reo Māori in the organisation? To what degree is the use of te reo reflecting Māori ways of knowing as opposed to direct translation of English words?

The term kaitiaki and kaitiakitanga for example, I see it being used all the time in primary schools and yet, the teachers have no idea what it really means. The idea of guardianship yeah sure, but it's way, way more than that, and all the other things that come with it. – Māori

Pānuitia: Read

Te reo, the Māori language, is considered a key cornerstone of Te Ao Māori. Most New Zealanders are regularly exposed to te reo in their daily life through the media and through their social environments. Consequently, most environmental restoration groups are using te reo Māori in various ways, these reflecting differing levels of engagement of Te Ao Māori within the organisations. At one end of the spectrum, an absence of te reo Māori may reflect environmental restoration projects that are resistant to engaging with Te Ao Māori. However, a large amount of single word use is somewhat unavoidable. Most New Zealanders are familiar with a relatively small vocabulary of Māori words, termed in the linguistics realm as ‘loanwords’.

Loanwords are borrowed from Māori and adopted into New Zealand English. A huge number of Māori loanwords can be found in the areas of flora and fauna, e.g. tree species such as pōhutukawa or kōwhai, or bird species such as kiwi or tūī. In addition, activities and aspects from Te Ao Māori, such as marae (the complex known commonly as a meeting house), pōhiri / pōwhiri (welcome) and hui (meeting), have also been adopted into New Zealand English. Place names are another a significant source of te reo Māori usage. A loanword is a word that partly assimilates from the donor language (te reo Māori) into the recipient language (New Zealand English). However, the adaptation is often incomplete, so loanwords may not completely transfer all features from the original Indigenous context. For

example, the word kaitiaki, now a loanword in New Zealand English, is often translated as ‘guardian’. From a Te Ao Māori perspective, however, kaitiaki is imbued with philosophical concepts of the environment that go beyond the surface translation of ‘guardian’.

New Zealand’s non-Māori place names tell the story of the country’s settlement by Europeans and where the newly arrived culture imprinted itself on the landscape. Names of places can be inherently political, as how, why and what names are used can be contested. Naming practices in New Zealand have evolved in response to social and political shifts since the 1970s, particularly with changes in attitude towards restoring Indigenous Māori rights and the importance of place names as taonga (treasures). An example is the use of Aotearoa as the name that is generically meant to refer to New Zealand. Contention over the use of this name arises over political resistance to acknowledge Māori rights in New Zealand.

In addition to loanwords, many Māori words are now part of environmental legislation in New Zealand. Within policy, these words are defined and debated, and take on an agency that governs and shapes how some restoration work is undertaken. As such, this type of te reo use may represent a familiarity with policy rather than the integration of an individual or organisation with Te Ao Māori. However, because the language is within government policy, concepts are readily and well accepted in the national discourse. For example, te mana o te wai is a fundamental concept focused on restoring and preserving the balance between wai (water), the wider environment and people. Other examples include terms such as Vision Mātauranga, kaupapa Māori, Tangata Tiriti and others. Their regular usage is due to the ability of national policies to give widespread coverage of te reo and Māori concepts.

When large texts or spoken language occur entirely in te reo, this represents the deepest levels of Te Ao Māori integration. The environmental restoration mahi is in tune with Māori communities and tangata whenua, and typically reflects strong relationships with, and leaderships from, Māori communities. Language usage at this level represents hōhonu.

Kōrerohia: Talking points



'I worry that te reo, like land, may be in the process of becoming yet another thing that Pākehā can acquire from Māori, like a unique new jacket that we think suits us.' 2



'The language can be simply an additional skill, something to put on the CV, a cool display of identity, or a sort of virtue-signalling.' 2



'a language is not merely a set of alternative words to name the reality around us. It has long been a truism in social philosophy that language creates the world we know. To learn Māori is to enter another world. Te reo names a different reality from the one named in English.' 2



'In an ideal world, te reo Māori would be a normal and compulsory part of the school curriculum, just as English is. But that would require something momentous: that we accept the possibilities of two worlds, two different meaning systems that may not always overlap.' 2



'We are very skilled at assimilation. If we consume te reo as an alternative language without it being another way of seeing, we run the risk that we will domesticate it, weakening its power to bring into being a different, more Māori, world.' 2



'the language can be instrumental in further colonisation.' 2



'This is not to say that Pākehā shouldn't learn and use te reo. But, as a people, we must wait our turn.' 5

(The number at the end of each talking point indicates the source in the Bibliography.)

Te Reo

Whakaarohia: Think

I can just use
Google translate
to understand
Te reo Māori
and associated
philosophies.

By learning a mihi I
am demonstrating
that I am not
racist.

I support and
advocate te
reo Māori to be
embedded in
environmental
mahi.

TAHURI KI UTA
Back to the shore

WAI PAPA
Standing at the shore

WAI PEREPERE
Stepping into
the waters

WAI MARAMA
Swimming towards
understanding

HŌHONU
Diving into the depths

Te reo Māori and
its revitalisation
is not my
responsibility.

I know the
difference between
being a consumer
of Te reo Māori (i.e.
taking a language
class) and being a
part of processes
that support Te reo
Māori revitalisation.

I believe Te reo
Māori is a taonga
for New Zealand.

Tikanga: Processes and practices

What kind of practices are being used that reflect a Māori worldview, e.g. karakia, mihi, pōhiri / pōwhiri, whānaungatanga?

They just brought us in to do karakia. – Māori

Pānuitia: Read

Tikanga reflects Māori philosophy in action. Tikanga Māori within environmental restoration work involves integrating the principles, values and practices of Māori culture into the process of restoring ecosystems. In practice, this could look like informed collaboration and consent on how to proceed with a restoration plan. Emphasis is given to have kōrero to determine best pathways. Tikanga guides Māori communities in how they relate to one another, to the land and to the wider world, and provides guidelines for behaviour, decision-making and the maintenance of harmony within communities. In the context of environmental restoration work, tikanga influences how Māori communities approach and engage with the land, emphasising concepts such as kaitiakitanga (guardianship) and sustainability. Tikanga can often be mistaken for and confused with ‘rules of doing things’. And while that is an aspect of tikanga, more importantly tikanga is about using relational processes to work with one another and the environment. Hirini Moko Mead described tikanga as: ‘tools of thought and understanding. They are packages of ideas which help to organise behaviour and provide some predictability in how certain activities are carried out. ... They help us to differentiate between right and wrong and in this sense have built-in ethical rules that must be observed. Sometimes tikanga help us survive.’

Tikanga represents ceremonial or ritual-type activities found in many renowned Māori cultural institutions, and includes mihi, pepeha, whakataukī, karakia and pōhiri / pōwhiri. It is characterised by language that follows a particular format, structure and / or poetical flow. Tikanga can often be thought of as easily integrated into



environmental restoration mahi because it has a specific function or role to play, and an allocated time and place for usage. For example, pōhiri / pōwhiri are formal welcomes; karakia are prayers and the setting of intentions and are used to open meetings or buildings; mihi are forms of introduction that allow people to familiarise themselves with one another. Many environmental restoration groups are using and employing tikanga. Karakia, for example, are being used in particular ways within the environment, such as working with plants, particularly before harvesting.

Kōrerohia: Talking points



'let tikanga do what it evolved to do: to manage relationships and to manage resources.' 9



'the principle of kinship, [is] the "glue that holds the system of tikanga together", particularly in relation to the use of resources.' 9



'In recent years, the courts have taken the lead in insisting that tikanga, Aotearoa's first law, be recognised, understood and applied in parallel with British-based law.' 9



'I'm competent at Excel spreadsheets. But I don't think I can or should be "competent" in somebody else's culture.' 6

(The number at the end of each talking point indicates the source in the Bibliography.)

Tikanga

Whakaarohia: Think

Although I want to make an effort, my processes of engaging and interacting with tikanga are hesitant.

When I engage in tikanga processes it is meaningful and I recognise its power to enhance relationships across whānau and whenua.

TAHURI KI UTA
Back to the shore

I resist and can be hostile towards the integration of tikanga Māori.

WAI PAPA
Standing at the shore

WAI PEREPERE
Stepping into the waters

I support the integration of tikanga Māori to be driven primarily by Māori leadership.

WAI MARAMA
Swimming towards understanding

HŌHONU
Diving into the depths

I support and advocate for an institutionalised commitment to tikanga Māori.



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Notes



PARADIGM MĀORI
The Wisdom Between

National
science
Challenges

NEW ZEALAND'S
BIOLOGICAL
HERITAGE

Ngā Kaitiaki
Tūhū