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Committee Te Upoko Taiao - Natural Resource Plan Committee
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Māori Values and Regional Resource Management

1. Purpose

To provide information on the application of Māori values in regional resource management.

2. Background

This paper provides a brief overview of Māori values and how they have and are currently being applied to resource management practice.

2.1 What are Māori values?

“Kei te ora te wai

Kei te ora te whenua

Kei te ora te tangata”

“When the water is healthy, the land and people are nourished” (Whakatauaki selected to lead the National Iwi Leaders Summit on Freshwater 2009)

In order to understand Māori environmental values we must first consider the beliefs on which they are founded. “Māori world view” derives from these foundation beliefs that underpin all Māori custom and practice. The Māori relationship with the environment is based on the concept of whakapapa or genealogy. Māori trace the descent lines and relationships of all entities from “ngā atua Māori”, the original creators of life through to the present day. Human life is descended from and related to all other entities and life forms in existence and is fundamentally dependent on and accountable for these familial relationships.

Māori express this relationship through absolute identification with their environment, often identifying themselves with a specific entity; be it a species, water body or landform.

The Māori environmental relationship then is one of intimacy and immediacy; the connection between human life and the environment is dynamic and contiguous. Māori do not distinguish between animate and inanimate entities believing that life is inherent in all things.

Māori environmental values devolve directly from this fundamental identification with the environment. Values provide direction for the correct and appropriate actions that will sustain and support this relationship.

Some examples of Māori values include;

Mauri - “The life force that generates, regenerates and upholds creation” (Rev Māori Marsden)

Tau utuutu -The environmental relationship is reciprocal, requiring a constant balancing of what is taken with what is given.

Ki uta ki tai - From the mountains to the sea. The environment should be considered as an interconnected system.

Mana whenua - Authority and responsibility for a defined area.

Kaitiakitanga - The act of environmental guardianship as a fundamental responsibility of mana whenua

Mātauranga Māori - The recognition and use of Māori knowledge and practices

2.2 Māori values and the Resource Management Act

Interest in the inclusion of Māori values in regional council process stems from long held iwi concern that the mauri of the environment is in decline. Land Court records from the mid nineteenth century identify Māori concern at the impact of European species and practices on mauri of land and water. Mana whenua in their role of kaitiaki have a long history of petitioning central and local government on environmental matters.

The Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) requires decision makers when considering matters of national importance to recognise and provide for (amongst other matters) the “*relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, waahi tapu and other taonga*” (section 6 (e)).

Decisions makers are also required to have particular regard for “*kaitiakitanga*” and the “*ethic of stewardship*” (section 7) as well as the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi (section 8).

The inclusion of Māori in RMA processes via consultation and the recognition of Māori values have received further support through the development and recognition of Iwi Management Plans in the RMA. Local authorities are required to take into account Iwi Management Plans which can be *“any relevant planning document recognised by an iwi authority and lodged with the council, to the extent that its content has a bearing on the resource management issues of the region”*.

Iwi Management Plans sought to avoid reactive responses to resource management consent applications or issues and policies (including resource management plans) that affect iwi in a particular rohe.

2.3 The Monitoring of Māori Cultural Values

2.3.1 Traditional monitoring of the environment

Māori environmental monitoring was fundamental to a culture dependent on the wellbeing of their environment for food, water, transport, building materials, heating, hygiene and all other necessities of human life. Monitoring of an integrated system ensured that small changes in one entity or species were noted and that the implications for other parts of the environment could be planned and provided for. Tohu or environmental indicators needed to be immediate and specific e.g. places, species, water clarity variants, weather patterns which provided the information required to manage the interdependent and dynamic relationship Māori had with the environment.

2.3.2 Monitoring of cultural values today

Today, most cultural health monitoring models look to the past to establish a baseline of ecological health. This information is drawn from oral tradition and archival information that identifies Māori values and primary indicators for a defined area e.g. a specific species its historic health, abundance and distribution. This information is then tested by comparative analysis with the state of the resource as it is today. A range of cultural and science based tools are applied to carry out this work.

The recent development of formal monitoring of cultural values is another mechanism for inclusion of Māori perspective in resource management. Iwi have long expressed frustration with both the application of the consultative process identified in the RMA and the weighting and treatment given to cultural evidence submitted to resource management processes. The development of a structural approach to the monitoring of Māori cultural values seeks to engage Māori directly into environmental reporting and resource management processes.

2.3.3 MFE Environmental Performance Indicators and the Cultural Health Index

From the early 1990s Ministry for the Environment have worked with iwi to develop Environmental Performance Indicators. The Environmental Performance Indicators programme is a significant programme to develop new indicators for environmental health across all New Zealand environments with a view to provide a standardised approach to environmental monitoring.

The Environmental Performance Indicators programme provided the impetus for development of cultural health indicators. The initial work undertaken on contract by Ngai Tahu freshwater scientist Gail Tipa resulted in the development of the Cultural Health Index (Appendix 1). The Cultural Health Index is a tool that Māori can use to assess and manage water ways. The model allows individual iwi to prioritise their own values in assessment of the site status, mahinga kai (traditional food species) values and overall health of a waterway to produce a cultural health index score that shows the cultural values present and their status. These are identified through the gathering of data using both traditional cultural observation methodology and western scientific analytical tools.

Information drawn from the Cultural Health Index has been included both in the Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu State of the Takiwa and the Environment Canterbury State of the Environment Reporting to the Ministry for the Environment.

Cultural monitoring models have subsequently been developed by iwi from throughout the country on a broad range of ecosystems including wetlands, inshore marine environments, forests, air quality and others. Species led approaches have also developed with in depth studies of mahinga kai species such as tuna (eels), kokopū (native fish) and kakahī (fresh water mussels) and their role as (tohu) indicators of fresh water systems.

2.3.4 Inclusion of Cultural Health Monitoring in Resource Management

There are increasing instances of regional and district councils working with iwi to gain an understanding of how resource management impacts Māori values. This work is often in the form of cultural impact reports resulting from iwi status as an affected party to resource consent applications e.g. irrigation schemes, dams, wind farms. Although many iwi have developed GIS data bases of heritage sites to inform their cultural impact reports the compilation of cultural ecological site and species data is less developed. Councils also work directly with iwi by supporting projects to gather values based information.

Treaty settlement is also a significant driver of values assessment and monitoring. This is fundamental to the leadership role of iwi in partnership with the Crown and local government in the restoration and management of large, iconic entities e.g. Rotorua Lakes, Waikato River and Lake Taupo.

The monitoring of Māori values is also being supported by agencies outside resource management. One example of this is the interest being taken by

District Health Boards who recognise the relationship between Māori environmental values and health. The Wairarapa District Health Board has called for the monitoring of Māori values pertaining to waste water discharges to the Ruamahanga catchment and the Northland District Health Board contracts local iwi and hapū to monitor the health of shellfish.

2.4 Wellington region and Māori values

The application of Māori values in resource management in the Wellington region has been led by iwi submissions to plans, policies, resource consents and environment court processes over many years. These submissions have identified Māori values specific to identified localities and resources.

2.4.1 Capacity and capability

The establishment of Ara Tahi in 1993 recognised a new appreciation of mana whenua role in resource management in the region. This role has been further strengthened by the appointment of Māori representatives to Greater Wellington's Committees and more recently the inclusion of mana whenua in Te Upoko Taiao - Natural Resource Plan Committee. The Kapiti Coast District Council also recognised the mana whenua relationship through the establishment of Te Whakaminenga, a Council - pan Iwi committee.

Development of knowledge of the environment has been enhanced by the establishment of Te Wānanga o Raukawa supported by an affiliation of local iwi. The wānanga provides degree courses in resource management and mātauranga Māori. Individual iwi across the region have developed their own resource management capability including GIS databases of their historic cultural landscapes that focus on sites of habitation. This information underpins cultural impact reports and submissions on matters impacting Māori values.

2.4.2 Regional Policy, Resource Consents and an assessment of Māori values

Iwi of the region identified the development of values based monitoring as a priority in the 2001 Regional Monitoring Strategy. Although this work has not been progressed, Ara Tahi has had substantial involvement and input into the proposed Regional Policy Statement. Iwi interests are specified in the objectives which include; recognition of iwi role in resource management decision making, the integration of kaitiakitanga in the sustainable management of the region's natural and physical resources and objectives relating to Māori values and relationship with the environment.

A recent resource consent decision on an application to discharge wastewater to the Waiwhetu Stream included provision for Cultural Health Monitoring of iwi values as a condition of consent. This decision is a significant development in the recognition of cultural values within the region's resource consent process.

Greater Wellington is collaborating with iwi on a project to identify and assess Māori values relating to 15 Wairarapa waterways. The work, which is part funded by Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry Community Irrigation Fund, will help inform setting water levels for water bodies in the Regional Plan. This work will be undertaken by Ngāti Raukawa freshwater scientist and Greater Wellington Catchment Committee member Caleb Royal in conjunction with Wairarapa iwi; Rangitāne and Ngāti Kahungunu.

It should also be noted that Ara Tahi undertook preparatory work for a regional iwi management plan for water including obtaining \$19,000 resource from the 2009/10 iwi project fund of the Greater Wellington Annual Plan. Ara Tahi subsequently recognised that this work best sit with Te Upoko Taiao to progress the inclusion of Māori values into the regulatory framework.

3. Comment

The inclusion of Māori values into all aspects of resource management is growing. This growth is partly driven by Treaty settlements, as well as iwi engagement in large resource management and restoration projects. Iwi now have the opportunity and resources to engage as kaitiaki in a substantive way. In this regard, it is noted that the Waikato River Management Board is due to publish a major study on the provision of Māori values undertaken by Gail Tipa.

The other major factor bringing Māori values to the fore is widespread concern in relation to a perceived decline in both water quality and quantity. There is a view that some resource consents that affect water quality and quantity have not protected Māori cultural values pertaining to water.

Iwi are as likely to be applicants for major water take and discharge consents, as they are submitters in future resource management processes. In this regard Māori commercial interests are as equally tempered by the need to balance cultural and ecological values against economic pressures and development opportunities as any other business. Treaty settlement will establish iwi as large commercial and agricultural business interests in the region. An example of this is Wairarapa Moana inc, the largest Wairarapa owned business and one of the largest Māori owned dairy consortiums in the country. Whilst their farms are based in Mangakino and Western Australia, they have declared an interest in investing in Wairarapa dairy land in the future.

Within the Wellington region Māori values are being recognised in various ways. The most recent of these is the inclusion of cultural monitoring as a condition of consent.

The 2005 amendment to the RMA required regional and district councils to give effect to the regional policy statements through their regional and district plans. The Ministry for the Environment identified that whilst Māori values are often well represented in regional policy statements, this representation does not necessarily flow through into regional plans.

During discussions in preparation of this report Ministry for the Environment Policy advisors noted that Greater Wellington was regarded as setting the standard nationally for inclusion of iwi into regional resource management decision making, citing the establishment of Te Upoko Taiao - Natural Resource Plan Committee as the most recent example of this. The establishment of Te Upoko Taiao provides the opportunity to consider how Māori values might be provided for in the regional plan.

Communication

There are no matters of communication

4. Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. ***Receives the report.***
2. ***Notes the content of the report.***

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Attachment 1: Why a Cultural Health Index?