



Ngāti Kuia

Ngā Kanohi Kārearea

Te Mahere Whakahaere Taiao o Ngāti Kuia

Iwi Environmental Management Plan

VERSION 1 | DECEMBER 2025





Ngā Kanohi Kārearea

THE FACES OF THE KĀREAREA | NEW ZEALAND FALCON

Te Mahere Whakahaere Taiao o Ngāti Kuia

Kanohi Kārearea can be interpreted as “*the face of the kārearea (New Zealand falcon)*” or, more figuratively, as someone who has the sharp, observant, and alert qualities of the kārearea. In Māori culture, birds like the kārearea are often admired for their agility, vision, and strength, and these qualities can be metaphorically applied to people who are vigilant, perceptive, or guardians in their community.

The name Kanohi Kārearea was gifted to Ngāti Kuia for Te Mahere Whakahaere Taiao o Ngāti Kuia, the Iwi Environmental Management Plan (IEMP) by Wayne Hippolite and Kim Hippolite. This name reflects the sharp, observant, and protective qualities of the kārearea (New Zealand falcon), embodying the spirit and intent of this plan.

Prepared for Ngāti Kuia, government agencies, stakeholders, and people who are interested in learning about the environmental management of Te Kupenga o Kuia.

Version control

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He Kupu Arataki

INTRODUCTION

Taku ara ko Matua Hautere

My path begins with Matua Hautere

**Te Hoiere te waka i topetope
ai ngā ngaru**

*Te Hoiere was the waka
that cut through the waves*

**Ka puea ake Te Kaitiaki a Kaikaiāwaro
i Te Moana o Raukawakawa**

*Kaikaiāwaro surfaced in the
Moana o Raukawakawa*

**I arahina ia ki ngā kokoru o Te
Tauihu a Te Waka o Māui**

*A guide to the numerous coves of
Te Tauihu a Te Waka-a-Māui*

**Ka hoea te awa ka tau ki te wai
pāpaku, ko Te Herenga**

*Travelled the river to the shallows,
the anchorage*

**Ka piki i a Maunganui ki te
pīnakitanga o Parikārearea**

*Maunganui was ascended to the
summit of Parikārearea*

**I reira ka poua tuahu ki te one,
ka poua tuahu ki te rangi**

*There the sacred alter
was erected*

ka hua ake ko Maungatapu

The mountain was named Maungatapu

I tapa te awa ko Te Hoiere

The river named Te Hoiere

**He wai-māori mō te
tini e whakarauika nei,**

*A life source for the myriads
who come and go*

Ko Ngāti Kuia

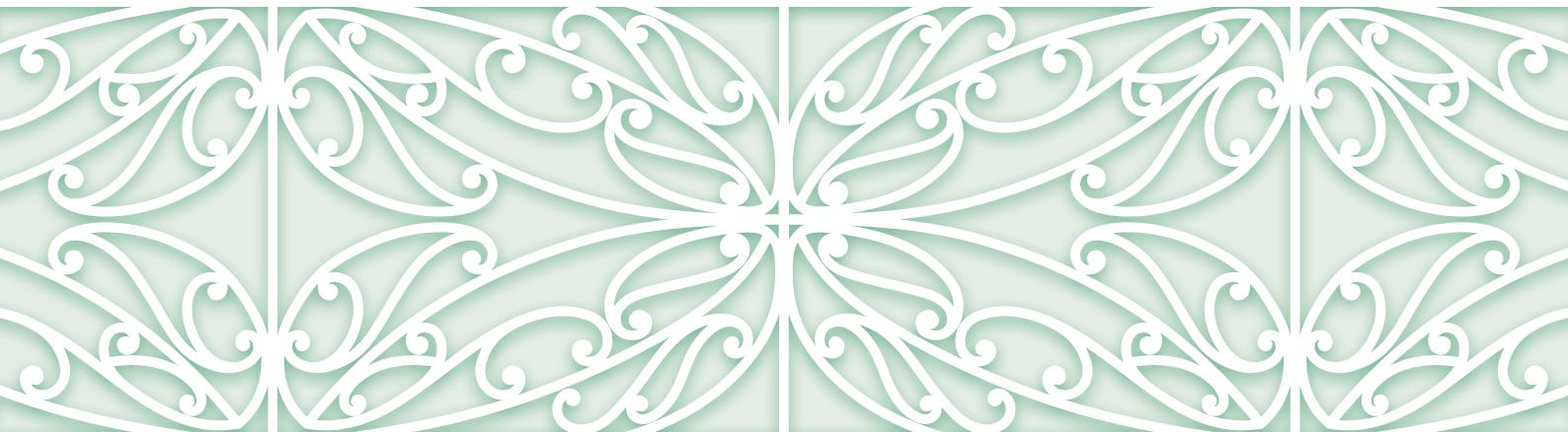
Ngāti Kuia

He iwi Pakohe

A people of pakohe

He iwi karakia e

A spiritual people



Kōrero Whakarāpopoto

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Te Mahere Whakahaere Taiao o Ngāti Kuia – Iwi Environmental Management Plan (IEMP) is a comprehensive framework developed by Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia to guide the protection, restoration, and sustainable management of the taiao within Te Kupenga o Kuia. Rooted in Ngāti Kuia whakapapa, tikanga, and mātauranga Māori, Te Mahere Whakahaere Taiao o Ngāti Kuia (IEMP) affirms the enduring role of the iwi as Hunga Tiaki and provides a strategic pathway for environmental stewardship that honours Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Te Mahere Whakahaere Taiao o Ngāti Kuia (IEMP) is both a cultural and statutory instrument, recognised under the Resource Management Act (1991), and developed in collaboration with Te Tauihu Councils. It builds upon previous initiatives such as the Pakohe Management Plan (2015) and Te Reo o te Taiao, consolidating Ngāti Kuia leadership in cross-Treaty environmental governance.

At its heart, the IEMP articulates a vision of restoring the taiao, nurturing connections, and uplifting whānau. It introduces the concept of Net Enduring Restorative Outcomes (NERO) as a guiding principle for assessing and responding to change, replacing the legacy of “*avoid, remedy, mitigate*” with a more culturally aligned and ethically robust framework.

Te Mahere Whakahaere Taiao o Ngāti Kuia (IEMP) outlines seven strategic objectives based upon the Te Rautaki Taiao o Ngāti Kuia, as well as six environmental management objectives, including:

- Strengthening the role of Ngāti Kuia as Hunga Tiaki
- Embedding tikanga-based marine and freshwater management
- Protecting wāhi tīpuna and mahinga kai
- Promoting whānau-led decision-making and adaptive management

It also defines applied methods for governance, leadership, collaboration, monitoring, and capacity building, ensuring that environmental management is both culturally grounded and operationally effective. The IEMP includes detailed policy guidance for engagement, spatial planning, and restoration, supported by cultural redress tools and statutory acknowledgements.

Te Mahere Whakahaere Taiao o Ngāti Kuia (IEMP) is intended as a living document, supported by a suite of ancillary instruments including the Mauri Ora Ki Uta Ki Tai monitoring framework and the Taonga Tuku Iho Strategy. It serves multiple audience, such as whānau, local and central government agencies, stakeholders, resource consent applicants, and the wider community, providing a shared foundation for partnership, action, and transformation.

Te Mahere Whakahaere Taiao o Ngāti Kuia (IEMP) turns to Ngāti Kuiatanga and te ao Māori for guidance, reaffirming that restoring the taiao is inseparable from the wellbeing of the people, and that true environmental leadership is grounded in whakapapa, wairua, and collective responsibility.



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Whakatauākī

PROVERB

Toitū te marae a Tāne, toitū te marae a Tangaroa, toitū te iwi

If the land is well and the sea is well, the people will thrive.

Ka rere arorangi Te Rupe o Ruapaka ki te karamatamata o Kahuroa, ki te keokeonga o Tūtūmāpou tae atu ki te tihi o Maungatapu.

Ka topa whakararo ki ngā wai whakariporipo o Te Hoiere, o Te Mahitahi, karekare atu ana ki te whenua taurikura o ōku tīpuna tau ana ki te Kupenga o Kuia.

E ngā mate huhua o te wā, rātou kua haoa nei e te kupenga a Taramainuku, haere, haere, whakangaro atu. Ko rātou ki te pō, ko tātou ki te ao.

Ko Rangi ki runga, ko Papa ki raro, Tihei tū Paiahahā!

Me pēhea e kore ai e mihi ki te hunga i tuku mai i ngā mātauranga, i whakapeto ngoi e hua mai ai tēnei mahere mō ngā uri o Ngāti Kuia. Ko te manawanui ki te whakaora i te taiao me te whakakaha i te mātau ki ngā haepapa hei “kaitiaki” mō Te Kupenga o Kuia, he kāmehameha. Ko ngā mahi kua riwha hei ataata i te ū ngātahi ki te tiaki me te poipoi i te taiao mō ngā uri whakaheke.

Kei te tautokona ngā kōrero o roto nei hei ara ki te whakamana i tō tātou taiao, ki te hāpai i ngā rohenga, ngā tamariki hoki o te moana, o ngā awa, o te ngahere, o te whenua, o te hautakiwā hoki.

Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi engari he toa takimano kē. Nō reira tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.

Wayne Hippolite and Matawai Winiata

The extraordinary Rupe of Ruapaka flies skyward to the summit of Kahuroa, to the heights of Tūtūmāpou, and reaches the peak of Maungatapu.

Te Rupe then descends to the swirling waters of Te Hoiere and Te Mahitahi, flowing onward to the fertile lands of my ancestors, settling in Te Kupenga o Kuia our boundary here in the top of the South Island.

To the many who have passed, those taken by the net of Taramainuku, farewell from this world. They dwell in the night, while we remain in the light.

Rangi is above, Papa is below—behold the breath of life!

We are grateful to all those who contributed their knowledge and time to the creation of this plan for the people of Ngāti Kuia. The dedication to restoring the environment and strengthening our shared understanding of our role as custodians of Te Kupenga o Kuia has been invaluable. This work reflects the collective commitment to safeguarding and nurturing the taiao for generations to come.

The messages within this work support the empowerment to better support our environment, including the domains and species of the sea, the rivers, the forests, the land, and the atmosphere.

My strength is not mine alone, but the strength of many. Therefore, many greetings to you all.



SECTION 1

Tīmatanga

INTRODUCTION



Te Paruparu (Forsythe Island) – photograph by Keelan Walker



Te Mahere Whakahaere Taiao o Ngāti Kuia (IEMP) is a tool to support the responsible management of the taiao within Te Kupenga o Kuia from Kahurangi Point to Te Parinui o Whiti (White Bluffs), encompassing Ngāti Kuia land and maritime boundaries.

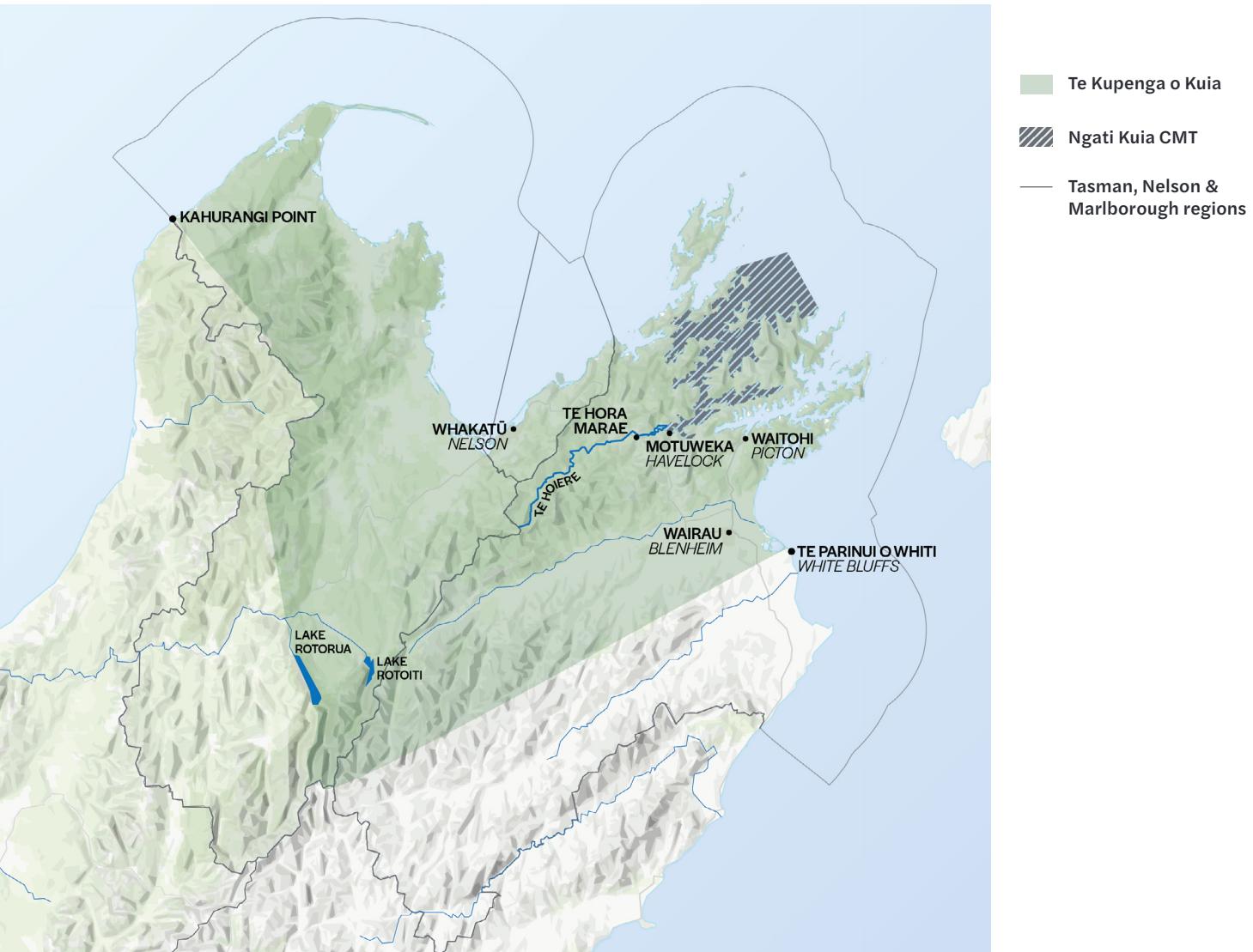
Iwi Environmental Management Plans (IEMPs) are generally prepared as an expression of rangatiratanga to help iwi, hapū, and whānau exercise their hunga taiao (kaitiaki) roles and responsibilities, identifying important issues related to the use of natural and physical resources within the rohe.

Under the Resource Management Act 1991(RMA), Iwi Environmental Management Plans (IEMPs) are formally recognised as important documents that must be considered in decision-making processes. The key reference is found in Section 35A and Section 61(2A)(a), Section 66(2A)(a), and Section 74(2A)(a) of the RMA.

Te Mahere Whakahaere Taiao o Ngāti Kuia (IEMP) was developed by Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia Trust, in collaboration with the three Te Tauihu Councils: Marlborough District Council (MDC), Tasman District Council (TDC), and Nelson City Council (NCC). Implementing the IEMP provides a framework for continuing collaboration with Te Tauihu Councils, stakeholders and Ngāti Kuia whānau.

Lessons learnt have been recognised since the Te Whakatau Deed of Settlement (2014) and subsequently through the Pakohe Plan Management Plan (2015), consolidating the position of Ngāti Kuia in cross-Treaty environmental management within Te Kupenga o Kuia.

FIGURE 1 Te Kupenga o Kuia



1.1 Te Kupenga o Kuia

Te Kupenga o Kuia is the home of Ngāti Kuia in Te Tauihu, a place of duration, of both physical and metaphysical occupancy.

Ngāti Kuia are descendants of the first people of Te Tauihu—the descendants of Māui, Kupe and Matuahautere. Ngāti Kuia are the living whakapapa of the original people of Te Tauihu. Through generations, Ngāti Kuia became one with Ngāti Wairangi, Ngāti Kopia, Ngāti Haua, Ngāti Tawake, Ngāti Whakamana, Ngā Te Heiwi and the Ngāti Tūmatakokiri.

In the 1820s and 1830s iwi from the North Island invaded and settled in Te Tauihu. Although Ngāti Kuia no longer had exclusive possession of all their territory they retained their tribal structures, chiefly lines and ancestral connections to the land¹.

As iwi of this whenua with unbroken occupancy within Te Kupenga o Kuia, Ngāti Kuia hold ahikāroa. Ngāti Kuia carry the responsibilities of that unbroken occupation, the custodial responsibilities for te mauri o te taiao.

Ko Matua Hautere te tangata

Ko Kaikaiāwaro te taniwha

Ko Te Hoiere te waka

Ko Ngāti Kuia he iwi pakohē

Matua Hautere is the captain

Kaikaiāwaro is the guardian

Te Hoiere is the canoe

Ngāti Kuia a people of pakohē

Wawata – aspirations

Aspirations are derived from the cultural values of Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia setting the foundation the IEMP.

- The mana and the mauri of the taiao are maintained in a vibrant, healthy state, not further degraded. Efforts are made to reverse the current state.
- Cultural values of Ngāti Kuia, Tiakina te Taiao, Manaakitanga, Whanaungatanga, Kotahitanga, Mana Motuhake and Wairuatanga, are provided for and enabled to maintain traditional practice
- Proposals for change adversely affecting the taiao within Te Kupenga o Kuia provide an opportunity for restorative outcomes.

In all cases, in understanding and responding to today's challenges, we turn to Ngāti Kuiatanga² and to our experience of living within te ao Māori, for guidance to redefine our future.

TE MOEMOEĀ VISION

Restoring the taiao

Nurturing connections

Uplighting whānau

*The whenua cannot be **restored** without restoring the people*

***Connections** cannot be nurtured without recognising the damage done*

*Barriers must be removed for **whānau** to be uplifted*

1 https://images.test.ngatiKuia.iwi.nz/Ngati_Kuia_Deed_of_Settlement_Summary_1238cd2877.pdf
2 All things uniquely Ngāti Kuia

SECTION 2

Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia Trust

KAIKAIAWARO CHARITABLE TRUST



Te Hora Marae – photograph by Melissa Banks



Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia Trust is a Post Settlement Governance Entity (PSGE), an outcome of the Treaty of Waitangi Settlement Process. Its main role is to hold, manage and be responsible for the collective assets received on behalf of the claimant group, most often represented by iwi (tribes).

Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia Trust provides a legal role as an iwi authority under the RMA, which is the basis of its initiative in providing for Te Mahere Whakahaere Tiaki Taiao o Ngāti Kuia (IEMP).

Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia is not the kaitiaki, but it has the mandate to support and enable kaitiaki and whānau to thrive. This IEMP acknowledges Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia Pakohe Management Plan

(2015), placing a pouwhenua that signals Ngāti Kuia will lead by example to support and guide restoration of the taiao within Te Kupenga o Kuia.

The primary role of Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia Trust (Ngāti Kuia) in this context is to support Ngā Mahi Tiaki Taiao responsibilities of Ngāti Kuia whānau and Hunga Tiaki.

Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia
in service to whānau

Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia
offers leadership

Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia
leads by example

2.1 Hunga Tiaki (Kaitiaki) & Tiaki Taiao Mahi (Kaitiakitanga)

Throughout this document, Te Mahere Whakahaere Taiao o Ngāti Kuia (IEMP), the terms Hunga Tiaki and tiaki taiao mahi are used as replacements for kaitiaki and kaitiakitanga.

Kaitiaki and kaitiakitanga do not fully convey the depth of understanding we have gained from a traditional perspective. Additionally, the use of Hunga Tiaki and tiaki taiao mahi throughout Te Mahere Whakahaere Taiao o Ngāti Kuia (IEMP) signifies growth and development within the reo Māori space, enhancing understanding of these kupu.

Hunga Tiaki emphasises the collective guardianship role, while tiaki taiao mahi reflects the active, ongoing work of protecting and restoring the environment. Referencing these terms throughout the IEMP ensures our mahi remains culturally grounded and future focused. This shift also recognises the dynamic and

collective nature of environmental stewardship, better aligning with the aspirations of our iwi, hapū, and whānau.

Using this terminology better reflects our cultural worldview and traditional knowledge systems. Asserting our own tikanga and mātauranga Māori, is essential and does not preclude engagement with legislative frameworks, such as the RMA.

Hunga Tiaki and tiaki taiao mahi are central to Rautaki Taiao Strategic Objectives 1 and 2, speaking to the responsibility and role of Ngāti Kuia in actively protecting and enhancing the mauri of the taiao.



2.2 Te Rautaki a Kuia



Te Hoiere – photograph by Melissa Banks

Limited capacity to fulfil tiaki taiao mahi responsibilities, erosion of the intergenerational transfer of knowledge, and the resulting struggle to participate in and influence the future of Te Kupenga o Kuia are direct outcomes of colonisation, land alienation, and disconnection from mātauranga Māori. Through generations of exclusion, whānau have been systematically disadvantaged.

Therefore, Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia has committed to a dual role, acting on behalf of Hunga Tiaki where appropriate, and working to strengthen the capacity and capability of whānau as Hunga Tiaki. Strategic Documents | Ngāti Kuia:

- Creating opportunities for learning, mentoring, and succession
- Rebuilding the commitment to Mātauranga Māori
- Supporting whānau-led environmental action
- Advocating for rangatiratanga and mana motuhake across decision-making

Interim action is often required, not just for long-term aspirations, but also for the day-to-day mahi. The organisation provides a balance between strategic, long-term rebuilding and the need to protect what remains:

- Leadership grounded in service
- Action driven by whakapapa
- Authentic partnership
- Empowered whānau

Tiaki taiao mahi refers to today's mahi and preparation for what is to come. It highlights how we stand today on behalf of whānau and the taiao, and how we lay the foundations for a future where tamariki and mokopuna inherit the full strength of Ngāti Kuia kaitiakitanga, alive and thriving once again.

2.3 Strengthening Partnerships

INTEGRATING KNOWLEDGE

The taiao is an interconnected, living system where whenua, wai māori, moana, tangata, and hau takiwā exist as an integrated whole. Within te ao Māori, the health of each element is known to affect the health of all others. Tangata whenua, as Hunga Tiaki, maintain the balance of these relationships, applying concepts such as tapu and noa as guiding principles to protect and restore the natural world.

This integration of shared knowledge differs from the reductionist approach to contemporary environmental management, where nature is divided into categories for study, regulation, and policy. Western science has long tried to manage ecosystems as separate components, whereas contemporary ecological thinking now recognises the importance of integrated approaches such as mātauranga Māori—environmental knowledge and practice. The goal is to work together collaboratively, strengthening partnerships.

Māori knowledge systems, particularly mātauranga Māori, Ngāti Kuiatanga, and the practice of tiakina te taiao (cultural monitoring) offer a proven and culturally grounded approach to tiaki taiao mahi and stewardship. They align with existing scientific methodologies, creating a robust framework for protecting and restoring the taiao, ensuring that both tangata whenua and Treaty Partners effectively contribute to the future of our shared environment.



Te Hora – photograph by Keelan Walker

2.4 Te Tiriti o Waitangi Governance

Te Tiriti o Waitangi is the re Reo Māori version of the Treaty of Waitangi. The Treaty is the version promoted by the Crown and debated by tangata whenua. The majority signed Te Tiriti, making it the only legal document under international law.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi sets clear direction on how manuhiri would co-exist with Tāngata Whenua. The Queen/Crown would govern her people, and hapū would retain their tino rangatiratanga (self-determination) over all their taonga katoa. It also affirmed the equality of citizens of Aotearoa.

The principles of the Treaty of Waitangi are derived from legal decisions that do not enact Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Te Mahere Whakahaere Taiao o Ngāti Kuia (IEMP) has been carefully crafted to reflect this partnership, informed by statutory requirements and the aspirations of Ngāti Kuia, ensuring the mana of iwi, hapū, and whānau is upheld with te ao Māori.

Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia upholds Te Tiriti o Waitangi as the foundational document that allowed the establishment of the settler government and confirmed the mana motuhake of hapū and therefore iwi.

Local and central government agencies have Treaty-based environmental responsibilities that extend beyond consultation. Shared governance must reflect this by enabling tangata whenua to exercise meaningful authority in the co-development of

policies, plans, and decisions. This includes providing resources for equitable participation and the embedding of mātauranga Māori and tikanga.

As reforms to environmental law unfold, the Crown's historical and legal commitments to tangata whenua must not be eroded or set aside in the name of efficiency or expediency.

The Kotahitanga mō te Taiao Alliance (KMTT), which includes Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia as a member, exemplifies practical collaboration. KMTT brings together the councils of Buller, Tasman, Nelson, and Marlborough, the West Coast Regional Council, iwi representatives, and DOC. Supported by The Nature Conservancy, the Alliance works collectively to restore natural landscapes across Te Tauihu, from west to east, from the mountains to the sea.

In the face of declining mauri of ecosystems and climate disruption, genuine partnership, founded on trust, reciprocity, and acknowledgment of mana motuhake—is essential for Aotearoa to progress towards a regenerative, intergenerational future for the taiao. A precautionary approach is vital to reduce the risk of further environmental harm.



Titiraukawa – photograph by Melissa Banks

2.5 Te Whakatau

SETTLEMENT

Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia signed Te Whakatau Ngāti Kuia Deed of Settlement in October 2010, with full implementation in August 2014. Nga Pou Tiaki are tools received as part of cultural redress.

The Ngāti Kuia settlement summary details cultural and commercial redress with direct relevance to tiaki taiao mahi. It is expected that the Crown will continue to uphold Te Whakatau, irrespective of changes to resource management law reforms. Settlement Documents | Ngāti Kuia.

The IEMP outlines how Pou Whakaaro (Deed of Recognition) and Pou Rāhui (Statutory Acknowledgements) are used to protect Ngāti Kuia's relationship with pakohe, directly reflecting the Deed's legal standing and consultation requirements.

The Deed outlines specific mechanisms for protecting pakohe, including:

- Customary collection rights for iwi members
- Access provisions over conservation land
- Environmental care obligations
- Exemptions from Crown Minerals Act permits
- Consultation requirements for decisions affecting pakohe
- Ability to update designated pakohe areas

TABLE 1 Nga Pou Tiaki cultural redress tools and level of influence for tiaki taiao mahi

CULTURAL REDRESS TOOLS	DEFINITIONS	LEVEL OF INFLUENCE FOR TIAKI TIAO MAHI
Tuku Whenua (vesting)	Ownership of a culturally significant site	Ownership
Whenua Rāhui (overlay)	Ngāti Kuia values are acknowledged in the management of culturally important sites	Active involvement in decision making (co-management)
Tiaki taiao mahi instruments	Ngāti Kuia associations are actively acknowledged in the management of Pakohe and Tītī	Active involvement in decision making (co-management)
Pou Whakaaro (deed of recognition)	Ngāti Kuia associations are acknowledged and recognised by Crown agencies	Protection
Pou Rāhui (statutory acknowledgements)	Ngāti Kuia associations are acknowledged and recognised through the RMA	Protection
Ngā Pou o Te Hoiere (protocols)	Relationship agreements with crown agencies for the management of sites and taonga	Active involvement in decision-making
Place names	Correction and changes to the place names of culturally significant sites	Recognition

2.6 Whakapapa Framework

The Ngāti Kuia Whakapapa Framework serves as a guiding tool to ensure the implementation of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in relationships with the Crown and Tāngata Tiriti.

This framework is deeply embedded in te ao Māori, emphasising the importance of whakapapa (genealogy), kaitiakitanga (guardianship), and the restoration of the taiao (the environment). It

provides practical guidance for honouring Te Tiriti in engagements, ensuring that cultural, environmental, and relational impacts are evaluated through a Māori lens.



FIGURE 2 Whakapapa Framework

Key aspects of this framework

1. Te Tiriti o Waitangi

- Te Tiriti o Waitangi is the foundational constitution for Aotearoa, inviting Tāngata Whenua and other peoples to co-habitat while maintaining respective mana motuhake (autonomy).
- The Whakapapa Framework helps enact Te Tiriti, providing guidance for relationships with the Crown and Tāngata Tiriti.

2. Te Ao Māori

- The framework is grounded in te ao Māori, fostering belonging and authenticity through whakapapa.
- It emphasises the interconnectedness of all living beings and the importance of tikanga (customs) and wairuatanga (spirituality).

3. Environmental stewardship

- Ngāti Kuia is responsible for caring for and restoring the taiao for all living beings.

- The framework provides a cultural lens for assessing environmental impacts, ensuring that Cultural Impact Assessments (CIAs) are technical, relational, and whakapapa-based.

4. Restoration & sustainability

- The framework supports kaupapa and relationships that celebrate te ao Māori, Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and mana motuhake.
- It aims to restore the mauri (life force) of the taiao in a meaningful way, resulting in long-term, sustainable outcomes.

5. Practical guidance

- The Whakapapa Framework offers practical guidance for honouring Te Tiriti in relationships with both the Crown and Tāngata Tiriti.
- It ensures that engagement is firmly rooted in Te Tiriti's intent and provides a way to step out of prevailing paradigms that may not align with Māori values.

2.7 Te Herenga Tangata

PURPOSE OF RELATIONSHIP

Connection is at the heart of restoration and protection mechanisms for the taiao.

In te ao Māori, the natural world is not a collection of separate parts to be managed, it is a living, breathing, interwoven whole. The rivers, mountains, forests, oceans, wind, and all species, including humans, are whakapapa-bound. Descendants of Papatūānuku and Ranginui and their tamariki, the atua. These relationships are not metaphor; they are real, ancestral, living relationships. This understanding frames the foundation of tiaki taiao mahi, the active responsibility to care for and protect the mauri of all living things.

This responsibility is first and foremost a relationship with the taiao, expressed through the principles of balance, respect, and restoration. From this sacred relationship flows every other relationship within ngā iwi, local communities, and with those who hold regulatory and statutory responsibilities under the Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

This document recognises a continuum of relationships, from the spiritual and ancestral through to the strategic and operational. The relationships we hold are not just administration or compliance, they are about trust, shared values and a common aspiration for the future of the taiao and our mokopuna.

Since Settlement, our expectation is to collaborate, co-lead and co-design. We seek enduring relationships based on mana ōrite (equal standing). Some relationships are built over generations; others are just beginning. All genuine relationships are welcome, fostering a willingness to walk the path together.

Human impact on the natural world has been largely unconscious, disconnected, and extractive, we no longer have the luxury of short-term thinking. We are now called to be either part of the problem or part of the solution. The future depends on restorative action, informed by the wisdom of indigenous knowledge, grounded in collective responsibility.

This section Te Mahere Whakahaere Taiao o Ngāti Kuia (IEMP) outlines how Ngāti Kuia understands, values, and approaches relationships, engagement, and collaboration. It affirms the need for strong relationships within our own iwi structure and across the many layers of interaction that influence the wellbeing of the taiao. These relationships must be respected, resourced, and renewed, not only to meet our shared obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi, but also to ensure the ongoing survival and wellbeing of all life within Te Kupenga o Kuia.

Through relationship, we move from words to action, from separation to connection, from degradation to restoration. It is in relationships that we find mutual satisfaction, shared purpose and collective strength, shaping the future together.



2.8 Engagement

This section clarifies what engaging with Ngāti Kuia involves, its important, and how it should be carried out when proposing changes that may adversely affect the taiao.

Engagement is a relationship, not just a transaction. It involves a two-way exchange based on manaakitanga, whanaungatanga, and integrity, rather than a mere procedural requirement.

- Engagement should begin early, not be left until the end
- It must be focused and responsive, shaped to the values and concerns of Ngāti Kuia, not solely the needs of the applicant
- Relationships are ongoing and should develop and strengthen over time with care
- Ngāti Kuia and applicants often share a common interest in the long-term well-being of Te Kupenga o Kuia

When to use this guidance

- Environmental legislation and regulations, including national direction instruments
- Environmental Plans, including spatial planning, regional and district plans (under the RMA or its successor)
- Resource Consent Applications (under the RMA or its successor)
- DOC Concession and Permit applications
- Any proposed activity that affects land, freshwater, air, ocean / coastal, or cultural values in Te Kupenga o Kuia
- General information requests or engagement for long-term planning or policy.

Why is engagement necessary?

Ngāti Kuia carry tiaki taiao mahi responsibilities for the taiao within Te Kupenga o Kuia, cultural, spiritual, ecological, and intergenerational. Engagement is not a courtesy; it is a constitutional and ethical requirement.

It is essential to note that Ngāti Kuia stresses the importance that New Zealand's environmental legislation recognises and provides for; the relationship Māori have, and the role of Māori as kaitiaki, and specifically Ngāti Kuia, to the taiao within te ao Māori.

Engagement with Ngāti Kuia involves honouring Te Tiriti, whakapapa, restoring relationships, and protecting te mauri of the taiao. Done well, it builds trust, strengthens proposals, and results in outcomes that are just, enduring, and mana-enhancing for all involved parties.



SECTION 3

Te Tūhura I Te Mahere Whakahaere Taiao

NAVIGATING THE ENVIRONMENT PLAN



Te Hoiere Waka, Momorangi Bay – photograph by Melissa Banks



Te Mahere Whakahaere Taiao o Ngāti Kuia (IEMP) enables Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia to effectively support tiaki taiao mahi within Te Kupenga o Kuia.

Te Mahere Whakahaere Taiao extends the vision and values for Te Kupenga o Kuia with specific focus on the management of the taiao. It provides clear direction to agencies and outlines the commitment of Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia to tiaki taiao mahi within Te Kupenga o Kuia, supporting Hunga Tiaki and Ngāti Kuia whānau.



Te Hoiere Waka, Momorangi Bay – photograph by Melissa Banks

As a direction-setting IEMP, the scope covers tiaki taiao mahi, as well as providing a broad suite of supporting reference materials, in an attempt to effectively respond to the pressing challenges facing tiaki taiao mahi today.

Te Mahere Whakahaere Taiao o Ngāti Kuia (IEMP) is intended to be a living document that can be reviewed as needed to stay updated on environmental issues within Te Kupenga o Ngāti Kuia. Work will continue on procedural matters, including monitoring and verifying places of significance.

3.1 Spatial Planning



Titiraukawa – photograph by Melissa Banks

True spatial planning begins with recognising that our cultural landscapes are living systems. Our presence is not confined to sites or boundaries; it is embedded throughout the whenua, wai, and moana, and sustained through our whakapapa, knowledge, histories, practices, and relationships. For Ngāti Kuia, this knowledge must guide not only how we plan space, but how we act within it, because anchoring decisions in our cultural landscapes protects mauri, accounts for cumulative effects, and ensures restorative outcomes.

Spatial planning is a powerful tool for achieving Net Enduring Restoration Outcomes, particularly when it is grounded in a te ao Māori worldview. This perspective emphasises the interconnectedness of all elements within the taiao and promotes a holistic, catchment-based approach to environmental management.

The IEMP uses spatial planning to identify and protect wāhi pakohe (naturally occurring pakohe sites), ensuring they are recognised in district and regional plans. This supports the Deed's provisions for updating and managing pakohe areas.

By considering the cumulative effects of development across entire ecosystems rather than isolated sites, spatial planning can help prevent fragmented decision-making and ensure that environmental, cultural, and social values are upheld. This approach aligns with the principles of tiaki taiao mahi and supports long-term sustainability.

For Ngāti Kuia, spatial planning must also serve as a mechanism for recognising their role as Hunga Tiaki and embedding Treaty settlement provisions into planning processes. This includes the ability to identify and protect areas of significance such as statutory and coastal acknowledgement areas, overlay zones, pakohe sites, and tītī islands. These areas are not merely geographic locations; they embody expressions of whakapapa, history, and ongoing relationships with the land and sea. When spatial planning weaves in these cultural elements, it becomes a tool for restoring and maintaining the mauri of the environment while respecting the rights and responsibilities of iwi, whānau, and hapū.

Moreover, spatial planning should be supported by strong regional collaboration to determine appropriate locations for development and where it should be avoided. It also needs to identify the infrastructure needed to support development in a way that enhances environmental and community wellbeing. This ensures that planning is proactive rather than reactive, and that it supports cohesive, well-connected communities without compromising the taiao and the cultural values of Ngāti Kuia.

3.2 Main users of Te Mahere Whakahaere Taiao o Ngāti Kuia

This document anticipates three main users and two parties of interest.

Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia

Te Mahere Whakahaere Taiao o Ngāti Kuia (IEMP) guides direction for kaimahi to achieve the vision, upholding the cultural values and supporting tiaki taiao mahi. This is done through strategic direction, in support for governance and management decision-making, as well as its use in backing Te Rōpū Taiao, the group of taiao practitioners and administrators who support tiaki taiao mahi within Te Kupenga o Kuia. The IEMP sections, with particular relevance for management, reflect the integrated approach of te ao Māori.

Te Taurihi Councils

Te Mahere Whakahaere Taiao o Ngāti Kuia (IEMP) is a significant resource management tool for local government, including Nelson City Council, Tasman District Council, and Marlborough District Council. It offers a framework to guide the development of policies, plans, and regulations, as outlined in the IEMP sections; Objectives, Policies, and Applied Methods, which act as mechanisms to support the revitalisation of te Mauri o te Taiao.

Resource consent applicants

Te Mahere Whakahaere Taiao o Ngāti Kuia (IEMP) also has relevance to applicants seeking proposals to make changes, helping to provide a referential understanding of the vision and cultural values of Ngāti Kuia, thereby enabling effective and efficient engagement.

The Crown

Te Mahere Whakahaere Taiao o Ngāti Kuia (IEMP) is relevant to government agencies that have responsibilities and functions which may influence or impact the taiao. It is important that government agencies draw on the IEMP and engage with Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia to effectively undertake their responsibilities within Te Kupenga o Ngāti Kuia.

The Department of Conservation (DOC)

Under its responsibilities in the Conservation Act 1987, DOC must consider the values and aspirations of Ngāti Kuia, especially fulfilling its obligations to tangata whenua in managing the Conservation Estate and other land managed by DOC.

The relationship Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia has with other Crown agencies will benefit from reference to this document. These include, but are not limited to;

- Ministry for the Environment
- Department of Conservation
- Ministry for Primary Industries
- Pouhere Taonga
- Department of Conservation
- Waka Kotahi
- The New Zealand Archaeological Association
- New Zealand Maritime Authority
- Crown Research agencies and science providers

The wider community

The general public and community-focused groups will benefit from the IEMP for information sharing and potential alignment of interests. These include, but are not limited to:

- Fish and Game New Zealand
- Residents and ratepayer groups
- Resource Management professionals
- Federated Farmers of New Zealand
- The forestry sector
- The tourism sector
- The fishing sector
- Ports of Marlborough, ports of Nelson and ports of Tasman
- Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)
- Residents and ratepayer groups
- Educators
- Marlborough Sounds Integrated Management Planning Group
- Marine transport operators
- Recreational fishing groups
- Dive clubs
- Boating groups / yacht clubs



3.3 Net Enduring Restorative Outcomes (NERO)

Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia has selected Net Enduring Restorative Outcomes (NERO) as an innovative tool to support the revitalisation of te mauri o te taiao in Te Kupenga o Kuia.

Hunga Tiaki are daily confronted by the unacceptable continuing degradation of te mauri o te taiao within Te Kupenga o Kuia. The legacy of the RMA and previous legislation has contributed to cumulative degradation, adversely affecting ecosystems, biodiversity, and cultural landscapes. Change is multi-factorial in its implications; therefore, the aggregated elements of any particular change must be restorative, ensuring the mauri of the taiao is restored in a meaningful way, resulting in long-term, sustainable outcomes. Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia is seeking that any proposed change takes into account the precautionary principle when assessing and responding to proposals for change.

The NERO framework aims to ensure that all proposed changes yield positive, restorative outcomes that are meaningful, durable, and intergenerationally accountable. This approach contrasts with the RMA framework, which focuses on avoiding, remedying, or mitigate adverse effects.

NERO represents a shift in environmental responsibility from managing degradation to revitalising mauri. It aligns with tikanga (customs) and whakapapa (genealogy), ensuring that environmental decisions are ethically and culturally responsible, preventing and reversing degradation, and delivering net enduring restorative outcomes.

Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia is seeking that proposed legislative and environmental plan and policy change takes into account the precautionary principle when assessing and responding to proposals for change.

TABLE 2 NERO principles

NERO PRINCIPLES	DESCRIPTION
Shift from permission to obligation	RMA asks if an activity can be justified by managing its effects. NERO asks if the outcome will uplift mauri (life force) and create intergenerational benefits. NERO centers responsibility, reframing environmental decisions as moral acts.
Alignment with Kaitiakitanga & Mātauranga Māori	Hunga Tiaki (guardians) are tasked with protecting, restoring, and enhancing the mana and mauri of the taiao (the environment). NERO affirms that restoration is a minimum standard, benefits must be durable, and trade-offs must result in net uplift.
Recognition of cumulative & systems-level impact	NERO demands consideration of catchment-scale effects and integration of climate, biodiversity, cultural, and social indicators. It commits to multi-generational outcomes, connecting values rather than siloing effects.
Technical viability & international alignment	NERO aligns with global frameworks, such as the EU Taxonomy's "Do No Significant Harm" principle and the IUCN's Net Positive Impact framework. It can be implemented using existing tools, such as cultural health indicators and environmental performance standards.
Accountability to future generations	NERO asks what future generations will inherit, mirroring te ao Māori temporal ethics that consider past, present, and future simultaneously.

3.4 IEMP Policy Development

The Rautaki Taiao objectives and the Te Mahere Whakahaere Taiao o Ngāti Kuia (IEMP) objectives provide a structured foundation for developing policies and applied methods that align with tikanga Māori principles. Each objective is directly connected to practical actions and strategies designed to protect, restore, and sustain the vital elements of Te Kupenga o Kuia, from places of significance and mahinga kai to air, land, freshwater, and marine environments. By embedding mātauranga Māori and collaborative governance into these policies, the IEMP ensures that applied methods are both culturally responsive and environmentally effective, promoting intergenerational wellbeing and the resilience of Ngāti Kuia natural heritage.

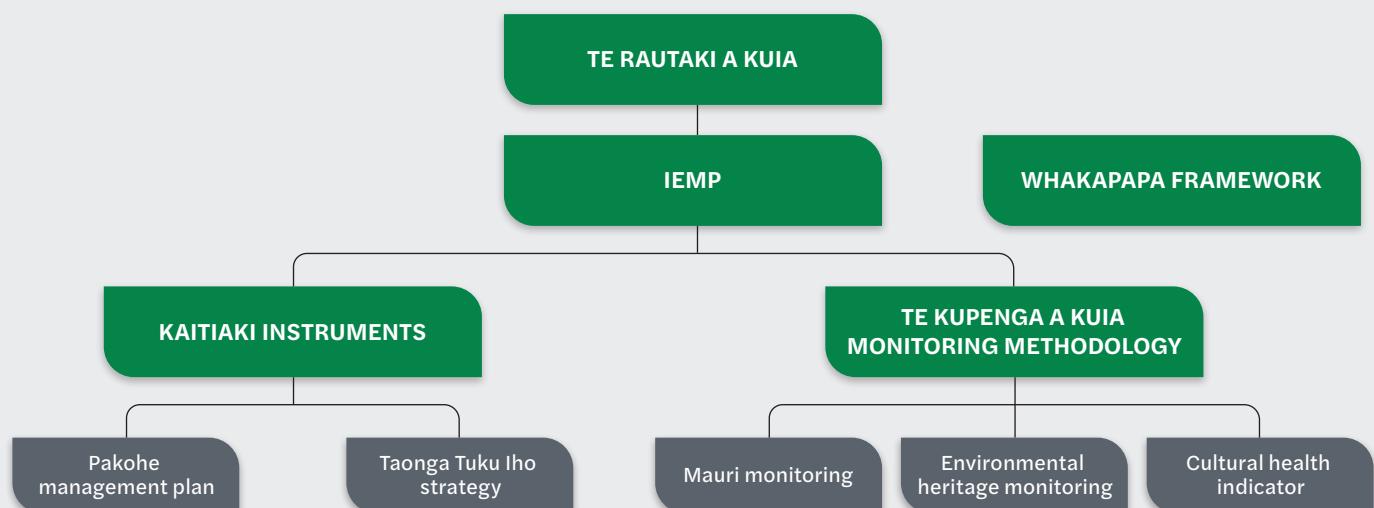


FIGURE 3 Policy and Te Mahere Whakahaere Taiao o Ngāti Kuia

SECTION 4

He Hononga Puaroa Ki Te Wāhi Me Te Tuku Ihotanga

A SACRED CONNECTION TO PLACE & HERITAGE



Te Hora Pa – photograph by Melissa Banks



Te ao Māori, the land, waterways, mountains, and skies are not merely physical landscapes, they are living entities infused with mauri, wairua, and whakapapa. These places embody the histories, identities, and spiritual connections of tangata whenua. They are places where mana is grounded, where tikanga is practiced, where the wairua of tīpuna continue to reside.

Understanding and respecting these places is essential for fulfilling the Treaty obligations of protection and partnership.

Wāhi Tīpuna, Wāhi Tapu, Wāhi Taonga and Wāhi Kāinga are interconnected and should not be managed in isolation. The spiritual, cultural, and ecological values are holistic and interdependent.

- Protecting these sites ensures the continuity of cultural identity, practices, and spiritual wellbeing of Ngāti Kuia.
- The management requires a holistic landscape approach, respecting the interconnectedness of land, water, people and atua.

The wāhi category descriptions evolved through the Places of Significance to Māori (POSM) project, supported by Te Tauihu Councils.

- Improve the protection of places and spaces of significance to Māori in Te Kupenga o Kuia.

- Inform resource management policy provisions and associated rules through a schedule of SASM (Sites and Areas of Significance to Māori)
- Inform and support any plan change to the operative Council Plans.
- Better-place Te Tauihu iwi to engage in spatial planning and resource management.
- Provide a platform for ngā iwi to build upon their own geospatial databases.
- Inform the development of policy around matters of national importance.

It is acknowledged that historical accounts of these places in the literature are often based on colonial worldviews and do not necessarily reflect those of iwi, whānau, and hapū. It is also acknowledged that accounts of these places vary across iwi. The project has discussed but not included the collection of cultural narratives and site-specific values, although some initial work was undertaken to develop a methodology for how this might occur.



Titiraukawa – photograph by Melissa Banks

4.1 Wāhi Tīpuna

PLACES OF ANCESTRAL SIGNIFICANCE

Explanation of importance

Wāhi tīpuna are sites that carry the stories, histories, and identity of the iwi and whānau. These places link current generations to their tīpuna and are central to Ngāti Kuia identity and continuity. They include:

- Marae, pā sites, urupā, maunga, awa, and moana.
- Locations associated with significant events, migrations, battles, and whakapapa connections.

Why they matter

- Wāhi tīpuna embody the mana and identity of Ngāti Kuia, preserving whakapapa and Mātauranga for future generations.
- These are living cultural landscapes, essential for the continuation of tikanga and cultural practice.

Identified issues

- Management of Wāhi Tīpuna requires collaboration with Ngāti Kuia to ensure cultural practices and historical narratives are respected.
- Co-governance and co-management arrangements are essential to ensure decisions are made in partnership with iwi and whānau.
- Cultural Effects Assessments (CEA) must be mandatory for any proposed activities that may impact Wāhi Tīpuna.



Te Hora Marae – photograph by Melissa Banks

4.2 Ngā Ara Tawhito

TRADITIONAL TRAILS & TRACKS

Explanation of importance

Ngā Ara Tawhito were, and remain, far more than just physical tracks across the landscape. They are the ancestral arteries of Te Kupenga o Kuia, deeply embedded in whakapapa, tikanga, and Mātauranga Māori. These trails were used for seasonal movement, trade, resource gathering, warfare, diplomacy, and whanaungatanga. Like rivers and coastlines, ara tawhito shaped social and economic life, connecting whānau, hapū, and iwi, and weaving together a living network of engagement across the whenua and moana.

Each trail was known intimately, its features named, its rhythms understood, its mauri respected. Ara tawhito often followed the paths of least resistance, such as ridgelines or water routes, and were lined with places of rest, food gathering, ceremony, and exchange. Importantly, they represent a cultural map of lived occupation, bound to both the physical and metaphysical landscape.

Why they matter

In the context of environmental management, Ngā Ara Tawhito provide a framework for reconnecting with mahinga kai, wāhi tapu, and other taonga, supporting the restoration of cultural landscapes and the transmission of intergenerational knowledge. Their revitalisation is essential for strengthening kaitiakitanga, enhancing ecological connectivity, and ensuring that cultural values are embedded in land use planning and decision-making.

Identified issues

Today, many of these pathways have been lost, degraded, or overlaid by infrastructure such as roads, fences, forestry blocks, or subdivisions. The severing of these trails has contributed to the disconnection of whānau from whenua, mahinga kai, and ancestral sites, eroding the transmission of intergenerational knowledge once carried along these routes.

Ngā Ara Tawhito can once again serve as pathways of reconnection—culturally, spiritually, and physically—revitalised through contemporary use and intergenerational stewardship.



Te Hoiere – photograph by Melissa Banks

4.3 Wāhi Taonga

PLACES OF SIGNIFICANT CULTURAL VALUE

Explanation of importance

Wāhi Taonga are places of significant cultural value, containing taonga that are essential for the cultural survival and identity of Ngāti Kuia. These include:

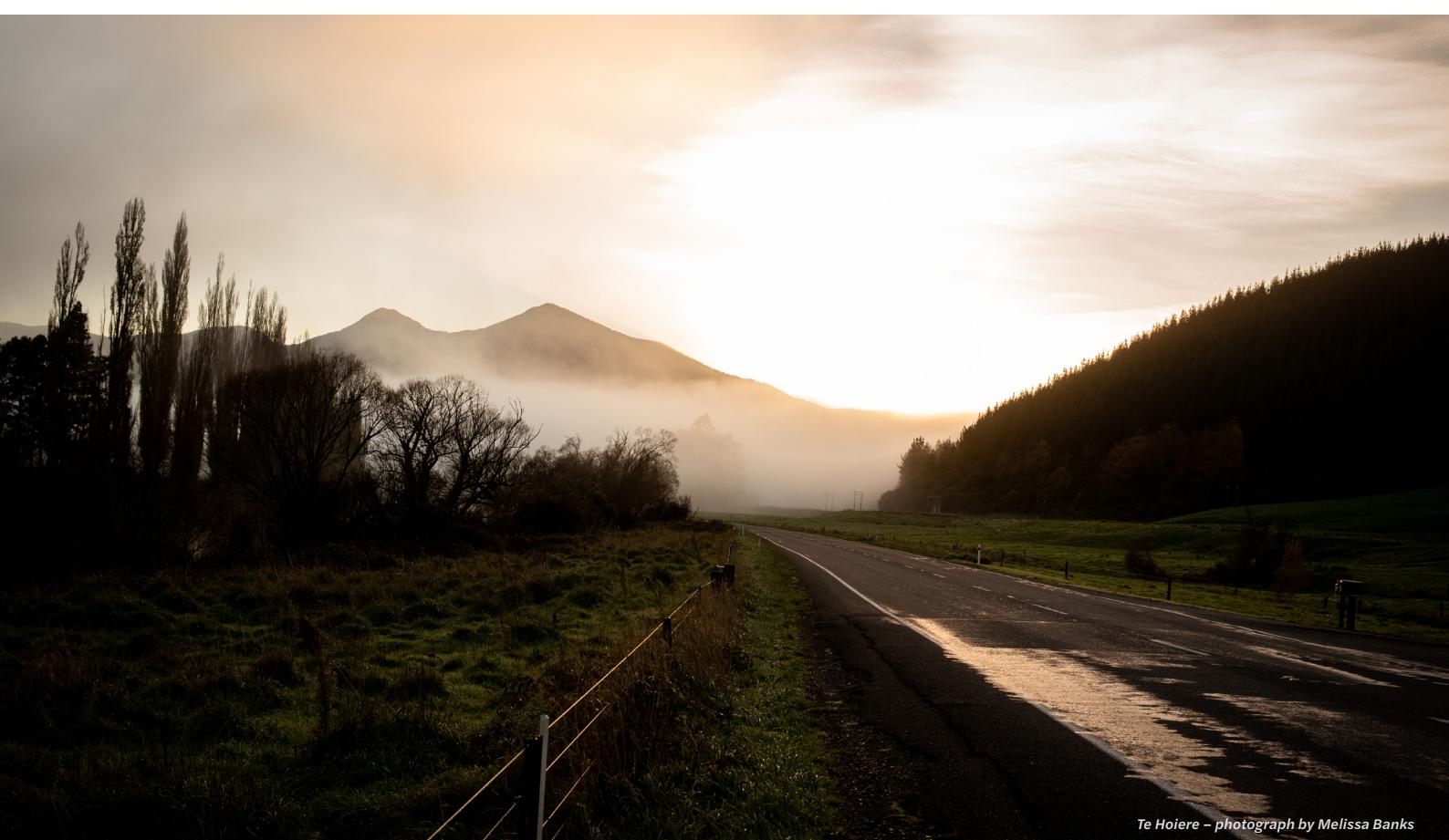
- Pātaka kai / mahinga kai, rongoā, urupā, and wāhi whakahirahira.
- Locations associated with traditional knowledge, resource use, and cultural practices.

Identified issues

- Damage, destruction or modification of wāhi taonga
- Lack of adequate consideration in environmental decision-making processes
- Loss of access to wāhi taonga and the ability to undertake customary practices

Why they matter

- Wāhi Taonga are essential; they serve as tangible evidence of our connection to the transmission of Mātauranga Māori / Ngāti Kuiatanga, supporting cultural practices such as food gathering, medicine, and customary use.
- They are cultural learning landscapes, connecting rangatahi to their heritage and maintaining the intergenerational flow of knowledge.



Te Hoiere – photograph by Melissa Banks

4.4 Wāhi Kāinga

PLACES OF SETTLEMENT & OCCUPATION

Explanation of importance

Wāhi kāinga are the living footprints of tangata whenua on the land—the places where Ngāti Kuia whānau lived, gathered, grew, learned, celebrated, and mourned. These included permanent pā kāinga, seasonal kāinga noho, and temporary pahi near resources or along ara tawhito. Tauranga waka (landing places) were central to these sites, as were gardens, urupā, ngāwhā, and communal facilities.

Historically, wāhi kāinga were deliberately located to sustain the wellbeing of the people and the environment. They were not randomly placed, but instead chosen for access to food, shelter, freshwater, sunlight, connection to maunga and awa, and strategic vantage points. They held not just buildings, but tikanga and tikanga-led rhythms of life, embedded within the values of manaakitanga, whanaungatanga, and tiaki taiao mahi.

Why they matter

The disruption and loss of wāhi kāinga, resulting from colonisation and urban development, have led to cultural dislocation, housing insecurity, and diminished presence on ancestral lands. Addressing these impacts requires policy measures that recognise and support the restoration of wāhi kāinga as living, evolving communities. Such measures are essential for upholding the rights of tangata whenua, promoting intergenerational wellbeing, and achieving equitable outcomes in accordance with Te Tiriti o Waitangi and relevant statutory frameworks.

Identified issues

Colonisation and urban expansion have disrupted, relocated, or erased many wāhi kāinga. Tangata whenua have been alienated from ancestral homes and denied opportunities to re-establish or build in ways that reflect cultural identity. The result is widespread housing insecurity, cultural dislocation, and loss of presence across ancestral lands.

By enabling the restoration of wāhi kāinga—not just as physical places but as living, evolving communities grounded in whakapapa—we support tino rangatiratanga, intergenerational wellbeing, and the rightful re-establishment of tangata whenua in their Te Kupenga o Kuia.



Te Hora Marae—photograph by Keelan Walker

4.5 Wāhi Tapu

SACRED SITES OF SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

Explanation of importance

Wāhi tapu are sites of high spiritual significance, considered sacred and inviolable. They are places where tapu are maintained to protect the wairua of the site and its people. These include:

- Urupā, sites of ritual significance, places associated with atua, and historical battlefields.
- Locations imbued with the presence of tīpuna or places where significant events have left a spiritual imprint.

Why they matter

Wāhi tapu are sacred and spiritually protected to maintain balance and harmony between the physical and spiritual worlds.

Identified issues

Disturbance or desecration of wāhi tapu can cause spiritual harm and cultural disruption, impacting the mana and wellbeing of whānau, hapū, and iwi.



Te Hora Marae – photograph by Melissa Banks

4.6 Pātaka Kai / Mahinga Kai

HUNTING & GATHERING ACTIVITIES

Explanation of importance

The degradation of Pātaka kai / mahinga kai (traditional food-gathering areas) and cultural trails is deeply rooted in the history of colonisation, which imposed Eurocentric land ownership models that fundamentally clashed with the relational and custodial Māori worldview. Key historical factors include:

- **Land confiscation and alienation:** Large-scale land confiscations through raupatu, unjust sales, and legislative impositions (e.g., the Native Land Court system) led to the fragmentation and privatisation of land that once supported communal Pātaka kai / mahinga kai practices.
- **Imposition of private property rights:** The Eurocentric notion of exclusive, individualised land ownership replaced the communal and custodial Māori relationship with whenua, leading to restricted access to traditional Pātaka kai / mahinga kai sites and cultural trails.
- **Environmental modification and development:** Colonial settlement patterns, deforestation, intensive agriculture, urbanisation, and infrastructure development (e.g., roads, railways) disrupted natural ecosystems, waterways, and cultural landscapes, destroying or degrading Pātaka kai / mahinga kai resources and obstructing cultural trails.

Today, these historical disruptions manifest as ongoing challenges that affect the cultural, spiritual, and socio-economic well-being of tangata whenua.

Loss of access & disconnection from Whenua

- **Restricted access:** Pātaka kai / mahinga kai sites and cultural trails are often on privately owned land, conservation estates, or are now urbanised, making it difficult for tangata whenua to access their traditional food sources and maintain cultural practices.
- **Legal and regulatory barriers:** Resource management laws and conservation regulations, fail to recognise the cultural rights of tangata whenua, restricting access to traditional areas.

- **Fragmented landholdings:** The fragmentation of Māori land into small, economically unviable parcels, or its continued alienation, limits the ability of whānau and hapū to exercise tiaki taiao mahi over Pātaka kai / mahinga kai and cultural trails.

Environmental degradation & resource depletion

- **Pollution and habitat destruction:** Industrial discharges, agricultural runoff, urban stormwater, and deforestation have polluted waterways and degraded habitats critical to Pātaka kai / mahinga kai species, including tuna (eels), inanga (whitebait), kōura (crayfish), and shellfish.
- **Loss of biodiversity:** The introduction of invasive species, overfishing, and habitat modification have severely impacted the availability of traditional food resources, undermining cultural practices linked to Pātaka kai / mahinga kai.

Cultural breakdown of intergenerational knowledge transfer

- **Loss of Tikanga and mātauranga Māori:** As access to Pātaka kai / mahinga kai and cultural trails diminishes, so too does the practice of tikanga associated with food gathering, preparation, and sharing, resulting in a breakdown of mātauranga Māori related to resource management and traditional knowledge systems.
- **Disconnection of Rangatahi:** Without active cultural practices and access to traditional sites, rangatahi are disconnected from their whakapapa and cultural identity, leading to cultural impoverishment and a loss of leadership succession for future Hunga Tiaki.



Titiraukawa – photograph by Melissa Banks

Cultural, spiritual & practical implications

- **Loss of mana and identity:** The inability to maintain ahi-kā-roa (the long-burning fires of occupation) and fulfil tiaki taiao mahi obligations erodes mana whenua and undermines cultural identity.
- **Spiritual disconnection:** In te ao Māori, food gathering is a spiritual act that maintains the mauri (life force) of both the resource and the people. The loss of Pātaka kai / mahinga kai and cultural trails severs this spiritual connection.

Socio-economic & health implications

- **Food insecurity and health impacts:** The loss of traditional food sources contributes to food insecurity and poor health outcomes, as tangata whenua are deprived of nutritious, locally-sourced kai.
- **Economic disempowerment:** The alienation from Pātaka kai / mahinga kai areas prevents iwi and hapū from participating in economic activities linked to customary food sources, impacting socio-economic resilience.

Political & Treaty implications

- **Treaty breaches:** The continued alienation and environmental degradation of Pātaka kai / mahinga kai and cultural trails are direct breaches of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, particularly Article II, which guarantees tangata whenua the undisturbed possession of their lands, forests, fisheries, and other taonga.
- **Inadequate Crown recognition and policy support:** Current policies and legal frameworks inadequately recognise and support the rights of tangata whenua to access and manage their traditional food and cultural sites.

While the situation is complex and deeply entrenched, strategic actions grounded in tiaki taiao mahi, rangatiratanga, and Mātauranga Māori can help reverse the decline.

4.7 Hunga Tiaki Kaitiaki Monitoring

The Te Kupenga o Kuia Mauri Assessment and Monitoring Tool Guiding Document, developed from the Te Hoiere Mauri Baseline Assessment Report (2025), provides a practical framework for kaitiaki to engage in mauri monitoring across the rohe. Grounded in mātauranga Māori and informed by lived experience, this tool enables regular assessment, reporting, and response to the condition of the taiao, guiding te mahi tiaki and strengthening kaitiakitanga.

To enhance this approach, Ngāti Kuia integrates additional tools including:

- **Cultural health indicators** – assessing the wellbeing of ecosystems through Māori values such as mahinga kai, taonga species, whakapapa connections, and access to wāhi tapu.
- **Cultural heritage indicators** – monitoring the integrity of cultural landscapes, traditional place names, and the continuity of tikanga-based practices.
- **Environmental heritage monitoring** – tracking ecological changes in culturally significant areas, including water quality, biodiversity, and land use impacts.

Together, these tools support a holistic, iwi-led monitoring system that reflects both cultural and environmental priorities. They enable Hunga Tiaki to make informed decisions, advocate for protection, and respond to changes in the mauri of the environment.

This integrated monitoring approach ensures that Ngāti Kuia can uphold its responsibilities under Te Tiriti o Waitangi, maintain the wellbeing of Te Kupenga o Kuia, and support intergenerational stewardship of the whenua and moana.



SECTION 5

Ngā Whāinga, Ngā Mahere Rautaki Me Ngā Tukanga I Whāia

OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIC POLICIES & APPLIED METHODS



Pakohe, Titiraukawa – photograph by Melissa Banks



5.1 Rautaki Taiao Objectives

Te Mahere Whakahaere Taiao o Ngāti Kuia (IEMP) integrates with and drives positive environmental management, delivering on the Ngāti Kuia Rautaki Taiao objectives.

OBJECTIVE 1

Kaitiaki (Hunga Tiaki) Ngāti Kuia as tangata whenua, as kaitiaki(Hunga Tiaki), leads restoration of Te Kupenga o Kuia.

OBJECTIVE 2

Kaitiakitanga (tiaki taiao mahi) continues to support the revitalisation of the taiao in Te Kupenga o Kuia, led by Te Rūnanga, nurturing connections and uplifting whānau as kaitiaki (Hunga Tiaki).

OBJECTIVE 3

Leadership and actions: Te Rūnanga leadership and actions promote an enduring commitment to deliver on all kaitiaki (Hunga Tiaki) responsibilities.

OBJECTIVE 4

Wāhi Tipuna: Policies, plans and process reflect tikanga and the importance of Ngāti Kuia Places of Significance in Te Kupenga o Kuia.

OBJECTIVE 5

Partnerships: Te Rūnanga motivates whānau and influences the wider community, to respect and protect our Taonga, forming partnerships with others to restore te mauri o te taiao in Te Kupenga o Kuia.

OBJECTIVE 6

Whānau decisions and actions, supported by Te Rūnanga, contribute to addressing major environmental challenges – kaitiaki(Hunga Tiaki), leading by example.

OBJECTIVE 7

Change initiated in Te Kupenga o Kuia, by both Ngāti Kuia and others, result in Net Enduring Restorative Outcomes.

5.2 IEMP Objectives & Policies

In the sections below we outline explanations of importance, identified issues and strategic policies related to each objective.

The policies outlined within Te Mahere Whakahaere Taiao o Ngāti Kuia (IEMP) are crafted to give practical effect to the strategic and environmental objectives, embedding tikanga Māori and mātauranga into applied methods that guide restoration, protection, and governance of the taiao across Te Kupenga o Kuia.

The IEMP objectives align with the overall strategic direction outlined in Te Rautaki Taiao o Ngāti Kuia objectives, comprehensively targeting key aspects of tiaki taiao mahi within Te Kupenga o Kuia.



Nukuwaiata, Chetwode Island – photograph by Keelan Walker



IEMP OBJECTIVE 1. TE MAURI O WAI MĀORI

Te Mauri o Wai Māori is restored and protected, ensuring that all freshwater bodies within Te Kupenga o Kuia are healthy, resilient, and able to support Ngāti Kuia Whānau wellbeing, Pātaka kai / mahinga kai, and ecosystem wellbeing, in accordance with Te Mana o Te Wai.

Wai Māori is a taonga tuku iho, a living ancestor that sustains all forms of life. In tikanga Māori, wai is the spiritual and physical cleanser, carrying mauri, wairua, and whakapapa. The flow of wai connects mountains to oceans, people to whenua, and atua to atua. Healthy wai reflects healthy people and ecosystems. When wai is degraded, so too is the mana of the people who descend from and live alongside it. Tiaki taiao mahi of wai demands that its flow, clarity, vitality, and tapu status are respected, protected, and restored. As such, all activity affecting wai must uphold Te Mana o te Wai and be guided by principles of whakaora (restoration), whakapapa (connection), and tiakitanga (protection).

Identified issues

- Contemporary land use practices and associated degradation of wai
- Lack of regard in resource management to the importance of the relationship of Ngāti Kuia, Ngāti Kuia Whānau and Tangata to wai
- Lack of recognition in resource management to the importance of Ngāti Kuia

Strategic policy

STRATEGIC POLICY	DESCRIPTION
SpP1 Te Mana o Te Wai as a guiding principle	All freshwater management decisions must uphold Te Mana o Te Wai, ensuring that the health of the water is prioritised above commercial or extractive uses.
SpP2 Riparian and catchment-based restoration	Support iwi-led restoration and catchment-scale management to prevent erosion, improve water quality, and revive freshwater ecosystems.
SpP3 Wāhi tapu and cultural use protection	Encourage local authorities and developers to identify, protect, and restore wāhi tapu and Pātaka kai / mahinga kai sites, seeking unrestricted access to these areas.



IEMP OBJECTIVE 2. TE MAURI O TE WHENUA

Te mauri o te whenua is upheld by promoting land-use practices that restore soil health, protect biodiversity, and sustain the ecological balance, all the while respecting Places of Significance.

Explanation/ importance

Whenua is more than just land (as in the Western sense) – it's Papatūānuku, the primordial mother, the source of identity, nourishment, and belonging. From a tikanga perspective, whenua is both whānau and whenua tangata – the placenta and the place we return to. It holds the memories of ancestors, the responsibilities of the living, and the hopes of future generations. Tikanga requires a balanced use and respectful treatment of whenua, governed by ahi kā, whakapapa, and mana whenua. Tiakitanga of whenua means ensuring that all development heals rather than harms and prioritises intergenerational wellbeing over short-term gain.

Identified issues

- Contemporary land use practices and the associated degradation of the whenua
- Lack of regard in resource management to the importance of the relationship of Ngāti Kuia, Ngāti Kuia Whānau and Tangata, to whenua
- Lack of recognition in resource management to the importance of Ngāti Kuia kaitiaki responsibilities, specifically as Hunga Tiaki and tiaki taiao mahi

Strategic policy

STRATEGIC POLICY		DESCRIPTION
SpP1	Regenerative land management	Support and promote sustainable land-use practices.
SpP2	Iwi-led land restoration	Take opportunities for involvement iwi-led whenua restoration projects.
SpP3	Wāhi Tapu and cultural use protection	Encourage local authorities and developers to identify, protect, and restore wāhi tapu and Pātaka kai / mahinga kai sites, seeking unrestricted access to these areas.
SpP4	Mātauranga Māori	Record and share Ngāti Kuiatanga as it applies to the sustainable management of whenua in Te Kupenga o Kuia.



IEMP OBJECTIVE 3. TIKANGA-BASED MARINE MANAGEMENT

The moana and coastal ecosystems, within Te Kupenga o Kuia, are protected and restored by embedding tikanga-based marine management practices, ensuring the sustainability of taonga species and customary rights.

Explanation/ importance

Moana is an ancestral domain governed by Tangaroa, imbued with mana and mauri, and intrinsically connected to whenua and wai. It is not a boundary but a connector of peoples, species, and spiritual realms. Tikanga upholds the moana as a place of kai, whakapapa, ceremony, and navigation. When degraded, the moana loses its mana, and so too do its people. Tiakitanga of moana requires rāhui, balance, and knowledge of tidal rhythms, breeding cycles, and taonga species. The health of the moana reflects the discipline and honour of those who harvest from it. It must not be treated as a waste sink or exploitation zone, but as a living relative.

Identified issues

- Contemporary land use practices and coastal activities, and the associated degradation of the moana.
- Lack of regard in resource management to the importance of the relationship of Ngāti Kuia, Ngāti Kuia Whānau and Tangata to the moana
- Lack of recognition in resource management to the importance of Ngāti Kuia kaitiaki responsibilities, specifically as Hunga Tiaki and tiaki taiao mahi

Strategic policy

STRATEGIC POLICY	DESCRIPTION
SpP1 Collaborative management of the Moana	Develop and maintain connections with parties relevant to the shared custodial care of the moana.
SpP2 Ngāti Kuia led marine protection and Rāhui	Respond to opportunities for involvement in iwi-led marine protection initiatives.
SpP3 Sustainable aquaculture / fisheries management	Apply a wide range of methods to support sustainable aquaculture/fisheries management.
SpP4 Pollution and coastal habitat restoration	Confront sewage discharge, general waste and sedimentation, in support of sustainable management.
SpP5 Customary fisheries	Continue priority support for / involvement in matters concerning customary fisheries.



IEMP OBJECTIVE 4. BALANCE BETWEEN WHENUA, MOANA & RANGI

The purity and vitality of hau takiwā is ensured by reducing air pollution, protecting natural carbon sinks, and maintaining the balance between whenua, moana, and rangi.

Explanation/ importance

Hau Takiwā is the breath of life—hauora, hau tapu, hau Māori. It is the sacred wind, the binding space between Ranginui and Papatūānuku, filled with the intangible wairua of all living things. Hau connects people, places, and atua, carrying both energy and memory. In tikanga, when the air is clear, the mana of the environment is visible and felt. When it is polluted, that mana is diminished. Tiakitanga of hau takiwā requires that we reduce emissions, protect ngahere that cleanse the air, and uphold practices that honour the sanctity of the unseen. The winds are messengers—they must be heeded, not choked.

Identified issues

- Contemporary practices that impact hau, including pollution and discharges to air, and the associated degradation of hau.
- Lack of regard in resource management to the importance of the relationship of Ngāti Kuia, Ngāti Kuia Whānau and Tangata to Te Hau Takiwā
- Lack of recognition in resource management to the importance of Ngāti Kuia kaitiaki responsibilities, specifically as Hunga Tiaki and tiaki taiao mahi

Strategic policy

	STRATEGIC POLICY	DESCRIPTION
SpP1	Collaborative management of Hau Takiwā	Develop and maintain connections with parties relevant to the shared custodial care of Hau Takiwā.
SpP2	Reducing industrial and agricultural emissions	Take steps to confront industrial air pollution and support low-emission practices.
SpP3	Carbon sequestration and indigenous forest protection	Consider opportunities for supporting or involvement in native forest regeneration to improve air quality and habitat.
SpP4	Air quality monitoring and protection of sacred spaces	Participate in iwi-led air quality monitoring programs, involving Ngāti Kuia Whānau, as applicable.



IEMP OBJECTIVE 5. WĀHI TĪPUNA

Ngāti Kuia wāhi tīpuna are protected, restored, and honoured as living cultural landscapes that embody the whakapapa, mana, and mauri of the iwi. All environmental planning, policy, and decision-making within Te Kupenga o Kuia must reflect the ancestral significance of these places, ensuring that tikanga, mātauranga Māori, and Ngāti Kuiatanga guide management and use.

Strategic policy

STRATEGIC POLICY	DESCRIPTION
SpP1 Crown recognition and support	All Crown agencies must formally recognise wāhi tīpuna within Te Kupenga o Kuia as sites of ancestral significance and provide active support for their protection, restoration and management.
SpP2 Council plan provisions A	Local authorities must embed wāhi tīpuna protections into district and regional plans, including schedules of Sites and Areas of Significance to Māori (SASM) and ensure these provisions are enforceable.
SpP3 Council plan provisions B	Plan Changes must be co-developed with Ngāti Kuia to ensure wāhi tīpuna are not only protected but revitalised, with provisions for access, education and cultural use.
SpP4 Buffer zones	Establish protective buffer zones around wāhi tīpuna to prevent encroachment, pollution, or degradation from adjacent land use or development.
SpP5 Access restrictions	Where appropriate, access to wāhi tīpuna may be restricted to protect spiritual and cultural values, with protocols developed in partnership with Ngāti Kuia.
SpP6 Rāhui	Ngāti Kuia may place rāhui on wāhi tīpuna to protect their mauri, particularly in response to desecration, environmental degradation or spiritual imbalance.
SpP7 Customary rights and access	Ngāti Kuia whānau must retain and be supported in exercising customary rights of access, use and stewardship over wāhi tīpuna, including for cultural, spiritual and educational purposes.
SpP8 RMA enforcement	Enforcement mechanisms under the RMA must be strengthened to ensure breaches.



IEMP OBJECTIVE 6. MAHINGA KAI

Mahinga kai within Te Kupenga o Kuia is restored, protected, and revitalised to uphold the cultural, spiritual, and ecological wellbeing of Ngāti Kuia whānau. Customary access, use, and stewardship of mahinga kai must be enabled through tikanga-based management, ensuring intergenerational transmission of mātauranga Māori and the resilience of taonga species.

Strategic policy

STRATEGIC POLICY	DESCRIPTION
SpP1 Legal recognition and protection	Ensure mahinga kai sites are legally recognised as wāhi taonga and protected through statutory instruments, including district and regional plans, overlays, and statutory acknowledgements.
SpP2 Customary rights and access	Support and uphold the customary rights of Ngāti Kuia whānau to access, harvest, and manage mahinga kai in accordance with tikanga and mātauranga Māori.
SpP3 Cultural landscape planning	Incorporate mahinga kai into cultural landscape planning frameworks, recognising their interconnectedness with wāhi tīpuna, wāhi tapu, and ngā ara tawhito.
SpP4 Iwi led restoration plans	Prioritise iwi-led restoration of degraded mahinga kai ecosystems, including habitat enhancement, species reintroduction, and water quality improvement.
SpP5 Rāhui and resource management	Enable the use of rāhui and other tikanga-based tools to protect and regenerate mahinga kai resources, particularly in response to overharvesting or environmental degradation.
SpP6 Community partnerships	Foster partnerships with local communities, agencies, and landowners to support the restoration and sustainable management of mahinga kai.
SpP7 Rangatahi engagement programmes	Develop and support rangatahi-focused programmes that reconnect youth with mahinga kai practices, ensuring intergenerational knowledge transfer and cultural continuity.
SpP8 Crown engagement and support	Require Crown agencies to actively support Ngāti Kuia-led mahinga kai initiatives through funding, policy alignment, and co-management arrangements.
SpP9 Cultural trail revitalisation	Revive and maintain cultural trails (ngā ara tawhito) that connect mahinga kai sites, enabling physical and spiritual reconnection with traditional food gathering landscapes.

5.3 Applied Methods

Together, these methods operationalise the vision of Te Mahere Whakahaere Taiao o Ngāti Kuia (IEMP) by embedding tikanga, mātauranga Māori, and intergenerational stewardship into all aspects of

environmental management. The application of these methods, in alignment with the Strategic policies outlined in this IEMP, will be achieved through engagement with Ngāti Kuia.

M1 Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Establish co-governance frameworks with Te Tauihu Councils and Crown agencies that embed Ngāti Kuia authority and uphold Te Tiriti o WaitangiFormalise decision-making protocols that prioritise Ngāti Kuia values, including recognition of ahi kā roa and whakapapa-based stewardshipEnsure governance structures support the implementation of IEMP objectives, including statutory acknowledgements and overlay classifications
M2 Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Empower Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia to lead restoration initiatives, including the Te Hoiere Catchment Project and Hunga Tiaki Monitoring programmesPromote leadership grounded in whakapapa and service to whānau, enabling intergenerational transmission of mātauranga MāoriAdvocate for Ngāti Kuia-led responses to climate change and environmental degradation, rejecting extractive paradigms
M3 Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Strengthen partnerships with iwi, hapū, councils, DOC, and NGOs through shared restoration goals and integrated planningFacilitate knowledge exchange between mātauranga Māori and Western science, especially in Hunga Tiaki Monitoring and spatial planningSupport collaborative development of cultural indicators and monitoring tools that reflect Ngāti Kuia values
M4 Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Create opportunities for whānau to engage in environmental decision-making, restoration projects, and Hunga Tiaki monitoring activitiesEnsure engagement processes are timely, reciprocal, and grounded in manaakitanga and whanaungatangaPromote whānau-led initiatives in papakāinga development, mahinga kai restoration, and cultural trail revitalisation
M5 Capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop training programmes for Hunga Tiaki monitoring, environmental literacy, and policy engagement.Support rangatahi engagement through education and hands-on involvement in restoration and monitoringBuild organisational capacity within Te Rūnanga to deliver on IEMP implementation and strategic objective
M6 Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Advocate for the adoption of NERO as a standard for assessing environmental change proposalsPromote the IEMP as a statutory and cultural instrument in local and national policy forumsChallenge reforms or activities that undermine Te Tiriti obligations or the mauri of te taiao
M7 Hunga Tiaki monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Cultural Health Indicator monitoring established to measure te mauri o te taiaoImplement monitoring programmes across Te Kupenga o Kuia, integrating cultural and scientific indicatorsEnsure monitoring informs adaptive management and supports the restoration of degraded ecosystemsInclude monitoring as a condition in resource consents and statutory planning processes
M8 Resourcing and funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Secure funding for restoration, monitoring, and whānau capacity-building through strategic partnerships and grantsDevelop long-term financial planning aligned with IEMP priorities and workstreamsEnsure equitable resourcing for Ngāti Kuia participation in environmental governance and restoration

SECTION 6

**Te Hurihangā o Tō
Tātou Āhuarangi**
OUR CHANGING CLIMATE



Te Hoiere – photograph by Keelan Walker





Te Hoiere – photograph by Melissa Banks

Our changing climate and related adverse effects are symptoms of overconsumption and irresponsible disposal of materials. Climate change is often framed as a political issue, which can sometimes distract from the root causes. This focus on climate change might unintentionally support industries like the climate change industry, electric vehicles, and technological solutions, while maintaining the status quo. Such a situation can lead to further environmental exploitation in the pursuit of acquiring more material goods, along with related disposal problems.

Good decision-making within the framework of *te Mauri o te Taiao* is a natural step for tangata whenua within *te ao Māori*. The urgent response must focus on the real issue, rather than just emissions and offsetting.

It is expected that, among various adverse effects, sea level rise and weather events will affect coastal area occupancy and the integrity of significant sites along the coast, as well as lead to the loss of cultural practices such as *Kaitiakitanga* to *Tiakitanga/ mahinga kai*. Regarding symptoms of human-induced climate change, *Ngāti Kuia*, as *Hunga Tiaki taiao*, continues to confront the causes of these adverse effects.

The daily dedication of *Ngāti Kuia* to *tiaki taiao mahi* through environmental restoration continues to be the appropriate, ongoing response to all threats, including symptoms of climate change. We encourage open dialogue and support to inform and enable *Māori* to be *Māori*, fostering *kaitiakitanga* by providing resources and collaboration.

We are particularly interested in changing land use management to help protect against flooding. This approach ensures that the *mauri* of the *taiao* is restored in a meaningful way, resulting in long-term, sustainable outcomes.

Kupu Māori

GLOSSARY

Awa	River, freshwater waterbodies
Hapū	Sub tribe
Hunga Tiaki taiao	Guardian
Inanga	Whitebait
Iwi	Tribe
Kai	Food
Kai moana	Food from the sea
Kāinga	Home
Kaitiaki	Guardian
Kaitiakitanga / Tiakitanga	Guardianship – Māori have an obligation to protect and enhance the mauri of all natural resources, for the benefit of ourselves, other people living in our homeland and for future generations
Kaupapa	Purpose
Kōura	Crayfish
Mana whenua	Authority over land or territory
Marae	The open area in front of a meeting house for formal discourse, also the complex of buildings around the marae
Mātauranga Māori	Māori knowledge
Maunga	Mountain
Mauri	Life force
Moana	Sea
Ngahere	Forest
Noa	Unrestricted, free of restriction
Pakohe	Argillite, metasomatised mud stone
Rangatiratanga	The right to exercise authority
Raupatu	Confiscation
Rohe	Region
Rongoā	Medicine
Rūnanga	Māori council or assembly
Tangata whenua	People of the land
Taonga	Treasures
Taonga Tuku Iho	Intergenerational resources
Tapu	Sacred and or restricted
Te ao Māori	The Māori world
Te Kupenga o Kuia	The tribal area of Ngāti Kuia as per Deed Settlement
Tiaki taiao mahi	Today's mahi and preparation for what is to come
Te Mana o te Wai	Recognises spiritual power of water and the relationship between water, the wider environment and communities
Te Tauihu	The prow or top of the South Island (o Te Waka a Māui)
Tikanga	Customary system of values and practices
Tipuna	Ancestors
Tuna	Eel species
Wāhi Pakohe	Naturally occurring pakohe
Wāhi tapu	Sacred place
Wāhi taonga	Sites of significance to Māori
Wāhi tipuna	Pakohe archaeological sites including quarries and occupation sites where Taonga Pakohe have been found
Whakapapa	Genealogical, lineage
Whānau	Family
Whenua	Land

Tohutoro

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Taonga Tuku Iho Management Strategy, 2015

Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia

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*Ngā Kanohi Kārearea is a tangata whenua iwi
environmental management planning document
prepared and mandated by Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Kuia.*

