

Innovations for Climate Adaptation

Ko ngā kōrero o ngā mana whenua

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Ko ngā kōrero o ngā mana whenua

Executive Summary

1. This is an interim report that presents kōrero from four mana whenua groups from throughout Aotearoa who have shared their views on climate change and their relationships with local and sometimes central government. Sharing their journeys are Aukaha (Kai Tahu), Te Kaahui o Rauru (Taranaki), Ngāi Tamawhariua (Ngāi Te Rangi) and Ngā iwi o Maketū (Te Arawa).
2. They are the result of interviews, kōrero, emails and some limited supplementary supportive material on each community/region that were collected in late 2022 and early 2023.
3. The purpose of this report is to highlight key ideas and experiences of each community or organisation as they relate to addressing climate change for their people. For two of the groups, this includes their experiences in developing climate adaptation plans/strategies.
4. The report discusses the implications of relationships with government as it relates to enhancing rangatiratanga – leadership, customary authority, sovereignty. Rangatiratanga underpinned the efforts of all.



Kai Tahu - Aukaha

Introduction

Aukaha, meaning to unite and bind together, is a Kai Tahu organisation based in Ōtepoti Dunedin that works to strengthen relationships between mana whenua, local and central government, sector partners and businesses across the Otago region. Representing five Rūnaka - Waihao, Moeraki, Puketeraki, Ōtākou and Hokonui – Aukaha works across environmental, health and social services and regional development foci:



Fig. 1 Aukaha online <https://aukaha.co.nz/#>

This is some of their kōrero on their environmental and climate change journey. Several challenges lie ahead in dealing with diverse functions and responsibilities, not least helping to support their own to scope out climate needs, aspirations, and planning and to support capacity development. They are leading multiple efforts on multiple fronts internally with their Rūnaka and externally with councils, central government agencies and others.

Kaitiakitanga

Kaitiakitanga is a central theme in the mahi (work) for Kai Tahu. It is an expression of rangatiratanga – leadership, self-determination – and involves for example the restoration of plant species and with the view of a climate resilient future:

“... all Rūnaka are involved in restoration work of varying types – so they are asking questions around whether what they are doing is climate proof – are they planting the right species for future environmental changes.”

They also recognised, however, that species from a previous era, i.e., that of their ancestors, may not sustain a long-term future of a changing climate.

Council relationships, climate change and capacity challenges

Aukaha, being a professional entity working to protect and promote the environmental and social interests of Kai Tahu, are regularly involved in regulatory work per the Resource Management Act and the Local Government Act. In this regard and in relation to the proposed regional policy statement, they do not consider climate change is well addressed. There are several difficulties, however, in being able to ensure Kai Tahu interests are integrated into the policy due to capacity issues and due to the technical nature of a lot of the work (i.e., models and predictions). Aukaha have also had to prioritise other work due to their limited capacity.

Similarly, local marae communities struggle to have the capacity to engage given the council-defined timeframes and deadlines. The whole process is reactive. Climate change issues as they relate to Kai Tahu in the area are only properly dealt with if and where initiative can be taken by them via funded research which is currently the case regarding a project on risk assessment.

The approach in assessing and responding to climate change is concerning not least given the coastal settlements and where urupā are by the coast and subject to erosion. Given those circumstances, one employee at Aukaha remarked, it is:

“... crazy that it's not core in our work.”

And in recognising the difficulties facing people's present and future predicaments, Aukaha realised, it is;

"... hard to have these conversations and how do you do so without scaring people".

At the same time, the discussions need to be had now in order to work out solutions. More than that, each marae or runaka need to:

"... do a climate change strategy. Map the risks, know what is going to happen, and be able to develop plans to manage those changes."

So much needs to be done, yet capacity and capability is limited, policy development is limited both internally within the hapū and externally within councils and relationships with councils also vary, making progress slow.

However, where there are close relationships, a far improved way of dealing with important issues has evolved, particularly concerning freshwater. The national policy statement on freshwater has played a significant part in guiding the functions and roles of the council, arising out of strengthened references to the Treaty/Te Tiriti in 2017 particularly in relation to explicitly "consider and recognise Te mana o te Wai" [which was] further strengthened in 2020 to 'give effect' to." Funding and "Starting projects from the ground up, in a co-development approach", that "reflects tino rangatiratanga" have been outcomes Aukaha have seen as a result of its relationship with the regional council.

While much progress has been made in recent years, especially in relation to regional council relationships and freshwater policy foci, there is further work to be done with district councils. Funding and staff turn-over are concerns, as well as capacity, cultural competency and the need to formalise relationships. Often mana whenua are 'volunteers' doing mahi aroha. More problematically, this has been a deeply engrained process where councils have been accustomed to mana whenua doing the work while the communities themselves see the work as important because it relates to their role as kaitiaki or guardian.

Councils often also do not fully understand what needs to be done and from the experience of Aukaha, they (councils);

“... just pass on ‘everything’ rather than what is relevant. So Aukaha staff have to go through all this irrelevant material to get to the issue that they do have concerns with.”

On one hand, that gives autonomy and control to mana whenua, but on the other hand, it does not properly account for the scale of the work to be done which therefore overburdens them.

The solutions, as Aukaha sees them, is for formal relationships at the rangatira level to be established and joint kaupapa or plans to be agreed upon, which then sets out a programme of action for executive functions for operational levels to carry out their work. This in turn would ensure that issues such as under-capacity, burn-out and therefore appropriate planning and timeframes are addressed or acted upon.

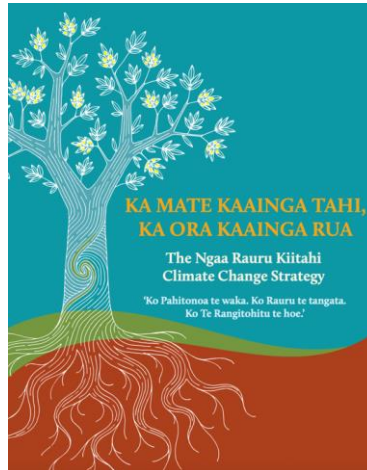
Elsewhere, examples of where “my knowledge and your knowledge can create a good outcome” and for climate adaptation concerns Taiari freshwater health restoration involving the two local runaka Puketeraki and Otakou alongside the Department of Conservation. The Department takes samples and has records from many decades as well (perhaps 50) while the local knowledge or mātauraka goes back much further. Complementing what is known are Kai Tahu archives which are being investigated regarding māhika kai sites to look at the changes over time. This example demonstrates how each contributes much to the project of awa restoration. Similarly, each needs the other as there are knowledge gaps on both sides but by working together, a greater understanding of river history and health is possible, thereby helping to plan for its future in the face of climate change impacts.

Taranaki – Te Kaahui o Rauru



Introduction

Te Kaahui o Rauru is a post settlement governance entity that was established following the settlement of Taranaki treaty claims. Te Kaahui o Rauru is therefore a tribal-level entity that carries out a number of functions on behalf of its 12 marae (<https://www.rauru.iwi.nz>). They represent their people on matters that concern the whole tribe. Sometimes, they represent hapuu on issues that may require significant resources and which may be difficult for hapuu to fund themselves. On environmental issues, their taiao team has good relationships with all hapuu, and Te Kaahui o Rauru has worked hard to support hapuu initiative and mana motuhake where they can. Te Kaahui o Rauru is a leader for Māori on climate strategy development. In 2022, in partnership with the Ministry for the Environment, they produced the Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi Climate Change Strategy.¹ This is their story of how they got there, as well as kōrero on how they see their (environmental) roles and responsibilities more generally.



Rangatiratanga: Devolution of powers

Te Kaahui o Rauru aspire to not just engage more in the management or kaitiakitanga of their lands and resources, but also to have greater control or rangatiratanga in decision making and in operational matters. Regional councils are required to draft new regional freshwater plans. Freshwater is one area where they see themselves having a devolved responsibility from councils to themselves where they are actively monitoring freshwater in

¹ The plan can be accessed here: <https://environment.govt.nz/assets/publications/ngaa-rauru-kiitahi-climate-change-strategy.pdf>

their rohe. In this way, their rangatiratanga would be more fully recognized. Their aspiration as they saw it was to see a transfer of power per resource management law which would see the ahi kaa as paid custodians to fulfil their responsibilities to then inform the regional council on the state of water quality.

Te Kaahui o Rauru saw themselves as paving a path for others perhaps less fortunate in terms of resources (i.e., funding) and positions to think about possibilities and to begin to act on them. They have had significant Crown funding to support their initiatives over two years. At the same time, they recognized the opportunity of also being able to learn from others as they build their roadmap.

Perhaps critically in terms of a new way of thinking about Crown support for the exercise of rangatiratanga, Te Kaahui o Rauru see their role of fulfilling kaitiakitanga duties or active custodianship over environmental resources as also fulfilling Crown goals. Moreover, hapū and iwi should not have to ask for Crown funding to carry out their ancestral obligations to look after their environment. As they see it,

“...ok, we [the Crown] want to build capacity within tangata whenua, we want our freshwater to be much better, we want iwi to engage in these processes, who is up for delivering that? Rather than us having to do some kind of process where we have to apply for funding and they graciously give it to us or not so graciously give it to us for that.”

Crown support and connections

Getting traction on key projects was not without significant Crown investment. The climate strategy was also the outcome of the Crown wanting to partner with a smaller iwi who had not yet developed their strategy compared to larger iwi who had. Te Kaahui o Rauru were well connected and well positioned to take on the initiative which culminated in a climate strategy after a year.

Importantly, the strategy as a high level document provides a roadmap for wider work over years to come and for all marae. As explained,

“... the climate strategy guides our whole workstream and the next steps will be adaptation plans or climate plans for the marae. The strategy can guide us to support those efforts.”

The strategy was also a clear move by the Crown to fulfil its Treaty/Te Tiriti obligations and to support hapū/iwi in developing their climate change goals and aspirations. Their strategy and relationship provides a model for the Crown and others around the motu.

“The overarching goal is to ensure that Ngaa Rauru Kiiitahi descendants have every chance to thrive, even in the most extreme scenarios. This strategy seeks to strengthen the iwi across all facets of our lives, to be prepared for climate change and to establish measures to enable climate action. The strategy will guide whaanau, hapuu and the iwi to respond to projected climate change impacts, while acknowledging opportunities to capitalise on.”

(<https://environment.govt.nz/assets/publications/ngaa-rauru-kiitahi-climate-change-strategy.pdf>, p.3).

Managed Relocation

For some marae communities, managed relocation is a reality now and has been a reality in the past. Significant issues face them including but not limited to obtaining suitable land to move to, council administrative red-tape and addressing legislative limitations. As explained,

“...they are looking at getting some land back from council, some land that’s under council administration, out at Kai Iwi to take this marae back to where it used to stand. So we had a hui, and there were reps, and there were a few councillors, it was at that level. But some of the restrictions ... they’re having to jump through all

the hoops to get any bit of land, when you should be able to live there and have a good lifestyle.”

Legislative limitations and Managed Relocation

Te Kaahui o Rauru saw legislative limitations in terms of people being able to use land in ways that they want to and other issues relating to private land ownership. On the subject of managed relocation, they were wary regarding the land purchase process given the history of land tenure and Crown-iwi relationships. Their Manager for the Pūtaiao unit explained the predicament plainly enough,

“The Crown is in a really difficult place in terms of you want people to be able to buy land, particularly iwi to be able to buy land to be able to relocate marae to, but there’s such a history around land acquisition and mistrust between the Crown and iwi.”

They recognize that the process involving the Crown is a difficult one and would need to be carefully managed in addition to managed retreat itself.

Past Precedents of Moving

Yet Ngaa Rauru Kaitahi at the community (marae) level have been incredibly resourceful and have taken initiative also when they’ve had to, especially in the face of more forceful climate-induced weather events such as storms and flooding. Their actions are also demonstrative of the idea of moving when needing to, and as they have done so in the past. As they explained,

“And we’ve started to move marae – not anything to do with the iwi office, but hapū (Waipapa) off their own bat have already been through the process of moving marae that have been flooded in the last few years, and the writing’s on the wall, so they’ve taken things in their own hands and moved their marae off the river and up

on to a hill. And it's not unusual nor is it the first case. It has also happened at Takirau, another marae that was flooded in part of the same flood, they've been looking at how they can protect their marae going forward. Iwi have a history of moving. It's not so much of a new concept, they've got a history of moving if the geographical circumstances require it."

Waipapa marae has actually been moved a number of times which may also explain the readiness or preparedness of the people to the idea of moving. They also recognize that their experience and acceptance to the idea of moving isn't shared by other kāinga or iwi elsewhere around the motu.

In their case, however, in addition to having a history of moving which enables them to have precedent and experience to call on, is that they have land to which they can move to. These are critical ingredients to successful managed relocation in addition to the internal leadership of the community.

Kaitiakitanga: freshwater, biodiversity protection, restoration, building skills

In addition to managed relocation as a key focus for Te Kaahui o Rauru are their efforts in freshwater management and biodiversity management. Freshwater is in their view what will sustain them long term so they are focused on identifying sources, protecting its health and ensuring fair share amongst their people and the general population. Underpinning freshwater monitoring is the importance of values which also helps to preserve the people's connection with the water. As explained,

"With climate change, the important thing is to make room for values and for values to play out in monitoring."

Te Kaahui o Rauru have also been prioritising work on biodiversity protection and restoration. They consider biodiversity loss and climate change as synonymous. Given the significant losses of many species over many years, they have been active in programmes

such as predator and pest control as well as building their own capacity and capability so that wider programmes for the care of lands and resources and their own people can occur. As they explained,

“if our biodiversity is in good shape then Papatuuānuku is more able to sustain these sort of impacts. ... It's not only good for the environment, it's also good for peoples' economic wellbeing.”

Combining mātauranga and western science approaches in biodiversity protection is essential they believe. This includes, for example, kōrero (stories/information) about hunting and gathering sites, gathering knowledge about bio-indicators, knowing what species are available at different times of the year (i.e., mātauranga), then gathering information regarding for example contaminants in water which collectively helps to give a picture of the health of the environment.

Again, building skills, or capability and capacity across numerous work programmes is important in order to be climate prepared and to empower community members to engage well with their whenua.

These comments are also recognition of the fact that the issues facing communities are complex and require new knowledge and resources to be combined with existing knowledge.

Marae engagement: finding the right balance between acting quickly and taking time

Marae communities are as diverse in their composition as their whakapapa. The diversity is also reflected in their views including their support or opposition for initiative such as the development of the climate strategy. Given the relative haste of the climate strategy project, there was some resistance to it as well as support. Engagement was not as fulsome as would have otherwise been the case if there was more time,

“And there’s a bit of resistance in terms of ‘why are you doing that?’ and maybe at a governance level we should have done it first, but we knew there was an opportunity so we just cracked on and did it.”

Nevertheless, community members were involved in many ways including as paid writers or as paid designers, and others in the community were consulted and gave their ideas. Those leading the process therefore recognized the importance of both getting on with the work while they could but also involving the community, even if it was less than some community members’ expectations. The end result is a model and guide for not only the hapū, but for many throughout Aotearoa to emulate.

Council relationships

Good relationships take time and maturity. Te Kaahui o Rauru and one of the regional councils have both worked hard at developing their mutual interests and relationship, resulting in hapuu members having a hot desk which is;

“...a really good opportunity for skills-building, knowledge sharing, relationships”.

But the council is also invited to come to them, so it is very much two way affair in each other’s ‘rohe’. This council, in the eyes of tangata whenua, are also much more open-minded and recognize that they are importantly part of processes in resource management. Their CEO is also Maaori who understands the importance of hapuu engagement. This relationship contrasts that with the other regional council where it is more formal, distant and less understanding of each other.

District council relationships vary depending on the closeness of relationships and also in terms of where the councils are located in relation to the rohe. Other factors affecting relationships are whether council and tangata whenua priorities overlap and whether competing iwi interests within a council area of jurisdiction affects the way in which a

council perceives its role in relation to each tangata whenua because of the lack of clarity on who (tangata whenua) belongs where.

Climate change is however addressed in an interesting way by one of the district councils in relation to Te Kaahui o Rauru and other iwi per a reforestation carbon sequestration project. The initiative stems not from iwi per se, but the benefits are to involve them per the credits which are intended to be divided up between the four iwi.

Commented [JC1]: Jude - come back to this - though this has been the case in the past there have been huge growth over the last year with both councils with collaboration and understanding of hapu at place.

Te Moana a Toi – Ngāi
Tamawhariua

Introduction

Ngāi Tamawhariua is a hapū of Ngāi Te Rangī whose marae Te Rereatukahia is located in the upper Tauranga Harbour. Their papakāinga is inclusive of their marae and pā (community).



Rereatukahia Marae. Image: Māorimaps.com

They are confined to their occupied area and no longer have title to their wider ancestral estate due to historical colonial processes that saw lands lost through forced cession, purchase and confiscation (Rigby 2001, pp. 28-29). A significant portion of the papakāinga is precariously located close to the shores of the harbour and predictions suggest it will soon be encroached upon by a rising sea. As described by hapū member Ngairo Eruera, the “papakāinga is built on wetlands, with some whare located in particularly low-lying areas - primarily because it was the only land left” (Stewart, May 2023). Despite the significant losses and the climate-induced challenges not of their making, Ngāi Tamawhariua are collaborating with researchers and beginning a process with local government to plot best pathways for their hapū and at the same time, become climate resilient. This is their story so far.

Capacity

As a small marae community, Rereatukahia is located by the coast in the Bay of Plenty near Katikati. The hapū Ngāi Tamawhariua have reached out to their descendant community through a climate change survey to find out their needs and aspirations as well as their skills that may contribute towards addressing climate change and related concerns. As explained:

“... so we’re looking at a social media campaign to get it [the survey] out to the wider hapū, not just the local, the people that live locally, so the people that are away to

find out what skills and knowledge exist in the wider group and whether people are happy to bring in their skills ... because some stuff can be done remotely.” (kōrero 1, 23 November 2022).

The survey has, therefore, been an important capacity building exercise, by firstly identifying the capacity and where it lies as bases to then work on how to embrace the many forms of capacity in relation to the many needs and interests that are already known and that are also arising through the survey and hui that are being held. Additionally, identifying descendants may also help encourage to develop employment in the area (kōrero 1, 23 November 2022).

Addressing climate change and other complex issues also requires an internal strategic approach where political representation is separate to operational matters and where projects can continue irrespective of what is happening politically (kōrero 1, 23 November 2022). This is particularly important if and where change frequently happens within committees such has been the case with the chair of the marae committee for Rereatukahia marae.

“I think a project manager role would be good so that that person has a contract, they’re contracted to do this work so regardless of what’s happening at a political level, the work can carry on.” (kōrero 1, 23 November 2022).

The division of political representation and operational practice is not unique to Rereatukahia. Their situation, however, highlights the internal challenges that a small community is required to address in order to also deal with any other issue. They are a community with highly complex environmental and social concerns who effectively need to move because of the threat of an encroaching sea.

“Some of the current flood mapping indicates housing areas through low-lying parts of the kāinga, definitely through the wetland, will be inundated.” (Stewart, 2023).

Maintaining continuity at a project level is a minimum, but so too is stable and ongoing political leadership, if these complex issues are to be addressed and addressed well.

Engagement with council: from passive relationship to active partnership

The hapū has recently started engaging in council processes such as in submissions to long term plans. Currently, these are led by their external advisor who lives in the area and represents the community on numerous matters, but again, the ideal would be to train and build capacity within the hapū so that their own can strongly lead in these processes and “fight the battles” as was described by one of their key representatives (kōrero 1, 23 November 2022).

More positively, however, where submissions have been made, the effect has been two-fold: first, they have directly fed into the planning process and second, they have brought recognition by the councils of the hapū directly. Participation in submission processes is still a reactive process though.

The desire of the people is ultimately to have an equal partnership with councils so that their rangatiratanga is properly recognised and provided for while council obligations and duties continue to be exercised.

Ngāi Tamawhariua are, therefore, working on draft memorandums of understanding (MOUs) as collaborative documents with both councils. The intent of the MOU are to;

“clearly state our position as mana whenua, as tangata whenua of this place” (kōrero 2, 2023).

These are medium term goals and both take slightly different strategies because relationships differ with the district and regional councils. Relationships with the regional council has been better than with the district council. Part of this has stemmed from active engagement concerning for instance freshwater and council responding to hapū requests to ensure that their awa is adequately monitored because:

“the water is a food source for us, it’s our kohanga, its everything ... its where life happens”. ... The council check water quality weekly and report the test results directly to the hapū advising also that it is safe to swim (kōrero 2, 2023).

Again, committing sufficient time by not only the hapū but also council is important in order to see these MOUs completed and then implemented. Added to this is that the hapū are doing this work on a shoe-string where most of the effort is voluntary and is supported by people who are also assisting because of the kaupapa and not for any other (i.e., financial/contractual) reason. The MOUs are driven by the communities, but being under-resourced and not actually considered a priority by either council, several months have passed with no follow up of either party to early drafts.

Discussions with council are not always easy. Historically, relationships with councils have also been strained and from a hapū perspective a lot of distrust has built up over the years because hapū views and values have been ignored. The urupa has been a case in point. Currently the urupa is located on an island but its long-term future is under threat. Alternative land has been offered including between a recycling centre and the harbour, but this is reclaimed saltmarsh which will likely be under water eventually as well.

“And to add insult to injury, it was actually an ex dump.” (kōrero 1, 23 November 2022).

Clearly a lot more work has to be done to resolve this and related issues, but at the heart of the concerns is the need to build trust and close working relationships so that issues,

especially sensitive ones, can be dealt with properly and for the long-term. Determining the future of the urupa further cements the importance of confirming the MOUs so that frameworks are in place for action plans to then be drafted and implemented. The hapū and their leadership still recognised that MOUs and anything that stems from them may take time and, therefore:

“...the hapū will have to still hold them [the councils] to account until this becomes embedded as a way to work, as a normal way to work.” (kōrero 1, 23 November 2022).

There is a lot of history of distrust (kōrero 2, 2023) to address and it will take time to build confidence and mutual respect in one another.

Moving but maintaining mana in the land

The major long-term issue facing Ngāi Tamawhariua is whether and how to move a community from a site where there is an encroaching sea to an inland area that is also still to be confirmed as a settlement site. Currently, they do not have a designated area to move to. Many political, legal, regulatory, social, environmental, infrastructural and related issues are to be addressed. The local people themselves have mixed views about moving. Some are hesitant while others are more accepting. The reality is that;

“...you will probably be safe where you are for the rest of your life, but it's your mokopuna and their mokopuna who will not be safe” (kōrero 1, 23 November 2022).

Ngairo echoed these views saying,

“The reality is that within 50 to 100 years, we're talking about relocation of the current kāinga,” ... “We understand that this could not probably be part of the

current generation's solution, but it will definitely be part of our solution around our tamariki." (Stewart, May 2023).

A major issue to address also concerns the tangible and intangible values of the people. They are about connections, identity, mana in the land and they tie the people to the whenua especially through the burial of their whenua. What is important therefore is to help translate the information about the risks to lands, homes and lives (research and mapping has been undertaken showing predicted scenarios), address hapū concerns and worries and help install:

"new mind sets and new ideas" (kōrero 2, 2023).

It is a complex task and will take many hui and discussions.

"I found today that there was a lot of people whose eyes were widened and they're the very people who, six months ago were saying to me, it's not going to happen in my lifetime and then I've seen a transition from them and now they're like seriously, they're seriously interested in being a part of it and knew that they needed to be there to become educated so that they were the people that can talk to their mokopuna and their babies ... it makes it easier to digest information when it comes from your own and so it's important to arm our people with all the tools they need so that they can go and filter it down into their, into their people cos that's when it's more acceptable, when it comes from like my Mum or my Nan." (kōrero 2, date, 2023).

On the complexities, Ngairo adds;

"... we understand Koro, Nan, Aunty, Uncle, where you are coming from, but we are not going to abide the fact that a natural event may take your life. The discussion

isn't going to go well but the action around preservation of life is probably what's going to win out the debate in the end." (Stewart, May 2023).

The community has two locations where houses are located, one lower area near the coast which is most at risk and one on high ground which is safer. There are approximately 40 houses on the lower site, with approximately 30 being occupied fulltime (approximately 10 being part-time baches). The housing in those low lying areas is sub-standard and there is only one road in and out. Worryingly,

"...in the event there was to be a serious catastrophic event, our people are all stuck" (kōrero 2, date, 2023).

There is some thought within the hapū leadership to move to an inland area which is currently owned by the District Council. Historical tenure research is currently being undertaken to identify and show how these lands moved out of customary tenure to non-customary title and also show connections of the original kaitiaki to the present descendants. Then from these baselines, the data can help to build a case that sees the return of the land to the hapū and the re-establishment of the cultural footprint of the hapū in the land again. These are the basic aspects of the vision regarding likely potential land to move to but considerable planning, financing and internal and external support is still required. And again, the MOU provides the overarching framework for both to work together and for both to benefit from. The MOU also acknowledges the history of Te Rereatukahia including the impacts on them by local and central government.

"And once that's acknowledged, then we can move on and when I say move on, I mean the discussion of potential land available for us to, that we once would have occupied" (kōrero 2, 2023).

Maketū

Introduction

Also in the Te Moana a Toi region, is the Te Arawa stronghold of Maketū where the waka Te Arawa finally settled more than twenty generations ago. Maketū, named after the original



village at Ra'iatea, is also where a collective of Arawa iwi have come together and developed an award-winning climate adaptation plan that was completed in late 2022. These are some of their experiences on their journey towards the development of their plan.

Iwi-led planning: council supporting

A collective of iwi interests in Maketū have come together to develop a climate adaptation plan.² By the end of the process, the plan obtained wide interest and became a recipient of a national award for best practice for non-statutory plans. Their efforts didn't end there, however, and out of the ten categories' recipients who each won awards, they also won the overall supreme award. The stand-out aspect of the award was that their process was iwi-led, with councils and central government supporting the local community to achieve their aspirations. The Bay of Plenty Regional Council and the Western Bay District Council were very supportive of what Maketū was trying to achieve, sending, for example, several people who were involved in climate change to hui, in weekends, to engage with the community to understand the issues that were central to the development of the plan. Close relationships with these officials continue in between hui, but this is more than a communication strategy, it is also about driving the initiative and about the community exercising its mana on its terms,

² The plan can be seen here: <https://maketu-runanga.iwi.nz/assets/He%20Toka%20Tū%20Moana%20Maketu%20Climate%20change%20Adaption.pdf>

“We’ve kept them on the e-mail list, so you know when we have updates on what’s happening with the plan, they just automatically get everything.”

From these communications, council officials then engage with the community enquiring how they can respond and support,

“...and I’ve had e-mails from them since then saying, hey, when can we meet?”

Notably, relationships with council officials also existed prior to the climate adaptation plan kaupapa and began earlier in the context of other environmental issues and in relation to a number of projects. These relationships helped to progress the adaptation plan because people were already known to each other, trust had been established, knowledge of how each other worked was also known and individuals could therefore just get on with the tasks at hand. This was also important from a community perspective in terms of working with consistent partners which also helps to maintain a consistency in effort and in outcomes. The alternative, i.e., high staff turn-over, is disruptive to not only council, but also to communities due to loss of knowledge of progress, ideas, plans etc.

The collective working together

A number of hapū and iwi have connections and interests in Maketū which overlap and which can cause friction, but in order to create a climate adaptation plan, it was important to leave aside political issues and come together on common goals.

“When it’s a kaupapa around things like climate change, things around water quality, when it’s those sorts of kaupapa, actually we’re saying, we all need to do this together.”

Politics so to speak are left aside and instead operational focus is kept in sight, dealing with the key environmental or social concerns.

“So that gave us the space to do the doing and to say this is not the space for the political discussions.”

Completing the plan: funding and a lot of voluntary time needed

The Bay of Plenty Regional Council provided seed funding to help initiate the project with a small grant (\$15,000).³ Iwi funding also supported the development of the plan. This came from various sources because a climate adaptation plan is concerned with not only environmental concerns, but also the wider world and education. These portfolios within iwi therefore helped to progress the plan's development, but significant voluntary time was also required to complete the plan. It took 5 hui with the community to get input and build the kaupapa around existing ideas and plan for critical needs.

Co-operation

Longer term aspirations are, however, to look towards further engaged relationships with local government so that the plan then becomes activated and supported.

“Between the councils’ business as usual and what we want to achieve and come together on that.”

The benefits of working closely together would then be mutual. The councils would achieve their duties and functions, while at the same time Maketū would achieve its goals. But firstly, it is important that councils clearly state their positions and priorities to address climate change which then gives mandate and authority to their officials to act and to set in place programmes with iwi. These steps would also give substance to what Te Tiriti is all about, namely supporting the rights and responsibilities of the Crown and Māori as outlined in the articles.

³ For more information on the support that both Maketū and Ngāi Tamawhariua received from the Council on climate adaptation work, see <https://www.boprc.govt.nz/your-council/news/news-and-media-releases/media-releases-2021/december-2021/community-led-climate-change-projects-get-a-boost>.

“Those high level statements from the councils mean that it just enables those officials to engage with us. All councils now, you know recognise Te Tiriti o Waitangi and that also means that supports their engagement with us.”

Maketū also has the perspective that if councils want to achieve their own climate goals in Maketū, they can, but they need to;

“... construct their plans alongside us. ... that’s the only way that we’ll move forward with them. Climate change is here now. We already know that so what are we going to do together and maybe working together with neighbours up the road, with the ones that are on the coast that are suffering the same kinds of concerns and it’s especially if we’re talking about multimillion dollar concerns, economically, environmentally, we need to work together. ”

A collective approach, jointly-led by Maketū and councils, and from a Tiriti foundation, is the model envisioned, but in practice, this also means working across communities especially because the issues affect all.



Image: Maketū, at the mouth of the Maketū estuary (P. Tapsell, 2022).

The plan in action

The plan is about prioritising key foci and responding to kāinga needs. It therefore has 12 priority projects which are overseen by a backbone committee. There are a lot of existing projects that will be identified under the plan and which will be supported and recognising that some will be independent as well but the idea is to be supportive. A further idea is to identify where gaps or needs are such as spatial planning, recognising also that “there’s a lot of work being done in land use change”. This is important when thinking about a changing climate. There are other issues like identifying;

“...what are our energy needs as a community and working out what potentially we can generate ourselves. ...We probably need some pretty strong partners in that piece of work.”

Then there are also the timeline and sensitivities in terms of relocation. It’s about having discussions with the marae that also;

“...maintains the integrity of their role as, as marae trustees. But is also realistic in terms of what the future’s going to bring. So there’s 40 properties that have been identified as at risk of water inundation including the marae. There are some houses that are just, they’re simply going to flood within the next year or two. So there’s an absolute sense of panic in terms of some of the whānau. We want to support those that are coming to that awful realisation that they’re actually going to have to move sooner rather than later.”

It’s also about being proactive now, rather than reactive in the face of crisis,

“Rather than wait for that big flood to come over ... let's just do this gradually over a few years, let's just move all of us up and yes, some are a priority and have to move now but you know, let's, let's make the decision now. ... So that in 20 years' time, it's done.”

General Themes across communities

Marae/kāinga/hapū recognition

It's important for marae/hapū to be recognized as the level of community at which climate change affects people. The higher level iwi also have a role in helping to support communities, but these roles need to be clarified. As one of the communities explained,

“...often the establishment of a post settlement governance entity [that is, a Treaty settlement entity] causes tensions for a tribe, the tension between hapū, iwi representation, its like the PSGE has sucked up the power into one central body. ... And often the hapū will deal with their own resource management issues and not come to the iwi office.”

Iwi have important roles to spearhead or guide mahi that affect hapū, however. This might mean developing high level plans, such as the Ngaa Rauru Ki Tahī Climate Strategy, to then help guide or support hapū plans. There are different levels of rangatiratanga – leadership/customary authority and sovereignty – in action. What these mean in duties and obligations are important to work out. They are also important in terms of accountabilities to whānau and hapū and in terms of communication strategies.

Recognition of history

For all communities, understanding history is essential for planning present and future strategies for protecting and promoting resilience. It is out of this context that each community's foundational identity, mana and whakapapa (“heritage”) emerges and which situates their current kaupapa or plans. A forward-looking plan therefore means thinking as much about the past. This is especially important for coastal marae communities who are dealing with managed relocation. Sacred sites and urupa (cemeteries) are foremost in their thinking alongside their current marae and papakāinga sites, as well as future-focused

questions such as where to move to. One of the communities explained this past-future perspective and the importance of whenua to identity and security:

“Looking at things like barriers to being able to do managed retreat, what does that practically mean, and how do you do that in a way that secures your history as well as your future – peoples place is really important, a cornerstone of the culture, so how do you maintain peoples sense of place and forge a way forward, a path to the new place.”

Another spoke about their history of moving when they needed to and that this history simply guides them. “Waipapa’s been moved three times already, so it’s not a new concept and people are accepting that that may be a reality”.

Leadership, unity, and funding

Some outstanding initiatives and progress in addressing the challenges of climate change are evident across each community story. Some success points –

1. Rangatiratanga – The importance of exercising leadership, authority, sovereignty in relation to kāinga (and all things of importance to the kāinga) within each of the communities has been clearly evident in all cases. Leadership needs to be consistent, recognised and supported, internally and externally. It is often “voluntary” – mahi aroha (in the unpaid sense), but kin-accountable and requires considerable time commitment over and above other duties (e.g. full-time work, family and other commitments). It is also paid, but does not cover the full extent of work that is required to fulfil responsibilities to achieve climate and kāinga resilience.
2. Unity is present amongst and within the communities on shared goals thereby ensuring good outcomes.
3. Funding has derived from external sources and is needed. But voluntary effort drives success. A question is, how much voluntary labour should be necessary?

4. Funding needs are significant in order to deal with climate adaptation. This needs to be conveyed to central and local government. Funding is just one dimension of duty of kawanatanga to support the exercise of rangatiratanga.

Challenges: the limits of capacity

Capacity limits within communities has hampered progress and successes have been attributed to considerable voluntary effort as noted above. These are not new ideas. Capacity limitations within local government were also apparent, especially where it concerns understanding kāinga or hapū climate issues or needs, wider environmental kaupapa as well as how to implement Tiriti obligations. Some councils (particularly at district level) had little relationship with mana whenua organisations or with marae or did not even engage with them. Distrust has been a hurdle and a constraint to building close relationships from a mana whenua perspective and will continue to be if it is not addressed. And if climate strategies and plans are to be properly implemented, councils and central government will need to be acutely aware of what capacity limitations there are and where. It will also be essential to support capacity building within their own organisations and with mana whenua in order to then support the development of kāinga/mana whenua -led climate adaptation plans and implementation. There are rights and duties of rangatiratanga and kawanatanga to be determined and worked out within each rohe/region. These are the challenges and opportunities.

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