



KAITIAKITANGA





ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

This resource has been developed for teachers to support the incorporation of Ngāi Tahu values and content into environmental and sustainability related curricula. This resource was commissioned by Environment Canterbury in partnership with Enviroschools Canterbury. The content is drawn from the knowledge and experiences of Ngāi Tahu people who are actively engaged in environmental management. For more information on this programme contact ecan.govt.nz/education

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Te Marino Lenihan

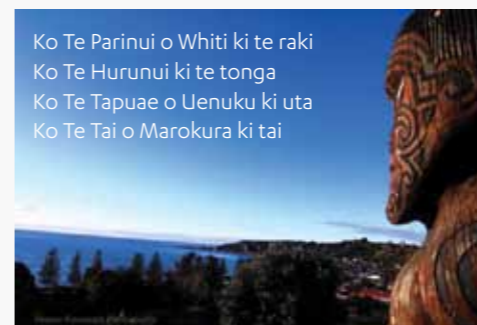
Ko Tere te maunga.
Ko Waimakariri te awa.
Ko Ngāi Tūāhuriri te hapū.
Ko Rūpene te whānau.

Te Marino is an active member of the Tuahiwi community and Ngāi Tūāhuriri Rūnanga. He has worked with and for iwi and hapū since 1998, engaging with territorial local authorities, developers, central government agencies and NGOs to advocate for cultural values, rights and interests.



Pere Tainui

Pere is an Ōnuku Rūnanga member. He is passionate about whakapapa and Kāi Tahu history. The values of the waterways are of particular importance to him. He believes it is our job to safeguard them and be vigilant about what enters the harbour in order to ensure that they are handed down to our mokopuna in a healthy state.



Ko Te Parinui o Whiti ki te raki
Ko Te Hurunui ki te tonga
Ko Te Tapuae o Uenuku ki uta
Ko Te Tai o Marokura ki tai

Raewyn Solomon

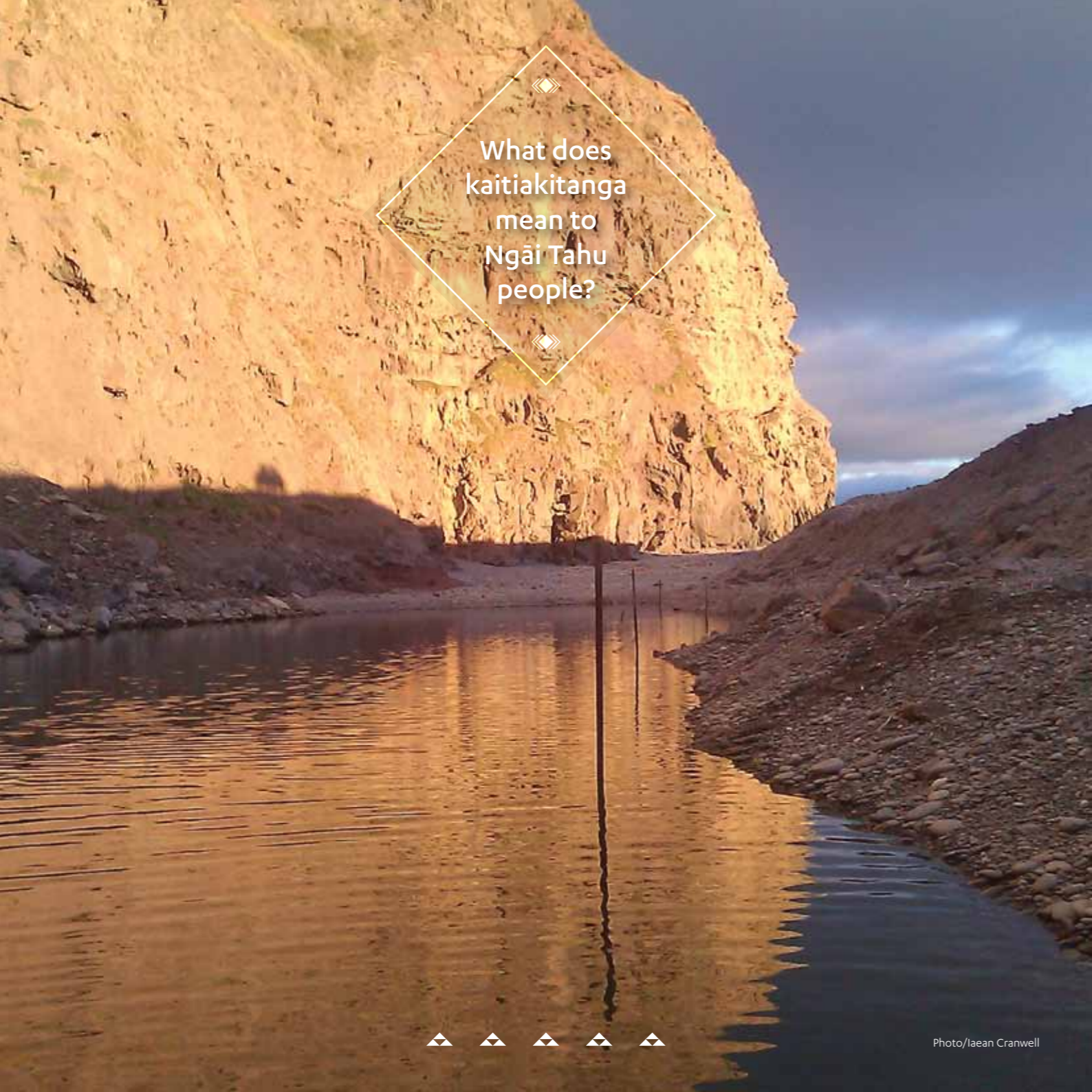
Raewyn works for Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura and has done so for over a decade. She currently works as their environmental officer. She was a project manager for Te Poha o Tohu Raumati, the Te Rūnanga o Kaikōura Iwi Management Plan 2005 and more recently has been instrumental in developing Te Korowai o Te Tai ō Marokura, a document that outlines a detailed

strategy of how Te Korowai proposes to develop and manage the marine environment, including five mātaimai and two taiāpure.



Rewi Couch

Rewi grew up in Rāpaki gathering food from the sea, lakes and rivers in the mahinga kai tradition of his tīpuna. After travelling overseas for many years he returned home to find the pressure of increased population, industrial, commercial and residential development had all but destroyed the great abundance that once filled Te Pātaka o Rākaihautū (Banks Peninsula), the great pantry of Rākaihautū. His response has been to confront the discharge of sewerage onto the kaimoana, plant trees to promote the reforestation of the rapidly eroding hills and gather data and research to culturally and environmentally challenge the construction of land barriers in our harbour. He describes his mahi as cultural and environmental restoration, “if we restore the environment we restore the mahinga kai and with it our cultural identity.”



What does
kaitiakitanga
mean to
Ngāi Tahu
people?

**KAITIAKITANGA IS OFTEN TRANSLATED AS ‘STEWARDSHIP’
OR ‘GUARDIANSHIP’, BUT IT HAS MORE DEPTH
AND BREADTH THAN EITHER OF THESE TERMS REVEAL**

“Our landscape and waterways are our taonga but do not belong to us. Our rights to use and enjoy them require us to be responsible for them in return. When taking, we give. In gifting, we gain. I think this is the heart and soul of kaitiakitanga.”

“In my lifetime, I have seen the landscape at my home go from being abundant with birds and kaimoana, to being scarce and in some places, toxic. Kaitiakitanga is my obligation to do what I can to leave the whenua and the wai in a better state for my mokopuna.”



“Kaitiakitanga has been passed down to us. For my generation, kaitiakitanga is about fixing the damage to the water, land and coast that has occurred over the last 50 years.”

The essence of kaitiakitanga is an active obligation to the landscape, its waterways and people. It is informed by the past, provides for the present, and is protected for the future.

Ngāi Tahu identity is rooted in over 40 generations of experience living in Te Waipounamu (South Island). Ngāi Tahu traditions explain how their ancestors shaped the landscape to make it bountiful for their descendants.

Across the centuries, Ngāi Tahu predecessors learned how to survive and thrive within their environment. The key cornerstone of that experience and culture has always been mahinga kai: the resources that were hunted, gathered, cultivated and ultimately nurtured for the benefit of those that would come after them. ‘Kai’ was not just food, but all resources that were required for survival and prosperity including medicines, clothing materials, building supplies and tools.



The ethic of kaitiakitanga grew from Ngāi Tahu's strong connection to mahinga kai and understanding that the environment must be healthy for people to be healthy. Kaitiakitanga reflects a reciprocal relationship between people and their environment.

At the time of early contact with settlers, Ngāi Tahu people were innovative farmers, fishers and harvesters of birds. Following European settlement, however, it became harder to continue such practices as traditional mahinga kai sites were acquired by private property owners and access to them was denied.

The adverse effects of that situation on Ngāi Tahu communities – their culture and economy – has since been compounded through environmental degradation. In many areas mahinga kai have either disappeared altogether or their health degraded to a point where they are no longer fit for human consumption.

Ensuring future generations know about, understand and can engage with mahinga kai resources and their environments has been the key driver in the development and practice of kaitiakitanga over the generations.



How is kaitiakitanga practiced by Ngāi Tahu today?



Today, kaitiakitanga is practiced in many different ways by Ngāi Tahu people and communities:



I work for our rūnanga as the environmental officer, which means my job is to work with local government on resource consent applications, and the plans they develop. My job involves working with a lot of people on building their understanding of our values and priorities for the landscape. For me though, there is no difference between what I believe in and what I do for a job, and I feel really lucky to have a job that means I am always connected with our whenua and the future our people want for our environment.



I've worked with private developers and other people who want to use natural resources or alter those environments. My role has been to help them better understand the importance of those resources and environments (i.e. mahinga kai) to my family, community and culture. I have found that a lot of people know little to nothing about our mahinga kai heritage and that helping them understand is one very real way of protecting our remaining mahinga kai from further degradation. With genuine goodwill, we can work with developers and decision makers to create positive outcomes for our environment. That can only be good for us all.



I've been involved in a long term research project about marine health as well as advocating for regrowing forests. Near our community, we have had sewerage released into the sea for a long time, which has made our kaimoana toxic. I've been working with researchers to understand the impact on our kaimoana and also to design an alternative way of treating and releasing sewerage so that our kaimoana become safe to eat again. I've also been lobbying local government to return some nearby land to forests so that the trees stop the soil eroding and recreate the habitat for our native birds.



Historically, our people had particular jobs to do. Some of our people would be fishers, some were experts in whakapapa, others midwives and the like. Today, we have less people living at the marae so we need to work with the community to actively look after the environment. One of the great examples from around home is that kids from the local school are planting the sides of the river. It is also important to work with government who set the rules for how the environment is managed to influence what the rules are.

The objective of practicing kaitiakitanga is to protect and restore our environment so that it can in turn sustain our communities. How kaitiakitanga is practiced has evolved over time in response to the broader context of environmental management and use. Some of the common ways kaitiakitanga is practiced now include:

◆ **Restoration activities**—Ngāi Tahu, through Papatipu Rūnanga, is involved in a number of restoration projects. These projects typically aim to restore the landscape to a prior state. Many of these projects are being done in partnership with local government, particularly Environment Canterbury. An example is Whakaora Te Waihora—this is a partnership between Ngāi Tahu, Environment Canterbury and central government to improve the health of Te Waihora (Lake Ellesmere). Ngāi Tahu had been investing in planting native trees around

the lake for a number of years, and the partnership is a more recent initiative that will increase the scale and impact of the restoration work. Over time, the restoration will contribute to improving water quality and recreating the ecosystem that supports significant species.

◆ **Working with central and local government**—Ngāi Tahu is actively engaged with central and local government on environmental management policy. Central government is responsible for nationwide policy, such as policy that defines standards under the Resource Management Act (such as national policy for freshwater), rules about carbon emissions, coastal management and the like. Ngāi Tahu works with Ministers and people inside government departments to encourage central government to embrace the philosophy, values and practices associated with kaitiakitanga. Local government is responsible



Before restoration project at Tai Tapu 21.02.12



Growth after 8 months. 29.05.13

for setting more detailed rules for the use of natural resources in their region and also granting resource consents (permissions to use natural resources) for commercial purposes. Through Papatipu Rūnanga, which are the traditional marae based communities, Ngāi Tahu seeks to influence the rules that are created and the way that natural resources are used by private developers with the same objective of increasing the recognition of kaitiakitanga values.

- ◆ **Working with resource users**—Ngāi Tahu also works directly with private users of natural resources, such as farmers and property developers to encourage them to lessen negative environmental impacts. This work is typically done through Papatipu Rūnanga, and typically involves recording the cultural histories and associations with particular sites and exploring how the proposed activity will impact on Ngāi Tahu communities and values.
- ◆ **Becoming a decision maker**—Ngāi Tahu also has some opportunities to become a decision maker about how resources can be used. These opportunities include customary management frameworks and individuals stepping into mainstream decision making roles. The customary management frameworks mainly operate over the coastal marine environment. Ngāi Tahu (and other iwi in their rohe) can apply to create customary management areas

(known as mātaītai and taiāpure). Within these areas, Ngāi Tahu people become the decision makers about what people can and can't do. The purpose of these tools is to allow Ngāi Tahu to use traditional knowledge about resource management to restore the health and abundance of the environment.

- ◆ **Monitoring**—Ngāi Tahu, through Papatipu Rūnanga, are also involved in a lot of environmental monitoring. Whānau and individuals monitor the environmental and cultural health of particular sites and water bodies. The important part about this work is that cultural values are included in what is measured and monitored. In a practical sense, cultural indicators can include monitoring the health of mahinga kai species, the ability to continue cultural practices, and the diversity of species present on the banks of rivers.
- ◆ **Forming partnerships**—Ngāi Tahu also form partnerships with private, public and community organisations to forge agreement on pathways forward. An example is Te Korowai o Te Tai ō Marokura, which is a partnership amongst all key stakeholders in Kaikōura about how to manage the marine environment to protect the interests of all sectors. Ngāi Tahu has the unique ability to bridge sectors, because the iwi has cultural, social, economic, political and environmental aspirations.

How do contemporary practices of kaitiakitanga reflect historical practices?



Some historical practices of kaitiakitanga included:



Cycled management—“our tīpuna (ancestors) used to safeguard the abundance of the fisheries by cycling which rivers they would fish in and making sure that they fished particular species at the right time of year. Our fishers would keep track of which rivers were in or out of rotation for use.”



“At Ōnuku, our water used to come from springs. Our tīpuna (ancestors) would plant harakeke (flax) around the springs because the harakeke roots would draw the water up, which would keep the water flowing. We would also dig trenches to move water from the springs to our māra kai (crop gardens). Today our creek water is cleaned using a UV treatment.”



Some of the contemporary practices of kaitiakitanga might seem distant from historical practices such as these. However, the changing nature of how kaitiakitanga is practiced reflects the changing way Ngāi Tahu communities live and the broader context for how the environment is managed. Importantly, the reasons for practising kaitiakitanga and the belief that Ngāi Tahu have obligations to the environment have not changed.

WHAT CAN SCHOOLS DO TO CONNECT WITH THE VALUES AND PRACTICES OF KAITIAKITANGA?

There are a number of ways that schools can explore the value and practices of kaitiakitanga, including:

- ◆ **Mahinga kai**—a food gathering activity is a powerful way to understand Ngāi Tahu identity. Connecting with mahinga kai could involve:
 - Learning about the lifecycle of local flora (e.g. watercress, kōwhai, harakeke) and fauna (e.g. fish and birds) and any associated mahinga kai practices;
 - Protecting, restoring or creating a habitat around the school that will support the return of a mahinga kai species (e.g. plants that will attract kererū / native wood pigeon);
 - Creating a conceptual or real pātaka (storehouse) so that those mahinga kai can be harvested, shared and enjoyed;
 - Learning about the Māori calendar (e.g. Matariki) to better understand when and where to harvest particular species.
- ◆ **Obligation**—exploring the nature of obligations that sit at the heart of kaitiakitanga could also have wider benefits of helping students to form links to their environment and broader community. Some activities could include:
 - **Adopt a site/resource**—adopting a river or a species could be used to explore the obligations of kaitiakitanga. After agreeing on a site/
- ◆ **Working with government**—Ngāi Tahu spends a lot of time and resources engaging with resource managers and decision makers. The class could jointly write a submission on a local resource consent application or district plan, referring to any relevant iwi management plans and using this exercise to compare and contrast the impact of a particular resource use on the community and Ngāi Tahu respectively.
- ◆ **Connecting with people**—the most valuable way to build understanding of kaitiakitanga is connecting with the people and communities who practice it. Being hosted at the local marae and having the opportunity to visit sites of significance with members of the local rūnanga is a powerful opportunity for connecting with Ngāi Tahu values.



WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION AND/OR RESOURCES?

Papatipu Rūnanga:

Many schools will want to connect with their local Papatipu Rūnanga. You can identify rūnanga in your area by visiting www.ngaitahu.iwi.nz/Te-Runanga/Papatipu-Runanga

It is important to note that Papatipu Rūnanga are largely run by volunteers and are typically inundated with work. If you do reach out to your local rūnanga, please understand that they may not always be able to respond to your request. It is often best to begin small and grow over time.

Video resources that may be relevant include:

- ◆ Te Marino Lenihan speaking about his ties with the river and land. Available at You Tube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=FcoVKd8hKs4
- ◆ Waka Huia clips about the histories and legends of Te Waipounamu—three part series. Available on You Tube:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=p3gVdOnHSyE
www.youtube.com/watch?v=JMMld47teM
www.youtube.com/watch?v=pPIYPqcluxc

Web resources

- ◆ Information on Ngāi Tahu is available at: www.ngaitahu.iwi.nz
- ◆ Information on projects referred to in this document is available at:
Te Korowai: www.teamkorowai.org.nz
Te Waihora: www.tewaihora.org
- ◆ Mahinga kai—there is a fantastic website that brings together information, stories and videos on Ngāi Tahu practices of mahinga kai, which is available at: www.kaihaukai.co.nz

Other Resources

- ◆ The I Am Ngāi Tahu publication, which explains who Ngāi Tahu is and what the Iwi does. It is available to download at: www.ngaitahu.iwi.nz/i-am-ngai-tahu

GLOSSARY

Kaimoana seafood

Mahinga kai food and other resources, and the areas they are sourced from

Rohe region

Whakapapa genealogy, cultural identity

Tīpuna ancestors

Papatipu Rūnanga marae based councils, administering the affairs of hapū

Kāi Tahu / Ngāi Tahu same iwi with a variation in dialect

Hapū collection of whānau (families)

Whānau families





Mā te mōhio ka mārama
With knowledge comes understanding

