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The Application of Custom to Contemporary Māori Resource Development

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ABSTRACT

Māori have always sought to carefully manage the natural environment – to ensure the sustainability of resources and the well-being of future generations. The dynamic nature of any culture provides flexibility for growth and development, so that new challenges can be faced with assurance and that dynamic and meaningful solutions can be found. This concept of flexibility and willingness to embrace change has been a feature of Māori culture and is documented throughout Māori history and within korero purakau. Therefore the requirement to embrace contemporary approaches to resource management has not been resisted. However, the desire to align traditional concepts with contemporary resource management conventions has at times been met with opposition and disapproval. This, despite the fact that the two world views have much in common and are not necessarily inconsistent with each other.

‘The Application of Custom to Contemporary Māori Resource Development’ is both the title of the thesis and the name given to the framework which it describes. The framework is a tool for future resource management that provides three levels of information. First, it identifies the resources where customary and contemporary methodology is currently being utilised. Second, it outlines the alignment and synergies that exist, and finally, it identifies barriers to the amalgamation and integration of both approaches.

The framework by itself will not address all the complex issues associated with Māori resource management; there are many other considerations that are beyond the scope of this thesis that would need to be dealt with in order to achieve that outcome. However, the framework does provide a mechanism through which Māori values and practices can be considered alongside Western views and perspectives.

The Framework will contribute to the development of more effective strategies, policies and planning. Thus, ‘The Application of Custom to Contemporary Māori Resource Development’ will contribute to improving the sustainable utilisation of natural resources.

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