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Advancing a regenerative tourism system in New Zealand: An analysis of an Indigenous  
tourism operation and the Tiaki Promise destination pledge

A research report presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
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## **Abstract**

Sustainable development has featured prominently in the tourism literature for the last 30 years promoting economic, social, and environmental goals. However, in practice its implementation has been overshadowed by the dominant neoliberal paradigm. This has resulted in economic growth being given priority over ecological and social factors, resulting in environmental damage and vulnerable communities.

This study examines the elements of regenerative tourism, which is an approach that goes beyond sustainable development to recognise and value the interconnectedness of all living systems. It further explores the place of the Tiaki Promise tourist destination pledge in supporting a regenerative tourism system. The analysis is contextually grounded in a case study of an Indigenous tourism operation, Kohutapu Lodge and Tribal Tours, in New Zealand. A qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews was used.

This research asserts that a systems approach reflecting an Indigenous worldview of the interconnection between all living systems, contextually grounded in its manifestation and with diverse and regenerative economies, can effectively support whole system health and flourishing. The research into the Tiaki Promise finds that its purpose and use has been inconsistently understood and applied but there is optimism that with continued development and clarification, it can support a regenerative tourism system through creating common cause to effect change away from a growth focussed paradigm.

**Keywords:** Tiaki Promise, regenerative tourism, system, Indigenous, pledge, diverse economies, flourishing, paradigm change, panarchy.

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## Translation of Māori terms

<i>Haka powhiri</i>	Ceremonial welcome dance
<i>Hangi</i>	Food cooked in an earth oven
<i>Hapu</i>	Family
<i>Kaitiaki</i>	Guardians
<i>Kaitiakitanga</i>	Guardianship and protection
<i>Kaumatua</i>	Elder
<i>Koha</i>	Offering, with connotations of reciprocity
<i>Maara kai</i>	Vegetable garden
<i>Mana</i>	Honour, status
<i>Manaakitanga</i>	Hospitality
<i>Manuhiri</i>	Guest
<i>Mauri</i>	Lifeforce
<i>Rangatahi</i>	Youth
<i>Rohe</i>	Area
<i>Ropu</i>	Group
<i>Runanga</i>	Tribal council
<i>Tamariki</i>	Children
<i>Te Ao Māori</i>	Māori worldview
<i>Tiaki</i>	To care, protect
<i>Utu</i>	Balance
<i>Whakapapa</i>	Genealogy, lineage
<i>Whānau</i>	Family
<i>Whenua</i>	Land

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **1.1 Introduction and rationale**

Tourism is one of the world's largest industries and has long been used as a vehicle for development through economic growth (World Tourism and Travel Council, 2021). It offers potential benefits of supporting cultural expression, social development, self-determination, environmental protection, and political development (Williams & O'Neill, 2007). However, increasing demand for tourism and a focus on economic growth has led to overtourism with natural and social systems detrimentally impacted by the number of tourists at a given time and place (Cheer et al., 2019), as well as vulnerable livelihoods reliant on tourism, and environmental damage (Dodds & Butler, 2019; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2020; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019). These negative impacts of tourism have persisted despite efforts over the last 30 years to implement sustainable tourism incorporating environmental, social, and economic factors.

The COVID-19 pandemic created an enforced pause for most tourism from early 2020 (UNWTO, 2020). This pause interrupted business-as-usual tourism and resulted in a surge of debate as to how tourism can be done differently to address the negative impacts and realise positive change for communities (Carr, 2020; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2020). The foci of these proposed changes include redefining tourism priorities to focus on community rights (Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019), living system flourishing (Cheer, 2020), degrowth (Duxbury et al., 2021; Fletcher et al., 2019; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019; Sharpley, 2020), Indigenous worldviews (Carr, 2020), and diverse and regenerative economies (Cave & Dredge, 2020; Gibson-Graham & Dombroski, 2020). There is also increasing recognition in tourism discussions that all living things are connected (Gibbons, 2020; Pollock, 2019) and that tourism operates as a complex adaptive system (Ateljevic, 2020; Movono, Dahles & Becken, 2017). Regenerative tourism is an emerging approach that recognises the complex system nature of tourism.

There is no singular established definition of regenerative tourism, however it stems from regenerative development that “uses the universal laws of systemic health and self-renewal to ...develop durable vibrant socio-economic systems” (Goener, 2015, p.1), and aims for “thriving and flourishing living systems” (Gibbons, 2020, p. 5483).

Regenerative tourism has been described as going “beyond sustainable tourism to focus on giving back and contributing to the proactive regeneration of communities, cultures,

heritage, places, landscapes, and so forth” (Duxbury et al., 2021) and with the ultimate outcome of system health (Becken, 2020).

## **1.2 Research focus**

This research considers the advancement of a regenerative tourism system in New Zealand. It explores and describes the elements of regenerative tourism including how it advances from sustainable tourism and is informed by complex adaptive systems theory, and how it manifests at the case study of Kohutapu Lodge. It further considers how the Tiaki Promise destination pledge could contribute to paradigm shift to support regenerative tourism.

### **Research Aim**

To explore and describe the elements of regenerative tourism and how they manifest at Kohutapu Lodge and to explore how the Tiaki Promise might support a regenerative tourism system.

**Research Question 1.** What is regenerative tourism and how does it manifest in the way tourism is being carried out at Kohutapu Lodge.

**Objective 1A.** To critically explore and describe the elements of regenerative tourism

**Objective 1B.** To explore Kohutapu Lodge’s relationship with regenerative tourism.

**Research Question 2.** What is the role of the Tiaki Promise in a regenerative tourism system?

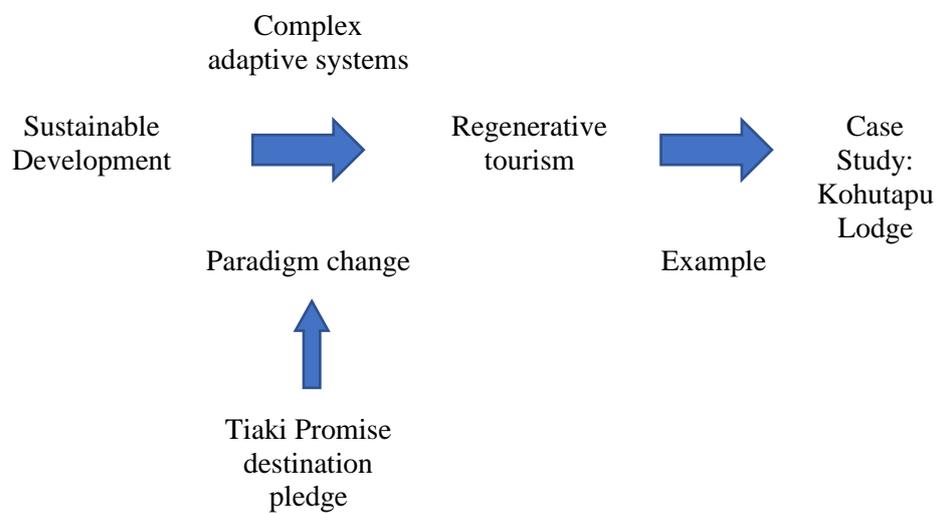
**Objective 2A.** To explore the potential of the Tiaki Promise to support paradigm shift toward regenerative tourism.

## **1.3 Structure of this research report**

This research report is ‘Advancing a regenerative tourism system in New Zealand: An analysis of an Indigenous tourism operation and the Tiaki Promise destination pledge.’ The report commences with three literature review chapters. Chapter 2 provides an overview of sustainable tourism, identifying how despite years of prominence in tourism discourse and the global sustainable development goals, ultimately due largely to its retained focus on economic growth it has not stemmed the environmental and

social damage occurring through tourism. Chapter 3 moves on to consider how complex adaptive systems inform the change from sustainable development to regenerative tourism including the need for paradigm change. It highlights how change can be made in a tourist system from the community level up, as well as the interconnectedness between all living systems. In Chapter 4 regenerative development is outlined along with an introduction to the Tiaki Promise, a tourism destination pledge in New Zealand with the potential to facilitate paradigm change towards a regenerative tourism system. Figure 1 below illustrates the relationship between the key elements of the report.

**Figure 1.** The relationship of the key elements of the research report



The literature review in chapters 2-4 is followed by a methods chapter, Chapter 5, outlining the qualitative research approach undertaken and ethical considerations. Chapters 6 and 7 reveal the research findings on regenerative tourism and the Tiaki Promise respectively, highlighting the voices of the research participants. Chapter 8 explicates the research questions in light of the data collected before Chapter 9 provides a conclusion and posits the potential for further research.

## **Chapter 2: Sustainable Tourism**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Sustainable development has featured heavily in tourism discourse and policy since the late 1980's yet tourism continues to negatively impact the environment and communities (Hall, 2011; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2018; Sharpley, 2020). This chapter examines the foundations of sustainable development and how the concept has been carried through to sustainable tourism. It then summarises proposed pathways to move beyond the neoliberal paradigm apparent in sustainable tourism.

### **2.2 An overview of sustainable development**

Cognisance that the Earth's resources are finite is not new. The Limits of Growth report in 1972 outlined the negative implications of continued exponential growth (Meadows et al., 1972). Over a decade later the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) produced 'Our common future: Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development', commonly known as the Brundtland Report (the Brundtland Report) (Brundtland, 1987). The Brundtland Report posits the possibility of a new era of economic growth that is environmentally and socially sustainable, an economic growth that could relieve the increasing poverty in the developing world (Brundtland, 1987, p. IV3). The Brundtland Report also provides the oft-cited definition of sustainable development as:

Sustainable development seeks to meet the needs and aspirations of the present without compromising the ability to meet those of future generations (Brundtland, 1987, p. 43)

Despite this initially simple-sounding definition, sustainable development's exact meaning and purpose have been highly contested since the Brundtland Report. While it is commonly described as addressing social, economic, and environmental concerns, the weight placed on each element and exactly what is to be sustained is not settled (Bartelmus, 2013; Elliott, 2013).

A focus on sustaining economic growth has been favoured by entities such as the World Bank (Bartelmus, 2013). This approach does not purport to ignore environmental and social factors but is based on a belief that economic growth is the solution to these concerns and is consistent with the Brundtland Report's explicit reference to economic growth being required for sustainable development (Brundtland, 1987, p. 50;

Mawhinney, 2002). A focus on economic growth is consistent with the overarching neoliberal paradigm which is globally dominant in the political, economic and social environments (Hursh et al., 2015). Neoliberalism champions the rule of the free market, withdrawal of the state from public services, and individual responsibility over public good (Conway, 2014); it assumes that privatisation, markets, and the right price solve all problems, and support social harmony (Peet & Harwick, 2015). This neoliberal focus contributes to the key criticisms of sustainable development; that its generally anthropocentric viewpoint sees nature existing only for human use and its prioritisation of economic growth over social development (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2018; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019; Saarinen & Gill, 2019; Sharpley, 2020).

The lack of an agreed interpretation of sustainable development and its elements means that it continues to be used as a buzzword applied in a myriad of ways (Adelman, 2017). In the context of sustainable tourism Swarbrooke (1999) goes as far as to say "... sustainable tourism is a continuous journey to a destination we will never reach, because wholly sustainable tourism is probably unattainable, and also because our idea of what constitutes sustainable tourism will undoubtedly change constantly" (Swarbrooke, 1999, p. 358). This is not to say that there has been no progress in the understanding of sustainable development since the Brundtland Report, of particular significance are the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 2015 (the SDGs).

The SDGs consist of 17 global goals to develop peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future (United Nations, 2015). Described as an ambitious step covering a broad view of sustainability (Fleming et al., 2019), the SDGs were developed over a number of years through wide consultation, and pledge to leave no-one behind (Thomson, 2015). Leaving no-one behind is an advancement from the SDGs predecessor, the Millennium Development Goals, and reflects an approach to development beyond poverty reduction. The SDGs represent a move to global goals (Fukuda-Parr, 2016) and an openness to address issues such as gender discrimination (Stuart & Woodroffe, 2016), environmental, economic, and social sustainability (Fukuda-Parr, 2016). Sustainable development is a global issue and thus such a global response is required (Meadows, 1999). However, despite the promise of the SDGs and of sustainable development rhetoric, it is argued that they continue to push an economic growth agenda (Boluk et al., 2019).

Several reasons have been posited as to why and how the SDGs continue to prioritise economic growth. These include a reliance on institutions that are responsible for heavy resource use (Eisenmenger et al., 2020), the goals being a medium through which power interests maintain their economic modalities (Carant, 2015), as well as trade-offs between economic growth and sustainable resource use (Eisenmenger et al., 2020). The SDG report 2020 summarises that while progress has been made in areas such as maternal health; growing food insecurity, degradation of the natural environment and pervasive inequalities persist (United Nations, 2020). These findings support one of the key criticisms of the SDGs; that they do nothing to alter the dominant neoliberal regime that exacerbates climate change and poverty (McCloskey, 2015).

### **2.3 Sustainable tourism**

The same contestable understandings of sustainable development have been brought into the notion of sustainable tourism (Hardy et al., 2002). Just as for sustainable development generally, the SDGs and the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) promote the importance of tourism for economic growth above other factors and support the view that growth is required for sustainability (Sharpley, 2020; Seyfi & Hall, 2021). For example, the UNWTO Secretary-General, Zurab Pololikashvili, said “Tourism’s sustained growth brings immense opportunities for economic welfare and development” (UNWTO, 2018). Overall, many contend that sustainable tourism is being undertaken with a focus on efficiency and throughput inconsistent with broader understandings of sustainability, and that the sustaining being done is the economic activity of tourism (Fletcher et al., 2019; Hall, 2009; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2018; Saarinen, 2015).

This growth approach is criticised by those that argue tourism operating in and supporting the dominant neoliberal paradigm is to the detriment of ecological and social needs (Boluk et al., 2021; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2018; Sharpley, 2020). It is not that economic growth cannot contribute to development, but growth without consideration to social factors and distribution of economic returns from tourism does little to further development (Hall, 2019). It is argued that tourism has not tackled ecological damage at the global level and the negative environmental impacts of our growth focus have continued to increase (McDonald, 2006), not least the contribution of air travel to global warming and carbon emissions (Sharpley, 2020). Further evidence supporting this focus

on economic growth is the rate at which tourist numbers continue to increase and the lack of any real-life movement towards a sustainable tourism industry during the previous 20 years (Hall, 2009; Buckley, 2012; Sharpley, 2020).

## **2.4 Beyond a neoliberal paradigm**

The preceding discussion has highlighted the difficulty of sustainable tourism within a dominant neoliberal paradigm and asserted that these approaches have themselves supported a neoliberal agenda. This represents a continuation of the mindset and behaviours that created the adverse impacts in the first place (Dwyer, 2018). The remainder of this chapter looks at ways to move beyond a neoliberal paradigm in tourism and will outline alternative pathways of degrowth/ steadystate, diverse and regenerative economies, and flourishing.

### **2.4.1 Degrowth/ Steadystate**

The unsustainable growth in tourism is illustrated by complaints of overtourism and images such as a snaking queue of climbers heading up Mt Everest (Fletcher et al., 2019). A buzzword of 2017, overtourism has been described as “the excessive growth of visitors leading to overcrowding in areas where residents suffer the consequences of temporary and seasonal tourism peaks...” (Milano et al., 2018). It is argued that a focus on capital accumulation and growth, has led to unsustainable outcomes and a dependency on tourism (Milano et al., 2018). Continued growth in tourism has persisted despite, or perhaps with the support of, the SDGs. Movono & Hughes (2020) articulated the paradox between tourism growth as a means of furthering the SDGs and the importance of growing slowly to address community needs and priorities. Others have also pointed to the need for degrowth to address tourism growth (Fletcher et al., 2019; Hall, 2009; Higgins-Desbiolles et al., 2019; Sharpley, 2020).

Degrowth is increasingly emerging as a proposed response to the unbalanced pull towards growth in tourism, of which overtourism is a symptom (Hall, 2009; Fletcher et al., 2019; Sharpley, 2020). Degrowth is defined as a state where economic growth does not increase, and it is complementary with a steadystate approach where the economic system does not grow (Hall, 2009; Kerschner, 2010). However, degrowth is not simply about reducing throughput or creating economic recession (Fletcher et al., 2019); it encourages development as a qualitative measure rather than quantitative and recognises the value of non-economic capitals, including the environment (Hall, 2010). An

example of a tourism operation that does not pursue economic growth is in the Kichwa Añangu Community in Ecuador who run ecotourism lodges in the Amazon. While appreciating the need for economic viability, success in this operation is measured by how tourism contributes to community- defined goals founded on *Sumak Kawsay* (the good life) a notion that seeks to recognise and support the harmonious relationship between people and nature (Renkert, 2019).

Degrowth and steadystate thinking require an altering of the 'rules of the game' (Hall, 2013) to ones where economic values are socially sustainable (D'Alisa et al., 2014) and do not unsustainably reduce natural capital (Hall, 2009). In practice, at a local level, degrowth/ steadystate tourism may incorporate new ways of doing tourism, such as creative tourism (Duxbury et al., 2021), domestic tourism (Ballantine, 2020) or community-centred tourism that measures success on community goals such as those used by the Kichwa Añangu community. In its approach to valuing capitals and considerations beyond economic growth, degrowth/ steadystate thinking also has consistencies with diverse economies.

#### **2.4.2 Diverse and regenerative economies**

Dominant societal discourse of the economy positions the capital market economy as being all-encompassing and controlling of society (Mosedale, 2011). The reduction of the economy to monetary capital renders all values and costs numerical and separates the economy from the society and context in which it takes place (Gibson-Graham, 2006). In contrast, a diverse economies approach recognises that there are myriads of alternative and parallel economies including factors such as social capital, spiritual and emotional capitals, community-cohesion, distributive economic capital, communal goals and non-monetary exchange (Bargh, 2012; Cave & Dredge, 2018; Gibson-Graham, 2006; Gibson-Graham & Dombroski, 2020; Mosedale, 2011). Connecting value with the society and context in which it arises, diverse economies are shaped by social structures, culture, agency, and local context (Cave & Koloto 2015; Mosedale, 2011). Movono et al. (2017) articulate an example of this in the context of 12 tourism operations in Fiji where they identified that through involvement in tourism, women had influenced gender relations and attained not only economic but also psychological, social, and political empowerment. This type of diverse economy also feeds back into building the capacity and resilience of the system (Goerner, 2015).

Cave and Dredge (2020) proffer that a diverse economies lens necessitates that we understand and appreciate different value systems. They identify diverse economies as more plentiful in the Global South and, particularly within Indigenous communities. In the context of a geothermal energy enterprise, Bargh (2012) identifies key Māori ethical concepts of *mana*, *utu*, *kaitiakitanga*, and *whakapapa* from which culturally and contextually relevant diverse economies arise. She describes these concepts as being a different way of thinking through which capital, non-capital, spiritual, and emotional aspects of life are valued equally. Bargh's analysis of key Māori concepts is equally applicable in tourism where the application of *Te Ao Māori* can provide space for diverse economies such as self-determination and maintaining *tikanga* (Ringham et al., 2016).

By recognising different values, diverse economies can support a broad understanding of well-being beyond the economic. Cave and Dredge (2020) give the example of an ecotourism business in New Zealand, Blue Penguins Pukekura. The operation is collectively owned by a Māori community and utilises global (tourism market) and local (Māori cultural) values to “create fiscal wealth as well as ‘well-th’”, defined as social, physical and mindful wellbeing within the social structure of the tribe (Cave & Dredge, 2020, p. 507). This is important, as it is now well established that well-being from tourism predicated on economic growth does not always materialise (Cheer et al., 2019; Dodds & Butler, 2019). Evidence of this has further intensified during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has left communities that were reliant on economic growth from tourism vulnerable (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2020). In contrast, an understanding of diverse economies can facilitate resilience to external shocks and enhance cultural continuation (Cave & Dredge, 2020). As well as supporting broad understandings of well-being, such culturally and contextually relevant diverse and regenerative economies contribute to flourishing.

### **2.4.3 Flourishing**

Within sustainable development, social factors are increasingly being recognised as essential for qualitative development, including human and environmental flourishing. The concept of human flourishing has been traced back to Aristotle (Kleinig & Evans, 2013) but is now being examined in contemporary terms. Flourishing has been described as “a combination of feeling good and functioning effectively” (Huppert &

So, 2013, p. 838) and “the various ways in which humans can, over the course of their lives, develop and live well” (Kleinig & Evans, 2013, p. 556). Kleinig and Evans (2013) see flourishing as being fundamentally related to human dignity. Douglass (2016) breaks flourishing into four elements of “conviviality of social & cultural life, inclusiveness in public life, distributive justice, and planetary and environmental flourishing” (Douglass, 2016, p. 174). Pertinent in observations of these enunciations of flourishing is that none of them are focussed on economic growth as a primary requirement for flourishing.

Flourishing is a social endeavour; it does not occur in isolation (Kleinig & Evans, 2013). As such human flourishing needs to be considered contextually; flourishing does not look the same from one community to another. When we consider human flourishing in the context of tourism, it is necessary to look at what it is the host communities want and need for their well-being. This host-visitor balance is relevant to equity and justice, as it is fundamentally about what is being valued. Higgins-Desbiolles et al. (2019) identify how tourists' demands, the 'right to be a tourist', is often given more importance than the rights of locals. This imbalance is the result of prioritising tourism throughput and economic growth over human flourishing. Justice in tourism must focus on local needs and rights leading the way (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2008, 2020).

The importance of localising needs and development in tourism comes through in the work of Scheyvens et al. (2021) and Movono & Hughes (2020). While their research focussed on how tourism contributes to the SDGs, their findings identify that local priorities and culture need to be recognised (Scheyvens et al., 2021) including local partnerships between tourism businesses and communities (Movono & Hughes, 2020). As global goals, the SDGs need to be contextualised to communities in order to be meaningful. In particular, the goals pay insufficient attention to Indigenous priorities (Yap & Watene, 2019) despite the value of Indigenous worldviews to the understanding of the relationship between people, nature, and culture (Scheyvens et al., 2021). For flourishing to occur, it must be understood in the context of each community.

Flourishing is not simply a consideration of the economic benefit from receiving tourists but also harmony, encompassing social and environmental concerns (Cheer, 2020). There have been efforts made in the tourism industry to look towards these factors. Intrepid Travel, for example, endeavours to balance the positive economic benefit to

communities with social and ecological factors (Cheer, 2020) and Planet Happiness is an initiative to strengthen the relationship between well-being and tourism for host communities, and to measure that well-being (Planet Happiness, 2020). Cheer postulates that the concept of human flourishing will be even more important in a post-pandemic world as the way that well-being is understood, tracked, and measured is reconsidered (Cheer, 2020).

## **2.5 Conclusion**

For decades the concept of sustainable development has promoted the consideration of economic, social, and environmental concerns. However, it has been implemented both as sustainable development and sustainable tourism with an untenable focus on economic growth despite the broader aims of the SDGs. This chapter has demonstrated that what is required is a paradigm change of what we value and how we recognise the diverse economies of tourism. To value people and place in a sustainable way we should look at how to implement strategies of degrowth and diverse and regenerative economies, and move our values system beyond prioritising economic growth.

## **Chapter 3: Tourism and complex adaptive systems**

### **3.1 Introduction**

Following on from the preceding chapter on sustainable tourism this chapter briefly considers the discourse around tourism as a system. It then uses Pollock's Tourism Circle model (Pollock, 1995) to begin an exploration of tourism as a complex adaptive system. This chapter highlights the aspects of complex adaptive systems pertinent to this tourism discussion including the key concepts of adaptive cycles and panarchy. The characteristics of the different levels of adaptive cycles and their impact on the system are also analysed. The chapter concludes with a discussion on paradigm change and common cause missions.

### **3.2 Tourism as a system**

Tourism has long been recognised as a system; however, the type and purpose of the system has not been consistently interpreted. Tourism has been described through lifecycle models in which destinations progress through a predetermined cycle impacted by tourist demands (Butler, 1980; Plog, 1974, 2001) and as an open system analysed through its industrialised nature and individual tourist systems (Leiper 1979, 1990, 1992). Expanding on the work of Leiper (1979, 1990), McKercher developed a complex tourism system model containing nine different actors (McKercher's model) (McKercher, 1999). McKercher and Prideaux have advanced this to analyse tourism from the perspective of complexity theory, recognising externalities that impact the structure of the tourist system (McKercher, 1999; McKercher & Prideaux, 2021).

Fundamentally however, all these systems revolve around the tourist, and the destination is important only to the extent relevant to tourism. This is illustrated by the assertion that the "tourist must be the starting point in the consideration of any tourism model" (McKercher & Prideaux, 2021, p. 169) and McKercher's model's interpretation of the destination community being restricted to businesses in the destination area (McKercher, 1999; McKercher & Prideaux, 2021). What this indicates is a mindset that sees destination communities as existing primarily for the pleasure of the tourist. It is the type of mindset that is supported by a focus on tourist throughput and economic growth as discussed in the preceding chapter. To move beyond this paradigm, we must recognise tourism as part of a living system that is a complex adaptive system.

### **3.3 Tourism as a complex adaptive system**

All living things are complex adaptive systems, as is any system that they are part of (da Silva Vieira, 2019). This includes tourism (Jakulin, 2017a). Complex adaptive systems are termed such because of the importance of the interconnections between the elements and their environment; the system cannot be understood by an examination of the elements alone (da Silva Vieira, 2019; Mitchell & Newman, 2001). One model that recognises tourism as a complex adaptive system is Pollock's Tourism Circle (Pollock, 1995). The tourism circle has elements of guests, suppliers, host community, and the natural environment; and its survival and health are dependent on the four elements working in harmony. Further distinguishing her thinking from other models, Pollock also articulates the importance of place (that cannot be replicated) over product (artificial creations) and the value of Indigenous worldviews that acknowledge the inherent connection between people and place (Pollock, 2012). This is a recognition of the interconnectedness of living things that comes through in tourism as a complex adaptive system.

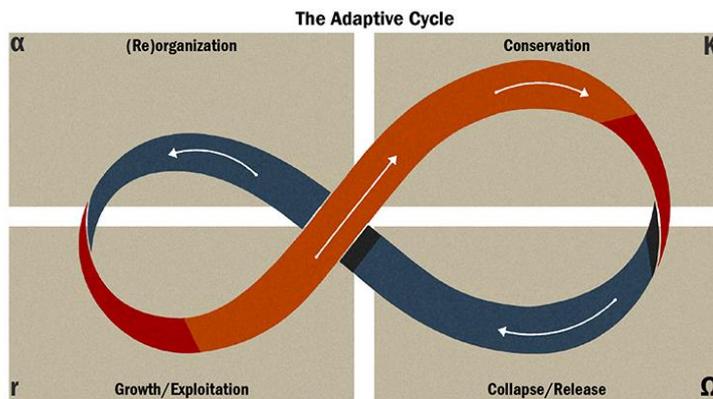
### **3.4 Adaptive cycles and panarchy in complex adaptive systems**

Further developing the Tourism Circle model beyond a linear concept, Pollock identifies that

... there are a whole series of interlocking circles or spheres of influence. Tourism is one circle within a much larger economic and social system... And within each of the four elements of the Tourism Circle, there are further circles and cycles (Pollock, 1995, p. 3)

This begins to describe the complex adaptive nature of tourism systems. Each level (scale) of the system has dynamic interactions between elements at that scale and it moves through phases of growth, conservation, release, and reorganisation in what is termed an adaptive cycle (Gunderson & Holling 2002; Holling 1986; Walker et al., 2004). Figure 2 shows how these phases connect in an adaptive cycle and illustrates the constant nature of change in adaptive cycles and how they are able to reorganise themselves after a collapse.

**Figure 2.** *The Adaptive Cycle.* Gunderson & Holling, figure 2-1, 2002.



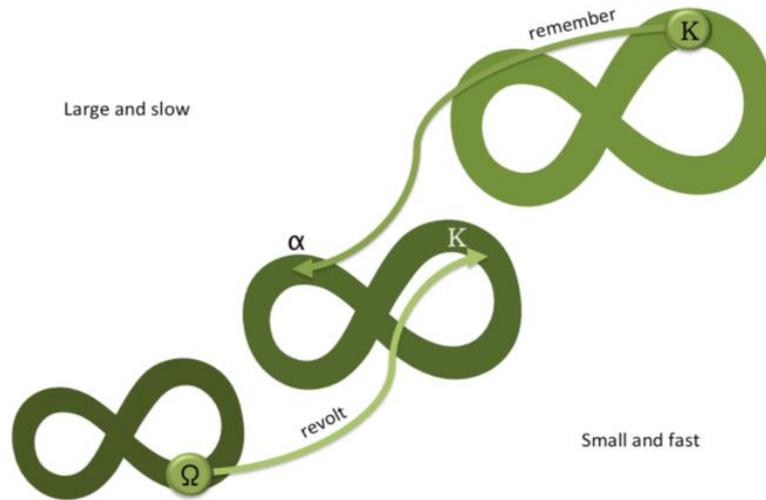
From *Panarchy*, edited by Lance H. Gunderson and C.S. Holling. Copyright © 2002 Island Press. Reproduced by permission of Island Press, Washington, DC.

In tourism we could describe the growth stage as when a destination becomes popular, and the local tour agency expands rapidly before it reaches the conservation phase and growth stabilises for a period. There can then be a release phase, for example if the destination is no longer accessible due to COVID-19, which leads to the need for the tour agency to reorganise with its surviving characteristics. The elements that remain stable despite adaptation and reorganisation are called resilience pivots (Rotorangi & Stephenson, 2004) and can thus represent the core identity of a resilient system. In the tour agency example this may be the values behind their operation such as promoting cultural rejuvenation that they then retain in the reorganisation phase. In a complex adaptive system there is a zone of stability that must be sustained to ensure its survival and its resilience is determined by its adaptive capacity to stay within these critical thresholds (Holling, 1973).

Complex adaptive systems are self-informing and adapt and evolve through feedback loops, meaning that what happens now affects what happens in the future (Jakulin, 2017b). As each living thing is its own system as well as part of other complex systems then feedback loops can occur at the element and each adaptive cycle scale level, as well as between adaptive cycles. While ecosystems evolve naturally by adding feedback loops and new rules, humans make conscious decisions and thus have a causative role to play in the resilience of socio-ecological systems (Lacitignola et al., 2007). Panarchy then, describes how complex systems of people and nature are dynamically organized and structured across scales of space and time (Gunderson et al., 1995; Gunderson & Holling 2002; Holling et al., 2002) and is illustrated by a nested set of adaptive cycles

that interact (Holling et al., 2002). Figure 3 illustrates a panarchy showing adaptive cycles at three different scales.

**Figure 3.** *A Panarchy.* Gunderson & Holling, 2002, figure 3-10, p. 75.



**From Panarchy, edited by Lance H. Gunderson and C.S. Holling. Copyright © 2002 Island Press. Reproduced by permission of Island Press, Washington, DC.**

The three adaptive cycles illustrated in the Figure 3 panarchy all represent different scales of a system and show how the system accounts for both stability and change. Each adaptive cycle moves at its own pace with quicker smaller cycles nested below larger slower cycles (Holling, 2001). The smaller cycles are able to change quickly and experiment, whereas the larger slower scales retain memory of the past and provide some stability to the system (Gunderson & Holling, 2002). This memory is illustrated by the 'remember' link in Figure 3. The memory retained in the larger scales explains why initial conditions in complex systems are less vulnerable to forces of change than later additions to the system. Russell and Faulkner (2004) describe this as potentially related to primacy, similar to how Coke has maintained dominance over Pepsi. We might see this in tourism when destinations endeavour to change the nature of their tourism offerings, for example the difficulty for Turkey trying to move beyond the 3S of sun, sea, and sand (Alvarez, 2010), or where smaller cycles such as the Kichwa Añangu community define success by community goals but at the country level economic growth is still prioritised.

In a panarchy hierarchy, change can also occur from the smaller, faster cycles upwards (Allen, 2014; Gunderson & Holling, 2002; McKercher, 1999). This is the revolt link indicated in Figure 3 and shows how the smaller faster adaptive cycles are nested in larger slower cycles and can effect wide-spread change (Hollings, 2001). Thus, while flourishing through tourism is contextually grounded, there is no one set scale at which change must be initiated for it to have an effect across scales and time. This bottom-up change is sometimes termed the butterfly effect- when a small change can significantly impact a system (Russell & Faulkner, 2004).

The butterfly effect can occur at leverage points within a complex system. Just as in the use of a lever, the location of the intervention and the force of the intervention determine the magnitude of the change (Lee, 2018). Meadows (1999) identified 12 such leverage points in a complex system, the most powerful of which involve transcending or changing paradigms, as it is out of these paradigms that the rest of the system flows- its structure, rules, and parameters (Meadows, 1999). Sustainable development has generally focussed on setting indicators along with limited policy change but all within the existing neoliberal paradigm (Hall, 2011). I posit that due to the relative power of initial conditions, which include an economic growth purview in the larger adaptive cycles, these types of interventions do not override the system memory and are therefore not effective for transforming the system. To achieve goals associated with socio-ecological sustainability, paradigm transformations are required that address drivers such as norms, values, rules, and governance systems (Brondízio et al., 2019).

### **3.5 Changing paradigms**

Scientific revolutions that result in paradigm shifts come about when there are a significant number of problems that old methods cannot solve and some major figures in the field focus on these unsolved problems (Kuhn, 1970). The potential for such a change is highest during the reorganisation stage of the adaptive cycle and innovations during this stage can result in a new and stable stage (Wahl, 2017). Given the continued environmental and social degradation caused and unable to be resolved by the dominant neoliberal tourism paradigm, and the potential release phase of adaptive cycles triggered by COVID-19, now may be the time for paradigm shift in tourism.

However, societies can be resistant to paradigm change (Meadows, 1999), particularly as the status quo often favours powerful agents (Chan et al., 2020) and initial conditions

are more resistant to change (Russell & Faulkner, 2004). Kuhn suggests that proponents of the existing dominant paradigm may adopt selected elements of the new proposed paradigm in an endeavour to strengthen the current paradigm without undermining its core principles (Kuhn, 1970), such has occurred with the sustainable development goals. One of the difficulties is that those who make decisions are influenced by the cultural values of the society they are in, and their decisions then feedback into cultural values in a feedback loop (Meadows, 2008). To support paradigm change, Ives et al. (2020) advances the importance of fostering common cause values.

Supporting Ives' proposition, historically, paradigm changes have occurred through common cause missions to make the world a better place (Goerner, 2019). Goerner suggests that

today's common-cause mission is part of the long-term quest to save humanity from the self-serving oligarchic power that always destroys societies—socially, economically, politically, and environmentally (Goerner, 2019, p. 4)

Common cause values tend to be aspirational and start at a community scale to enable people to deeply connect with a place, but for sustainable change the community scale must be nested across scales within space and time (Gibbons, 2020) a notion consistent with panarchy. These interpretations of common cause values and mission resonate with a regenerative tourism approach that recognises the importance of context, nested adaptive cycles and whole system health.

### **3.6 Conclusion**

As a complex adaptive system, tourism is a panarchy of nested adaptive cycles that interact and recognise the interconnection between all living things. Changes in the tourism system can occur both bottom-up and top-down through these nested cycles. The larger, slower cycles retain system memory and are thus sensitive to initial conditions making changes slower to effect. The smaller faster adaptive cycles can act quickly and experimentally with the potential to affect the larger, slower cycles. This means that changes at the community scale in tourism such as at Kohutapu Lodge have the potential to trigger changes at a larger scale such as the national level. This is particularly so at times of release and reorganisation in the adaptive cycle such as in this time of COVID-19. Meadows describes the most powerful intervention in a system as being the paradigm level, as it is out of these that the rest of the system flows. Paradigm

shifts are not easy to enact but this is what is required in order to move tourism systems from an economic growth paradigm to a regenerative paradigm. This research report considers the role that the Tiaki Promise could have in such paradigm change.

## **Chapter 4: Regenerative Development and Destination Pledges**

### **4.1 Introduction**

A fundamental difference between sustainable development and regenerative development is the holistic and systems thinking applied to regenerative development (Gibbons, 2020). This chapter articulates the basis of regenerative development and how regenerative tourism goes beyond sustainable development. It then reflects on the synchronicity between regenerative development and Indigenous worldviews before introducing the Tiaki Promise destination pledge.

### **4.2 Regenerative Development**

Regeneration refers to “the self-feeding, self-renewing processes that natural systems use to nourish their capacity to thrive for long periods of time and their ability to adapt to unexpected, sometimes threatening circumstances” (Goerner, 2015, p. 1). This ability to adapt and survive is reflective of the adaptive cycles and zone of stability in complex adaptive systems described by Holling (1973). Regenerative design uses these principles of ecological systemic health, recognising the importance of the relationship between system parts, and applies them to socio-ecological systems (Cole et al., 2013). A social–ecological system is a “complex, dynamic and self-adjusting system that involves interactions and linkages at a range of scales between the social world and the ecological world wherein that place is situated” (Griffith et al., 2010, p. 9). Gibbons (2020) then defines regenerative development as “a process of shifting minds and hearts to support thriving living systems and communities” (Gibbons, 2020, p. 5483).

Regenerative development goes beyond sustainability thinking by recognising the critical dynamic relationships between humans and nature through the interaction of nested adaptive cycles (Gibbons, 2020). Rather than focussing on efficiency and mitigating damage like sustainable development, regenerative development aims for thriving flourishing living-systems in which both individual and whole-system health and wellbeing increase continually (Gabel, 2015; Gibbons, 2020). Health in this context is defined by Gibbons as “the condition in which complexity, diversity, capacity to support all life, and the potential to change to provide future options increases in the system” (Gibbons, 2020, p. 21). System health is reflective of the self-renewing process of regeneration returning resources to build the capacity of the system through a regenerative economy (Gabel, 2015; Goerner, 2015). In tourism systems this is visible

in harmony, encompassing social and environmental concerns (Cheer, 2020). Like regenerative development, the concept of regenerative tourism aims to proactively contribute to individual and whole system health and flourishing (Duxbury et al., 2021).

### **4.3 Regenerative tourism**

Regenerative tourism has been described as “[going] beyond sustainable tourism to focus on giving back and contributing to the proactive regeneration of communities, cultures, heritage, places, landscapes, and so forth” (Duxbury et al., 2021) and with the ultimate outcome of system health (Becken, 2020). This system includes natural, social, and cultural elements and their interactions (Becken, 2020). Pollock describes the aim of regenerative tourism as

To restore the harm that our system has already done to the natural world, and by using nature’s principles, to create the conditions of life to flourish. It views wholes and not parts, and is a very different way of looking at the world. A regenerative approach to tourism starts at home within ourselves, then our workplaces and our communities, and depends on caring hosts willing to ensure their destination is healthy and full of life. (Pollock, 2019, n.p.)

To support a regenerative system, tourism must look beyond the current focus on economic growth to an understanding of the interconnectedness of people and the environment and the importance feeding capital back into the system (Becken, 2020). To do this, there is a need to change from an economic growth paradigm to one that supports whole system health and flourishing perhaps utilising a degrowth/ steadystate approach and appreciating diverse economies. It is at the paradigm level where change must occur for sustainable transformation of the system (Gibbons, 2020; Goerner, 2015). In practice regenerative tourism will include a greater synchronisation between what the hosts offer and what visitors value with a commitment to looking after natural resources and a connection with the community (Pollock, 2019).

#### **4.3.1 Indigenous worldviews**

A regenerative paradigm shift will reflect that humans are a part of nature and not superior to it, and all life is interconnected and interdependent (Pollock, 2019). This paradigm is consistent with Indigenous worldviews. Indigenous Peoples predominantly view themselves as one with nature, intrinsically connected as part of the same extended family of which people are only one part (McKenzie & Morissette, 2003; Salmón, 2000).

For example, the Kichwa concept of *sumak kawsay* (good living) means a fullness of life in community, together with other persons and nature (Gudynas, 2011) and in Māori custom, every aspect of creation is genealogically connected (Rotorangi & Stephenson, 2014). This view of nature as family further extends to using land for the well-being of the people (Rotorangi & Stephenson, 2014) and the obligation to care for the Earth as a family member (McGowan, 2020).

Carr (2020) argues that the relationship between regenerative tourism and Indigenous Peoples in tourism can be reciprocally beneficial; Indigenous cultures can be revitalised by tourism, and Indigenous ways of thinking can be incorporated to feed and sustain the regenerative system. The spiritual and cultural connection between Indigenous Peoples and the land can be supported by tourism that offers a means to generate capital in a way that respects such connection and protection (Bricker et al., 2013; Abate & Kronk, 2013). Consistent with Indigenous worldviews and diverse economies, such capital need not be solely financial such as illustrated in the analysis of Bargh (2012) and Ringham et al. (2016) and the examples of Blue Penguins Pukekura (Cave & Dredge, 2020) and the Kichwa Añangu community (Renkert, 2019). Indigenous worldviews thus are based on paradigms that value nature and capitals beyond economic growth and such views are increasingly incorporated in tourism planning such as the Tiaki Promise in New Zealand (Carr, 2020).

#### **4.4 The Tiaki Promise**

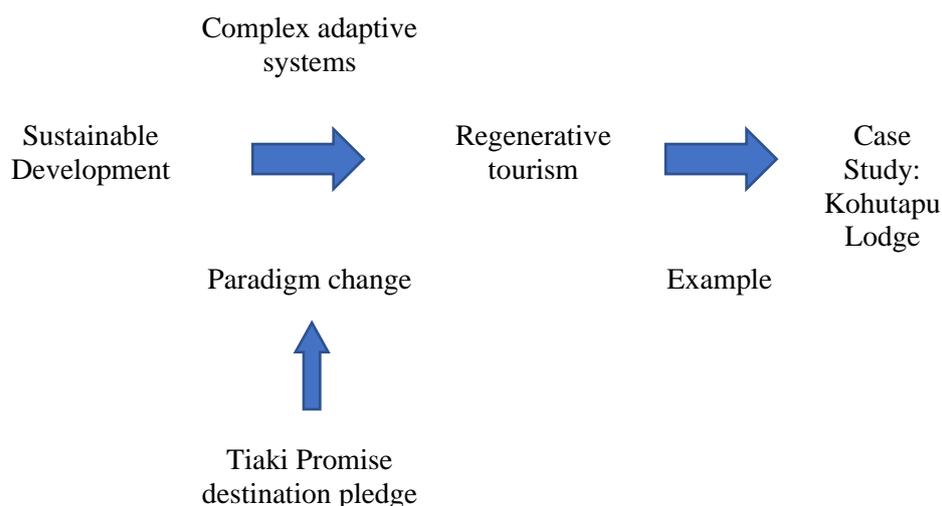
Tiaki means to care for people and place and is informed by Māori values (Carr, 2020). The Tiaki Promise launched in 2018, calls on international visitors to New Zealand to promise to care for New Zealand for now and for future generations (Tourism New Zealand, 2018). The Tiaki Promise resulted from a collaboration between Air New Zealand, the Department of Conservation, Local Government New Zealand, New Zealand Māori Tourism (NZMT), Tourism Holdings Ltd, Tourism Industry Aotearoa. and Tourism New Zealand and calls for travellers to:

1. Care for land, sea, and nature, treading lightly and leaving no trace
2. Travel safely, showing care and consideration for all
3. Respect culture, travelling with an open heart and mind

(The Tiaki Promise, Tiaki New Zealand, 2021, attached as Appendix A).

In 2020, the independent public-private partnership Future Tourism Taskforce recommended the expansion of the focus of the Tiaki Promise to embed it in everything we do domestically and internationally, to shift mindsets and behaviours of everyone in New Zealand (Tourism Futures Taskforce, 2020). As illustrated in Figure 1, this research considers how the Tiaki Promise destination pledge can contribute to regenerative tourism through paradigm change.

**Figure 1.** The relationship of the key elements of the research report



#### 4.4.1 Destination Pledges

Destination pledges like the Tiaki Promise are increasingly being used as a tool to modify tourists' negative behaviours (Albrecht & Raymond, 2020) and help attract conscientious, high-value travellers (Spinks, 2019). Research undertaken with 19 tourism experts across five countries by Albrecht & Raymond (2020) suggests that tourism operators use destination pledges to initiate conversations around responsible behaviour. The goal of changing behaviours was linked with engaging and inspiring tourists about why destinations need protection (Raymond, 2020). However, their research found that it has been difficult to measure whether pledges are actually changing behaviour (Albrecht & Raymond, 2020).

Chen (2021) undertook research to assess whether destination pledges influenced sustainable travel behaviours. Chen identified that while pledges had been found to have an impact on marketing (Medel, 2020) and to target specific behaviours like book donation (Cotterill et al., 2013), no study had explicitly addressed whether a pledge could influence traveller's behaviour (Chen, 2021). In contrast to Albrecht & Raymond (2020), who interviewed tourism experts, Chen surveyed 147 Canadian residents on

their anticipated behaviour using a hypothetical pledge based on the Tiaki Promise. Chen found that signing a tourist pledge did not significantly impact tourists' intentions to travel responsibly and that pledges with general content did not have the same effectiveness as pledges with specific short requirements (Chen, 2021). However, Chen also found that signing a pledge strengthened self-transcendence value (caring about the wellbeing of others and the environment) on responsible travel behaviours. Chen (2021) thus posits the potential value in combining the pledge with marketing strategies.

#### **4.5 Conclusion**

Regenerative tourism draws from complex adaptive systems thinking and Indigenous worldviews to encapsulate the interconnectedness between people and the environment and their interactions across scale and time. Regenerative tourism will require a paradigm shift away from an extractive economy to one that values a regenerative economy that supports individual and whole system health and flourishing. The Tiaki Promise reflects these principles and aims to encourage travellers to appreciate the value of New Zealand's people and place and look after it now and for the future. This research explores a case study of regenerative tourism in New Zealand and how it manifests regenerative principles as well as the potential relevance of the Tiaki Promise in supporting a regenerative tourism system.

## **Chapter 5: Methodology**

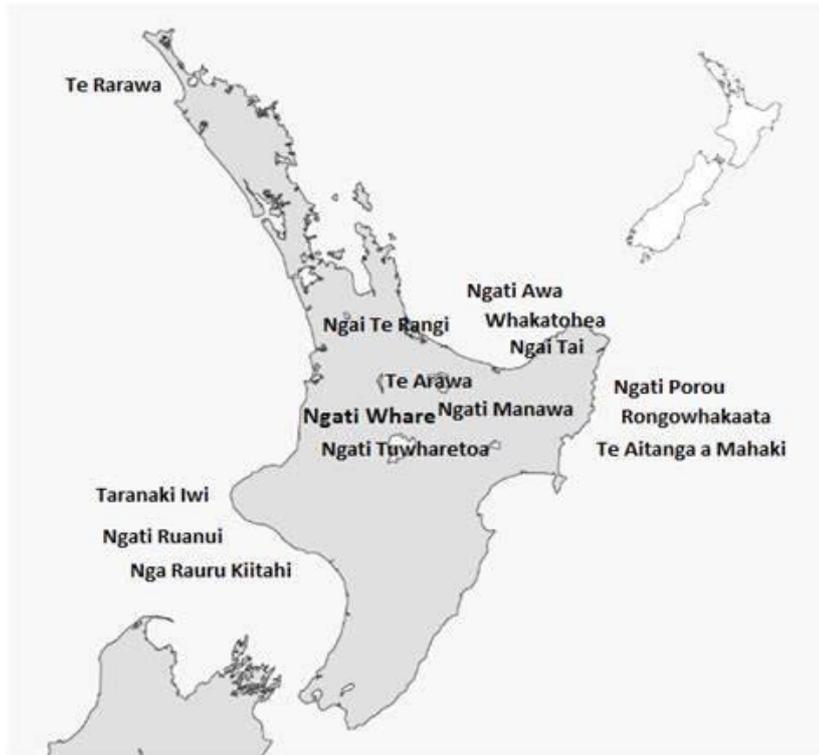
### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter outlines the methodological approach employed in this research. As a 60-credit research report this research involved documentary analysis and limited qualitative semi-structured interviews in the context of a case study. The chapter commences with a description of the case study, an Indigenous Māori tourism operation, Kohutapu Lodge and Tribal Tours based in Murupara, Bay of Plenty, New Zealand (Kohutapu Lodge). Images of the location of Ngāti Manawa tribal lands and then the location of Kohutapu Lodge within these lands are included for reference. The chapter continues with a description of the approach to this research, before considering ethical research issues, fieldwork, data analysis and limitations.

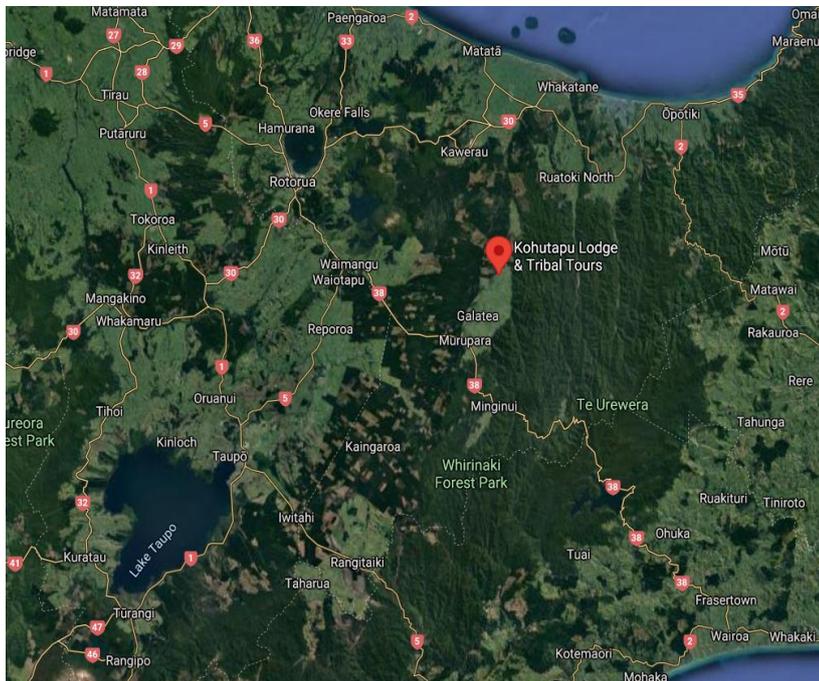
### **5.2 The Case Study: Kohutapu Lodge**

Kohutapu Lodge offers a cultural tourism experience with activities such as forest bathing- the opportunity to just ‘be’ and reconnect with nature. It is located in Ngāti Manawa tribal lands and situated next to Lake Aniwhenua. It is run by the Toetoe *whānau* Maurice, Karl, and Nadine with children Tylah-Fern and Bodhi. Maurice and Karl are Ngāti Manawa tribe, and Nadine (who is married to Karl) *whakapapas* back to Ngai Tai. Ngāti Manawa are the descendants of the ancestor, Tangiharuru and are the *kaitiaki* of the Tawhiuau Mountain and Rangitaiki river. Rangipo, on the Rangitaiki river, is where Ngāti Manawa farewell the eels as they return to sea to spawn and holds special significance to Ngāti Manawa. The lands between the Kaingaroa plains and the Rangitaiki and Whirinaki valleys are *mana whenua* for Ngāti Manawa (Ngāti Manawa, 2021). Kohutapu Lodge is located in this *rohe*. Figure 4 shows the location of Ngāti Manawa tribal lands and Figure 5 shows the location of Kohutapu Lodge more specifically within this area.

**Figure 4.** *Map of 15. Iwi Collective, 2016*



**Figure 5.** *Location of Kohutapu Lodge. Google, 2021.*



### **5.3 Approach and researcher positionality**

This research explores tourism through a regenerative development lens. Regenerative development proactively aims for flourishing systems and, to collect data reflective of this, I used an appreciative inquiry approach to data collection. Appreciative inquiry examines strengths and successes rather than focusing on deficits (McArthur-Blair & Cockell, 2014). In undertaking qualitative research through this strength-based approach, the aim is to “discover what gives life to a system, what energises people and what they most care about, to produce both shared knowledge and motivation for action” (Sharp et al., 2016, p. 4). I do not discount the risk of ignoring the ‘shadows of human experience’ (McArthur-Blair & Cockell, 2014) but believe that a balance of experiences will emerge in ongoing genuine interactions. In this approach the researcher recognises that their role is not to point out problems but to listen, learn, and understand lived experiences so far as possible within the constraints of the research.

I also acknowledge the importance and validity of a critical indigenous pedagogy. As described by Denzin et al. (2018) this approach rejects a single paradigm and colonial Western methods and has goals of justice and equality. It is centred on valuing the transformative power of Indigenous knowledge and empowering inquiry, honouring Indigenous values, customs, and knowledge (Denzin et al., 2018). I endeavour to carry out this research in a manner that recognises and respects Indigenous values, customs, and knowledge, and being open to multiple paradigms of belief. At the same time, I acknowledge that as a pākehā researcher, part of a majority colonial population, the very carrying out of this research in a predominantly Māori community has the potential to reinforce colonial power relations. In preparing for the site visit I made sure that I was familiar with the case study and the information already available in order to respect the time and knowledge of the participants. When selecting participants and carrying out interviews I was led by those who showed interest and respected the schedules and priorities of interviewees. When introducing myself I positioned myself as a learner and not as someone who had come in to impose their own viewpoints.

## 5.4 Ethical research issues

The 2018 New Zealand census data of Murupara records that 91% of the community of Murupara identify as Māori, the median income was \$18,800 (compared to a national median of \$31,800), and 37% of adults have no qualifications (Statistics New Zealand, 2020). I identify as New Zealand pākehā with both my parents having Scottish heritage, and I am currently carrying out post-graduate studies at Massey University. There are potential issues with power relations; these can be mediated with the appreciative inquiry approach. I further resonate with the view of Banks and Scheyvens (2014) that ethics is not fundamentally about preparing an ethics proposal but about carrying out research ethics from the bottom up, always with consideration for the *mana* of the people and places in which we research.

I identify that the Māori ethics framework Te Ara Tika expressly states that all research in New Zealand is of interest to Māori (Hudson, 2010). Further, I recognise the centrality of reciprocity which acknowledges the generosity of the custodians of knowledge (Stewart-Withers et al., 2014). I further acknowledge the following Indigenous principles to guide this research:

1. *Aroha kit e tangata* (a respect for people)
2. *Kamohi kitea* (the seen face, that is present yourself to people face to face)
3. *Titiro, whakarongo...korero* (look, listen...speak)
4. *Manaaki ki te tangata* (share and host people, be generous)
5. *Kia tupato* (be cautious and astute)
6. *Kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata* (do not trample over the *mana* of people)
7. *Kaua e mahaki* (do not flaunt your knowledge)

(Cram, 2001)

I considered these principles when planning and carrying out this research. I felt it was important to carry out fieldwork in person, to present myself at Kohutapu Lodge and explain my genuine interest in their operation. I recognised the *mana* of the participants and the place, recognising my place as fitting in with them and their rhythm and not the other way around.

Before entering the field, I also completed the inhouse ethics procedure at Massey University. For this I prepared documentation including an information sheet and consent form (attached as appendices B and C) and these forms and potential ethical issues arising in this fieldwork were discussed with the research supervisor Dr Api Movono, and with Professor Regina Scheyvens, both of Massey University. We discussed issues around the scope of consent and the importance of being clear about consent parameters. The resulting information sheet detailed the research I was undertaking and who to contact for further information. The consent form requested consent for participation in this research and set out how the information would be used. Following the inhouse ethics procedure, I applied for a low-risk ethics approval with Massey University, and this was approved, Ethics Notification Number: 4000024340.

## **5.5 Fieldwork**

### **5.5.1 Data collection procedure**

Qualitative research is used to describe, explore, or explain social phenomena (Stewart-Withers et al., 2014). This research lent itself to qualitative research as the heart of regenerative tourism is community and I was seeking to understand the community's beliefs and values and how these are expressed through tourism. By using semi-structured interviews in the context of the case study I could explore the rich experiences of the participants, obtaining supportive evidence of regenerative tourism (O'Leary, 2017). I recognised the importance of active learning, being aware of my own positionality and focussing on hearing the voices of people's realities rather than my preconceptions. I chose to undertake semi-structured interviews based on a list of topics that were to be covered but in a way that allowed for the flow of natural conversation and new topics to be explored. I planned for the questions to be open-ended and relevant to the proposed research questions, for example 'Can you tell me about the values behind Kohutapu Lodge?' These semi-structured interviews were complemented with a 3-day site visit at Kohutapu Lodge where I was able to observe daily operations and interactions.

### **5.5.2 Case study and Participant Selection**

When researching regenerative tourism and its possible implementation in New Zealand, I discovered that the Coastal Bay of Plenty was already endeavouring to apply a regenerative tourism framework under the guidance of Tourism Bay of Plenty

(TBOP). I identified Kohutapu Lodge as an Indigenous tourism operation within the TBOP area and chose this as the institution for the case study. Having identified a case study, I selected key informants as those whose roles or experiences led them to have relevant knowledge or information (O’Leary, 2017). I relied on the key informants for limited snowballing of participants; that is, sometimes one interviewee directed me to another person who could help to inform this study (O’Leary, 2017).

### **5.5.3 Entry into the field**

The fieldwork primarily took place at the chosen case study location of Kohutapu Lodge. The contact was Nadine Toetoe, a director and operator of Kohutapu Lodge. I arrived at Kohutapu Lodge on Monday, 7 June 2021 and stayed until 9 June 2021. I stayed onsite and paid for this accommodation. Due to the COVID-19 border closures, there were no tourists, but Kohutapu Lodge have ‘pivoted’ like some other tourism enterprises and was running a youth programme, Manawa Ora Rangatahi (Manawa Ora). I was introduced to the youth and the team at Kohutapu Lodge and had an opportunity to greet them and briefly explain why I was there. Over the time I was there, I observed the interactions between the youth and the Kohutapu Lodge team, visitors, and the environment.

I have identified the Toetoe’s by their full names and the guides by their first name, just as Kohutapu Lodge does in its publications and interviews. To respect the privacy of the youth I have identified them by initial only, even though this was not requested by them. I had ongoing discussions with Nadine Toetoe over the period that I was there and she signed the consent form. I interviewed Maurice Toetoe for a shorter period. He gave verbal consent but declined to see any documentation. I obtained verbal consent from and briefly interviewed guides Himi and Willie, particularly around the *maara kai* and connection to the *whenua*. I also obtained verbal consent from *rangatahi* J and H to be interviewed for this research. I did not provide them with the written forms as I was aware of learning difficulties associated with reading for J. Both these youth had struck up a conversation with me and were comfortable having the discussion. While I had casual conversations with other youth, they appeared guarded. Thus, I did not request an interview with any other youth as I was conscious that I was an outsider who had been granted entry to a training course that was not open to the public generally.

I had arranged to travel to Tauranga to interview Kristin Dunne of Tourism Bay of

Plenty (TBOP). When our agreed date became unsuitable at short notice, we completed the interview by Zoom instead. I emailed the information and consent forms to Kristin prior to the interview, and she returned the signed consent form. I also interviewed Dani McDonald, Communications advisor from New Zealand Māori Tourism (NZMT). Due to COVID-19 alert levels and weather warnings at the time this interview was also conducted by zoom. A written consent form was provided in advance and verbal consent obtained.

**Table 1.** Table of research participants

Nadine Toetoe	Director, Kohutapu Lodge	Selected for insider knowledge
Maurice Toetoe	<i>Kaumatua</i> , Ngāti Manawa tribe; Director, Kohutapu Lodge	Snowball participant. Iwi insider knowledge.
Himi	Guide, Kohutapu Lodge	Snowball participant
Willie	Guide, Kohutapu Lodge	Snowball participant
Youth J	Participant in Manawa Ora	Snowball participant
Youth H	Participant in Manawa Ora	Snowball participant
Kristen Dunne	CEO, TBOP	Selected for insider knowledge
Dani McDonald	Communications and Tiaki Governance Board, NZMT	Selected for insider knowledge

In accordance with Māori *tikanga* I offered a *koha* to Kohutapu Lodge (Mead, 2003). As an acknowledgment of the personal generosity and time of the Toetoe family, on arrival at Kohutapu Lodge, I gave some locally made chocolates to the family and some gingerbread men as I knew they had a young child. On departure I left behind a rugby ball, soccer ball and volleyball as an acknowledgment of appreciation for the youth to have allowed me to be a part of their training journey.

In addition, the Kohutapu team are passionate about their work and Nadine expressed belief in the value of spreading the word of tourism’s potential to support community and place. I discussed with Nadine, and she endorsed the idea, that I will write an article about their operation. I acknowledge the importance of ongoing reciprocity and relationships and intend to continue my communications with Kohutapu as we continue

to advance a regenerative/ Māori worldview approach to tourism. I will also be sharing this research with Kohutapu Lodge.

Reciprocity with Kristen Dunne of TBOP and Dani McDonald of NZMT will be through an ongoing relationship and sharing of information and the results of this research. Subsequent to the fieldwork being undertaken Dani requested a copy of the questions I had asked her - because she felt they raised some important issues about the role of the Tiaki Promise and the concept of *kaitiakitanga* - so that she could share them with the Tiaki Governance Board. This is another an example of reciprocity through shared learning and collaboration.

#### **5.4 Limitations**

Because of the COVID-19 border closures, I could not observe or interview tourists at Kohutapu Lodge. However, this research is primarily looking at how Kohutapu Lodge express their values, and how that translates into their youth training programme could be seen as a proxy for how this translates into their tourism operations. Later research may be undertaken to consider whether there are any immediate or lasting impacts of the tourism approach on the tourists.

The Tiaki Promise was only launched in late 2018. The result of this is that there is limited research on the Tiaki Promise. I have researched the material available, including destination pledges for other countries. The other impact of the Tiaki Promise being launched in late 2018 is that it was only in place for around a year before border closures started due to COVID-19. There has thus been little time for it to have an observable impact. I have however undertaken the interviews on its intent and how the interviewees perceived it being utilised now and in the future.

#### **5.5 Data analysis**

Most of the interviews were recorded and transcribed using the application Otter. This was complemented by written notes for shorter, *ad hoc* interviews. While limited photos are included in this report they provided a resource to me for recapturing the emotional connection with the case study. Following the fieldwork, I undertook a thematic analysis of the interview notes and related documents to sort the raw data into themes for analysis (Guest et al., 2012; O’Leary, 2017). Patterns in the data were coded in a manner relevant to the overall research aim (Stewart-Withers et al., 2014).

## **5.6 Conclusion**

This research was predominantly located at Kohutapu Lodge. I selected the key interviewees of Nadine Toetoe, Kristin Dunne, and Dani McDonald based on their insider knowledge and undertook limited snowballing. The qualitative interviews I undertook were semi-structured and enabled data rich in personal experiences to be obtained. I was unable to observe the tourism business in operation at Kohutapu Lodge due to COVID-19, however, it was ascertained that similar cultural values were being applied to their youth training programme. The limited time that the Tiaki Promise was in place before border closures also means there is limited information available on its impact however I was still able to conduct research around the intent of this pledge.

## Chapter 6: Findings- Regenerative tourism

### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the data collected on regenerative tourism, primarily through fieldwork at the case study and a zoom interview with Kristen Dunne. It starts with a description of the strategy and plan of Tourism Bay of Plenty (TBOP) to implement a regenerative tourism strategy in the Coastal Bay of Plenty, in which Kohutapu Lodge is located. Immediately this follows a summary of the interview with Kristin Dunne, CEO of TBOP, on the meaning of regenerative tourism and its expression in TBOP. The chapter then moves to the case study of Kohutapu Lodge and covers the interviews with Nadine Toetoe, Maurice Toetoe, Guides Himi and Willie, and Youths J and H covering Kohutapu Lodge values, regenerative tourism, and Kohutapu Lodge's COVID-19 pivot, Manawa Ora Rangatahi (Manawa Ora).

### 6.2 Tourism Bay of Plenty

Kohutapu Lodge lies within the region covered by the destination management organisation TBOP. TBOP is a trust jointly controlled by Tauranga City Council and Western Bay of Plenty District Council. TBOP has implemented a tourism strategy Te Hā Tāpoi | The Love of Tourism, with the mission of growing a sustainable visitor economy for the benefit of their community (TBOP, 2019). TBOP's 'tourism with purpose' plan asserts that "Regenerative tourism is the challenge of the future: a process of partnership with nature in resonance with indigenous wisdom" (TBOP, n.d., p. 4). Figure 5 shows the TBOP area and Murupara is towards the bottom right.

**Figure 6.** The Coastal Bay of Plenty. AA, 2021.



Kristin Dunne has been the CEO of TBOP for five years. The interview with her covered TBOP's approach to tourism, regenerative tourism, and the Tiaki Promise. Kristin articulated her understanding of regenerative tourism as:

How I would describe [regenerative tourism] simply is that it ... leaves a place better than you found it. But in order to do that it requires a lot of complexity. And it is really at the system's level, so for me it's firstly about community conversation. So, what does the community actually want for their place and how would the visitors interact with that. There's going to be a different answer from different people and from different communities. It's absolutely about having an *iwi/hapu* led *Te Ao Māori* approach ... had we just stuck with that all along, we probably wouldn't be needing to re-elevate this thinking. So, I'm very careful to say that it's an indigenous wisdom, both from Māoridom, but also other indigenous people as well.

Kristin described how the first step for TBOP was to find out what was important to the community. To do this they started by consulting with the community about 'place DNA'. They found that people did appreciate the natural resources and culture that the area provided and recognised the need to protect them. There are a range of different passions that the TBOP community values, from the Bay of Plenty's abundant food sources to its surf community culture. One way that the TBOP is taking its regenerative approach forward is to market towards tourists whose passions connect with those of the community rather than aim for a growth in numbers.

Kristin described how regenerative thinking must be genuine and involves an 'inside-out' change, not a tick-box exercise. It requires a different way of thinking which then leads to a different way of living. At TBOP, they have been working on this inside-out change, but Kristin acknowledged the difficulties in effecting changes in the face of stakeholders such as Councils and funders that expect results quickly and are keen to employ traditional growth measures of success. Kristin believes it is time to share examples of regenerative tourism like Kohutapu Lodge who naturally employ Indigenous worldviews in their operation, and to bring change and genuine understanding of regeneration up the scale from individual operations to local governance, national governance, and globally. She asserts that this will require individuals with the vision and belief to step forward and for governance to make room for this to happen and be prepared to listen.

### 6.3 Kohutapu Lodge

Figure 7. Nadine Toetoe at Kohutapu Lodge. Hutchison, 2021



#### 6.3.1 Murupara and Ngāti Manawa

Ngāti Manawa traditionally used local resources to sustain themselves and for trade, utilising their land and rivers and maintaining a balance between use and regeneration (Ngāti Manawa Claims Settlement Act, 2012). However, during the 1950s, Murupara became a base for logging operations in the Kaingaroa Forest, and there was employment with the Kaingaroa Logging Company and the Forest Service.

Restructuring and privatisation in the 1980s left many unemployed, and many left Murupara. Some consider the peak of the logging operations to be the ‘boom’ time of Murupara (McClintock, 1998). However, Maurice Toetoe, *kaumatua* of Ngāti Manawa, recounts it differently. He describes:

Our house is still on the marae. Our house is the only one there. Mum could see, and Dad could see, what was happening. All our families lived around the marae, then in the late 1950s/1960s we all had to shift. So that broke us up... We all had to shift into town. Why? And Mum and Dad knew so they took title out on our home and it's still there, the only house there. It's all *papakāinga* (ancestral land)... but it's quite sad. [The logging operations] broke up our structure... At the moment Ngāti Manawa owns 2% of their land that they had... we had 16 hapu back in the day, now we've only got 3. Because there's no land.

Murupara is currently one of the most economically impoverished locations in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2020). Maurice Toetoe perceives that there are three

generations of unemployment in families. This is backed up in articles in the media highlighting socio-economic concerns in the area such as gang conflicts (Biddle, 2019; Otago Daily Times, 2019) and ATM thefts (Shanks, 2019). A brief visit to the township of Murupara, approximately 20km from Kohutapu Lodge, during the case study site visit revealed the prominence of gang colours, graffiti, and property damage. But what an outsider sees on the surface does not always represent the real spirit of a community. The film *Murupara Dreaming* produced in 2015 shows a town fighting for survival and a desire for a better future for the *tamariki* (Māori Television, 2015).

### **6.3.2 The values behind Kohutapu Lodge**

Nadine Toetoe has worked in tourism for over 20 years. Previously working for “very commercial, very polished, beautifully executed experiences,” her love for her culture and community led to the establishment of Kohutapu Lodge. In her own words

I love our culture. I love sharing that with the world and seeing people become a part of us and our land and our stories and understand who we are and where we are from. I have always really firmly believed that tourism is a really positive vehicle to educate and to instigate change in a positive way for more than just the visitor... We wanted to create a cultural tourism product and it was just real life, it was to share our history with our visitors but also our present... To be able to come back out here to my husband’s tribal land and create a cultural tourism experience based on the tikanga and beliefs of this particular tribe ...

One of the things that really sat true in us was when Maurice told us about how this tribe, so it’s a landlocked tribe, ... and at a certain time of year obviously some places were rich in resources – plenty of food sources, plenty of fresh water- and other places were really poor in resource so at a certain time of the year the Chief of the tribe would ask everybody to uproot and then rotate around so those that had it not so good would then have it good and vice versa. And the entire tribe learnt how to share everything and look after each other in order to survive and get along. So that was the basis of us establishing our business.

... Murupara as a township was once a thriving forestry town. Then once that became mechanised and unemployment soared through the roof, very quickly what followed on behind were a lot of those other negative really prickly social connotations- so we always had the vision to use tourism and to harness it in a way that we could positively give back to our community and start to instigate change and share with our, most importantly

with our *rangatahi*, about the beautiful big world that was out there, but most importantly how to be proud of who you are and where you're from.

For Maurice as well, he sees tourism as an opportunity for employment for Ngāti Manawa people and describes that

tourism is one of the avenues [Ngāti Manawa] pursues... to show people what we have in Ngāti Manawa. Our beautiful Rangataiki river, all these sorts of things of our ancestors, the oldest pohutakawa forest in the world, showcasing the oldest rock art in New Zealand, Ngāti Manawa culture: The eel people.

Maurice explained to me that eels have special significance to Ngāti Manawa, who act as their guardians, carefully managing stocks. In accordance with Ngāti Manawa *tikanga* for example, when eel fishing the first eel is always returned to the water and only one is taken for sharing.

### **6.3.3 Kohutapu Lodge and real-life tourism**

Nadine describes the Kohutapu Lodge approach as “real-life tourism.”

It [is] simply just being authentic and not a show, not a song, not a dance... this is not a mass tourism product, it's a very intimate tourism product. We live onsite, so we're here this is our home, our family lives here. We live and breathe this place and our experience every day.... allowing people to understand some of the stuff that we've gone through in the last couple of hundred years which has led us to where we are now. But most importantly the resurgence of our language, our culture, our history, and the importance of that going forward as a people as well.

Nadine also believes Kohutapu Lodge reflects what is now being called regenerative tourism. She identifies that the core values of regenerative tourism stem from Indigenous cultural belief structures, “it is our *tikanga* and culture as Māori that is the fundamental basis of regenerative tourism.” Nadine identifies that sustainable tourism was such a big thing for a number of years, and that was leaving a place in the same state you found it. Whereas, for them, they want to leave it in a better state for the next generation. Expanding on regenerative tourism Nadine described that everything has a *mauri* (lifeforce) and people, nature, and community are one. As she describes it:

You can't have one without the other. So, if the land and the waterways are not well, the people will not be well. But if our people are not well, how can we fix the land and the waterways. Everything goes together community, environments, everything

goes together, and people need to stop putting them in such square little boxes and separating them and understand that it is one. It is one space that we need to be traversing across fluidly.... Everything is a flow on and when one is out of kilter, then it's going to impact on the other areas.

On ‘upscaling’ Kohutapu Lodge’s approach, Nadine says Māori is not an exclusive culture, it is inclusive. Rather than wanting to protect what makes Kohutapu ‘different’, Nadine welcomes others to undertake their own journeys. Nadine’s view is that with more illumination of examples of regenerative tourism, the idea will grow. When talking about Kohutapu Lodge as an example of regenerative tourism Nadine says

I guess we also never went about popping up flags and blowing our own trumpets ... there is a saying in our culture that the kumara never boasts about how sweet it is. So we would just quietly always go under the radar... I've now got to a point where I can talk about it because there's a lot of interest in what we have been doing. But for years and years we just never spoke about it, we just did it, it was just natural. We did it, and again didn't expect anything back from it other than the best for our kids. We just wanted the best for them.

Due to the growing profile of Kohutapu Lodge and Nadine’s leadership on sustainability and regenerative tourism, Nadine was herself appointed to Air New Zealand’s sustainability panel, which she says gives an opportunity to give input from the “flax roots” up.

#### **6.3.4 The importance of community**

Kohutapu gives back to the community in many ways. Nadine describes how community engagement was present from the outset.

We didn't just pop up a sign and start a website and say we're gonna do this and change the world ... We actually went through process of engagement with our old people, with our tribe, with the marae, with the *runanga*, with the schools, with the teachers, with community groups, with everybody before we even started.

Kohutapu Lodge has a relationship with Stray Tours who resonated with Kohutapu’s philosophies and, until COVID-19 struck, brought busses of international tourists to experience Kohutapu Lodge’s offerings. One of the tourist-community interactions is the delivery of *hangi* food by the tourists to the local school. Nadine describes how this benefits both hosts and visitors

It's teaching them the process of *powhiri*, of welcome, and standing up and being proud of who you are and where you're from. So [the *tamariki*] will welcome our visitors into the school by way of *haka powhiri* and there is *korero* and *waiata*. And then our visitors will explain to them who they are, where they're from, which part of the world, what career aspirations they have or what pathways they're following. They'll teach them different languages, talk about different types of food, animals or geography, all sorts of things beautiful things.

Then there's a really robust, cultural and educational exchange that happens that has a reciprocal benefit both for the visitors, and for our *tamariki*. Our *tamariki* walk away understanding that they are a part of a bigger picture and there's a beautiful big world out there that is just as accessible to them as anybody else in the world, but if you're going to go out there, you must know who you are, where you're from, and be able to walk proudly. And then for our visitors it's not necessarily a monetary exchange but it's something that happens on the inside of them. In terms of giving back and leaving a positive footprint behind them in a community and making change. And it's a feeling, it's not a, like I said it's not a monetary exchange, it's an exchange of energy, of compassion, of empathy, of giving and not expecting anything else back in return for it.

....

The kids just became, from the first time we went in with international visitors, compared to a week later that change was really quick... just a multitude of really positive confidence, the confidence in our kids to look someone in the eye. It sounds silly but ... to be able to have a conversation with somebody that looks really different to you, that's from the other side of the world is a massive thing for our kids. ... it was just such a beautiful, beautiful balance of engagement from all sides.

....

We would often have conversations with our visitors about hey, it doesn't necessarily have to be the biggest bungee jump or the fastest jet boat or the shiny marble plated hotel room that you're staying in. It's a feeling, again that's a feeling, it can be a five-star experience on the inside.

Kohutapu Lodge also gives back financially to the community. Nadine explained

The last winter before COVID struck we purchased 36 winter uniforms for our kids who were going to school without warm uniforms or not going to school because they didn't have the winter uniform. Every year we send a classroom of kids on a trip around New Zealand all expenses paid. We reinvested over

\$30,000 back into the marae. Sent a couple of kids away to Taratahi Farm on scholarships and overseas to America on six-week internships as well.

Nadine described to me how important the community engagement and support is. And the support is not just one way. When asked about the community response during the COVID pause on travel, Nadine said “we came out here to use tourism to help our community, and when we were on our knees it was our community who turned around and helped us.”

Kohutapu Lodge has “a vision to change a town through tourism.” But Nadine does not believe this should be an isolated vision. She says

if we really are going to make fundamental change then I think there are a couple of structures that need to be flipped upside down and inverted... we’ve always said that the visitor is the most important person. And I really believe that it is us on the ground that are the most important people, it’s us as families, as the tourism operators, as the ones that are out there in our communities, that really hold the true value... and if there was a lot more value proposition, how much more could we invest into our people, into our place, into our communities and environment.

This belief of the importance of people, place and community has transferred into Kohutapu Lodge’s COVID-19 ‘pivot’.

#### **6.4 Manawa Ora Rangatahi**

Applying the same core values of passion for the community and love of their culture that they hold in tourism, Kohutapu Lodge chose to use the COVID-19 pause in tourists to ‘pivot’ and use their people and infrastructure resources to run Manawa Ora. Manawa Ora is a 12-week course for *rangatahi* (youth) aged 16 – 24 who are not involved in education or employment (Manawa Ora, 2021). It was apparent from the site visit and interviews that the trust and connection between the *rangatahi* and the team from Kohutapu Lodge enabled personal and inter-personal growth. For Maurice Toetoe, it comes down to the importance of knowing who you are and where you come from, giving the confidence to go out into the world and be who you can be.

Knowing who you are and where you come from came through as important in the interviews with youths J and H. J said the course “puts the idea in your head that if you want to do something... it’s out there.” She described how before the course, she was

“just laying down not doing anything.” Largely estranged from her immediate family and living in a house bus, she left school during year 10 in Australia and moved to New Zealand. She had not been in further education or employment since. She spoke with appreciation and flickers of hope in her eyes of the personal goals and career plan that Nadine works on with each youth individually. H told a similar story. Living rurally and not engaged in education or employment, she was “basically just staying home.” Learning about other opportunities and reconnecting with the *whenua* had given her a new vision of her future. Both youths spoke animatedly of the *maara kai*.

The *maara kai* is a community vegetable garden being created by the *rangatahi* in Manawa Ora. Guide Himi spoke of the noticeable change in the *rangatahi* with the introduction of the *mauri* stone to the *maara kai*. He explained that *mauri* means life force and the *mauri* stone brings protection to the crops, the people working in the garden, and the surrounding lands. Prior to being buried in the centre of the garden, the *rangatahi* and leaders all had an opportunity to hold the stone and impart good energy. Himi also spoke of how planting would be done according to the Māori calendar of the local *whānau* and *rohe*. Guide Willie described how *mauri* is in all living things and connects us. He described the connection to the land as really important when learning who you are and where you come from as a lot of genealogy comes from the land. He had found that many of the youth had not connected with the land with their own families and were finding it to be therapeutic just to be out digging and knowing the end result is to provide food.

**Figure 8.** *The centre of the maara kai in which the mauri stone is buried. Hutchison, 2021*



**Figure 9.** *Preparing the worm farm for the maara kai.* Hutchison, 2021.



## **6.5 Conclusion**

The data in this chapter provides the foundation for the discussion of research question 1: What is regenerative tourism and how does it manifest in the way tourism is being carried out at Kohutapu Lodge, and specifically objective 1B: To explore Kohutapu Lodge's relationship with regenerative tourism. The interview with Kristin Dunne raised the importance of inside-out change and ascertaining what the community values. This was also reflected in the interviews at the case study that identified the need to know who you are and where you come from, reflecting the importance of context in well-being. The significance of the Indigenous worldview that recognises the *mauri* of, and interconnectedness between, all living things was also apparent through the interviews. Further, an appreciation of diverse economies was apparent in the focus of Kohutapu Lodge that is not on economic growth, but on increasing the capacity and well-being of the community and providing a 5-star experience on the inside to tourists.

## Chapter 7: Findings Tiaki Promise

### 7.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the data collected on the Tiaki Promise, primarily through fieldwork at the case study and zoom interviews with Dani McDonald and Kristen Dunne. It starts with a summary of the interview with Dani McDonald of New Zealand Māori Tourism (NZMT), with a focus on the background and purpose of the Tiaki Promise and her views on its potential use as it continues to develop. The chapter then summarise the interview with Kristen Dunne on how she perceived the purpose of the Tiaki Promise in TBOP. It concludes with comments from Nadine Toetoe on the place of the Tiaki Promise in Indigenous tourism and in the mindsets of New Zealanders.

The Tiaki Promise calls for travellers to promise to:

1. Care for land, sea, and nature, treading lightly and leaving no trace
2. Travel safely, showing care and consideration for all
3. Respect culture, travelling with an open heart and mind

Clips of the Tiaki Promise highlighting New Zealand’s environment features on Air New Zealand’s inflight video system and are available on the internet. Posters of the Tiaki Promise can be downloaded by tourism providers. The posters reiterate the three key aspects of the Promise and provide further detail including a heading ‘How to care for New Zealand’ followed by diagrams annotated: protect nature, keep NZ clean, drive carefully, be prepared, show respect.

**Figure 10.** *Tiaki Promise diagrams.* Tiaki New Zealand, 2021.



## 7.2 The Tiaki Promise- New Zealand Māori Tourism (NZMT)

Dani McDonald from NZMT is on the Tiaki Promise Governance Board. She describes that the collaboration on the Tiaki Promise was initially driven by Air New Zealand and arose from a recognition amongst the founding groups that New Zealand was a special place, but there was a lack of respect from visitors. Dani says “there was a need for it as something to aspire to. That wasn’t ... considered when tourism took off in 2013.” The Tiaki Promise is aspirational and aims to create behaviour change that reflects New Zealanders’ love of the outdoors. She describes the Tiaki Promise as a promise to care for our people, place, and culture. Rather than launching a fancy marketing campaign, the intention was that the industry would pick up the idea, and there would be ongoing progress towards behaviour change.

Dani further advised that while the Tiaki Promise was initially directed towards incoming visitors, there has been increasing recognition that New Zealanders travel too and should also uphold the Tiaki values. Despite the name Tiaki Promise coming from Māori, the governance group has only recently appointed a Māori advisor to strengthen the depth and authenticity of the Tiaki Promise. This reflects the ongoing development of the concept. Dani explained

the initial thought was to create the Tiaki Promise as a promise for visitors coming to New Zealand, and it was very outward looking. It’s since changed... we’ve tried to sort of redirect its direction I guess to New Zealanders traveling, international visitors coming in. And also, just travellers generally anywhere like New Zealanders going overseas. Like, how do we uphold our own values ... So it’s wanting to highlight the values that we have and kind of say, look, this is valuable to us so when you come here can you promise that you that you uphold and respect those values we have.

The idea extends not just to how to behave as a traveller but also how we as hosts care for our *manuhiri*. Dani advised that NZMT are taking this thinking even further within their limitations as an organisation. They recognise that there may be structural issues that hold people back from enacting Tiaki values, so they try and identify ways to make it achievable. For example, looking into their community and leveraging what is already happening in the community, looking at ways to support change rather than order it.

Dani’s view is that by and large Māori tourism operators already hold Tiaki values and express them in their everyday lives whether through tourism or not. She says “they

might not call it the Tiaki Promise, but it is just something they do.” In the same way Dani says, “I always see regenerative tourism as Māori Tourism”. Her examples to me particularly highlight diverse and regenerative economies- giving back to the community and caring for the environment. For example, Māori tourism business Whale Watch Kaikoura exist to protect the whales; they are literally the kaitiaki of the whales. Karaka Café in Wellington brings in students to train them, not just how to wash dishes but how to work up to management, this is a reinvestment into the community. She explained that thus while you will not necessarily find the Tiaki Promise or Regenerative plastered over a Māori tourism business, they apply the principles of *kaitiakitanga* and *manaakitanga* daily.

### **7.3 The Tiaki Promise- Tourism Bay of Plenty (TBOP)**

Having recognised the importance of the ‘inside-out’ of regenerative tourism, Kristin Dunne is somewhat less optimistic about the potential of the Tiaki Promise. She recalls the Tiaki Promise starting out as a promotional goal, with beautiful images and language, but launched as a marketing strategy. While recognising that it is positive for there to have been collaboration between organisations to create the Tiaki Promise, there were no workshops, and it was more of a “here are your posters” project. However, Kristin recognises that you cannot ask visitors to do what you are not doing, and she believes that the flaw in the Tiaki Promise was that it did just that.

Kristin believes that the best chance to go forward with the Tiaki Promise and genuine changes to tourism in New Zealand was the Tourism Taskforce which she was an advisor to. According to Kristin, the government received the taskforce’s interim report but then took it no further and disbanded the taskforce. While the Minister of Tourism has spoken of regenerative tourism and there being a plan, it appears not even leaders in destination management know what it is, and Kristen asserts that there is no lead industry role nor local uptake of the Tiaki Promise.

### **7.4 The Tiaki Promise- Kohutapu Lodge**

Nadine Toetoe has positive hopes for the Tiaki Promise. For Kohutapu Lodge, Nadine expressed that it is what they believe inwardly and express outwardly anyway. She says

I think the Tiaki Promise is fundamentally really important for our industry but again as long as it's not ticking boxes and it's actually truly really happening, and the industry is buying into it

and believing it at a deeper level than getting a sticker to pop on the wall.... It just can't be superficial. To us personally ... we were doing it anyway. It's what we built our business on, it's who we are.

Further, Nadine says it is not just the industry that needs to adopt the values

I feel that there's definite value for the nation to get behind one promise. Nationwide, in unison. And to live and breathe in it every single step of the way from the top of the North Island to the bottom of the South, and if people are exposed to it multiple times. It's like a mantra, say it over and over again, do it over and over again, suddenly you start believing that and doing it.

We discussed the potential discord between the overall aspirational nature of protection the promise calls for and the ways that this is indicated can be achieved such as 'drive safely'. She puts this down to the limits of getting a message across in print. I did not observe any Tiaki posters or promotional material during the site visit. Overall, Nadine believes that the current Tiaki Promise is a starting point that is moving in a positive direction and needs to keep doing so.

## **7.5 Conclusion**

The data in this chapter provides the foundation for the discussion of research question 2: What is the role of the Tiaki Promise in a regenerative tourism system? And specifically objective 2A: To explore the potential of the Tiaki Promise to support paradigm shift toward regenerative tourism. The data provided inconsistent views on the purpose of the Tiaki Promise but all research participants saw the potential value in the Tiaki Promise as a mindset for New Zealanders which could be communicated to tourists. These views confirm the significance of the 'inside-out' mentality of the Tiaki Promise and of regenerative tourism. Neither are a tick box activity but a reflection of genuinely valuing people and place.

## **Chapter 8: Discussion**

### **8.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses how the data collected contributes to answering the research questions. It begins with a summary of regenerative tourism and its elements as identified in the literature review and fieldwork. It then moves on to consider each of those elements in light of the data collected, illustrating how regenerative tourism manifests at Kohutapu Lodge. The chapter then continues with a discussion of research question 2 looking at the potential role of the Tiaki Promise in a regenerative tourism system and in particular its potential role in paradigm change.

### **8.2 Research Question 1.**

**Research Question 1.** What is regenerative tourism and how does it manifest in the way tourism is being carried out at Kohutapu Lodge.

**Objective 1A.** To critically explore and describe the elements of regenerative tourism

Tourism involves the interaction of social and natural systems that constantly adapt and evolve with each other (Gunderson, 2003). They are complex adaptive systems made up of many interacting parts that have non-linear interactions (Baggio & Sainaghi, 2011). Regenerative tourism then recognises the importance of the relationship between system parts to support flourishing living systems. These living systems include natural, social, and cultural elements. This recognition of the interconnectedness between people and nature and a broad understanding of well-being stem from Indigenous worldviews that see people and the environment as part of the same family. The research participants described regenerative tourism as “leaving a place better than you found it” and “an elevation of Indigenous worldviews” (Kristin Dunne, 2021). As well as “leaving [a place] in a better state for the next generation” and the proposition that “core values of regenerative tourism stem firmly from [Indigenous] cultural belief structure.” (Nadine Toetoe, 2021).

To support this living system flourishing, a paradigm change is required to one that values system health over growth, appreciating diverse capitals and regenerative economies that develop capacity by putting resources back into the system. These are also consistent with a view of regenerative tourism being context-specific in terms of

how it is carried out. The diverse and regenerative economies will differ from place to place depending on what is valued- be it *mana*, being *kaitiaki* of whales, or community goals. What draws the diverse economies together in regenerative tourism is that they support system health and return resources to the system. This is a change from sustainable development which has operated in, and arguably advanced, a neoliberal growth paradigm.

In order to intervene and change a system there are a number of leverage points at which intervention is possible. Meadows (1999) posits that the paradigm level is a powerful place to intervene for sustaining change. This is because other leverage points such as system goals and rules are all predicated on our paradigm. Therefore, people will need to turn away from the dominant neoliberal paradigm to accept and meaningfully engage with regenerative tourism. One step in doing this is to redefine a tourist system so that the community and environment are central features rather than the tourist.

In summary, this literature review and field research identify the following elements of regenerative tourism:

1. Regenerative tourism aims to proactively contribute to flourishing living systems
2. Regenerative tourism starts at the community level and is contextually grounded in its manifestations
3. Regenerative tourism recognises the numerous complex systems that interact across scales and time.
4. Regenerative tourism reflects Indigenous worldviews that recognise the interconnectedness of all living things
5. Regenerative tourism is supported by diverse and regenerative economies that return resources to the system

**Objective 1B.** To explore Kohutapu Lodge's relationship with regenerative tourism.

Kohutapu Lodge is run by the Toetoe family in Ngāti Manawa Tribal lands. Kohutapu Lodge undertakes what it calls 'real-life tourism', and the Indigenous worldviews which

they hold true and express through tourism reflect the principles of regenerative tourism. Applying the principles of regenerative tourism that I identified in the literature to Kohutapu Lodge elicits the following analysis:

***Regenerative tourism aims to proactively contribute to flourishing living systems***

The Toetoes set up Kohutapu Lodge with the vision to ‘change a town through tourism’ and the way that they are carrying out their operation is contributing to living system flourishing- feeling good and functioning well- in a number of ways. The reciprocal engagement and support between Kohutapu Lodge and the community exhibit factors of conviviality of social & cultural life, inclusiveness in public life, distributive justice, and planetary and environmental flourishing. Prior to commencing their operation and on an ongoing basis, Kohutapu Lodge recognised the *mana* of the people of the town. Right from the start Kohutapu Lodge planned to support the town and community, not to position itself as better or to exploit local resources.

In their engagement with the schools, Kohutapu Lodge is supporting social and cultural life, inclusiveness in public life, and distributive justice. The people of Murupara are not hidden away from tourists to present a perfect image. Instead, tourists are invited to engage with the school children. The children learn more about who they are and where they come from; they hold pride in themselves and their culture. The experience opens their eyes to the hope and opportunity for the future, and to value who they are and celebrate their cultural identity.

The financial and material support provided to schools by Kohutapu Lodge helps provide both basics and further opportunities to students. In this way, the capital resources received through tourism are shared back with the community. There are meals provided regularly and shoes and winter uniforms so that everyone can attend school and learn. In addition, school trips are sponsored, further opening students’ eyes to the wider community in which they live, and for some scholarships for further education, making possible what may have otherwise seemed impossible. Financial support is also provided to the local marae, which both directly and indirectly supports culture and community.

Kohutapu Lodge’s contribution to flourishing is not limited to tourism. With an absence of tourists due to COVID-19, Kohutapu redirected its people and infrastructure resources to running Manawa Ora Rangatahi. Despite the impact of COVID-19 possibly

sending the Kohutapu tourism adaptive cycle into a release phase, due to their resilience developed through diverse and regenerative economies they have been able to retain their core values of Indigenous worldviews and community support and pivot to a reorganisation phase that includes providing youth training.

***Regenerative tourism starts at the community level and is contextually grounded in its manifestations***

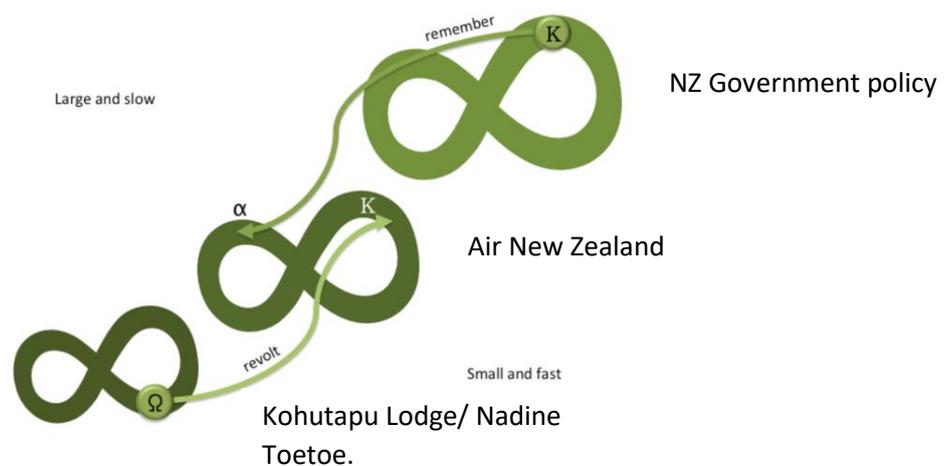
Kohutapu Lodge is located in Ngāti Manawa lands, and they apply Ngāti Manawa *tikanga* to their tourism operation. For Kohutapu Lodge, being contextually grounded in this territory means they understand both the obligation to support the community and the value of sharing history, stories, and culture with tourists. The Toetoes *whakapapa* back to this land and the connection with the *whenua* is unbreakable. The contextual grounding is important and related to knowing where you come from (Nadine Toetoe) and place DNA (Kristin Dunne). For Tourism Bay of Plenty (TBOP) the first thing they did when looking at a regenerative tourism framework was to research place DNA - what is it that was special to people about the Coastal Bay of Plenty. From there, they could continue discussions about what type of tourism was desired and connect passions. In a community-first approach, every place is different, and every place has something different to offer.

***Regenerative tourism recognises the numerous complex systems that interact across scales and time***

Because of the interactions between systems and adaptive cycles, changes at one scale and system can impact systems on other scales and at other time periods. Nadine Toetoe relayed to me the proverb ‘*Kāore te kumara e kōrero mō tōna ake reka*’ [the kumara does not sing of its sweetness]. Kohutapu Lodge had been quietly undertaking their tourism business for a number of years, not boasting of their successes but step by step engaging with and making positive contributions to their community and guests. However, they recognise now is the time to start speaking out and slowly changes can be made, starting from the ground up. For example, Nadine Toetoe has been appointed to Air New Zealand’s sustainability panel, taking her ‘flax-roots’ knowledge to an influential national organisation. Similarly, Kristin Dunne advised on the NZ Tourism Taskforce, taking her TBOP regenerative tourism destination knowledge to a national scale.

The Figure 11 example of panarchy in the Kohutapu Lodge context has Kohutapu Lodge as a small and fast adaptive cycle, able to innovate and change quickly. Despite being a smaller scale, Kohutapu Lodge can effect change on the next scale up, in this example Air New Zealand. Nadine is directly impacting Air New Zealand’s adaptive cycle through input into their sustainability program. The largest adaptive cycle in this example is NZ government policy used to illustrate an adaptive cycle that is slower still to adapt.

**Figure 11.** *Kohutapu Lodge panarchy.* Hutchison, 2021. Based on Gunderson & Holling, 2002



An example how a larger cycle is slower to adapt could be described in a panarchy including TBOP (as the smaller adaptive cycle) and the Councils in TBOP’s area (as the larger adaptive cycle). Despite TBOP’s recognition of regenerative tourism and the different capitals to be valued, the Councils’ measure of success is still predicated on the initial conditions of economic growth,

***Regenerative tourism reflects Indigenous worldviews that recognise the interconnectedness of all living things***

The Toetoes live and breathe their Māori worldviews. As described by Nadine Toetoe for them this is real life tourism, and they just present their authentic selves and share their genuine love of their culture with others. Māori worldviews include the principle of people as being one with all nature and all living things being connected. There is a respect for all things being in balance and for the connection with the *whenua* and the *whakapapa* back to ancestors connected with the land. Examples of this at Kohutapu

Lodge can be found in the *maara kai* where planting will be done according to the Māori planting calendar of the *hapu*, and where the *mauri* stone was placed at the centre. *Whakapapa, whenua, te ao Māori* are all maintained in the stories shared with visitors.

The principles of *kaitiakitanga* and *manaakitanga* are two Māori principles that resonate with regenerative tourism principles of interconnectedness. The importance of balance between and interconnectedness of people, nature, and community was relayed to me by Nadine as

If the land and the waterways are not well, the people will not be well. But if our people are not well, how can we fix the land and the waterways. Everything goes together community, environments, everything goes together.... Everything is a flow on, and when one is out of kilter, then it's going to impact on the other areas.

Respect and care for the environment is maintained at Kohutapu Lodge. For example, in accordance with Ngāti Manawa *tikanga* when eel fishing the first eel is always returned to the water and only one is taken for sharing. This *tikanga* reflects an appreciation of feedback loops. Every living thing is also its own complex system that interacts with other systems. For example, we could consider the eels in the Rangitaiki river as an adaptive cycle in a system with Kohutapu Lodge as the next biggest adaptive cycle. The availability or scarcity of eels in the river acts as a feedback to Kohutapu Lodge who can then modify their behaviour accordingly. While Kohutapu Lodge can adapt quickly in their eeling practices, the eel population as a smaller faster scale responds even quicker to imbalances. By being responsive to this feedback, Kohutapu Lodge maintains the balance and harmony between the people and the eels and is an example of the conscious role humans make in system resilience and well-being.

***Regenerative tourism is supported by diverse economies that return resources to the system***

An extractive economy depletes resources, but a regenerative economy puts resources back into the system. Kohutapu Lodge gives back financial support, cultural support, and supports *mana* in the community. In return they receive an intangible benefit, one that has no price but is the knowledge of sharing and valuing your culture and supporting your community. This extends to their work with Manawa Ora -putting back into the system and increasing capacity for the youth to go forward. For tourists, they

receive more than a bed and a *hangi*, they receive an authentic experience that strikes at the heart and transcends what money can buy. The functioning of regenerative economies is apparent in that it is not one way as well. As an emotional Nadine Toetoe told me that “we set up the business to support the community. But when we were down on our knees, it was the community who supported us.”

The neoliberal paradigm measures success by economic growth and this has overshadowed attempts to implement sustainable development. Both Nadine Toetoe and Kristin Dunne spoke to me of the importance of turning tourism on its head so that community is valued. Rather than chasing the tourist dollar at any cost, what is more valuable to them is putting forward the kind of tourism that is best for people and place. This valuing of community will be evident through degrowth, diverse and regenerative economies, and flourishing living systems.

### **8.3 Research question 2**

**Research Question 2.** What is the role of the Tiaki Promise in a regenerative tourism system?

**Objective 2A.** To explore the potential of the Tiaki Promise to support paradigm shift toward regenerative tourism.

Meadows identifies a number of leverage points in which to intervene in a system (Meadows, 1999). Applying these to the place of the Tiaki Promise in a tourism system it is apparent that there are two leverage points at which the Tiaki Promise could be a lever. The first is at the rules level, the second is at the paradigm level. At the rules level we see the specific directives that derive from the Tiaki promise- protect nature, keep NZ clean, drive carefully, be prepared, and show respect. According to Meadows, rules are ranked just at five of twelve points to intervene in a system (with one being the most powerful) suggesting some but not authoritative power to alter systems. However, notably, Chen (2021) found that specific behaviours were more susceptible to influence suggesting that rules directed at specific behaviours may be effective.

The most powerful point in a system is transcending paradigms, the understanding that reality is subjective. However, the second most powerful point is the changing of paradigms. Currently, the dominant paradigm both in tourism and generally in economic development is neoliberalism, favouring economic growth as a measure of

success. The Tiaki Promise calls for travellers to care for land, sea, and nature, treading lightly and leaving no trace; travel safely, showing care and consideration for all; respect culture, travelling with an open heart and mind. The Tiaki Promise thus calls for a paradigm that values people and place, such as a regenerative paradigm. The Tiaki Promise in its initial form calls on travellers rather than hosts to undertake the promise. However, the legitimate question that arises is, if the hosts do not show a belief and respect in these values, then is it reasonable to expect a tourist to support them.

The primary research undertaken did not provide a clear answer as to how the Tiaki Promise was intended to make changes. Dani McDonald described that what was sought was a behavioural change, but the exact method this was intended to occur by is unclear. Kristin Dunne's experience of the Tiaki Promise was as a marketing tool which does not directly correlate with any leverage point. For Nadine Toetoe, the Tiaki Promise is an expression of internal values and must be authentic. Dani and Kristin echoed this idea and, in particular, supported this for the future of the Tiaki Promise. These internal values reflect the inner paradigm and thus this idea lends support to the argument that the Tiaki Promise may be effective at the paradigms leverage point.

Chen (2021) found that signing a tourist pledge did not alter a tourists' intentions (and the Tiaki Promise does not even require signing). However, the self-transcendent values of travellers who were already inclined that way were strengthened by signing the pledge. This suggests that marketing to the right type of tourist i.e., those with self-transcendent values, and then reinforcing this with a pledge might be effective. In Chen's study, Canadian residents were asked about their hypothetical intentions when presented with a tourism pledge (Chen, 2021). This is not necessarily the same as how a tourist would react if asked to sign it in the geographical and temporal proximity of the people and place who believe the pledge. An area for further research could be whether the time proximity of pledges makes a difference.

The interviews with Dani McDonald, Nadine Toetoe, and Kristin Dunne indicate that for the Tiaki Promise to have real potential in changing paradigms, it first needs to be a paradigm that is believed inwardly and expressed outwardly by hosts and all New Zealanders. We cannot expect tourists to adopt a paradigm simply by being told to, but we may be able to influence paradigms by living and breathing them, effectively creating a common cause that can trigger paradigm shift. This is all relevant to the way

we invite tourists to our country - matching passions, and fundamentally how we express our collective beliefs. At the moment the Tiaki Promise is seen as a mix of a marketing tool and something that has unrealised potential.

#### **8.4 Conclusion**

This chapter analysed the research questions in the light of data collected. It identified five core elements of regenerative tourism and found that they all manifested at Kohutapu Lodge in a way that was contextually relevant. It confirmed the relevance of panarchy illustrating how change is able to be made upwards from the smaller, faster Kohutapu Lodge adaptive cycle to the larger, slower Air New Zealand adaptive cycle and beyond. The ability for change to be made in this way means that regenerative tourism can start at the community level and still make changes on a larger scale. Related to this the Tiaki Promise was discussed and found to have potential as a tool for paradigm change, the most effective way to change a system. These findings indicate that the advancement of a regenerative tourism system in New Zealand and beyond is possible and realistic.

## **Chapter 9: Conclusion**

### **9.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides a final summary and conclusion of this research that considered the advancement of a regenerative tourism system in New Zealand. It captures the key elements of regenerative tourism and proposes a definition of regenerative tourism. It then summarises how the elements come together and are manifested at Kohutapu Lodge to achieve whole system health and flourishing. The chapter then considers the research into the Tiaki Promise which indicates its potential to change a system through rules or more fundamentally through a paradigm change that may require adoption by all New Zealanders. It finishes with an indication of future possible research in these areas.

### **9.2 Regenerative tourism**

This research has identified core elements of regenerative tourism of:

1. Regenerative tourism aims to proactively contribute to flourishing living systems
2. Regenerative tourism starts at the community level and is contextually grounded in its manifestations
3. Regenerative tourism recognises the numerous complex systems that interact across scales and time.
4. Regenerative tourism reflects Indigenous worldviews that recognise the interconnectedness of all living things
5. Regenerative tourism is supported by diverse and regenerative economies that return resources to the system

Based on these elements and the data collected at Kohutapu Lodge, I define regenerative tourism as

Contextually grounded in its manifestation, regenerative tourism is a systems approach that reflects an Indigenous worldview of the interconnectedness of all living things and uses diverse and regenerative economies to support whole system health and flourishing.

Regenerative tourism aims for flourishing living systems – living systems that are feeling good and functioning effectively. While ecological systems are self-regulating, socio-ecological systems involve humans that make conscious decisions, and therefore we have a role in supporting system flourishing. Thus, regenerative tourism requires a change in paradigm away from tourism being seen as a linear function centred on extracting maximum economic growth from tourists to a recognition that tourism takes place in communities and natural environments. At Kohutapu Lodge this thinking is evident in their mission to “change a town through tourism” and to use tourism as “a really positive vehicle to educate and to instigate change in a positive way” (Nadine Toetoe, 2021). The recognition of the interconnectedness between all living things is reflective of Indigenous worldviews, valuing nature as part of the family. At Kohutapu Lodge they recognise and value the *mauri*, the life force in all living things, seeing as inseparable the relationship between the environment, people, and the community.

Flourishing does not take place in isolation and therefore regenerative tourism design must start at the community level and be contextually grounded. However, this does not limit change to community level. Panarchy describes how in complex systems, adaptive cycles interact with other adaptive cycles at different scales and times and therefore can create change at these different scales. This change can be bottom-up and top-down. Thus, the regenerative tourism approach being undertaken at the smaller, faster scale of Kohutapu Lodge can affect the bigger, Air New Zealand or Tourism Bay of Plenty scale, and then on to the national scale, and so forth. Examples of this are how Nadine Toetoe has been appointed to the Air New Zealand sustainability panel, thus affecting that adaptive cycle directly. Similarly, the illuminating of regenerative tourism examples like Kohutapu Lodge as suggested by Nadine, Dani McDonald, and Kristin Dunne will affect other tourism adaptive cycles and influence change.

A turn away from the current predominant focus on growth will allow space to recognise and seek diverse and regenerative economies. An example of this at Kohutapu Lodge is how it prioritises community support in its operations over economic growth and tourist throughput. They do this in a number of ways including supporting schools and helping develop self-esteem and cultural values in the young people. This puts resources back into the system building capacity. Similarly, for the tourists, they receive an experience that has values that transcend an economic exchange. This type of diverse and regenerative economies approach supports system health resilience. This is apparent

at Kohutapu Lodge both through the support they received from the community during the COVID-19 border closure and how they have been able to retain their core identity of community support and love of their culture to pivot and run Manawa Ora Rangatahi.

### **9.3 The Tiaki Promise**

The Tiaki Promise can be part of a regenerative tourism system through the leverage points of rules or paradigm change. The Tiaki Promise sets out expected behaviours of tourists but also appeals to more fundamental beliefs by asking visitors to promise to care for land sea and culture, show care and compassion, and respect culture. Meadows (1999) work on leverage points suggests that the most powerful intervention point to alter our current neoliberal tourism system is at the paradigm level. All participants interviewed on the Tiaki Promise expressed the importance of the Tiaki Promise being something that applied to all New Zealanders- not just international visitors. The proposition of making the Tiaki Promise something that is lived and breathed by all New Zealanders is consistent with using common cause to facilitate paradigm shift. Thus, for the Tiaki Promise to support paradigm change it may need to be something that permeates life in New Zealand and becomes a genuine part of our culture.

### **9.4 Further research**

Further research is warranted on both regenerative tourism and the Tiaki Promise. Regenerative tourism can make changes from the bottom up with smaller, faster, adaptive cycles making changes to slower, larger systems and this is what we see happening with the likes of Kohutapu Lodge. However, changes can also be made from the top-down. As a relatively new approach, at least in non-Indigenous societies, the optimal governance conditions at these larger, slower adaptive cycles to support regenerative tourism should be explored.

The effectiveness of destination pledges such as the Tiaki Promise to support regenerative tourism deserve significant further attention. This research highlights in particular the need to explore the importance of perceived consistency between pledges/ promises and host values in creating paradigm change. Expanding on Chen's 2021 study, the impact on tourists of geographical and temporal proximity to the people and place that exhibit the values of pledges when asked to sign or promise should also be explored.

## 9.5

### Conclusion

This research shows how regenerative tourism can be further advanced in New Zealand. The elements of regenerative tourism identified illustrate the importance of context and community, but the inclusion of a complex adaptive systems analysis shows how what is happening at the community level can effect change at a larger scale. Of importance for regenerative tourism is the need to move beyond the neoliberal paradigm that infiltrated and overshadowed efforts to implement sustainable development. The paradigm shift required is to one that recognises the interconnectedness of all living systems and values diverse and regenerative economies in building system capacity, resilience and ultimate system health and flourishing. The Tiaki Promise has the potential to be involved in creating that paradigm change through common cause, but further research is required on this, and in particular the importance of the host community paradigm values in creating paradigm change.

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Appendix A  
The Tiaki Promise

TIAKINEWZEALAND.COM  
#TIAKIPROMISE

**tiaki**  
CARE FOR NEW ZEALAND

**TIAKI PROMISE**

WHILE TRAVELLING IN NEW ZEALAND I WILL

CARE FOR LAND, SEA AND NATURE,  
TREADING LIGHTLY AND LEAVING NO TRACE

TRAVEL SAFELY, SHOWING CARE  
AND CONSIDERATION FOR ALL

RESPECT CULTURE, TRAVELLING  
WITH AN OPEN HEART AND MIND

HOW TO CARE FOR NEW ZEALAND

- PROTECT NATURE
- KEEP NZ CLEAN
- DRIVE CAREFULLY
- BE PREPARED
- SHOW RESPECT

## **Appendix B**

### **Information Sheet**



**MASSEY UNIVERSITY**  
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES  
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
TE KURA PŪKENGĀ TANGATA

#### **The place of the Tiaki Promise tourist pledge in a regenerative tourism system**

#### **INFORMATION SHEET**

##### **Introduction**

This research asks the following questions:

1. What is regenerative tourism and how is it apparent in the way tourism is being carried out in the Bay of Plenty, Aotearoa?
2. How does the Tiaki Promise support regenerative tourism?

The research is being conducted by Bronwyn Hutchison who is a Masters in International Development student under the supervision of Dr Apisalome Movono, both of Massey University.

##### **Project Description**

This project seeks to explore the potential of regenerative tourism to support social and ecological well-being in Aotearoa. The Tiaki Promise is being considered for its potential relevance to how changes can be made in tourism systems to transform their purpose and support a broad understanding of well-being. This research focuses on Aotearoa, and specifically the area covered by Tourism Bay of Plenty and Kohutapu Lodge.

##### **Invitation**

We are inviting you to participate as we would value drawing on your experience and insights into how regenerative tourism is, or could be, applied in Aotearoa, and how the Tiaki Promise may support this.

You have been asked to participate in a key informant interview

## Data Management

The information you provide will be kept confidential and stored safely. All data, including interview recordings and notes, will be stored in the researcher's password-protected OneDrive.

## Participant's Rights

We would be delighted if you agreed to participate, but please be assured that you are under no obligation to do so. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- *decline to answer any particular question;*
- *withdraw from the study at any time;*
- *ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;*
- *provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;*
- *be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.*
- *ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview.*

## Project Contacts

If you have any questions about this research please contact the following:

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## Committee Approval Statement

*This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. The Ethics Notification Number is: 4000024340. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named in this document are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you want to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor Craig Johnson, Director (Research Ethics), email [humanethics@massey.ac.nz](mailto:humanethics@massey.ac.nz)*

**Appendix C**  
**Participant Consent Form**



**MASSEY UNIVERSITY**  
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES  
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
TE KURA PŪKENGĀ TANGATA

The place of the Tiaki Promise tourist pledge in a regenerative tourism system

**PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM - INDIVIDUAL**

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree/do not agree to the interview being recorded.

I would/ would not like a copy of any transcripts from my own interviews.

I would like to be referred to in this study in the following way (fill in your preference):

- My name and title e.g. ....
- (e.g. Michael Maiava, Rainforest Lodge owner, Fiji)
  
- My title or a descriptor e.g. ....
- (e.g. Lodge owner, Fiji)

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

I agree to the data collected being used for the completion of this Masters research and any related articles, blogs, conference presentations.

I would/would not like a summary report of the findings sent to me on completion of this research.

**Signature:**

.....

**Full Name - printed**

.....

**Email address:**

.....

**Mobile number:**

.....