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**Māori Involvement in Natural Resource Management
in Aotearoa New Zealand; Do Statutory Processes
Create Benefits**

**A thesis for the partial fulfilment of the requirements
for
Master of Philosophy in Science
Māori Resource & Environmental Management**

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ABSTRACT

Māori have been under represented in natural resource management in Aotearoa New Zealand since the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi 1840 (Te Tiriti o Waitangi), and the establishment of the British Government in New Zealand in the 1850's. The establishment of the Waitangi Tribunal in 1975 as an independent commission of inquiry has provided a valuable role and assisted Māori in achieving recourse to land heritage entitlement and natural resource management through making recommendations to proprietary rights. The Declaration of Independence and the Treaty of Waitangi are currently before the Waitangi Tribunal to determine their validity in New Zealand municipal law. Notwithstanding, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples supports Māori human rights but is yet to be incorporated into domestic law in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The reform of natural resource management in Aotearoa New Zealand in the 1990's and in particular the Resource Management Act 1991, has partially paved a way forward in developing policy for Māori participation in the statutory application of natural resource management. However, the exemption of Māori proprietary rights to minerals, the conservation estate, marine and coastal area (foreshore and seabed) and compensation thereof remains a contentious debate for Māori. For this reason, Māori proprietary rights and statutory representation to land heritage entitlement and resource management continues to remain at the forefront of Māori contemporary grievances in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Treaty of Waitangi settlement legislation partially mitigates historical grievances created by the Crown and their representative agencies. However, the progress of compensating and providing redress to Māori for the alienation of natural resources has been slow-moving since the first national fisheries Treaty settlement in 1992. Eighteen years on Māori continue to seek a meaningful relationship with the Crown

to achieve parity for the Māori people as the indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Providing Māori with their own legislation and opportunities to participate at a local government level in the application of statutory management of natural resources is one means of achieving this. A greater respect of the Treaty partnership can provide a pathway forward and resolve the indifferences that have been long-standing since the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. Revamping the constitution of Aotearoa New Zealand and ensuring the same within a national Māori statutory body representing hapu and iwi is another means of balancing the inequities that have existed between Māori and the Crown over the last 170 years is also another means of achieving parity in Aotearoa New Zealand.

WHAKATAUKI

He mea hanga toku whare, ko Papatuanuku te paparahi,
Ko nga maunga nga poupou, ko Rangainui e titiro iho nei te tuanui.
Pihanga-tohoro titiro ki Te Ramaroa;
Te Ramaroa titiro ki Whiria, kit e pakiaka o te riri ki te kawa o Rahiri;
Whiria titiro ki Panguru, ki Papata, kit e rakau tu papta kit e tai hauauru;
Panguru-Papata titiro ki Maungataniwha,
Maungataniwha titiro ki Tokerau,
Tokerau titiro ki Rakaumangamanga,
Rakaumangamanga titiro ki Tutamoe,
Tutamoe titiro ki Whakatere,
Whakatere titiro ki Pihanga-tohoro
Ehara aku maunga I te maunga haere, he maunga tu tonu, tu te ao, tu te po.¹

My house is made with Papatuanuku [the earth] as the floor,
The mountains are the supports, and Ranginui [the sky] who looks down here is the
roof.
From Pihanga-tohoro look to Te Ramaroa;
From Te Ramaroa look to Whiria, to the root of strife, the protection of Rahiri;
From Whiria look to Panguru, to Papata, to the leaning trees which stand together in
the west;
From Panguru-Papata look to Maungataniwha,
From Maungataniwha look to Tutamoe,
From Tutamoe look to Maunganui,
From Maunganui look to Whakatere,
From Whakatere look to Pihanga-tohoro.
My mountains are not travelling mountains, they are mountains which stand
eternally, day and night.

¹ A description of the house or territory of Ngapuhi, the mountain supports which reflect the pride of the groups within the tribe and which symbolise the mutual protection and assistance one gets from looking to the other. Hohepa, 1981:8; Lee 1983:290 (Ngapuhi) in Department of Maori Affairs. (1987). He Pepeha, He Whakatauki no Tai Tokerau. Department of Maori Affairs, Whangarei, New Zealand. Government Printing Office, Auckland, New Zealand.

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