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**Joint Management Agreement between Taupō District Council and Ngāti  
Tūwharetoa:  
A summary of lessons for local government**

**A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
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## **ABSTRACT**

The first Joint Management Agreement created under s36B of the Resource Management Act 1991 was signed on 17 January 2009. The parties involved were Taupō District Council and Ngāti Tūwharetoa. The JMA provides for publicly notified resource consents and plan changes applying to multiply owned Māori land to be decided upon by a panel of decision makers chosen equally by Council and Ngāti Tūwharetoa. It is the first example of an iwi authority having an equal share of decision-making power within statutory resource management decision making in New Zealand.

This research considers the Joint Management Agreement within the context of other agreements between councils and iwi authorities in New Zealand, and government and indigenous bodies internationally. In addition, the research comments on the progression of Māori involvement in the statutory resource management framework in New Zealand, with a particular focus on the implications of recent Te Tiriti o Waitangi settlements.

Findings of the research include that Ngāti Tūwharetoa's position and ability to enter into a Joint Management Agreement is in part the result of their dominant land owner status in the Taupō District, with these land holdings being relatively unchanged by colonialist land takes. The over-arching lesson of the agreement is that each council must look at its own specific situation with iwi in its district, and look at all tools available in order to improve those relationships. S36B of the RMA 1991 was a tool that had not been used before but proved to be an efficient and effective one in this case.

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