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KAITIAKITANGA AND THE CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE MANAGEMENT OF THE KAITUNA RIVER.

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A planning project presented in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Resource and Environmental Planning at Massey University.
FOREWORD

"Ko te kinenga o te kai kai taku waimimi, kai te awa o Tapuika."

"The source of all sustenance is the water of my bladder, the river of Tapuika."

This thesis examines concepts and information which are of great significance and sensitivity to Maori. It recognises that there are varying interpretations of the concepts and issues of Maori natural, cultural and environmental heritage discussed in this thesis, from both Maori and non-Maori commentators. It focuses on the extent to which kaitiakitanga has been incorporated effectively into New Zealand’s resource management framework.

It must be noted that kaitiakitanga is an extremely important and sacred component in Maori philosophy. Thus there is no pretence that this thesis is a comprehensive interpretation of it. The author would like to acknowledge the information he has received from Ngati Pikiao kaumatua and the Te Runanga O Ngati Pikiao. He has worked closely with them from the outset to incorporate their wisdom and knowledge into this thesis and to establish the historical and current circumstances of Ngati Pikiao’s relationship to the Kaituna River.

The author offers this discussion on issues that are becoming central to a bicultural environmental management system with respect and good faith.

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1 A description of the Kaituna River in the famous Pohuaatau a Te Kopuni (the song poem of Kopuni) by the great Ngati Hinerangi ancestor Te Pohuni.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis is dedicated to the late Koro Kawana Nepia to whom I am greatly indebted for his valuable and very timely contribution at the conception of my research. Without Koro Kawana’s spiritual and familial interconnectedness with the Kaituna and its expression to this author, this piece of work would be without its wairua.

Firstly I would like to thank my dedicated supervisor, Peter Horsley, for his continued support and enthusiasm throughout the year. His all-hours and unlimited advice, accommodation, knowledge, guidance, belief and commitment to this work have been much appreciated.

Secondly, I would like to thank Kepa Morgan and Colleen White of Te Runanga O Ngati Pikiao for their ongoing help and sharing in understanding of the Kaituna River issue. I am very grateful for their provision of unlimited sources of information as well as their input and comments into final drafts of this thesis. I am also indebted to Te Ariki Derek Morehu, Ngati Pikiao kaumatua, for his early input into the thesis and my introduction to an appreciation of tikanga Maori and things wairua. Also David Field, ex-regional conservator for the Bay of Plenty Department of Conservation conservancy, for his help with my understanding of DOC’s perspective on the Kaituna River issue and specifically his personal role in traditional river and reserve management.

I would also like to thank some other important people who have helped me along the way. The late Mina McKenzie for her early advice on the concept of kaitiakitanga in the context of the “Maori world” and the implications of this concept in the resource management environment of regional and local government. Ngaire Reeves at Rotoiti for her explanation and understanding of the history of the Kaituna issue and helping this author with initial contacts with Ngati Pikiao kaumatua. Bertram Kingi, of the Lake Rotoiti Scenic Reserves Board, for early discussions, ideas and people to contact. Kalaveti Batibasaga for his initial discussion on the importance of a spiritual connection to land and resources for indigenous peoples. Todd Taiepa, for his help with readings, thesis ideas and structure as well as other discussions throughout the last two years.

Also importantly, I would like to acknowledge the help of Susan Forbes and my father, Geoff, for thesis “ideas” all the way through to the end as well as their help with reading, re-reading and editing this thesis - very much appreciated. Kate for her help, support and editing of the thesis as well as being a very good travelling and thesis writing companion. John and Judy Hellstrom for providing me with a home for all those weekends at Kilbraa and Endeavour Inlet. And finally, Lindsay and my family and friends for their help, support, advice and putting up with semi-nomadic lifestyle and my long-term stays at Rotoiti.

Thank you all
This thesis investigates kaitiakitanga as an integral component of the Maori environmental management system and the theoretical and practical implications of this concepts incorporation in modern resource management, in particular the conservation and heritage management of the Kaituna River, Okere, Rotorua. With increasing attention being focused on the development of bicultural policies for resource management, this thesis pursues the effectiveness of New Zealand’s environmental mandate as inclusive of Maori and Treaty of Waitangi concerns.

Through the use of an extensive literature research and retroductive interviews, this thesis examines both the Maori and Western world-views and their resource management perspectives and practices. In terms of giving expression to kaitiakitanga, an investigation of the hierarchies, priorities and partnerships developed to resolve competing resource conflicts was undertaken, as well as the various legally based structures and mechanisms for processing and implementing partnership arrangements and recognising iwi rights and values. The Kaituna River was chosen as a case study because of the current ongoing resource management conflict between Maori and the Crown with respect to recreational use and commercial development versus Maori cultural and spiritual values.

The case study complemented the findings of this research in that, despite the widespread formal recognition of kaitiakitanga by management agencies and the various statutory and non-statutory mechanisms that could be used to accord Maori management authority, there have been neither a sufficiency, nor an appropriate choice of formally established structures to allow Ngati Pikiao to exercise, as Treaty partners, their kaitiakitanga responsibilities. More specifically, the situation investigated at the Kaituna River established the current inability of New Zealand’s political and judiciary systems to apply kaitiakitanga effectively as a mechanism for dealing with resource management issues involving Maori and the Crown. At present, kaitiakitanga is expressed in the RMA as a principle to which territorial authorities shall have “particular regard” in achieving the purpose of the Act. It is to be effected through the requirement the RMA places on these authorities to “take into account” the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi. The problem is though, as many Maori involved in resource management are realising, it is a requirement which those with responsibilities under the RMA may choose to readily avoid. Whether the kaitiakitanga role of hapu and iwi will become better understood, appreciated and given effect to by resource management agencies involved and the promised Treaty of Waitangi partnership is being affirmed still remains to be seen.

While the case study was specific to the Kaituna River, the findings of this thesis could be relevant to any conflicting resource management situation between Maori and the Crown in New Zealand. The development of new principles and/or a new planning framework relating to the kawanatanga response needs to become consistent with New Zealand’s dual mainstream planning heritage. Legal and constitutional adjustments may be needed to facilitate formal collaborative management structures and negotiated agreements at all levels.

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