

# Indigenous Knowledge as Evidence in Local Government Decision-Making: Challenges and Opportunities

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August 2017





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Date: 18 August 2017

#### Recommended citation

Koroi, H. (2017). Indigenous knowledge as evidence in local government decision-making: challenges and opportunities

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# Indigenous knowledge as evidence in local government decision-making: challenges and opportunities

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This project was supported by Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga and Auckland Council

## Mihi

Ko Whakarongorua, ko Kokohuia ngā maunga  
Ko Awanui, ko Huria ngā awa  
Ko Ngātokimatawhaorua, ko Tinana ngā waka  
Ko Mokonuiarangi, ko Te Uri o Hina ngā marae  
Ko Te Ngahengahe, ko Te Uri o Hina ngā hapū  
Ko Ngāpuhi, ko Te Rarawa ngā iwi  
Ko Rāhiri, ko Tumoana ngā tangata

Tēnei ka mihi ki a koutou kua tautoko, kua hāpai ake i ēnei mahi. Tuatahi ki ngā rōpū e rua, te rōpū RIMU ki te kaunihera o Tāmaki Makaurau, waihoki, te rōpū Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga i whakatō ngātahi ai i te kaupapa o tēnei tuhinga; Tuarua, ki ōku tūākana Carina, Esther rātou ko Michelle kua whakatinana i ngā āhuatanga o tēnei mea te whanaungatanga, otirā, kua whangahia tēnei pīpī ki ngā āhuatanga o te tuhi; Tuatoru, ki a koutou ngā kaiuiui i whai wāhi ki te hāpai ake i ēnei mahi rangahau. Kāore i kore ka rere āku mihi ki tōku whānau, hapū, iwi waihoki ki ōku mātua tūpuna, nā koutou ēnei hikoitanga i tīmata i runga i te whakaaro aroha ki āu mokopuna. Hei whakaotinga, kia rere āku mihi ki a koutou o Te Korowai Aroha o Aotearoa, otirā ki a koe Nanny Jozie kua whakaoho i te wairua, te ngākau me te hinengaro o mātou kua roa e noho ngoikore ana. I runga i te reo mihi ki a koutou katoa e whakaputa ana i te whakatauki rā ki a hirikapo – “Nāku te rourou nāu te rourou ka ora ai te iwi”



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## 1.0 Introduction

The fight for indigenous rights has existed at a global scale since the 1970s (Lane & Hibbard, 2005) but has only been recognised via international declaration (namely, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People) since 2007. In light of increasing discussions around indigenous rights, local and national governments are coming under pressure to address issues of social justice in this field. Since the Local Government Act 2002, local governments in New Zealand have been given significant powers and responsibilities within their local jurisdictions which include statutory obligations to cater to the interests of local Māori (Cheyne & Tawhai, 2008). How local governments take into consideration Māori interests appears frequently in New Zealand literature and is broadly the concern of this report. There are, however, gaps concerning how local governments can best utilise mātauranga Māori in order to better meet their statutory obligations or further still to give fair authority to Māori voices in light of their status as indigenous peoples. This research explores the challenges and opportunities relating to the incorporation of Mātauranga Māori into local government decision-making.

Mātauranga Māori is first explored in the wider context of indigenous knowledge through a literature review and then through a case study of Auckland Council employees. These were carried out in the form of interviews exploring the personal experiences of two Auckland Council employees and the ways in which they incorporate Mātauranga Māori into their roles working for council. This report, while not exhaustive, does provide insight into an important topic for local government. In addition, it provides a solid foundation for future studies and a thorough guideline of best practice for incorporating mātauranga Māori into forums of local government or indeed in other organisations.

The first section of the report contains the literature review which was categorised using a Māori analytic framework derived from a document called Te Aratitia, which conceptualizes the pathway of Tāne-nui-ā-rangi to the heavens to collect ngā kete o te wānanga. This document was collated by Te Korowai Aroha o Aotearoa, however Te Aratitia itself derives from Io (the divine creator). The conceptual framework outlines the following themes: iho matua, whakapapa, mana motuhake and tikanga. It must be noted, however, that there are many instances of overlap in these concepts. This stems from the inherently interdependent and interconnected nature of indigenous knowledge and lived experience.

The second section of the report turns to the case study of the Auckland Council context. It presents the themes which came from interviews with council staff. The interview participants' reflections resonate to a great extent with the themes

discussed in the existing literature. However, one key finding that that was less prominent in the literature is the importance of acknowledging shared histories when considering indigenous perspectives in decision-making.

## 2.0 The New Zealand context

Te Tiriti o Waitangi was signed on the 6th of February 1840 between representatives of the British Crown and Te Whakaminenga ō Ngā Rangatira (The Confederation of United Tribes). The signing of Te Tiriti was intended on behalf of rangatira to be a declaration of the Queen's power to control her own subjects within the territories of Aotearoa. In the minds of rangatira, Te Tiriti reaffirmed the mana and rangatiratanga guaranteed to chiefs as outlined in 'The Declaration of Independence' signed only five years earlier by Crown representatives and the confederation. Based on the assurances of missionaries they knew and trusted, rangatira at the time thought that the English version fairly translated the intent of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. However, the Treaty of Waitangi differed essentially from Te Tiriti in its transfer of "absolute and without restriction all rights and powers of sovereignty ... over their [confederation] respective territories" (The Treaty of Waitangi, 1840). Despite having fewer than 50 signatures versus the 500 written on Te Tiriti, the Treaty of Waitangi is now considered the official legal document of New Zealand (Forster, 2014).

In the years that followed the signing of Te Tiriti, the British declared sovereignty and the systematic colonisation of Aotearoa began. Māori went from exercising authority over all of Aotearoa to possessing an estimated 5.6 per cent of total land area. Land loss and colonial population growth signalled a power shift that further legitimised state regulation of land use and development. Māori became marginalised from their own ancestral lands, significantly reducing the exercise of tribal authority. Assimilation was encouraged and in numerous instances forced upon Māori through public policy, leading to the eventual rapid decline of te reo Māori, substantial loss of traditional knowledge and practice and the decline of Māori wellbeing (Forster, 2014).

"The presence of two versions has caused significant ambiguity around the meaning of the Treaty, expectations and interpretations of Treaty provisions" (Forster, 2014. p.65). Today all rights that were promised to Māori under the treaty, including "undisturbed possession of their Lands and Estates Forests Fisheries and other properties" (The Treaty of Waitangi, 1840), remain unlegislated. Instead, the principles of the Treaty have been interpreted by the high courts for the purposes of statutory incorporation (Forster, 2014). These treaty principles inform a number of legislative statutes including the Resource Management Act 1991 and the Local Government Act 2002 (Majurey, et al. 2010; Cheyne & Tawhai, 2008) which is concerned with providing "opportunities for Māori to contribute to and participate in local authority decision-making processes" (Cheyne & Tawhai, 2008. p5). These are also the principle statutes for defining local government responsibilities with respect to the needs and interests of Māori within their local jurisdictions.

### 3.0 Literature review

The literature review focuses on the use of indigenous knowledge in local government decision-making. Due to time constraints, this report presents the outcomes from only a sample of the available literature. Despite the intentions of the research to explore uses of indigenous knowledge, it became apparent fairly early on that the literature we had selected focused in large part on Māori engagement. In light of this, interpretation of the literature was vital in order to address the initial research question. It must also be noted that most, if not all of the literature sampled, was written from an indigenous perspective (even if the authors themselves may not have been indigenous).

Much of the literature related to New Zealand examples although there are a number of readings from Australia which featured prominently in some sections of the report. The aim in analysing the literature was to categorise the information into one of a number of information types, including frameworks, examples, challenges, opportunities, barriers, aspirations and outcomes. These categories allowed many of the stories that were encountered to be carried through to the report while allowing specific recurring themes to be pulled out and analysed further. The literature review was reported using a Māori analytic framework which contains the following dimensions: iho matua, whakapapa, mana motuhake and tikanga. It must be noted however that there are many instances of overlap in these concepts. This stems from the inherently interdependent and interconnected nature of indigenous knowledge and lived experience. Iho matua relates some of the foundational characteristics of indigenous knowledge to give the reader a better grounding in indigenous epistemologies and worldviews. Whakapapa identifies the importance of making and nurturing both our kin and non-kin based relationships from a Māori worldview. Mana Motuhake focuses on the importance Māori place on identity for the wellbeing of an individual and their community. Lastly, the section on tikanga addresses examples of processes and procedures used at government level and how these have or have not empowered indigenous participation. The order in which each kaupapa is presented is deliberate and further elaborated in the literature discussion section.

## 4.0 Iho Matua – Discourse and philosophy

*“... to ask my father what mātauranga Māori is would be like asking a fish what water is. It remains invisible to them” Taki Marsden (Royal, 1998. p5, cited in Tuhiwai, 2000).*

*Mātauranga Māori springs from the existential pūrākau of Papatūānuku (earth mother) and Ranginui (sky father), the progenitors of all life (See Majurey, Atkins, Morrison & Hovell, 2010, p.267). From these two come the atua (supernatural guardians) who manifest amongst the various realms such as Tāne Mahuta (atua of the forest) and Tangaroa (atua of oceans and sea life); to the multitude of tamariki (children) or animals born of these atua; right down to the first human, Hineahuone, formed from ngā one i kura waka, the clay of Papatūānuku’s earthly womb. This whakapapa (genealogical narrative) describes the descent of all things. It is through this existential whakapapa and other foundational pūrākau that Māori observation and interaction with the world is informed and what we call Mātauranga Māori is observed (Jackson, 2008). If we keep this in mind, we can understand the pretext behind countless Māori concepts such as whanaungatanga which refers to the familial responsibility that atua and tangata have to ensure one another’s well-being; the tapu which resides in each human being as a result of their descendance from the divine source; tikanga that are used in particular interactions with atua to ensure safety.*

Indigenous values devolve from the existential origins of a particular group. It is important to understand that indigenous nations have unique values and ways in which these values take shape; there are however, particular epistemological characteristics outlined in the literature that are shared amongst various indigenous groups. While not a comprehensive list, these include:

- a) that all things are imbued with intangible, spiritual value (Cheng, Kruger & Daniels, 2003, as cited in Lane & Hibbard, 2005; Tipa, 2009; Williams, 2001, as cited in Jackson, 2008)
- b) all things are interconnected and interdependent and so collective well-being and mutual reciprocity is essential (Mazzocchi, 2006 & Cajete, 1994, as cited in Hikuroa et al., 2011; Williams, 2001, as cited in Jackson, 2008; Tipa, 2009)
- c) resources are considered collective and intergenerational (Durie, 2004, as cited in Hikuroa et al., 2011)
- d) resources are managed on the basis of shared local meanings and knowledge (Berkes, 1993, as cited in Hikuroa et al., 2011).

Indigenous epistemologies are fundamentally distinct from dominant Western epistemologies that inform much local and national government decision-making. Consequently, the ways in which indigenous values can be used in council decision-making is often a point of difficulty. This section will address three key dimensions to understanding indigenous worldviews: spiritual values, collectivism and holism. With these in mind, local governments can begin to better engage with and incorporate indigenous peoples and worldviews into their decision-making.

## 4.1 Spiritual value

Indigenous peoples observe the world in both spiritual and physical terms. All things are imbued with an inherent spiritual element that connects each object to a divine source. For Māori, this spiritual element is called wairua. Wairua is connected to the physical body through mauri (or the life sustaining essence) which is inherited by a thing upon its creation. The wellbeing of an individual therefore depends on both their physical and spiritual health (Majurey, Atkins, Morrison & Hovell, 2010). Colonial discourse considers spiritual elements to either not exist at all or otherwise take the dualistic view that physical and spiritual things remain separate, whereas indigenous views see the spiritual and physical as singular (Majurey et al, 2010). While the variation in worldviews is not in itself problematic, the view that colonial discourse is more valid than indigenous discourse is, as this marginalizes indigenous worldviews, especially within the context of law. One such example is that of the taniwha Takauere, who is described as a spiritual, metaphysical creature that manifested at both Ngāwhā and Lake Omāpere in the far north of New Zealand. An appeal was lodged with the environment court against the building of a corrections facility at Ngāwhā due to the negative effects this would have on the wellbeing of Takauere and those who believe in Takauere. Unfortunately, the courts found that “The ...

Resource Management Act ... does not extend to protecting the domains of taniwha, or other mythical, spiritual, symbolic or metaphysical beings” (Beadle v Minister of Corrections, as cited in Majurey et al., 2010). The consequence of this was that tangata whenua world views were not upheld in court which in turn led to the eventual destruction of one of Takauere’s kāinga (Majurey et al., 2010).

## **4.2 Collectivism**

Collectivism as distinct kin-based social organisation is an important concept that upholds the foundations of indigenous worldviews (Lane & Hibbard, 2005). “It involves the attribution of responsibility on a collective rather than an individual basis” (Majurey et al., 2010. p.269). Colonial discourse promotes the idea of representative governance which is at odds with indigenous discourse (Lane, 1997, cited in Lane & Corbett, 2005). Democracy at both local and national level is the primary form of representative governance in New Zealand and other colonial countries. The democratic process, which in theory claims to increase and uphold the participation of local actors in decision-making, in reality falls far short of achieving this goal. Negative attitudes and feelings towards the legitimacy of this system are evident in the low and declining voter turnout (Cheyne & Tawhai, 2008). Democracy assumes that communities are homogenous and do not contain diverse actors with diverse needs. The community voice essentially becomes an expression of the status quo, rather than a representation of diverse actors and in particular ignores the special position of indigenous peoples and their distinct needs (Lane & Corbett, 2005). Additionally, for Māori to engage with government processes they must assimilate to these representative forms of governance such as councils, trusts, boards etc. so as not to be left out of decision-making. The consequence of this, which is highly evident in Aotearoa, is the unconscious or conscious loss of traditional indigenous social organisation (Morrison, 2011; Lane & Corbett, 2005; Forbes, 2014).

## **4.3 Holism**

Holism speaks of the interrelated and interconnected nature of all things; the obvious consequence of which is that changes to one part of an ecosystem will change other parts of that system. This varies from the compartmentalising nature of Western discourse (Majurey et al., 2010; Posey, 1999, as cited in Tipa, 2009). Consideration of the ecosystem as a whole is necessary in order to truly assess the impacts of engagement within a particular environment. The holistic nature of mātauranga Māori is often compromised in the process of engagement with local and national bodies. In the case of the Te Arawa Lakes settlement 2006, for example, “the ownership of lake water was separated from ownership of lake beds” (Morrison, 2011) which is in direct

conflict with the holistic way in which Te Arawa perceive the lake and indigenous groups at large view and interact with ecological systems. Another example is that of the natural resource framework “Ngai Tahu – Ki Uta, ki Tai,” which relies on the idea that the mauri of a river cannot be assessed in isolation of its surroundings and must be based on the mauri of interrelated components in the wider catchment. “This conceptualisation of a catchment confirms a deeper understanding that a catchment constitutes soil, water, flora, fauna, and the relationships between them” (Tipa, 2009. p.104). For example, things such as unnatural sediment build up, vegetation growth, or wildlife abundance are equally important and valid indicators of river health as measuring ammonia levels.



## 5.0 Whakapapa – Making and celebrating connections

*“Mai te kōpu o te whaea ki te kōpu o te whenua” – From the womb of the mother to the womb of Papatūānuku*

*Whakapapa describes an interconnected genealogical web of relationships through time and space transcending both natural and supernatural dimensions. Whakapapa describes the descent of individuals from their mortal ancestors stretching all the way back to the first woman Hineahuone and beyond to our immortal creators, Papatūānuku and Ranginui. Whanaungatanga is the act of nurturing whakapapa for the betterment and continuity of tribal traditions and histories. Whanaungatanga is expressed in the practice of manaakitanga, kanohi ki te kanohi (interacting face-to-face) and aroha ki te tangata (to be present to another person) amongst other things – all of which assert the nurturing of relationships.*

Despite a rise in social justice activism, indigenous rights remain a contentious issue due to underlying power imbalances that maintain hegemonic power and control in the hands of the colonising society (Jackson, 2008; Henwood, Barnes, Brockbank, Gregory, Hooper & McCreanor, 2016; Matunga, 2000). Arguably, most, if not all interactions permitted by local government ensure that this power imbalance remains unchallenged. For indigenous peoples this presents a degree of risk and uncertainty that perpetuates tense government-indigenous relationships (Jackson, 2008). In many cases, principles of whanaungatanga were offered on behalf of indigenous peoples during times of early settlement. It is important that the same approach of collective wellbeing and responsibility be reciprocated, without the continued weight of crown power and authority holding indigenous peoples to ransom. This section will explore aspects pertaining to indigenous rights by looking firstly at the various forms of indigenous participation in local government decision-making and secondly, the shared benefits available to indigenous groups within their tribal boundaries.

### 5.1 Forms of indigenous participation

Indigenous rights and interests have emerged out of the historical struggle for indigenous survival and recognition. In attempts to seek restorative justice following often violent histories, in many colonised countries, indigenous rights are now

legislated. Forms of indigenous participation fall along a wide spectrum between collaboration and consultation. These provisions provide both opportunities and challenges, in that they assert obligatory responsibility on governments to engage with indigenous peoples while on other hand maintaining the power of the state to define the extent of indigenous interests and rights (Forster, 2014). Redistribution of power and authority is the ultimate goal of engagement for indigenous peoples as they seek to regain self-determining rights, affording them the greatest degree of influence in shaping their futures and those of their descendants (Forster, 2014; Lane & Hibbard, 2005). One example of indigenous groups that have secured self-determination is the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. For these tribes, sovereignty, which establishes governance under their own constitution and bylaws, has been made a reality within the colonial United States of America since 1938 (Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1944). While the collective has had to compromise to obtain this status, including ceding a large portion of land, the freedom to reinforce their own political autonomy is a starting point upon which they can begin to regroup and recover their cultural heritage and ways of being (Lane & Hibbard, 2005).

Joint management schemes are the common form of indigenous power sharing found in the literature. Joint management has been established through legislation in Aotearoa through the Te Arawa lakes settlement Act 2006, between the Bay of Plenty Regional Council, the Rotorua District Council and the Te Arawa Lakes Trust (a representative of various iwi). According to Morrison (2011, pp.65-66), “[c]o-management is heralded as a justice mechanism for indigenous peoples, because it provides for indigenous involvement and contribution in planning and decision-making processes.” The practicalities of joint-management, however, do not always accommodate these objectives. In particular, the Bay of Plenty Regional Council maintains control over scientific experiments and expenditure. This challenge is also evident in another example from New Zealand: the *taiāpure* application process, through which local hapū or iwi apply for management rights over a particular ancestral fishing ground. Despite the aim of *taiāpure* to improve Māori engagement in fisheries, the ultimate decision-making, including regulating policy, remains with the Minister of Fisheries (Jackson, 2008). Consequently, these joint-management schemes can often result in co-option, where one party holds an unequal degree of decision-making power while indigenous voices, which are meant to hold equal precedence, become discretionary at the whim of those in power. This highlights a common problem, that the practice of legislation frequently falls short of achieving intended aspirations to redistribute power to indigenous people (Morrison, 2011; Lane & Corbett, 2005).

Morrison (2011, p.224) concludes that “genuine power-sharing may be better conceptualized as an outcome to be worked towards, rather than an assumed starting point of co-management.” It is, however, unfortunate that when such arrangements are legislated, indigenous peoples are often the principal driving force in ensuring that legislation is upheld and operational, rather than purely hypothetical (Lane & Hibbard, 2005; Lane & Corbett, 2005).

## **5.2 Sharing of benefits**

Connection to place is the foremost criteria for defining indigeneity. Consequently, “indigenous claims to land and control of natural resources can only be understood within this context” (Lane & Hibbard, 2005. p.175). As independent nations, indigenous peoples have interests in the wealth and prosperity of their people. Much of this wealth is found in the abundance of local resources and territories and the knowledge derived from human interactions with that environment.

For centuries colonial settlers have extracted resources, developed infrastructure on and manipulated landscapes for the sake of their own wellbeing and prosperity (Forster, 2014). This has occurred under concepts of progress and development which fundamentally conflict with indigenous views of development which are otherwise “based on co-evolution with the environment, and on respecting the carrying capacity of ecosystems” (Hikuroa, Morgan, Durie, Henare & Robust, 2011, p.107). These aspirations are challenging for indigenous peoples to uphold as they lose land management rights and resources are exhausted. Not only is it difficult for indigenous peoples to uphold their own developmental ideologies, but further still, they are alienated from both participating in and receiving the products of the wealth created through Western development (Lane & Corbett, 2005; Palmer, 2011). For indigenous peoples, Western approaches to development on the whole have proven to have negative social and health implications. Globally, indigenous peoples share a common myriad of social ills as a result of colonisation (Hitchcock & Bieseke, 2000; Perry, 1996, cited in Lane & Corbett, 2005), perpetuated through poor decision-making that ignores the wellbeing of indigenous peoples.

One example of the detrimental effects of Western models of development on indigenous people in Aotearoa is the subdivision planned on whenua tuku (or lands gifted) to Ngāti Porou ki Harataunga by Hauraki iwi. A review of this development scheme carried out by the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment in 2006 found that the Thames-Coromandel District Council that consented the development within the Whangamatā catchment found that the council’s general approach to

planning and decision-making lacked adequate consultation with tangata whenua as well as an awareness or understanding of Māori history, traditional rights and aspirations. The incorporation of Mātauranga Māori in this case would have created shared benefits not only for tangata whenua who are also kaitiaki of the lands on which the subdivision was planned, but also for the community at large that sought to uphold and promote the environmental integrity of the area (Palmer, 2011).

Consideration and implementation of mātauranga Māori in planning acts as a protective factor for the wellbeing of tangata whenua which should be of interest to the council and the wider community. A cultural impact assessment, “Homai te waiora ki ahau” created by Stephanie Palmer and funded by Te Puni Kōkiri, was piloted in this context as a psycho-social resource that uses waiora as a value base to measure and understand Māori wellbeing. This tool describes 12 distinct aspects of waiora which participants rate along a scale between zero and 10. Despite the fact that the tool was introduced in retrospect of the council’s agreement to allow the development to go forward, it was thought to be an appropriate way in which to engage and empower tangata whenua and identify potential mitigation strategies (Palmer, 2011). This could be considered a good framework for the Thames-Coromandel District Council to use in decision-making that impact on the wellbeing of tangata whenua. The impact that Western development has on the health and wellbeing of all people should be a top priority of local and national governments but at present the marginalisation of Mātauranga Māori reinforces a subordinate level of care for Māori peoples.

Other solutions could include the use of iwi management plans in tandem with long term iwi engagement and relationships. The Resource Management Act 1991 “requires regional councils and local authorities, in developing or changing their plans, to take into account any relevant planning document recognised by an iwi authority affected by the plan” (Solutions, 2004, p.3). Iwi management plans are largely viewed as tools to aid environmental and resource management. Through an awareness of iwi management plans, regional councils are able to plan with the interests of iwi in mind because they are tangata whenua and have kaitiaki obligations for their local environments and resources (Solutions, 2004). Iwi management plans can further be used as a tool by local councils to refer to when surveying the various stakeholder interests of a particular issue. Ongoing and open communication between iwi and councils about how best to incorporate iwi aspirations into council planning is the most efficient way forward and prevents back pedalling on issues where iwi interests have been ignored and must be brought up in various other forums. Unfortunately, the wording of the RMA, which is weak at best, requires councils only to ‘take into account’ iwi management plans, and as a result

many iwi argue that councils have not been utilizing iwi management plans (Solutions, 2004). A further point of consideration for councils is the level of expertise that iwi hold in maintaining and restoring local environments and resources. It goes without saying that environmental health should be of considerable concern to regional councils, and they should not overlook the position of iwi as major stakeholders and experts in environmental care.

An awareness and recognition of tribal histories, indigenous languages and culture can further be improved through visual prompts and aids that make indigenous stories and values visible to the public (Thompson-Fawcett, 2010). This can occur in a number of ways i.e. through the use of indigenous art, imagery and symbols in public spaces. The use of public signage to explain indigenous place names, historic events and sites of significance allows for an increased awareness of indigenous peoples. Another example involves utilising indigenous design principles which take into account the collective, diverse, holistic and spiritual characteristics found in traditional indigenous settings. Māori Urban design principles for example have been used in the design of papa kāinga by Ngāti Whātua o Ōrākei. The concept of wairua is expressed in urban design by maintaining accessibility to places and features of importance such as Maungakiekie, te Waitematā, the urupā and marae (Rolleston & Awatere, 2009). Other design principles such as the kaitiakitanga promote benefits for all local actors; for example, in the restoration of waterways and natural areas (Rolleston & Awatere, 2009).

## 6.0 Mana Motuhake – Self-determining rights

*“Toitū te kupu, toitū te mana, toitū te whenua” (Tinirau) - The permanence of the language, prestige and land (Mead & Grove, 2003, p. 405)*

*Mana motuhake describes the self-determining rights gifted to whānau, hapū and iwi by atua, to have control over their own lives in accordance with kawa (natural laws). Furthermore, it relates specifically to independent political rights within ancestral territories. These rights are associated with a number of concepts including ahi kā roa, which translates to the long burning fires and signals that land is occupied by long enduring kaitiaki. It is further illustrated by concepts such as ‘tangata whenua’ or people of the land, a term used to express political autonomy and sovereignty of a hapū in a particular region.*

Reclamation of sovereignty presents the ultimate goal for many indigenous peoples. Prior to colonisation, sovereignty was an assumed reality of indigenous nationhood (Lane & Hibbard) and involved three interlinking matters: “how to maintain or regain control over resources, especially land; maintain particular sets of social relations and more or less distinct cultural orders; and have some measure of political autonomy” (Cornell, 1988, cited in Lane & Hibbard, 2005, p.173). Devastating land and resources loss among other things has led to the subsequent loss of political autonomy for indigenous groups worldwide, with few exceptions. This section addresses attempts to re-establish measures of sovereignty in the following sections: resource management, social organisation and knowledge systems.

### 6.1 Resource management

“Place is central to the concept of indigeneity. From place derives culture, identity, social organisation and economy” (Lane & Hibbard, 2005, p.174). The connection of indigenous peoples to their land is shaped by hundreds to thousands of years of intergenerational occupation that make indigenous peoples experts in navigating, utilising and sustaining these environments. Further to this is a spiritual connection that manifests in and amongst these localities as a result of intergenerational tribal rituals and practices. As land acquisition was the primary motivation for settlement, land loss has been a significant aspect of the colonised experience. Indigenous land

title is highly contentious in present day efforts to reconcile indigenous grievances due to the presence of various stakeholders being situated within indigenous boundaries. Indigenous communities often find themselves in competition with commercial interests that dominate resource policy in housing, farming (Henwood et al., 2016) fishing (Jackson, 2008), mining, ranching, forestry and tourism (Lane & Hibbard, 2005). In order to clear these fertile lands for commercial purposes, indigenous communities were often relocated, removed or marginalised to smaller areas within their territories.

While regaining lost land and sovereignty is key to the aspirations and wellbeing of many indigenous peoples, local authorities tend to interpret indigenous interests much more narrowly. In many cases local authorities reduce indigenous aspirations relating to their ancestral lands to those of generic environmental interests, employing environmental groups or principles as a substitution (Lane & Hibbard, 2005). This disregards the importance of indigenous lands as both a tangible and intangible resource base which sustains the identity, wealth and wellbeing of local tribes (Tipa, 2009). Intangible values especially are widely held by indigenous peoples, deriving from a relationship of equal, mutual and often familial status between people and environment. For the indigenous groups of New Zealand, *mahinga kai*, which speaks of both the ability to access resources and the site of gathering itself, are a vital aspect of *hapū* identity. *Te Kete Poutama*, a traditional food source for the people of *Ngāti Tūwharetoa ki Kawerau*, was once a huge source of *mana* as it provided the means by which they were able to host and show *manaakitanga* towards visitors – a virtue which is held in high regard for indigenous groups throughout Aotearoa (Hikuroa, Slade & Gravelly, 2011). This shows that land loss is not only a loss of physical wealth but also *mana*, an intangible source of pride and prestige.

Mootwingee National Park in New South Wales, Australia, the ancestral lands of the Mutawintji people, is another example of a local government interpreting indigenous rights very narrowly. In this case, local authorities declared the park a “Reserve for the Preservation of Caves, Native Flora and Fauna, Aboriginal Drawings and Carvings” while ignoring the custodial rights and interests of the Mutawintji people. The status of the park as a reserve stopped the Mutawintji people from pursuing their traditional practices of fishing, hunting and gathering – essentially removing their ability to survive (Lane & Corbett, 2005). After much protest on the part of the Mutawintji people, they were eventually given joint-management rights.

It is evident that ecological concerns are only the tip of the iceberg and that generic environmental remedies will not suffice in meeting indigenous rights and interests in ancestral lands. Only indigenous peoples have the wealth of knowledge to practice

and protect their cultural traditions and spiritual connections. Furthermore, ancestral lands contain resources which are of vital importance to the survival and prosperity of indigenous peoples.

## **6.2 Social organisation**

Multiple indigenous communities situated within a local authority jurisdiction consist of various complex social groups who typically represent entirely different nations with distinct customs, practices and values (Palmer, 2008; Harmsworth & Awatere, 2012). The recognition of each distinct group is fundamental to the expression of sovereignty. Local governments often find it difficult to differentiate between distinct groups; whether their interests are custodial or locational (in Auckland these interests are distinctly known as Mātāwaka and Mana Whenua interests); and to recognise the diversity of custodial land interests within a given localised area. The result of this social complexity can be that smaller indigenous groups are ignored altogether or that tribal groups are forced to participate under the umbrella of large homogenised groupings that are unnatural and result in smaller groups being subsumed and their identities made invisible (Morrison, 2011). The Te Arawa Lakes Trust, for example, is a centralised system that does not necessarily accommodate the authority and political autonomy of various hapū but instead homogenises representation under one superseding entity (Morrison, 2011).

## **6.3 Knowledge systems**

Indigenous knowledge is the result of “wisdom and experience of ecosystems gained over millennia from direct observations” (Durie, 2004; Mazzocchi, 2006, cited in Hikuroa et al., 2011, p.105). The practice of indigenous knowledge is vital in the expression of indigenous identity and is also a source of vital information for the protection and sustenance of the environment. However, in some cases, indigenous knowledge alone may not be sufficient to address the severe degradation of land resulting from colonialism and Western development. Mahinga kai, as previously mentioned, describes a practice of food collection. Survival was and is for many Māori, contingent upon “knowledge of mahinga kai and the ability to gather resources from the land, waterbodies, and the sea” (Tipa, 2009, p.99). The state of mahinga kai (as a place of food collection) can be used to measure the health of an ecosystem. Sustainable Māori resource practice has previously ensured that these stocks are maintained through practices such as rāhui, a traditional periodic restriction of resource harvesting to allow stocks to replenish (Williams, 2012). Mātauranga Māori is also evident in the traditional practice of pā tuna or “eel weirs.” Best (1986, p.133) explains that “[w]eirs are constructed at rapids, where the rushing waters glide from



one calm reach to another”. The placement and construction of these weirs show an intricate knowledge of the river’s currents, ebbs and flows (Tipa, 2009). Unfortunately, the degradation of freshwater and the destruction of wāhi tapu including mahinga kai have led to the loss of tribal food sources. Furthermore, the degree of chemical pollution, as in Te Kete Poutama, presents problems which Mātauranga Māori has not evolved to deal with. In this case, the use of multiple knowledge systems is necessary. Scientific and indigenous knowledge can be used in tandem to achieve the best outcome for the revitalisation of these environments (Hikuroa et al., 2011). Attempts have been made to develop models that enable the use of multiple ways of knowing in decision-making. One such example from Aotearoa is the ‘Mauri model,’ a “decision-making framework that provides a culturally based template within which indigenous values are explicitly empowered alongside Western knowledge” (Morgan, 2006, cited in Hikuroa, Slade & Gravley, 2011, p.3). It assesses the sustainability of proposed actions on the mauri of a resource. A hierarchy of environmental, cultural, social and economic indicators are assessed along a five-point integer scale which reflects the mauri state of the resource between mauri mate (denigrated – no longer life sustaining) and mauri ora (restored – life sustaining) (Hikuroa, Slade & Gravley, 2011). Decision-making frameworks such as these provide space for multiple knowledge systems to work together while at the same time ensuring that indigenous knowledge is recognised and valued.

## 7.0 Tikanga – Processes to ensure safety and respect

*“ka noho teina te tangata” – Humanity sits as a junior to the natural world*

*Tikanga are the procedures and protocols used to guide us in our interactions with each other and with the divine (atua). Tikanga ensures that we uphold the mana, tapu and mauri of all living things (our whanaunga) and therefore support the continuation of whakapapa. To disregard tikanga is to act against the laws of nature (kawa) and to place oneself at risk of injury or even death. To risk the life of even a single individual is to risk whakapapa itself.*

The interface between Indigenous peoples and local governments is shaped by the processes and policies set by both local and national authorities. These processes can either help or hinder aspirations for mutual understanding, engagement and the fulfilling of objectives. In Western contexts, processes are largely dominated by Eurocentric ideals and methodologies that are at fundamental odds with indigenous discourse. This section will observe two themes that featured heavily in the literature: processes and procedures; and funding and resources.

### 7.1 Processes and procedures

Language, including technical jargon, cultural barriers and unfamiliarity with the ins and outs of government decision-making processes limit meaningful indigenous participation (Lane & Corbett, 2005; Adamowicz et al., 1998; Noel et al., 2006, cited in Morrison, 2011). Indigenous peoples, invested in having their voices heard, complain of burdensome voluntary workloads, inability to influence decisions (Palmer, 2011) and processes that are lengthy and without a timeframe (Jackson, 2008).

In situations where indigenous knowledge and customs are theoretically recognised in government decision-making, in practice, what often happens is that indigenous people must demonstrate their compliance to both their own customs as well as those of the dominant mainstream. This means that they must actively demonstrate a mastery of multiple knowledge systems and explicitly negotiate them, while local authorities are only expected to be competent in one knowledge system (Barnes, 2006, cited in Henwood et al., 2016; Jackson, 2008). Indigenous people find that their arguments are often disputed more than non-indigenous applicants (Lane &

Corbett 2005). They have to present disproportionately large bodies of evidence to support their claims (Lane & Hibbard, 2005; Jackson, 2008). For example, in Aotearoa, a *taiāpure* is an application process for gaining custodial management rights to a particular fishery. It was found that while the application of the local hapū was successful and empowering of Mātauranga Māori, they still had to abide by institutional parameters to support the application.

Even when battles are won at the local level to change attitudes with regards to indigenous rights, significant change that manifests at a local level can often be stifled by national legislation. One such example is the possibility of ownership of lake water by the Te Arawa Lakes Settlement Trust following the slow changing of public attitudes to the high level of influence held by Te Arawa within the local region. This move, however, is stifled by the substantial changes that would be necessary within New Zealand legislation to make it legal. This is especially evident in RMA amendments that were made directly following the High Court's ruling over the Kaituna river; these determined that protection orders in line with heritage protection legislation can no longer be made in respect of water (Te Runanga o Ngāti Pikiao v Minister for the Environment, cited in Majurey et al., 2010).

## **7.2 Funding and resources**

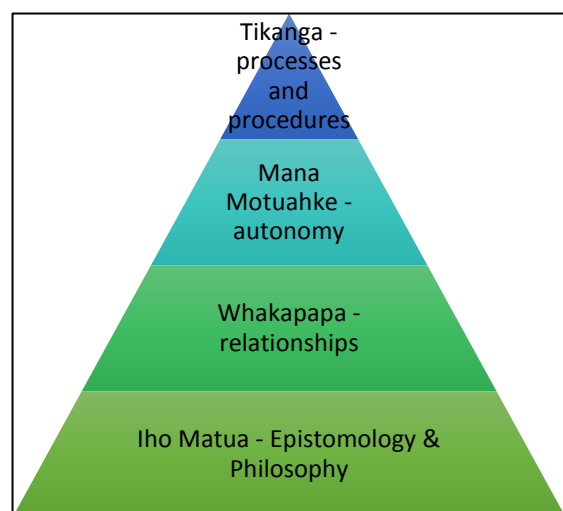
Indigenous peoples, in the process of regaining a degree of management rights to their land and resources, have aspirations to improve, sustain and enhance the vitality of their natural environments and to protect indigenous landscapes and cultural sites of significance (Lane & Hibbard, 2005; Palmer, 2011). Land rights are often returned when land and resources are in poor condition after years of commercial use (Lane & Hibbard, 2005; Henwood et al., 2016) and so indigenous peoples must resource the revitalisation of these environments themselves. Funding pools for indigenous land management are often inadequate given the scale of the management task or are systematically designed to deny indigenous access to funds (Lane & Corbett, 2005). In Australia, after a number of legislative changes, the number of funding applications for the management of indigenous owned land went down, likely due to the inaccessibility of the application processes. This resulted in the appointment of 11 facilitators to aid indigenous peoples to develop their funding proposals. Despite this, funding disbursed to indigenous peoples remained very low and facilitators found themselves overworked as the task of developing applications is complex and time consuming (Lane & Corbett, 2005).

Indigenous people have for a long time led the fight for social justice. This came about as a result of resistance to the continued denial of their rights through colonisation. In order to gain custodial recognition, indigenous peoples often have to

fight actively to negotiate and assert their rights in a legal setting that is both drawn out and costly. Specialist skills are often needed in accounting, finance and governance; the availability of support to assist indigenous peoples to utilise funding acquired through redress or returned land and resources is scarce (Lane & Hibbard, 2005), which in some cases is setting them up to fail and not conducive to aspirations for indigenous redress and justice.

### 7.3 Discussion

This literature has informed us of the various challenges, opportunities and successes encountered when using indigenous worldviews within government settings. In order to move towards a greater degree of efficacy this report identified a number of ways in which indigenous world views are and can be further empowered. These include (i) providing some context for understanding indigenous views, (ii) understanding how to engage with indigenous peoples and (iii) frameworks or systems for utilising and incorporating indigenous knowledge into government decision-making. Collectively these approaches endeavour to bring greater awareness to indigenous voices and experiences and to provide an equitable voice alongside colonial narratives that would otherwise assume a position of power and normality within both political and civil domains. The texts were categorised into four themes:



1. Iho matua – philosophies and epistemologies;
2. Whakapapa – making and nurturing relationships;
3. Mana motuhake – self-determination; and
4. Tikanga – processes and procedures.

The order in which these kaupapa are introduced here is deliberate and, as reflected in the figure above, expresses the various layers of mātauranga Māori and their dependence on one another. For example, when there is an understanding of Māori epistemologies and philosophy, one can understand whakapapa and its importance for Māori. Alternatively, if one attempts to use tikanga from Te Arawa to inform processes within the Tāmaki region, then there is a lack of awareness around principles concerning mana motuhake, which tells us that the tikanga of tangata whenua takes precedence. This framework can be used to guide interactions with Te

Ao Māori, whether this is in the incorporation of mātauranga Māori in work or otherwise.

## **8.0 Methodology**

In order to explore the themes identified in the literature review in the Auckland Council context, face-to-face, semi-structured interviews were carried out by the author with two Auckland Council staff members in February 2017. Participants were identified as interviewees on the basis of their experience as team members involved in council project/s that involved some degree of mātauranga Māori integration and furthermore their willingness to participate. The author acquired ethics approval through Auckland Council's ethics committee well in advance of the interviews. The questions covered in the interviews were split into two parts. The first related broadly to mātauranga Māori: (i) the aspirations for incorporating it into their project; (ii) the extent to which these aspirations were achieved; and (iii) how implementation could be improved in the future. The second part related broadly to Māori cultural competency: (i) situations in their work (in general) where they might have used it; (ii) how well versed they felt they were in it; and (iii) in what areas they could improve. The full schedule of interview questions can be found in the Appendix.

### **8.1 Method**

The interviews were recorded and transcribed by the author. The transcripts were then reviewed and broken down using the same kind of thematic analysis that was used in the literature review. Where themes from the literature occurred in the interviews these are used in the analysis below; while new headings are added for topics that fall outside the material included in the literature review. The findings from the interviews largely resonated with themes from the literature review.

The interviews affirmed the following as important considerations when attempting to involve iwi and hapū in local government decision-making in a meaningful way: cultural competency, a familiarity with cultural processes and procedures, an appreciation of Māori interests through the concept of mana motuhake, a recognition of the shared benefits for all parties, and the visibility of Māori identity in urban space. The interviews also revealed a final consideration as important to the success of engaging successfully with indigenous people in decision-making that was not frequently addressed in the available literature on the topic. That is, the need for decision-makers to recognise the intertwined histories of the descendants of colonisers and indigenous peoples and how these histories may influence the present day state of indigenous – colonial relationships.

## 8.2 Reflections of the author

The interviews provided a unique opportunity to explore the research question in more depth. Where there may have been gaps in the literature or a lack of clarification on any aspect, the interviews enabled a level of flexibility that I tried to utilise by directing and emphasizing particular aspects where I felt the literature was lacking. I myself am of Māori and European descent. As the project emphasised a Māori world view I have no doubt that this affected how I interacted with each of the participants – not necessarily in a negative way, just in a different way.

When interviewing participant 1 (who was Māori) I felt a sense of connection through our cultural experiences and struggles, which was both beneficial and detrimental at times. On the one hand this allowed for what I felt was open and honest conversation and on the other hand I felt I may have directed the conversation to highlight the negative aspects of the council's engagement with iwi. Participant 1 took personal responsibility beyond the functions of their job role in liaising with iwi. This likely occurred because they were Māori and felt a wider responsibility for the wellbeing of their people. I further think that they felt a sense of responsibility on the council's behalf in light of prior poor engagement with iwi. This was somewhat evident in their emphasis on acknowledging historical wrongdoing. Another observation of value was that the participant interpreted many of the questions on cultural competency (and in general) from their own personal view as a Māori person, rather than as an employee. I felt that the standard to which they held themselves accountable in areas of cultural competency would not have been expected of council employees in general.

Participant 2 was not Māori and yet I felt equally comfortable talking to them. I felt a sense of appreciation for the difficulty of the task they were given, for someone who was not Māori and had not necessarily had a lot of experience engaging with Māori. Despite this I could feel in their presence that they held a lot of the qualities that were valued within Māori communities, those being, that they were open minded, respectful, that they were willing to learn and to participate in tikanga despite the discomfort they may have felt in not being proficient in te reo Māori. Participant 2 presented a willingness to understand Māori world views and a determination to give credence to the voices of those Māori communities who they worked with. In respect of both participants I felt a bit sad that they often responded to questions of cultural competence with feelings of inadequacy because while there is always reason to improve one's knowledge and ability to walk comfortably through te ao Māori, I could tell that they were both genuine people who had done their best and I feel those

milestones should be celebrated rather than viewed from a place of deficiency. I wasn't always able to portray this to them during the interview.



## **9.0 Findings**

### **9.1 Cultural competency**

(a) Having a certain level of proficiency in Te reo Māori that allows you to at least introduce yourself and/or participate in mihi, whakatau, karakia and waiata tautoko. Some units at Auckland Council support beginner level te reo Māori through regular classes.

(b) Understanding basic tikanga that takes place on the marae including pōwhiri processes and simple things such as not taking food or wearing shoes in the wharenuī. These competencies can be developed by using principles outlined in Te Ara Tika as a foundational guideline for how to interact with whānau and hapū. Alternatively, you can hire an external contractor to do capability training with group members.

(c) Understanding Māori concepts that relate to your kaupapa and how these concepts take shape. Knowing these concepts will give you more clarity in hui and enable you to join in and direct discussion towards your kaupapa. For example, if one is working with tamariki Māori, one must understand that relying on concepts of the nuclear family will not suffice, and that whanau includes the immediate family, grandparents and extended. If the facilitator is thinking ‘family’, and participants are thinking ‘whānau’, they will be talking past each other without even knowing. Or more generally, understanding the holistic nature of mātauranga Māori, in that a range of dimensions must be taken into consideration to measure the wellbeing of a single individual or conversely that humans are affected by the wellbeing of the environment.

### **9.2 Processes and procedures**

(a) Understanding that wānanga space is timeless and allowing hui to evolve naturally in length or number so as to obtain the best outcomes. At times participants found that either deadlines or budget restrictions forced them to either rush hui or to cut projects altogether. This is counterproductive as it limits the space in which mātauranga Māori is able to manifest. When Māori engage, information must be tika (correct) and processes must reach a state of ea (completion) otherwise they compromise the tapu of the knowledge that has been shared in the process of wānanga.

(b) Managers and leadership need to allow for Māori processes to take greater preference – not limiting engagement within timeframes and money constraints. It is

important that managers and leaders are also involved in the ground work so that they can understand the value of engagement and the consequences of decisions that are made, especially where the mana and tapu of people and relationships are concerned. For example, understanding that cutting a project early may compromise relationships that have been built.

(c) Using Māori frameworks throughout the process where relevant to privilege and empower mātauranga Māori and dispel the illusory normalisation of Western frameworks that displace and alienate Māori from council processes and engagement. For example, when looking at improving outcomes for tamariki Māori, the first question to ask is what do improved outcomes look like? Māori frameworks such as Te Puawaitanga o Ngā Whānau may be useful in this case, for creating questions that explore this concept from a Māori perspective. This is where a consciousness of mātauranga Māori is important in influencing the design and delivery of frameworks, policies, pilots and services to fit with whanau Māori.

### **9.3 Historical context**

Māori have grown sceptical of any form of cooperation with crown agencies due to distant and recent past experiences that have left them worse or no better off. There are a number of ways in which trust with mana whenua can be rebuilt and developed to allow for effective engagement.

(a) Employers need to know and understand the nature of previous forms of engagement with hapū or iwi, as these may possibly set the tone for initial engagement. If there has been poor engagement in the past, where hapū or iwi have felt alienated and disrespected, there is likely to be some scepticism. Being able to acknowledge that this has happened and reassure hapū and iwi that your intentions are good, will allow you to move on to the kaupapa you have come to discuss.

(b) Understanding iwi and hapū past grievances exhibits a willingness to understand the position of mana whenua in their present context. At the very least, it is important to research and be aware of the grievances which have ongoing implications for hapū and relevance for your particular kaupapa. Acknowledging these grievances from the very beginning sets an honest and accountable platform upon which the kaupapa you are focusing on can progress.

(c) An understanding of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and The Treaty of Waitangi provides a highly beneficial platform from which one can begin to have respect for the position of whānau, hapū and iwi in retaining their mana motuhake (self-determining rights) and how this informs their status as special stakeholders within the New Zealand context.

## 9.4 Mana motuhake

(a) Actively engaging with hapū and iwi regarding areas of interest to them is important. A lack of awareness of Māori interests in a particular area or approaching them only after a majority of major decisions have been made is taken as tokenistic and disingenuous. In the first instance, improvement requires overarching processes that ensure knowledge of and consideration for hapū and iwi interests. Leadership must be intentional about incorporating information gained from Māori engagement into all aspects including planning, operations and policy to enact a transformational shift for Māori as outlined in the Auckland Plan.

(b) Māori engaging in council processes must feel as though they and the mātauranga that they share, is valued. Using the wellbeing of tamariki Māori as an example of empowering whānau to engage with facilitators:

- create a space which enables discussion by providing toys and a childminder;
- provide koha for whānau to participate and bring food for everybody;
- facilitators should spend time explaining the project, where whānau fit in and how their input will affect policy;
- privilege their mātauranga in the creation of frameworks and policy;
- pilot services in areas of significance for whānau;
- report outcomes to whānau during the various stages of project implementation;
- allow whānau to experience project outputs and co-design measurements for success.

Furthermore, valuing and respecting that knowledge means ensuring that the information is kept according to the wishes of hapū and whānau, at times this may mean that information given is tapu and must stay within the wānanga. It must be presented correctly, with the proper intent and context and it must be endorsed by whānau.

(c) Relationships must be developed and nurtured using mātauranga Māori principles such as manaakitanga and kanohi ki te kanohi. One of the participants commented that principles such as these should guide best practice throughout council's services.

## **9.5 Shared benefits**

(a) Māori engagement presents an opportunity for both parties to share and learn from the various bodies of knowledge that they bring into a space. This is an approach in which all knowledge and experience is valued and respected allowing for the best possible outcome. For example, observing concepts of kaitiakitanga while also sharing science-based methodologies and ideas. Wānanga can and should be a learning process for both parties.

## **9.6 Māori identity**

(a) Improving the integration of mātauranga Māori into decision-making involves empowering and making visible Māori identity. This includes providing opportunity for the recitation of iwi and hapū stories and history through physical space design and information output. This also involves providing opportunities or otherwise supporting cultural experiences. For example, providing or supporting ongoing te reo development for Māori who sit both internal and external to the organisation. This must go beyond simple beginners classes if te reo is to become a part of individual and collective identity.

## **9.7 Discussion**

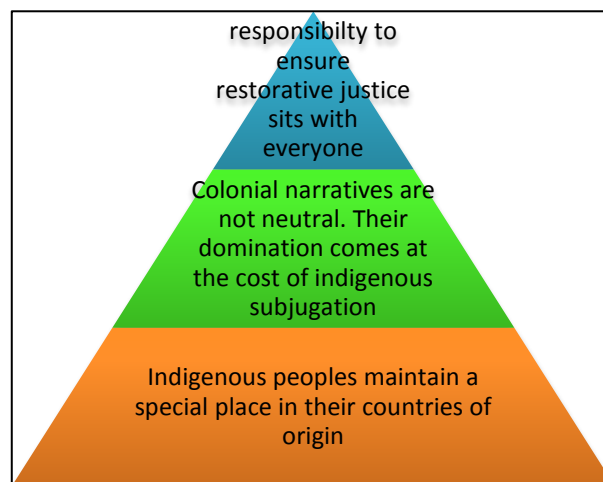
Information gathered from the interviews largely supported and aligned with much of the literature except that there was a specific and unique importance placed on understanding shared histories. This may have been the result for a number of reasons including (a) the fact that the literature was taken from an indigenous perspective, while the interviews were had with council employees or (b) while these points were made explicit in the interviews, my intentions when reviewing the literature may have placed a lesser importance on the historical context provided. It was found that understanding and knowledge of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the Treaty of Waitangi as well as the context and intent behind the signing of these documents was important. This shared history also included the history of tangata whenua, their historic struggles with colonisation and lastly the nature of recent interactions with government. By acknowledging these historic experiences, they are no longer made invisible or relegated to the past, but are recognised as having ongoing implications in the present; they provide an honest and truthful platform from which engagement can occur.

## 10.0 Conclusion

This report has explored the use of indigenous knowledge through a literature review and case study of two Auckland council employees. Both the literature review and the qualitative interviews suggest that there are various underlying assumptions which led to many of the challenges and shortfalls mentioned throughout the text. These include the following:

- i) a lack of recognition for the special place of indigenous peoples within a colonised society
- ii) the assumptions that colonial discourse is neutral and provides equal opportunity for everyone and the lack of recognition that it is in fact a *colonial* discourse; and lastly
- iii) the presumption that indigenous peoples alone are responsible for the restoration of indigenous wellbeing and culture.

In order for positive and substantive change to occur in the field it is absolutely central that these assumptions be addressed first and foremost. The pyramid below works as a guide for local government practitioners to assess and understand the underlying power imbalances that may exist in any given situation. The conceptual pyramid outlines a number of fundamental points that local governments should understand in order to meaningfully engage with indigenous people.



These include: an understanding that indigenous peoples hold a special place and position within their countries of origin, whether this is a declared treaty, indigenous status or other means; recognition that colonial narratives are not neutral and that they dominate social norms and practices at the expense of subjugating indigenous people and their worldviews; and lastly, an acceptance of responsibility for ensuring

restorative justice for indigenous peoples who have been, and continue to be, oppressed by colonisation. As colonial governments who hold/have held much power and control over indigenous peoples – it is their obligation under statute, their opportunity as actors who live in a position of social-colonial dominance and lastly their responsibility as the highest representative institute for the pursuit of moral and just practice to, at the very least, meet indigenous peoples half way. Once these points are understood, the second point of action would be to look at the various ways in which indigenous worldviews can be integrated into government practice. The variety of methods outlined in the literature is a testament to the rich and distinct oral histories and knowledge that indigenous people have accumulated over many years of occupation on tribal lands. Some examples have been provided to give readers direction, from which they might find engagement with local indigenous groups to be the best way forward. Building long-term relationships with indigenous groups ensures that the integrity of shared indigenous narratives is empowered and preserved, even within a context which does not necessarily align with indigenous discourse or practice. While numerous challenges have been presented throughout the text, they can more constructively be viewed as pathways for opportunity; to learn, to adapt and to empower. It is of course important to remember that the depth and breadth of situations which one may encounter in a local government setting means that “there is no one size fits all” in terms of approaches to engaging indigenous perspectives. The best outcomes will come as a result of good intent, and practice which meaningfully addresses the types of considerations mentioned in this report.

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## **12.0 Glossary of important terminology**

### **Mātauranga Māori**

Mātauranga Māori, according to Marsden, “encapsulates a Māori world-view and involves observing, experiencing, studying and understanding the world from an indigenous cultural perspective” (in Harmsworth, G., Warmenhoven, T. & Pohatu, P., 2004 p.11). Mātauranga Māori encapsulates Māori values such as tikanga (knowledge of cultural practices); te reo Māori (Māori language); kaitiakitanga (guardianship); whakataukī (proverbs); kōrero tawhito, pakiwaitara (stories and legends); and whakapapa (genealogy) (Harmsworth et al., 2004).

### **Whakapapa**

Whakapapa describes an interconnected genealogical web of relationships through time and space transcending both natural and supernatural spaces. Whakapapa describes the genealogical descendant of individuals from their mortal ancestors stretching all the way back to the first woman Hineahuone and beyond to our immortal creators, Papatūānuku and Ranginui (Tipa, 2009; Majurey, Atkins, Morrison & Hovell, 2010).

### **Whanaungatanga**

Whanaungatanga is the act of maintaining whakapapa links through a reciprocal obligation for the wellbeing of whanaunga. Whanaunga provide a vital support system that maintains the safety of individuals within a web of mutual responsibility. Without whanaungatanga, support systems are weak.

### **Kaitiakitanga**

Kaitiakitanga is a form of practice of whanaungatanga. Within the modern context of environmental management, it is translated best as the guardianship role people take on to nurture and protect their environment.

### **Mana**

Mana describes the level of prestige, influence or power that a person has. Mana is never self-appointed but can only be proven through a fulfilment of one's obligations and responsibilities to their whānau, hapū, iwi. Some of these responsibilities are also inherited at birth and accorded by atua (supernatural guardians).

## **Tapu and Noa**

Tapu describes the state of a thing as being sacred or set apart. All things hold a degree of tapu that is derived from their connection to the divine source. In particular instances some ceremonies, people or things sit in a higher state of tapu and require a heightened sense of consideration upon interaction (Johansen, 1954). Tapu often relates to human interaction within atua domains. Particular processes return spaces from a state of tapu to a state of noa (or normality) that is then safe for free human interaction; a state of noa is often brought about through the consumption of food, water or the reciting of karakia.

## **Tikanga**

Tikanga is the human interpretation of natural law. We are informed about tikanga through atua kōrero, stories and oral histories. Particular rituals and procedures are adhered to for the safety of individuals and whānau in their interactions with tapu. Often these rituals relate to the maintenance of tapu or the grounding of noa. To break tikanga, especially where a transgression of tapu is concerned, can result in major consequences.

## **Tangata Whenua**

Tangata whenua is the term used for a whānau, hapū or iwi who have held ahi kā (long term occupation defined by the continued burning of home fires) in a particular location and exercise kaitiaki responsibilities within that area.

## 13.0 Appendix: Interview schedule

FORM 9

### Interview Schedule

**Project name:** Indigenous knowledge as evidence in local government decision making: challenges and opportunities

**Principal researcher/s:** Haylee Koroi

#### General Information

Tell me about your work in council.

- How long have you worked at council?
- What is your role?
- What kind of work are you involved in?

#### Māori engagement or consideration of Māori worldview/knowledge/value

Let's have a discussion about what matauranga Māori means to you...

Thinking about a recent project...

What were the project's aspirations (if any) for Māori engagement or the use of Māori

Knowledge/values/worldviews?

To what extent were these aspirations fulfilled?

What went well and what didn't go so well with the project's Māori engagement or use of

Māori knowledge/worldviews/values?

How could this be developed or improved on for the future?

By the end of the project, did Maori engagement or use of Māori knowledge/worldviews/values influence the project and at what phase? i.e. design, implementation

## **Cultural Competency & Understanding**

What are some situations in your work that have required Māori cultural competency, please elaborate? (Researcher will explain cultural competency and provide examples where necessary)

What Māori cultural competency skills or experience do you bring to the situations you have identified? Did you gain these skills and/or experience through your work at Auckland council or elsewhere?

Did you feel well prepared to work in these spaces? What did you find challenging? What did you find easy?

What Māori cultural competencies do you think you could develop or improve on? How?



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