

Te Awarua-o-Porirua Whaitua Implementation Programme:

**NGĀTI TOA RANGATIRA STATEMENT**





## PEPEHA

**KO WHITIREIA TE MAUNGA  
KO PARIRUA TE AWA  
KO RAUKAWAKAWA TE MOANA  
KO NGĀTI TOA TE IWI**

**WHITIREIA IS THE MOUNTAIN  
PORIRUA IS THE RIVER  
RAUKAWAKAWA (COOK STRAIT) IS THE SEA  
NGĀTI TOA IS THE TRIBE.**







## OUR VISION FOR TE AWARUA-O-PORIRUA

Our vision is that the mauri (life force) of Te Awarua-o-Porirua is restored and its waters are healthy, so that all those who live in the region, including Ngāti Toa and our manuhiri (visitors), can enjoy, live and play in our environment and future generations are sustained, physically and culturally. In realising this vision, it is Ngāti Toa's expectation that initiatives to restore our waterways are based on a partnership model that honours Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the Ngāti Toa Claims Settlement Act 2014, our current partnerships with responsible councils, and a recognition of our relationship with our environment.

Te Awarua-o-Porirua is integral to the identity of Ngāti Toa. The harbour has played a fundamental role over the generations in sustaining the physical and cultural needs of our people. As kaitiaki, we have a reciprocal obligation to nurture and protect our environment, and to ensure that it can sustain our future generations.

Through our relationship with Te Awarua-o-Porirua Whaitua, Ngāti Toa will continue to exercise its kaitiakitanga and therefore play an important role in the ongoing protection of the harbour and its waterways. We will also continue to exercise our kaitiakitanga through our relationships with our community and with Greater Wellington Regional Council, Porirua City Council, Wellington City Council and Wellington Water. An integrated and coordinated approach to the implementation of the Whaitua Implementation Programme will be important to the success of achieving our vision for Te Awarua-o-Porirua, along with that of the community.

We will measure our success in achieving this vision through our people. When our people are physically and spiritually well and culturally thriving, we will know that the mauri of Te Awarua-o-Porirua has been restored. Ngāti Toa will hold to account all those who make decisions that affect the kaitiaki relationship that Ngāti Toa have with Te Awarua-o-Porirua. It is a responsibility that the people of Ngāti Toa accept and we will work with our partner organisations to ensure that we are progressing towards success.



## OUR ENGAGEMENT WITH THE WHAITUA IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMME

In 2014 Ngāti Toa agreed to participate in Greater Wellington Regional Council's work to implement the requirements of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management. We saw this as an opportunity to work together with agencies to ensure that our voice was heard, develop shared values and re-set expectations on national policy settings.

In 2018, Ngāti Toa decided to withdraw its appointed representative from the Whaitua Committee. This was to allow Ngāti Toa the opportunity to carefully evaluate and articulate its views in relation to its aspirations for Porirua's waterways and harbour. In particular, Ngāti Toa was uncomfortable with the consensus-based approach to the Committee's deliberations, which compromised Ngāti Toa in terms of its values and its role as kaitiaki.

From Ngāti Toa's perspective, there is no compromise: we wish for our people to be able to harvest food from, swim in and enjoy the waters of Te Awarua-o-Porirua, and we wish for the fish, birds, insects and plants of this ancient ecosystem to thrive once again. These aspirations are grounded in our responsibility as mana whenua of this region.





## OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH TE AWARUA-O-PORIRUA WHAITUA

The streams and tributaries flowing into the harbour are greatly valued by Ngāti Toa as mahinga kai (places to gather food), but also because they are a source of renewal and replenishment for Te Awarua-o-Porirua. Historically, the natural flows and processes of the harbour were a defining feature of tribal life, and the abundance of natural life supported by the harbour provided a wealth of kaimoana (seafood, shellfish), providing the people of Ngāti Toa with an important source of food. The streams that feed into the harbour also provided a plentiful supply of freshwater fish and tuna (eels). The streams were surrounded by forest, which provided foods such as birds, berries and rongoā (medicines). In addition to providing sustenance for Ngāti Toa and their manuhiri, kaimoana gathered from the harbour and harakeke (flax) from the Taupō wetland were important commodities for trade and gifts.

According to iwi tradition, Awarua-o-Porirua was valued because it was the richest harbour for kaimoana and other resources south of Kawhia. Shellfish such as pipi, pūpū (winkle or cat's eye), paua, mussels and oysters, kina (sea urchin), and a range of fish sustained the people of Ngāti Toa. Because of the life-sustaining abundance and variety provided by Te Awarua-o-Porirua and its tributaries, as well as

the surrounding coast and ocean, a large number of Ngāti Toa settlements were located in and around the harbour.

Taupō Pā, at Plimmerton, near the entrance of the harbour, was the principle residence of Ngāti Toa chief Te Rauparaha. Paremata Pā, constructed in the 1830s, was the residence of Nohorua, Te Rauparaha's older brother. Nohorua also had a pā at Hongōeka. Te Rangihāeata had pā at both Motukaraka and Pauatahanui (Matai-taua Pā).

Forming the southern side of the entrance to Porirua Harbour is Whitireia Peninsula. This is another area of importance to Ngāti Toa, containing numerous wāhi tapu (sacred sites) and historical sites, including burial places, kainga, pā, middens, pits, terraces (for gardens) and tauranga waka (places of anchorage). Areas of settlement on the peninsula include Te Kahikatoa, Te Neke, Te Onepoto, Kaiaua, Onehunga and Kaitawa.

Takapuwahia Pā, located on the southern shores of the Onepoto Arm, became an important kainga of Ngāti Toa following the capture and detention of Te Rauparaha by the Crown. Hongōeka, a coastal settlement north of the harbour entrance, is also a significant kainga of Ngāti Toa. Takapuwahia and Hongōeka are the only remaining traditional

settlements of Ngāti Toa within the Porirua region and continue to be sites of significance.

In the twentieth century, the Takapuwhia community faced many challenges including Crown pressure to take their land for housing of the general population and the provision of utilities such as roading, water and sewerage to the pā. In the 1940s the Crown began to develop state housing at Takapuwhia, part of a major programme of public housing construction throughout the Tawa Flat - Porirua - Titahi Bay areas. The Crown sought to 'pepper-pot' members of the tribe among the rest of the community in an effort to 'assimilate' them, and also had a policy of not approving housing loans to iwi members, which would force them to move out of Porirua.

Despite the development of housing around Takapuwhia, by the end of the 1950s the provision of infrastructure to the Takapuwhia settlement itself was still poor: the roads were only partially formed, there was no mains sewerage, and the water supply was inadequate, with only two or three houses connected (Deed of Settlement between Ngati Toa Rangitara and the Crown, 2012).



▲ **Taupō pā, Plimmerton**

URL: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/taupo-pa-plimmerton>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), updated 25-Jun-2014



Until the 1930s and 1940s, the people of Ngāti Toa were still substantially dependent on the marine resources taken from the area. Ngāti Toa had demarcated pipi beds from which it collected pipi, and took pūpū and fish from the harbour, not only for day-to-day needs but also for social gatherings and events, when considerable additional quantities were gathered.

In 1940 complaints were raised that pollution from a number of sources was entering and affecting the Porirua arm of the harbour. Residents of the area, including Ngāti Toa, were alarmed to see raw sewage cast up on the foreshore and at times discolouration of the harbour itself. In May 1940 the Medical Officer of Health for the Wellington area reported on pollution of the harbour. The report concluded that although 40,000 to 60,000 gallons (approximately 150,000 to 227,000 litres) of untreated sewerage entered the harbour per day, mainly from the Porirua Mental Hospital, the location of the discharge point and the effects of tides meant that the continuous flow of sewage appeared 'to be causing no nuisance and inconveniences no one'. The report found no evidence for the

claims that the pollution was having an impact on the shellfish in the harbour (Deed of Settlement between Ngati Toa Rangitara and the Crown, 2012, p.41).

By 1960, the Onepoto arm of the harbour had been significantly affected by the impacts of water pollution, reclamation and various public works. In 1960, Ngāti Toa asked the Crown to set up a 'competent tribunal' to deal with Ngāti Toa interests in the Porirua harbour. This request was declined. Ngāti Toa also submitted a petition to Parliament claiming compensation for damage done to the harbour bed by pollution and reclamation. In evidence given to the Maori Affairs Select Committee, members of Ngāti Toa told of the depletion of kaimoana and destruction of breeding grounds and beds. They also informed the Committee that over several years local doctors and health department officials had warned Ngāti Toa residents not to consume fish or shellfish from the harbour or swim in the waters. The loss of this once abundant resource was a devastating blow to Ngāti Toa, which had always relied on the sea and waterways for sustenance. The Maori Affairs Committee, however, had no recommendation to make on the petition (Deed of Settlement between Ngati Toa Rangitara and the Crown, 2012).

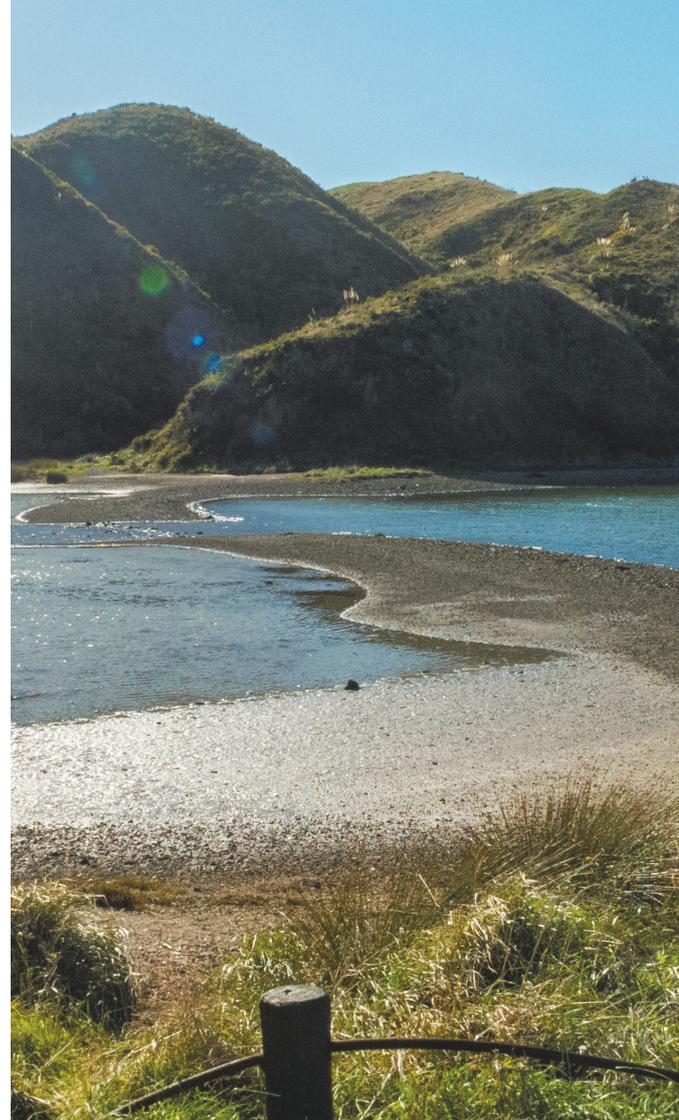
Throughout much of the twentieth century the Crown has not included Ngāti Toa in any meaningful role in the management of the Porirua harbour or its resources. With little power to influence or intervene, Ngāti Toa has witnessed the degradation and destruction of the harbour. The discharge of human waste into waterways, the estuary and sea has caused great distress to Ngāti Toa for cultural, environmental and public health reasons, as has the discharge of industrial effluent into waterways. This has had an ongoing impact on our ability to harvest traditional sources of food and other resources, and the knowledge and practices associated with the harvesting, utilisation and protection of those resources. In addition to not being able to provide for its own people, Ngāti Toa has a diminished ability to provide manaakitanga (hospitality) to its manuhiri.

## THE ISSUES WE FACE TODAY

The lands, harbours and waterways of Te Awarua-o-Porirua were adversely impacted by settlement and urban development. However, it is the Porirua and Pauatahanui harbours which are of utmost concern to Ngāti Toa, because they are both of great cultural and historical significance to the tribe, as well as being precious resources that once supported rich flora and fauna.

As a result of a lack of engagement with the iwi, poor public policy and inadequate investment in local infrastructure, Te Awarua-o-Porirua and its catchment – including all associated ecosystems have been negatively impacted. This has detrimentally affected the way the people of Ngāti Toa have lived, learned and developed in the Porirua rohe.

Ngāti Toa has consistently sought to maintain its customary rights with regard to the harbour and its resources. Over the years, the effects of intensified land use, contamination and siltation have resulted in poor water quality and an inability to harvest food. The inability to harvest kaimoana from the harbour – once considered the food basket of Ngāti Toa – has had a detrimental impact on the tribe's ability to fulfil its cultural functions, to live by its cultural values and to meet the physical needs of its people. We mourn the loss of our mahinga kai and live through the memories of our kaumātua (elders), hoping that one day we will be able to feast from the waters of Te Awarua-o-Porirua and share our knowledge and practices of cultural harvest with our people once again.



---

### The state of the infrastructure network:

Ngāti Toa is concerned about the capacity of the current infrastructure network (wastewater and stormwater) to keep up with anticipated population growth in the catchment, and the level of contamination in our waterways, which poses an increasing risk to ecosystem and human health. The wastewater treatment network is at capacity and overflows in places during heavy or prolonged rain, contaminating waterways and the harbour. Contamination is exacerbated by old leaking pipes as well as incorrectly connected pipes throughout the Porirua network. This impacts on the mauri of the waterways, and the harbour itself, as the receiving environment.

The aging sewage and stormwater network, coupled with intensified development in the Porirua area, is also affecting our traditional sites of residence. Takapuwhia and Hongōeka are now under threat from flooding and overflows of wastewater and stormwater during severe weather events, which affects our homes, marāe and māra (gardens). Further degradation of our homes and marāe will have a catastrophic impact on Ngāti Toa.

---

### Contaminants in our waterways are at unsafe levels:

Our water network (stormwater, wastewater, freshwater streams) has unacceptably high levels of contaminants, impacting negatively on the health and safety of our people and our ability to practice our traditional customary practices. These contaminants have impacted the mauri of the waterways of Te Awarua-o-Porirua.

We are particularly concerned about the following contaminants:

- E.coli from wastewater discharges due to the wastewater treatment plant reaching capacity
- copper and zinc, primarily from car tyres and brake pads and poorly maintained roofs
- nitrogen, mainly from stock effluent and agricultural fertilisers
- sedimentation from land erosion and earthworks.

---

Roles and responsibilities are uncertain across the Whaitua:

There is a lack of shared vision, collaboration, accountability and co-delivery of operational policy between the responsible agencies (Greater Wellington, Porirua City Council, Wellington City Council and Wellington Water).

---

Inadequate cultural, environmental and freshwater education of our Porirua citizens:

Citizens remain poorly informed about Ngāti Toa's association with Te Awarua-o-Porirua and its cultural importance, the overall state of our waterways and the health and safety issues we face as citizens who have the right to enjoy, live and play in our rohe. We need to better educate people about the issues, and work with our community on solutions.

---

The transport network impacts negatively on our freshwater system:

Population growth has and will continue to see an increase in cars, trucks and buses on our roading system. This is resulting in high levels of copper and zinc contaminating our streams and harbour.

---

Freshwater policy and regulatory settings appear to be ineffectual:

Responsible agencies (Greater Wellington Regional Council, Porirua District Council and Wellington City Council) lack a systematic approach to policy and regulatory responsibilities, leading to inconsistencies, poor decisions or no action being taken against non-compliance.

---

Iwi freshwater interests and rights:

As mana whenua, Ngāti Toa has rights and interests to freshwater within our rohe. Our rights and interests have not been relinquished nor have they been appropriately recognised through any policy or legislative process.

It is unclear how the allocation of freshwater rights (consents for discharges and water takes) is carried out across the Whaitua. This has implications for potential trading of freshwater, which Ngāti Toa have an interest in. There is a lack of metering and no trading registry, impacting on the ability to monitor as well as manage

---

Unclear rationale for monitoring:

Monitoring of Te Awarua-o-Porirua and its waterways provides an important evidence base for understanding water quality and ecological health, and therefore, what needs to be prioritised for change. A more coherent rationale and process for what is monitored and why is a matter of priority.





## HE TAUĀKĪ

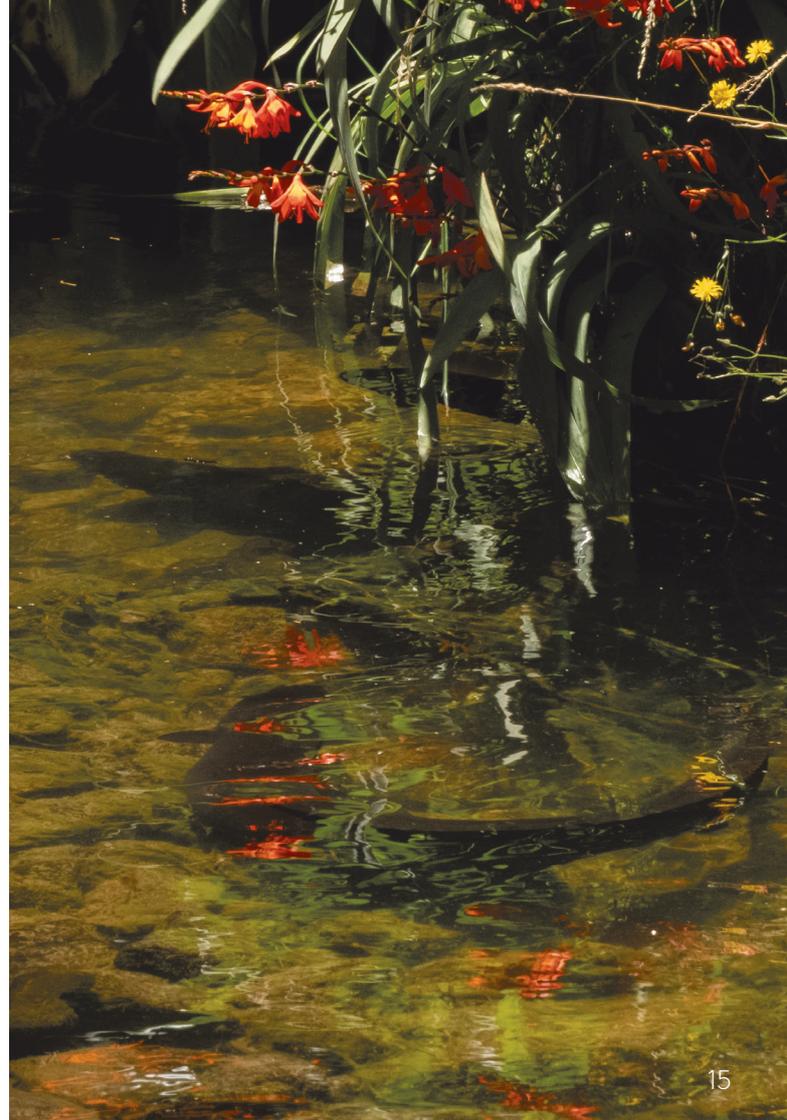
As kaitiaki of Te Awarua-o-Porirua and the broader whitua, the following are a series of statements and recommendations that capture our current reality and aspirations for the future:

- Ngāti Toa acknowledges the important work of Te Awarua-o-Porirua Whitua Committee and agree in principal to the values, findings, analysis encompassed by its work and the general direction of change.
- Ngāti Toa believes that agencies must work proactively to fulfil their Tiriti obligations to Ngāti Toa, and we expect to see opportunities for the co-design of policy and processes as well as co-management of key assets.
- The mana and mauri of all of our waterways and associated ecosystems within the Ngāti Toa Porirua rohe must be returned to a state of health, enabling our iwi to carry out its cultural responsibilities and obligations to its people, manuhiri and future generations.
- Ngāti Toa must be able to exercise its customary practices, including the harvesting of food and water, without fear of harm.
- Greater Wellington Regional Council must support the application of mātāuranga Māori methods and knowledge to monitoring undertaken by the Council to measure the health of the waters of Te Awarua-o-Porirua.
- Ngāti Toa's freshwater rights must be recognised by Greater Wellington Regional Council when considering the allocation of fresh water.
- Greater Wellington Regional Council, Porirua City Council, Wellington City Council and Wellington Water, alongside Ngāti Toa and the community, should collectively establish a Mai Uta Ki Tai (mountains to sea) Work Programme for implementation. The Mai Uta Ki Tai Work Programme could include
  - an 'Eco-System Enhancement Action Plan' that identifies priority actions for change and an ongoing monitoring and reporting schedule
  - a five-year 'E.coli Action Plan' to address the contamination issues with targets and ongoing monitoring regime
  - a twenty-year 'Water Network Action Plan' to identify and prioritise actions to address waste water, stormwater and freshwater issues across the rohe, including the issue of wrongly connected pipes
  - amendments to the Natural Resources Plan should be made to enable more use of control levers for urban development to better manage the impacts on water quality, including of stormwater discharges and the use of building materials containing high levels of zinc and copper

- a programme to re-connect people with their water bodies. This programme should include education about pollution prevention and community programmes.

The work programme **must include** background on Ngāti Toa's historical association with Te Awarua-o-Porirua and the wider catchment and a framework for understanding ecological health and wellbeing from a Te Ao Māori perspective.

- Ngāti Toa would like to see the implementation of innovative practices for stormwater and wastewater management. We also expect urgent measures to be taken to prevent flooding and stormwater/wastewater overflows affecting our kāinga at Takapuwahia and Hongōeka.
- We support and encourage alternative forms of transport in and around our waterways to minimise degradation. We encourage whānau to walk and cycle and to enjoy recreational activities with limited environmental impacts, such as fishing and waka ama.
- More collaboration across the councils, Wellington Water, and central government agencies such as New Zealand Transport Agency and Housing New Zealand is necessary and will provide better coherency across Mai Uta Ki Tai projects, enabling Ngāti Toa to better prioritise projects and capabilities from across the iwi to contribute to this important work.





For more information about the findings and recommendations of Te Awarua-o-Porirua Whaitua Committee, see *Te Awarua-o-Porirua Whaitua Implementation Programme*, available from the Greater Wellington website [www.gw.govt.nz](http://www.gw.govt.nz)