



Kawenata Rerenga Rauropi ā-Rohe o Waikato Waikato Biodiversity Accord

Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini
My strength is not as an individual but as a collective



Te aronga Purpose

The Waikato Biodiversity Accord brings together organisations with the common goal of creating and putting into action a regional biodiversity strategy. The Accord signatories share a commitment towards maintaining and restoring the full range of ecosystem types to ensure healthy, functioning indigenous biodiversity in the Waikato region.

The Accord is a voluntary agreement and is not legally binding. It does not restrict any person in the exercise of any power or discretion under any statute.

The Accord and the regional biodiversity strategy will be reviewed every five years.

Tangata whenua me te Kawenata Tangata whenua and the Accord

The principal iwi groups in the Waikato region are Waikato, Ngāti Maniapoto, Raukawa, Hauraki, Te Arawa, and Ngāti Tūwharetoa. These groups include many related iwi and hapū.

The Māori worldview recognises that all parts of te taiao (the environment), both living and non-living, possess spiritual qualities. These qualities are known as tapu, mauri, mana, and wairua. Whakapapa (genealogy) connects and binds tangata whenua to the environment. The Accord recognises the mana of tangata whenua and their role as kaitiaki to safeguard indigenous biodiversity. Kaitiakitanga, inherited through whakapapa, ensures tangata whenua maintain this intergenerational guardianship over their rohe.

The care and protection of te taiao inherent in kaitiakitanga does not preclude using resources in a sustainable way. This traditional resource management knowledge (a component of mātauranga Māori) and responsibilities passed down through generations are all part of this inter-connected relationship.

The environmental management plans of various iwi within the Waikato region highlight a commitment to restoring and protecting natural and cultural heritage through traditional knowledge and modern scientific methods.

The Accord signatories acknowledge that local iwi and hapū have a strong cultural interest in protecting and sustainably managing biodiversity in the Waikato region. While these interests may differ by iwi, hapū and rohe (tribal area), the partners seek to reflect these interests in both the principles of this Accord and in the regional biodiversity strategy framework.

Ngā mātāpono Principles

The following principles will guide the actions of signatories to this Accord:

Te Tiriti o Waitangi and treaty settlements as a foundation

We acknowledge that tangata whenua are kaitiaki at place and that they wish to exercise their tino rangatiratanga (authority and self-determination) over their land. We respect their mana, kawa, tikanga, mātauranga and whakapapa.

The Accord honours the deep connection between tangata whenua and the natural world through whakapapa. It will ensure that mātauranga Māori informs our biodiversity vision while upholding tikanga (protocols) and addressing historical breaches of Māori land rights. We are guided by the principles of partnership, protection, participation and shared decision-making.

Collaboration and partnership

Shared responsibility, working together, and forming partnerships are essential for maintaining, restoring and enhancing indigenous biodiversity.

Integrated and coordinated approach

We will achieve a greater positive impact on habitat connectivity and ecological integrity by coordinating our collective efforts, resources, expertise, funding and actions (including working within resource and financial constraints) beyond administrative boundaries.

Honesty, trust and accountability

Transparency, honesty, and accountability will be maintained in all biodiversity management actions and decisions. This includes respecting the interests and mandates of all signatories.

Inclusiveness and participation

All signatories will be involved in and participate in delivering actions to foster a sense of collective responsibility for managing indigenous biodiversity.

Long-term commitment and adaptability

We need a long-term, inter-generational and adaptable strategy that is regularly reviewed to acknowledge the need for sustained effort and flexibility when circumstances change.



*Hāpaitia te ara tika e pūmau ai te rangatiratanga
mō ngā uri whakatipu*
*Foster the pathway of knowledge to strength,
independence and growth for future generations*

Nā tō rourou, nā taku rourou ka ora ai te iwi
*With your food basket and my food basket,
the people will thrive*

*Mā te rongo ka mōhio; mā te mōhio ka mārama; mā
te mārama ka mātau; mā te mātau ka ora*
*Through resonance comes cognisance; through
cognisance comes understanding; through
understanding comes knowledge; through
knowledge comes life and wellbeing*

Tā te tika ka hua, tā te pono ka toha
*From truth comes growth, from honesty
comes generosity*

Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini
*My success is not the work of one, but the work
of many*

*Ko te pae tawhiti, whāia kia tata; ko te pae
tata, whakamaua kia tina*
*Seek out distant horizons and cherish
those you attain*

Anga a te Rautaki Rerenga Rauropi ā-Rohe

Regional Biodiversity Strategy Framework

The Accord signatories will develop a collaborative regional biodiversity strategy. This strategy will have community buy-in and meet the statutory requirements under the National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity and the Waikato Regional Policy Statement. The strategy will:

- Set out a landscape-scale vision and holistic approach to the restoration¹ of indigenous biodiversity. This will provide the overarching direction for local indigenous biodiversity strategies and other relevant plans, policies and strategies required or provided for in legislation.
- Be achievable in practice across the region for the benefit of the full range of regional ecosystems.
- Record the actions intended to promote the maintenance and restoration of the full range of regional ecosystems² for current and future generations, including the prioritisation of areas of high biodiversity value while considering all biodiversity values and ecosystem services.
- Recognise the interactions between people and species, the connections between rural and urban environments, and the connections across ecological districts.
- Recognise biological and physical connections within, and between the terrestrial environment, fresh water and the coastal marine area (a “ki uta ki tai – mountains to the sea” approach).
- Consider and promote the wider benefits of protecting biodiversity, such as protecting taonga and wāhi tapu, improved water quality, healthier freshwater habitats, carbon sequestration, hazard mitigation, biosecurity and amenity values.
- Recognise and involve treaty partners, whānau, hapū, iwi and Māori organisations as central leaders in the biodiversity system.
- Acknowledge the historical barriers faced by tangata whenua and respect their right to prioritise development over indigenous biodiversity protection in certain situations, as per their exercise of kaitiakitanga and rangatiratanga.
- Explore incentives for private landowners and Māori landowners as kaitiaki of indigenous biodiversity.
- Include effective community actions to build knowledge, skills and capability, empowering people to be active guardians of biodiversity.
- Provide for actions that increase resilience to the biological and environmental changes associated with climate change.
- Follow an efficient and effective strategy development and implementation process that recognises the varying capacity and resource constraints of the Accord signatories and wider community to participate and enables sharing of costs and leveraging of resources across partner organisations.

¹ As defined in Section 1.6 Ministry for the Environment (2023) *National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity*
² As defined in Section 1.6 Waikato Regional Council (2016) *Waikato Regional Policy Statement: Te Tauāki Kaupapahere Te-Rohe O Waikato*



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Te oati

Commitment

We, the undersigned, commit to actioning the Accord’s principles and regional biodiversity framework to strengthen our collaboration and build a strategy to improve the indigenous biodiversity of the Waikato region.

Ngā kīwai

Accord partners

Iwi partners



Local and regional authorities



Agencies



The Waikato Biodiversity Accord is a living document – anyone who is passionate about biodiversity and wants to commit to maintaining and restoring indigenous biodiversity in the Waikato region can join at any time.