

MANIAPOTO FRESHWATER CULTURAL ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK





OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT

Maniapoto Māori Trust Board (MMTB) and NIWA have been working collaboratively over the past two years to support Maniapoto whānau with three objectives in mind:

- Engaging and exciting Maniapoto whānau into reconnecting with their freshwaters.
- Developing a framework to assess the state of their freshwaters that reflects the unique values of Maniapoto whānau.
- Building the capability and capacity of Maniapoto whānau to participate in the assessment of their waterways according to their freshwater values.

The goal of this project was to work alongside Maniapoto whānau to develop a first draft Maniapoto Freshwater Cultural Assessment Framework (CAF).

Specifically responds to the needs and aspirations of whānau involved (e.g. to support in decision-making and influencing action in others), and is whānau-led and/or co-developed

Acknowledges whānau as place-based experts

Recognises and empowers whānau as co-leaders, co-governors, researchers, knowledge holders and teachers

Creates outcomes (not just outputs) that are useful and benefit the participating community and future generations

Enables Māori to share what is known, felt and understood by whānau (their mātauranga) in a way that helps to communicate their story

A CULTURAL ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

An aerial photograph of a river flowing through a lush, green forest. The river is dark and calm, reflecting the surrounding foliage. Large, moss-covered rocks are scattered throughout the riverbed. The banks are covered in dense vegetation, including many large, vibrant green ferns. The overall scene is serene and natural.

GUIDING DOCUMENTS

Ngā Wai o Maniapoto (Waipā River) Act 2012

The purpose of the Act is to restore and maintain the quality and integrity of the waters that flow into and form part of the Waipā River for present and future generations, and the care and protection of the mana tuku iho o Waiwaia. This Act has been the most recent catalyst for much of the freshwater focussed work across the Maniapoto rohe.

MANIAPOTO FRESHWATER MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES AND PLANNING

Maniapoto have been strategic and proactive in progressing their freshwater management and restoration priorities. The Maniapoto Priorities for the Restoration of the Waipā River (2014), Maniapoto Fish Plan (2015) and Iwi Environmental Management Plan (2016) serve as guiding documents for freshwater objectives. Other projects (e.g. Ngā Repo o Maniapoto, Tūhonohono, Mangaokewa Stream Cultural Health Index, Taonga Register, Upper Waipā River Integrated Management Plan, Healthy Rivers Waiora Project) all share an overall objective, that:



Ngāti Maniapoto whānau are actively participating in monitoring and assessment of freshwater within their rohe



FRESHWATER ASSESSMENT TRAINING WĀNANGA

In 2018-2019, MMTB and NIWA worked collaboratively to deliver freshwater assessment training wānanga for kaitiaki.

Three two-day wānanga were held at Maniapoto marae introducing kaitiaki to a number of assessment tools including the NIWA Stream Health Monitoring Assessment Kit (SHMAK) methods, E.coli testing, invertebrate identification, as well as fish and tuna monitoring methods.

Maniapoto sought to invest in enthusiastic kaitiaki who were both endorsed by their whānau and connected to their marae. These wānanga enabled us to excite and engage kaitiaki with practical, hands-on freshwater assessment experiences before exploring the development of a Maniapoto Freshwater Cultural Assessment Framework.



A MANIAPOTO FRESHWATER CULTURAL ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK



is a framework derived from Ngāti Maniapoto values, that incorporates Ngāti Maniapoto ways of assessing the state of those values, as well as assessment tools and approaches that draw on mātauranga Māori, community and scientific knowledge



HOW DID WE DO IT?

Developing the framework involved multiple methods, including:

- a literature review,
- wānanga kōrero, and
- semi-facilitated breakout sessions.

These different methods then allowed us to collate our findings, identify the framework components and visualise what the Maniapoto Freshwater Cultural Assessment Framework might look like.

In order to ensure that we built from the foundation of previous work completed by MMTB and whānau, we initially reviewed important Maniapoto literature and planning documents.



LITERATURE REVIEW

Through this review, we were able to identify four of the most consistently discussed freshwater values:

- Tuna
- Swimming
- Kōura
- Sites of Significance

An initial draft framework concept was presented with the literature reviewed to whānau at our first framework development wānanga held at Kahotea Marae in 2019 (Figure 1).



Figure 1 Initial draft concept of four potential values.

WĀNANGA KŌRERO

The first wānanga was attended by eight kaitiaki who had been involved in the 2018 freshwater assessment training wānanga. These kaitiaki represented a number of marae and whānau throughout the Waipā River catchment.

We utilised wānanga as a forum for discussions with whānau and to ground truth the initial framework values suggested based on the literature reviewed.



SEMI-FACILITATED BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Two questions were used to prompt whānau discussions facilitated by a project team member:

1. What is the current state of your value (e.g., tuna)?
2. How do you assess this?

This discussion enabled whānau to talk freely through what the current state of a value was and how they might go about assessing it 'Ko tā Maniapoto' (according to Maniapoto). We used mind maps and post-it noting to capture the kōrero shared (Figure 2).

Figure 2 Example of a mind mapping product from the breakout sessions.

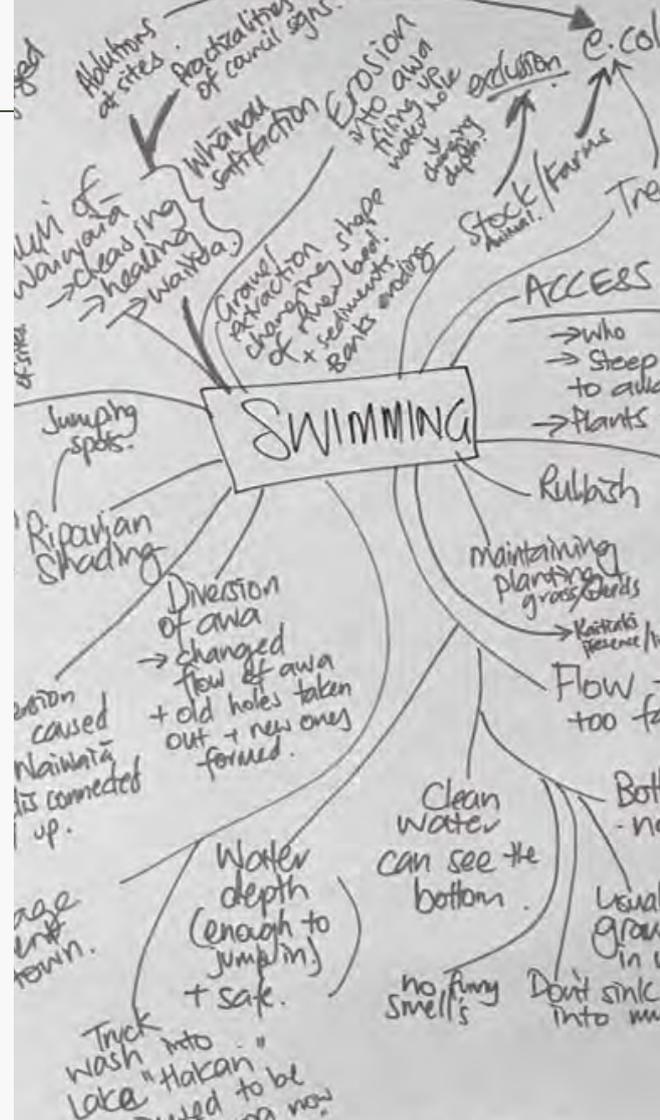




Figure 3 Values to be included in the Maniapoto Freshwater Cultural Assessment Framework.

In addition to the values explored in this first wānanga, we asked kaitiaki to identify any values not captured by the initial framework.

These included drinking water, birds, watercress, as well as culturally and ecologically important plants (e.g., rongoā and riparian) (Figure 3).

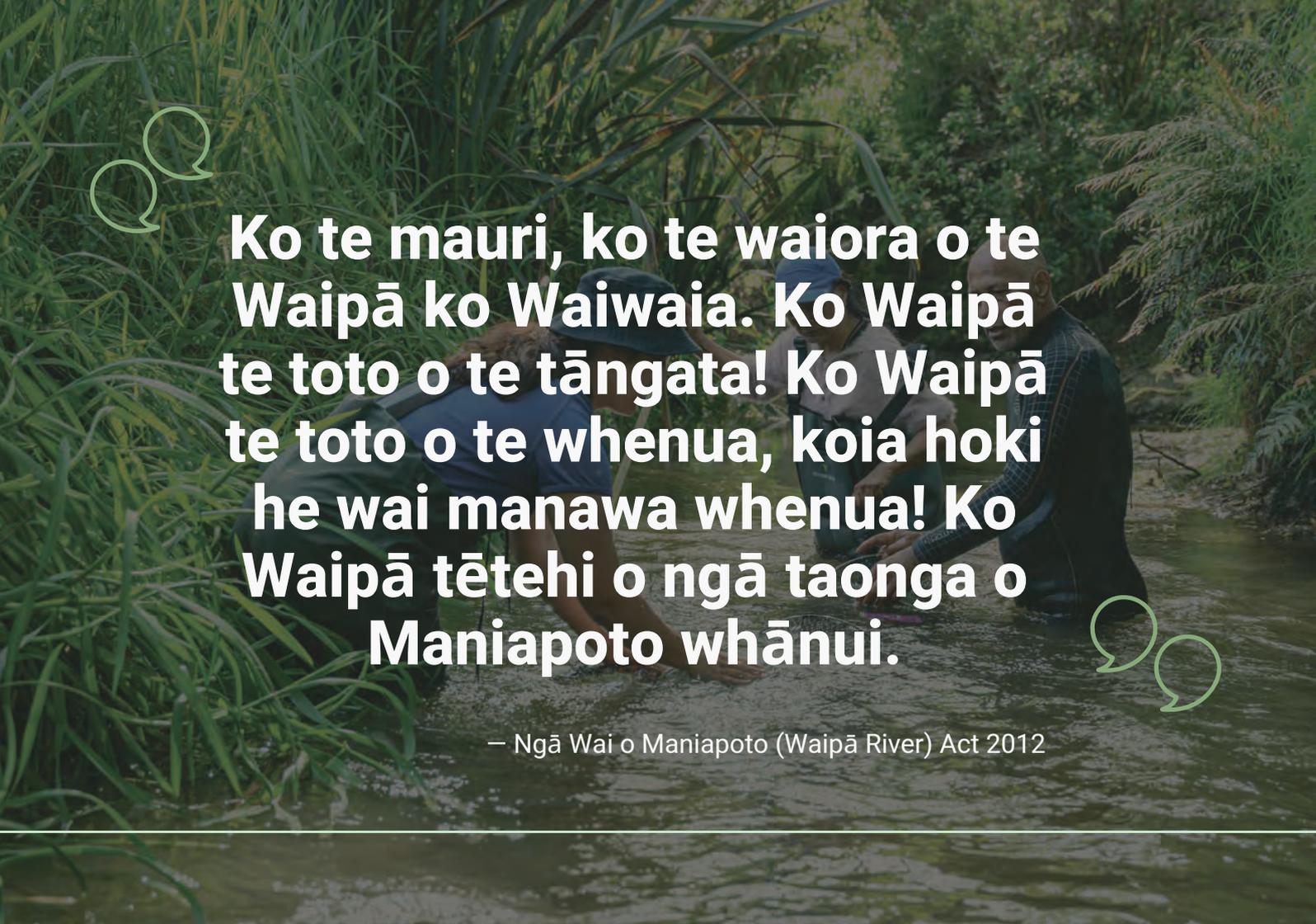
In the first instance, three values were chosen to explore in depth: tuna, swimming and drinking water. The additional values identified have not yet been developed, but are included to demonstrate their importance and highlight potential future developments needed.

COLLATING WĀNANGA DATA

The project team then undertook a two-step process in exploring and collating the information shared during our wānanga.

The three values common to all of the whānau (tuna, swimming and drinking water) were the focus of collation and visualisation.



A photograph of three people wading in a river, surrounded by tall reeds. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter. In the top left and bottom right corners, there are decorative green speech bubble icons.

**Ko te mauri, ko te waiora o te
Waipā ko Waiwaia. Ko Waipā
te toto o te tāngata! Ko Waipā
te toto o te whenua, koia hoki
he wai manawa whenua! Ko
Waipā tētehi o ngā taonga o
Maniapoto whānui.**

— Ngā Wai o Maniapoto (Waipā River) Act 2012

TE MAURI O WAIWAIA

In our wānanga, whānau discussed the importance of being able to connect with their freshwaters and described the feeling of wellness and sense of belonging coming from their connection with Waiwaia. Waiwaia is the taniwha, the protective essence, that resides in the Waipā River and it is the mauri of Waiwaia that the whānau ultimately want restored.

The name for the framework 'Te Mauri o Waiwaia' encompasses a range of values and the restoration of the health and wellbeing of freshwater and people across the Ngāti Maniapoto rohe. The name of this framework pays tribute to this intention and overall aspiration of Ngāti Maniapoto whānau.





IDENTIFYING THE FRAMEWORK COMPONENTS

The ways in which each whānau assessed the state of tuna, swimming and drinking water in their respective rohe were explored in more depth.

First, we used the mind maps and post-it noting products from the wānanga to develop an initial idea of the key attributes (e.g., health of the tuna) assessed by whānau when considering the state of each of their values (e.g., tuna).

Secondly, for each attribute, we identified the multiple indicators discussed by whānau that demonstrated a healthy state for that value (e.g., tuna are available in sufficient numbers to support whānau harvest).

VISUALISING VALUES

Our approach allowed us to incrementally build the framework. Figure 4 is an example of how the discussions captured were visualised for the tuna value, and how kōrero about tuna was mapped through to attributes, and then on to the indicators of state.

We underwent the same process for both the swimming and drinking water values.

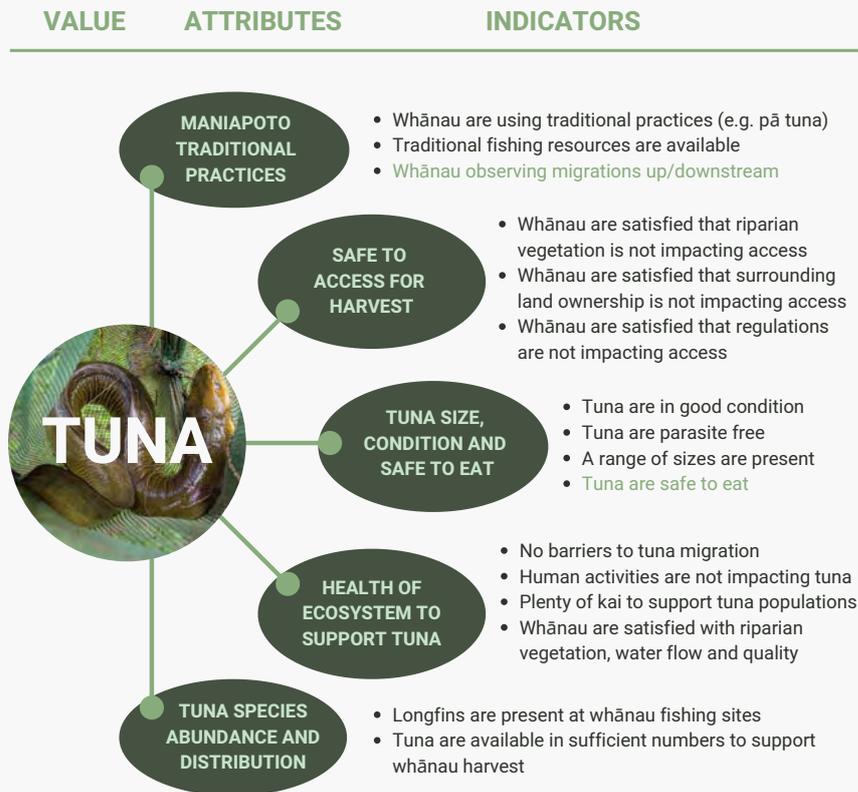


Figure 4 Example of the tuna value mapped to attributes and potential indicators. Indicators in green highlight where a tool/approach needs to be developed by whānau.

CONNECTING TOOLS AND APPROACHES WITH THE FRAMEWORK

Figure 5 Maniapoto whānau utilising nutrient testing kits from the SHMAK at Kahotea marae.

Once attributes and indicators were identified, we looked for readily available tools (including those that the whānau had been trained to use, e.g., SHMAK, E. coli, invertebrate and tuna monitoring) and approaches that would support whānau in the collection of the data required to populate their framework.

Two types of assessments were found to be applicable to the framework according to whānau. The first included a broader look at some of the biophysical indicators of each attribute using community science tools like the SHMAK (Figure 5).



CULTURAL HEALTH INDICATORS

Add your name here if you want to: _____

INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITIES
TE MAURI O WAIWAIĀ - MANIAPOTO KAITIĀKI ASSESSMENT

SITE NAME: _____ DATE & TIME: _____

MANIAPOTO CULTURAL USES (please circle): TUNA SWIMMING DRINKING WATER
OTHER: _____

For each question please indicate whether or not you are satisfied that the health of the wetland you are visiting is sufficient to support TUNA SWIMMING and/or DRINKING WATER.
To answer these questions please circle a number on a scale between 1 and 5, where 1 = not satisfied (bad) and 5 = satisfied (good)

QUESTION	1	2	3	4	5	Not relevant
1. Are you satisfied that the bank vegetation is healthy and that it is in the right vegetation to support tuna / swimming / drinking water? The plants and the banks together & provide banks for soil and regular vegetation does help drop soil & unwanted material from washing into the water. Comments: _____	Not satisfied				Yes, satisfied	
2. Are you satisfied that the banks are protected to support tuna / swimming / drinking water? Are the banks being into the waterway? Are people or stock using the banks causing issues? Comments: _____	Not satisfied				Yes, satisfied	
3. Are you satisfied that the effects of excessive stream algae and plant growth is controlled at this site? Comments: _____	Not satisfied				Yes, satisfied	
4. Are you satisfied that the bed or substrate condition of the waterway appears healthy to support tuna / swimming / drinking water? Has the bed or substrate of the waterway changed? If so, are a plant or tree, that is now all dead or gone? Comments: _____	Not satisfied				Yes, satisfied	

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INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITIES: Te Mauri o Waiwaiā - Maniapoto Kaitiāki Assessment (V2, May 2018)



The second type of assessment was based on a cultural health indicator (CHI) approach.

For each of the cultural health indicators, whānau were provided with questions that asked them to explore how satisfied they were with that indicator by responding on a scale of 1 – 5 where 1 was not satisfied, and 5 satisfied (Figure 6).

Figure 6 Example CHI survey form.



Once the appropriate tools and approaches were identified for each indicator, and in order to test that the draft CAF would provide the data that whānau were seeking, we developed a draft assessment protocol and data collection forms.

These were tested by whānau at a second wānanga held at Te Hape Marae. During a reflections session, whānau were able to identify if any indicators were missing and if changes were needed to the data forms and assessment protocol.

TESTING THE TOOLS AND DATA FORMS

NEXT STEPS AND IMPLEMENTATION

Although some initial testing occurred, work still remains to implement and further refine the protocols, data collection forms and framework. Future activities include site selection, regular and longer-term data collection, collation of results, analysis, as well as interpretation, visualisation, and communication of that data within the Cultural Assessment Framework.

In October 2019, the MMTB in collaboration with NIWA were successful in securing further funding to undertake the work necessary to progress the next phases of framework development.

This includes the development of a data management approach, data analysis and data visualisation tools.



A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a large, dark fish, possibly a trout or salmon, in a body of water. The fish is wet and its scales are glistening. The person's hands are visible, one near the head and the other near the tail. The background is dark and slightly blurred, suggesting an outdoor setting near water.

FURTHER READING

MMTB (2015) He Mahere Ika - Maniapoto Upper Waipā Fisheries Plan.

MMTB (2016) Ko tā Maniapoto Mahere Taiao - Maniapoto Environmental Management Plan.

Ratana, K., Herangi, N., Rickard, D. (2020) Maniapoto Freshwater Cultural Assessment Framework - Developing the Framework. NIWA Client Report 2020189HN. 28p.

Tipa, G., Williams, E., Herangi, N., Dalton, W., Skipper, A., Iti, W. (2014) Maniapoto priorities for the restoration of the Waipā River catchment. NIWA Client Report, WEL2015-3.

GET IN TOUCH

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We would like to acknowledge the Waikato River Authority for their continued support and ongoing financial assistance to complete this work. We also want to thank both MMTB and NIWA staff and students who have contributed, mentored and reviewed the work completed to date.

This mahi has also drawn on the experiences of whānau and researchers involved in the Ngā Kete o Te Wānanga: Mātauranga, Science and Freshwater Management research programme (MBIE Contract No. C01X1318).





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