



## Manatū mo te Taiao Ministry for the Environment MĀTAURANGA MĀORI AWARD MEDIUM-LARGE ORGANISATION WINNER

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VIDEO**



As the lead public sector agency for environmental policy, Te Manatū Mō Te Taiao Ministry for the Environment recognised it was uniquely positioned to support the relationship Māori have with the whenua.

In order to build better partnerships with tangata whenua, the Ministry introduced Te Ao Hurihuri, a transformational gains strategy to improve their ability to engage and partner with iwi/Māori.

Principal Advisor Joyce-Anne Raihania says the strategy adapts Sir Mason Durie's Pae Ora – Healthier Futures model.

“By basing our strategy on a kaupapa Māori framework, we have challenged our organisation to consider Māori's connection to the whenua and the responsibility that Māori have for protecting land for past and future generations,” she says.

Te Ao Hurihuri considers six pae ora elements:

- Mana Ora – Building accountability and relationships with public sector leads Public Service Commission, Te Arawhiti and Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori
- Kaitiaki Ora – Strengthening leadership opportunities for Te Rōpu Māori o te Manatū mo te Taiao

- Whānau Ora – Providing wānanga, training and tools to become competent when engaging their Treaty partners
- Wai Ora – Reviewing and redefining the Ministry’s divisions and their work programmes
- Mauri Ora – Providing individualised performance plans to fulfil engagement competency requirements
- HauOra – Evaluating the Ministry to assess their performance and progress

**“We recognised that how we work together internally and how we engage externally with Māori is critical to the success of the Ministry’s work”**

The strategy was launched in July 2020 by the Ministry’s chief executive at an all-staff hui. These included Treaty training, te reo classes, and effective engagement workshops for staff to upskill and begin their own bi-cultural journey. For many participants, this has been a uniquely personal journey.

Says one employee, “I feel I have a greater awareness and understanding of what my people have lost, and the inter-generational trauma and suffering as a result of this across all aspects of our livelihoods and how that carries on into today. At the end of one of the sessions I was really overwhelmed and emotional from what I had learnt and had been ignorant to... From a professional front, I now have greater understanding of the need to ensure Maori communities are connected in with our environmental work, and we enable younger generations to lead in their home regions.”

A commitment to Māori development is also part of the Ministry’s Strategic Framework, launched at the end of 2020.

“This consists of an operating principal of bringing the Treaty of Waitangi and te ao Māori into our work every day and a strategic priority of reflecting the Treaty of Waitangi in decision making,” says Joyce-Anne.

A Deputy Secretary Māori Rights and Interests role was created to lead and set the direction of future work.



“We recognised that how we work together internally and how we engage externally with Māori is critical to the success of the Ministry’s work,” she says.

## THE AIM

The Ministry for the Environment wanted to build a Māori Crown relations-capable workforce to transform the way it works with its communities in setting policy and strategies to take care of the environment.

## STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

- Te Ao Hurihuri, a transformational strategy, was introduced by the chief executive.
- Managers and directors are expected to embed Te Ao Hurihuri and the Treaty of Waitangi principles into their work.
- Supporting initiatives include:
  - Te Tai Kaha: A rōpu of leading Māori experts and rangatira to provide advice and iwi technicians on key policy areas such as Resource Management Act reform, freshwater management and the Three Waters Reform Programme
  - Te Ihirangi: A Māori-led initiative for climate change charged with raising awareness, holding hui, collecting data for a GIS platform and participating in the Iwi Chair's forum as a lead advisor on climate change.
  - Science secondment: an iwi secondment to support Māori integration into Ministry data and strengthen the partnership
  - Intern partnership with strategic iwi: Each summer 12 Māori interns join the Ministry.
- Strategic Framework that includes a commitment to Māori engagement and development.

## RESULTS AND BENEFITS

- Training undertaken by staff:
  - Te Arawhiti Effective engagement workshops – 57 participants,
  - Treaty/New Zealand history training – 260-plus staff have participated in one-day workshops;
  - Reo Ora – an eight-week te reo training for staff, 40-plus staff have attended
- Increased opportunities for Māori staff within the Ministry.
- The use of te reo by staff has grown significantly as they have become more confident.

## KEY LEARNING

Te Ao Hurihuri has enabled the Ministry for the Environment and its people to be more confident, competent and effective when working with Māori and enhances Māori's kaitiakitanga role with the whenua. By improving its operating model, the Ministry has been able to mana enhance its Treaty partnership.

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