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**MEDIA RELEASE**

## **REVIEW PROPOSES CHANGES TO MĀORI FISHERIES STRUCTURES**

Te Ohu Kaimoana (Māori Fisheries Trust) will hold up to 10 hui nationwide with iwi organisations to discuss far-reaching recommendations made in a review of the Māori Fisheries Settlement structures.

The 2015 Review was a scheduled review prescribed in the Māori Fisheries Act 2004. The Māori Fisheries Act gives legislative effect to an agreed method of allocation of the Māori Fisheries Settlement, agreed in 2003. The review was carried out by Wellington barrister Tim Castle.

Te Ohu Kaimoana Chairman Mr Matiu Rei welcomed publication of the 2015 Review. He said the nationwide hui will assist iwi in understanding the implications of the review's recommendations. Whether the recommendations are implemented or not is a decision for iwi, requiring agreement from at least 75 percent of iwi.

"Iwi have an opportunity through their decisions to shape the Māori Fisheries Settlement entities and the future direction of their fisheries assets," Mr Rei said today. "A key objective of the nationwide hui is to further understanding of the recommendations so that iwi are able to make informed decisions at a meeting to be held later in the year."

Te Ohu Kaimoana has put together a team for the nationwide hui that includes Te Ohu directors, iwi representatives and individuals qualified to deal with the issues.

The 2015 Review recommends, among other things, that iwi take direct control of the flagship Māori fishing company, Aotearoa Fisheries Limited. Recommendations include:

- All voting shares in AFL are transferred to iwi;
- Iwi directly appoints the board of AFL;
- Te Ohu Kaimoana is wound up and its voting and income shares in AFL transferred to iwi;
- Additional members be added to the board of Te Pūtea Whakatupu Trustee Limited with different appointment arrangements for directors
- Te Pūtea Whakatupu Trustee Limited and Te Wai Māori Trustee Limited to be stand-alone entities with their own administrative support.

Te Ohu is required to communicate its response to iwi within 40 working days of the release of the 2015 Review. It is then required to hold a Special General Meeting within 60 working days of the release of the report where iwi vote on the recommendations. Mr Rei said the meetings will further assist Te Ohu in developing its response to the recommendations.

Deputy Chairman of Te Ohu Kaimoana and Chairman of Te Runanga A Iwi O Ngapuhi, the country's largest iwi, Mr Sonny Tau, said the 2015 Review is a further step in the evolution of Māori Fisheries.

“Te Ohu Kaimoana, as an organisation, has proved extremely effective. Against expectations, it has managed to allocate almost all of the Māori Fisheries Settlement in the last 10 years. It has further advocated on behalf of iwi at political and industry levels to ensure the value of the Settlement is not whittled away through changes in regulations and government or industry policy. Protecting and enhancing the Māori Fisheries Settlement is an over-arching goal of Te Ohu Kaimoana.”

“The 2015 Review will be considered by some iwi as an evolutionary step in the ongoing nature of Māori commercial fisheries. Now that virtually all iwi have their fisheries assets, they will have developed a greater understanding of what’s required in managing them. There was a huge debate for over a decade on how these assets should be divided up between iwi and the allocation model that was agreed was a finely balanced solution. Iwi will have to think very seriously, however, about pulling apart that structure at this time,” Mr Tau said.

Sir Mark Solomon, Te Ohu Kaimoana Director and Chairman of Te Runanga o Ngāi Tahu, said now that the 2015 Review has been distributed to iwi organisations, the role of the reviewer is completed. It is up to Iwi to give consideration to the recommendations. “Mr Castle’s work as the reviewer is ended. It is now up to Iwi and Māori to weigh up the pros and cons, and do their own analyses to assess the merits or otherwise of the recommendations,” Sir Mark said.

The 2015 Review will be a topic of discussion at Te Ohu Kaimoana’s hui-a-tau (AGM) on 25 March at the Novotel Hotel Auckland International Airport.

## Background

The Fisheries Settlement consisted of cash and fishing quota delivered through iwi for the benefit of all Māori and was provided for through a 1989 Interim Settlement and a 1992 Final Settlement. Further information and the full report can be found at [teohu.maori.nz/review](http://teohu.maori.nz/review).

AFL ownership is structured through a mix of voting and income shares. Te Ohu Kaimoana holds all of the voting shares on behalf of iwi and 20 percent of the income shares. The remaining 80 percent of the income shares are spread over all iwi. AFL owns and operates fishing and aquaculture enterprises including Moana Pacific Fisheries, Pacific Marine Farms, Prepared Foods, and 50 percent of Sealord Group Limited with Japanese seafood company Nippon Suisan Kaisha, Limited.

The structures under review were:

- **Te Ohu Kai Moana Trustee Limited**, the corporate trustee of Te Ohu Kai Moana Trust, which holds the assets of the Māori Fisheries Settlement between Māori and the Crown on behalf of Māori until they are distributed to Mandated Iwi Organisations as prescribed by the Act;
- **Aotearoa Fisheries Limited**, the commercial entity of the Settlement structures,
- The corporate trustee of **Te Pūtea Whakatupu Trust**, which was established to promote Māori education initiatives, training and research,
- The corporate trustee of **Te Wai Māori Trust**, which supports iwi initiatives in the protection and enhancement of freshwater fisheries initiatives through funding research, development and education initiatives, and
- **Te Kawai Taumata**, which appoints directors to Te Ohu Kai Moana Trustee Limited on behalf of 57 iwi organisations.

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