

# TE OHU KAIMOANA



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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Te Ohu Kaimoana, the Māori Fisheries Trust, has considered the Government's recent announcement to create the country's largest marine reserve around the Kermadec Islands. The **Chairman of Te Ohu Kaimoana, Mr Matiu Rei**, and **Chief Executive, Mr Peter Douglas**, provide the following comments:

1. The Deed of Settlement between the Crown and iwi (signed as part of the full and final settlement for Maori interests in fishing) guaranteed that the Crown would consult with its partners – iwi (and its agents) – on matters relating to the management of our fisheries and ecosystems. The Government has not lived up to its guarantees in respect of the Kermadec Ocean Sanctuary.
2. The nature of Maori customary rights – as recognised by the Courts – means irrespective of whether iwi (or Te Ohu Kaimoana through its fishing companies) have or have not fished in the area for some years, those rights endure. The extent of use is not relevant and does not remove the Government's obligation to consult with its Treaty Partners where the decision affects the rights of Māori. Iwi rights go beyond other participants in the fisheries sector and include quota share interests in fisheries based on QMA10 – the Kermadec zone. The nature of those rights means all iwi have a commercial interest in this area.
3. To inform Te Ohu Kaimoana (as the agent of the Treaty partners) a mere 10 hours before the Prime Minister's announcement at the United Nations and call it consultation is cynical.
4. The Kermadec Ocean Sanctuary builds on the New Zealand seafood industry's efforts to protect the Kermadec ecosystem through the creation of a "Benthic Protection Area" in 2007. The BPA bans all forms of fishing that make contact with the sea floor. Te Ohu Kaimoana was one of the key industry partners in the creation of BPAs over the entire EEZ around the Kermadec Islands. Te Ohu Kaimoana welcomes the Sanctuary insofar as our actions are further strengthened by preventing mining in that area.
5. Our ethos and the basis for Te Ohu Kaimoana in the Māori Fisheries Settlement is to act as kaitiaki on behalf iwi to protect and enhance the Fisheries Settlement and the opportunities it offers. Sustainable fishing is the core tenet to that ethos. The Government has gone much further than it needed in this instance. Fishing within the Kermadec zone is well within sustainable limits.
6. The Fisheries Settlement recognises iwi interests in fisheries. These are ongoing. Iwi will always be involved in fisheries and fishing. Iwi take a long-term view on management and seek both sustainable utilisation and conservation outcomes. The Government will also have an enduring role in fisheries management. As the only other long-term participants, it makes sense that the Government and iwi work on measures such as this. Te Ohu Kaimoana calls on the Government to work with iwi and ourselves on the broader application of marine protected areas.

Te Ohu Kaimoana will outlay its concerns to the Prime Minister, Minister for the Environment and the Minister for Primary Industries, on behalf of iwi at the earliest opportunity, and reiterate the clear intentions contained within the 1992 Deed of Settlement between Māori and the Crown, Mr Rei and Mr Douglas said.

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