

Address by Jamie Tuuta to

The Nature Conservancy Symposium

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Tēnā koutou

Thank you to TNC for the opportunity to present to you all today. My name is Jamie Tuuta and I am the Chairman of Te Ohu Kaimoana, the Māori Fisheries Trust.

I would like to start by acknowledging Lynne Zeitlin, Michael Looker and the wider TNC team for their excellent work on the recently published *Learning from New Zealand's 30 Years of Experience Managing Fisheries under a Quota Management System* which has provided a number of insights for us all to consider as we look to the future of our fisheries globally.

Kaitiakitanga

The Māori concept of kaitiakitanga is about wise and enduring use.

Kaitiakitanga is unavoidably connected with notions of power, control and ownership of land and water – and this fact is often missed when we talk about kaitiakitanga in the modern context. We simply cannot be kaitiaki of our land and sea if we have lost ownership or control and influence over it – a point worth bearing in mind as one third of New Zealand's coast line has now passed into private and foreign ownership.

Kaitiakitanga relates to the management of resources – including use and protection. Effectively it refers to sustainable management and the utilization of resources in such a way and at such a rate as to ensure that they are not diminished.

We are kaitiaki. As such, we have a responsibility to past and future generations.

Kaitiakitanga speaks to the notion that nature and culture cannot be separated. Our role as kaitiaki requires us to protect and nurture our environment and it will in turn protect and nurture us.

In a fisheries context it was always understood by Māori that fisheries might rise and fall on the science of sustainability.

Where stocks are under pressure, fishing effort would reduce. We saw that with the hoki and the orange roughy resources over the last 10 – 15 years and they are now in great shape. We accepted the cuts in quota to help rebuild.

1992 Settlement

The fisheries settlement was the first modern agreement between Māori and the crown to settle historic grievances under the Treaty of Waitangi.

It is a pan-Māori settlement, involving all iwi in the one deal.

And it kicked off the wider claims process that our country has been resolving since the 1980s.

In the 25 years since signatures sealed the full and final agreement (and I don't use that term lightly), the fisheries settlement was the beginning of Māori economic reawakening and revitalisation.

Leaders talk about the importance of the Māori fisheries settlement as being fundamental to their iwi's economic growth; contributing to the health and wellbeing of iwi communities, a reassertion of rangatiratanga, an expression of identity. It is also a critical component to the resolution of their wider claims under the Treaty of Waitangi.

Māori endorsed the Quota Management System in 1992 as a suitable regime for the sustainable management of commercial fisheries. It is the only fisheries management regime that has been agreed and endorsed by Māori as it has a kaitiakitanga-like focus on using resources within sustainable tolerances.

The properties of the QMS - perpetuity, security, and sustainability - were the incentives Māori required for long-term management, recognising that future generations would benefit or otherwise from the actions of the current generation. This approach is in keeping with the concept of kaitiakitanga and the intergenerational view held by Māori.

The quota represented a right to fish in perpetuity which is what Māori sought and the Māori Fisheries Settlement was the result.

The rights were secure - dependent only on meeting sustainability requirements.

It was considered then, as it remains now, a regime in which Māori and iwi could play a meaningful part. It was the opportunity for Māori to work in partnership with the Crown to consider how we manage the marine environment in the future; how we might give expression to the Māori fisheries settlement in a contemporary context.

Partnership remains part of the ongoing challenge.

Challenges

The Māori fisheries settlement has become part of the Māori constitution.

It's a valuable agreement because fisheries are culturally important.

The Maori Fisheries Settlement is inextricably linked to the fisheries management regime and set in place the requirement that future governments work in partnership with iwi.

This has not yet been achieved but we are hopeful that our new Prime Minister's statements of her desire to achieve a true partnership with Maori comes to fruition.

To that end, partnership and transparency is fundamental to any evolution of laws and policies relating to the marine environment.

This speaks to the inherent conflict in pluralistic societies with differences in world views. The Māori world view of kaitiakitanga vs those who advocate preservation for preservation's sake.

The proposed Kermedec Ocean Sanctuary provides an illuminating case study. It demonstrates the importance of transparency in government processes and the subsequent risks where this is absent. It also illustrates the inherent problems within a pluralistic society where we have opposing world views, such that one, (usually the Māori world view) is subordinated to the other.

It also raises the question of motive. The Kermedec discourse shows that beneath the rhetoric of sustainability is the desire for New Zealand to be lauded as a pioneer in marine conservation.

Hansard confirms this with many speeches referring to New Zealand's pioneering status as a world leader in marine conservation.

Our pursuit for leadership in the marine conservation space needs to be one that is culturally, scientifically and intellectually robust.

Research demonstrates that protection and sustainability goals can be achieved through a range of different protection regimes which can accommodate cultural and social interests.

Everything that has ever gone wrong between Māori and the Crown since 1840 is a result of a clash of ideology. Mostly a clash of western ideology over Māori value systems.

Māori have two things in our favour - immortality and memory. Now just think about that.

Opportunity

Current Māori leaders have summarised the current conservation protection objective as 'hostile to the customary principle of sustainable use' and observe that 'the spiritual linkage of iwi with indigenous resources is subjected to paternalistic control.

The future must be one that adopts a Māori world view, one where conservation solutions meet multiple social and ecological goals. This will not be achieved so long as conservation is framed as a human vs nature contest.

Māori have always maintained that the division between humanity and nature, which translates into barriers and demarcations between economy and environment is an artefact of western

thinking. Rather, there is an underlying unity between human and non-human.

The future requires an investment in sustainability and science.

I see a future of kaitiakitanga in practice, flourishing relationships between people, place and natural resources. Nature and culture cannot be separated, the human dimension is not an obstacle to be overcome on the way to a conservation solution but is key to that solution.

Collectively we have the opportunity to create a legacy for this and future generations – we are therefore in a privileged position to develop and shape fit for purpose arrangements that speak to us as Aotearoa New Zealand.

Thank you