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**United Nations Group of Experts on
Geographical Names**

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Item 12 of the provisional agenda *

**Geographical names as culture, heritage and identity,
including indigenous, minority and regional languages
and multilingual issues**

**Report of New Zealand on new maps showing
traditional/customary/ancestral/original Māori names**

Submitted by New Zealand **

Summary

In 1995, the New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa¹ published a set of very popular poster-style maps, entitled *Te Ika a Māui, The Land and its People circa 1840*,² and *Te Wai Pounamu, The Land and its People circa 1840*.³ With a considerable volume of additional restored and corrected Māori names resulting from Tiriti o Waitangi claim settlements over the past three decades, the Board decided it was time for new versions of the maps.

The two new printed maps will be published in March or April 2023. They are renamed *Tangata Whenua Place Names – Te Ika-a-Māui* and *Tangata Whenua Place Names – Te Waipounamu*. The maps will further contribute to a growing appreciation and interest in Māori names by being a dedicated source of accurate and authoritative information that will be an important education resource. The Māori names contribute to restored mana (status) – to meet Tiriti o Waitangi partnership, participation and protection principles. The names show macrons, where relevant, to reflect meaning and pronunciation.

Recognition of these important historical names assists in acknowledging the deep connection between Māori and the land that has been maintained through oral traditions, despite many of the historical names having been overlaid with introduced European names.

The report provides information on the process of how the maps were prepared, in particular with regard to the importance of engaging directly with appropriate Māori groups on the correct names and meanings. While the purpose of the new maps is to highlight the names, the new design and artwork will make them a collectable resource and a source of conversation for all New Zealanders.

* GEGN.2/2023/1

** Prepared by Wendy Shaw, Secretary for the New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa

¹ Memorial markers of the landscape.

² See <https://www.linz.govt.nz/sites/default/files/nth-island-front-lg.jpg>.

³ See <https://www.linz.govt.nz/sites/default/files/sth-island-front-lg.jpg>.

Māori place names

“In pre-literate Māori culture there was a huge dependence on memory and the careful transmission of history from generation to generation. The names in the landscape were like survey pegs of memory, marking the events that happened in a particular place, recording some aspect or feature of the traditions and history of a tribe. If the name was remembered it could release whole parcels of history to a tribal narrator and those listening. The daily use of such place names meant that the history was always present, always available. In this sense the living and travelling reinforced the histories of the people.

Some of these groups of names, as well as individual names, were of such significance that when a tribe migrated elsewhere it ‘replanted’ its history in its new home by naming its new landscape with the names of the place of origin. Because of the role of place names as a device for recording and remembering tribal history the historical events themselves sometimes became relocated in the new setting. This is one of the reasons why some Māori and Polynesian histories appear so similar and repetitious. They may be the same story repeated in fresh settings. This does not make the traditions associated with a particular place name, or group of names, any less authentic. It is a perfectly valid process within an oral tradition. It derives from the character of oral tradition. It uses place names in different ways from the way literate societies use them.”

From *Ngā Tohu Pūmahara, The Survey Pegs of the Past, Understanding Māori Place Names*⁴, published by the New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa, 1990.

New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa

The Board is a statutory body responsible to the Minister for Land Information. It follows formal processes, including targeted and public consultation, to make geographic names official within New Zealand. The Board has legislative functions to collect and encourage the use of original Māori place names for recording on official maps and charts. This includes standardising the orthography of Māori names by applying macrons and hyphens where required.

Present day official maps and charts contain many Māori place names; however, not all are spelled correctly. As the national naming authority, the Board is working towards restoring original Māori names and reviewing their orthography. For more information about the Board see <https://www.linz.govt.nz/our-work/new-zealand-geographic-board>.

By producing and publishing the 2nd edition of these two maps the Board is fulfilling one of its statutory functions to ‘collect’ original Māori names on official maps. It is also meeting a purpose stated in its legislation: ‘to provide the means for appropriate recognition to be accorded to cultural and heritage values associated with geographic features’.

In addition, the maps will be an educational resource to complement the new New Zealand history curriculum being rolled out in schools during 2023 which specifically addresses the importance of geographic naming by Māori as a means to understand the history of a place, feature or area.

⁴ <https://www.linz.govt.nz/sites/default/files/nga-tohu-pumahara.pdf>

1st edition of the maps, 1995

The 1st edition maps were based on drafts prepared for a *Centennial Atlas*⁵ which was to have been published in 1941. Due to a funding shortage because of the Second World War the atlas was never completed. A large volume of the material and names prepared for it remained stored at the Alexander Turnbull Library and in the Board's archives, including lists of names originally compiled with the assistance of past notable scholars Sir Apirana Ngata, James Cowan, Johannes Andersen, George Graham and other nomenclature experts of the day.

At the South Pacific Place Names Conference in 1990 it was resolved to produce a map of original Māori place names. Following preliminary work, the Board agreed to finish the centenary maps as part of the International Year for the World's Indigenous People in 1993. The existing body of scholarship was sought, and further names were added to the original lists. For the cartography, vegetation *circa* 1840 was sourced from the 1976 *New Zealand Atlas* and a review of more recent scientific papers.

The highly esteemed and decorated late Mrs Te Aue Davis (1925-2010) (CM, OBE, CNZM⁶) assisted the former Department of Survey and Land Information in researching Māori names and traditions. She worked principally with the Board to collect material on original Māori names from tribal groups who had previously contributed to the Board's publication *He Korero Pūrākau Mo Ngā Taunahanahatanga a Ngā Tūpuna, Place Names of the Ancestors, A Maori Oral History Atlas*⁷. In collaboration with John Wilson and Tā Tipene O'Regan, she also wrote and edited the material for the Board's companion publication, *Ngā Tohu Pūmahara, The Survey Pegs of the Past, Understanding Māori Place Names*. The networks that Mrs Davis had previously established were used to verify individual Māori names for the maps, including several months of travel by Mrs Davis to meet with kaumātua⁸.

For the orthography of the names the Board tried to balance the standardised orthography for te reo⁹ Māori developed by the then newly established Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori (Māori Language Commission)¹⁰, with the perceived cartographic difficulties of using macrons, hyphens and longer geographic names. While macrons were endorsed, hyphens were not, as they were considered to create cartographic 'noise' that could be misinterpreted as map symbology. The Board also chose to separate out the constituent parts of names considering that the origin and meaning was 'destroyed' by compounding words.

Artwork for the maps was produced by the renowned artist, the late Cliff Whiting (1936-2017) (ONZ¹¹).

2nd edition of the maps, 2023

The 2nd edition maps have improved on the 1st editions with corrections, and the addition of original names restored as cultural redress through the Tiriti of Waitangi settlement process, and names determined through direct consultation with

⁵ The centennial of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi/Tiriti o Waitangi in 1840

⁶ Commemorative Medal, Order of the British Empire, Companions of the New Zealand Order of Merit

⁷ <https://www.linz.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2022-11/319295-LINZ-Maori%20Oral%20History%20Atlas-PGS.pdf>

⁸ Elders

⁹ The language

¹⁰ Established by the Māori Language Act 1987 and Maori Language Amendment Act 1991

¹¹ Order of New Zealand

iwi¹² and hapū¹³. A small amount of feedback received following the publication of the 1st editions has also been addressed. For Te Waipounamu (also known as South Island), names were comprehensively reassessed by Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu¹⁴ given the decades of additional research they have done on their cultural heritage, which culminated in their online cultural heritage atlas Kā Huru Manu¹⁵. For Te Ika-a-Māui (also known as North Island), names were widely consulted on with many Māori groups. The 2nd edition of Te Ika-a-Māui was intended to be an iterative improvement, particularly given there was no resourcing/capacity to research geographic names.

Generally, the standardised orthography for te reo Māori is used, which is confirmed by a licensed translator, Ms Te Haumihiata Mason (ONZM¹⁶). However, for some names, determining the correct orthography such as macron placement is not possible where the kōrero¹⁷ of the name is not known – Mōtūwairaka is the tupuna¹⁸ Wairaka drowned and transformed to stone like a fishing sinker (mōtū) but Motutāiko is the island (motu) of the black petrel. Tiriti of Waitangi settlement names from their respective legislation are also shown on the maps, so they may reflect the preference of iwi and hapū rather than the correct orthographic standard. Kōrero in the index on the backs of each map was gathered from tangata whenua¹⁹, authoritative resources, or carried down from the 1st editions.

Where the 1st edition maps were plate prints, the 2nd editions are digital products built from layers of geographic information. The landscape was mostly derived from the data behind Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand's 1:50k scale digital topographic maps. Starting with modern and accurate data, the map turns back time on some of the more notable changes in the landscape over the past two centuries. These include land reclamations, river diversions, glacial retreat, the construction of numerous hydro-electrical dams, and natural events such as the uplift of the large lagoon Te Whanganui-a-Orotū in the 1931 Napier earthquake. Some of the names are for features that no longer exist. The cartographer, Roger Smith from Geographx (NZ) Ltd, showed the vegetation coverage based on his prior work and this was supplemented from other sources. As the map is at 1:1million scale the changes depicted are approximate only and are not exhaustive. Rather, they are representative in order to put the original geographic names in a generalised pre-colonial context.

Hori Te Ariki Mataki from Ariki Creative completed the artwork and overall design for the new maps.

Consultation with tangata whenua

For the Te Ika-a-Māui (North Island) map, over 500 iwi contacts were invited to provide feedback. For the Te Waipounamu (South Island) map, Ngāi Tahu consulted internally with its 18 papatipu rūnanga²⁰. The Board also sought feedback from Te Tau Ihu (top of the South Island) iwi and the two iwi/imi on the Chatham Islands, noting that Moriori have a unique language. The Board used an online feedback form via the

¹² Extended tribe

¹³ Tribe or sub-tribe

¹⁴ Tribal group of much of the South Island

¹⁵ <https://www.kahurumanu.co.nz/atlas>

¹⁶ Officers of the New Zealand Order of Merit (awarded in 2023 for services to Māori language education)

¹⁷ Story

¹⁸ Ancestor

¹⁹ People of the place

²⁰ <https://ngaitahu.iwi.nz/te-runanga-o-ngai-tahu/papatipu-runanga/>

Qualtrics™ platform. Consultation began around mid-2021 and has been ongoing since, with last minute feedback received as recently as March 2023.

The engagement with tangata whenua did not attract a significant number of responses, but for those who gave feedback the discussions were in depth, which impacted on the timeline and delivery of the final maps. However, the desire to get the names right was uppermost in this project.

The basemaps

Since late 2020, across a dozen iterations, the names chosen, their feature types and their locations have evolved. Multiple versions have created significant rework and review by Geographx and the Board's Secretariat. At 1:1million scale not all names could be shown.

See the most recent March 2023 basemap versions here:

Te Ika-a-Māui (JPG, 7.6MB)

https://www.linz.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2023-03/09d_Te-Ika-a-Maui_070323.jpg

Te Waipounamu (JPG, 8MB)

https://www.linz.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2023-03/02a_Te-Waipounamu_200323.jpg

Map scale and accuracy

The two printed maps are 900x685mm at 1:1million scale reproduction. Small scale wall maps such as these are designed for general reference, and neither the maps nor the data represented on them can ever be considered a reliable source of detailed geographic information. Some of the features displayed and labelled are so small that they would typically have no place on maps of such a small scale, but the features and places that tangata whenua wanted on the map are not necessarily of a significant physical scale.

Some features (such as pā²¹ and kāinga²²) are grouped so closely together that symbols have been deliberately spaced to avoid confusing overlaps and ensure that both the type of feature and its name are clearly discernible and communicated. On the working draft the symbols (eg a single pā) covered approximately 5 square kilometres. The original Māori names are also generally longer than what their present-day equivalent may be and so required more space. In some cases, the trade off to show a name has required a shorter form, eg Te Whakatūrākau rather than Mangatārera o Te Whakatūrākau. Further compromise has been necessary by culling a significant number of names, generalising some data, and applying normal cartographic practice on maps of this scale where the need for clarity and effective communication trumps the need for accuracy.

However, accuracy is important. The dataset supporting the map is captured with the most precise information available (eg the exact location of a named rock). It is the Board's intention to publish the names 'collected' from the map for reuse, and possibly produce a larger scale online map in the future with more names added.

Population distribution

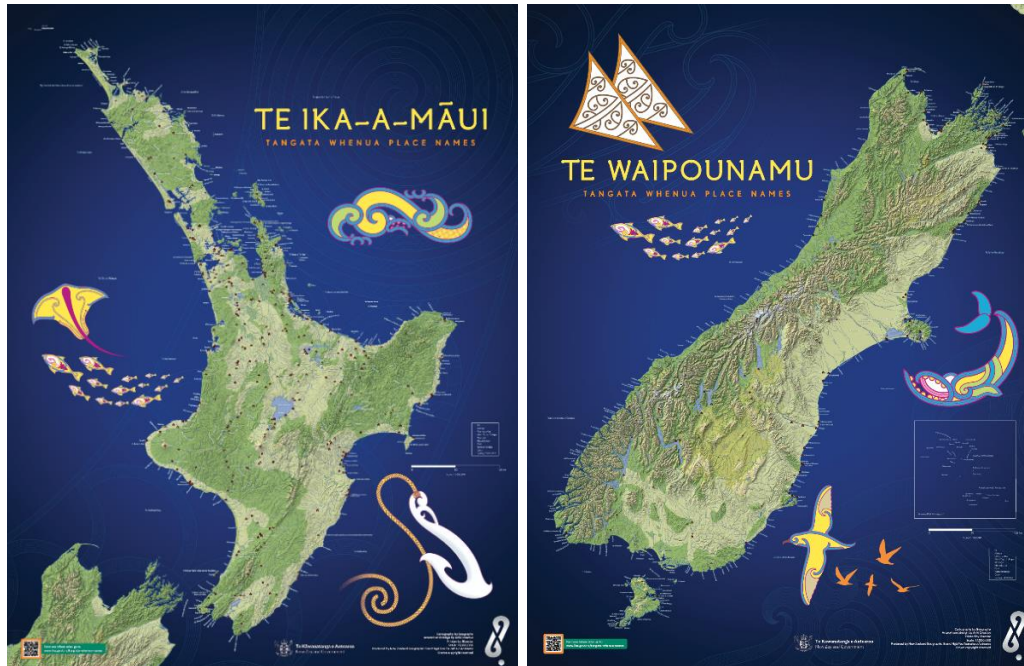
The new maps have a reasonable distribution of names across Aotearoa New Zealand. This is pleasing from a visual perspective but may be misleading as to how the population was distributed geographically in the mid-1800s (noting that the bulk of the population was in the top half of Te Ika-a-Māui and relatively few people

²¹ fortified village

²² residence, village, settlement

Design, artwork

Ariki Creative modernised the artwork to be striking and symbolic. The colours are bold and eye-catching – attempting to draw interest, especially from school children. The Board’s committee on Māori place names offered advice and feedback on the numerous design/artwork options from Ariki Creative. This is a sample of version nine from mid-2022:



Printing, distribution, launch

7,000 prints of each map were run in April 2023. Just over 2,500 will be distributed to all schools in New Zealand and around 800 to marae²⁴. An informal launch of the maps was held when the Board met on 26 April 2023. A formal launch will be held in the near future, with invitations and thanks to all those involved, past and present.

What’s next?

The Board plans to eventually produce an interactive digital version of the maps to supplement the static PDF or JPG files which will be freely downloadable under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 licence. The digital version may be presented as an alternative view to the *New Zealand Gazetteer*. It will provide for many more Māori names to be depicted at any scale and all of the stories will be discoverable.

In the meantime, the names shown on the printed maps will be published and made publicly discoverable, ‘collected’ in the *New Zealand Gazetteer* either as entirely new entries or captured against existing official and unofficial geographic names.

The Board’s statutory function is to ‘collect original Māori names of geographic features for recording on official charts and official maps’. The next step could be to request Toitū Te Whenua LINZ to record the names on maps and charts, at least where no other name exists. Having these original Māori names on the maps and

²⁴ The formal gathering/greeting/discussion/education place of iwi/hapū

charts does not necessarily mean that they will become official, but it does open the opportunity.

Feedback from tangata whenua will be sought for a future 3rd edition of the maps and captured for possible use.

Indigenous terms in reference to geographic names²⁵

Traditional	kōrero tuku iho	history, stories of the past, traditions, oral tradition
Customary	tikanga tuku iho	customary law, tradition, lore, custom
Ancestral	ipukarea	ancestral home, homeland, native land, inherited land - significant water or geographical feature of a tribe's homeland relating to the tribe's identity and the source of their livelihood.
Original	taketake	long-established, original, ancient, own, lasting, aboriginal, native, indigenous

Points for discussion

The Group of Experts is invited to:

- (1) Take note of the efforts made to restore original Māori names and to share their stories as part of the education curriculum for New Zealand history.
- (2) Consider why the documentation in printed form is important to tangata whenua.
- (3) Understand the restoration balance which benefits reclaiming identity, pride and connection to place.
- (4) Recognise various mediums to use to share indigenous names for education.
- (5) Take note of how well the 1st edition maps were received by New Zealanders and the expectation that the 2nd edition maps will be equally as popular.

Contact

For any enquiries, comments and feedback please contact:

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²⁵ <https://maoridictionary.co.nz/>