

HE ARA HONOHONO PATHWAYS TO MANA WHAKAHONO

HE KUPU ĀRAHI – IWI/HAPŪ GUIDANCE FOR IWI/HAPŪ KAIMAHI



MANA WHAKAHONO AGREEMENTS: WHAT IWI/HAPŪ KAIMAHI NEED TO KNOW

Key messages for iwi/hapū kaimahi:

- ☞ If your iwi or hapū does not have a Treaty settlement or a joint management agreement, a Mana Whakahono ā Rohe could help ensure your rights and interests are recognised in resource management processes and other matters.
- ☞ If you do have a Treaty settlement or joint management agreement, a Mana Whakahono could be used to implement those agreements and improve processes relating to resource management and other matters.

How do we assess whether we need a Mana Whakahono ā Rohe?

- ☞ If you have a taiao team, talk with them to understand key issues, any existing agreements, and whether existing agreements with council are working well.
- ☞ Consider whether existing agreements will be recognised within the Fast-track Approvals Act, and other legislation.
- ☞ Guidance also recommends doing a SWOT analysis on existing agreements and relationships (see pg 18 of the guidance [here](#))

Who needs to be involved from iwi/hapū?

- ☞ You need agreement from your governance group to initiate a Mana Whakahono agreement. You may also want to engage with whānau, hapū, owners of Māori land in your rohe, or other iwi.
- ☞ Only iwi authorities can initiate a Mana Whakahono ā Rohe, so if your roopū is not an iwi authority then you need to request that the appropriate iwi authority initiate on your behalf. Councils can also initiate an agreement with a hapū (see pg 25 - 26 of the guidance [here](#)).
- ☞ It's important to get input from your taiao team. These people will understand the existing processes and how existing processes and procedures could be improved and formalised.

What kind of skills are required to develop a Mana Whakahono ā Rohe?

- ☞ A governance group with leaders from both the iwi/hapū and council to oversee the process.
- ☞ A project manager or facilitator to make sure the agreement is delivered.
- ☞ From an iwi/hapū perspective, it's important to get input from the environmental team. From a council perspective, it's important to get input from the teams responsible for plan development, plan changes, resource consenting, and monitoring. These teams will understand the existing processes and how existing processes and procedures could be improved and formalised.
- ☞ Because a Mana Whakahono is a legal agreement, a lawyer is usually involved in drafting the agreement.

What funding and support is available?

- ☞ Some councils or iwi may have funding available to support the development of relationship agreements, such as Mana Whakahono ā Rohe.
- ☞ Ministry for the Environment maintains a [webpage](#) with links to all completed Mana Whakahono agreements, and published comprehensive guidance in 2018.
- ☞ Papa Pounamu has set up a LinkedIn group for iwi/hapū kaimahi and people who work with iwi/hapū, to share ideas, resources and experiences. You can find that group [here](#).

What do we need to include in our letter of initiation?

- ☞ A clear statement that you wish to initiate a Mana Whakahono agreement
- ☞ The purpose of the Mana Whakahono agreement, from your perspective.
- ☞ The key issues you want to address in the Mana Whakahono ā Rohe, including issues outside the RMA if that is relevant.
- ☞ Information about timing, location, attendees and agenda for the initial hui
- ☞ You can find more information on the letter of initiation (see pg 23 of guidance [here](#))

When is the right time to initiate a Mana Whakahono ā Rohe?

- Consider your capacity, capability and budget to support the negotiation of the agreement.
- Consider any upcoming issues in your rohe (eg. Fast-track applications, major plan changes, development of monitoring frameworks etc.)
- Iwi authorities cannot initiate a Mana Whakahono agreement in the 90 days before a local government election (for example, 11 July to 12 October 2025). This exclusion period is intended to protect the parties from investing in relationships and negotiations that may not be continued through the elections.

What is important to include in a Mana Whakahono?

- It's important to negotiate to agree funding and other resourcing to support implementation. A Mana Whakahono is legally binding so can provide some certainty about funding continuing into the future.
- Consider attaching a workplan to your Mana Whakahono agreement, setting out a timeline for operationalising the agreement, responsibilities, and resourcing.
- A Mana Whakahono could also including a clause setting out how iwi/hapū want to be involved in processes under the Fast-track Approvals Act or other streamlined planning processes.

What are the steps to signing off a Mana Whakahono?

- There is no legal requirement for the public to be consulted on a Mana Whakahono, unless the agreement includes matters which require specific consultation under the RMA or LGA (eg. joint management and transfer of powers).
- Iwi/hapū need to follow any internal processes to ratify the agreement - for example, approval by a board, hui-a-hapū or other forums.
- Council need to follow their own internal processes to ratify the agreement.
- It is up to the partners to decide how to promote the agreement - for example, the agreement could be formally launched, or could be designed and made available on iwi/hapū or council websites.

He kupu whakakape / Disclaimer

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Papa Pounamu does not represent iwi or hapū authorities, nor are we an iwi or hapū entity. Rather, we serve as a national professional forum that supports, advocates for, and practices Māori planning. While we offer technical support to iwi and hapū, we acknowledge that mana to speak for iwi and hapū rests solely with those entities.

This guidance, tools and information sheets are intended to support iwi, hapū and councils to envision, scope, and negotiate agreements that fulfil their aspirations for a better working relationship. These resources are not prescriptive and should not be used to limit the scope or content of Mana Whakahono agreements.

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