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## **Tātari Tauutuutu: moving beyond ‘cultural impact assessment’ in search of Māori cultural survival outcomes**

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## **1. Introduction**

This report was written following a decision to discontinue using a ‘cultural impact assessment’ approach after becoming more aware of the limitations of this now well-established planning and policy tool (Partal & Dunphy, 2016). We are especially concerned that a cultural impact assessment largely fails to provide a satisfactory basis on which to assist Māori communities to achieve the goal of ‘cultural survival’. For this reason, there now exists an urgent need to create a new assessment tool that delivers desired outcomes of this kind.

What is outlined in this report should be considered as a ‘first step’ towards the creation of a new tool. It is our intention that the alternative emerging perspective provided here will be supported by a more detailed academic publication on this matter at a later point in time. In the meantime, what is outlined here is intended to provide a rationale that explains why we are moving towards the use of a new tool, and in practical terms just what this new approach will entail. The study findings/information contained in the remainder of this report has been organised in a way that seeks to give expression to this new approach.

### **1.1 What is a ‘Cultural Impact Assessment’?**

According to New Zealand Quality Planning guidelines, a cultural impact assessment is a written report that documents (Māori) cultural values, interests and associations with an area or a resource, and the potential impacts of a proposed activity on these aspects of Māori community identity<sup>1</sup>. Cultural impact assessments are a tool that can be used by planners, policy-makers, and consultants more generally to help facilitate the active participation of Māori communities in impact assessment activities (e.g. Resource Management Act 1991, s32). A cultural impact assessment is generally regarded as technical advice, much like any other technical or science report. In terms of ‘method of creation’, a written cultural impact assessment (report) usually provides a synthesis of numerous lines of supporting evidence that are created through separate investigative activities.

### **1.2 The emergence of ‘Cultural Impact Assessment’ practice**

In New Zealand, there is no legislative requirement for the creation of cultural impact assessments. The expression ‘cultural impact assessment’ is not mentioned in the Resource Management Act 1991. The emergence and use of cultural impact assessment as a tool, coincided with a shift in public policy from an earlier focus on the importance of economic outcomes, to a more recent recognition of social/ecological considerations and in New Zealand – Treaty obligations. This broadening of public policy provides an important ‘well-being’ logic behind the perceived need for impact assessments (generally) and cultural impact assessments (more specifically).

In a New Zealand context, the Resource Management Act 1991 includes practice guidelines that are deemed to create a need for cultural impact assessment, including: (i) the assessment of environmental effects (RMA 1991 s32, s88(2)(b) and Schedule 4); (ii) requests for further information (RMA 1991 s92); (iii) the determination of notification status (RMA 1991 ss95 to 95F); (iv) consideration of Part 2 matters when making a decision on an application for resource consent (RMA 1991 s104); and (v) consideration of appropriate conditions of resource consent (RMA 1991 s108).

The idea of creating an impact assessment emerged in the late 1960’s as part of formal recognition for the role of ‘environmental’ impact assessment in developed nations, largely as a result of increasing concern about the impact of human economic activities on the natural world. During intervening decades, *environmental* impact assessment was gradually extended into the realms of social, ecological, and cultural well-being domains.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.qualityplanning.org.nz/index.php/supporting-components/faq-s-on-cultural-impact-assessments>

A key point from this brief history is that the idea of creating an impact assessment is still relatively new. Internationally, the use of cultural impact assessment methodology has only emerged over the past two decades.

*The literature indicates that CIA has largely been practiced only in the last two decades, primarily for the purpose of understanding impacts of development, including mining, on indigenous communities, and, relatedly, has mainly been documented as occurring in countries with indigenous populations. The range of professional sectors engaging in CIA has significantly diversified since the mid-2000s, with cultural development, tourism and urban planning fields engaging in CIA more recently, although these are still the minority of CIA activities. Proponents range from consultants to governments to university-based researchers (Partal & Dunphy, 2016, p. 4).*

### **1.3 Key 'Assumptions' of a Cultural Impact Assessment Approach**

Cultural impact assessment practice rests on a number of key assumptions and in particular the idea that it is an assessment of past, existing, or likely future 'negative' or 'unwanted' impacts on a cultural entity. Those impacts which are perceived to be 'positive' or 'desired' are generally not the focus of an impact assessment.

Second, an existing or likely future 'impact' is usually measured in terms of a change in the state of cultural values. This idea assumes that it is possible to define unique cultural values, and to assess and measure the extent of a given 'unwanted' impact on them. More fundamentally, this aspect of a cultural impact assessment also assumes the relevance of the English concept of 'values' as a basis for appropriately assessing impacts in a non-European context.

Third, the concept of a cultural impact assessment is articulated in the English language while its theoretical roots are firmly planted in a western scientific – environmental science – resource/environmental economics – planning and public policy – conception of reality. Given that cultural impact assessment has been designed for use primarily in non-English speaking cultural contexts, there exists a significant linguistic assumption concerning the relevance of western scientific conceptions of reality to other cultural entities. In practice, this assumption is extremely difficult to uphold, which is precisely why it has proved so difficult in cultural impact assessment to obtain basic agreement on what different cultural entities mean by the use of the word 'culture'.

Finally, there exists a need for the planning and policy-making fraternity to assess effects because:

*... culture is increasingly accepted as a domain of public policy, given its fundamental role in human well-being, considerations of culture and related impacts are vital (Partal & Dunphy, 2016, p. 3).*

In a New Zealand context, this last assumption of public policy 'responsibility' is linked with the expression of *kāwanatanga* (transl. government, dominion, rule, authority, governorship, province). The fact that Te Tiriti o Waitangi - the Treaty of Waitangi provides permission for the expression of *kāwanatanga* in this way, should not be taken as a basis for assuming that the idea of having an external, non-Māori entity responsible for Māori cultural well-being rests easily or comfortably with Māori communities. A key tension here concerns the role of an external professional body in making plans, policies, and rules on behalf of a Māori community. In reality, *this is not possible*, which is precisely why hapū management plans and cultural impact assessments have been called for. This being the case, the effectiveness of this approach to planning and policy-making *for* Māori communities is entirely dependent upon the quality of supporting information provided by local hapū.

For this reason, it is essential that we are clear about the intended role of communication tools, such as ‘hapū management plans’ and ‘cultural impact assessments’ - *along with their limitations*.

The extent to which communication tools of this kind assist, either directly or indirectly in contributing towards the creation of plans, policies and rules that benefit Māori communities, is a question that could well benefit from closer and more critical academic investigation. Rightly or wrongly, a very real perception among Māori communities is that the preparation of hapū management plans and cultural impact assessments is part of a local government ‘box-ticking’ exercise that contributes very little, in practical terms, to plans and policies that benefit Māori communities. Our desire to rethink the design and use of a cultural impact assessment tool stems directly from concerns of this kind.

While ‘tool’ redesign and/or repurposing may well be appropriate, there is a limit to what can be accomplished by what are effectively written ‘information communication tools’ of this kind. The real solution to the perceived hapū ‘self-determination’ concerns outlined above, lies in the future role of co-governance and co-management arrangements. The fact is, written English (i.e. the language of planners and policy-makers), is extremely limited in its ability to communicate, both unambiguously and clearly, ‘meaning’ that is encoded in Te Reo Māori. If both languages shared comparative meaning and vocabulary, then we would not need the Māori language.

## **2. Key 'limitations' of a Cultural Impact Assessment approach**

A cultural impact assessment rests upon a number of key limitations that may not be immediately evident from a non-scientific point of view. A recent, systematic review of cultural impact assessment practice has drawn attention to a number of 'significant' theoretical and methodological problems which we present below as an introduction to a more detailed elaboration of this matter in this report section.

*... methodological challenges for CIA documented in the literature are significant. These include lack of agreed definitions and indicators, the limitations of quantitative data, especially in explaining causality, the expense and difficulty of using qualitative data, the unmet need for assessors to have strong cultural sensitivity and timescales that are inadequate for reasonably tracking impacts (Partal & Dunphy, 2016, p. 6).*

### **2.1 Difficulties associated with defining the word 'culture'**

The first and perhaps most serious limitation of cultural impact assessment concerns difficulties linked with defining exactly what we mean by the English word 'culture' or 'cultural'. Häyrynen (2004) suggests that most of the problems associated with cultural impact assessment stem from the fact that ...

*... the concept of 'culture' is . . . imprecise, not concrete, ... vary(ing) not only in its theoretical definitions, but also according to its linguistic and administrative uses (Häyrynen, 2004, p. 3).*

*One of the major challenges of CIA is that defining 'culture' and therefore 'cultural impact assessment' is difficult. This may not be surprising, given that 'culture' is known to be one of the most contested words in the English language (Hawkes, 2001) cited in (Partal & Dunphy, 2016, p. 3).*

The reason why the English word 'culture' is one of the most contested words in the English language is because there are a documented 6,900 distinctive, living languages (and associated cultural entities) still in existence in the world today. Each of these languages constitutes a unique oral/symbolic basis for encoding differing worldviews that have been created by past human communities/societies. It is simply not possible *or even necessary* for this unique cultural diversity to be adequately defined and generalised into one modern English language word (i.e. culture).

A further difficulty associated with defining exactly what we mean by the word 'culture' concerns the measurement of impacts. As mentioned above ...

*... culture and cultural impact were infrequently defined, leading to the problem that few authors discussed specifically, the difficulty in measuring impact of a concept that has not been clearly explicated ... (Häyrynen, 2004; Sharma, 2008) cited in (Partal & Dunphy, 2016, pp. 5-6).*

### **2.2 The role of values in impact assessment**

A second limitation of cultural impact assessment concerns the central role of 'values' as a means of defining a given cultural entity, subsequent to corresponding definition and measurement of past, present or future effects (i.e. impact assessment).

*... if culture is defined as pertaining to values and norms of specific groups of people, assessment of impact is, by definition, fraught: seemingly similar cultural phenomena or institutions can have a totally different meaning for different groups of people (Keating, Loughlin, & Deschouwer, 2003) cited in (Partal & Dunphy, 2016, p. 6).*

The use of 'values' in a Māori cultural context is also problematic for other reasons. First, there is a translation problem. According to the late Rev. Māori Marsden:

*... there is no specific term in Māori for the word 'value'. With his holistic view of the Universe the Māori idea of value is incorporated into the inclusive holistic term 'taonga' - a treasure, something precious; hence an object of good or value (Marsden, 2003, pp. 38-39).*

Second, as part of efforts made to socialise the Māori language, it can be argued that the English word 'value' has been introduced into Te Reo Māori as a loan word. While the use of a loan word is valid as a translation aid, this does not mean that an English conception of 'value' either belongs to, or contributes to, the survival of Māori cultural identity. An absence of direct translation for the English word 'value' (in Te Reo Māori) indicates a corresponding absence of *shared meaning*.

*Cultures pattern perceptions of reality into conceptualisations of what they perceive reality to be; of what is to be regarded as actual, probable, possible, or impossible. These conceptualisations form what is termed the 'worldview' of a culture ... The worldview lies at the very heart of the culture, touching, interacting with and strongly influencing every aspect of the culture. In terms of Māori culture, the myths and legends form the central system on which their holistic view of the universe is based (Marsden, 2003 p. 56).*

Third, accepting the fact that as part of their engagement in a modern-day market economy, Māori communities have adopted the use of the English word 'value', there remains the problem of measurement. In Māori culture, the full expression of tino rangatiratanga (transl. self-determination) typically exists at the level of hapū (i.e. each hapū have their own values) and as noted earlier, this means that "... seemingly similar cultural phenomena or institutions can have a totally different meaning for different groups of people" (Keating et al., 2003) cited in (Partal & Dunphy, 2016, p. 6). A further relevant question relates to just how diverse hapū perceptions of value are reconciled at an iwi level of organisational scale.

The definition of a 'value' in a Māori community context requires 'collective' agreement on a particular perception of reality that makes the identification of a 'common' or 'collective' value possible.

By contrast, a western scientific conception of collective knowledge creation is based on the idea of a community of professionals working towards the creation of one 'superior' perception of reality (i.e. a theory). In a Māori community context, multiple perceptions of reality co-exist together and the fact that they can be very difficult to reconcile with each other is not considered to constitute evidence of 'inferiority'. Quite to the contrary, Cole (2017) has argued that the use of perceptual diversity of this kind in knowledge development was a sure evidence that in 1769, at the time of the arrival of Captain James Cook in New Zealand, a Māori methodology of knowledge development was at least 216 years ahead of the latest methodological developments in transdisciplinary (i.e. the emerging frontier of western science).

*Although traditional beliefs vary between iwi (tribes) and hapū (groups within tribes), and it is crucial to maintain awareness of diversity within the category of Māori (Wilson, 2010), there are also some values that are broadly held (Patterson, 1992) cited in (Love & Tilley, 2014, p. 41).*

To require a Māori community to come to collective agreement on their perceptions of reality (i.e. a common set of values) tends to create division that works contrary to the expression of kawa, kaupapa and tikanga linked with maintaining community well-being. From this perspective, the perceived benefits associated with transferring an English conception of value into an indigenous (Māori) cultural context are difficult to see.

A further cultural 'value' assumption concerns the matter of representation, and closely linked to this problem is a related matter of investigative cost. At what point in a cultural impact assessment do we know that we have successfully collected a 'representative' sample of a given cultural entity's values? To what extent does the cost associated with further investigative inquiry become a barrier to the discovery of an accurate, representative understanding of local cultural values? How can we be sure that the study or survey method that we have used to elicit cultural values, has not biased the perception of value that we have created? When it comes to measuring values, how far down the methodological 'rabbit hole' should we be prepared to go, to be sure that we have clearly defined Māori 'cultural values' as a basis for impact measurement and assessment?

Given the above, in a Māori cultural context, we tend to agree with Keating, Loughlin et al. (2003) that the goal of measuring 'cultural values' is fraught with questionable assumptions and operational challenges. This point raises an important question about the need for, and perceived role of, a unifying 'cultural impact assessment method'. Furthermore, a focus of attention on 'values' limits our understanding of 'cultural identity'. There is more to the definition of 'culture' and 'worldview' than just *values*. This is especially the case in a Māori cultural context that could be defined as 'indigenous' and/or 'holistic' in character.

*If we accept that there is no one way of seeing things, then our methods need to reflect this and embrace rather than deny diversity (Barnes, 2000, p. 4).*

### **2.3 Decolonising 'Cultural Impact Assessment' methodology**

There is a final limitation of cultural impact assessment that is not mentioned by Partal and Dunphy (2016) as part of their systematic review of cultural impact assessment literature. The linguistic and measurement problems associated with the adoption and use of 'cultural impact assessment' exist primarily because this is a western scientific (economic, environmental science, planning, public policy) framework and/or method being applied in a Māori cultural context. The existence of implementation problems of the kind outlined above raises a question about why it would not be possible for Māori communities to create and use their own culturally derived frameworks based on their expressions of *kawa*, *kaupapa* and *tikanga* (i.e. a *kaupapa* Māori approach).

*The central principle of kaupapa Māori is resistance to any automatic or assumed 'rightness', 'naturalness' or dominance of Western ways. An assumption of Western models as 'normal' and indigenous models as 'different' underpins colonisation, and Kaupapa Māori rejects that basic assumption (Love & Tilley, 2014, p. 40).*

The need to ask the question, 'why would it not be possible for Māori communities to create and use their own culturally derived frameworks' indicates the existence of a related problem that is linked with the perceived value of the Māori language, Māori knowledge and the perceptions of reality on which they are based.

*Kaupapa Māori theory then provides a platform from which Māori are striving to articulate their own reality and experience, their own personal truth as an alternative to the homogenisation and silence that is required of them within mainstream New Zealand society. Inherent in this approach is an understanding that Māori have fundamentally different ways of seeing and thinking about the world and simply wish to be able to live in accordance with that specific and unique identity (Mahuika, 2008, p. 4).*

By recommending the use of a cultural impact assessment framework, planners and policy-makers also seem to ignore the fact that even in western science, method and outcomes are inextricably related. This point is no less so in a Māori cultural context. The recommended adoption and use of a

western scientific impact assessment framework (cf. method) that is defined by the English language effectively pre-determines the results and outcomes that must come from the use of such a tool in a Māori community context. This fact raises the question of why it is necessary for a Māori community to be constrained by the use of an assessment framework or approach of this kind? In kaupapa Māori-based approaches to knowledge development, method is subordinate to the issues being addressed. This means that only a Māori community can define an appropriate method/framework to be used in investigating an issue of Māori community concern.

*While kaupapa Māori research may be seen as taking a distinctive approach and having underlying principles or aspects which are based on a Māori worldview (L. T. Smith, 1999), methods are likely to be subordinate to the issues and utility of the research and may be drawn from a range of methodologies (Barnes, 2000, p. 4).*

A further key point about the role of Māori communities in choosing frameworks and methods that are most appropriate to their needs, is that kaupapa Māori approaches focus attention on more than just knowledge outcomes (i.e. that which is primarily of interest to planners and policy-makers). The involvement of a Māori community in a collective knowledge-creation activity should strengthen that community and their relationship with the whenua. By contrast, cultural impact assessment activities focus attention on the fact that we all have different 'values' and this tends to be divisive in a way that does not enhance the expression of kotahitanga (transl. unity). When Māori communities are given the opportunity to focus their attention on the expression of kawa, kaupapa and tikanga, this typically has a transformative and unifying effect that heals and strengthens.

*Finally, kaupapa Māori as a concept must not be captured by academics working solely from within academic institutions. Its transforming purpose must continue to be driven by Māori community and iwi interests from which it has evolved (G. Smith, Hoskins, & Jones, 2012, p. 20).*

### **3. The Problem of Measuring a Cultural Impact**

The linguistic and methodological problems associated with using cultural impact assessment in a cross-cultural context (e.g. the adoption of this method by Māori communities) also contributes towards difficulties in impact assessment *measurement*. Measurement problems concern both (i) what is measured (i.e. selection of appropriate indicators) and (ii) the use of appropriate metrics by which to conduct measurement. While it is reasonably easy and common to measure the past and present extent of heritage assets such as buildings, graves or archaeological sites, these constitute a very small part of cultural identity.

*The elements of culture considered most frequently in the literature about CIA were tangible, such as heritage resources of gravesites or archaeological sites ... But intangible elements of culture, things that cannot be seen or touched but are essential to maintain and practice culture, such as spiritual beliefs, language, traditional knowledge, oral history and inter-generational relationship patterns, were also considered important. Gibson et al. (2011) particularly recommend that CIA consider both tangible and intangible elements, with culture being 'much more than stones and bones; ... a living, continually adaptive system, not a remnant of the past' (2011, p. 1800) cited in (Partal & Dunphy, 2016, p. 4).*

#### **3.1 The measurement of intangible cultural elements**

This is particularly a problem in an indigenous cultural context in which a higher degree of discomfort exists in trying to reduce the measurement of an effect into indicators based on discrete numbers or estimates of spatial extent. Māori cultural knowledge is holistic, relational, spiritual and linked with prohibitions on its use. By contrast, a discrete number or indicator is a simplification of reality that largely fails to capture these intangible dimensions of knowing and permission. As noted by the late Rev. Māori Marsden (2003), this simplification tendency limits the usefulness of the English conception of 'value' in a holistic Māori cultural context. The idea of a discrete 'value' poorly captures the full range of intangible elements (e.g. mana, wairua, whakapapa, whanaungatanga, tikanga) that are considered essential to maintaining the Māori cultural identity that supports a Māori cultural perception of reality.

*With his holistic view of the Universe the Māori idea of value is incorporated into the inclusive holistic term 'taonga' ... These taonga refer to the cultural tradition, lore, history; corpus of knowledge etc, with which the descendants can identify and which provide them with their identity, self-esteem and dignity; that which provides them with psychological security. Even death was regarded as a taonga for that is the 'greenstone door' that led to ultimate reality and rest. Processes of assimilation and cultural genocide imposed upon tangata whenua have robbed them of much of their taonga resulting in the loss of dignity, self-esteem, and identity. This loss results in the displacement due to cultural erosion, under assimilationist policies, of the basic metaphysics by which members of a culture guide their life. (Marsden, 2003 pp. 38-39).*

#### **3.2 Goal orientation as a measurement problem**

The impact assessment method was created to support the achievement of desired goals that are deemed important to society. Societal goals deemed as essential to the future well-being of New Zealand society are defined in the Resource Management Act 1991. The need to ensure that local government plans and policies contribute towards achieving these goals (esp. RMA 1991, Part 4, section 32) provides a central 'RMA rationale' for the use of social, ecological and cultural impact assessments. It is important to understand that the current 'goal-orientation' of the Resource Management Act 1991 is itself an additional assumption that is not necessarily beyond question. The three core goals of the Resource Management Act 1991 are defined in part 2, section 5(a-c) as:

- (a) *Sustaining the potential of natural and physical resources (excluding minerals) to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations; and*
- (b) *Safeguarding the life-supporting capacity of air, water, soil, and ecosystems; and*
- (c) *Avoiding, remedying, or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment.*

We can summarise these three goals as follows: (a) social fairness, (b) ecological sustainability and (c) ‘management’ – *that does no more harm*. In seeking the achievement of these core goals, the Resource Management Act prioritises five further goals as being matters of national importance:

- (i) *The preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment (including the coastal marine area), wetlands, and lakes and rivers and their margins, and the protection of them from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development;*
- (ii) *The protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development;*
- (iii) *The protection of areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna;*
- (iv) *The maintenance and enhancement of public access to and along the coastal marine area, lakes, and rivers;*
- (v) *The relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu, and other taonga.*

While the current goal orientation of the 1991 Resource Management Act supports *the relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu, and other taonga*, it stops short of providing explicit legal recognition of, and protection for, the goal of Māori cultural survival. This point is important for a number of reasons.

First, the goal of Māori cultural survival is arguably the goal that is *most important* to Māori communities. After the mana diminishing and damaging effects of 178 years of colonisation, it would be unwise to assume that the survival of Māori culture is a given. Internationally, human cultural extinction is a matter of grave concern. While there are a documented 6,900 living languages in the world today (and by implication at least 6,900 distinct cultural entities), the average rate of language/cultural extinction is one every three months. This means that within the next 100 years, the world currently stands to lose somewhere between 50–90 percent of its current linguistic diversity (Romaine, 2015).

Second, adoption of the goal of cultural survival highlights a serious limitation of current cultural impact assessment frameworks, which were created to support the achievement of social fairness and ecological sustainability outcomes in a modern-day market economic (efficiency<sup>2</sup>) context. While not irrelevant, the achievement of these goals constitutes an incomplete contribution towards the goal of Māori cultural survival.

This cultural survival goal is not just a concern for Māori communities in New Zealand. The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (2004) who has proposed that the scope of ‘cultural impact

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<sup>2</sup> RMA Part 4, section 32(4a) and Part 2, section 7(b).

assessments' involves "... to narrow a focus" for achieving the holistic well-being needs of indigenous communities (generally).

*Validation for the close connection between EIA, SIA and CIA is also provided by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (2004). They acknowledge that, as most indigenous and local communities live in areas where the vast majority of the world's genetic resources are found and they have used biological diversity in a sustainable way for thousands of years, their cultures are deeply rooted in the environment on which they depend. This interconnection was the organization's impetus to develop guidelines that involve all of these types of IA, the 'Voluntary guidelines for the conduct of cultural, environmental and SIAs regarding developments proposed to take place on, or which are likely to impact on, sacred sites and on lands and waters traditionally occupied or used by indigenous and local communities (Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, 2004) cited in (Partal & Dunphy, 2016, p. 7).*

### **3.3 Values measurement as a basis for making trade-offs**

As noted earlier, the use of a cultural impact assessment framework involves acceptance of an implicit assumption concerning our willingness to participate in activities linked with assessing the impact of economic activities *on culture* – as a basis for informing decisions regarding what levels of impact are acceptable (i.e. the creation of a trade-off). Trade-offs are deemed to be a necessary contribution towards the 'efficiency goal orientation' of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA 1991, Part 4, section 32(3b)). The creation of trade-offs is one of the primary reasons why cultural impact assessments are commonly associated with attempts to define and measure cultural values.

While Māori communities can and are willing to make trade-offs in some areas, the goal of cultural survival is not one of those areas. Our cultural decline and the looming threat of cultural extinction is a cumulative effect of 178 years of trading-off Māori cultural well-being and identity - one (political, plan, economic, legal and policy) transaction at a time. The time has now come for legislators, planners, and policy-makers to come to terms with the fact that Māori cultural survival is a legitimate and 'non-negotiable' aspiration of Māori communities. There is an urgent need to provide legal recognition and protection for this goal and this is going to mean that we need to create new assessment frameworks, not for use in legitimising cultural impacts, but for use in ensuring cultural well-being *and survival* outcomes. This is a very different 'resource management problem' to the one that we have been pre-occupied with since the introduction of the Resource Management Act in 1991. This is a challenge that will require vision and leadership on the part of Māori communities along with enabling support on the part of the planning and policy-making profession.

*Bishop (1996) supports the involvement of non-Māori people in Māori research for two reasons. Firstly, he is appreciative of the highly skilled, professionally trained non-Māori who are becoming bicultural and are willing to work in Māori-controlled contexts. These researchers are committed to the betterment of Māori people and present their work as koha (gift) for Māori people. Secondly, Bishop argues that for non-Māori people to "leave it all to Māori people is to abrogate their responsibilities as Treaty partners" (R. Bishop, 1996, p. 18) cited in (McNicholas & Barrett, 2005, p. 400).*

#### **4. Kaupapa Māori as an alternative to Cultural Impact Assessment**

If we accept the idea that a cultural impact assessment approach is not ideally suited to the cultural well-being and survival aspirations of (all) Māori communities, then what might an alternative look like and what does the use of a different approach imply for existing planning and policy-making activities? In this report section, we explore possible answers to these questions.

In a cultural impact assessment, an approach to assessing the likely effects of a development activity is predefined by English terms and western scientific assumptions about the nature of reality. The assessment of an effect is measured by changes in the state of what ideally needs to be 'clearly defined' cultural values. One of the ways to relax some of the need for cross-cultural acceptance of the predefined ideas and assumptions of a cultural impact assessment tool, would be to allow a given cultural entity to define key terms according to their own worldview reality and language. By doing this, we ensure that operational assumptions are clearly understood and the choice of preferred method or process is consistent with the basic worldview assumptions of the affected cultural entity. As noted by Barnes (2000, p. 4), "If we accept that there is no one way of seeing things, then our methods need to reflect this and embrace rather than deny diversity".

In a Māori cultural context, it would be possible to create a space for an approach of this kind by allowing a Māori community to: (i) use the Māori language to define their own investigative terms, and (ii) express their own preferred behaviours (i.e. kawa, kaupapa and tikanga), as a basis for creating a collective method that addresses perceived concerns or answers emerging questions. Our Māori pūkenga (transl. scholars) in western academy refer to an approach of this kind as kaupapa Māori (Smith et al. 2012, Smith 1999). In addition, and if need be, it is a quite simple matter to provide the members of a Māori community the opportunity to engage with non-Māori expert advice from other leading specialists if they feel that this is necessary. An approach of this kind would provide a culturally responsive alternative to the existing prescription of cultural impact assessment. Most importantly, an approach of this kind does not require a given cultural entity to define a problem in terms of discrete values that really only make sense in a western scientific axiomatic frame of reference based on exclusive logic. In an indigenous cultural context, the abstract western idea of 'value' is typically an implicit part of ritual, belief, relationships, responsibilities, reciprocity, redistribution, the use of language and communal behaviours. Very few of these dimensions of indigenous 'value' can be easily be abstracted into a cardinal unit of account.

While a kaupapa Māori approach to exploring the implications of development options would be more ideally suited to the needs of a Māori community, it creates problems for planning and policy staff, unless they have the requisite cultural knowledge and language skills needed to bring these two worlds together in an appropriate way. This is an area in which the planning and policy-making profession needs to work on creating appropriate co-management and co-governance spaces in which cross-cultural dialogue and sharing of this kind can occur. Furthermore, as noted above, the orientation of these co-management and co-governance spaces needs to shift from (i) a planning and policy-making logic based on the creation of trade-offs that further diminish cultural survival options, to (ii) a new logic in which the focus of joint activity is on how to enhance options for improving Māori cultural well-being and survival. This shift in logic must reflect a 'coming to terms' with the idea that in the future, Māori cultural survival is no longer a negotiable commodity.

Three related English concepts provide a helpful basis by which to understand key priorities associated with a Māori community approach to what our Māori pūkenga (transl. scholars) in western academia refer to as 'kaupapa Māori'. While there are exceptions to this framework, in general it provides a useful way of understanding a modern-day Māori cultural prioritising of investigative activities.

**(a) Reclaiming** – the mana diminishing and damaging effects of 178 years of colonisation mean that achievement of the goal of Māori cultural survival is now critically dependent upon the efforts of Māori communities to reclaim their language, knowledge, cultural institutions, and worldview. Reclaiming Māori cultural identity will thus be a central focus of any methodology that guides Māori community members in their response to planning and policy questions, problems, and conversations. For this reason, it should come as no surprise that Māori community members may well demonstrate a disinterest in adopting non-Māori language, concepts, theory, and methods. This preference needs to be patiently respected. For many Māori communities, the most pressing priority that they face at present involves reclaiming their own identity.

**(b) Reframing** – the efforts of Māori community members to reclaim their ancestral identity and language forms the basis of efforts to ‘reframe’ this ancestral identity and heritage in a modern-day, neo-liberal-dominant-market-economic context. This is an extremely challenging aspect of collective effort by Māori communities. The world in which our tīpuna lived and created their language, kawa, kaupapa and tikanga is very different to the world that we live in today. Reframing can be as simple as the transfer of language and customs from the past into the present. At the more complex end of the ‘reframing continuum’, Māori communities can find themselves grappling with modern-day phenomena that are inconsistent with the cultural practices of our tīpuna. Reframing in this context means creating new knowledge and understandings about how things should be done in ways that effectively give expression to a Māori worldview. This can take time and this means that it is not always possible to provide instant answers to external questions. Hesitancy of reply on the part of Māori community members, also needs to be patiently respected.

**(c) Reinstating** – colonisation has resulted in the decline of some aspects of Māori culture to the point of extinction. In these cases, the work of reclaiming and reframing lays a necessary foundation for the task of reinstating what has been lost. Beginning in the 1970s, efforts made to revive the Māori language would be a good example of what is involved, practically speaking, in the work of reinstating. Another example of reinstating effort would be the activities of Māori communities in Te Iho matua whānau-ecological restoration projects.

It is helpful for policy-makers and planners to understand that any conversation that they initiate with a Māori community will be positioned in relation to these three, key, Māori cultural well-being and survival priorities. For this reason, it would be very helpful if planners and policy-makers can begin to think about how they can shift their planning paradigm, goals and practice in a way that supports the efforts of Māori communities to achieve the goal of cultural survival as aligned to these three general priorities.

#### **4.1 Kaupapa Māori - the expression of kawa, kaupapa and tikanga**

While there will always be exceptions to this rule, in many cases it is likely that Māori communities will feel most comfortable with the opportunity to investigate a planning/policy question, grapple with a planning/policy problem and co-create planning/policy relevant knowledge, through the expression of their kawa, kaupapa and tikanga. Our Māori pūkenga (transl. scholars) who work within western academia have characterised an approach of this kind as ‘kaupapa Māori’, a framework that also embraces decolonising activism.

*It is possible to identify two key Kaupapa Māori elements—a cultural element and a political (or maybe a political–cultural) element. These are related, and both have a praxis, or an analysis and action aspect. The cultural element involves the assertion or reinvigoration of cultural ideas in action such as ideas of whanaungatanga, manaakitanga and reciprocity as social capital. The political element foregrounds economic power and historical analyses, and the related actions*

*of economic self-development. Both elements are crucial to the radical potential of Kaupapa Māori (G. Smith et al., 2012, p. 13).*

In a Māori community context, we can think of a kaupapa Māori approach as the daily expression of kawa, kaupapa and tikanga by the members of that community. These daily behaviours provide what could be thought of as a ‘methodological/method context’ for the co-creation of knowledge, often through investigative activities. Because a kaupapa Māori approach is based on Māori behaviours, protocols and language, its use will have the effect of enhancing the mana and mauri<sup>3</sup> of a Māori community. This is a desired outcome that supports the goals of Māori cultural well-being and survival, and adds an important level of legitimacy to the planning/policy question, problem or conversation being addressed.

#### **4.2 Kaupapa Māori - empowering and culturally safe**

A ‘kaupapa Māori’ approach is also empowering because it means that a project can be hapū-led. Hapū leadership of a creative activity project creates a ‘culturally safe’ space in which the members of a Māori community (i.e. Te Aho Matua whānau members) can work together to (i) define their own terms and questions; (ii) preference the use of guiding principles (transl. kaupapa) and methods (transl. tikanga) that they think are appropriate for a given problem; (iii) make decisions on who best to involve in a project given available time and resources; and (iv) collectively agree on what benefits the project will produce and for whom these benefits are intended. Given that whānau members are usually the participants and key beneficiaries of a kaupapa Māori project of this kind, it is important to explain exactly what is meant by the use of the term ‘whānau’.

*As an aspect of Māori philosophy, values and practices ‘whānau’ is central to kaupapa Māori research, which is derived from different epistemological and metaphysical foundations (McNicholas & Barrett, 2005, p. 401).*

#### **4.3 Reclaiming ‘whānau Māori’ as a basis for well-being and survival**

A common, modern English translation for the Te Reo Māori word ‘whānau’ is nuclear family. While not wrong, this translation is incomplete and therefore unhelpful as a basis for understanding all that is implied by a Māori cultural understanding of well-being and survival. The Māori dictionary defines ‘whānau’ as:

*“... extended family, family group, a familiar term of address to a number of people - the primary economic unit of traditional Māori society (Moorfield, 2005).*

The idea of an ‘extended family’ moves us closer towards a Māori cultural understanding of the English concept of ‘family’. However, even the extended nuclear Māori family (cf. hapū) is only one small branch of a Māori family tree (cf. whakapapa) that includes Papatūānuku - our Earth Mother, Ranginui - our Sky Father and Atua Māori – the various children of Papatūānuku and Ranginui.

One of the children of Papatūānuku and Ranginui is named Tāne-nui-a-rangi and it is through this tīpuna (transl. ancestor) that tāngata whenua trace their ‘genealogy’ back to Papatūānuku and Ranginui, of whom they are descendants. In other words, tāngata whenua do not consider themselves as a senior member of this family (transl. tuakana), but rather as one of its youngest siblings (transl. Teina). This understanding of the correct meaning of the expression ‘whānau Māori’ has a number of

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<sup>3</sup> Mauri (transl.) - life principle, life force, vital essence, special nature, a material symbol of a life principle, source of emotions - the essential quality and vitality of a being or entity. Also used for a physical object, individual, ecosystem or social group in which this essence is located.

important implications for the way in which we think about a Māori cultural contribution to planning and policy-making.

First, when the authors of the Resource Management Act 1991 refer to ‘safeguarding the life-supporting capacity of air, water, soil, and ecosystems’ in Part 2, section 5(b) of the Act, from a Māori cultural perspective they are referring to safeguarding the life-supporting capacity (cf. mauri) of the members of Te Iho Matua whānau Māori (i.e. the family of Ranginui and Papatūānuku). This point is important because damage done to what western scientists refer to as ‘ecosystems’ can likewise be thought of as a ‘mana-diminishing’ act towards all whānau Māori members.

Second, when we talk about the goal of Māori cultural well-being and survival, we are really talking about ‘whānau Māori’ well-being and survival. The English word ‘culture’ can be translated as ‘whānau’ in a Māori context because it is this extended whānau (i.e. the children of a family entity defined by the various domains of the natural world) that provides us with our unique ‘indigenous’ (Māori) identity. Thus, ecosystem decline can be thought of as whānau Māori well-being decline. One of the most effective ways of assessing whānau Māori well-being (in a modern-day context) is to measure the remaining spatial extent of forest, lake, river, wetland, grassland, and/or marine ecosystems in a given area. When we do this, we discover straight away, that 178 years of colonisation in this country has reduced Te Iho Matua whānau Māori (transl. the celestial members of the family of Ranginui and Papatūānuku) well-being to threshold (i.e. near extinction) levels.

Third, the expression ‘whānau Māori’ not only assists in providing understanding about the meaning of the English concept of ‘family’ in a Māori cultural context, it also assists in defining the *Māori cultural economy* that existed in the time of our tīpuna (i.e. before the arrival of Tauīwi). This point is made very clear in the preface to the book by Raymond Firth, first published in 1929 under the title – ‘The Primitive Economics of the New Zealand Māori’.

*The life of the Māori, cannot be explained on the assumption that economic interests and needs have created their social structure ... Though modified by them, that structure had biological and social foundations of its own ... The economic activities of the Māori were developed, in short, within a framework set by the family ... (Firth, 2011).*

In Te Reo Māori, we can describe the Māori economy with the name – Te Iho Matua, Te Aho Matua whānau o Rangī rāua ko Papatūānuku (i.e. the celestial and terrestrial family of Ranginui and Papatūānuku). Reclaiming the Māori economy is thus a further important dimension of Māori cultural survival. In order for a culture to survive, it needs the freedom to give daily expression to its language, systems of knowledge development/learning and culturally derived institutions. For Māori communities, this is a defining lesson of the last four decades that has emerged from efforts to reclaim, reframe and reinstate the Māori language - Māori responsive approaches to education, healthcare, social welfare, and knowledge development (cf. western science). An urgent need now exists to expand this reinstating and decolonising effort into the domain of the Māori economy. The work of planners and policy-makers is central to the achievement of this Māori cultural well-being and survival goal.

## 5. Reflections - towards the goal of cultural co-existence in New Zealand

By reclaiming the Māori language and whānau Māori identity, we find ourselves confronting yet another interesting question concerning just how a Māori cultural model of economy, based on a Māori family identity, will ever be able to co-exist with a market-based model of economics. It seems likely that our tīpuna anticipated this problem and provided an answer in their support and signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi – the Treaty of Waitangi. The Treaty provides support for the creation of zones of what could be described as ‘cultural exclusion’ and ‘cultural inclusion’ that are critically important for achieving the goal of cultural co-existence.

The ‘Treaty House’ at Waitangi (in Northland) is perhaps our most powerful national symbol of a metaphorical ‘zone of cultural inclusion’ in which Māori and non-Māori work together for the benefit of our nation as a whole. In this zone of ‘cultural inclusion’ we work together to build a shared national identity as Kiwis, or New Zealander’s, through the expression of generosity, trust, and goodwill. This zone of inclusion thus provides a space for co-management and co-governance arrangements, the building of a common blended language and collective aspirations. However, the inclusive character of the Treaty House space does not ideally support the goals of Māori or non-Māori cultural survival. This requires the creation of additional ‘zones of cultural exclusion’.

The expression of kāwanatanga (transl. government, dominion, rule, authority, governorship) as provided for in the Treaty of Waitangi is a good example of a ‘zone of cultural exclusion’ that provides a space for the English language, the market economy and the rule of ‘British’ law as created by our legislature and administered by our nation’s courts and local government entities, etc. Over the past four decades, it has become increasingly clear to Māori communities that while this zone of cultural exclusion is necessary for the expression of kāwanatanga (transl. government, dominion, rule, authority, governorship), this aspect of our Treaty partnership only supports the goal of ‘western cultural survival’ and as such, is an incomplete and inadequate solution to the goal of whānau Māori well-being and survival.

The achievement of the goal of Māori cultural well-being and survival ideally requires the creation of a further zone of cultural exclusion for the expression of tino rangatiratanga (transl. chieftainship, right to exercise authority, chiefly autonomy, chiefly authority, ownership, leadership of a social group, domain of the rangatira, noble birth, attributes of a chief) and the operation of the Māori cultural economy (i.e. Te Iho Matua, Te Aho Matua whānau o Rangi rāua ko Papatūānuku) in a way that incentivises the use of the Māori language and the daily expression of Māori behaviours (i.e. kawa, kaupapa and tikanga). Much ground has been made over the past four decades in creating this metaphorical ‘zone of Māori cultural exclusion’ including the growth of distinctly Māori cultural approaches to education, medicine, whānau-ora, law and knowledge development. This is the emerging planning and public policy context in which it will be increasingly necessary to understand how to support, (i) the reclaiming of a Māori cultural identity; (ii) the reframing of existing planning and policy practice, tools, theories and methods in ways that support Māori cultural well-being and survival outcomes; and (iii) the task of reinstating ‘Te Iho Matua, Te Aho Matua whānau o Rangi rāua ko Papatūānuku’ (transl. the celestial and terrestrial family of Ranginui and Papatūānuku) as a basis for the operation and survival of the Māori cultural economy. This is also the emerging planning and public policy context in which we must now move beyond the mana diminishing assumptions and limitations of cultural impact assessments.

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