

THE DECLARATION OF NGĀTI KAHUNGUNU RIGHTS

History and tradition teaches us that the Hapū and Iwi of Ngāti Kahungunu have always possessed the mana to exercise the authority of sovereign peoples,

History and tradition also teaches us that the Hapū and Iwi of Ngāti Kahungunu have always accepted that the mana imposed both rights and responsibilities as kaitiaki in relation to the care and protection of ourselves as unique peoples,

History and tradition also teaches us that the rights and responsibilities of kaitiakitanga have always included the care and protection of Papatūānuku who nurtures all life,

History and tradition further teaches us that in the discharge of the rights and responsibilities of kaitiakitanga the Hapū always acknowledged and respected the whakapapa they shared one with another by acting together in congress as the Iwi of Ngāti Kahungunu,

History and tradition confirms that the rights and responsibilities of Kaitiakitanga are discharged as part of the constitutional right of tino rangatiratanga,

History and tradition also confirms that tino rangatiratanga was the right and solemn duty which the Hapū and Iwi had to exercise governance according to the tikanga which joined together all those who were descendants of Ngāti Kahungunu,

History and tradition further confirms that the mana and the right to be sovereign peoples and to exercise the constitutional authority of tino rangatiratanga could never be abdicated nor given away because they were held in trust by the tipuna for the care and protection of the mokopuna,

History and tradition emphasises that the changing times of human affairs the Hapū and Iwi of Ngāti Kahungunu reserved the right to develop and devise new ways or institutions within which tino rangatiratanga could be exercised as the constitutional authority while preserving the values and tikanga upon which it was based.

This Declaration of Ngāti Kahungunu Rights was written by Māori Law Expert Moana Jackson who also worked extensively on international indigenous issues around the world. In 1988, Moana was part of the first Māori delegation to the United Nation's Working Group drafting the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Between 1997-1999 the Ngāti Kahungunu Constitutional Review Committee, Dr Moana Jackson, Mereana Pitman, Mere Ruru, and Taanga Lawrence, met and spoke with 17,000 Ngāti Kahungunu descendants. Through the review process, the committee drew together a Bill of Rights that gives expression to our Ngāti Kahungunu mana and rangatiratanga. This set of fundamental rights for the descendants of Ngāti Kahungunu is titled the Declaration of Ngāti Kahungunu Rights. In 2001 this declaration was adopted at an Annual General Meeting of Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi Incorporated. The Declaration was translated by Lewis Moeau.

Accepting the wisdom of our history and tradition, and accepting their prevailing truths today, the following Declaration of Ngāti Kahungunu Rights solemnly proclaims-

1. That all peoples of the collective Hapū and Iwi of Ngāti Kahungunu have the right of self-determination. By the virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely preserve their economic, social and cultural development.
2. That the Hapū and Iwi of Ngāti Kahungunu have the right to exercise their individual or collective tino rangatiratanga in order to ensure the welfare, protection, and mana of all peoples who are the descendants of the Hapū and Iwi of Ngāti Kahungunu.
3. That the Hapū and Iwi of Ngāti Kahungunu have the right to exercise their individual or collective tino rangatiratanga according to the values of our tipuna which ensured the power and authority should always be exercised in balance with the obligations all peoples have to the atua, the tipuna, and each other
4. That the Hapū and Iwi of Ngāti Kahungunu have the right to exercise their individual or collective tino rangatiratanga in order to determine the nature, extent, and obligations inherent in their political, social, cultural, and economic relations with institutions or peoples who are not descendants of the Hapū and Iwi of Ngāti Kahungunu.
5. That the Hapū and Iwi of Ngāti Kahungunu have the right to exercise their individual or collective tino rangatiratanga in order to protect, nurture, and sustain all their values, waters lands, and other taonga (tangible and intangible)
6. That the Hapū and Iwi of Ngāti Kahungunu have the right to exercise their individual or collective tino rangatiratanga in relation to the use, application, and benefits of existing and future commercial or technological advances as they may effect their lives, waters and lands
7. That the Hapū and Iwi of Ngāti Kahungunu have the right to exercise their individual or collective tino rangatiratanga in relation to the protection, enhancement, and control of all knowledge which has been, and will be, part of the intellectual and cultural property of the Hapū and Iwi of Ngāti Kahungunu