

Position Statement on the effect of bovine dairy intensification on the state of the Oraka-Aparima takiwā

As kaitiaki of the Oraka-Aparima takiwā (as detailed in Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu Act 1996) we hold responsibility for manawhenua manamoana¹, the wider community and the coming generations.

Our mother, Papatūānuku, can only take so much, her veins (the water ways) are now clogged with sediments, algae, toxic cyanobacteria and faecal bacteria. The accumulated effects from intensive land-use damages our relationship with our ancestral landscape, water, sites, wāhi tapu and other taonga, and our culturally defining practices such as mahinga kai, rongoā, raranga etc.

The current state of the takiwā (wai, whenua and moana) is now seriously eroding our cultural health, wellbeing and cultural practices. It is at a state that it contrary to our Ngai Tahu Deed of Settlement and the purpose and principles of the RMA. One of the defining principles of the Treaty of Waitangi was for the active protection of mana whenua rights and interests.

Intensive farming has been identified as the main contributor ² to the deterioration of our waterways and we believe enabling further intensification impacts us achieving our kaitiaki responsibilities.

We recognise and appreciate that some in the farming community are trying to achieve better environmental practices, but this will not achieve the restoration required while further intensification is allowed to add to the cumulative effects on Papatūānuku.

Therefore, as kaitaki we believe it is appropriate to oppose all consent proposals that intend to intensify agriculture. Our initial focus is to oppose bovine dairy conversions and increases in herd numbers.

We will oppose such consents until:

- Such activities (including cumulative effects) have decreased contaminant outputs sufficiently to no-longer cause harmful effects on the waterways, their margins and estuaries
- Such intensive land-use activities prove they cause no harm to the whenua, wai, and biodiversity (including freshwater fish)
- There are better rules and standards to provide for improvement in the health of the waterways and margins, sufficient to provide for our cultural uses (such as mahinga kai)
- The cessation of the removal of wetlands and indigenous vegetation, and the protection and restoration results in improvements.
- Improvement in the health of waterways, mahinga kai resources and access, and the cultural health of the takiwā so that it no longer impacts negatively on our kaitiaki responsibilities and the environment.
- Active protection of our rights and interests are achieved.

We belong to the environment and are only borrowing the resources from our generations that are yet to come. It is our duty to leave the environment in as good or even better condition than received from our tupuna.

¹ Traditional/customary authority or title over land, forests, waterways and sea.

² Snelder and Legard. 2014, Ewans 2018, Robertson et al. 2019,

Mō tātou, ā, mō kā uri ā muri ake nei

For us, and our children after us.