

## TE REO O HAURAKI

*“Ma wai taku reo e ora ai? Maku ano!”*

### He Kupu Whakataki

Te reo Maori is common to us all. Te reo Maori in Hauraki (included here also is the notion of specific language usages from Hauraki i.e., regional/tribal dialect) requires urgent attention, arguably more so than all regions. Whilst on the face of it the statistics (see below) do not present an entirely different picture from other tribes in Waikato (and Waikato is above the national average for Māori of around 23 percent<sup>1</sup>) there are a couple of factors which we need to consider. The overall number of speakers of te reo Māori in Hauraki is significantly lower and therefore the opportunities to create “language communities” here is less. Language communities are required to continue the growth and transmission of the language. Other tribes have developed, in some cases very comprehensive (see Taranaki and Ngāi Tahu?), language revitalisation strategies and interventions: particularly focussed on the younger generations. Whilst, there are some bilingual and immersion opportunities in Pare-Hauraki and adult te reo Māori classes we need to develop more sustained organised strategies and interventions to address, what we would consider a dire situation.

At the present rate of decline te reo in Hauraki will become moribund within two generations. This decline needs to be arrested, reversed and revived. Without Te Reo, Hauraki iwi lose intrinsic knowledge and understandings of ourselves and a characteristic that sets us apart amongst other iwi. This settlement process has the greatest opportunity to fully address this issue. We will not get another.

Hauraki occupies a special position in terms of language revival, in that it has not featured prominently in reo initiatives over the last 30 years or more. Hauraki has not reaped the rewards as others have. For this reason there is a good case for the Crown to support a collective initiative of this type.

### Proposal

Hauraki should consider some form of redress specifically for te reo. This may be through relationships with key Government agencies to assist with language planning and implementation over an extended term (2-4 generations?). This makes it fiscally achievable. Firstly Hauraki iwi need to decide whether this is a priority. If it is then some work would need to be done around this for negotiations.

Finally the Maori Language Commission has conducted consultation rounds with iwi. Hauraki was included with Waikato. No Hauraki iwi representatives were present. As a first step should we agree this is worth pursuing, Hauraki iwi could invite Te Taura Whiri i Te Reo Maori to listen, consider, reflect and report our specific issues to the Crown and use this as a component of our negotiations.

### He Kupu Whakakapi

Soon this Government will embark on an audit of its agencies to assess how effective they have been in supporting the revival of te reo Maori. The Minister of Maori Affairs is driving it. This is an important opportunity for Hauraki to show leadership.

By identifying specific goals for Maori language restoration and having the means through the settlements process to act upon them effectively, we could make an enduring contribution to our collective futures and leave a tangible legacy.

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Tribal Affiliation <sup>ii</sup>	No of speakers of te reo Maori	Total tribal population in Waikato region	Percentage of speakers
Hauraki (Coromandel) Region	21	90	23%
Ngāti Hako	336	1,377	24%
Ngāti Hei	81	558	15%
Ngāti Maru (Marutuahu)	780	3,375	23%
Ngāti Paoa	930	3,375	28%
Patukirikiri	9	66	14%
Ngāti Porou ki Harataunga ki Mataora	330	1,170	28%
Ngāti Pūkenga ki Waiau	171	477	36%
Ngāti Rāhiri Tumutumu	42	195	22%
Ngāi Tai (Hauraki)	87	342	25%
Ngāti Tamaterā	693	2,457	28%
Ngāti Tara Tokanui	147	489	30%
Ngāti Whanaunga	213	588	36%
Ngāti Haua (Waikato)	1,722	4,923	35%
Ngāti Maniapoto	8,961	33,627	27%
Ngāti Raukawa (Waikato)	2,175	8,163	27%
Waikato	10,920	33,429	33%

<sup>i</sup> See *Te Oranga o Te Reo Māori 2006: The Health of the Māori Language 2006* (Te Puni Kōkiri 2008, p.18).

<sup>ii</sup> Te Puni Kōkiri (2008) *Te Oranga o Te Reo Māori i te Rohe i Waikato 2006: The Health of the Māori Language in Waikato 2006*, p.7. Wellington.