

.iwi.nz Moderation Policy Review Submission

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Tena koutou nga mema a te Komiti Oversight:

While progress in existing policy is always welcome, when "First principle" is compromised we sow the seeds for future trouble.

It has long been my contention that casualisation of the term "iwi" plays into the hands of those who hope to see Maori identity weakened and eventually disappear.

I contend that "iwi" can only properly apply to those whakapapa based community groupings, which are the foundation stones of "Maoridom" and which may be determined at whatever level appropriate to "te take o te ra", ie whanau/hapu/iwi whanui.

This does not invalidate the status or the kaupapa of other tangata whenua groupings (such as Urban Maori Authorities), but declares they are in another category ie that of "Service Groups".

The so-called "Iwi Authorities" (one of which I served on the Board of through its inception years) are also Crown registered Service Bodies - they are not IWI per se. My Runanga Organisation has always maintained this distinction - we are NOT the iwi but a body which SERVES the iwi regardless of politics etc. It was never an easy road but the early years never are.

The Crown has NEVER "permitted" iwi to become "legal entities" since it legislated via its own London Parliament to annex NZ in May 1841 and assumed Sovereign authority over this country and its people. Yet beforehand it HAD recognised the NZ "tribes" as being the sovereign authority holders, hence the treaty process etc

The Crown has intimated that it will accept "iwi" as legal bodies under special legislation, yet its obvious that Iwi have to pre-date the Crown by many generations and DO NOT REQUIRE THE CROWNS PERMISSION to exist. Where new Iwi groups may formate, such as "taura here" they MUST be sourced from that tikanga derived "koiwi" base.

This was the issue underlying the Maori Fisheries raruraru, and one underlying the current Foreshore and Seabed matter, and it will arise time and time again unless te ao maori gets its kaupapa straight.

You cant have two groups holding "mana iwi" in the same territory, and obviously the Urban Maori Authorities are not "tangata whenua" as such in the districts where they operate. This is not to denigrate their work, but they would not have to exist if colonial pressures had not dealt so harshly to the local iwi.

It is however very possible to have two separate categories or levels of operation carrying on simultaneously, as long as they are clear where their boundaries are. Modern societies make these distinctions all the time, not always in agreement but this is why we have authorities such as "the Moderator" to keep the separate hats in their place.

My point is that the existing registry is already in breach of Tikanga Maori; only genuine iwi bodies should be entitled to hold that designation with other "roopu Maori" holding some affiliated but separate definition reflecting their community service status.

So this raises the matter of "iwi legality"? Well, its about time. The longer Maori accept "colonial creep" as it were, the weaker their mana whenua, mana tipuna becomes.

The wider issue of say "democratic power" vis a vis iwi based and urban based communities is one to be worked through as financial and other pragmatic resources are consolidated, and is not one for this forum. The concept of "iwi" however is at the heart of the definition of "Maori" itself - muddy this one and you end up in the swamp and THATS where the alligators are licking their lips.

Kia ora tatou

Tony Chadwick. Te Whanau a Apanui Iwi.