OFFICIAL

IN THE WAITANGI TRIBUNAL **KEI MUA I TE TARAIPIUNARA**	**WAI 3325** **WAI 3279**
UNDER	**The Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975**
CONCERNING	**The Climate Change Priority Inquiry**
AND	**Te Upokorehe Future Generations Climate Change Claim**

BRIEF OF EVIDENCE OF KAHUKORE BAKER FOR TE UPOKOREHE FUTURE GENERATIONS CLIMATE CHANGE CLAIM

Dated: 26 March 2025

RECEIVED
Waitangi Tribunal
26 Mar 25
Ministry of Justice
WELLINGTON

Bryce Lyall, Maithili Sreen and Hannah Swedlund
Barristers
PO Box 60649
Titirangi
Auckland 0642
Ph: (09) 889 1835
Bryce@brycelyall.com
Maithili@brycelyall.com
Hannah@brycelyall.com

1. Ko wai rā, ko wai rā i tu i a koutou? Ko Kahukore Baker ahau Ko Heretaunga Panenehu Pat Baker tōku papa. Ko Heretaunga Pita Baker tōku matua tipuna. Ko au he uri o Te Upokorehe.

2. I am giving evidence today in support of the Te Upokorehe Future Generations Climate Change Claim.

3. In particular I want to speak to a taonga apecies for us, the pilot whales.

4. In 2014 a pod of 40 pilot whales beached at Ōhiwa. The stranding of a pod of pilot whales of this magnitude was unheard of in our rohe, although of course they are frequent visitors.

5. Te Upokorehe Kaumātua, Resource Management Team, Marae and whānau members worked alongside DOC, BOP Regional Council and the local community but unfortunately the entire pod had to be euthanised.

6. For Te Upokorehe, who have an age-old relationship with the whale, and consider them to be whānau members, the stranding was a tragedy.

7. Whale expert Ramari Stewart then enabled us to carry out a customary recovery process of the heads of the entire pod, for research purposes. Kaumātua Wallace Aramoana invited neighbouring iwi to send representatives to work alongside Te Upokorehe and Ramari so

everyone could benefit from Ramari's knowledge and experience in the process.

8. The recovery involved several stages that took place over a year, at Roimata Marae. The whānau carried out this work alongside Ramari, fitting it around their daily lives and other commitments.

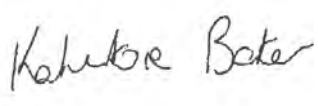
9. In 2017, Ramari brought a team of Te Waipounamu researchers to Roimata Marae for whale ear-bone research. Te Upokorehe turned Roimata Marae into a science lab. We have been informed that the Te Upokorehe Tohorā Collection is the largest known familial collection. While other places have bigger collections, only Te Upokorehe has recovered an entire whānau including the upoko of the little unborn whale, named Koropepe. This was a far better research experience for Te Upokorehe than sending 'our whales' away to Te Papa or to Universities. I attach a video showing this as "**A**".

10. I live in Wellington and can remember going home to Te Upokorehe adn working with the whales, and then driving to Wellington, exhausted. I stopped for a swim and could feel the wairua of the whales. I felt the connection that all Te Upokorehe feel with these taonga.

11. We are concerned that the threats posed by climate change, including algal blooms, loss of food supply, and changing water temperatures will kill these creatures or mean they no longer come to Te Upokorehe. As has been proven, a little funding can allow us to do a lot of research, a lot of future proofing. My message here today is that the people on the ground, the communities, are those that best know the threats they face and the solutions for them.

12. Yet what we see time and again is the Crown providing funding and resources to those with no knowledge of our rohe, or our taonga species.

Dated: 26 March 2025



Kahukore Baker