I TE RŌPŪ WHAKAMANA I TE TIRITI O WAITANGI

WAI 2358
Wai 762
Wai 1162
Wai 1716
Wai 2460

KEI RARO I TE MANA O te ture o te **Tiriti ō Waitangi 1975**

Ā

I TE TAKE O te pakirehua **National Fresh Water and Geothermal Resources** (Wai 2358)

Ā

I TE TAKE O tētahi kerēme nā **Te Urunga Aroha Evelyn Kereopa** mō tōna **whānau**, me ētahi mema o te hapū o **Te Ihingārangi** o Maniapoto (Wai 762)

JOINT BRIEF OF EVIDENCE OF TE URUNGA AROHA EVELYN KEREOPA, ANTHONY WHARERAUPO OLSEN, IAN JOHN MITCHELL, MERLE MAATA ORMSBY, DANIEL WHETU ORMSBY AND BRYCE PEDA ALDRIDGE

Dated 17 October 2025

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Ā

I TE TAKE O tētahi kerēme nā **Anthony Whareraupo Olsen, Trudy Elizabeth Paatu Olsen,** me **Kathryn Fiona Whetureereata Olsen,** mō ngā iwi o **Waitaha** me **Kāti Māmoe** (Wai 2460)

Ā

I TE TAKE O tētahi kerēme nā **Ian John Mitchell** mō ngā hapū o **Ngāti Hineira** me **Te Uri Taniwha** o **Ngāpuhi** (Wai 1716)

Ā

I TE TAKE O tētahi kerēme nā **Merle Ormsby, Tiaho Pillot** me **Daniel Ormsby,** mō a rātou whānau, me ngā uri o **Te Taawhi Patena Mariu** rāua ko **Rauaiterangi Mary Patena** (Wai 1196)

Ā

I TE TAKE O tētahi kerēme nā **Bryce Peda Aldridge,** mōna, nā runga anō i te tono o **Nuki Aldridge** (kua mate), me **Te Taumata o Tangitu – The Tahawai (Aldridge)** claim (Wai 2377)

MAY IT PLEASE THE TRIBUNAL

INTRODUCTION

1. This joint brief of evidence is provided by Te Urunga Evelyn Aroha Kereopa, Anthony Whareraupo Olsen, Ian John Mitchell, Merle Maata Ormsby, Daniel Whetu Ormsby and Bryce Peda Aldridge ("**the Claimants and Interested Parties**").

Te Urunga Evelyn Aroha Kereopa

2. My name is Te Urunga Evelyn Aroha Kereopa, but members of my whānau call me Evelyn or Kaike. I am the named claimant for Wai 762 and an interested party in the National Freshwater and Geothermal Resources Inquiry ("**Wai 2358 Inquir**y" **or** "**Inquiry**").

3. The Wai 762 claim is on behalf of my whānau and Te Ihingarangi, a hapū of Ngāti Maniapoto. My iwi are Ngāti Maniapoto, Ngāti Tūwharetoa and Ngāti Hau. One of my main hapū is Te Ihingarangi, but I whakapapa to many other hapū, including hapū of Ngāti Tūwharetoa as set out in my earlier brief of evidence.[1]

4. The geothermal taonga I'm connected to the most is in Tokaanu. I whakapapa to hapū in this area through my dad's side. My main links to Tokaanu are through Ngāti Tūrangitukua and Ngāti Hinemihi. My evidence draws on my whanau connection to Ngāti Tūwharetoa and affiliated hapū.

Anthony Whareraupo Olsen

Ko Kirikirikatata te mauka tapu

Ko Aoraki te mauka

Ko Waitaki te awa

Ko whiti atu te Moananui a Kiwa ki Korotuaheka

[1] T Kereopa, *Brief of Evidence* dated 15 March 2024, Wai 2358, #I9 at [2]

Ko Uruao te waka

Ko Rākaihautu te takata

Ko Waitaha te iwi

5. My name is Anthony Whareraupo Olsen. On behalf of Waitaha and Kāti Māmoe, I am the named claimant for Wai 2460 (Waitaha ki te Waipounamu claim) together with my sisters Trudy Elizabeth Paatu Olsen and Kathyrn Fiona Whetureereata Olsen. We are claimants in the Wai 2358 Inquiry.

6. Our Waitaha and Kāti Māmoe whakapapa is closely tied to our geothermal taoka. Our geothermal taoka interests concerns all geothermal springs in Te Waka-a-Māui, both past and present.

Ian John Mitchell

Ko Pukenui (Te Ahuahu) te maunga

Ko Ōmāpere te roto

Ko Te Awa Rangatira, Te Kerikeri, te awa ki te Tai Tama Hine

Ko Hokianga te awa ki te Tai Tama Tane

Ko Matawhaorua te waka

Ko Kupe te tangata

Ko Erana Karearikí Pehiri raua ko Arthur Edmonds nga tupuna

Ko Te Uri Taniwha me Te Hikutu ngā hapū

Ko Parawhenua, Pa Te Aroha nga marae

7. My name is Ian John Mitchell, and I am the named claimant for Wai 1716 and an interested party in the Wai 2358 Inquiry. I am a 27-generation descendent of Kupe and my iwi is Ngāpuhi as I am descended from Rāhiri. My hapū include those that precede Ngāpuhi, that relate to Kupe: Te Uri Taniwha and

Te Hikutu. The other hapū to which I affiliate are those following Rāhiri. They are all Ngāpuhi Tuturu, characterised by our tupuna Uenuku and Kaharau, children of Rāhiri. From Uenuku come the hapū Te Tini o Hua, Ngāti Hine, Ngāti Hineira, Ngāti Korohue, Ngāti Rangi, Ngāti Kawa and others.

8. I am also connected to Ngāti Hau – Ngāti Kaharau via Esther Robinson, who is the daughter of Rokaha Matarau Manu. Rokaha was born and raised with her mother's tribe, Ngāti Ruanui hapū in Taranaki and is the granddaughter of Patuone.

9. The geothermal taonga of concern to us is Lake Ōmāpere, which is the source of the Waitangi River, Kerikeri River and Hokianga River. We also recognise all the underground connections, where the channels from Lake Ōmāpere connect through to the underground basalt lava flows, to all the regional waterways and to ngāwhā geothermal pools.

Merle Maata Ormsby and Daniel Whetu Ormsby

Ko Tongariro te Maunga

Ko Rotoaira te Moana

Ko Tahuarangi te Awa

Ko Ngati Hikairo te Iwi

Ko Motuopuhi te Pa

Ko te Matapuna o Tuwharetoa me Hikurangi nga Marae

10. Our names are Merle Maata Ormsby and Daniel Whetu Ormsby. We are the named claimants for Wai 1196 along with the late Tiaho Pillot. Our claim is on behalf of our whānau and for and on behalf of the descendants of Te Taawhi Patena Mariu and Rauaiterangi Mary Patena. We are interested parties in the Wai 2358 Inquiry.

11. The collective korero we provide in this joint brief of evidence relates to the geothermal taonga of our whānau and our hapū. We are Ngāti Hikairo but also identify as Ngāti Hōtu, Ngāti Tamakōpiri and Tūwharetoa.

12. There are a large number of puna taonga in our rohe. The puna our tūpuna and whānau have been directly involved with include:

    a. Hinekapa's puna;

    b. Te Mimi O Tara puna;

    c. Te Maari puna;

    d. Ketetahi Puna;

    e. Tokaanu Puna;

    f. Wahii Puna and Hipaua; and

    g. Te Pahiko Puna.

Bryce Peda Aldridge

13. My name is Bryce Peda Aldridge, formerly known as Bryce Peda-Smith. My father, Nuki Aldridge, was the principal claimant for the Wai 2358 Inquiry. I am an interested party in the Wai 2358 Inquiry.

14. Te Whānau o Rātāroa to which I whakapapa are a whānau of Ngāti Uru, Ngāti Pakahi and Te Tahawai o Whangaroa and we have lived at Rātāroa in the Whangaroa Harbour since the Mātaatua waka arrived with my tupuna Puhi. Our whakapapa establishes the longevity of Te-Whānau-ō-Rātāroa. It records our descent from Ranginui, the Sky Father, and Papatūānuku, the Earth Mother.

15. My evidence concerns Ngāwhā Springs. The Springs hold a lot of cultural, spiritual, and economic significance to Ngāpuhi hapū, our whānau and me.

The Purpose of our Joint Brief of Evidence

16. The purpose of this joint brief of evidence is to comment and provide our whakaaro on the Draft Geothermal Strategy ("**Draft Strategy**" or "**Strategy**") prepared by the Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment ("**MBIE**").

17. Excluding Mr Aldridge, the remainder of the Claimants and Interested Parties lodged a joint submission during the public consultation process on the Draft Strategy ("**Joint Submission**"). Our Joint Submission is attached to this joint brief of evidence as **Appendix A**.

18. This joint brief of evidence will refer to, and expand on, the views expressed in the Joint Submission.

SUMMARY OF THE DRAFT STRATEGY

19. The Draft Strategy contains the long-term vision for Aotearoa to be a "global leader in sustainable geothermal development, delivering innovation, resilience and inclusive growth for future generations" ("**Vision**").[2]

20. The three strategic outcomes ("**Outcomes**") stated in the Draft Strategy are to:

    a. Extend Aotearoa's position as a world-leader in geothermal innovation.[3]

    b. Accelerate Aotearoa's energy resilience through the development of increased electricity generation and harnessing geothermal heat to support Aotearoa's energy transition, with the goal to double geothermal energy use by 2040.[4]

    c. Strengthen regional economies and te Ōhanga Māori by advancing geothermal development in collaboration with tāngata whenua, and

[2] Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, *From the Ground Up: A draft strategy to unlock New Zealand's Geothermal Potential,* dated 30 July 2025 ("**Draft Strategy")**, at p 4.
[3] Draft Strategy, at p 16.
[4] Draft Strategy, at p 16.

unlocking industrial growth, tourism and trade to support Aotearoa's goal of doubling exports.[5]

21. The Draft Strategy identifies five action plan goals ("**Goals**"):

a. Improving access to geothermal data and insights;[6]

b. Ensuring regulatory and system settings are fit for purpose;[7]

c. Advancing knowledge and uptake of geothermal technologies;[8]

d. Enabling place-based geothermal clusters;[9] and

e. Driving science, research and innovation, including supercritical geothermal technology.[10]

22. The Draft Strategy acknowledges the Wai 2358 Inquiry[11] and the Ministerial Foreword states that the Strategy does not pre-empt any Waitangi Tribunal findings.[12] It also states that government officials have proactively engaged with iwi and hapū in the development of the Strategy and that further engagement is welcomed.[13]

OUR SHARED WHAKAARO ON THE DRAFT STRATEGY

Overview of Our Whakaaro

23. As stated in our Joint Submission, we broadly support the Vision and Outcomes stated within the Draft Strategy.

24. There are some aspects we do not agree with which are discussed in further detail below.

[5] Draft Strategy, at p 16.
[6] Draft Strategy, at p 18.
[7] Draft Strategy, at p 18.
[8] Draft Strategy, at p 18 and 19.
[9] Draft Strategy, at p 19.
[10] Draft Strategy, at p 19.
[11] Draft Strategy, at p 17.
[12] Draft Strategy, at p 3.
[13] Draft Strategy, at p 17.

25. A key concern of ours centres around *how* the Goals set out in the Draft Strategy will be achieved. We consider that it is essential for the Goals to be implemented through a Māori lens that recognises and provides for tikanga and mātauranga Māori, the ability for Māori to exercise kaitiakitanga and tino rangatiratanga over our geothermal taonga and opportunities for Māori to work alongside the Crown in the use and development of our geothermal taonga.

26. We believe this approach is integral to ensuring the Vision and Outcomes in the Strategy empowers tangata whenua, and guaranteeing the Strategy is whakahurihuri (transformative), rather than tangohanga (extractive).

Outcomes

27. We consider that the manner through which the Outcomes are achieved, and at what costs they should be achieved, should be identified in the Draft Strategy.

28. Māoridom, and tikanga, should be treated as a guiding philosophy when making decisions concerning our taonga, and it should not be a tick box or a matter that is simply tolerated.

29. Iwi and hapū landowners are not just collaborators but are strategic leaders and are of equal importance to others, such as members of industry, academia and government.

30. To reflect this, the Government needs to move forward from mere consultation and adopt a co-design approach with Māori that recognises the principles of kaitiakitanga and tino rangatiratanga. Such an approach could include joint ventures between the Crown and ahu whenua trusts with a system in place that monitors the effectiveness of this approach through a tikanga lens and Māori led innovation hubs.

31. As set out in [6] of our Joint Submission, kaitiakitanga necessitates ownership and sharing in the benefits that accrue from the use and development of geothermal resources. This helps to set in place a system allowing for reinvestment and growth.

32. The Draft Strategy cannot be viewed solely through a Pākehā lens. For example:

a. "innovation" must incorporate mātauranga Māori;

b. "energy resilience" should include tino rangatiratanga;

c. "strengthening te Ōhanga Māori" should include intergenerational equity and tino rangatiratanga.

33. There are clear social, cultural, political and environmental benefits for Māori. However, it is Māori that are always compromising. The Crown and Māori often have differing views, but it should not be for the Crown to dominate and for Māori to give up their tikanga.[14] Māori authority and structures we choose are confined by the Crown, we can't fully use our tikanga and values taught to us by our elders because it doesn't fit into the Crown's structure of governance for us. Māori do not have the full ability to be doing what we should be as kaitiaki because the Crown obstructs full exercise of tino rangatiratanga.[15]

Action Plan Goals

34. Overall, we do not oppose the Goals set out in the Draft Strategy. However, we do consider that the Goals lack detail. The aim of our evidence is to highlight what we consider are gaps within the Goals.

35. We believe the use and development of our geothermal taonga should be led by Māori. The benefits that accrue from the utilisation of our geothermal taonga should be shared through the provision of funding to build Māori capacity within the geothermal sector and managed through increased co-governance.

36. Māori capacity building in the geothermal sector should take place at both the national level, as well as on a case specific basis for whānau, trusts and hapū to exercise tino rangatiratanga over our geothermal taonga. The proposed action in the Draft Strategy that seeks to ensure regulatory and system settings are fit for purpose includes working with the education sector to

[14] Specific kōrero from Mr Aldridge.
[15] Specific kōrero from Ms Kereopa.

strengthen geothermal career pathways to support an ongoing talent pipeline.[16]

37. This proposed action should be expanded to include geothermal resources-based university studies with a campus in Taupo and/or Rotorua. A study program that incorporates a Māori perspective and a pathway, including scholarships, should also be included for Māori / rangatahi Māori to learn specialist skills in geothermal exploration, drilling and environmental management practices to supplement their mātauranga Māori.[17]

38. Expanding the proposed action in this way would assist and support place-based geothermal clusters and complement the development of a Geothermal Centre of Excellence.[18] Without capacity building for Māori, the action plan risks reinforcing existing power imbalances.

39. As stated at [10] of our Joint Submission, it is imperative that the Goals are not pakeha focused and profit centric. Innovations such as supercritical exploration and data access stand to greatly increase the efficiency of geothermal resources. Though, it is vital that they reflect a Māori worldview.

40. Māori knowledge of geothermal resources may be couched in non-scientific terms, for example referring to taniwha, but they demonstrate a deeper understanding of how geothermal taonga operate. This must be borne in mind when seeking to tap into resources deeper within the whenua. Being aware of how to deal with heavy metals and minerals is important – there are some taniwha you do not want to disturb.

41. Western science proves things wrong in order to prove them right. Māori knowledge is built up over time through generations of learning and understanding. The western perspective only relies on information if it comes from a person with a qualification. Historically, Māori were often misunderstood or underestimated by pākehā. However, Māori possess deep, intergenerational knowledge of geothermal taonga, grounded in their unique relationship with the whenua.[19]

[16] Draft Strategy, at p 20 – Horizon 2 2027-2028.
[17] Specific kōrero from Mr Olsen.
[18] Specific kōrero from Mr Olsen.
[19] Specific kōrero from Mrs Merle Ormsby and Mr Daniel Ormsby.

42. There should be more emphasis on investing in Māori capability and support so Māori can explore, develop and benefit from their own taonga. Enabling tangata whenua in this way and through benefit-sharing should therefore be mandatory, not optional.

Overarching Direction

43. As stated at [12] of our Joint Submission, we emphasise that a kaitiakitanga approach that looks at geothermal taonga as more than a simple profit-generating enterprise should be adopted. For example, place based geothermal cluster groups should be an overarching group for individual place-based cluster groups to go to for help and assistance. This would ensure that a collective voice is maintained rather than siloing development.

44. Similarly, a centralised body is required to assess feasibility and data to ensure consistency of policies applied. We acknowledge there will likely be variances at a micro level, but the overarching direction should be shared.

45. We consider there should be a commitment stated within the Strategy to implement the Wai 2358 Inquiry findings in full, excluding any assumption that Crown-led development is the default and including language that treats Māori as stakeholders rather than just Rights-holders.

INDIVIDUAL WHAKAARO ON THE DRAFT STRATEGY

46. In addition to our shared whaakaro above, we make some individual comments on the Draft Strategy below.

Te Urunga Aroha Evelyn Kereopa

47. Māori need to take action first and come to an agreement on who should represent Māori when co-designing with the Crown. The timeframe for this must be reasonable. The first step should be to hold a hui-a-hapū. The Crown always talks to iwi chairs, the New Zealand Māori Council or Post-Settlement Governance Entities, and not to hapū members and most importantly ngā whānau.

48. The sad thing is that nobody has been able to truly participate, and the Post-Settlement Governance Entities have been making the calls for us. If whānau came together, maybe it would be better than the influence of iwi and Post-Governance Settlement Entities. I would expect ahi kā to be involved in making decisions and being part of co-design. It needs to come back to the owners of the whenua, those around the ngāwhā.

49. Tikanga, mātauranga Māori and te ao Māori must be the foundation of all policies, and not a secondary lens. All Māori areas have different tikanga, and knowing the tikanga that pertains to that specific ngāwhā is necessary. Knowing this tikanga is a huge learning curve, and I will take the lead from ahi kā kaitiaki. I endorse the kaitiaki, our ahi kā as they know the ngāwhā, and have lived there and will continue to live there.

50. Where tikanga identifies wāhi tapu, environmental degradation, or the need for rahui, commercial use must cease. The role of our kaitiaki is to monitor and make sure everything is happening as it should be. Tikanga and kaitiakitanga need to be the foundation of Crown policies moving forward.

51. The Crown has their views and Māori have theirs. Both should be able to fill in gaps in the others if anything is missing. If more weight is placed on the Crown's views that's not an even balance and totally wrong.

52. The Crown should assist Māori in catching up so that there is balance and harmonious engagement. It is important for the Crown to fund initiatives to help rangatahi Māori get into the position where they can be future experts in this field. The Crown also needs to assist Māori with experts that can identify whether our ngāwhā are commercially viable. Data should be publicly available and easy to understand; some information will be more technical than others but should depend on the type of use. The Crown should also protect against non-Māori commercial companies taking all the opportunities before Māori, because there is a current gap in resources and capacity.

53. If there is going to be a monitoring board then it is important that they know tikanga and that Māori are equally represented on the board.

54. Development projects should prioritise benefitting the local community, like heating for homes and schools, before things like commercial manufacturing.

If the Crown collects royalties, it's good, but they need to make sure that the royalties are going back to the uri of the ngāwhā.

Anthony Whareraupo Olsen

55. Establishing a baseline of publicly available data and commissioning data insights report for the geothermal sector[20] is supported as good quality geoscience and engineering data obtained at an early stage is integral to good decision-making.

56. However, the action plan needs to prevent Māori participation in the geothermal sector from becoming cost prohibitive. With the sector heavily dominated by major players like energy companies there is less opportunity for Māori to use and develop geothermal taonga. Not being able to access existing seismic survey data on our geothermal fields adds another challenge for Māori to participate in the sector.

57. There is no value in duplicating exploration and drilling operations for data that already exists. Data, regardless of how it is obtained, should be made publicly available once the development of a geothermal taonga that relates to the data is completed especially where that development is inactive.

58. There needs to be more focus and effort put into low to moderate geothermal temperature use and development. $60 million from the Regional Infrastructure Fund is ring-fenced for a project to explore the commercial viability of supercritical geothermal technology. This project does not consider the benefits of exploring low temperature use.

59. There are several uses for low to moderate geothermal heat including honey processing, flower growing, prawn farming and bathing, including in ngawha in the far north to waiariki in Maruia and Hamner Springs in the South Island. More fund and concentrated effort should be focused on these types of geothermal uses, not just on large-scale operations, to facilitate space heating initiatives, for example, using near-ground surface heat flow for schools, hospitals and airports.

[20] Draft Strategy, at p 20 – Horizon 1 2025 - 2026.

60. The Bay of Plenty and Waikato Regional Councils designate geothermal fields in their regions based on their characteristics and values and by classifying them into groups or management zones through their regional plans and policy statements. While these designations and classifications serve to protect outstanding natural features, significant ecosystems and cultural values, the decision-making process, at least for the cultural values, is not widely canvassed leading to an almost arbitrary decision regarding the classifications of some geothermal fields, at least as far as iwi are concerned.

61. I have read Ms Kissick's draft evidence to be filed in relation to the Draft Strategy. I support Ms Kissick's recommendation that a National direction through a National Policy Statement ("**NPS**") and National Environmental Standards ("**NES**") specific for geothermal should be prepared and put in place by the Government. National direction for the use, development and management of Aotearoa's geothermal resources would ensure a consistent planning framework is applied. In the preparation of a NPS and NES, matters that are important to Māori should be incorporated including tikanga, kaitiakitanga, tino rangatiratanga, Mātauranga Māori and a Māori worldview and perspective with regard to our geothermal taonga.

Ian John Mitchell

62. Fundamentally the Draft Strategy it is a good thing – the more we know and understand about the resource is a good thing.

63. However, we do not want to just be consulted. Anybody who is utilising the taonga now should be paying a proprietary right to the Māori owner, to enable Māori to enter the industry in their own right.

64. If co-design takes place, it should be on the basis of a proprietor, not an outsider. Co-design should be with whānau/hapū, not government or legally created structures.

65. Policies and regulations should have concepts of connection and whakapapa, and kaitiaki representing proprietary ownership. Above all else kaitiakitanga, protection and long-term sustainability come first.

66. For a long time, the Government has been taking royalties on gold and silver minerals extracted from all whenua. I think there must be a recognition of Māori taonga where private companies use and develop Māori taonga on non-Māori owned whenua.

67. The Government needs to build Māori capacity in the geothermal sector to help Māori to understand the nature of the Supercritical Geothermal resource, and the hydrological science involved. There is a huge lack of scientific knowledge of the resource among Māori.

68. Centralised bodies to monitor the sector could be useful, if it includes a Māori worldview. We need balance with local perspective. This could be two separate bodies, one scientific body, and one Māori body, which are separate but must be reconciled.

Merle Maata Ormsby and Daniel Whetu Ormsby

69. We support a new approach to the use and development of our geothermal taonga, but it is important to get the right people at the table with the right attitude. We aren't against working with the government; however, it is important that all parties take the time to understand and appreciate each other's perspective. Previously, we have experienced being spoken for, not spoken to, and don't want a repeat of the history we have experienced.

70. We have experienced generations of pressure in relation to our land. We are the ones who experience the consequences of the lake levels being adjusted, which have turned our property into a swamp and filled our stream with silt. Any changes to geothermal governance should include us at the forefront as the inherited landowners.

71. We need to recognise the Mauri of the water, the Mauri of those puia that we interact with. The Strategy needs to reflect what will be good and what will be of benefit for our future generations.

72. How do we know the Crown will stop using the resource? Our whānau have thought before, that they were going to be working with the Crown, but it became evident that the Crown were pursuing their own agenda. We don't want a repeat of the history we have experienced.

73. We need to know what they will actually do to protect our taonga. The focus of the Draft Strategy should not be on hapū/iwi, it should be on whānau/hapū and it should actually address the needs of the landowners and Māori on the ground.

Bryce Peda Aldridge

74. The Draft Strategy provides the opportunity to develop the Māori economy, but in doing so it needs to support smaller iwi too. Furthermore, the Strategy should align with Mātauranga Māori and focus on the atua of each rohe.

75. In Northland, we use a method of 'haumi e' (conception), 'hui e' (development and 'taiki e' (the final product). When developing strategies of this kind, the Crown should adopt the same approach. One that not only recognises the importance of the atua but also understands their intrinsic connection to the environment and natural resources. To truly understand and responsibly manage the resource, it is necessary to understand the atua associated with it, as they embody the ancestral and spiritual dimensions that give the resource its identity and function within the natural world.

76. The use of Joint ventures by Māori and the Crown to co-designing how best to use and develop our geothermal taonga would be a good option for us to explore. The Wai 2358 claimants are more aware of issues with their geothermal taonga in their rohe and could be spokespeople for their iwi in actioning a co-design approach.

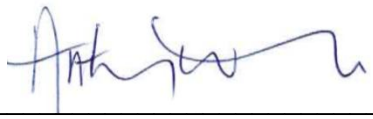
77. The Outcomes of the Strategy should be considered using a mātauranga Māori framework developed by the Environmental Protection Authority ("**EPA**"). This framework offers a culturally grounded, holistic approach to kaitiakitanga that is focused on intergenerational responsibility, reciprocity, and the interconnectedness of all living systems. By integrating this framework, the Strategy will better reflect a Te Ao Māori worldview and ensure that Māori perspectives, values, and mātauranga are embedded throughout the policy development and implementation process. This Strategy is a step in the process of tuku, a process of transfer and responsibility. As the duty of kaitiakitanga is passed on from previous generations, Māori carry the obligation to not only protect but to enhance it for those yet to come. The application of the EPA's mātauranga Māori framework to this Strategy would

ensure alignment with existing practices and support the integration of Te Ao Māori perspectives in an integrated and transparent way. The mātauranga Māori framework is attached and annexed as "**Appendix B**".

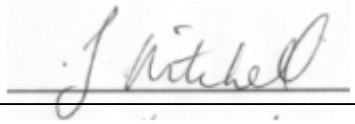
78. We acknowledge that there is still unfinished business arising from the Te Paparahi o Te Raki inquiry, particularly around questions of sovereignty and the relationship between He Whakaputanga and Te Tiriti. In the context of the Strategy, it is important that it reflects and makes space for the exercise of that rangatiratanga, which continues to be actively upheld in the north.

DATED on this **17th** day of **October 2025**

Te Urunga Evelyn Aroha Kereopa



Anthony Olsen



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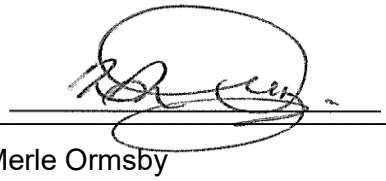
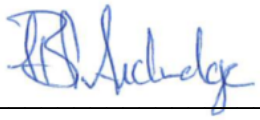


Merle Ormsby



Bryce Aldridge