WAITANGI TRIBUNAL

Wai 3559

CONCERNING the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975

AND a claim by Natasha Willison-Reardon on behalf of te Iwi me Hapū ki Marokopa – Ngāti Rarua ki Marokopa, Ngāti Toa Tupahau, Ngāti Peehi, Ngāti Te Kanawa and Ngāti Kinohaku ki Marokopa, based in the rohe of Hapū ki Marokopa Marae

MEMORANDUM-DIRECTIONS OF THE DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON

The Registrar will please enter this matter on the register of claims and give it the next available Wai number. The register should note that the claim was received on 26 February 2026.

The claimant should please take note of the 'Wai' number reference at the top of the page. Please use this claim number in any communication with the Tribunal.

This claim is lodged by Natasha Willison-Reardon on behalf of te Iwi me Hapū ki Marokopa – Ngāti Rarua ki Marokopa, Ngāti Toa Tupahau, Ngāti Peehi, Ngāti Te Kanawa and Ngāti Kinohaku ki Marokopa, and concerns te Iwi me Hapū ki Marokopa's whenua, moana, urupā, puna, reefs and ngahere. The claimant alleges that the Crown has breached the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi by:

- failing to uphold its duty to protect the coastal environments of Marokopa and Kiritehere through its policies, decisions, and omissions, allowing coastal erosion to continue unchecked;
- allowing wāhi tapu to be destroyed by blasting sacred taonga rock formations during roadwork, without consent, tikanga nor proper protection in place;
- failing to develop or implement any meaningful strategy to support Māori coastal communities facing these threats; and
- failing to engage, consult, or act in a timely and coordinated way to prevent further damage.

The claimant seeks a variety of relief, including recommendations that the Crown:

- acknowledges grievances raised in the claim;
- provides a sincere and public apology to the claimant, their whānau, hapū and iwi;
- undertakes a full review of the decisions and processes that led to the destruction of wāhi tapu and other taonga in the realignment of the road in Marokopa, and addresses the structural issues that allowed it to happen;
- works with mana whenua to identify all wāhi tapu and taonga across the rohe and ensures these are permanently protected through appropriate legal, cultural and environmental mechanisms;

- develops and implements a co-designed coastal protection and climate adaptation strategy specific to Kiritehere, Marokopa and surrounding areas, resourced adequately and led by mana whenua;
- along with relevant councils, reviews all historic and current consents granted in the area without mana whenua consultation and takes steps to address breaches and prevent further harm;
- reviews legislative and regulatory systems including the Resource Management Act 1991, the Local Government Act 2002 and the Public Works Act 1981 to align with Te Tiriti o Waitangi, ensuring that mana whenua are embedded in governance and planning processes; and
- resources mana whenua-led planning, cultural mapping, environmental monitoring and decision-making frameworks across the rohe.

The claimant may amend this claim at a later stage. In any case the Tribunal may require the claimant to prepare a fully particularised statement of claim before the claim can be heard.

The Tribunal currently runs district and kaupapa inquiry programmes in which claims are grouped either by district or by kaupapa (thematic) issue. Historical claims are those that raise grievances which arose before 21 September 1992. Contemporary claims have grievances that arose on or after that date. Some claims have both historical and contemporary grievances.

The allegations made in this claim are contemporary in nature. They pertain to natural resources and environmental management and as such may be best suited for consideration in Wai 3450, the Natural Resources and Environmental Management Kaupapa Inquiry.

When the time comes for the claim to be prepared for hearing, the Tribunal will decide whether there are any matters in the present claim that the Tribunal may not inquire into. The claimant needs to be aware that there are some matters that the Tribunal is not allowed to inquire into, such as any Bill that has been introduced into Parliament (unless the Bill has been referred to the Tribunal under section 8 of the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975). Also, when historical claims are settled, the settlement legislation usually forbids the Tribunal from inquiring further into the matters that have been settled.

The claimant also needs to be aware that the Tribunal does not make settlements. After the Tribunal has completed an inquiry into claims, it writes a report making recommendations to the Crown. It cannot tell the Crown what to do; it may only recommend that the Crown acts to address the negative consequences of its breaches of the principles of the Treaty.

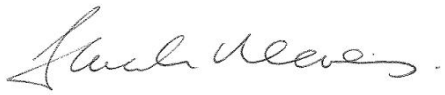
Legal Aid Services provides help for Waitangi Tribunal claimants. For advice on getting a lawyer or receiving funding, please contact Legal Aid Services at their Wellington central office or one of the local offices; the claimant should check their telephone directory for contact details.

Any questions about the contents of this document should be directed to The Registrar, Waitangi Tribunal, DX SX 11237, Wellington; phone (04) 914 3000, fax (04) 914 3001; email wt.registrar@justice.govt.nz.

The Registrar is to send a copy of this direction to the claimant and to:

- Crown Law Office;
- Te Tari Whakatau, Office of Treaty Settlements and Takutai Moana;
- Crown Forestry Rental Trust;
- Legal Aid Services;
- Te Puni Kōkiri;
- Department of Conservation;
- Waitomo District Council; and
- All those on the notification list for Wai 3450, the Natural Resources and Environmental Management Kaupapa Inquiry.

DATED at British Colombia, Canada this 10th day of March 2026



Judge Sarah Reeves
Deputy Chairperson
WAITANGI TRIBUNAL