WAITANGI TRIBUNAL

Wai 3571

CONCERNING	the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975
AND	a claim by Natasha Willison-Reardon on behalf of Iwi me Hapū Ki Marokopa, incorporating Ngāti Rarua Ki Marokopa, Ngāti Toa Tupahau, Ngāti Pēhi, Ngāti Te Kanawa, and Ngāti Kinohaku ki Marokopa, based in the rohe o 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 27 April 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 Iwi me Hapū Ki Marokopa, incorporating Ngāti Rarua Ki Marokopa, Ngāti Toa Tupahau, Ngāti Pēhi, Ngāti Te Kanawa, and Ngāti Kinohaku ki Marokopa, based in the rohe o Hapū Ki Marokopa Marae, and concerns the experience of rural Māori in relation to cultural identity. The claimant alleges that the Crown has breached the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi by:

- failing to actively protect the cultural identity of rural Māori within the criminal justice system;
- imposing and maintaining a monocultural justice system grounded in Western punitive doctrine, overriding tikanga based justice practices and marginalising collective, restorative and mana enhancing frameworks;
- failing to recognise tikanga Māori, mātauranga Māori, hapū based governance, and whenua anchored identity as taonga guaranteed protection under Article II of the Treaty of Waitangi;
- failing to actively protect Māori by maintaining justice processes that diminish mana, entrench deficit narratives, reproduce over-representation, and perpetuate structural marginalisation in rural Māori communities; and
- failing to respond adequately to known cultural harm to rural Māori and allowing culturally unsafe, disempowering justice practices.

The claimant seeks a variety of relief and the following recommendations:

- that hapū based justice mechanisms be resourced;
- that marae based diversion be embedded; and
- that co-governance justice oversight be established.

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 cultural identity and as such may be best suited for consideration in the Wai 3500, Taku Ahurea, Taku Tūākiri: the Cultural Identity Kaupapa Inquiry, and Wai 3060, Te Rau o te Tika: the Justice System Inquiry.

The claimant should also note that this claim is registered only insofar as it concerns contemporary allegations of Treaty breaches by the Crown.

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.

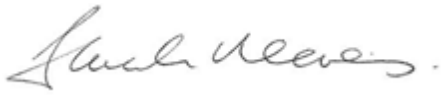
Legal Aid Services provides help for Waitangi Tribunal claimants. For advice on getting a lawyer or receiving funding, please contact Legal Aid Services at their Wellington central office or one of the local offices; the claimant should check their telephone directory for contact details.

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;
- Ministry for Culture and Heritage;
- Ministry of Justice; and
- all those on the notification list for Wai 3500, Taku Ahurea, Taku Tūākiri: the Cultural Identity Kaupapa Inquiry.

DATED at Wellington this 18th day of August 2026



Judge Sarah Reeves
Deputy Chairperson
WAITANGI TRIBUNAL