IN THE WAITANGI TRIBUNAL
KEI MUA I TE TARAIPIUNARA

WAI 1750
WAI 1092
WAI 1787
WAI 3272
WAI 1758

UNDER — **The Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975**

CONCERNING — **The North-Eastern Bay of Plenty District Inquiry**

AND — **The Rongopopoia Hapū Claim, brought by Hinehou Leef (deceased), Richard Wikotu (deceased), Aroha Wikotu, Rocky Ihe (deceased), and Kahukore Baker (Wai 1787)**

AND — **The Upokorehe claim brought by Sandra Aramoana, Wayne Aramoana, Wallace Aramoana, Lance Reha, Gaylene Kohunui and Kahukore Baker (Wai 1092)**

(cont)

BRIEF OF EVIDENCE OF TREVOR TIRA TAYLOR RANSFIELD

Dated: 30 October 2026

RECEIVED
Waitangi Tribunal
30 Oct 26
Ministry of Justice
WELLINGTON

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KŌKIRI CHAMBERS

AND	**Te Upokorehe Settlement Claim (Wai 3272)**
AND	**The Upokorehe Hapū Ngāti Raumoa Roimata Marae Trust Claim brought by Sandra Aramoana, Wayne Aramoana, Wallace Aramoana, Lance Reha and Gaylene Kohunui (Wai 1758)**

KIA WHAKAAE MAI TE TARAIPIUNARA

1. If the environment is not right, the health of our whānau is not right. It's all in our mauri, kaitiakitanga and Wai Maori. Te Upokorehe live this on a daily basis as we've always done. We already care for our rohe, our tāonga and our people.

2. Te Upokorehe are active kaitiki in our rohe:

    2.1. Our Upokorehe Resource Management Team has been established for over 30 years;

    2.2. We ran a Upokorehe Kiwi Project (supported by Department of Conservation (**DOC**);

    2.3. We have a Memorandum of Understanding for Onekawa-Te Mawhai Pā site with the Bay of Plenty Regional Council (**BOPRC**);

    2.4. We have an New Zealand Transport Authority (**NZTA**) Project Agreement for Wainui Road to Ōpōtiki; and

    2.5. We recovered (with tohunga tohorā) and hold unique tohorā collection;

    2.6. We developed an Iwi Management Plan, attached as Appendix A.

3. As part of this mahi we were represented in our own right on Mai Ngā Kuri a Wharei ki Tihirau and Ōhīwa Harbour Implementation Forum (**OHIF**).

State of the taiao

4. The state of our taiao makes me feel very sad. At Kutarere the drains and the awa used to get cleaned out. This doesn't happen now, and the marae is under water when it floods in Kutarere.

5. In the past, I worked alongside Tim Senior BOPRC (now retired) and we both worked very hard on the flooding situation here in Kutarere community, holding many community meets over the years on the flooding issue.

6. Storms are getting more frequent: when Matekerepu was blocked off, people were stuck in cars and this is not just a once off either. Kutarere has been flooded. Photos of this flooding are below:

7. The health of the awa is not good – there's algae bloom and weeds in the mudflats. In the 1960s and 70s, the awa used to be wide and clear. There is no maintenance now, its all stopped. Over the years, the funding has been going elsewhere.

8. Through farming we've got landslides and slips washing away the whenua. We used to use the awa for blessing taonga at the church, behind the gate at the back. We can no longer do this because of silt.

9. It's shocking that we are losing our species in the awa – inanga, cockabullies, all gone.

10. When the health of the awa is not good, your wellbeing and awa wellbeing are the same. This means karakia, karakia, karakia, and needing helping hands.

11. Wai is used for spiritual and physical cleansing; we use it for cleansing tupāpaku too. If the mauri of the wai is not well, the

hinengaro is vulnerable, and is unbalanced; this means the people, and the kai, are not healthy, too.

12. The birds play a huge part of your environment – their hauora is tied to ours. This is the work the Upokorehe Resource Management Team has been carrying out on the ground for decades. A photo of me releasing a kiwi as part of the Kiwi Management Project is below:

13. There are more and more people applying for pipi permits to feed whanau these days – they come from everywhere – down the Coast, Waimana, and permits for tangi too.

14. In the old times, you harvested from one place, then you moved to another to let it replenish. We used and still do use rāhui to help the kai be sustainable. This is kaitiakitanga.

15. We have made gabion baskets for mussel restoration:

16. Below is a picture of me planting alongside the Waiotahe awa:

17. The biggest challenge to the whenua, awa, and moana is Climate Change. Councils are nowhere near prepared for that. For the Councils, its about the putea.

What we need

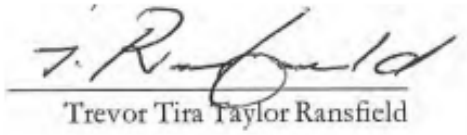
18. We need education – we need to have more wānanga about the taiao and Wai Māori. Up at Rongopopoia there are rare fish – the kokopū and cockabully – they are still up there. All three awa run

into the Ōhiwa so if the awa are polluted with farming and other things, the harbour will be too and the kai moana.

19. We need support to be able to hikoi round the rohe so whānau can see this for themselves, and to learn from those who are the kaitiaki on the ground. At the end of the day, we Māori can only do so much as the government controls the regulations and the putea.

20. Hauora needs to be supported; we need to go back to the spirit of kaitiakitanga and Wai Maori. We also need to acknowledge the work in the rohe that the care groups do – for example, the bird counts.

Dated: 2026



Trevor Tira Taylor Ransfield