

Kaikōura Water Zone Committee (KWZC)

Ted Talks April 2019

A short word from Ted Howard, Chair of Kaikōura Water Zone Committee:

“Two fresh water mataitai were recently gazetted for parts of the Kahutara and Oaro catchments and were raised at our last meeting. There was a lot of misunderstanding about what they are. Their history is long and complex. From a legal perspective, the NZ parliament accepted that their existence is guaranteed by article 2 of the Treaty of Waitangi, and from a Māori perspective their existence is a far older expression of Kaitiakitanga – the responsibility of all to care for the environment and the treasures it delivers to us.

From a legal perspective, mataitai are explicitly embodied in the Fisheries Act 1996 and the Ngai Tahu Claims Settlement Act of 1998; yet their legal existence is much older, as even the 1908 Act had a clause stating “**Nothing in this Part of this Act shall affect any existing Maori fishing rights**”, without actually defining what those rights were (that stayed in the “too hard” basket for another 80 years).

From a local perspective, mataitai were a substantive part of the Te Korowai discussions, and were explicitly mentioned in the 2011 Te Korowai Strategy on pages viii, xviii, 85, 89, 101, 103 and 106.

In practice they are a right of fisheries management, and apply only to NZ Fisheries waters (not to land). They are one expression of the rights to management of fisheries guaranteed in the Treaty. Any restrictions on fisheries expressed in any regulations apply equally to all people.

The idea that we all have a responsibility to care for our environment is common to most cultures. We all do have that responsibility.

We all need to respect each other, the diversity of approaches to issues that is present, and the environment that sustains us. We are getting better at it. We have further to go. Earthquake stress doesn't help.”