

# Understanding and Applying Te Tautuhi ō Rongo

## Conversation starter

- *Economic development*



## Purpose

To introduce **Te Tautuhi ō Rongo** and explore how it can support policy thinking.

We encourage policy leaders to facilitate an informal conversation in small groups or teams using the discussion questions and prompts provided in this guide. Throughout this guide there are prompt questions that are designed to spark discussion, deepen understanding, and encourage people to think about how you could apply Te Tautuhi ō Rongo to policy and engagement practice.

## Preparation

It's recommended that you allow 60 minutes for the conversation. This conversation could be included as a part of a regular team meeting, or as a one-off session to learn more about Te Tautuhi ō Rongo. We recommend you have a safe and quiet space to support open discussion within the group.

What you need:

- Familiarise yourself with this guide - particularly the questions, prompts and case study.
- Complete the learning on Te Tautuhi ō Rongo and read the guidance so you feel you have a comfortable understanding of Te Tautuhi ō Rongo
- Have support resources handy, including the framework, the video, the case study and Powerpoint slides.

Overview:

Time	Segment	Focus
0–10 min	<b>Whakatau / Welcome</b>	Acknowledge the kaupapa and set the scene.
10–25 min	<b>Intro to the Framework</b>	Quick overview of Te Tautuhi ō Rongo concept.
25–50 min	<b>Case Study – Aroha</b>	Explore the case studies and discuss application.
50–60 min	<b>Share Back &amp; Wrap</b>	Reflect, share insights, close.

## Delivery (60 minutes)

### 1. Whakatau / Welcome (0–10 mins)

- Karakia or whakawhanaungatanga if appropriate.
- Explain the aim of the session: to explore how Te Tautuhi ō Rongo can strengthen policy work, such as in our advice in briefing papers or options analysis.

### 2. Intro to Tautuhi ō Rongo (10–25 mins)

Give a short overview of Te Tautuhi ō Rongo. **Please note:** It is helpful to have a printed diagram of the framework or show it on a screen for quick reference.

#### **Facilitator Prompts:**

Te Tautuhi ō Rongo:

- Helps public servants explore the distinct rights, interests and responsibilities of hapū, Iwi and Māori as tangata whenua as well as citizens.
- Is based on the preamble and articles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi | The Treaty of Waitangi, which informs the four axes:
  - Partnership (Preamble of Te Tiriti | The Treaty)
  - Kāwanatanga (governance – Article 1)
  - Rangatiratanga (self-determination – Article 2)
  - Ōritetanga (equity – Article 3)
- Is made up of four representative communities – Iwi and hapū, tangata whenua, Citizens and the Crown – which inform the elements.
- Uses four elements that sit inside the Framework and reflect the relationship between the representative communities in each corner of the Framework:
  - *Quality Governance* – reflects a high-level relationship between whānau, hapū and Iwi and the Crown that provides for a variety of partnership arrangements;
  - *Quality Participation* – focuses on understanding personal and individual-based rights, interests and responsibilities whilst promoting the equality of opportunity between Māori and non-Māori;
  - *Roles & Representation* – recognises the distinct roles and associated rights, interests and responsibilities that can apply to a single person or be dispersed between collectives; and
  - *Taura Here* – focuses on Māori kinship and whakapapa connections as groupings of whānau, hapū, Iwi and their collective rights, interests and responsibilities.
- Has ‘Te Ngako’ at the centre, which is the desired outcome.

## Discussion Prompts:

Ask participants about their initial thoughts regarding Te Tautuhi ō Rongo to generate discussion. The following prompt questions can support you in this discussion:<sup>1</sup>

- What are your initial thoughts when you first look at the Framework?
- What stands out to you about the framework? (e.g. terminology and the words used; the visual design; an interconnected/holistic view; function as an inquiry and reflective tool).
- Tell me what you notice about the elements and axes.
- Are you able to see how the articles and principles of Te Tiriti | The Treaty are incorporated into the Framework?
- When you are at work, where would you place yourself on this Framework? Why would you place yourself there?
- Have you ever used a Treaty analysis tool or Framework in your work before? Can you see any differences or similarities between Te Tautuhi ō Rongo and other policy tools? Examples might include:
  - The Cabinet Office Circular CO (19)5: Treaty of Waitangi Guidance
  - Guidance - Providing for the Treaty of Waitangi in legislation and supporting policy design
  - Treasury's He Ara Waiora
  - DMPC's Policy Skills Framework - Te Ao Māori, the Treaty of Waitangi, and Māori Crown relationships

### 3. Case Study (25–50 mins)

Share the case study below with the group and then use the discussion prompts to generate conversation and insights.

#### Regional Investment Programme Review<sup>2</sup>

**Michael is a Principal Policy Analyst at New Zealand's Ministry of Economic Development. He has been asked to lead a strategic review of the Government's regional investment programme, which was designed to stimulate economic growth in underdeveloped, provincial areas.**

**Recent reports show mixed results: while some regions have experienced strong growth, others have seen limited impact. The Minister for Economic Development wants to understand whether the current investment model is delivering equitable**

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<sup>1</sup> Update the relevant slide in the PowerPoint resource with the prompt questions that feel most appropriate to ask your team.

<sup>2</sup> The case studies used in this learning are fictional and created for learning purposes. Despite being hypothetical, participants are expected to consider the Public Service Code of Conduct and Managing Conflicts of Interest obligations when engaging with the material.

**and sustainable outcomes, particularly for Māori-owned enterprises and rural communities.**

**As Michael begins his review, he hears through the kūmara vine that several people in his community attempted to apply for funding through the regional investment programme but were declined. Not because their ideas lacked merit, but because they struggled with the complexity of the application process. This raises a red flag for Michael - if members of his community are facing these barriers, how many other Māori entrepreneurs are being unintentionally excluded?**

**Discussion prompts (choose 2–3):**

- What tensions might Michael navigate in this situation?
  - How does his position on the Kāwanatanga Axis influence how he responds to the issues raised?
  - What responsibilities does he carry as a public servant, and how might these interact with his personal connections?

#### ***Professional responsibilities versus personal connections***

As a public servant, Michael sits on the kāwanatanga axis and must provide impartial, free and frank, evidence-based advice to deliver on his responsibility in supporting the Crown to give effect to Te Tiriti | The Treaty. He must recognise the Crown's duty to protect the rights and interests of hapū, Iwi and Māori and ensure that any policy or investment settings reflect the Crown's obligations under Article 2 (rangatiratanga) and Article 3 (Ōritetanga).

At the same time, in this scenario Michael has a connection to people who have experienced barriers to accessing a government funded programme, which could create a tension for him between professional neutrality and personal experiences and insights that highlight a systemic inequity. Whilst Michael cannot advocate for his community specifically or from his personal experience, he can draw on his insights to test if there are structural barriers that affect Māori citizens more broadly.

#### ***Iwi and Māori aspirations versus system performance***

Locally led, Iwi-driven economic development approaches through the exercise of rangatiratanga might conflict with a generic investment model. If the application process applied a standardised national criterion to access funding, these might not have reflected the realities of Māori entrepreneurs that required more tailored pathways.

- Who are the impacted communities in this scenario, and how are they represented?

- Are they collective entities (e.g. iwi, hapū)?
- Or are they individuals (Māori as citizens)?
- What rights and interests are at stake for these communities?
  - Are we recognising both citizenship (e.g. fair access to funding) and collective (e.g. rangatiratanga over economic development) rights and interests?

### ***Māori as citizens***

Māori-owned enterprises and Māori entrepreneurs are Māori citizens, holding individual economic rights and interests and can apply for funding alongside all other citizens. As citizens Māori have a right and interest to fair, barrier-free and equitable access to government investment, and a transparent and understandable application process.

### ***Iwi and hapū***

As collective entities they hold collective rights and interests under Article 2, particularly in relation to whenua, resources and local development. Iwi and hapū have the right to pursue their own economic development pathways. Some regional economic development strategies might also be Iwi-led, or there might be expectations for Iwi to have meaningful engagement in local investment priorities, requiring a partnership approach to design rather than consultative.

### ***Rural Māori Communities***

These may include whānau or hapū groups or be Iwi-connected communities. Economic opportunities are tied to the collective rights, land use and regional aspirations as tangata whenua.

### ***The Crown***

Is responsible for ensuring no citizen is disadvantaged through the design and delivery of a programme to enable equality of opportunity for all citizens, including Māori.

- What does Te Ngako look like?
  - How could the programme be redesigned in a way that gives effect to the Treaty by enabling Māori to thrive as both citizens and tangata whenua?

***e.g. an investment programme that enables Māori to thrive by:***

- reviewing the design of the programme to avoid any unintended exclusion of applicants
- ensuring equitable access to funding
- recognising the role of Iwi in regional development aspirations

***Possible redesign features:***

- co-designed assessment criteria with Iwi and/or hapū (quality governance)
- tiered entry points for smaller businesses (quality participation)
- application support delivered by kaupapa Māori business hubs or iwi development teams (taura here)

#### **4. Share Back & Wrap (50–60 mins)**

Invite people to share one key insight.

**Wrap-up questions:**

- What value did Te Tautuhi ō Rongo add to your thinking?
  - *To what extent did the Framework influence your understanding of relationships and collective versus individual rights, interests and responsibilities of hapū, Iwi and Māori?*
- Where could you apply this in your day-to-day work?
  - *To what extent did this exercise highlight gaps in your current approach to thinking and analysis?*
- How might using this framework change how we define the “problem” in policy work?
- How might using this framework change how we define the “problem” in policy work? What’s one way you could apply Te Tautuhi ō Rongo in your current work?
  - *Could this framework be used alongside other tools and resources, such as cost-benefit analysis or stakeholder mapping?*

Close with thanks and next steps (e.g. optional follow-up, resource links, or reflection prompts).

Encourage participants to complete the learning on Te Tautuhi ō Rongo if they haven’t already.