



Aide memoire: Kaipara Moana Remediation Programme - Meeting advice

Date submitted: 1 March 2024

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Security level: In-Confidence

Actions sought from ministers	
<i>Name and position</i>	<i>Action sought</i>
To Hon Andrew Hoggard Associate Minister for the Environment	For noting and decision to meet
CC Hon Penny Simmonds Minister for the Environment	For noting only
CC Hon Shane Jones Minister for Oceans and Fisheries, Regional Development	For noting only
CC Hon Simeon Brown Minister for Local Government	For noting only
CC Hon Todd McClay Associate Minister for Agriculture, Forestry, Hunting and Fishing	For noting only
CC Hon Mark Patterson Minister for Rural Communities, Agriculture, Regional Development	For noting only
CC Hon Paul Goldsmith Minister for Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations	For noting only

Appendices and attachments
1. Briefing to incoming Ministers and other key decision-makers - FINAL Feb 2024.pdf

Key contacts at Ministry for the Environment			
<i>Position</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Cell phone</i>	<i>First contact</i>
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Acting Deputy Secretary Partnerships, Investments, and Enablement	Sara Clarke		

Kaipara Moana Remediation Programme - Meeting advice

Purpose

1. This aide memoire provides advice on Tame Te Rangi's invitation, originally sent to Hon Shane Jones, Minister for Oceans and Fisheries to meet with the Joint Committee Members of the Kaipara Moana Remediation Programme (KMR) and visit one of its landowner projects.

Requestor's name and organisation

2. Tame Te Rangi is the co-chair of the KMR Programme, which operates independently but has offices, administration and financial support from Northland Regional Council, Whangārei.
3. KMR aims to achieve a 50% reduction of sediment flows into the Kaipara Moana over the next 100 years. It is a partnership, formalised through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed October 2020, between the Ministry for the Environment (the Ministry), Ngā Maunga Whakahii o Kaipara, Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Whātua, Te Uri o Hau, Northland Regional Council and Auckland Council.
4. A briefing prepared by KMR, outlining the programme's purpose and achievements, is provided as Appendix 1.

Ministry recommendation

5. The Ministry recommends meeting with the KMR Joint Committee and visiting one of its landowner projects. We suggest that this meeting include Justine Daw, the head of the KMR operations team and stakeholders (including primary producers) who have experienced the benefits of the programme itself.
6. KMR is the Ministry's single largest freshwater remediation investment. Your visit would enable the Joint Committee members to demonstrate the economic and environmental value of this investment and discuss opportunities for KMR to contribute to achieving the Government's national and regional priorities for farm planning, resilience to extreme weather, and thriving rural communities.
7. 9(2)(g)(i) [REDACTED]

Priority

8. High | **Medium** | Low

Refer to other

9. KMR's work may be of interest to other Ministers with responsibilities for social development, employment, conservation, primary industries and local government. The funding is managed through a council-iwi-hapū partnership and provides jobs and opportunities to upskill, opportunities to protect and improve the environment, fish populations and biodiversity. KMR also uses innovative approaches, for example using PolBionix bio-based biodegradable nursery containers which offer an alternative to plastic pots, for a mix of exotic and native afforestation.

Any additional information identified

10. The Ministry contributes \$100 million to the \$200 million programme. Auckland Council and Northland Regional Council contribute \$10 million each, with the remaining \$80 million to come from landowners and other sources.
11. 9(2)(b)(ii) [Redacted]
12. 9(2)(b)(ii) [Redacted]
13. KMR receives and manages expressions-of-interest from landowners, iwi/hapū, marae trusts and community groups for funding of sediment reduction projects. To date most of KMR's activity is focused on waterway restoration; however, it is now expanding its activities to include a focus on reducing hill-country erosion.
14. As of 31 January 2024, KMR has engaged with 785 landowners - over half of the estimated pastoral landowners in the 6,000 km² catchment. Together with individual landowners, it has developed 576 Sediment Reduction Plans.
15. There are currently 28 local businesses and 20 nurseries accredited as KMR suppliers, 57 people trained as KMR Field Advisors - many from local iwi/hapū, an estimated 230,000 hours of new work contracted or completed.
16. Over 620 km of fencing is completed or contracted and just under 1.485 million native plants are in the ground or contracted to plant.
17. Lessons learned from KMR are shared within the Ministry, with teams testing advice, assumptions, and the direction of the programme. The Freshwater Farm Plan team, the Systems Change and Capability team, the Science and Data Systems team all have engaged with the KMR programme to learn from each other.

Signatures



Lorena Stephen
General Manager – Partnerships and
Investments
**Partnerships, Investments and
Enablement**
26 February 2024



Sara Clarke
Acting Deputy Secretary
**Partnerships, Investments and
Enablement**
29 February 2024

Hon Andrew Hoggard
Associate Minister for the Environment

Date

For Minister's office use only:

Minister's decision	Accept invitation/meeting Yes/No
Comments	
Signature	
Date	

Appendix 1 (updated February 2024)

E kore e mōnehunehu te pūmahara ki ngā whēinga o neherā nā rātou nei i toro te nukuroa o Te Moana-nuiā-Kiwa o Te Moana Tāpokopoko ā Tāwhaki me Papahoro-nuku. Ko a rātou tapuwae kua kākahutia ki te kiri o Papa-tū-ā-nuku e hora nei – Kaipara Moana he tawhiti tōna roa, he manatunga, he taonga, he tapu ... he ngaru nui mā te tauihu o te waka e wawāhi.

Kaipara Moana is an ancient bastion of nature, alive with history of days, of eras past. It is a place of deep spiritual and cultural value, a space with its own mauri and identity imbued with a mana of its own.

The Kaipara Moana has unique values

All waterways are important, but the Kaipara has unique global and national values, including important economic values.



6,000km² (600,000 Ha) of catchment covering:

- 2 regions
- 7 major river systems
- ~3,500 sub-catchments
- ~92,000 micro-catchments
- 9 (planting) eco-districts

The Kaipara is the largest harbour in the Southern Hemisphere, and one of the largest in the world.

It is ecologically and culturally significant, with some of NZ's most at-risk ecosystems (dunes, seagrasses, wetlands). The Kaipara also has unique national and economic value as the nursery for much of New Zealand's snapper fishery.

Vision: The mauri of Kaipara Moana is restored and protected and its significance - for Kaipara Uri and all New Zealanders - is recognised.

Mission: KMR invests in projects and people to halve sediment flows into the Kaipara Moana.

KMR Investment Goals aim to deliver intergenerational outcomes:

- **Natural Capital - Tiaki taiao:** Kaipara Moana Mauri restored so it is healthy, self-sustaining and naturally productive
- **Social Capital - Tātai Hononga:** Kotahitanga empowers Kaipara Uri and local community participation including hapū and marae, in local solutions, leveraging opportunities
- **Human Capital - Manaaki Tangata:** Kaipara Uri and local skills and capability support innovation, effective land management and community resilience
- **Physical & Financial Capital - Ōhanga:** Sustainable, resilient and optimised primary production in the Kaipara catchment and harbour

Sediment is the problem in the catchment

An estimated 700,000 tonnes of sediment flow into the Moana each year - 7 times the natural rate. Sediment smothers riverbeds and seabed habitats & reduces light, with major impacts on fish, shellfish and plant life.



The Sediment Challenge

- Sediment is a master contaminant carrying nutrients, microbes and heavy metals that affect human, animal & environmental health
- The loss of environmental quality has major flow-on impacts on the Kaipara's fisheries, tourism, recreational and cultural values
- Dredging doesn't solve the problem (suspended sediments)
- NZ's valuable soils are best when they stay on the land

What's at stake? Snapper Case Study

- Snapper is NZ's top commercial catch for inshore fisheries
- Annual export value of ~\$35 million (2017)
- In latest 5 year band, NZ's inshore commercial fishing contributed \$460m to GDP and 3,861 jobs
- Snapper contributes 15% of this ~\$69m to the economy & 579 jobs - **each & every year**
- A snapper fishery collapse would be costly
- High correlation between seagrass blade densities and juvenile snapper abundance

KMR underpinned by MOU commitments

- KMR is a decade long programme, recognising sediment is an intergenerational issue
- A tight focus on sediment: KMR retires and plants waterways & erosion-prone land
- MfE primary funder (\$100m) with Crown funding unlocked by matched funding by Auckland and Northland Councils (\$10m each), and landowners (\$80m)
- A voluntary programme - KMR works with willing landowners & groups

Crown and Council commitments to KMR are formalised in an MOU with Kaipara Uri. KMR's Deed of Funding from the Crown reflects the MOU commitments.



KAIPARA MOANA REMEDIATION

KMR is performing strongly

KMR has the confidence of programme partners, stakeholders and landowners, and is delivering well against its KPIs.

KMR is the largest harbour restoration programme in New Zealand.

Just over 2 years into operations, KMR is scaling up at pace as planned (data as at 31 January 2024)

- 28 local businesses & 19 nurseries accredited as KMR suppliers
- 57 people trained as KMR Field Advisors - many from local iwi/hapū
- >230,000 hours of new work created - a year's work for >145 people (31 Dec 2023)
- >\$1.3.6m in project value completed or contracted, supporting local nature-based employment
- 746 landowners have expressed interest in KMR - almost half of the estimated eligible pastoral landowners in the catchment
- 1000s of meetings with iwi/hapū, professional and rural networks, community groups & landowners
- 576 KMR co-funded plans have been developed with landowners
- >1.485 million plants and trees planted or contracted for planting
- >620 km of fencing completed or contracted: More than the distance from Kaitiāia to Taupō
- >345 hectares planted or contracted to plant mainly in narrow riparian strips (KMR focused on waterways until late 2023)
- >110,000 hectares managed under KMR plans

KMR is now investing across the full landscape

At its start, KMR invested in projects to protect waterways. From September 2023, KMR has been able to invest in projects across the landscape, accelerating our scale-up & ability to reduce sediment.



Focus of KMR Investments

- Highly erodible land.
- Land with direct connectivity to waterways or the Moana itself.

Half the catchment is erosion prone:

- 300,000ha of Highly Erodible Land (LUC>6e)
- 45% is on pasture (80% drystock, 17% dairy).

-13% of land generates ~40% of sediment into the Moana

- Sediment disproportionately from pastoral land.

Roughly 50/50 stream bank vs. hill slope erosion, but the catchment is not uniform:

- Northern = more hill slope erosion (>60%).
- Southern = more stream bank erosion (>70%).

KMR provides a Plan and on-farm advice

- Landowners are connected with a trained Field Advisor.
- The Field Advisor walks the land to understand erosion risks & identify best options to reduce erosion.
- A Sediment Reduction Plan (SRP) records agreed project.
- KMR contracts the landowner to deliver the project.

Our grants support a (necessary) diversity of projects

To achieve our outcomes, KMR runs 2 grants: Landowner Grant and Whenua Whānui Fund. KMR also invests in Navigator demonstration projects to share learnings and best practice.

Landowner Grants

- "1:1 contract" between KMR and landowner.
- Sediment Reduction Plan developed with a **trained local Field Advisor** (free service).
- KMR co-funds **up to 50%** of estimated project costs in the Plan e.g fencing and planting.

Whenua Whānui Fund (WWF) Grants

- "1: Many" contract between KMR & community group, iwi/hapū, marae, catchment group.
- WWF can support projects on **collectively-owned land**.
- WWF also supports projects on **public land** that involve community.
- KMR co-funds **project planning** and development of a **Sediment Reduction Plan** (free).
- KMR co-funds **up to 70%** of estimated costs in the Plan and some **project overheads** to reflect the real time/costs needed to engage, coordinate and project manage groups.
- Applicants include groups and landowners where there is **collective benefit** from a project.
- Groups include iwi/hapū, marae, landcare groups, fish and game entities, trusts on land with multiple ownership, public landowners, reserve boards, kaitiaki, **legal and non-legal** entities.

Navigator Projects

- KMR 'Navigator projects' are flagships that demonstrate best practice in reducing sediment losses from the land, and share learnings with the community, sector or iwi/hapū.
- Across the catchment, 13 Navigator projects are contracted or in development.

KMR engagement is targeted

As a voluntary programme, positive communications & user-experience are key to engaging & retaining landowners, our core customers.

Landowner Survey Feedback

The experience of working with KMR is described very positively:

- The application process for the KMR grant was deemed as 'easy' or 'very easy' (66.7%), as was the KMR contracting process (75%).
- All other responses to this question were 'neutral'.
- KMR was especially commended for effective planting projects, and working towards shared results with landowners.

Most landowners could not think of any ways KMR can improve:

- KMR is seen as a significant, forward-thinking leader that contributes to environmental well-being in the catchment.
- Respondents appreciated the opportunity to kick-start sustainable farming practices and native-planting.

Changing landowner mix

While KMR is working with more dairy farmers overall, a growing proportion of sediment reduction projects are with drystock farmers:

- Dairy: 291
- Drystock: 216
- Lifestyle blocks: 10
- Other/unspecified: 39

KMR creates new local jobs & career pathways

As a *Jobs for Nature* programme, KMR has a dual focus on supporting people into jobs and providing training and development. A particular focus for KMR is to develop nationally-relevant training and career pathways to grow a cohort of Freshwater Farm Planners.

KMR creates new, local employment in rural areas, right across the catchment:

- **28 local businesses and 20 nurseries** accredited as **KMR project suppliers**.
- Landowners can also do the work themselves, meeting KMR standards.
- As at 30 June 2023, through KMR project investments **255,000 hours of new work** were completed or contracted for delivery.

KMR pilots national qualifications

Working with the NZ Association of Resource Management (NZARM), KMR is lifting training and employment outcomes in the Kaipara Moana catchment. In 2023, KMR and NZARM piloted the development and roll-out of two national training courses to help KMR Field Advisors obtain future qualifications in Freshwater Farm Planning.

KMR Field Advisors will shortly pilot the Capability Assessment Tool for freshwater farm planners and receive in return receive in return a tailored qualifications development plan which will be supported by KMR.



Case Study: KMR supporting dairy farmers to meet new environmental standards

Nestlé is the largest food and beverage supplier in the world, and Fonterra's largest customer. In August 2023, Nestlé announced it would no longer offset embedded carbon emissions in its supply chain. As a result, Fonterra will soon need to ensure that the milk product ingredients it supplies to Nestlé are already carbon-neutral.

In response, in December 2023, Fonterra announced a farm-level carbon emissions reduction target. Overall, it is estimated that around 8% of Fonterra farmer emissions can be offset via new tree planting on farm, including around wetlands, rivers and streams, and on erosion-prone land. Such planting not only offsets on-farm emissions, but also reduces sediment loss, improves biodiversity and pollination services, and protects and restores precious waterways and species on farm. KMR is already working with the majority of Fonterra farmers in the catchment, and will focus in 2024 on supporting activities that also help them to achieve carbon reduction goals.

Our projects improve rural resilience....

KMR's project investments in rural and often remote areas not only support local employment, they strengthen rural resilience to extreme weather, climate shocks and economic downturns. In particular, tree planting and hillside stabilisation will reduce future flooding and landslide impacts.

Cyclone Recovery

In 2023, **Gabrielle & the Auckland Anniversary floods** caused almost **\$1.9 billion in property damage, as well as damaging many farm systems**. The cost of repairing fences and/or fencing around silps reduced many landowners' ability to co-invest in KMR projects.

Working closely with the Ministry for the Environment, we rapidly designed and rolled out a **KMR Cyclone Recovery Fund** to support the recovery and/or relocation of affected KMR projects.



....and reduce primary sector risk

Globally, New Zealand's highest value markets are setting increasingly stringent environmental standards, driven by shareholder and customer demands. Through our work, KMR is supporting New Zealand's primary sector to successfully respond.

The New Zealand primary sector feeds around 40 million consumers a year. **We are therefore highly exposed to changing global market norms and standards**. As with the recent decision by Nestlé to set new carbon emissions standards, New Zealand exporters are facing **more stringent requirements for environmental sustainability** in our food and fibre exports.

It is not just consumers and private companies lifting the bar for environmental performance. The EU has recently introduced the **European Green Deal**, a plan for Europe to be the first 'climate-neutral continent', with no net greenhouse emissions by 2050.

KMR's co-funding of sediment reduction projects can reduce landowner and sector exposure to climate-related market risk. In addition, KMR can provide important third-party verification of project scope and completion via our digital tools.

Farm Plans remain a sector priority

All of the main primary sector producers in New Zealand have committed to farm environment plans to achieve water quality and other outcomes. Irrespective of regulation, there remain strong industry drivers for landowners to take action to improve environmental performance on farm. KMR can help with planning, co-investment and verification of relevant actions.

KMR accelerates progress towards Council goals

Auckland Council's 10 Year Budget 2021 - 2031 lists water quality as one of the top issues facing the region. The region's Long Term Plan specifically commits to cleaning up the Kaipara Harbour via its contribution to KMR.

Northland Regional Council's current Long Term Plan (2021 - 2031) notes sediment as a primary issue for Northland, and sets out its commitments to hosting and co-funding the KMR programme.

KMR aligns to national priorities

KMR activities are well aligned to the new Government's ethos of voluntary action (c.f. regulation), local solutions (c.f. national prescription) and investing directly to achieve outcomes.

KMR activities align directly with central and local government priorities to boost **resilience** to floods and other **extreme weather**, support **'localism'**, sustain **rural communities**, and **grow the economy**.

KMR activities align to and can provide momentum to the Government's 100 Day Plan priorities, specifically:

- Regional requirements for Cyclone and flood recovery including:
 - Restoring wetlands.
 - Planting near stream banks to reduce floodwater erosion.
- New approaches to Three Waters, including:
 - Rewilding natural corridors to allow for stormwater flows.
- Local economic diversification including:
 - Growing new revenue streams on-farm from small-scale farm forestry.
 - Growing new local industries from project "by-products" (food and fibre, nutraceuticals, etc).

Areas of focus in 2024

In 2024, KMR's ongoing focus is to scale up the programme across the catchment. We are well on our way to our 2nd millionth tree, with Winter 2024 the first season of large-scale hill country afforestation.

We will continue to work with NZARM to develop training and Farm Planning qualifications for KMR Field Advisors. A key decision will be how we align with and support the Freshwater Farm Plan system.

