

# Maori groups shape new model

by Miles Erwin

A new flexible governance model being developed for Maori groups has important ramifications for Treaty settlements and Maori economic and social development.

The new model is being created because current governance models such as companies and trusts are often too inflexible to meet the needs of Maori groups.

Governance generally refers to the institutions and processes of running an organisation.

"The mainstream governance models have been created for use by Western organisations and tend to be for single purposes," says Emma Eastwood, leader of the governance team in Te Puni Kokiri, the Ministry of Maori Development, which is developing the model.

Eastwood says the differences between Pakeha and Maori organisations justify a new governance model.

"Membership of an iwi group is life-long.

"It's not something like a company you can trade in and out of such as a shareholder.

"You have rights by birth which has implications for how you structure your organisation," she says.



ILLUSTRATION: SARAH RESTALL

**LATEST MODEL:** The new Maori governance model will benefit treaty settlements and Maori economic and social development.

tion," she says.

"This model is intended to be more flexible and be able to carry out the full range of functions that Maori groups seek to do."

Jeremy Gardiner, an advisor

to Ngati Awa on its governance bill, says a new model may have important implications for Treaty of Waitangi settlements.

"At Treaty settlement level there is difficulty matching the needs that iwi have with what is

currently available to them," he says.

"It often requires significant fiddling with their structures to accommodate what they want.

"This leads to increased costs in terms of time and compliance.

"A more flexible model will assist iwi in receiving settlements."

The most recent report on the Maori economy, from the NZ Institute of Economic Research, identified governance as an important issue for Maori economic development.

Matanuku Mahuika, a partner at Kahui Legal which specialises in Maori legal issues, says a new model will assist in long-term management of Maori assets.

"It will fill the immediate need for better arrangements to be put in place for long term management of assets.

"This will have a positive impact on the Maori economy in the long term," he says.

Mahuika says the development of a new governance model is important because of the growth of Maori organisations.

"Maori organisations have gone from very basic service providing organisations with limited resources to much larger, more complex organisations

with a greater range of responsibilities and greater expectations."

By being more flexible, the model will be able to accommodate the social requirements of modern Maori organisations, says Eastwood.

"Iwi carry out a range of activities on behalf of their members and they have distinct features such as Maori cultural aspects of how they want to run their organisations which don't necessarily align with current models."

Mahuika says it is important to develop a new model as past Maori governance models, such as Maori Trust Boards, are rooted in the cultural thinking of the past.

"The Maori Trust Boards were created in the 1950s when circumstances were different.

"For example, they are accountable to the Crown, through the Minister of Maori Affairs.

"Today Maori organisations are expected to be accountable to their members."

The new model has been designed for whakapapa Maori groups (groups linked by a common ancestry) but it will be available for use by all organisations.

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## Overseas Kiwis give Greens a crucial push

by Emma Page

Overseas voters could play an important role in deciding the electoral result next weekend.

More than 38,000 New Zealanders with overseas addresses are currently enrolled to vote in this year's election with the majority living in Australia and England.

Raymond Miller, a political scientist at Auckland University, says the election will be close and the overseas vote will impact both the minor and major parties.

He compares the situation to the 1999 election where overseas votes helped the Green Party win the Coromandel electorate pushing its number of parliamentary seats up to seven.

While the overseas vote has always been important to minor parties hovering around 5 per cent of the party vote, Miller says the closeness of this election means they may also be crucial to National and Labour.

"In 1999 Labour was always the favourite to win the election because National had been in government for nine years. This election is more uncertain and perhaps closer so every vote will probably count.

"For the Greens it's the same situation as in 1999. For the two major parties it could be even more important."

Green Party co-leader Rod Donald says the overseas vote is extremely important to his party and that it is actively canvassing for it.

This year the Greens have parliamentary candidates who live and campaign in London and Sydney.

"We make a special effort to canvas for

the party vote because expat Kiwis have always supported us strongly and in fact they have made a material difference in the last two elections."

General secretary for Labour Mike Smith says the overseas vote is important to Labour and Labour supporters can access information about Labour via its website.

A spokesperson for National said the party considers all votes to be important.

It has also launched a website called Internats designed specially for National supporters living overseas.

"We hope it will provide an interesting and informative link to politics and events back home," says a National spokesperson.

Miller says both National and Labour will exploit the overseas vote.

He says Labour's no interest on student loans scheme may have been designed in part to attract young New Zealanders living overseas.

"I think Labour has pitched for young voters who are heavily indebted because of tertiary studies.

"It may be one of the attractions to Labour on that alone."

Miller also says the Greens appeal to the under 30s age group and many New Zealanders living overseas fall into this category.

Donald agrees saying the demographics of expat New Zealanders are close to the demographic the Greens appeal to.

He describes them as being younger, well educated and with an understanding of what environmental destruction looks like.

"They simply want to make sure someone is looking after their home while they are away," he says.