



New Zealand Permanent Mission to the United Nations

Te Māngai o Aotearoa

United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

New Zealand statement

*Agenda Item 9: Discussion on the theme "Traditional
knowledge: Generation, transmission and protection"*

Delivered by Honorable Nanaia Mahuta
Te Minita Whanaketanga Māori
New Zealand Minister for Māori Development

23 Paenga-whāwhā 2019

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- Tēnā koe Mr / Madam Chair
- Traditional knowledge or mātauranga Māori is an important kaupapa (topic) topic to New Zealand. This body of knowledge or mātauranga originates from cosmogony and is embedded in the genealogy of Māori people and the interconnected relationship of all living things.
- This mātauranga is also etched into our Māori language, our genealogies, our songs, our dance, our art and story-telling – it embodies a worldview that is our inheritance, our legacy and our gift to future generations.
- Importantly, in our countries experience, the modern application of traditional knowledge is being applied to natural resource management, conservation and biodiversity protection, innovation in public policy and service delivery approaches in education, health and justice reform, creative and social enterprise and contributing to values based approaches to enhancing the Māori economy.
- Our challenge in a modern context is not merely one of recognition and protection but also one of stewardship and utilisation to engage and interact in the evolution of our culture and society.
- Unfortunately, cultural appropriation without attribution or consent inhibits Māori from determining the appropriate use of traditional knowledge.
- Our experience has shown that incorporation traditional knowledge into public policy can deliver transformative outcomes. But it is a progressive and iterative approach that must be sustained and for that to occur, state recognition of mātauranga Māori is fundamental.
- We have also recognised that an entirely different approach is required to achieve system wide change across a whole of government approach.

- In New Zealand, recognition of a Māori world view as the Living Standards Framework is implemented will help to embed high level recognition by government to better understand the determinants of wellbeing.
- Engaging Māori participation in policy formation in relation to climate change, natural resources, indigenous intellectual property, research, development and innovation are progressive steps towards greater inclusion of Māori that our government supports.
- There are many questions ahead of us relating to:
 - Protection, use and stewardship
 - Attribution and benefit sharing
 - Safeguarding against layers of misappropriation
 - The role of government and engaging Māori in determining solutions.
- Bringing Indigenous communities into the policy, design and decision-making processes when governments make decisions, enables us to have a different conversation but more importantly, focuses on intergenerational/ sustainable transformation that looks at the wellbeing of our whanau (families) and our communities.
- While we do not have a roadmap on these matters, we do believe as a country that by taking this path, the benefits for Māori will contribute to benefits for our country.
- Tēnā koutou