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OTHER EFFECTIVE AREA- BASED CONSERVATION MEASURES (OECMS)

APPLICATION TO TAKITUMU CONSERVATION AREA

12 MARCH 2024

Outline of Meeting



Time	Program
6pm	Arrival & registration of participants Opening prayer & Welcoming remarks
6:15pm	Recap of community workshop held in November 2023
6:30pm	Working Group present findings on OECEM full assessment for the TCA
7:15pm	Q&A
7:30pm	Signing of Consent Form (<i>Kainuku Ariki, Karika Ariki, Manavaroa Mataiapo Tutara</i>)
7:45pm	Closing remarks, Next Steps and Closing Prayer
8:00pm	Group photo & Light refreshments



What is an OECM?



An Other Effective area-based Conservation Measure (OECM) is:

A **geographically defined area** other than a Protected Area, which is **governed and managed** in ways that **achieve positive and sustained long-term outcomes** for the **in-situ conservation of biodiversity**, with associated ecosystem functions and services and where applicable, **cultural, spiritual, socio-economic, and other locally relevant values** (CBD, 2018).

PA - a clearly defined geographical space, recognised, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long term conservation of nature.



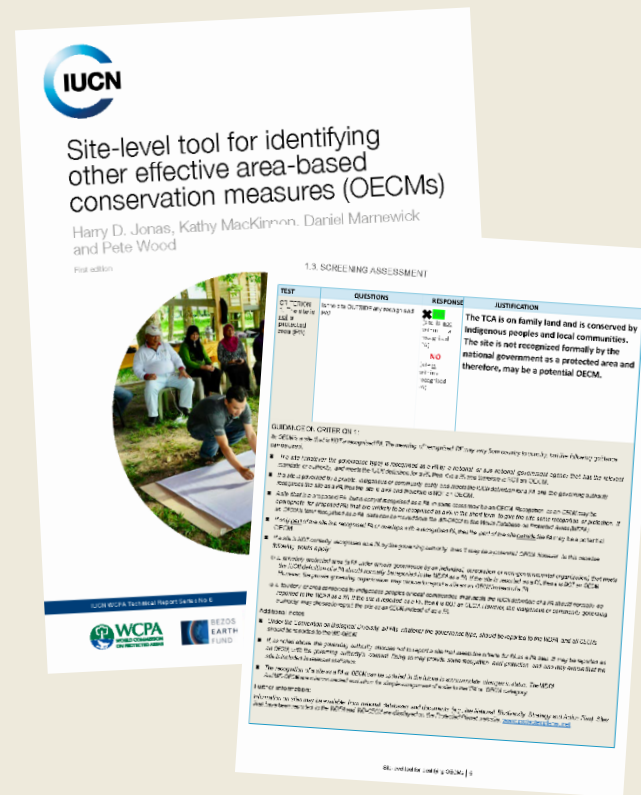


WORKSHOP RECAP

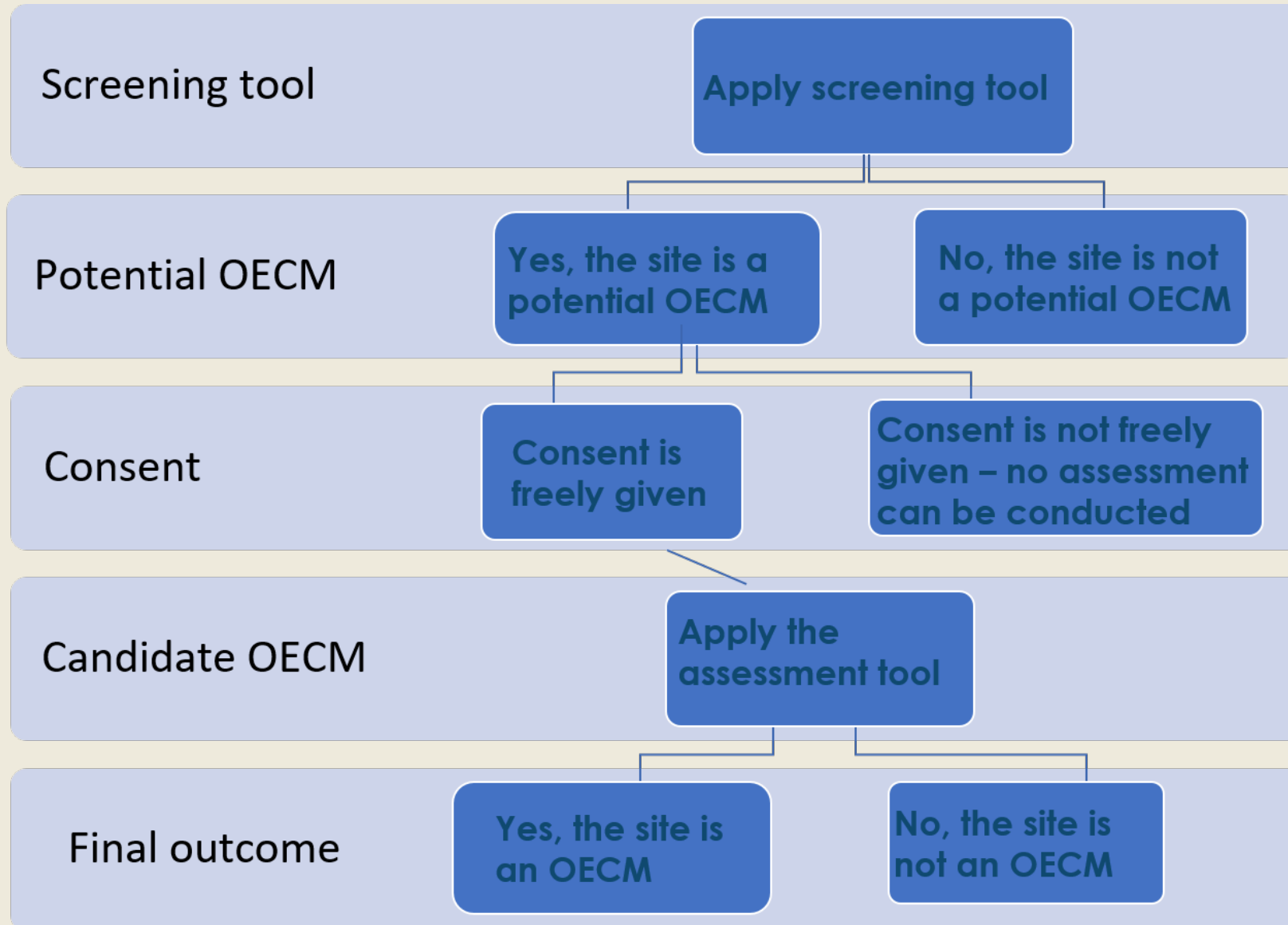
- What are the **benefits and challenges** of applying OECM
 - **Benefits** e.g. extra layer of protection, international recognition etc.
 - **Challenges** e.g. ensure key purpose of site is upheld, ensure landowner rights are fully respected, site not monitored regularly
- **Funding opportunities - 10+**

IUCN Green List Project	Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation
EDGE Protected and Conserved Area Fund	Pacific Bioscapes Project
Global EbAFund	KIWA Initiative
Rufford Foundation	BIOPAMA
Keindanren Nature Conservation Fund	The Darwin Initiative: biodiversity grant funding for developing countries
Macarthur Foundation	

- Looked at the **OECM assessment tool** and its **8 criteria**



STEPS TO IDENTIFY OECCM SITES





WORKSHOP RECAP

- **Why TCA** went through the criteria
 - geographically defined with an agreed and boundary
 - Is the site managed
 - Does the site have clear goals, objectives and measures in place
 - Is there long term in-situ conservation of biodiversity
- **FPIC** - what it is, highlighted a signed **consent letter**, looked at a **draft**. Kainuku Ariki, Karika Ariki, Manavaroa Mataiapo Tutara to sign on behalf of the family
- We got every body into **groups to look at the assessment**



Outcomes



1. **Confirmed community support** of OECCM
2. **Community gave feedback** on the tool and consent letter
3. NES to **review feedback** and include amendments to the tool and consent letter;
4. Establish a **working group** to refine the tool further
5. Launch of the **TCA Management Plan 2020-2030**
6. **Translation** of tool into Maori





TCA Working Group meetings

25 Jan, 1 Feb, 29 Feb 2024

TCA Working Group sessions

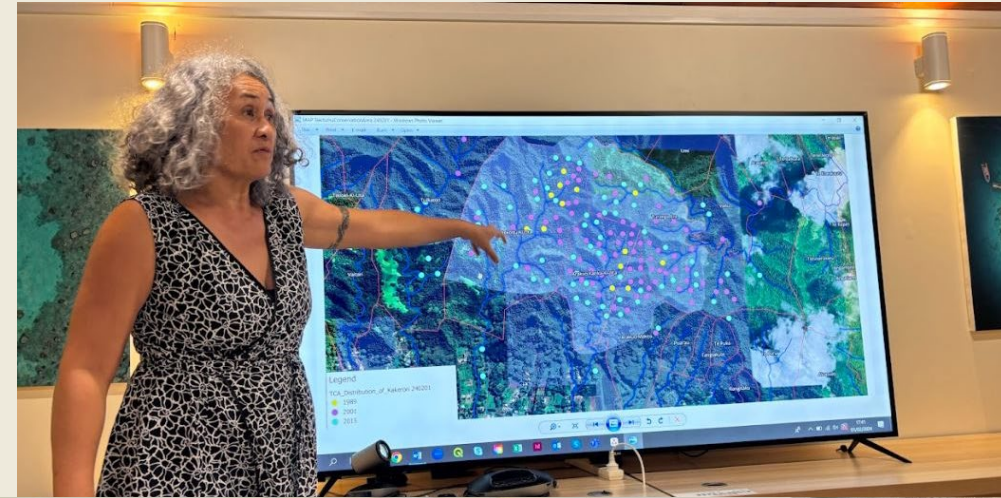
- Reviewed changes from workshop in November and refined further.
- Confirmed details in each criteria (1-8)
 - The site supports important biodiversity values
 - Site is geographically defined area
 - Governing body to manage the site
 - Threats to the site
- Finalised the Consent letter

First TCA Working Group team photo



TCA Working Group sessions

- Tried to locate original declaration/ agreement of TCA (established 1996)
- Sent assessment to UNEP, SPREP, IUCN for feedback
- Suggestion of a storyboard and updated TCA signage
- Important to educate the family so they are aware of the TCA
- Heavy discussion on the map and boundaries



Example of OECM Assessment tool – TCA details

TESTS	QUESTION	RESPONSE	JUSTIFICATION
CRITERION 2: There is a reasonable likelihood that the site supports important biodiversity values	<p>Does available information suggest that the site supports at least one of the following important biodiversity values?</p> <p>(a) Rare, threatened or endangered species and ecosystems</p> <p>(b) Natural ecosystems that are under-represented in protected area networks</p> <p>(c) High level of ecological integrity or intactness</p> <p>(d) Significant populations/extent of endemic or range-restricted species or ecosystems</p> <p>(e) Important species aggregations, such as spawning, breeding or feeding areas</p> <p>(f) Importance for ecological connectivity, as part of a network of sites in a larger area</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> NO</p>	<p>The site supports important biodiversity values as it is the home of the endemic kākērōri bird, whose range is restricted to the forested hills in Southern Rarotonga. This bird was once amongst the rarest birds in the world, with only 29 in existence in 1989. Since then, intensive conservation efforts to protect the kākērōri population against predation by ship rats have brought the population back from the brink of extinction. The population was critically endangered in 1989, and is now sitting at 618 birds as of the 2023 population census, therefore moving the population up to 'vulnerable' status in the IUCN Red List. While these efforts are exemplary, given the small range state of the species, threats such as cyclones could have drastic impacts on the habitat, and therefore survival, of the species.</p> <p>Protection of the site by three landowning families, albeit unlegislated, has prohibited any commercial or residential development within the Area. This has kept the site as a near-pristine forest and natural ecosystem that provides a safe home to many native and endemic species, including endemic birds, such as the ʻŌi, (<i>Aplonis cinerascens</i>, Rarotonga Starling) and Kūkupa (<i>Ptilinopus rarotongensis</i>, Cook Islands Fruit-dove), and endemic plants such as Mato (<i>Homalium acuminatum</i>, Cook Islands Homalium) and Puaneinei (<i>Fitchia speciosa</i>, Rarotonga Fitchia).</p> <p>The biodiversity in the Area provides eco-tourism opportunities through educational tours to locals and tourists alike. The site and its biodiversity has cultural importance for 3 indigenous tribes, and is an important breeding area for the kākērōri as well as for other species</p> <p>The site is a Key Biodiversity Area and an Important Bird Area</p>

GUIDANCE ON CRITERION 2:

⚠ At this screening stage, the assessor should select 'yes' if there is a reasonable likelihood that the site supports important biodiversity values. Further evidence is used to confirm the presence of important biodiversity values, if necessary, during the full assessment (step 3).

⚠ 'Reasonable likelihood' means, for example, (a) there are reports of important biodiversity values, including from indigenous and traditional knowledge holders, or (b) analysis suggests that important biodiversity values are likely to be present, for example if satellite imagery shows suitable intact habitat within the range of a threatened species or ecosystem.

⚠ If a site is already recognised under an international biodiversity designation (for example, as a Key Biodiversity Area, or an Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area), then it can be assumed to support important values and may be a potential OECM.

There is further guidance related to biodiversity values under step 3, criterion 4. Sources of biodiversity information are listed in the guidance for criterion 4.

- **Criteria 2: The site supports important biodiversity values**
 - Home to endemic kākērōri and other endemics e.g. ʻŌi
 - The TCA supported restoring a critically endangered species
 - The site is a key biodiversity area and important bird area
 - Two watersheds – Avana and Tōtoko'itu
 - Eco-tourism
 - Educational value
 - Cultural importance for three Ngati

Example of OECM Assessment tool – TCA details

- **Pressures and threats** on the biodiversity values and ecosystem services of the site:
 - Rats prey on eggs and nestlings
 - Wild cats, poaching koura vai, cyclones and invasive weed species e.g. African Tulip tree, mile-a-minute
- How are threats being **mitigated**?
 - Rat baiting by landowners, TIS, NZDOC and others
- Anticipated **future threats** that may affect the important biodiversity:
 - Landowners may want to dissolve the TCA and reclaim land
 - Development encroaching towards TCA
 - Succession of current Conservation Manager
 - Damage to the habitat and tracks from cyclones

Describe the management activities (for example, protection, harvest controls, restoration), especially those that impact the biodiversity values and ecosystem services of the site.	Main rat poisoning; Interim poisoning; Kākerōri nesting; Kākerōri banding; Kākerōri census; Eco-tours; School visits; Trek clearing and maintenance All activities listed above are from the management plan and contribute towards bird conservation
Pressures and threats:	
List any current pressures on the biodiversity values and ecosystem services of the site. These pressures may originate inside the site (e.g., illegal logging) or outside the site (e.g., pollution).	The primary threat to the site is the ship rat, which preys on the eggs and nestlings of the endemic kākerōri and other bird species within the area. Other threats include wild cats, poaching of freshwater prawns, koura vai, cyclones and invasive weed species such as African Tulip trees and mile-a-minute.
Describe how and to what extent the governance and management of the site can mitigate the pressures on the biodiversity and ecosystem values.	This is being mitigated through predator control by landowners, Te Ipukarea Society, NZ Department of Conservation and others via rat baiting
List any anticipated future threats that may affect the important biodiversity values and ecosystem services of the site.	High risk: landowners wanting to acquire pieces of land within the TCA. Landowners may also want to dissolve the TCA and reclaim their land. High risk: development encroaching towards the TCA Medium risk: succession of the current Conservation Manager. A suitable candidate within the landowning family's needs to be identified Low risk: track maintenance. This is necessary to ensure the safety of those who visit High risk: cyclone may damage the habitat and block existing tracks. A contingency fund would allow a quick response to fixing any damaged tracks and roads, thus allowing rat baiting to be run on time, and helping to prevent invasion of weeds
Long-term basis for governance and management:	
Describe any legal, official, customary, or other recognised basis for the institutions/organisations involved in the governance and management of the site that contributes to making the governance and management arrangements permanent.	The TCA is a community conservation area. The agreement between the three landowning families was that the area would not involve legal ownership, and has proven to be effective in its current governance. The primary objective to protect the endemic kākerōri has resulted in an increase from 29 birds to 618 birds, over the 35-year period since the recovery of the kākerōri birds
Describe any legal, official, customary or other recognised status of the site (for example, forest reserve, military zone, customary land, Particularly Sensitive Sea Area, archaeological heritage site) that contributes to the site's long-term status.	The TCA is a community conservation area. The agreement between the three landowning families was that the area would not involve legal ownership, and has proven to be effective in its current governance. The primary objective to protect the endemic kākerōri has resulted in an increase from 29 birds to 618 birds, over the 35-year period since the recovery of the kākerōri birds

Example of OECM Assessment tool – TCA details

- **Criteria 5:** Institutions or mechanisms exist to govern and manage the site
 - 3 Ngati (Kainuku, Karika, Manavaroa)
 - TCA Coordinating Committee
 - TCA Conservation Manager
- **Criteria 6:** Governance and management achieve in site conservation of important biodiversity values
 - YES!
 - Control of rats, increasing the kākerōri bird population from 29 in 1989 to 618 in 2023.

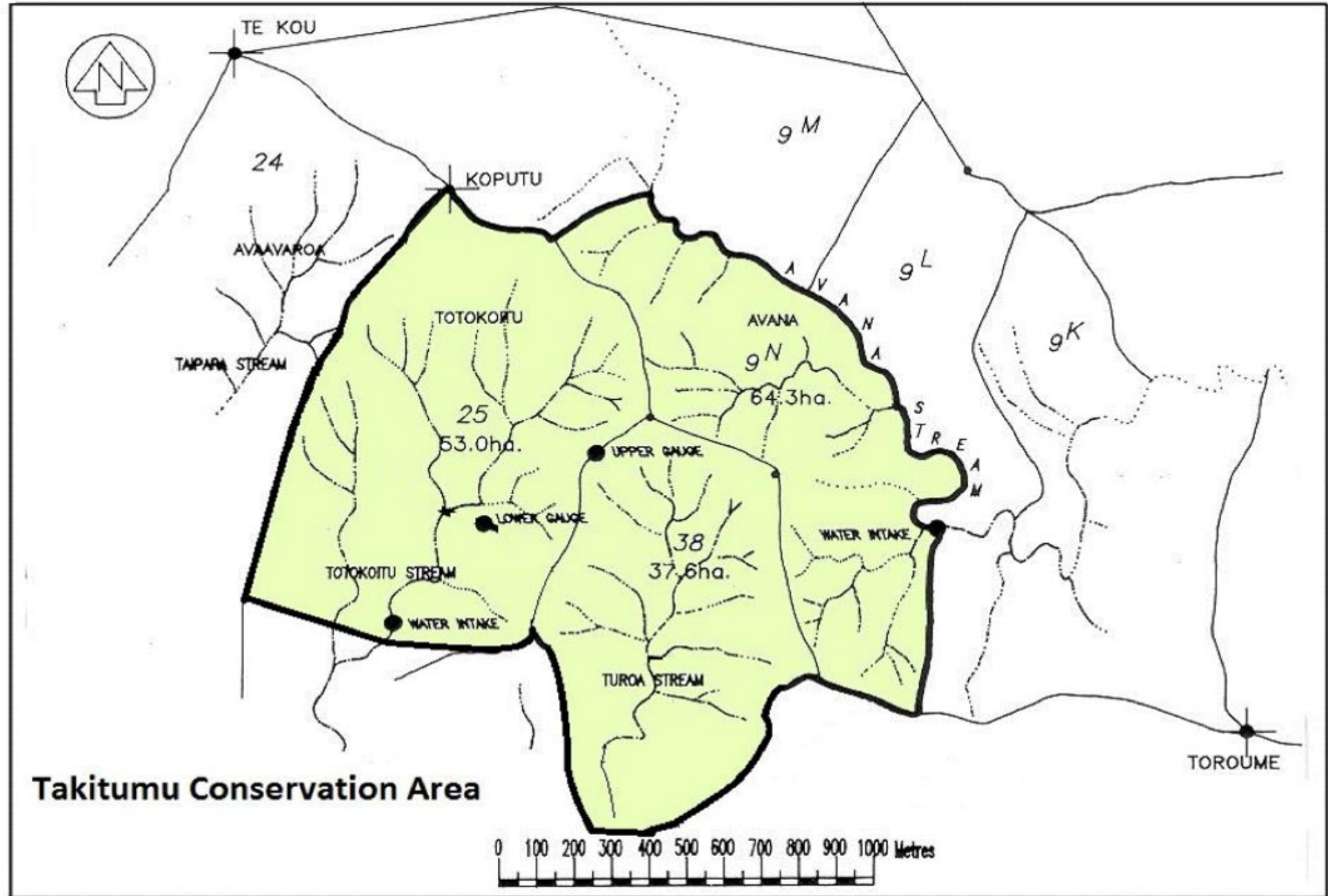
3.2.3. ASSESSMENT

TESTS	QUESTIONS	RESPONSE	JUSTIFICATION
CRITERION 5: Institutions or mechanisms exist to govern and manage the site	Is there one or more institution(s) or mechanism(s) that govern(s) and manage(s) the site?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> UNCERTAIN OR PARTIALLY <input type="checkbox"/> NO	The site is owned by Indigenous People and Local Communities (IPLCs) – Ngati Kainuku, Ngati Karika and Ngati Manavaroa. The TCA is governed by the TCA Co-ordinating Committee which consists of representatives from the landowning families and is managed by the TCA Conservation Manager.
<p>GUIDANCE ON CRITERION 5:</p> <p>The following may be an OECM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✳ A site governed by government where one or more agencies have a mandate to govern and manage the site. ✳ A site where an Indigenous people or community has a mandate to govern and manage the site. ✳ A site where a private entity (individual, group or organisation) has a mandate to govern and manage the site. ✳ A site with mixed forms of governance and management where there is an appropriate institution, collective agreement or division of roles that results in necessary governance and management being carried out. <p>The following are unlikely to be OECM: A site with no governance or management mechanism.</p>			
TESTS	QUESTION	RESPONSE	JUSTIFICATION
CRITERION 6: Governance and management of the site achieve or are expected to achieve the <i>in situ</i> conservation of important biodiversity values	Do the governance and management of the site prevent and mitigate threats, and conserve the site's important biodiversity values, or are they expected to do so?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> UNCERTAIN OR PARTIALLY <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Yes. Management is addressing threats through predator control, which has led to an increase in population from 29 kākerōri birds in 1989 to 618 birds in 2023. The three landowning families have respected the formation of the TCA and grown the conservation values of the area since it was formed in 1996. No development activities that is inconsistent with the TCA objectives occur at the site.
<p>GUIDANCE ON CRITERION 6:</p> <p>The following may be an OECM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✳ A site where governance and management are effectively mitigating pressures on the biodiversity values. ✳ A site where a mechanism exists (for example, a legal means, customary law or binding agreement with the Landowner) to address pressures on biodiversity values, and there is a reasonable expectation that the mechanism will be used when required. ✳ A site where mitigation of pressures and conservation of biodiversity values are constrained by limited capacity or resources, but there is a reasonable likelihood that these additional resources will be available within a time frame that will allow effective management. ✳ A site with no pressures identified but where capacity or a mechanism exists to identify and respond to possible future threats. 			

TCA Map

- Based on an original map from Survey Department
- 155ha

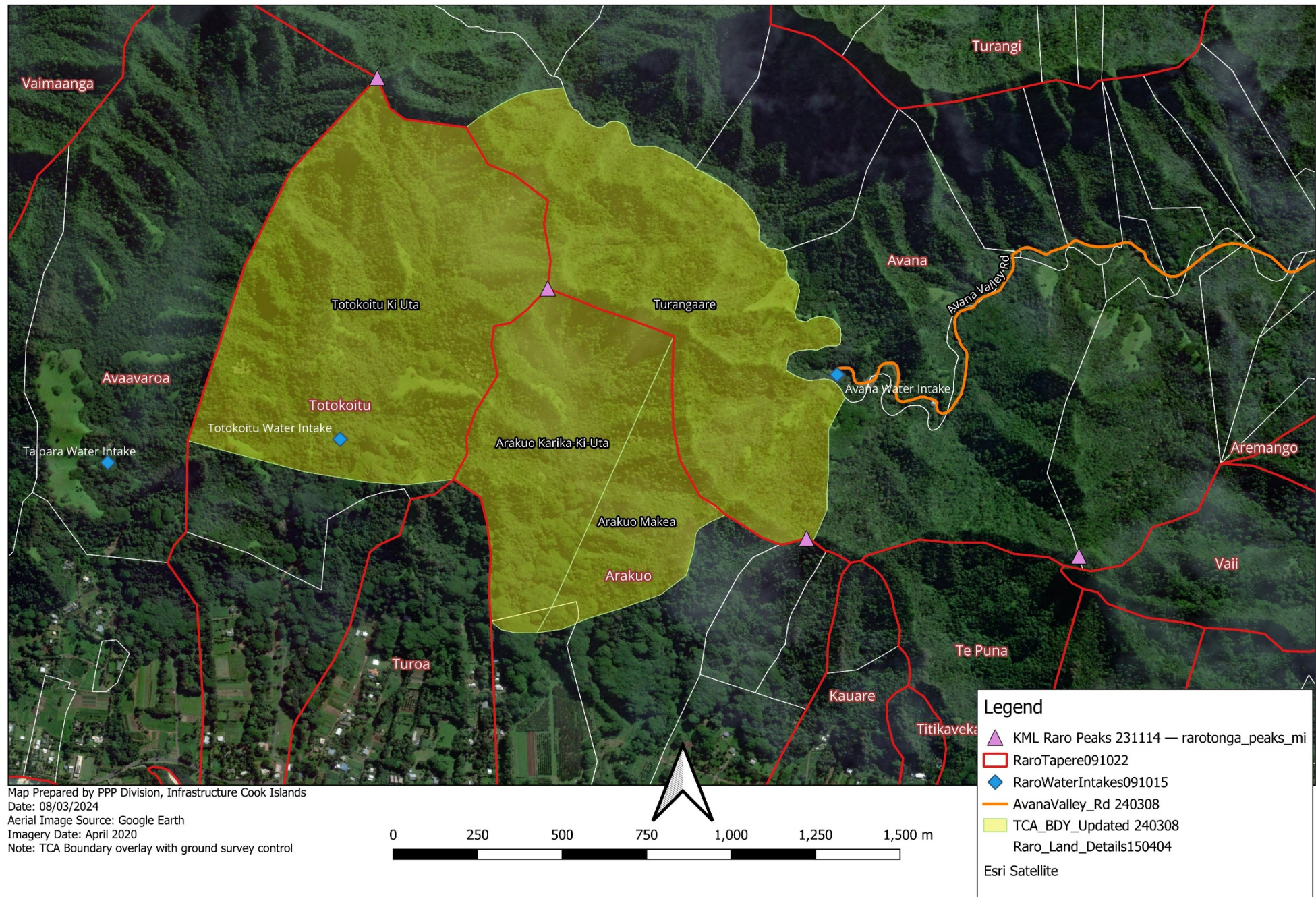
Figure 2. The Takitumu Conservation Area



TCA Map

- Discrepancies in area – MOJ vs QGIS data (next slide)
- Final map
- Need to conduct ground surveys

MAP Takitumu Conservation Area





TCA boundaries as per Map



Land	Section #	Tapere	District	Vaka	Area (m2) QGIS	Area (ha) QGIS	Area (ha) MOJ	Area (ha) Original	VARIANCE (ha)
Tōtoko'itu-ki-Uta	Pt Sec. 25	Tōtoko'itu	Takitumu	Takitumu	874,587.14	87.46	85.66	53.00	34.46
Arakuo Karika-ki-Uta	Pt Sec. 38	Arakuo	Takitumu	Takitumu	383,764.22	38.38	38.09	28.43	9.95
Arakuo Makea	Pt Sec. 35	Arakuo	Takitumu	Takitumu	185,889.67	18.59	12.29	9.17	9.42
Turangaare	Pt Sec. 9N	Avana	Ngatangiaa	Takitumu	688,327.03	68.83	68.92	64.30	4.53
						213.26	204.95	154.90	

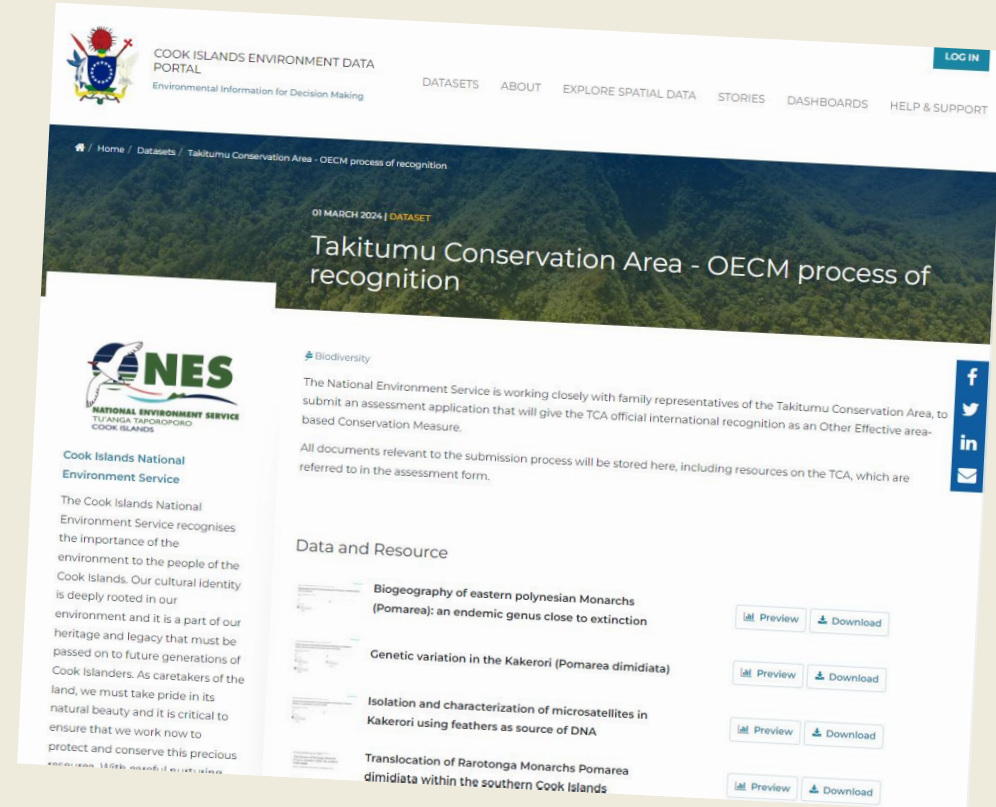


Working Group meetings

- All resources (consent letter, assessment, reports etc.) uploaded onto the CI Environment Data portal for public access <https://cookislands-data.sprep.org/>
- 20+ reports on the kākērōri or the TCA

"What's important to me is that a family has come together and agreed on something for 30 years. More important to me, is to continue that agreement."

Edward Karika





Ui'anga?

Next Steps for OECEM



1. NES to submit the application on behalf of the family to SPREP, who will submit to UNEP-WCMC
2. Inform Kopapa Ao Ora Natura (KAON) – Q1 2024
3. UNEP-WCMC conduct their process and advise when TCA officially recognized as OECEM





Signing of consent letter for application of TCA as an OEEM

(Kainuku Ariki, Karika Ariki, Manavaroa Mataiapo Tutara)



Takitumu Conservation Area Consent for Application of Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures

Name of the site: **Takitumu Conservation Area (TCA)**

Total Area: **155 ha, located on Turangaare Pt Sec. 9N, Arakuo Karika-ki-Uta Pt Sec. 35, Arakuo Makea Pt Sec. 38, and Tōtoko'itu-ki-Uta Pt Sec. 25B**

Primary purpose of Conservation: **Protect the endemic Pomarea dimidiata (Kākerōri - Rarotonga flycatcher)**

Secondary purpose of Conservation: **Conservation of endemic bird species such as 'Ī'oi, (*Aplonis cinerascens*, Rarotonga Starling) and Kūkupa (*Ptilinopus rarotongensis*, Cook Islands Fruit-dove), and endemic plant species such as Puaneinei (*Fitchia speciosa*, Rarotonga Fitchia) and Mato (*Homalium acuminatum*, Cook Islands Homalium); the TCA also supplies a third of Rarotonga's vital water source;**

At a workshop held in Rarotonga in January 2023, representatives from the TCA proposed for the Takitumu Conservation Area to be considered as an Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measure (OECM). OECMs gives the TCA another layer of protection for the long-term effective conservation of biodiversity - a great step towards gaining greater recognition for the site.

We declare that we have the authority to represent the three landowning Ngati/Tribe (**Ngati Kainuku, Ngati Karika, Ngati Manavaroa**) in the Takitumu Conservation Area.

We confirm that we have the rights, permissions and authority on behalf of our family to provide our informed consent to recognise the Takitumu Conservation Area as an OECM and also provide the required information.

We also understand that the OECM recognition will not have any adverse legal, financial or management implications to the TCA.

We also wish to state that we have the right to withdraw our consent, if needed and shall inform you accordingly.

We, the undersigned, in representation of the three Ngati, **Ngati Kainuku, Ngati Karika, Ngati Manavaroa** responsible for the **Takitumu Conservation Area** confirm that:

1. A full assessment be conducted by the National Environment Service on the TCA for consideration as an OECM site



2. The Takitumu Conservation Area be recognised as an OECM
3. National Environment Service must inform the three Ngati of the findings of the OECM full assessment
4. National Environment Service are authorised to provide data and information on the biodiversity and ecosystem services in the Takitumu Conservation Area to the World Database-OECM in accordance with this consent form.
5. We have followed an appropriate process of discussion and consultation in accordance with our normal decision-making practices to make the above decisions.

Ngati Kainuku

Kainuku Kapiriterangi Ariki

Ngati Karika

Makea Karika George Ariki

Ngati Manavaroa

Manavaroa Mataiapo Tutara – Phillip Nicholas

.....

Date: ____/____/2024

.....

Date: ____/____/2024

.....

Date: ____/____/2024

National Environment Service

.....

Halatoa Fua
Director



Open floor

An aerial photograph of a tropical coastline. The top half of the image shows clear, turquoise water with visible coral reefs and sandy patches. The middle section features a narrow, light-colored sandy beach. The bottom half is dominated by a dense, lush green forest of tropical trees and palm trees. A semi-transparent white rectangular box is centered over the beach area, containing the text.

**Closing Remarks,
Closing Prayer + Light
refreshments**



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MEITAKI NGAO

