

# Kaupapa Māori Research Design Template

*A practical tool to help tangata whenua design and carry out kaupapa Māori research.*

*This template supports whānau, hapū, or iwi to develop research projects grounded in mātauranga Māori. It ensures research priorities are clearly defined, align with local tikanga and values, and draw from atua-based insights to guide adaptation solutions.*

## Purpose

This resource provides a structured guide to designing and undertaking kaupapa Māori research to identify climate adaptation responses. It aligns with Step 2.4 of the Tangata Whenua-led Climate Adaptation Guide and ensures that research is tikanga-led, grounded in mātauranga Māori, and supports whānau, hapū and iwi to generate culturally sound, actionable solutions.

## Understanding Kaupapa Māori Research

Kaupapa Māori research is a method and ethic of inquiry that centres Māori worldviews, values, language, and lived experience. It affirms the validity of Māori knowledge systems and supports research that enhances the wellbeing, tino rangatiratanga, and aspirations of Māori communities.

Key characteristics:

- Led by Māori, for Māori, with Māori.
- Grounded in tikanga, whakapapa, and mātauranga tuku iho.
- Seeks transformation, liberation, and the restoration of mana and mauri.
- Validates Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing.
- Emphasises collective benefit, intergenerational relevance, and ethical engagement.

## Kaupapa Māori Research Process: Guidance for Step 2.4

### 1. Identify the Research Question

Begin by exploring: "He aha te pātai?" What is the true question behind this kaupapa? This may come from lived experience, pūrākau, observed tohu, or ancestral responsibilities. Root the question in your rohe, relationships, and collective aspirations.

### 2. Establish Tikanga and Ethical Boundaries

Define the tikanga that will guide the research. Consider kawa of hui, consent processes, how knowledge will be shared, protected, and attributed. Embed practices of koha, manaaki, and cultural safety.

### 3. Identify Knowledge Holders and Voices

Map who needs to be involved: kaumātua, tai tamariki, tohunga, practitioners, and whānau with lived experience. Ensure participation across generations, domains of knowledge, and mana whenua relationships.

### 4. Choose Culturally Grounded Methods

Use research methods that are relational and tikanga-aligned, such as:

- Wānanga and kano ki te kano hui
- Kōrero tuku iho and whakapapa mapping
- Huringa o te tau and maramataka-based observation
- Mana whenua walks, site visits, and spatial storytelling

### 5. Explore Existing Solutions and Innovations

Investigate what responses already exist within your rohe or have been used in the past. What adaptations did our tūpuna employ? What modern innovations are being trialled locally or globally?

### 6. Prioritise Adaptation Responses

Through collective analysis, identify what adaptation responses (e.g. from Kaupapa Māori Climate Adaptation Matrix) emerge from the research. Organise these into:

- Te Ahunga Nui: Short-term actions that can begin now
- Te Ahunga Roa: Long-term strategies requiring sustained investment

### 7. Align with Tikanga and Te Taiao

Ensure each response aligns with atua, tikanga, and local environmental conditions. Ask: Does this response protect mana? Restore mauri? Uplift whānau and whenua?



## 8. Document and Reflect Collectively

Record insights clearly and accessibly. Reflect together on what was learned. Maintain transparency with whānau and hapū, and honour the whakapapa of the knowledge shared.

### Key Principles to Uphold

Principle	Application
Tino Rangatiratanga	Māori-led process, local control of knowledge and outcomes
Tikanga	Guided by cultural protocols, values and collective ethics
Manaakitanga	Care for participants, recognition of contributions, cultural integrity
Kaitiakitanga	Protecting knowledge, people, and places throughout the process
Whanaungatanga	Relationships underpin all engagement, analysis, and dissemination
Pūkengatanga	Upholding expertise, mātauranga ā-iwi, and intergenerational knowledge

### Outputs of the Research May Include:

- Identified adaptation responses with cultural rationale
- Mapped pūrākau and environmental indicators
- Draft action plans for implementation
- Recommendations for capability, resources, and policy support

### Optional Tools to Support Your Research Design:

- Whānau & Hāpori Mātauranga Logbook
- Climate Risk & Vulnerability Matrix
- Atua Māori Profiles and Risk Templates
- GIS Cultural Risk Maps

This template provides a structured guide to designing and undertaking kaupapa Māori research to identify climate adaptation responses.

### Kaupapa Māori Research Design Table

Section	Guiding Pātai	Your Kaupapa & Response
<b>Kaupapa Ingoa / Name</b>	What is the name of this research kaupapa?	
<b>Adaption Response</b>	What is the adaption response you are researching?	
<b>Research Scope &amp; Focus</b>	What is the scale of this kaupapa (local, regional, national)? What specific climate threat or adaptation domain is being explored (e.g. flooding, drought, māra kai, cultural wellbeing, relocation)?	
<b>Te Take – Purpose &amp; Intent</b>	Why are we undertaking this? What do we want to learn, understand, or address?	
<b>Mātauranga Sources</b>	What mātauranga or kōrero tuku iho exists? What pūrākau, observations, or intergenerational insights are relevant?	
<b>Whānau, Hapū, or Experts Involved</b>	Whose voices must be included? How will kaumātua, rangatahi, tohunga, or mana whenua be engaged?	
<b>Methods</b>	How will we gather and interpret insights? What culturally grounded methods will be used (e.g. wānanga, site visits, maramataka-based observation)?	
<b>Existing Solutions / Case Studies</b>	What examples of adaptation (past or present) already exist? What has been	



	done locally, nationally, or internationally that is relevant?	
<b>Tikanga Alignment Check</b>	How does this response protect mana, restore mauri, and uphold tikanga?	

