

# Atua Māori Risk Assessment Template

A guided template for assessing climate risks and natural hazards through atua-based observations.

Supports whānau and hapū to record tohu, apply mātauranga, and interpret shifts in atua domains as early indicators of risk.

## How to Use This Template

This tool is for hapū, iwi, and marae to identify, assess, and respond to climate-related risks through an Atua Māori lens. It guides users to:

- Facilitate kōrero with whānau, kaumātua, rangatahi, and mātanga
- Track changes in atua systems (moana, ngahere, awa, maramataka, etc.)
- Record pūrākau, tohu, and mātauranga that reveal environmental shifts
- Prioritise risks and prepare for future adaptation actions

## Before you begin:

- Gather a group with mixed age groups (kaumātua, pakeke, rangatahi)
- Print or prepare digital copies for note-taking
- Identify local atua systems most relevant to your rohe
- Optional: Bring pūrākau, maramataka logs, or historical photos/maps

## Facilitation Tips:

- Use colours or visuals to support non-linear thinking - Encourage local kōrero tuku iho – don't focus on 'filling all the blanks'
- Revisit the template after 6 or 12 months to track changes
- Consider facilitating the risk identification process during seasonal wānanga or hikoi to observe sites in situ

## Why Use Atua Māori in Risk Assessment?

Using Atua Māori frames climate risks within ancestral systems, it reconnects us to the whakapapa of te taiao, enabling adaptation grounded in whakapapa, mātauranga, and tikanga. Identifying which atua systems are disrupted helps locate where and how shifts are occurring, and more importantly, how to respond in culturally appropriate, mana-enhancing ways. These disruptions might show up in tohu, weather shifts, ecosystem loss, or decline in mahinga kai. Looking to atua allows us to re-centre mana whenua perspectives and create responses that uphold mana motuhake and intergenerational knowledge.

## Section 1: General Information

Area	Details
Name of the Rohe / Hapū / Marae:	
Location (Whenua, Awa, Moana):	
Date Completed:	
Key Contributors (Names, Roles):	
Facilitator(s) of Risk Assessment:	
Affiliated Atua Focused On:	e.g., Tāwhirimātea (winds), Tangaroa (moana), Haumia-tiketike (wild foods)
Purpose of this Risk Assessment:	e.g., "To identify environmental threats to our moana and develop appropriate kaupapa Māori responses."

## Section 2: Atua-Based Environmental Relationships

Complete this table to guide your understanding of environmental systems through atua.

Atua	Element	Local Examples	Why This Atua is Relevant Here	Location of Impact / Presence
Tāwhirimātea	Wind, storms, air	Strong easterlies in autumn, damage to trees	Seasonal risk to native ngahere + infrastructure	ridgelines, slopes



Tangaroa	Ocean, tides, fish	Erosion of coastal urupā, decline in local fish	Threatens kaimoana, wāhi tapu	Coastal areas
Tūmatauenga	Conflict, people, survival	Pressure on resources during storms	Need for coordinated emergency responses	Civil defence centres
Haumia-tiketike	Wild foods	Decline in natural food sources	Food resilience risk	Swamp edge
Rongo-mā-Tāne	Cultivated foods, peace	Drying of māra kai areas	Loss of kai sovereignty	Northern river flats

*Optional Guidance Prompts:* - What atua are most commonly mentioned in our pūrākau or waiata? - What tohu are associated with these atua in our rohe? - Where can you observe these atua systems being impacted?

### Section 3: Risk Identification Matrix

Use this guided table to break down each atua-based climate risk.

Wāhanga	Atua	Risk	Tohu / Indicators	Likelihood and Impact
Te Taiao (Natural Env.)	Tangaroa	Loss of sand dunes and shellfish beds	Less pipi, high tide reaching pōhutukawa	Likely
Ngā Āhuatanga Hanga (Built Env.)	Tāwhirimātea	Stormwater overload and roof damage	Pooling after heavy rain, leaking wharenuī	Very Likely
Te Tangata (People)	Tūmatauenga	Elder kaumātua passing with unrecorded knowledge	No succession planning, knowledge gaps	Possible
Te Tuakiri (Cultural Identity)	Tangaroa	Damage to urupā and wāhi tapu	Exposed graves, water incursion	Likely
Ōhanga me ngā Rawa	Rongo-mā-Tāne	Decrease in seafood availability	Small catches, distant migration	Possible

### Section 4: Summary of Key Findings

- Which risks are most urgent?
- What atua systems are most affected?

**Reflections:** - How does this reshape our priorities? - How will we build whānau and hapū resilience together?

### Section 5: Collection of Kōrero Tuku Iho and Mātauranga Māori

This section is for compiling kōrero and mātauranga gathered during hui, interviews, or wānanga with kaumātua, mātanga, or whānau.

Date	Source (e.g., Kaumātua, Hui)	Key Insights	Atua or Element Referred To
14/03/2025	Hui-a-hapū (Ngāti xxxx)	"The awa used to flood every 20 years – now it's every 2."	Tangaroa, Tāwhirimātea
20/04/2025	Wānanga with xxx	"Tuna migration is shifting in the maramataka."	Moana tu i te repo, Tangaroa
02/05/2025	Interview with Aunty xxx	"We used to have heavy wind every winter – tohu for planting. They've not as consistent."	Tāwhirimātea



*Example Questions to Guide Kōrero:* - What changes have you observed in the whenua, awa, or moana? - What atua do you feel are most present or active in our environment? - Have any maramataka tohu disappeared or shifted? - Where do atua expressions physically manifest in your rohe?

### Section 6: Impact Sites

Use this section to list key physical locations (e.g., pā, māra, wāhi tapu, marae, fishing zones) that are being directly affected by the risks you identified. This helps inform GIS work and planning in the next phase.

Site Name	Type (e.g., pā, marae, urupā)	Associated Atua	Observed Impacts	Tohu Present
[insert]	Urupā	Tangaroa	Coastal erosion exposing burial sites	Encroaching tide, visible cliff collapse
[insert]	Māra kai	Rongo-mā-Tāne	Crops drying prematurely	Soil cracking, shriveled plants
[insert]	Ridgeline	Tāwhirimātea	Windthrow damaging forest edge	Uprooted trees, leaf stripping

This template is a living document. Use it as a kōrero starter. Let it surface the whakaaro, tohu, pūrākau, and real-time experiences of your hapū, marae and whānau. Embed what matters locally, not everything must be filled perfectly, but everything shared should help you adapt with mana and purpose.

Next step: Update template in six – 12 months.

