This explanatory section, provided by tangata whenua, describes the traditional values and perspectives of tangata whenua. These values and perspectives reflect the predominantly spiritual and communal nature of the Maori view of the world. The description of the values and perspectives provides a context for the subsequent sections of this chapter.

The matters discussed in this section help to inform people about the possible effect of development on tangata whenua values and perspectives and therefore enable more informed decisions to be made in respect of development proposals. This is consistent with the duties imposed by Part II of the Resource Management Act.

Ka nui te whanui te titiro a te tangata whenua i te ahua o te whakahaere o te taiao me nga hua o Papatuanuku. Ko enei nga mea i heke iho i nga tupuna, ma tatou e tiaki kei roto i nga whakapapa e hono mai ana enei mea ki te tangata whenua me te ao whanui.

Kei roto i nga korero tuku iho, Ranginui me Papatuanuku ka puta ko Tanemahuta, Tawhirimatea, Tangaroa, me etahi atu. Na enei tokorua i timata nga mea mea katoa o te ao e kiia nei ko a tatou taonga.

E kitea atu ana, ko te mauri te mana nui, te kaihono i nga mea mea katoa. Engari ina mate te mauri na te tukino, na te haaparau ranei, kua mate katoa a tatou taonga.

Ki te Maori, ko te whenua te taonga, i putu mai te tangata i a ia, a te wa, ka hoki atu ano ki reira. Ko te tino whakapono o te tangata whenua, ko nga tangata, no ratou te whenua e watea ana ki a ratou nga hua o te whenua me nga mea mea katoa o te moana.

E tino mohio ana te tangata whenua, i timata mai nga mea mea katoa i te whenua. Koia tenei ko te taonga tino nui i tukua iho e nga tupuna ma tatou e tiaki. I te mea e puta mai ana te wai, me te oranga mo nga mea katoa i a ia, e tika ana ina te pau, te mutu ranei te mana o nga mea ki a tatou me whakahoki atu ano ki te whenua. No reira, te whakapono o te tangata whenua, ko nga mea katoa kua huri hei otaota, kua pirau ranei, me whakahoki atu ki te whenua anake.

Ko nga rakau Maori, manumanu me nga kararehe o te ngahere, ko enei ko nga tamariki a Tanemahuta, e kiia nei e te tangata whenua, ko te "Korowai O Papatuanuku", ko te mea nui kia mutu te whakawaatea i nga ngahere i te mata o te whenua, i te mea ka honoa te whenua, ka horo te waipuke, ka takoto tahanga a Papatuanuku hei tirohanga ma te kanohi tangata.
Ko nga whakapai whenua, kaua rawa e pa ki nga ngahere, ahakoa inaniaei, kua mutu ke te kai o nga Maori i nga manu o te ngahere, hei oranga mo ratou, ahakoa ko ratou ano nga kaitiaki. Na ratou enei mea i tiaki mai i ora ai tatou. Te tino take a te tangata whenua, kia tiakihia nga ngahere me ana tamariki i te mea me hanga enei mea, e ora ai, me tiaki tetahi i tetahi.

Ko nga rongoa Maori he rongoa tuturu me tango mai i te Wao Nui a Tane. Tino ngakau nui te Maori ki enei rongoa o te whakaora me nga mate tinana. E haere tahi ana nga kaikohi rongoa me nga karakia hei awhina ki te whakaora i nga atua atua o te ngahere, engari, kia tino ma ai nga rongoa. Mai ano ka tango mai te Maori, kia rite te hiahia, ka waiho atu ano etahi mo a muri atu. E tika ana kia mama te huarahi me nga tikanga mo nga ngahere, ahakoa ko ratou ano nga kaitiaki. Ko te tangata whenua he tangoa tuku iho hei painga mo ratou. Ki te tangata whenua he taonga tango ano te wai i te tino o nga painga kei roto. Ko te whakapono o te Maori, kia ma te wai i nga wa katoa, kia ora ai nga manawa o nga uri kei te heke mai. He tino nga mahi mo te wai, he mea nui tenei ki te tangata whenua. Ko te wai-ora mo te kai me te kohue rongoa, te iriri tangata, me te hiki tapu whakawhakanga tangata turoro, me te tiaki i nga tuna, ika, me era atu o nga mea e noho ana i roto i te wai. Ko te wai kua waikura, kua waimea ranei, e kore e ora te mea ki roto. Mai ano i nga tupuna i haere ai nga tangata ki te hapu ika, ki te hapu tuna kei roto i nga awa me nga roto. E tika ana e watea tonu ana te huarahi ki te tangata whenua ki te haere ki enei wahi.

Ki te tangata whenua, ko te haurua, te wai te me te oneone, koia enei ko nga mea nui mo te Taiao, kaua e wehewehea engari me whakahaere tahi. Ko te pepeha a te Maori "Tihei mauri oral!" mo te pepi kua whanaui mai ki te ao ka thewa, ka ngote, i te haurua ki roto i tona manawa. Te whakamaramatanga o tenei pepeha e pa ana ki te hau ka ngotea tuatahitia e te pepi i tona putanga whanaautanga mai ki tenei ao, a...tae noa ki tona hokinga atu ki te koup o te whenua. Ki te tangata whenua, ko te atawhai i nga ngahere he mea tino nui, kia ora ai te ngahere.

Wahi tapu. Ki te tangata whenua ka nui te whai mana, tapu ranei o nga hua o Papatuanuku. Engari, me tino titiro tatu ki nga urupa me etahi atu wahi penei, kia hikia rano te tapu katahi ano te tangata ka ahei ki te haere ki runga i enei wahi. Ko nga wahi tapu he mea tino nui ki te Maori i raro i enei wahanga. Tena pea ko nga rakau, nga toka, maunga, tauranga waka, herenga waka, nga taonga mo te mahi kakahu me nga taonga mahi. Enei mea katoa e taea e te tohunga te karakia te uta atu ranei e tapu ki runga kia roa ai e whakamahia ana e tato. I raro i nga tikanga Maori tuku iho he mahi tino kia whakamahia e te whenua tapu. Ki te tangata whenua, ko te atawhai i nga ngahere he mea tino nui, kia ora ai te ngahere.

E kore rawa nga tangata e taea te hou atu ki roto ki enei wahi. Ki te tangata whenua he tangoa tanga ranei i nga owha, kia whakapai te tapu o nga charatiranganga, nga mea mahi o te wahi tapu. Ki nga tangata whanau, ko nga Tangata whenua, ko nga ngahere me ana te whakapai te tapu ki te tangata whenua. E tika ana nga mea nga whakamahia e nga tangoa nga tapu te wahi tapu. Ki nga tangata whenua, ko nga ngahere he mea nga tapu, ko nga mea tino tupa te wahi tapu. Ki te tangata whenua, ko nga ngahere he mea nga tangoa nga whakamahia e nga tangoa nga tapu te wahi tapu.
He wahi huna nga torere kia kore ai e kitea atu e te kanohi tutu. Ko enei wahi kei roto i nga ana, kei runga ranei i nga toka. I te wa nei e kore te tangata whenua ko te whakaatu kei hea nga torere, te take, kei rawakehia nga ko wi me nga taonga a o tatou tupuna. Na etahi o nga hapu me nga whanau i whirihiria hei kaitiaki mo enei wahi. I nga ra nei, kua whakamumu haere nga tangata whenua ki te whakatu whanui, i o ratou urupa. Te take, i nga ra o mua ka tahaengia nga taonga, ka ha aparutia nga ko wi. Ko nga hapu me nga whanau nga kaitiaki o enei wahi tapu. E kore te katoa e mohio kei hea nga wahi nei kei whakaitingia te mana o nga kaitiaki.

Te wehe i etahi whenua, me etahi atu tikanga, e kitea atu ana tenei ki a ratou tikanga, ki te tia ki enei whenua hea painga mo te katoa. Ki o tatou tupuna te takutai me te moana kotahi tonu. Kahore e rereketanga o tetahi i tetahi. He mea nui ki te tangata whenua, kia tika te whakahaere, me te tia ki te takutai, me te moana, hea whakakahia ake i a ratou tauranga ika. E tika tuku iho kia watea nga huarahi ki nga Maori, ki te kohikohi i nga hua o Papatuanuku. E Kohi kaimoana ana te tangata whenua, i roto i ona ake rohe. Ka whakaarahia nga mataitai e nga hapu e noho ana ki te taha moana, kia whai kai ai ratou me nga whanaunga, e noho ana ki te whenua.

Ko enei wahi e tia ki matapikohia ana e te tangata whenua. I enei ra, ko nga mataitai, kahore mo te kohi moni, engari, mo te whangai i nga tangata o nga marae. Ko te wero o nga tangata whenua, kia whakawatea tonu mai nga huarahi katoa ki enei wahi. Ko te tia pure, ko te wehe i tetahi wahi ma nga tangata o reira e tia. Ko te rahui e kati i tetahi wahi ki te tangata, kia tupu ai, kia hua ai nga kai moana kei reira.
Tangata whenua have a holistic approach to the management of the environment and its resources, and consider that all resources are treasures handed down to them as guardians by their ancestors. Fundamental to this approach is the principle of interconnectiveness of mankind to the natural world through whakapapa (genealogical ties).

According to Maori traditions, Ranginui (Sky Father) and Papatuanuku (Earth Mother) are the primeval parents who gave birth to Tanemahuta (God of the Forests), Tawhirimatea (God of the Winds), Tangaroa (God of the Seas) and many others. It is from this progeny that there came about the creation of the living world and all its inhabitants, otherwise known today as our natural resources.

The holistic approach is based on the concept of “mauri” - the life force which links together all living things as one, without boundaries or division. Each resource has its own life force to sustain its existence. Therefore should the mauri of a resource be extinguished by some form of desecration or pollution, the resource can no longer exist.

The most valued resource to all Maori is the whenua (the land). The significance of whenua relates back to Papatuanuku who is the source of all creation - from whom human beings were created and nurtured and to whom human beings return. Tangata whenua believe that the people belong to the land and should be accorded freedom to enjoy the fruits of the land and the abundance of the sea.

The land or the Earth is recognised by the tangata whenua as the Mother of creation, and is considered to be among the most important taonga (treasures) handed down for our guardianship. She provides life for all living things from the waters within her and people are bound to respect her with the love that all children should give to their mother. From her life is derived. To her, the wastes of life and the body devoid of life are returned. Hence the belief by tangata whenua, that the only method of the disposal of waste is to the land.

The children of Tanemahuta were the native forests, shrubs, bird-life, and forest animals which were perceived by tangata whenua as forming the “Te Korowai O Papatuanuku”, or the cloak that covers Earth Mother. Therefore it is most important that the land not be stripped of its native trees. Such an act is seen by tangata whenua as an act of indecency, and it is painful to witness the aftermath of such actions in the form of slips, erosions and the flooding of land where our Earth Mother must lie in her nudity for all to gaze upon.

At no time should development of land endanger or threaten the natural habitat of native birds. Although Maori no longer depend on native species for sustenance, they are still considered as kaitiaki that we recognise and protect for their past contributions to our survival. The protection of the forest and its children is of high priority to the tangata whenua because each species was created to complement the other to ensure their mutual survival.

Rongoa Maori (Maori medicine) were natural remedies obtained from Te Waonui o Tane (the great forests of Tane) which were highly valued for their healing and remedial properties. A karakia (incantation) always accompanied the gathering, preparation and administering of rongoa as a vital part of the healing process.
The entire process of preparing rongoa was tapu, not only in respect of the gods who presided over healing, but also for hygienic reasons. The longstanding practice of Maori was that you took only what you needed, so that there would always be some left for another day. Access to rongoa and measures that allow for the continuance of traditional cultural practices are vital for the well-being of Maori.

Water has many values and is an equally important taonga to tangata whenua. Maori believe that water must remain pure and uncontaminated so that it may continue to protect, preserve and sustain life for future generations. Water has many different purposes or values to tangata whenua. “Waiora” has healing and life-giving properties, and is used for ritual purposes. “Wai Maori” is for human consumption, for everyday purposes and to sustain the habitat of fresh water fisheries. “Waimate” or “Waikura” are stagnant or polluted waters which are no longer capable of sustaining life.

The ability of tangata whenua to continue their longstanding traditional practices of fishing the fresh-water rivers, lakes and streams for tuna (eel) is an important issue and, in particular, the provision of access to these areas is desirable.

Air, along with water and soil, is perceived by tangata whenua as an integral element of the environment. Together they must be managed as one rather than as separate entities. The Maori pepeha “Tihei mauri ora!” signifies the “breath of life” and is an exclamation saying, “Thus, there is life!”.

This pepeha (or proverb), relates to the time when a new-born baby enters into the world and takes its first breath of “life”. The symbolism of the proverb encompasses the importance of life and all that pertains to it. Tangata whenua believe therefore that air must be of the purest quality; a quality that will sustain the life of the new-born child into adulthood and until such time as they depart this world.

All resources are considered by tangata whenua to hold an element of sacredness and, in particular, we look at the sacredness of “waahi tapu” and other sites of significance to Maori. Waahi tapu denotes a place under tapu (under restriction). Waahi tapu is a personal thing which is sacrosanct to Maori.

Included under this category could be trees, rocks, mountains, hills, waterways, places for food gathering, cultivating and harvesting, canoe landings, moorings, and sources of materials for the construction of houses, canoes and for clothing and tools. All these things could be placed under sacred protection by a tohunga (a spiritual expert) to maintain the integrity of their sustainable use.

Other sites of significance to tangata whenua often considered as tapu include papakainga where a chief may have lived, places where battles were fought and where the dead fell, the great pa sites of the district or the abode of a taniwha. There are some waahi tapu that no-one can enter or touch. By Maori custom it was considered a direct violation of tapu to “turn the sod” or disturb the soil within the boundaries of a waahi tapu. To carry out this act was to bring the wrath of the gods upon the offender and his family. Certain maunga (mountains), puke (hills) and awa (rivers) were also considered sacred and therefore remained relatively untouched. These maunga and awa were significant to tangata whenua in that they marked the land boundaries where hapu/iwi exercised mana whenua.
Their boundaries to the sea and the natural features of the landscape were a very important part of the landscape.

Oratory often included the recital of one’s whakapapa (genealogy) which made reference to a mountain or a river to identify the affinity of the hapu with that land. Mountains and hills were considered tapu because of these beliefs, and because of historical events which took place on them.

Urupa, or burial grounds, were often located in areas that were hidden from prying eyes. These places of burial could be a cave (ana) or ledge in the rocks. To preserve the identification of their whereabouts, their locations were known only to an appointed few of the hapu or whanau of a particular area and, in certain cases, to the wider iwi.

Today there is a certain element of reluctance on the part of the tangata whenua to disclose or identify their waahi tapu due to past incidents of the pilfering of taonga from these burial grounds, and the desecration of human remains. The guardians of these sacred places are the hapu and whanau of the area and, in many instances, these hapu and whanau wish to retain their rangatiratanga (chiefly authority) as the guardians of their sacred places by not revealing them to the public. The setting aside of reserves and land for special purposes is considered by tangata whenua as a practice consistent with their tikanga, in that it conserves those areas of special significance for the enjoyment of all.

Traditionally, the entire coastal area was considered to be part of the whenua. Maori made no distinction between the foreshore and the sea. The management of the coast and its environs is a priority for tangata whenua and, in particular, the conservation and enhancement of their fisheries. The freedom of traditional access to the natural resources of the land and the sea was a customary right of the indigenous peoples of this land.

The gathering of kai-moana (seafood) was carried out by tangata whenua within their traditional boundaries. Mataitai (traditional fisheries) were established by each hapu along the coast to provide them and their inland whanaunga (relatives) with food.

These food gathering places were very jealously guarded and protected by the tangata whenua of the area. Today mataitai provide for the needs of the marae and its people and are strictly for non-commercial purposes. Access to these customary food gathering places is a priority of tangata whenua. “Taiapure” is a more recent form of reserve that involves the whole community. The concept of rahui is a means of establishing a reserve or a restricted area which is put in place as a conservation measure, to conserve the food that is there and allow for its rejuvenation.