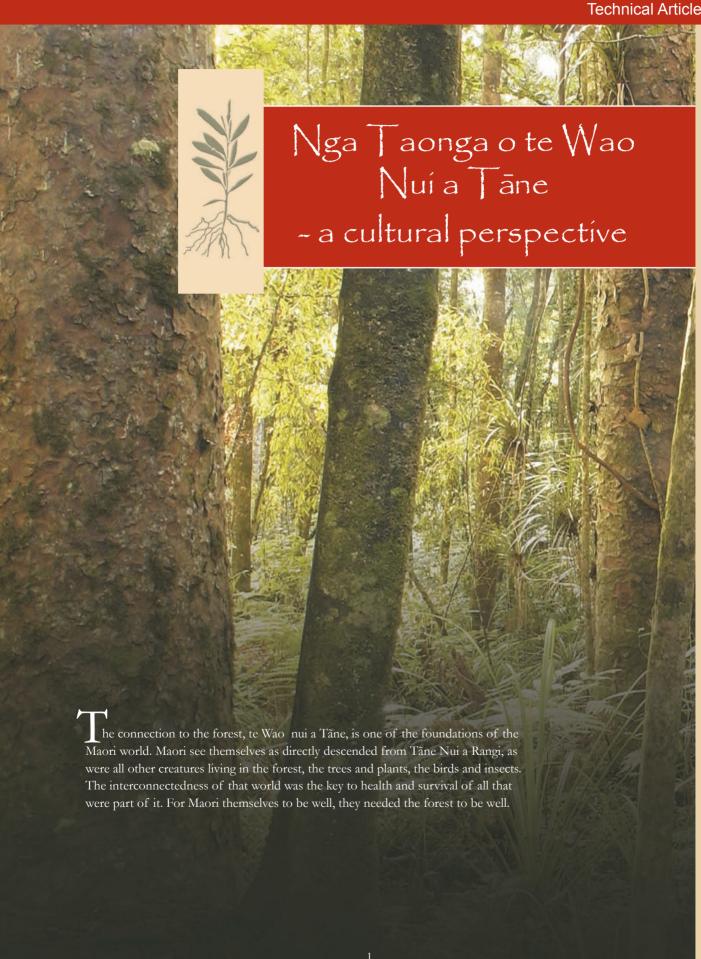


# PLANTING and MANAGING NATIVE TREES

Technical Article No. 3.1



Technical Handbook Section 3: Cultural and Historical Perspective on Planting Native Trees 3:1 Nga Taonga o te Wao Nui a Tāne - A cultural perspective

#### **TIKANGA**

The tikanga (traditional practices) that governed all activities involving the forest were put in place to ensure the wellbeing of the whole forest community, and the various species that are part of it.

This is not only a traditional viewpoint; it very much reflects the understandings and expectations of many Maori today. Again and again submissions made in support of Wai 262 and other claims to the Waitangi Tribunal in recent times highlight the concern of Maoridom at the way the integrity of the forest world has been destroyed by the land management practices of the last 150 years. Maori see that as a major factor in their loss of mana; in the deterioration of their social structures; in their poor health statistics; and in the uncertainty that many feel as they look towards the future.

A number of issues including deterioration of waterways and ground waters, changes in coastal sedimentation and loss of biodiversity are seen by many claimants to be a direct result of the lost integrity of the forest world. The world of Tāne has lost its mana, and he is no longer able to provide for his children.

The goals and objectives of Tane's Tree Trust reflect a response that many claimants would endorse. However the traditional Maori understanding of the forest suggests a different order of priority to that of the Trust, which, amongst other values, strongly promotes the potential of the major timber producing species of the forest. Maori see that as very important, but the first priority for many would be to focus firstly on reinstating the integrity of the forest itself, before focusing on those species within the forest of particular commercial interest.

Most members of Tāne's Tree Trust would agree with that, even if the primary thrust of the Trust is the timber species. A healthy functioning forest is the environment needed to ensure the optimum growth of the major trees that make up the forest canopy, those that have potential both for timber production and carbon credits.



## **WEAVING MATERIALS**

There were a wide range of species in the forest used by Maori for weaving. Many of the vines had particular uses, for example, in the construction of hinaki (traps) for catching eels. Fibre was needed that was durable in water for long periods of time which meant that materials other than flax were often used. Various trees provided dyes and preservatives.

There is no longer the same need today for many of the traditional uses, as modern materials are readily available. However there are exceptions. Kiekie is still very much in demand for weaving. This is an epiphytic vine found in mature healthy forest, particularly in the North Island. It belongs in a natural forest community, but could be considered unwelcome in forest managed for sustainable production. The importance of such species as kiekie needs to be recognised and respected.







#### Trees used for Rongoa

Maori name

Karamu

The range of species used by traditional healers varies from area to area, reflecting local traditions and local flora. Some of the most important forest species are given in Table 1.



Table 1: Plant species found in native forests that are used in Rongoa Maori, traditional healing. Names vary from region to region, so in some cases several Maori names are given.

**Botanical name** 

Coprosma robusta

|                    | ,  |
|--------------------|--|
| Kanono/raurekau    | Coprosma grandifolia                         |
| Kawakawa           | Macropiper excelsum                          |
| Tutu/tupakihi      | Coriaria arborea                             |
| Makomako           | Aristotelia serrata                          |
| Mamaku             | Cyathea medullaris                           |
| Tataramoa          | Rubus australis,                             |
|                    | R. cissicoides                               |
| Koromiko/kokomuka  | Hebe stricta                                 |
| Manuka             | Leptospermum scoparium                       |
| Mingimingi/tumingi | Leucopogan fasciculatus                      |
| Kumarahou          | Pomaderris kumerahou                         |
| Pukatea            | Laurelia novae-zelandiae                     |
| Houhere/houhi      | Hoheria populnea and other Hoheria species   |
| Whauwhaupaku/      | Pseudopanax arboreus                         |
| parapara/puahou    |  |
| Horopito           | Pseudowintera colorata                       |
| Poroporo           | Solanum aviculare and Solanum laciniatum     |
| Kohekohe           | Dysoxylum spectabile                         |
| Tanekaha           | Phyllocladus trichomanoides                  |
| Kowhai             | Sophora tetraptera and other Sophora species |
| Mahoe              | Melicytus ramiflorus                         |
| Ti kouka           | Cordyline australis                          |
| Mangeao            | Litsea calicaris                             |
| Kamahi/tawhero.    | Weinmannia racemosa                          |
| Rangiora/wharangi  | Brachyglottis repanda                        |



Not all of these species would be suitable as nurse trees for large scale plantings of podocarps. However many will, and the need to ensure that local biodiversity is reinstated would be better served by widening the range of species used.

Myrsine australis



Mapou/matipo



# LEAVING THE TAONGA OF THE FOREST FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

The reason for focusing on reinstating the forest is to ensure that coming generations will have access to the taonga (treasures) of the forest. These include the physical resources that it has traditionally provided: timber for carving; rongoa (medicinal plants) for health and healing; materials for weaving; and various foods; along with the many other taonga that are at the basis of Maori culture.

If Maori lose their connection to the forest, many believe they will lose a key part of their identity. It is the source of their mana, and the foundation of matauranga Maori, traditional knowledge. They see the mauri of the forest, its life force and life-giving force as being compromised and therefore much less able to protect all that belongs to it.



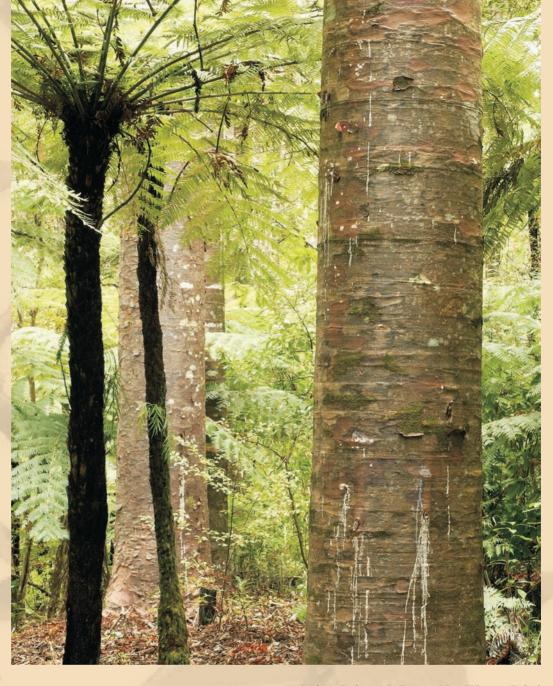
### **CURRENT CUSTOMARY USES OF THE FOREST**

Current Maori uses of forest resources reflect traditional values and uses. This use is increasing rather than diminishing, a reflection both of the current cultural revival, and the realities of modern life.









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Tãne's Tree Trust promotes the successful planting and sustainable management of New Zealand native trees and shrubs for multiple uses.