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<http://www.tipuake.org.nz/>

ABSTRACT

Tipu Ake ki te Ora: Reconciling Local Indigenous Māori Realities and Wisdom With Government, Research and Funding Protocols

Te Whaiti is a remote settlement located within Whirinaki, one of the world's richest and most diverse remaining rainforests. When native milling ceased a generation ago, the community lost its livelihood and main source of employment. Their reality is that of an indigenous community, rich in wisdom and steeped in tikanga, but financially desolate.

The local primary school faced this reality and transformed itself to respond to the future educational needs of its local community. The school and the community had called on the strengths and values of their ancestor Toi. Their organisational learnings have been distilled to create the Tipu Ake Lifecycle - An Organic Leadership Model for Innovative Organisations (and Communities). Tipu Ake ki te Ora means growing from within ever upwards towards wellbeing. The Tipu Ake Lifecycle is modeled on the dynamics of growth in a rainforest. It is a cyclic behavioural model that uses organic leadership and visioning tools to handle complexity, foster teamwork and shared leadership, drive innovation and positive action (see <http://www.tipuake.org.nz/>)

The community continues its learning with its kaitiakitanga programme (<http://www.kaitiakitanga.net/>) - a vision to equip their children and iwi to find Ora by growing a sustainable future rooted in their own values for their grandchildren's grandchildren in the global knowledge economy.

Both Tipu Ake and Kaitiakitanga are active research projects where the community has boldly shared its learning journey with volunteers and undergraduate teams from AUT, UNITEC and other tertiary institutions. No postgraduate research or funding has been involved.

The paper will be presented by members of the Te Whaiti community and partners who will tell their story in their own words and share the Tipu Ake Leadership Model. They will discuss some of the challenges a community like theirs faces when it tries to do things for itself and protect its own intellectual capital, using its own methods in a culture far removed from that of the mainstream world of centralised government agendas, research protocols or development funding.