



Policy Priorities HE AHA TE MEA NUI?

Taking it to the People

This election, the Maori Party is asking an important question.

He aha te mea nui o te Ao?

What is the most important thing in the world?

Many of you have told us, he tangata, he tangata, he tangata: it is people, it is people, it is people.

But such is the rich and creative tapestry of the people who inhabit Aotearoa, that we have received many other answers.

Real wages for real work; being respected; a clean environment; my kids; seeing the Treaty honoured; thriving whanau and communities; having hope.

This document presents some of these solutions that you have shared with us.

Our promise is to join with you, and work hard, to achieve what we as a people know is right for this nation.

Our party, the Maori Party, incorporates the name of the indigenous peoples of Aotearoa – maori – in this sense meaning natural.

Our commitment to you is that we will uphold indigenous values, to ensure our country maintains its natural beauty for all who call this land home.

We are working on further developing an identity which is truly of the Pacific. This is our long term plan.

Our aspirations are:

- Te Tiriti o Waitangi: we want to face our past with courage, so we can build our future together.
- Economy: we want to work together to make the nation great again by investing in ourselves to lead us to productivity on a grander scale.
- Whanau ora: we want to invest in our children and their children yet to come. To feed their minds, to nurture their creativity; to appreciate the wonders of their identities, their languages, and their cultures.

The Maori Party is committed to keeping our natural resources and environment healthy, safe and intact for everyone and for future generations.

The Māori Party believes in the efficient use of water, the conservation of energy, and the need for sustainable environmental management.

The Maori Party is also committed to assisting whanau, hapu and iwi, as tangata tiaki, to take whatever measures are necessary to ensure the wellbeing and future good health of the environment.

- We promote the appropriate development of renewable energy resources, including geothermal and hydro, wave, wind and solar, in order to protect and preserve limited resources such as oil, gas and coal.
- We support the Department of Conservation in working with local hapu and iwi to transfer the kaitiakitanga role back to tangata whenua.

We aspire to work together to make the economy great but not at the expense of our environment. Climate change affects us all and the biggest emitters must take responsibility to change the way they do business. Any cost they pass on to consumers must encourage environmentally responsible choices. The principle must be that polluters pay.

We want sustainable development. We must reduce our dependence on oil by strategies to reuse, recycle, repair, respect, replace and trade local.

Our priorities are:

- A Nuclear Free Aotearoa. We also want a GE Free Aotearoa.
- Improved public transport which results in reduced emissions. We also support the development of sustainable building practices and the use of emission-free vehicles.
- Request the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment to urgently convene cross-party discussions to assess the impact of peak-oil production on Aotearoa.
- Moratorium on 1080 drops.
- Mitigate the impact of emissions pricing on low and modest income consumers by developing options for affordable and sustainable energy services for householders.

Manaakitanga and rangatiratanga leads us to address the low income taxpayers. Rangatiratanga and kotahitanga prescribe a rise in the minimum wage to help to reduce the gap between low-income taxpayers and the average income for the Nation.

The Government's indebtedness has declined to a low level relative to our gross national product. The Government is also in a better position to borrow than private businesses and individuals. The tax system needs to reflect the principle that taxation should be distributed to achieve equality.

Petrol taxes and duties should be spent on reducing the environmental impacts of transportation, eg public transport, rail and shipping freight; and not returned to general fund.

Our priorities are:

- No tax on the first \$25,000 earned.
- Incentivise small businesses to grow, by reducing unnecessary compliance costs.
- Food should be exempt from GST on the grounds that GST hits low-income people disproportionately.
- Adjust superannuation entitlements for those groups who currently experience lower life expectancy.
- We will call for a review of Kiwisaver and its implications for the equity

We want to see more community services and less government bureaucracy for the outcome of whanau restoration.

- We will make the Government more accountable and transparent through the unbundling of public money spent on tangata whenua; and a report shall be produced on the outcomes achieved across the social policy sector with the funds allocated for tangata whenua.
- We will empower communities, whanau and hapu to develop responses to issues impacting on them; by trusting them and resourcing them.

Strategic Alliances

We will invest in strategic alliances across central and local government, industry, business and Maori communities that incentivise;

- Maori skills and qualifications;
- Maori participation in the labour market;
- Maori privately and collectively owned business growth;
- aligning Maori resources with regional driver industries and invest in opportunities for partnerships, joint ventures and other economic development collaborations.

By 2021, 43% of New Zealanders will be Maori, Pasifika or Asian.

We recognise the contribution that Māori enterprise and entrepreneurship has made to our nation's economy.

And at the same time, we know that the growth of the Maori asset base and the strong entrepreneurial drive within the Maori business sector could be used to help invert the annual pyramid of spending, in order to focus on the future.

Because iwi are major contributors to the economy, and owners of large natural resources, we support investments in geothermal and water power plants.

The Māori Party promotes the Genuine Progress Index as the standard measure of business success.

We will encourage whanau to enter into commercial enterprises that build on their particular circumstances as a whanau.

We support the development of local and regional business partnerships between local and regional authorities, industries and businesses; whanau, hapū and iwi. We support collective business development strategies that increase economic participation and encourage local and regional self-reliance.

The economic benefits of international trade agreements need to be balanced with consideration of our own local, regional and national social progress and environmental enhancement.

Small Business

We will incentivise whanau and family businesses to grow. Small businesses will be encouraged to grow, and to increase employment of rising quality within the context of kaitiakitanga. Our priorities are:

- We advocate for a 5% reduction in the business tax (down from 30% to 25%) for all businesses with a net income of less than \$100,000.
- We will support business development incentives (eg MWDI) to invest in success.
- We will review compliance requirements so that there is no increase in compliance costs.
- We will simplify employment legislation, ensuring a focus on family friendly practices. We will hold employers accountable for preventable workplace related deaths and injury.

Entrepreneurship and Enterprise

- Streamline the funding distributed by the Ministry of Economic Development to create a Community Development Bank. The Bank will make small loans to whanau and family businesses to incubate and rollout new products and services.
- Investing in regional research and development programmes that will forecast the long term opportunities and skills required to increase productivity and economic growth.

Successive governments and their policies have created worrying policy problems in our land of plenty. Our priorities are:

Support child, whanau and families

- We will set a deadline to eliminate child poverty by 2020;
- We will designate an official poverty line at 60 percent of the median household disposable income after housing costs and set net income for those on benefits at this measure to prevent poverty.
- We will increase minimum wage to at least \$15 an hour.
- Raise core benefit levels, including superannuation, veteran's pensions.
- Simplify *Working for Families* including extending the 'in-work' payment to all families.
- Investigate the reintroduction of a *Universal Child Benefit* ;
- Establish a '*Neighbourhood Renewal*' Fund, which may include incentives to encourage living more collectively, eg community gardens.

Improve quality and performance

It is important that the community receives accurate information about our progress as a nation. To advance this we propose the adoption of the '**Genuine Progress Index.**'

Joint action across government agencies creates confusion and duplication. Social sector agencies need to move their resources to the regions so that community solutions can be supported – rather than one-size-fits-all solutions. Also, government agencies need to align their regional foot-prints. Too much cost, time and effort is expended on this inefficiency.

Services that matter

Acting quickly and appropriately can address negative outcomes before they start. Programmes like KidsCan – who provide raincoats and shoes to low-decile schools, should be fully-funded. Therefore we propose the establishment of an '*Every Child Matters*' Fund. This is a targeted and time-limited grant to ensure, among other things that no child starts school without a raincoat or shoes.

Services to support better homes

Maori often have the land but not the income to service borrowing. Without state assistance, home ownership for most is a dream. Decent housing is essential to good health and wellbeing. Cold homes can harm people, particularly the very young and the very old. We will expand retrofit programmes to ensure homes meet achievable Warm Home Standard targets to WHO levels of 18° minimum.

- We will cap the rent for state housing and review the accommodation supplement to address overcrowding and homelessness.
- We need realistic options to enable low income families into homeownership – we will investigate proposals to capitalise family benefit payments;

Social housing communities

The state must take the major responsibility for social housing along with local body and civil society partners, including iwi.

- We will resource iwi and Maori organisations to develop sustainable housing initiatives, including iwi trust initiatives, marae based living, co-operative housing.

The Maori Party promotes whanau ora as the way forward to achieving a future where whanau determine what is in their best interests. Our priorities are:

- Wairuatanga – spirituality
- Hinengaro – the mind
- Tinana – physical wellbeing
- Whanau – the family
- Whanaungatanga – extended family
- Waiora – total wellbeing for the family and individual
- Mauri – the life force
- Mana ake – the unique identity of the family and individual
- Ha a kui ma a koro ma – breath of life from our ancestors
- Whatumanawa – the open and healthy expression of emotion
- Whenua –reconnection to the land
- Whakapapa– maintain connections to whanau, hapu and iwi.

Cultural Competency

Agencies will be monitored for cultural competency to ensure the quality of services, access and outcomes invest in well-being. We commit to addressing institutional racism.

- Cultural competence will be an employment standard in social services.
- We will support and resource providers with a track record of success in attaining mauriora; and in preventing family violence.

Opportunity Communities

We support communities by trusting in their own locally developed solutions. Those who have never had the backing to reach their potential, will be supported to find new and sustainable opportunities to achieve their goals.

The cure is in the care

The Maori Party supports a restorative justice system, where victims are empowered and the community is integral to bolster relationships and reduce crime. Restoration of the role of the collective is important. The Maori Party will require all Government agencies to recognise and work with whanau on all issues that affect them.

We want to decrease Maori offending and victimisation, to reduce the use of imprisonment as the priority response to offending, and to encourage better use of the policing resource.

- We support literacy and numeracy projects in prison.

Eliminating Social Hazards - Gambling

The harm being done by pokies, particularly for Maori, Pasifika, Asian, low income workers and beneficiaries, should be addressed by:

- devolving greater power to local authorities to reduce venues;
- investigating new technologies such as player tracking and pre-commit card;
- reviewing the way in which so much funding is redistributed from poor communities to activities which benefit people in other areas.

Tobacco out of Aotearoa (TOA)

Despite the legislative and regulatory environment, the number of cigarettes and the volume of tobacco available for consumption is increasing. The health of the nation must come before the profits of the tobacco giants.

- Introduce TOA Bill.

All our children being able to read, write & count

Our focus is on being healthy and living longer. We recognise that the cost, quality and location of health provision all has a material impact on the wellbeing of families. Our priorities are:

Improve access

Health is a basic human right. Children and young people should not be excluded because of their whanau employment status, ability to pay or where they choose to live. We believe in free preventive health care to under-six year olds and over-sixty-five year olds.

- We will support rangatahi wellbeing programmes.
- We will resource more services for tangata whaiora in the community sector, and ensure tangata whaiora representation on the Mental Health Commission.
- We will also ensure Rongoa Maori services are accessible.
- Initiate wellness checks / warrant of fitness, 6-monthly minimum, dependent on degree of risk; and regular checks for diabetes, asthma, cardiac and chronic disease.

Increase the supply of quality health workers

To ensure all children get the best possible start in life, we support a shift in the emphasis of health investment towards primary care. We will invest in a sustainable well-paid health workforce in public, non-government and not for profit sector. The Maori health workforce shall get 'equal work for equal pay.'

- We will sponsor single parents and low-income people to train for the workforce.
- We want to achieve safe staffing

Improve quality and performance

The community must receive accurate information about the performance of hospitals, PHOs and DHBs, including adverse events to be reported publically every three months. We support the separation of the funder provider roles of the DHBs. We will review the duplication of corporate and administrative functions between hospitals, PHOs and DHBs, and whether there are any savings available if duplications were removed.

Services that matter

Acting quickly and appropriately can address negative outcomes before they compound and result in mortality; bariatric surgery needs to be funded.

- Public health programmes to reduce the high incidence and cost of type two diabetes and heart disease will be funded.
- We support whanau focused alcohol and drug, addiction, recovery and restoration services.
- Resource mobile dental units such as buses to get to rural, poor communities with a focus on whanau dental needs;
- Regular cervical cancer smears and prostate checks.

Services for kuia and kaumatua

Older people should feel safe and secure, and be able to live with dignity. Yet the aged cared workforce is underpaid, understaffed, and too often do not receive the training they need to deliver the best care. The aim of the review is to ensure kuia and kaumatua with moderate health needs are able to live in their homes as long as possible.

All our children being able to read, write & count

The Maori Party supports proper recognition of disabled people and their families in the context of whanau ora. We believe that disabled persons have the right to participate in decision-making, be protected by law, and have control of their lives.

We have supported IHC's complaint to the Human Rights Commission that Government policy has impacted on the ability of schools to meet the educational needs of students with disabilities.

Our priorities are:

- We support the establishment of an appropriately funded lead agency for disability issues.
- We promote Government working in partnership with whanau to develop a framework for information distribution and flexible support.

Vision and hearing testing

Analysis of coverage data reveals that European children were far more likely to be screened at preschool than others. In the 2005/06 year, while 77% of European children received their vision screen, only 45% of Maori children and 29% of Pasifika children received these 'universal' tests.

- We will review the National Vision Hearing Screening Programme service specifications to ensure universal coverage is achieved.
- Improved access to technology (smoke alarms, video phones, texting and signing on mobile phones) will be explored.

The priority for the Maori Party is that disabled persons and their whanau can access support in order to have a life of their own, and to achieve that vital sense of purpose. We endorse the concept – nothing about us, without us.

- We will resource respite care and wraparound services for disabled persons to ensure they determine where they seek to live.

Meaningful Entitlements

- We support the Early Family Support System triggered by the first identification of disability, being universally available to families.
- We support a review of the funding and contracting model for special needs in schools. Current provision is uneven and inequitable.
- We will review income support to ensure full participation in family and community life in order that people with disabilities have better access to supported independent living.
- The disability policy will address the disparities between Health and ACC disability funding based on cause.

Workforce Capacity

- We will review the work conditions, pay and training opportunities for those working in the elderly, disability and home care sector;
- We will invest in sign language interpreters and teachers to express support for the NZ Sign Language Act (2006) as an official language.

Our priorities are:

Improve access

Education is not only a basic human right, but it is also necessary if we want to make sure our young people make good choices about their future. Children should not be excluded from early childhood education because of whanau employment status or ability to pay.

- We believe in compulsory and free early childhood education from four years of age.
- We also believe that the exclusion of play centres and kohanga reo is unfair and improper, and should be removed so that 20 hours free childcare be extended to children in these centres also.

Increase the supply of quality teachers

To ensure all children get the best possible start in life, we support a shift in the emphasis of education investment towards children and early childhood education, including lower adult: child ratios. In return, we expect services to meet the needs of Maori and Pasifika children and their parents, to be culturally competent and appropriate.

- We will increase the supply of quality early childhood care and education services in low-income areas.

Improve quality and performance

To strengthen the delivery partnership with the Kohanga Reo National Trust, we need to ensure the funding and contract model is robust, yet accountable, but minimises unnecessary compliance. Similarly we believe that the funding and contracting model of early childhood education should be reviewed to ensure it is not creating unnecessary compliance costs.

Services that matter

Because providers like kohanga reo play an increasingly important role in delivering social services to whanau, we believe that a number of new services should be piloted.

- Literacy and numeracy services to parents trying to teach children to read, write and count.
- Puna Reo a iwi trialled with those whanau who are willing.

Education of the Future

To enhance healthy lifestyles, teachers in early childhood centres will have skills in health and physical wellbeing. Centres will be equipped with computers to support information technology skills. The use of the reo and dialects of Maori and Pasifika communities will be encouraged.

The compulsory sector needs to be strong enough to equip students for life with a range of options before them. Our priorities are:

Help young people to succeed

Too many Maori children are struggling at school.

- We will establish incentives that reward school success and innovation in reducing under-achievement and disengagement.
- We will promote whanau engagement by investing in communities and innovation.
- We will reduce teacher-student ratios.
- We will support professional development for teachers, particularly in cultural competency.
- Fund schools to meet needs of high and complex needs students with a range of options including intensive counseling.

Increase the supply of quality teachers

Demand for good quality teachers, especially Maori language teachers exceeds supply.

- We will promote participation in, and increase numbers of Maori language teachers to increase the level and use of te reo Maori at all levels.
- We will develop and monitor a competency framework for Maori language teachers.

Bonding and student loan write-offs should be investigated to attract good teachers to work in to hard-staff areas.

- We also believe the TeachNZ scholarship needs to be reviewed to ensure no students are disadvantaged.

Improving performance

Schools are essentially community based organisations, many of whom are large with strong organisational infrastructure.

- The public needs to be provided with better information on school performance, including Maori and Pacific achievement.
- The 'enrolment schemes' need to be reviewed to ensure children from low-income whanau and families are not disadvantaged.
- We support a single, national qualifications system.
- Invest in key support staff, such as those focused on improving levels of literacy and numeracy.

Iwi Service Provision

Because iwi are major contributors to the economy, and like everyone else need a literate and numerate workforce, we believe that a number of new iwi services could be funded or at very least, investigated for their feasibility.

- Mobile literacy and numeracy services that can reach children, parents and whanau in rural areas.
- Establishment of a Maori Education Authority.
- Greater freedom to supplement Maori educational outcomes with whanau, hapu and iwi models of education.

Our priorities are:

Increase accessibility to tertiary education

Tertiary education is a front-end investment into the nation's future and should be freely available to all.

- To ensure that all people have the chance to pursue tertiary education, we will introduce a fee reduction policy to reduce fees to a nominal level over time.
- We will also increase access to student allowances, by reintroducing a universal student allowance – which will be set at the level of the unemployment benefit.

Student loan repayment

Student loan debt repayments should only start when you start earning one and a half times the average wage.

- There will be a five year grace period for repayments after graduation.
- Student loans will remain interest free.

The cost of bridging-courses

More often than not bridging-courses at tertiary level compensate for poor quality secondary education. Young people should not be charged for these courses.

Remove discrimination

To overcome barriers to entry into a decent job, a review of racial discrimination in the jobs market will be completed. The review will also offer solutions for overcoming racism.

Improve performance

Section 159G of the Education Act, the principles guiding the operation of the Tertiary Education Commission, needs to be amended to include a reference to the Treaty of Waitangi.

We will advocate for increased Maori representation on tertiary governance bodies, including mana whenua and Maori student representation.

Industry Training

To increase the training opportunities and skills development of the Maori workforce, there needs to be investment into training offered by Maori providers. A greater investment in industry training is needed for those trades with acute skill shortages, including building and construction, electricians, plumbers, mechanics, welders; and in growth areas of the economy including IT and in creative innovation.

If iwi assets have developed in farming, fisheries and forestry, then priority needs to be given towards developing the skills of those already in their workforce, to achieve optimum results. It is about supporting people with the right blend of knowledge and skills.

- We will invest in trade training and apprenticeships, developed and delivered in conjunction with key industry sectors, to upskill workers and address skill shortages, and to better enable industries to take advantage of skills training.
- We support a retraining allowance.

Ko te reo te mauri o te mana Maori

Language is the key to Maori identity and culture.

Te reo rangatira is the most precious gift our tupuna bequeathed to us to protect, maintain and share with the world.

The Crown and its agencies must respect that hapu and iwi are the appropriate guardians of their respective reo – and the Crown's duty as a Treaty partner is to assist and support the iwi and hapu to fulfil their responsibilities.

The Boards of Te Taura Whiri, Te Mangai Paho, Te Waka Toi, Whakaata Maori and similar agencies with responsibilities protecting te reo me nga tikanga Maori should be jointly appointed by tangata whenua and the Crown.

Government funding must be commensurate with the Crown's duty of active protection of the tino rangatiratanga of iwi in respect of their taonga. The Maori Party will ensure the Crown's legal and moral duties to protect and promote te tino rangatiratanga of iwi and hapu in respect of their taonga are also carried out by mainstream cultural institutions, eg TVNZ, Radio New Zealand, Te Papa, QE II Art Council etc.

The Party supports the view that TVNZ and Radio NZ should remain in public ownership, but show a greater responsiveness to the needs and aspirations of all peoples of Aotearoa.

The Party supports the current framework for purchasing programmes and broadcasting services through NZ on AIR and Te Māngai Pāho. Both agencies should continue to have a focus on Māori programmes and services.

The Party supports Maori broadcasting policy and resources being better developed through a co-ordinated approach with sectors such as education, training and business development.

The Party also supports tangata whenua having a more direct stake in the resources provided for the promotion of Maori language, culture and economic development through broadcasting.

Our priorities are:

Centre for Maori Language Excellence

Because excellence in te reo Maori is something we are proud of, we support the establishment and full-funding of a Centre for Maori Language Excellence.

- Develop policy to address the cultural misappropriation of indigenous names and symbols.