

**JUSTIN TIPA – SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE FOR OTAGO PROPOSED REGIONAL POLICY  
STATEMENT: FRESHWATER PLANNING PART**

1. My name is Justin Te Rangiparuhi Tipa. I was raised in the Waitaki valley, within the tribal takiwā of my Papatipu Rūnanga, Te Rūnanga o Moeraki. I am the Chair of Te Rūnanga o Moeraki, as well as their representative on the Board of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu.
2. My evidence discusses the integral relationship of Ngāi Tahu to wai and our reliance on mahinga kai for our cultural identity, how this has been affected by irresponsible resource management, and our aspirations for the Waitaki catchment and other awa in the Moeraki takiwā.
3. Wai is part of who we are as Ngāi Tahu. It is an integral part of our language, our whakapapa, our culture, our being. Wai also sustains our people by providing a home for our mahinga kai and other taonga species.
4. Our identity as Ngāi Tahu is inextricably linked to the concept of mahinga kai. Traditionally, our economies depended on mahinga kai, and our mana and our reputation are hinged upon our ability to harvest traditional resources, primarily from our waterways and coastal areas. This activity has increasingly been concentrated in coastal areas due to the degradation of, and loss of access to, inland mahinga kai resources. Mahinga kai in the coastal rivers and estuaries has also come increasingly under pressure from the impacts of a resource management approach focused on maximising economic productivity and not what the rivers need.<sup>1</sup>
5. My evidence describes the paramount importance of the Waitaki River that flows from Aoraki, the most sacred of Kāi Tahu ancestors, and the impacts on the river and the associated mahinga kai from the reshaping of the awa and the development of land around it.<sup>2</sup>
6. I discuss some of the work we are doing to support reconnection with the Waitaki River through restoring mahinga kai habitat and monitoring catchment health, and I describe the way in which fragmented management of the catchment hampers our ability to carry out our kaitiakitanga responsibilities for the awa.<sup>3</sup> We want to see holistic management of the Waitaki catchment, and a planning framework that

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<sup>1</sup> See paragraph [14].

<sup>2</sup> See paragraphs [11]-[13] and [21].

<sup>3</sup> See paragraphs [17]-[20].

recognises the rangatiratanga of mana whenua and supports and enables our work in the catchment.

7. We also have strong connections to the other rivers in our takiwā. I describe the degradation we have seen in these rivers and their wetlands and estuarine systems.<sup>4</sup> Our aspiration for these awa is to restore them to sustain traditional practices, but if we are to sustain our mahika kai and taonga species for future generations, the strong connection between wai māori and wai tai needs to be better provided for and the wetlands and estuaries must be able to function properly.
8. In the past we have been hampered in doing anything about the degradation of our waterways, and the resulting disconnection and alienation of whānau, because we have been excluded from the decision-making table. Our aspiration is for a true Treaty partnership that would ensure we are always at the table, that our rangatiratanga and kaitiakitanga are provided for by giving mana whenua powers to manage wai māori and to engage with mahinga kai in whatever ways they find to be appropriate, and that the needs of whānau are provided for, including in water allocation frameworks.
9. There is a responsibility for everybody who wants to use natural resources to make sure that they are looking after the environment that supplies those resources. If we are to protect and restore the mauri of our waterways so that they can provide for our children and grandchildren, we need to see practices on the whenua that are ecologically as well as economically sound. The Regional Policy Statement has an important role to play in making sure that happens.

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<sup>4</sup> See paragraph [23].