

Dr. John Reid

Ngāi Tahu Research Centre

Te Ao Māori

Climate change has been marked by the substantial imbalance between human action and the preservation and wellbeing of the ecosystems we inhabit. One hallmark of the Anthropocene, our current era defined by human influences on the earth, is the overconsumption of resources at a rate that cannot be sustained. This overconsumption stands in contrast to First Nations models for

ecological stewardship and kaitiaki practices for the management and protection of land and seascapes that are showing signs of stress and overexploitation. John's research highlights the vital importance of mātauranga Māori to revitalise living in harmony with and caring for the world around us. As John stated in an interview on Ko ngā moana whakauka | Sustainable Seas initiative:

“Kaitiakitanga is an interesting term because it often gets translated poorly into English as stewardship or guardianship. As if you were the one in control of the relationship. Whereas I think kaitiakitanga, how I understand it, it's a mutually enhancing relationship. You care for it, and it cares for you...It's this interconnected relationship. That's what drives me is both that sense of care and the relationship, but also a sense of being cared for in that relationship. The underlying impetus or motive for the work is how do we establish that balance in the relationship, or how do you tauutuutu, how do you enhance that relationship? How do you give and receive, and give and give and give, so it builds up this positive connection and relationship?”

About John

- PhD Development Studies, Sustainable Land Development
- Senior Research Fellow, Ngāi Tahu Research Centre, 2013 to present
- Managing Director of Earth Quotient, a consultancy specialising in environmental sensing



One major component of John's approach is the use of Māori centric environmental management and governance structures. Te Tiriti o Waitangi provides a framework for these structures, that exist along a continuum and comprise varying levels of authority, influence, and degrees to which mātauranga Māori is integrated and valued. Over the past 30 years there have been significant shifts due to the emergence of iwi authorities, corporations and co-governance models, particularly in relation to the management of natural resources.

In his various governance and research leadership roles, John advocates for the use of indigenous thinking in establishing a sustainable future for the country. As we face climate change, biodiversity loss, and the pollution of our waters, this knowledge can help us adapt our behaviours and development accordingly. By understanding our history, our ecosystem, and fostering kaitiakitanga, communities can create a more vibrant and sustainable future. John speaks eloquently to these factors combined in the 2023 Frank Film—“Ōtautahi Christchurch: The water city?”.

SUSTAINABLE WAYS OF BEING

How do we uphold our responsibilities to living in harmony with and caring for the world around us? Current climate effects are the result of overexploitation of the earth's resources. How do we bring back a balance?

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS



Partnership with iwi in research allows for the privileging of Indigenous knowledges and practices, which have long histories of sustainable living.

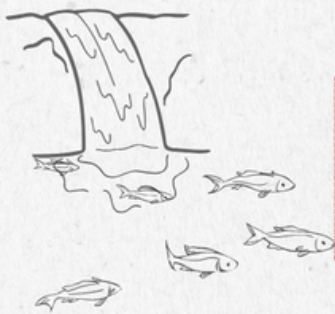
CO-GOVERNANCE

Co-governance aligns with Te Tiriti o Waitangi principles of partnership, protection, and participation. When duly applied systems benefit from diverse perspectives and kaupapa Māori integration into practices and policies.



KAITIAKITANGA

Living in harmony with and nurturing the world around us brings a different set of values and ethics to ways of being. It promotes more collectivistic values that attend to the wellbeing of the whole.



JOHN'S IMPACT

- Cultural, social, and ecosystem benefits through increased public knowledge and application of sustainable Māori practices
- Significant growth in Māori-owned primary industries and businesses
- Changes to industry practices and governmental policies that integrate Māori values, knowledge, and practices.



Research Impact

John's research impact is driven by the ways in which his research embodies and advocates for **valuing and integrating kaupapa Māori** in research and practice. Key aims include:

- + Increasing representation of Māori communities in research and governance.
- + Shifting public opinions around indigenous thinking for solving problems.
- + Reducing fear of co-governance and recognition that it brings better outcomes.
- + Moving toward better long-term thinking and planning.

Increasing communication and dissemination of indigenous innovations

- + Development of video communications tailored to general audiences.
- + Development of Kaitiaki Intelligence Platforms that provide automated real-time environmental data to support Māori decision-makers.
- + Widespread uptake of his resources, including 50,000 to 100,000 views of his documentary and TEDx talk.
- + The embedding of research into government, industry, and iwi environmental and economic policies.

Through the application of indigenous methods there have been significant advances in multiple domains, including:

- + Advancing indigenous roles in environmental governance and management.
- + Significant growth of Māori ownership and presence in the primary industries. Māori are likely to be majority owners in the next two generations leading to significant changes in political and economic power.
- + The development of successful indigenous enterprises, built on indigenous environmental ethics and values.