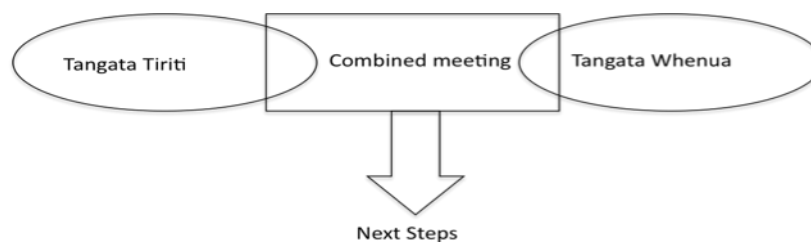


Understanding the Treaty with those who are not of Maori descent

The affirmation by the NZ government of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples formally recognises the indigenous status of tangata whenua. This recognition raises the question of the status of those of us who are not of Maori descent. Judge Eddie Durie described (1989) the status of other citizens as tangata Tiriti as they belong to the land by right of Te Tiriti. Thinking through the rights and responsibilities of tangata Tiriti requires careful attention to holding on to what really matters to us.

Te Tiriti /Treaty Relationships Framework:



This Framework encourages all people to work together towards the best of both worlds of tangata whenua and tangata Tiriti, building on the networks of bicultural (two culture) relationships that are developing our multicultural and intercultural understanding of how to work together. Understanding these relationships highlights much that is regarded as the common good. Further resources in this matter are available through the work on Strong Sustainability <www.phase2.org> and new economics <www.neweconomics.org.nz>.

The Marine and Coastal area (Takutai Moana) Bill actually repeals Crown ownership of that area. It is possible that this development may open up new meaning about what it is to hold the area in common.

The Crown role as a party to the Treaty needs to be encouraged by those who understand their role as tangata Tiriti. Organising by tangata Tiriti becomes pivotal. The Third Sector which stands alongside the government (central, regional and local) Sector and the commercial Sector has proved a vital site for such organising.

The basis of Te Tiriti Treaty Relationships Framework is the Whare Tatou and the two caucuses of *Tangata Whenua and Tangata Tiriti*. The Whare Tatou calls the people together to hui *in accordance with the tikanga and kawa of mana whenua*. Then the two caucuses form and work separately, often caucusing within themselves, eg for cultural or issues group(s). After the caucuses everyone comes together in the Whare Tatou to report what they wish and next steps are identified. The Whare Tatou is for the sharing of common concerns and aspirations as well as of diversity and differences, talking through them, not working in isolation.

Working in this Tiriti Relationships Framework has led many groups in the Third Sector to constructively develop their understanding of what a Tiriti-based future might be like. *Understanding the Treaty* in this way opens up opportunities for all those who live in this country to examine their rights and responsibilities, recognising the indigenous status of tangata whenua. By building lasting relationships in this way we can develop a diverse, cohesive *Tiriti-based, sustainable, multicultural future which acknowledges the mana of tangata whenua*

28 September 2010