

# **Some Cultural and Historical Factors Influencing Rural Māori Tourism Development In New Zealand**

**Chrys Horn**

Landcare Research New Zealand  
Christchurch  
[Chrys.horn@xtra.co.nz](mailto:Chrys.horn@xtra.co.nz)

**Brenda Tahī**

Brenda Tahī and Associates  
Te Urewera  
[Brenda.tahi@xtra.co.nz](mailto:Brenda.tahi@xtra.co.nz)

## **Abstract**

Rural Māori face more challenges when setting up businesses than their urban or non-Māori counterparts. New Zealand's colonial history provides an important context for Māori development, particularly in rural areas where the effects of the marginalisation created by colonial processes are still strongly evident. Within this context, a range of other factors comes into play. These are the cultural calls that rural Māori have on their time, the ways in which cultural practices clash with commercial practice, the expectations that rural Māori have of business development, the ways in which land ownership operates, and the historical factors that have left rural Māori marginalised and in a position of trying to recover what they have lost. Infrastructural issues and geographic isolation also create challenges for rural people over and above the challenges experienced by urban dwellers, whether Māori or non-Māori.

Key words: participatory action research; Maori culture; business development; rural development

---

## **1.0 Introduction**

This paper outlines findings from an ongoing participatory action research project focused on rural Māori tourism business development in New Zealand. Māori, the indigenous people of New Zealand, ran highly successful businesses in the early days of colonisation (Frederick, 2002). However, colonisation processes in which lands were confiscated and cultural resources were destroyed led to their marginalisation from mainstream economic development (Davies, Lattimore, & Ikin, 2005; King, 2003; Ryan & Crotts, 1997). More recently Māori as a segment of New Zealand society suffered disproportionately from the economic restructuring of the 1980s (Mowbray, 2001; Walker, 1992). Since the 1970s Māori have been actively working to reestablish their identity, culture, and language and to change their economically marginalised status.

Rural development presents a number of challenges over and above those faced in urban development contexts. Thus economic gains made by some Māori in urban areas have not been reflected in gains for those living in geographically remote rural areas (New Zealand Institute of Economic Research [NZIER], 2003). People in remote, rural areas face greater difficulties in setting up viable businesses because of their distance from markets, their lack of tourism infrastructure, and their place in regional networks (Ashley & Maxwell, 2001; Briedenham & Wickens, 2004; NZIER, 2003; Young, 2006). Rural people have less access than urban residents to general infrastructure, including roads, telecommunications, and education, and many also have lower incomes, which also limits their access to educational and business opportunities (Ashley & Maxwell, 2001; Beckley et al., 2008; Liu, 2006; Young, 2006).

Culture is an important element in these patterns. Tribal connections to land, a strong sense of cultural identity, and a strong desire to work to better the fortunes of the local community draw some Māori back to rural areas to “keep the home fires burning” (as they describe it). Such a move often costs these individuals considerably in terms of their earning capacity. Furthermore, once back, their tribal leadership skills are in high demand and working to fulfil this need can take an enormous amount of time from those with the capacity to work on developing new businesses.

Rural Māori need ways to support their activities in their home areas economically. A handful of small Māori ecotourism businesses have started up in New Zealand in response to this need and are considered highly successful. One of these, Whale Watch Kaikoura, has grown into a very large business. Furthermore, indigenous groups, including those outside of New Zealand, are looking to ecotourism as a form of development that utilises their knowledge and resource bases (Butler & Hinch, 2007; Colton & Harris, 2007; Zeppel, 2006). The rural Māori groups in our case studies are aware of these projects and see tourism as a means of furthering their own economic development.

This paper emerges from reflections on two applied case studies in a 4-year participatory action research (Reason & Bradbury, 2001) project learning how to support rural Māori tourism business development. Its purpose is to highlight the ways in which the challenges associated with rural development intensify and are intensified by the challenges associated with indigenous development. Overall we will show how history, culture, and geography intersect to influence the capacity of rural Māori to set up ecotourism businesses in rural New Zealand.

## **2.0 Background**

This research was part of a larger project using participatory action research methods (Reason & Bradbury, 2001) to learn how to develop tourism in the two rural areas under study. It began in July 2004 and has involved a partnership between Landcare Research New Zealand, a Crown Research Institute (CRI), and three rural Māori organisations: two in the eastern North Island of New Zealand and one on the east coast of the South Island (Banks Peninsula/Te Pātaka o Rākaihautu) (see Figure 1). This partnership built on longstanding relationships between the CRI and Māori in these areas and emerged as a result of requests from those Māori for assistance with tourism development. The research has been collaborative, with each organisation nominating a locally based researcher or researchers to be part of the team alongside two researchers based in the CRI.

In the northern case-study area, three businesses were already operating with a very low turnover before the start of the research. The operators of these businesses wanted to grow their operations and to see tourism develop further. Others in the community were interested in following their lead. In contrast, the southern case study held and still holds no rural Māori-owned tourism businesses.

Tourism development was seen by all those involved as having the potential to utilise local natural resources to diversify the local economy. Māori participants in this study wanted to maintain a presence in their ancestral home areas and to find a way to support that. As one participant put it when asked why he wanted to develop a tourism business:

Well I feel we are in the right area for it. You go anywhere else and there is nothing like we have, and it is ours! It's home. And for me I feel strongly about being able to come home—so for me I have to make something work.

Participants also wanted to provide jobs to draw skilled young people back to live at home and to provide work for those already living in the area. Like other indigenous groups, the people we worked with saw tourism development as one of the few possibilities for economic development (Butler & Hinch, 2007; Zeppel, 2006) but felt they would need to develop some new knowledge and skills if such an endeavour were to be successful.



Figure 1. Case-study areas in southern and northern New Zealand.

The research consortium sought funding from the Foundation for Research Science and Technology (a government department) within a tourism-focused portfolio. The programme had two aspects. First, researchers surveyed tourists to understand demand for Māori ecocultural tourism in both areas (Becken & Sampson, 2007; Fitt, Wilson, & Horn, 2007; White, Fountain, & Horn, 2008; Wilson et al., 2006). The second aspect of the project was aimed at learning how local people could be

supported to develop tourism business and overcome the barriers that faced them. This second aspect of the work was a more complex and interactive task that required the ongoing participation of a number of existing businesses and individuals interested in developing tourism business. It was here that the meaning of partnership had to be negotiated and explored in a setting in which the various stakeholders had different expectations and hopes for the research.

The participation involved in participatory action research is highly problematic as a concept (Blackburn, 2000; Jacobson & Storey, 2004; Klodawsky, 2007). In the New Zealand context, the ideals of participation and empowerment that the research team went into the project with (of working in partnership, ensuring all stakeholders had equitable input into the project) were not always easy to achieve. A number of factors converged that made it difficult to work in what might be considered “true” partnership. These included the funders’ requirements that there be a lead contractor and tight contract specifications prior to beginning the research. The relative inexperience of the community groups in working in such a research project and problems that they experienced internally during the course of the research also affected the way in which the partnership evolved, as did the CRI researchers’ relative inexperience of local conditions.

The complexity of this situation and the inherent power relationships between the different stakeholder groups meant that a very high priority was put on developing high-trust relationships and maintaining good communication with community participants. The research team also spent considerable time reflecting on their processes and direction and renegotiating with the funders (a difficult and time-consuming task) when that became necessary. The complexity of the situation was increased because while the CRI had longstanding relationships with both Māori groups, the researchers involved in this project had no prior personal connections with the community participants in the project or with the local researchers. Hence it was important to develop working relationships both with research team members and the businesses and community members participating in the research.

To this end, with the agreement of research participants in the northern area, the research team embarked on a series of interviews aimed at building relationships and learning about local tourism development. A different process was used in the southern area, where the local leaders preferred to consider the process of tourism development from the perspective of local *rūnanga*, or tribal councils. A significant part of the work with this group was facilitating the development of relationships with and between the different groups for whom Banks Peninsula is called home. Thus, the participatory nature of the research meant the two case studies unfolded differently based on the skills of the research teams in both places and on the expressed needs of those involved in the research at the community level.

### **3.0 Methods**

The analysis reported here emerges from a range of sources. Initially, we completed 30 interviews, mainly with people connected with the northern area. These included 5 people with established businesses or microenterprises, 3 in the start-up process, and 9 who expressed interest in setting up a tourism business (including 1 person from the southern area). In addition we talked with 13 people with some kind of tourism business support role in agencies, in Māori organisations, and in district councils. Many interviews were conducted with two interviewers: one who asked the questions and the other who took detailed notes

(after some debate, interviews were not taped, partly as a data management strategy, since this work was mainly to provide background for the upcoming action research work, and partly because research team members felt this would be more comfortable for interviewees). While interviews were generally conducted in English, sometimes Māori became the best way for interviewees to express themselves, so having at least one interviewer fluent in Māori was also important when working at the local level.

Other data sources included the records of, and reflections on, our meetings and ongoing work with groups in the north, from records of the monthly meetings and activities conducted with our working group for the southern case study, and from the work we completed looking at the demand for Māori tourism experiences in this programme, cited above. Our understanding also developed from informal and ongoing conversations that occurred as part of our work together with participants outside of formal meetings.

As part of an ongoing participatory action research project, the findings from this research have been regularly presented back to our research participants and to any other interested community members. As such, the information provided a point of reflection for all participants, which then informed actions for developing tourism in their respective areas. The second author of this paper, for example, has since worked in a coaching role with businesses and potential businesses to assist their development in the local area.

Without exception, people we talked with were aware of our role as researchers in this research project. They agreed to participate and were able to withdraw their participation at any time. Furthermore, this paper, along with all other research outputs produced by the research programme, has been given to community members in both case-study areas for comment and sign-off before being put into the public arena.

## **4.0 Colonial History**

New Zealand's colonial history has a considerable effect on rural Māori business development and on the socioeconomic position in which Māori currently find themselves. In the early days of colonisation in the mid-19th century, Māori were stripped of much of their lands and the resources on which they based their early entrepreneurial activity. The Waitangi Tribunal was set up in 1975 to hear evidence of these injustices and to provide information for government to help with settling these grievances.

### **4.1 Effect of Settlement Processes**

Some tribal groups have completed their hearings and their subsequent settlement negotiations with the Crown, while others are still in the process of developing their cases. This status affects a tribe's access to resources. It also affects tribal capacity to focus most effort on development work. Tribes that have not settled, for example, have to focus their attention on seeking redress for grievances (an enormous task in which evidence and argument must be prepared for Tribunal hearings). Ngāi Tūhoe (in the North) were in the process of Tribunal hearings during the interview phase of the research. In comparison, the southern *iwi* group (Ngāi Tahu) in the case study had officially settled their grievances in 1998. Since settlement, the business arm of Ngāi Tahu has become highly successful, providing the tribe with significant resources for economic, social, and cultural development.

Tūhoe, by comparison, currently have a smaller pool of resources and are only beginning the process of negotiating their settlement with the Crown.

The settlement process also affected tourism development directly. A Tūhoe interviewee noted that recent documentation of grievances for the recently completed Treaty hearing process had reopened old wounds. This, in turn, had increased local resistance to the idea of developing tourism, particularly where it involved sites of cultural significance. Thus a site that had been the scene of a massacre, for example, was deemed inappropriate for visitors, even though that site was also interesting because of its remoteness and because of its connection to a historically important religious leader.

#### ***4.2 Developing Tourism Within a Marginalised Community***

Even without this reopening of wounds, other rural communities in places such as Australia and South Africa with a history of poverty and marginalisation can contain individuals who do not want tourists visiting, which can lead to less-than-desirable conditions for the development of tourism (Altman & Finlayson, 1993; Briedenhann & Wickens, 2004). Sometimes these people can resort to using crime in an effort to put off tourists, something many mentioned was happening in the northern case-study area. This presents both opportunity (people can set up a business looking after tourist vehicles while they go about their outdoor activities) and challenge (visitors may be put off coming into the area). An individual associated with an information centre near the northern case-study area said she was nervous about directing tourists to some parts of the area because of crime problems. Even a small amount of crime can affect the propensity of outside operators to send tourists into an area. Hence, businesses in the area have developed strategies for managing this issue, for example by accompanying people when they are in the area, providing safe parking for vehicles, and situating accommodation appropriately.

#### ***4.3 Relationship Between the Crown and Maori***

In both our case-study areas, the relationship between Crown agencies and Māori impacts on business development. Much Māori land was illegally confiscated in the past and is now in public ownership. In the northern area, previously confiscated land is now designated as a national park and controlled by the Department of Conservation (DOC), which manages the park for recreation and conservation. The ways in which the DOC manages the area create tensions for the Tūhoe people, who see Te Urewera as their home and domain. The contested nature of land ownership in this case means that Tūhoe operators in the northern case study feel that their relationships with the Crown should differ from those of other commercial users. However, the DOC sees no provision under current law for them to recognise this different status and considers it important to manage access to the land consistently across all permit holders.

### **5.0 Interaction of Indigenous Cultures and Business**

The relationship between culture and business is not entirely straightforward. Hindle & Lansdowne (2005) note two dominant themes emerging from research on indigenous entrepreneurship: “the need to reconcile tradition with innovation and the need to understand how indigenous world-views and values impact on enterprise” (p. 131). In this work culture was the reason many of our interviewees

were interested in developing ecotourism businesses. Like Māori in other studies (Carr, 2007; Hay, 1998; McIntosh & Ryan, 2007; Ryan & Crotts, 1997; Warren & Taylor, 1999), people in our case studies see tourism business as a means to allow them to support themselves and their families and communities, while living on their ancestral lands, maintaining their lifestyles, language, and customs, and also conserving and restoring their natural resources.

Likewise, Anderson (1997), reporting on Canadian First Nations' economic development, found that motivations for developing business included: economic independence as a means for realising self-government; improving the well-being of First Nations people; preserving cultural values and languages; having First Nations control the economic development process; creating sustainable businesses for the long term; building partnerships and joint ventures; and building more capacity for economic development. Thus, indigenous people have a holistic approach to economic development that can mean less focus on the economic aspects of business when compared with nonindigenous businesses (Davies et al., 2005; Loomis, 2000).

Some authors (e.g., Harmsworth, 2005; Zygadlo, McIntosh, Matunga, Fairweather, & Simmons, 2004; Stafford Group, 2001) report that successful Māori tourism businesspeople feel that incorporating Māori values into their business practice contributes to their success. Furthermore, the concept of *tinō rangatiratanga* (loosely translated as self-determination) was, and remains, central to both the business development process and the outcomes that our participants wanted from that process. Successful Māori businesses are run by people who know that they can and must become financially independent if they are to achieve individual, family, and community goals.

Frederick (2002) and Frederick and Henry (2004) offer further insights into the way culture influences the styles of Māori entrepreneurs. They list a set of ideal personal traits (from past research) that international entrepreneurs have and outline the results of a survey of New Zealand entrepreneurs that measured their match to this type. Pākehā (NZ European) respondents generally matched the ideal type, but Māori respondents were more likely to differ. Māori respondents emphasised group accomplishment rather than individual accomplishment and prioritised harmony and relationships over materialism and wealth. These traits are clearly visible in our research participants in both case-study areas, which means that they must balance these values against the requirements of business development.

## **6.0 Effect of Rural Māori Culture and Lifestyle on Business**

There are a number of ways in which Māori culture can affect tourism development. The following sections present themes that emerged as important influencers of, and challenges for, businesses from our research.

### **6.1 Differing Perceptions of Māori Culture**

Many of our rural Māori participants see tourism business as a means to maintain their cultural practices and to make that culture more visible to non-Māori. As one potential operator in our study put it:

We have been looking at a tourism concept in which the core experience is sharing Ngāi Tūhoe's affinity with the environment in Te Urewera. This can look like a harsh environment, but Tūhoe have lived here for a long

time, and there is lots to share with people that involves interpreting the environment in a less harsh way.

This interest has been recorded as a driver of Māori tourism business development in other parts of New Zealand (Lindsay, 2004; Warren & Taylor, 1999), but we have found it to be a point of tension, since visitors can and do ascribe different meanings to their encounters with Māori than what Māori expect in presenting their cultural traditions. Many tourists from overseas, in particular, are unable to recognise Māori culture when it is not explicitly presented as such. This can mean that they miss or misunderstand culturally meaningful traditions associated with everyday life that are presented in an ecocultural tourism setting and may not be able to even recognise either people or products as being “authentically” Māori (Wilson et al., 2006).

Work in the wider research programme indicates that Māori culture is not currently a strong selling point for tourists surveyed in both case-study areas, although it does add value to a tourism product (Becken & Sampson, 2007; Wilson et al., 2006). Domestic visitors recognise and understand these tourism products, but in general, New Zealanders are not interested in them as a tourism experience (White et al., 2008; Wilson et al., 2006), just as Australians are not very interested in Aboriginal tourism products (Ryan & Huyton, 2005). However, all the businesses that we worked with had both domestic and international customers who were interested in the Māori cultural components of the products and engaged with them for that reason.

This suggests that Māori ecocultural tourism providers must work hard to locate and market to those visitors with an interest in Māori culture. This job is further complicated by two things. First, domestic customers may be looking for something different as compared with international visitors because of their relationship with the culture. For example, the domestic visitors with whom Wilson et al. (2006) spoke were uncomfortably aware of New Zealand’s colonial history and felt that they should know more about the culture than they did. International visitors had no such feelings. Second, branding a product as Māori may not always advantage a business (Harmsworth, 2005). In the 1990s for example, staff at Whale Watch Kaikoura, one of New Zealand’s best-known Māori ecocultural tourism businesses, reported that they preferred not to tell their stories about the place and the whales because of the lack of interest shown by customers (Horn et al., 1998). Some business participants in our case study found that they acquired most of their customers by focusing their marketing material on their product (accommodation, transport, or horse trekking) and providing clues such as artwork or Māori words to indicate the Māori cultural elements in a very subtle way. Others chose to highlight their Māori component strongly and saw it as a key element of what they wanted to provide. However, the people who did this successfully spent considerable time and money experimenting with their marketing networks to find customers with a specific interest in Māori products. Knowing how to experiment and develop networks to yield such customers was not an easy task and required expertise that many of our participants did not have.

## **6.2 Necessity Entrepreneurship**

The entrepreneurship literature distinguishes between “necessity entrepreneurs” (people who have gone into business because they were forced to by job loss or



lack of local work) and “opportunity entrepreneurs,” who go into business because they see an opportunity. Zolton et al. (2005) find that 83% of New Zealand entrepreneurs are opportunity entrepreneurs while 16% are necessity entrepreneurs. Māori have a higher rate of necessity (34.5%) than non-Māori. They also tend to be younger and have fewer educational qualifications, both of which are factors that increase the potential for business failure (Lazear, 2002). Zolton et al. (2005) also suggest that necessity entrepreneurs, who go into business because they have to, are less well prepared than opportunity entrepreneurs, who are more likely to have seen others go into business or may even have begun other businesses. Thus a high “necessity” rate, relative youth, and lower levels of education are all factors that might increase the chances of Māori business failure.

In the case of the rural Māori communities we worked in, however, many of the people thinking about going into business were retired or semiretired. Many have returned to the rural area, having lived and worked in urban areas for some time and so have considerable life experience behind them. It is difficult to say whether these Māori are necessity or opportunity entrepreneurs. While many people living in rural areas qualify for some form of state support, few of the participants in our case studies were on this kind of support. They saw developing a business as a necessary part of moving home. As part of this they had saved or begun consultancy work as a way of supporting themselves through developing their own local tourism business.

### **6.3 Tensions Between Culture and Business**

Our work confirms that cultural practices can directly clash with business practices. For example, some individuals in our case studies showed discomfort with the idea of making a profit. Warren and Taylor (1999) frame this as a potential conflict between tourism’s commercial aspects and traditional practices, which emphasise giving, not selling. An informant in a business support role in our southern case study reported that the service ethic was so strong among some rural Māori communities that people could feel uncomfortable being paid for business development work, something that she noted could impact on the future viability of that business. Likewise, as one of our participants pointed out, a *tangi* (funeral) requires participation of all in the community, and working for personal gain during a *tangi* is unacceptable. This can present difficulties when clients have booked in and when the businessperson is required to attend to the *tangi*. It is also even more challenging if the business depends on the use of community facilities for the *tangi*.

Another point of tension between culture and tourism business occurs in managing sensitive sites and cultural knowledge. Respondents noted the presence of tensions around the question of giving away cultural knowledge to outsiders, particularly in situations where an individual connects with genuine enjoyment to clients with a strong interest in learning about the culture. This was a point of tension within the communities we worked with and has been noted elsewhere (Carr, 2007). One interviewee in reflecting on the practice of another businessperson noted that:

For Anaru [not his real name] this was ... more about *tikanga* [traditional ways of doing things] in business and how much he should give away to the tourists. ... He had a lot of confidence and he did what he thought was

good for him and the valley, but some local people didn't like it [because they thought he should not be giving this information away].

Likewise, tourism may not be feasible where local people feel that a site is too sensitive to be visited by tourists, such as places where people lost their lives or the sites of major events in local history. An individual reflecting on one such site noted that:

It's criminal that there are opportunities that we are not exploiting given all the history there. ... We had meetings about this [...] and there were many for it and many against. A *koroua* [old man] put his foot down and said that it could only happen after he had gone—maybe. So that was that.

Thus, a significant set of challenges emerges from the marginalised nature of Māori culture in a postcolonial world. The need that many Māori feel to preserve Māori values and culture can also make the culture less adaptive than it once was (Said, 1993). Māori business development in the early days of colonisation (before its effects set in) would indicate that the culture was in fact highly adaptive and able to cope with challenges to tradition in situations where opportunities for profit presented themselves (King, 2003). Colonisation therefore has ongoing effects from within the culture that can affect business development. It seems reasonable to assume that were the culture unthreatened, it is likely that many of the issues associated with challenges to *tikanga* highlighted in this paper could be more easily and safely challenged by those within the culture, particularly those in the younger age groups (Apgar & Horn, 2008). These issues increase the complexity of developing a business and increase the time needed to set up a business, since extended family must be consulted and potential problems must be discussed before going into business.

#### **6.4 Cultural Demands on Time**

Cultural demands often compete for the time of those trying to run a business. Rural communities, including those in our study, rely on considerable voluntary effort to keep local services and institutions running. Our participants were involved in maintaining and running *marae* (community meeting facilities) complexes, participating in consultation processes, and in managing local development projects. One individual recounting the time they were setting up their business noted:

We were really busy people in those days, doing lots of other things—land cases, feasibility studies, seed potatoes—everything was going on, including *marae* refurbishment. All these activities took time—time we could have dedicated to the business, but we had so much else to deal with.

There can be issues associated with maintaining a presence in the rural areas with which Māori groups identify, as we found in both case-study areas. Individuals with the capacity to start a business and with an interest in doing it in their *rohe* (home area), as we have already noted, often have a strong interest in working for the benefit of the local Māori community. Many of these people have returned from living and working in urban areas and are highly capable, so that they are

called on for help and leadership on many different local projects and issues. For example, an individual who had recently returned home talked about his work with numerous local projects, including the development of a new *marae* complex, working on the local claims process, investigating development projects for collectively owned lands, and sitting on local and regional economic development projects. While doing this he was also running a consultancy business (his sole source of income), trying to set up a new tourism business, and developing a farm. Each of these projects was (and is) a major undertaking in itself. Thus, while most businesspeople in urban areas can focus solely on the needs of their business, rural Māori setting up in business are often spread thinly across a range of projects.

Such workloads can be stressful for both individuals and families. Informal conversations with some of our research participants, as well as our research with Māori youth from our southern case-study area (Apgar & Horn, 2008) and conversations with Māori from some other areas around New Zealand, indicate that Māori who live away from their home areas may enjoy better standards of living and more leisure than they would at home. Certainly, if they were to set up a business, they would have more time to put into that work if they lived away than they would if they lived at home. Thus people who return home have a very strong service ethic and desire to further tribal and community aspirations.

This pattern of service to their local Māori communities is reflected in the desire of many of the individual businesspeople in our study to generate employment for others in their community. Many of our participants rated employment for others as an important reason for developing business. A business run on this basis may take on staff who do not have the necessary skills for the job (Horn, 2002). As well, we have found in our work, the person setting up the business may see it only as a means to an end and not be passionate about the business per se, which lessens the likelihood of the business' succeeding.

### **6.5 Landownership**

Culture also affects business through the medium of landownership. Māori land is often owned collectively. Our respondents cited this as a challenge for setting up a business, for two reasons. First, banks will not loan money backed by land that is collectively owned. Second, any developments that occur on the land require the agreement of all landowners. Our research participants had generally managed this aspect of their business well. For some, the land had been used for a similar purpose in the past. A few of the people we work with are leaders with the *mana*, or standing and skills, to manage participation and conflict within the wider family and community. However, even these people found they had to change their initial plans because of a lack of agreement from their extended family. Thus, one family setting up a business decided that they could not build permanent accommodation as they had hoped and instead put in a more temporary tent camp.

### **6.6 Infrastructural Issues in Rural Areas**

The Māori we work with are drawn to live in highly remote, rural areas where they have familial and cultural links. "Māori geographical location looms as a potentially significant barrier to economic development, because ... Māori represent a significant proportion of the population in rural areas" (NZIER, 2003, p. 52). Many of the areas in which rural Māori live are highly remote with very sparse populations. The smaller and more remote the community, the greater the

barriers to developing businesses in general and tourism businesses in particular for a number of reasons.

First, capital tends to move out of rural areas into urban centres (Britton, 1996). This means there is little money for roads, telecommunications, electricity, and services that most urban dwellers take for granted. In our case-study areas, this is reflected in narrow, windy, gravel roads, which are subject to frequent washouts and closures and which have few signs to inform travellers of services available in the area. Likewise, frequent telecommunication disruptions and lack of cell phone coverage present challenges for people running a tourism business on their own. Furthermore, power supplies to Te Urewera are in question as power companies move to cut the maintenance of lines into the area because the cost of supplying power to such a remote area is considered too great.

Second, associated with this is the tendency for urban areas to attract labour and skills because of the range of opportunities available there. The relative lack of opportunity for employment in rural areas means that workers with skills tend to move out of the area, making it difficult for rural businesses to find and retain good staff (Hohl & Tisdell, 1995; Horn et al., 1998; Schöllmann & Dalziel, 2002). In Te Urewera, finding staff presented significant challenges for businesspeople because the work is often casual and infrequent, particularly when businesses are in the start-up phase, and potential employees may be unwilling or unable to take on this kind of work. This was especially problematic because part of the reason our participants wanted to set up businesses was to provide local employment. Furthermore, evidence from associated survey work in the northern area shows that visitors interested in guided trips prefer local guides (Fitt et al., 2007).

Third, residents of remote rural areas are distant from potential markets, a fact of some importance in the development of tourism (Altman, 2001; Hohl & Tisdell, 1995). In our case-study areas there was no possibility that someone would walk in without having planned and booked their stay first. The quality of the roads and the fact that many rental car companies do not allow rental cars to be driven on gravel roads meant that businesses must work hard to get the attention of potential customers and provide transport to their business location.

### ***6.7 Networks for Business Development***

Cultural patterns also affect business development through the ways in which local networks operate. Much work has been done on the role and importance of networks in allowing businesses to access timely information, services, customers, and supplies (Bøllingtoft & Ulhøi, 2005; Cziksentsmihalyi, 2003; Johns & Matsson, 2004; Knuckley et al., 2002; Pavlovich, 2003; Ulhøi, 2004; Young, 2006). Network theorists distinguish between strong links and weak links. Strong links in a network exist with people who see each other often. In comparison, weak links are more distant relationships and are most important for bringing new information into a strongly linked network (Buchanan, 2003; Pavlovich, 2003). People with strong links speak to each other often, so they have a similar knowledge of opportunities, issues, and people. In comparison, people who are only in contact infrequently are likely to know and have access to different things in this regard. Furthermore, networks do not automatically work well. People have to learn how to work them (Sampson, 2004) and how to exchange relevant information with those with whom they make contact.

The rural communities in our study are characterised by strong linkages within *whānau*, *hapu*, and *iwi* (family, subtribe, and tribe, respectively) and few linkages to other communities and networks regionally and nationally. This lack of weak linkages makes the issues of remoteness and distance far more difficult to overcome (Young, 2006) for many of our participants. Many of the participants in our study were initially unaware of the importance of building and working networks and of the range of ways in which they might achieve this. As we have already shown, much of people's energy is focused on the local community and the issues that currently exist there. Despite this, research participants have potentially useful national and international business linkages through the tribal diaspora. Both tribal groups that we work with have extensive diasporas across New Zealand and internationally, many of whom still strongly identify with those tribes and the places from which they descend but who may not be well connected to the people who remain living at home. Part of tribal development, therefore, may be to foster and facilitate these linkages to the benefit of all concerned.

## **7.0 Conclusions**

The intersection of history, culture, and geography sketched out in this paper indicates that rural Māori who are setting up new ecotourism businesses face more challenges than their urban and non-Māori counterparts. Historically, colonisation processes have resulted in ongoing patterns of marginalisation, which can increase local resistance to tourism development and in turn may result in crime against tourists. The marginalised status of Māori communities disadvantages them through a lack of capacity to negotiate legal and institutional processes associated with business development. This is compounded by the Crown's lack of capacity to negotiate institutional processes differently with Māori when that might be appropriate.

Culturally, Māori living in traditional situations tend to face significant challenges when they are setting up a business. Rural Māori setting up business often do so only as only one of a number of other endeavours associated with community, social, cultural, or economic development. Most potential businesspeople in urban New Zealand are able to dedicate much more of their time toward the needs of the business and few feel the need to take on time-consuming community responsibilities on a par with those people developing businesses in our case studies. For rural Māori the responsibilities may be significantly greater because of their role in keeping the home fires burning and in maintaining community facilities for use by the wider tribe.

The marginalised nature of the culture also presents both challenges and opportunities for tourism development. The cultural knowledge that individuals carry provides opportunities to offer unique tourism products to visitors. However, culture is not individually owned and the tribal community can and does question what cultural knowledge should be passed on to tourists and what should not. This issue is also linked to challenges that may arise when host and guest have a different understanding of what is being bought and sold. It is therefore important for Māori tourism operators to develop a reflexive understanding of their product and the way in which it is provided. A further challenge arises from the sense of needing to protect the culture from the influence of a colonising culture. Thus, some community members may frown on business principles such as making a profit or generating individual wealth. This is in direct contrast to the fact that in

the early days of colonisation (before colonisation processes had had any impact) Māori ran highly successful businesses without the same questions being raised.

Geographically, places with small populations have significantly less access to the kinds of infrastructure that most businesses consider vital to their function. Thus roads, telecommunications, and electricity are all resources that most urban dwellers take for granted but which are problematic for those in our case studies. In addition to a lack of infrastructure, further issues may arise from the need for rural businesspeople to put significant time into contributing to providing their own community facilities and infrastructure.

Overall then, while most entrepreneurs in urban and non-Māori settings focus all their efforts and time on their business, the people we have interviewed are often developing business as one activity among many. In that respect, building the wider community's capacity to participate in their own development processes will assist individuals who are trying to set up their own businesses. Beyond this, the way through the challenges and problems that confront rural Māori tourism businesses and the people that support them is highly complex. There is a need for intervention or support at a number of different levels and for support services and structures to be tailored toward their specific set of issues and needs. Help will most usefully come from those with some experience and knowledge of the difficult conditions that exist in the rural Māori tourism setting. Furthermore, this analysis indicates a need to build the capacity of Crown agencies to work with Māori, perhaps more than there is a need to build capacity in rural Māori communities to work with agencies.

## 8.0 References

- Altman, J. C. (2001). *Indigenous communities and business: Three perspectives, 1998–2000* (Research Working Papers 9/2001). Canberra, Australian National University, Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy.
- Altman, J. C., & Finlayson, J. (1993). Aborigines, tourism and sustainable development. *Journal of Tourism Studies*, 4(1), 38–50.
- Anderson, R. B. (1997). Corporate/indigenous partnerships in economic development: The first nations in Canada. *World Development*, 25(9), 1483–1503.
- Apgar, M., & Horn, C. (2008). *Young Māori perspectives on eco-cultural tourism and Māori communities: A scoping study in cultural identity, community development and participation* (Landcare Research Contract Report LC0708/119). Retrieved August 2008 from [http://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/research/sustainablesoc/tourism/growing\\_regional.asp](http://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/research/sustainablesoc/tourism/growing_regional.asp)
- Ashley, C., & Maxwell, S. (2001). Rethinking rural development. *Development Policy Review*, 19(4), 395–425.
- Becken, S., & Sampson, K. (2007). Māori ecocultural tourism. In J. Buultjens & D. Fuller (Eds.), *Case studies in Indigenous tourism* (pp. 107–138). Lismore: Southern Cross University Press.

- Beckley, T. M., Martz, D., Nadeau, S., Wall, E., & Reimer, B. (2008). Multiple capacities, multiple outcomes: Delving deeper into the meaning of community capacity. *Journal of Rural and Community Development*, 3(3), 56–75.
- Blackburn, J. (2000). Understanding Paulo Freire: Reflections on the origins, concepts and possible pitfalls of his educational approach. *Community Development Journal*, 35(1), 3–15.
- Bøllingtoft, A., & Ulhøi J. P. (2005). The networked business incubator—leveraging entrepreneurial agency? *Journal of Business Venturing*, 20, 265–290.
- Britton, S. (1996). Tourism, dependency and development. In Y. Apostolopoulos, S. Leivada, & A. Yiannakis (Eds.), *The sociology of tourism: Theoretical and empirical investigations* (pp. 155–172). London and New York: Routledge.
- Briedenhann, J., & Wickens, E. (2004). Tourism routes as a tool for the economic development of rural areas—vibrant hope or impossible dream? *Tourism Management*, 25(1), 71–79.
- Buchanan, M. (2003). *Small world: Uncovering nature's hidden networks*. London: Phoenix.
- Butler, R., & Hinch, T. (2007). Introduction: Revisiting common ground. In R. Butler & T. Hinch (Eds.), *Tourism and indigenous peoples: Issues and implications* (pp. 1–14). Oxford, UK: Elsevier.
- Carr, A. (2007). Māori nature tourism businesses: Connecting with the land. In R. Butler & T. Hinch (Eds.), *Tourism and indigenous peoples: Issues and implications* (pp. 113–127). Oxford, UK: Elsevier.
- Colton, J., & Harris, S. (2007). Indigenous ecotourism's role in community development: The case of Lennox Island First Nation. In R. Butler & T. Hinch (Eds.), *Tourism and indigenous peoples: Issues and implications* (pp. 220–233). Oxford, UK: Elsevier.
- Cziksentmihalyi, M. (2003). *Good business: Leadership flow and the making of meaning*. London: Hodder and Stoughton.
- Davies, P., Lattimore, R., & Ikin, K. (2005). Māori economic development: Overview and prospects. In J. E. Rowe (Ed.), *Economic development in New Zealand* (pp. 107–126). Aldershot, UK: Ashgate.
- Fitt, H., Wilson, J., & Horn, C. (2007). *A profile of tourism in the Lake Waikaremoana region: Independent visitation in rural New Zealand* (Landcare Research Science Series No. 33). Lincoln, New Zealand: Manaaki Whenua Press. Retrieved August 2008 from [http://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/research/sustainablesoc/tourism/growing\\_regional.asp](http://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/research/sustainablesoc/tourism/growing_regional.asp)
- Frederick, H. H. (2002). Individual and collective entrepreneurship amongst the Pākehā and Māori of Aotearoa/New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Applied Business Research*, 1(1), 77–91.
- Frederick, H. H., & Henry, E. (2004). Innovation and entrepreneurship amongst Pakeha and Maori in New Zealand. In C. H. Stiles & C. S. Galbraith (Eds.), *International Research into the Business Disciplines* (Vol. 4, pp. 115–140). Oxford, UK: Elsevier.

- Harmsworth, G. R. (2005). *Report on the incorporation of traditional values/tikanga into contemporary Māori business organisation and process* (Landcare Research Report LC0405/058, prepared for Mana Taiao). Palmerston North, New Zealand: Landcare Research. Retrieved June 2007 from [http://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/research/sustainablesoc/social/documents/report\\_trad\\_values\\_tikanga\\_Harmsworth.pdf](http://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/research/sustainablesoc/social/documents/report_trad_values_tikanga_Harmsworth.pdf)
- Hay, R. (1998). Sense of place in a development context. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 18(1), 5–29.
- Hindle, K., & Lansdowne, M. (2005). Brave spirits on new paths: Towards a globally relevant paradigm of indigenous entrepreneurship research. *Journal of Small Business and Entrepreneurship*, 18(2), 131–142.
- Hohl, A. E., & Tisdell, C. A. (1995). Peripheral tourism: Development and management. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 22(3), 517–534.
- Horn, C., Simmons, D. G., & Fairweather, J. R. (1998). *Evolution and change in Kaikoura: Responses to tourism development* (Report No. 6). Lincoln, New Zealand: Tourism Research and Education Centre (TREC), Lincoln University.
- Horn, C. (2002). *A complex systems perspective on communities and tourism: A comparison of two case studies in Kaikoura and Rotorua*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Lincoln University, New Zealand.
- Jacobson, T. L., & Storey, J. D. (2004). Development communication and participation: Applying Habermas to a case study of population programmes in Nepal. *Communication Theory*, 14(2), 99–121.
- Johns, N., & Mattsson, J. (2005). Destination development through entrepreneurship: A comparison of two cases. *Tourism Management*, 26(4), 605–616.
- King, M. (2003). *A Penguin history of New Zealand*. Auckland, New Zealand: Penguin Books.
- Klodawsky, F. (2007) ‘Choosing’ participatory research: Partnerships in space-time. *Environment and Planning A*, 39, 2845–2860.
- Knuckley, S., Johnston, H., Campbell-Hunt, C., Carlaw, K., Corbett, L., & Massey, C. (2002). *Firm foundations: A study of New Zealand business practices and performance*. Wellington, Ministry of Economic Development.
- Lazear, E. (2002). Entrepreneurship. Keynote paper. In *2003 New Zealand Association of Economists Conference* (pp. 1–54). Auckland: New Zealand Association of Economists.
- Lindsay, V. (2004). *Sustainable economic development and entrepreneurship: An indigenous perspective Waikato, New Zealand*. Auckland, New Zealand: The Taitokerau Sustainable Development Research Group for the James Henare Centre.
- Liu, A. (2006). Tourism in rural areas: Kedah, Malaysia. *Tourism Management*, 27, 878–889.



- Loomis, T. M. (2000). Indigenous populations and sustainable development: building on indigenous approaches to holistic self-determined development. *World Development*, 28, 893–910.
- Mair, H., Reid, D., George, W., & Taylor, J. (2001). Planning for growth? Rethinking the rural tourism opportunity. *Canadian Journal of Extension*, 2001, 1–5.
- McIntosh, A. J., & Ryan, C. (2007). The market perspective on indigenous tourism: Opportunities for business development. In R. Butler & T. Hinch (Eds.), *Tourism and indigenous peoples: Issues and implications* (pp.73–83). Oxford, UK: Elsevier.
- Mowbray, M. (2001). *Distributions and disparity: New Zealand household incomes*. Ministry of Social Policy, Wellington.
- New Zealand Institute of Economic Research (NZIER). (2003). *Maori economic development—Te ohanga whanaketanga Maori*. Wellington, New Zealand: New Zealand Institute of Economic Research.
- Pavlovich, K. (2003). The evolution and transformation of a tourism destination network: The Waitomo Caves, New Zealand. *Tourism Management*, 24, 203–216.
- Reason, P., & Bradbury, H. (2006). *A handbook of action research*. London: Sage.
- Ryan, C. (2002). Tourism and cultural proximity: Examples from New Zealand. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 29(4), 952–971.
- Ryan, C. A., & Crotts, J. (1997). Maori art: A historic and cultural perspective of its cultural significance and relationship to tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 24(4).
- Ryan, C., & Huyton, J. (2000). Aboriginal tourism—a linear structural relations analysis of domestic and international tourist demand. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 2, 15–29.
- Ryan, C., & Huyton, J. (2005). Balanda tourists and Aboriginal people. In C. Ryan & M. Aicken (Eds.), *Indigenous tourism: The commodification and management of culture. Advances in tourism research* (pp. 51–65). Oxford, UK: Elsevier.
- Said, E. W. (1993). *Culture and imperialism*. New York: Knopf/Random House.
- Sampson, R. J. (2004). Networks and neighbourhoods. In H. McCarthy, P. Miller, & P. Skidmore (Eds.), *Network logic* (pp. 155–166). London: Demos.
- Schöllmann, A., & Dalziel, A. (2002, June). *Rediscovering regions: Regional development from a central government policy perspective*. Paper presented at the meeting of the New Zealand Association of Economists, Wellington, New Zealand.
- Stafford Group. (2001). *A study of barriers, impediments and opportunities for Māori in tourism: He Matai Tāpoi Māori* (Final Report). Wellington, New Zealand: The Office of Tourism and Sport and Te Puni Kōkiri.
- Ulhøi J. P. (2004). The social dimensions of entrepreneurship. *Technovation*, 25, 939–946.

- Walker, R. (1992). Maori people since 1950. In G. W. Rice (Ed.), *The Oxford history of New Zealand* (2nd ed., pp. 498–519). Auckland, New Zealand: Oxford University Press.
- Warren, J., & Taylor, C. N. (1999). *Developing Maori tourism in New Zealand*. Wellington, New Zealand: Centre for Research Evaluation and Social Assessment.
- White, R., Fountain, J., & Horn, C. (2008). *Tourists' participation and interest in cultural heritage tourism activities on Banks Peninsula* (Landcare Research Contract Report LC0708/075). Retrieved August 2008 from [http://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/research/sustainable/tourism/growing\\_regional.asp](http://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/research/sustainable/tourism/growing_regional.asp)
- Wilson, J., Horn, C., Sampson, K., Doherty, J., Becken, S., & Hart, P. (2006). *Demand for Maori ecocultural tourism. Landcare Research Science Series No. 31*. Lincoln, New Zealand: Manaaki Whenua Press.
- Young, N. (2006). Distance as a hybrid actor in rural economies. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 22(3), 253–266.
- Zeppel, H. (2006). *Indigenous Tourism: Sustainable development and management. Ecotourism series No. 3*. Wallingford, UK: CABI Publishing.
- Zoltan J. A., Arenius, P., Hay, M., & Minniti, M. (2004). *Global entrepreneurship monitor 2004 executive report*. Babson Park, MA, and London: Babson College & London Business School. Retrieved June 2009 from [http://www.gemconsortium.org/about.aspx?page=global\\_reports\\_2004](http://www.gemconsortium.org/about.aspx?page=global_reports_2004)
- Zygodlo, F. K., McIntosh, A., Matunga, H. P., Fairweather, J., & Simmons, D. G. (2003). *The values associated with Māori-centred tourism in Canterbury* (Report No. 35). Lincoln, New Zealand: Tourism Research and Education Centre, Lincoln University.