

RENEWABLE ENERGY ZONES NORTHLAND PILOT CONCEPT

Consultation questions

Potential benefits to Northland

1. Do you support the development of a REZ in Northland?

Please provide your reasons as to why or why not.

Te Kahu o Taonui o Taitokerau supports the development of a REZ in Northland for the following reasons.

Te Kahu O Taonui (TKoT) is a collective of all twelve Iwi in Te Tai Tokerau: representing Ngāti Kuri, Te Aupōuri, Te Rarawa, Ngai Takoto, Ngāti Kahu, Kahukuraariki, Whaingaroa, Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Hine, Ngāti Wai, Te Roroa and Ngāti Whātua. These Iwi cover the geographic area from Auckland to Cape Reinga.

We exist to: Advance the collective aspirations of these 12 Iwi, promote and support Whānau/ Māori aspirations for social and economic advancement in Te Tai Tokerau, provide a regional link to Government priorities, and ensure that Māori have a voice and actively participate to ensure equity

One of these aspirations is to address Pungao: Energy/Fuel poverty.

Energy/Fuel poverty is estimated to affect more than 80% of all Maori households in Te Tai Tokerau. It has adverse impacts on the health and wellbeing of tamariki/mokopuna as well as our elderly. Whanau having access to affordable, self-sustaining energy/fuel solutions supports whanau wellbeing. There are parallel aspirations for water, sewage, communications data and roading.

The potential renewable energy generation in the region could and should be a key driver of the social, economic and self-determination aspirations of the Iwi of Te Tai Tokerau. To be able to achieve there needs to be adequate capacity in the local electricity network. There also needs to be fair and equitable access to the transmission network.

2. What potential benefits of a REZ are important to you?

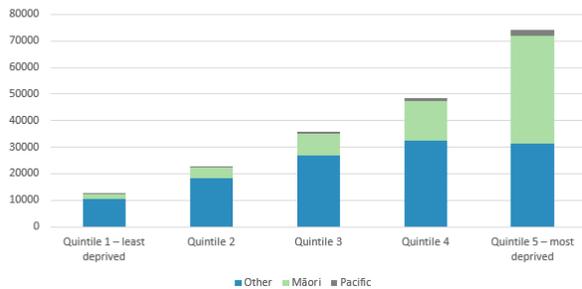
Consider economic, social, cultural and environmental factors.

Te Tai Taitokerau has a high Maori population (35.6%) more than double the national average. Alongside this the region has some significant socio-economic challenges. For example, mean household (\$90,978) is below the national average (\$113,311) and per capita income (\$33,837) also lags the national average (\$41,260).

In health the Northland DHB states: *“Māori experience low health status across a range of health and socioeconomic statistics. They comprise over one-third of Northland’s total population, but 54 percent of the child and youth population, a key group for achieving long-term gains. Māori experience early onset of long-term conditions like cardiovascular disease and diabetes, and their life expectancy is about eight years less than non-Māori.”*

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<https://www.health.govt.nz/new-zealand-health-system/my-dhb/northland-dhb/population-northland-dhb>

*Source: Infometrics, Regional Economic profile 2020-2021

We believe the latent potential of a REZ in Te Tai Tokerau for iwi Maori cannot be overstated. Iwi being involved the generation of renewable energy in their own backyard and potentially the supply of energy directly to their own people has multiple benefits on multiple levels.

As already stated, an estimated 80% of all Maori households in Te Tai Tokerau suffer from energy/fuel poverty. Access to the benefits of a REZ in the region to help address this.

Greater economic prosperity for iwi leads directly to greater health and social prosperity for the members of those iwi. That in turn boosts the regional economy and at the same time reduces the strain on health and social services.

Iwi participation in renewable energy generation is wholly consistent with the Government's well-being approach and covers all four capitals in the Treasury Living Standards Framework. Iwi are multigenerational investors with a strong focus on future generations. Not short-term speculators.

3. What potential costs of a REZ are important to you?
Consider economic, social, cultural and environmental factors.

Any direct cost to monthly household power bills would be largely untenable in Te Taitokerau given the energy poverty most already suffer.

Given the potential benefits, as stated above, from iwi participation in renewable energy generation in Te Tai Tokerau; the cost of not being able to participate is of significant concern to iwi. Whether that be from transmission/network constraints, being outbid by cashed-up 'big players' or speculators 'land banking' capacity on the electricity network.

Potential generation and network infrastructure

4. Do you support enabling developments through upgrades to existing lines and substations as demand for connections to the networks emerge? If not, what alternatives would you propose?

We strongly support the upgrade and use of existing network infrastructure where possible.

5. If new lines needed to be built to connect resources, where should they be constructed/not constructed?

They should not be constructed on wāhi tapu or sites which are culturally and historically significant to mana whenua. The earliest possible engagement with iwi is essential to prevent missteps.

We note that in your Statement of Corporate Intent: *Transpower is committed to the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in our operations as an SOE and as a company owned by the Crown as Treaty partner. We seek to build and maintain effective relationships.*

We look forward to working with Transpower in this regard.

6. Are there alternative proposals that you think we should consider?

TKoT believes there is an opportunity to reframe this as a regional resilience response alongside the national renewable energy objectives. By working with Northpower and Top Energy, Te Kahu o Taonui see off-grid or stand-alone community networks (local solutions for local needs) providing a rational counterpoint to efficient use of regional and national energy infrastructure investment.

It would help address the socio-economic issues already raised and free up transmission assets to export surplus generation out of the region.

7. Do you have development projects that a REZ might assist you to construct and connect?

A number of iwi across Te Tai Taitokerau have renewable energy projects at various stages of planning or implementation. These include solar and wind projects and commercial relations with other parties.

In almost every case constraints in the Transpower and local lines company networks, particularly in the Far North, are going to inhibit or delay these projects without with the expected investment a REZ would bring.