

2020 - 2040

Intergenerational Living Strategy

Whanganui Māori

Regional Tourism Organisation

Trust Board (WMRTO)



Contents

Foreword by Geoffrey Hipango	1-2
Our Values	3
Strategic Vision Snapshot	4
Introduction	5
Sustainability Strategies	5
Excellence Strategies	6
Supporting Strategies	7
Sector Challenges	8-9



**“Tēnēi te mihi maioha kia koutou
katoa i raro i te manaakitanga
o matou Matua nui i Te Rangi.
E rere kau mai te awa nui mai
i te kahui maunga ki Tangaroa.
Ko au te awa ko te awa ko au!
No reira tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou,
tēnā tatou katoa.”**



Foreword by Geoffrey Hipango

“Tooku Awa tooku Reo tooku Wairua e. He matapihi ki Whanganui” – my river, my language, my spirit, a window to that which is Whanganui.

The intent of this strategy is to firmly place at the center the tribal worldview of the significance the Whanganui river has had and continues to attract national and international interest.

Since the time of intrepid explorer Kupe who spiritually prepared himself as he entered the mouth of the river and uttered “Kua kaa kee ngaa ahi – the fires of occupation have already been lit. The presence of our people were, here to further greet the renown, navigator Tamatea who traversed the great Pacific to Aotearoa at the helm of Takitimu. During his time on the Whanganui river he adorned himself in a manner befitting his nobility and in doing so was honored by the name of one of our marae that carries in recognition of this occasion, Te Putiki-wharanui-a-Tamatea-po-kai-whenua.

Even first contact with missionaries who declared the Gospel that spoke of Jesus Christ son of God were greeted by our tribal priest, “this man Jesus Christ you speak of, I know not, but I know his Father very well”. A Whanganui river worldview provided the lens to filter a multitude of relationships.

It is the role of traditional story telling that lies at the heart of the tribal narrative passed through generations as lessons, and as principles. It speaks of tensions through settlement and colonisation. More so it speaks of the resilience of the Iwi of the Whanganui river to ensure not only its survival but to thrive and develop.

The Whanganui river has been the instrumental reminder that has been a provider of food, transport and spiritual cleansing. This has not changed the wellbeing of the tribe is inextricably linked to the wellbeing of the Awa. Marae are the places of refuge and depositories of knowledge. As our beloved elder Morvin Simon declared, “Where there is a body of water, people settle, and stories are told”.

It is evident that tourism has considerably increased in Whanganui over the years. This has also been further acknowledged through worldwide recognition of the Whanganui River now legislated as being conferred the same rights as a person, (Ruruku Whakatupua, 2014¹) and therefore needs to be protected. The following strategy applies the principles that our strategy must be balanced with meaningful economic prosperity that benefits our Iwi but also applying kaitiakitanga principles of ensuring human behavior does not impact negatively upon the taonga our people refer to as Te Awa Tupua.

This strategy welcomes the rest of Aotearoa and the world to participate in the uniqueness of our indigenous tribal perspective that when shared is truly transformative and can be gift offered to the world.”

¹Ruruku Whakatupua (2014) Te Mana o Te Awa, Whanganui River Deed of Settlement, Articles 2.1 and 2.3.

Our Values

The strategy values are guided by the values that protect the awa:

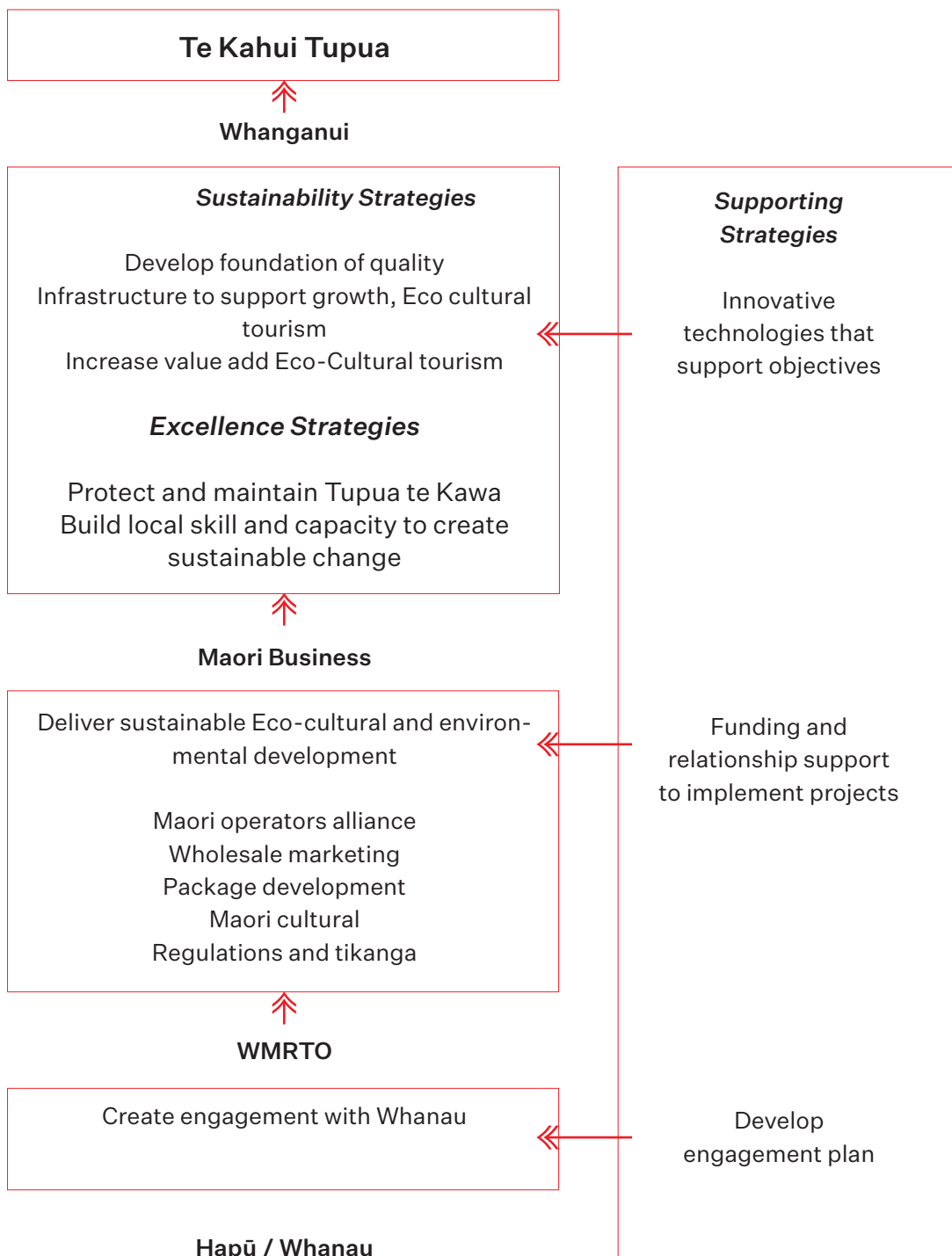
- **Ko te Awa te mātāpuna o te ora: The river is the source of spiritual and physical sustenance.**
- **E rere kau mai te Awa nui mai i te Kāhui Maunga ki Tanaroa: The great river flows from the mountains to the sea.**
- **Ko au te Awa, ko to Awa ko au: I am the River and the River is me.**
- **Ngā manga iti, ngā manga nui e honohono kau ana, kau tupu hei Awa Tupua: The small and large streams that flow into one another and form one River.**

Te Awa Tupua (Whanganui River Claims Settlement Act) Act 2017



Strategic Vision Snapshot

Whanganui Māori Tourism Strategy



Introduction

There are fundamentally three key strategies that underpin the aspirations of the WMRTO covering the next 20 years, they will be reviewed in five year intervals:

- Sustainability Strategy
- Excellence Strategy
- Supporting Strategy

The following 7 objectives have been developed and updated from former strategic plans that are still relevant today. They are objectives that underpin the above Strategic areas in growth, quality and support with actions to achieve objectives.

Sustainability Strategies

Develop foundation of Quality infrastructure to support growth, Eco Cultural tourism (Growth)

This objective covers aspects of infrastructure, including roading, amenities, accommodation, tracks and cycle ways etc.

- Identify and work with key stakeholders to achieve the required outcome.
- Huts, tracks and services adjacent to the Whanganui River and within the Whanganui National Park.
- Influence government and local, regional council to prioritize Whanganui River Road through Accelerate25.

Increase value add Eco-Cultural Tourism (Growth)

This objective covers innovation in delivery of packages from operators, the ability to grow this area of alternative Tourism.

- International recognition for the region's cultural and scenic assets and as destination of choice.
- The revitalization of regional strategy Te Kahui Tupua.
- Events and conferences.
- A broader range of scenic, historical and heritage destinations.
- A broader range of ecotourism and leisure-based opportunities.
- High quality Māori Food and drink offerings based on local produce and knowledge.
- Natural health and wellbeing.

Excellence Strategies

Protect and Maintain Tupua Te Kawa (Quality)

This objective looks to ensure Tupua Te Kawa sets the framework in upholding and recognition of Te Awa Tupua.

- To uphold Tupua te Kawa as a significant component of tourism in the region, and ensuring that we
 - a) Are involved with management in tourism (at a regional and business level).
 - b) Have direct influence over the ways Māori culture and places of traditional significance are used.
 - c) Receive direct financial and employment benefits from that use.
- Provide the employment opportunities that will encourage young Māori to see tourism as a career; and
- Licensing tour operators.

Build local skill & capability to create sustainable change (Quality)

This objective looks to growth strategies to develop Whanganui Māori in on and around our River.

- Identify training providers that will enhance the needs of operators on the awa.
- Promote and co-ordinate training opportunities for operators.
- Develop Iwi based training programs that enhance operations.



Supporting Strategies

Innovative Technologies that support objectives (Support)

This objective looks to utilise technologies to support growth and quality strategies to accelerate over time.

- Identify gaps in technology and connectivity for operators on the awa.
 - Research innovative technologies such as digitisation currently available and promote to our membership.
-

Funding & Relationship support to implement projects (Support)

This objective is to develop relationships with key stakeholders identify common goals and work collaboratively on projects and events that achieve desired outcomes.

- Research and identify key stakeholders and potential partners.
 - Collectively Identify and create events that enhance tourism on the awa.
-

Develop Engagement Plan (Support)

We will develop an Engagement Plan with focus on Whanau, Marae and Hapū seeking to engage with the sector.

- Research, identify and create data base of groups interested in tourism.
- Create engagement through social media sites ie. Facebook, Instagram etc



Sector Challenges

The above objectives also have a lens over the following challenges identified in the Whanganui-Manawatu Horizons Growth Study . The WMRTO will look at ways our objectives can add value to the over all growth study but also help mitigate some of the challenges.

Challenges	Mitigation
Overcoming the limitations posed by the small rating base of the Ruapehu and Whanganui District Councils – they are too small to fund tourism development actions on their own, particularly those related to the international marketing actions which are critical to the area’s growth.	Seek cost share arrangements with Government and others to undertake necessary marketing, infrastructure development, product development and other actions. Collaboration with others will be required to share in the cost of tourism development actions.
Overcoming the budget constraints experienced by DOC. DOC has not been sufficiently resourced to enable it to play a full role in meeting the needs of tourists and visitors in the area.	Make special budget provision, with a focus on expanding visitor use and enjoyment of the Tongariro and Whanganui National Parks / River. Seek out creative ways to optimise fair funding contributions from users of conservation land. Give focus to working with others to provide for collaborative planning, marketing and the use and enjoyment of the Conservation estate.
Providing for the full involvement of iwi - in the absence of completion of Tongariro National Park Treaty negotiations - noting iwi wish to play a more significant role in the future development of tourism and visitor services – including the provision of services providing a deeper understanding of culture and heritage.	Make progress on implementing the actions listed in this Action Plan but ensure a place is secured at the table and opportunities for active participation / investment of iwi in decisions and investments affecting the tourism sector are left open.

Challenges

Mitigation

Attracting new jobs and creating dynamic towns to serve the needs of visitors and residents alike.

Ensure the tourism / visitor sector has an experienced and qualified workforce to support them by optimising local employee selection opportunities and matching skill shortfalls with training providers.

Providing a broader suite of products and services which are able to be monetised – noting that the Tongariro area offers some of the most accessible alpine volcanic landscapes in the world and the Whanganui River provides easily navigable and spectacular landscape experiences.

Prepare an asset / product / service and infrastructure development plan to enable the full potential of this unique area to be unlocked, appreciated and enjoyed by a larger number of visitors and tourists.

Establishing accommodation and utility services before, rather than after pressure points become evident and providing a regulatory environment conducive to the provision of assets which promote the use and enjoyment of the area.

Plan for and provide regulatory settings enabling expanded use and enjoyment of the National Parks and other facilities in the area and suited to the development of new accommodation, transport requirements, utility services and facilities – and at the same time, protecting the sustainability of the asset.