

# Alternatives to anti-Māori themes in news media

## Theme 11 'Māori resources'

*In this negative theme, potential or actual Māori control of significant resources - for example, land, fisheries or money - is portrayed as a threat to non-Māori.*

### How this is being said

Threat, fear, rich iwi, reverse racism, Māori land 'gifted' back, fisheries, compensation, customary rights, public access, iwi tax, Pākehā missing out, give Māori an inch and they'll take a mile.

### Examples

- "Iwi tax' Tribe sets lakebed fishing levy', *Dominion Post* headline, March 6, 2009.
- 'TV3 implied that Ngai Tahu were to blame for David and Morgan Saxton being imprisoned for stealing the pounamu.' *Press*, April 11, 2008.
- 'Tribe: Pay us for air rights', *NZ Herald* headline, Oct 7, 2004.

### What does this assume?

- The audience is non-Māori.
- A Pākehā audience should feel threatened by Māori control.
- Māori control of resources is offensive because they don't deserve it.
- Māori should be grateful for any compensation.

- That economic opportunities for non-Māori are limited by iwi unfairly 'locking up' resources.
- The resource is wasted on Māori.

### What does this do?

- Makes Pākehā control of wealth in Aotearoa invisible; for example, by focussing on Māori-controlled land and ignoring the 80% in non-Māori hands.
- Obscures the sales of major assets from non-Māori to foreign interests.
- Demonises Māori who want to develop their own economic base in line with Māori values.
- Undermines Māori efforts toward economic self-determination.
- Justifies government scrutiny of Māori-controlled resources.

### How else could this be said?

- Treaty settlements and the return of resources are a significant and positive achievement that everyone can be proud of.
- Māori resources are less likely to be sold overseas.
- Māori control and use of resources generates taxes, jobs and services.
- It is in Pākehā interests for resources to be in Māori control, because they will be managed with a long-term view.
- Māori concepts of resource management are legitimate and sustaining; e.g. wairua and kaitiakitanga promote conservation and sustainable development.

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See [www.trc.org.nz/  
theme-11-m%C4%81ori-  
resources](http://www.trc.org.nz/theme-11-m%C4%81ori-resources)

Submit your own examples of this theme in the media and suggest your alternatives. Suggestions will be moderated and uploaded to the site.