

Maori fishery manager to be reigned in

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THE organisation responsible for managing \$540 million in fishery assets for Maori, Te Ohu Kaimoana, will be reviewed rather than dis-established – a move that strips away some of its power and wealth.

The outcome was not what Tuhoë wanted, but Ngati Awa voted in support of it.

Under the Maori Fisheries Act in 2004, Te Ohu Kaimoana (Maori Fisheries Trust) was set up to manage the fishing quota awarded to Maori in the 1992 fisheries settlement.

Up until yesterday it had owned all of the voting rights and 20 per cent of income shares in Aotearoa Fisheries, which owns 50 per cent of Sealords. The remainder of the income was spread across all iwi.

An independent review of the Maori Fisheries Settlement, conducted this year, recommended Te Ohu Kaimoana should be wound down, with power returned to iwi groups for management.

In the review, Wellington barrister Tim Castle said iwi were now “mature” and capable of taking control of their destiny.

However, the resolution to scrap Te Ohu Kaimoana failed to gain the necessary 75 per cent vote by iwi representatives at a special annual meeting held in Wellington yesterday.

Instead, the representatives voted to review Te Ohu Kaimoana and restructure it so it no longer received income from Aotearoa Fisheries, and held voting shares. Rather its focus

would become advocating for Maori interests in the fisheries industry and policy development advice for iwi.

The 20 per cent income shares and voting rights it previously held would pass to Aotearoa Fisheries.

However, the true extent of the restructuring will not be realised until after the review is completed in 2016. In addition an alternative funding scheme for Te Ohu Kaimoana will need to be adopted in the future.

Iwi representatives at the meeting also voted that any major transactions for Aotearoa Fisheries would be required to reach at least the 75 per cent majority voting threshold.

The company is also required to continue to work with iwi as well as Sealords, which it partly owns, to develop and implement policies on collaboration.

“It was good decision-making today and a good outcome. We need to remain pro-active as we move forward with this review, which will be completed next year.”

– Enid Ratahi-Pryor

Tuhoë chairman Tamati Kruger said he and Te Uru Taumatua chief executive Kirsti Luke attended the meeting with the intention of voting in favour of disestablishing Te Ohu Kaimoana.

He said while the vote did not go their way, he was pleased about the review.

“It was great to be here and be part of the meeting. Our position was that we were in favour of winding up Te Ohu Kaimoana ... however, we are happy with the result.

“We came with a more harsh approach but the iwi



Enid Ratahi-Pryor,
Ngati Awa chief
executive

here have decided that they can do something a little bit different.

“I think it is a good idea to see where we will sit after a review and we are going to prepare ourselves to put our ideas into a submission.”

Ngati Awa chief executive Enid Ratahi-Pryor said she was pleased with the outcome reached by the meeting.

She said 57 iwi attended the meeting and most of the decisions were unanimous.

“If there were 57 iwi that were unanimous that says something about the resolutions; that they were qualified and fair. And that suggests that there was a lot of planning and information beforehand.”

Mrs Ratahi-Pryor said Ngati Awa voted in accordance with the majority, the position held by the Iwi Collective Partnership group of tribes.

“Our position is that we think we got a really good outcome.

“It was good decision-making today and a good outcome.

“We need to remain pro-active as we move forward with this review, which will be completed next year.”

The Iwi Collective Partnership includes Ngati Awa, Ngai Te Rangī, Nga Rauru, Ngati Manawa, Ngati Porou, Ngati Ruanui, Taranaki Iwi, Ngaitai, Te Rarawa, Ngati Tuwharetoa, Whakatohea and Te Arawa.