

Jacinta Ruru

Why freshwater matters to Maori in law

Since the mid 1980s, New Zealand has been committed to reconciling with Maori. Many settlement statutes now provide iwi throughout the country with financial, commercial and cultural redress for Crown actions or inactions that breached the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi. Many of these settlement statutes recognize the importance of water to iwi. Some settlements have been particularly revolutionary in developing cultural redress options that give iwi co or joint environmental management responsibilities for lakes and rivers. This talk considers the current law and policy for recognising Maori interests in law and questions if it goes far enough for recognising why freshwater matters to Maori.