

WAI Water



AN EXAMPLE OF A PRE EUROPEAN KARAKIA

KARAKIA MO TE KAI

A PRE EUROPEAN THANKGIVING KARAKIA

Nau mai nei

Welcome

E ngā hua o te Wao o te Ngakinga

The fruits of produce of earths cultivations,

O te wai tai o te wai Māori

of the seas, and freshwater estates.

Na Tane, na Rongo,

The domains of Tane, Rongo,

Na Tangaroa, na Maru.

Tangaroa and Maru, thus provided

Na Ranginui e tu nei, raua ko

Overseen by Ranginui who stands above,

Papatūānuku e takoto nei.

and Papatūānuku who lies beneath.

Tuturu whakamaua

Forever hold firm, stout and true

Kia tina, tina

Yes, indeed!

Hui e,

Hui e,

Taiki e!

Taiki e!



WITHOUT FRESHWATER WE ARE DEAD!!!

That's the truth and the reason why water pops up everywhere in atuatanga. Water is that important.

**WHEN THE WELLS DRY,
WE KNOW THE WORTH OF WATER.**

Benjamin Franklin

Thanks for that summary Mr Franklin, even though you're an old American dude who died in 1790.

The creation myth has differences wherever you go but the basic story is that there was Te Kore (nothingness) which became Te Po (the darkness) which then developed in Te Ao Marama (the world of light).

Take a look at the following. Can you see where water/liquid is constantly present in the development of a baby? Without babies our whakapapa dies out, without water our whakapapa dies out. This is why the creation myth features child birth but not in the way we would usually talk about it.

THE CREATION MYTH	SEQUENCE HUMAN BIRTH
↓	
Te Kore nothingness, the void, potential, energy	Women and men have potential to carry on whakapapa. But this is nothingness until their energies come together to make a baby. When the seed (sperm) is planted in the garden (womb) the void is pierced.
↓	
Te Po	A growing baby goes through many stages in the darkness and warmth of his or her mother.
↓	
Te Ao Marama	At the end of nine months the baby travels down the sacred river of life and emerges from water into the light, into a new reality
↓	
Tihei Mauriora	After birth the baby takes it's first breath – Tihei Mauriora

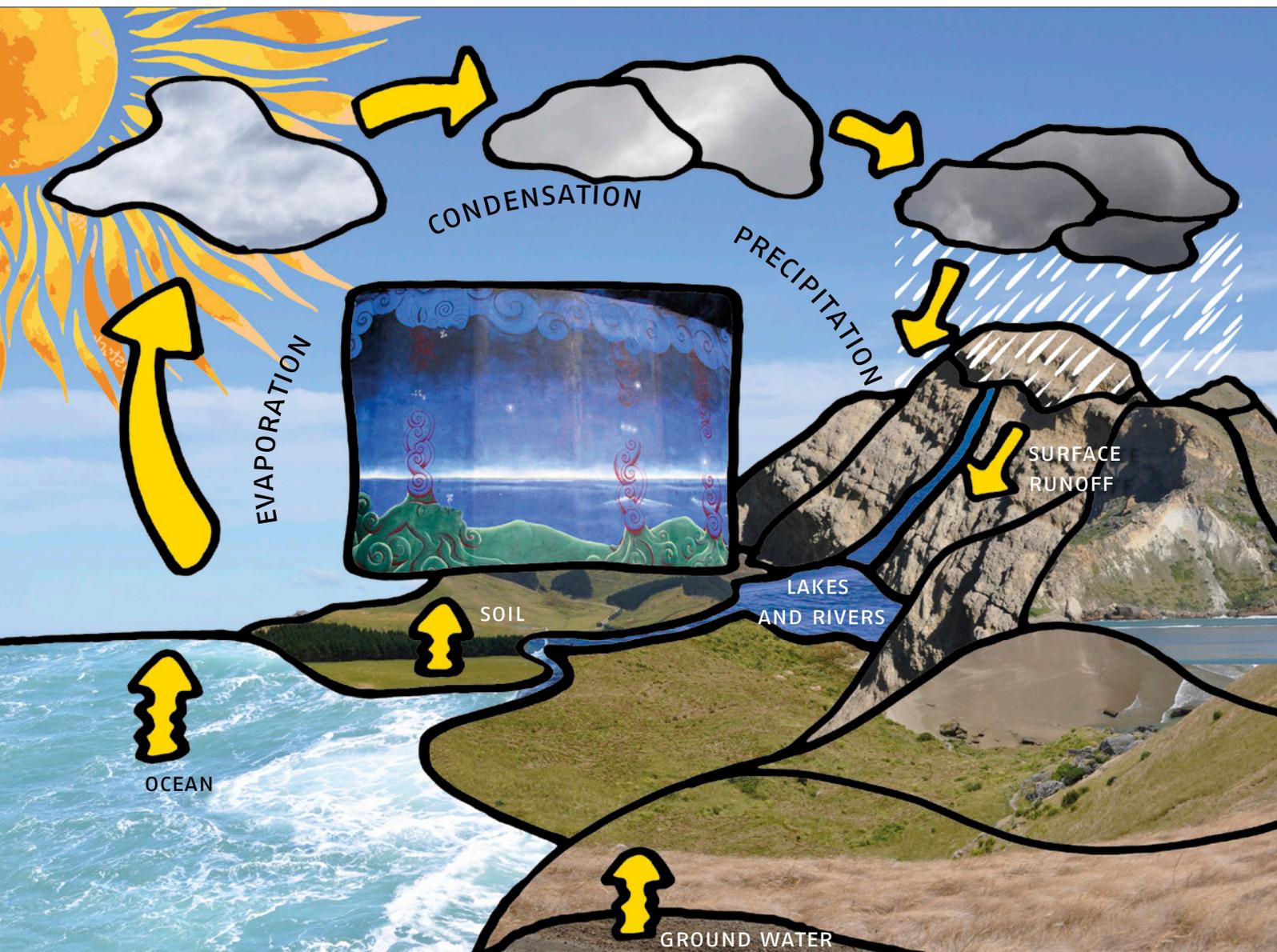
WATER AND THE ATUA CONTINUED

The world as we know it was created when Taane, one of 70 sons of Ranginui (sky father) and Papatūānuku (earth mother), forced his parents apart. At this early point Ranginui cried continuously for his beloved whom he had previously held in a close embrace.

From the tears cloud and mist formed in between the separated lovers. Sometimes the tears took the form of hail and sometimes snow.

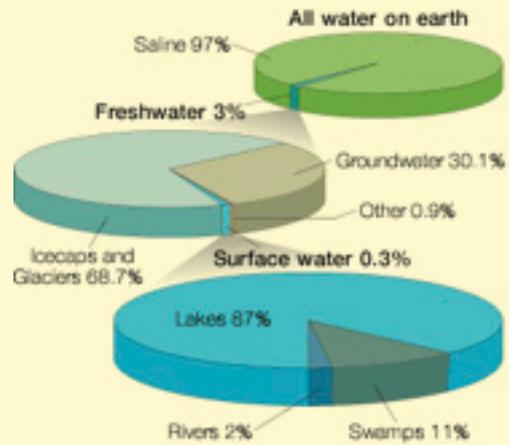
As water hit the body of Papatūānuku it rose back towards the sky as mist.

Today we would call this the water-cycle, again something that is very important for our survival and a really good reason to look after our atua/environment/s



The earth is Papatūānuku. Therefore the land is her body and the waterways her veins and arteries. Papatūānuku's veins carry life-giving water (blood) around her body keeping her and if we are careful us healthy.

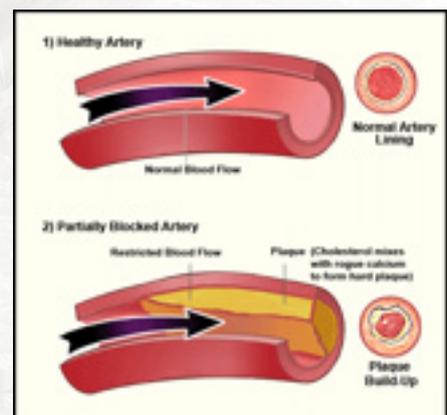
The earth is made up of 72% water, but 97% of this is in the ocean so we can't use it. Three percent is freshwater. Another way of looking at this is to take an apple. The skin is fresh water and the rest salt water.



If Papatūānuku's veins become blocked they need to be flushed out to restore the natural flow to the rest of her body.

Poison running around her body will affect us too. This might be directly because we don't have fresh drinking water or more indirectly because we eat something like watercress that has been growing in polluted water.

Compare this to the network of rivers and what happens if slips block rivers. Floods provide the means by which the river is cleaned out so that the water can return to an unimpeded flow.



In terms of humankind's influence on the earth it is said universally by indigenous peoples

**IF WE LOOK AFTER THE MOTHER, SHE WILL LOOK AFTER US,
IF WE DO NOT CARE FOR HER WE WILL SUFFER.**

The children of Ranginui and Papatūānuku wanted to make a being that looked like their mother. These atua wanted to make ira tangata or humankind, creatures that would be made in their image but would not have their magical powers.

WATER

- COMPOSES 75% OF YOUR BRAIN
- REGULATES YOUR BODY TEMPERATURE
- MAKES UP 83% OF YOUR BLOOD
- REMOVES WASTE
- COMPOSES 22% OF YOUR BONES
- CUSHIONS YOUR JOINTS
- HELPS CARRY NUTRIENTS AND OXYGEN TO YOUR CELLS
- MOISTENS OXYGEN FOR BREATHING
- HELPS CONVERT FOOD TO ENERGY
- PROTECTS AND CUSHIONS YOUR VITAL ORGANS
- HELPS YOUR BODY ABSORB NUTRIENTS
- MAKES UP 75% OF YOUR MUSCLES

Source unknown

Category	Water Percentage
BODY	70%
BLOOD	83%
BRAIN	75%
MUSCLES	75%
CELLS	80%

▶ YOUR BODY NEEDS WATER TO SURVIVE

- A 2% drop in water can cause
- Dehydration, tiredness, no concentration, headaches, constipation, smelly dark wees, dizziness.

A new born baby is 78% water

An adult male is about 60% water

An adult female is about 55% water

Look what they made and how important water is to it.

All of the children contributed to the search for the right parts to make this new being that would be like their mother. Tane was the most active so he experimented by mating with lots of different forms that might be female.



During his search he met Hinetuparimaunga and they had a daughter called Parawhenua. Parawhenua married Kiwa and their children were the waters of the earth. Parawhenua became the 'parent of water' and is celebrated in the following whakatauki.

E kore a Parawhenua e haere ki te kore a Rakahore

Parawhenua will not come out in the absence of Rakahore

Rakakore was the personification of rocks and as Parawhenua was the personification of water and mountain streams. The whakatauki means that mountain streams and springs would not flow if it were not for the solid rock from where they came.

This is a very relevant saying for the Wairarapa region because water is squeezed out of the Tararua mountains through the rock underneath. The debris rocks that are issued at the same time are pushed down into the valley through the rivers.

Tangaroa is known as the god of the seas. Lesser known is that he is also in charge of inland waterways as well. This means that he is the guardian of all water life, or all creatures that live in both fresh and salt water.

This makes sense as endemic eels and freshwater fish migrate from rivers to the sea every year. Coastal estuaries are an important place because during autumn adult fish of some species swim out to the ocean to breed and other lay their eggs in grass along banks. Later the young ones come back inland during the spring.

These facts were not missed by tupuna so they set up fishing villages in these areas, which is a reason for the importance placed upon mouths of rivers.

He wai Tangaroa i haere ki uta

By means of water was Tangaroa enabled to travel inland



As with all other life forms that are endemic to New Zealand, or those created through the experimentation of atua and female elements, water received mauri or the essential life force principle at the time of its creation. Māori consider water and all other life forms whether animate (that can move about) or inanimate (staying in one place) to be related as they share descent from the atua.

As water is considered a living thing, it is to be cared for, never to be mismanaged or polluted. Water is essential to life and to mistreat it would be to offend the atua which really means we won't be able to use it or it will run out.

It is a sacred gift from the atua as it contains mana atua (the prestige and power of the gods). Wastewater was considered to be defiled and so could only be purified by sending it back through Papatūānuku to be cleansed. That is why Māori favour dairy discharge back onto land and one reason why wetland restoration is supported.

If contaminated and clean water were mixed this would cause an imbalance in each through combining the different mauri. This could only be fixed by ritualistic purification. This is why different classifications of water were isolated where possible. Processes such as the meeting of salt and fresh water at river mouths were viewed as natural and so an understandable exception. It is also the reason why Māori object so strongly to sewerage being put into rivers.

WAIORA

Kia ora, he waiora *Salutations, the waters of life*

Puritia ngā mahi wairua *Grasp and be steadfast in the works of the spirit*

Me whakawhetai, ki a Ihowa *Give thanks to the Lord*

Te kaihanga o ngā mea katoa *The Creator of all things*

Me whakawhetai i te ao, i te po *Offer thanks throughout the day, and the night*

Homai he waiora ki ahau *Give unto me the waters of life*

Homai he waiora ki ahau *Give unto me the waters of life*

Ki ahau! *Unto me*

WATER IS USED

IN ALL ASPECTS OF LIFE

Different sources of water		
Waiora	Rainwater, the purest form	Rituals, symbolic cleansing, drinking
Waipuna	Hillside springs, often filtered through limestone	Drinking, cooking
WaiMāori	Running streams, rivers and streams	Drinking, cooking, washing, healing
Waikino	Stagnant pools	Unfit debased or spoilt
Waimate	Polluted or dead	Unfit
Waitai	Sea, surf and tidal	food gathering, medicinal

Special clear pools were used as mirrors. These spaces were called wai rakaia or 'water-to adorn'.

RITUALISTIC USES OF WATER INCLUDED

- The tohi birth rite, or separation of the umbilical cord and dedication of a child to the atua.
- Bathing after giving birth
- Removing tapu after returning from battle
- Removing tapu associated with death and burial
- Giving blessings, although this is more of a modern Christian development as cooked food (noa = common) was more likely to have been used in pre European times.

Different springs, backwashes, or stretches of river would be used for individual purposes. The people were careful that ritual purposes would not interfere with domestic chores or general hygiene with the opposite applying as well. All of these considerations were given due thought when planning a settlement.

HE HUAHUA TE KAI? E, HE WAI TE KAI

ARE PRESERVED BIRDS THE BEST FOOD? OH NO! WATER IS

IMPORTANT WORDS

Māori terms that are heard extensively within New Zealand society draw origins from water.

So **tupuna** or the word for grandparent is a breakdown of **tu** to establish and **puna** a spring of water. Placed together tupuna becomes the spring of water that is continuously being established.

Similarly **mokopuna** or grandchild is **moko** a blueprint and **puna** a spring of water. So mokopuna is blueprint of the spring water.

Tapu is applied to various places as a caution or restriction. The place could be hazardous or dangerous i.e. a cave or hole on a river. It could be due to the ritual use of a place such as one that was used for washing a person who is sick. In this case and others tapu stops people from entering an area where there they might pick up a disease.

A short-term **rahui** or exemption from a place can be placed because human sewerage is accidentally leaked above a gathering place for cooking water. Many of the restrictions placed through concepts such as tapu and rahui are concerned with maintaining safety, health and hygiene.

Māori representatives who are involved in environmental matters bring the values of old into modern times because they are still relevant. Sometimes it seems that Māori have had time to make mistakes and so have found ways to avoid them but pakeha are still acclimatising which basically means they are still making mistakes.



The following provides a poignant example of the Māori mode of thinking that sums up the often-put Māori argument

TO TOKI KO HUI TE RANGIORA

He anewa ki te anewa a wai?

He anewa ki te anewa a tane mahuta

Mahue rawa koe hei ukaipo ukaikino

He anewa ki te anewa a wai?

He anewa ki te anewa a tangaroa

Mahue rawa koe hei urupa ururangi

He anewa ki te anewa a wai?

He anewa ki te anewa a tangaroa te ohu kai

Mahue rawa koe hei parakino pararau

Ma wai rā. Ka taurima

Ma wai rā, ka ata mohio

Kaore e tutuki e te tangata te kaikino a ngā taonga

Kua ngaro

Only after the last tree has been cut down

Only after the last fish has been caught

Only after the last river has been poisoned

Only then will you find that money cannot be eaten

