



MIN25-1067

17 December 2025

Keely Paler
Application Lead
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Tēnā koe Keely,

Thank you for your letter of 11 December (your reference FTAA-2504-1048) requesting further information under section 67 of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (FTAA) relating to the Taranaki VTM application under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024. My answers to your questions are below.

In my response to the invitation to comment (AM25-0827), I noted that I had considered the direct effects of mining in the mining area and the indirect effects in the area where the plume of sediment from the mining activity is likely to occur when considering the impact these effects may have on meeting the purpose of the Fisheries Act 1996. In my response (MIN25-0882) to Minute 10, I noted that consideration of the impacts of the proposal was provided on the basis of the mining area and the modelled plume being amalgamated into one area. This response takes the same approach.

In my letter I refer to three items of correspondence I have provided to you:

- AM25-0827 – my response to the invitation to comment;
- MIN25-0882 – my response to Part A of the Taranaki VTM Expert Panel's request for additional information (Minute 10); and
- MIN25-0881 – my response to Part B of the Panel's request for additional information (Minute 10).

Additional information requested by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) at the direction of the Panel:

1a: The iwi or iwi grouping in whose name that rohe moana has been established.

In my response to Part B of Minute 10 (MIN25-0881), I noted that there are two South Taranaki rohe moana (that extend from the coastline to beyond the territorial sea boundary) that may be affected:

- the joint rohe moana of Te Atihaunui a Pāpārangi and Ngā Rauru; and
- Te Atihaunui a Pāpārangi (Whanganui River Māori Trust Board).

1b: With reference to relevant mapping where appropriate, explain what is meant by “overlays the project area to a significant degree”, including to the extent possible, how that description aligns with the overlap shown in the MPI / FNZ dataset supplied under Minute 10.

In my initial response to the invitation to comment sent in September 2025 (AM25-0827), I noted that established rohe moana in the Taranaki area overlap the project area to a significant degree, and which may be affected by the sediment plume (as modelled). The rohe moana to which I was referring are those identified in question 1a, that is, the joint rohe moana of Te Atihaunui a Pāpārangi and Ngā Rauru and Te Atihaunui a Pāpārangi Whanganui River Māori Trust Board).

On the basis of an assessment by my officials of two mapped outputs:

- the map titled *Customary Fisheries Areas Relevant to the Taranaki VTM project* in Appendix Two of the material sent in response to Part B of Minute 10 (MIN25-0881) shows the gazetted areas for these rohe moana. The shapefiles for these areas were sent along with my response to Part A of Minute 10 (MIN25-0882); and
- the map titled *Taranaki VTM Project* in Appendix Two of the material sent in response to Part A of Minute 10 (MIN25-0882) shows the mining area and the modelled sediment plume.¹

1c: Indicate, so far as you are aware, whether this comment was based on any mapping, datasets or regulatory instruments that differ from the customary fisheries GIS layer supplied to the Panel.

This mapping information is the same as that provided to you in my responses to Minute 10.

The regulatory instruments for the two rohe moana that extend from the coastline to beyond the territorial sea are:

- Fisheries (Kaimoana Customary Fishing) Notice (No. 6) 2009 (No. F500) (accessible at <https://gazette.govt.nz/notice/id/2009-go7757>); and
- Fisheries (Kaimoana Customary Fishing) Notice (No. 7) 2013 (Notice No. MPI 197) This area overlaps the area established in 2009 (accessible at <https://gazette.govt.nz/notice/id/2013-go4994>).

The regulatory instrument for the rohe moana that begins approximately 20 nautical miles offshore and extending south to the boundary of the South Island fisheries waters is:

- Fisheries (Notification of Tāngata Kaitiaki/Tiaki for Area/Rohe Moana of Te Tai Hauāuru—Te Rūnanga o Ngā Wairiki) (Notice No. MPI 1155), accessible at <https://gazette.govt.nz/notice/id/2020-go1971>.

1d: If possible, indicating whether MPI / FNZ considers the extent of overlap shown in the dataset supplied under Minute 10 to be consistent with the phrase “to a significant degree” as used in the Minister’s statement. If the assessment differs from that description, a brief explanation would assist the Panel’s understanding.

I have been advised by my officials this assessment was made in consideration of the inshore part of the rohe moana (within the Territorial Sea) that is overlapped by the modelled suspended sediment plume extent.

As noted in the response to Part B of Minute 10, I recommend the Panel engages with tangata whenua of the rohe moana. This would support an assessment of the significance of the potential impact of the mining and sediment plume on tangata whenua of the rohe moana.

¹ From figure 5.16 of the Trans-Tasman Resources LTD Taranaki VTM Project Fast-Track Act Application 15 April 2025.

2a: Indicate whether, in MPI / FNZ's view, the current GIS dataset for the Te Tai Hauāuru rohe moana is complete and up to date, including any amendments or new regulations made since the dataset was first published.

I have been advised by my officials the mapping is accurate and current. The relevant notices remain – these are listed in my response to question 1c above.

2b: If any changes or additions have been made or are pending (but not yet reflected in the public GIS layer), it would be helpful if copies of the relevant regulations and, if possible, an updated spatial file and/or map suitable for use in the Panel's decision could be provided.

I have been advised by my officials no changes have been made or are pending.

2c: Where available, a map showing the overlay, with a brief note of the information sources used to create it.

This map is provided as **Appendix One** to this letter.

3: If this information is available, it would also assist the Panel if MPI / FNZ could describe, at a high level, how MPI / FNZ understands customary fishing authorisations to be taken via commercial fishing vessels within statistical areas 040 and 041 in FMA8, and how that practice relates to any rohe moana that overlap the application area and or sediment plume. The Panel is not seeking individual-level catch data, but a general policy and operational description to understand the practical implications of any overlap which may be described or considered significant.

I have been advised by my officials that Regulation 11 of the Fisheries (Kaimoana Customary Fishing) Regulations 1998 provides for Tangata Kaitiaki/Tiaki appointed for a gazetted area/rohe moana to authorise the taking of fisheries resources for customary food gathering purposes. This customary food gathering must be consistent with the tikanga of the relevant tangata whenua.

Regulation 13 of the Kaimoana Regulations allows for commercial and customary fishing to occur during the same fishing trip, so long as the catch is marked accordingly. This applies in all statistical areas, and to all area/rohe moana established under the Kaimoana Regulations.

I recommend the Panel engages with south Taranaki iwi who would be affected by mining and sediment plume, for their tikanga on issuing customary fishing authorisations.

While my response to the Panel on potential effects on customary fishing has focussed on customary fishing in a gazetted area/rohe moana, customary fishing also occurs in areas that have not been gazetted. These authorisations are issued under regulations 50-52 of the Fisheries (Amateur Fishing) Regulations 2013 for the purposes of hui or tangi (regulation 50(1)(a)), or, in the case of some iwi in Taranaki, the taking of fish on a commercial fishing vessel for the stocking of a pātaka where fish are taken and stored for later events. Two pātaka are operated by Te Atiawa from New Plymouth.

In addition to the iwi operating under the Kaimoana Regulations (Ngā Rauru and Te Atihaunui a Pāparangi/Whanganui), I have been advised by my officials that two other iwi exercise customary fishing rights under regulation 50 of the Amateur Regulations. These are Ngāti Ruanui and Ngā Ruahine. These iwi were identified in the section 18 report prepared by the Environmental Protection Authority.

Iwi fishing under regulation 50 are not required to report catches to Fisheries New Zealand. I recommend that the Panel engages directly with these iwi to understand how their customary fishing rights may be affected by the proposal.

Supply of Information

In accordance with section 67(2) of the Act the Minister for Oceans and Fisheries is asked to provide electronic copies of the information or report requested.

You will have received a copy of the rohe moana boundaries in the package of material sent in response to Minute 10 (MIN25-0082). Please let my office know if you need these sent again.

Nāku noa, nā,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'S' followed by a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke.

Hon Shane Jones
Minister for Oceans and Fisheries

Appendix One: Customary Fishing Areas relevant to the Taranaki VTM Project
