# The Legal Māori Lexicon: a wordlist of Māori language legal terms with English glosses.

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# A Brief Introduction to the Legal Māori Lexicon

The Legal Māori Lexicon (LML) is a substantial list of Māori language legal terms with their English glosses that has been gathered alongside the final phase of the collation of the Legal Māori Corpus. The major task of the Legal Māori Project is to produce a dictionary of Legal Māori terms, and the LML is an important tool to the achievement of the forthcoming dictionary.

Please note that the LML is not a dictionary in its own right, nor is an exhaustive list of all legal terms in the Māori language. Instead, it is a finder list of terms identified by looking for legal terms in areas where we felt, on reasonable grounds, that they were likely to occur. Inevitably there will be gaps in the LML, but it is a useful tool nonetheless and we look forward to expanding it as further terms are brought to our attention.

***Legal Māori Terms***

For the purpose of the Legal Māori Project we have defined a legal Māori term as:

* a word or phrase that has ***at least*** one meaning where that meaning is ***closely related*** to Western legal concepts.

Legal terms in Māori are those terms used by fluent speakers of Māori for professional communication in Western legal contexts. These legal Māori terms form part of the specialised language used in the legal domain. These technical terms are complemented with more common words also often used in the legal domain, words that are typical of and occur more frequently in legal contexts than in the language in general. This vocabulary is useful too for those who use Māori to express legal meaning.

***Identifying Legal Māori terms***

Many of the terms in the LML were identified by examining a substantial collection of documents from the Legal Māori Corpus. As the LMC is over 8 million words in size we did not have the capacity to read all documents in order to identify all potential legal Māori terms for the purposes of the lexicon. Instead we selected LMC documents from across the corpus text categories and across most of the time period covered by the corpus (1860s-2009) for the reading programme. Other legal Māori terms were identified by perusing existing wordlists and dictionaries to find legal terms identified by other authors. All terms identified were recorded in a spreadsheet with appropriate glosses; the list was subsequentlychecked for duplications, spelling variants and the like.

Further description of our work on this phase is set out below.

**Step One: Reader lists**

In this step, seven research assistants were given a selection of texts from the Legal Māori Corpus. These researchers were Māori speakers of intermediate level or above. All these researchers have completed law degrees, with four currently practising as barristers and solicitors at an intermediate level of experience. The texts selected for them to read were from across the six categories of texts in the LMC:

* **Category One**: texts included in this category are those written for broad dissemination: official proclamations, speeches of Members of Parliament, official public notices and official information, and press releases.

* + The readers for this category read a selection of contemporary official publications such as Legal Services Agency booklets, and contemporary MPs speeches.
* **Category Two**: texts included in this category are Māori community generated language directed primarily to the Crown or the wider community about legal matters. This includes petitions, correspondence to the native minister, as well as websites and other media statements.
  + The readers for this category read through the all available texts of the letters sent by Māori to Native Minister Donald Mclean, as well as selected articles from Māori Newspapers such as *Te Wananga*, *Te Karere Māori* and *Te Waka Māori o Niu Tirani*.
* **Category Three**: texts included in this category are officially generated translations of bills and Acts (“statutory language”).
  + Readers for this category read Government Acts and Bills from the years 1892, 1893, 1897, 1898, 1899, 1905, and 1908. In addition readers gathered Māori language terms used in recent/current legislation.
* **Category Four**: texts included in this category are Māori language versions and translations of deeds and Crown/Māori agreements and other specific legal instruments.
  + Readers for this category identified appropriate terms in Land Deeds from the years 1873 and 187, and in selected documents such as the Taupo Joint Management Agreement.
* **Category Five**: texts included in this category are court and tribunal documents including (mainly) Native/Māori Land court documents, regulations and forms, and Waitangi Tribunal documentation.
  + The reader for this category identified terms from transcripts of post 1975 Māori Land Court proceedings and selected Waitangi Tribunal evidences and hearings.
* **Category Six**: texts included in this category are documents from predominantly Māori organisations that engage in a type of quasi-legal discourse such as Synod proceedings from the Diocese of Waiapu and Te Pīhopatanga o Aotearoa, and proceedings from the Māori Parliament.
  + The reader for this category identified terms gathered from a selection of the Anglican Synod proceedings as well as from a set of Māori Parliament proceedings.

**Step Two**

In this step research assistants consulted a collection of dictionaries, wordlists and compendia in order to identify existing Māori terms with identifiable legal meaning.

***Printed Dictionaries***

* Aotahi LTD (2005). *Taking care of business: Business terms in Aotearoa, He papakupu pakihi: English-Maori business directory.* Te Kuiti, New Zealand: Aotahi LTD.
* Duval, Terry P. A. *A preliminary dictionary of Maori gainwords compiled on historical principles*. (1995). Unpublished PhD Thesis, Canterbury University, Christchurch, New Zealand.
* Ngata, H. M. (1993). *English-Maori dictionary*. Wellington, New Zealand: Learning Media.
* Williams H. W. A *dictionary of the Māori language*.(1971, 7th edition), Wellington, New Zealand: Government Printer.
* Spiller, P. (ed.) *New Zealand Legal Dictionary.* (2005, 6th edition) Wellington, New Zealand: LexisNexis.
* Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori *Te Matatiki: Contemporary Māori Words.* (1996) Wellington, New Zealand: Oxford University Press.

***Electronically available dictionaries:***

* HM Ngata *English–Māori Dictionary*

[*http://www.learningmedia.co.nz/ngata/*](http://www.learningmedia.co.nz/ngata/)

* HW Williams *A Dictionary of the Māori Language* 6th Edition

[*http://www.nzetc.org/tm/scholarly/tei-WillDict.html*](http://www.nzetc.org/tm/scholarly/tei-WillDict.html)

* Auckland University of Technology Te Aka Māori-English, English-Māori Dictionary and Index [*http://www.maoridictionary.co.nz/*](http://www.maoridictionary.co.nz/)
* Ministry of Education *he Kupu Arotake – a Glossary for Education Evaluators*

[*http://www.ero.govt.nz/Review-Process/He-Kupu-Arotake/English-to-Maori*](http://www.ero.govt.nz/Review-Process/He-Kupu-Arotake/English-to-Maori)

Wakareo ā-Ipurangi dictionaries (available to subscribers only):

* Wordstream Williams Corpus – Wakareo @ <http://www.reotupu.co.nz/wslivewakareo/default.aspx>
* Custom Māori Law Lexicon - Wakareo @ <http://www.reotupu.co.nz/wslivewakareo/default.aspx>
* He Kupu Arotake - Wakareo @ <http://www.reotupu.co.nz/wslivewakareo/default.aspx>
* Kimikupu Hou modern words - Wakareo @ <http://www.reotupu.co.nz/wslivewakareo/default.aspx>

***Unpublished wordlists and compendia***

* Draft glossary of procedural legal terms (2008) prepared for the Legal Services Agency.
* Legal Māori Project: Terms identified during the pilot phase of the Legal Māori Project (2008)
* Te Matahauariki Institute: “Te Mātāpunenga: A Compendium of References to the Concepts and Institutions of Māori Customary Law.” (2007) Tūhonohono Text.
* Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori. Unpublished glossary of legal terms (1988).