

# Kupu Arataki

Introduction

01

5. Landscape assessment is carried out for many reasons. These Guidelines, though, are deliberately focused on the statutory planning context.

6. 'Decision-makers' means the Environment Court, boards of inquiry, council commissioners, and some council officers with certain delegated authority. Importantly, these Guidelines take the position that the same principle also applies by extension to everyone else involved in statutory planning processes.

7. Te Ao Pākehā incorporates all non-Māori traditions including various immigrant communities. Pākehā culture is distinctive to Aotearoa. While it draws strongly on Western traditions, it is diverse and is influenced by other non-Western cultures.

**Purpose and scope**

- 1.01 Landscapes are part of who we are. They are the natural systems on which we depend, how we live with our land, and the meaning and pleasure we take from our surroundings. They are part of our identity. Landscapes are important to us all. It is no surprise, then, that landscapes are often at the heart of statutory planning matters.
- 1.02 The purpose of Te Tangi a te Manu: Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines is to improve landscape assessment within a statutory planning context.<sup>5</sup> The role of landscape assessment in this context is to assist decision-makers and others<sup>6</sup> to manage and improve landscape values.
- 1.03 The Guidelines promote an Aotearoa New Zealand approach. They seek alignment between Te Ao Māori and Te Ao Pākehā streams of landscape assessment. They recognise mātauranga Māori and the importance of tāngata whenua values alongside concepts and values inherited from Western and other cultural traditions.<sup>7</sup> Combining such perspectives is key to understanding and appreciating our landscapes.

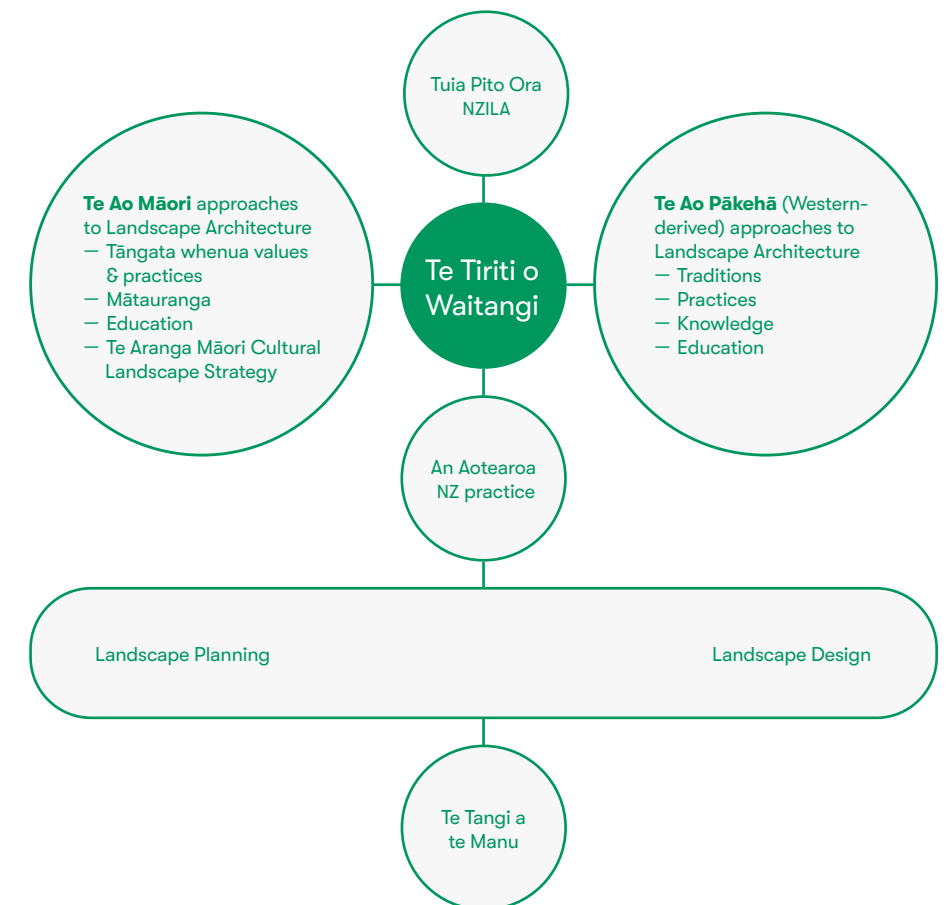


Figure 1. The Guidelines sit within an evolving Aotearoa New Zealand practice that draws on both Te Ao Māori and Te Ao Pākehā approaches, giving effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi.

8. We adopt the style of using Aotearoa and New Zealand interchangeably throughout the Guidelines as short for Aotearoa New Zealand.

- 1.04 The Guidelines adopt a principles-based approach to methodology that allows for assessment methods to be tailored to each situation. They emphasise transparency and reason, rather than adherence to prescriptive methods. Such methods are unsuitable because of the need to interpret the different types of information and values (objective and subjective) inherent in landscapes, and the different purposes for which landscape assessments are carried out. Crucially, the flexibility of a principles-based approach also provides the flexibility necessary for practice to continue to evolve.
- 1.05 The Guidelines also seek alignment between design and assessment. Such alignment is the most effective way of improving our landscapes and environmental values.

#### ***New Zealand practice in an international context***

- 1.06 These Guidelines are consistent with directions that landscape assessment is moving in internationally. Practice in recent years has been moving towards:
- A holistic concept of landscape that goes beyond physical character and scenery to the tangible and intangible relationships between people and place.
  - Attention to the specific character of each place rather than relying solely on generic parameters.
  - A reasoned approach to assessment based on transparency and explanation, rather than adherence to prescriptive methodology.
  - An increasing use of landscape as an integrative concept that can respond to a broad complex of environmental values and issues.
- 1.07 Aotearoa<sup>8</sup> has found itself at the forefront of this emerging practice because:
- Te Ao Māori perspectives have helped to highlight the extent to which cultural perspectives are central to the environment, not only for tāngata whenua, but for everyone.
  - Change is often easier in a small community—practice was advanced at key moments by a small number of people whom the authors acknowledge and thank.
  - The current Resource Management Act provides for landscape. Environment Court decisions have played a key role in bedding in concepts and principles as they have emerged.

I am a seed which was sown  
in the heavens of Rangīātea.

## **He kākano ahau i ruia mai i Rangīātea**





Above: Ātea a Rangi  
Carvings: Ātea a Rangi Trust  
Image: Shannon Bray

9. The intent of the Guidelines is to explain the reasoning behind certain concepts, principles, terminology, and approaches rather than merely state them. Understanding the reasons should add confidence to how we approach our work. It should provide a stronger platform for continuing evolution of practice.

10. It is planned to update the Guidelines in response to the new resource management legislation expected in 2023. Because the Guidelines are based on landscape principles, we anticipate changes to them will be limited to how they are applied under the new legislation rather than the concepts, principles, and approaches themselves.

## How to use these guidelines

- 1.08 The Guidelines are to be read as a whole. Do not take parts out of context. They are organised as follows:
- Chapters 2 and 3 set out overarching principles that apply to the whole Guidelines.
  - Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7 describe the core assessment approach applicable to all types of landscape assessment. The chapters are linked: Chapter 4 defines landscape and describes the concept of landscape. Chapter 5 outlines assessment of landscape character and values. Chapter 6 outlines assessment of effects on landscape values (values being embodied in character). Chapter 7 outlines management of landscape values.
  - Chapters 8 and 9 address special topics with respect of ‘outstanding natural features and landscapes’ and ‘natural character’.  
The concepts, principles and approaches described in the earlier chapters apply equally to these special topics.
  - Two quick guides are appended. They provide an example of a typical report structure and a brief guide to carrying out two different kinds of landscape assessment: an assessment of landscape and visual effects (i.e. proposal-driven), and a landscape assessment of an area (i.e. policy-driven).
- 1.09 The intent of the Guidelines is to set out a coherent framework of concepts, principles, and approaches that can be tailored to suit each assessment’s purpose and context.<sup>9</sup> Promotion of such flexibility is not to be misconstrued as ‘anything goes’: on the contrary, the approach promoted by these Guidelines demands that practitioners understand what they are doing, and why, and that they explain it in a transparent and reasoned way.
- 1.10 These Guidelines represent our current understanding. They will require replacing as practice and understanding continues to evolve.<sup>10</sup> They will have served their purpose if, as we hope, they contribute to that process.

If you know who you are  
and where you are from,  
then you will know where  
you are going

**Inā kei te mohio koe ko wai koe,  
i anga mai koe i hea,  
kei te mohio koe kei te anga atu  
ki hea**





Above: Matakaitaki Valley,  
Otākou/Otago  
Image: Richard Denney