

Geographic Names Standardization Policy for New Zealand

United States Board on Geographic Names
Foreign Names Committee



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1. Introduction

This geographic names standardization policy has been prepared as an aid to those geographic names experts who are the working staff for the United States Board on Geographic Names (BGN) in the standardization of the geographic names of New Zealand for United States Government use. The BGN and its staff work to effect consistent treatment of geographic name spellings in U.S. Government databases, publications, maps, and charts. The country policies are intended to satisfy, in part, the statutory requirements levied upon the BGN in Public Law USC 80-242 to develop principles, policies and procedures for geographic names standardization, and to promulgate decisions with respect to the principles of geographic nomenclature and orthography.

2. Languages and Language Policy

a. Demographics

As of March 2013, New Zealand has a population of 4,242,048, of whom 215,589 are from England, 89,121 from China, 67,176 from India, 62,712 from Australia, 54,276 from South Africa, 52,755 from Fiji, and 50,661 from Samoa, among other countries.¹ The country consists of two large islands, North Island and South Island, and about six hundred smaller islands and islets, most of them uninhabited.

b. Language

English (ISO-693-3 code 'eng') and Māori (ISO-693-3 code 'mri') are the official languages of New Zealand, the latter becoming so only after passage of the Māori Language Act 1987.² English enjoys more widespread use in schools, the public sector, the courts, and parliament, though Māori can be used in all legal proceedings and is taught in most schools. Also known as *te reo* ('the language'), *te reo Māori*, and Maori (in English-speaking countries outside of New Zealand), Māori is an Eastern Polynesian language of the Tahitic subgroup, which includes Tahitian, Rarotongan (Cook Islands Māori), Hawaiian, Marquesan, and Rapa Nui (spoken on Easter Island). As of 2013, 148,395 New Zealanders speak Māori, most of them residing on the North Island (see Appendix D).

¹ Though data have been collected for the 2018 census, the final report will not be published until sometime in 2019. The 2013 New Zealand census contains the country's latest, most complete demographic data. *StatsNZ/Tatauranga Aotearoa*, 'Statistics.' English. <<https://www.stats.govt.nz/>> Accessed February 1, 2019.

² The Te Ture mō Te Reo Māori 2016/Māori Language Act 2016 supersedes the 1987 version; however, the more recent act reinforces the official status of Māori (see *Parliamentary Counsel Office/Te Tari Tohutohu Pāremata: New Zealand Legislation*, 'Te Ture mō Te Reo Māori 2016/Māori Language Act 2016.' English, Māori. <<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2016/0017/29.0/DLM6174509.html>>). A bill was introduced in 2018 in the New Zealand Parliament/Pāremata Aotearoa to recognize English as an official language, accorded the same legal status as Māori and New Zealand Sign Language, but the proposed law has not yet received Royal assent. See: *New Zealand Parliament/Pāremata Aotearoa*, 'English an Official Language of New Zealand Bill.' English, Māori. <https://www.parliament.nz/en/pb/bills-and-laws/proposed-members-bills/document/52HOH_MEMBERBILL071_1/english-an-official-language-of-new-zealand-bill>. Regarding Māori, see: *Parliamentary Counsel Office/Te Tari Tohutohu Pāremata: New Zealand Legislation*, 'Māori Language Act 1987.' English. <<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1987/0176/latest/whole.html>> Both accessed February 13, 2019.

c. Geographic Names Standardization

The New Zealand Geographic Board/Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa assigns, approves, alters, and discontinues the use of official geographic names for geographic and hydrographic features within the country, its territorial waters, and its continental shelf.³ The Board, comprised of the Surveyor-General of New Zealand (chair), the National Hydrographer, and eight members—at least two of them Māori—nominated by the Minister of Land Information, rigorously reviews place names before designating them official, publishing all decisions and findings in the *New Zealand Gazetteer*. Thus, when in doubt about the spelling of a specific place name, the toponymist should not exercise individual judgment but instead consult the Gazetteer.⁴

3. Toponymic Policies

a. Orthography

The Maori alphabet consists of the Latin letters and digraphs:

A a, E e, H h, I i, K k, M m, N n, Ng ng, O o, P p, R r, T t, U u, W w, Wh wh

Vowels can be pronounced with a short or long sound, the latter generally distinguished in script by a macron (ˉ).⁵ Every syllable in a Māori place name (and word) ends with a vowel. Every vowel is pronounced. There are no diphthongs.

b. Romanization

Maori does not require romanization.

c. Diacritics

The following diacritics are found in Māori geographic names.

Character Name	Character	Unicode Value
A with macron, Latin capital letter	Ā	0100
A with macron, Latin small letter	ā	0101
E with macron, Latin capital letter	Ē	0112
E with macron, Latin small letter	ē	0113
I with macron, Latin capital letter	Ī	012A
I with macron, Latin small letter	ī	012B
O with macron, Latin capital letter	Ō	014C

³ Per recent legislation: *Parliamentary Counsel Office/Te Tari Tohutohu Pāremata*, 'New Zealand Geographic Board/Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa) Act 2008.' English. <<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2008/0030/30.0/DLM1065412.html>> Accessed February 13, 2019.

⁴ *Land Information New Zealand (LINZ)/Toitū te whenua*, 'New Zealand Gazetteer.' English. <<https://gazetteer.linz.govt.nz/>> Accessed February 5, 2019. The LINZ website allows users to submit inquiries, to request reviews, and to nominate place names for official status.

⁵ Possessing a ready understanding of context, native Māori speakers may use macrons inconsistently or not at all.

Character Name	Character	Unicode Value
O with macron, Latin small letter	ō	014D
U with macron, Latin capital letter	Ū	016A
U with macron, Latin small letter	ū	016B

d. Generic Terms

A generic term describes a geographic feature (e.g., ‘river,’ ‘hill,’ ‘lake’). If the term does not identify the actual feature, it should be considered a false generic and not be added to the generic field of the Geographic Names Database (GNDB). Generic terms are not collected for populated places. Appendix A contains a list of Māori generic terms seen in approved names.

e. Macrons, Hyphenation, Capitalization, and Spelling

The Māori Language Commission⁶ disseminates orthographic guidelines for Māori words. Most Māori place names abide by them. Still, only spellings sanctioned by the New Zealand Geographic Board—which considers history, tradition, and common usage and not only phonemic and phonetic principles—should be considered authoritative, regardless of deviation from Commission rules. Hence the exceptions amidst the following examples:

Macrons

Use macrons to indicate long vowels:

- *Aupōuri Forest* (FRST)
- *Hue tē Taka Peninsula* (PEN)
- *Tūtūmāpou Hill* (HLL)
- *Umukurī* (LCTY)

Hyphenation

The Māori Language Commission discourages use of hyphens, and the New Zealand Geographic Board records the vast majority of compound names without them:

- *Motuarohia Island* (ISL), which replaces *Motu-Arohia Island*
- *Opokongaruru Stream* (STM), which replaces *Opoko-o-Nga-Uru Stream*

But the following may also be found in the *Gazetteer*:

- *Motu-o-Rūrū* (LCTY)
- *Ngā Pona-toru-a-Peretū Scenic Reserve* (RESN)
- *Te Whai-taranui-a-Whare-Matangi-ki-te-kimi-i-tana-matua-a-Ngarue* (LCTY)

Also, hyphenate names containing the particles *a*, *o*, or *ō* (‘place of’):

⁶ Set up under the Māori Language Act 1987 and continued under the Te Ture Reo Māori 2016/ Māori Language Act 2016, the Commission promotes Māori throughout New Zealand, conducts linguistic research, and examines and registers translators and interpreters, among other activities. *Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori/Māori Language Commission*, ‘Who are we and what do we do?’ English, Māori. <<http://www.tetaurawhiri.govt.nz/the-landscape-of-aotearoa-will-resonate-with-our-indigenous-language/>>. Accessed February 5, 2019.

- *Ngā Tuaitara-a-Taikehu* (ISL)
- *Motu-o-Rūrū* (LCTY)

Capitalization

Capitalize the first letter of all Māori place names. The definite articles *te* (singular) and *nga* (plural) must also be capitalized when in initial position:

- *Te Oi* (HLL)
- *Te Rere Mahanga* (FLLS)
- *Nga Horo Island* (ISL)
- *Nga Kiekie Whawhanui a Uenuku Scenic Reserve* (RESN)

Capitalize other parts of a place name if they are themselves proper names:

- *Manga Te Puhi Scenic Reserve* (RESN)
- *Te Rangī-i-Totongia-a-Tamatekapua* (ISL)⁷

Spelling: Reduplication

As in other languages of Oceania, reduplication—repetition of all or part of a morpheme, the smallest grammatical unit in a language, to intensify or pluralize—occurs in Māori:

- *Aratiatia* (RPDS), where *ara* = ‘path’ and *tiatia* = ‘zig-zag’ (from *tia*, ‘dash’)
- *Matanehunehu* (STM), where *mata* = ‘headland’ and *nehunehu* = ‘sea spray’ (from *nehu*, ‘spray’)

If reduplication juxtaposes identical vowels, do not replace them with a diacritic:

- *Ahaaha Rocks* (ISLS), not *Ahāha Rocks*
- *Awaawanui Stream* (STM), not *Awāwanui Stream*
- *O te Ukuuku Tuku* (PT), not *O te Ukūku Tuku*

f. Long and Short Forms

Short form Māori place names usually consist of Māori river names without the English generic:

- Long form: *Oruru River* Short form: *Oruru*
- Long form: *Tutaekuri River* Short form: *Tutaekuri*
- Long form: *Wharekahika River* Short form: *Wharekahika*

Short forms of geographic names may appear on maps and lists. Long and short forms of names of populated places are approved when supported by official evidence. In most instances, the short name should be ranked as the primary one.

g. Abbreviations

Abbreviations do not occur in Māori geographic names.

⁷ Meaning, ‘the day Tamatekapua had a bloody nose’

h. Numbers

Māori geographic names containing cardinal or ordinal numbers are very rare. When found, collect them according to their spelling in the *Gazetteer*, which incorporates numbers into the names:

- *Aparima* (LCTY) = *apa* ('party of workmen') + *rima* ('five')
- *Ruamahanga River* (STM) = *rua* ('two') + *mahanga* ('fork')

4. Political Geography Policy

a. Country Name

English Approved New Zealand⁸

b. Capital Name

English Approved Wellington

c. First-order Administrative Divisions (ADM1)

New Zealand is divided into sixteen regions (ADM1; see Appendix B). Regional councils administer eleven of these, unitary authorities (a form of territorial authority) administer the other five.⁹ Nine more island groups, not listed below, are part of New Zealand but designated 'Area Outside Territorial Authority.' See Appendix C for further details.

<u>ADM1</u>	<u>Seat</u>	<u>GENC</u>	<u>GEC</u>
1. <i>Auckland</i>	<i>Auckland</i>	NZ-AUK	NZE7
2. <i>Bay of Plenty</i>	<i>Whakatane</i>	NZ-BOP	NZE8
3. <i>Canterbury</i>	<i>Christchurch</i>	NZ-CAN	NZE9
4. <i>Gisborne</i>	<i>Gisborne</i>	NZ-GIS	NZF1
5. <i>Hawke's Bay</i>	<i>Napier</i>	NZ-HKB	NZF2
6. <i>Manawatu-Wanganui</i>	<i>Palmerston North</i>	NZ-MWT	NZF3
7. <i>Marlborough</i>	<i>Blenheim</i>	NZ-MBH	NZF4
8. <i>Nelson</i>	<i>Nelson</i>	NZ-NSN	NZF5
9. <i>Northland</i>	<i>Whangarei</i>	NZ-NTL	NZF6
10. <i>Otago</i>	<i>Dunedin</i>	NZ-OTA	NZF7

⁸ Although the Māori-language *Aotearoa* has been commonly used in post-colonial times to refer to the country, the New Zealand Geographic Board has not approved the place name.

⁹ A *regional council* is a type of local authority responsible for, among other things: freshwater, land, air, river, and coastal waters management; soil erosion mitigation and flood control; emergency management and civil defense preparedness; regional land transport planning; and harbor navigation and safety, oil spills, and marine pollution. A *territorial authority*, another type of local authority, bears most of the same responsibilities that fall upon a regional council, as well as building control and public health inspections. A *unitary authority* is a territorial authority upon which the responsibilities, duties, and powers of a regional authority have been conferred. *New Zealand Department of Internal Affairs/Te Tari Taewhenua*, 'Local Government in New Zealand - Glossary.' English. <<http://www.localcouncils.govt.nz/ljip.nsf/wpgurl/Resources-Glossary-Index>> Accessed February 5, 2019.

<u>ADM1</u>	<u>Seat</u>	<u>GENC</u>	<u>GEC</u>
11. Southland	Invercargill	NZ-STL	NZF8
12. Taranaki	Stratford	NZ-TKI	NZF9
13. Tasman	Richmond	NZ-TAS	NZG4
14. Waikato	Hamilton	NZ-WKO	NZG1
15. Wellington	Wellington	NZ-WGN	NZG2
16. West Coast	Greymouth	NZ-WTC	NZG3

d. Conventional Names

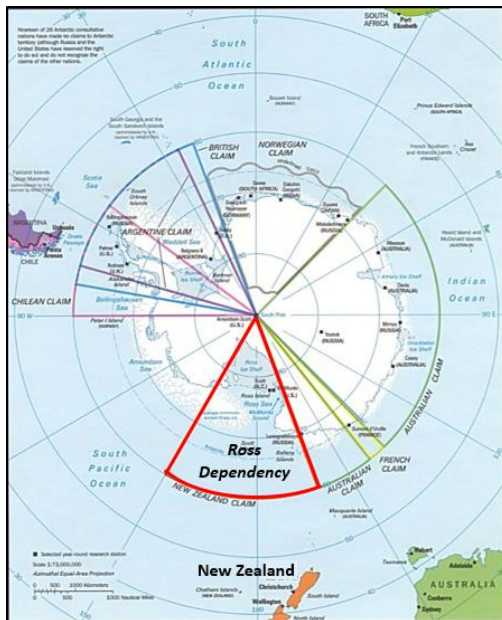
The New Zealand country file in the GNDB contains no Conventional names. To remove or add Conventional names, BGN approval is required.

e. Unique Geopolitical Situations

For the latest country-specific boundary dispute information, consult the U.S. Department of State Office of the Geographer and Global Issues.

Ross Dependency

New Zealand claims the Ross Dependency, an Antarctic region lying between longitudes 160°E to 150°W and latitude 60°S. The Antarctic Treaty of 1959 stipulates that no claims to territorial sovereignty shall be asserted.¹⁰ Most countries, including the U.S., do not recognize New Zealand’s claim.



Source: *The University of Texas at Austin/Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection, 'Islands, Oceans, Poles.' 'Antarctic Region' (1995; enhanced).*

¹⁰ *Secretariat of the Antarctic Treaty, 'The Antarctic Treaty.'* English. <<https://www.ats.aq/e/ats.htm>> Accessed February 13, 2018.

https://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/maps/islands_oceans_poles/antarctic_region_pol_95.jpg>
Accessed February 9, 2019.

5. Source Material

Maps

Land Information New Zealand (LINZ)/Toitū te whenua maintains a website hosting large map image files (jpg; 1:500,000 to 1:1.4 million), topographic maps (TIFF and GeoTIF; 1:250,000 to 1:50,000), shape files, and other file formats covering the entire country. All may be downloaded at no cost.

<<https://www.linz.govt.nz/>>

Place Names

New Zealand Gazetteer. The New Zealand Geographic Board/Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa is the official arbiter of Māori place name orthography. The Board publishes its findings and decisions in the *Gazetteer*, available on the LINZ website. The *Gazetteer*—which contains the names, coordinates, and designations of over 52,000 features—may be downloaded as an Excel file or searched online. The website also hosts an interactive map that allows one to search for the location of a given place name using a variety of criteria.

<<https://gazetteer.linz.govt.nz/>>

Reed, A.S. *A Dictionary of Maori Place Names*. Wellington: A.H and A.W. Reed, 1961. Though dated and less comprehensive than the *Gazetteer*, the *Dictionary* analyzes components of hundreds of names, providing culturally- and historically-informed definitions.

The New Zealand Ministry of Culture and Heritage maintains *New Zealand History/Nga korero a ipurangi o Aotearoa*, an encyclopedic website of New Zealand history, including language and toponymy. The page ‘Te Wiki o Te Reo Māori – Māori Language Week,’ contains a table providing translations of a thousand place names.

<<https://nzhistory.govt.nz/culture/maori-language-week/1000-maori-place-names>>

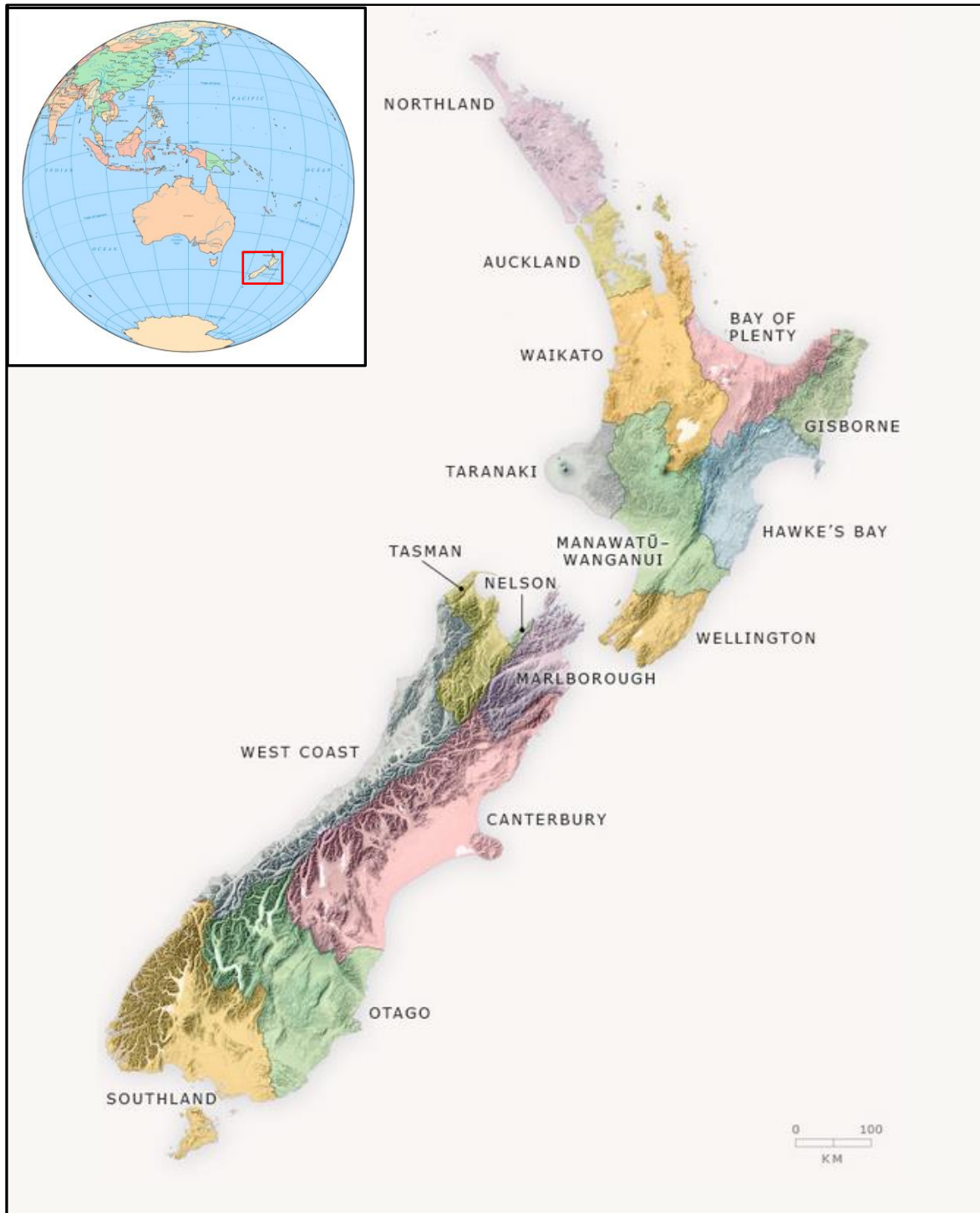
Appendix A: Glossary of Generic and Descriptive Terms

The following generic terms appear frequently in Maori place names; however, they do not always correctly describe the nature of the feature.

Māori Generic	English	Examples
<i>Ahu</i>	mound	<i>Ahurua</i> (HLL,LCTY)
<i>Ara</i>	path	<i>Aramoana</i> (LCTY), <i>Aramaire</i> (HLL)
<i>Awa</i>	river	<i>Awahōhonu</i> (STM), <i>Awamata</i> (STM)
<i>iti</i> (suffix)	small	<i>Hauti</i> (LCTY), <i>Maungarataiti</i> (LK)
<i>Kai</i> ¹¹	food, to eat	<i>Kaingaroa</i> (LCTY) , <i>Kaipipi</i> (PT)
<i>Manga</i>	stream	<i>Mangaora</i> (STM), <i>Mangapakeha</i> (LCTY)
<i>Mānia</i>	plain	<i>Māniatoto</i> (LCTY), <i>Maniapoto</i> (CAVE)
<i>Maunga</i>	mountain	<i>Maungahiha</i> (HLL), <i>Maunga Kākaramea</i> (HLL)
<i>Moana</i>	sea,large lake	<i>Aramoana</i> (LCTY), <i>Moana Roa</i> (BCH)
<i>Motu</i>	island	<i>Motuaiuri</i> (ISL), <i>Motuapouahi</i> (HLL)
<i>One</i>	sand	<i>Onepoto</i> (BAY,HLL,LCTY,PPLX)
<i>Pae</i>	ridge,range	<i>Ahipaepae</i> (HLL), <i>Paerata</i> (LCTY)
<i>Papa</i>	flat	<i>Papanui</i> (BCH,HLL,CNYN,LCTY,PPLX,STM)
<i>Puke</i>	hill	<i>Pukearenga</i> (HLL), <i>Pukeatua</i> (HLL)
<i>Tai</i>	coast,tide	<i>Taikorea</i> (LCTY), <i>Tairua</i> (HLL,LCTY)
<i>Wai</i>	water	<i>Waipapa</i> (BAY), <i>Wairereata</i> (FLLS)
<i>Whanga</i>	harbor,bay	<i>Whanganui</i> (BAY,ISL,LCTY,PPL)

¹¹ In a toponym, *kai* ('food,' 'to eat') signifies a place of an abundant foodstuff or where eating of some kind occurred: *Kaiata* (*kai* 'to eat' + *ata* 'morning' = 'eat in the morning'); *Kaiiua* (*kai* 'to eat' + *aua* 'herring' = 'meal of herring'); *Kaikanohi* (*kai* 'to eat' + *kanohi* 'eye' = 'place where a legendary warrior caught his wife in adultery and ate her eyes in revenge')

Appendix B: New Zealand Administrative Divisions (ADM1)



Base Map: John Wilson, 'Nation and Government: Regional Council Boundaries,' *Te Ara: The Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, English, Maori. <<https://teara.govt.nz/en/map/2740/regional-council-boundaries>>. Inset: *Maps of the World*, 'Maps of Australia and Oceania.' English. <<http://www.maps-of-the-world.net>> Both accessed February 5, 2019.

Appendix C: New Zealand Outlying Islands (Area Outside Territorial Authority)

Red circles below represent outlying islands of New Zealand. Seven groups are not part of any region and designated as *Area Outside Territorial Authority*. The Chatham Islands, the only inhabited ones, are a special territorial authority unto themselves. The Solander Islands are part of the Southland Region. All groups have Māori-language names, but only those recognized by the New Zealand Geographic Board are included.¹²

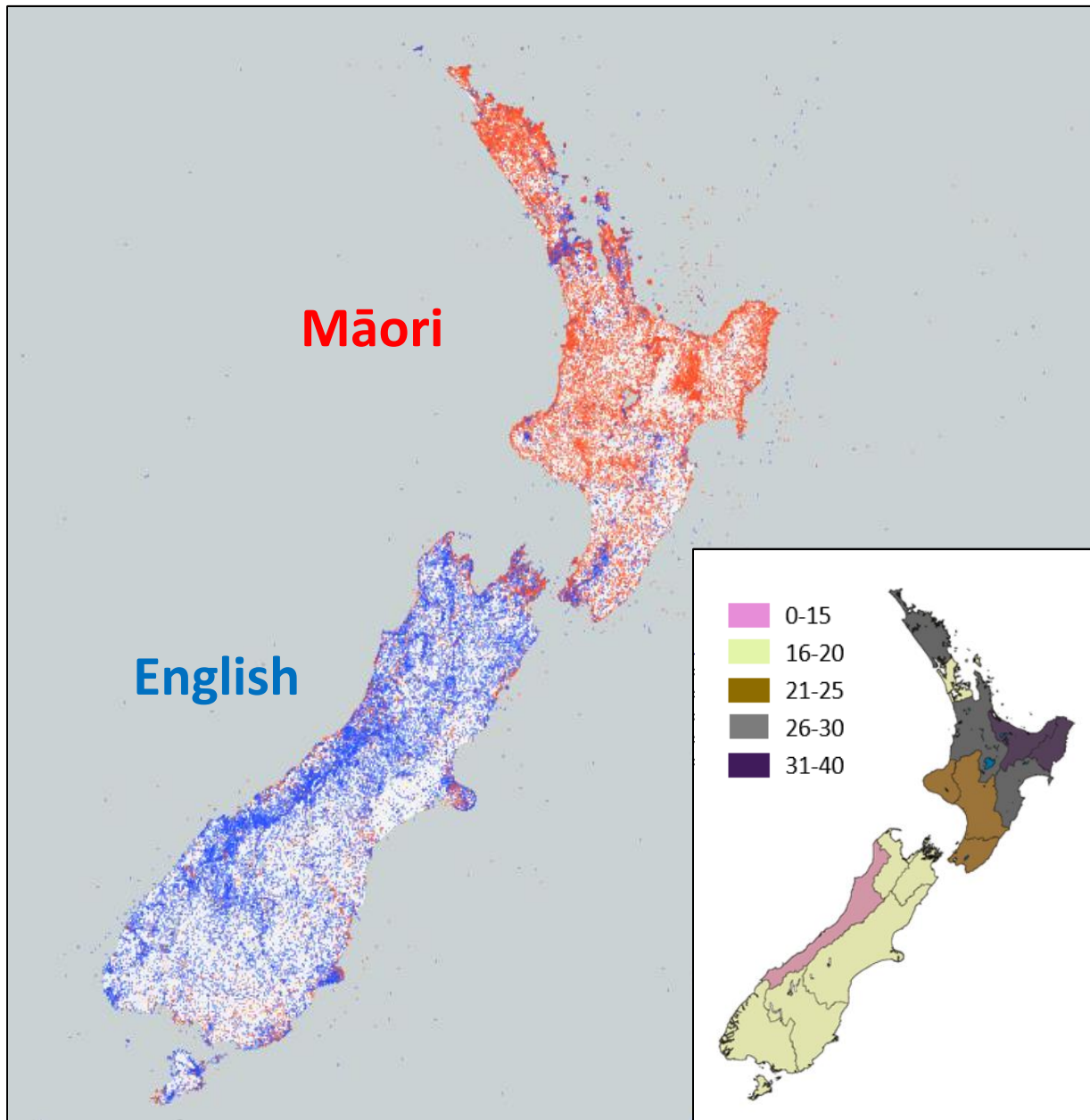


¹² Unofficial names include: *Rangitāhua* (Kermadec Islands), *Ngamoturukaraka*, *Manawa Tawhi* (Three Kings Islands), *Wharekaui*, *Rehoku* (Chatham Islands), and *Motu Maha* (Auckland Islands)

Source: *The University of Texas at Austin/Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection*, 'New Zealand Maps.' 'New Zealand' (2006; enhanced detail).

<http://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/maps/australia/new_zealand_physio-2006.pdf> Accessed February 7, 2019.

Appendix D: Māori/English Place Names Distribution and Percentage of Māori Able to Converse in the Language (by Region)



Base map: Knox, Chris. 'Our Place Names.' *New Zealand Herald*. 'Our Place Names.' English. <<https://insights.nzherald.co.nz/article/our-place-names/>>¹³ Inset: *New Zealand History/Nga korero a ipurangi o Aotearoa*, 'Percentage of Māori able to converse in the language, by region.' English. <<https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/maori-language-by-region-map>> Both accessed February 11, 2019.

¹³ The URL leads to an interactive map, allowing the viewer to change scale and to see the names of individual points. The map was created by Te Pūnaha Matatini, a research center hosted by the University of Auckland, and Dragonfly Data Science, a New Zealand-based research firm specializing in statistical analysis.