



Honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi

For a fairer society

Honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi means making New Zealand a fairer place for everyone who lives here. Te Tiriti o Waitangi is the basis of peace and justice in Aotearoa. It is an ongoing agreement, not something to be settled.

The Green Party is committed to addressing the ongoing breaches of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, fixing the Treaty settlement process so that it is just, fair and durable, and upholding Māori representation in governance and decision making. These changes will make a real difference for hapū and iwi Māori and get us that much closer to truly honouring our country's founding document. We will:

1. Entrench the Māori electorates and oppose any call for a referendum on them
2. Create a level playing field for local government wards, by letting councils establish Māori wards without being overturned by a poll
3. Undertake a comprehensive review of the Treaty settlement process and put an end to “full and final” settlements, e.g. to allow settlements to be revisited where situations have changed or claimants were shut out of original negotiations
4. Ensure claims can only be settled with the agreement of the original claimants and remove the Crown's “large natural groupings” approach to settlements.

The Green Party accepts the te reo Māori text of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and affirms that Māori did not cede their tino rangatiratanga. In Government, we will recognise this by seeking to right historic and contemporary wrongs, ensuring a baseline of Māori representation in local and central government, and implementing Te Tiriti in everything we do.

The Green Party recognises the Treaty settlement process for what it is: an opportunity for iwi Māori, under the pressures of economic and social hardship and within the constraints of a Crown-imposed process, to make the best deal possible to redress historical claims, reconcile the past, and re-establish an economic base for their people.

As Aotearoa moves towards a relationship that truly upholds tino rangatiratanga, it is essential that tangata whenua have representation in Parliament and on local and regional councils so they have a voice in the decisions that affect them.

Entrench the Māori electorates

The Green Party upholds the importance of the Māori electorates, which guarantee that there are Māori MPs who are directly accountable to Māori voters. Entrenching the Māori electorates so that only a 75 percent vote of Parliament can remove them, will protect their constitutional status and importance. We will oppose any call for a referendum on the Māori electorates. We will make changes to the Māori Electoral Option to ensure more flexibility for people to change between the Māori and general rolls.

Equitable Māori representation in local government

Currently, if a local or regional council wants to establish a Māori ward, a binding poll on the issue must be held if five percent of the electors of the city, district, or region request it. There is no equivalent requirement for the establishment of general wards. This discrepancy sets a double standard that limits Māori participation and representation in local government by allowing it only if the majority agree. The Green Party will make the process fair and equitable by amending the Local Electoral Act 2001 to remove the ability to demand a poll. We will also require councils to consider, at least once every six years, whether to establish Māori wards and Māori constituencies.

End full and final settlements

The Green Party will undertake a comprehensive review of the Treaty settlement process to ensure it is just, fair, and durable. We will end the requirement for the Crown to negotiate full and final settlements. Given the failure of some settlements to date, the Green Party has always believed that these should be able to be revisited by future generations, in cases where situations have changed or groups were shut out of the original process. The process, which can divide Māori from one another, can hardly be called full and final, because it can open up new breaches in Te Tiriti. Financial redress usually compensates for less than one percent of what was confiscated, and hardly any land is returned. Compensation must be sustainable, and we also support non-financial options for restitution and reconciliation, such as the Crown's apology to Parihaka.

Reform settlement negotiation policy

Many hapū have been shut out of negotiations and have not had acknowledgement of their unique claims. We will remove the Crown's requirement to only negotiate with large natural groupings, as it can lock hapū and smaller iwi out of the process. We will require that claims cannot be settled without the agreement of the original claimant. At present, the Crown will only negotiate directly if all WAI claims relating to an area are included, even where the original claimant opposes the negotiations. There is nowhere else in New Zealand law where the original claimant can have their claim settled without their consent. We will ensure the government does not proceed with settlement legislation or consider alternate mechanisms unless there is full hapū support.

www.greens.org.nz/te-tiriti

The logo for the Green Party, featuring a stylized green leaf above the word "Green" in a white, serif font.

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