

## INDIGENOUS FRAMEWORK: Measuring the performance of New Zealand's primary-based industries from a Māori cultural perspective

### Establishing a Sustainability Dashboard according to a Māori Worldview

To establish a set of Indigenous sustainability indicators for Māori farming and fishing enterprise, it is crucial to understand what Maori want to sustain. Determining what Māori want to sustain requires an exploration of the Māori worldview. This worldview is structured on the fundamental notions of whakapapa (interconnections) and mauri (life supporting capacity). Generally speaking this way of seeing the world asserts that the health of the environment is dependent upon on the quality of its life-supporting capacity. Or, in others words, the ability of the environment to support diverse and abundant life. The more mauri an entity (e.g. a river) possesses the more abundant the life it can support.

However, maintaining mauri requires that entities are related to in a respectful manner, or in a way that either maintains or increases their health. Māori articulate a number of cultural values that offer an ethical guide on how to relate with, and behave toward, both social and environmental entities. These relational values are consistent with the Maori worldview, and have been well-articulated by various researchers. These values are defined in the below table.

Māori Worldview and Relational Values		
Worldview	Value	Meaning
Mauri	Tino rangatiratanga	Acts of self-determination
	Manawhenua	Legitimacy to control resources
Whakapapa	Whanaungatanga	Bonds of kinship – togetherness
	Manaakitanga	Acts of giving
Mana	Whakakotahitanga	Respect for individuals and desire for consensus
	Tūrangawaewae	Connection to a place that gives standing, identity, and security
	Kaitiakitanga	Guardianship
	Te Aotūroa	Interdependence with the natural environment
	Taonga tuku iho	Holding protected treasures passed on

These values provide a guide for discerning between social and environmental practices that might be considered ethical (sustainable) or unethical (unsustainable). However, to actually determine whether practices increase the mauri of social and environmental entities evidence is required. Following a detailed literature review practices within Maori enterprise were identified that were consistent with Maori relational values, and in turn have been recognized to increase the mauri of environmental, and societal, entities. The practices were grouped under eleven headings and are articulated in the below table.

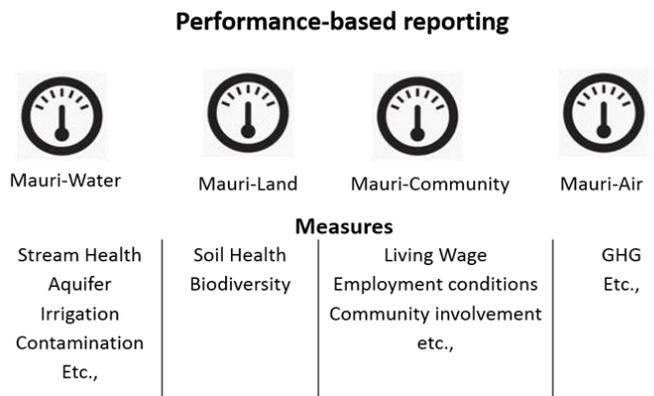


Practices Aligning with Relational Values	
Practice	Definition
Governing	Building and maintaining culturally-matched, competent, strong, diverse, and capable governance
Managing	Building and maintaining capable management that is accountable to governance
Navigating	Inclusive and decisive decision-making
Relating	Strategic partnerships, networks, and joint ventures between a business, or tribal entity, and 'outsiders' with needed skills and strengths
Communicating	Good communication processes between leadership and owners/tribal members
Learning	Good processes for continual skill development and knowledge acquisition
Innovating	Identifying unique and innovative development options
Sustaining	Ensuring actions maintain or build the mauri of non-human kin
Protecting	Protecting taonga tuku iho
Building	Enhancing the mana of whanau, hapu, iwi and community
Revitalizing	Supporting and building a contemporary Maori culture and identity

It can be logically determined that the presence, or absence, of these practices within Maori enterprise would indicate the extent to which an enterprise was engaging in sustainable behavior according to Maori values. In other words, monitoring and evaluating a Maori enterprise based on its practices could act as a mechanism for reporting on its sustainability from an indigenous, and more particularly Maori point of view. This type of reporting, in dashboard form, is illustrated below.

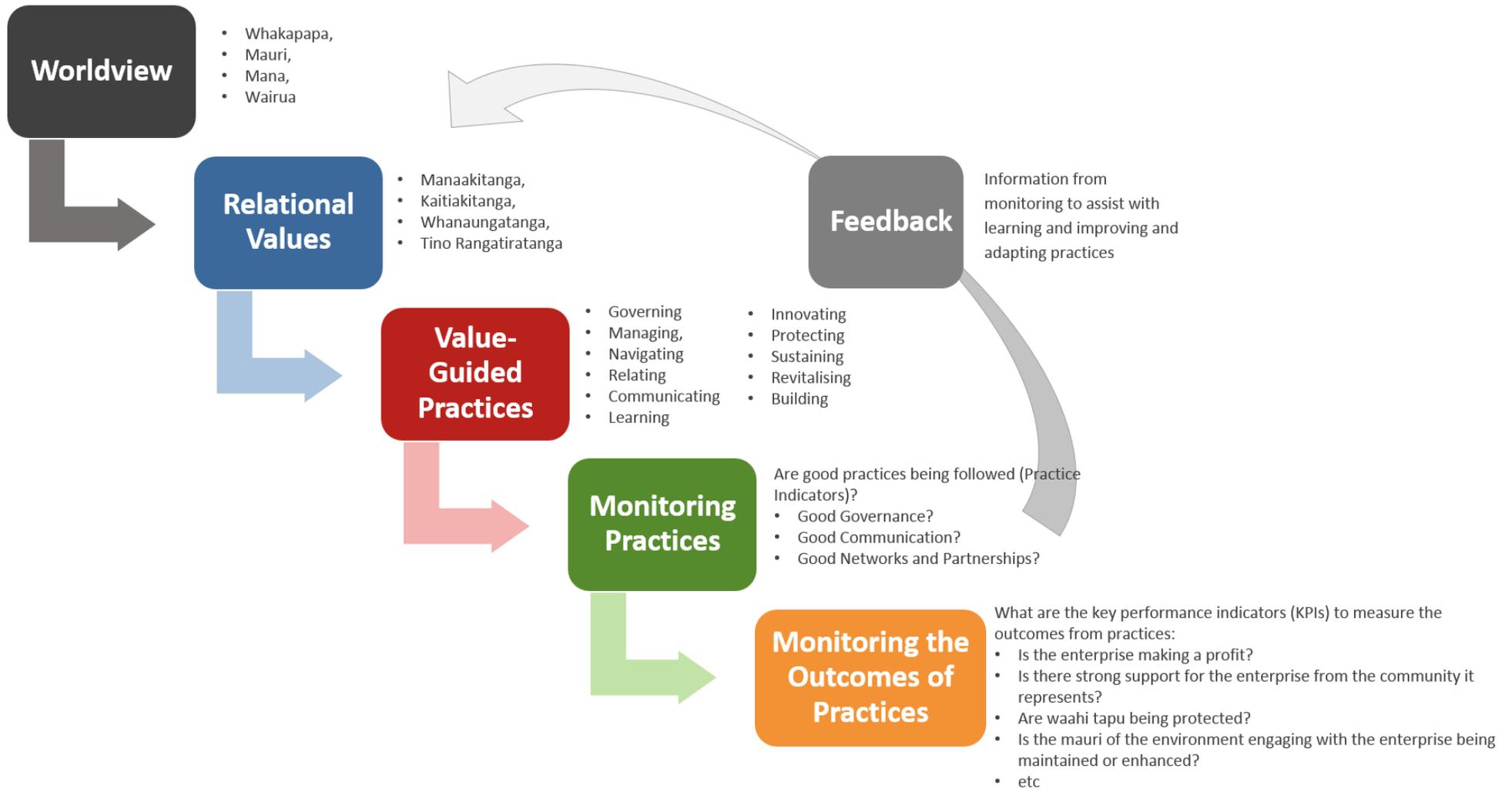


However, practice-based reporting is limited to some extent because it is largely dependent upon the honesty of those using the reporting tool. Consequently, it is also considered necessary to establish sets of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which measure the outcomes of practices within an enterprise. In this way a mechanism for validating whether sustainable behaviours are in fact being practiced, or whether practices thought to give rise sustainable outcomes actually do so. Such measures would determine, according to the Maori worldview, the levels of mauri expressed by different entities (for example, the mauri of land, water, and community), and provide an evidence base for the modification, adoption, or rejection, of particular practices. An example of how a performance based dashboard could look from a Maori perspective is outlined on the right.



## Conclusion

Sustainability indicators from an indigenous point of view have been constructed based on the fundamental notions of whakapapa (interconnections) and mauri (life supporting capacity). This worldview gives rise to relational values, which in turn are given effect by ethical or sustainable practices. However, it has been outlined that monitoring the outcomes of these practices is important for continually evaluating their effectiveness is generating desired results. The figure below illustrates the approach that has been taken to developing indigenous sustainability indicators, and the theory behind the formation of a dashboard for Maori enterprise, within the ARGOS programme.



The full report is available in the [Research Report 13/06](#).

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