

Foreshore & Seabed Snapshot

Throughout 2003 and 2004 the Board led opposition to the government's proposals to overrule the findings of the Court of Appeal that Maori could seek a title to the foreshore and seabed and vest the ownership of it in the Crown.

The government first tried to take ownership of the foreshore and seabed at Thames in 1868 and this met with strong and consistent opposition from Hauraki. The historical circumstances and the continued storm of protest over 136 years are well documented in the evidence presented to the Waitangi Tribunal in 1998- 2002 as well as an extensive submission made by the Board in October 2004 to the Select Committee on the proposed Foreshore and Seabed Bill.

The Foreshore and Seabed Act 2004 was passed by Parliament in November 2004 and vested the full legal and beneficial ownership of the foreshore and seabed in the Crown despite our opposition and that of Maori throughout the country.

However that is not the end of the story. We predict the the implementation of the Act and related legislation in Hauraki will be problematic. Already we are aware that local government proposes to implement financial charges for anyone occupying the coast, to sell off foreshore and seabed areas or to effectively alienate it through long term lease.