

*E kore e mōnehunehu te pūmahara ki ngā whēinga o neherā nā rātou nei i toro te nukuroa o Te Moana-nuiā-Kiwa o Te Moana Tāpokopoko ā Tāwhaki me Papahoro-nuku. Ko a rātou tapuwae kua kākahutia ki te kiri o Papa-tū-ā-nuku e hora nei – Kaipara Moana he tawhiti tōna roa, he manatunga, he taonga, he tapu ... he ngaru nui mā te tauihu o te waka e wawāhi.*

Kaipara Moana is an ancient bastion of nature, alive with history of days, of eras past. It is a place of deep spiritual and cultural value, a space with its own mauri and identity imbued with a mana of its own.

The Kaipara Moana has unique values

All waterways are important, but the Kaipara has unique global and national values, including important economic values.



6,000km2 (600,000 Ha) of catchment covering:

- 2 regions
- 7 major river systems
- ~3, 500 sub-catchments
- ~92, 000 micro-catchments
- 9 (planting) eco-districts

The Kaipara is the largest harbour in the Southern Hemisphere, and one of the largest in the world.

It is ecologically and culturally significant, with some of NZ’s most at-risk ecosystems (dunes, seagrasses, wetlands).  
The Kaipara also has unique national and economic value as the nursery for much of New Zealand’s snapper fishery.

**Vision:** The mauri of Kaipara Moana is restored and protected and its significance - for Kaipara Uri and all New Zealanders - is recognised.

**Mission:** KMR invests in projects and people to halve sediment flows into the Kaipara Moana.

KMR Investment Goals aim to deliver intergenerational outcomes:

- **Natural Capital - Tiaki taiao:** Kaipara Moana Mauri restored so it is healthy, self-sustaining and naturally productive
- **Social Capital - Tātai Hononga:** Kotahitanga empowers Kaipara Uri and local community participation including hapū and marae, in local solutions, leveraging opportunities
- **Human Capital - Manaaki Tangata:** Kaipara Uri and local skills and capability support innovation, effective land management and community resilience
- **Physical & Financial Capital - Ōhanga:** Sustainable, resilient and optimised primary production in the Kaipara catchment and harbour

Sediment is the problem in the catchment

An estimated 700,000 tonnes of sediment flow into the Moana each year - 7 times the natural rate.  
Sediment smothers riverbeds and seabed habitats & reduces light, with major impacts on fish, shellfish and plant life.

KMR project investments take a whole-of-landscape approach to reducing sediment



The Sediment Challenge

- Sediment is a master contaminant carrying nutrients, microbes and heavy metals that affect human, animal & environmental health
- The loss of environmental quality has major flow-on impacts on the Kaipara’s fisheries, tourism, recreational and cultural values
- Dredging doesn’t solve the problem (suspended sediments)
- NZ’s valuable soils are best when they stay on the land

What’s at stake? Snapper Case Study

- **Snapper is NZ’s top commercial catch for inshore fisheries**
- **Annual export value of ~\$35 million** (2017)
- In latest 5 year band, NZ’s inshore commercial fishing contributed \$460m to GDP and 3,861 jobs
- **Snapper contributes** 15% of this ~\$69m to the economy & **579 jobs - each & every year**
- **A snapper fishery collapse would be costly**
- High correlation between seagrass blade densities and juvenile snapper abundance

KMR underpinned by MOU commitments

- **KMR is a decade long programme**, recognising sediment is an intergenerational issue
- **A tight focus on sediment:** KMR retires and plants waterways & erosion-prone land
- **MfE primary funder** (\$100m) with Crown funding unlocked by **matched funding** by Auckland and Northland Councils (\$10m each), and landowners (\$80m)
- **A voluntary programme** - KMR works with willing landowners & groups

Crown and Council commitments to KMR are formalised in an MOU with Kaipara Uri.  
Any unilateral change to KMR funding would be seen as **a breach of the MOU**



KAIPARA MOANA REMEDIATION

KMR is performing strongly

KMR has the confidence of programme partners, stakeholders and landowners, and is delivering well against its KPIs.

KMR is the largest harbour restoration programme in New Zealand.

A little over 3.5 years into operations, KMR continues to scale up as planned (data as at 31 July 2025)



28 local businesses & 20 nurseries accredited as KMR suppliers



**57 people trained as KMR Field Advisors - many from local iwi/hapū**



**> 398,000 hours of new work created** - a year’s worth of work for 256 people



**>\$27m in project value completed or contracted**, supporting local nature-based employment



**1,345 landowners and groups have expressed interest in KMR** spanning pastoral, horticultural and community interests



1,000s of meetings with iwi/hapū, professional and rural networks, community groups, trusts, primary sector groups & landowners



**881 Sediment Reduction Plans** have been developed and contracted with landowners and groups, and 128 more are in development



**>2.7 million plants planted or contracted for planting this winter**



**>1,030 km of fencing completed or contracted:** The same distance as from Cape Rēinga to Hamilton and back!



**1,431 hectares of land planted, contracted to plant or regenerating into native forest**

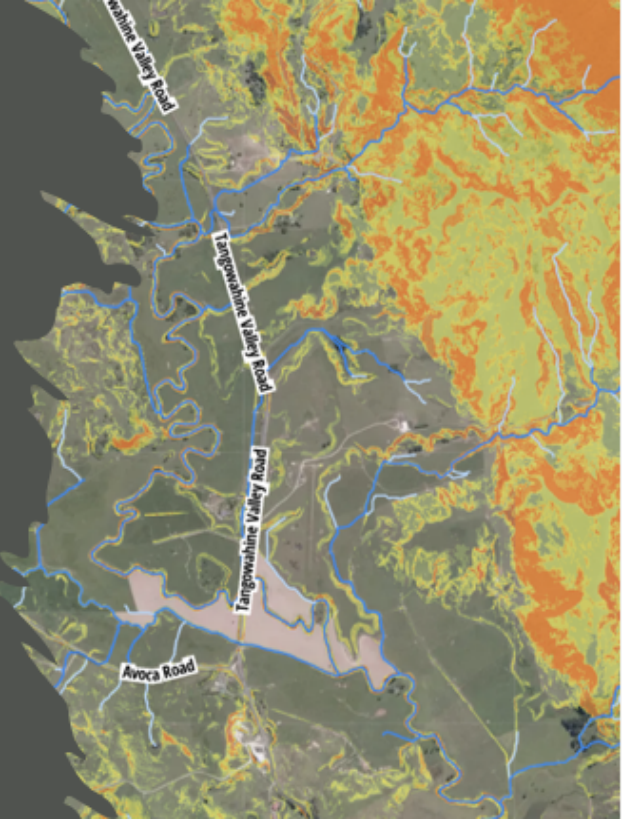


**>146,000 hectares managed under KMR plans**



**KMR is now investing across the full landscape**

At its start, KMR invested in projects to protect waterways. From September 2023, KMR has been able to invest in projects across the landscape, accelerating our scale-up & ability to reduce sediment.



**Focus of KMR Investments**

- Highly erodible land.
- Land with direct connectivity to waterways or the Moana itself.

**Half the catchment is erosion prone:**  
~ 300,000ha of Highly Erodible Land (*LUC*>6e)

- 45% is on pasture (80% drystock, 17% dairy).

**~13% of land generates ~40% of sediment into the Moana**

- Sediment disproportionately from pastoral land.

**Roughly 50/50 stream bank vs. hill slope erosion,** but the catchment is not uniform:

- Northern = more hill slope erosion (>60%).
- Southern = more stream bank erosion (>70%).

**KMR provides a Plan and on-farm advice**

- Landowners are connected with a trained Field Advisor.
- The Field Advisor walks the land to understand erosion risks & identify best options to reduce erosion.
- A Sediment Reduction Plan (SRP) records agreed project.
- KMR contracts the landowner to deliver the project.

**Our grants support a (necessary) diversity of projects**

To achieve our outcomes, KMR runs 2 grants: Landowner Grant and Whenua Whānui Fund. KMR also invests in Navigator demonstration projects to share learnings and best practice.

**Landowner Grants**

- “**1:1** contract” between KMR and landowner.
- Sediment Reduction Plan developed with a **trained local Field Advisor** (free service).
- KMR co-funds **up to 50%** of estimated project costs in the Plan e.g fencing and planting.

**Whenua Whānui Fund (WWF) Grants**

- “**1: Many**” contract between KMR & community group, iwi/hapū, marae, catchment group.
- WWF can support projects on **collectively-owned land**.
- WWF also supports projects on **public land** that involve community.
- KMR co-funds **project planning** and development of a **Sediment Reduction Plan** (free).
- KMR co-funds **up to 70%** of estimated costs in the Plan and some **project overheads** to reflect the real time/costs needed to engage, coordinate and project manage groups.
- Applicants include groups and landowners where there is **collective benefit** from a project.
- Groups include iwi/hapū, marae, landcare groups, fish and game entities, trusts on land with multiple ownership, public landowners, reserve boards, kaitiaki, **legal and non-legal** entities.

**Navigator Projects**

- KMR ‘Navigator projects’ are flagships that demonstrate best practice in reducing sediment losses from the land, and share learnings with the community, sector or iwi/hapū.
- Across the catchment, 13 Navigator projects are contracted or in development.

**KMR engagement is targeted**

As a voluntary programme, positive communications & user-experience are key to engaging & retaining landowners, our core customers.

**Landowner Survey Feedback**

**The experience of working with KMR is described very positively:**

- The application process for the KMR grant was deemed as ‘easy’ or ‘very easy’ (66.7%), as was the KMR contracting process (75%).
- All other responses to this question were ‘neutral’.
- KMR was especially commended for effective planting projects, and working towards shared results with landowners.

**Most landowners could not think of any ways KMR can improve:**

- KMR is seen as a significant, forward-thinking leader that contributes to environmental well-being in the catchment.
- Respondents appreciated the opportunity to kick-start sustainable farming practices and native-planting.

**Changing landowner mix**

While KMR works with a wide variety of community, marae and hapū interests, dairy farmers are our largest primary sector landowner group. However, with 3 drystock farmers in the catchment to every dairy farmer, a growing number of projects are with drystock farmers.

- Dairy: 46% / Drystock: 37% / Horticulture or other: 6%
- Lifestyle blocks: 8%

**KMR creates new local jobs & career pathways**

As a *Jobs for Nature* programme, KMR has a dual focus on supporting people into jobs and providing training and development. A particular focus for KMR is to develop nationally-relevant training and career pathways to grow a cohort of Freshwater Farm Planners.

KMR creates new, local employment in rural areas, right across the catchment:

- **28 local businesses and 20 nurseries** accredited as **KMR project suppliers**.
- Landowners can also do the work themselves, meeting KMR standards.
- As at 31 June 2025, through KMR project investments **398,000 hours of new work** had been generated through KMR contracts.

**KMR pilots national qualifications**

Working with the NZ Association of Resource Management (NZARM), KMR is lifting training and employment outcomes in the Kaipara Moana catchment. In 2023, KMR and NZARM piloted the development and roll-out of two national training courses to help KMR Field Advisors obtain future qualifications in Freshwater Farm Planning.

KMR Field Advisors have also piloted a national Capability Assessment Tool for freshwater farm planners and received in return receive in return a tailored qualifications development plan which will be supported by KMR.



**KMR is already an award-winning initiative**

KMR is one of only 4 initiatives from NZ to be nominated for the prestigious Earthshot Prize 2025. We will learn by October if KMR is a global finalist.

In 2025, KMR won the Environmental Action in the Community Award at the Kaipara District Environmental Awards. In 2024, KMR was a finalist in the Sustainable Business Awards, and named on the ‘Next 95’ list which recognises nationally-leading environmental innovators. In 2023, KMR was showcased for our work in the community at the Ballance Farm Environment Awards in both Auckland and Northland.

Such nominations and awards reflect KMR’s ongoing excellence, as well as our systematic use of scientific datasets and digital tools to identify and prioritise actions that will deliver the greatest environmental benefits.

**Our projects improve rural resilience....**

KMR’s project investments in rural and often remote areas not only support local employment, they strengthen rural resilience to extreme weather, climate shocks and economic downturns. In particular, tree planting and hillside stabilisation will reduce future flooding and landslide impacts.

**Case Study - West Partnership**

A review of a typical KMR farmer highlighted the benefits of working with KMR. The West Partnership, a family-run 403 ha farm on medium hill country in Northland, worked with KMR to protect erosion-prone areas and native bush remnants, leading to significant improvements to water quality, farm infrastructure and land management systems.

- Scope of KMR project**
- Retirement of 9.45 hectares of ecologically sensitive land across two priority areas
  - Installation of 2.45 km of fencing, subdividing one large pasture paddock into five smaller paddocks and adding a laneway, to better protect sensitive land
  - Fencing and protection of two wetlands, totalling 0.45 hectares
- Results & Benefits**
- Economic: Improved grazing efficiency (\$12,800/year in increased pasture income), and opening the way for future biodiversity credits
  - Environmental: Reduced sediment loss, enhanced biodiversity, and stronger resilience to climate impacts
  - Operational: Better stock flow, time savings (~24 hrs/year), improved animal welfare, and reduced stress for farmer, dogs and stock.

- Financial Overview**
- Total investment (KMR and landowner): \$62,925
  - Revenue uplift on farm: \$14,000
  - Benefit-to-cost ratio: 22%
  - **Estimated payback period: 4.5 years**

**....and reduce primary sector risk**

Globally, New Zealand’s highest value markets are setting increasingly stringent environmental standards, driven by shareholder and customer demands. Through our work, KMR is supporting New Zealand’s primary sector to successfully respond.

The New Zealand primary sector feeds around 40 million consumers a year. **We are therefore highly exposed to changing global market norms and standards.** As with the recent decision by Nestlé to set new carbon emissions standards, New Zealand exporters are facing **more stringent requirements for environmental sustainability** in our food and fibre exports.

It is not just consumers and private companies lifting the bar for environmental performance. The EU has recently introduced the **European Green Deal**, a plan for Europe to be the first ‘climate-neutral continent’, with no net greenhouse emissions by 2050.

KMR’s co-funding of sediment reduction projects can reduce landowner and sector exposure to climate-related market risk. In addition, KMR can provide important third-party verification of project scope and completion via our digital tools.

**Farm Plans remain a sector priority**

All of the main primary sector producers in New Zealand have committed to farm environment plans to achieve water quality and other outcomes. Irrespective of regulation, there remain strong industry drivers for landowners to take action to improve environmental performance on farm. KMR can help with planning, co-investment and verification of relevant actions.

**KMR accelerates progress towards Council goals**

Auckland Council’s 10 Year Budget 2021 - 2031 lists water quality as one of the top issues facing the region. The region’s Long Term Plan specifically commits to cleaning up the Kaipara Harbour via its contribution to KMR.

Northland Regional Council’s current Long Term Plan (2021 - 2031) notes sediment as a primary issue for Northland, and sets out its commitments to hosting and co-funding KMR .

**KMR aligns to national priorities**

KMR activities are well aligned to the new Government’s ethos of voluntary action (c.f. regulation), local solutions (c.f. national prescription) and investing directly to achieve outcomes.

KMR activities align directly with central and local government priorities to boost **resilience** to floods and other **extreme weather**, support **‘localism’**, sustain **rural communities**, and **grow the economy**.

- KMR activities align to and provide momentum to a number of central government priorities, specifically:
- Regional priorities for resilience to extreme weather through:
    - Restoring wetlands.
    - Planting near stream banks to reduce floodwater erosion.
  - Local economic diversification including:
    - Growing new revenue streams on-farm from small-scale farm forestry.

**Demonstrated return on KMR investment**

In March 2025, an independent report evaluated the benefits of KMR using well-tested valuation methodology. The report found:

- KMR is expected to return ~\$423 million in total benefits
- For every \$1 invested via KMR, \$3.94 is generated - **a return on investment (ROI) of almost 4 to 1**
- The primary value generated from KMR is economic – e.g. support for local jobs, local purchase of materials, and sustaining primary production.

