



Māori data sovereignty: Opportunities for policy agencies

26 July 2017

Indigenous and Māori Data Sovereignty: Overview

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WHAT IS ID-SOV?

Data Sovereignty = jurisdiction.

Data is subject to the laws of the nation **within which it is stored**



ID-Sov is about the rights of a nation to govern the collection, ownership, and application of its own data (USIDSN).



Indigenous Data Sovereignty –

data is subject to the laws of the nation **from which it is collected** (including Tribal nations)



GROWING GLOBAL RECOGNITION

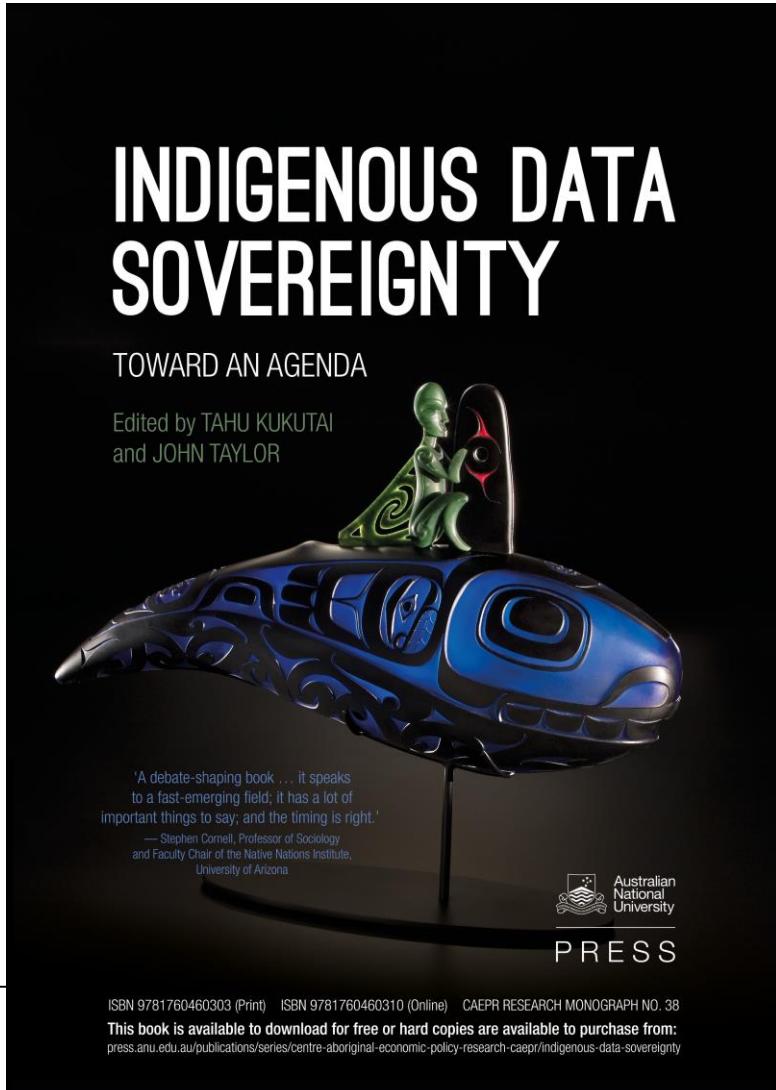
2007 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

2008 WHO Commission on the Social Determinants of Health

a ‘Minimum Health Equity Surveillance System’. As part of the system, ‘good-quality data on the health of Indigenous Peoples should be available, where applicable’.

Indigenous recognition in the **International Open Data Charter** – under development

THERE'S A BOOK



Free download:
<https://press.anu.edu.au>

'Whalerider', Preston Singletary & Lewis Tamihana Gardiner



SELECT FINDINGS

UNDRIP requires a relocation of authority over data from nation-states back to indigenous peoples

Official statistical systems ill-equipped to support the governance aspirations of indigenous polities

Some NSOs recognise need for change but still focused on the needs of national governments rather than indigenous peoples

GAPS:

- **Models for data governance**
- Indigenous epistemologies for data gathering and analysis
- Metrics of indigenous development and wellbeing
- Legal mechanisms for ID-Sov

ID-SOV IS A SIGNIFICANT ISSUE IN AOTEAROA

**Iwi wanting access
to and possession
of data for their
own development**

**Regional health
data sharing
agreement includes
Māori D-Sov**



**Iwi Chairs
Forum
Data Iwi
Leadership
Group**

**Independent
Maori
Statutory
Board :
Data
Strategy
Expert Panel**

ADVOCACY FOR MĀORI

- Data rights and interests
- Data governance
- Data storage and security
- Data access and control

<https://www.temanararaunga.maori.nz/>

TE MANA RARAUNGA

Māori Data Sovereignty Network

WHAT ARE MĀORI DATA?

Data from Māori (self-generated)

From iwi, Māori organisations and businesses

Data about Māori (generated by others)

Used to describe or compare Māori collectives

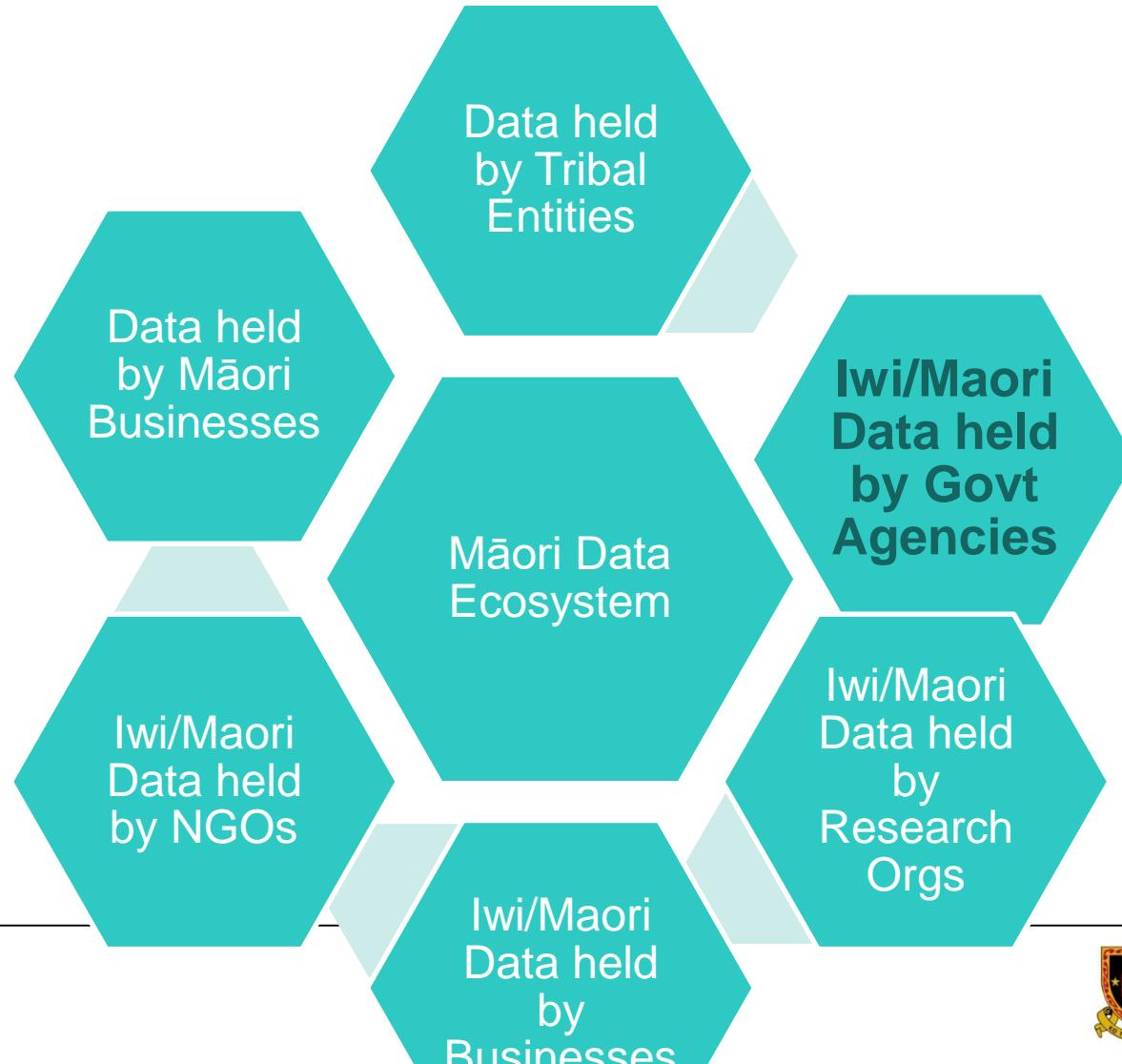
Data about Māori resources

Generated by self and/or others



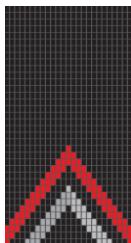


MĀORI DATA ECOSYSTEM



DATA AND THE TREATY

- ‘**Maori Data Sovereignty**’ recognizes that Māori data should, at the very least, be subject to Māori governance (**Article 1**)
- The ‘**Cultural License**’ focuses on the social contract between Crown and Iwi through their Treaty relationship (**Article 2**).
- The ‘**Social License**’ relates to a social contract or expectation that the government will act in the interest of its citizens. (**Article 3**)



ID-SOV RESEARCH

Māori Data
Audit Tool
(accountability)

Tikanga & Big
Data
(governance)

How are data a
taonga
(our concept of
value)

Enduring aspirations in digital
age
(Ngā Pae – Māori CoRE)

University of
Waikato
research
platform

ID-Sov
Research Programme



CONTROL AS EXERCISING ID-SOV

DATA GOVERNANCE OPPORTUNITIES



State agencies, NGOs

TRIBAL
REGISTERS

LOW
CONTROL

HIGH
CONTROL



DATA RISKS (THE 5 C's)

Cultural context

Control

Content

Consent

Capability

Source: Kukutai and Walter (2016). Making data work for Indigenous peoples
International Open Data Conference, October 7, Madrid.
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DATA OPPORTUNITIES (5 P's)

Power of
the data

Prosper

Peoples

Protect

Partner

Source: Kukutai and Walter (2016). Making data work for Indigenous peoples
International Open Data Conference, October 7, Madrid.
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THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

Māori data and health: some issues and risks

- Health is patterned by ethnicity in Aotearoa-NZ
- Ethnicity data are critical to monitoring the differential and racialised distribution of risks and benefits in society

BUT, we continue to see:

- Uncritical and under-theorised use of the concept of ethnicity in health research and policy
- Perpetuation of ideas of ethnicity/‘race’ as biologically or genetically real in research on Māori health
- A focus on the variable of Māori ethnicity as the “risk”

Māori data and health: some issues and risks

Decontextualisation

- Seeing people outside of their contexts and realities (as the sum of administrative – and sometimes survey – data)
- Fixing characteristics of individuals as static
- Decontextualising the data collections: What were they designed for? How were the variables chosen? Who were they designed to serve?
 - Data collected in racialised and colonial spaces will embody this context
 - Algorithms will also embody the biases in the data
- Decontextualising indigenous experiences of surveillance

Māori data and health: some issues and risks

Risks of risk prediction

- Conceptualising variables as "risk factors" inherent to, or a characteristic of, the individual
- Conceptualising statistical risk (e.g. an association) interpreted as causal
- Reliance on variables that 'mark' individuals, but no variables that measure the processes and systems that impact individuals
 - What unmeasured variables or processes is ethnicity a proxy for?
 - What are the risks of making decisions based on unmeasured variables?

Māori data and health: some issues and risks

Quality

- Unresolved data quality issues in the health sector e.g. issues with ethnicity data on NHI and other administrative health datasets
- Potential for low-quality analysis where approaches are data-driven, without:
 - A research question or hypothesis
 - An understanding of the current evidence/literature in the field
 - A nuanced understanding of the limitations and quality of the data variables in datasets

REFLECTIONS

- What are the ID-Sov data risks (the 5 Cs) in your organisation/sector? What steps can be taken to address those risks?
- What are the ID-Sov opportunities in your organisation/sector? How can those opportunities be realised?