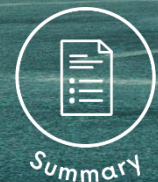


SUSTAINABLE  
SEAS

Ko ngā moana  
whakauka

# Blue Economy Principles for Aotearoa New Zealand

June 2023



Summary

# Blue Economy Principles for Aotearoa New Zealand

## Principles to support a sustainable blue economy

This document sets out principles to underpin Aotearoa New Zealand's journey towards a sustainable blue economy. The Sustainable Seas National Science Challenge defines a blue economy through a uniquely Aotearoa lens, which places the moana, and the relationship of people with the moana, at its heart.

The declining health of our marine environment raises serious questions about how we care for and manage the oceans. These blue economy principles combine aspirations for healthy oceans with society's requirements and expectations.

The principles were developed by reviewing blue economy principles used internationally, and then researching and establishing a set of blue economy principles domestically.

The Blue Economy principles are designed to support:

- people making decisions about investment, regulation, production, science funding, resource management, and governance — to nurture, build, or develop a blue economy
- people interested in transitioning to and tailoring the blue economy to their circumstances — including businesses, government agencies, iwi authorities, local and regional government, communities, hapu, and whānau.

Implementing these blue economy principles would help people and organisations:

- meet international best practice expectations
- achieve market advantages
- support communities and central and local government to improve the health of marine environments and people's well-being.

The principles are designed to align with iwi interests in governance, management, and the use of marine environments and resources.

## In Aotearoa, people and the moana are at the heart of a sustainable blue economy

A blue economy definition for Aotearoa means marine activities that generate economic value and contribute positively to social, cultural, and ecological well-being.

By committing to and implementing the blue economy principles:

- decision makers will help to leave marine environments in a better condition than they found them and support all New Zealanders to enjoy and derive diverse values from marine environments today and in the future
- businesses will develop sustainable strategies for medium and long-term success
- people's relationships and connections to the moana will be informed by Te Ao Māori and Te Tiriti o Waitangi opportunities.

## Blue economy principles work with ecosystem-based management and empowering mana moana principles

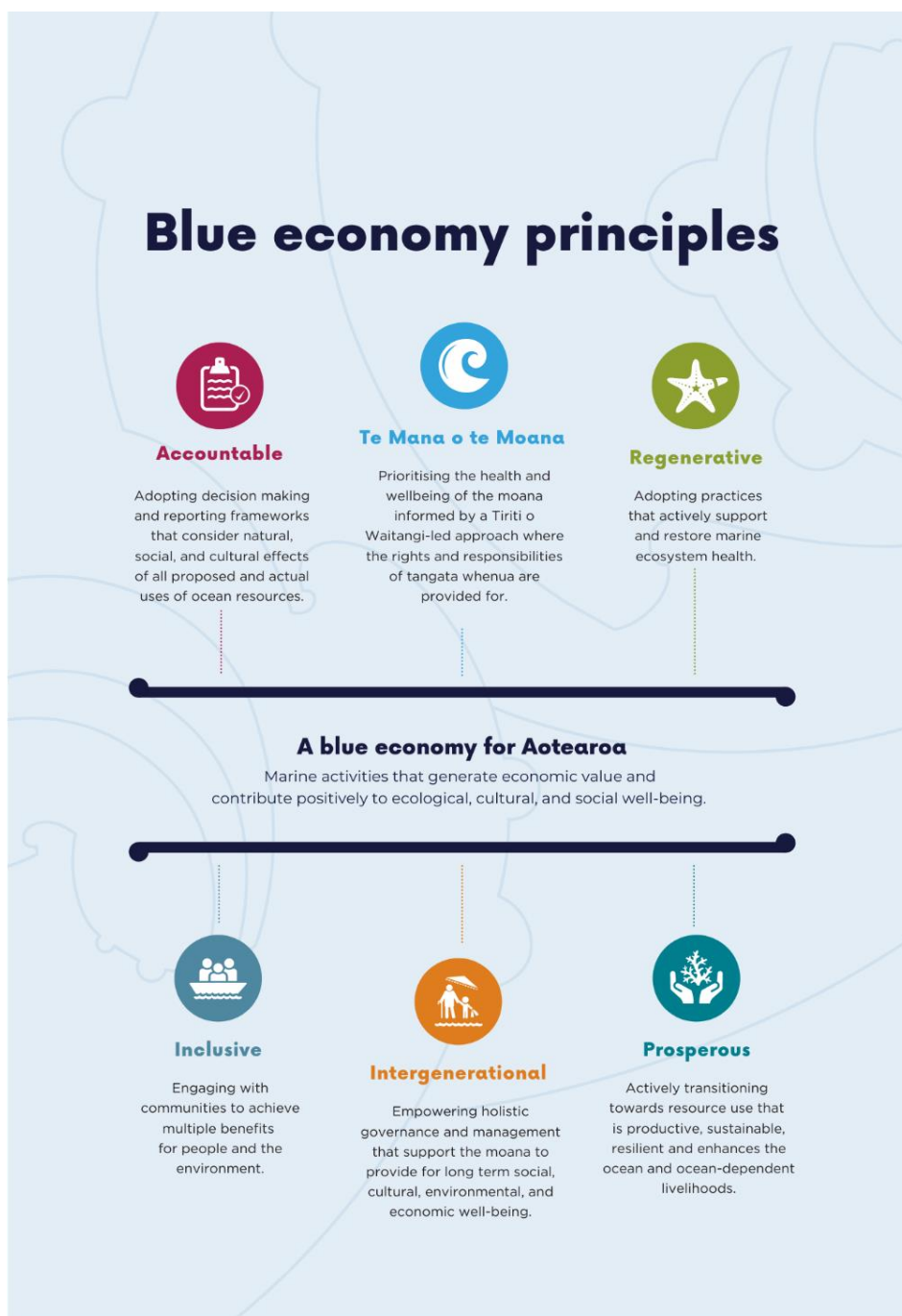
We developed these principles after reviewing blue economy principles internationally, by drawing on Sustainable Seas National Science Challenge research on a blue economy for Aotearoa, and conducting workshops in a targeted outreach process.

For more information, you can read our report on Developing blue economy principles for Aotearoa New Zealand, which is available on our website.

These blue economy principles align with two other sets of principles, designed to deliver the Challenge objective and vision:

- [Ecosystem-based management \(EBM\)](#)
- Empowering mana moana (in development)

Together, the three sets of principles draw on three core workstreams and are designed to work together to secure medium-term legacies for the Sustainable Seas National Science Challenge.



## Implementing the Aotearoa New Zealand blue economy principles

Principle	What this might mean in practice
<p><b>Te Mana o te Moana</b></p> <p>Prioritising the health and wellbeing of the moana informed by a Tiriti o Waitangi-led approach, where the rights and responsibilities of tangata whenua are provided for.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritising the health and well-being of the ocean in all marine estate management</li> <li>• Considering a Te Tiriti o Waitangi-led approach involving partnership and collaboration with tangata whenua</li> <li>• Understanding the relevant rights and interests of tangata whenua</li> <li>• Supporting kaitiakitanga – the responsibility of tangata whenua to preserve, restore, enhance, and guide the sustainable use of the moana for present and future generations</li> <li>• Using appropriate tikanga and mātauranga Māori to guide decisions and actions</li> </ul>
<p><b>Prosperous</b></p> <p>Actively transitioning towards resource use that is productive, sustainable, resilient and enhances the ocean and ocean-dependent livelihoods.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using the blue economy principles to guide branding, marketing, and promotional campaigns</li> <li>• Seeking out restorative finance options</li> <li>• Adopting best practice environmental and social certification schemes</li> </ul>
<p><b>Accountable</b></p> <p>Adopting decision making and reporting frameworks that consider natural, social, and cultural effects of all proposed and actual uses of ocean resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopting ‘four capitals’, ‘nature-based disclosure’, or other multiple-bottom line reporting regimes</li> <li>• Adopting transparent, evidence-based decision-making and reporting processes around environmental and community impacts (adverse and beneficial)</li> <li>• Measuring and reporting progress against local, national, and international benchmarks such as the Sustainable Development Goals, the blue economy principles, or appropriate certification standards</li> </ul>
<p><b>Regenerative</b></p> <p>Adopting practices that actively support and restore marine ecosystem health.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moving from harm reduction approaches to designing for minimised harm and actively restoring damaged environments as part of standard practice</li> <li>• Investing in circular economy solutions</li> <li>• Establishing funding mechanisms that prioritise regenerative business models</li> <li>• Contributing productively to ecosystem-based management of the marine environment</li> </ul>
<p><b>Intergenerational</b></p> <p>Empowering holistic governance and management that support the moana, to provide for long-term social, cultural, environmental, and economic well-being.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking a multi-generational approach to investment and prioritisation decisions</li> <li>• Developing regulatory approaches, science funding, and business development models that prioritise intergenerational strategies and commitments</li> </ul>
<p><b>Inclusive</b></p> <p>Engaging with communities to achieve multiple benefits for people and the environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaging communities in relevant decision-making through participatory processes and responding meaningfully to community interests and concerns</li> <li>• Developing novel ways to share the benefits of marine resource use with communities</li> <li>• Developing regulatory approaches, science funding and business development models that enable community engagement</li> </ul>

**Summary produced for Sustainable Seas National Science Challenge synthesis strand  
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**For more information on this project, visit:**

[sustainableseaschallenge.co.nz/our-research/enhanced-blue-economy](https://sustainableseaschallenge.co.nz/our-research/enhanced-blue-economy)



**About the Sustainable Seas National Science Challenge**

Our vision is for Aotearoa New Zealand to have healthy marine ecosystems that provide value for all New Zealanders. We have 75 research projects that bring together around 250 scientists, social scientists, economists, and experts in mātauranga Māori and policy from across Aotearoa New Zealand. We are one of 11 National Science Challenges, funded by the Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment.

[www.sustainableseaschallenge.co.nz](https://www.sustainableseaschallenge.co.nz)

*Cover image: Hamish McCormick*