

COOK ISLANDS UNITED PARTY MANIFESTO

Akarongo, Manakonako e te Aroa



2026 General Elections

Let's do this. Let's stay connected.

Printing Company: Rarotonga Printing Limited, March 2026

Graphic Designer: Montel A. Williams

Photography: Junior and Cheryl Marsters and Konini Rongo

Front Cover Image and Motifs: Designed by Sam Ataera

Vaka and Island Image: Navigating Our Direction - Island By Island

Māori Translator: Tenoa Puna

Tikitiki-tangata Motif - People united in purpose

Ni'o Mango Motif - Protection, strength, and courage

Circle Motif - Woven together as the people of the Cook Islands

Spearhead Motif - Leadership, direction and purpose

Akapapa'anga

Contents

To Tatou Arataki	5	Our Leader
To Tatou Akakoro'anga	7	Our Purpose
	8	Our Vision and Mission
To Tatou Ora'anga Tangata	9	Our Values
To Tatou Parani Angaanga	10	Our Action Plan
To Tatou Kaveinga Nui	15	Our Direction
To Tatou Kaveinga Akateretere	16	Our Policies



TO TATOU Arataki OUR LEADER

1 Korinetia 13:13

***E teiane, te vai nei te akarongo, te manakonako, e te aroa, e toru ra;
ko tei maata ra i taua toru nei, ko te aroa ia.***

Aere mai ka rave tatou i teia. Kia noo tamou piri ua rai.

I a tatou e akavaitata atu nei ki te ikianga maata o te 2026, te rave nei tatou ma tetai pupu aronga tangata tei akaatinga e ma te akatinamou ki runga i te oraanga o to tatou iti tangata e te oraanga o to tatou pae nooanga. Ko ta tatou manifesto te akaari mai nei i ta tatou akaatinga anga ki te iti tangata Kuki Airani. E ma te tuku ua rai i te anoano o to tatou iti tangata ei mua ua rai e ma te arapaki atu ki te tatamakianga ta ratou e kite nei i te au ra. Ko te pukuatu ra o teia manifesto no runga i te oraanga tei nooia, au manakonakoanga e te au ravenga tukeke tei akaputupuia i roto i te au marama o te uriuri kapua ki te iti tangata o Rarotonga nei, te Pa Enuā e to vao mai i te Patireia.

Na roto i te noo akatukati anga kia koe, ka rauka te maramarama tau no te au anoano kia raveia kia tau ki te akanoonoo anga. Ko ta tatou Kuki Airani United Party kua akakeuia kia kimi i te au ravenga no te akameitaki atu i te oraanga e ma te paruru atu i to tatou paepae puakapaanga tei tukuia ki roto i to tatou rima no te au uki e manga nui. Ka aere kapiti tatou, ma te taokotai, kia akatupu ma te akangateitei i to tatou iti tangata, to tatou au putuputuanga, e ratou te ka aru mai ia tatou.

Te Atua Te Aroa
Hon Teariki Heather

TO TATOU Arataki OUR LEADER

1 Corinthians 13:13

***And now these three remain: faith, hope and love.
But the greatest of these is love.***

Let's do this. Let's stay connected.

As we approach the 2026 general elections, we do so with a team of candidates committed to prioritising the health of our people and the health of our environment. This manifesto shows our commitment to the people of the Cook Islands, putting the needs of our people first and responding to the real challenges they face every day. At the heart of this manifesto are the lived experiences, ideas and solutions that were gathered over months of open discussions with you the people of Rarotonga, the Pa Enua, and overseas.

By staying connected to you, we have a better understanding of what needs to be done in priority order. We the Cook Islands United Party are determined to find solutions that improve our livelihoods and protect our environment which we are entrusted to safeguard for future generations. Let's move together, united, to create a future that honours our people, our communities, and those who will come after us.

*Te Atua Te Aroa
Hon Teariki Heather*

TO TATOU Akakoro'anga OUR LOGO

For 200 years, the Cook Islands have been influenced by the Christian principles of FAITH, HOPE, AND LOVE. These principles influence the thinking and actions of the Cook Islands United Party.

The 'Dove' represents unity, community well-being and compassion to build and maintain relationships with respect.

The '15 stars' represent each island that makes up the Cook Islands and are specifically circled around the frame of the logo to represent the importance of each individual island.

The 'Blue' background signifies our geographical position in the Blue Pacific region and our relationship with Pacific and international countries.



TO TATOU Akakoro'anga OUR PURPOSE



OUR VISION

Empowering the aspirations of our people will be our priority.

OUR MISSION

To stay connected and responsive to the needs of our people.

TO TATOU Ora'anga Tangata OUR VALUES

Tu Tauturu | To Help

Supporting the elderly, parents, youth, children and people with disabilities and special needs.

Tu Akono | To Protect

Protecting our environment, culture and traditions.

Tu Tavini | To Serve

Serving our communities.

Tu Akakoromaki | To Persevere

Serving with patience, respect and understanding.

TO TATOU Parani Angaanga OUR ACTION PLAN

Putting People First

Increase Welfare Benefits

Many families are under increasing pressure due to the high cost of food, housing, and everyday essentials.

Keep and Bring Our People Home

Incentivise Cook Islanders

Our people are needed. Let's value them to keep and bring them home.

Free Water

Reduce the Cost of Living

Families, schools, churches, farmers and growers are struggling to pay their water bills, especially at a time when the cost of living is already high.

Protect Our Moana

Protect Our National Asset

Our ocean is under threat, and its delicate ecosystem is showing signs of stress.

Homebased Healthcare

Strengthening Nursing and Caregiving Services

In-home care services are needed for the people of Rarotonga, especially for those who rely on family caregivers or who have no family support available.

TO TATOU Parani Angaanga OUR ACTION PLAN

Cook Islands Māori Culture

Strengthening Our Way of Life

Cook Islands Māori language, māori values, language and akonoanga, are poorly resourced. Priority needs to be given to identifying the resources needed.

Cultural Youth Initiatives

Widen Learning Alternatives

Youth learn in various ways. More learning environments are needed, so that youth can thrive with excellence in Peu Māori and Peu Papa'a.

Healthy Nation Health Economy

Reduce Non-Communicable Diseases

Increase the availability of nutritious unprocessed food options to our people to prevent the further rise of non-communicable diseases in the Cook Islands.

Land Tenureship

Our Ancestry Link and Birthright

Ensure land remains a legacy to our people through their indigenous birthright passed down on from our ancestors.

Relationship With New Zealand

Restore and Reaffirm

A binding "National Referendum" will ensure the people of the Cook Islands have their say on our relationship with New Zealand.

TO TATOU Parani Angaanga OUR ACTION PLAN

Grow Our Local Food Economy

Incentivise Import Substitution

Farmers, Fishermen and Growers need to be valued and better supported to be the preference over imported goods.

Tourism Management

Manage Tourism Wisely

No tourism development is worthwhile, if our people are without water and our environment is harmed.
Growing the right type of tourism is what's needed.

Rarotonga and Pa Enua Waste Facilities

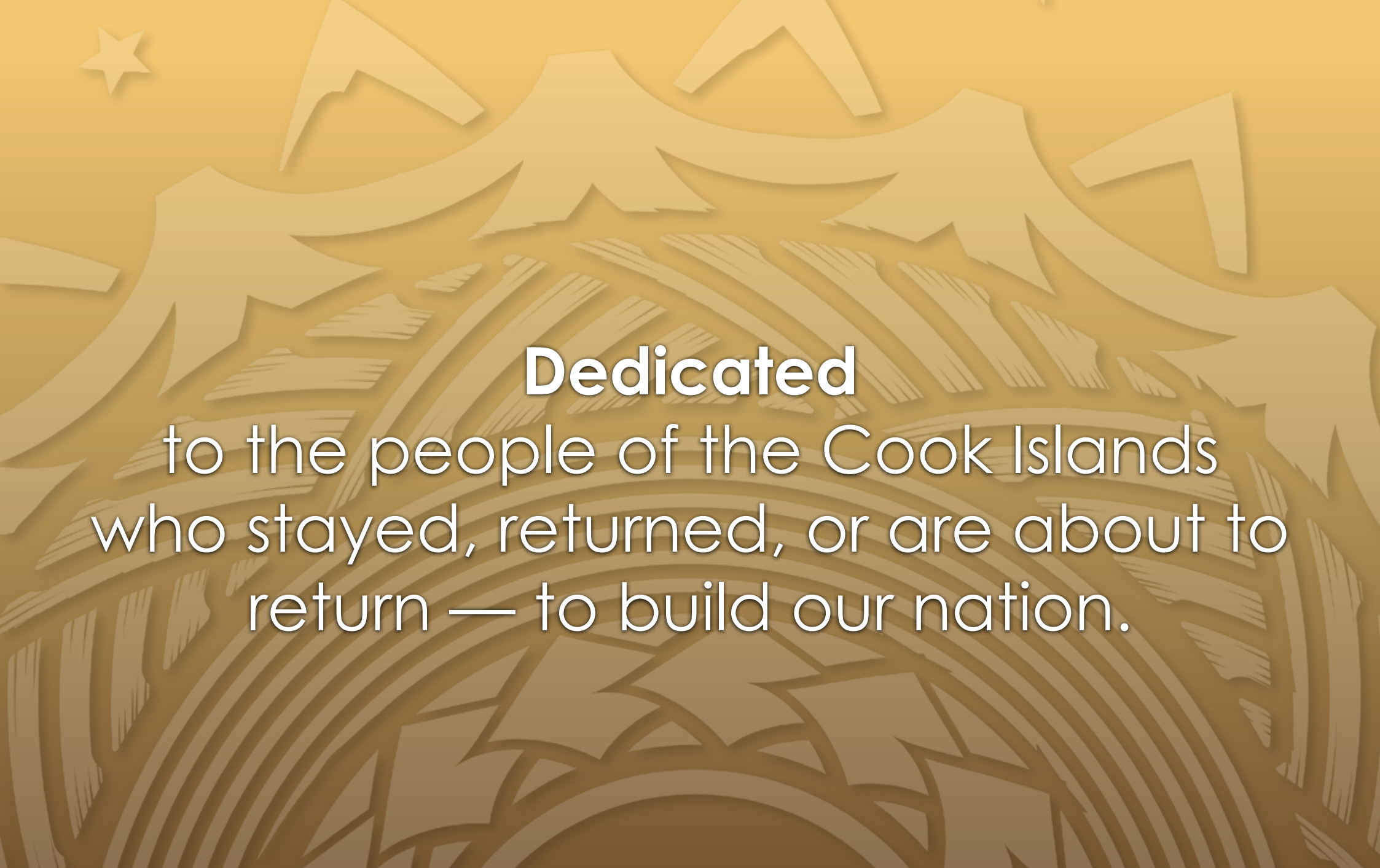
Reduce, Recycle and Reuse

Urgent need to deal with the Cook Islands waste to prevent negative impacts on our people, and our environment.

Stronger Parliament

Thriving Pa Enua

A binding “National Referendum” to address the significant decline in Pa Enua populations, including reducing the size of Parliament and reallocating Members of Parliament’s salaries to their respective Pa Enua budget.



Dedicated
to the people of the Cook Islands
who stayed, returned, or are about to
return — to build our nation.



TO TATOU Kaveinga Nui OUR DIRECTION

**This is our home. Our responsibility. Our future.
“Mou te ko, mou te ere. Kia pukuru o vaevae kia mokora o kaki.”**

The Cook Islands is not just a place – we are a people, an identity, and a living connection between our Enuā, our Moana, and our future generations.

Our commitment is to build a Cook Islands that is self-assured, culturally grounded, environmentally protected, and economically resilient.

We are guided by the responsibility handed down from past generations to protect, to nurture, and to pass on stronger foundations to those who follow.

Our governance is guided not only by policy, but by the wisdom of our ancestors and the practices, values, and cultural traditions that have sustained our people for generations.

We will ensure that development does not come at the cost of our identity, and that progress does not erase our foundations.

TO TATOU Kaveinga Akateretere OUR POLICIES

“Putting People First”

Increase Child Welfare
to \$90 fortnightly

Increase Disability and Infirm
Support to \$80 fortnightly

Increase Pensioner
\$370 fortnightly

*“Tamariki, pa metua, and people
with disabilities face the real
threat of poverty. Action is overdue
— time to act now!”*

Hon Rob Heather
Member of Parliament, Akaoa, Rarotonga



TO TATOU Kaveinga Akateretere OUR POLICIES

Our Commitment

To better support our children, elderly, and people with disabilities.

Vision

A Cook Islands where every person is valued and well cared for.

TO TATOU Kaveinga Akateretere OUR POLICIES

“Free Water”

We are committed to ensuring that water for homes, families, and domestic food production is free and accessible.

“To Tatou Vai should be a water service, not a water business.”

*Justine Flanagan
Keep Our Water Free Petitioner*



TO TATOU Kaveinga Akateretere OUR POLICIES

Our Commitment

To manage water resources and ensure fairness between communities and commercial users.

Vision

A Cook Islands where water for non-commercial purposes is free, and commercial users pay their fair share.

TO TATOU Kaveinga Akateretere OUR POLICIES

“Keep and Bring Our People Home”

We are committed to creating competitive incentive packages to keep and bring Cook Islanders home.

“People are a nation’s greatest asset. The skills, knowledge, and, experience that drive families, support vital services and strengthens our economy.”

Elizabeth Iro
Former Secretary of Health



TO TATOU Kaveinga Akateretere OUR POLICIES

Our Commitment

To create real opportunities so our people will stay, return, and build their future at home.



Vision

A thriving Cook Islands where our people choose to stay, return, and contribute to our future.

TO TATOU Kaveinga Akateretere OUR POLICIES

“Protect Our Moana”

Our Moana is a living inheritance. Our responsibility is to act as guardians of our Moana, protecting valuable marine ecosystems and ensuring its health and abundance for future generations.

“History tells us that extractive industries are expensive to operate and, scientifically, have yet to prove it is safe to do so without harming our sensitive deep-sea marine life.”

***Dr Teina Rongo,
Marine Scientist***



TO TATOU Kaveinga Akateretere OUR POLICIES

Our Commitment

To protect our ocean and natural environment for future generations.

Vision

A Cook Islands that protects the Moana while securing a sustainable future for our people.

TO TATOU Kaveinga Akateretere OUR POLICIES

“Homebased Healthcare”

We are committed to strengthening the delivery of home-based services for the elderly, people with disabilities, and individuals recovering from illness or surgery.

“More help in personnel and resources is needed to care for our most vulnerable in the community. Family caregivers are exhausted and urgently calling out for help.”

***Maui Short and Tarina Moorfield
Directors of Toku Nei Ora’anga Ora***



TO TATOU Kaveinga Akateretere OUR POLICIES

Our Commitment

To reduce pressure on hospital services and create a more sustainable and compassionate health system for the Cook Islands.



Vision

A Cook Islands that improves the quality of life for patients, and families.

TO TATOU Kaveinga Akateretere OUR POLICIES

“Relationship with New Zealand”

We are committed to honouring our long-standing constitutional and historical ties under our “free association” arrangement.

“Free association is not symbolic – it carries an expectation of cooperation, communication, and alignment on significant matters affecting both nations.”

***Hon Winston Peters
Leader, New Zealand First***



TO TATOU Kaveinga Akateretere OUR POLICIES

Our Commitment

To restore our diplomatic relations with New Zealand, our closest partner and an important part of our history, economy, and future.

Vision

A Cook Islands united with New Zealand,
united for our people.

TO TATOU Kaveinga Akateretere OUR POLICIES

“Cook Islands Māori Culture”

We are committed to ensuring Cook Islands Māori values, language, and Akonoanga Māori are resourced to the highest standard, so they are actively lived and practised in our home, schools, and workplaces.

“Our reo is our heritage; to nourish it in homes and schools is to nourish our future.”

*Mama Tupou Manapori
Teacher and language advocate*



TO TATOU Kaveinga Akateretere OUR POLICIES

Our Commitment

To protect, strengthen, and resource Cook Islands Māori values, language, and akonoanga so they remain central to our daily lives.

Vision

A Cook Islands where our culture is strong, visible, and guides our national identity.

TO TATOU Kaveinga Akateretere OUR POLICIES

“Healthy Nation Healthy Economy”

We are committed to building a healthy nation by making local food the most affordable choice for families over processed, imported foods.

“Our traditional way of eating has always been fresh, made with love, and by far the best for us over processed foods.”

***Elizabeth Iro
Former Secretary of Health***



TO TATOU Kaveinga Akateretere OUR POLICIES

Our Commitment

To expand the variety of locally grown produce, poultry, meat products and kai moana.

Vision

Cook Islands families are healthier, farmers, fishermen, and growers are major contributors to the economy, and healthcare costs are reduced.

TO TATOU Kaveinga Akateretere OUR POLICIES

“Cultural Youth Initiatives Widen Learning Alternatives”

We are committed to creating more inclusive and enriching environments so youth can thrive in Peu Māori and Peu Papa’a.

“Our youth are our future. Investing in them ensures they are grounded in their identity, gives them confidence in knowing that their potential is limitless, guaranteeing a future filled with endless possibilities.”

Jackie Tuara

Businesswoman and Cultural Advocate



TO TATOU Kaveinga Akateretere OUR POLICIES

Our Commitment

To create cultural learning environments where Cook Islands Māori language and Akonoanga are innovatively learnt and delivered.

Vision

A Cook Islands that empowers our cultural and community knowledge holders to enrich the next generation.

TO TATOU Kaveinga Akateretere OUR POLICIES

“Land Tenureship”

We are committed to land reformation to balance the needs of resident and absentee Cook Islanders, while ensuring legislation preserves our cultural identity and protects our ancestral land.

“Our customary land tenure system ensured fairness for all family members. Decisions were not based on majority voting.”

Rev Temanu Soatini

Minister of the Word and Barrister/Solicitor



TO TATOU Kaveinga Akateretere OUR POLICIES

Our Commitment

To implement land reform that restores and strengthens the deep relationship between indigenous Cook Islands Māori identity and our ancestral land.

Vision

A Cook Islands Land Tenureship System that balances absentee landowners and residential landowners.

TO TATOU Kaveinga Akateretere OUR POLICIES

“Grow Local Food Economy”

We are committed to making import substitution a reality by creating real incentives that value and prioritise Cook Islands’ local produce over imported goods.

“Our experience growing crops and raising livestock proves that agriculture can thrive; the real challenge is producing enough to meet the growing local demand.”

Teariki Heather

Director, T & M Construction Ltd



TO TATOU Kaveinga Akateretere OUR POLICIES

Our Commitment

To grow and control our food security. Our future depends on what we grow, catch, and produce.

Vision

A Cook Islands where farmers, fishermen and growers strengthen and grow the local economy.

TO TATOU Kaveinga Akateretere OUR POLICIES

“Tourism Management”

We are committed to making the Cook Islands a distinctive destination that protects our people, strengthens our culture, and safeguards our environment.

“The uniqueness and beauty of the Cook Islands - a ‘magical little place’ with a vibrant culture and opportunities for innovation - is worth protecting.”

**Tata Crocombe
Businessman**



TO TATOU Kaveinga Akateretere OUR POLICIES

Our Commitment

To place a nightly bed tax of \$1.50 per visitor to improve water, environment, road, and waste facility infrastructure.

Vision

A Cook Islands Tourism that has a lower impact on infrastructure and meets the needs of the local population.

TO TATOU Kaveinga Akateretere OUR POLICIES

“Rarotonga and Pa Enua Waste Facilities”

Needs *urgent* attention.

“We’ve got to do something about it. We can’t just watch it fill up in Rarotonga and the Pa Enua!”

*Hon Teariki Heather
Leader, Cook Islands United Party*



TO TATOU Kaveinga Akateretere OUR POLICIES

Our Commitment

To protect the well-being of our people and the health of our streams and lagoon.

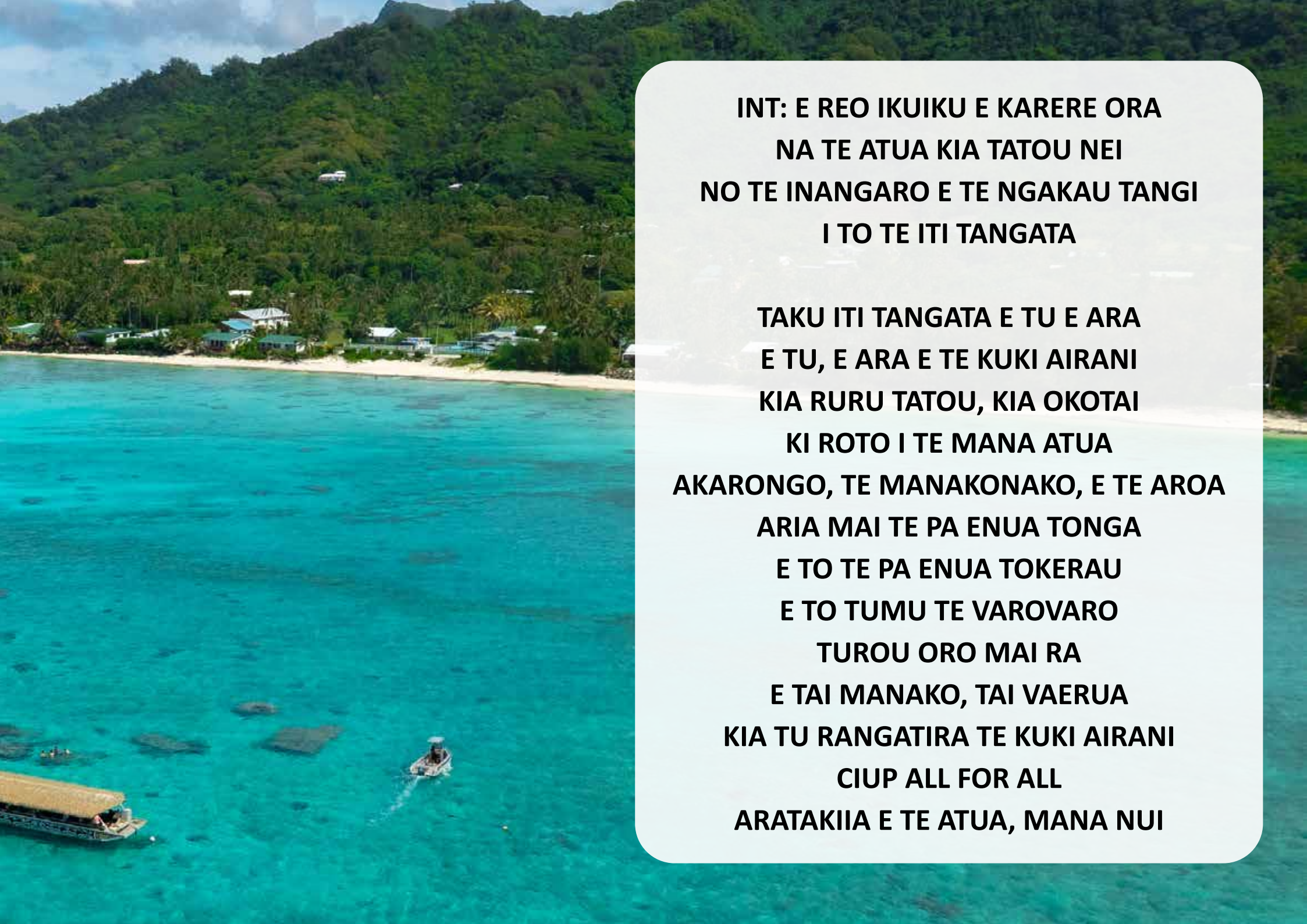


Vision

A Cook Islands that has a fully modernised waste processing facility.



Theme Song
Composed by Travel Purua and
supported by Samuel Nga



**INT: E REO IKUIKU E KARERE ORA
NA TE ATUA KIA TATOU NEI
NO TE INANGARO E TE NGAKAU TANGI
I TO TE ITI TANGATA**

**TAKU ITI TANGATA E TU E ARA
E TU, E ARA E TE KUKI AIRANI
KIA RURU TATOU, KIA OKOTAI
KI ROTO I TE MANA ATUA
AKARONGO, TE MANAKONAKO, E TE AROA
ARIA MAI TE PA ENUA TONGA
E TO TE PA ENUA TOKERAU
E TO TUMU TE VAROVARO
TUROU ORO MAI RA
E TAI MANAKO, TAI VAERUA
KIA TU RANGATIRA TE KUKI AIRANI
CIUP ALL FOR ALL
ARATAKIIA E TE ATUA, MANA NUI**

OUR VISION - OUR FUTURE

We look ahead to a Cook Islands that is:

Self-reliant in food and energy, reducing dependence on imports.

Environmentally protected, with thriving reefs, lagoons, and lands.

Culturally strong, where our language, traditions, and knowledge are lived daily.

Economically resilient, with opportunities for all islands and all people.

Connected, with our people choosing to stay, return, and invest in their homeland.

