



# Te Kaahui o Rauru

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## NEWS RELEASE

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### IWI COLLECTIVE APPEAL OF SEABED MINING DECISION LOOMS

Te Kaahui o Rauru representatives are feeling hopeful and anxious as the final step in their battle to protect the Taranaki Bight seabed looms.

Kaiwhakahaere (CEO) Anne-Marie Broughton said the South Taranaki iwi were preparing for Monday's court case in Wellington to appeal the Environmental Protection Authority's decision last year to grant consent to Trans Tasman Resources Ltd to mine the Taranaki seabed.

"This has been a long and draining process for us and we're feeling equal measures of hope and anxiety. The mining operation involves the excavation of 50 million tonnes of seabed per year for 35 years over an area of 65 square kilometres, down to 11 metres deep. The carnage and impacts will be immense. As Kaitiaki, we have no option but to stand up for Tangaroa and we're putting our hope in the High Court to overturn the decision."

Ms Broughton noted the split decision of the hearings commissioners, with two members of the four member panel (Sharon McGarry and Gerry Te Kapa Coates) voting to decline consent citing concerns over localised adverse environmental effects and tangata whenua existing interests.

"We are optimistic because these two highly qualified and experienced commissioners have come to this view. The decision to approve untested, underwater, opencast seabed mining, noting that approval was granted through the exercise of a casting vote, raises real concerns for us."

Ms Broughton noted the decision yesterday by the Government to not release further oil and gas block offers was a strong sign that short-term, environmentally damaging and unsustainable activities were coming to an end.

"The Government has taken a responsible and courageous step to protecting our environment, and we're hopeful that they'll impose a moratorium on seabed mining – quickly!"

"The exploitation of natural resources is last century boom and bust thinking at its worst. There are better ways to grow good local jobs than drilling and seabed mining. We must protect our offshore environment."

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She said the representative group from Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi was looking forward to standing together with the other appeal parties next week, including representatives of the Taranaki-Whanganui Conservation Board, Te Ohu Kaimoana, Ngaati Ruanui, Kiwis Against Seabed Mining, Forest & Bird and Greenpeace.

***For further information, please contact Anne-Marie Broughton on 027 342 3005.***