

Generic Geographic Features Listing - Māori and English



NGĀ POU TAUNAHA
O AOTEAROA

The following list has been compiled over a number of years by several people who worked for the New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa. It is not a full set of all geographical terms, but reflects the commonly used generic feature types of New Zealand.

The descriptions of the features assist with understanding how they should be used. The descriptions of these features are not prescriptive, in many instances there is no English equivalent for the Māori feature and vice versa. The terms are not intended to be a translation of each other, but to be independent and uphold their uniqueness.

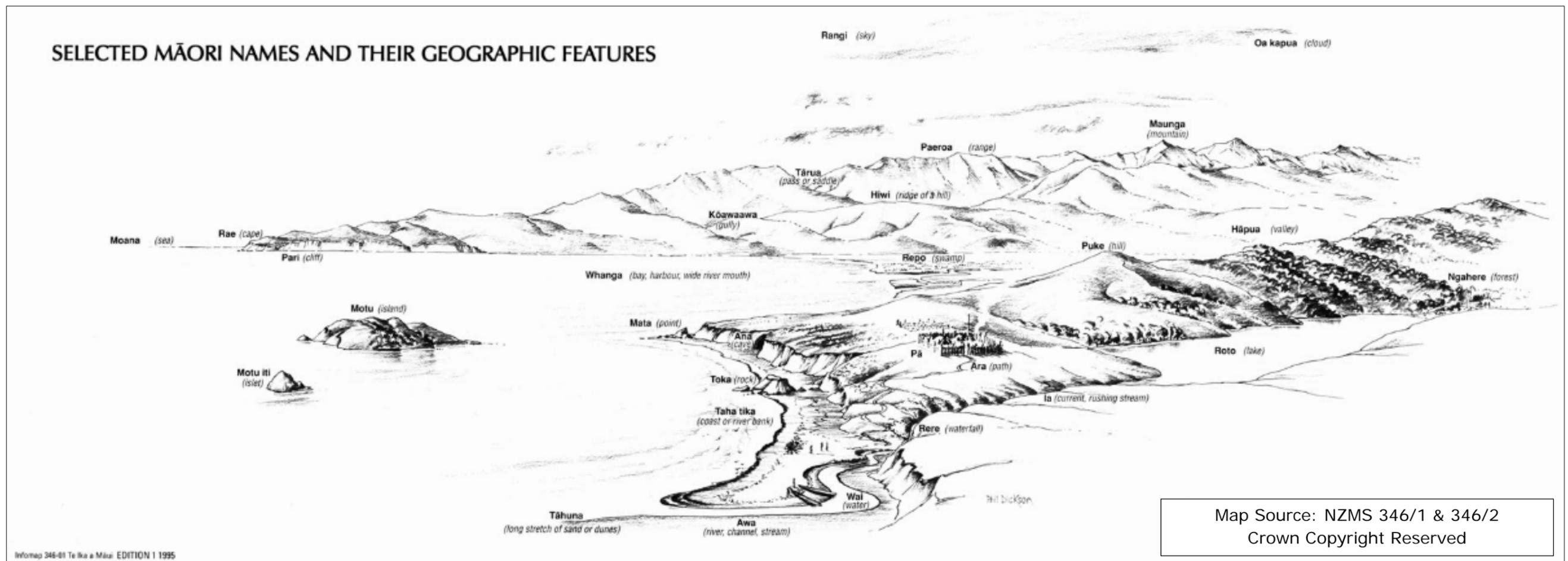
Some of the Māori features originate from korero pūrakau (ancestral stories) and are applied metaphorically. There is no particular dialect, they are general terms used to describe a feature. These features are grouped together where there are common meanings.

The restoration of original Māori place names requires a need to understand the use and role of generic Māori feature terms when applied to place names.

Invitation to contribute:

This feature listing is a work in progress. The New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa welcomes suggestions, contributions, views and comments from all sectors of the community.

Please contact: **the Secretary, New Zealand Geographic Board Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa, PO Box 5501, Wellington 6145** or email: info@linz.govt.nz



Māori Term	English Term	Feature Description	Associated Feature/s	Comments
āpiti	arm	A long, narrow confined inlet in the coastline and used in the same context as a branch of a tree	See also chasm, crevasse, gorge and gully (land based āpiti)	
ākau roa	bank	An underwater protruding feature which may dry at low water. Normally sand or gravel. Applied to fishing, estuaries, bays, arms, rivers	See also reach	ākau roa means long rocky beach
ākaunga roa maioro		Ditch and bank and is derived from the dunes	see also ditch, platform	
riu	basin	A bowl shaped depression in land surrounded by higher land. Similar to a big, open valley	see also valley	e.g. Te Riu o Waiapu
	amphitheatre	a natural formation often circular or oval shaped like a man-made theatre		
kokori	small bay	Small bay, cove or inlet	see also bay, cove	
koro				koro is also a bay and a cove
whanga	bay	A deep indentation in the coastline of seas and large lakes	see also harbour	whānga means waiting place, e.g. Whānganui, Whāngarei, as distinct from the generic e.g. Te Whanganui a Tara, Whangaroa (Akaroa)
aka				Ngāi Tahu
one, onepū, tātahi	beach	A gently sloping shore between the land and sea that is washed by waves or tides, and is generally comprised of sand, rocks and stones		ākau means shoreline
	beacon	a modern convention used as a guiding device located on a coast or high promontory		
tūāpapa, haupapa, raupapa	bench	A narrow, flat or gently sloping ledge or step, bounded above and below by steeper slopes	see also platform	tūāpapa means terrace, platform, flat rock
piko, hawe	bend	A curve in a river	see also river bend	piko means curved
korutanga, kokorutanga	bight	A large or extensive curved indentation of the coastline		Larger than a bay.
kūrae pari	bluff	A steep rock face commonly adjacent to water A steep rock face commonly overhanging water	see also headland see also precipice	pari means cliff
rae		A high bank or bold headland, presenting a precipitous front, or a steep cliff	see also cape, cliff, escarpment, face, headland	rae means forehead or brow

Māori Term	English Term	Feature Description	Associated Feature/s	Comments
kautawa	branch	A branch of a river. A tributary of a larger waterway	see also stream source and tributary	kautawa means offshoot of a river or track
peka, kāpeka		A branch of a river or track		
kahupapa	bridge	An arch like rock formation, generally created by erosion	see also viaduct	kahupapa means platform between a double canoe or tree
kaupapa				Ngāi Tahu dialect
	butte	A conspicuous flat topped hill with steep sides often capped by a resistant layer of rock		
kahurapa	buttress	A rugged, protruding rocky ridge or face on a mountainside or hillside		
kaurapa				
taupae				
whirinaki or hirinaki				
nohoanga	camp	A seasonal camping place, where shelter is known. More temporary than puni		
nohoaka				Ngāi Tahu dialect
pahī		A company of travellers resting in a temporary camp, which is a place of shelter		
puni		A permanent resting place		
tauranga		A canoe landing place or encampment used regularly and may be permanent or temporary		
koi	cape	An extensive extremity of land projecting into a body of water		
rae		A steep browed headland	see also bluff, cliff, escarpment, face, headland	rae means forehead or brow
mātārae		Projecting spur of a hill. High promontory	see also headland, promontory	
ana	cave	A recess leading to an underground open space (vertical or horizontal and natural or man-made). Also a prominent cliff overhang		
rua		A hole or pit sometimes used for storage or as a reservoir	see also reservoir	
puta		An opening in a cliff face or hillside	see also hole	
tomo	tomo	A deep sinkhole or pit usually in limestone, bigger than ana, like a chasm		tomo means chasm, void
urupa	cemetery	an area of land to inter deceased persons		
ara, kawa, hongere, roma	channel	A relatively narrow water body joining larger water bodies or a natural or artificial bed of running water, land or sea route, similar to causeway and canal		ara means passage or channel, e.g. The Gut

Māori Term	English Term	Feature Description	Associated Feature/s	Comments
wa			see also passage	awa means river. Used as a sea name
koko	chasm	A deep breach, cleft, fissure or opening in the earth's surface	see also arm, crevasse, gorge and gully	koko means gullet
pakohu		Cleft or rent on cliff face	see also gully	pakohu means a cavity
tawhā or tahā		A hill which opens into a gorge below		
	cirque	a semicircular basin with a steep headwall and sidewalls created by glacial erosion. Commonly at the head of a glacial valley		
taone matua	city	An urban centre with a population of more than 20,000		taone means town
pari	cliff	A high, steep to perpendicular rock face usually overhanging and prominent	see also bluff, escarpment	pari means cliff, precipice
parihaka	low cliff			
ākau	coast	A strip of land of indefinite width that extends from the low-tide line inland to the first major change in landform features	see bank, reef, rocky coast	ākau means rocky coast
tai		Inshore coastal water - the near part of moana	see also sea	
tahatai	seaside	Proximity to the sea, riverbank		
takutai	sea coast	The edge of the sea coast; the borderline		takutai means the edge
tuku		The edge or extremity of coastline	see also edge, shore	tuku means edge
uta		Land by sea and sea by land - inland		
tārua, tarahanga, tāwhatitanga, nonoti	col	A high, narrow saddle like pass or depression in a mountain range	see also pass and saddle	tārua means hollow
koeko, kōekoeko	cone	A landform shaped like a cone with relatively steep slopes and a pointed summit		
koro	cove	A small bay or indentation along a coastline or in a lake. Semi-enclosed bay, place of shelter		
kira	crag	A steep rugged rock projecting from a mountain or a detached fragment of rock, e.g. Castle Hill, Kuratawhiti		kira means rough with sharp points
tarakira	craggy			
taratara	craggy			taratara means jagged rocky pinnacles
puia	crater	A depression created by volcanic activity		
rua			see also cave, hole	rua means vent or opening

Māori Term	English Term	Feature Description	Associated Feature/s	Comments
awa haemana kaimanga kuinga manga, maka pininga mātāpuna, hikuawa	creek	A tributary river with mouth at or above sea level Streamlet - a branch of a watercourse or class of creek Streamlet - a branch of a watercourse or class of creek Streamlet, the source of a stream Water course, stream or river A stream which flows underground The source of a waterway eg the Waikato River is sourced from Mount Tongariro	see also channel, stream see also stream	awa means channel kuinga means wellspring manga means stream. maka is Ngāi Tahu
taumata tihi	crest	The highest point or summit on a hill or mountain, or the highest line along a ridge or range. Also resting place, e.g. longest place name – Te Taumatawhakatangihangakoauauatamateapokaiwhenuakitanataha	see also summit	taumata means apex tihi means topmost
kāpiti	crevasse	A fissure or crack in the surface of a glacier or snowfield, caused by stresses resulting from differential movement over an uneven surface	see also gorge	kāpiti means a narrow pass
ia au tai	current cut/cutting cutting	The continuous movement of water flowing in the same direction either permanently or seasonally a steep to vertical river bank which has been eroded lateral by a river a short river channel Part of a stream where the current is flowing faster than normal and the water surface is broken. Swift flowing water over an obstacle above the riverbed, eg, rocks, fallen tree or where water is forced to flow through a constricted channel	See also rapids	ia means rushing stream au means open sea
hāpua kōniu ngutuawa pūwaiwaha wahapū	delta delta	A flat alluvial tract of land at the mouth of a river traversed by its diverging branches, and commonly shaped in a triangle or fan, resembling the Greek letter 'delta' A large deposit at the mouth of a braided river. Not necessarily delta shaped A semi-enclosed coastal water body into which both seawater and freshwater flows, the tidal mouth of a river	see also lagoon, pool see also river mouth and estuary	hāpua is not necessarily at the river mouth generic feature type - provided with Hauraki Collective settlement names Wahapū is the ultimate mouth or lips of the river.
koraha pākihi	desert	An arid region with a low rainfall and devoid of vegetation can be applied to areas of perennial ice and snow		Koraha comes from the Bible, and means a large flat infertile area of open, extended country.

Māori Term	English Term	Feature Description	Associated Feature/s	Comments
rōhai				rōhai means deserted, empty land (abandoned)
tītōhea				tītōhea means arid
moka	district	A defined area for administrative purposes		moka relates to a sea area
rohē		rohē are divided into takiwā	see also region	
taiwhenua				Means area
takiwā				takiwā means space
tāpere				
awakeri	ditch, drain	An open channel created to drain excess water, a channel or area filled with stagnant water	see also waterway	awakeri means dug up
awamate		A dry river bed created when a river changes course or backwater/stagnant water		awamate means dried bed where river has changed course
maioro		A ditch and bank. A generic term derived from dunes	see also bank, platform	
raorao	downs	An area of low, generally flat land or of undulating country, e.g. South Canterbury, Saint Bathans		raorao means low rolling hills, characteristic of undersea floor geomorphology. Also means to travel through very fast
	dune	mound or ridge of wind blown sand rising to various heights		
te nuku	earth	the solid material of the globe, constitutes land surface not water surface		sourced from Te Hiku claim settlement
tahataha, tūpaki, harapaki, pūnaunau	edge	A sharply pointed ridge or slope of a hill		tahataha means river edge
tahatika		Traversable waters edge of coast or river, or seaside		tahatika means river edge
tuku		The edge or extremity of coastline	see also coast, shore	tuku means edge
takau	escarpment	A long, more or less continuous cliff or relatively steep slope facing in one general direction, separating two level or gently sloping surfaces, and produced by erosion or faulting	see also bluff, cliff and face	takau means steep slope
ngutu	estuary	Outlet of river to sea and lake	see river mouth	ngutu means mouth of a river
aro maunga	face	The principle side or surface of a landform, usually applied to a mountain. In the presence of a prominent landform such as a mountain	see also bluff, cliff and escarpment	
mata				

Māori Term	English Term	Feature Description	Associated Feature/s	Comments
	fan	A low heap of alluvial material, having a roughly triangular plan. Typically formed where rivers or streams with a high speed are suddenly checked by reaching a flatter region, e.g. where mountain streams enter plains		
	fault	a rupture or fracture of rock strata due to strain in which displacement is observable		
tōpito	feature	Term applied to a category of land or sea type	see also district, locality, place and region	
	fiord/fjord	A long narrow arm of the sea, in a valley that is U-shaped and steep walled generally several hundred metres deep, with high rocky cliffs or slopes along a mountainous coast		no Māori equivalent
	firth	A long, narrow arm of the sea; also the opening of a river into the sea. It is commonly the lower part of an estuary, a Scottish term for a body of estuarine water		
koraha	flat	A relatively level area of land		
mania		A level tract of land, e.g. Maiototo, flat, open, wide country	see also plain	different level of extent
ngā papa				different level of extent
papa				different level of extent
pāraharaha				different level of extent
pararahi				different level of extent
raupapa				different level of extent
take, pū	foot	The bottom of a slope or grade		
pae, paeroa	foothills	The lower line of hills that run parallel with and at the foot of a higher mountain range		
kauanga	ford	A shallow place where a river, stream or creek may be crossed by wading		
raupapa				
hangaruru	forest	An area of dense growth of trees		
hamaruru				
ngaruru				
ngahere				
wao				
pūau	fork	The point at which two separate courses (usually water) meet/join and continue as one		
pūrau				
waiherehere				

Māori Term	English Term	Feature Description	Associated Feature/s	Comments
	forts	a natural steep formation that resembles a castle or fortress-like structure		
	fumarole	a small vent in a volcanic area from which steam, gases and various acids are ejected		
angotanga	gap	A break or opening in a mountain ridge		
putanga		An opening such as a break in a line of hills, or an entrance to an open harbour between two promontories		
ngāwhā	geothermal spring			ngāwhā means bubbling boiling springs
puia				
waiariki				waiariki means hot springs
	geothermal mud	found in geothermal areas		
	geothermal vent	a submerged feature consisting of a vent of hot mineral-rich waters on the ocean floor generally located on or near spreading oceanic ridges or on the continental margins of subduction trenches		
	geyser	a violent ejection of steam and super heated water from an underground source through a hole in the ground		
waipara	glacier	An accumulation of slowly moving ice		waipara means glacial dust
	glacier tongue	A long narrow extension of the lower part of a glacier	see also piedmont glacier	waipara means glacial dust
waiparahoaka				waiparahoaka means glacial colour
waiparahoanga				waiparahoanga means glacial colour
hukapō			see also piedmont glacier	
moana	gulf	A relatively large part of the ocean or sea extending far into the land; the largest of the various forms of inlets or bays		
āpiti	gorge	A deep narrow gorge or ravine	see also arm, chasm, crevasse and gully	
kāpiti		Kāpiti; base word is Apiti. Āpiti and kāpiti are synonyms	see crevasse	
kawarau				
kōaka, parari	gulch	a deep ravine		
kopi				
pakohu				
pakohu				
te koko				
whāiti				
awa	gully	A small channel produced by running water in earth or unconsolidated material	see also arm, chasm, crevasse and gorge	
kopia				
kowaka				

Māori Term	English Term	Feature Description	Associated Feature/s	Comments
pakohu parari				
aka	harbour	A standing water area usually protected by natural or artificial features, suitable for anchoring or mooring vessels. Often has sunken rocks dotted here & there	see also bay	aka means haka, whanga
haka whanga				whanga means hanga
waha, pūwaha	harbour mouth	Areas of tidal sea bounded between open sea, land and harbour, and usually narrow in width between the coastal land masses	see also harbour entrance	
ararua	harbour entrance	A point indicating where a harbour is entered into from the open sea. As for harbour mouth, the entrance is bounded between open sea, land and harbour	see also harbour mouth	
kūrae	headland	An abrupt and prominent land feature, usually extending into water, but can also be used for similar inland features	see also cape and bluff	
mātārae rae	head/headland			rae means base, brow
torouka	distinctive headland	Projecting spur of a hill. High promontory	see also cape, promontory	torouka means projection
puke, hiwi	hill	An elevation of terrain above the level of the surrounding land		
kōmata	hills	end of a range		
tuapuke	hillock	A rounded hill of no great elevation or small rise in the land	see also knoll	
taumata tihi	crest of a hill	The highest point of a hill	see also summit	
	historic site	a place of historic occupation or site of significance		
rua	hole	A deep and well defined depression in the ground	see also cave	rua not to be confused with the numeral. Man made storage pit.
huka motu, motunga huka	iceberg or ice flow	A large floating 'island of ice'		
mānia huka	ice piedmont	An ice-field located on a low lying strip of land between the ocean and a coastal range of mountains, often terminating at an ice-shelf. Formed when valley glaciers coalesce on a coastal plain to form a thick accumulation of almost stagnant crevasse free ice		Ice plain.
	ice plateau	an elevated area of land covered with ice		Ice plain.

Māori Term	English Term	Feature Description	Associated Feature/s	Comments
papanga huka	ice sheet	A glacier of considerable thickness and more than 50,000 sq. kms in area, forming a continuous cover of ice and snow, not confined by topography		
pārae huka	ice shelf	A sheet of very thick ice, with a level or gently undulating surface, which is attached to the land along one side but most of which is afloat and unbounded on the seaward side of a steep cliff		
arero huka	ice tongue	Same as Glacier Tongue - a long narrow extension of the lower part of a glacier		
takaripa huka, taihekenga huka	icefall	That portion of a glacier that flows down a very steep gradient, developing a zone of crevasses		
	ice rise	A clearly defined elevation of the otherwise totally flat ice shelf, typically dome-shaped and rising 100 to 200m above the surrounding ice shelf		
	incline	An inclined surface, a slope, gradient, pitch, ramp, bank, ascent, rise, acclivity, upslope		
kokoru	inlet	Usually a minor indentation of water between the coast and outlying sand beaches or sand barriers. Often a bay within a bay e.g. around Lake Waikaremoana or Queen Charlotte Sound		
motu	island	An area of land completely surrounded by water	see also nunatak	motu means a separated distinctive feature appearing in a landscape or a seascape - as in island in the water, a distinct clump of bush on land, or a protruding small hill.
moutere				moutere only used as island in the context of water
motuiti	islet	A small island or rock	see also rock	small islet means toka
whenua kūiti ara kūiti	isthmus	A neck of land joining two larger areas		whenua kaki is a transliteration.
huahua tuapuke	knob	A small rounded hill, especially an isolated one A rounded hill of no great elevation or small rise in the land	see also hillock	
hāpua muriwai papawai	lagoon	A stretch of water parted from a larger body of water by a low barrier, e.g. sand or gravel bank	see also delta, pond or pool	"According to Rongomaiwahine sources, it is a word for lagoon"

Māori Term	English Term	Feature Description	Associated Feature/s	Comments
pūroto				
roto	lake	A substantial enclosed body of water (fresh or sea), generally fed by a river(s) and emptying into another river(s). Such a feature, close to the sea, may be significantly comprised of sea water		
whenua	land	A solid part of the earth's surface		
	landing	a level area to embark		
tauwharenga	ledge	A narrow shelf or projection of rock, longer than wide, formed on a rock wall or cliff face		also means overhang
taiwhanga	locality	An identifiable area within a local authority area, usually rural or partly in character	see also district, feature, place and region	
	lookout	a vantage point used to view the landscape		
	massif	A massive topographical and structural feature, especially in an orogenic belt, commonly formed of rocks more rigid than those of its surroundings		No Māori equivalent.
repo, kōrepe, hūhi	marsh	A tract of low-lying land often flooded and usually characterised by growth of grass and reeds	see also swamp, swampy and wetland	
	mesa	A tableland; a flat topped mountain or plateau bounded on at least one side by a steep cliff		No Māori equivalent.
	moraine	A mound or ridge of unstratified glacial drift, chiefly till (glacial dust), deposited by direct action of glacial ice		No Māori equivalent.
Maunga, mauka	mountain	Any part of the earth's crust higher than a hill (usually greater than 300m), sufficiently elevated above the surrounding land surface to be considered worthy of naming, and characterised by a discrete summit area		
hawai		A narrow channel joining larger water bodies. A constriction in a waterway		
hawaiti	narrows			
taikoraha	mudflats	a stretch of muddy land left uncovered at low tide		
wahapū	mouth	where a river flows into the sea		
auhuka	névé	Describes freshly deposited snow in the accumulation area of a glacier		

Māori Term	English Term	Feature Description	Associated Feature/s	Comments
motu	nunatak	An isolated rock peak projecting above the surface of land ice or snow		
pā	pā	A man-made fortified site, generally neo-lithic		
tārua	pass	A natural passageway through high, difficult terrain, i.e. a low point between two peaks. Or a navigable channel connecting a body of water with the sea	see also channel and col	
awarua	passage	A narrow water body joining larger water bodies	see also channel	
tara	peak	The pointed top or summit of a mountain	see also summit	
tuawhenua	peninsula	An area of land almost surrounded by water		
waiparahoaka	piedmont glacier	A glacier formed by coalescence of two or more valley glaciers at the base of a mountain range	see also glacier	hoaka means water dirty from grinding
	pillar	A vertical natural structure, slender in proportion to height		
	pinnacle	A tall slender pillar of rock, rising to a point		
wāhi	place	Means a city, town, village, site, area, or similar place and includes a locality and suburb; but does not include a district, region or ward of a local authority or Crown protected area	see also district, feature, locality, region	
mānia	plain		see also flat	
papatairite rewa	plateau	A relatively elevated are of comparatively flat land which is commonly limited on at least one side by an abrupt descent to lower ground		
	platform	Any level or nearly level surface, ranging in size from a terrace or bench to a plateau or plain. Man-made		
kūrae	point	A tapering piece of land jutting out from the shore or forming a turning point of the coastline.		
	pole	Either end of the axis of a sphere		
hāroto	pond or pool	A relatively small inland body of still water	see also lagoon	
hāpua			see also delta	
hōpua	deep pools	Can be inland under a waterfall		

Māori Term	English Term	Feature Description	Associated Feature/s	Comments
amonga waka	portage	A place where carrying boats or goods between navigable waters is necessary		portage
tōanga waka	portal	An entrance and exit especially large and imposing		place where canoes are dragged over, portage
paripari	precipice	A vertical or steep face of rock, cliff, mountain, etc	see also bluff, cliff	might have other uses e.g. tides; tai timu means tide ebbs and tai pari means tide flows/rises
hū koi koutu kūmore mātārae ngahu	promontory	A high cape with a bold termination		
torouka tūmū whakarae	promenade	Projecting spur of a hill or a high promontory a paved walkway typically along a seafront	see also bluff, headland	torouka means projection an esplanade, front, walk, boulevard, avenue, walkway
ipu kōpiha koropiha kumete ruakumete	punchbowl	A round, deep hollow in hills	see also crater	
	pyramid	a structure with a square or triangular base with sloping sides that meet in a point at the top		
rerewē	railway	A railway		
ika tuawhenua ika whenua pae paeroa ranga	range	Aligned and connected series of hills	see also ridge	main range of hills main range of hills horizontal ridges of hills range of hills, particularly of a long even ridge ridge of a hill, rising ground in a plain
au korio pūau	rapid	A swift flowing portion of a body of water which may or may not be navigable	see also waterfall	gentle current

Māori Term	English Term	Feature Description	Associated Feature/s	Comments
tāheke taiheke				
	reach	Part of a sound or river		no Māori equivalent
ākau kawa pūkawa tau	reef	A rocky elevation in a water body which is dangerous to navigation, and which may uncover		
rohe takiwā tāpere rua	region	A large area of defined land	see also district, feature, locality and place	
	reservoir	A hole or pit sometimes used for storage or as a reservoir	see also cave	
hiwi kahaka kahiwi	ridge	An elongated elevation of land		
ranga ripa tuahiwi tuku		High ridges	see also range	ridge of a hill, rising ground in a plain
		On the other side of the ridge, over there. Low elevation.	see also shore (tidal)	
	riegel	A transverse rock bar or rock step which causes an irregularity in the long profile of a glacially eroded valley		no Māori equivalent
awa tihatika	river	A relatively large flowing body of water	see also river bend and river mouth	awa often used for valley, but predominant use is as a river
		Banks of the river or river shore		
awapuni hawe	river bend			hawe means bend in road or river or eddy in wind
kukupango piko	river bend (braided)	flows in multiple channels across a gravel floodplain with evidence of recent channel migration		piko means curved
komutu konu ngutu ngutuawa	river mouth	An area of a river flowing into another water feature, e.g. the sea, a lake, another river		
		Outlet of river to sea and lake		

Māori Term	English Term	Feature Description	Associated Feature/s	Comments
pūaha		A curve of a river course	see also bend	
tawa			see also river, river bend	
wahapū			see also delta, estuary	
pīnakitanga, pīnekitanga	rise	A broad gently sloping, elevated portion of the sea floor		
tokamoana	rock	A solid mass of the earth's crust rising from the bottom of a waterbody and is either completely submerged, or above the water surface	see also mouiti	
tokawai				
pohatu				
papa				
kirikiri		A mass of gravel		
toka	rock	a solid mineral material forming part of the surface of the earth		
tokatoka	rocks	Rocks upon rocks descriptive, lava crag		
ākau	rocky coast	where the action of marine waves has formed steep cliffs that maybe precipitous	see also coast, reef	
kōhanga	rookery	A place where birds nest in colonies		
tarakai				
	rotunda	round space sometimes dome like		
tārua	saddle	A low point in the crest line of a ridge, commonly between the heads of streams flowing in opposite directions..	see also col and pass	
tarahanga or tarahaka		Northern orthography of 'tarahanga' (Ngata dict.) is for a pass or saddle and another usage is 'indentation'. It seems very much a synonym for 'nonoti' (saddle) which has North Canterbury provenance	Example: Tarahaka Whakatipu	
nonoti				
one	sand			
kirikiri		Materials, gravel		
kōhatu		Boulders/rocks		
para		flotsom/jetsom		
paru		dirt		
pōhatu		Boulders/rocks		
tāhuna	sandbank	Expanse of sand and in the sea or river, often uncovered at low tide. Esturine, riverine, tidal flats.	see also beach, seaside	tahuna means wide flat sandy bank
toka		Big fixed rocks		

Māori Term	English Term	Feature Description	Associated Feature/s	Comments
tāhuna	sand point	A big, wide, open, sandy beach	see also spit	tahuna means sand, e.g. onetapuha
tai	sea	An expanse of salt water smaller than an ocean and generally in proximity to a continent	see also coast	
moana				
takutai	sea coast	A strip of land of indefinite width bounded by the sea	see also beach and seaside	
tahawai	seaside	An area at the edge of the sea	see also sand bank, sea coast	
rehutai	seaspray	A place which is subject to sea spray		
	settlement	A place which has previously been uninhabited where people establish a community		
	scarp	A very steep bank or slope, an escarpment		
matatāhuna, tāhuna	shoal	A shallow place, submerged sand bank, especially one that shows at low water	see also sand point	tahuna means tidal flats
pakihiwi	shoulder	A ridge on a mountain, commonly having the appearance of a shoulder	see also crest	
pokohiwi				
mitimiti, pāti	shallows	An area of water (usually sea) that has a consistently shallow depth, and is identified for navigational purposes		
taihua, tuku	shore (tidal)	The lower area of beach between low and high tides	see also coast, ridge	
tai		Sea water, salt, tidal		tai means inner tidal zone
ākau	shoreline	A gently sloping shore that is washed by waves or tides, and is generally covered by sand, rocks and stones		ākau means shoreline
takutai	shoreline			
tātahi	seashore			tātahi means seaside
uta				inland from the sea
matiri	sinkhole	a cavity in the ground especially in a limestone formation caused by water erosion and providing a route for surface water to disappear underground		MATIRI derives from 'tiri', a hole. The prefix 'ma' indicates active tense ie. 'Matiri' to make a series of holes. The whole of the Matiri Range is pockmarked with sink holes many of which have degraded into small lakes or ponds. It is the dominating geological feature of the Range. The same usage is found in the names of kumara gardens etc. indicating rows of planting holes.
horo	slip	A land slip		

Māori Term	English Term	Feature Description	Associated Feature/s	Comments
horohoro				
aupaki	slope	An inclined surface, the gradient of which is determined by the amount of its inclination from the horizontal, and the length of which is determined by the inclined distance between its crest and its foot		
auroro				
hirinaki				
kotautau				
panaunau				
panaki				panaki means gentle slope
pīnakitanga				
pīnekitanga				
rapaki				
rea				
tāwhati				
tahitahi				
papa huka	snowfield snowdrift	A region of snow cover a bank of deep snow heaped up by the wind		
kokuru	sound	A relatively long arm of the sea or ocean, forming a channel between an island and a mountain or connecting two larger bodies, as a sea and the ocean, or two parts of the same body		
onetahua	spit	A point of sand or gravel projecting from the shore into a body of water	see also sand point	
puna	spring	The point or area of natural issue of water		
pukenga				
io	spur	A subsidiary ridge that projects laterally and sharply from the crest or side of a mountain		
kāniuniu				
karahiwi				
mātārae				
mātātāu				
Taukāuki				
taukaka				
taumutu				
utu				
arapiki	staircase	An evenly graduated incline		

Māori Term	English Term	Feature Description	Associated Feature/s	Comments
kōreporepo	swampy	A low lying area with a high level of water saturation	see also marsh, swamp and wetland	
kūkūwai				kūkūwai means swampy ground
pīpīwai				
rei				rei means swampy ground
reporepo			see also drain, swamp	
	table	A flat topped area of land		
raorao	tableland	A general term for a broad elevated region with nearly level or open, undulating surface of considerable extent		
pūroto, pūroroto	tarn	A small lake		
parehua	terrace	A relatively level bench or step like surface breaking the continuity of a slope or a river cut		
whakahua				
arero	tongue	A long narrow extension of the lower part of a glacier		
ara	track	A footpath or path, created by use	see also trail	
ara	trail	A beaten path, generally through wilderness	see also track	
huanui				
huarahi				
kaupapa				
makatea				
paparahi				
pakihi	treeless	A clay pan area		
kautawa	tributary	A stream draining into a larger one and contributing water to it	see also branch and stream source	
manga				
tohu roherohe	trig	A geodetic station		
awaawa	trough	Any long narrow depression in the earth's surface		
kōawaawa				
	town	means same as place NZGB Act 2008		
	tunnel	A subterranean passage		

Māori Term	English Term	Feature Description	Associated Feature/s	Comments
awaawa hārua kakari kakaritanga kōaka mārua nukuao riu tāwhārua tāwhati taiororua tairua tapoko whārua whakarua whērua	valley	A low area more or less enclosed by hills and usually with a stream flowing through it		
kahupapa kaupapa	viaduct	A man-made bridge structure, generally for built for trains to cross deep ravines	see also bridge	kahupapa means bridge linking a canoe or tree Ngāi Tahu dialect
	village	a group of houses and associated buildings smaller than a town situated in a rural area		
puia, ahi tipua	volcano	a mountain or hill typically conical having a crater or vent through which lava rock fragments, hot vapour and gas have erupted from the earths crust		
hīrere rere wairere	waterfall	A section of river or creek where water descends freely from a higher elevation	see also rapid	
arawai awakari awakeri	waterway	An artificially made water course	see also ditch	
awaawa taiari taieri	wetland	A wet, swampy, large expanse of land	A wet, swampy, large expanse of land.	taiari and taieri have the same meaning but different pronunciation.

Māori Term	English Term	Feature Description	Associated Feature/s	Comments
wāpu	wharf	A structure for the berthing of vessels		
āwhiowhio au kōmingomingo kororipo ngāwhiowhio ripo ririno toiremi	whirlpool	A body of water moving rapidly in a circular path of relatively limited radius		
koraha	wilderness area	An area of undeveloped country preserved in its natural state		

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