

Application to mine iron sands offshore: be informed



There's been considerable misinformation about our marine consent application to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to extract iron-ore sand off the South Taranaki coastline.

The people of Taranaki deserve to have the facts so you can make an informed view.

Trans-Tasman Resources Limited (TTR) is a majority owned and managed New Zealand company. We are proposing to introduce a new industry that will create a large number of new jobs and a range of economic benefits to the region. TTR believes many people in South Taranaki will benefit from the opportunities that come from a considered and high technology project that has sustainable environmental, and beneficial economic and social, outcomes.

This project will add to the diversification of the economic activity in the Taranaki and Whanganui regions, creating jobs and training for local people.

It will contribute to the region's economy, through additional taxes and royalties and increase New Zealand's export earnings by over \$300 million a year.

We welcome debate and discussion about our project, informed by facts not myths. It's important New Zealand has an informed discussion about the contribution sustainable mining projects can make to our economy and the well-being of the country.

Myth 1: Nothing has changed from the first application

The facts

- Since the previous application, TTR has undertaken additional science and engineering work and extensive consultation with stakeholders and interest groups. TTR is confident it has addressed the concerns and the shortfalls of the original application, and communicated this information to stakeholders and EPA.

Myth 2: TTR has not engaged with iwi

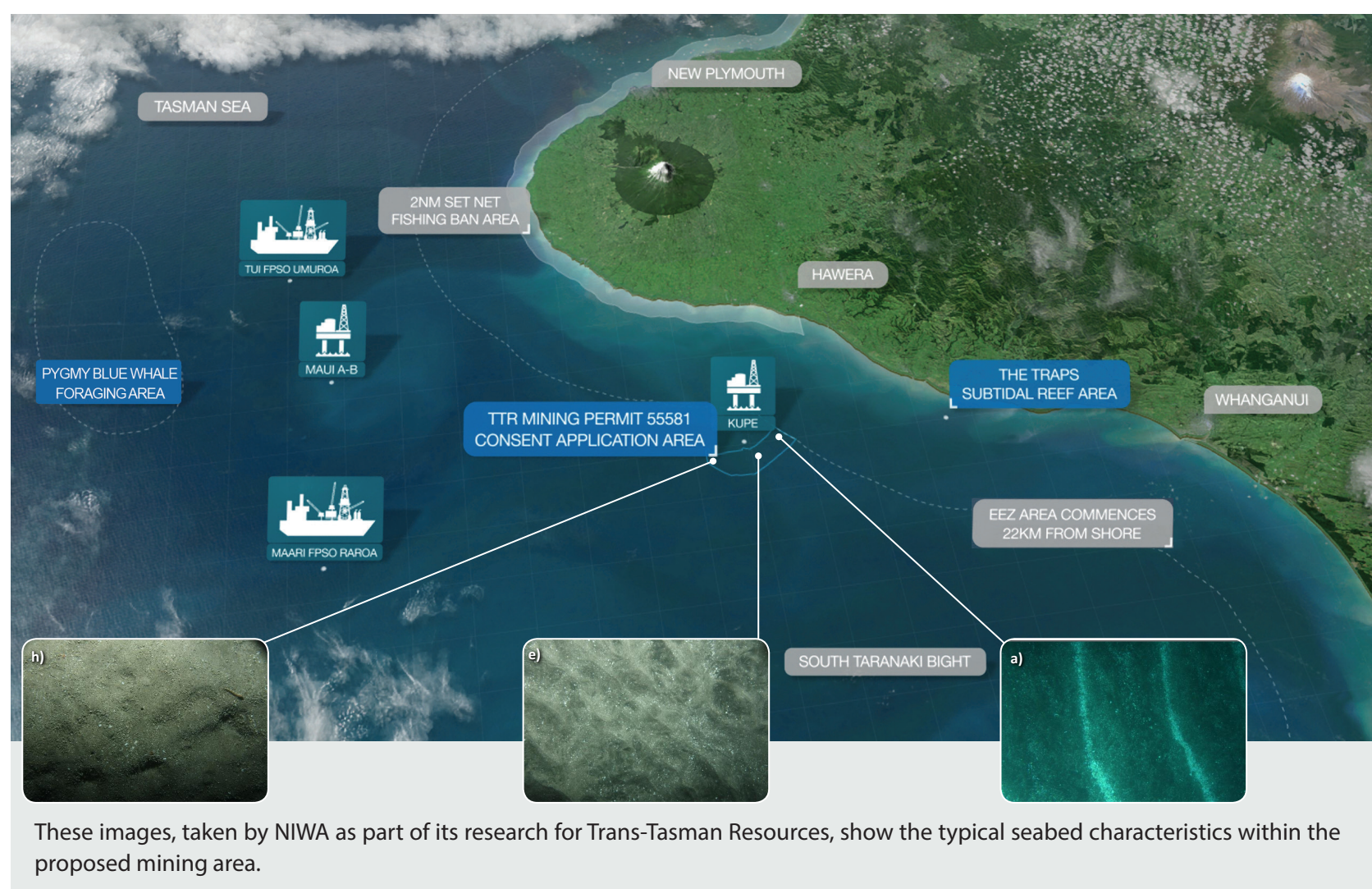
The facts

- TTR has undertaken extensive engagement and consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, regulators, interest groups, as well as all affected iwi.
- In March 2015, TTR extended invitations to Ngāti Ruanui, EPA, Taranaki Regional Council (TRC), Department of Conservation, Maritime New Zealand, Iwi Fisheries Forum and commercial fishing representatives to visit a seabed diamond mining operation off the South Africa coastline, using similar machinery to that which TTR propose to use. The invitation was accepted by the EPA, TRC, and representatives of the Iwi Fisheries Forum.
- TTR has always recognised Ngāti Ruanui's position as mana whenua.
 - o TTR has provided Ngāti Ruanui with all the available information throughout the process and has provided multiple opportunities to access the confidential, scientific reports. TTR has continued to try to work with Ngāti Ruanui to better understand their concerns and where possible find ways to address them.
 - o Despite a lack of engagement TTR has provided for ongoing participation by Ngati Ruanui in its proposed conditions.
 - o TTR remains open to discussions with Ngāti Ruanui at any stage throughout the EPA's consenting process.
- TTR has presented the stakeholder engagement package to Nga Ruahine (CEO and Chair) and Nga Rauurū Kiitahi (CEO and Chair). All the other iwi in Taranaki, including Te Atiawa, Ngāti Mutunga, Ngāti Maru have viewed the stakeholder package. Ngāti Tama gave their apology at an information evening that was organised for the iwi in the North.
- TTR has also presented the stakeholder engagement package to the iwi members of the Te Tai hau a uru Fisheries Forum at Pungarehu Marae.

Myth 3: The recent photos released of the STB Underwater Club's inshore reef project is representative of the whole South Taranaki Bight

The facts

- The level of fauna and flora being witnessed by the reef project is not representative of the broader Patea shoals area or where TTR is proposing to extract iron sands offshore.
- The National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA) have sampled 145 seabed sites within the broader Patea Shoals region using video, photographs, dredges and sediment cores and describes the region near TTR's permit area as a high energy environment with regular seabed disturbances. It is characterised as rippled seabed, comprising coarse, iron-rich sands.



These images, taken by NIWA as part of its research for Trans-Tasman Resources, show the typical seabed characteristics within the proposed mining area.

- Outside of specific locations, such as the inshore reef being studied by the STB Underwater Club, the broader Patea Shoals environment where we propose to mine generally supports low species diversity and abundance.
- TTR recognises the existence and importance of inshore reefs, such as the one being studied by the STB Underwater Club, and has proposed extra monitoring protocols for these sensitive sites to ensure they are protected.

Myth 4: The plume created by the TTR operation will be dramatic and evident; larger than the size of Mt. Taranaki, affecting water clarity and smothering reefs and other fragile environments

The facts

- TTR will not be adding any extra sediment to the South Taranaki Bight (STB). TTR will be extracting, processing and returning the same extracted sediment (minus the iron ore) back into the same general area.
- Using an engineered re-deposition system, only 1.2% of the returned sediment will remain mixed in the water column, creating the 'plume', whilst 98.8% of the returned sediment will be deposited into the hollow in the seabed created on extraction.
- The amount of sediment being added into the STB by rivers exceeds the TTR suspended sediment fraction by over 15 times.
- The predicted suspended sediment concentration, with regards to the 'plume', is very low and when compared with the suspended sediment already in the natural environment, the 'plume' will be indistinguishable.
- NIWA has shown that the levels of this background sediment along the coast would naturally exceed any 'plume effect' typically by over 100 times.

Myth 5: The proposed mining will threaten marine mammals, seabirds, fish and zooplankton

The facts

- NIWA has concluded that the effects of the proposed operation on all zooplankton, seabird, marine mammal species, and most fish species will be negligible.
- The project has been specifically engineered to mitigate environmental effects.

Myth 6: There's nothing in this for locals

The facts

- The project will generate over 1600 new jobs in total, including

over 700 regionally, providing economic benefit for South Taranaki people.

- TTR has committed to an annual fund of \$50,000 per year to be administered by the South Taranaki District Council in collaboration with TTR. The purpose of the fund is to assist in the establishment of projects for the benefit of the South Taranaki community, in particular for the social and economic wellbeing of the community.
- TTR has committed to the establishment of a training facility located in the township of Hawera. The purpose of the training facility will be to provide technical and marine skills-based training to prospective trainee process operators and maintenance support staff from the South Taranaki communities.
- TTR has committed to the establishment of a geotechnical and environmental monitoring base located in the port of Whanganui.

Myth 7: TTR is secretive because they have redacted certain reports

The facts

- TTR has not withheld any information and the entire data base and reports are available to all stakeholders and interest groups.
- Interested parties or their appointed experts are able to access the confidential information by signing a confidentiality agreement.
- TTR applied for a direction, under section 158 of the EEZ Act, protecting certain intellectual and commercially sensitive information forming part of its application for the marine consent application.
- Having considered the section 158 application, the EPA's Decision-making Committee was satisfied that an order protecting that information was necessary to avoid disclosing trade secrets or to avoid causing unreasonable prejudice to TTR's commercial interests.
- This section 158 protection has been granted in both of the previous EEZ applications to the respective Oil and Gas companies with no objection or comment from iwi.

We welcome debate and discussion about our project, informed by facts not myths. It's important New Zealand has an informed discussion about the contribution sustainable mining projects can make to our country.

Read our full application and the more than 40 reports that support our application at:

<http://www.epa.govt.nz/EEZ/whats-going-on/current-applications/ttr-2016/application/Pages/application-docs.aspx>