NZCPR POLITICAL PARTY TREATY POLICY 2026

Executive Summary

The 2026 election presents New Zealanders with a stark constitutional choice. For the first time in our history, voters must decide whether the country remains a Parliamentary democracy based on equal citizenship — or whether it will begin a transition towards a Treaty-based constitution that would replace democratic authority with tribal control.

The political parties are split into two clear blocs.

National, ACT and New Zealand First support equal rights, Parliamentary sovereignty, and democratic accountability. They oppose co-governance, reject race-based public-service obligations, and want Treaty of Waitangi commitments confined to what Parliament has expressly enacted. Their policies would preserve a unified health system, a single justice system, elected local government, and democratic control over natural resources.

Labour, the Greens, the Maori Party, and the Opportunity Party support Treaty partnerships, co-governance, and constitutional transformation. They would progressively move the country toward Maori-led public services, stronger powers for the Waitangi Tribunal, expanded tikanga-based judicial authority, with some parties pushing hard for a new constitution based on the Treaty. Their policy direction aligns with Labour's *He Puapua* agenda for tribal control by 2040 - and *Matike Mai*, a constitutional transformation model developed by Professor Margaret Mutu and the Iwi Chairs' Forum, with dual government, shared sovereignty, Maori veto powers, and ultimately tribal control over government decision-making.

Most New Zealanders have never read these documents — and have no idea how far-reaching their proposals are. If New Zealand's unwritten constitution were to be replaced with a new Treaty-based constitution, the unelected and unaccountable Judges of the Supreme Court would gain ultimate authority over our elected government, through the power to strike down as 'unconstitutional' any

decision of Parliament they deemed insufficiently favourable to Maori. Judicial supremacy would displace parliamentary sovereignty, shifting the power to govern permanently away from voters.

This report summarises the party positions and exposes the constitutional danger posed by the radical left-wing bloc. The choice in 2026 is not simply political, it is constitutional — and it will determine whether New Zealand remains a Westminster democracy or whether it will eventually succumb to tribal rule.

Where the Parties Stand

The debate over Maori and Treaty policy will be one of the defining issues of the 2026 election – but one that largely plays out under the radar of public awareness. Parties are divided not only on specific policies such as the Maori seats and co-governance, but also on the deeper constitutional question of the relationship between Maori, the Crown, and the New Zealand public.

At one end are parties emphasising equal citizenship, Parliamentary sovereignty, and a common legal framework. At the other are parties seeking greater Maori political authority, Treaty-based institutions, and constitutional transformation — to ultimately replace democratic authority with tribal control.

The following scorecard provides a snapshot of the main differences.

Party Scorecard

✓ supports ✗ opposes ~ mixed/unclear

Issue	National	ACT	NZ First	Labour	Greens	TPM	TOP
Referendum on Maori seats	~	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Treaty partnership / co-governance	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
Treaty principles in legislation	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
Abolish Waitangi Tribunal	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Equal rights, not race-based rights	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Did Maori cede sovereignty?	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Treaty-based constitution	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
Abolish UNDRIP*	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
He Puapua **agenda**	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
Matike Mai*	✗	✗	✗	~	✓	✓	~

***Notes:**
UNDRIP is the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; *He Puapua* is Labour's blueprint for tribal control; and *Matike Mai* is the Iwi Leaders' plan to replace New Zealand's unwritten constitution and Parliamentary sovereignty with a *Te Tiriti*-based constitution and tribal supremacy.

A Note on the Changing Interpretation of Te Tiriti

The meaning of the Treaty has been radically re-engineered over recent years. What was in 1840 a clear transfer of sovereignty to the Crown along with a guarantee of private property rights and equal citizenship, has been repackaged into *Te Tiriti* — a modern political construct claiming Maori never ceded sovereignty and are therefore entitled to shared or parallel governance.

Today *Te Tiriti* is commonly framed as delivering the 'three Ps': a *partnership* of shared Maori-Crown decision-making; the *participation* of Maori in the delivery of public services; and the *protection* not only of Maori interests but of a right to 'equity'.

This reinterpretation has turned the Treaty from a nation-building agreement into a constitutional lever for co-governance, veto power, and race-based privilege.

Party-by-Party Policy Overview

National — Crown Sovereignty & Equal Citizenship

National accepts the Treaty as a founding document and supports settlements and appropriate Maori participation in service delivery. It opposes separate governance and any attempt to override parliamentary sovereignty.

Key actions:

- Emphasises equal citizenship and equal opportunity.
- Opposes co-governance of public-services
- Supports co-management for natural resources
- Considering a legislative reset of the Waitangi Tribunal
- Advancing three bills to standardise, repeal, or reduce Treaty principles and obligations in legislation

Waitangi Tribunal: National has committed to restoring the Tribunal back to its original purpose. It supports completing historic Treaty settlements and honouring Treaty commitments.

Bottom line: National supports equal citizenship and Treaty obligations expressly enacted by Parliament — not open-ended race-based powers.

ACT New Zealand — One Law for All

ACT has the clearest constitutional stance: protecting equal rights, Parliamentary sovereignty, and the rule of law.

Key actions:

- Insert Parliamentary sovereignty, equal rights and the rule of law as core constitutional principles into the *Constitution Act*
- Amend the *Legislation Act* to ensure statutes mean what Parliament enacted
- Define the 'rule of law' in the *Senior Courts Act* – and restrict the use of 'tikanga' to make clear that the law should be certain and Parliament has the final say
- Protect private property by adding it to the *Bill of Rights*
- Restrict judicial activism and vague Treaty clauses
- Remove race-based requirements from the public service by repealing section 73 of the *Public Service Act*, and its equivalent in the *Crown Entities Act*
- Restrict the Waitangi Tribunal to focus entirely on completing historical settlements and then wind it up
- Support a referendum on Maori seats

Waitangi Tribunal: ACT's 2026 policy represents a significant change from simply reviewing the Tribunal. It proposes to end the Tribunal's contemporary jurisdiction, complete the remaining historic claims, and disestablish the Tribunal once that historic work is completed.

Bottom line: ACT seeks a decisive constitutional shift back to Parliamentary sovereignty and universal citizenship.

New Zealand First — Equal Citizenship & Democratic Accountability

New Zealand First emphasises equal rights and services delivered according to need.

Key actions:

- Binding referendum on Maori seats
- Abolish the Waitangi Tribunal and replace it with a commission to complete the historic settlements then wind it up
- Disestablish Auckland's Independent Maori Statutory Board

- Oppose *He Puapua*, co-governance and race-based policy

Waitangi Tribunal: New Zealand First's 2026 position is to abolish the Waitangi Tribunal and replace it with a temporary Treaty of Waitangi Completion Commission, which would complete the remaining 'historic' claims and then cease to operate. Contemporary Treaty issues would be handled through the Ministry of Maori Development and normal governmental and Parliamentary processes.

Bottom line: NZ First wants voters — not activists — to determine the future of Maori seats and Treaty institutions.

Labour — Institutional Treaty Partnership

Labour views *Te Tiriti* as a partnership requiring ongoing Maori participation in government decision-making and public service delivery.

A Note of Caution: It is important to remember that while the Labour Party hasn't publicly revealed much policy in this area, nor did they in 2020, when the first we knew about their radical He Puapua plan to replace New Zealand's Westminster democracy with tribal rule by 2040, was when they began imposing it onto the country after they'd won that election.

Key actions:

- Restore iwi participation agreements in resource management
- Reinstate "give effect to Te *Tiriti*" obligations in schools
- Strengthen the Waitangi Tribunal
- Expand Maori-led trades training and service delivery
- Maintain co-governance and Treaty-based policy settings

Waitangi Tribunal: Labour supports retaining and strengthening the Waitangi Tribunal rather than restricting it or winding it up.

Bottom line: Labour says it supports a strengthened Treaty partnership within the existing constitutional framework.

Green Party — Treaty-Based Constitution & Maori Sovereignty

The Greens support radical constitutional change centred on *Te Tiriti* that would effectively replace Parliamentary sovereignty with tribal rule.

Key actions:

- Affirm Maori sovereignty and tikanga as first law
- Grant the Waitangi Tribunal binding powers
- Re-open historical claims, including over *private land*

- Entrench Maori seats
- Implement UNDRIP
- Recognise the 1835 Declaration of Independence

Waitangi Tribunal: The Greens support strengthening the Waitangi Tribunal and giving it binding authority over the Crown. They oppose Treaty settlements being permanently "full and final" and would re-open claims - including for all Crown land and *private land*.

Bottom line: The Greens see *Te Tiriti* as a constitutional foundation for Maori sovereignty.

The Maori Party— Constitutional Transformation & Maori Authority

The Maori Party seeks *full* Maori authority over New Zealand through constitutional transformation based on *Te Tiriti* and *Matike Mai*.

Key actions:

- Provide $220 million over four years to implement *Matike Mai*
- Deliver a Treaty-based constitution and Maori sovereignty
- Make Waitangi Tribunal rulings binding
- Re-open Treaty claims, including for *private land*
- Assert Maori control over freshwater, data, health, education, justice, and economic development
- Establish Maori-led authorities across public services

Waitangi Tribunal: The party proposes transforming the Waitangi Tribunal into a powerful judicial authority with recommendations legally binding on the Crown. By arguing that *Te Tiriti* is a living covenant that cannot be permanently "settled", they plan to re-open the claims process, introduce retrospective relativity clauses, reframe settlements as ongoing obligations, and implement a "Land Back" framework that would return Crown land, council land, conservation land, and *private land* to Maori.

Bottom line: The Maori Party seeks to replace Parliamentary authority with tribal supremacy.

The Opportunity Party — Treaty Partnership & Constitutional Change

TOP supports full Crown–Maori partnership and constitutional change centred on *Te Tiriti*.

A Note of Caution: Since the Opportunity Party's fourth ranked candidate, Dr Kayla Kingdon-Bebb, was a co-author of He Puapua - Labour's radical plan to replace democracy with tribal rule by 2040 - voters should be under no illusion about the constitutional upheaval that could lie behind TOP's seemingly moderate political image.

Key actions:

- Support co-governance and Maori self-determination
- Strengthen the Waitangi Tribunal
- Repeal the Coalition's *Marine and Coastal Area Amendment Bill*
- Restore Treaty references removed from legislation.
- Advocate constitutional change ahead of 2040

Waitangi Tribunal: TOP supports the Waitangi Tribunal and opposes attempts to restrict its role.

Bottom line: TOP aligns with Treaty-based constitutional transformation.

What the Choice Means for Voters

New Zealanders face two fundamentally different constitutional futures:

1. Equal Citizenship & Parliamentary Sovereignty

National, ACT, NZ First

- Common citizenship
- Equal rights
- Democratic authority
- Parliamentary sovereignty
- Opposition to race-based governance

2. Treaty-Based Constitutional Transformation

Labour, Greens, Maori Party, TOP

- Treaty partnership
- Co-governance
- Maori veto powers
- Constitutional change towards replacing Parliamentary sovereignty with tribal supremacy

These are the choices facing voters at Election 2026.

Conclusion

New Zealand literally stands at a constitutional crossroads.

For decades, the interpretation of the Treaty has been progressively transformed by officials, academics, and activist judges — shifting it from a historical agreement of Parliamentary sovereignty, private property rights, and equality in the eyes of the law, into a modern political doctrine of partnership, co-governance, and Maori privilege. That re-interpretation has now reached its end point: a push for full constitutional transformation.

He Puapua and *Matike Mai* are not academic exercises. They are blueprints for a new constitutional order in which Maori would hold veto powers over the Crown, where tikanga would over-ride the common law, and where an unelected judiciary would hold binding authority over an elected Parliament.

With Judges having the power to strike down every attempt to return such a system to Parliamentary sovereignty as unconstitutional, once enacted, constitutional change would be permanent.

Parliament could not reverse it.

Voters could not change it.

Democracy would forever be replaced by a Maori supremacy.

The danger is amplified by the fact that New Zealand's highest court has already begun expanding tikanga beyond anything Parliament ever intended. A Treaty-based constitution would hand these same judges the final say over the country's future — removing democratic control entirely.

Yet most New Zealanders remain unaware of what constitutional transformation actually means. They hear soothing language about "partnership" and "shared decision-making", without realising these are euphemisms for a fundamental restructuring of the state, which would lead to the complete denigration of democracy.

The 2026 election is therefore not just another political contest. It is a decision about the constitutional foundations of New Zealand. One path preserves equal citizenship, Parliamentary sovereignty, and democratic accountability. The other places the country on a path towards a Treaty-based constitution that entrenches race-based governance, threatens private property rights, and removes voters from the centre of political authority.

This report summarises the facts.

The choice now lies with the public.

The stakes could not be higher.