Title: How Scrapping the Census Could Affect Māori Data

Māori Data Sovereignty (MDS) consists of 6 principles, Rangatiratanga, states that Māori should have authority over how information about them is collected and used. Replacing the traditional Census with the Stats NZ administrative dataset can impose risk to the integrity and accuracy of the data.

Government records usually don’t let people clearly identify their iwi, whanau or culture like Census does. This takes away some control Māori have their own data and can lead to several risks. Māori populations and communities may be misrepresented due to inaccurate or missing data, reducing certainty in official statistics. It also reduces Māori ability to guide and protect their information according to Whakapapa (context and relationships) and Kaitiakitanga (guardianship). If data is used without their consent.

To avoid these risks Stats NZ should collaborate with Māori in the creation of the new system. Following Tikanga, which is about doing the right thing to uphold Māori rights, groups like Te Mana Raraunga and Te Kahui Raraunga can help set guidelines for how Māori data is collected, stored and used. This ensures that the MDS principles are respected by the new Census form.

Word count: 187