



KARAKIA

Regardless of a person's cultural background, it is important to ensure the safety of all members of the group while near the water. One way to achieve this, is to focus our thoughts and acknowledge the powerful forces of nature that are present. In the Māori world, this is done when karakia are recited, linking the people to the gods.

Tangaroa is known as the God of the Sea. The tikanga (protocols/rules) that were practiced while gathering kaimoana (seafood) acknowledged that kaimoana belonged to Tangaroa and this had to be respected. Karakia were said before people departed for the fishing grounds. A Karakia could be recited before venturing on the seashore as a way to give responsibility to the group to treat the animals and plants living there with respect and care. Consult members of your community to find out if there is a local person who is able and willing to provide a karakia to begin your field trip. If not, your group may like to use one of the karakia below.

A SIMPLE KARAKIA

***E te Atua,
Ārahina mātou. Manaakitia
nga taonga a Tangaroa.***

Simply, it says:

***Guide us,
Care for the ocean's treasures.***

AN ANCIENT KARAKIA

***Whakataka te hau ki te uru.
Whakataka te hau ki te tonga.
Kia mākinakina ki uta.
Kia mātaratara ki tai.***

***E hī ake ana te atākura He tio,
He huka,
He hauhūnga.***

Tīhei Mauri Ora!

This ancient karakia was first recorded in print in Charles Davis, 'Maori Momentos', 1855. Below is one suggested translation, however, there are several others, each offering different perspectives and appropriate understandings.

***The westerly wind will surely come,
so too will the wind from the south.
Be ready for them.
It will be icy and cold inland and on the coast.
The dawn will be awesome,
and will transform
this frozen landscape.***