



MORIORI IMI

SETTLEMENT TRUST

RĒKOHU 44s 176w

Court of Appeal Judgment Update (June 2026)

Outcome of the Appeal

The Court of Appeal heard Mori Mori's appeals on 4 March 2026 and released its judgment on 10 June 2026.

The appeals related to the Crown's Treaty settlement process with Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri (NMOW) and whether aspects of that process could lawfully proceed while issues concerning Mori Mori rights and interests remain before the courts.

The Court dismissed both appeals. This means the Court did not overturn the earlier High Court decisions relating to:

- the declaration sought by Mori Mori concerning the Crown's ability to enter into a settlement with NMOW affecting interests in henu (land) and tangible miheke in Rēkohu; and
- the request for interim orders to prevent the Crown from progressing aspects of the NMOW settlement process while the proceedings continued.

What the Court Said

The Court recorded NMOW's assurance that:

"Ngāti Mutunga do not assert, and have never asserted, they have te tino rangatiratanga over Imi Mori Mori or the Chatham Islands."

The Court also accepted that the Agreement in Principle and the initialled Deed of Settlement do not themselves affect existing Mori Mori rights.

Importantly, the Court recognised that Mori Mori may still seek to have questions relating to existing rights, interests, mana, status and customary rights determined by the courts through appropriately framed proceedings.

