



Survival in the harsh climate of the South Island (Te Waipounamu) meant that Māori had to use all available resources to feed their families. Māori had to process and preserve food as the climate meant that there would be times when food was scarce. South Island Māori families (whānau) couldn't rely on planting and harvesting food like North Island tribes, they had to become skilled at gathering food and preserving food.

Māori families (whānau) would travel across the South Island (the takiwā) gathering food and other resources on a seasonal basis. By doing this, the tribal structure of the South Island (Ngāi Tahu) was created, through alliances and marriage. For Ngāi Tahu the environment - the land (whenua), waters, coasts, oceans, flora and fauna - and how humans interact with it, is at the heart of the tribe's identity and their culture.

- Mahinga Kai refers to the tribal (Ngāi Tahu) interests in traditional food, natural resources, and the places where those resources are found.
- In the past Ngāi Tahu used the local Avon river to gather food including: eels (tuna), whitebait (inaka), native trout (kōkopu), cockabullies (kōkōupara), grey ducks (parera), and paradise shelducks (putakitaki). The Avon River was a rich source of food, a centre point for meeting, trading and gathering food.
- Keeping traditional food gathering practices alive for future generations is an important part of maintaining cultural values and ensuring that the land (whenua) is looked after.

**Questions:**

- *How will the way in which you work contribute to keeping the Avon River as clean as possible?*
- *How would you like the Avon River to be for the next generations?*