



## **Contact, Ngati Tahu win international energy award**

20 April 2018 - Contact Energy and the Ngati Tahu Landowners Collective have been awarded the prestigious 2018 US Energy Association Corporate Volunteer Award in Washington DC for their work in Kenya.

The energy company and the Bay of Plenty land owners spent 12 months helping power company KenGen and Maasai communities establish a sustainable partnership to co-manage geothermal resources in Kenya.

KenGen is the largest power producing company in Kenya, and has developed over 500 megawatts of geothermal power generation on the Olkaria field, one of the world's premier geothermal resources. The region is also home to a large population of nomadic Maasai, which has led to tensions over how the geothermal resources are developed.

The aim of the exchange programme was to share Contact and Ngati Tahu's experience of working together on the Ohaaki geothermal field, near Taupo, to support the Maasai and KenGen's efforts to develop and grow a mutually beneficial partnership.

Aroha Campbell, a Trustee of the Ngati Tahu Tribal Lands Trust and member of the Ngati Tahu Landowners Collective, says there are strong parallels between New Zealand and Kenya, with indigenous communities in both countries having deeply vested cultural, economic, environmental and social interests in geothermal resources.

"One of the key requirements to developing a sustainable geothermal partnership is placing the interests of local communities on par with the commercial considerations," says Campbell. "This is not always intuitive when it comes to resource development projects, which is what makes this award so gratifying. It recognises how far the Contact and Ngati Tahu partnership has come, and we are thrilled we could share our ongoing experience with our Kenyan partners."

Kaapua Smith, Head of Sustainability at Contact Energy, says Contact Energy is proud of the award and its partnerships.

"The most gratifying part of the exchange was seeing how much progress KenGen and the Maasai communities have made in a short space of time," says Smith. "It is still a work in progress – as is our partnership with Ngati Tahu – but shows there can be a win-win when it comes to resource development and indigenous communities."

The award was presented to Contact and Ngati Tahu representatives in Washington DC, and the event was attended by the New Zealand Ambassador to the United States, Hon. Tim Groser.

The exchange programme, which consisted of two visits to Kenya by the New Zealand delegation and two visits to New Zealand by Kenyan delegation, was sponsored by Power Africa and partners United States Energy Association and the Geothermal Energy Association.

Power Africa was launched by US President Barak Obama in 2013 with the goal of adding more than 30,000 megawatts of cleaner, more efficient electricity generation capacity and 60 million new home and business connections.

The United States Energy Association (USEA), which is part of Power Africa, established the corporate volunteer award to recognise outstanding individuals and organisations who contribute to the objectives of the United States Energy Association and Power Africa, by contributing to worldwide sustainable energy development.

## **ENDS**

**Picture:** (Left to right) Ngati Tahu Tribal Lands Trust's Aroha Campbell and Dorothy Raroa, with Contact's Jacqui Nelson and Kaapua Smith, accepting the 2018 US Energy Association Corporate Volunteer Award in Washington DC for their work in Kenya.

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### **About Contact Energy**

Contact is one of New Zealand's largest listed companies. We keep the lights burning, the hot water flowing and the BBQ fired up for over half a million homes and businesses across New Zealand. We're committed to a sustainable, low carbon energy future for New Zealand. To us, this means balancing our commitment to lower carbon, renewable energy, while upholding our good standing with local communities and maintaining reliable economic access to energy for our customers. We generate electricity from hydro, geothermal and gas and have one of the most flexible generation portfolios in the country.

### **About Ngati Tahu Land Owner Collective**

The Ngati Tahu Land Owner Collective represents mana whenua and landowners around the Ohaaki Power Station in Reporoa. The LOC is made up of three entities – the Ngati Tahu Tribal Lands Trust, Tahorakuri A No 1 Sec 1 (Ohaki Papakainga), and Tahorakuri A1 Sec 30. They represent the broad interests of landowners and mana whenua in its relationship with Contact Energy.