



Pounamu returned to Ngai Tahu

Yesterday, the New Zealand Customs Service marked International Customs Day by returning a 175 kilogram piece of pounamu (also known as jade) to Ngāi Tahu. Customs stopped it from being exported illegally in December 2010.

The confiscated pounamu was sold by a jeweller to a customer from China who had previously exported numerous pieces of pounamu and so it was packaged for export with no consideration of any export restrictions.

Subsequent checks by Customs found the pounamu to be in a raw state with no approval to export having been applied for. Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu was notified and the pounamu seized.

The export of pounamu, both natural or processed, is prohibited except with the consent of the Minister of Customs. The Minister can only give consent on written advice from Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, or the Mawhera Incorporation if the pounamu was from the catchment of the Arahura River.

Please see our [website for the full article](#) and information on [protected New Zealand objects and pounamu](#).