

Community Talk Story Sessions Preliminary Findings

An Update for the Mauna Kea Stewardship & Oversight Authority

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Agenda

Mahina Consulting to provide a walkthrough of the following:

- Overview of Community Talk Story Scope & Process
- Review of Preliminary Findings
- Q&A



Executive Summary:

Community Feedback on the Draft MKSOA Strategic Framework

Overview

1. What is not understandable — the areas where language, structure, and concepts are unclear or inaccessible.
2. What is missing — the critical elements, perspectives, and systems needed to make the Framework complete, culturally grounded, and actionable.

Across both themes, participants called for clarity, transparency, inclusivity, and cultural integrity in all aspects of the Framework.

Executive Summary:

Community Feedback on the Draft MKSOA Strategic Framework

Conclusion

Community feedback underscores a shared desire for a *Strategic Framework* that is:

- Culturally grounded in Kānāwai and ‘ike kūpuna,
- Transparent and accessible to all audiences,
- Educational and intergenerational, and
- Action-oriented, measurable, and restorative in its outcomes.

To honor the community’s feedback and input, moving forward, the Framework must evolve from a conceptual document into a **living guide**—one that honors the Mauna, restores balance, and empowers the people of Hawai‘i to steward Mauna Kea with integrity, accountability, and clarity.

Key Findings

1. Clarity, Language, and Accessibility

- Complex and academic language makes the Framework difficult for general audiences to understand.
- Plain-language explanations, including a glossary and use of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i, are needed for key terms such as kānāwai, stewardship, and ecosystem approach.
- Calls for keiki-friendly and bilingual versions, visual aids, and multimedia storytelling to make the Framework more inclusive and accessible.
- Participants requested clearer, more directive and action-oriented language, replacing abstract phrasing with concrete examples of how values and principles are practiced.

Key Findings

2. Legal and Governance Transparency

- There is limited understanding of Act 255 and how it shapes the Authority's powers, governance, and responsibilities.
- Stakeholders want plain-language summaries of the law, inclusion of direct statutory language, and visuals that delineate jurisdictional boundaries (MKSOA, UH, DLNR, DHHL).
- Participants called for clear accountability structures, an organizational chart, and explicit information on who oversees the Authority.
- Missing acknowledgment of lineal descendant rights, land ownership (crown and ceded lands), and unresolved legal disputes.

Key Findings

3. Core Values, Guiding Principles, and Vision

- The distinction between Core Values and Guiding Principles is unclear, and both are perceived as too linear, conceptual, and disconnected.
- Participants want these concepts shown as interconnected and relational, grounded in kuleana, respect, and the perspective of the Mauna itself as a living being.
- Vision and inspirational language are missing—stakeholders called for a forward-looking statement that reflects mutual benefit, healing, and hope for the people of Hawai‘i and Mauna Kea.
- The term “Authority” was described as triggering and colonial; community members suggested titles that reflect stewardship and partnership instead.

Key Findings

4. Cultural Integrity and Historical Context

- Missing acknowledgment of generational trauma, U.S. occupation, and historic injustices tied to land use, permitting, and telescope construction.
- Respondents emphasized the need for a restorative justice lens that acknowledges harm and seeks healing.
- The Framework should explicitly integrate Native Hawaiian cultural practices—including ceremonies, celestial navigation, and ancestral sciences—as living components of stewardship.
- Calls for broader inclusion of Native Hawaiian culture beyond ceremonial references, ensuring cultural knowledge informs all governance decisions.

Key Findings

5. Education and Youth Engagement

- Education is underrepresented in the current Framework. Stakeholders want it embedded as a core component of stewardship, science, and cultural continuity.
- Recommendations include:
 - » Curriculum integration across school levels (e.g., a “Mauna Kea unit”).
 - » Creation of interactive educational materials (videos, maps, visuals).
 - » Youth engagement pathways through partnerships with organizations such as the Hawai‘i Council Youth Commission, Indigenous Youth Alliance, and Kū Ānuenue.

Key Findings

6. Community Engagement and Communication

- Feedback emphasized the need for ongoing, transparent, and reciprocal dialogue rather than one-time consultations.
- Requests include clear articulation of how community talk-story sessions inform Master and Management Plans, and mechanisms for regular updates through local and social media.
- Missing elements include short, accessible educational videos, multilingual resources, and collaborative outreach with schools and community organizations.



Key Findings

7. Environmental Stewardship and Land Use

- The Framework's environmental approach is viewed as too limited and reactive, focusing on restoration without clear links to preservation, protection, and prevention.
- Stakeholders seek measurable, long-term sustainability goals and ecological indicators, particularly regarding waters, streams, and ecosystems.
- There is a call for explicit land use controls that prevent desecration of sacred or culturally significant sites, and for recognition of Pōhakuloa as ecologically connected to Mauna Kea.



Key Findings

8. Science and Knowledge Systems

- The Framework equates science primarily with astronomy, excluding other disciplines and ‘ike kūpuna (ancestral knowledge).
- Respondents recommend expanding science to include ecology, geology, biology, and cultural sciences, validating both Indigenous and contemporary ways of knowing.
- Inclusion of ‘ike kūpuna and Native Hawaiian celestial navigation would reinforce a holistic model of stewardship.



Key Findings

9. Kānāwai and Indigenous Governance

- Stakeholders called for a dedicated Kānāwai section explaining its principles, cycles, and application to governance and land control.
- Inclusion of Dr. Pua Kanakaʻole's Kānāwai teachings, with accompanying definitions and visuals, would demonstrate its centrality to the Framework.
- Participants also requested opportunities for ongoing conversations about Kānāwai, linking it to both cultural education and legal practice.



Key Findings

10. Funding, Resources, and Implementation

- The Framework lacks a sustainable funding plan for stewardship, regulation, and enforcement.
- Suggested solutions include:
 - » Fee structures and concession revenues to support conservation.
 - » Transparent allocation of funds toward ecological restoration and cultural education.
- » Development of an economic model that aligns resource use with stewardship principles.
- Respondents also requested implementation tools—timelines, milestones, and measurable outcomes—to translate values into concrete action.

Cross-Cutting Themes

Theme	Community Priorities
Transparency & Clarity	Explain Act 255, roles, and governance in plain language; use visuals and accessible tools.
Cultural Integrity & Restorative Justice	Acknowledge trauma, history, and U.S. occupation; embed healing and justice into stewardship.
Education & Youth Empowerment	Make education and youth engagement central to the Framework’s mission.
Inclusive Communication	Commit to sustained, reciprocal dialogue and accessible outreach.
Environmental & Cultural Stewardship	Expand restoration to include preservation, prevention, and spiritual renewal.
Integration of Knowledge Systems	Elevate ‘ike kūpuna alongside contemporary science.
Language & Representation	Increase ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i, define key terms, and represent the Mauna’s voice as living.
Sustainability & Funding	Establish a clear, transparent funding model for long-term stewardship and accountability.
Vision & Inspiration	Add a forward-looking vision statement that unites ecological, cultural, and communal aspirations.

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