

Briefing to the incoming Minister of Conservation

Ngā pitopito korero – Minita Te Papa Atawhai

January 2023



Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai



**Te Kāwanatanga
o Aotearoa**
New Zealand Government



Contents

This 'Briefing for the Incoming Minister' (BIM) introduces you to the conservation portfolio.

It provides a high-level overview of conservation and current challenges, the role of DOC, your role as Minister of Conservation, and upcoming decisions.

The attachments also provide an overview of DOC's senior leadership team, a list of key partners and stakeholders, and a list of briefings that will be provided to support your understanding of the portfolio.

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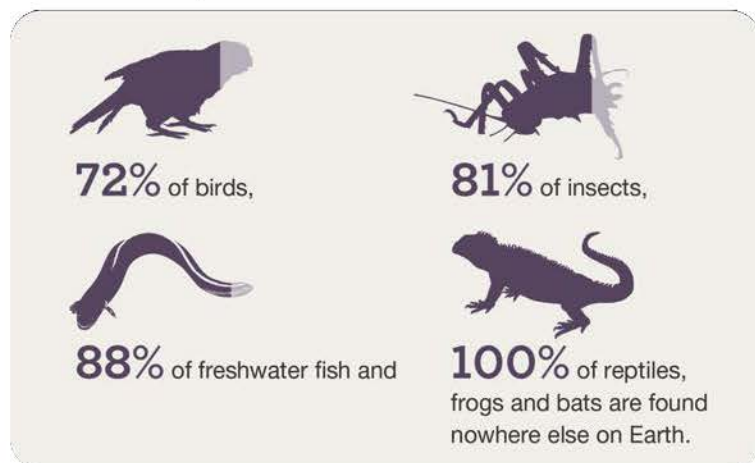
1. Conservation matters to New Zealand



New Zealanders' connection to this land, our oceans and wildlife runs deep. Through whakapapa, spiritual or emotional connection, mental health and wellbeing, physical enjoyment, resilience to climate change impacts, and the economic prosperity of our regions and country.

Our connection to our cultural heritage matters to us. Our cultural heritage places keep us, and future generations, connected to our rich and unique culture.

New Zealand's plants and animals are endemic and unique.



Once these species are gone from here, they're gone from everywhere.

We are a global hotspot for marine biodiversity. About 30% of Aotearoa New Zealand's biodiversity is found at sea, and around 50% of our marine flora and fauna are found nowhere else on earth. New Zealand's marine environment spans 4.2 million km² and 30 degrees of latitude. Only 0.4% of this is protected in no take marine reserves.

Our ecosystems and places are special and worth protecting. We are one of only four countries in the world with significant braided river systems. Our offshore islands are rich in biodiversity and are the last refuges for some animals and rare plants.

Nature and heritage matters to New Zealanders

In 2021/22 around 80% of New Zealanders reported visiting protected natural areas (such as parks, reserves and beaches) and 75% heritage sites.

Two-thirds of New Zealanders (65%) agree that the preservation and conservation of the outdoors is one of the most important issues in New Zealand.



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2. When nature thrives, New Zealand thrives



Our unique species and places are worth protecting for their own sake, and because our economy and society depends on a healthy nature.

Our economy depends on nature from tourism to agriculture, forestry and fisheries, infrastructure, property, energy, resources, sports and recreation.

- There are more than 5,000 current concessions for businesses to operate on DOC land and waters, creating \$20m revenue each year.
- Conservation and nature-tourism supports regional economies – creating job opportunities, visitor experiences and undertaking significant pest control.
- High levels of biodiversity have a positive impact on ecosystem functions and resilience which means that ecosystem services are more likely to be maintained despite disturbance and change.
- New Zealand markets itself on the clean, green image - our environmental credentials underpin the success of our primary industries, and it's what most international tourists come here for.
- International tourists spent \$1.9 billion in the year to March 2022.

Conversely the economy suffers if we don't act

- Introduced wasps cost New Zealand's economy more than \$130 million dollars a year, with the biggest economic impacts on farming, beekeeping, horticulture and forestry workers.
- If left uncontrolled, wilding pines are a \$4.6 billion threat to the national economy. Wilding pines threaten to invade alpine herb fields, dry tussock lands, geothermal areas and the volcanic plateau, frost flats and seasonal wetlands.

Our health and wellbeing depends on nature.

Scientific evidence demonstrates the link between our natural environment and wellbeing. Nature provides us with green spaces, opportunities for recreation and allows us to gather kai. Participating in the outdoors and connecting with nature improves wellbeing and creates a connection with nature.

Visitor activity from the Timber Trail Great Ride in the Pureora Forest (managed and run by DOC and Nga Haerenga New Zealand Cycle Trails) directly contributes over \$6m annually to the Waikato region, plus important contributions to conservation on the trail from concessionaires, visitors and volunteers.

Nature provides solutions to problems like climate change

Nature-based solutions can combine climate and biodiversity policy. We can remove carbon from the atmosphere, store it and build resilience to the impacts of climate change at the same time as supporting biodiversity and wider environmental outcomes.

- New Zealand's mature native forests are thought to hold seven billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent – equal to 86 years' worth of the whole country's greenhouse gas emissions – and keeping them healthy ensures this carbon isn't released).
- Peat wetlands in particular are super carbon sinks. They hold twice as much carbon as all of the world's forests combined yet cover about 3% of earth's land surface.

Restoring native forests and wetlands helps address biodiversity loss and climate change.



3. Nature is in trouble



Biodiversity decline is a global issue.

Right now, New Zealand's biodiversity is under pressure. Our ecosystems are declining and nearly 4,000 native species are either at risk or threatened with extinction. For many more species we do not have enough data to make an assessment.



Drivers of biodiversity loss



Invasive species – that outcompete and attack indigenous species and strip habitats. Like possums, rats, deer, goats, weeds and undaria (Japanese seaweed)



Climate change – changes in weather patterns, extreme heat and rain changing ecosystems and affecting species faster than they can adapt



Land and sea use change – such as deforestation, draining wetlands, fragmentation of habitats, intensification



Direct exploitation – extracting resources in a way and rate that is unsustainable, like over fishing



Pollution – like excess nutrients and plastics.

New Zealand's native animals evolved separately from the rest of the world for millions of years. They did not learn to defend themselves against introduced predators. Now, these predators kill an estimated 25 million native birds each year.

Kiwi populations were declining at 2% per year, leading to the real prospect of our grandchildren not being able to see a kiwi in the wild in future. With active management, Brown Kiwi are now no longer classified as threatened.



4. Where we focus effort, we see progress



Biodiversity is in crisis – what we do makes a difference. We've proven in many parts of the country that when we remove or manage the threats, restore the habitats and/or modify how we use or interact with nature, it comes back.

Recent conservation successes include:

- Tahr are now constrained to their feral range, because the Department has been working with recreational hunters to reduce the Tahr population by 25,000 over the past three years.

[Please note the following correction to the above statement has been provided by the Department of Conservation on 28 March 2023: The removal of over 30,000 tahr since 2019 through the combined efforts of DOC and recreational and commercial hunters. Highest priority has been given to reducing tahr populations outside their prescribed feral range and within National Parks.]

- Science and technology is accelerating development of new and existing predator control tools, including drones and remote sensing tools.
- We have managed to improve the threat status of some species:
 - five species moved from 'Nationally Critical' – the last category before extinction
 - North Island brown kiwi improved from 'At Risk – Declining' to 'Not Threatened'
- Partners are making a huge difference in improving our forest ecosystems, including in South Westland, Abel Tasman National Park and the Taranaki Mouna Project.
- The ambitious Capital Kiwi Project and partners released 11 kiwi in November 2022. These kiwi are the first of 250 planned to be released around Wellington – part of a four-year project to eradicate introduced predators. This is a big step towards the predator free by 2050 goal.

- The 218 Jobs for Nature projects are providing nature-based employment and supporting the goals of the Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy
 - 116 Jobs for Nature projects are led by iwi, hapū or whānau
 - 4389 people have been employed, with more than 3 million hours worked
 - 899,722 hectares treated for rats and/or mustelids

New Zealand is a global leader in conservation, and DOC staff hold significant knowledge and expertise that has led to world leading conservation innovations. We have been innovative in the fight against invasive species and creating island sanctuaries. We've carried out nearly a quarter of the world's island pest eradications. Without this active intervention we would lose much of New Zealand's special biodiversity.

But we are only just **'holding the line' and we can't do it everywhere**. Our focus is on our most threatened species and critical biodiversity threats, which means there are a range of species and places which are not getting the help they need.

So far, we have not been able to stop widespread biodiversity decline given the scale of the problem and increasing range of threats, including climate change.

For example, while the national predator control programme covers 600,000 hectares of aerial operations a year, this is a tiny part of the 8,700,000 hectares of land DOC manages.

5. A system-level response is needed



In 2020 Cabinet approved the Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy: *Te Mana o te Taiao*.

Te Mana o te Taiao provides an 'all of New Zealand' response to the threat to our biodiversity and sets the direction and goals for biodiversity in New Zealand to 2050.

DOC is the overall lead agency for *Te Mana o te Taiao* and is responsible for a significant part of its delivery, but biodiversity is not restricted to public conservation lands and waters. Many significant ecosystems and species occur on farmland and other private and Māori land.

A wide range of central and local government agencies, iwi, NGOs, businesses, community groups and individuals all have critical roles in achieving the ambitious goals of *Te Mana o te Taiao*.

The whole biodiversity system, including legislation, governance and leadership, and science and monitoring needs to be working together.

Te Mana o te Taiao recognises that the current system isn't working as well as it should be, as it is failing to tackle issues at the scale needed to address the ongoing and cumulative loss of indigenous biodiversity.

The current system is complex, legislation is complicated and out of date, and planning is being done independently, with no overall monitoring.

Improving the system

DOC is working with others to lead and coordinate the system level response, including building the right governance, developing an implementation plan for 2023–2025, and establishing monitoring and reporting.

The biodiversity system will be working well when we are turning around the declining statistics and tracking progress at the national level. Success also requires DOC to be focusing its effort and demonstrating the difference it is making.

We are at a defining moment for the future of nature and biodiversity that we all depend upon. We have a window of opportunity now to harness and leverage the energy and commitment across the system to mount an effective response, and it is critical that we take this opportunity. The biodiversity crisis, along with climate change, are critical issues of our time.

More work is needed to understand the required interventions at the system and DOC organisational level.



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Photo: Jason Blair

6. What DOC does



DOC's area of responsibility stretches from the Kermadec Islands in the north to the subantarctic archipelago in the south. Our work includes:

- managing public conservation land and waters and conserving natural and cultural heritage throughout Aotearoa New Zealand, including marine wildlife and mammals in our territorial seas
- the protection of the many native birds, fish, insects, lizards, frogs, bats and marine mammals in Aotearoa, on and off of Public Conservation land.
- working alongside communities across New Zealand to monitor and care for our most precious and at-risk species and places
- regulation and law enforcement, with functions and powers under the Conservation Act and other pieces of legislation, to protect indigenous species and ecosystems
- connecting with nature and cultural heritage, on public conservation land and through engagement and advocacy
- managing visitor assets, including tracks and huts, and making sure people from all over the world have a safe and enjoyable experience
- advocating for protection and restoration of biodiversity and heritage across Aotearoa New Zealand and at a global level

We manage:



8 million ha of land (a third of NZ's land area)



4.5 million ha of water, including 52 marine reserves and sanctuaries



220 large islands, hundreds of smaller islands and rock stacks.



14,407 native species of flora and fauna



21,853 visitor assets



15,000 km of track



950 huts



300 campsites



15,500+ heritage sites

DOC is NZ's largest provider of visitor activities. We provide more toilets, tracks, picnic areas, huts and campsites than anyone else.

DOC manages the largest heritage portfolio in the country, caring for and telling the stories of the places that have shaped New Zealand's history.



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Who we are

DOC has 2,500 dedicated staff working at more than 100 locations across New Zealand. Our offices and visitor centres across 10 regions enable DOC to work with communities in almost every corner of New Zealand. Our operations are supported by legal, planning, people and culture, policy, scientific and financial services coordinated from Conservation House in Wellington.

DOC's strategic focus is currently:



Biodiversity – turning the tide of biodiversity loss by targeting efforts to reducing pressure on the most threatened species and restoring eco-systems.



Climate change – supporting species and adapting to the impacts of climate change, and exploring opportunities for nature-based solutions to climate challenges.



Getting the system right – setting ourselves up to deliver and get results for nature, which includes an effective regulatory function and critical partnerships.



Building a modern, professional organisation – one with robust systems, and a focus on assurance and accountability. We want DOC to be known as a great organisation, one that is trusted to deliver and good to work with and for.



Being an honourable treaty partner – our commitment to being an honourable Treaty Partner needs to be the foundation for everything we do. With one of the strongest obligations in law to give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, we know it will take time to truly deliver on this commitment.

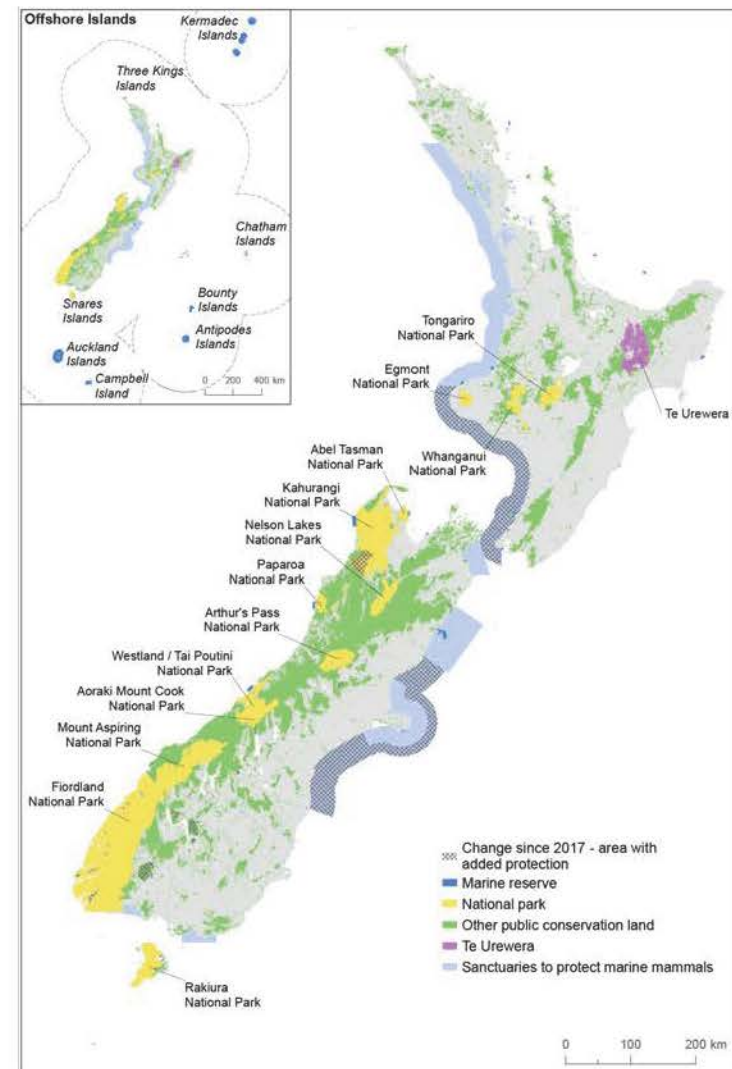


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Location of DOC offices and visitor centres



Public conservation land across Aotearoa New Zealand





7. Treaty Partner relationships are at the heart of what we do



Whānau, hapū and iwi have a fundamental and deep connection to their whenua, awa and moana, and as kaitiaki, they care about the wellbeing of native species and public conservation lands and waters. As a Treaty partner, DOC has responsibilities to Māori in fulfilling their role as kaitiaki, whether a Treaty settlement is in place or not.

Section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987 requires us to give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, and the Ngāi Tai ki Tāmaki Supreme Court decision underscores the strength of this requirement.

DOC also has a growing range of partnerships, management and consultation arrangements with iwi arising from Treaty settlements.

Although we have made some progress in advancing relationships with our Treaty partners, there is some way to go to achieving a thriving partnership in conservation. Addressing these challenges is a priority area for DOC over the next five years.

Work includes developing guidance on what it means to be an honourable Treaty partner, and building capability for giving effect to Treaty of Waitangi principles.

We are also developing our response to a report by the Options Development Group, which recommends short and longer-term changes to policies and legislation to give better effect to the principles of the Treaty.

At a glance

- There are currently 70 Treaty Settlements across the country, covering more than 70 iwi and including more than 3,000 specific obligations and commitments.
- 17 settlements include references to co-management or co-governance.

s 9(2)(f)(iv)



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8. Many others are critical to conservation



Conservation requires a collective effort involving central and local government, iwi and hapū, business and industry sectors, private landowners, scientists and researchers, education, NGOs, philanthropy, communities and individuals.

Government agencies, including Ministry for the Environment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Ministry for Primary Industries (including Te Uru Rākau, Fisheries New Zealand and Biodiversity New Zealand), Land Information New Zealand, and local, territorial, regional and unitary councils have important roles and responsibilities. As do New Zealand Fish and Game Council, Game Animal Council, Māori statutory bodies and Treaty settlement entities.

The primary sector, including farmers and growers, play an important role, and hundreds of community groups are actively involved in leading and delivering conservation work as well as many more individual landowners.

The business sector is increasingly engaged in conservation efforts and over 5,000 business operate on public conservation land and waters. Many of these businesses contribute significantly to conservation, and enable visitors to experience nature and the outdoors as well as telling the stories of the places they are operating in.

A list of key Conservation partners and stakeholders is in appendix 1.

Statutory bodies

The New Zealand Conservation Authority and Conservation Boards are statutory bodies that provide advice to the Minister and Director-General on policy, the management of public conservation lands and waters and species, and in respect of other activities of DOC.

They also have responsibilities for the development, approval and implementation of policies, strategies and plans.

As Minister of Conservation, you have appointment and monitoring responsibilities for more than 70 entities within the Conservation portfolio.

The importance of working with others to reverse the decline of biodiversity is emphasised by a University of Canterbury estimate that a quarter of New Zealand's native vegetation (approximately 2.8 million hectares) is on sheep and beef farms.



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9. The big challenges ahead



We are making progress against our strategic priorities. However, there are several big challenges that we need to address if we want conservation efforts to be successful for New Zealand:

- The **scale of the biodiversity challenge** requires us to prioritise our efforts on the critical areas that will make the biggest difference for species and ecosystems. We don't have the resources for intensive management across eight million hectares of public conservation land.
- **We are lacking the data** and systems needed to support effective prioritisation. Improving our monitoring and reporting of outcomes will support making decisions around trade-offs and where we focus our efforts on managing the risk of losing some of our precious forests and species.
- We're struggling to effectively suppress **predators and pests**. Deer and other browsers are destroying our forests and we are only holding the line in areas with sustained predator control.
- About 30 percent of New Zealand's biodiversity is found at sea, yet only a fraction of our **marine environment** is protected. There is further work to do to meet our domestic and international goals.
- **Climate change** is impacting every aspect of DOC's work. It's driving more frequent and severe storms that are damaging our visitor asset network and putting pressure on habitats and species. We need to radically re-think how we support species to survive as their environments change, and how we build a sustainable visitor network. Meeting our own emissions reductions targets will also take innovation and investment.
- The sheer scale of carrying **land management responsibilities for 30% of New Zealand** means the range of activities we need to undertake on a regular basis is extremely broad, including roads, carparks and toilets, drinking water and wastewater services, emergency response and fire management.
- We have a **large and ageing visitor asset base**, which we cannot continue to maintain and keep to required standards. We need to ensure that we provide for a spectrum of experiences, whilst making difficult decisions on what assets we replace and maintain, to ensure our visitor network is financially sustainable.
- Establishing a **sustainable funding** base for conservation is becoming critical as inflation increases the cost of delivering conservation services and outputs. Covid-19 stopped international visitors and caused a \$19m drop in revenue. We need to make hard calls on what we invest in and where we disinvest, including decisions on a fit for purpose and sustainable visitor asset network.
- There is significant work to be undertaken to be an **honourable Treaty partner** and build capability for giving effect to Treaty of Waitangi principles.
- Our **regulatory system is difficult to engage with**, including backlogs in processing applications, delays in conservation management planning and uncertainty around how DOC's Treaty responsibilities play out in our regulatory context. We are partway through significant changes including new teams focussing on regulatory policy and assurance functions; and a regulatory strategy to clarify DOC's regulatory role and identify key priorities for improvement over the next five years.
- **Meeting our international commitments** will require a focused effort. Under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, New Zealand committed to the global targets of protecting 30% of land, inland water, coastal areas and oceans, by 2030.

10. Where we're heading



At the heart of what we're trying to achieve at DOC is healthy nature – we want Papatūānuku to thrive. To support this, we need a country that connects to, and values, our nature and heritage.

What success looks like

- **We're clear about the work, experiences, places and species we focus on.** This will be informed by robust science, monitoring and reporting, and an understanding of whānau, hapū and iwi values and aspirations at place.
- **Targeted conservation effort would have grown across New Zealand.** We will be enabling others - individuals, whānau, hapū and iwi, businesses, landowners and community groups - to actively make a difference for biodiversity and cultural heritage.
- **We will consistently do excellent conservation work** – with best practice and innovation, safely and effectively.
- **Our policies and regulations support and protect ecosystems, species, and heritage.**
- **Being an honourable Treaty Partner means we achieve shared outcomes and healthy nature.**
- Our **regulations are easy** for our Treaty Partner, stakeholders and the businesses that operate on public conservation land and waters to engage with.
- Our efforts will help New Zealand to **lead the way in climate change mitigation and adaptation**, by managing the largest risks to ecosystems and species and integrating climate science into DOC systems and management practices.
- Our work with visitors will be **supporting a regenerative tourism system** that is built to ensure conservation, restoration, and regeneration of natural and cultural heritage.
- **DOC is clear on the experiences we provide, and decisions to replace, maintain or remove assets reflect this**, along with ensuring our built assets are both resilient to climate change and contribute to mitigating climate change impacts.



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Photo: Jason Blair

11. Key work underway



The Department's priority operational and policy work programmes are listed below.

Looking after our biodiversity

- Continuing Predator Control and Predator Free 2050
- Effective browser control (e.g goats, deer, tahr)
- Threatened species management
- Kauri protection
- Fiordland predator incursion response
- Wilding conifer control
- Leading an all-of-government plan describing priority outcomes, and a revised implementation plan for *Te Mana o te Taiao* – Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy (including clear actions, monitoring and reporting)
- Developing clear priorities for DOC's biodiversity work nationally and for each region (including research priorities)

Marine

- Revitalising the Hauraki Gulf through **s 9(2)(f)(iv)**
- Progressing the Kermadec/Rangitāhua Ocean Sanctuary
- South-East Marine Protection statutory process

Connecting people with nature and cultural heritage

- Delivering a fit for purpose, financially sustainable visitor network that provides clarity on where we invest and where we don't
- Continuously improving DOC's visitor risk and safety system
- Progressing the Milford Opportunities Project and management of the Tongariro Alpine Crossing

Organisational capability and systems

- Being clear on what it means to be an honourable Treaty partner and operationalising section 4 in a consistent way
- Continuous implementation and improvement of DOC's regulatory function
- Ensuring DOC is financially sustainable, with excellent financial and asset management.
- Treaty settlement negotiations

Legislation and policy

- **s 9(2)(f)(iv)**
- Conservation law reform and the review of the Wildlife Act 1953
- Partial reviews of the Conservation General Policy and the General Policy for National Parks
- Stewardship land review and reclassification
- Contributing to resource management reform
- Coordinating DOC's response to Government's climate change policies and integrating climate adaptation into DOC systems and plans

Working with others

- Ensuring partnerships, including Jobs for Nature, Predator Free 2050 and commercial partnerships, deliver sustainable outcomes for biodiversity
- Growing our work with philanthropists to explore possible opportunities supporting pest eradications
- Ruapehu Alpine Lifts Limited voluntary administration
- New Zealand Battery: Lake Onslow option

Further advice will be provided on these work programmes separately, seeking your advice on direction and priorities

12. Your role as Minister of Conservation



As the Minister of Conservation, you provide leadership on national and global conservation outcomes including in biodiversity, recreation, and cultural heritage. You have many statutory powers and functions including under section 5 of the Conservation Act 1987, which establishes the Department of Conservation under your control.

Several of your priority work programmes as Minister of Conservation will drive outcomes relevant to your ministerial colleagues, and vice versa. There are significant opportunities to work closely with ministerial colleagues holding the Environment, Climate Change, Forestry, Energy and Resources, Oceans and Fisheries, Biosecurity, Arts Culture and Heritage, Land Information, Local Government, Tourism, Economic and Regional Development, and Agriculture portfolios.

Your responsibilities include:

- appointment and monitoring of over 70 entities that drive conservation outcomes
- acquiring land for conservation purposes and recommending the creation of national parks
- granting concessions for activities on public conservation land
- establishing marine mammal sanctuaries and marine reserves
- statutory functions under the current Resource Management Act 1991
- participating in negotiating international conservation agreements
- participating in setting strategic direction and performance expectations, and
- monitoring and reviewing performance of the Department.

Several statutory ministerial responsibilities are routinely delegated to the Director-General, with further delegations from the Director-General to DOC staff (e.g. decisions on some concessions). If the Director-General considers a matter is of sufficient national interest or importance, you will be asked whether it should be decided under delegation or referred to you for decision, regardless of any standing delegation.



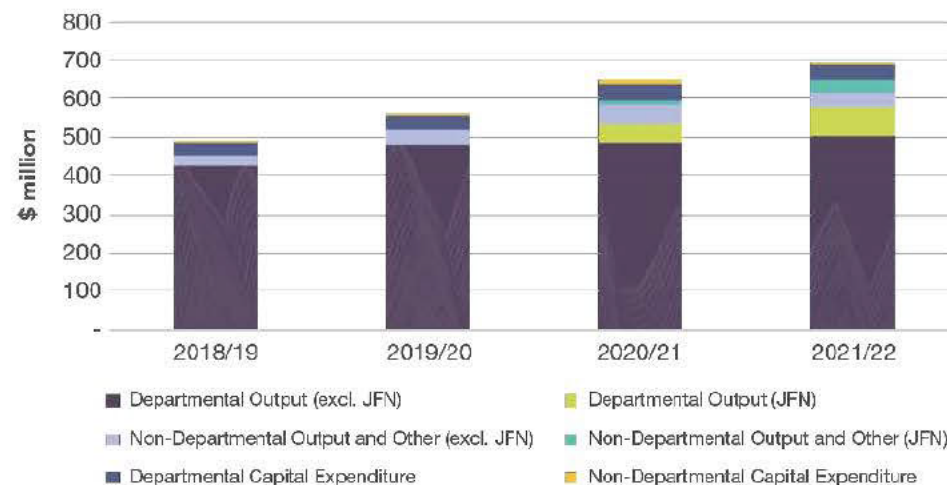
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13. Vote conservation

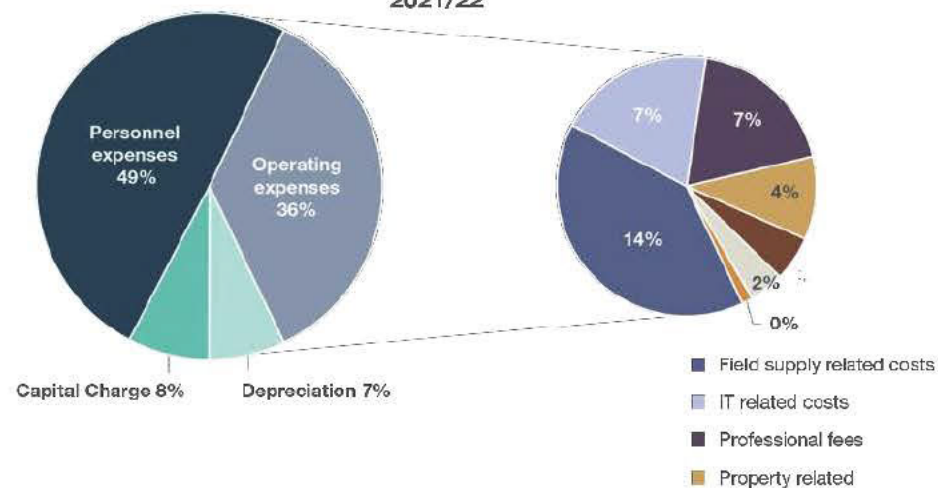
Appropriations across Vote Conservation total \$916m in 2022/23, including tagged contingencies. Funding decreases to \$728m by 2026/27, representing a 21% decline. This is driven primarily by reductions in:

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Vote Conservation - Actual Expenditure by Appropriation Type

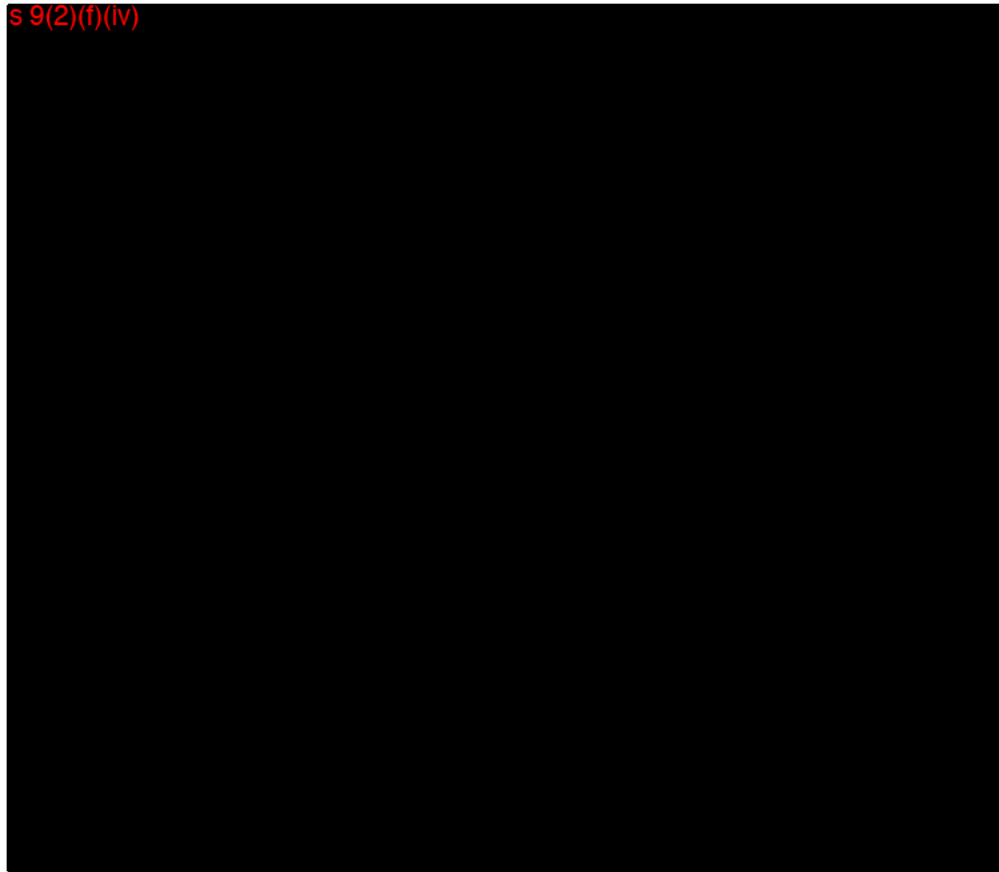


Departmental Opex by Cost Category (excl. JFN)
2021/22



14. Upcoming decisions over the next three months

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15. DOC leadership team



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Appendix 1: Key partners and stakeholders

Statutory and quasi statutory bodies	
New Zealand Conservation Authority (NZCA)	The NZCA provides strategic policy advice to you and the Director-General on conservation priorities at a national level. It is engaged in conservation planning and policy development affecting the management of public conservation areas administered by DOC. You are required to consult the NZCA on certain matters, including appointments to conservation boards.
Conservation boards	Fourteen regional conservation boards are appointed by you to provide independent advice on the Department's policy and activities, including oversight of the development of their region's conservation management strategy. Once the NZCA approves a strategy, the relevant board advises on its implementation. Boards report annually to the NZCA.
Fish and Game councils; New Zealand Fish and Game Council	Twelve regional fish and game councils manage freshwater sport fishing and game bird hunting. Each council appoints one person to the New Zealand Fish and Game Council. The national council advises you, develops policy and guidelines, advocates the interests of anglers and hunters and coordinates the fishery and game bird management. You will be requested to make decisions and approvals on many aspects of fish and game management.
Game Animal Council (GAC)	The GAC is established under the Game Animal Council Act 2013 to represent the interests of the recreational hunting sector and aims to improve the management of hunting resources, while contributing to positive conservation outcomes. It provides advice to you on game animals and hunting, provides information/education to the hunting sector, and advocates for improved commercial/recreation hunting access, safety, and hunter-led conservation.
Queen Elizabeth II National Trust	The QEII National Trust is a charitable trust that partners with private landowners to protect sites on their land – primarily through open space covenants (an agreement between the Trust and a landowner to protect land forever).
Predator Free 2050 Limited	A Crown-owned, charitable company established to leverage philanthropy and help deliver the Government's goal of eradicating possums, stoats and rats by 2050. You and the Minister of Finance are the share holding Ministers for the Company.
Ngā Whenua Rāhui Komiti	The Komiti is an advisory committee to you on two funding programmes designed to protect the natural integrity of Māori land and preserve mātauranga Māori: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ngā Whenua Rāhui Fund provides protection for Māori landowners through 25-year renewable kawenata (covenant). • The Mātauranga Kura Taiao Fund seeks to preserve the customs, history and stories associated with whenua Māori and tikanga.
Milford Opportunities Project (MOP)	The MOP Board is a Ministerial advisory committee established to advise Ministers on the feasibility of the Milford Opportunities Project.
Te Urewera Board	Under the Te Urewera Act 2014, the Te Urewera Board is appointed to speak as the voice of Te Urewera to provide governance and some aspects of management in accordance with the principles of the Act. This includes producing the management plan and a statement of priorities. The Crown appointees to the Board are selected by you.
Guardians	The Guardians of Lakes Manapouri, Monowai and Te Anau are ministerially appointed groups that meet twice a year and work with electric power companies in monitoring the impact of power generation on the lakes, particularly on water levels. Similarly, the Guardians of Lake Wanaka monitor the environmental health of that lake. The Kaikōura Marine Guardians are jointly appointed by you and the Minister for Primary Industries to advise on matters affecting Te Tai-o-Marokura.

Taupō-nui-a-Tia Management Board	The Taupo-nui-a-Tia Management Board administers the beds of Taupo waters.
Nature Heritage Fund (NHF) Committee	The NHF encourages, facilitates and supports programmes, activities and initiatives associated with the protection, management and enhancement of indigenous nature. The NHF Committee assesses applications to the NHF and provides you with advice on funding recommendations.
Treaty partners	
Iwi Leaders Group	The Iwi Leaders Group operates as part of the National Iwi Chairs Forum. The Forum was established to share information; work collaboratively on key priorities of iwi within the National Iwi Chairs Forum; and advocate the collective priorities of the iwi within the National Iwi Chairs Forum in discussions with others, recognising the rangatiratanga/ independence of iwi.
Treaty settlement entities	In addition to maintaining relationships with iwi Treaty partners, Treaty settlements establish Post Settlement Governance Entities with which you and the Department are required to interact. In some settlements, bespoke statutory bodies with iwi membership are established, that exercise a range of your or Departmental functions
Iwi	There are a significant number of iwi and imi groups that DOC engages with across New Zealand. As a responsible treaty partner, engagement with whānau, hapū and iwi is driven by region and project and cannot be succinctly summarised.
Te Ohu Kaimoana	Under the Māori Fisheries Act 2004, Te Ohu Kaimoana is a charitable trust established to represent the collective interests in fishing and fisheries-related activities of the recognised 58 iwi organisations. It works to advance Māori interests in the marine environment, including customary fisheries, commercial fisheries and aquaculture as well as providing policy and fisheries management advice to iwi and the wider Māori community.
Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)	
Forest and Bird	Forest & Bird is an independent conservation charity with a special interest and advocacy in the protection and conservation of New Zealand's indigenous flora and fauna, unique wild places, and natural ecosystems.
Greenpeace	Greenpeace is an independent, global organisation that lobbies for policy/legislative/ regulatory change on environmental issues, including through court action. It is particularly focussed on food and farming, oceans and fishing, mining, and plastics.
WWF	WWF NZ is part of the global world wide fund for nature network, an independent conservation organisation focussed on stopping the degradation of the natural environment. New Zealand programmes mainly focus on marine issues including research, advocacy and partnerships aimed at protecting habitats and species and minimising harm from fishing and other activities.
Predator Free 2050 Trust (PF2050 Trust)	The PF2050 Trust is an independent charitable trust that operates with the purpose of connecting groups/ organisations/iwi/agencies with the common goal of a predator free Aotearoa New Zealand. It provides support, advice, coordination, and encouragement to help restore native species.
Federated Mountain Clubs (FMC)	FMC represents the interests of 96 tramping and mountain clubs and their members. It advocates for people who recreationally access backcountry New Zealand and seeks to increase protection of natural landscapes while protecting access to, and the legacy of, the backcountry hut and track network. It also supports the Backcountry Trust.

Backcountry Trust	The Backcountry Trust supports volunteers to maintain huts and build tracks in the backcountry on public conservation land. It advocates for improved access for recreational trampers, deerstalkers, and mountain bikers.
Environmental Defence Society (EDS)	The EDS is an advocacy organisation that seeks to protect and restore New Zealand's landscapes, freshwater systems, oceans and indigenous biodiversity. It regularly advocates for process, policy and legislative reform to reflect these aims, across government and businesses.
Mountain Safety Council (MSC)	The MSC is a national organisation with a mandate to encourage safe participation in land-based outdoor activities. It develops and promotes safety messaging, produces insights from data collection and analysis, and builds partnerships with various recreational and governmental organisations.
New Zealand Deerstalkers Association (NZDA)	The NZDA is a not-for-profit national organisation that advocates for New Zealand hunters and hunting clubs and seeks to protect recreational hunting rights.
NEXT Foundation	NEXT Foundation administers an up to 10-year, \$100 million programme of strategic philanthropy, dually focussed on education and environment projects, including research and innovation, conservation and community participation.
Commercial and industry bodies	
National Business Partners: Fonterra, Air New Zealand, Genesis, Fulton Hogan, Dulux, Meridian and Toyota NZ.	Working with business is part of DOC's strategy to galvanise an all-of-New Zealand response to the biodiversity crisis. DOC's national partners are a suite of large, influential businesses that support priority conservation work. By working together, we deliver more biodiversity gains on the ground, extend our reach beyond DOC's normal channels, and inspire others to act through demonstrable leadership.
Sustainable Business Network (SBN)	SBN is New Zealand's largest, longest-standing sustainable business organisation focused on enabling system change in climate, waste and nature. The network includes around 600 organisations that connect through events, resources and projects to help New Zealand become a more sustainable nation.
Federated Farmers	Federated Farmers is an advocacy group that lobbies for policy/legislative/regulatory change on behalf of all farmers, including fruit and vegetable, dairy and meat. It is governed by a National Board and a National Council, and has approximately 13,000 voluntary members.
OSPRI	OSPRI is a partnership between primary industries and government that works with the farming industry to manage animal disease. It manages two national programmes – the National Animal Identification and Tracing system (NAIT) and the National Bovine Tuberculosis Pest Management Plan (TBfree).
Tourism Industry Aotearoa (TIA)	The TIA is an independent association representing all sectors of New Zealand's tourism industry. It advocates on behalf of the tourism sector on issues such as transportation, the environment, levies, and immigration.
Seafood NZ	Seafood New Zealand is an industry body that represents the five sector representative entities across deepwater, inshore, aquaculture, paua and rock lobster to advance fisheries interests in New Zealand and overseas.

Appendix 2: Suggested list of forthcoming briefings

Reference	Subject	Description
23-B-0023	Vote Conservation: Financial overview	A financial overview of Vote Conservation and DOC: Conservation covering existing budget commitments, progress on these, risks, and asset management.
23-B-0024	Current priorities and key issues	An overview of the current work programme and key issues to support discussion of your priorities. The brief will cover the status of each project, key Ministerial decisions in coming months and legislative reform underway. The briefing will also provide overviews of a number of key current issues including Stewardship Land, Jobs for Nature, Ruapehu Alpine Lifts, the Milford Opportunities Project, South-East Marine Protection, and the Lake Onslow project.
23-B-0025	Biodiversity – key issues and priorities	An introduction to the Department's core work on biodiversity. The brief will cover the Department's leadership role and progress in implementing the Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy - Te Mana o te Taiao. It will introduce the frameworks we use for assessing and categorising the threat status of our wildlife, and prioritising protection action.
23-B-0026	The Treaty partnership	An overview of the Department's approach to Treaty relationships, approach to meeting its obligations under section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987 and implementing Treaty settlements. The brief will also outline the status of Treaty negotiations underway, the scale of potential obligations, and noting where Ministerial decisions may be required in coming months.
23-B-0027	Climate change	Climate change affects all parts of the conservation portfolio. This briefing will outline the significant threats and challenges that climate change is presenting to native species and ecosystems and public conservation lands and waters. It will describe the important role the Department plays in the all of government climate change response. It will overview the work underway on assessing and adapting to impacts on species, land, assets, and reducing our carbon footprint.
23-B-0028	Conservation stewardship at place	This briefing will cover the Department's operational work on the ground from a regional operations perspective. It will outline key challenges and priorities and our management approach to these.
23-B-0029	Connecting people to nature and heritage	The Department engages with many people and organisations who use public conservation land and waters for recreation, business and to connect with nature. This briefing will provide an overview of systems, issues, and priorities, including visitor experiences, future of assets and impact of climate change.

Appendix 3: DOC strategy

Papatūānuku thrives

Toitū te marae a Tāne-Mahuta, Toitū te marae a Tangaroa, Toitū te tangata – If the land is well and the sea is well, the people will thrive

We are an honourable Treaty partner

In achieving our purpose and outcomes, we give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi by actively partnering with whānau, hapū and iwi to protect and sustain our shared natural and cultural heritage

Our outcomes

Ecosystems and species across Aotearoa are thriving from mountain to sea

- A full range of ecosystems on land, water and sea are protected and enhanced
- Indigenous species are not threatened with human-induced extinction
- Landscapes, ecosystems and species are resilient to climate risk

Public conservation land and waters are maintained and improved for future generations

- Conservation land and waters benefit from fewer pests and reduced pressures, including from visitors
- We understand whānau, hapū and iwi priorities
- Cultural heritage is managed and protected
- Our actions support Aotearoa to mitigate and adapt to climate change

Connection with nature and cultural heritage enriches people's lives

- The health and wellbeing of whānau, hapū, iwi and communities are linked to the health of nature
- From the city to the wilderness, people connect with nature and our cultural heritage
- New Zealanders care for and take action to preserve our special places and species
- A range of sustainable recreational experiences encourage New Zealanders to enjoy the outdoors

DOC is a great organisation

- We work as one to deliver on our strategy
- Our people thrive and grow
- We have regard to whānau, hapū and iwi priorities in our decision making
- We have the capability to be an honourable Treaty partner
- Mātauranga Māori informs all our work
- We are trusted and known as being good to work with
- We are excellent at managing finances and our assets
- We keep our people and visitors safe

Our principles

Nature-centred

Treaty-anchored

Intergenerational

Climate-focused

Impactful

Kaimahi-centred

Our roles

Protecting land, species, ecosystems and cultural heritage for conservation purposes

Managing threats and adverse impacts

Being a voice for conservation

Connecting people to nature