

Appendix 3. Key findings - summary of consultation on *Te Kōiropa o Te Kōiropa*, the discussion document for the new Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy

1.1 Overview of public engagement

Public engagement on the development of the Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy (ANZBS) took place between late 2018 and early 2020:

- Phase one of public engagement—late 2018 to July 2019: 22 Treaty partner hui, 6 public workshops, and development of the discussion document, *Te Kōiropa o Te Kōiropa*.
- Phase two of public engagement—August to September 2019: Eight-week public consultation period on the discussion document, *Te Kōiropa o Te Kōiropa*; 8 public workshops, 6 focus groups, Biodiversity HiveMind, and youth engagement. 20 Treaty partner hui were held from October to December 2019.

During the eight-week public consultation period on the discussion document *Te Kōiropa o Te Kōiropa*, the Department of Conservation (DOC) received 3279 submissions from written submissions, survey responses, Biodiversity HiveMind, youth submissions and form submissions. A breakdown of the submissions received is set out in table 1.

Table 1: Total submissions by type

| Submission type | Count |
|--|-------------|
| Written submissions | 159 |
| Treaty partners | 5 |
| Statutory boards | 9 |
| Environmental non-government organisations (NGOs) | 14 |
| Community and recreation groups | 38 |
| Industry | 22 |
| Local government | 19 |
| Science community | 24 |
| General public | 30 |
| Survey responses | 550 |
| Biodiversity HiveMind* participants' feedback | 443 |
| Youth submissions | 281 |
| Individual form submissions from Forest and Bird supporters | 1846 |
| TOTAL | 3279 |

*The public could engage in the discussion document online using Scoop's public engagement platform, HiveMind. This interactive survey platform allows participants to consider statements about an issue, add their own statements for others to vote on, and to see how their opinions fit with other people's views.

1.2 Key themes from public engagement

Most submitters across all interest groups supported the intent of the proposals in *Te Koiroa o Te Koiroa* in principle.

Key themes that emerged from public engagement are summarised below.

Urgency

Many of these submitters broadly agree there is a biodiversity crisis, and a need to act urgently.

Reviewing the current NZBS

Many submitters said it is important that the current ANZBS is analysed in depth to understand what worked, what didn't, and why. These learnings should then inform the new 20-year ANZBS, including baselines for new goals.

Purpose and scope

Many submitters commented on the purpose and scope of the ANZBS and the degree to which the focus should be on protecting and restoring indigenous biodiversity. There was general agreement that everything that has an adverse impact on indigenous biodiversity should be in scope of the ANZBS, including non-indigenous biodiversity.

Many land-based industry submitters, along with many councils and other submitters, said that protection and restoration of indigenous biodiversity outcomes on private land cannot be achieved without buy-in from landowners. These submitters said it's important that industry is seen as part of the solution as well as part of the problem. Industry, along with Treaty partners and other New Zealanders, should be empowered to act.

Key pressures and drivers of indigenous biodiversity loss

Many submitters agreed with the key pressures and drivers of loss set out in the discussion document. Some submitters said more emphasis should be placed on climate change, economic development, fresh water, the marine environment, urban and high-growth areas, private land, invasive species, and management frameworks, as well as the overarching problem definition.

Key terms and assumptions

Many submitters were concerned about the ambiguous meaning and inconsistent use of some key terms in the discussion document. This caused some confusion and impacted on purpose and scope, resulting in flow-on effects across the proposals. The key terms mentioned by many submitters were 'nature', 'indigenous biodiversity', 'non-indigenous biodiversity', 'positive non-indigenous biodiversity', 'negative non-indigenous biodiversity', 'introduced species', 'significant' and 'protection'. Submitters generally said these key terms need to be adequately defined and used consistently in the final ANZBS.

Strategy framework

Many submitters said they liked the idea of a framework for the strategy that weaves in Te Ao Māori. Some submitters also said that ANZBS would benefit from a logic framework that shows the direct links between its different parts. Overall, we heard that there was a need for a stronger

focus on Te Ao Māori, mātauranga Māori and tikanga practices in the ANZBS. Treaty Partners have also reiterated the need for resourcing to support iwi, hapū and whanau to take action on the ground to protect and restore indigenous biodiversity.

Vision

There was support from many submitters for the vision in principle, with a few saying it is aspirational. However, there were mixed views on the timeframe, and some submitters said the vision could be more ambitious while others said it needs to be more realistic and pragmatic.

Values and principles

Many submitters generally supported the values and principles. However, some industry submitters did not support some principles, and/or noted tensions between them, and sought clarity on how this would be resolved (such as evidence-based knowledge and courage to make decisions without full information).

Goals

Many submitters supported the goals in principle, noting that measures still need to be developed.

A few submitters, including some councils, said there were a lot of priorities reflected in the goals, and were concerned this could impact on effectiveness.

A few councils said a target date of 2050 is too late for many of our threatened species, habitats and ecosystems. One council said some of them will be gone or nearly gone by then if declines are not reversed much earlier. Another said there should be no further loss of indigenous biodiversity from 2025, and a baseline should be established to measure against. A further council said the ANZBS should make explicit that more losses of indigenous biodiversity are inevitable in the short to medium term under the ANZBS, or it should provide clearer goals about maintaining current extent and species population.

The proposed goals around establishing marine protected areas and zero bycatch of seabirds, corals and marine mammals have been common topics of discussion at the workshops and focus groups, as well as through submissions. Some view these as unattainable, while others view them as ambitious goals to aspire to. Feedback suggests that many groups have similar aspirations for improving marine biodiversity, and it will be crucial that the right tools and methods are in place and that there are clear pathways to achieving the outcomes sought.

Implementation and monitoring

Most submitters said implementation and monitoring is critical to the success of the strategy. Many submitters said it is critical that the ANZBS goals are measurable and realistic for monitoring to be useful. Some submitters said the SMART methodology (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timely) should be used to set all measures and targets. Some submitters noted the need to establish baselines as a priority. One submitter suggested a 2025 goal is set for establishing this.

There was strong support for a collaborative process to develop a detailed implementation plan from many key stakeholders. There is recognition that we will all need to work together to succeed, and that the ANZBS presents an opportunity to unite groups and interests towards common goals to improve biodiversity outcomes.

There has also been strong support for a review of conservation legislation and policy.