

17 February 2021

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

Thank you for your Official Information Act request to the Department of Conservation, received on 19 January 2021 in which you asked for:

- 1. I am seeking information (documents/reports/briefings and correspondence) written, sent or received since Jan 1st 2020, relating to a review, and the pausing or cessation of the predator control portion of the Sub-Antarctic Islands Programme.*
- 2. All documents/reports/briefings and correspondence, written, sent or received since Jan 1st 2020, relating to funding*

On 4th February 2021 you clarified (or refined) your request to:

- 1. I am seeking all: reports, reviews, advice, minutes, memos and updates written, sent or received regarding the decision-making rationale, financial rationale and ecological impacts of pausing the predator control work in the subantarctic, since January 2020.*

After the successful eradication of mice from the subantarctic Antipodes Island, the Department was buoyed to continue with investigation into the feasibility of eradication of mice, cats and pigs from Maukahuka/Auckland Island, and the Pest Free Maukahuka/Auckland Island project commenced. Initially, the project was funded through Budget 2018, and subsequently through the International Visitor Levy (IVL) fund which utilised levies paid by international tourists to Aotearoa New Zealand. Due to the significance in size and logistical challenges in accessing Maukahuka/Auckland Island, initial estimates of cost of the eradication were placed at over \$80 million. The decision to pause the Maukahuka Auckland Island Eradication Project was made by the Director-General Lou Sanson in March 2020, during a time when the Department (and wider government) were preparing for the highly likely austerity measures due to the Covid-19 pandemic, particularly with the IVL funding disappearing virtually overnight with the closure of borders to international visitors.



This was not a cessation of all work however, as the team has continued to finalise reports into the investigation of eradication of mice, cats and pigs from Maukahuka. The team has effectively finalised 'design' of the eradication project.

Concurrently, the Director-General asked for a process to help the Department understand and prioritise investment in large landscape scale projects, essentially creating an optimised package of landscape scale sites for investment, and a process for helping rationalise where to focus future investment. The Optimised Landscape Investment Portfolio was developed through significant work and internal consultation in April and May 2020. It uses a phased and gated process (scope, design, implement, sustain), to ensure distinction in decision points for delivery of a project. Maukahuka Auckland Island sits amongst this portfolio, and due to the thorough work of the Pest-Free Auckland Island team, is ready to "implement" when funding / funding partners are obtained.

I would welcome you to contact me to clarify any further questions you may have regarding the future of the Maukahuka Pest Free Auckland Island eradication project. You can contact me at [REDACTED] or [bbeaven@doc.govt.nz](mailto:bbeaven@doc.govt.nz).

Items relating to your request are listed in the schedule at the end of this document. I have decided to release the relevant parts of the documents, subject to information being withheld under the following sections of the Official Information Act, as applicable:

- personal contact details of officials, under section 9(2)(a) – to protect the privacy of natural persons, including deceased people.

Information in scope of your request has been extracted from a PowerPoint dated 21<sup>st</sup> July 2020 (document 13 in table below). Information not in scope your request has been removed from the response.

In making my decision, I have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the Official Information Act.

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) and enclosed documents may be published on the Department's website.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Brent Beaven', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Brent Beaven  
Director Predator Free 2050  
Department of Conservation  
*Te Papa Atawhai*

**Table 1 - Schedule of documents**

Item	Date	Document description	Decision
1	13 <sup>th</sup> May 2020	Ranking landscape scale sites based on their biodiversity benefits	Released in full
2	20 <sup>th</sup> July 2020	OLIP Technical Report	Released in full
3	11 <sup>th</sup> December 2020	OLIP Presentation for Leadership Team	Released in full
4	25 <sup>th</sup> September 2020	Maukahuka technical feasibility 3.0	Released in full
5	17 <sup>th</sup> July 2020	DGTF - 21 July 2020 - Cover, Predator Free Maukahuka	Released in full
6	10 <sup>th</sup> May 2020	<b>Emails on the topic:</b> 210216_Maukahuka_OIAD-573_Email_RE Predator Free Auckland Islands_Kessick	Released in part
7	14 <sup>th</sup> September 2020	<b>Emails on the topic:</b> 210216_Maukahuka_OIAD-573_Email_PF Auckland Islands_Kessick	Released in part
8	13 <sup>th</sup> April 2020	<b>Emails on the topic:</b> 210215_Maukahuka_OIAD-573_FW Landscape Scale Investment Advice- 04132020 001431	Released in part
9	4 <sup>th</sup> April 2020	<b>Emails on the topic:</b> 210215_Maukahuka_OIAD-573_FW Landscape Scale Investment Advice- 04042020 234931	Released in part
10	13 <sup>th</sup> April 2020	<b>Emails on the topic:</b> 210215_Maukahuka_OIAD- 573_Email_Sanson_Project Maukahuka_200413	Released in part
11	29 <sup>th</sup> April 2020	<b>Emails on the topic:</b> 210215_Maukahuka_OIAD- 573_Email_Sanson_Project Maukahuka Governance Review_200429	Released in part
12	21 <sup>st</sup> July 2020	210215_Maukahuka_ME Presentation to DGTF (AKLD Islands)_21 July 2020_	Released in part
13	29 <sup>th</sup> May 2020	<b>Emails on the topic:</b> 210212_Maukahuka_RE Project Muakahuka - future work -05292020 050200	Released in part
14	15 <sup>th</sup> April 2020	<b>Emails on the topic:</b> 210211_Maukahuka_Email_Maukahuka - next steps-04152020 041550	Released in part
15	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2020	<b>Emails on the topic:</b> 210210_Maukahuka_FW maukahuka context meeting summary and actions -02042021 022518	Released in part



16	21 <sup>st</sup> April 2020	<b>Emails on the topic:</b> 210210_Maukahuka_FW Project Muakahuka - lou's decision -02042021 022407	Released in part
17	15 <sup>th</sup> April 2020	200415 Maukahuka COVID-19 Project Initial Impact Analysis	Released in full
18	16 <sup>th</sup> August 2020	20-B-0645 - Briefing - Request - Governance and management of large and complex projects	Released in full