


6 December 2022



Tēnā koe 

Thank you for your Official Information Act requests to the Department of Conservation (DOC), received on 14 and 15 November 2022 in which you asked for:

1. *The number of native animals – native animals – that have died as a result of 1080 poison in 2021.*
2. *How much in total (including fuel, staff time etc) did DOC spend on 1080 programmes in 2021.*

I respond to each of your questions below.

1. *The number of native animals – native animals – that have died as a result of 1080 poison in 2021.*

In 2021, there was one 1080 predator control operation at which native animals are known to have died from 1080 poisoning. The aerial operation (Ōkarito South) unfortunately resulted in the death of 556 black-backed gulls. It was not a DOC operation, but rather was carried out by Zero Invasive Predators as part of Predator Free South Westland. You can read more about the incident on the ZIP website at the following link:

zip.org.nz/updates/2021/11/media-release-loss-of-black-backed-gulls-and-dog-during-predator-elimination

The Ōkarito gull deaths were a highly unusual event, as it is rare for native birds to be killed by 1080. DOC's operational practices include measures to mitigate risks to native species, which are based on many years of research and development. For example, cereal pellets incorporate 1080 into a complex 'bait matrix' to minimise chaff, baits are dyed green to deter birds and scented with a cinnamon lure to attract possums and rats but not birds, and bait is sown at low densities of 1–3 kg per hectare. Monitoring results and independent research have proven that 1080 effectively protects New Zealand's native wildlife.



I note that you can also access information on non-target animal deaths from all aerial 1080 operations in New Zealand, in the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) annual reports on aerial 1080 operations, and in the EPA aerial 1080 operators' reports. These documents can be accessed from the EPA website at the following links:

<https://epa.govt.nz/resources-and-publications/monitoring-and-reporting/?tag=322>

<https://epa.govt.nz/resources-and-publications/1080-aerial-operators-reports/>

2. *How much in total (including fuel, staff time etc) did DOC spend on 1080 programmes in 2021.*

We have interpreted your request to be for the cost of aerial 1080 operations that form part of our [National Predator Control Programme](#).

DOC reports financial data in financial years rather than calendar years – we are therefore providing you with figures for financial years 2021/22 and 2020/21.

In Financial Year 2021/22, the National Predator Control Programme spent \$11.786 million on aerial 1080 control operations. In Financial Year 2020/21, the programme spent \$10.806 million on aerial 1080 control operations. These figures include all operational costs such as bait, road transport, aircraft and contractors.

You are entitled to seek an investigation and review of my decision by writing to an Ombudsman as provided by section 28(3) of the Official Information Act.

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

Nāku noa, nā



Ben Reddiex
Director, National Programmes
Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai