

Annual Report of the  
**New Zealand  
Conservation Authority**

Te Pou Atawhai Taiao O Aotearoa

FOR THE PERIOD 1 JULY 2022 TO 30 JUNE 2023

*Presented to the Minister of Conservation and tabled in the House of Representatives  
pursuant to section 6E of the Conservation Act 1987*

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## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

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Hon Tama Potaka  
Minister of Conservation

Tēnā koe Minister

I submit, in accordance with Section 6E of the Conservation Act 1987 (**the Act**), the annual report of the New Zealand Conservation Authority/Te Pou Atawhai Taiao Aotearoa (**the Authority**) for the period 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023. The Act requires that the Authority report each year to the Minister on the exercise of its functions and powers.

### **Meetings**

The Authority met on six occasions during the year. Two meetings were held outside of Wellington, at Invercargill and Rotorua respectively, and involved a day field trip in each case alongside the local conservation board and regional departmental staff, and included meeting with local mana whenua.

### **The approval of plans**

The Authority was not asked to approve either a conservation management strategy or national park management plan during the year under report. A priority for the Authority is timely review by the Department of its management plans and strategies which are integral to the Department's function and performance. I point out that 80% of statutory planning documents are overdue for full review and 98% will be overdue in 5 years, a growing trend that has been evident for well over a decade now.<sup>1</sup> The Authority is strategically engaged in the Department's current initiative to 'reimagine' management planning, to build confidence in the system in order to get the basics right and embed te ao Māori values.

### **Change of land status**

The Authority lodged a submission on the draft recommendations of the National and Mana Whenua Panels for the reclassification of stewardship land in Western South Island, advocating for the continued role of the Authority when selecting parcels of land for addition to national parks.

### **Functions under the National Parks Act 1980**

The Authority has been active in seeking progress on the partial review of the General Policies to give full effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti o Waitangi and consider the advice of the Options Development Group Report of April 2022.

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<sup>1</sup> These figures include conservation management strategies, national park management plans and conservation management plans.

The Authority invited Ngāi Tūhoe representatives Tamati Kruger and Kirstie Luke to their meeting in August 2022 to hear about the aspirations and learnings from the Te Urewera settlement model.

### **Investigate and/or advise on conservation matters of national importance**

The Authority continued to schedule strategic sessions at each meeting with the Director-General (**D-G**) and members of the departmental Senior Leadership Team (**SLT**). Following the departmental reset and appointment of the full complement of Deputy Directors-General, the focus has moved to building a strong and connected interface with the SLT with key strategic sessions at intervals throughout the year. In addition, I have attended ‘virtual sessions’ and I am scheduled to link in to further SLT/D-G sessions to further strengthen connectivity across strategic topics.

### **Committees**

The Act enables the Authority to establish committees to carry out functions or tasks delegated to the Authority. In the reporting period, the active committees included Biocontrol, Conservation Law Reform, Treaty Partnerships, Management Planning, Marine, and Tourism.

### **Advocacy**

The Authority advocated its interests during the reporting period through submissions on: proposed changes to the National Policy Statement (**NPS**) for Freshwater Management and National Environment Standards for Freshwater, NPS on Indigenous Biodiversity, West Coast Stewardship Land Reclassification recommendations, National Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks, Managing our Wetlands in the Coastal Marine Area, proposed amendments to amateur fishing regulations in the Fiordland Marine Area, Freedom Camping Regulations, Revitalising the Gulf (Marine Protection Proposals), DOC and LINZ draft Long-term insights briefing, Natural Built Environment and Spatial Planning Bill, and the NPS for Renewable Energy Generation.

Members also represented the Authority at multiple events and meetings throughout the year, and Tony Lepper attended a Tahr Liaison meeting in Christchurch as a co-opted liaison for the Authority.

### **Minister of Conservation**

The Hon Poto Williams attended the Authority’s meetings in August and December 2022, and in between meetings, as Chairperson I maintained a regular two-monthly meeting with the Minister, and discussed issues by phone as and when they arose. We have met on several occasions related to your Ministerial portfolios, including conservation, and I value your passion for conservation. Significant weather events early this year have disrupted the level of engagement that would normally apply.

The Authority during the year has provided advice directly to the Minister on a number of matters including the stewardship land reclassification process, Crown Minerals Amendment Bill, seabird bycatch, natural quiet in the Civil Aviation Bill, bottom trawling, advice on expenditure of money in 2023–24, and appointments to conservation boards in 2023.

## **Director-General**

This has been a busy year for the Director-General, Penny Nelson, as a reset of the Department and introduction of a new Senior Leadership Team has seen significant change and refresh across the Department. The Authority has maintained a positive and connected relationship with the D-G during the year, including a series of strategic discussions with the D-G and Senior Leadership Team across priority issues and challenges facing conservation.

## **Conservation boards**

Authority members are invited to select a conservation board for which they act as a liaison person, to attend meetings, receive agenda papers and liaise with the board chair. Reporting back informs the Authority of issues that conservation boards may be facing, and identifies actions the Authority may provide in tangible support. It also allows boards to elevate significant issues.

In September 2022 the Authority hosted the annual conservation board chairs' conference in Wellington. This is an important forum for building collaboration between the Authority and conservation boards to share ideas, practices and develop deeper understanding of the role boards play in the conservation leadership space.

## **Stakeholder engagement**


The Authority hosted or engaged with stakeholders and representatives of conservation boards, crown research institutes, Forest & Bird, Maritime New Zealand, and Fish & Game on a range of topics and to maintain relationships.

## **In closing**

There remain many challenges to achieving sound conservation and heritage outcomes. The North Island storms early this year have added to that complexity and underlined the threat to te taiao from climate change. The Authority is focused on achieving what is possible in the current legislative framework on strategic priorities while maintaining a 'critical friend' relationship with the D-G and Senior Leadership Team.

Finally, I thank Authority members and support staff for their continued effort and application to their function, and particularly to those members who retired or whose terms expired at 30 June.

Nāku iti, noa nā



Edward Ellison, ONZM  
Chair, New Zealand Conservation Authority



## MISSION STATEMENT

To ensure for the people of New Zealand, that the richness of New Zealand's natural and cultural heritage is valued, restored, maintained, and cared for by all, in order to enhance our environment and quality of life.



## 1. INTRODUCTION TO THE AUTHORITY

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The New Zealand Conservation Authority/Te Pou Atawhai Taiao O Aotearoa (**the Authority**) is a national statutory body, established by section 6A of the Conservation Act 1987 (**the Act**), that provides strategic advice on conservation issues of national importance to the Minister of Conservation (**the Minister**) and to the Director-General of Conservation.

The functions of the Authority are set out in the Act, the National Parks Act 1980, the Wildlife Act 1953, the Marine Reserves Act 1971, the Reserves Act 1977, the Wild Animal Control Act 1977 and the Marine Mammals Protection Act 1978.

The Authority also has specified responsibilities, set out in Treaty claims settlement legislation, in relation to engagement with tangata whenua. These include establishing respectful working relationships, exercising mana recognition, and acknowledging kaitiakitanga as an important foundation for Māori conservation outcomes.

A major responsibility of the Authority is the approval of the 10-year conservation management strategies and national park management plans that guide the Department of Conservation's (the Department's) management of public conservation lands, waters, and species.

The Authority is committed to collaborative models in the management of public conservation resources. This is embodied in the long history of formal engagement of New Zealanders in the conservation management of Aotearoa New Zealand, through bodies such as the Authority and conservation boards. The partnership between conservation boards and the Authority is a long-standing legislative mechanism that enables conservation through partnerships.

## 2. MEMBERSHIP OF THE AUTHORITY

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The Authority has 13 members, appointed by the Minister. Authority members are appointed for 3-year terms, unless otherwise stated, and may be re-appointed. The process of appointment ensures that a range of perspectives, life experiences and geographical knowledge contributes to the advice and decisions made by the Authority. The Authority is made up of:

- two appointments in consultation with the Minister of Tourism, two appointments in consultation with the Minister for Māori Development, and one appointment in consultation with the Minister of Local Government
- one appointment on the recommendation of the Royal Society Te Apārangi, one on the recommendation of the Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society of New Zealand, and one on the recommendation of Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand
- one appointment on the nomination of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu
- four appointments following nominations from the public.

**NICOLE ANDERSON** of Kerikeri, appointed after consultation with the Minister for Māori Development. Term: June 2018 to June 2023.

**TĀNE DAVIS MNZM** of Invercargill, appointed on the nomination of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu. Term: October 2018 to June 2023.

**EDWARD ELLISON ONZM** of Dunedin, appointed from public nominations, is Chair of the Authority. Term: January 2019 to June 2023.

**SALLY GEPP** of Nelson, appointed on the recommendation of the Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society of New Zealand. Term: August 2020 to June 2023.

**GREG DULEY** of Hawke’s Bay, appointed from public nominations. Term: July 2022 to June 2025.

**METERIA TUREI** of Dunedin, appointed from public nominations. Term: July 2022 to June 2025.

**ROBIN MCNEILL MNZM** of Invercargill, appointed on the recommendation of the Federated Mountain Clubs. Term: August 2020 to June 2023.

**TAK MUTU** of Rotorua, appointed after consultation with the Minister of Tourism. Term: April 2021 to June 2023.

**WENDY NELSON MNZM** of Wellington, appointed on the recommendation of the Royal Society Te Apārangi, is Deputy Chair. Term: August 2020 to June 2023.

**VIV SHAW** of Te Anau, appointed from public nominations. Term: August 2020 to June 2023.

**AROHA MEAD** of Wellington, appointed after consultation with the Minister of Tourism. Term: July 2022 to June 2025.

**SHANE TE RUKI** of Te Awamutu appointed after consultation with the Minister of Local Government. Term November 2021 to June 2023.

**PUKE TIMOTI** of Hamilton, appointed after consultation with the Minister for Māori Development. Term: August 2020 to June 2023.

The diversity amongst the members brings together a wide range of knowledge, focus and skill.



NZCA members and servicing staff with DOC Eastern North Island staff and members of the Ngāti Tahu Ngāti Whāoa Rūnanga Trust at Matarae Marae in Reporoa (April 2023). Photo: Aroha Mead

### 3. MEETINGS

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The Authority met on six occasions during the year: in August, October and December 2022, and in February, April and June 2023. Each meeting took place over two days, and those held outside of Wellington included a one-day field trip on the first day alongside the local conservation board.

#### 3.1 Strategic advice to the Minister

Hon Poto Williams, Minister of Conservation, attended the Authority's meetings in August and December 2022. Between meetings, the Authority's Chair, Edward Ellison, maintained a regular two-monthly meeting with the Minister and discussed issues via phone as and when they arose. Throughout the reporting year, in addition to discussions within its meetings, the Authority has advised the Minister on the following matters:

- stewardship land reclassification process, in September 2022
- Crown Minerals (Prohibition of Mining) Amendment Bill, in September 2022
- seabird bycatch, in October 2022
- opportunity for natural quiet within the Civil Aviation Bill, in November 2022
- bottom trawling, in November 2022
- advice on expenditure of money in 2023-24, in January 2023
- appointments to conservation boards in 2023, in March 2023.

#### 3.2 Strategic advice to the Department

This reporting year saw a period of significant change within the Department, with the introduction of a new Senior Leadership Team in place by October 2022, just one year after Penny Nelson was appointed Director-General in November 2021.

The Authority continued to meet with a member of the Department's Senior Leadership Team at each meeting to engage on strategic issues and were pleased to meet with the new Deputy Director-Generals at its August 2022, December 2022 and February 2023 meetings.

Strategic discussions with the Director-General and Deputy Directors-General included:

- ministerial policy priorities
- the Department's organisational reset
- the Department's approach to the Options Development Group (ODG) report
- becoming an honourable Treaty partner
- statutory management planning
- reviews of the General Polices
- stewardship land reclassification
- biodiversity and climate change adaptation.

### 3.3 Engagement with external parties

The Authority hosted and heard from the following speakers from outside of the Department:

- Tamati Kruger, Kirstie Luke and Jo Breese to discuss Te Urewera model, and learnings, in August 2022.
- Tania McInnes, former Chair of the Northland Conservation Board, to discuss the board's community initiative, Arohata te Taiao, in August 2022.
- Representatives from NIWA, Maanaki Whenua / Landcare Research, and Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society during a workshop on carbon sequestration, in December 2022.
- Nigel Clifford and Renny VanderVelde, from Maritime NZ, about the *RMS Niagara* shipwreck, in December 2022.
- Corina Jordan, Chief Executive of New Zealand Fish & Game, on stakeholder relationships and the work of Fish & Game, in February 2023.
- Professor James Higham of Otago University, Rebecca Ingram, Chief Executive Tourism Industry Aotearoa, and Professor Susan Becken of Griffith University at a Tourism workshop, in February 2023.
- Ocean Mercier, senior lecturer at Te Kawa a Māui, Victoria University, for a workshop on the use of genetic technologies in Aotearoa, in June 2023.

### 3.4 Attendance at meetings 2022/23

Member	Number of meetings attended (total of 6)
Nicole Anderson	3.5
Tāne Davis	4
Greg Duley	5
Edward Ellison (Chair)	6
Sally Gepp	6
Robin McNeill	5
Aroha Mead	4.5
Tak Mutu	6
Wendy Nelson	6
Viv Shaw	5
Shane Te Ruki	3
Puke Timoti	5.5
Metiria Turei	5

### 3.5 Treaty partner and stakeholder engagement

Field trips are a vital part of the Authority's way of operating, giving members the chance to view concerns and opportunities raised in public submissions in situ, and to appreciate the local context faced by departmental staff and communities in managing public conservation lands. It is also an opportunity for the Authority to spend time with local conservation board members, discussing matters important to their regions. The Authority meets outside of Wellington twice annually at its April and October meetings.

#### 20 October 2022 – Murihiku/Invercargill, Southland

After an extensive period of no field trips resulting from COVID-19 restrictions, the Authority travelled down to Murihiku/Invercargill on its first field trip since April 2021. During this time members were hosted by the Southland Conservation Board and engaged extensively with board members, local departmental staff, and local community conservation groups on the conservation initiatives they are driving. The Authority also enjoyed a comprehensive morning hui with board members and local mana whenua at Te Rau Aroha Marae in Bluff, discussing the Predator Free Rakiura project and hearing about an iwi-led environmental project in Hokonui.

The afternoon was filled with outdoor trips to the Bluff Hill Motupōhue Environment Trust offices, a walk along the Bluff Hill Glory Track, finishing with a visit to the Department's quarantine facility in Invercargill and a presentation on the subantarctic islands.

#### 26 April 2023 – Reporoa, Bay of Plenty

The Authority travelled to Rotorua where they were hosted by the Bay of Plenty Conservation Board and enjoyed a field trip through the Reporoa area and a hui with board members, departmental staff and the local iwi of Reporoa at Mataarae Marae in Reporoa. The Authority met with members of the Ngāti Tahu Ngāti Whaoa Rūnanga Trust at the hui and discussed important conservation matters facing the region and iwi, in addition to exploring ways to progress the Bay of Plenty Conservation Management Strategy (CMS). The Authority heard about the many projects local iwi are working on, both through the Jobs for Nature project and their own initiatives, and received insight into what iwi consider important when carrying out conservation management.

The afternoon was filled with a field trip to the Wai-o-Tapu Thermal Mud Pools and along the way were shown work iwi are doing to manage the spread of wilding pines, before concluding our field trip at the base of Maungakaremea (Rainbow Mountain) to learn about the role local iwi played in formally restoring the original name of the maunga.



Inferno Crater Lake, Waimangu Volcanic Valley. Photo: NZCA servicing staff



Whio family in Katipō Creek. Photo: Richard Rossiter

## 4. BUDGET, FEES, AND ALLOWANCES

### 4.1 Budget and member fees

The Authority’s budget for the reporting year was \$148,000. Fees and allowances are paid in accordance with the Fees and Travelling Allowances Act 1951. The Chairperson receives a daily meeting fee of \$700, and other Authority members receive a daily meeting fee of \$450. Budgetary constraints, however, do not allow the Authority to meet or achieve its statutory functions.

### 4.2 Carbon emissions

At the October 2021 meeting, the Authority adopted a Climate Change Policy that committed the Authority to calculate, as far as practicable, its carbon footprint and publish this in its annual reports. The Department’s Outcomes Management Office has provided the tools to enable the Authority to fulfil its commitment.\*

The 2018–19 year is included as a baseline, with all six of the Authority’s meetings taking place in person. During 2021–22, four of the six meetings were held online, with no external meeting or field trips taking place, but it included the Conservation Board Chairs’ Conference.

	2018–19 (first year measured)	2021–22 (previous year)	2022–23 (reporting year)
CO <sub>2</sub> e t	18.90	11.73	20.61

\* Emissions reporting includes hosting the Conservation Board Chairs’ Conference (see section 8.4).

## 5. THE CONSERVATION ACT 1987

### 5.1 Section 4 of the Act

Section 4 of the Act states: ‘This Act shall so be interpreted and administered as to give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi.’ As a body established under this Act, section 4 applies to the Authority in the discharge of its functions.

During the reporting year, the Treaty Partnerships Committee discussed giving effect to section 4 and what it means to become an honourable Treaty partner. The committee also developed an annual work plan to focus on workstreams, such as Treaty Settlement obligations and opportunities for the Department, while also identifying ways in which the Department can implement the recommendations from the Options Development Group report.

## **5.2 Functions of the Authority**

Section 6B of the Act sets out the functions of the Authority.

### **(a) Advise the Minister on statements of general policy**

General policy is the highest level of statutory planning for conservation outcomes. There are two general policies, the General Policy for National Parks and the Conservation General Policy.

This year, the Authority has raised and discussed aspects of both the General Policy for National Parks and the Conservation General Policy with the Minister at the bi-monthly meetings, noting that the work related to both policies is ongoing and raising any concerns members viewed as important for the Minister to consider.

### **Approve conservation management strategies**

A conservation management strategy is a 10-year statutory document that implements general policy and establishes objectives for the discharge of the Department's functions in the area covered by the strategy, and for recreation, tourism, and other conservation purposes. Conservation management strategies are developed by departmental planning staff in partnership with local conservation boards and tangata whenua.

No conservation management strategies were received by the Authority for consideration this reporting year. The lack of progress is an issue the Authority has consistently raised with the Department.

### **(b) Approve conservation management plans**

Although the Authority may be asked to approve conservation management plans, they are usually approved by conservation boards, in some cases jointly with an iwi authority, as provided in Treaty Settlement legislation.

No plans were received by the Authority for consideration during the reporting year.

### **(c) Review the effectiveness of the Department's administration of general policies**

When approving statutory planning documents, the Authority seeks to satisfy itself that appropriate effect is given to the two statements of general policy: The Conservation General Policy and the General Policy for National Parks.

### **(d) Investigate and/or advise on conservation matters of national importance**

The Authority investigates conservation matters it deems to be of national importance and provides advice to the Minister and Director-General of Conservation. The Authority provides this advice in

a number of ways, such as in discussions at meetings, via letters (outlined in section 3), by way of its committees working closely with departmental staff, sharing its submissions (outlined in section 5.3), and by the Chairperson maintaining regular contact (via phone and/or online meetings) with the Minister and the Director-General.

#### **(e) Change of land status – stewardship land**

On 27 May 2022, the Minister released the recommendations for reclassification of stewardship land in Western South Island for public consultation. The Authority discussed these recommendations at its June 2022 meeting, including how best to proceed with the work ahead. The Authority also noted that the work undertaken by conservation boards in 2016, to identify the five highest priority land parcels for reclassification, has been largely overlooked.

In this reporting year, the Authority lodged its submission during the public consultation period for recommendations on stewardship land reclassification, in August 2022. In this submission the Authority raised a number of topics for discussion relating to stewardship land in Western South Island and advocated strongly for continuity when selecting parcels of land for addition to National Parks.

#### **(f) Education and publicity**

Minutes, agendas and other information regarding the Authority's functions and activities, including its meetings which are open to the public, are available on the Authority's website.

No education or publicity activities were undertaken during the reporting period.

#### **(g) Priorities for expenditure by the Department**

The Authority provided the Minister and the Director-General of Conservation with its advice on priorities for the expenditure of money for the financial year 2023–24 on 16 January 2023.

#### **(h) New Zealand Fish & Game Council liaison**

Section 6B(1)(i) of the Conservation Act 1987 provides for the Authority to liaise with the New Zealand Fish & Game Council (**Council**). The Authority and New Zealand Fish and Game Council provided each other with copies of agendas and meeting papers during the reporting period.

Corina Jordan, Chief Executive of New Zealand Fish & Game, attended the February 2023 meeting in Wellington and engaged with members on strengthening the stakeholder relationship between the Authority and the Council, with additional information provided on the revised priorities of the Council.

#### **(i) Ministerial delegations**

The Minister did not delegate any ministerial powers or functions to the Authority during the reporting period.



### 5.3 Powers of the Authority

Section 6C of the Act sets out the powers of the Authority.

#### (a) Committees

The Conservation Act 1987 enables the Authority to establish committees to carry out functions or tasks delegated by the Authority. Committees that were active during the reporting period, and members involved in those committees included:

- o **Biocontrol Committee:** Wendy Nelson, Puke Timoti

Section 5A of the National Parks Act 1980 and section 51A of the Reserves Act 1977 stipulate that before authorising the introduction of any biological control organism in any national park or reserve, respectively, the Minister shall consult with the Authority.

This reporting year the committee received an application from the Department, on behalf of Te Pahu Landcare group, seeking authorisation to introduce four biological control agents into Kaniwhaniwha Stream Recreation Reserve, Waikato, to protect biodiversity values. The agents are tradescantia leaf beetle (*Neolema oglobini*), tradescantia tip beetle (*N. abbreviata*), tradescantia stem beetle (*N. basicostata*), and yellow leaf spot fungus (*Kordyana brasiliensis*) to control the invasive weed species tradescantia (*Tradescantia fluminensis*).

After due consideration, the committee recommended the introduction of the four biological control agents into Kaniwhaniwha Stream Recreation Reserve, Waikato, for biocontrol purposes to protect the biodiversity values of the reserve.

- o **Conservation Law Reform Committee:** Edward Ellison, Tāne Davis, Aroha Mead, Viv Shaw, Sally Gepp, and Puke Timoti

This committee was established at the Authority's February 2022 meeting to

advise the Minister on conservation law reform proposals. This reporting year the committee met with departmental officials on 2 February 2023, where the Department discussed with the committee scoping questions to be considered in the review of the Wildlife Act 1953, whether the Act should include responsibilities for species integration, and the direction the review should take. The committee is expected to receive another update once Cabinet has made a decision following recommendations supplied from the Department and the Strategic Oversight Group (SOG).

- o **Treaty Partnerships Committee:** Nicole Anderson, Tāne Davis, Aroha Mead, Edward Ellison, and Puke Timoti

The role of this committee is to ensure that the Department gives appropriate effect to section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987 and remains an honourable Treaty partner through upholding the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi/Treaty of Waitangi. This year, the committee has held regular meetings with Michelle Hippolite, former Deputy Director-General Kāhui Kaupapa Atawhai, and Tame Malcolm, the current Deputy Director-General Treaty Partnerships, on the implications of the Ngāi Tai ki Tamaki Supreme Court decision for the Department, and how to progress the implementation of the Options Development Group report.



View from Rainbow Mountain. Photo: Lukas Marek

- **Management Planning Committee:** Edward Ellison, Sally Gepp, Metiria Turei, and Viv Shaw.

This committee was established to provide the Department with advice on its internal system review and design, and all matters relating to statutory plans and strategies, such as the national conservation management strategy review for biking. This reporting year, the committee met with departmental staff in September and November of 2022, and March and May of 2023, and have recently been involved in advising the Department on the implementation of its regulatory strategy and work on re-imagining management planning.

- **Marine Committee:** Wendy Nelson, Edward Ellison, Nicole Anderson, and Sally Gepp.

This committee has remained consistently involved in the Department's work regarding all marine matters, from Marine Management Act reviews, marine reserve

applications, climate change adaption plans, and more recently the impacts on coastal and marine habitats following Cyclone Gabrielle. This reporting year, the committee met with departmental officials in September and November of 2022, and March and May of 2023, and hold a strong working relationship with the Department's marine staff.

- **Tourism Committee:** Tak Mutu, Viv Shaw, Nicole Anderson, Robin McNeill, and Tāne Davis.

This committee was established to advise the Department on the future of tourism in New Zealand from a conservation perspective. The committee has met twice this reporting year to discuss the Milford Opportunities Project, and is set to engage with staff from the Department on key tourism-related matters, such as the Department's Visitor Strategy.

## **(b) Advocacy**

The Authority advocated its interests during the reporting period through several public submissions, available to read on its webpage on the Department's website. These include submissions on:

- Exposure draft of proposed changes to the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management and National Environment Standards for Freshwater (including wetland regulations), submitted July 2022
- National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity, submitted July 2022
- West Coast Stewardship Land Reclassification: Panel's Recommendations, submitted August 2022
- Draft National Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks 2022, submitted September 2022
- Managing our Wetlands in the Coastal Marine Area, submitted September 2022
- Proposed Amendments to Amateur Fishing Regulations in the Fiordland (Te Moana Atawhenua) Marine Area, submitted September 2022
- Freedom Camping Regulations, submitted October 2022
- Revitalising the Gulf: Marine Protection Proposals, submitted October 2022
- DOC and LINZ draft Long-term Insights Briefing, submitted January 2023
- Natural and Built Environment Bill and Spatial Planning Bill, submitted February 2023
- National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation, submitted May 2023.

## **6. THE NATIONAL PARKS ACT 1980**

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### **6.1 Functions of the Authority**

Section 18 of the National Parks Act 1980 sets out the functions of the Authority.

#### **(a) Review the General Policy for National Parks**

General policy is the highest level of statutory planning for conservation outcomes. There are two general Policies, the General Policy for National Parks and the Conservation General Policy. The Authority is the custodian of the General Policy for National Parks.

The partial review of the General Policy for National Parks is underway and aims to fully give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi/ Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The Options Development Group released its report on April 2022 and during this reporting year, the Authority has discussed ways in which the recommendations from the ODG report can be implemented into the review of the General Policy for National Parks. The review work will continue into the next reporting year.

**(b) National park management plans**

No reviews of national park management plans were conducted during the reporting period.

**(c) Additions to, and deletions from, national parks**

No additions to, or deletions from, national parks were advised during the reporting period.

**(d) National park investigations**

No national park investigations were undertaken during the reporting period.

**(e) National park determinations**

No determinations were made during the reporting period.

## 7. MEMBERSHIP OF OTHER ORGANISATIONS

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### 7.1 JD Stout Trust

The Stout Trust was established to provide grants for the preservation of natural or historical sites or amenities for public enjoyment, and the promotion, creation, or preservation of works of art, including visual, audio, or literary arts.

The Authority has a representative that sits on the Historical and Natural Sites Panel, a board that advises on grants made by the Trust. Wendy Nelson is the Authority's representative on this panel, and attended the Trust's meetings on 13 September 2022 and 27 October 2022.

### 7.2 International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) is a democratic membership union that uses the world's most influential organisations and experts to conserve nature and work towards sustainable use of natural resources. The IUCN has over 1,400 members from over 170 countries; the Authority, along with another government agency, is one of eight members of the New Zealand Committee of the IUCN. The Committee meets quarterly. Wendy Nelson is the Authority's representative on the Committee.

This reporting year two meetings were held of the New Zealand IUCN National Committee – in late November 2022, and then in early May 2023 when the AGM was held. Geoff Keey is now the Chairperson of the National Committee and meeting dates have been set for three meetings to be held in the remainder of 2023, with the intention of reinstating the quarterly meeting schedule.

### 7.3 Land and Water Forum

The Authority is a member of the Land and Water Forum. Details about the activities of the Forum during the reporting period are available at [www.landandwater.org.nz](http://www.landandwater.org.nz). Having completed its first phase of work, the forum took a formal break from July 2018.

## 7.4 Other organisations

**Species Aotearoa** – Wendy Nelson, Aroha Mead

**Strategic Oversight Group for the Wildlife Review** – Aroha Mead, Greg Duley

**Tahr Plan Implementation Liaison Group** – Tony Lepper (co-opted)

**Wild Animal Management National Coordination Group** – Greg Duley

## 8. CONSERVATION BOARDS

### 8.1 Conservation board boundaries

There were no changes to conservation board boundaries in the reporting period.

### 8.2 Conservation board nominations

The Minister is required to consult with the Authority prior to appointing public members to conservation boards. The Authority provided its advice to the Minister on the appointment process for 2023. The Authority was encouraged by the high standard of nominations received. It was heartening to see great diversity across these nominations, not only of ethnicity, gender and age, but of also of experience, knowledge and skills.



### 8.3 Authority/conservation board liaison

One Authority member acts as liaison with each conservation board. This liaison function includes attendance at board meetings and informal liaison with the board chair. Interactions, highlights and issues are reported back to the Authority at each meeting.

Conservation board	Liaison member
Te Hiku o te Ika	Nicole Anderson
Northland	Nicole Anderson
Auckland	Aroha Mead
Waikato	Puke Timoti
Bay of Plenty	Tak Mutu
East Coast Hawke's Bay	Greg Duley
Tongariro Taupō	Tak Mutu
Taranaki Whanganui	Shane Te Ruki
Wellington	Wendy Nelson
Chatham Islands	Edward Ellison
Nelson Marlborough	Sally Gepp
West Coast Tai Poutini	Vacant
Canterbury Aoraki	Greg Duley
Otago	Metiria Turei
Southland	Viv Shaw

#### 8.4 Annual Conservation Board Chairs' Conference 2022

The Authority hosted the annual Conservation Board Chairpersons' Conference on 3 and 4 September 2022, at AREA Events in Wellington. These conferences are designed to build collaboration between the Authority and conservation boards, and for the boards to develop stronger working relationships with each other and the Department. They provide the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of the Government's expectations of the boards, and the role they play in conservation leadership within their communities. It is a vital opportunity to share ideas and practices. Main topics on the conference's agenda for 2022 included:

- Discussions with the Director-General of Conservation
- Statutory management planning and the Department's review of its management planning system
- Chairs' only 'around the table' discussion session
- Stewardship land reclassification
- The Department's role as a regulator
- Addressing the biodiversity and climate crises
- Effective communication and advocacy for conservation boards
- Conservation law reform
- Governance and Improvement Project update.

## 8.5 Annual reports

Conservation boards are each required by section 60 of the Act to provide the Authority with an annual report. These reports are available on the board's individual pages on the Department's website.

## 8.6 Implementation of conservation management strategies

Most conservation boards have adopted a systematic process for monitoring the progress of the implementation of the conservation management strategy for their region, and for advising the Department's operations directors in that respect. Boards report on this monitoring in their annual reports.

Under the Conservation General Policy, the Department is required to provide each conservation board with a report (at least annually) on the implementation of the conservation management strategy for its region.

# 9. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

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The Authority reviews its performance and strategy annually at its June meeting. Members reviewed their work programme for 2022-23 (Appendix I) noting the status of actions to date. In forming the work programme for 2023-24, members agreed that the Authority would focus on its own priorities, which will be informed by the Minister's priorities.

The Authority reviewed its performance and noted that it has been effective in its role as an independent advisor to the Director-General and maximised its relationship as a critical friend, commenting that it has increased its level of engagement following the one-year anniversary of Penny Nelson's appointment as Director-General of Conservation.

This has largely been achieved through the ability to have more in-person meetings and field trips post-COVID.

## 9.1 Regular review of policies, procedures, and principles

The Authority undertakes a regular review of its policies, procedures and principles. This year, the Authority reviewed, amended and/or adopted the following:

- o **NZCA Statement of Expectations for CMSs, NPMPs and CMPs:** adopted in August 2022. This document provides departmental planners and conservation board members with clarity about the expectations for a best practice approach for conservation management strategies (CMSs), national park management plans (NPMPs) and conservation management plans (CMPs). These statements may be updated frequently to ensure clarity and consistency of expectations from Department planners and board members when supplying management planning documents.
- o **NZCA content and format check sheet for CMSs and Management Plans:** adopted in August 2022. This is a form that is to accompany conservation management strategies and conservation management plans presented to the Authority for approval. Its purpose is to give the Authority assurance that best practice has been followed and the CMS or CMP does not

derogate from legislation; and it requests that compliance with best practice be attested to by the Operations Director.

- **NZCA Walking Access Principles:** adopted in August 2022. The purpose of this policy is to address the extent to which the use of any natural or historic resource for recreation or tourism is not inconsistent with its conservation, and the Department of Conservation's duties to foster the use of natural and historic resources for recreation. It also recognises the national leadership of Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa/Outdoor Access Commission and the responsibilities of mana whenua as kaitiaki to protect and care for the land.
- **NZCA South Island High Country Principles:** adopted in February 2023. The purpose of these principles is to maintain and restore the natural heritage of New Zealand's South Island high country. The extensive inland area, 6.7 m ha, holds natural characteristics that are important to the cultural identity and wellbeing of New Zealanders. It derives these characteristics from its landscape, predominance of indigenous biota, natural processes, its traditional uses, and the perceived lack of human impact.
- **NZCA Freshwater Principles:** adopted in June 2023. The purpose of these principles is to acknowledge and seek to uphold Te Mana o Te Wai. As described in the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management, Te Mana o Te Wai refers to the fundamental importance of water and recognises that protecting the health of freshwater protects the health and wellbeing of the wider environment. These principles recognise the interaction of freshwater with the land from the mountains to the open sea, ki uta ki tai, and that freshwater is essential to all life, and recognises that freshwater environments include rivers, lakes, wetlands, groundwater, estuaries, and geothermal waters.
- **NZCA Committee Structure Policy:** adopted in June 2023. This policy gives effect to the Authority's ability to establish committees under section 6D of the Conservation Act 1987 and sets out the guidelines on the constitution, structure and function of committees. This policy also recognises that in order for the Authority to accomplish its role it will be necessary from time to time to appoint committees for specific purposes.

These policies, procedures and principles can be found on the Authority's webpage on the Department's website.



## 10. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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I wish to thank Authority members, past and present, for their contribution to the work of the Authority, and to note our appreciation to the Executive Officer, Dr Rick McGovern-Wilson, and Servicing Officers, Lorna Travers, and David Tibshraeny, who have been most efficient in the support and delivery of our work.

I would also like to acknowledge Penny Nelson, Director-General, and the departmental staff whose dedication to our public land and waters has been ever present in their engagements with the Authority. These relationships are extremely important to the work of the Authority, and members appreciate the enthusiasm Department staff have shown in assisting the Authority.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the work of the conservation boards and their members, whose sincerity and passion has provided the Authority with valued advice and who have played an active part in engaging the community with conservation.

*- E Tū Tāngata -*



Two-month-old kakāpō chick at the Southern Islands Quarantine Facility. Photo: Dianne Mason

## 11. SCHEDULES

### 11.1 First schedule

Conservation management strategies: approval dates and status of reviews as of 30 June 2023. The statutory expectation is that each conservation management strategy will be reviewed at 10-year intervals.

The Authority's role is to approve the strategies once they have been presented by the Department and the relevant conservation board. The Authority does not undertake the reviews.

CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGY	DATE APPROVED	STATUS
Te Hiku o Te Ika	Conservation board est. 2015	Work underway
Northland	8 September 2014	Current
Auckland	9 October 2014	Current
Waikato	8 September 2014	Current
Bay of Plenty	4 December 1997	Under review
East Coast/Hawke's Bay	14 October 1998 (East Coast) 19 October 1994 (Hawke's Bay)	Overdue for review
Tongariro Taupō	30 May 2002	Overdue for review
Wanganui	9 April 1997	Overdue for review
Wellington	20 January 2019	Current
Chatham Islands	12 August 1999	Overdue for review
Nelson/Marlborough	12 September 1996	Overdue for review
West Coast Tai Poutini	15 April 2010	Under review
Canterbury (Waitaha)	1 June 2016	Current
Otago	1 June 2016	Current
Southland Murihiku	1 June 2016	Current
Stewart Island/Rakiura	9 February 2011	Overdue for review

## 11.2 Second schedule

National Park management plans: approval dates and status as of 30 June 2023.

The Authority's role is to approve the management plans once they have been presented by the Department and the relevant conservation board. The Authority does not undertake the reviews.

NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN	DATE APPROVED	STATUS
Tongariro	12 October 2006	Overdue for review
Egmont/Taranaki	14 February 2002	Overdue for review
Whanganui	9 August 2012	Overdue for review
Abel Tasman	9 October 2008	Overdue for review
Kahurangi	13 June 2001	Overdue for review
Nelson Lakes	10 October 2002	Overdue for review
Paparoa	1 February 2017	Current
Arthur's Pass	13 December 2007	Overdue for review
Aoraki/Mount Cook	12 August 2004	Under review
Westland Tai Poutini	21 December 2001	Overdue for review
Mount Aspiring	23 June 2011	Overdue for review
Fiordland	21 June 2007	Overdue for review
Rakiura	9 February 2011	Overdue for review

### 11.3 Third schedule

Address list for conservation boards.

CONSERVATION BOARD	BOARD ADDRESS (c/o Department of Conservation)
Te Hiku o Te Ika	PO Box 569 Kaitaia 0441
Northland	PO Box 842 Whangārei 0140
Auckland	Private Bag 68908 Wellesley Street, Auckland 1141
Waikato	Private Bag 3072 Hamilton 3240
Bay of Plenty	PO Box 457 Whakatane 3120
East Coast Hawke's Bay	Private Bag 11010, Manawatū Mail Centre Palmerston North 4442
Tongariro Taupō	PO Box 528 Taupō 3351
Taranaki/Whanganui	Private Bag 3072 Hamilton 3240
Wellington	Private Bag 11010, Manawatū Mail Centre Palmerston North 4442
Chatham Islands	PO Box 114, Waitangi Chatham Islands 8942
Nelson Marlborough	Private Bag 5 Nelson 7042
West Coast Tai Poutini	Private Bag 701 Hokitika 7842
Canterbury Aoraki	Private Bag 4715, Christchurch Mail Centre Christchurch 8140
Otago	PO Box 811 Queenstown 9348
Southland	PO Box 743 Invercargill 9840

## 11.4 Fourth schedule

An outline of the statutory functions and powers of the Authority exercised in the reporting year.

ACT	2022-23	STATUTORY FUNCTION
<b>Statutory functions (Conservation Act 1987)</b>		
6B(a)	Y	Advise on statements of general policy
6B(b)	Y	Approve conservation management strategies and any amendments
6B(c)	N	Review and report on effectiveness of general policies
6B(d)	Y	Investigate matters of national importance
6B(e)	Y	Consider and make proposals for change of land status of national and international importance
6B(g)	N	Encourage and participate in educational and publicity activities
6B(h)	Y	Advise annually on priorities for expenditure
6B(i)	Y	Liaise with New Zealand Fish & Game Council
6B(j)	N	Exercise any other powers and functions delegated by the Minister
<b>Statutory functions (National Parks Act 1980)</b>		
18(a)	N	Prepare and approve statements of general policy for national parks (NP)
18(b)	N	Approve NP management plans and any amendments
18(c)	N	Advise on priorities for expenditure for NPs
18(d)	N	Review effectiveness of general policies for NPs
18(e)	Y	Consider and make proposals for addition of lands to NPs and establishment of new NPs
18(g)	Y	Give advice on any other matter relating to any NP
4(2)(b)	Y	Determinations re: native plants and animals preserved - introduced plants and animals exterminated
5A(2)(a)	N	The Minister shall consult the Authority on introduction of any biological control organism
12(1)	N	The Minister shall consult the Authority on Specially Protected Areas
14(1)	N	Recommend establishment or revocation of Wilderness Areas
15(1)	N	Recommend establishment or revocation of Amenities Areas
18A	N	The Minister shall consult the Authority on access arrangements to an NP re: section 59 of the Crown Minerals Act 1991
44(1)	N	Adopt or amend statements of General Policy
<b>Statutory powers (Conservation Act 1987)</b>		
6C(2)(a)	Y	Establish committees
6C(2)(b)	Y	Release for public information any recommendation, report, or advice
6C(2)(c)	Y	Advocate at any public forum or in any statutory planning process

## 12. APPENDIX I – NZCA WORK PROGRAMME 2022-23

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This work programme has been developed in response to the letter of expectation from the Minister of Conservation, dated 2 May 2022.

The Authority’s work programme is structured in three parts.

1. The Minister’s expectations. These are the Government and Ministerial priorities for the coming year that the Minister of Conservation would like the Authority to consider. The work programme will address actions to monitor the Authority’s performance against these priorities for reporting purposes.
2. The Authority’s focus areas. These are areas that the Authority has identified as a priority focus for the coming year. The work programme will address actions to best deliver on these goals.
3. The Authority’s strategic priorities. These are the strategic priorities of the Authority that set long-term goals and direction. These strategic priorities are the foundation of the ongoing work of the Authority to deliver on its mission statement:

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‘To ensure, for the people of New Zealand, that the richness of New Zealand’s natural and cultural heritage is valued, restored, maintained, and cared for by all, in order to enhance our environment and quality of life.’

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The Authority maintains a rolling one-year calendar to establish a working plan to achieve the goals and actions set out in this work programme, and to identify further risks, issues and opportunities for conservation that are not covered by this work programme.

NEW ZEALAND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY  
WORK PROGRAMME 2022-23

 Action not started
  Action overdue
  Action underway or ongoing
  Action completed






PART 1: PRIORITY WORKSTREAMS 2022-23

1. Conservation law reform

Relates to NZCA strategic priorities (D)(E)(F)(K)







Actions 2022-23

Status Progress commentary

- | Actions 2022-23  | Status  | Progress commentary   |
|--|---|---|
| (a) Consider the recommendations from the Options Development Group (ODG) report in any work related to conservation law reform, to ensure the principles of Te Tiriti are embedded within contemporary legislation. |    | NZCA extraordinary meeting with DOC staff held on 4 July 2022, which explored ODG recommendations to be addressed in the Conservation Law Reform (CLR) programme. |
| (b) Monitor and advise on progress of the Strategic Oversight Group (SOG) and working groups to ensure the Wildlife Act Review is well placed to deliver fit-for-purpose and mana-enhancing legislation.             |    | NZCA engaged in workshop for CLR issues and opportunities at August 2022 meeting. CLR Committee considering working group topics.                                 |
| (c) Submit on the Conservation Management and Processes Bill (CMAP) at select committee.   |   | NZCA submitted on CMAP on 30 June 2022. Update to be provided at December 2022 meeting.   |
| (d) Engage in the Marine Reserves Act Review, advocating vision and ambition in legislative change.  |  | Department yet to initiate work on the review.  |
| (e) Engage in the select committee process for the National and Built Environment Bill and Spatial Planning Bill, Resource Management Act (RMA) reforms.   |  | NZCA submission submitted 5 February 2023. NZCA members Wendy Nelson (Deputy Chair) and Sally Gepp appeared before the Select Committee on 2 March 2023.          |

## 2. Implementation of strategies and plans to address the climate and biodiversity crises

Relates to NZCA strategic priorities (D)(E)(F)(K)

Actions 2022–23	Status	Progress commentary
(a) Engage with and provide advice to Minister of Conservation (MOC) and D-G on the implementation of Te Mana o te Taiao / Aotearoa NZ Biodiversity Strategy (TMoTT).		Update received by DOC staff at August 2022 meeting. To be discussed with DD-G at December 2022 meeting.
(b) Advocate for the inclusion of marine ecosystems, habitats and species in the implementation of TMoTT.		Advocacy included in submission on the National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity (NPS-IB) (submitted 21 July 2022)
(c) Support science / mātauranga to enable more effective implementation of TMoTT, and advocate for improved coordination of and access to environmental databases and collections.		
(d) Assess the effectiveness of the implementation of the Vote Biodiversity Fund (\$180 m) and impact and outcomes of subsequent budget moneys.		
(e) Monitor the implementation of the Department's Climate Change Adaption Action Plan (CCAAP).		
(f) Ensure major environment, conservation and climate change reforms are connected (eg TMoTT, Te Mana o te Wai, PF2050, conservation law reform, Biosecurity Act overhaul).		








### 3. Review and reclassifying stewardship land

Relates to NZCA strategic priorities (C)(D)(E)(F)(K)

Actions 2022-23




Status

Progress commentary

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| (a) Ensure the principles of Te Tiriti are embedded in the Department's programme and approach to prioritising stewardship land reclassifications in WSI and NSI.  |   | Discussed at August 2022 meeting with the Minister, D-G and DOC staff. Issue explored in the NZCA submission on the recommendations of the National and Mana Whenua Panels, submitted 23 August 2022. Received a copy of the Ngāi Tahu agreement for the Mana Whenua Panel on 15 November 2022.                  |
| (b) Conduct a credible and transparent investigation into the recommendations related to additions to national parks and provide clear recommendations for action. |   | Information on the legislative process and process to date provided by DOC on 26 July 2022.  |
| (c) Support the West Coast Tai Poutini Conservation Board on specific land recategorisation matters.   |   | Discussed at Conservation Board Chairs' Conference on 3 and 4 September 2022.  |
| (d) Investigate Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu position on national parks in considering recommendations on recategorisation to national park status.                      |   | Information requested from DOC staff provided on 29 July 2022. Discussed at August 2022 meeting with the Minister, D-G and DOC staff. Received a DOC memo re Ngāi Tahu opposition to National Park Status on 1 August. Received a copy of the Ngāi Tahu agreement for the Mana Whenua Panel on 15 November 2022. |
| (e) Advise on the strategy/programme for prioritising stewardship land classification.   |  | Submission on recommendations of the National and Mana Whenua panels, submitted 23 August 2022.  |

#### 4. Partial reviews of the Conservation General Policy (CGP) and the General Policy for National Parks (GPNP)

Relates to NZCA strategic priorities (D)(E)(F)(K)




Actions 2022–23	Status	Progress commentary
<p>(a) Consider the recommendations from the Options Development Group (ODG) report in the partial review of the GPNP, to ensure section 4 considerations and learnings from Ngāi Tai ki Tamaki are appropriately addressed.</p>		<p>NZCA extraordinary meeting with DOC staff held on 4 July 2022, which explored ODG recommendations to be addressed in the GP partial review programme.</p>
<p>(b) Complete the partial review of the GPNP (in accordance with its function under section 18(a) of the National Parks Act 1980).</p>		
<p>(c) Advise MOC on the drafting of the CGP partial review (in accordance with its function under section 6B(1)(a) of the Act).</p>		

## 5. Statutory management planning system and processes

Relates to NZCA strategic priorities (A)(B)(C)(D)(E)(F)(K)

### Actions 2022–23

Status Progress commentary



- (a) Ensure section 4 considerations are appropriately addressed in policies and statutory plans that come before the Authority for approval.  Ongoing.
- (b) Advise the Department on the future-state of management planning, with blue skies approach to reform.  Discussion with Marie Long (DD-G, National Operations and Regulatory Services) and Steve Taylor (Director, Regulatory Services) at Management Planning Committee meeting 3 March 2023.
- (c) Advise MOC and D-G on the recommendations resulting from the external review of the statutory management system, being undertaken by Environmental Defence Society (EDS).  Feedback provided on 20 January 2023.

## 6. Cross-government work on the future of tourism

Relates to NZCA strategic priorities (E)(F)(G)(K)

### Actions 2022–23

Status Progress commentary

- (a) Advise MOC and D-G on matters relating to tourism on public conservation land.  N/S
- (b) Engage in initiatives with the potential to apply sustainable tourism practice to the wider conservation landscape.  Update session scheduled for December 2022.

**PART 2: STRATEGIC PRIORITIES (long-term objectives)**  
(Reviewed and approved at NZCA August 2022 meeting)

**Statutory role for management planning and land status**

**Strategic priority (A&B)**

NZCA role (A&B)

Goals (A&B)

Actions (A&B)

**Conservation management strategies (A) and national park management plans (B)**

Statutory (review and approval).

Review, approve, and champion improvements to the planning framework to ensure timeliness and quality of the planning process.

1. Follow NZCA approval processes and seek opportunities to expedite timelines and efficacy of the approval processes whilst holding or improving the quality of decisions.
2. Approve CMS/NPMP at the third meeting after receipt.
3. Continue to push for better, more dynamic, and responsive plans, and smarter planning processes.
4. Ensure CMSs and NPMPs align with legislation.
5. Ensure Operations staff undertake their work in conformity with the statutory plans.

**Strategic priority (C)**

NZCA role (C)

Goals (C)

Actions (C)

**Land status re-categorisation eg stewardship land**

Statutory (for national parks) and advisory (for all conservation lands).

Ensure the process and decision for land recategorisation is credible and robust; and that this is apparent to all stakeholders, including hapū and iwi at the inception of the process.

1. Conduct a credible and transparent investigation and provide a report with clear recommendations for action.
2. Support the relevant conservation board on specific land recategorisation matters.
3. Provide advice on future tenure reviews under the Land Act 1948, Crown Pastoral Land Act 1998 and Overseas Investment Act 2005 / Office processes.
4. Advise on the strategy/programme for prioritising stewardship land reclassifications.

## Strategic priority (D)

NZCA role (D)

Goals (D)

## Treaty of Waitangi and post-Treaty settlement conservation management

Statutory and advisory.

Meet requirements for NZCA as specified in settlement legislation; give on-going effect to the principles of the Treaty (per section 4 and General Policies); provide advice in response to requests from settlement negotiation parties; evaluate and provide feedback on novel post-Treaty settlement approaches to achieving conservation outcomes.

Actions (D)

1. Ensure Conservation Act 1987 section 4 considerations are appropriately addressed in the updated General Policy for National Parks and that the procedures for this are updated with learnings from Treaty settlements, and other advice received.
2. Demonstrate openness and good faith when giving advice (if consulted) on alternative models for conservation oversight and management.
3. Maintain open and ongoing communication with iwi leaders.
4. Implement NZCA's section 4 template (including revisions), and review the Authority's performance in relation to this annually.
5. Ensure the Department develops an effective strategy for building relationships with iwi.
6. Receive updates from the Department on their implementation of the Ngāi Tai ki Tamaki decision.

## Influence and 'step change' opportunities

### Strategic priority (E)

Strategic advice to the Minister and D-G in the current context of conservation, the governance requirements, and strategic advice on public policy documents and legislation

### NZCA role (E)

Advisory.

### Goals (E)

Be respected as an independent and influential source of strategic advice for conservation.

### Actions (E)

1. Give clear, considered and timely advice:
  - on all matters, relevant to the NZCA effectively fulfilling its functions; and
  - where this can be influential in achieving better conservation outcomes.
2. Maintain an active environmental scan to ensure the current and future operating context for conservation is well understood.
3. Maintain active links with conservation boards and the community, actively seek improved quality of conservation board nominees.
4. Follow up on submissions and advice to gauge their influence and identify where improvements in this role can be made.
5. Provide regular monitoring of and advice to achieve the Department's Stretch Goals and the Intermediate Outcomes objectives.

**Strategic priority (F)**

NZCA role (F)

Goals (F)

**Opportunities for step-change in conservation**

Advisory and advocacy.

Better understand, protect, enhance and appreciate Aotearoa New Zealand's native terrestrial and marine biodiversity, and ensure that conservation and efforts across major reforms and environment initiatives are connected and impactful.

Actions (F)

1. Provide strategic advice to the Director-General and the Minister for the effective management of introduced and pervasive pest species and weeds affecting native biodiversity.
2. Support the discussion and evaluation and, where appropriate, field assessment (probably meant to be in-containment), of gene drive / gene editing and other novel technologies that could help Aotearoa New Zealand become predator free by 2050.
3. Provide advice on securing and/or sustaining a social licence to responsibly use efficient pest and weed control technologies.
4. Continue to encourage the Department to undertake and sustain large-scale animal pest control and progress toward complete eradication of mammalian predators from large areas, such as Rakiura.
5. Encourage the Department to actively manage other threats to native biodiversity such as kauri dieback (PTA) disease and myrtle rust, and to take a strong stance on biosecurity in general.
6. Advocate for conservation on private land.
7. Encourage the Department to undertake and sustain landscape-scale plant pest and weed control, such as wilding pines eradication.
8. Encourage the Department to produce measurable positive outcomes for biodiversity at a species and habitat level.

### Strategic priority (G)

NZCA role (G)

Goals (G)

Actions(G)

### Visitor management on public conservation lands and waters

Advisory and advocacy.

Manage and mitigate the activities of domestic and international visitors on public conservation land.

1. Advise the Department on the implementation of its Visitor Strategy and the DOC/MBIE Tourism Strategy.
2. Ensure the concessions framework for tourism activities on public conservation land is fit for purpose.
3. Review the resilience and capabilities of conservation land for providing for visitors at specific sites, especially pressure points.
4. Work with other key stakeholders that have an interest in the tourism industry, eg TIA, MBIE, local government, and iwi, hapū and whānau.

## Advocacy on nationally significant issues for conservation

### Strategic priority (H)

NZCA role (H)

Goals (H)

Actions (H)

### Climate change adaptation and mitigation

Advisory and advocacy.

Assess the implications of, and opportunities arising from, climate change and ensure conservation planning and expenditure priorities.

1. Highlight the role of conservation in mitigating and adapting to climate change; and the means to reduce the risks of climate change to biodiversity and the Department's infrastructure and management of capital assets.
2. Show leadership with respect to landscape-scale pest and weed control and its contribution as a mitigating factor – improving ecosystem health/resilience.
3. Monitor the implementation of DOC's Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan (CCAAP).
4. Advise on connectivity of climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts between reforms and environmental programmes.



**Strategic priority (I)**

NZCA role (I)

Goals (I)

Actions (I)

**Rivers and freshwater ecosystems**

Advisory and advocacy.

Be an advocate for ecosystem services that public conservation land provides to New Zealanders, with respect to values of our waterways and waterbodies.

1. Maintain active advocacy for the comprehensive protection of a representative range of rivers.
2. Use the NZCA River Report (2011) and other national freshwater management initiatives as a basis for advocacy for freshwater ecosystem management.
3. Provide strategic advice on the management of whitebait and other endangered freshwater species such as the longfin eel.
4. Ensure DOC's environmental strategies align with the National Policy Statement for Freshwater and its successors, and the ANZBS, to address cumulative impact issues in water use and management.

**Strategic priority (J)**

NZCA role (J)

Goals (J)

Actions(J)

**Marine ecosystems and protected areas**

Advisory and advocacy.

Contribute to the better protection of the marine environment and biodiversity.

1. Actively engage with iwi, hapū and all stakeholders on Marine Protected Areas and how to protect a representative range of habitats and species.
2. Encourage the Department to investigate the Snares, Three Kings and Chatham Islands for marine protection and implement follow-up steps from this.
3. Maintain a watching brief on the growing/expanding marine aquaculture industry and monitor development and its impacts on marine ecosystems.
4. Maintain oversight of threatened species marine bycatch and the effectiveness of monitoring of bycatch on fishing vessels, especially through the use of cameras.
5. Encourage consideration of the Kermadec Islands for protection.

## Monitoring and evaluation

### Strategic priority (K)

#### Effectiveness and efficiency of the Department's conservation management

#### NZCA role (K)

Review and advisory.

#### Goals (K)

Fulfil statutory function (CA 6B(c)) to review and report on the Department's administration of General Policies; provide insightful evaluation and advice that contributes to improved conservation outcomes and a 'check and balance' on the Department's strategic planning.

#### Actions (K)

1. Ensure General Policies are implemented in CMSs and NPMs (via approval role – see A&B), and Milestone reporting is undertaken.
2. Provide advice on the Department's Statement of Intent.
3. Provide advice to the Minister of Conservation and Director-General on budget and priority spending.
4. Provide advice to the Department on how business, volunteer groups and communities can engage with them more easily in order to increase conservation outcomes.

### Strategic priority (L)

#### NZCA's performance

#### NZCA role (L)

Self-review.

#### Goals (L)

Effect continuous improvement to achieve greater value and impact.

#### Actions (L)

1. Undertake annual self-review of performance and modus operandi.
2. Regularly review and update the NZCA policies and principles.
3. Work on a process to ensure better communications between conservation boards and the NZCA.
4. Produce an annual report for the year ending 30 June 2023.
5. Strive for continuous growth of cultural competency of all members.



NEW ZEALAND

**CONSERVATION AUTHORITY**  
TE POU ATAWHAI TAIAO O AOTEAROA

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**Te Kāwanatanga  
o Aotearoa**

New Zealand Government