

Pūrongo-ā-tau Annual Report

For the year ended 30 June 2025



Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

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For the year ended 30 June 2025



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Annual Report for the year end 30 June 2025

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01

**He kupu takamua, kei roto
ko tētahi tauākī haepapa**

**Foreword including
statement of responsibility**

Te kupu whakataki a te Tumuaki

Director-General's foreword

Nō tērā tau, he nui ngā piere nuku i pā mai ki a mātou o Te Papa Atawhai otirā ki te kaupapa whānui o te whāomoomo i Aotearoa nei. Heoi, ka mihi ki a koutou i panoni i ngā mahi kia eke ai ki ngā whāinga penapena, kia kawea hoki ai ngā utu e piki haere ana.

Nā te mea ko Te Papa Atawhai te kaiwhakarato nui rawa o te mahi tāpoi i Aotearoa, he wāhanga nui tō mātou i te aronga o tēnei Kāwanatanga ki te whakatupu ōhanga. Kua rahi ake ngā manuhiri, ka mutu kua piki ake te moniwhiwhi mā te 12 ōrau mai i ngā tāpuitanga nō tērā raumati. E haere pai ana tō mātou pūnaha tāpui, ā, kei te harikoa ngā kiritaki. Kua waihanga mātou i ētahi wheako hou, pērā i te Tuatapere Hump Ridge Great Walk, kua whakatika hoki mātou i te ara ki Mautohe ki Te Whanganui o Hei me ngā arawhiti ki Makarora, ki ngā Blue Pools hoki ki te rohe o Wānaka.

Ka haere mai ngā manuhiri ki konei ki te kite i ngā maunga, ngā kararehe whanokē, ngā ngahere ātaahua me te tuakiri ahurea e motuhake ana. Engari ia e raru ana te taiao. Kei a tātou tētahi o ngā hautanga nui rawa o ngā momo taketake e mōrearea ana i tēnei ao, ā, he mahi uaua te whakawhānui ake i te 365 miriona tāra mō te rerenga rauropi ki te 2.3 piriona tāra me mātua whiwhi e ngaruru ai ngā momo nei.

Ahakoā ēnei piere nuku, kua tutuki i a mātou ngā inenga mahi. E āwhina ana tō mātou pūnaha haumi hou, a BioInvest, i a mātou ki te toha i ngā pūtea ki ngā kaupapa e hāngai pū ana ki ō mātou whakaarotau, me te tika hoki o te mahi.

Nā te āta whakahaere i te manu taketake, te manu whakawhānau pī, te manu mōrearea rawa atu o Aotearoa, arā i te tara iti, i tutuki pai ai tētahi kaupeka whakawhānau, ā, 17 ngā pī kua rere ki te rangi. Nā te mea he iti i te 40 ngā kātua manu, he taonga ngā pī katoa. Nā mātou hoki i whakarite tētahi taupori takahē mohaoa ki Rees Valley me tētahi taupori kākāriki karaka e mohaoa ana ki Pukenui. Ka kitea hoki i tēnei tau he whakatupunga o ngā manu hihi ki Tiritiri Matangi, koinei te mea nui rawa i roto i ngā tau.

Ko ngā otinga o tā mātou National Predator Control Programme ngā mea pai rawa atu o ngā tau katoa, i pēnei nā te pūtaiao atamai me te whakapakaritanga o te hātepe mahi. Nā te kitenga anō o te kiwi pukupuku ki te Tai Poutini e kitea ana te hiranga o te tāmi ā-rohe i ngā konihi.

Heoi, mēnā ka tiro atu ki tērā atu taha, e kitea ana ngā manu tai me ngā whāngote rere moana e matekai ana i te āhuarangi hurihuri. Nā te wera o te paehama e piki haere ana ka nui ake ngā tau pōike, ā, ka nui hoki ngā konihi. Ki te taha o Ngāi Tahu, i whakawhiti atu mātou i ngā kuaka 15 ki tētahi nōhanga hou ki Whenua Hou kia whakahaumarutia ai te taupori i te piki haeretanga o te taumata o te moana me ngā āwhā e kaha pā mai ana.

I te tau e tū mai nei, ka kaha ake ngā mahi whakakorikori i ngā tāngata o Aotearoa ki te mahi i ngā mahi tika mō te taiao kia taea tonutia ai te whakahaere ngā wero nei.

Ka kitea hoki ngā otinga o te whāomoomo ki te taha o ō mātou hoa haere i raro i te Tiriti. Nō tēnei tau tonu ka whakamanatia te puretumu whakataunga mō Taranaki Maunga i te marama o Āperira. Kua kopoua he poari hei kanohi, hei reo hoki mō te maunga, hei whakaū hoki i ngā uara o te whakataunga mā roto i te kaupapa o Taranaki Mouna.

Kei roto i te puka hukihuki o te Rautaki Whakahaere Whāomoomo o Te Hiku o Te Ika-a-Māui, e whakatakotoria ana tētahi ara hou ki te whakahaere i ngā motu, ngā onepū, me ngā ngahere ki te rohe o Te Hiku.

Nā te kaupapa o Raukūmara Pae Maunga Restoration, nā mātou ko Te Whānau-ā-Apanui ko Ngāti Porou hoki i whakahaere, i hinga ai ētahi tia, he nui ake i te 10,000, me ētahi nanekoti, he nui ake i te 2,000, ā, kua tukua te 1080 ki te whenua, kei te takiwā o te 116,000 heketā te rahinga, nā konā ka mimiti haere te nama o ngā paihama me ngā kiore.

E nui ana tā mātou whakapakari ake i tō mātou pūnaha whakaae. Kua whakamahea mātou i te tāpiripiri o ngā tono puka whakaaetanga mai nō te wā i mua i te kotahi tau ki muri, ā, e whakauru mai ana i ētahi tukanga hou kia tere ake ai te mahi. Kei te whakamāmā hoki mātou i tō mātou anga mahi kia pai ake ai te arotake me te ine i ngā otinga mō te taiao.

Ka ora te whenua, ka ora te tangata.



Nā Penny Nelson

Te Tumu Whakarae

Te Papa Atawhai



Whakaahua: Te Papa Atawhai

Te kupu whakataki a te Tumuaki

Director-General's foreword

It has been a challenging year for the Department of Conservation (DOC) and for conservation in Aotearoa New Zealand. Thank you to those who have made changes to meet savings targets and absorb rising costs.

DOC, as New Zealand's biggest tourism provider, is an important part of the Government's focus on economic growth. Visitor numbers are up, and we generated 12% more revenue from summer bookings than we did last year. Our new booking system is working smoothly, and customers are happy. We have created new experiences such as the Tuatapere Hump Ridge Great Walk, and we have repaired Mautohe Cathedral Cove in Coromandel and the Makarora and Blue Pools bridges near Wānaka.

Visitors come here for the mountains, quirky wildlife, beautiful forests and unique cultural heritage. But nature is in trouble. We have one of the highest proportions of threatened indigenous species globally and struggle to stretch our funding of \$365 million for biodiversity to the \$2.3 billion needed for species to thrive.

Despite these challenges, we have met our performance measures. Our new investment system, BioInvest, helps us to allocate funds effectively in a way that is sharply focused on priorities.

Intensive management of New Zealand's most endangered endemic breeding bird, the tara iti/New Zealand fairy tern, saw a successful breeding season with 17 fledglings taking to the skies. With fewer than 40 adult birds, every chick is precious. We created new wild populations of takahē in the Rees Valley and kākārīki karaka/orange-fronted parakeet on Pukenui/Anchor Island. There was record breeding for hihi/stitchbird on Tiritiri Matangi Island.

Our National Predator Control Programme had its best results to date, helped by smart science and improved operational delivery. Rediscovering kiwi pukupuku/little spotted kiwi on the West Coast shows why it is so important to suppress predators at a landscape scale.

On the downside, we are seeing seabirds and marine mammals starving because of climate change. Hotter temperatures bring more mast years and, in turn, more predators. With Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, we transferred 15 kuaka Whenua Hou/Whenua Hou diving petrel chicks to a new site to safeguard the population from rising sea levels and more frequent storms.

This year, we will be stepping up efforts to mobilise New Zealanders to take action for nature so we can keep on top of the challenges.

We are also getting results for conservation with our Treaty partners. The settlement redress for Taranaki Maunga was enacted in April this year. A board has been appointed to be the face and voice of the maunga and to uphold the values of the settlement through the Taranaki Mouna project.

The draft Te Hiku o Te Ika-a-Māui Conservation Management Strategy sets out a new pathway for managing ngā motu, ngā onepu, ngā wai and ngāhere (islands, coasts, waters and forests) in the Te Hiku region.

The Raukūmara Pae Maunga Restoration project, with Te Whānau-ā-Apanui and Ngāti Porou, has culled more than 10,000 deer and 2,000 goats, and has delivered 1080 across 116,000 hectares, significantly reducing the presence of possums and rats.

We are improving our permissions system dramatically. We have cleared the backlog of permit applications older than 1 year and are introducing new ways of working so we can move faster. We are also simplifying our performance framework so we can better monitor and measure outcomes for nature.

Ka ora te whenua, ka ora te tangata. When the land is well, the people are well.



Penny Nelson

Director-General

Department of Conservation Te Papa Atawhai



Photo: DOC

Te tauāki noho haepapa

Statement of responsibility

In accordance with the terms of section 45C of the Public Finance Act 1989, in my opinion, as Director-General of the Department of Conservation, this Annual Report fairly reflects the operations, progress, and organisational health and capability of the Department.

I have the responsibility for the preparation of the Department's financial statements and statements of expenses and capital expenditure, and for the judgements expressed in them.

I have the responsibility for having in place a system of internal control designed to provide reasonable assurance as to the integrity and reliability of financial reporting.

I have the responsibility for ensuring that end-of-year performance information on each appropriation administered by the Department is provided in accordance with sections 19A to 19C of the Public Finance Act 1989, whether or not that information is included in this Annual Report.

I am responsible for the accuracy of any end-of-year performance information prepared by the Department, whether or not that information is included in the Annual Report.

In my opinion:

- the financial statements fairly reflect the financial position and operations of the Department for the reporting period; and
- the forecast financial statements fairly reflect the forecast financial position and operations of the Department for the financial year to which the forecast financial statements relate.



Penny Nelson

Director-General

Department of Conservation Te Papa Atawhai

29 September 2025

02

**Te haeretanga o
ngā takune rautaki**

**Progress on strategic
intentions**

He aha tā mātou mahi

What we do

When nature thrives, Aotearoa New Zealand thrives. The distinctive species found here are worth protecting for their own sake and because the country's economy and society depend on a healthy natural environment.

Isolation from the rest of the world has made New Zealand's flora and fauna unique. Many of the plants and animals living here are found nowhere else on Earth, so if we fail to protect them, they are gone for good.

The Department of Conservation Te Papa Atawhai (DOC) manages a third of New Zealand's land area and is the largest provider of visitor activities.

We oversee 4.5 million hectares of water, including 53 marine reserves and sanctuaries, 220 large islands, and hundreds of smaller islands and rock stacks. We look after more than 14,000 kilometres of track, 300 campgrounds, 15,000 heritage sites and 927 huts.

We manage and protect public conservation lands and waters, conserve natural and cultural heritage, monitor and report progress against conservation targets, carry out regulation and law enforcement under relevant legislation, manage a wide range of visitor assets, and advocate for nature.

Ō mātou takune rautaki

Our strategic intentions

The Department of Conservation's *Statement of Intent 2022–2026*¹ has been replaced by the *Strategic Intentions 2025–2029*,² which was published in July 2025 and is effective from July 2025 to June 2029.

Our new strategic intentions reflect our strategy, which was revised in July 2024, the Government's priorities (see 'Ō mātou Minita/Our Ministers' on [page 26](#)) and our upcoming integrated performance framework.

The upcoming integrated performance framework includes impact measures that are included in the Estimates of Appropriations 2025/26. These impact measures track progress against intermediate outcomes and reflect our shift from reporting on outputs to focusing on our impact on conservation. While we will still use output measures in some cases, we are developing new impact measures for future years. Reporting on the new integrated performance framework will be included in our Annual Report 2026.

¹ Department of Conservation. 2022. *Statement of Intent Tauākī Whakamaunga Atu 2022–2026*. Wellington: Department of Conservation. doc.govt.nz/statement-of-intent-2022-2026

² Department of Conservation. 2025. *Ngā Takune Rautaki Strategic Intentions: July 2025 – June 2029*. Wellington: Department of Conservation. doc.govt.nz/strategic-intentions-2025-2029

Tā mātou rautaki hou

Our refreshed strategy

We updated our strategy in July 2024 to provide greater clarity and reinforce our aspirations for New Zealand's natural world.

Our strategic outcomes remain the same, but we have refined the intermediate outcomes that direct our work by including more detail.

VISION	Nature is thriving in Aotearoa Te Oranga o te Ao Tūroa 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				
PURPOSE	We protect and restore nature Toitū te Taiao				
STRATEGIC OUTCOMES	Ecosystems and species across Aotearoa are thriving from mountains to sea See pages 30 to 47	Public conservation lands and waters are maintained and improved for future generations See pages 48 to 57	We are an honourable Treaty partner See pages 58 to 63	Connection with nature and cultural heritage enriches people's lives See pages 64 to 72	DOC is a great organisation to work for and with See pages 73 to 78
	Improved condition of threatened species and a representative range of ecosystems See pages 30 to 39	Active protection of Māori rights and interests, and active participation of Treaty partners See pages 58 to 60	Visitors enjoy a sustainable number of experiences See pages 64 to 70	Improved performance of the conservation regulatory system See pages 73 to 76	
INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES	DOC leads and enables others to have the greatest impact for biodiversity See pages 40 to 43	Our land and water management obligations are met See pages 48 to 55	Increased capability and capacity See page 61	People and communities value and take action to preserve nature and cultural heritage See pages 71 to 72	Our people are engaged and see the contribution that they are making See page 77
	We attract investment into conservation See pages 44 to 47	Important cultural and historic sites are protected See pages 56 to 57	Partnerships and relationships are strengthened See pages 62 to 63		DOC is financially sustainable and known to be effective See page 78

Ō mātou tūāpapa

Our foundations

This year, we launched new values and behaviours to guide how we work and to build the culture we want. More information on these is available in 'Te ahurea, ngā uara, me ngā whanonga/Our culture, values and behaviours' on [page 100](#).



Integrity

It's about being open, honest and responsive.

We build trust and include others.

We do what we say we will.

- Be open, honest and transparent
- Follow through on what we say we will do



Connect

It's about working together to make a difference for nature.

Whakawhanaungatanga | we build authentic relationships.

Kotahitanga | we work together as one.

- Mahi tahi | work together to achieve better outcomes
- Make every interaction count



Empower

It's about enabling each other to grow and succeed.

In a high trust environment we innovate, share knowledge and learn from others.

- Create space for others to succeed
- Find the simplest way



Achieve

It's about being purposeful. We get things done.

Our work makes a positive impact for future generations.

We celebrate progress.

- Be solutions focused
- Do the right work



Ō mātou tāngata

Our people

We have 2,827 funded full-time equivalent (FTE) positions, which is a decrease from 2,910 in 2023/24. Our people are working in 100 communities across the country, from the Kermadec Islands in the north to the subantarctic islands in the south. Supported by our office- and field-based staff, we are proud of our broad and deep skills and expertise, including our whale and native animal rescue teams, emergency responders and firefighters, alpine search and rescue crew, predator control experts on remote islands, technical scientists, and hundreds of rangers protecting biodiversity and cultural heritage across the length and breadth of New Zealand.

Together we focus on nature thriving in New Zealand.

We are led by our **Director-General**, Penny Nelson, and we have seven business groups:

- **Biodiversity, Heritage and Visitors** provides technical expertise and science, and leads and translates strategy and policy into action.
- **Regional Operations** delivers the work needed to improve the condition of the assets and resources we are responsible for.
- **Treaty Relationships** drives our maturity as an honourable Treaty partner, with the aim of being an exemplar for the New Zealand public sector.
- **Policy and Regulatory Services** develops and implements policy settings and regulatory practice that promote conservation outcomes and meet the objectives of the Government of the day.
- **Public Affairs** supports the organisation to build trust and confidence with New Zealanders, Parliament, our stakeholders and our people, and mobilises the efforts of others to achieve more for nature.
- **Organisation Support** ensures that we are resourced, capable, financially secure, technologically enabled and safe. This group helps us in managing our people, systems, assets and property, and supports us to do better for nature by guiding effective change and programme management.
- The **Office of the Director-General** supports our Director-General and Senior Leadership Team to work through complex problems, anticipating issues and risks.

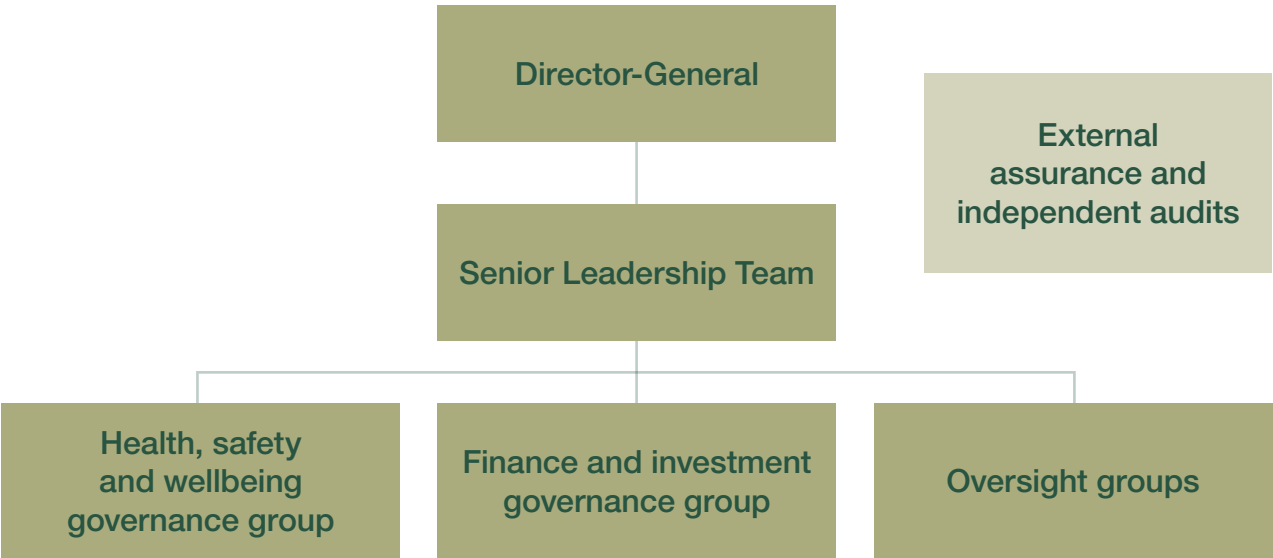
Te kāwanatanga, te whakatūturu me te whakahaere tūraru

Our governance, assurance and risk management

Our governance structure sets out our strategic direction and priorities, ensures accountability and transparency of decision making, and shapes our organisational culture.

Members of our Senior Leadership Team work with others in the public and private sectors as part of reference groups, committees and panels to inform best practice. These groups include the Chief Executives’ Reference Group and the Expert Advisory Panel.

Our governance structure provides assurance and integrity that we will do what we say with our funding. Our assurance framework provides assurance on how well our system is operating and informs good decision making. Our risk management processes enable us to manage risk to deliver optimum outcomes. Building integrity into our work is foundational and influences how we behave, operate and deliver our legislative commitments (see ‘Tāpiritanga 2: Ngā tūranga me ngā mahi ā-ture/Appendix 2: Statutory roles and functions’ on [pages 169 to 170](#)).



Our governance structure

Te whakahira i ā mātou mahi

Prioritising our work

We prioritise work and target effort by implementing smarter approaches, such as creating portfolios for different areas of work (for example, biodiversity, heritage and visitors). This portfolio planning helps us manage our funding and resources over longer periods, ensuring that our efforts are focused on achieving strategic outcomes.

Our new *Strategic Intentions 2025–2029* document, our strategy and our upcoming integrated performance framework will further refine how we prioritise work. We continue to engage in multi-year business planning, conduct regular and ongoing technical reviews of projects, and make trade-offs and resource allocation choices, which are described in the *Statement of Intent 2022–2026*.

The shift in our prioritisation reflects our aim to achieve long-term conservation outcomes.

By using historical trends to inform future modelling, we can make informed decisions, achieve cost savings and manage an increasing scope of work. For further details on the direction we are moving in, see ‘Prioritising our actions’ on [page 36](#).

Te ine i ā mātou mahi hei arotake i ngā nekehanga e pahawa ana

Measuring our work to monitor the difference we are making

Our performance measurement framework ([pages 80 to 81](#)) looks at how our performance indicators (our longer-term progress) and our outputs (what we do each year) are linked to outcomes (what we want to achieve for New Zealand). Our performance indicators and output measures are different ways of assessing performance.

The results of our performance reporting inform our business planning, providing useful insights and adjustments for the next planning cycle. For our disclosure of judgements and progress against our performance indicators and outputs, see ‘He pārongo mahi nō te mutunga o te tau mō ngā whakaaetanga whakapau pūtea/Year-end performance information on appropriations’ on [pages 79 to 98](#).

From 2025/26, we will use a new performance framework that will focus on a set of core impact measures that have been designed to strengthen the link between the work we are doing and the impact we have on conservation outcomes. This will be reflected in next year’s Annual Report.

Ā mātou kaupapa mahi matua

Our key work programmes

Our *Statement of Intent 2022–2026* reflects conservation priorities under the previous Government. Our current strategic direction gives effect to this Government’s priorities and is available in our *Strategic Intentions 2025–2029*. Many of our work programmes are continuing, and the status of each of these is outlined below.

Clear biodiversity priorities	
Ongoing implementation of the biodiversity strategy	<p>The next implementation plan for <i>Te Mana o te Taiao – Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy 2020</i>³ is being developed.</p> <p>For information on what we delivered this year, see ‘Next phase of the national biodiversity strategy’ on page 36.</p>
Implementing the ‘collective delivery of the Predator Free 2050 Strategy’ Budget 2022 initiative, and ongoing development of tools to progress the Predator Free 2050 goal	<p>As part of Budget 2022 funding to improve biodiversity and biosecurity, the Predator Free 2050 work is ongoing.</p> <p>For information on what we delivered this year, see ‘Developing leading-edge tools and technologies to combat predators’ on page 35, and ‘Working towards being predator free by 2050’ on page 34.</p>
Continuing to adapt threatened species recovery and strategies to reduce the threats	<p>This work is ongoing and reflects our intermediate outcome ‘Improved condition of threatened species and a representative range of ecosystems’.</p> <p>For information on what we delivered this year, see ‘Biodiversity investment approach development’ on page 36.</p>
Continuing the Arawai Kākāriki (wetland restoration), Ngā Awa (river restoration) and Living Water programmes	<p>Wetland and river restoration work is ongoing, as this reflects our intermediate outcome ‘Improved condition of threatened species and a representative range of ecosystems’.</p> <p>For details on the 10-year freshwater partnership between DOC and Fonterra, see ‘Closing out the Living Water partnership after a decade’ on page 43.</p>
Continuing national, freshwater and marine reserve monitoring and reporting	<p>Monitoring work is ongoing, as it informs long-term trends and what we need to do to best care for nature.</p> <p>For information on what we delivered this year, see ‘Understanding growing pressures on marine mammals and seabirds’ on page 37.</p>

3 Department of Conservation. 2020. *Te Mana o te Taiao – Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy 2020*. Wellington: Department of Conservation. doc.govt.nz/te-mana-o-te-taiao

Continuing the marine protected species programme	<p>As part of Budget 2022 funding to improve marine system resilience, this work is ongoing.</p> <p>For information on what we delivered this year, see 'Progression of the Hauraki Gulf/Tīkapa Moana Marine Protection Bill' on page 53.</p>
Ongoing delivery of the kauri protection programme	<p>This work is ongoing and reflects our intermediate outcome 'Improved condition of threatened species and a representative range of ecosystems'.</p> <p>For information on what we delivered this year, see 'Kauri protection programme' on page 52.</p>
Ongoing bird flu preparation	<p>This preparation will help protect New Zealand biodiversity and the ongoing work reflects our intermediate outcome 'Improved condition of threatened species and a representative range of ecosystems'.</p> <p>For information on what we delivered this year, see 'Extending our world-leading seabird tracking programme' on page 39.</p>
Great experiences for visitors	
Ensuring visitor experiences are fit for purpose, focused on levels of service and product set management	<p>This work is ongoing and reflects our intermediate outcome 'Visitors enjoy a sustainable number of activities'.</p> <p>For information on what we delivered this year, see 'Cost of extreme weather' on page 65.</p>
Ongoing destination management planning at Tongariro and Milford	<p>Destination management work is ongoing, reflecting the Minister of Conservation's priority to 'Generate new revenue and calibrate costs'.⁴</p> <p>For information on what we delivered this year, see 'Boost for conservation from increased International Visitor Conservation and Tourism Levy' on page 65.</p>
Maturing and implementing the visitor risk and safety system	<p>This work is ongoing as part of our continuous systems improvements and our commitment to keep our visitors and staff safe.</p> <p>For information on what we delivered this year, see 'Te hauora, te haumarua me te tautiaki/Health, safety and security' on page 105.</p>
Climate change	
Integrating climate change adaptation into DOC's systems and practices	<p>As part of Budget 2022 funding for enabling climate resilience, climate change adaptation work is ongoing.</p> <p>For information on what we delivered this year, see 'Climate change vulnerability assessment' on page 52.</p>
Providing specialist support for Managing Invasive Species for Climate Change Adaptation in the Pacific	<p>We continue to support the Pacific Island communities.</p> <p>For information on what we delivered on the Managing Invasive Species for Climate Change Adaptation in the Pacific programme, see our Annual Report 2024.⁵</p>

⁴ For further details on the Minister of Conservation's priorities for DOC, see 'Ō mātou Minita / Our Ministers' on [page 26](#).

⁵ Department of Conservation. 2024. Annual Report for the year ended 30 June 2024. Wellington: Department of Conservation. doc.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/about-doc/annual-reports/annual-report-2024/annual-report-2024.pdf

Defining regenerative tourism and heritage and visitor system approaches to climate change	Work is underway to develop regenerative tourism approaches to address climate change impacts.
Stronger Treaty partnerships	
Working with mana whenua on threatened species recovery	<p>This work is ongoing and reflects our intermediate outcome ‘Kua pai ake te āhua o ngā momo whakaraerae, kua whānui hoki ngā pūnaha hauropi/Improved condition of threatened species and a representative range of ecosystems’, and the Minister of Conservation’s priority to ‘Strengthen relationships with iwi/hapū’.</p> <p>For information on what we delivered this year, see examples (including bird relocations) on pages 31 to 33.</p>
Ongoing implementation of Treaty settlement obligations	<p>This work is ongoing and reflects our intermediate outcome ‘Active protection of Māori rights and interests, and active participation of Treaty partners’.</p> <p>For information on what we delivered this year, see ‘Treaty settlement commitments’ on pages 58 to 60.</p>
Growing staff knowledge and understanding of indigenous conservation	<p>This work is ongoing and reflects our intermediate outcome ‘Increased capability and capacity’.</p> <p>For information on what we delivered this year, see ‘Empowering our people through Whāinga Amorangi’ on page 61.</p>
Ongoing regulatory improvements and relationship management with iwi	<p>This work is ongoing and reflects our intermediate outcome ‘Active protection of Māori rights and interests, and active participation of Treaty partners’, and the Minister of Conservation’s priority to ‘Strengthen relationships with iwi/hapū’.</p> <p>For information on what we delivered this year, see ‘Treaty settlement commitments’ on pages 58 to 60.</p>
Developing an integrated Te Roopu Taiao biodiversity operational plan	<p>This work is incorporated in <i>Te Mana o te Taiao – Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy 2020</i>.</p> <p>Progress against <i>Te Mana o Te Taiao – Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy Implementation Plan</i>⁶ can be found in the annual implementation plan progress reports.⁷</p>

6 Department of Conservation. 2022. *Te Mana o Te Taiao – Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy Implementation Plan*. Wellington: Department of Conservation.

doc.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/conservation/biodiversity/anzbs-implementation-plan-2022.pdf

7 doc.govt.nz/te-mana-o-te-taiao-implementation-plan

Partnering for conservation

Developing a clear partnering framework for our work with others on priority threatened ecosystems and species

This work is ongoing and reflects our intermediate outcome 'People and communities value and take action to preserve nature and cultural heritage'.

For information on what we delivered this year, see 'Always Be Naturing' on [page 71](#).

Continuing Jobs for Nature and Predator Free partnerships to incentivise improved biodiversity performance

This is the final year of funding for the Jobs for Nature programme, which was designed to create both nature-based employment and enduring environmental benefits between 2020 and 2025. Jobs for Nature has contributed to a number of projects over time, including The Capital Kiwi Project, The Hem of Remutaka Coastal Wetland Restoration and Waipapa Pikiāriki Project. Projects were designed to be sustainable or to continue by transitioning to other investment opportunities.

For information on what we delivered this year, see 'Wrapping up the Jobs for Nature programme' on [page 40](#).

Delivering the DOC Community Fund round and supporting the Nature Heritage Fund committee

The Nature Heritage Fund is not being continued as part of Budget 2025. The DOC Community Fund is continuing, as it reflects our intermediate outcome 'People and communities value and take action to preserve nature and cultural heritage' and the Minister of Conservation's priority to 'target investment into high-value conservation outcomes'.

For information on what we delivered this year, see 'Annual DOC Community Fund supports 20 projects' on [page 72](#).

Well-supported frontline

Ongoing maintenance and improvements of DOC's systems and assets, including technology

This work is ongoing and reflects our intermediate outcome 'DOC is financially sustainable and known to be effective'.

For information on what we delivered this year, see 'Making the way we work easier' on [page 78](#).

Integrating and improving support for frontline staff

This work is ongoing and reflects our intermediate outcome 'DOC is financially sustainable and known to be effective'.

For information on what we delivered this year, see 'Making the way we work easier' on [page 78](#).

The right system settings	
Conservation law reform, including the Review of the Wildlife Act 1953	<p>This work is ongoing and reflects our intermediate outcome ‘Improved performance of the conservation regulatory system’.</p> <p>For information on what we delivered this year, see ‘Reviewing the Wildlife Act 1953’ on page 76.</p>
Conservation Management and Processes Bill	<p>This work is ongoing and reflects our intermediate outcome ‘Improved performance of the conservation regulatory system’.</p> <p>For information on this year’s achievements, see ‘Reviewing the Wildlife Act 1953’ on page 76.</p>
Partial reviews of the Conservation General Policy and General Policy for National Parks	<p>Work on a Conservation Amendment Bill is underway. If enacted, it will replace both sets of general policies with a single new National Conservation Policy Statement.</p>
Stewardship land review and reclassification of legislative amendments	<p>This work is ongoing and reflects our intermediate outcome ‘Active protection of Māori rights and interests, and active participation of Treaty partners’ and the Minister of Conservation’s priority to ‘Strengthen relationships with iwi/hapū’.</p>
Improving permissions processes	<p>Work is ongoing to deliver faster, more effective permissions processing and more effective cost recovery as part of broader modernisation of the conservation regulatory system. This reflects our intermediate outcome ‘Improved performance of the conservation regulatory system’.</p> <p>For information on what we delivered this year, see ‘Permissions at pace’ on page 74.</p>
Marine protection proposals for the Hauraki Gulf/Tikapa Moana	<p>This work is ongoing, following Budget 2022 funding to improve marine system resilience. Work continues on the Hauraki Gulf/Tikapa Moana Marine Protection Bill as a vehicle for improving protection in the Gulf.</p> <p>For information on what we delivered this year, see ‘Progression of the Hauraki Gulf/Tikapa Moana Marine Protection Bill’ on page 53.</p>

03

He arotake i ngā mahi

Assessment of operations

Te whakatinana i ngā whakaarotau o te Kāwanatanga

Implementing the Government's priorities

Ō mātou Minita

Our Ministers

Our responsible Ministers are the Minister of Conservation, Hon Tama Potaka, and the Minister for Hunting and Fishing, Hon James Meager. Hon James Meager was appointed to the Hunting and Fishing portfolio on 24 January 2025, replacing Hon Todd McClay.

The Minister of Conservation announced four new priorities for DOC in September 2024:

- **Target investment into high-value conservation outcomes.** Our mahi⁸ will identify and strengthen protection of high-value conservation areas that deliver the best outcomes for biodiversity and recreation.
- **Generate new revenue and recalibrate costs.** We will strengthen conservation efforts by generating new revenue and improving outcomes from our investments in conservation.
- **Strengthen relationships with iwi/hapū for better conservation outcomes.** We will work more closely with iwi/hapū and others to meet our Tiriti o Waitangi | Treaty of Waitangi settlement commitments and achieve shared goals for conservation and kaitiakitanga.
- **Fix concession processes.** We will reduce red tape to make it easier for businesses, researchers and others to undertake mahi and other activities on public conservation land.

The ministerial priorities for the Hunting and Fishing portfolio remain as follows:

- Improve the management of wild animals for hunters and conservation, including the designation of Herds of Special Interest.
- Support Fish & Game New Zealand and the New Zealand Game Animal Council.
- Ensure access to public conservation land for hunters and fishers.
- Provide representation for hunting and fishing views in conservation decision making.

Reporting on our progress

We report regularly to the Minister of Conservation on progress under the four new priorities, including:

- using International Visitor Conservation and Tourism Levy (IVL) funding to strengthen the visitor experience and conservation outcomes
- increasing private investment into making Maukahuka/Auckland Island predator free
- progressing settlement negotiations, with the Ngāti Ranginui and Ngāti Hauā settlement bills both being read in the House
- processing permissions at pace, with 248 applications that were over 1 year old being completed by the end of June.

⁸ For a glossary of te reo Māori and te reo Moriori terms used in this report, see see Tāpiritanga 1 / Appendix 1, [page 168](#).

Te pūtea i whiwhi

Funding we received

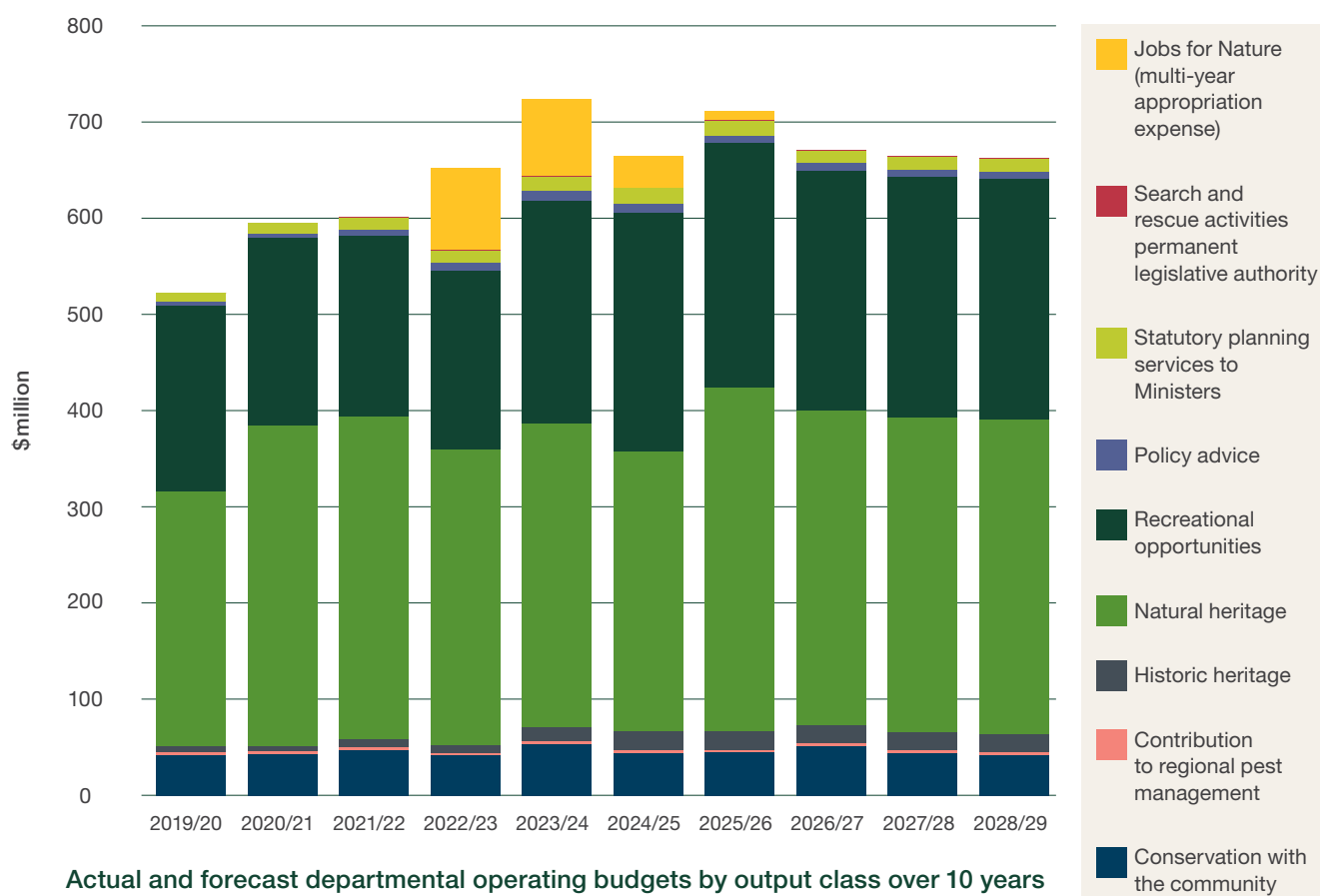
We receive funding by providing outputs to the Crown, for services to third parties, and from sponsorships, donations, bequests and grants.

In 2024/25, we received:

- \$718 million for departmental spending, which included \$675 million for departmental output appropriations (day-to-day operating expenses) and \$43 million for capital budgets (long-term investment to maintain, acquire or upgrade physical assets)
- \$107 million for non-departmental spending, which DOC spends on behalf of the Crown (for example, grants to community conservation funds and the protection of biodiversity on private and Māori land).

Since Budget 2022, we have not received any new departmental funding, and no new baseline funding is expected in the foreseeable future.⁹

The graph below shows our investment journey since 2019/20. For more information, see 'Te whakatutuki o te Tari – Te tauākī whakatutuki o te ratonga/Departmental performance – Statement of service performance' on [pages 87 to 98](#), or our financial statements in sections 5 and 6 on [pages 111 to 160](#).



⁹ For an overview of Budget 2024, visit doc.govt.nz/budget-2024.

Ngā penapena i te paepito

Our baseline savings

All government agencies are required to set out the amount saved in their Budget 2024 Initial Baseline Exercise (IBE) and how they achieved these savings, including contractor and consultant savings. DOC has no major spending decisions, as set out in Cabinet Minute ECO-24-MIN-0231.¹⁰ We received no new initiative funding in Budget 2024 for what we consider to be 'significant' budget initiatives.

Our baseline was reduced by \$31.3 million per year from 2024/25 because of the Budget 2024 IBE, and we also needed to make additional one-off savings of \$8.9 million in 2024/25 (\$6.9 million for the Kermadec Ocean Sanctuary programme and \$2 million for Jobs for Nature). We achieved these savings by making programme savings, savings from enabling functions and savings from external services.

For non-departmental expenditure, the following baseline savings were made: the return of funding for the Kermadec Ocean Sanctuary programme, a small portion of which was departmental expenses.

Te itinga iho o te whakapau pūtea ki ngā kaikirimana me ngā mātanga hāpai

Reduction in expenditure on contractors and consultants

We achieved a reduction of \$14.91 million in 2024/25, which represents 10% (\$32.99 million) of total departmental workforce expenditure in 2024/25. This compares with expenditure of \$35.03 million for 2022/23 and \$47.90 million for 2023/24, respectively, which represent 12% and 15% of total departmental workforce expenditure in these years, respectively.

It is important to note that DOC employs seasonal contracted staff in the summer months for big programmes of work that are weather dependent.

¹⁰ treasury.govt.nz/publications/cabinet-minute/cabinet-minute-eco-24-min-0231-monitoring-and-reporting-major-spending-savings-and-revenue-decisions

Te pūtea 2025

Budget 2025

Like all government agencies, we have also been directed by the Government to find savings from our baseline budget by reducing funding and grant payments to third parties that are not aligned to government priorities.¹¹ This has resulted in ongoing annual savings and the return of money to the Crown to a total of \$3 million by reducing grant payments to the Mātauranga Kura Taiao Fund and the Nature Heritage Fund, ending a co-funding contribution to the Tohu Whenua visitor programme run by Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga, and ending discretionary grant payments associated with Te Tiriti o Waitangi | Treaty of Waitangi settlements (Treaty settlements).

Further ongoing baseline savings of \$5 million per annum have been achieved by closing the Crown Land Acquisition Fund, decreasing Policy services functions and disestablishing the Predator Free 2050 Limited company.

Vote Conservation has been allocated additional funding of \$20 million through the IVL for 2025/26 and outyears for levy-funded projects. This funding is supported by a forecast increase in levy collections by the Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment following the recent IVL rate increase from \$35 to \$100. We have also been allocated further time-limited funding of \$36 million over 4 years from 2025/26 to 2028/29 for committed projects from IVLs collected to date.

Our first performance plan covers absorbing cost pressures of \$147 million over 4 years.

¹¹ For an overview of Budget 2025, visit doc.govt.nz/budget-2025.

He arotake i ngā mahi

Assessment of operations

In this section, we provide an update on what we delivered and achieved this year against each of our strategic outcomes.

STRATEGIC OUTCOME

E taurikura ana ngā pūnaha hauropi me ngā momo huri noa i Aotearoa mai i ngā maunga ki te moana

Ecosystems and species across Aotearoa are thriving from mountains to sea

Thanks to New Zealand's geographical isolation, the native animals and plants here evolved separately from the rest of the world for millions of years.

There are animals and plants that only exist here – from giant land snails to flightless birds, trees that can live for over 1,000 years and the smallest dolphin in the world.

Right now, much of New Zealand's nature is in trouble. Species and ecosystems are declining at a rapid and accelerating rate, and over 4,000 native species are either threatened with extinction or at risk of becoming threatened. Just over 487 of these species are under our active management.

New Zealand's unique species are worth protecting for their own sake and because the economy and society depend on a healthy natural environment.

Native birds are being killed at an estimated rate of 25 million a year by introduced predators such as possums, rats and stoats – and their habitats are being threatened by wild goats, deer and other introduced species.

Deforestation, introduced animals, weeds and pathogens, wetland drainage, and climate change are weighing heavily on ecosystems across the country.

However, when we remove or manage threats, restore habitats and improve how people interact with nature, we give nature a chance to bounce back. By focusing knowledge, resources and support in the right places at the right times, we have shown we can make a positive difference for species and ecosystems.

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME

Kua pai ake te āhua o ngā momo whakaraerae, kua whānui hoki ngā pūnaha hauropi

Improved condition of threatened species and a representative range of ecosystems

Note that progress towards this intermediate outcome also contributes to our strategic outcome 'Public conservation lands and waters are maintained and improved for future generations'.

The statistics are sobering



63%

of ecosystems
are threatened



82%

of native birds are
threatened or at risk



90%

of native seabirds are
threatened or at risk



94%

of native reptiles are
threatened or at risk



72%

of native freshwater
fish are threatened
or at risk

Protecting New Zealand's unique species

This year has seen steps forward for some of New Zealand's most threatened species,¹² and a greater depth of understanding about what is happening for others. Some examples are outlined below.

Tara iti/New Zealand fairy tern

With fewer than 40 adult birds remaining, tara iti is New Zealand's rarest native bird and has teetered on the brink of extinction since the 1980s despite intensive management. This year's tara iti breeding season was remarkably successful, with 17 fledglings taking to the skies – up on 12 fledglings last year and 10 the year before. At least eight of this season's fledglings are female, helping to balance out the male-biased population.

Kakī/black stilt

Although fledging success in captivity was slightly lower this year (94.2%) than in the previous two seasons (97.2% and 97.0%), 147 kakī juveniles were in aviaries awaiting release in August 2025 and almost 160 kakī were released into the wild this year. At least 141 adult and 149 sub-adult kakī were known to be alive in the wild in February 2025.

Hihi/stitchbird

A record-breaking 277 hihi fledged in this year's breeding season on pest-free Tiritiri Matangi Island off Whangaparāoa Peninsula in Auckland. There are around 2,000 hihi alive today, with seven breeding sites and one naturally surviving population on Te Hauturu-o-Toi/Little Barrier Island.

¹² For a breakdown of the conservation status of species under the New Zealand Threat Classification System, see Tāpiritanga 6/Appendix 6, [page 176](#).

Takahē

This year, takahē had a record breeding season on Te Motutapu a Taikehu/Motutapu Island, with six pairs each successfully raising a juvenile bird on this island in the Hauraki Gulf/Tīkapa Moana. Over the last 2 years, pressure to find new sites for takahē has led to new populations being established. This year, we released 51 takahē into a new site in the Rees Valley in Fiordland, the second largest wild site for this bird, and the total population now numbers around 530 birds.

Kākāriki karaka/orange-fronted parakeet

Kākāriki karaka is New Zealand's rarest forest bird, with fewer than 500 individuals left in the wild. This year, a new wild population was established on predator-free Pukenui/Anchor Island in Fiordland, comprising 80 birds transferred from captive breeding facilities at the Isaac Conservation & Wildlife Trust and Orana Wildlife Park. This work aligns with the *Kākāriki Karaka Recovery Strategy 2024–2034*,¹³ which aims to establish 10 self-sustaining populations on Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu lands over the next 20 years. Kākāriki karaka is a taonga species for Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu.

Kākāpō

The first kākāpō mating call to be heard in the North Island in 100 years was captured this summer at Sanctuary Mountain Maungatautari. In partnership with Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, three male kākāpō were established at this Waikato sanctuary in 2023, representing the first birds to be moved off a protected island. The mating call – or 'booming' – is a positive sign that the birds are settled enough to display natural behaviours.

Gollum galaxias

This threatened freshwater fish – whose bulging eyes saw it named after the *Lord of the Rings* character – was discovered in a Southland stream during a DOC survey. The tiny Gollum galaxias occurs only in Southland and Otago and had not previously been found in the Waimatuku catchment, which became part of the Ngā Awa river restoration programme this year.



Juvenile kakī/black stilts being released into the Tasman valley.
Photo: Liz Brown

¹³ Department of Conservation. 2024. Te Ara Mōrehu: He Rautaki Whakaora Kākāriki Karaka/Kākāriki Karaka Recovery Strategy 2024–2034. Wellington: Department of Conservation. doc.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/science-and-technical/te-ara-morehu-kakariki-karaka-recovery-strategy-2024-2034.pdf

Pisa Flat woollyhead

Consistent funding and collaboration have proved a game changer for Central Otago's threatened Pisa Flat woollyhead, which is close to extinction. In 2024, only 16 of these endemic plants remained in the wild, but dedicated funding and support from the Dunedin Botanic Garden saw numbers increase this year. The Botanic Garden's expert propagation team reared over 40 mature plants and 200 seedlings using hand pollination, and a further 120 seedlings are now growing in Central Otago nurseries.

Waitaha gecko

Two native Waitaha geckos found living on a predator-free island off the Canterbury coast are thought to be the oldest in the world at around 60 and 64 years old. Found during a 5-yearly monitoring visit in March 2025, the pair were able to be identified due to markings made by a scientist in the 1960s. The Waitaha gecko is classified as At Risk and is mostly found in lowland Canterbury. No other species of gecko is known to live so long – the average is 10 years.



Dunedin Botanic Garden staff, DOC staff and other members of an expert advisory group observing the collection of Pisa Flat woollyhead seed at Mahaka Katia Scientific Reserve in December 2024.
Photo:
Richard Ewans

Working towards being predator free by 2050

Creating a New Zealand where native species are safe from extinction and thriving is the foundation of the Predator Free 2050 movement. All Predator Free work makes a major contribution towards the implementation of *Te Mana o te Taiao – Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy 2020*.

DOC leads the Predator Free movement, which brings together iwi and hapū, non-governmental organisations, businesses, government agencies, community groups, and New Zealanders from all walks of life.

Launched in 2016, the goal is to eradicate possums, rats, stoats, ferrets and weasels – some of the most damaging introduced predators that kill millions of native birds each year. Achieving this would drastically improve conditions for the thousands of native species currently threatened or at risk of extinction. It would also be a world first.

This year saw the best-ever results from DOC's National Predator Control Programme due to good scientific advice and improved operational delivery. The outcomes for threatened species were very encouraging, with measurable increases recorded for pekapeka/long- and short-tailed bats, pīwauwau/rock wren, mohua/yellowhead, kōkako, kākā, mistletoes and other endangered populations where predators are being controlled. Kiwi populations are also recovering where stoats are being controlled, with the tide most recently being turned for Fiordland tokoeka, one of New Zealand's rarest kiwi species.

Over the past 5 years, Predator Free 2050 has captured the public's interest and driven communities to take action in ways that no previous conservation campaign has. There are more than 8,000 volunteer groups across the country uploading their trapping results to a central database.

This year, we sought public input on new draft goals for Predator Free work to 2030, including expanding the current target species list and inspiring even more New Zealanders to take action.

By 2030, the aim is to have evidence that achieving a predator-free New Zealand is possible and we know how to do it. We need to be able to quantify the benefits of the work to enable Predator Free 2050 to find greater private and community investment to continue the work and fund it to completion.

As part of cost saving initiatives, it was announced in the Government's Budget 2025 that the Crown company, Predator Free 2050 Limited, will be disestablished. DOC will take over responsibility for managing and supporting the company's contracts. This will save the Government \$12.6 million in operating costs over 4 years.

Our commitment to the goal of a predator-free New Zealand is as strong as ever. Our role is to continue to ensure that projects and organisations can continue their excellent work delivering on the Predator Free strategy.

Developing leading-edge tools and technologies to combat predators

Developing new and smarter predator control technologies is critical to reaching New Zealand's predator-free goals. Our Tools to Market programme invests up to \$1 million each year into the development of new tools and the refinement of existing tools to make them more efficient, safer and more cost-effective.

Across the Predator Free 2050 research and development space, four new tools were introduced this year: a communication module that lets users know the state of traps they have set, including whether the trap has been triggered; a trail camera that uses artificial intelligence (AI) image recognition to determine which species it is capturing; a 'spitfire' long-life toxin delivery device for possums that sprays the poison onto a target's abdomen, leading to it being ingested during grooming; and a multi-species kill trap that uses AI to ensure that it is only triggered by target species.

One of the most positive developments this year was the trial of a new meat bait targeting feral cats. Controlling the feral cat population is important for the survival of native wildlife and to reduce the spread of toxoplasmosis, which is caused by a parasite that spreads through cat faeces. In the first aerial trial last spring, DOC researchers dropped the bait by helicopter over 5,000 hectares in the St James Conservation Area in North Canterbury. A sample of 10 feral cats in the trial area were fitted with GPS-VHF collars, and monitoring showed that 9 of these cats were killed. Stoat and ferret numbers also declined to very low levels post-baiting. Further trials are being undertaken.

We also worked on a second meat-based bait that included the registered toxin para-aminopropiophenone (PAPP) to directly control stoats. Initial hand-laid field trials have shown that this bait is highly effective. Aerial trials will be carried out later this year.



Testing the DOC AI camera developed by The Cacophony Project.
Photo: The Cacophony Project

Prioritising our actions

Making the biggest difference for nature we can with the money we have is front and centre for all our work. With a \$300 million biodiversity budget against a \$2.3 billion need, we are in the ‘preventing losses’ space – prioritising urgent action for those species and ecosystems at immediate risk of extinction so that we make every dollar count.

Next phase of the national biodiversity strategy

Te Mana o te Taiao – Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy 2020 is the national cross-agency strategy that guides action for nature at national, regional and local levels.

In May 2025, we started public consultation on the next implementation plan for the strategy, which will cover the period 2025 to 2030. The plan is due to be completed in early 2026.

Biodiversity investment approach development

Our current funding enables us to protect and manage just 10–15% of the species and ecosystems we are responsible for. Understanding the outcomes and trade-offs of different conservation investments is therefore essential.

We are developing a world-leading system called BioInvest to ensure that we are investing where it will make the biggest difference to nature.

BioInvest will provide us with an unprecedented ability to describe what is being invested in, what the conservation outcome is and the trade-offs required. Based on data from over 13,000 outcome plans, BioInvest will enable us to make informed and transparent decisions about the work we choose to do so that we can use funding in the most efficient way.

A new budget explorer tool uses BioInvest data to explore which plans we could start working on. This allows us to quickly respond to changes in funding or government priorities.

In the last year, we used BioInvest to determine the best use of an extra \$5 million we set aside for urgent work over the next 2 years to prevent the irreversible loss of 30 threatened species and 5 rare ecosystems.

Other organisations are already using BioInvest to see how their work contributes to national biodiversity goals. The NZ Nature Fund used BioInvest to identify the best projects to fund from their 2024 fundraising efforts. There has also been significant international interest in the adaptation of this home-grown investment and prioritisation system.

Understanding growing pressures on marine mammals and seabirds

Conservation status of marine mammals

We gained greater clarity on the priorities for managing at-risk marine mammals from new data published this year. It showed that the number of threatened or at-risk marine mammal species in New Zealand had increased from 10 in 2019 to 14 in 2024.

This was the first assessment in 5 years by experts, including DOC scientists, and covered the conservation status of all 57 species of marine mammals.

The parāoa/sperm whale and pygmy blue whale were added to the Threatened species list, and the tohorā/southern right whale, hakurā/goose-beaked whale and pygmy sperm whale were added to the At Risk species list. The terehu/bottlenose dolphin was the only species whose status improved – although this change was due to better information, not an actual increase in numbers.

Seabird ‘wreck’ in North Island

Unusually high numbers of dead seabirds on North Island west coast beaches were reported in November and December 2024.

We confirmed starvation as the cause of the birds’ deaths, likely associated with climate change. Warmer than usual seas off the Japanese coast affected the birds’ food stocks, and juvenile birds returned to New Zealand in poor condition and died when they got here.

Tītī/sooty shearwaters were the most affected, followed by rako/Buller’s shearwaters and tītī wainui/fairy prions. All three of these species are classified as At Risk and dependent on conservation management measures to prevent further declines.

Past tracking of tītī revealed that 70% of the New Zealand population migrates to seas to the north and east of Japan.

Action plan needed for world’s rarest sea lion

The data showed that New Zealand’s endemic pakake population could decrease by 30% to 70% over the next three decades.

Already the rarest of the world’s six sea lion species, the pakake moved to a higher risk category, from Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable to Threatened – Nationally Endangered, based on updated information about the species’ population size, distribution and trend. This change reflects improved data quality, including recent pup production figures from multiple breeding sites. A New Zealand Sea Lion Action Plan, which will outline steps to promote pakake recovery, is currently being developed and will be released publicly later this year.



Two juvenile pakake play fighting on Enderby Island.
Photo: Madeleine Brennan

Protecting New Zealand marine mammals and seabirds

Reducing extinction risk for key flagship marine species

Improving marine resilience, particularly for Māui dolphins and migratory seabirds, is one of our top priorities. The Budget 2022 initiative ‘Reducing Extinction Risk for Key Flagship Marine Species’ has provided essential funding for our dedicated research programme to continue.

Māui dolphin

The Māui dolphin is critically threatened, with only about 54 individuals over the age of 1 year remaining. To date, three Māui dolphins and seven Hector’s dolphins have died from toxoplasmosis, the leading non-fishing threat to Māui dolphins. Without action, toxoplasmosis is expected to continue driving their population decline, so we are researching how to reduce infections in Māui dolphins.

We are working with Massey University to develop fast and cheap methods for identifying toxoplasmosis strains, with Earth Sciences New Zealand (formerly NIWA) to help us understand how toxoplasmosis parasite eggs contaminate Māui dolphin habitats, and with iwi to share knowledge about the parasite and create educational resources for schools.

In collaboration with the University of Auckland and Ngāti Te Ata, we began a 2-year population survey of Māui dolphins off the North Island’s west coast in summer 2024/25. This survey will be repeated at 5-year intervals and will help track changes in the population and inform conservation efforts.



Adult and juvenile Māui dolphins.
Photo: Martin Stanley

Migratory seabirds

This year, we managed the first translocation of kuaka Whenua Hou/Whenua Hou diving petrels in partnership with Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu. A new home was required for this critically threatened petrel species, as its only breeding site is being eroded by rising sea levels and increasingly frequent storms.

The entire population of Whenua Hou diving petrel consists of only 210 individuals, and they only breed up to 20 metres from the high-tide line on the sand dunes of Codfish Island/Whenua Hou, off Stewart Island/Rakiura.

In December 2024, an initial 15 petrels were moved to a predator-free location in the South Island, with staff remaining on the island to look after the chicks until the last one fledged. This was the first of five planned transfers over the next 5 years to establish a new colony.

Extending our world-leading seabird tracking programme

Tracking information is important for piecing together what is happening for seabird populations – both to protect birds from contagious viral diseases like avian influenza ('bird flu') and for when large-scale deaths occur.

In 2024/25 alone, field teams deployed at least 239 tracking devices on 11 species of albatrosses and petrels across nine islands. Together, these efforts form the world's largest seabird tracking programme. The tracking devices provide insights into the distributions of and fisheries bycatch risks to the different species across the globe, including northern royal albatross off the Chilean coast, southern royal albatross over the Patagonian Shelf, southern Buller's albatross off the Australian coast and across the Tasman Sea, and black petrels off the Ecuadorian coast, as well as the movements of light-mantled sooty albatross. The seabirds that live here connect us with other countries and the tracking data we collect enables conservation action wherever they travel.



Tagging and tracking a juvenile Antipodean albatross.
Photo: DOC

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME

**E ārahi ana a Te Papa Atawhai
i tāngata kē atu kia pai rawa
atu te pānga o te mahi ki te
rerenga rauropi**

**DOC leads and enables others
to have the greatest impact for
biodiversity**

Conservation is a collective effort. Given the scale of the problem and increasing threats to nature, we partner with many others to increase the positive outcomes for nature.

We work with central and local government, iwi and hapū, business and industry sectors, private landowners, scientists and researchers, educators, non-governmental organisations, philanthropists, communities, and our wonderful and hugely appreciated volunteers around the country.

In this section, we celebrate some of the many examples of how we work with others to achieve biodiversity outcomes.

Wrapping up the Jobs for Nature programme

This was the final year of funding for the \$1.2 billion Jobs for Nature programme, which was established by the Government in 2020 to stimulate the economy post-COVID-19.

DOC provided \$485.3 million for 225 projects over 5 years to support people entering nature-based work, creating enduring environmental benefits. An independent review estimated that DOC-funded projects will collectively return more than \$1.9 billion in environmental, social and economic benefits over 30 years, a return on investment of \$4 for every \$1 spent.¹⁴

In this final year, we focused on supporting project partners to transition out of the programme while sustaining conservation gains wherever possible. Many projects have become self-sustaining through becoming a commercial business or finding new funding.

We will apply the many lessons learned from Jobs for Nature about community-led conservation to our approach for DOC Community Fund investments, the Nature Prospectus and Predator Free 2050 contracts.

We would like to acknowledge all our project partners and their hard work in super-charging conservation efforts in New Zealand.

¹⁴ Webber J, Steen-Jones C. 2024. Jobs for Nature impact assessment. Prepared for the Jobs for Nature Secretariat. Wellington: MartinJenkins. jobsfornature.govt.nz/assets/Publications/Final-report-2024-Q4-J4N-impact-results-2024.pdf



Kaitiaki and taurira
of Waikanae
Jobs for Nature
at the closing
celebration,
December 2024,
Otaraua Park,
Waikanae.
Photo:
Sarah Wilcox

Iwi-run business supporting nature in Waikanae

The Waikanae Mahi mō te Taiao project was established in 2021 as part of the Government's Jobs for Nature programme, building on an existing environmental partnership between mana whenua, DOC, Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai Charitable Trust, Kāpiti Coast District Council, Greater Wellington Regional Council and Groundtruth Limited.

Jobs for Nature funding boosted the partnership's work to restore the health of the Waikanae River on the Kāpiti Coast, while teaching kaimahi practical skills such as environmental restoration, pest control and sustainable land management.

Overall, 94 people were employed on the project, with 67 trainees completing formal, hands-on and life-skills training. Their skills and experience laid the foundations for future employment and the restoration of nature. The project has involved the local community through school visits, river clean-ups and plant nursery open days.

The project saw nearly 22,000 riparian plants being planted to prevent erosion and 45 hectares in the Waikanae River catchment being restored through native plantings. There was also around 2,000 hectares of goat control and around 600 hectares of possum control. In December 2024, the project transitioned from Jobs for Nature to an iwi-run business, ensuring that long-term gains are sustained.

The Waikanae River is part of the Ngā Awa river restoration programme.

Advancing conservation with Auckland Zoo

In October 2024, we signed a strategic partnership with our long-term partner Auckland Zoo to streamline collaboration on saving native species and advocating for conservation.

Combining DOC's knowledge and active management of wild conservation sites with the Zoo's expertise in breeding, rearing and providing specialist animal care will help us to recover species from the brink of extinction.

Auckland Zoo has worked with DOC for three decades on 14 national recovery programmes for threatened species – ranging from New Zealand's most endangered bird, the tiny tara iti/New Zealand fairy tern, to the largest giant wētā, the wētāpunga.

Filling the Hawke's Bay bush and trees with birds

This year, a grant worth \$13.7 million was set up thanks to a generous gift to conservation. This will open the door for the community to fill the Hawke's Bay bush and trees with birds.

The experienced Eastern & Central Community Trust Incorporated (ECCT) will manage the grant to undertake predator control or replanting of areas with native species.

Community groups, private landowners, iwi and agencies throughout Hawke's Bay can apply for the funding, which is expected to open in mid-2025.

Helping a rare tree daisy to bloom

Around 1,000 rare Gardner's tree daisy seedlings were cultivated at the Tongariro Prison nursery this year as part of a relationship with the Department of Corrections.

This rare plant is one of New Zealand's few native deciduous trees and produces white, waxy flowers. Threatened by habitat loss, animal browsing and introduced weeds, it is now only found in the southern half of the North Island and its survival is dependent on conservation efforts.

The seeds were collected by DOC near Taihape, were germinated and nurtured in the prison nursery, and will remain in the nursery until they are large enough to survive in the wild.

Marking a decade of the SMART marine mammal programme

This year, we marked a decade of the Sustainable Marine Mammal Actions in Recreation and Tourism (SMART) initiative, which has empowered nearly 2,000 participants with essential knowledge about marine mammal protection regulations.

Co-funded by Skipper Training NZ since 2023, the programme targets marine tourism operators, agency partners and the public. Our collaborative efforts have promoted good practices on the water, leading to increased compliance with regulations that safeguard New Zealand's marine mammals.

Delivering coordinated action for an entangled paikea/humpback whale

Protecting marine mammals is all in a day's work for our whale disentanglement team, but in emergency situations, strong local partnerships make all the difference.

In June 2025, an 8–9-metre-long young paikea was reported entangled in rope off the Otago coast. Caught in a cray pot line, the whale was spotted in clear distress around 9.00 am.

Our whale disentanglement team was contacted and quickly started working remotely with an experienced local fishing crew already on site, while also mobilising themselves. The crew successfully disentangled the whale at approximately 10.45 am thanks to a coordinated effort from our disentanglement team, the fishing crew and mana whenua, Te Rūnaka o Moeraki.

We are experts in protecting New Zealand's most precious species, and by working closely with others in emergency situations, we use collective experience to help get the result we all want.

Closing out the Living Water partnership after a decade

The Living Water partnership between DOC and Fonterra formally ended in July 2024. During the 10 years it ran, the programme trialled tools and approaches to improve fresh water and biodiversity on farms in five catchments around New Zealand.

The work involved over 60 community groups and organisations, 70 projects, and 44 trials to deliver solutions that could be used in other farming areas.

Together, we restored streams and peat lakes, planted over 400,000 native trees and other plants on farms, and developed plans to allow farmers to embed sustainable farming practices.

The work resulted in increased numbers of native freshwater fish in rural waterways and reduced amounts of sediment and nutrients reaching waterways, as well as the sharing of new knowledge and skills with farmers, rural communities and iwi/hapū, enabling them to carry on the work.

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME

**Ka tō mai mātou i te pūtea mō
te mahi whāomoomo****We attract investment into
conservation**

We are carefully using every dollar at our disposal, but protecting and restoring New Zealand's native animals and plants is a massive job. We have been working hard this year to find new sources of investment to expand our conservation efforts.

Our Nature Prospectus

We are working with the NZ Nature Fund charitable trust to grow funding for conservation. In November 2024, we launched a Nature Prospectus, which showcased a selection of priority DOC biodiversity projects to make it easy for others to contribute.

We started with three pilot projects where irreversible loss is imminent:

- Helping to save New Zealand's most endangered native bird, the tara iti/New Zealand fairy tern.
- Establishing a sanctuary for the critically threatened Alborn skink.
- Restoring a rare limestone ecosystem in North Otago.

The NZ Nature Fund receives and manages private funds/donations. Up to 30 June 2025, \$443,308 has been raised for three prospectus projects and the pukunui/southern New Zealand dotterel campaign since fundraising started.



Restoration planting
at Wai o Toura
Reserve.
Photo: Clement Lagrue

Groundbreaking island conservation work

This year, New Zealand joined the Island-Ocean Connection Challenge (IOCC) – a global conservation effort to restore 40 islands as safe havens for native wildlife by 2030.

New Zealand's 328 predator-free islands are an insurance policy for nature – around one in seven threatened species depend on islands for survival.

We are including three major islands in the IOCC initiative: Stewart Island/Rakiura, Maukahuka/Auckland Island and Rēkohu/Wharekauri/Chatham Islands.

Each of these islands has high biodiversity and unique ecosystems that are threatened by introduced predators.

Given the remoteness of the islands and the fact that two of them are populated, this is the most ambitious island restoration project DOC has ever undertaken. We are internationally renowned for our work on islands, so this ambition is one we are confident of achieving.

Joining the IOCC bolsters our connection to international donors, who will work with us to raise the expected \$137 million required. As at 30 June 2025, we have raised over \$970,000 for the Maukahuka/Auckland Island project to completely eradicate introduced predators.



Tussock mast monitoring on Maukahuka.
Photo:
Rose Hanley

Eight years to a predator-free Maukahuka/Auckland Island

Some 500 kilometres south of Stewart Island/Rakiura lies Maukahuka/Auckland Island.

As a nature reserve and World Heritage site, Maukahuka is home to some of the world's rarest animals, like the toroa/Gibson's albatross, tētē kakariki/Auckland Island teal and Auckland Island rail.

In the biting cold surrounding oceans, tohorā/southern right whales, pakake/New Zealand sea lions and hoiho/yellow-eyed penguins thrive in the protection of a marine reserve.

The island has exceptionally high seabird diversity and is a migration hub for seabird species that roam the globe. But it is also home to thousands of introduced pigs, mice and feral cats, which have overrun the island's 46,000 hectares.

The first year of a 2-year 'readiness phase' has been completed, funded by the IVL. Complete eradication of pigs, mice and cats will take 8 years to deliver once funded. It is expected to be funded in part through the IOCC and other philanthropy.

Long-term strategic partnerships

Our national commercial partnerships are the lifeblood for some of our key recovery programmes and the maintenance of our hut network. We value their commitment to nature through the work DOC delivers and their ongoing passion and enthusiasm for projects that make a tangible difference.

AIR NEW ZEALAND

Air New Zealand has been partnering with us since 2012 and supports more than 40,000 hectares of sustained predator control alongside five Great Walks, transportation of threatened species, and additional direct investment and support of biodiversity projects.

This airline also supports our Conservation Dogs Programme, transporting our canine colleagues around the country. This year, they shared some of our dogs' valuable predator control work on social media. Half a million people have viewed the *Mission: Pawssible* video, which highlighted conservation dogs sniffing out rats and stoats on Rangitoto and Motutapu Islands.



Ange Newport and her conservation dogs Pipi, Almo and Tahī with an Air New Zealand flight attendant. Photo: Air New Zealand



We have been partnering with Dulux since 2013. Dulux contributes product, funding and technical expertise, allowing our huts, buildings and historical assets to be restored, protected and maintained for future generations.

This year, Dulux also provided paint for a mural in Kaiteriteri celebrating 30 years of the Tonga Island Marine Reserve, which is adjacent to the Abel Tasman National Park. The mural, designed by artist Mat Tait, offers a glimpse into the marine world and features taonga species such as kekeno/New Zealand fur seal, tāmure/snapper, kōura/saltwater crayfish and rāwaru/blue cod.



Kaiteriteri Recreation Reserve CEO Mason Fitzgerald, Artist Mat Tait and DOC Marine Reserves Ranger Stew Robertson in front of the mural. Photo: Helen Otley

Fulton Hogan

Fulton Hogan has been our national partner for the Takahē Recovery Programme since 2016.

Fulton Hogan's sponsorship has funded research and innovation, including deploying GPS trackers and drones to monitor takahē and study their interactions with each other and the environment. With their support, we released 51 takahē in the Rees Valley in Whakatipu this year to establish a new wild population.

Takahē numbers have nearly doubled since 2016, reaching around 500 birds this year.



Takahē release in the Rees Valley. Photo: DOC



Genesis has been our national partner for the Whio Forever Recovery Programme since 2011.

Funding from Genesis is behind the annual Whio Awareness Week, which this year featured a new photo competition that was designed to show the best side of these plucky birds and tap into the photography skills of their many supporters.

The number of protected whio breeding pairs has increased from 298 in 2011 to 531 this year.



Photo: Bradley Shields

Meridian

Meridian has been our national partner for the Kākāpō Recovery Programme since 2016, providing financial and in-kind support.

Meridian's engineering team put in the mahi alongside our rangers on predator-free islands to ensure we have fit-for-purpose power systems that are powered primarily by the sun. This ensures that specialty equipment like chick incubators run efficiently during the breeding season to give the critically threatened kākāpō the best chance of success.

The kākāpō population has doubled from 124 in 2016 to 240 this year.



Mark and Joe from Meridian on Codfish Island / Whenua Hou with a kākāpō. Photo: DOC

STRATEGIC OUTCOME

E puritia ana ngā whenua whāomoomo tūmatanui me ngā wai whāomoomo tūmatanui ka whakapaingia ake hoki mō ngā reanga o muri

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

We are responsible for 8.6 million hectares of land (nearly a third of New Zealand), 4.5 million hectares of water, 15,308 known species of plants, animals and fungi, 21,978 visitor assets, and over 14,000 kilometres of track.

The scale of nature loss requires us to focus our efforts on where we can make the biggest difference. We simply do not have the resources for intensive management across 13.1 million hectares of public conservation lands and waters.

Similarly, preserving New Zealand’s cultural heritage requires careful management of limited resources and the pursuit of partnerships and collaborative opportunities to ensure that important cultural and historic sites are protected.

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME

Kua ea ō mātou here ki te whakahaere whenua me te whakahaere wai

Our land and water management obligations are met

As a manager of public conservation lands and waters, we have a wide range of responsibilities, including developing New Zealand’s national biodiversity strategy, managing introduced predators, wild animals and pests, and providing insights into the impacts of climate change on the natural world.

National Predator Control Programme

In 2024, we delivered 24 aerial predator control operations across 736,000 hectares through our National Predator Control Programme, a key part of the Predator Free 2050 movement.

Alongside our partners, we used 1080, large-scale trapping and other methods to control predator numbers. This work was done at important conservation sites across the country to protect the remaining populations of threatened birds, bats, frogs, lizards and giant land snails.

This season, we changed the timing of our operations, which really paid off. Based on advice from our scientists, who carefully review the results of operations around beech masts when predator numbers surge, we targeted rats before beech seed was produced and after it had germinated.

The results speak for themselves. All our operations suppressed rats effectively, in most cases down to undetectable levels, providing relief for native species. This new approach will stand us in good stead for the next big beech mast when predator numbers surge again.

Successes from this season's work underscore how critical it is to continue to reduce predators to ensure that New Zealand's native wildlife survives:

- New data shows that there are on average twice as many pīwauwau/rock wrens at predator control sites compared with sites with no control.
- 275 critically threatened pekapeka/long-tailed bats were found in one tree in Whirinaki Te Pua-a-Tāne Conservation Park outside Rotorua, where we have undertaken predator control operations for more than 20 years.
- The kākā population in Pureora Forest (an ongoing predator control site) in the Waikato now has a 1:1 male/female sex ratio – the first time a balanced ratio has been recorded and evidence that ongoing predator control is helping to save the more vulnerable females.



Trail cameras in the Kaitake Range have documented the success of 5 years of predator control, with more images of kiwi and fewer of their predators.
Photo: DOC

Cameras reveal the impact of sustained predator control

Dozens of cameras installed on the Kaitake Range in Taranaki are revealing the success of 5 years of intensive predator control.

A dramatic decrease in possum, stoat and feral cat numbers has been documented in the latest trail camera images. Even better, the cameras have captured a notable increase in protected native species like kiwi, which have been successfully re-introduced to the area.

The joint predator control programme involves DOC, Taranaki Mounga, iwi and other community collaborators.

Following 1080 drops in Kaitake in November 2024, the number of feral cats detected dropped almost overnight, from about 95% of the cameras recording cats to about 1%. There was a similar result for stoats.

Physical work, including maintaining bait stations and leg-hold possum traps, is carried out by staff from DOC and Taranaki Mounga, as well as volunteers and paid staff from iwi and community groups.

The results demonstrate how a trapping network extends the benefits from aerial operations by reducing predator reinvasion.

The Kaitake Range is part of Te Papa-Kura-o-Taranaki.

Wild Animals Management Programme

Our Wild Animals Management Programme is focused on wild deer, goats, pigs, tahr and chamois at priority conservation sites. In Budget 2022, we received funding to increase deer management and goat control. This has allowed us to scale up our efforts.

Wild deer and goats eat young plants and seedlings, preventing forests from regenerating and reducing food for native species. With no natural predators in New Zealand, their numbers keep growing unless controlled.

The work relies on strong community and iwi partnerships, allowing local knowledge to be used in delivering wild animal management.

This season, we rolled out on-the-ground monitoring to get a clearer picture of whether we are making an impact on deer and goat numbers. While national-scale monitoring gives us the big picture, this detailed hands-on work zooms in on the specific places we manage.

Teams collected data across nine locations using standard methods like the faecal pellet index (number of droppings) and the seedling ratio index (numbers of tall and short seedlings). This allows the data to be combined nationally.

We will return to measure these sites again in 3 years to track changes over time. The results from this season's monitoring are due to be released in spring 2025.

Relationships are key to the second National Wild Goat Hunting Competition

Controlling the wild goat population is vital to protecting the habitats of threatened species and boosting the resilience of forests to climate change.

The second National Wild Goat Hunting Competition tapped into the skills of the nation's hunters. It was run in partnership with the New Zealand Deerstalkers Association and supported by Hunting & Fishing New Zealand, Te Tari Pūreki Firearms Safety Authority New Zealand and Federated Farmers of New Zealand.

This season, 800 participants removed almost 13,000 wild goats, up 2,800 on the previous year. Most notably, 64% of entrants said they are now more likely to hunt goats following the competition.

Climate change vulnerability assessment

This year, we published New Zealand's first large-scale climate change vulnerability assessment for terrestrial plants and animals.¹⁵ This is a major step towards integrating climate change risk into our biodiversity work programme.

We assessed 1,145 native species, 65% of which were identified as highly vulnerable to climate change by 2090. Bats, many penguins and albatrosses, plants in rare ecosystems, alpine invertebrates, and coastal lizards were some of the most vulnerable species. The large number of highly vulnerable species reflects the already small populations, limited distributions and low reproductive capacities of New Zealand's native plants and animals.

We have now started to assess different climate change risks and their predicted impacts on some of the most vulnerable species. These detailed assessments will further improve our ability to manage New Zealand's biodiversity in a rapidly changing environment.

A report prepared by Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research on the predicted impact of climate change on six animal pests indicates that their numbers may significantly increase. Modelling showed that the density of rats and the number of overwintering wasp nests could more than double in some areas by 2090. This would have important impacts on the threatened species that we manage and indicates that more resources will be needed to control pests in the future.

Kauri protection programme

Our kauri protection programme is focused on safeguarding this iconic tree at priority conservation sites around the upper North Island, working with the Ministry for Primary Industries, Tiakina Kauri, regional councils and our Treaty partners.

This year saw the completion of the Hūnua Ranges kauri population health monitoring survey, which was carried out in partnership with Auckland Council and iwi. No evidence of kauri disease was found.

We also started a monitoring survey in the Kaimai Mamaku Conservation Park, which is the only other large kauri forest where the pathogen that causes kauri disease has yet to be detected. These studies are important for informing ongoing forest management and kauri protection.

Work to combat kauri disease this year included the start of a transformative project to protect the country's largest known kauri tree, Tāne Mahuta, and preserve Northland's Waipoua Forest for future generations.

Rākau Rangatira is a long-term partnership project between DOC and Te Iwi o Te Roroa to upgrade both the visitor infrastructure and the visitor experience in Waipoua Forest. This year, project work included reconstruction of the bridge, boardwalk and viewing platform at Tāne Mahuta in October and November 2024.

The upgraded infrastructure provided will enhance protection for Waipoua Forest from kauri disease. Safer access and raised walkways minimise soil movement from visitors exploring and staff working in the area. People can unintentionally carry kauri disease on their shoes and tools, so limiting where people walk around these taonga trees is important.

¹⁵ Brumby A, Marshall J, Murray T, O'Donnell C, Richards R. 2025. Trait-based climate change vulnerability assessments of terrestrial taxa in Aotearoa New Zealand. Wellington: Department of Conservation. Science for Conservation 343. doc.govt.nz/science-for-conservation-343

Progression of the Hauraki Gulf/ Tikapa Moana Marine Protection Bill

Marine protection is a proven tool to enhance marine biodiversity both domestically and internationally.

A third of New Zealand's breeding seabirds nest in the Hauraki Gulf/Tikapa Moana, and it is also home to biologically important kelp forests and protected coral. Over the last 20 years, reports have shown ongoing environmental decline, with increasing areas of bare reef, habitat loss and depleted numbers of fish.

The Hauraki Gulf/Tikapa Moana Marine Protection Bill proposes 19 new marine protection areas and will almost triple the amount of protection in the Gulf. The Bill passed its second reading in December 2024 and will progress through final parliamentary stages in time.

Southeast marine protection

In June 2024, a judicial review was filed in relation to decisions about six marine reserves along the southeast coast of the South Island. This proceeding challenged decisions made by the former Minister of Conservation, Minister of Transport, and Minister for Oceans and Fisheries, and the legal process is ongoing. We continue to plan for implementation and co-management with Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu.



Carrying out a dissection on a spade-toothed beaked whale named Ōnumia.
Photo:
Michael Hayward

The world's first ever dissection of a spade-toothed beaked whale

A 5-metre-long spade-toothed beaked whale, one of the world's rarest and most mysterious tohorā/whales, washed ashore at Taieri Mouth in July 2024, gaining massive domestic and international media attention and providing an opportunity to learn more about the species.

We worked with Te Rūnanga o Ōtākou, Ngātiwai, Tūhura Otago Museum, University of Otago and

international scientists to carry out a world-first dissection of the whale (named Ōnumia by tangata whenua), combining cultural traditions and scientific methodology.

The findings of the dissection enhanced our knowledge of this enigmatic mammal and could have implications for how we manage the human threats this species faces in its environment.

Wildlife monitoring, regulation and compliance

Trade of endangered species across the border

Regulating and monitoring the trade of endangered animals and plants across New Zealand's borders continued this year, in close collaboration with the New Zealand Customs Service and Ministry for Primary Industries under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the Trade in Endangered Species Act 1989.

Initiatives this year included having a joint DOC–Ministry for Primary Industries stand at the 2025 Chinese New Year festival in Auckland

(26% of surrendered/seized items in 2024 were classified as 'traditional Chinese medicines'); supporting the New Zealand Olympic Committee in obtaining permits to take kākahu containing feathers from CITES-listed species to the Paris 2024 Summer Olympics; and operating a stall at Te Matatini 2025 to provide information and advice on travelling with taonga.

CITES non-compliance reporting

This year, we saw a reduction in the instances of seizures and surrenders compared with 2023/24 (10 and 24 less, respectively). The main species seized and surrendered were consistent with last year.

Total instances of seizures and surrenders of CITES-listed species, 2020–2025

	Instances of seizures	Instances of surrenders
2024/25	233	5,286
2023/24	243	5,310
2022/23	284	3,744
2021/22	254	690
2020/21	320	75 ^a

a Note that there were COVID-19 border closures in 2020/21.

Breakdown of key CITES-listed species seized and surrendered by weight

Product	Amount
Corals	447 kg
Shells	709 kg
Crocodile jerky	47 kg
American ginseng	221 kg
Number of traditional medicines (including American ginseng)	1,660
Total number of seized or surrendered items	6,364

Compliance

Alleged non-compliance incidents were down 5% this year (2,122 incidents) compared with 2023/24. We issued 186 formal warnings (up from 153 in 2023/24) and 215 infringement notices (up from 220 in 2023/24) and took 12 successful prosecutions (down from 20 in 2023/24).

This year’s top five reported offences by legislation were:

Whitebait Fishing Regulations 2021	395 (19%)
Conservation Act 1987	349 (16%)
Reserves Act 1977	253 (12%)
Marine Mammals Protection Act 1978	192 (9%)
Wildlife Act 1953	195 (9%)

During the year, 35 new Warranted Officers completed their initial training, bringing the total number of trained Warranted Officers enforcing conservation laws to 189.

Spot check results

This year, we ran spot checks on tourism operators, guides and drivers operating on public conservation land in the Te Anau and Aoraki districts.

Public conservation land is protected for nature and wildlife, so tourism operators must hold a concession or special permission to run activities like guided tours, adventure activities or accommodation on this land.

Out of 205 compliance checks, we identified 77 instances of non-compliance (38%). Over one-third (35%) of non-compliance involved individuals or companies operating with no concession.

The checks were held with the New Zealand Police and the NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi, who focused on road safety.

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME

E taumarutia ana ngā wāhi hītori me ngā wāhi whakahirahira ā-ahurea**Important cultural and historic sites are protected**

Cultural heritage acts as a bridge between the past and the present. We manage 15,000 cultural heritage places and collections, including more than 400 places that are at risk of climate change, 50 cultural heritage experiences and 600 managed places comprising over 1,400 assets. We work closely with others to protect and promote the history of New Zealand.

Waka recovery on Rēkohu/Wharekauri/Chatham Island

The partial remains of an ancient ocean-voyaging waka that was estimated to be over 450 years old were uncovered by a Chatham Island farmer and his son on public conservation land in late 2024.

As the land manager, we provided on-the-ground support during the recovery efforts by imi, iwi and local landowners. Two of our archaeologists worked with the excavation team over January and February 2025, under the management of Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture and Heritage.

This significant archaeological find included 450 pieces of naturally preserved timber, some with unique carvings and braided rope. DNA testing of the timber has shown that the waka was built from New Zealand native trees. Further investigation is underway to better understand the origin of the waka and its likely use.

New Great Walk opened

In October 2024, the Tuatapere Hump Ridge Track became the 11th Great Walk after years of dedicated and collaborative work with the Tuatapere Hump Track Charitable Trust and the local community, councils, Ōraka-Aparima Rūnaka, Māori landowners' trusts and volunteers.

Boasting scenic routes and majestic views, the walk blends centuries-old Māori history with early 20th century Pākehā endeavours.

To bring the history of the area to life, we worked with Ōraka-Aparima and the local community to gather stories to share. A highlight was supporting Ōraka-Aparima rangatahi from across the motu to come together, hear stories from kaumātua and visit the places where these stories live.

DOC funding of \$7.9 million brought the 62-kilometre-long track up to Great Walk standard, with track upgrades, a new swing bridge, the conservation of heritage sites, a car park extension and a new waharoa at the entrance to welcome visitors.

This season was one of the track's best, with over 1,000 more visitors than last year. Visitors reported high satisfaction with the standard of facilities, the quality of the lodge hosts, value for money, storytelling and the connection to Māori culture.

This track remains proudly community owned and run by the Tuatapere Hump Track Charitable Trust, while operating under the Great Walk brand. This approach honours both the land and the people who care for it.



We went beyond traditional interpretation methods to tell historic stories on the Tuatapere Hump Ridge Track. Corten steel figures like those shown here imagine Port Craig as it was in the 1910s – a settlement with the busiest sawmill in New Zealand. This sign is part of an interpretive trail around the old mill site.

Photo: DOC

STRATEGIC OUTCOME

E whaimana ana tā mātou tū hei hoa haere i raro i te Tiriti

We are an honourable Treaty partner

This year, we reaffirmed our commitment to being an honourable Treaty partner by making it one of the five strategic outcomes for our organisation. This indicates the depth, meaning and complexity of our relationships with our Treaty partners and our desire to work more closely with iwi, hapū and whānau as nature's guardians. While being an honourable Treaty partner is ambitious and we will not always get things right, we are dedicated to this work.

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME

**E āta tiakina ana ngā mōtika me
ngā aronga Māori, ā, e whai wāhi
mai ana ngā hoa o te Tiriti**

**Active protection of Māori rights and
interests, and active participation of
Treaty partners**

Treaty settlement commitments

DOC has the largest number of Treaty settlements to implement of any Crown agency – 81 in total, with 3,451 specific commitments to working with iwi. Approximately 86% of these are either on track or have been completed.

He Korowai Whakamana framework

In December 2022, Cabinet agreed to applying the He Korowai Whakamana framework to achieve oversight of Treaty settlement commitments and a consistent approach for addressing and resolving settlement issues. Part of the framework requires core Crown agencies to track the status of their commitments using the online portal Te Haeata and to report on these.

The intention of this reporting requirement is to enhance Crown accountability for Treaty settlement commitments, give iwi visibility and assurance that their settlement commitments have been upheld, and track progress.

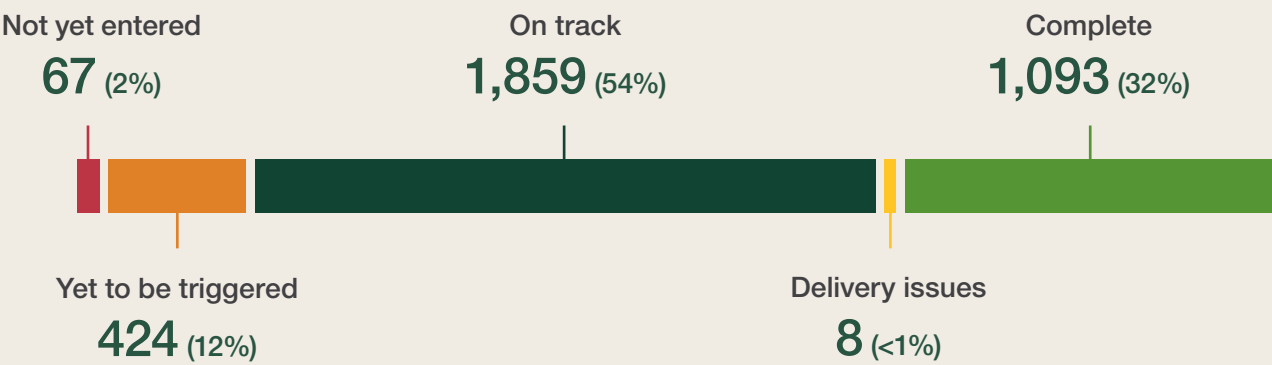
Status of our Treaty settlement commitments

Treaty settlements aim to settle breaches of Te Tiriti o Waitangi | Treaty of Waitangi and provide a foundation for enduring partnership.

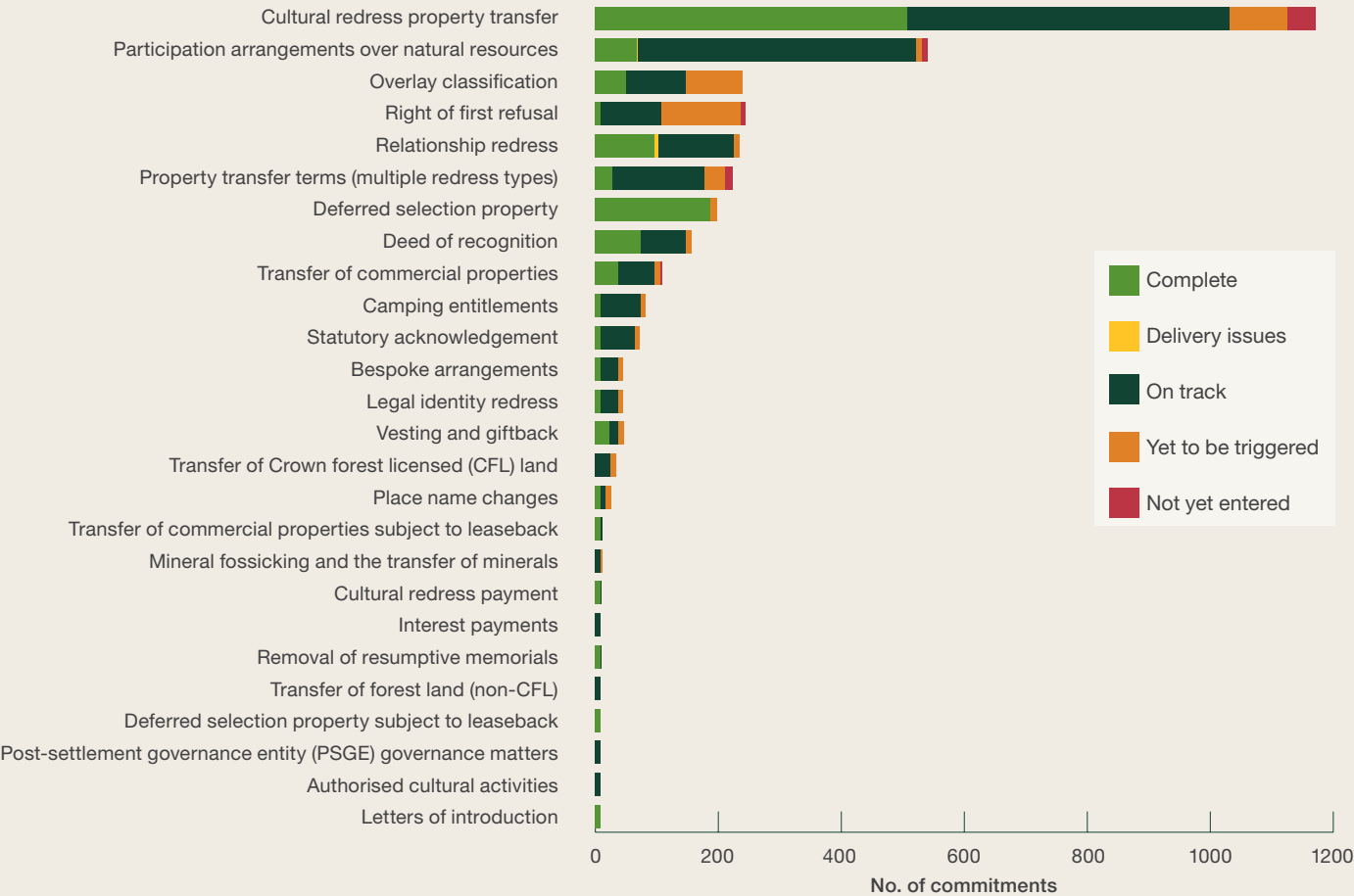
Delivery issues affected 0.2% of our 3,451 settlement commitments, with the most common issue being relationship redress and the other issue being participation arrangements over natural resources.

The joint review of a relationship agreement must start no later than 2 years after the settlement date. If the agreement is still being reviewed, this is referred to as 'relationship redress'. People may be engaged in the mahi while the agreement is being reviewed.

A 'participation arrangements over natural resources' delay refers to a delay in getting all parties to review a Motu Plan/Conservation Management Plan, which is drafted in consultation and needs agreement from different parties, including iwi, the Conservation Board and the local council.



Status of our Treaty settlement commitments



Commitments by commitment type

Our performance on Treaty settlement commitments

In response to the Office of the Auditor-General's report on how public organisations are fulfilling Treaty settlements,¹⁶ we have focused on reviewing planning to meet and monitor our commitments.

We are developing an end-to-end reporting system to improve visibility and understanding for planning and monitoring purposes. To do this, we are reviewing all the activities that make up the Crown's commitment to a Treaty settlement. This understanding will enable planning and monitoring of the many activities involved – from one-off commitments, such as transferring land, to longer-term and more enduring commitments, to relationship redress and participation arrangements over natural resources. In our review, we are prioritising one-off commitments, including right of first refusal commitments.

We continue to support the Treaty Settlement work programme led by Te Tari Whakatau/The Office of Treaty Settlements and Takutai Moana (formerly Te Arawhiti). One example of an outcome of this programme is the enactment of Te Ture Whakatupua mō Te Kāhui Tupua 2025/Taranaki Maunga Collective Redress Act 2025, which established Te Papa-Kura-o-Taranaki (Taranaki Maunga, Pouākai, Patuhā, Kaitake and Panitahi) and surrounding land as a legal person, collectively known as Te Kāhui Tupua. Te Kāhui Tupua has its own legal personhood with corresponding rights, powers, duties and liabilities of a legal person. DOC is part of the collective responsible for taking care of Te Kāhui Tupua.

We allocated \$7.1 million in funding towards settlements this year.

New Conservation Management Strategy developed in partnership with iwi

One of our significant achievements this year was providing the New Zealand Conservation Authority with the Te Hiku o Te Ika-a-Māui Conservation Management Strategy (CMS)¹⁷ for its approval in June.

This is the first CMS¹⁸ arising from Treaty settlement to be co-authored with iwi. It forms a significant part of the cultural redress for the four northernmost Te Hiku iwi (Ngāti Kuri, Ngāi Takoto, Te Aupōuri and Te Rarawa).

¹⁶ Office of the Auditor-General. 2025. How public organisations are fulfilling Treaty settlements. Wellington: Office of the Auditor-General. oag.parliament.nz/2025/treaty-settlements/docs/treaty-settlements.pdf

¹⁷ Department of Conservation, Ngāi Takoto, Te Rarawa, Te Aupōuri. 2024. Draft Te Hiku o Te Ika-a-Māui Conservation Management Strategy. Wellington: Department of Conservation. doc.govt.nz/te-hiku-draft-cms

¹⁸ A CMS focuses on outcomes for places that are special to iwi, hapū and whānau and communities. It identifies how these places will be managed over the next 10 years or more.

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME

Kua pai ake te āheitanga me te raukaha**Increased capability and capacity**

Two main programmes of work are underway to build Māori Crown relations capability across the public service: Whāinga Amorangi and Māori language planning.¹⁹

Empowering our people through Whāinga Amorangi

It is essential that we continue to invest in increasing the empathy, skills and confidence of our people in te ao Māori to foster collaboration and partnerships with iwi and hapū.

Our Whāinga Amorangi plan for increasing Treaty capability was updated this year and will roll out from July 2025. We have added the additional competency of Treaty settlement knowledge for our staff in acknowledgement of its importance in helping us to meet our Treaty settlement obligations and work towards being an honourable Treaty partner.

We launched new online Treaty e-learning modules in May 2025, which focus on giving our people across the country a basic understanding about Te Tiriti o Waitangi | Treaty of Waitangi.

Over 300 (11%) of our staff took part in 2-day Treaty workshops this year. All respondents said that this increased their knowledge, and many highlighted it as the best training they had undertaken on the topic.

A further 180 (6%) of our staff attended our long-running 5-day cultural capability programme on a marae, coming together from all over the country to connect, learn and upskill in Treaty capability. Around 90% of respondents said they had an increased knowledge and eagerness to learn more.

New minimum Treaty capability expectations were developed this year for all staff across seven competencies. Separate expectations were created for our leaders, as they are expected to attain a higher level of knowledge about Te Tiriti o Waitangi | Treaty of Waitangi and engaging with Māori.

Māori language planning

This was our first full year of working towards the goals in Te Reo Aurea, our Māori language plan, which was first published in May 2024. We achieved many of our core short-term and mid-term goals and have moved from 'initial' to 'developing' on the ZePA model that is used to determine Māori language revitalisation in government agencies.²⁰

A te reo Māori survey of all staff was completed this year for the first time since 2021 and showed that 89% had a high level of interest in learning the language. Multiple learning opportunities have been made available across DOC, catering to all levels of ability, including wānanga and online e-learning modules. This year, we added further reinforcement of knowledge through a revised Te Pūkenga Atawhai application, which provides interactive ways to learn te reo Māori and tikanga for staff, no matter where they are located.

¹⁹ These programmes align with our obligations under section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987, Te Ture mō Te Reo Māori 2016 / Māori Language Act 2016 and section 14 of the Public Service Act 2020.

²⁰ Research led to the development of the ZePA model of Māori language revitalisation in New Zealand. ZePA is an acronym for three critical positions, Zero – Passive – Active, and identifies factors that enable or disable language maintenance and acquisition.

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME

**Kua pakari ngā rangapū mahitahi
me ngā hononga**

**Partnerships and relationships
are strengthened**

Embedded through our biodiversity work are 19 recovery groups made up of professional advisors from different organisations who provide high-quality technical advice to DOC.

Recovery groups set the direction for work to increase population sizes and secure the survival of species as diverse as the hoiho/yellow-eyed penguin, kea, kiwi, mohua/yellowhead, pekapeka/bats, pepeketua/native frogs and tuatara.

Recovery group membership often includes iwi representation, acknowledging the important cultural and spiritual ties between Māori and native species, as well as their kaitiaki or guardianship role. Our recovery groups currently include Ngāti Pāhauwera, Ngāti Koata, Ngāti Toa Rangatira, Taranaki Whānui/Ngāti Mutunga, Ngātiwai, Ngāti Whātua o Kaipara, Patuharakeke Te Iwi, Te Uri o Hau and Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu.

**Ngā Whenua Rāhui habitat
restoration and erosion control**

Gathering kai and swimming in the waters of their rohe is the long-held ambition of Ngāti Pāhauwera iwi.

This year, their post-settlement governance entity, the Ngāti Pāhauwera Development Trust, started working with us to restore habitat along the Waihua River and Putere lakes in northern Hawke's Bay.

The Trust's Taonga Tuku Iho project is restoring critical habitat by tackling erosion, sedimentation and the loss of native species. The project is funded through the DOC-administered Mātauranga Kura Taiao Fund, which supports the preservation of traditional Māori knowledge and practices.

The 3-year plan has started with monthly monitoring and riparian planting to support the return of kākahi, waikōura/freshwater crayfish and ngutu kākā/kākābeak – species that are tied not only to ecosystem health but to the identity and history of Ngāti Pāhauwera.

Iwi members are learning methods for erosion and sediment control to protect kākahi and other indigenous species. Their work is strengthened through interviews with kaumātua to hear the history of kākahi in the awa – where they used to be and what they were used for.

The traditional practices and tikanga of collecting kākahi are being passed down to rangatahi to create a multi-generational legacy.



Placing mistletoe seeds on a host tree to complete the translocation process.
Photo: Carisse Enderwick

First signs of mistletoe success at Pirongia

The unfurling of tiny green leaves is the first sign of success from last year's mistletoe translocation to Pirongia Mountain in the Waikato.

New Zealand's native mistletoes are at risk of extinction, with possums posing the main threat to their survival – a possum can eat an entire plant in one sitting.

Long-term restoration efforts began at Pirongia in the early 2000s, and since then we have been working with Pirongia Te Aroaro o Kahu Restoration Society, Te Pahū Landcare Group, and local iwi Ngāti Hikairo, Ngāti Mahanga and Ngāti Apakura to restore the maunga and reintroduce native species.

In 2023, translocations of pirinoa/green mistletoe and tāpia/white mistletoe started, which saw sticky mistletoe seeds being attached to dozens of host trees in Pirongia Forest Park.

Recent monitoring of 18 host trees showed that 53 individual mistletoe plants had germinated, with small leaves starting to sprout. The plants can be slow to get going and take around 5 years to reach maturity, when they will start producing fruit, a key source of food for native birds.

Continued control of possums and rats in the area is key to the project's success, both in terms of protecting mistletoe and increasing numbers of native birds, which act as pollinators and seed dispersers.

Pirongia is part of DOC's National Predator Control Programme, which uses aerially applied toxins to control possums and rats. The two local community groups have also contributed to the programme through extensive trapping and baiting.

STRATEGIC OUTCOME

Ka whakamōmonatia te oranga o te tangata i tōna hononga ki te taiao me te whakapapa ā-ahurea

Connection with nature and cultural heritage enriches people's lives

Nature is what sets New Zealand apart. It is part of New Zealanders' DNA and the reason millions of people visit each year to experience something truly unique.

We have a key role to play in looking after the country's natural and cultural treasures, but we cannot afford to maintain them all. We need to prioritise a sustainable number of experiences, find new sources of revenue, and encourage people and communities to take action to protect and preserve nature.

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME

E toitū ana te nui o ngā wheako e whai wāhi ai ngā manuhiri

Visitors enjoy a sustainable number of experiences

Conservation-related tourism contributes \$3.4 billion a year to the New Zealand economy, and DOC is the largest provider of visitor experiences in the country.

We maintain over 16,000 beds and camping spaces and had over 1 million bed nights booked across our facilities this year – a 13% increase on the previous season. And over the 2024/25 summer season, we enjoyed hosting 97,000 walkers on the Great Walks.

We also enable more than 1,000 tourism businesses to operate on public conservation lands and waters.

We operate a visitor safety system so that visitors can undertake activities at different levels of risk, from a short walk or picnic through to high-risk activities in the remotest backcountry areas on public conservation land.

Boost for conservation from increased International Visitor Conservation and Tourism Levy

In recognition of the importance of nature to growing New Zealand's tourism industry and economy, the Government increased the IVL from \$35 to \$100 from October 2024 to ensure that visitors contribute more towards the places, species and facilities they enjoy here. The IVL is jointly administered by Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment and DOC.

This year, \$62.8 million from the IVL (including some uncommitted funding from previous years) was allocated to conservation projects, with \$55 million per year committed from 2025/26.

The conservation portion of the funding is targeted at restoring unique wildlife, supporting thriving landscapes in national parks and other popular sites, and improving visitor experiences at high-volume and high-value locations like Great Walks, huts, tracks and heritage sites.

Highlights from this year's investment include:

- \$3.5 million to expand Short Walks and Day Hikes, showcasing some of the most beautiful and extraordinary places in the country
- \$2.4 million (of a \$5 million investment package) to restore walking access to the iconic Mautohe Cathedral Cove following severe weather damage, and the development of a visitor management plan to ensure sustainable, long-term operations there

- starting safety improvements to 158 high-use cable bridges and wire crossings, and beginning a 3-year programme to upgrade facilities at key visitor sites
- \$3.5 million invested in controlling wilding conifers across an extra 23,000 hectares of renowned landscapes and ecosystems in the Mackenzie Basin, Wakatipu and Aoraki/Mount Cook and on Rangitoto Island.

We allocated a further \$9.5 million to expand predator control in national parks and at busy visitor sites.

Cost of extreme weather

In 2023, Cyclone Gabrielle caused extensive damage across the North Island, including an estimated \$56–97 million economic loss in tourism on public conservation lands and waters.²¹

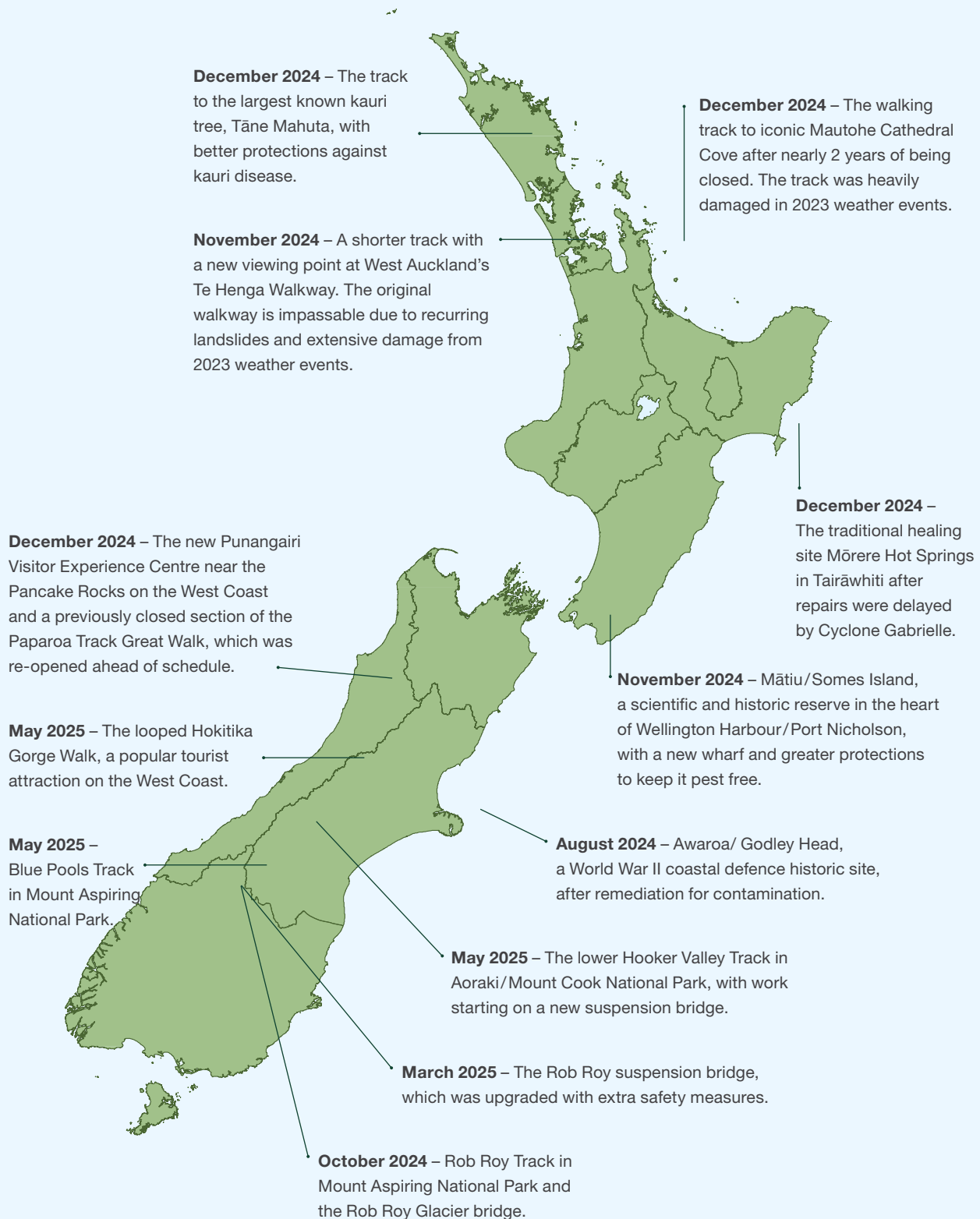
DOC used \$12.6 million in government funds and \$13 million from our budget to address the damage. Work started in 2023/24 with the recovery of visitor assets in 19 conservation districts in the North Island, ensuring access to public conservation land. This year, work has continued to open new facilities, upgrade infrastructure, and repair huts, tracks and bridges.

We also recovered biodiversity and cultural heritage assets, including waterproofing the historic Mansion House on Kawau Island in the Hauraki Gulf/Tikapa Moana and protecting kōiwi on Moturua Island in the Bay of Plenty.

We considered visitor safety and the resilience of tracks, bridges and sites to ongoing threats from extreme weather events. Spending on repairs has quadrupled in the past 5 years, with 300 coastal assets at risk due to rising sea levels.

²¹ This was based on four factors: gross domestic product (GDP) loss from visitor spending due to cancelled bookings for DOC facilities, loss of concessionaires' business revenue, loss of capital value from DOC facilities and the cost of repairing damaged DOC sites based on regional case studies.

Places we re-opened this year



Healthy numbers on our new Great Walk

Great Walks are one of New Zealand's most iconic outdoor activities, synonymous with exceptional visitor experiences and outstanding landscapes.

Overall visitor demand for New Zealand's Great Walks is healthy, with over 230,000 bed nights booked over the 2024/25 summer season, continuing the slow recovery from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Booked bed nights for Great Walks were up 1% on the previous season, largely due to the addition of the Tuatapere Hump Ridge Track to the Great Walks family. This new Great Walk opened in Southland in October 2024 after 5 years of planning and development. More information about it can be found on [page 57](#).

A significant upgrade of our booking website in 2024 resulted in a smooth run for the opening of the Great Walks bookings in May 2025. The upgrade included the introduction of an online queuing tool to manage peak demand and improve the booking experience. In total, 140,000 bed nights were booked on the Great Walks opening days – a 7% increase on last year.²²

Short Walks supported by levy

Short Walks of less than 3 hours duration remain the most popular activity for both New Zealanders and international visitors, and we have been focusing on delivering these.

Funding from the IVL supported maintenance and improvements at 25 locations across New Zealand. We repaired tracks and boardwalks damaged through weather events and visitor usage, added new facilities, and supported our staff to help visitors, manage safety incidents, and do general maintenance and cleaning.

This work improved visitor satisfaction, lowered complaints about toilets, and ensured that tracks remained open and in good condition through the peak summer period.

Great Rides

Additional funding for Ngā Haerenga Great Rides of New Zealand had a positive impact on what we were able to achieve for cyclists this year.

We worked in a co-funding arrangement with the St James Trails Trust and Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment to deliver maintenance work on the St James Cycle Trail – a challenging journey through magnificent Canterbury high country. This allowed five times the work we could have completed alone to be done.

²² This excludes the Tuatapere Hump Ridge Track, for which bookings are managed independently.

Record year for recreation revenue

This was another record year for recreation revenue, up 15% to \$29 million.

There were three key drivers of this increase:

- **Great Walk fees** – Most Great Walk fees increased by 18% following a fee review in 2024 to account for the effect of inflation. This was the first review since 2021. This increase did not significantly affect demand for our most popular Great Walks, like the Milford Track. However, we are keeping a close eye on the effect of fee increases, as we did observe a decrease in bookings on some Great Walks.
- **Te Araroa Trail Pass** – We partnered with Te Araroa Trust to launch a Te Araroa Trail Pass, and 85% of registered walkers purchased a pass this season. This partnership has allowed the deployment of volunteer 'Tiaki rangers' to support visitors and increase our revenue.
- **International visitors** – This season saw a significant increase in the number of international visitors staying at our network of over 300 conservation campsites, helping to drive a 128% increase in campsite revenue.

A financially sustainable visitor network

We are refining and rebalancing our range of experiences to meet visitors' needs and be financially sustainable. This work includes investing in visitors' most-loved experiences and managing the impacts of demand on visitor experiences and the surrounding environment.

Great Walks, Short Walks, Day Hikes and Great Rides are integral parts of our visitor network and provide a range of experiences to help people connect with nature and cultural heritage.

Announcements were made this year directed at improving the financial sustainability of the visitor network.

Three paid parking pilot trials will run at visitor hotspots in the South Island, with staggered starts from October 2025. The locations are Pancake Rocks and Franz Josef Glacier/ Kā Roimata o Hine Hukatere on the West Coast, and White Horse Hill in Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park in Canterbury. The option for pre-booked parking will be explored in the pilot to better manage visitor demand and experience.

We manage a network of over 920 huts around New Zealand, with pre-booking available for 40 of the most over-subscribed facilities. This year, we added another 15 huts to the pre-booking service to increase certainty for visitors and support the payment of hut fees.

Milford Sound/Piopiotahi

The future direction for one of New Zealand's most iconic tourist destinations, Milford Sound/Piopiotahi, was announced in June 2025 following a multi-year independent review of management options. This spectacular fiord has seen visitor numbers grow to over 1 million a year, creating congestion and infrastructure issues.

The Government announced a \$15.2 million investment in upgrading infrastructure and enhancing conservation. This includes \$6.4 million of IVL funding for new visitor facilities across the Milford corridor and at Deepwater Basin.

In the next phase, we will work with Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and engage with the tourism industry to develop ways to spread tourism out over the Milford corridor and reduce the impact on the environment.

Cultural heritage reset

We actively manage over 600 individual heritage places, from those associated with the first footprints of the early Polynesian settlers through to places of more recent significance, such as the Pike River mine.

Like New Zealand's native species, the country's heritage places are protected under the Conservation Act 1987 and cannot be replaced if they are lost or destroyed.

Our visitor insights research shows the value of these places and the history they evoke. More than a quarter of international visitors seek out places of significance to Māori and cultural heritage sites, while 30% of New Zealanders visit protected heritage places every month.

With a large number of heritage sites to maintain and protect, we instigated a 5-year cultural heritage reset programme this year. The programme is looking to ensure that we are focusing on the right work at the right places with the right people.

This year, the programme focused on developing a new heritage investment tool, Heritage Invest, to help us determine where our limited funding is best spent to protect people's stories and connections to heritage places.

Ultimately, this will help us to improve the condition of the key places we look after and the visitor experiences at them.



Te Ririō, unveiled at the start of the Tongariro Alpine Crossing in December 2024, introduces visitors to the sacred landscape they are entering. Te Ririō is a significant figure for local iwi Ngāti Hikairo ki Tongariro.
Photo: DOC

Advanced monitoring on the Tongariro Alpine Crossing

The Tongariro Alpine Crossing tops the bucket list for many domestic and international visitors. We are working hard to protect Tongariro from the impacts of high visitor numbers and to increase visitors' preparedness for this challenging alpine hike.

This year, we introduced integrated monitoring systems to improve the management of assets and enhance visitors' experiences.

Remote sensing systems for tracks, huts and toilets help to monitor visitor numbers, carbon emissions, building health, energy efficiency and occupancy. The systems

mean that we can monitor wastewater levels in toilets remotely, reducing the likelihood of track closure due to toilet overflows and enabling us to reduce helicopter trips to collect wastewater.

Two new activity counters are providing live data on visitor numbers and movements, which helps to identify congestion times and bottlenecks. A new weather station on the mountain also provides more accurate localised forecasts, improving visitor safety information for this mountainous hike.

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME

E uara ana ngā tāngata me ngā hāpori i te tuku ihotanga o te taiao me te ahurea, ā, e mahi ana rātou ki te tiaki i ēnei mea

People and communities value and take action to preserve nature and cultural heritage

Encouraging and enabling others to take the lead on conservation projects amplifies the good we can do for nature. Across the country, volunteers, community groups, iwi and individual landowners are the main driving force behind on-the-ground conservation activity.

Always Be Naturing

Nature looks different in New Zealand. It is unique, part of who we are as New Zealanders, and vital to our wellbeing and the economy. But nature is in trouble, and most people do not know or feel powerless to help.

We are on a mission to change that. We are mobilising New Zealand for nature.

We are focusing on the areas where we can make the biggest impact. But with a \$300 million biodiversity budget against a \$2.3 billion need, we are only just holding the line for threatened species.

Despite this, research shows that over 80% of New Zealanders believe that nature is in good shape. The reality is different – we have one of the highest proportions of threatened and at-risk species in the world and the rate of decline is increasing. We need more action and investment, now and into the future.

Although nature matters to New Zealanders, most people are unaware of the scale of the challenge.

We need to flip the script – to reframe how we think about nature and the value it has in our lives so that more people and businesses are willing to get involved. To do this, we are building a 3-year, evidence-led programme to inspire and enable sustainable action.

The Always Be Naturing campaign, launching in September 2025, will capture attention and motivate participation by making it fun and easy for people to get involved.

The campaign is supported by a programme to activate the business sector and encourage investment and a drive to improve our digital customer experience.

We are building on the efforts and ideas of others, including iwi, environmental non-governmental organisations and some of New Zealand's most well-known brands, to build momentum and drive change at scale.



Backcountry hut network upgrades and rebuilds

This year, we continued to support the work of the outdoors community to maintain the backcountry network of huts and tracks, with 39 huts upgraded.

The Community Conservation Partnership Fund and IVL provided funding of around \$900,000 to the Backcountry Trust, which was increased by a further \$500,000 through donations and sponsorships, to maintain – and in some cases rebuild – backcountry huts.

The Trust's work included rebuilding Leon Kinvig Hut in the Ruahine Forest Park (damaged by Cyclone Gabrielle) and Anti Crow Hut in Arthur's Pass National Park. Eighteen backcountry huts were also re-roofed to remove lead to protect kea.

A huge thank you to the over 290 volunteers and contractors who completed over 12,400 hours of work, including 200 kilometres of track maintenance.

Annual DOC Community Fund supports 20 projects

This year's DOC Community Fund provided \$9.2 million in funding to 20 conservation projects driven by communities around the country. Eight of the projects were transitioning from the Jobs for Nature programme, allowing hard-won conservation gains to be sustained.

This year, the funding focused on projects protecting species or ecosystems in danger of disappearing forever, including some of New Zealand's rarest species, the tara iti/ New Zealand fairy tern, hihi/stitchbird, looper moths and *Powelliphanta* land snails.

The huge appetite for preserving nature was apparent, with the submission of 291 applications worth more than \$141 million.

STRATEGIC OUTCOME

Ka tū Te Papa Atawhai hei whare pai rawa mō ngā tāngata o waho o roto hoki

DOC is a great organisation to work for and with

Over the past 12 months, we have made big strides towards improving the conservation regulatory system, including proposals to modernise some of the 28 different pieces of legislation we work under. This work included exploring charging for access to some areas of public conservation land.

The year was marked by intensive work to resolve a backlog in permissions and to streamline and improve key permitting systems. Permissions are the rules that help protect natural areas and wildlife.

We continue to strengthen engagement and increase our financial sustainability and effectiveness while working within challenging financial constraints.

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME

Kua pai ake te mahi o te pūnaha whakariterite whāomoomo

Improved performance of the conservation regulatory system

We have been working to streamline and modernise the conservation regulatory system to make it easier and faster to work with us while continuing to protect nature.

We currently operate under 28 pieces of legislation that are old and hard to navigate.²³

In November 2024, the Government released two discussion documents that included proposals to:

- explore charging for access to some areas of public conservation land
- streamline concessions and planning processes and enable more flexibility around land exchange and disposals.

The proposal to introduce access charges for some of New Zealand's most visited areas of public conservation land would create new revenue streams to invest in conservation and visitor infrastructure that supports these iconic landscapes.

Prior to consultation closing in February 2025, we held in-person and online meetings with Treaty partners and key stakeholders, including 25 hui with iwi and hapū. Over 12,900 submissions were received across both discussion documents. Analysis results and options are currently being considered.

²³ For a full list of the legislation we operate under, see Tāpiritanga 2/Appendix 2, [pages 169 to 170](#).

Permissions at pace

An enormous effort has been made this year to make it easier for businesses to operate on public conservation lands and waters through improvements in our permissions system.

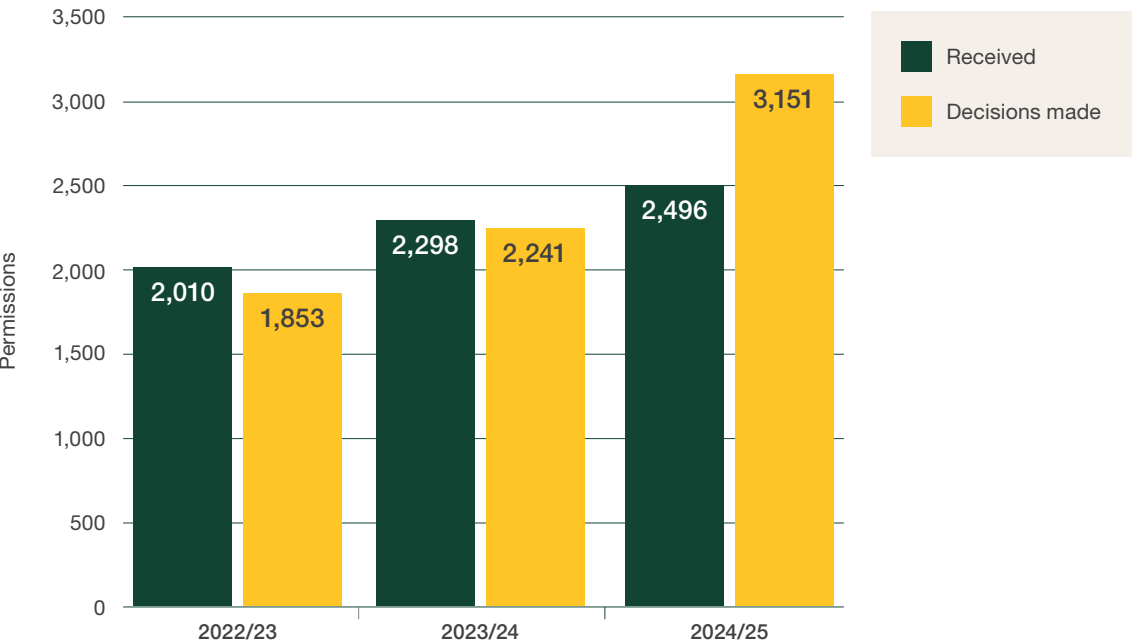
We grant a variety of different permissions and manage contracts for activities, including the commercial use of public conservation land, interactions with protected wildlife, research on public conservation land and access to public conservation land for mining activities.

At its peak in February 2025, the permissions system held 1,300 pending applications. Working at pace, we had reduced this to nearly half that number by June 2025. This included clearing a backlog of over 248 applications that were more than 1 year old.

We achieved this by using smarter systems and processes, including AI tools to help research statutory documents. We are developing new technology to allow people to apply for a permit or concession online. This will also improve processing times.

One-off drone permits are now processed within 1 week thanks to work we did to determine in advance where drones are allowed and where no-fly zones are. We are looking to do similar things with other permits.

Making these processes faster and easier is important – we are enabling a wide range of activities that connect people with nature and support local economies. Our role as a regulator is to ensure that any activity on public conservation lands and waters is lawful and sustainable, and to protect the natural environment.



Permissions in numbers

New Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

The Fast-track Approvals Bill passed its third reading in Parliament in December 2024, establishing a streamlined process for development and infrastructure projects delivering significant regional or national benefits.

The following conservation approvals were included:

- Concessions, covenants and land exchanges under the Conservation Act 1987 and Reserves Act 1977.
- Authorities provided under the Wildlife Act 1953.
- Specific permissions under the Freshwater Fisheries Regulations 1983.
- Access arrangements under the Crown Minerals Act 1991.

It is worth noting that a significant proportion of public conservation land (approximately 40%) is excluded from the fast-track regime.

We have established an internal Fast-track team to manage fast-track applications within the timeframes stipulated by the Act and to work closely with other involved agencies.

Improved hunting permit system launched

An improved hunting permit system for public conservation land was launched in May 2025, making permits valid for longer, simplifying hunting areas and making it easier to apply for permits on the go. Improvements were based on feedback from hunters.

Hunting permits are now valid for 12 months, an increase on the previous 4-month period. Hunters will also receive reminders 14 days before their permits are due to expire so they can easily obtain a new one.

Hunting regions have been simplified into 8 areas, instead of the previous 54.

Herds of Special Interest and Fish & Game reform

Herds of Special Interest are herds of game animals on public conservation land that have been formally designated by the Minister for Hunting and Fishing to be managed for hunting while ensuring that conservation values are protected.

This year, we started to explore the potential for designating a sika deer Herd of Special Interest in the Kaimanawa and Kaweka Forest Parks. We are running a targeted consultation with stakeholders and will draft a Herd Management Plan for public consultation.

We have also been supporting the delivery of legislative reforms to modernise and strengthen Fish & Game New Zealand, including updating the national management of hunting and fishing resources and advocacy.

Reviewing the Wildlife Act 1953

We are continuing to review – on an extended timeframe – the Wildlife Act 1953, which protects New Zealand’s wildlife and regulates interactions with native species. We are working on developing a modern, fit-for-purpose approach to better manage species and protect New Zealand’s biodiversity.

In May 2025, amendments were made to the Wildlife Act to ensure that permits for incidental harm are issued only if they do not negatively impact wildlife populations. These changes provided certainty and clarity after a High Court judgment effectively put authorities granted under the Wildlife Act at risk. The amendments ensure that wildlife is protected even in cases where some incidental harm occurs.

We will continue to assess the impacts to wildlife from proposed activities and set conditions to ensure that activities do not inflict harm on wildlife.



Entrance to the Cave Creek Memorial Track / Kotihotiho.

Photo: Julia Wells

30-year anniversary of Cave Creek

This year marked 30 years since the Cave Creek tragedy, where 14 people lost their lives when a DOC-built viewing platform collapsed. It was a failure of DOC systems and processes that led to the platform collapse.

This shocking event led to a systemic overhaul of how visitor assets are managed within DOC, increased government funding to manage these assets safely, and major improvements in health and safety requirements for government agencies in New Zealand.

Our approach to managing risk and ensuring safety is much stronger than it was 30 years ago, focusing on doing the right work, with clearly defined health and safety roles and responsibilities. We do not try to do more than we are resourced for.

We acknowledge and remember Tai Poutini Polytechnic students Catherine McCarthy, Abram Larmour, De-Anne Reid, Paul Chisholm, Scott Murray, Alison Blackman, Anne-Marie Cook, Jody Davis, Peter Shaw, Barry Hobson, Matthew Reed, Kit Pawsey and Evan Stuart, and DOC Punakaiki Field Centre Manager Stephen O’Dea.

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME

**E whai wāhi atu ana ō mātou
tāngata, ā e kite ana rātou i te hua
o ā rātou mahi**

**Our people are engaged and see the
contribution that they are making**

We are focused on becoming a more innovative organisation that achieves great things for nature, energises our people, and mobilises others to care and invest in nature too. Our people data, including gender, diversity and inclusion, and information on equal opportunities at DOC can be found in section 4 'Te oranga me te āheitanga o te whare/ Organisational health and capability' on [pages 99 to 105](#).

Creating great work environments for all our people

We want all our people to feel comfortable and safe at work, and we embrace employee-led networks for this reason.

In August 2024, we joined the cross-agency neurodiversity network INDIGO (Including Neurodiversity in Government Organisations), which is supporting people with neurodivergence to thrive in the public sector.

On Suffrage Day this year (19 September 2024), we launched a Women's Network within DOC to foster connection, support, advocacy and knowledge-sharing among women. As part of this initiative, we introduced the Inspiring Women speaker series, which has already been attended by over 1,600 staff.

Regular events, educational initiatives and peer support from the Rainbow Network have continued to play a vital role in ensuring that we are a place where everyone feels respected and valued.

A Kaimahi Māori network is currently being developed within DOC to support Māori staff.

Rangers learn heritage carpentry to restore stables

Learning old-time carpentry skills to protect a historic stable sounds like a pretty good work story.

In April 2025, 18 of our South Island rangers were taught how to restore stables at the former St James Homestead in Canterbury using methods from the 1800s, while learning the legal intricacies of cultural heritage work. The principle of making sure things are fixed like-for-like is one of our obligations.

A lot of heritage carpentry work is highly skilled, and only a handful of our people still know how to do it. This training made sure that these skills were passed on from ranger to ranger.

The team used beech logs removed from a fire at Bridge Hill in Arthur's Pass. They skilfully crafted the logs with axes to create replacement posts for those rotting in the stables. Douglas firs (wilding conifers) were also chopped down on site and milled to build a new gate to protect the stables from grazing cattle.

Ranger-to-ranger training is part of our annual frontline training calendar.

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME**E toitū ana te pūtea a Te Papa Atawhai, ā, e mōhiotia ana mātou mō tō mātou whaikaha****DOC is financially sustainable and known to be effective**

Being clear on what we can and cannot do and demonstrating value for money is important. We continue to update systems and processes – always with an eye to making them more efficient and easier for staff to use. We want our people to use as much of their time as possible working for nature, not on administration. Similarly, we have made improvements to our services for the public and those who work with us. It all helps to maintain the trust and confidence of New Zealanders.

Making the way we work easier

We have been updating our systems so that they are more modern, secure and easier to use. All our systems are now cloud-based, and we have upgraded internet access for staff in remote locations and increased protection against cyber threats.

Rangers increasingly have access to digital tools that help them collect and share information in the field, and office staff are benefiting from more automated systems and better access to data. These improvements mean less time spent on administration in the office and more time for nature.

We have been developing a new employee self-service portal this year to provide one place for all internal services, from technology supplies or a new building access card to scientific advice.

We have also begun phasing out old systems, including our document management system and human resources systems, to move to alternatives that save time and money.

AI is presenting opportunities for us, and we are looking at ways to incorporate it wherever possible. Choosing AI solutions is our preferred approach to help us work smarter, faster and more effectively.

On-time invoice payments

This year, we met the new government target of 90% of domestic trade invoices being paid within 10 business days.

Close collaboration with our suppliers and internal teams has seen over 91% of our trade invoices being paid within 10 working days in the quarter ending June 2025.

We continue to refine our process in preparation for meeting the updated government target of 95% from January 2026.

Enhanced customer service

Over the past 2 years, we have introduced a centralised customer service centre and an 0800 number to provide better service to our customers. This year, we brought in new technology to improve our ability to service our callers.

Since the launch of the new customer relationship management (CRM) system in September 2024, the team has answered nearly 27,000 calls, received 18,000 emails and created over 22,000 customer records. The CRM improves how follow-ups are handled, making it easier to see when a customer last contacted us, what they asked about and who helped them.

Data from incoming queries is used to ensure that topical information is available on DOC's website and that it is easy to find.

The top topics people contacted us about this year were biodiversity, visitor information, bookings and hunting.

He pārongo mahi nō te mutunga o te tau mō ngā whakaaetanga whakapau pūtea

Year-end performance information on appropriations

**Whakapuaki mō ngā
whakatau – Ētahi whakatau
whakapūrongo, matapae,
me ētahi whakaaro taketake**

Disclosure of judgement – Critical reporting judgements, estimates and assumptions

Our service performance information is prepared in accordance with Public Benefit Entity Financial Reporting Standard 48 (PBE FRS 48).

In selecting performance measures, we have made judgements to determine which aspects are relevant and meaningful to readers.

The judgements with the most significant effect on selection and measurement are outlined below.

Our performance measurement framework looks at how our performance indicators (our longer-term progress) and our outputs (what we do each year) are linked to outcomes (what we want to achieve for New Zealand). Our performance indicators and output measures are different ways of assessing performance.

Our performance reporting results inform our business planning, providing useful insights for the next planning cycle and letting us make adjustments for the future.

We provide footnotes to explain any changes to performance measures and any rationale if a performance measure was not achieved.

Ngā tūtohu whakatutuki

Performance indicators

Our performance indicators are aligned to our Outcome Monitoring Framework.²⁴ We use them to track progress towards achieving our outcomes and support long-term status and trend reporting. They range in scale from annual to 10-yearly, but most reflect medium-term trends over 3 to 5 years.


Monitoring for outcomes is complex, difficult to measure and can take many years to change. A subset of indicators is available each year for reporting. The selection of indicators reported on is based on the refresh cycle, expected rate of change and availability of applicable data that is required for the indicator assessment.





The indicators are assessed using a combination of quantitative and qualitative evaluation. Subject matter experts use prior knowledge and judgement to define the range of acceptable levels.

To enable a full cycle of data collection, all indicators are assessed using data that is 1 year in arrears.

²⁴ doc.govt.nz/outcome-monitoring-framework

Our performance measurement framework

Key to symbols and colours	
<p>Ecosystems and species across Aotearoa are thriving from mountains to sea</p> <p> Management of natural heritage</p> <p> Jobs for Nature</p> <p>Public conservation lands and waters are maintained and improved for future generations</p> <p> Management of natural heritage</p> <p> Crown contribution to regional pest management</p>	<p>Connection with nature and cultural heritage enriches people's lives</p> <p> Management of historic heritage</p> <p> Management of recreational opportunities</p> <p> Conservation with the community</p> <p>DOC is a great organisation to work for and with</p> <p> Policy advice, statutory planning, and services to Ministers and statutory bodies</p> <p> Search and rescue permanent legislative authority</p>

Ecosystems and species across Aotearoa are thriving from mountains to sea	
Performance indicators	Outputs ²⁵
<p>Ecosystem representation: the full range of ecosystems is protected somewhere (terrestrial, freshwater, marine).</p> <p>Species representation: preventing declines and extinctions (terrestrial, freshwater, marine).</p> <p>Maintain ecosystem composition (terrestrial).</p>	<p> Number of species under active management to ensure local security.</p> <p> Number of full-time equivalent hours worked in nature-based employment.</p> <p>Number of Jobs for Nature projects completed during the year.</p>
Public conservation lands and waters are maintained and improved for future generations	
Performance indicators	Outputs
<p>Indigenous dominance: ecological processes are natural – exotic species spread and dominance (terrestrial, freshwater, marine).</p> <p>Indigenous dominance: ecological processes are natural – ecosystem function (terrestrial, freshwater, marine).</p>	<p> Hectares of land receiving treatment for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• rats and mustelids• possums• deer• goats• weeds• wilding conifers. <p>Number of island biosecurity programmes where a pest-free status has been maintained.</p> <p> Number of regional pest management strategies with completed Crown exacerbator weed and pest programmes.</p>

²⁵ Outputs are performance measures we use for the activities we undertake. Our output measures are set out in the Estimates of Appropriations 2024/25. These are being shifted to impact measures, starting in 2025/26.

We are an honourable Treaty partner

Performance indicators

These are being developed and will be introduced in 2025/26.

Outputs

These are being introduced as part of the upcoming integrated performance framework in 2025/26.

Connection with nature and cultural heritage enriches people's lives

Performance indicators

Visitation at protected heritage sites.
Visitor satisfaction at protected heritage sites.
Visitation at protected natural areas.
Visitor satisfaction at protected natural areas.
The condition of Actively Conserved Heritage Places (seeking a stable and not deteriorating condition).



Number of historic heritage assets for which remedial work is completed to standard during the year.

Percentage of historic heritage assets for which regular maintenance work is on track to standard.

Percentage of historic or cultural heritage assessment reports completed to standard.



Huts – percentage to standard.

Tracks – percentage to standard.

Structures (bridges, boardwalks and so on) – percentage to standard.

Longer-term recreation concessions monitored.

Other longer-term resource-use concessions monitored.



Number of community agreements enabling work by others.

Number of strategic partnerships supporting priority conservation work.

DOC is a great organisation to work for and with

Performance indicators

Improvement in the level of return on investment for significant DOC products.
Employee engagement survey.



Number of ministerial briefings.

Number of Official Information Act 1982 requests received and actioned within statutory requirements.

Number of parliamentary questions received with 100% meeting the ministerial deadline.

Technical quality of policy advice papers assessed by a survey and robustness assessment.

Satisfaction of the Minister of Conservation with the policy advice service, as per common satisfaction survey.



Land Safety Forum work programme milestones are delivered.

Biodiversity indicator assessment

The biodiversity indicators are assessed at 1- to 5-year intervals. This assessment occurs at the national scale, and it takes a significant shift in the state and trend of the underlying assessment datasets of an indicator to change the indicator state or trend.

The underlying trend assessment requires sufficient time series data and takes time to build up. Nationally, more than 30% of land is protected. However, protection is uneven across the classifications of environmental units under indigenous vegetation. High levels of protection occur in alpine areas, but less than 1% of lowland areas in the western North Island, southern North Island and eastern South Island are protected and under indigenous cover.

Where assessments require the most complete data for levels of legal protection for ecosystems and the conservation status for native species, these datasets are unlikely to change substantially in the long term. For example, while the level of marine protection is increasing (see 'Progression of the Hauraki Gulf/Tīkapa Moana Marine Protection Bill' on [page 53](#)), it takes time to make its way into legislation and be included in the data used to assess 'Ecosystem representation – the full range of ecosystems is protected somewhere – Marine'.

Heritage and recreation indicator assessment

Our indicators relating to historic heritage and recreation are assessed using data that is collected and summarised every year. There is a direct link between the questions asked in the *Public Pulse of Conservation* survey and the measure used for the assessment. The underlying trend assessment requires at least 3 years of data.

The *Public Pulse of Conservation* is the main data source used to assess these indicators. This monthly survey started in 2021 and captures data on public use and enjoyment of protected natural areas and protected heritage places. It is hosted on the Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment's Tourism Evidence and Insights Centre, which provides unrestricted access to tourism sector stakeholders from across New Zealand and beyond.

Output measures

Our output measures report on the activities for which we receive funding to invest in and deliver. Output measures are set out in the Estimates of Appropriations and are used to describe what we achieved and how well we did with the money allocated.

The creation of the multi-category appropriation 'Services for conservation' in the Estimates of Appropriations is for 2024/25 and outyears and includes funds transferred from what was previously seven separate departmental output expenses appropriations.

Our departmental outputs (appropriations) are:

- services for conservation (multi-category appropriation), which includes:
 - management of natural heritage
 - management of recreational opportunities
 - management of historic heritage
 - conservation with the community
 - policy advice
 - statutory planning, and services to Ministers and statutory bodies
 - Crown contribution to regional pest management
- search and rescue activities (permanent legislative authority)
- Jobs for Nature (multi-year departmental appropriation).

Our two biggest departmental outputs account for approximately 88% of our expenditure. They are:

- the management of natural heritage for maintaining, restoring and protecting ecosystems, habitats and species across public conservation lands and waters (over 30% of New Zealand's land area)
- the management of recreational opportunities for the maintenance and management of recreational facilities and services, including buildings, huts, campsites, bridges, other structures and tracks, and the management of business concessions.

Around 60% of our total costs are incurred directly on delivering outputs.

We have discretion to select our output measures and targets, and we review our output measures each year. Any proposed changes are approved by our Senior Leadership Team. Our targets reflect the work we have planned for the year based on prioritisation and our strategic direction.

The data collected for our output measures is used for internal and external purposes. This includes progress reporting to the Minister of Conservation, an Annual Report to Parliament, Official Information Act 1982 responses, parliamentary question responses and other external communications.

The output measures draw on several data sources, such as:





- the extent of our operations to manage and control wild animals, including deer and goats, and pests such as possums, rats, mustelids, weed species and wilding conifers. The work is recorded as it is delivered; where overlapping operational areas occur, we 'flatten' the areas to avoid double reporting of the hectares treated
- structured data from internal asset management systems for core recreation and historic assets, and funding agreements with community organisations.

We use the *Ministerial Policy Satisfaction Survey* from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet to assess the Minister of Conservation's satisfaction with the services provided by our policy advice function.





We consider that performance has been achieved when the output is within a tolerance level acceptable for the nature of the work. This is within 5% of the performance target for significant measures (annotated with SM) and within 10% for all other measures.

State and trend assessments









To allow for a full cycle of data collection, the six indicators are assessed using data that is 1 year in arrears. The assessments for state and trend carried out in 2024/25 are based on a full-year data cycle up to 30 June 2024. The state and trend from the previous assessment for each indicator is also provided for comparison. The assessments range in scale from annual to 10-yearly, but most reflect medium-term trends over 3 to 5 years.

Key performance indicator dashboard legend			
State key		Trend key	
	The assessment found the indicator is at an acceptable state	↑	Data used in the assessment indicated the indicator has improved over time
	The assessment found the indicator is borderline, or there is a reason for concern	—	Data used in the assessment indicated the indicator was stable over time
	The assessment found the indicator is below an acceptable state	↓	Data used in the assessment indicated the indicator has deteriorated over time
	The assessment was inconclusive	×	There was not enough consistent time series data to assess trend

Ecosystems and species across Aotearoa are thriving from mountains to sea

Performance indicator	State and trend assessments	
Ecosystem representation: The full range of ecosystems is protected somewhere – Terrestrial	2020/21	2023/24
		
	<p>Terrestrial ecosystems provide land habitat and environments for native plants and animals to live in. This measure assesses the level of protection of a representative range of ecosystems. Having a wider range of protected representative ecosystems, particularly in lowland and coastal zones, may improve the security of species that live within them.</p> <p>Ecosystems are affected by local and national-scale pressures that can impact vegetation cover and habitat availability for species. Pressures can come from extreme weather events, introduced mammalian and weed pests, and activities such as land use changes.</p> <p>The increased area of land protected has benefited some naturally uncommon ecosystems and some land environments, but large gaps in reporting and less visibility for individual highly vulnerable and depleted ecosystems mean that small changes will not be detected.</p> <p>Generally, upland environments like alpine or mountain habitats are well protected and have a high proportion of native cover, whereas areas of fertile flat and rolling hill country in the lowlands have proportionally less protection and are much more depleted in terms of extent and integrity.</p> <p>For information on progress in 2024/25, see ‘Climate change vulnerability assessment’ on page 52.</p>	
Ecosystem representation: The full range of ecosystems is protected somewhere – Marine	2022/23	2023/24
		
	<p>When effectively implemented, protected marine ecosystems support the recovery of marine biodiversity, provide areas for scientific research and may create resilience to wide climate impacts.</p> <p>This assessment has remained unchanged since 2019/20. No new marine reserves have been established since 2014. While a new marine mammal sanctuary was established in 2021, the level of protection of marine ecosystems remains unchanged because marine mammal sanctuaries do not protect the wider biodiversity in the areas they cover.</p> <p>Marine protected area (MPA) assessments do not consider marine protection implemented by other organisations, which also contributes to our domestic protection targets (for example, the Ministry for Primary Industries administers customary protection, and regional councils administer marine protected areas). Most marine habitats and species do not have sufficient data for us to know what needs to be protected. Ideally, MPAs would be implemented through marine spatial planning processes, such as Sea Change – Tai Timu Tai Pari in the Hauraki Gulf/Tikapa Moana. While these assessments are based on a full-year data cycle up to 30 June 2024, for information on progress in 2024/25, see ‘Understanding growing pressures on marine mammals and seabirds’ on page 37 and ‘Southeast marine protection’ on page 53.</p>	

Connection with nature and cultural heritage enriches people's lives

Performance indicator	State and trend assessments	
Visitation at protected heritage places	2022/23	2023/24
		
	<p>This year, we measured a visitation rate of 74%, which reflects the percentage of New Zealanders who usually visit a protected heritage place over a 12-month period. This was just below the 'acceptable' performance target of 75% and so was assessed as 'borderline' in meeting that target.</p> <p>Visitation to protected heritage places is influenced by various factors, including popularity, heritage fabric, scenery, accessibility, infrastructure, marketing and weather. The performance target is lower than for protected natural areas because there are fewer DOC-managed protected heritage places that people can choose to visit.</p> <p>This is the third year this indicator has used data from the <i>Public Pulse of Conservation</i> survey. We need to continue collecting time series data to make a more accurate assessment of trend.</p>	
Visitor satisfaction at protected heritage places	2022/23	2023/24
		
	<p>This status assessment is based on a Net Promoter Score (NPS) of 17 for protected heritage places. The NPS is a widely used measure of customer satisfaction. This was just below the 'acceptable' performance target of over 20 NPS and so was assessed as 'borderline' in meeting that target.</p> <p>Visitors are satisfied when the experience provided meets their expectations and preferences. What is available and what people expect from their experiences, including facilities and services, can change over time, so DOC must ensure that its offerings keep up with these evolving expectations.</p> <p>This is the third year that this indicator has used data from the <i>Public Pulse of Conservation</i> survey. We need to continue collecting time series data to make a more accurate assessment of trend.</p>	
Visitation at protected natural areas	2022/23	2023/24
		
	<p>This year, we measured a visitation rate of 81%, which reflects the percentage of New Zealanders who usually visit a protected natural area over a 12-month period. This was just above the performance target of 80% and so was assessed as 'acceptable' in meeting that target.</p> <p>Visitation to protected natural areas is influenced by various factors, including popularity, recreational opportunities, scenery, accessibility, infrastructure, marketing and weather.</p> <p>This is the third year that this indicator has used data from the <i>Public Pulse of Conservation</i> survey. We need to continue collecting time series data to make a more accurate assessment of trend.</p>	
Visitor satisfaction at protected natural areas	2022/23	2023/24
		
	<p>This status assessment is based on an NPS of 27 for protected natural areas. This is just below the 'acceptable' performance target of over 30 NPS and so was assessed as 'borderline' in meeting that target.</p> <p>Visitors are satisfied when the experience provided meets their expectations and preferences. What is available and what people expect from their experiences, including facilities and services, can change over time, so DOC must ensure that its offerings keep up with these evolving expectations.</p> <p>This is the third year that this indicator has used data from the <i>Public Pulse of Conservation</i> survey. We need to continue collecting time series data to make a more accurate assessment of trend.</p>	

**Te whakatutuki o te Tari – Te tauākī
whakatutuki o te ratonga**

**Departmental performance –
Statement of service performance**

Our output measures show how we measure the activities we undertake and the services we deliver. Targets are reviewed each year to ensure that they reflect our operating environment and support achieving our outcomes. These are included each year in the Estimates of Appropriations.

We consider that performance has been achieved when the output is within a tolerance level that is acceptable for the nature of the work. This is within 5% of the performance target for significant measures (annotated with SM) and within 10% for all other measures.

Our statement of service performance has been prepared in compliance with the requirements of the Public Finance Act 1989 and PBE FRS 48. The year-end performance measure results are subject to audit by KPMG as part of its annual audit of end-of-year performance, in accordance with the Public Finance Act 1989, Public Audit Act 2001, and other legislative or administrative requirements and expectations.

**Services for conservation multi-category
appropriation**

The single overarching purpose of this appropriation is to promote and protect New Zealand’s natural and cultural heritage and visitor opportunities for conservation purposes.

Output results



1/1 achieved
Management of
natural heritage



2/3 achieved
Management of
historic heritage



2/2 achieved
Policy advice



2/2 achieved
Jobs for Nature



2/5 achieved
Management of
recreational opportunities



2/3 achieved
Statutory planning,
and services to Ministers
and statutory bodies



7/7 achieved
Management of
natural heritage



2/2 achieved
Conservation with
the community



1/1 achieved
Search and rescue
activities – permanent
legislative authority



1/1 achieved
Crown contribution
to regional pest
management



Management of natural heritage

What we intend to achieve: This appropriation covers the maintenance, restoration and protection of ecosystems, habitats and species.

Our progress: The importance of controlling and managing predators and key species is illustrated in 'Working towards being predator free by 2050' on [page 34](#).

STRATEGIC OUTCOME: Public conservation lands and waters are maintained and improved for future generations					
	2022/23 actual	2023/24 actual	2024/25 target	2024/25 actual	Results
Pest and weed control					
Hectares of land receiving treatment for rats and mustelids SM	1,125,892	1,008,730	680,000–950,000	1,135,148	Achieved ^a
Hectares of land receiving treatment for possums SM	67,603	66,779	140,000–230,000	213,256	Achieved
Hectares of land receiving treatment for deer SM	181,821	141,551	120,000–280,000	214,366	Achieved ^b
Hectares of land receiving treatment for goats SM	1,031,715	1,254,180	850,000–1,140,000	1,167,053	Achieved ^b
Hectares of land receiving treatment for weeds using a site-led approach SM	100,613	104,555	115,000–150,000	246,841	Achieved ^c
Hectares of land receiving treatment for wilding conifers using a site-led approach SM	125,999	83,275	85,000–150,000	85,092	Achieved
Number of island biosecurity programmes where a pest-free status has been maintained SM	49	51	44–63	50	Achieved

a We achieved success in numerous large-scale aerial operations, bringing our results over the target range.

b Includes performance achieved through the additional Budget 2022 funding.

c Working closely with investors and regional councils bolstered our delivery to be above target. We also took advantage of the favourable weather conditions to undertake larger areas of aerial control.

STRATEGIC OUTCOME:
Ecosystems and species across Aotearoa are thriving from mountains to sea

	2022/23 actual	2023/24 actual	2024/25 target	2024/25 actual	Results
Ecosystems and species management					
Number of species under active management to ensure local security SM	466	487	370–520	391	Achieved

Output class operating statement 2024/25:

Management of natural heritage (pest and weed control, ecosystem and species management)



1/1



7/7

	30/06/24 Actual \$000	30/06/25 Budget \$000	30/06/25 Revised budget \$000	30/06/25 Actual \$000
Revenue				
Crown	290,759	306,310	269,749	269,746
Other	20,226	26,749	20,954	16,606
Total revenue	310,985	333,059	290,703	286,352
Expenses	308,240	333,059	290,703	314,869
Surplus/(deficit)	2,745	0	0	(28,517)



Crown contribution to regional pest management

What we intend to achieve: This appropriation covers the delivery of services to control weed and animal pests on lands administered by DOC to meet statutory good neighbour obligations and regional pest management plans.

Our progress: All regional pest management plans are available at bionet.nz/rules/pest-management-plans.

STRATEGIC OUTCOME:					
Public conservation lands and waters are maintained and improved for future generations					
	2022/23 actual	2023/24 actual	2024/25 target	2024/25 actual	Results
Crown contribution to regional pest management					
Number of regional pest management strategies with completed Crown exacerbator weed and pest programmes	16	16	16	16	Achieved

Output class operating statement 2024/25:
Crown contribution to regional pest management



1/1

	30/06/24 Actual \$000	30/06/25 Budget \$000	30/06/25 Revised budget \$000	30/06/25 Actual \$000
Revenue				
Crown	2,778	2,778	2,501	2,501
Other	38	29	33	33
Total revenue	2,816	2,807	2,534	2,534
Expenses	2,731	2,807	2,534	2,833
Surplus/(deficit)	85	0	0	(299)



Management of historic heritage

What we intend to achieve: This appropriation covers the protection and conservation management of historic heritage.

Our progress: The importance of assessing the country's historic and cultural heritage to better protect it so that future generations can enjoy experiences that only New Zealand can provide is illustrated in 'Cultural heritage reset' on [page 69](#).

STRATEGIC OUTCOME: Connection with nature and cultural heritage enriches people's lives					
	2022/23 actual	2023/24 actual	2024/25 target	2024/25 actual	Results
Historic and cultural heritage restoration					
Number of historic heritage assets for which remedial work is completed to standard during the year SM	16	30	40	29	Not achieved ^a
Percentage of historic heritage assets for which regular maintenance work is on track to standard SM	63%	58%	75%	77% of 1,495	Achieved
Percentage of historic or cultural heritage assessment reports completed to standard	71%	80%	40%	80% of 1,494	Achieved

a Includes performance achieved through the additional Budget 2022 appropriation. The number of projects set as the target was based on expectations early in the year that they would all qualify. However, not all projects were remedial in nature. Additional projects for remedial work are in the design, scoping and contractor engagement phases for delivery, with at least five projects expected to near completion early in the next financial year.

Output class operating statement 2024/25:

Management of historic heritage



2/3

	30/06/24 Actual \$000	30/06/25 Budget \$000	30/06/25 Revised budget \$000	30/06/25 Actual \$000
Revenue				
Crown	13,626	12,688	19,049	19,049
Other	493	76	76	34
Total revenue	14,119	12,764	19,125	19,083
Expenses	12,460	12,764	19,125	14,281
Surplus/(deficit)	1,659	0	0	4,802



Management of recreational opportunities

What we intend to achieve: This appropriation covers the provision of recreational facilities and services on land administered by DOC and the management of business concessions.

Our progress: Reducing our permissions backlog has been a ministerial and departmental priority this year. See 'Permissions at pace' on [page 74](#).

STRATEGIC OUTCOME: Connection with nature and cultural heritage enriches people's lives					
	2022/23 actual	2023/24 actual	2024/25 target	2024/25 actual	Results
Asset management					
Percentage of huts meeting the required service standard SM	80%	86%	90%	85% of 927	Not achieved ^a
Percentage of tracks meeting the required service standard SM	52%	52%	45%	57% of 14,039 km	Achieved
Percentage of structures meeting the required service standard SM	95%	95%	95%	95% of 12,029	Achieved
Recreation concessions					
Percentage of recreation longer-term concession permits, licences, leases and easements monitored annually SM	18%	14%	10%–15%	6% of 1,502	Not achieved ^b
Other resource-use concessions					
Percentage of other longer-term resource-use concessions monitored annually SM	8%	10%	5%–10%	4% of 3,084	Not achieved ^b

a Our standards include measures related to both safety and the visitor experience. Our risk-based approach to recreational asset management is focused on addressing critical safety work that impacts visitor safety first, as a priority. While the percentage of huts did not achieve the overall target, this largely reflects low-risk but high-cost work at remote backcountry huts that relates to visitor experience standards.

b The number of concessions that are being monitored was low due to an increased focus on addressing the concessions applications backlog.

Output class operating statement 2024/25:
Management of recreational opportunities



2/5

	30/06/24 Actual \$000	30/06/25 Budget \$000	30/06/25 Revised budget \$000	30/06/25 Actual \$000
Revenue				
Crown	197,497	187,970	207,443	207,443
Other	36,170	32,312	38,812	40,659
Total revenue	233,667	220,282	246,255	248,102
Expenses	224,370	222,282	248,255	222,652
Surplus/(deficit)	9,297	(2,000)	(2,000)	25,450

Revenue from key DOC products and services

	2020/21 Actual \$000	2021/22 Actual \$000	2022/23 Actual \$000	2023/24 Actual \$000	2024/25 Actual \$000	Change from 2023/24 (%)
Revenue received						
Huts	2,293	2,139	2,759	4,072	4,149	1.9%
Conservation campsites	7,122	5,534	7,058	9,373	10,246	9.3%
Great Walks	6,817	5,864	7,667	8,936	10,668	19.4%
Visitor centre network – gross retail	1,555	960	1,909	2,396	2,639	10.1%
Venue and lodges	563	503	631	644	760	18.0%

DOC concession and partnership revenue

	2020/21 Actual \$000	2021/22 Actual \$000	2022/23 Actual \$000	2023/24 Actual \$000	2024/25 Actual \$000	Change from 2023/24 (%)
Source of financial contribution						
Concessions, leases and licences	8,077	9,424	20,584	26,876	29,725	10.6%
Sponsorship/partnership revenue	20,430	20,607	14,571	12,998	6,872	-47.1%



Conservation with the community

What we intend to achieve: This appropriation covers the provision of public awareness and educational services, and growing conservation through building partnerships with others, including iwi, councils, community groups, businesses and individuals.

Our progress: Our strategic partnerships and agreements with community groups are ongoing and important relationships as we achieve more working together – see ‘Always Be Naturing’ on [page 71](#).

STRATEGIC OUTCOME: Connection with nature and cultural heritage enriches people's lives					
	2022/23 actual	2023/24 actual	2024/25 target	2024/25 actual	Results
Engagement					
Number of community agreements enabling work by others SM	New for 2023/24	360	320–400	401	Achieved ^a
Number of strategic partnerships supporting priority conservation work	New for 2023/24	11	5	8	Achieved

a Conservation with the community measures have been reset for 2024/25 to reflect a change in conservation priorities. ‘Number of funding agreements enabling conservation work by others’ has been replaced.

Output class operating statement 2024/25: Conservation with the community



2/2

	30/06/24 Actual \$000	30/06/25 Budget \$000	30/06/25 Revised budget \$000	30/06/25 Actual \$000
Revenue				
Crown	52,277	50,494	43,496	43,496
Other	820	1,580	1,080	399
Total revenue	53,097	52,074	44,576	43,895
Expenses	44,315	52,074	44,576	40,230
Surplus/(deficit)	8,782	0	0	3,665



Policy advice

What we intend to achieve: This category covers the effective policy advice to support decision making by Ministers on government policy matters relating to conservation, including climate change mitigation.

Our progress: Policy advice is very varied, but an example is the 'New Fast-track Approvals Act 2024' outlined on [page 75](#).

STRATEGIC OUTCOME: DOC is a great organisation to work for and with					
	2022/23 actual	2023/24 actual	2024/25 target	2024/25 actual	Results
Policy advice					
The satisfaction of the Minister of Conservation with the policy advice service, as per common satisfaction survey	4	4	4 out of 5	4	Achieved
Technical quality of policy advice papers assessed by a survey and robustness assessment	3	3	3 out of 5	3	Achieved

Output class operating statement 2024/25:

Management of policy advice



2/2

	30/06/24 Actual \$000	30/06/25 Budget \$000	30/06/25 Revised budget \$000	30/06/25 Actual \$000
Revenue				
Crown	9,677	9,721	9,293	9,293
Other	194	20	20	33
Total revenue	9,871	9,741	9,313	9,326
Expenses	9,059	9,741	9,313	8,987
Surplus/(deficit)	812	0	0	339



Statutory planning, and services to Ministers and statutory bodies

What we intend to achieve: This category covers the provision of services to Ministers and statutory bodies to enable them to discharge their portfolios and responsibilities.

Our progress: Our advice covers a wide range of topics and includes options and important impacts. An example is ‘Reviewing the Wildlife Act 1953’ on [page 76](#).

STRATEGIC OUTCOME: DOC is a great organisation to work for and with					
	2022/23 actual	2023/24 actual	2024/25 target	2024/25 actual	Results
Statutory planning, and services to Ministers and statutory bodies					
Number of ministerial briefings	613	502	950–1,050	601	Not achieved ^a
Number of Official Information Act requests received and actioned within statutory requirements	760	753	750–850	911 (98%)	Achieved
Number of parliamentary questions received with 100% meeting the ministerial deadline	973	427	750–1,000	700 (92%)	Achieved ^b

a The target range is an estimate of briefings, memos and status report items being produced in response to requests from the Minister’s office. The variation from the target range was outside DOC’s control because the number of requests received is externally driven.

b This measure is considered ‘achieved’ if performance is within 10% of the target.

Output class operating statement 2024/25: Management of statutory planning, and services to Ministers and statutory bodies



2/3

	30/06/24 Actual \$000	30/06/25 Budget \$000	30/06/25 Revised budget \$000	30/06/25 Actual \$000
Revenue				
Crown	14,352	13,850	15,710	15,710
Other	0	75	76	0
Total revenue	14,352	13,925	15,786	15,710
Expenses	10,972	13,925	15,786	14,329
Surplus/(deficit)	3,380	0	0	1,381



Search and rescue activities – permanent legislative authority

What we intend to achieve: This appropriation is limited to search and rescue activities and services as authorised under section 9(1) of the Land Transport Management Act 2003. This permanent legislative authority started in 2021/22.

Our progress: DOC is a member of the Land Safety Forum Te Ope Tautiaki Whenua, which carries out a range of collaborative projects that are run via sub-groups of interested members. Updates on these projects can be found at doc.govt.nz/land-safety-forum-projects.

STRATEGIC OUTCOME:

DOC is a great organisation to work for and with

	2022/23 actual	2023/24 actual	2024/25 target	2024/25 actual	Results
Search and rescue activities					
90% of Land Safety Forum work programme milestones are delivered	New for 2023/24	Meets	Meets	Meets	Achieved

Output class operating statement 2024/25:

Search and rescue activities



1/1

	30/06/24 Actual \$000	30/06/25 Budget \$000	30/06/25 Revised budget \$000	30/06/25 Actual \$000
Revenue				
Crown	836	668	691	691
Other	0	0	0	0
Total revenue	836	668	691	691
Expenses	732	668	691	691
Surplus/(deficit)	104	0	0	0



Jobs for Nature (multi-year appropriation)

What we intend to achieve: This category covers nature-based employment through helping to revitalise communities and stimulate the economy post-COVID-19.

Our progress: See 'Wrapping up the Jobs for Nature programme' on [page 40](#).

STRATEGIC OUTCOME: Ecosystems and species across Aotearoa are thriving from mountains to sea					
	2022/23 actual	2023/24 actual	2024/25 target	2024/25 actual	Results
Jobs for Nature					
Number of full-time equivalent hours worked in nature-based employment (1 FTE = 1,560 hours per annum)	New for 2024/25	New for 2024/25	68	314.5	Achieved ^a
Number of Jobs for Nature projects completed during the year	New for 2024/25	New for 2024/25	56	66	Achieved ^a

a These are new performance indicators for 2024/25 and have been selected because they reflect the focus of this Budget 2020 initiative. The increase in FTE hours worked is due to variations to funding agreements and deliverables from 2023/24 to 2024/25. The number of hours worked was above target. The number of projects completed was slightly below target due to project extension requests but within the variance threshold.

Output class operating statement 2024/25:

Jobs for Nature



2/2

	30/06/24 Actual \$000	30/06/25 Budget \$000	30/06/25 Revised budget \$000	30/06/25 Actual \$000
Revenue				
Crown	74,115	28,108	33,372	32,248
Other	0	0	0	0
Total revenue	74,115	28,108	33,372	32,248
Expenses	74,115	28,108	33,372	32,248
Surplus/(deficit)	0	0	0	0

04

**Te oranga me
te āheitanga o te whare**

**Organisational health
and capability**

Te ahurea, ngā uara, me ngā whanonga

Our culture, values and behaviours

Alongside our refined vision and new purpose, this year we launched new values and behaviours to guide our work and culture. Over 780 of our people from across the organisation helped to create four new organisational values and eight associated behaviours through workshops and feedback.

Our values and behaviours drive how we work together and with others by promoting purposeful, outcomes-driven work, a solutions-focused mindset, and high-trust relationships with Treaty partners and stakeholders.

We embed these values and behaviours into all aspects of our work to enhance effectiveness.

This year, we focused on four areas of our culture: leadership, communication, recruitment and retention, and induction. These areas were chosen based on best practice research, lessons learned from other agencies, and where we believe we can make an early and significant impact for our people.



Integrity

It's about being open, honest and responsive.

We build trust and include others.

We do what we say we will.

- Be open, honest and transparent
- Follow through on what we say we will do



Connect

It's about working together to make a difference for nature.

Whakawhanaungatanga | we build authentic relationships.

Kotahitanga | we work together as one.

- Mahi tahi | work together to achieve better outcomes
- Make every interaction count



Empower

It's about enabling each other to grow and succeed.

In a high trust environment we innovate, share knowledge and learn from others.

- Create space for others to succeed
- Find the simplest way



Achieve

It's about being purposeful. We get things done.

Our work makes a positive impact for future generations.

We celebrate progress.

- Be solutions focused
- Do the right work

Ngā whakaōritenga whiwhinga mahi

Equal employment opportunities

We support equal employment opportunities. The principles that underpin our approach to being a good employer include impartial selection, recognition of the aims and aspirations of Māori and all ethnicity or minority groups, and recognition of the employment requirements of women and persons with disabilities.

Our policy, principles and processes support our commitment to being a 'good employer', as defined in the Public Service Act 2020. Our inclusion and diversity programme meets these legal requirements by providing strategic direction and plans that support equal employment opportunities. We are committed to building an inclusive culture that attracts and retains a diverse workforce and to being a place where our people have a strong sense of belonging and everyone is supported and can thrive.

This year, focus areas included building our Treaty capability, eliminating potential bias in the recruitment process, increasing staff engagement and inclusiveness, and strengthening our culture through embedding our new organisational values and behaviours with our people.

Early scoping is underway to develop a reasonable accommodation policy. Our employees already have accommodation options such as flexible hours, working from home and ergonomic workstations. The policy will help managers to implement reasonable accommodation procedures and make sure that all employees are aware of these procedures. Making changes to accommodate employees' needs is part of good management practice and will ensure that we attract and retain a diverse workforce.

Te matahuhua, te manarite me te hao i te katoa

Diversity, equity and inclusion

We have an ongoing commitment to being a diverse and inclusive workplace where people deliver efficiently and effectively. We use our *Kia Toipoto (Closing Gaps) Action Plan 2024*²⁶ and diversity and inclusion commitments included in Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission's *Papa Pounamu Public Service work programme*²⁷ to guide our work.²⁸

Kia Toipoto (Closing Gaps) Action Plan

Each year, we publish a Kia Toipoto: Gender, Māori and Ethnic Pay Gap Action Plan, which is produced collaboratively across stakeholder groups and the Public Service Association (PSA), using best-practice guidance from the Public Service Commission. This year's plan, *Kia Toipoto (Closing Gaps) Action Plan 2024*, built on our achievements of previous years and will support us to continue our journey towards becoming a great organisation where people feel valued, supported and able to thrive.

We continue to have a low overall gender pay gap of 1.1% (30 June 2025), compared with the national public sector gender pay gap of 6.1% (30 June 2024). It is unlikely that the pay gap that exists is caused by unjustified factors, such as bias. We consider that, where pay gaps exist, these will be justified, allowing for factors such as staff levels of experience.

We continue to improve our processes to support our equity goals.

Transparency

Starting salary guidance for hiring managers has been implemented and is being used extensively across DOC to support equity in the recruitment process. In the last year, a significant amount of remuneration information has been published to the employee intranet (where none existed previously) to improve the transparency and understanding of how decisions are made within our remuneration system. We have been in collective bargaining this year. One of our objectives in bargaining is to improve the transparency of our pay progression system, particularly at manager level.

²⁶ Department of Conservation. 2024. *Kia Toipoto (Closing Gaps) Action Plan 2024*. Wellington: Department of Conservation. doc.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/about-doc/gender-pay-gap/kia-toipoto-closing-gaps-action-plan-2024.pdf

²⁷ Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission. 2017. *Tā te Papa Pounamu Kaupapa mahi. Papa Pounamu Public Service work programme*. Wellington: Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission. publicservice.govt.nz/guidance/papa-pounamu

²⁸ In November 2024, we reported on the actions taken in response to the Public Service Commission's diversity and inclusion work programmes: *Kia Toipoto* and *Papa Pounamu*. The Public Service Commission has advised that this reporting requirement has now finished.

Papa Pounamu priorities

We continue to work towards the five Papa Pounamu diversity and inclusion commitments, using our existing plans and systems. Our work programmes and progress under the commitments are summarised below.

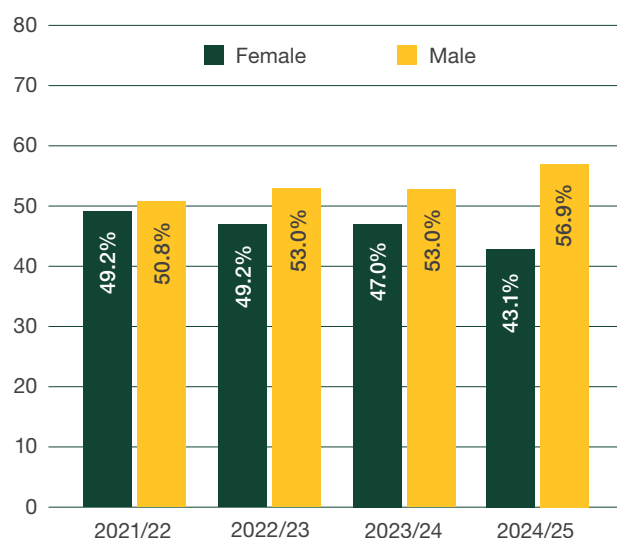
Te Urupare i te Mariu/Addressing bias

- This year, we improved our recruitment process to minimise unconscious bias by removing desired salary information at the application stage. Research shows that men tend to have higher salary expectations than women. Removing this information means that salary offers can be made purely on merit, rather than any external factors.
- We continue to offer two e-learning modules on addressing unconscious bias, including one for interview panel members on bias in the recruitment process.
- We are developing new toolkits for managers in the next year to further support equitable recruitment processes, and we are researching any potential barriers for diverse candidates in our recruitment practices.

Hautūtanga Kākano Rau/ Fostering diverse leadership

The diversity of our workforce is improving year on year. Over the past 5 years, we have seen an improvement in gender balance in senior leadership positions:

- Overall, our workforce is made up of 53.4% women, 46.0% men and 0.3% gender diverse. This compares with 52.7%, 46.7% and 0.2%, respectively, in 2023/24.
- This year, gender representation across senior leadership (Tier 2 and Tier 3) is 43.1% female and 56.9% male.
- Our Māori workforce makes up 16.2% of our total number of staff, and 20.4% of Māori staff are represented across our Tier 2 and Tier 3 leadership positions.



Numbers of female and male leaders
(Tier 2 and Tier 3) over the past 4 years

Te āheinga ā-ahurea / Cultural competence

We are committed to being an honourable Treaty partner. In the past year, we have made significant progress in supporting the capability building of our people in this area. For further information, see ‘Empowering our people through Whāinga Amorangi’ on [page 61](#).

Ngā tūhononga e kōkiritia ana e ngā kaimahi / Employee-led networks

Our employee-led networks contribute to a culture of inclusion and create a sense of belonging. They help our people connect, share knowledge and support each other. For details on our employee-led networks, see [page 77](#).

Hautūtanga Ngākau Tuwhera / Inclusive leadership

Our training programmes are created to equip managers with the skills and knowledge needed to be inclusive leaders:

- Our ‘Management Essentials’ series was attended by more than 394 staff. It provides training and support to leaders on topics including coaching skills, honourable Treaty partnership for leaders, tikanga for your team, leadership mindsets, self-care and wellbeing, and psychological safety.
- A new cultural competency toolkit was created for the recruitment team to support targeted recruitment, with a focus on Māori candidates. It includes a list of diverse job sites and ethnic media for targeted recruitment strategies. We started advertising certain roles on the Māori & Pacific Jobs website²⁹ to reach candidates with specific skill sets and to encourage more diversity in our candidate pool.
- We ran our second biannual staff survey this year, which had a 75% participation rate, and complemented this information with a new healthy work survey to identify and manage mental health and wellbeing, which are key risks for our people. Analysis of the results is ongoing and will help inform the way we lead in the future.
- We have started work on a new leadership capability programme, designed to provide a clear learning pathway for current and future leaders.

²⁹ maoripacificjobs.co.nz

Te hauora, te haumaru
me te tautiaki

Health, safety and security

Health and safety is not just a top priority but a non-negotiable in our work. This year, we further developed our Occupational Health system to ensure that it covers the full suite of occupational hazards across DOC and integrates with other systems, such as firefighter fitness.

We also focused effort and investment on our at-site management of hazardous substances to ensure that we remain compliant with regulatory frameworks and prioritise staff safety.

Against a background of continuing incidents of intimidation and harassment of our staff, we ran a programme of organisation-wide security risk assessments to ensure that risks are identified and appropriate controls are deployed.

Incidents with fatal potential, by critical risk and financial year

Critical risk	Financial year			
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Chainsaw use	2	2	2	4
Helicopter use	15	25	18	18
On-road vehicle driving	39	40	49	56
Work at height	2	1	2	1

Te tuku pūrongo Hōtaka Waro
Kore a te Kāwanatanga
Carbon Neutral Government
Programme reporting

DOC is a part of the Carbon Neutral Government Programme, which aims to accelerate emission reductions across the public sector.

Total annual emissions

This year, our total (gross) emissions were 13,113 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂-e).³⁰

Emissions profile

Emissions data was reported and grouped into the categories shown in the table below. Data is excluded where the source of emissions is minimal – for example, if it forms less than 1% of the inventory. We have included comparative data for our base year, as well as the previous financial year, because some emission factors³¹ have changed since last year.

Comparison of DOC's verified carbon emissions over time

Emission source	2020/21 (base year) (t CO ₂ -e)	2023/24 (t CO ₂ -e)	2024/25 (t CO ₂ -e)	Change between 2024/25 and base year
Purchased fuels (diesel and petrol) ^a	3,471	3,283	3,048	↓
Aerial services (Jet A-1 and aviation fuel)	2,943	3,228	3,042	↑
Staff commuting and working from home	– ^b	2,170	2,217	n/a
Wastewater	2,018	1,814	1,665	↓
Business travel	1,241	1,480	1,779	↑
Electricity and natural gas	783	510	654	↓
Landfill and composting	475	330	293	↓
Other fuels	141	191	202	↑
Freight	–	130 ^c	103	n/a
Refrigerants	143	103	95	↓
Other purchased goods ^d	17	12	15	↓
Total	11,231^e	13,251	13,113	↑

- a Emissions from diesel and petrol have been combined into the category 'Purchased fuels' to align with programme reporting categories.
- b The first year these emissions were reported was 2021/22, when they were 1,673 t CO₂-e.
- c The first year these emissions were reported was 2023/24.
- d Emissions for paper and purchased water are combined into 'Other purchased goods and services' due to them being very small contributors.
- e Note that the numbers do not add due to rounding.

30 Our emissions are reported as tonnes of CO₂-e, a universal unit of measurement used to evaluate different greenhouse gases against a common basis. This unit of measurement indicates the global warming potential of each greenhouse gas, expressed in terms of the global warming potential of one unit of carbon dioxide.

31 Emission factors enable greenhouse gas emissions to be estimated from a unit of available activity data (for example, tonnes of fuel consumed, tonnes of product produced) and absolute greenhouse gas emissions.

Reducing our emissions

Our emission reduction targets

Our target is to reduce our emissions by at least 21% by 2025 and by 42% by 2030 compared with our baseline year (July 2020 to June 2021). These targets are in line with New Zealand's efforts to limit global warming to 1.5°C as a part of the country's commitment to the Paris Agreement.

Progress towards our emission reduction targets

This year, our emissions decreased by 138 t CO₂-e compared with the previous year (from 13,251 to 13,113 t CO₂-e).

We have seen reductions in our three top emission sources (purchased fuels, aerial services and wastewater treatment) compared with the previous year.

Business travel emissions have increased due to an increase in international travel compared with the previous year.

For emission sources included in our targeted reduction plan, there was an overall reduction of 8% from our base year of 2020/21.³²

Toitū Carbon Reduce certification

We participate in Toitū Envirocare's Carbon Reduce programme, which certifies that we have made a complete and accurate record of our greenhouse gas emissions. This is in line with international best practice and is accredited by the Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand. The programme also certifies that we meet the Toitū Envirocare criteria for committing to further manage and reduce our emissions. This year, we achieved this certification for the fourth year in a row.

Progress towards fleet reduction targets

In 2021, the Carbon Neutral Government Programme was set up to accelerate the reduction of emissions within the public sector. In the context of our vehicle fleet, the immediate priority was to optimise the size of the fleet, which we committed to reducing by 20%.

In March 2021, we had 832 vehicle assets (light commercial and passenger vehicles). Between that time and June 2024, we had reduced the fleet by 13.5%. This year, we have reduced our fleet by a further 9.5%, totalling a 23% reduction since the target was set.

³² Note that staff commuting (2,174 t CO₂-e in 2024/25) is not included in our target reduction plan because it is not a mandatory source to include. Removing these emissions gives an overall reduction of 8% from our base year of 2020/21.

Te whakatutuki o ngā rawa

Asset performance

Our asset management performance

We have previously brought together several asset management functions into one unit. This includes strategy, investment, inspections, project delivery, engineering, asset planning and system improvement. In late April 2025, we also brought our national property and fleet management into the unit.

This alignment of functions recognises that effective management of our assets is critical to supporting great visitor experiences and fulfilling our responsibilities to manage public conservation lands and waters, protect biodiversity, and uphold Treaty partnerships.

This change is allowing us to deal with overdue high-priority work more effectively – for example, we are repairing faults to structures faster to maintain visitor safety. Through concentrated effort, focus and skill from our national team and regional staff, overdue high-priority work orders decreased from 109 in June 2024 to 18 by 30 June 2025.

Another focus area is the improvement of our renewal and upgrade programme across all asset types. We are building a long-term infrastructure investment plan to help us manage our funds and required outcomes.

Service critical assets

We are reviewing our asset portfolio to ensure that we are meeting government expectations, as set out in Cabinet Office circular CO (23) 9.³³ We have identified only a small number of assets that have the potential to be ‘service critical’. These are assets that support the two villages DOC manages as the local authority – Aoraki/Mount Cook and Whakapapa. Our services in these villages include providing drinking water, stormwater and wastewater to these communities, and the associated assets have been revalued with a cost value of \$40 million, which equates to a net book value of \$23 million. Failure of these assets could affect the provision of fresh water and wastewater services to the villages. We will continue this review over the next year, which will include exploring the criticality of individual assets within these services and their contingency plans.

We manage assets valued at about \$9.8 billion (see table on next page). Land makes up about 90% of that, and the remainder is mainly visitor assets like roads, tracks and huts.

³³ Cabinet Office. 2023. Cabinet Office circular CO (23) 9: Investment Management and Asset performance in Departments and Other Entities. Wellington: Cabinet Office. dpmc.govt.nz/publications/co-23-9-investment-management-and-asset-performance-departments-and-other-entities

DOC asset profile, 2024/25 (Crown and departmental assets combined)

Asset group and class	Carrying amount (\$m) ^a	Depreciation (\$m)	Capital expenditure (\$m) ^b
Information and communications technology			
• Computer software	0.9	0.9	0.0
Fleet			
• Vessels	3.0	0.4	0.3
• Motor vehicles	16.6	2.4	2.2
Property			
• Plant and equipment (including radios)	19.8	3.8	6.2
• Furniture and fittings	3.7	0.7	0.7
• Buildings	89.7	2.8	9.1
• Infrastructure	88.5	2.6	6.3
Visitor and historic (cultural)	604.1	20.9	18.4
Land (Crown and departmental)	8,955.2	0.0	1.4
Fencing	25.6	2.1	1.5
Total	9,807.1	36.6	46.1

a Includes assets under construction.

b Excludes transfers between departments.

05

**Ngā tauākī pūtea ā-tau
me ngā tauākī pūtea
mō te anamata**

**Annual financial statements
and forecast financial
statements**

Ō mātou tauāki ahumoni ā-tari

Departmental financial statements

Statement of comprehensive revenue and expense

for the year ended 30 June 2025

30/06/24		Notes	30/06/25	30/06/25	30/06/25	30/06/26
Restated Actual \$000			Actual \$000	Budget ^a \$000	Revised Budget ^a \$000	Forecast ^a \$000
Revenue						
655,917	Revenue Crown	3	600,177	612,587	601,304	646,357
57,941	Other revenue	3	57,764	60,841	61,051	61,051
713,858	Total revenue	3	657,941	673,428	662,355	707,408
Expenses						
286,793	Personnel costs	4	295,050	278,200	307,200	307,200
317,739	Operating costs	5	270,958	314,941	271,810	316,375
33,710	Depreciation, amortisation and impairment expense ^b	10,11	36,251	37,904	37,904	38,451
46,594	Capital charge	6	47,374	44,383	47,441	47,382
2,241	Net loss on disposal of property, plant and equipment		1,087	–	–	–
687,077	Total expenses		650,720	675,428	664,355	709,408
26,781	Net surplus/(deficit)		7,221	(2,000)	(2,000)	(2,000)
Other comprehensive revenue and expense						
24,117	Gain on property revaluations	10	9,263	–	–	–
50,898	Total comprehensive revenue and expense		16,484	(2,000)	(2,000)	(2,000)

a The statement of accounting policies provides explanations of these figures, which are unaudited.

b The prior year number has been restated to reflect a \$213,000 increase in fixed asset depreciation in the 2023/24 financial year, resulting from management’s subsequent review of the depreciation process.

Refer to Note 2 for an explanation of major variances between the actual and revised budget.

Statement of financial position

as at 30 June 2025

30/06/24		Notes	30/06/25	30/06/25	30/06/25	30/06/26
Restated Actual \$000			Actual \$000	Budget ^a \$000	Revised Budget ^a \$000	Forecast ^a \$000
Taxpayers' funds						
545,912	General funds	14	508,615	558,911	527,406	535,098
417,638	Property, plant and equipment revaluation reserves	14	426,901	393,552	417,669	417,669
963,550	Total taxpayers' funds		935,516	952,463	945,075	952,767
Represented by:						
Current assets						
58,614	Cash		4,767	25,453	7,146	6,955
3,659	Prepayments		4,728	3,000	3,000	3,000
4,214	Inventories		4,392	4,000	4,000	4,000
10,128	Trade and other receivables	8	13,364	26,018	16,000	16,000
3,371	Non-current assets held for sale		3,371	3,370	3,370	3,370
209,526	Debtor Crown	9	176,450	195,925	180,000	175,000
289,512	Total current assets		207,072	257,766	213,516	208,325
Non-current assets						
825,068	Property, plant and equipment ^b	10	838,213	802,674	830,565	840,548
1,862	Intangible assets	11	888	2,809	1,762	1,662
826,930	Total non-current assets		839,101	805,483	832,327	842,210
1,116,442	Total assets		1,046,173	1,063,249	1,045,843	1,050,535
Current liabilities						
45,636	Trade and other payables		30,947	45,786	35,768	32,768
7,288	Goods and services tax payable		1,470	5,000	5,000	5,000
33,558	Employee entitlements	12	29,031	30,000	30,000	30,000
8,377	Provisions	13	4,900	5,000	5,000	5,000
26,693	Return of operating surplus to the Crown	7	7,278	–	–	–
18,079	Revenue in advance		23,389	10,000	10,000	10,000
139,631	Total current liabilities		97,015	95,786	85,768	82,768
Non-current liabilities						
12,402	Employee entitlements	12	12,439	15,000	15,000	15,000
859	Provisions	13	1,203	–	–	–
13,261	Total non-current liabilities		13,642	15,000	15,000	15,000
152,892	Total liabilities		110,657	110,786	100,768	97,768
963,550	Net assets		935,516	952,463	945,075	952,767

a The statement of accounting policies provides explanations of these figures, which are unaudited.

b The prior year number has been restated to reflect a \$213,000 increase in fixed asset depreciation in the 2023/24 financial year, resulting from management's subsequent review of the depreciation process.

Refer to Note 2 for an explanation of major variances between the actual and revised budget.

The accompanying accounting policies and notes form part of, and should be read in conjunction with, these financial statements.

Statement of changes in taxpayers' funds
for the year ended 30 June 2025

30/06/24		Notes	30/06/25	30/06/25	30/06/25	30/06/26
Restated Actual \$000			Actual \$000	Budget ^a \$000	Revised Budget ^a \$000	Forecast ^a \$000
947,286	Balance at 1 July		963,550	942,887	963,763	945,075
50,898	Total comprehensive revenue and expense ^b		16,484	(2,000)	(2,000)	(2,000)
	Distributions to Crown					
(19,198)	Capital repayments		(33,896)	(1,489)	(33,816)	–
(26,693)	Return of operating surplus	7	(7,278)	–	–	–
60	Other movement		(10,035)	–	–	–
	Contributions from Crown					
–	Asset transfers		–	5,000	5,000	5,000
11,197	Capital contributions		6,691	8,065	12,128	4,692
963,550	Balance at 30 June		935,516	952,463	945,075	952,767

- a The statement of accounting policies provides explanations of these figures, which are unaudited.
- b The prior year number has been restated to reflect a \$213,000 increase in fixed asset depreciation in the 2023/24 financial year, resulting from management’s subsequent review of the depreciation process.
- Refer to Note 2 for an explanation of major variances between the actual and revised budget.

Statement of cash flows

for the year ended 30 June 2025

30/06/24	Notes	30/06/25	30/06/25	30/06/25	30/06/26
Actual \$000		Actual \$000	Budget ^a \$000	Revised Budget ^a \$000	Forecast ^a \$000
Cash flows – operating activities					
678,872	Receipts from Revenue Crown	628,939	612,587	605,401	653,357
69,294	Receipts from other revenue	63,976	60,841	61,051	61,051
(284,839)	Payments to employees	(299,512)	(277,700)	(306,700)	(306,700)
(302,242)	Payments to suppliers	(309,507)	(315,441)	(272,310)	(316,875)
(46,594)	Payments for capital charge	(47,374)	(44,383)	(47,441)	(47,382)
114,491	Net cash flow from operating activities	36,522	35,904	40,001	43,451
Cash flows – investing activities					
1,440	Receipts from sale of property, plant and equipment	727	–	–	–
(41,921)	Purchase of property, plant and equipment	(37,234)	(43,088)	(43,088)	(48,334)
(200)	Purchase of intangibles	36	–	–	–
(40,681)	Net cash flow from investing activities	(36,471)	(43,088)	(43,088)	(48,334)
Cash flows – financing activities					
11,197	Capital contributions	6,691	8,065	12,128	4,692
(19,198)	Capital repayments	(33,896)	(1,489)	(33,816)	–
(40,506)	Return of operating surplus to the Crown	(26,693)	–	(26,693)	–
(48,507)	Net cash flow from financing activities	(53,898)	6,576	(48,381)	4,692
25,303	Net increase/(decrease) in cash	(53,847)	(608)	(51,468)	(191)
33,311	Opening cash balance	58,614	26,061	58,614	7,146
58,614	Closing cash balance	4,767	25,453	7,146	6,955

a The statement of accounting policies provides explanations of these figures, which are unaudited.

Refer to Note 2 for an explanation of major variances between the actual and revised budget.

The goods and services tax (GST) (net) component of operating activities has been included under supplier payments and reflects the net GST paid to and received from Inland Revenue.

Reconciliation of net surplus to net cash flow from operating activities

for the year ended 30 June 2025

30/06/24 Actual \$000		30/06/25 Actual \$000
26,781	Net surplus	7,221
	Add non-cash items	
33,710	Depreciation, amortisation and impairment expenses	36,251
(34)	Donated assets	(176)
33,676	Depreciation, amortisation and impairment expenses	36,075
	Add items classified as investing or financing activities	
2,241	Net loss on disposal of property, plant and equipment	1,087
	Less cash items	
-	Donation of bequest funds to a trust	(13,634)
	Add/(Less) working capital movements	
(256)	(Increase)/Decrease in prepayments	(1,069)
141	(Increase)/Decrease in inventories	(178)
1,113	(Increase)/Decrease in trade and other receivables	(3,236)
26,399	(Increase)/Decrease in Debtor Crown	33,076
8,613	Increase/(Decrease) in trade and other payables	(14,689)
2,338	Increase/(Decrease) in goods and services tax payable	(5,818)
1,859	Increase/(Decrease) in employee entitlements	(4,490)
4,756	Increase/(Decrease) in provisions	(3,133)
6,830	Increase/(Decrease) in revenue in advance	5,310
51,793	Net movement in working capital	5,773
114,491	Net cash flow from operating activities	36,522

Statement of commitments

as at 30 June 2025

30/06/24 Actual \$000		30/06/25 Actual \$000
Commitments by category		
<i>Capital commitments</i>		
20,782	Property, plant and equipment	10,857
20,782	Total capital commitments	10,857
<i>Operating commitments</i>		
62,486	Non-cancellable accommodation leases	58,090
324	Other non-cancellable leases	825
62,810	Total operating commitments	58,915
83,592	Total commitments	69,772
Commitments by term		
23,507	Less than 1 year	21,007
17,277	1–2 years	10,973
21,940	2–5 years	20,350
20,868	Greater than 5 years	17,442
83,592	Total commitments	69,772

Capital commitments

Capital commitments are the aggregate amount of capital expenditure contracted for the acquisition of property, plant and equipment and intangible assets that have not been paid for and not recognised as a liability at the balance date.

Non-cancellable operating lease commitments (accommodation and other)

The Department leases property, plant and equipment in the normal course of its business. Most of these leases are for premises, motor vehicles and computer hardware and have non-cancellable leasing periods ranging from 3 years to 15 years. The Department's non-cancellable operating leases have varying terms, escalation clauses and renewal rights. No restrictions are placed on the Department by any of its leasing arrangements.

Statement of contingent liabilities

as at 30 June 2025

Public liability claims relate to claims against the Department and are disclosed without prejudice. As at 30 June 2025, there are 58 proceedings and potential claims, of which 12 are quantifiable. The remaining 46 claims cannot be quantified (2024: 70 proceedings and potential claims, of which 9 were quantifiable).

The Department’s quantifiable contingent liabilities are broken down as follows:

30/06/24 Actual \$000		30/06/25 Actual \$000
	Court and Tribunal proceedings and other potential claims	
1,493	Non-compliance with the building code of Department commercial properties	14,372
–	– Claims regarding voidable Land Act leases in the Pourerere Conservation Area	2,500
1,750	Earthquake strengthening of Department buildings	1,750
1,120	Claims for damage caused by events originating from public conservation land	1,120
792	Non-compliance with Residential Tenancies Act 1986	296
2,041	Other quantifiable proceedings and potential claims	669
7,196	Total court and tribunal proceedings and other potential claims	20,707

The Department is aware that further sites may exist throughout New Zealand that could require remediation (due to mining, asbestos, pollution or other factors) at some point. Because these potential sites are unknown, the Department does not currently have a commitment to restore the sites, so no provision or contingent liabilities are recognised as at 30 June 2025.

Since March 2025, the Department has assessed 83 sites under its Building Warrant of Fitness (BWof) compliance programme, with 90 additional surveys planned for the 2026/27 financial year. Of the known portfolio of 386 properties, 31 assets hold valid BWofFs, 3 have expired, 90 are exempt and 262 require further investigation. However, it is estimated that only 132 will require a BWofF. Approximately \$13 million of the total liability relates to penalties payable to the Crown, with the remainder due to third parties. Until all assessments are complete, the Department remains exposed to a contingent liability comprising both remedial costs and potential penalties.

The Healthy Homes Guarantee Act 2017 came into effect on 1 July 2019. The Department is reviewing its residential accommodation portfolio in relation to this Act to determine whether any potential remediation is needed to comply with the requirements of the Act. From 1 July 2024, all residential rental homes must comply with the healthy homes standards.

The Department is also reviewing its portfolio of residential accommodation for potential tax liability relating to the calculation of allowances connected to this work. It has been hard to quantify until recently, without an appropriate tenancy database or capturing the split between rent and allowances given to staff. No provision has been recognised for the aforementioned matters because the reviews have not yet progressed enough to reliably measure the potential liability.

Contingent assets

The Department has no contingent assets (2024: nil).

Indemnities

The Director-General of the Department has a delegation from the Minister of Finance under the Public Finance Act 1989 to agree to indemnities in access agreements over private land. This provides the public and staff of the Department with access to land managed by the Department.

Indemnities to three parties via public insurance policies were provided in 2024/25 (2024: 3).

On 22 June 2025, the Minister of Finance provided an indemnity to Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) from the Department under section 65ZD of the Public Finance Act 1989 in relation to its participation in the ACC Accredited Employers Programme contract with ACC.

Te tauāki kaupapa here kaute

Statement of accounting policies

Reporting entity

The Department of Conservation (the Department) is a government department as defined by section 2 of the Public Finance Act 1989.

The relevant legislation governing the Department's operations includes the Public Finance Act 1989 and the Conservation Act 1987. The primary objective of the Department is to provide services to the public rather than making a financial return. For financial reporting purposes, the Department is a public benefit entity (PBE).

Reporting period

The reporting period for these financial statements is for the year ended 30 June 2025. The forecast financial statements are for the year ending 30 June 2026.

The financial statements were authorised for issue by the Director-General of the Department on 29 September 2025.

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on a going-concern basis and in accordance with the requirements of the Public Finance Act 1989, which includes the requirement to comply with New Zealand generally accepted accounting practice (NZ GAAP) and the New Zealand Treasury instructions. The Department has applied the *Tier 1 Public Benefit Entity International Public Sector Accounting Standards (PBE IPSAS)* in preparing the 30 June 2025 financial statements.

The statements have been prepared on a historical cost basis, modified by the revaluation of certain items of property, plant and equipment. The accounting policies have been applied consistently to all periods presented in these financial statements.

These financial statements are presented in New Zealand dollars, and all values are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars (\$000). The functional currency of the Department is New Zealand dollars.

Accounting standards effective 30 June 2025

PBE IPSAS 1 Disclosure of Fees for Audit Firms' Services

Amendments to *PBE IPSAS 1 Disclosure of Fees for Audit Firms' Services* requires the Department to disclose the fees incurred for services received from its audit or review firms and to provide a description of each service. The impact of this change is presentation and disclosure.

Standards issued and not yet effective and not early adopted

Standards and amendments issued but not yet effective that have not been early adopted and are relevant to the Department are listed below.

PBE IFRS 17 Insurance Contracts

This new standard sets out accounting requirements for insurers and other entities that issue insurance contracts. It applies to financial reports covering periods beginning on or after 1 January 2026.

These new standards are not expected to have a significant effect for the Department.

Significant accounting policies

Significant accounting policies are included in the notes to which they relate. Significant accounting policies that do not relate to a specific note and that materially affect the measurement of financial results, the financial position and output statements are outlined below.

Budget and forecast figures

The budget, revised budget and forecast figures have been prepared in accordance with NZ GAAP, using accounting policies that are consistent with those adopted in preparing these financial schedules. They have also been prepared in accordance with *PBE Financial Reporting Standard 42: Prospective Financial Statements*. The budget, revised budget and forecast financial schedules are not subject to audit.

The budget figures for 2024/25 are those included in *The Estimates of Appropriations for the Government of New Zealand for the year ending 30 June 2025*. The revised budget figures for 2024/25 are those included in *The Supplementary Estimates of Appropriations for the Government of New Zealand for the year ending 30 June 2025*.

The forecast figures for 2025/26 are those included in *The Estimates of Appropriations for the Government of New Zealand for the year ending 30 June 2026*. The forecasts have been prepared in accordance with the Public Finance Act 1989 and reflect the existing government and ministerial policies at that time, in addition to the Department's purpose, strategic intentions and activities based on the estimates and assumptions that might occur in the 2025/26 year.

Cost allocation

The Department has determined the cost of outputs using the following cost allocation methodology:

- Direct costs are charged directly to outputs. Depreciation and capital charge are charged on the basis of asset utilisation. Personnel costs are charged on the basis of actual time incurred.
- Indirect costs are assigned to outputs based on both the proportion of direct staff hours and the relative effort as assessed by budget managers.

For the year ended 30 June 2025, direct costs were 54% of the Department's costs and indirect costs were 46% of the Department's costs (2024: direct 56% and indirect 44%).

Cash on hand

Cash on hand includes petty cash and the amount in the current account bank balance.

Non-current assets held for sale

Non-current assets are classified as held for sale if their carrying amount will be recovered principally through a sale transaction rather than through continuing use. Non-current assets held for sale are measured at the lower of their carrying amount and fair value less costs to sell.

Trade and other payables

Short-term trade and other payables are recorded at their face value.

Goods and services tax

All items in the financial statements, including appropriation statements, are stated exclusive of goods and services tax (GST), except for receivables and payables, which are stated on a GST-inclusive basis. Where GST is not recoverable as input tax, it is recognised as part of the related asset or expense.

Income tax

Government departments are exempt from income tax as public authorities. Accordingly, no charge for income tax has been provided for.

Critical accounting estimates and assumptions

In preparing these financial statements, estimates and assumptions have been made concerning the future. These estimates and assumptions may differ from the subsequent actual results. Estimates and assumptions are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. Estimates and assumptions that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year are discussed in the specific notes.

Restatement of depreciation expense of property, plant and equipment

The prior year depreciation expense has been restated by \$213,000 due to a 2023/24 financial year close issue identified during the 2024/25 financial year end close, which required reprocessing of depreciation.

Comparatives

The restatement of depreciation expense of property, plant and equipment has resulted in the restatement of the income statement for the year ended 30 June 2024, the balance sheet as at 30 June 2024 and the statement of changes in taxpayers' funds for the year ended 30 June 2024. The restatement adjustments are detailed in the table on the next page.

He tuhinga mō ngā tauāki whakahaere pūtea mō te tau i mutu ake i te 30 Pipiri 2025

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 1: Comparative financial information

During the 2024/25 financial year end close, an issue was identified with the 2023/24 financial year close, requiring depreciation to be reprocessed for that year. As a result, an additional \$213,000 in depreciation was posted to the 2023/24 financial year. Due to the sequential nature of fixed asset accounting, such corrections must be completed before progressing to subsequent periods.

Statement of comprehensive revenue and expense

for the year ended 30 June 2024

	Previously reported \$000	Depreciation expense Adjustment \$000	Restated \$000
Expense			
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment expense	33,497	213	33,710
Total expenses	686,864	213	687,077
Net surplus/(deficit)	26,994	(213)	26,781
Total comprehensive revenue and expense	51,111	(213)	50,898

Statement of financial position

as at 30 June 2024

	Previously reported \$000	Depreciation expense Adjustment \$000	Restated \$000
Taxpayers' funds			
General funds	546,125	(213)	545,912
Property, plant and equipment revaluation reserves	417,638	–	417,638
Total taxpayers' funds	963,763	(213)	963,550
Non-current assets			
Property, plant and equipment	825,281	(213)	825,068
Total non-current assets	827,143	(213)	826,930
Total assets	1,116,655	(213)	1,116,442

Note 1: Comparative financial information continued

Statement of changes in taxpayers' funds
for the year ended 30 June 2024

	Previously reported \$000	Depreciation expense Adjustment \$000	Restated \$000
Balance at 1 July	947,286	–	947,286
Total comprehensive revenue and expense	51,111	(213)	50,898
Distributions to Crown			
Capital repayments	(19,198)	–	(19,198)
Return of operating surplus	(26,693)	–	(26,693)
Other movement	60	–	60
Contributions from Crown			
Capital contributions	11,197	–	11,197
Balance at 30 June	963,763	(213)	963,550

Note 2: Significant variances between actual and revised budget

Statement of comprehensive revenue and expense

Revenue from the Crown was \$1.1 million below the revised budget, primarily due to the timing and delivery of Jobs for Nature activities. This shortfall was matched by a corresponding \$1.1 million underspend in the Jobs for Nature multi-year appropriation.

Other revenue was \$3.3 million below revised budget, mainly due to lower-than-expected income from Great Walks and hut fees.

Actual expenses for the year were \$13.6 million below the revised budget, largely driven by delays in International Visitor Conservation and Tourism Levy funded projects, the timing and delivery of Jobs for Nature activities, and personnel savings from a significant slowdown in recruitment.

Statement of financial position

Current assets were \$6.4 million below the revised budget. This was mainly due to \$2.4 million less cash being held, driven by lower requirements resulting from expenditure delays, and Debtor Crown being below expectations, partly due to delayed Jobs for Nature revenue recognition caused by timing and delivery factors.

Current liabilities exceeded the revised budget by \$11.2 million. This was largely driven by the \$7.3 million provision for the return of operating surplus. The Department budgets to fully utilise its funding, with no surplus returned. Revenue in Advance liability was higher than expected, driven by the receipt of funding for key landfill remediation projects ahead of work commencement.

Note 2: Significant variances between actual and revised budget continued

Statement of cash flows

Net cash flow from operating activities was \$3.5 million less than the revised budget, mainly as a result of the investment of bequest funds into a trust supporting predator control and revegetation projects in Hawke's Bay, offset by higher-than-expected Crown cash funding. The additional Crown funding drawn down in cash reduced the Debtor Crown receivable at year end (see Note 8 for details).

Net cash flow from investing activities was \$6.6 million less than the revised budget due to lower-than-planned levels of capital investment.

Note 3: Total revenue

The Department derives revenue through the provision of outputs to the Crown, for services to third parties, and from sponsorships, donations, bequests and grants. Revenue is recognised when earned, reported in the current financial period and measured at the fair value of the consideration received. With the exception of revenue received in the form of donations and bequests, all revenue from other income has been classified and treated as exchange revenue. The nature of exchange revenue streams is that an approximate equivalent value is given in exchange.

Revenue Crown

Revenue from the Crown is measured based on the Department's funding entitlement for the reporting period. Revenue Crown is a non-exchange transaction because the Crown does not directly receive equal value from the Department in return for the funding. The funding entitlement is established by Parliament when it passes the Appropriation Acts for the financial year. The amount of revenue recognised takes into account any amendments to appropriations approved in the Appropriation (Supplementary Estimates) Act for the year and certain other unconditional funding adjustments formally approved before balance date.

No conditions are attached to the funding from the Crown. However, the Department can incur expenses only within the scope and limits of its appropriations.

The fair value of Revenue Crown has been determined to be equivalent to the funding entitlement.

Revenue – Non-exchange transactions

Donations

The Department receives value from the public or another entity (for example, cash or other assets) without giving approximately equal value in exchange. Donations are recognised as revenue when they become receivable unless there is an obligation in substance to return the funds if conditions are not met.

Where a physical asset is acquired for nil or nominal consideration, the fair value of the asset received is recognised as revenue when control of the asset is transferred to the Department.

Revenue – Exchange transactions

Provision of goods and services

Revenue from the supply of goods and services is measured at the fair value of consideration received. Revenue from the supply of goods is recognised when the significant risks and rewards of ownership have been transferred to the buyer. Services provided to third parties on commercial terms are recognised as revenue in proportion to the stage of completion at balance date.

Sponsorships

Revenue from sponsorships is initially recorded as revenue in advance and subsequently recognised as revenue when the conditions of the sponsorship are satisfied.

Cost recoveries

Fees for the supply of services to third parties on a cost recovery basis are recognised as revenue upon the provision of the services. Revenue received in advance of the provision of services is recognised as unearned revenue to the extent that it relates to future accounting periods.

Note 3: Total revenue continued

Other revenue

Certain operations of the Department are reliant on services provided by volunteers. Volunteer services are not recognised as revenue or expenditure by the Department.

30/06/24 Actual \$000		30/06/25 Actual \$000
	<i>Non-exchange</i>	
2,728	Donations	2,498
	<i>Exchange</i>	
24,682	Recreational and tourism charges	32,664
12,998	Sponsorships	6,872
11,092	Administration cost recoveries	7,813
266	Leases and rents	161
2,856	Retail sales	2,849
2,436	Permissions cost recoveries	4,459
883	Resource sales	448
57,941	Total other revenue	57,764

Note 4: Personnel costs

Salaries and wages are recognised as a separate expense, as employees provide services.

For the ACC Partnership Programme, an external independent actuarial valuer (Craig Lough from Melville Jessup Weaver and Fellow of the New Zealand Society of Actuaries) has calculated the outstanding claims liability and the valuation is effective 30 June 2025. The actuary is satisfied as to the nature, sufficiency and accuracy of the data used to determine the outstanding claims liability.

30/06/24 Actual \$000		30/06/25 Actual \$000
257,420	Salaries and wages	262,042
7,982	Superannuation subsidies	8,248
2,137	Annual, long-service and retirement leave provisioning	2,470
1,529	ACC Partnership Programme	1,669
660	Uniforms	603
1,200	Termination entitlements	2,812
9,754	Temporary and secondment staff costs	13,605
6,111	Other	3,601
286,793	Total personnel costs	295,050

Note 5: Operating costs

Operating expenses are recognised in the period to which they relate.

30/06/24 Actual \$000		30/06/25 Actual \$000
83,965	Operational contractors	90,478
39,550	Professional fees	17,569
36,819	Communications and computer expenses	32,676
25,823	Field supplies	22,900
13,005	Lease expenses	13,019
6,337	Travel	6,741
78,489	Grants	48,262
14,552	Accommodation	20,245
6,410	Motor vehicle and vessel expenses	7,088
1,753	Office supplies	1,984
1,133	Purchase of goods for retail sale	1,028
1,111	Printing	1,399
2,174	Insurance	2,257
6,086	Other	4,685
	Fees paid to auditors:	
503	Fees for financial statement audit	627
29	Fees for other services	–
317,739	Total operating costs	270,958

Operating leases

An operating lease is a lease that does not transfer substantially all the risks and rewards incidental to ownership of an asset. Lease payments under an operating lease are recognised as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term. The Department leases vehicles, office premises and office equipment. Because all the risks and benefits are retained by the lessor, these leases are classified as operating leases and are expensed in the period in which the costs are incurred.

Note 6: Capital charge

The Department pays a capital charge to the Crown twice a year on the balance of taxpayers' funds, including revaluation reserve, as at 1 July and 1 January. The capital charge rates for the 6-month periods ending 31 December 2024 and 30 June 2025 were both 5.0% (2024: 5.0%).

Note 7: Return of operating surplus to the Crown

The repayment of surplus is required to be paid by 31 October each year.

30/06/24 Actual \$000		30/06/25 Actual \$000
26,994	Net surplus for the year	7,221
	Add/(Less)	
(247)	Remeasurement losses on long service and retirement leave	(70)
330	Remeasurement on loss on write off of assets destroyed by Cyclone Gabrielle	(330)
(2,384)	Donated assets and third party contribution towards construction of assets	(1,543)
2,000	Other expenses	2,000
26,693	Total return of operating surplus to the Crown	7,278

Note 8: Trade and other receivables

Short-term trade and other receivables are recorded at face value, less any provision for impairment. The Department applies the simplified expected credit loss model of recognised lifetime expected credit losses for receivables. In measuring expected credit losses, short-term receivables have been assessed on a collective basis based on the days past due.

Impairment of a receivable is recorded when there is a reasonable expectation that the Department will not be able to collect amounts due according to the original terms of the receivable. Overdue receivables that are renegotiated are reclassified as current (that is, not past due).

Accounting policy for impairment of receivables

Impairment of a receivable is only recognised when there is objective evidence that the amount due would not be fully collected. While trade and other receivables are subject to the expected credit loss requirement of PBE IPSAS 41, no additional impairment provision was provided because the effect was immaterial.

30/06/24 Actual \$000		30/06/25 Actual \$000
8,314	Trade receivables	9,111
(2,322)	Less provision for impairment	(2,013)
5,992	Net trade receivables	7,098
4,136	Accrued revenue	6,266
10,128	Total trade and other receivables	13,364

Note 9: Debtor Crown

The Debtor Crown balance of \$176.4 million (2024: \$209.5 million) represents operating funding (GST inclusive) not drawn down due to the timing of cash requirements.

Note 10: Property, plant and equipment

Property, plant and equipment consists of land, buildings, plant and equipment, infrastructure, fencing assets, vessels, motor vehicles, furniture and fittings, visitor and cultural assets, and land formation costs. Land, buildings, infrastructure, fencing, visitor assets and land formation costs are measured at fair value, while all other assets are measured at cost less accumulated depreciation and impairment losses.

Assets under construction are recognised at cost. Where an asset is acquired at no cost, or for a nominal cost, it is recognised at fair value as at the date of acquisition. Gains and losses on disposals are determined by comparing the disposal proceeds with the carrying amount of the asset and are included in surplus or deficit. When a revalued asset is sold, the amount included in the property, plant and equipment revaluation reserve in respect of the disposed asset is transferred to general taxpayer funds.

Depreciation is provided on a straight-line basis on all property, plant and equipment except for land, land formation assets, cultural assets and assets under construction that are not depreciated.

Revaluations

The carrying values of revalued assets are assessed annually. For all asset classes other than Land, the depreciated replacement cost method and indexation model are used to measure assets at fair value.

The indexation model uses the appropriate capital goods index published by Stats NZ to determine the movement in asset values over the intervening period.

Significant assumptions applied in deriving depreciated replacement cost include the following:

- The historical cost adjusted by movements in the appropriate capital goods price index reflects the present replacement cost.
- If an asset is revalued using an index, the accumulated depreciation is restated proportionally based on the percentage movement in cost.
- The rate of depreciation expense after the revaluation is based on the new replacement cost.

The net revaluation results are charged to other comprehensive revenue and expense and are accumulated to an asset revaluation reserve in equity for that class of asset. Where this would result in a debit balance in the asset revaluation reserve, this balance is not recognised in other comprehensive revenue and expense but in surplus or deficit. Any subsequent increase in revaluation that reverses a previous decrease in value recognised in surplus or deficit will be recognised first in surplus or deficit up to the amount previously expensed and then recognised in other comprehensive revenue and expense.

*Note 10: Property, plant and equipment continued***Land**

Land is initially recognised at cost and is revalued annually based on rateable valuations provided by Quotable Value Limited in accordance with the Rating Valuations Act 1998. Individual land lots are updated every 3 years (triennial rateable valuations) using a mass-appraisal process.

Where land cannot be matched to an assessment, the valuation is obtained using an average per-hectare rate. Every 5 years, the Department obtains a certification by an independent registered valuer that the valuation methodology applied and calculations of the valuation are a reasonable proxy for fair value. The last independent valuation was conducted for the year ended 30 June 2020.

Land lots not subject to revaluations based on the triennial rateable valuations are revalued by applying an index determined using regional and district sales data for comparable land types provided by CoreLogic New Zealand.

Buildings

Buildings were valued at fair value by using the depreciated replacement cost method and price indices collated by Stats NZ as at 30 June 2025.

Plant and Equipment

Plant and Equipment is measured at cost less accumulated depreciation and impairment losses.

Infrastructure and Fencing assets

Infrastructure and Fencing assets were valued at fair value by using the depreciated replacement cost method and price indices collated by Stats NZ as at 30 June 2025.

Vessels, Motor Vehicles, and Furniture and Fittings

Vessels, Motor Vehicles, and Furniture and Fittings are all valued at cost less accumulated depreciation and impairment losses.

Visitor and Cultural assets

Visitor assets include several asset classes, including tracks, structures, buildings (predominantly huts) and signs.

All Visitor assets are valued at fair value using price indices applicable for the year derived from Stats NZ as at 30 June 2025.

Cultural assets are held by the Department and have been acquired over many years and by many means, such as purchase, donation and bequest. These assets are held and maintained for public benefit purposes such as the contribution to knowledge and culture. Cultural assets include carvings, paintings and other collections of works of art, fossils and artefacts that have been discovered on Crown land, and assets gifted or given to the Department to look after on behalf of the Crown (for example, taonga and gifts from visiting dignitaries). Cultural assets with a value that can be determined greater than \$5,000 must be recorded as assets. Cultural assets are not depreciated (as their intrinsic value does not diminish) and are shown at estimated market value.

Land Formation

Land formation costs, which include the costs of cutting through mountains or initial earthworks to prepare the ground where tracks are to be built, are valued at fair value by using price indices collated by Stats NZ as at 30 June 2025.

Property, plant and equipment under construction

The total amount of property, plant and equipment under construction is \$34.6 million (2024: \$36.5 million).

Community assets

The land and historic buildings managed by the Department are the nation's natural and historic heritage. Because these community assets belong to the Crown, their valuation is reflected in the 'Schedule of assets – Crown as administered by the Department of Conservation'. Typically, this land includes national, conservation and forest parks, as well as Crown reserve land.

Note 10: Property, plant and equipment continued

	Land \$000	Buildings \$000	Plant and Equipment \$000	Infrastructure \$000	Fencing \$000	Vessels \$000	Motor Vehicles \$000	Furniture and Fittings \$000	Visitor and Cultural assets \$000	Land Formation \$000	Total \$000
Cost or valuation											
Balance at 1 July 2023	20,093	202,766	53,605	99,419	140,895	9,936	30,049	22,179	1,125,378	236,982	1,941,302
Transfers to/from classes	-	(157)	566	1,743	1,160	116	(1,043)	28	(4,844)	2,623	192
Additions	-	5,589	2,115	1,941	1,103	1,000	5,475	655	20,693	599	39,170
Revaluation movement	5,069	8,226	-	2,942	268	-	-	-	28,488	3,865	48,858
Impairment – cyclone assets	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(231)	-	(231)
Disposals	-	(1,102)	(93)	(259)	(29)	(24)	(2,761)	(63)	(4,659)	-	(8,990)
Balance at 30 June 2024	25,162	215,322	56,193	105,786	143,397	11,028	31,720	22,799	1,164,825	244,069	2,020,301
Balance at 1 July 2024	25,162	215,322	56,193	105,786	143,397	11,028	31,720	22,799	1,164,825	244,069	2,020,301
Transfers to/from classes and other adjustments ^a	2	(459)	510	122	34	33	(39)	(64)	716	90	945
Additions	-	6,524	6,153	1,682	1,540	250	2,207	744	17,616	809	37,525
Revaluation movement	899	5,144	(3)	1,634	102	-	-	-	13,093	3,579	24,448
Disposals	-	(6)	(2,453)	(115)	(187)	(310)	(1,449)	-	(3,492)	-	(8,012)
Balance at 30 June 2025	26,063	226,525	60,400	109,109	144,886	11,001	32,439	23,479	1,192,758	248,547	2,075,207
Accumulated depreciation and impairment losses											
Balance at 1 July 2023	-	131,931	36,196	39,523	115,007	7,527	13,752	18,450	783,936	-	1,146,322
Depreciation expense	-	2,492	2,981	2,373	2,048	406	2,384	739	19,180	-	32,603
Revaluation movement	-	5,929	-	1,360	222	-	-	-	16,999	-	24,510
Disposals	-	(1,131)	(91)	(206)	(32)	(10)	(1,717)	(44)	(4,971)	-	(8,202)
Balance at 30 June 2024	-	139,221	39,086	43,050	117,245	7,923	14,419	19,145	815,144	-	1,195,233
Balance at 1 July 2024	-	139,221	39,086	43,050	117,245	7,923	14,419	19,145	815,144	-	1,195,233
Transfers to/from classes and other adjustments ^a	-	(2,263)	(215)	(274)	(44)	-	6	(1)	1,453	-	(1,338)
Depreciation expense	-	2,748	3,755	2,327	2,114	404	2,355	684	20,926	-	35,313
Revaluation movement	-	5,776	-	564	50	-	-	-	8,795	-	15,185
Disposals	-	-	(2,058)	(78)	(67)	(310)	(891)	-	(3,995)	-	(7,399)
Balance at 30 June 2025	-	145,482	40,568	45,589	119,298	8,017	15,889	19,828	842,323	-	1,236,994
Carrying amounts											
At 30 June 2023	20,093	70,835	17,409	59,896	25,888	2,409	16,297	3,729	341,442	236,982	794,980
At 30 June 2024	25,162	76,101	17,107	62,736	26,152	3,105	17,301	3,654	349,681	244,069	825,068
At 30 June 2025	26,063	81,043	19,832	63,520	25,588	2,984	16,550	3,651	350,435	248,547	838,213

a To recognise the impact of transactions that have not been recognised on closing of fixed asset register last year.

Note 10: Property, plant and equipment continued

The useful lives of property, plant and equipment have been estimated as follows:

Asset class	Estimated useful life in years
Buildings	
Administrative buildings	20–40
Plant and Equipment	
Plant and field equipment	10
Radio equipment	5–10
Infrastructure	
Industrial fire equipment	45
Landscaping	44
Roads	10–100
Sewerage	64
Stream control	98
Water supply	60
Fencing	25–40
Vessels	
Engines	10
Hulls	15
Motor Vehicles	
Passenger (30% residual applied)	4
Utilities (40% residual applied)	5
Furniture and Fittings	
Furniture, computers and other office equipment	5
Visitor and Cultural assets	
Buildings/huts	35–65
Campsite, amenity areas and car parks	10–50
Roads (surface only)	25
Signs	10
Structures	25–100
Tracks	8

In accordance with *PBE IPSAS 17 Property, plant and equipment*, the useful lives of property, plant and equipment are assessed annually to determine whether they are appropriate, and the future depreciation charge is adjusted accordingly. In some circumstances, and particularly for the revalued assets, this may lead to instances where the estimated useful lives vary, but not materially, from the standard policy presented above.

Note 11: Intangible assets

All intangible assets, including those not yet in use, are measured at cost and are reviewed for impairment at balance date. Any impairment in the value of an intangible asset is included in the surplus or deficit.

Costs directly associated with the development of software for internal use by the Department are recognised as an intangible asset.

Computer software is the largest category within intangible assets and is amortised on a straight-line basis over a period of 5 to 7 years.

There are no restrictions over the title of the Department's intangible assets, nor are any intangible assets pledged as security for liabilities.

30/06/24 Actual \$000		30/06/25 Actual \$000
Cost or valuation		
32,743	Balance at 1 July	32,703
200	Additions	–
(240)	Corrections to prior year transactions	(36)
32,703	Balance at 30 June	32,667
Accumulated depreciation and impairment losses		
29,734	Balance at 1 July	30,841
1,107	Amortisation expense	938
30,841	Balance at 30 June	31,779
1,862	Carrying amount as at 30 June	888

Note 12: Employee entitlements

Short-term employee entitlements

Employee entitlements expected to be settled within 12 months of balance date are measured at nominal values based on accrued entitlements at current rates of pay. These include salaries and wages accrued up to balance date, accrued annual leave at balance date, long-service and retirement leave entitlements expected to be settled within 12 months, and sick leave.

Other employee entitlements include accrued annual leave, time off in lieu, vested long-service leave and a provision for sick leave.

30/06/24 Actual \$000		30/06/25 Actual \$000
Current portion		
9,413	Accrued salaries and wages	4,335
3,447	Long-service and retirement leave	3,500
20,698	Other employee entitlements	21,196
33,558	Total employee entitlements (current portion)	29,031

Note 12: Employee entitlements continued

Long-term employee entitlements

Employee entitlements due to be settled beyond 12 months of balance date in which the employee renders the related service, such as long-service leave and retirement leave, are calculated on an actuarial basis. The calculations are based on likely future entitlements accruing to staff based on years of service, years to entitlement, the likelihood that staff will reach the point of entitlement, contractual entitlement information and the present value of the estimated future cash flows.

The measurement of long-service and retirement leave obligations depends on factors that are determined on an actuarial basis using several assumptions. Two main assumptions used in calculating this liability are the salary growth factor and the discount rate. Any changes in these assumptions will affect the carrying amount of the liability.

Discount rates and salary growth rates used in the actuarial valuation are as specified by the New Zealand Treasury for valuations of this type and are effective for valuations as at 30 June 2025.

30/06/24 Actual \$000		30/06/25 Actual \$000
Non-current portion		
12,402	Long-service and retirement leave	12,439
12,402	Total employee entitlements (non-current portion)	12,439

An increase in the discount rates used in the actuarial valuation has resulted in a decrease of \$0.03 million in the value of the long-service and retirement leave liability.

The demographic assumptions used are based on New Zealand population mortality and the experience of superannuation arrangements in New Zealand and Australia.

The table below shows the effect that varying the assumed rate of salary growth and discount rates has on the valuation result if all other assumptions are constant.

Key assumption	Liability assumptions \$000	
	1% below assumed	1% above assumed
Salary growth	-1,299	+1,506
Discount rates	+1,476	-1,255

Note 13: Provisions

The Department recognises a provision for future expenditure of uncertain amounts or timing where there is a present obligation (either legal or constructive) as a result of a past event, it is probable that expenditure will be required to settle the obligation and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation. Provisions are not recognised for future operating losses. Provisions are measured at the present value of the expenditures expected to be required to settle the obligation.

30/06/24 Actual \$000		30/06/25 Actual \$000
Current portion		
3,629	Environmental	2,757
10	Onerous contracts	440
4,738	ACC and Other Provisions	1,703
8,377	Total current portion	4,900
Non-current portion		
646	Environmental	1,203
213	Onerous contracts	–
859	Total non-current portion	1,203
9,236	Total provisions	6,103
Movements in provisions:		
Environmental		
2,975	Balance at 1 July	3,847
(808)	Provision utilised or reversed during the year	(1,541)
1,680	Provision made during the year	1,654
3,847	Balance at 30 June	3,960
Onerous contracts		
74	Balance at 1 July	223
(74)	Provision utilised or reversed during the year	(10)
223	Provision made during the year	227
223	Balance at 30 June	440
ACC and Other Provisions		
1,431	Balance at 1 July	5,166
(18)	Provision utilised or reversed during the year	(4,181)
3,753	Provision made during the year	718
5,166	Balance at 30 June	1,703
9,236	Total provisions	6,103

Note 13: Provisions continued

Below is a summary of the significant provisions.

Waikato-Tainui Waikato River Conservation Accord

Provision was made in the 2014/15 financial year for \$0.8 million as the Department's share of the costs associated with the obligations arising under the above accord. This was increased by a further \$1.4 million from 2017/18 to 2023/24, to reflect the work plan over the next 2 years. To date, net costs of \$0.6 million have been incurred against the provision.

Cleaning up contaminated sites

A provision of \$0.8 million was made in the 2019/20 financial year for remediation work at the Whakapapa Wastewater Treatment Plant to ensure resource consent compliance. This was increased by \$1.1 million in 2024/25, with \$0.8 million in net costs incurred to date.

Note 14: Taxpayers' funds

Taxpayers' funds represent the Crown's investment in the Department and are measured as the difference between total assets and total liabilities. Taxpayers' funds are disaggregated and classified as general funds and property, plant and equipment revaluation reserves. The latter relate to the revaluation of fixed assets to fair value.

30/06/24 Actual \$000		30/06/25 Actual \$000
General funds		
553,765	Balance at 1 July	545,912
26,781	Net surplus for the year	7,221
(19,198)	Capital repayments to the Crown	(33,896)
11,197	Capital injection from the Crown	6,691
(26,693)	Return of operating surplus to the Crown	(7,278)
60	Other movement	(10,035)
545,912	Balance at 30 June	508,615
Property, plant and equipment revaluation reserves		
393,521	Balance at 1 July	417,638
24,348	Revaluation gains	9,263
(231)	Other adjustments to revaluation reserve (Impairment – Cyclone assets)	–
417,638	Balance at 30 June	426,901
963,550	Total taxpayers' funds at 30 June	935,516
Property, plant and equipment revaluation reserves consist of:		
24,307	Land revaluation reserve	25,206
75,976	Buildings revaluation reserves	84,893
287,370	Visitor assets revaluation reserves	286,807
29,985	Other revaluation reserves	29,995
417,638	Total property, plant and equipment revaluation reserves	426,901

Note 15: Financial instruments

Financial instrument categories

The carrying amounts of financial assets and financial liabilities in each of the financial instrument categories are as follows.

30/06/24 Actual \$000		30/06/25 Actual \$000
Financial assets measured at amortised cost		
58,614	Cash	4,767
10,128	Trade and other receivables	13,364
209,526	Debtor Crown	176,450
278,268	Total financial assets measured at amortised cost	194,581
Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost		
45,636	Trade and other payables	30,947
45,636	Total financial liabilities measured at amortised cost	30,947

Financial instrument risks

Financial assets are initially measured at fair value plus transaction costs.

The Department's activities expose it to a variety of financial instrument risks, including credit risk and liquidity risk. The Department has a series of policies to manage the risks associated with financial instruments and seeks to minimise exposure from financial instruments. These policies do not allow any transactions that are speculative in nature.

Credit risk

Credit risk is the risk that a third party will default on its obligation to the Department, causing the Department to incur a loss. In the normal course of its business, credit risk arises from debtors and deposits with banks.

The Department is only permitted to deposit funds with Westpac New Zealand, a registered bank, and enter into foreign exchange forward contracts with the New Zealand Debt Management Office. These entities have high credit ratings. For its other financial instruments, the Department does not have significant concentrations of credit risk.

The Department's maximum credit exposure for each class of financial instrument is represented by the total carrying amount of cash and net receivables. No collateral is held as security against these financial instruments, including those instruments that are overdue or impaired.

Note 15: Financial instruments continued

Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that the Department will encounter difficulty raising liquid funds to meet commitments as they fall due.

In meeting its liquidity requirements, the Department closely monitors its forecast cash requirements with expected cash drawdowns from the New Zealand Debt Management Office. The Department maintains a target level of available cash to meet liquidity requirements.

The following table analyses the Department’s financial liabilities that will be settled based on the remaining period at the statement of financial position date to the contractual maturity date. The amounts disclosed are the contractual undiscounted cash flows.

	Less than 6 months \$000	Between 6 months and 1 year \$000	Between 1 and 5 years \$000	Over 5 years \$000
Liquidity risks				
2024				
Trade and other payables	45,636	–	–	–
2025				
Trade and other payables	30,947	–	–	–

Note 16: Related party transactions and key management personnel

The Department is a wholly owned entity of the Crown. The Crown significantly influences the roles of the Department as well as being its major source of revenue.

The Department enters into transactions with other government departments, Crown entities and state-owned enterprises on an arm's length basis. Those transactions that occur within a normal supplier or client relationship, on terms and conditions that are no more or less favourable than those that it is reasonable to expect the Department would have adopted if dealing with that entity at arm's length in the same circumstance, are not disclosed as related party transactions.

Key management personnel compensation comprises the Director-General of the Department and the Senior Leadership Team. Total compensation includes long-service leave and retirement leave.

30/06/24 Actual		30/06/25 Actual
\$3,035,704	Salaries and other short-term benefits	\$2,718,238
\$90,771	Other long-term benefits	\$102,492
\$3,126,475	Total key management personnel compensation	\$2,820,730
9	Total full-time equivalent staff	7

The Deputy Director-General Treaty Relationships of the Department is a Trustee for Save the Kiwi Trust and Wingspan Birds of Prey Trust. An amount of \$5,661,135 was paid to Save the Kiwi Trust (2024: \$6,714,455) and no balance is outstanding at year end. An amount of \$2,459 was paid to Wingspan Birds of Prey Trust (2024: nil) and no balance is outstanding at year end.

No other transactions were carried out with related parties.

Note 17: Capital management

The Department's capital is its equity (or taxpayers' funds), which comprises general funds and revaluation reserves. Equity is represented by net assets. The Department manages its revenues, expenses, assets, liabilities and general financial dealings prudently. The Department's equity is largely managed as a by-product of managing income, expenses, assets, liabilities and compliance with the Government's Budget processes and with instructions issued by the New Zealand Treasury. The objective of managing the Department's equity is to ensure that the Department effectively achieves its goals and objectives for which it has been established, while remaining a going concern.

Note 18: Events after balance date

On 30 October 2024 the High Court delivered a judgment in the *Stafford v Attorney-General* litigation, in which it found the Crown had breached its fiduciary duties relating to land transactions in the South Island in the 1840s. On 27 August 2025, the High Court issued a further and final judgment on relief (legal remedies). Taken together, the legal implication of these judgments is that:

- (a) land owned by the Crown (not including land held by Crown entities or State-Owned Enterprises) within the Spain Award area is held on trust for the benefit of the customary owners;
- (b) the Crown must pay monetary compensation in lieu of land (current market value) that is subject to the trust but which the Crown no longer holds;
- (c) the Crown must also pay monetary compensation for lost use of the relevant land since 1845 (as proxied by rental proceeds); and
- (d) simple interest on the compensation under (c) above.

The judgment did not specify the parcels of land subject to the trust and the precise quantum of the compensation payable to the plaintiff. Both parties have requested any final declaration in relation to remedies, including quantum, is deferred until 31 October 2025 to enable the negotiation of a settlement. In addition, the High Court has granted an interim order prohibiting access to the information and details relating to the remedies until 31 October 2025.

The Attorney-General is the Minister responsible for the negotiation and is supported by the Minister for Māori-Crown Relations. Negotiations remain confidential to the parties.

These financial statements currently include land and improvements that are subject to the litigation and the negotiations. Any settlement package is expected to include a financial component and some land and improvements. However, the exact composition of the settlement package in terms of these components remains uncertain and will depend on the outcome of the negotiations. There is a possibility that a write-off of land and improvements may need to be recognised in the future once the negotiations are concluded. (2024: none.)

Ngā āpitihanga whakahaere pūtea ehara nō te tari

Non-departmental financial schedules

Schedule of revenue – Crown as administered by the Department of Conservation

for the year ended 30 June 2025

30/06/24			30/06/25	30/06/25	30/06/25	30/06/26
Actual \$000		Note	Actual \$000	Budget ^a \$000	Revised Budget ^a \$000	Forecast ^a \$000
Revenue						
26,876	Concessions, leases and licences	1	29,725	26,337	26,876	27,772
11,488	Other operational revenue		3,186	1,329	3,614	3,624
38,364	Total revenue		32,911	27,666	30,490	31,396

a The statement of accounting policies provides explanations of these figures, which are unaudited.

Non-departmental income is administered by the Department on behalf of the Crown. Because this income is not established by the Department or earned in the production of the Department's outputs, it is not reported in the departmental financial statements.

Schedule of expenses – Crown as administered by the Department of Conservation
for the year ended 30 June 2025

30/06/24		30/06/25	30/06/25	30/06/25	30/06/26
Actual \$000		Actual \$000	Budget ^a \$000	Revised Budget ^a \$000	Forecast ^a \$000
Vote Conservation					
61,873	Appropriation for non-departmental output classes ^b	56,832	75,070	63,197	42,361
39,615	Appropriation for non-departmental other expenses	15,675	20,635	40,760	6,734
12,842	Goods and services tax input on appropriations	7,334	10,167	12,124	2,604
114,330	Total expenses	79,841	105,872	116,081	51,699

a The statement of accounting policies provides explanations of these figures, which are unaudited.

b Includes multi-category expenses and expenses in multi-year appropriations.

The schedule of expenses – Crown as administered by the Department of Conservation summarises non-departmental expenses that the Department administers on behalf of the Crown. Further details are provided in the statement of expenses and capital expenditure incurred against appropriations on [pages 156 to 158](#).

Schedule of assets – Crown as administered by the Department of Conservation

as at 30 June 2025

30/06/24			30/06/25	30/06/25	30/06/25	30/06/26
Actual \$000		Note	Actual \$000	Budget ^a \$000	Revised Budget ^a \$000	Forecast ^a \$000
Current assets						
96,233	Cash		29,400	17,861	96,233	96,233
1,200	Prepayments		254	200	200	200
14,382	Trade and other receivables		15,572	44,517	27,079	23,259
17,099	Non-current assets held for sale	2	19,198	–	–	–
128,914	Total current assets		64,424	62,578	123,512	119,692
Non-current assets						
–	Investment in Te Kāhui Tupua		113,785	–	113,000	113,000
69,039	Investment in Te Urewera		69,039	70,000	70,000	70,000
9,069,952	Property, plant and equipment	3	8,967,968	8,372,731	8,945,439	8,954,102
9,138,991	Total non-current assets		9,150,792	8,442,731	9,128,439	9,137,102
9,267,905	Total assets		9,215,216	8,505,309	9,251,951	9,256,794

a The statement of accounting policies provides explanations of these figures, which are unaudited.

Schedule of liabilities – Crown as administered by the Department of Conservation

as at 30 June 2025

30/06/24			30/06/25	30/06/25	30/06/25	30/06/26
Actual \$000		Note	Actual \$000	Budget ^a \$000	Revised Budget ^a \$000	Forecast ^a \$000
Current liabilities						
6,389	Trade and other payables		3,096	4,205	4,205	4,206
619	Revenue in advance		613	–	–	–
1,639	Provisions	4	878	–	–	–
8,647	Total current liabilities		4,587	4,205	4,205	4,206
8,647	Total liabilities		4,587	4,205	4,205	4,206

a The statement of accounting policies provides explanations of these figures, which are unaudited.

Schedule of commitments – Crown as administered by the Department of Conservation
as at 30 June 2025

30/06/24 Actual \$000		30/06/25 Actual \$000
	<i>Capital commitments</i>	
807	Property, plant and equipment	–
807	Total capital commitments	–
	<i>Commitments by term</i>	
807	Less than 1 year	–
807	Total commitments	–

Expenses yet to be incurred on non-cancellable contracts that have been entered into on or before balance date are disclosed as commitments to the extent that there are equally unperformed obligations.

Schedule of contingent liabilities and contingent assets – Crown as administered by the Department of Conservation

as at 30 June 2025

30/06/24 Actual \$000		30/06/25 Actual \$000
Quantifiable liabilities		
94,000	Fulfill make good clause of Ruapehu Alpine Lifts' concession	94,000
242	Other quantifiable proceedings and potential claims	727
94,242	Total contingent liabilities	94,727

As at 30 June 2025, there were 20 claims against the Crown, 16 of which are not currently quantifiable (2024: 23 claims of which 20 were not quantifiable). Contingent liabilities are disclosed unless the possibility of an outflow of resources embodying economic benefits or service potential is remote.

In June 2023, one of the Department's concessionaires, Ruapehu Alpine Lifts Limited (RAL), went into liquidation and then into receivership by the Crown. The concession agreement requires RAL to make good the ski infrastructure on the mountain. However, RAL cannot fulfil the make good clause of their concession agreement. The concession was transferred to Pure Tūroa Limited on 5 April 2024 to operate the Tūroa Ski Area. The Crown agreed that Pure Tūroa Limited will not be responsible for removing existing infrastructure at the termination or expiry of its concession. The Department will hold the liability to make good the ski infrastructure at the termination or expiry of Pure Tūroa Limited's concession to an unknown future date. In May 2025, management of the Whakapapa Ski Area was transferred to Whakapapa Holdings 2024 Limited under a new 10-year concession. However, two judicial reviews have been initiated – one by the Ko Tūwharetoa Te Iwi Charitable Trust and another by representatives of Te Patutokotoko – seeking to quash these concessions. This presents a significant contingent liability for the Department, as a successful challenge could leave the ski fields without lawful operators, jeopardise Crown investments and reignite concerns over abandoned infrastructure.

Whilst concessionaires remain operating on the mountain and the ski lift remains in use, the make good provision will remain contingent. These uncertainties have meant that the Department has recognised a contingent liability for the make good provision as at 30 June 2025. The requirement to make good has been estimated in a desktop valuation to be between \$69 million and \$119 million.

There were no contingent assets as at 30 June 2025 (2024: nil).

Statement of trust monies
for the year ended 30 June 2025

	As at 30/06/24 \$000	Contributions \$000	Distributions \$000	Net Interest \$000	As at 30/06/25 \$000
Bonds/Deposits Trust	10,966	188	(149)	416	11,421
Conservation Project Trust	1,632	751	(788)	73	1,668
National Parks Trust	41	–	–	2	43
NZ Walkway Trust	3	–	–	–	3
Retention Money (Construction Contracts Act 2002)	–	1,011	–	–	1,011
Total	12,642	1,950	(937)	491	14,146

The Department has delegated authority to operate these trust accounts under section 66 and section 67 of the Public Finance Act 1989.

Trust accounts are mainly used to hold bonds and deposits from operators working on public conservation land, including those contracted by the Department. These are repaid when the operators have been cleared of all obligations.

Te tauāki kaupapa here kaute

Statement of accounting policies

Reporting entity

These non-departmental financial schedules present financial information on public funds managed by the Department on behalf of the Crown.

These non-departmental balances are consolidated into the Financial Statements of the Government of New Zealand for the year ended 30 June 2025. For a full understanding of the Crown's financial position and the results of its operations and cashflows for the year, refer to the Financial Statements of the Government of New Zealand for the year ended 30 June 2025.

Reporting period

The reporting period for these financial schedules is for the year ended 30 June 2025. The forecast financial statements are for the year ending 30 June 2026.

The financial schedules were authorised for issue by the Director-General of the Department on 29 September 2025.

Basis of preparation

The financial schedules have been prepared on a going-concern basis and in accordance with the requirements of the Public Finance Act 1989, which include the requirement to comply with New Zealand generally accepted accounting practice (NZ GAAP), and the New Zealand Treasury instructions. The Department has applied the *Tier 1 Public Benefit Entity International Public Sector Accounting Standards (PBE IPSAS)* in preparing the 30 June 2025 financial schedules.

The statements have been prepared on a historical cost basis unless otherwise stated. The accounting policies have been applied consistently to all periods presented in these financial statements.

These financial statements are presented in New Zealand dollars, and all values are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars (\$000). The functional currency of the Department is New Zealand dollars.

Budget and forecast figures

The budget, revised budget and forecast figures have been prepared in accordance with NZ GAAP using accounting policies that are consistent with those adopted in preparing these financial schedules. They have also been prepared in accordance with *PBE Financial Reporting Standard 42: Prospective Financial Statements*. The budget, revised budget and forecast financial schedules are not subject to audit.

The budget figures for 2024/25 are those included in *The Estimates of Appropriations for the Government of New Zealand for the year ending 30 June 2025*. The revised budget figures for 2024/25 are those included in *The Supplementary Estimates of Appropriations for the Government of New Zealand for the year ending 30 June 2025*, adjusted for any transfers under 26A of the Public Finance Act.

The forecast figures for 2025/26 are those included in *The Estimates of Appropriations for the Government of New Zealand for the year ending 30 June 2026*. The forecasts have been prepared in accordance with the Public Finance Act 1989 and reflect the existing government and ministerial policies existing at that time, in addition to the Department's purpose, strategic intentions and activities based on the estimates and assumptions that might occur in the 2025/26 year.

Goods and services tax

All items in the non-departmental schedules, including appropriation statements, are stated exclusive of goods and services tax (GST) except for receivables and payables, which are stated on a GST-inclusive basis. In accordance with instructions issued by the New Zealand Treasury, GST is returned on revenue received on behalf of the Crown, where applicable. However, an input tax deduction is not claimed on non-departmental expenditure. Instead, the amount of GST applicable to non-departmental expenditure is recognised as a separate expense and eliminated against GST revenue on consolidation of the Financial Statements of the Government.

Trade and other receivables

Short-term trade debtors and other receivables are recorded at their face value, less any provision for impairment. The Crown applies the simplified expected credit loss model of recognised lifetime expected credit losses for receivables. In measuring expected credit losses, short-term receivables have been assessed on a collective basis based on the days past due.

The carrying amount of the asset is reduced through the use of a provision for impairment account and the amount of the loss is recognised in surplus or deficit. Overdue receivables that are renegotiated are reclassified as current (that is, not past due).

Accounting policy for impairment of receivables

Impairment of a receivable is only recognised when there is objective evidence that the amount due would not be fully collected. While trade and other receivables are subject to the expected credit loss requirement of PBE IPSAS 41, no additional impairment provision was provided because the impact was trivial.

Trade and other payables

Short-term trade creditors and other payables are recorded at their face value.

He tuhinga mō ngā āpitihanga mō te tau i mutu ake i te 30 Pipiri 2025

Notes to the schedules for the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 1: Revenue

The Department collects revenue on behalf of the Crown. This is mainly from concession fees, rent and leases, and licences from commercial users of Crown-owned land. Revenue is recognised when earned, reported in the current financial period and treated as exchange transactions.

30/06/24 Actual \$000		30/06/25 Actual \$000
5,361	Tourism occupations	6,538
5,452	Guiding	6,671
4,252	Aircraft landings	4,852
2,756	Telecommunications	1,949
1,067	Other occupations	1,376
1,647	Grazing	1,585
1,359	Ski areas	1,892
1,500	Boating	1,102
1,270	Residential/recreational	1,374
407	Vehicle transport	330
991	Easements	1,135
355	Filming	339
136	Miscellaneous	232
165	Extractions fees	118
158	Sporting and special events	232
26,876	Total concessions, leases and licences	29,725

Note 2: Non-current assets held for sale

Non-current assets held for sale are classified as held for sale if their carrying amount will be recovered principally through a sale transaction, rather than through continued use. Non-current assets held for sale (including those that are part of a disposal group) are not depreciated, amortised or revalued while they are classified as held for sale. This accounting treatment is in line with the New Zealand Treasury guidance.

Total non-current assets held for sale mainly comprise land that has been identified for settlement of Te Tiriti o Waitangi | Treaty of Waitangi claims.

30/06/24 Actual \$000		30/06/25 Actual \$000
17,099	Land	19,198
17,099	Total non-current assets held for sale	19,198

Note 3: Property, plant and equipment

The carrying values of all assets are assessed annually.

For revalued assets (Land, Buildings and Infrastructure), a revaluation change is recognised against the revaluation reserve for that class of assets. Where this results in a debit balance in the revaluation reserve, the balance is recognised in surplus or deficit.

Depreciation is provided on a straight-line basis at rates that will write off assets, less their estimated residual value, over their remaining useful life. Land and Cultural assets are not depreciated.

	Land \$000	Buildings \$000	Infrastructure \$000	Cultural assets \$000	Total \$000
Cost or valuation					
Balance at 1 July 2023	8,446,909	16,244	26,064	5,100	8,494,317
Additions	9,415	29,642	2,144	–	41,201
Revaluation movement	573,561	125	827	–	574,513
Disposals	(473)	(34,895)	–	–	(35,368)
Assets transferred to held for sale	(59)	–	–	–	(59)
Balance at 30 June 2024	9,029,353	11,116	29,035	5,100	9,074,604
Balance at 1 July 2024	9,029,353	11,116	29,035	5,100	9,074,604
Additions	1,365	2,610	4,637	–	8,612
Revaluation movement	(3,404)	(474)	473	–	(3,405)
Disposals	(4,814)	(3,102)	(5,641)	–	(13,557)
Assets transferred	(93,239)	74	(75)	–	(93,240)
Balance at 30 June 2025	8,929,261	10,224	28,429	5,100	8,973,014
Accumulated depreciation and impairment losses					
Balance at 1 July 2023	–	1,431	2,745	–	4,176
Depreciation expense	–	12	276	–	288
Revaluation movement	–	82	106	–	188
Balance at 30 June 2024	–	1,525	3,127	–	4,652
Balance at 1 July 2024	–	1,525	3,127	–	4,652
Depreciation expense	–	13	278	–	291
Revaluation movement	–	38	65	–	103
Balance at 30 June 2025	–	1,576	3,470	–	5,046
Carrying amounts					
At 30 June 2023	8,446,909	14,813	23,319	5,100	8,490,141
At 30 June 2024	9,029,353	9,591	25,908	5,100	9,069,952
At 30 June 2025	8,929,261	8,648	24,959	5,100	8,967,968

Note 3: Property, plant and equipment continued

Land

Land is initially recognised at cost and is revalued annually based on rateable valuations provided by Quotable Value Limited in accordance with the Rating Valuations Act 1998. Individual land lots are updated every 3 years (triennial rateable valuations) using a mass-appraisal process.

Where land cannot be matched to an assessment, the valuation is obtained using an average per-hectare rate. Every 5 years, the Department obtains a certification by an independent registered valuer that the valuation methodology applied and calculations of the valuation are a reasonable proxy for fair value. The last independent valuation was conducted for the year ended 30 June 2025.

Land lots not subject to revaluations based on the triennial rateable valuations are revalued by applying an index determined using regional and district sales data for comparable land types provided by CoreLogic New Zealand.

The use and disposal of Crown land managed by the Department is determined by legislation. The main Acts are the Reserves Act 1977, Conservation Act 1987 and National Parks Act 1980. These Acts impose restrictions on the disposal of surplus areas and the use of reserves, conservation areas and national parks. Crown land is not subject to mortgages or other charges. Specific areas may be included in Treaty settlements if the Crown decides to offer those areas to claimants.

Buildings

Buildings were valued at fair value by using the depreciated replacement cost method and price indices collated by Stats NZ as at 30 June 2025.

Infrastructure

Crown Infrastructure assets were valued at fair value using price indices effective as at 30 June 2025.

Cultural assets

Cultural assets are stated at fair value. These assets are not depreciated and were last valued as at 30 June 2012. Historic buildings used for rental activities are stated at fair value using depreciated replacement costs. This valuation remains in effect as at 30 June 2025.

Heritage assets

The Department has a number of Heritage assets under its care due to the historical significance of these assets to New Zealand. The cost of Heritage assets cannot be reliably measured given the nature of these assets and, accordingly, they are not able to be recognised on the schedule of assets.

The useful lives of property, plant and equipment have been estimated as follows:

Asset class	Estimated useful life in years
Buildings	
Administrative buildings	20–40
Infrastructure	
Stream control	98
Roads	10–100
Structures	25–100

Note 4: Provisions

The Crown recognises a provision for future expenditure of uncertain amount or timing when there is a present obligation (either legal or constructive) as a result of a past event; it is probable that an outflow of future economic benefits will be required to settle the obligation; and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation. Provisions are not recognised for future operating losses.

Provisions are measured at the present value of the expenditures expected to be required to settle the obligation using a pre-tax discount rate that reflects current market assessments of the time value of money and the risks specific to the obligation. The increase in the provision due to the passage of time is recognised as a finance cost.

Environmental provisions

This is the estimated cost of rectifying the environmental damage in the following affected or contaminated sites that the Crown has an obligation to remedy:

- The tailings and tunnels in numerous former goldmine sites in the Coromandel Peninsula that may have unsafe access and/or may leach contaminants into waterways in the surrounding areas.
- Former landfill sites in the King Country region at Mōkau, Maniaiti/Benneydale and Pureora.
- Several abandoned coalmines, both underground and open cast, within the Maniaiti/Benneydale, Māhoenui, Pirongia, Waitawheta and Ōhura coalfields where there are risks of contamination from treatment ponds, tailing dams and underground drives.

Transfer of concession revenue

A provision of \$0.2 million for concession revenue is payable to iwi relating to land transferred to them under Treaty settlements.

Note 5: Events after balance date

On 30 October 2024 the High Court delivered a judgment in the *Stafford v Attorney-General* litigation, in which it found the Crown had breached its fiduciary duties relating to land transactions in the South Island in the 1840s. On 27 August 2025, the High Court issued a further and final judgment on relief (legal remedies). Taken together, the legal implication of these judgments is that:

- (a) land owned by the Crown (not including land held by Crown entities or State-Owned Enterprises) within the Spain Award area is held on trust for the benefit of the customary owners;
- (b) the Crown must pay monetary compensation in lieu of land (current market value) that is subject to the trust but which the Crown no longer holds;
- (c) the Crown must also pay monetary compensation for lost use of the relevant land since 1845 (as proxied by rental proceeds); and
- (d) simple interest on the compensation under (c) above.

The judgment did not specify the parcels of land subject to the trust and the precise quantum of the compensation payable to the plaintiff. Both parties have requested any final declaration in relation to remedies, including quantum, is deferred until 31 October 2025 to enable the negotiation of a settlement. In addition, the High Court has granted an interim order prohibiting access to the information and details relating to the remedies until 31 October 2025.

The Attorney-General is the Minister responsible for the negotiation and is supported by the Minister for Māori-Crown Relations.

Negotiations remain confidential to the parties.

These financial statements currently include land and improvements that are subject to the litigation and the negotiations. Any settlement package is expected to include a financial component and some land and improvements. However, the exact composition of the settlement package in terms of these components remains uncertain and will depend on the outcome of the negotiations. There is a possibility that a write-off of land and improvements may need to be recognised in the future once the negotiations are concluded. (2024: none.)

06

**He tauākī i ngā
whakapaunga, tae ana ki
te whakapaunga pūrawa
mō ngā whakaaetanga
whakapau pūtea**

**Statements of expenses
and capital expenditure
for appropriations**

Ētahi mōhiotanga ahumoni tāpiri

Additional financial information

Statement of expenses and capital expenditure incurred against appropriations

for the year ended 30 June 2025

30/06/24		30/06/25	30/06/25	30/06/25	Location of end-of-year performance information
Actual \$000	Appropriation title	Actual \$000	Budget ^a \$000	Revised Budget ^a \$000	
	Departmental output expenses				
732	Search and rescue activities PLA	691	668	691	Page 97
732	Total departmental output expenses	691	668	691	
	Departmental capital expenditure				
39,370	Property, plant and equipment and intangible assets	37,489	43,088	43,088	
	Non-departmental output expenses				
3,604	Community Conservation Fund	18,284	17,021	21,449	
934	Management services – natural and historic places	933	972	972	
45	Moutoa Gardens/Pākaitore	45	45	45	
4,583	Total non-departmental output expenses	19,262	18,038	22,466	
	Non-departmental other expenses				
–	Compensation payments	–	60	60	
288	Depreciation – Crown property, plant and equipment	290	387	387	
–	Impairment of Crown property, plant and equipment	533	–	8,400	
–	Impairment of public conservation land ^b	1,600	50	7,748	
35,561	Loss on disposal of Crown property, plant and equipment	10,867	14,171	20,162	
454	Mātauranga Māori fund	810	547	847	
1,086	Payment of rates on properties for concessionaires	928	1,464	1,464	
548	Provision for bad and doubtful debts	7	100	2,000	
437	Subscriptions to international organisations	503	550	550	
1,000	Vesting of reserves	1,496	3,105	6,639	
241	Waikaremoana lakebed lease	241	241	241	
39,615	Total non-departmental other expenses	17,275	20,675	48,498	

Continued on next page

Statement of expenses and capital expenditure incurred against appropriations continued

30/06/24		30/06/25	30/06/25	30/06/25	Location of
Actual		Actual	Budget ^a	Revised	end-of-year
\$000		\$000	\$000	Budget ^a	performance
				\$000	information
Non-departmental capital expenditure					
–	Crown land acquisitions	–	1,000	1,000	
2,702	Hump Ridge Great Walk	1,884	2,098	2,435	
400	Milford Flood Protection	2,754	800	3,200	
–	Pike River memorial and museum	–	921	–	
311	Purchase and development of reserves	–	1,800	7,432	
3,413	Total non-departmental capital expenditure	4,638	6,619	14,067	
Multi-category expenses and capital expenditure (MCA)					
Identification and implementation of protection for natural and historic places MCA					
<i>Non-departmental output expenses</i>					
3,412	Legal protection Queen Elizabeth II National Trust	3,412	3,412	3,412	
68	Nature Heritage Fund	42	6,405	124	
–	South Island Landless Natives Act	–	4,495	–	
5,756	Support for Māori land	7,406	9,914	7,414	
<i>Non-departmental capital expenditure</i>					
1,040	Nature Heritage Fund land purchases	162	2,346	1,696	
10,276	Total identification and implementation of protection for natural and historic places MCA	11,022	26,572	12,646	
Provincial Growth Fund – Conservation projects MCA					
<i>Non-departmental other expenses</i>					
–	Regional projects	–	10	10	
<i>Non-departmental capital expenditure</i>					
20,311	Infrastructure projects	2,610	2,690	3,743	
20,311	Total Provincial Growth Fund – Conservation projects MCA	2,610	2,700	3,753	
Services for Conservation MCA					
<i>Departmental output expenses</i>					
44,315	Conservation with the community	40,230	52,074	44,576	Page 94
2,731	Crown contribution to regional pest management	2,833	2,807	2,534	Page 90
12,460	Management of historic heritage	14,281	12,764	19,125	Page 91
308,240	Management of natural heritage	314,869	333,059	290,703	Page 89
224,370	Management of recreational opportunities	222,652	222,282	248,255	Page 93
9,059	Policy advice	8,987	9,741	9,313	Page 95
10,972	Statutory planning, services to Ministers and statutory bodies	14,329	13,925	15,786	Page 96
612,147	Total Services for Conservation MCA	618,181	646,652	630,292	
642,734	Total multi-category expenses and capital expenditure	631,813	675,924	646,691	
730,447	Total annual and forecast permanent appropriations	711,168	765,012	775,501	

Continued on next page

Statement of expenses and capital expenditure incurred against appropriations continued

30/06/24		30/06/25	30/06/25	30/06/25	Location of
Actual	Appropriation title	Actual	Budget ^a	Revised	end-of-year
\$000		\$000	\$000	Budget ^a	performance
				\$000	information
	Multi-year appropriations (MYAs)				
	Departmental output expenses				
74,115	Jobs for Nature (MYA)	32,248	28,108	33,372	Page 98
74,115	Total department output expenses	32,248	28,108	33,372	
	Non-departmental output expenses				
40,582	Jobs for Nature (MYA)	15,746	17,764	18,748	
399	Mount Ruapehu Ski Fields Infrastructure (MYA)	312	4,500	380	
7,073	Predator Free New Zealand (MYA)	10,652	10,542	10,653	
48,054	Total non-department output expenses	26,710	32,806	29,781	
852,616	Total annual and permanent appropriations and multi-year appropriations	770,126	825,926	838,654	

- a The statement of accounting policies provides explanations of these figures, which are unaudited.
- b These amounts are excluded from the schedule of expenses on [page 142](#) because they are recorded as a change in the Crown asset revaluation reserve.

Actual expenditure for an individual category may exceed the revised budget for that category but must not exceed the revised budget for the multi-category.

Expenses and capital expenditure incurred in excess of appropriation

The Department does not have any expenses or capital expenditure incurred in excess of appropriation during 2024/25 (2024: nil).

Expenses and capital expenditure incurred without, or in excess of, authority

The Department does not have any expenses or capital expenditure incurred without, or in excess of, authority during 2024/25 (2024: nil).

Statement of departmental capital injections

for the year ended 30 June 2025

30/06/24		30/06/25	30/06/25	30/06/25
Actual \$000		Actual \$000	Budget ^a \$000	Revised Budget ^a \$000
11,197	Capital contributions	6,691	8,065	12,128
11,197	Department of Conservation – capital injection	6,691	8,065	12,128

a The statement of accounting policies provides explanations of these figures, which are unaudited.

Asset transfers to the Department from Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) are presented as a capital injection from the Crown. They are intra-departmental fencing assets transferred during the year. The Department received no fencing assets from LINZ during the current financial year.

The Department's capital is its equity, which comprises taxpayers' funds and revaluation reserves and is represented by net assets. The Department manages its equity to ensure that it effectively achieves the goals and objectives for which it has been established, whilst remaining a going concern. A capital injection is sought when the Department identifies that it does not have sufficient resources to achieve this objective.

Summary of output class expenditure by output

for the year ended 30 June 2025

30/06/24 Actual \$000		30/06/25 Actual \$000
	Vote: Conservation	
	<i>Management of natural heritage</i>	
15,084	Landscape integrity	16,253
11,084	Taonga and iconic species	10,971
26,444	Pressure-led work	54,107
102,784	Land and water obligations	49,556
74,115	Jobs for Nature	32,248
64,062	Species persistence	97,079
88,781	Ecosystems conservation	86,903
382,354	Total management natural heritage	347,117
12,460	<i>Management of historic heritage</i>	14,281
12,460	Total management of historic heritage	14,281
	<i>Management of recreational opportunities</i>	
59,667	More visitors to iconic destinations	49,941
55,556	More New Zealanders enjoy gateway destinations	58,071
33,621	Locally treasured destinations	36,267
34,780	More people enjoy the backcountry	35,045
40,747	Accessing public conservation land	43,328
224,371	Total management of recreational opportunities	222,652
	<i>Conservation with the community</i>	
18,017	Effective implementation of Treaty settlements	18,318
9,422	Conservation identity/values	10,953
16,504	Conservation activity achieved by others	10,644
372	Conservation investment in NZ prosperity	315
44,315	Total conservation with the community	40,230
	<i>Policy advice and ministerial servicing</i>	
9,059	Policy advice	8,987
10,972	Statutory planning, bodies, ministerial services	14,329
20,031	Total policy advice and ministerial servicing	23,316
2,731	Crown contribution to regional pest management	2,833
732	Search and rescue activities	691
686,994	Total output expenses	651,120
83	Unrealised remeasurement losses	(400)
687,077	Total expenses per statement of comprehensive revenue and expenses	650,720

07

**Te pūrongo a te kaitātari
kaute Motuhake**

Independent auditor's report



**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT
TO THE READERS OF DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION'S ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025**

The Auditor-General is the auditor of Department of Conservation (the Department). The Auditor-General has appointed me, Ed Loudon, using the staff and resources of KPMG, to carry out, on his behalf, the audit of:

- The annual financial statements of the Department that comprise the statement of financial position, statement of commitments, statement of contingent liabilities and contingent assets as at 30 June 2025, the statement of comprehensive revenue and expenses, statement of changes in taxpayers' funds, and statement of cash flows for the year ended on that date and the notes to the financial statements that include accounting policies and other explanatory information on [pages 112 to 140](#).
- The end-of-year performance information for appropriations of the Department for the year ended 30 June 2025 on [pages 79 to 98](#).
- The statements of expenses and capital expenditure of the Department for the year ended 30 June 2025 on [pages 156 to 160](#).
- The schedules of non-departmental activities which are managed by the Department on behalf of the Crown on [pages 141 to 154](#) that comprise:
 - the schedules of assets; liabilities; commitments; and contingent liabilities and assets as at 30 June 2025;
 - the schedules of expenses; and revenue for the year ended 30 June 2025; and
 - the notes to the schedules that include accounting policies and other explanatory information.
- The statement of trust monies for the year ended 30 June 2025 on [page 146](#).

Opinion

In our opinion:

- The annual financial statements of the Department:
 - fairly present, in all material respects:
 - its financial position as at 30 June 2025; and
 - its financial performance and cash flows for the year ended on that date; and
 - comply with generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand in accordance with Public Benefit Entity Reporting Standards.



- The end-of-year performance information for appropriations:
 - provides an appropriate and meaningful basis to enable readers to assess what has been achieved with each appropriation; determined in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand; and
 - fairly presents, in all material respects:
 - what has been achieved with each appropriation; and
 - the actual expenses or capital expenditure incurred in relation to each appropriation as compared with the expenses or capital expenditure that were appropriated or forecast to be incurred; and
 - complies with generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand in accordance with Public Benefit Entity Reporting Standards.
- The statements of expenses and capital expenditure have been prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the requirements of section 45A of the Public Finance Act 1989.
- The schedules of non-departmental activities which are managed by the Department on behalf of the Crown have been prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the Treasury Instructions. The schedules comprise:
 - the assets, liabilities, commitments, and contingent liabilities and assets as at 30 June 2025; and
 - expenses, and revenue for the year ended 30 June 2025.
- The statement of trust monies for the year ended 30 June 2025 have been prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the Treasury Instructions.

Our audit was completed on 29 September 2025. This is the date at which our opinion is expressed.

Basis for our opinion

We carried out our audit in accordance with the Auditor-General's Auditing Standards, which incorporate the Professional and Ethical Standards, the International Standards on Auditing (New Zealand), and New Zealand Auditing Standard 1 (Revised): *The Audit of Service Performance Information* issued by the New Zealand Auditing and Assurance Standards Board. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Responsibilities of the auditor* section of our report.

We have fulfilled our responsibilities in accordance with the Auditor-General's Auditing Standards.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.



Responsibilities of the Director-General for the information to be audited

The Director-General is responsible on behalf of the Department for preparing:

- Annual financial statements that fairly present the Department's financial position, financial performance, and its cash flows, and that comply with generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand.
- End-of-year performance information for appropriations that:
 - provides an appropriate and meaningful basis to enable readers to assess what has been achieved with each appropriation; determined in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand;
 - fairly presents what has been achieved with each appropriation;
 - fairly presents the actual expenses or capital expenditure incurred in relation to each appropriation as compared with the expenses or capital expenditure that were appropriated or forecast to be incurred; and
 - complies with generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand.
- Statements of expenses and capital expenditure of the Department, that are prepared in accordance with section 45A of the Public Finance Act 1989.
- Schedules of non-departmental activities, prepared in accordance with the Treasury Instructions, of the activities managed by the Department on behalf of the Crown.
- Statement of trust monies in accordance with the Treasury Instructions.

The Director-General is responsible for such internal control as is determined is necessary to enable the preparation of the information to be audited that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the information to be audited, the Director-General is responsible on behalf of the Department for assessing the Department's ability to continue as a going concern.

The Director-General's responsibilities arise from the Public Finance Act 1989.

Responsibilities of the auditor for the information to be audited

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the information we audited, as a whole, is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion.

Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit carried out in accordance with the Auditor-General's Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements are differences or omissions of amounts or disclosures,



and can arise from fraud or error. Misstatements are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the decisions of readers, taken on the basis of the information we audited.

For the budget information reported in the information we audited, our procedures were limited to checking that the information agreed to the Estimates of Appropriations for the Government of New Zealand for the Year Ending 30 June 2025. For the forecast financial information for the year ending 30 June 2026, our procedures were limited to checking to the best estimate financial forecast information based on the Budget Economic Fiscal Update for the year ending 30 June 2026.

We did not evaluate the security and controls over the electronic publication of the information we audited.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Auditor-General's Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. Also:

- We identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the information we audited, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- We obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Department's internal control.
- We evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Director-General.
- We evaluate whether the end-of-year performance information for appropriations:
 - provides an appropriate and meaningful basis to enable readers to assess what has been achieved with each appropriation. We make our evaluation by reference to generally accepted accounting practice in New Zealand; and
 - fairly presents what has been achieved with each appropriation.
- We evaluate whether the statements of expenses and capital expenditure, schedules of non-departmental activities, and statement of trust monies have been prepared in accordance with legislative requirements.
- We conclude on the appropriateness of the use of the going concern basis of accounting by the Director-General.
- We evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the information we audited, including the disclosures, and whether the information we audited represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.



We communicate with the Director-General regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Our responsibilities arise from the Public Audit Act 2001.

Other information

The Director-General is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises all of the information included in the annual report other than the information we audited and our auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the information we audited does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of audit opinion or assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information. In doing so, we consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the information we audited or our knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on our work, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Independence

We are independent of the Department in accordance with the independence requirements of the Auditor-General's Auditing Standards, which incorporate the independence requirements of Professional and Ethical Standard 1: *International Code of Ethics for Assurance Practitioners (including International Independence Standards)* (New Zealand) issued by the New Zealand Auditing and Assurance Standards Board.

Other than in our capacity as auditor, we have no relationship with, or interests, in the Department.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed Loudon'.

Ed Loudon
KPMG
On behalf of the Auditor-General
Wellington, New Zealand

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Ētahi atu kaupapa

Other matters

TĀPIRITANGA 1 | APPENDIX 1

He kuputaka o ngā kupu Māori me ngā kupu Moriori

Glossary of te reo Māori and te reo Moriori terms

awa	river
hapū	sub-tribe
hui	meeting
imi	tribe (Moriori)
iwi	tribe (Māori)
kai	food
kaimahi	worker, employee, staff
kaitiaki	guardian, trustee
kaitiakitanga	guardianship, stewardship, trusteeship, trustee
kākahu	cloak
kaumātua	elder
kawenata	covenant
kōiwi	human bone, corpse
mahi	work
mana whenua	authority over land or territory
marae	courtyard, the open area in front of the wharenuī, where formal greetings and discussions take place
mātauranga Māori	the body of knowledge originating from Māori ancestors, including the Māori world view, perspectives and cultural practices
maunga	mountain
motu	island
rangatahi	young people
rohe	district, area, territory, region
taonga	treasure; something considered to be of value, including objects, resources or ideas
te ao Māori	the Māori world view – acknowledging the interconnectedness and interrelationship of all living and non-living things

te Pūkenga Atawhai	Māori language and tikanga learning application
te reo Māori	the Māori language
te reo Moriori	the Moriori language
tiaki	protect, preserve, guard
tikanga	custom, correct protocol, traditions
tohu whenua	heritage sites that promote New Zealand's unique culture and connect visitors to stories and places
waharoa	a Māori carved entranceway, symbolic gateway
waka	canoe, vehicle
wānanga	(v) to meet and discuss, deliberate, consider; (n) meeting, discussion
Whāinga Amorangi	empowering our people programme
whakaweku	freshwater crayfish trap made from bundles of bracken fern
whānau	family
wharenuī	meeting house, communal house

TĀPIRITANGA 2 | APPENDIX 2

Ngā tūranga me ngā mahi ā-ture

Statutory roles and functions

The Department of Conservation Te Papa Atawhai (DOC) has a legislative mandate to protect and care for Aotearoa New Zealand's natural environment and cultural heritage. Our area of responsibility stretches from the Kermadec Islands in the north down to the subantarctic islands in the south.

Our statutory functions under the Conservation Act 1987 are to:

- manage, for conservation purposes, all land and other natural and historic resources held under the Conservation Act 1987
- preserve all indigenous freshwater fisheries, and protect recreational freshwater fisheries and freshwater fish habitats
- advocate for the conservation of natural and historic resources
- promote the benefits of the conservation of natural and historic resources, including the subantarctic islands, and international cooperation on matters relating to conservation
- promote educational and advocacy material relating to conservation
- foster the use of natural and historic resources for recreation, and allow their use for tourism to the extent that these uses are not inconsistent with the conservation of these resources
- advise the Minister of Conservation on matters relating to any of those functions or to conservation generally.

In total, we administer 28 Acts³⁴ and have a significant function under many more.

In addition to our legal requirements, we share 57,000 kilometres of boundaries with other landowners. This requires us to deliver on 'good neighbour' expectations and maintain public support in the communities we operate in.

Internationally, New Zealand is a party to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and has adopted the 2022 Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), which commits to protecting 30% of global land and ocean by 2030.

We are also New Zealand's lead agency for eight additional international agreements, including the:

- Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP)
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)
- Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)
- East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP)
- Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)
- International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- Ramsar Convention on Wetlands
- World Heritage Convention.

³⁴ This is based on existing legislation prior to 30 June 2025 and therefore does not include any legislation that is currently in progress.

We administer these Acts:	We have a function under these Acts:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canterbury Provincial Buildings Vesting Act 1928 • Conservation Act 1987 • Freedom Camping Act 2011 • Game Animal Council Act 2013 • Harbour Boards Dry Land Endowment Revesting Act 1991 • Hauraki Gulf Marine Park Act 2000 • Kaikōura (Te Tai o Marokura) Marine Management Act 2014 • Kapiti Island Public Reserve Act 1897 • Lake Wanaka Preservation Act 1973 • Marine Mammals Protection Act 1978 • Marine Reserves Act 1971 • Mount Egmont Vesting Act 1978 • National Parks Act 1980 • Native Plants Protection Act 1934 • Ngāi Tahu (Tūtaepatu Lagoon Vesting) Act 1998 • Queen Elizabeth the Second National Trust Act 1977 • Queenstown Reserves Vesting and Empowering Act 1971 • Reserves Act 1977 • Stewart Island Reserves Empowering Act 1976 • Subantarctic Islands Marine Reserves Act 2014 • Sugar Loaf Islands Marine Protected Area Act 1991 • Trade in Endangered Species Act 1989 • Tutae-Ka-Wetoweto Forest Act 2001 • Waitangi Endowment Act 1932–33 • Waitangi National Trust Board Act 1932 • Waitutu Block Settlement Act 1997 • Wild Animal Control Act 1977 • Wildlife Act 1953 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biosecurity Act 1993 • Crown Forest Assets Act 1989 • Crown Minerals Act 1991 • Crown Pastoral Land Act 1998 • Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017 • Fisheries Act 1996 • Forests Act 1949 • Land Act 1948 • Local Government Act 1974 • Local Government Act 2002 • Māori Land Amendment and Māori Land Claims Adjustment Act 1926 • Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Act 2011 • Natural and Built Environment Act 2023 • Public Works Act 1981 • Resource Management Act 1991 <p>Other legislation, such as the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990, Official Information Act 1982, Privacy Act 2020, Public Service Act 2020, and Search and Surveillance Act 2012, will also apply to the exercising of our powers and functions.</p> <p>We are required under section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987 to interpret and administer legislation to give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi the Treaty of Waitangi. We also implement commitments across 81 Acts for Te Tiriti o Waitangi Treaty of Waitangi settlements as at May 2025.</p>

TĀPIRITANGA 3 | APPENDIX 3

Te tautiaki taiao i tutuki i ētahi atu
Conservation achieved through others

Support for Māori land

This funding programme exists to protect the natural integrity of Māori land and preserve mātauranga Māori. The Ngā Whenua Rāhui Fund provides protection for Māori landowners with 25-year reviewable kawenata.

	2023/24 actual	2024/25 target	2024/25 actual	Results
Percentage of restoration programmes undertaken that meet the criteria for success set out in their programme plans	New for 2024/25	85%	100	Achieved ^a
Number of agreements with ungulate control work	New for 2024/25	26	24	Achieved ^b
Number of small mammal predator control operations undertaken that meet their targets for operational success	13	10	10	Achieved
Hectares of land receiving treatment for goats	174,155	140,161	113,843	Not achieved ^c
Number of other terrestrial animal pest operations undertaken that meet the criteria for success set out in their programme plans	2	2	1	Not achieved ^d
Number of acutely threatened species that will have improved security for one or more populations as a result of active species conservation programmes	7	5	8	Achieved
Number of agreements where biodiversity outcome monitoring is undertaken to measure the effectiveness of the agreement	13	6	37	Achieved
Number of new kawenata agreements that secure protection of one or more of the four national priorities for biodiversity protection on private land and/or add to a protected corridor or protected landscape	New for 2024/25	Reported at year end	8	Achieved ^e

- a This measure has been reinstated, as it best reflects the nature of the work associated with approved Ngā Whenua Rāhui kawenata agreements.
- b To reflect the changing focus of conservation priorities, the hectares receiving treatment for small mammal predators measure has been replaced by the number of agreements with ungulate control work. This measure is considered ‘achieved’ if performance is within 10% of the target.
- c The target was not achieved due to operational constraints, including a reduced buffer zone coverage and restricted access to certain lands, which limited control activities.
- d The target was not achieved due to weather deferring the completion of one biosecurity and wasp control programme.
- e To reflect the intention of kawenata agreements, the number of kawenata agreements measure has been reworded.

Community conservation funds

These funds are directed at practical, on-the-ground projects. These projects will maintain and restore the diversity of New Zealand’s natural heritage and allow more people to participate in recreation, enjoy and learn from historic places, and engage with and value the benefits of conservation.

	2023/24 actual	2024/25 target	2024/25 actual	Results
Percentage of projects funded that meet deed and reporting standards	100%	95%	97%	Achieved

Loss on disposal of Crown property, plant and equipment

This appropriation is limited to losses incurred on the disposal of Crown property, plant and equipment, or incurred as a result of correcting departmental land-holding records.

	2023/24 actual	2024/25 target	2024/25 actual	Results
The number of land-holding records corrected during the year	6	2–6	9	Achieved

Mount Ruapehu – management and removal of ski field infrastructure

This appropriation is intended to achieve the management and removal of ski field infrastructure on Mount Ruapehu, and subsequent restoration of the environment.

	2023/24 actual	2024/25 target	2024/25 actual	Results
Project milestones are met	Meets	Meets	Meets	Achieved

Predator Free New Zealand

This fund focuses on activities aimed at controlling and eradicating mammalian pests in New Zealand by 2050.

	2023/24 actual	2024/25 target	2024/25 actual	Results
Number of hectares that have achieved multi-species elimination	New for 2024/25	130,000	122,110	Achieved ^a
Investment in projects contributing to new predator management tools being available for landscape eradication projects	5	5	5	Achieved

a This measure is considered 'achieved' if performance is within 10% of the target.

Jobs for Nature (multi-year appropriation)

This category covers nature-based employment through helping to revitalise communities and stimulate the economy post-COVID-19.

	2023/24 actual	2024/25 target	2024/25 actual	Results
Number of full-time equivalent hours worked in nature-based employment (1 FTE = 1,560 hours per annum)	New for 2024/25	144	349.7	Achieved ^a
Number of Jobs for Nature projects completed during the year	New for 2024/25	57	53	Achieved ^{a,b}

a These are new performance indicators for 2024/25 and have been selected because they reflect the focus of this Budget 2020 initiative. One measure is above target, as the increase in FTE hours worked is due to variations to funding agreements and deliverables from 2023/24 to 2024/25.

b This measure is considered 'achieved' if performance is within 10% of the target.

TĀPIRITANGA 4 | APPENDIX 4

Te rapu me te mātai tangata

Search and surveillance

We enforce laws that conserve New Zealand’s natural and historic heritage. Our conservation role includes legislative responsibilities for New Zealand’s conservation matters under several Acts of Parliament.

To administer this legislation, we are charged with carrying out a compliance and law enforcement function across a range of geographic- and species-related legislation that is in place to protect New Zealand’s terrestrial, freshwater and marine plants and animals.

In carrying out this function, we must comply with the Search and Surveillance Act 2012. Section 171 of that Act relates to reporting the exercise of an entry power, a search power or a surveillance power while carrying out law enforcement activities.

Significant matters to report for the year ended 30 June 2025

- Section 171(a) – the number of occasions on which entry or search powers were exercised without a warrant: **2 (two)**.
- Section 171(b) – the number of occasions on which warrantless surveillance powers were exercised in the period covered by the report that involved the use of a surveillance device: **0 (zero)**.

Note: These surveillance activities were carried out in monitoring problem marine reserves and whitebait fishery sites.

- Surveillance devices used: binoculars, telescopes, hand-held cameras, trail cameras, 1x permanent closed-circuit television (CCTV) camera operating 24/7 (Nelson Marlborough region) with footage overwrites every 7 days.
- Section 171(c) – in respect of each kind of surveillance device used without a warrant in the period covered by the report, the numbers of that kind of device used:
 - i. for a period of no more than 24 hours: **0 (zero)**
 - ii. for a period of more than 24 hours but no more than 48 hours: **0 (zero)**.
- Section 171(d) – the number of persons charged in criminal proceedings where the collection of evidential material relevant to those proceedings was significantly assisted by the exercise of a warrantless search or surveillance power in the period covered by the report: **0 (zero)**.

These findings cover the year from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025 and are compiled from a survey of 44 district offices that carry out compliance and law enforcement roles.

Ngā mahi o ngā poari punanga i tutuki

Performance of reserve boards

Reserve boards are appointed under the Reserves Act 1977 and manage reserves that are public conservation land but vested in the reserve boards for management purposes. DOC publishes annual

summary financial statements of these reserve boards. The details provided below are the most recent financial results available.

Financial performance of reserve boards for 2024/25

Reserve board	Type	Revenue (\$)	Expenditure (\$)	Cash in bank accounts (\$)
Northern North Island				
Ōakura	Recreation	47,792	45,998	42,155
Ruakākā	Recreation	948,827	863,795	275,579
Ruakākā	Local purpose	17,559	21,400	4,057
Taurikura	Hall	9,630	10,130	2,640
Waipū Cove	Recreation	2,193,404	1,421,875	2,596,184
Central North Island				
Pākaitore/Moutoa Gardens	Historic	47,682	56,385	88,594
Eastern North Island				
Awakaponga	Local purpose	11,228	18,923	20,819
Lake Rotoiti	Recreation	95,402	72,837	114,274
Lower North Island				
Lake Horowhenua	Recreation	2,556	1,323	73,397
Poukio	Recreation	15,372	15,130	56,279
Whitireia Park	Recreation	7,501	1,716	85,908
Tiriraukawa	Hall	40	0	1,960
Northern South Island				
Homewood	Hall	586	0	11,868
Kaiteriteri	Recreation	8,893,595	8,662,306	1,319,600
Western South Island				
Millerton	Hall	8,217	19,710	13,679
Charleston	Local purpose	5,427	5,262	3,088

Financial performance of reserve boards for prior financial years

Reserve board (and year of most recent financial results)	Type	Revenue (\$)	Expenditure (\$)	Cash in bank accounts (\$)
Northern North Island				
Coates Memorial Church (2024)	Local purpose	2,039.02	1,258.84	780.18
Glorit (2020)	Local purpose	13,640	17,808	6,185
Waikiekie (2017)	Recreation	4,521	6,484	22,556
Whatitiri (2022)	Recreation	22,060	27,062	16,189

TĀPIRITANGA 6 | APPENDIX 6

Te Pūnaha Whakaraupapa Mōrea o Aotearoa

New Zealand Threat Classification System

To date, the conservation status of over 15,374 species has been assessed using the New Zealand Threat Classification System (NZTCS).

Conservation status of all species and for a subset of the species groups assessed to date

Conservation status		All species		Species group ^a					
			Bats	Birds	Freshwater fishes	Marine mammals	Invertebrates	Reptiles	Vascular plants
Data Deficient		5,324	1	2	–	21	1,642	3	116
Extinct		81	–	62	1	–	8	1	6
THREATENED	Nationally Critical	533	1	18	4	4	224	11	198
	Nationally Endangered	215	–	14	6	1	70	16	93
	Nationally Vulnerable	358	1	37	12	3	107	21	118
	Nationally Increasing ^b	22	1	11	–	1	7	1	1
AT RISK	Declining	488 ^c	1	27	11	1	107	49	252
	Recovering	17	–	9	–	–	4	3	1
	Uncommon ^d	4	–	–	–	4	–	–	–
	Relict	157	–	25	–	–	99	8	11
	Naturally Uncommon	2,688 ^e	–	37	6	–	1,435	7	665
	Not Threatened	4,777	–	37	12	5	1,722	5	1,350
Total number of assessed species ^f		15,374	6	491	76	57	5,784	134	2,846

a Only a selection of the assessed species groups is presented for illustrative purposes. For details on other species groups and definitions of the conservation statuses, visit nztnz.org.nz.

b Threatened – Nationally Increasing is the new name for the former status At Risk – Recovering (criterion A) and has been used in assessments since 2021.

c This figure includes 10 species that were assessed as At Risk – Gradual Decline prior to this status being renamed At Risk – Declining in 2008.

d At Risk – Uncommon is the new name for the former statuses At Risk – Naturally Uncommon and At Risk – Relict and has been used in assessments since 2024.

e This figure includes five species assessed as At Risk – Sparse prior to this status being renamed At Risk – Naturally Uncommon in 2008.

f These totals are higher than the sums of rows because the totals include Non-resident Native and Introduced and Naturalised species.



**Te Kāwanatanga
o Aotearoa**
New Zealand Government