

Aotearoa New Zealand's pledge to the Island-Ocean Connection Challenge



Kia manawa tītī

Have the heart of a sooty shearwater

The epitome of perseverance and endurance, anyone who has the heart of a tītī (*Ardenna grisea*) has the staying power to keep fighting past the point of discomfort to achieve their goal, reach their destination and complete their tasks.

On behalf of the peoples of these islands, we the signatories pledge to support the removal of introduced mammalian predators from three of Aotearoa New Zealand's most important island ecosystems: the Rēkohu/Wharekauri/Chatham, Rakiura/Stewart and Maukahuka/Auckland island archipelagos¹.

We know that without the pressure of introduced predators, nature will rewild these islands, contributing to international agreements that aim to reverse biodiversity decline, mitigate some of the impacts of climate change and protect the wellbeing of island communities.

This is Aotearoa New Zealand's most ambitious drive to restore nature, and it is aligned with the goal of making Aotearoa New Zealand predator free (free of rats, possums and stoats) by 2050. Our nation has been at the forefront of island restoration for many years, building on the foundation set by the work of mana whenua / nunuku henu (the indigenous people of these places) in managing their taonga / miheke (treasured) species. We know that new technology and increased investment will be required to reach the overall goal.

By the conclusion of the Challenge in 2030, Aotearoa New Zealand will endeavour to:



significantly advance the removal of mammalian predators from Maukahuka / Auckland Island to restore the functioning of the ecosystem on land and sea, and have monitored the success of the operation for 2 years



significantly advance the removal of feral cats from Rangihau / Rangiauria / Pitt Island to ensure the survival of critically threatened taonga / miheke species



complete the first phase of the removal of possums and feral cats from Rēkohu / Wharekauri / Chatham Islands as the first step towards removing possums, feral cats and rats from the whole archipelago and creating a predator free haven for Aotearoa New Zealand's threatened native species by 2050



significantly advance the removal of rats, possums, feral cats and hedgehogs from Rakiura / Stewart Island



support the natural rewilding of the islands (where appropriate) through the active restoration and translocation of threatened species, alongside robust biosecurity measures to prevent the introduction or re-incursion of mammalian predators.

This shared goal of restoring these island ecosystems from ridge to reef will be progressed in a way that values mātauranga Māori / tutohungatanga Moriori (knowledge) and upholds the principles of tikanga / tikane Māori and Moriori, (custom and practice), kaitiakitanga / t'chiekitanga (guardianship), manaakitanga / manawareka (showing respect, generosity and care) and rangatiratanga / nunukutanga (chiefly autonomy and authority).

Whaiwhakaaro / Considerations

The long-held indigenous knowledge of the island and ocean ecosystems of Aotearoa New Zealand and how they interact form part of the body of knowledge called mātauranga / tutohungatanga.

Ngāi Tahu whanui, Ngāti Mutunga and Moriori act as kaitiaki / t'chieki (cultural guardians) of taonga / miheke such as traditional knowledge, artistic and cultural works, important places, and flora and fauna that are significant to their respective iwi or imi identity and rangatiratanga / nunukutanga.

Article 31 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples specifically recognises the right of indigenous peoples to maintain, control, protect and develop their taonga / miheke. The Mataatua Declaration on Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Article 2 of Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Treaty of Waitangi) reaffirm this right.

Ngāi Tahu whanui, Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri and Moriori value and support the kaupapa / hokoaro (purpose) of the Challenge and agree with the principles of knowledge sharing that it promotes.

Ngā Herenga / Conditions

To feel secure in the knowledge that their rights to cultural and intellectual property will be safeguarded if mātauranga Māori and tutohungatanga Moriori is shared through participation in the Challenge, the indigenous peoples of Aotearoa New Zealand who hold kaitiakitanga / t'chiekitanga over these islands provide the following conditions on their involvement in the Challenge.

- Knowledge of indigenous fauna and flora will be shared only with the express permission of the holders of that knowledge and with the agreement that they retain intellectual property rights over that knowledge.
- Restoration and conservation funding for projects on the islands of Aotearoa New Zealand will make provision for the inclusion of Ngāi Tahu, Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri and/or Moriori participation in this work as appropriate.
- Any research that comes from this agreement will be co designed with kaitiaki / t'chieki of the place in which it is being undertaken. If the research involves taonga / miheke, the kaitiaki / t'chieki of that taonga / miheke will lead that research.
- Research funded or otherwise undertaken under the auspices of the Island-Ocean Connection Challenge will include the opportunity to build capability and capacity for kaitiaki / t'chieki through being engaged in the research.

Nothing in this pledge, or actions arising from it, shall derogate from the relationship, rights or interests of Ngāi Tahu whanui, Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri and Moriori as Treaty Partners or under their individual Deeds of Settlement with the Crown.

Nothing in this pledge, or actions arising from it, shall contravene the role of the Department of Conservation Te Papa Atawhai as a regulator or land manager for the functions for which it is accountable.

He mihi (thank you). We acknowledge the support of the Island-Ocean Connection Challenge, which is supporting Aotearoa New Zealand with global publicity and fundraising support – for every \$2 Aotearoa New Zealand raises, they will give \$1 to restore these islands.

Founding parties

SIGNED BY
Te Rūnanga o Hokonui



CHAIR
TERRY NICHOLAS

SIGNED BY
Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri Iwi Trust



CHAIR
JOHN KAMO

SIGNED BY
Te Runaka o Ōraka Aparima



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SIGNED BY
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Predator Free Rakiura



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SIGNED BY
Director-General of the Department of Conservation Te Papa Atawhai



Partners



Te Runaka o Awarua



Chatham Islands
Landscape Restoration Trust
Restoring nature's gifts.



Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai



Supporters



We accept this pledge to the Island-Ocean Connection Challenge on this day

SIGNED BY

Walter W. Schubert

