

Tēnā koe

Thank you for your request to the Department of Conservation, received on 20 February 2025.  
You asked:

- 1. Has an agreement been signed on behalf of Rakiura / Stewart Island, Chatham Island's, Auckland Island and any other Island's belonging to New Zealand with IOCC?*
- 2. If an agreement has not been signed - when will it be signed.*
- 3. Who are the parties signing this agreement?*
- 4. What consultation has taken place with the Rakiura Community including how and when?*
- 5. What notifications have been given to the Rakiura Community regarding this project / agreement?*
- 6. What consultation has taken place with Iwi including how and when?*
- 7. What notifications have been given to the Iwi regarding this project / agreement?*
- 8. A full copy of the signed agreement?*
- 9. Who has been involved in this project / agreement on behalf of DoC, PFR, ZIP, Iwi, the local community,*
- 10. What took place at the Field Trip in Rakiura on 19th February 2025 - what was the programme of events and presentations?*
- 11. Who was in attendance at the Field Trip in Rakiura on 19th February 2025 (including: DoC, Predator-Free Rakiura, Iwi, Chatham Islands, IOCC representatives and any other persons?*
- 12. Who will be in attendance at the "Launch" at Bluff Marae on 21st February 2025 and which groups / organisations are they representing.*

We have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982. Our responses to your questions are listed below, as well as some information about the Island Ocean Connection Challenge (IOCC).

Aotearoa New Zealand has joined the international Island Ocean Connection Challenge (IOCC) and pledged to restore and rewild three of our globally significant islands – Rakiura/Stewart Island, Maukahuka/Auckland Island, and Chatham Islands. The Challenge, founded by international conservation groups Re:wild, Scripps Institution of Oceanography, and Island Conservation, aims to restore at least 40 globally significant island ocean ecosystems from ridge to reef by 2030.

Six Māori and Moriori Indigenous groups, community trusts and New Zealand's Department of Conservation are also committing to the Challenge. The New Zealand Government has already committed \$54 million to these three island restoration projects as part of our Predator Free 2050 work. Joining the IOCC benefits New Zealand by connecting us to international donors who will work with us to raise an expected further ~\$137M for these important conservation projects.

**Questions 1, 2, 3 and 8:**

The IOCC pledge (Pledge) is attached as item 1. The pledge was signed by the eight New Zealand parties in January 2025, and signed on behalf of the IOCC by Re:wild in February 2025. The Founding Parties who have signed the Pledge are:

- Te Rūnanga o Hokonui
- Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri Iwi Trust
- Te Rūnaka o Ōraka Aparima
- Hokotehi Moriori Trust
- Te Rūnaka o Awarua
- Te Puka Rakiura Trust/Predator Free Rakiura
- Te Rūnaka o Waihōpai
- Chatham Islands Landscape Restoration Trust
- Department of Conservation
- Re:wild

**Question 4, 5, 6 and 7:**

Iwi and community-led trusts were central to the collaborative process of developing the IOCC Pledge. Neither formal consultation nor notification with the Rakiura community or iwi was required under the provisions of the Conservation Act 1987 as no new conservation work was part of the Pledge.

**Question 9:**

The people involved in the Pledge who represent the organisations you listed are:

- DOC – David van der Zouwe - Director, Strategic Partnerships and Engagement
- Te Puka Rakiura Trust (Predator Free Rakiura) – Dean Whaanga – co-chair, Paul Norris – co-chair, Darius Fagan – General Manager
- ZIP – none
- Iwi – Gail Thompson, Michael Skerrett, Stewart Bull, Tāne Davis and Hayden Preece.
- Local community – Stewart Bull, Tāne Davis, Gail Thompson and Paul Norris – members of the PFR engagement and advisory group.

**Question 10:** The field trip on Rakiura on 19 February 2025 included:

- A visit to Observation Rock to view Ulva Island and hear about the history of predator removal and restoration there.
- A visit to the Community Centre to have lunch and to hear about the Pukunui/Southern NZ dotterel programme.
- A visit to Lee Bay for a group photo and walk to Little River.

**Question 11:**

Senior representatives of the agencies present on Rakiura on 19 February 2025 were:

Agency	Representatives
DOC	Aaron Fleming - Operations Director, Southern South Island Region
	Ben Reddiex - Director, National Programmes
	David van der Zouwe - Director, Strategic Partnerships and Engagement
Te Puka Rakiura Trust	Dean Whaanga – co-chair
	Darius Fagan – General Manager
	Estelle Pura Pērā-Leask – Trustee
Chatham Islands	Monique Croon – co-chair of Chatham Island Landscape Restoration Trust
	Levi Lanauze - co-chair of Chatham Island Landscape Restoration Trust
IOCC representative	Wes Sechrest – CEO and Board Chair of Re:wild
	Karl Campbell – Director of Latin American Islands, Re:wild
	Richard Griffiths – Head of Operations, Pacific Region, Island Conservation

**Question 12:**

We do not have a record of all attendees of the IOCC launch event at Te Rau Aroha marae in Bluff on 21 February. DOC did not host this event. We can confirm the following senior DOC representatives:

- Penny Nelson, Director-General;
- Sia Aston, Deputy Director-General Public Affairs;
- Aaron Fleming, Operations Director Southern South Island Region;
- Ben Reddiex, Director National Programmes; and
- David van der Zouwe, Director Strategic Partnerships and Engagement.

Item	Date	Document description	Decision
1	21 February 2025	Aotearoa New Zealand Pledge to Island Ocean Connection Challenge, signed by eight New Zealand signatories and IOCC.	Released in full

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

Nāku noa, nā

David van der Zouwe  
 Director Strategic Partnerships and Engagement  
 Department of Conservation  
*Te Papa Atawhai*