

Ngā Takune Rautaki Strategic Intentions

Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

July 2025 – June 2029



Department of
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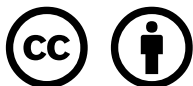
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Ngā ihirangi

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Te kupu takamua a te Kaihautū

Te Oranga o te ao Tūroa

E harikoa ana te ngākau ki te whakaatu atu i ngā takune rautaki o Te Papa Atawhai mō te Hūrae 2025 tae noa ki te Hune 2029. E takoto ana ki roto i tēnei puka ko ō mātou whakaarotau nui rawa mō te whā tau e tū mai nei i a mātou e nanaioe atu ana ki te tū hei kōkiri whaimana mō te taiao, hei reo arataki hoki mō te whāomoomo.

E kore e taea te whakatūai te uara ka ahu mai rā i te taiao ki te hauora, te toiora, me te ōhanga i Aotearoa nei. Nā te taiao ka ahu mai ko te hau parukore, te wai māori, me te one haumako. E noho pokapū ana te taiao i te tuakiri ā-motu, ā, mā te taiao ka whakaratohia mai te huhua o ngā āheitunga mō ngā mahi a rēhia. Ka taurikura te motu o Aotearoa mēnā tātou ka tāroki, ka whakahaumarū, ka whakahaumanu hoki i te taiao.

Engari, he nui ngā wero i te taiao. Huri noa i te ao whānui, ka nui te whakaraerae o te rerenga rauropi taketake nā te mimiti haere o ngā nōhanga, te kaha o te kaiapo, ngā momo kōkuhu, te parahanga, me te āhuarangi hurihuri. Kāore e nui ake ana te pānga mai o tēnei ngarohanga i whenua kē atu, e kaha rangona ana tēnei āhuatanga ki Aotearoa nei, e pērā ana i te mea kei konei ko te pānga riterite nui rawa o ngā momo taketake e whakaraerae ana, huri noa i te ao.

E manawanui ana mātou ki te panoni i te āhua o tā mātou whakahaumarū i ngā momo taketake, ngā pūnaha hauropi, me ngā horanuku taiao kia rahi ake ai te pāpātanga. Kua whakawhanakehia e mātou tētahi taputapu rautaki hei ārahi i ā mātou haumitanga, hei whakaū hoki i tā mātou tautoko i ngā momo me ngā pūnaha hauropi e kaha matea ana ki te āwhina. Kei roto i tā mātou tukanga matawhā ki te whakahaeretanga o te rerenga rauropi taketake ko te aukati i te ngaromanga o ngā momo e kore e taea te huri whakamuri, te whakahaumarū i ngā pūnaha hauropi me

ngā horanuku, te pupuri tonu i ngā motu kei te moana e konihi-kore ana, e kīrearea-kore ana hoki, me te whakahaere i te rangahau whai-aronga kia mārama ai mātou ki ngā whakawehi me ngā āputa.

E mārama pai ana ngā putanga e hiahia ana:

- E taurikura ana ngā pūnaha hauropi me ngā momo huri hoa i Aotearoa mai i ngā maunga ki te moana
- E puritia tonutia ana ngā whenua whāomoomo tūmatanui me ngā wai whāomoomo tūmatanui, ka whakapaingia ake anō hoki mō ngā reanga o muri
- Ka whaimana Te Papa Atawhai i tōna tūranga hei hoa haere kōtui i raro i te Tiriti
- Ka pai kē ake te oranga o te tangata i tāna tūhono atu ki te taiao me te whakapapa ā-ahurea
- Ka tū Te Papa Atawhai hei whare pai rawa atu mō ngā tangata o waho, me ngā kaimahi o roto

E mōhio ana mātou e kore e taea e mātou anake ēnei whāinga te whakatutuki. Kei roto i *Te Mana o te Taiao – Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy*, e aro atu ana mātou ki te whakarahi ake i ngā whakatutukinga whāomoomo mā te mahi tahi me ngā hoa haere o te Tiriti, ngā tari kāwanatanga ā-rohe, ā-motu hoki, me ngā rōpū ā-hapori. Ka tautoko mātou i te mahi tahitanga ki te tūhono i te tangata ki te taiao, ka whakarahi hoki i te haumitanga kiritoru kia pai ai tā mātou kaupare ake i ngā wero o te wā o muri.

Mā tātou katoa ka mātua whakaritea te oranga tonutanga o te taiao ki Aotearoa nei mō ngā whakatupuranga o muri nei.



Nā Penny Nelson

Te Kaihautū

Te Papa Atawhai

Director-General's foreword

Nature is thriving in Aotearoa – Te Oranga o te ao Tūroa

I am delighted to present the strategic intentions for the Department of Conservation Te Papa Atawhai (DOC) for July 2025 to June 2029. This document outlines our ambitious priorities for the next 4 years as we strive to be a powerful advocate for nature and a leading voice in conservation.

The value nature brings to the health, wellbeing and economy of Aotearoa New Zealand and its people cannot be overstated. Nature provides clean air, fresh water and fertile soils. It is central to the country's identity and offers countless opportunities for recreation. Aotearoa New Zealand prospers when we preserve, protect and restore the natural environment.

However, nature is facing significant challenges. Globally, biodiversity is under severe threat from habitat loss, overexploitation, invasive species, pollution and climate change. Nowhere is this loss more pronounced than in Aotearoa New Zealand, which has the highest proportion of threatened indigenous species in the world.

We are committed to transforming the way we protect native species, ecosystems and natural landscapes to maximise our impact. We have developed a strategic tool to guide our investments, ensuring that we support the species and ecosystems that need it most. Our four-pronged approach to biodiversity management includes preventing irreversible species loss, protecting ecosystems and landscapes, maintaining predator- and pest-free offshore islands, and conducting targeted research to understand threats and gaps.



Our desired outcomes are clear:

- Ecosystems and species across Aotearoa are thriving from mountains to sea
- Public conservation lands and waters are maintained and improved for future generations
- DOC is an honourable Treaty partner
- Connection with nature and cultural heritage enriches people's lives
- DOC is a great organisation to work for and with

We recognise that we cannot achieve these goals alone. Through *Te Mana o Te Taiao – Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy*, we aim to amplify conservation successes by collaborating with Treaty partners, local and central government agencies, and community groups. We will support collective action to connect people with nature and increase third-party investment to meet the challenges ahead.

Together, we can ensure that nature thrives in Aotearoa for generations to come.

Penny Nelson

Director-General

Department of Conservation Te Papa Atawhai

Te kupu takamua a te Minita

Nōku kē te whiwhi kua riro i ahau ngā takune rautaki o Te Papa Atawhai mō te Hūrae 2025 tae noa ki te Hune 2029.

Nā runga i tōku tūranga hei Minita Whāomoomo, kua toro atu ahau ki ētahi o ngā wāhi whakahirahira rawa i Aotearoa nei, ā, kua kite ahau i ngā taonga whakamīharo e motuhake ai tēnei whenua, e waihangatia ai te ara orange mō te tangata, e whakamaneatia ai hoki ngā tūruhi mai i tawhiti ki konei.

Ka nui ake i te haurua o ngā tūruhi tāwahi ka toro atu ki tētahi papa tāpui ā-motu i a rātou i konei i Aotearoa nei, ā, mā roto i te tāpoi ki runga i te whenua whāomoomo anake ka ahu mai rā ko te 4 piriona tāra i te ia tau.

He rite tonu te kī mai a ngā iwi, ngā hapū, ngā kaiwhakahaere tāpoi, ngā rangatira pakihi, me ngā whakahaere whāomoomo ki ahau, he nui rawa te whakawhirinakitanga a ngā haporī me ngā pakihi ki tētahi taiao e taurikura ana. Ka mutu, kei te takiwā o te 11 piriona tāra te uara ka ahu mai i te hau parukore, te wai māori, te one haumako, me ngā kaituku hae e hōrapa kākano ana, i te ia tau.

Hei āpiti i tēnā, he mea nui te taiao ki te 70 ōrau o ngā hoko whakawaho i Aotearoa. He meka tēnei kōrero – ki te kore tātou e tiaki i ngā momo taketake me ngā pūnaha hauropi ka tāputia te haeretanga mai a ngā tūruhi, ka whakamutua hoki te āheitanga o ētahi ki te hoko i ngā hautaonga ka waihangatia mai i konei.

E haepapa ana Te Papa Atawhai ki te tiaki i te takiwā o te hautoru o te whenua i Aotearoa me te whakahaumarū i ngā pūnaha hauropi e noho ana hei tūāpapa mō tō tātou ōhanga. E aro atu ana mātou ki ētahi wero nui i a mātou e whakahaumarū ana i te rerenga rauropi taketake e motuhake nei ka kitea i konei.

Ko ētahi o ngā manu, ngā ika, me ngā ngārara ka kīia mai nō Aotearoa tonu kāore e kitea i whenua kē atu. Mēnā ka ngaro rātou i konei, kua ngaro mō

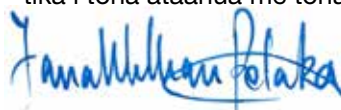
ake tonu atu. Mā te whakatutuki i te whāinga nui o Aotearoa Kīrearea Kore i mua i te 2050 ka hua mai ko tētahi arawātea ki te whakahaumanu i ngā ngahere me ngā awa, me te whakahoki mai i ngā kararehe e tino whakaraerae ana mai i te kūwaha o te whare ngaro.

Kua whakatakotoria e au ngā whakaarotau e 4 e whai ake nei mā Te Papa Atawhai:

- Te whakaarotau ki ngā momo, ngā wāhi whakahirahira, me ngā horanuku rongonui e nui rawa ana te hiranga, me te mātua whakarite kia kitea rā te taunakitanga pai mō tā mātou haumi i ngā wāhi ka taea tētahi panonitanga nui te whakatutuki.
- Te whakarite i te huhua o ngā puna hou mō te moniwhiwhi e āwhina ana ki te whakarahi ake i ngā mahi whāomoomo, pērā i ngā utu uru ki ngā wāhi rongonui, te whakanui ake i te tāpoi, te tukuoha me ngā rangapū mahitahi, me te whakapai ake i te whakahoki pūtea i ngā mahi whakamāmā.
- Te whakahou i te pūnaha whakariterite whāomomo kia ngāwari ake ai, kia tere ai, kia iti iho ai hoki te pūtea ki ngā tāngata e mahi pakihi ana ki runga i te whenua whāomoomo.
- Te whakamāmā i ngā ture kia ngāwari ake ai te whakahaumarū i ngā wāhi taiao, te whakatairanga ake i te uru haepapa, me te whakarahi ake i ngā ōhanga ā-rohe.

Kua tonu hoki ahau i Te Papa Atawhai ki te haere tonu i ā rātou mahi whakamīharo ki te taha o ngā hoa haere o te Tiriti. Mā pango, mā whero, ka oti te mahi.

Ka nui te mihi ki ngā tāngata katoa o Aotearoa e manawanui ana ki te mahi i te mahi whāomoomo huri noa i te motu. Me whakahīhi tātou katoa ka tika i tōna ātaahua me tōna mauri.



Nā Hōnore Tama Potaka
Minita Whāomoomo

Minister's foreword

It is a great privilege to receive the strategic intentions for the Department of Conservation Te Papa Atawhai (DOC) for July 2025 to June 2029.

As Minister of Conservation, I have visited some of Aotearoa New Zealand's most special places, seeing first-hand the incredible taonga (treasures) that make this place unique, define people's way of life and attract millions of tourists from afar to enjoy.

More than half of Aotearoa New Zealand's international tourists visit a national park while they are here, and tourism on public conservation lands and waters alone generates more than \$4 billion each year.

Iwi/hapū, tourism operators, business owners and conservation organisations all reiterate to me the critical reliance that communities and businesses have on a healthy natural environment. Fresh air, clean water, good soil and pollinators that disperse seeds on public conservation land are estimated to be worth nearly \$11 billion each year.

Not only that, but nature is also critical for 70% of Aotearoa New Zealand's exports. It is a fact that if we do not look after native species and ecosystems, tourists will stop coming to visit and people will stop being able to buy products that are made here.

DOC is responsible for looking after nearly a third of the country's land and protecting the ecosystems that underpin its economy. We are facing big challenges when it comes to protecting the unique biodiversity found here.

Some of the birds, fish and insects that call this place home are found nowhere else in the world. When they are gone from here, they are gone forever. Achieving a Predator Free New Zealand by 2050 offers the best opportunity to restore forests and rivers and bring back critically endangered wildlife from the brink of extinction.



I have set DOC four priorities:

- Prioritising the species, special places and iconic landscapes that matter most, and ensuring there is good evidence that we are investing where we can make the most difference.
- Generating multiple sources of new revenue that help boost conservation efforts, such as access charging for the most popular sites, increased tourism, philanthropy and partnerships, and better cost recovery from concessions.
- Modernising the conservation regulatory system so it is simpler, faster and cheaper for people doing business on conservation land.
- Simplifying rules to make protecting natural areas easier, promoting responsible access and boosting regional economies.

I am also asking DOC to continue their wonderful mahi (work) with Treaty partners. Mā pango mā whero, ka oti te mahi – with black and with red, the work is achieved.

Thank you to the many committed New Zealanders working hard in conservation across the motu (country). We should all take pride in its beauty and mauri.

Hon Tama Potaka
Minister of Conservation

Ngā tauākī haepapa

Statements of responsibility

Director-General's statement of responsibility

In signing this information, I acknowledge that I am responsible for the information on strategic intentions for the Department of Conservation Te Papa Atawhai. This information has been prepared in accordance with section 38 and section 40 of the Public Finance Act 1989.



Penny Nelson
Director-General

1 July 2025

Minister's statement

I am satisfied that the information on strategic intentions prepared by the Department of Conservation Te Papa Atawhai is consistent with the policies and performance expectations of the Government.



Hon Tama Potaka
Minister of Conservation

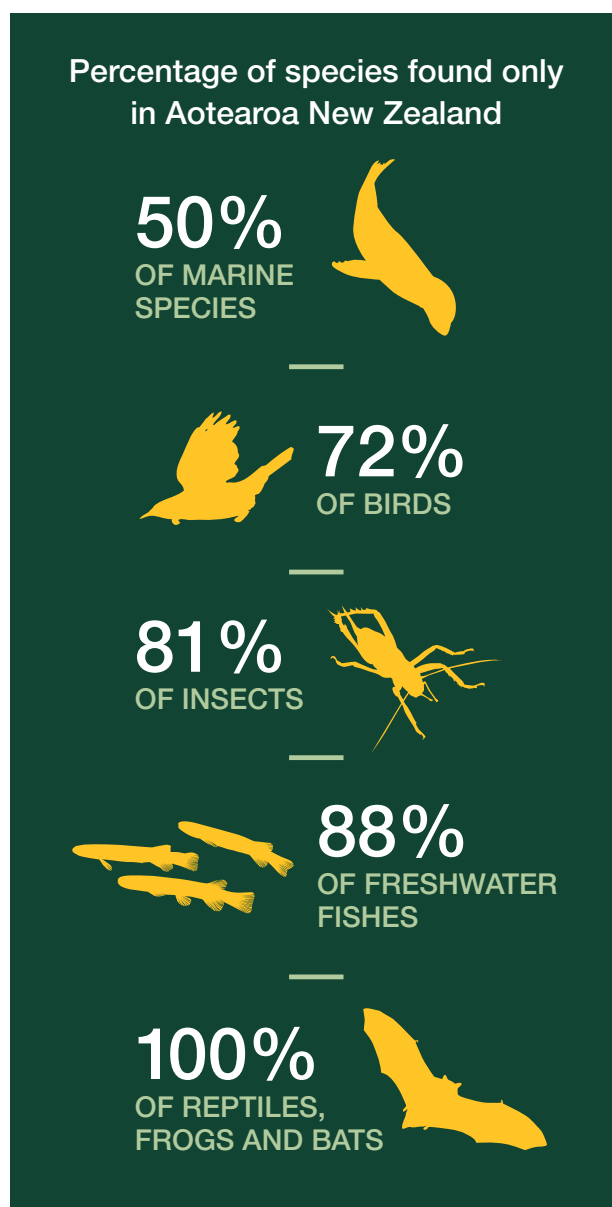
1 July 2025

Te hiranga o te taiao ki Aotearoa

The significance of Aotearoa New Zealand's natural environment

Aotearoa New Zealand's natural environment is like nowhere else on Earth. Over half of the wildlife found here is endemic, having evolved in isolation from the rest of the world millions of years ago. This country has offshore islands that serve as a last refuge for a number of species, is a global hotspot for marine biodiversity, and is one of only four countries in the world with significant braided river systems.

The economy relies on the environment being in great shape – 70% of Aotearoa New Zealand's export earnings are from sectors that depend on nature; conservation and nature tourism support regional economies through jobs and visitor experiences; and the landscapes and scenery are the leading reason why international visitors come here.^{1,2}



¹ sbc.org.nz/valuing-natural-capital

² For the latest data from the International Visitor Survey, see teic.mbie.govt.nz/index.html



The braided Waimakariri River in Canterbury, which is home to threatened birds that nest on the open river gravel. Photo: Shellie Evans

The cultural significance of Aotearoa

New Zealand's natural environment also cannot be underestimated. New Zealanders are proud of the unique nature that is found here – it is part of who we are. For a vast majority, it is the most loved aspect of living in this place, with many people regularly visiting protected natural areas and heritage places.³

Māori have an integral relationship with their whenua (land), awa (rivers) and moana (sea). As kaitiaki (guardians), they care about the wellbeing of native species and public conservation lands and waters. Restored nature uplifts mana, and resilient biodiversity enables cultural practices and mahinga kai (food-gathering practices), contributing to the regeneration of mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge).

When nature is in balance, ecosystems are strong and resilient. But the challenges in maintaining this balance are increasing. Aotearoa New Zealand has the highest proportion of threatened native species in the world – more than 1,000 species are threatened with extinction and more than 3,000 are at risk.^{4,5} The majority of rare or naturally uncommon ecosystems found here are also threatened.⁶ Many factors drive biodiversity loss, including invasive species, climate change, land- and sea-use changes, natural resource exploitation, and pollution.⁷

³ For the latest visitor insights report, see doc.govt.nz/visitor-insights

⁴ Bradshaw CJA, Giam X, Sodhi NS. 2010. Evaluating the relative environmental impact of countries. PLOS One. 5(5):e10440. doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0010440

⁵ For the latest threat classification data, see nztcs.org.nz

⁶ Holdaway RJ, Wiser SK, Williams PA. 2012. Status assessment of New Zealand's naturally uncommon ecosystems. Conservation Biology 26: 619–629. conbio.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/j.1523-1739.2012.01868.x

⁷ Department of Conservation. 2020. Biodiversity in Aotearoa: an overview of state, trends and pressures. Wellington: Department of Conservation. doc.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/conservation/biodiversity/anzbs-2020-biodiversity-report.pdf

Ō mātou haepapa

Our responsibilities

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 all the way 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 allowing 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.

We share 57,000 km 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, Aotearoa New Zealand is a party to the Convention on Biological Diversity and has adopted the 2022 Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, which commits to protecting 30% of global land and ocean by 2030.⁸

We are Aotearoa New Zealand's lead agency for eight additional international agreements, including the following:

- Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
- Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals
- East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership
- Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
- International Union for Conservation of Nature
- Ramsar Convention on Wetlands
- World Heritage Convention

8 cbd.int/gbf

In total, we administer 27 Acts and have a significant function under many more.

We administer these Acts:

- Canterbury Provincial Buildings Vesting Act 1928
- Conservation Act 1987
- Freedom Camping Act 2011
- 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

We have a function under these Acts:

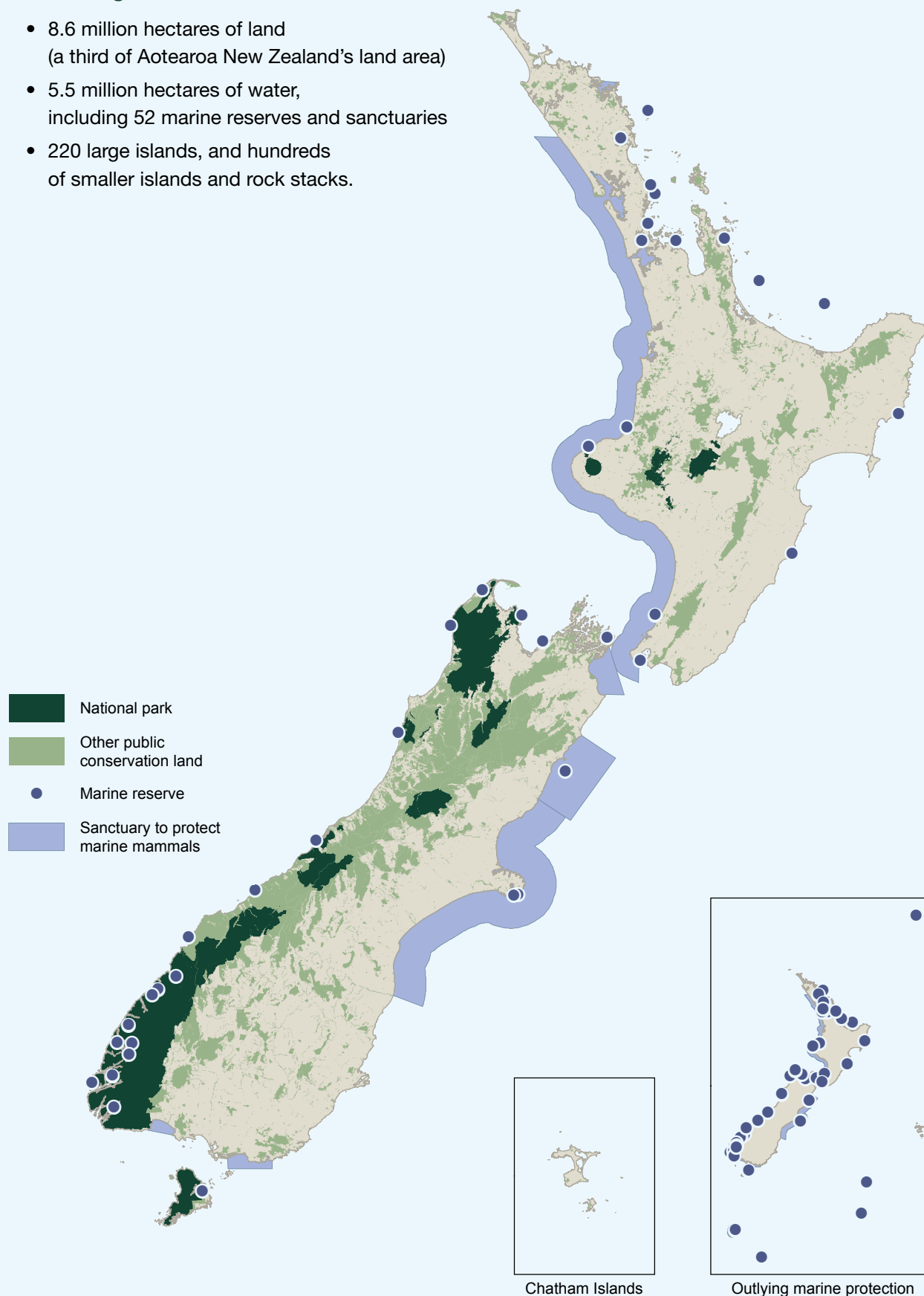
- Biosecurity Act 1993
- Crown Forest Assets Act 1989
- Crown Minerals Act 1991
- Crown Pastoral Land Act 1998
- Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017
- Fisheries Act 1996
- Forests Act 1949
- Land Act 1948
- Local Government Act 1974
- Local Government Act 2002
- Maori Land Amendment and Maori Land 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

We also implement commitments across 81 Acts for Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Treaty of Waitangi) settlements as at May 2025.

What we manage across Aotearoa New Zealand

We manage:

- 8.6 million hectares of land (a third of Aotearoa New Zealand's land area)
- 5.5 million hectares of water, including 52 marine reserves and sanctuaries
- 220 large islands, and hundreds of smaller islands and rock stacks.



Ō mātou whakaarotau

Our priorities

In September 2024, the Government set four clear priorities for the Conservation portfolio under the leadership of the Minister of Conservation to address the significant financial and environmental challenges we are facing:⁹

- Target investment into high-value conservation outcomes for biodiversity and recreation.
- Generate new revenue and recalibrate costs.
- Strengthen relationships with Iwi/hapū for better conservation outcomes to meet our Te Tiriti o Waitangi settlement commitments and achieve shared goals for conservation and kaitiakitanga (guardianship).
- Fix concession processes to make it easier for businesses, researchers and others to undertake activities on public conservation lands and waters.

The Hunting and Fishing Ministerial portfolio was established in January 2023 to manage game animals as valued introduced species, balance hunting and conservation objectives, support Fish & Game New Zealand and the New Zealand Game Animal Council, and support hunting and fishing on public conservation lands and waters.



Tasman Lake and Haupapa/Tasman Glacier in Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park, an area known for its tourism and being part of the internationally acclaimed Te Wāhipounamu – South West New Zealand World Heritage Area. *Photo: John Strother*

⁹ beehive.govt.nz/release/new-priorities-protect-future-conservation

Tā mātou rautaki hou

Our refreshed strategy

In 2022, we introduced a high-level strategy to guide our work. We then refreshed that strategy in July 2024 to give greater clarity and identify key shifts we need to make to help us achieve our strategic vision. We have five aspirational strategic outcomes, each with two to three intermediate outcomes to direct our work. Embedded in these are the priorities of the Conservation portfolio and Hunting and Fishing portfolio.



Te whakatinana i te rautaki

Bringing our strategy to life

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

Nature is in trouble, and our management of natural heritage makes a real difference. When we remove or constrain threats, restore habitats and improve how we interact with nature, it bounces back.

We lead the development and review of Te Mana o Te Taiao – Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy Implementation Plan, which guides all those who work with or have an impact on biodiversity.¹⁰

Our Biodiversity Investment Approach allows us to strategically spread our effort across different work programmes, which will **improve the condition of threatened species and a representative range of ecosystems**. We will implement a system that improves the visibility of our work, how much it costs and how it contributes to conservation outcomes. We will ensure that our priorities are evidence based, and improve our planning processes, delivery and impact evaluation. This will also strengthen our advocacy for conservation and enable us to **lead and enable others to have the greatest impact for biodiversity**.

As of 2025, we only have 15% of the budget needed to undertake our biodiversity responsibilities.

We are focused on **attracting investment into conservation** through measures such as increased third-party investment in priority projects and improved return on investment from commercial partners. This will help us generate new revenue.

Our biodiversity work programmes focus on:

- intensively managing species and tailoring this management for those most at risk of extinction
- protecting a wide range of ecosystems so that threatened species are secure and can thrive, and we have time to learn about the less-understood species in those ecosystems
- reducing predators, browsers and weeds over large landscape-scale areas to lessen the pressures on species and their habitats and improve both ecosystem resilience and the natural environment
- carrying out research to improve conservation outcomes by expanding management tools and our understanding of species and biological systems.

¹⁰ doc.govt.nz/nature/biodiversity/te-mana-o-te-taiao-aotearoa-new-zealand-biodiversity-strategy-2020/te-mana-o-te-taiao-implementation-plan

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

Our primary job is to maintain and improve the condition of the lands, waters, ecosystems and cultural heritage that we are responsible for. Our **land and water management obligations** include preventing the spread of pests onto private land, limiting the damage caused by fires, saving lives through search and rescues, and providing access by maintaining 1,100 km of public roads.

We have local authority responsibilities for Aoraki/Mount Cook, Milford Sound/Piopiotahi and Whakapapa Village. This includes providing planning services, compliant water supplies, sewerage, stormwater, snow clearance and rubbish disposal services.

Planning for the impacts of climate change

Climate change is one of the biggest global challenges we face. We are already feeling the impacts of extreme weather events and must plan how we will respond in the future. Storms create costly damage to infrastructure, and changing temperatures and rainfall patterns shift habitats and species distributions. We can expect new land use demands as New Zealanders adapt to climate change events, which will further impact our environment and conservation outcomes.

Our key climate change work includes:

- nature-based solutions that address climate change, such as the regeneration of native forests and the restoration of peatlands and mineral wetlands for carbon storage and improved resilience

- the Department of Conservation climate change adaptation action plan to manage climate change impacts for native species, ecosystems, visitor assets and heritage¹¹
- technology to shift us to a lower carbon operating model.

Management of cultural heritage

We manage the largest heritage portfolio in Aotearoa New Zealand, with an estimated 15,000 cultural heritage assets, places, archaeological sites and collections across public conservation lands and waters. As at 2025, we only actively manage about 4% of our heritage portfolio. The portfolio is under increasing threat from climate change, which will result in significant loss without targeted action.

The Cultural Heritage Reset Programme is modernising our heritage management systems and practices, increasing awareness and ensuring the **protection of important heritage places** in our care, and building our reputation as a leader in cultural heritage conservation. We are focusing our protection on a range of priority cultural heritage places and will increase the proportion that we manage to 10% over time. We will partner or collaborate with our Treaty partners and other organisations to protect heritage sites for the benefit of all New Zealanders.

The Cultural Heritage Reset Programme's priorities are:

- improving the condition of key heritage places
- building internal capability and an updated inventory
- entrenching management practices that support mātauranga Māori, stronger connections to place and a stronger risk management approach
- improving visitor experiences at treasured heritage places.

¹¹ doc.govt.nz/adapting-to-climate-change

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

We are an honourable Treaty partner

The Conservation Act 1987 requires us to give effect to the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in our work. Our strategy calls on us to be an honourable Treaty partner in all that we do. This means that we **actively protect Māori rights and interests and ensure participation** by engaging and delivering conservation work with whānau, hapū and Iwi. We value te ao Māori (the Māori world view) and will seek permission and endorsement to integrate mātauranga Māori into our work. We will take account of Treaty rights and interests, and impacts on Māori, when giving advice and making decisions. These actions will allow us to achieve shared goals for conservation and te taiao (the natural world).

Uplifting Treaty capability

As part of our commitment to **increasing Treaty capability and capacity**, the Māori Crown relations capability framework (MCR Framework) underpins our Treaty capability programmes and initiatives.¹² Our work provides clear expectations and benchmarks on competency, while allowing the flexibility to ensure that our staff across different teams and locations will upskill in the areas that are most relevant to their roles.

The MCR Framework has six key focus competency areas:

- Understanding racial equity and institutional racism
- Aotearoa New Zealand history and Te Tiriti o Waitangi
- World view knowledge
- Tikanga and kawa
- Te reo Māori
- Engagement with Māori

Te Reo Aurea, our Māori language plan, is an integral component of our Treaty capability work, enabling us to affirm the mana of te reo Māori. Where we enhance our proficiency, awareness and appreciation of te reo Māori, we are better equipped to collaborate with our Treaty partners in safeguarding Aotearoa New Zealand's distinctive biodiversity and cultural heritage.

Te Reo Aurea describes our medium-term goals for te reo Māori, including:

- **status** – increasing the use of bilingual signs and assisting Iwi/Māori with story-telling in their own voice
- **critical awareness** – making progress up the Māori Language Commission's E Tipu ZePA scale, a measurement tool for maturity in using te reo Māori¹³
- **acquisition** – tracking and reporting on Māori language spend and measuring impact
- **use** – ensuring that district offices have Treaty capability plans and budgets in place
- **corpus** – improving policy for translation and interpretation.

¹² pk.govt.nz/en/a-matou-whakaarotau/maori-crown-relations/public-sector-capability

¹³ en.tetaurawhiri.govt.nz/tools

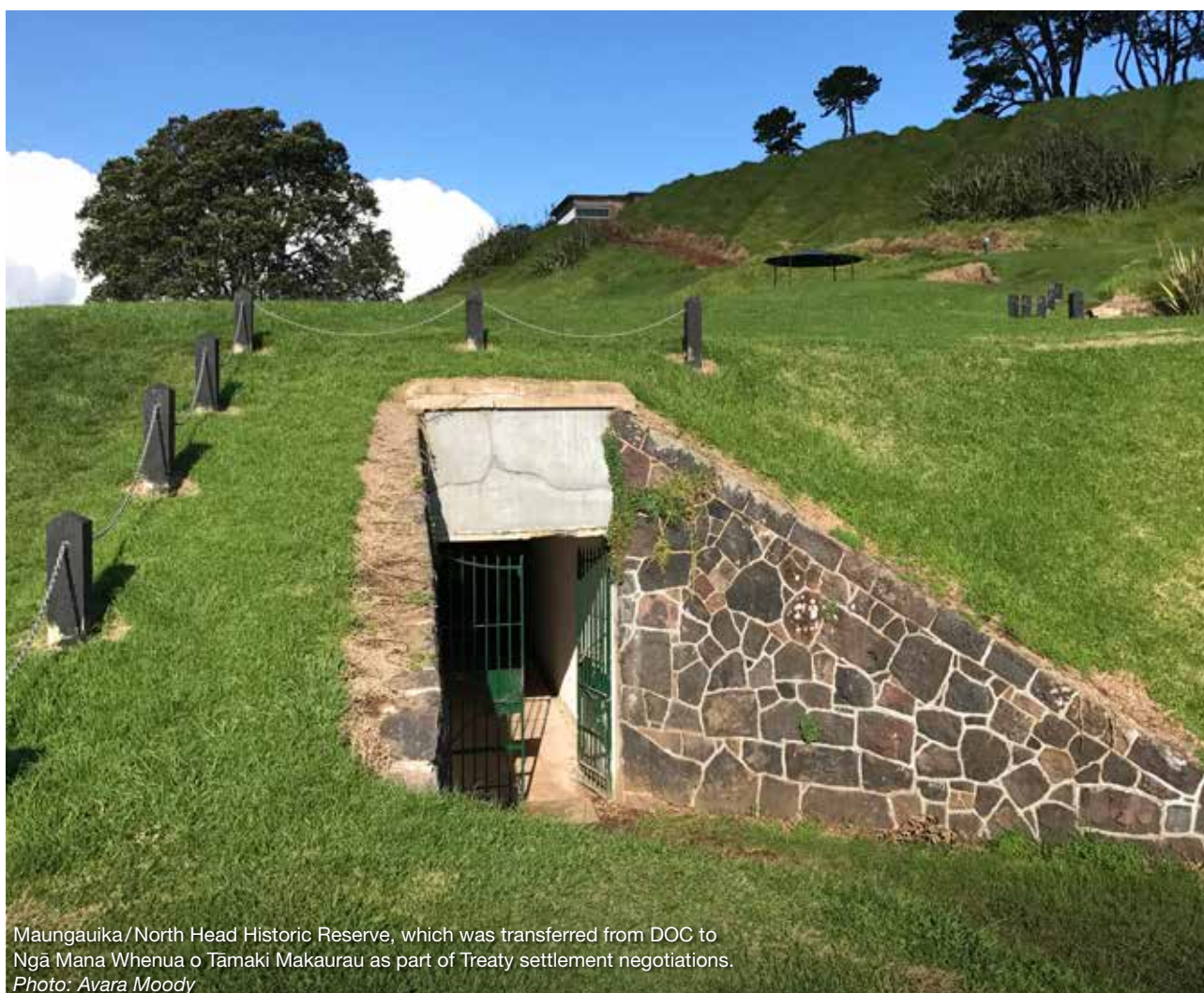
Developing and implementing Treaty settlements

Treaty settlements are a major driver for our conservation partnerships with Iwi. The settlements typically create mechanisms and entities to facilitate how we work together to manage land and assets, which **strengthens our partnerships and relationships** and results in better conservation outcomes.

As at March 2025, we have completed 31% of 3,455 Treaty settlement commitments. We manage the delivery of these commitments through our End-to-End Treaty Settlement Improvement Project. We will engage in good faith and pursue authentic relationships with tangata whenua, while openly communicating our role and responsibilities.

Our settlement work includes:

- negotiating towards a Deed of Settlement
- developing legislation to put a settlement into law
- implementing the Deed of Settlement and Settlement Acts.



Maungauika/North Head Historic Reserve, which was transferred from DOC to Ngā Mana Whenua o Tāmaki Makaurau as part of Treaty settlement negotiations.
Photo: Avara Moody



Powell Hut, which was built in 2019 and is the most popular hut in the Tararua Range. Photo: Julian Baker

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

We connect people to nature through a range of sustainable visitor experiences and by influencing people and communities to value nature and be involved in conservation.

The vast majority of New Zealanders visit protected natural areas every year, and most international visitors participate in outdoor activities and have an overwhelmingly positive opinion of Aotearoa New Zealand's natural scenery and wilderness.¹⁴ Both the *New Zealand-Aotearoa Government Tourism Strategy* and our *Heritage and Visitor Strategy* provide direction for our management of recreational opportunities.^{15,16} We enhance the experience of visitors by educating them on

Aotearoa New Zealand's natural and cultural heritage and managing risks appropriately.

We operate a huge visitor network, but the full number of experiences and ageing assets is not affordable. We must **provide a sustainable number of experiences** for future generations.

Our Future Visitor Network Programme is:

- realigning the network to meet the changing needs of visitors and better meet demand
- reviewing how we allocate our resources and developing a 10-year asset management plan
- exploring new ways of managing visitors, including visitor management tools
- considering how to better protect conservation, safeguard and showcase cultural heritage, be more resilient to climate change, and partner with others to manage unique experiences.

¹⁴ For the latest data from the International Visitor Survey, see teic.mbie.govt.nz/index.html

¹⁵ mbie.govt.nz/immigration-and-tourism/tourism/new-zealand-aotearoa-government-tourism-strategy

¹⁶ doc.govt.nz/heritage-and-visitor-strategy

Our network of visitor facilities includes:

15,000 km
OF TRACKS



339
CAMPSITES

950
HUTS



45
SOLE-OCCUPANCY
FACILITIES

50
ICON SITES



13
TOHU WHENUA
SITES

521
AMENITY AREAS



24,000
SIGNS

Building momentum around acting for nature

Many organisations are already making a significant contribution to conservation in Aotearoa New Zealand, but the challenges facing nature are increasing all the time. Mobilising for Nature is our 3-year integrated national engagement programme that will build momentum around nature as a shared national priority and encourage **people and communities to take action**.

Our Mobilising for Nature programme will:

- raise awareness of what we have, why it matters, what we could lose and what we can do about it
- connect and engage people with nature through both physical and digital experiences
- provide accessible pathways to a range of actions people can take, such as donating, volunteering, investing and participating.

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

We want to be known as a modern, innovative, professional, **financially sustainable and effective** organisation. We are:

- improving systems and processes to make DOC an easier place to work for and with
- creating 'more time for nature' for our public-facing staff
- making it easier for external stakeholders to engage with us
- considering more flexibility on land exchanges
- introducing access charges to some areas of public conservation land.

The following programmes of work will contribute to making DOC a great organisation.

Regulatory Modernisation Programme

We are rapidly delivering this multifaceted, multi-year programme to improve the **performance and productivity of the conservation regulatory system**.

We are making our processes more efficient and effective for permissions, concessions, hunting permits and fishing licences. To modernise conservation land management, we must provide certainty for applicants and decision-makers, speed up concessions processing to reduce waiting times, remove unnecessary restrictions on activities, and reduce our processing costs. We will clarify what is required to give effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, including reviewing existing policy and practices, codifying approaches and embedding improvements to our decision-making functions. This work programme will make it cheaper, faster and easier to engage with our concession and planning processes.

Digital Strategy

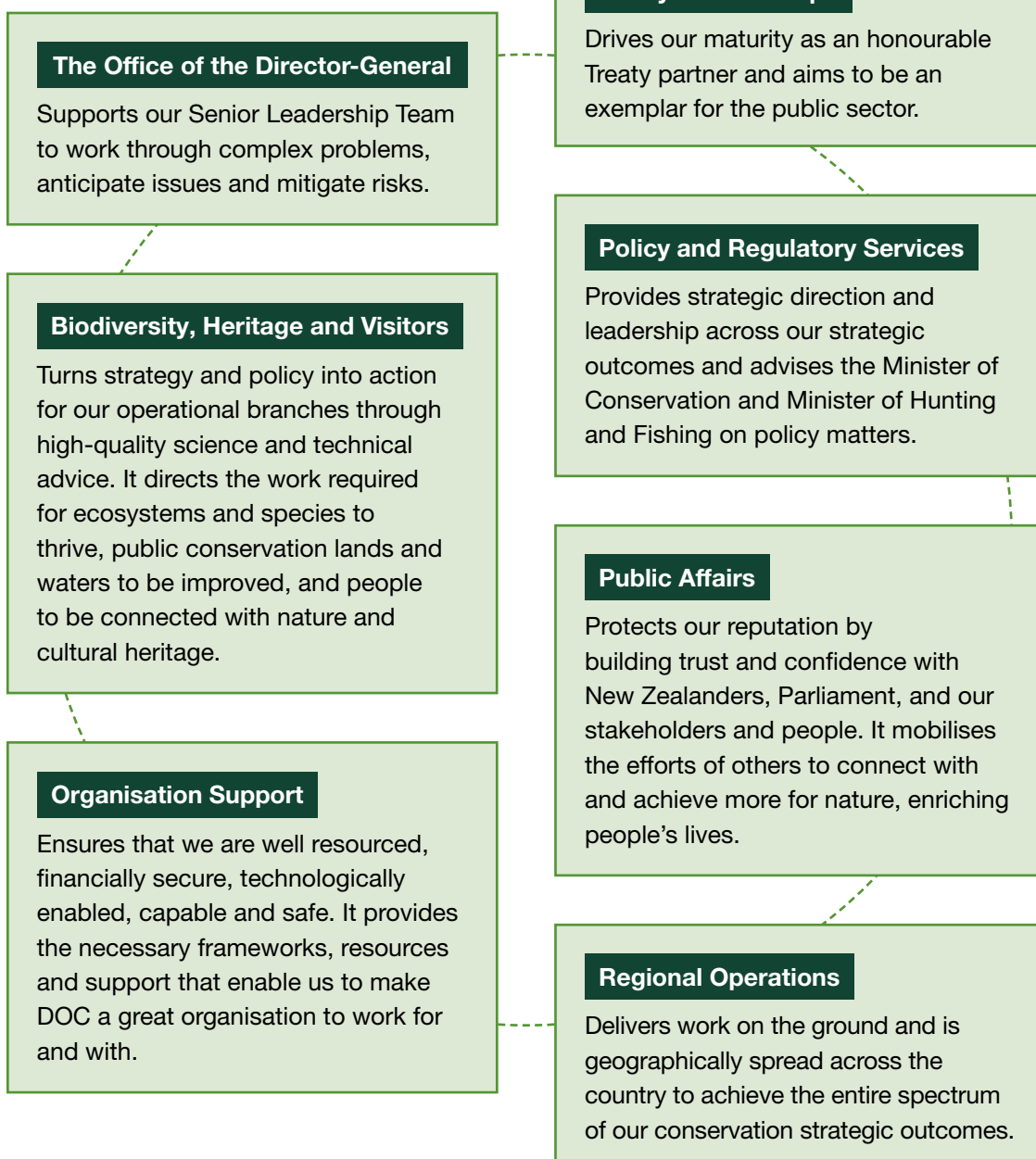
For our **people to be engaged and see the contribution we are making**, we will use data, expertise and scientific evidence to deliver work ourselves and through others. With approximately 2,700 staff embedded in 100 communities around the country, we have a highly mobile and remote workforce, providing a unique opportunity to embrace innovative solutions.

Our Digital Strategy focuses on enabling and informing our staff. It directs us to shift to technology that supports mobile work, improves processes and explores how artificial intelligence can help us. We will work towards leveraging our data into insights for decision making to help gain a deeper understanding of conservation, the environment, our workforce and the challenges we face.

Tō mātou pūnaha whakahaere me te ahurea

Our operating model and culture

Our organisational structure is divided into seven groups. Our Senior Leadership Team, led by the Director-General, is represented by a member from each of these groups and provides clear, decisive leadership to achieve the Government's objectives.



Te hauora me te haumarū

Health and safety

Not only do we employ an extensive workforce, we also engage large numbers of contractors and partner with many volunteer groups in a variety of work activities, often in remote areas that have difficult access. Staff operate as teams in the field, but for some tasks, working solo is common practice.

Our Health and Safety Management System continues to be integral in our operations, with emphasis on 'safe to start' procedures and robust intentions systems and communications. As part of our continuous improvement, we will further develop the occupational health system, organisation-wide security risk assessments and the at-site management of hazardous substances.

The personal safety of our people is a top priority for us, as our staff and contractors are facing notable levels of harassment and intimidation, and threats of violence. We will continue to provide training and support to our people so that they can avoid or mitigate the risk of violence. This training includes working with the New Zealand Police on preventive measures.

Ngā uara me ngā whanonga

Values and behaviours

At the heart of our success is our strong culture, defined by our values and who we are. This drives how we work together and with others. Our values are integrity, connect, empower and achieve, and these have been incorporated into our strategy. The next step is to weave these into our systems and processes, making them an essential part of how we work.



The top nine critical risks that our people face are:

- on-road driving
- working in and with helicopters
- boating
- using chainsaws
- security or workplace violence
- working alone
- working at heights
- psychosocial impacts
- hazardous substances.

Ngā ara whiwhi mahi tautika

Equal employment opportunities

We place importance on developing a culture where everyone can participate, thrive and grow. Our focus areas for inclusion and diversity include closing unjustified pay gaps, supporting women in leadership and providing unconscious bias training.

He anga tutukinga whakauruuru

Integrated performance framework

We have developed an integrated approach to drive understanding of and accountability for our performance. It ties our delivery to the intermediate outcomes of our strategy and provides a framework to understand our health as an organisation.

The framework creates a key shift in the way we work, placing more focus on planning and reporting on our impacts on conservation, such as our effect on the integrity of ecosystems.

Our impact measures reflect our progress against the intermediate outcomes of our strategy. They will form the basis of our performance story as we transition away from mostly reporting on our activities, such as the hectares of pest control. We will still collect data on our conservation activities, and this will support the reporting of our impacts. Over time, we will build a much better picture of wider conservation outcomes and how we contributed to these.

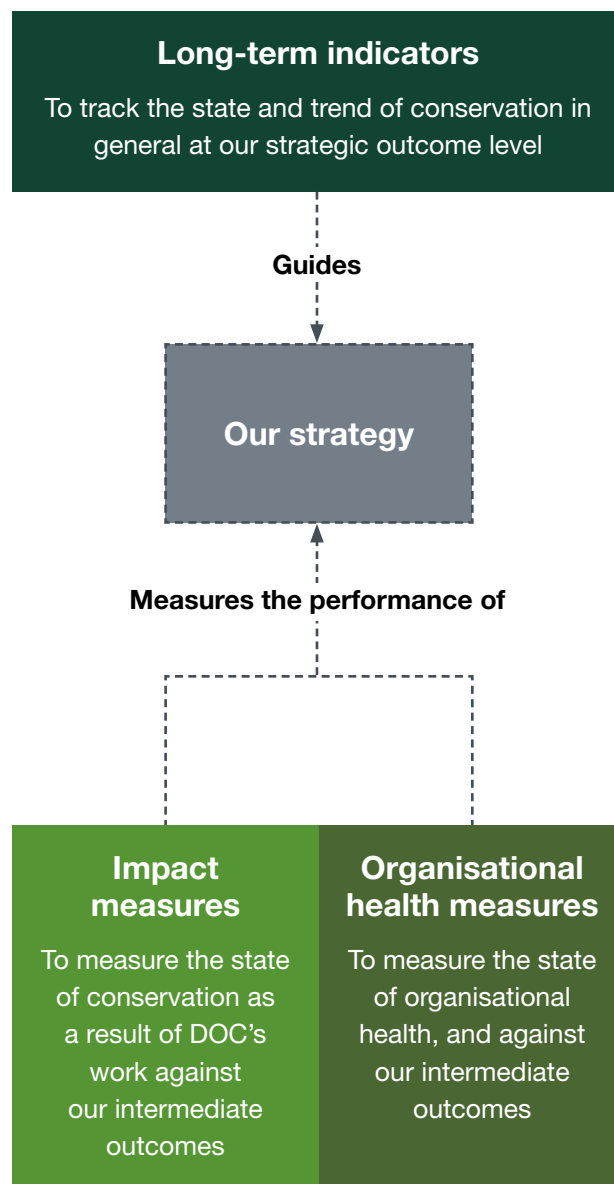
The integrated performance framework also includes measures for our organisation's health, which informs our progress towards our strategic outcome that DOC is a great organisation to work for and with. This includes assessing management aspects such as finances, and health and safety.

He tukanga ki te whakamahere kōpaki

Portfolio planning approach

We have introduced a portfolio-led business planning process to prioritise objectives across the organisation and recommend funding allocations to be integrated into multi-year business plans. This process will streamline our planning, help us to better align our business plans with our resources and measure our progress against outcomes.

How our integrated performance framework is planned and reported



Te whāomoomo ki te taha o te hāpori

Conservation with our community

We work collaboratively with many government and non-government partners and stakeholders to achieve our common goal of protecting nature. There is no doubt that achieving positive conservation outcomes requires a collective effort. We will continue to rely on great partnerships and allow others to lead and facilitate action.

Examples of who we work with

Environmental and conservation sectors

Environmental Defence Society
Environmental Law Initiative
Forest & Bird
Greenpeace Aotearoa
International Union for Conservation of Nature
Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research
Nature Heritage Fund Committee
New Zealand Conservation Authority
NEXT Foundation
Ngā Whenua Rāhui Komiti
Predator Free 2050 New Zealand Trust
Queen Elizabeth II National Trust
Save the Kiwi
Te Urewera Board
World Wildlife Fund
Zero Invasive Predators

Recreation sector

Backcountry Trust
 Federated Mountain Clubs
 Fish & Game New Zealand
 Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa – Outdoor Access Commission
 New Zealand Alpine Club
 New Zealand Deerstalkers Association
 New Zealand Game Animal Council
 New Zealand Mountain Safety Council
 Ngā Haerenga New Zealand Cycle Trails
 Recreation Aotearoa – Te Whai Oranga

Public Service

Ministry for Primary Industries
 Ministry for the Environment
 Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment
 Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
 Te Puni Kōkiri
 Te Tari Whakatau

Industrial sector

Air New Zealand
 BusinessNZ
 Dulux
 Federated Farmers
 Fulton Hogan
 Genesis Energy
 Meridian Energy
 Minerals West Coast
 New Zealand Māori Tourism – He Toa Takitini
 Ngāi Tahu Tourism
 NIWA
 OSPRI
 Plant & Food Research
 RealNZ
 Seafood New Zealand
 Straterra
 Sustainable Business Council
 Sustainable Business Network
 The Aotearoa Circle
 Tourism Industry Aotearoa
 Trojan Holdings Limited
 Zoo and Aquarium Association

We also work closely with Treaty partners such as post-settlement governance entities and Iwi/hapū, as well as with local community groups, businesses, private landowners, conservation boards, schools and universities.



**Te Kāwanatanga
o Aotearoa**
New Zealand Government