



Hoiho Technical Group - 2024/25 season update

1. Changes to the group's membership

- The HTG have undergone some significant changes to their members in the past year, with Richard Seed, Trudi Webster and Bruce McKinlay leaving the group. On the positive side, John Richardson, Senior Inshore Fisheries Analyst from FNZ has joined the group as a member and William Gibson (Senior Scientist) has joined the group on some occasions, particularly for discussions around the hoiho multi-threat risk assessment (HMTRA). Furthermore, Wanna Yeo from YEPT has joined the group as an observer until a new YEPT member has been appointed. The current members are Hendrik Schultz (DOC, Convenor), Puawai Swindells-Wallace (TRoNT), Jana Hayes (TRoNT), John Richardson (FNZ), Wanna Yeo (YEPT).

2. New approach

- With the significant changes to the group, we are rethinking of how to interact with the hoiho community and would like to take a more open approach. If you would like to discuss technical matters with us, please get in touch with Hendrik (hschultz@doc.govt.nz). While many things can be resolved via email, we will consider adding a slot for an online or in-person discussion at our next HTG hui.

3. Implementation of actions in Te Mahere Rima Tau

In the past 2024/25 season HTG have focussed on the following pieces of work:

- Input into the hoiho multi-threat risk assessment for hoiho. FNZ has commissioned a spatial multi-threat risk assessment for the northern population of hoiho (HMTRA). HTG have provided feedback on the hoiho MTRA since this work was started. In April 2025, HTG have hosted a workshop with FNZ, modelers, SNZ and subject matter experts for FNZ to provide updated information and to help inform an evaluation of potential management approaches.
- Support and develop a CSP research project (MIT2024-05) 'Testing the utility of visual deterrent options (i.e. green LEDs) to mitigate incidental bycatch of protected species in set nets.' Work is planned to take place in Oamaru Harbour with an anticipated start date in August 2025. If initial results from the CSP research project indicate that green LEDs act as a visual deterrent a FNZ project will begin a trial of this approach on set net gear with the aim of assessing impact on target catch and bycatch rates.



- HTG members provided input into a protocol to uplift & return of hoiho to/from Whenua Hou.
- HTG provided advice to HGG regarding a proposal to hold hoiho in captivity for advocacy purposes.
- Regular engagement of HTG members with disease researchers from Otago University about ongoing and planned disease research.
- Support of pre- and post-season meetings.

4. Progress against actions in Te Mahere Rima Tau 2024/25

- As part of the Review of Te Kaweka Takohaka mō te Hoiho in 2024, the number of actions in Te Mahere Rima tau was reduced from 83 to 66. We have gone through all actions and provided status updates in the status column. A copy of this DRAFT full status update report is attached. Please have a read and bring any comments or updates to the symposium discussion or email your comments to hoihofeedback@doc.govt.nz. This report will be finalised after the symposium (incorporating any of your feedback) and will be uploaded to the DOC website (www.doc.govt.nz/hoiho-recovery). Thank you very much in advance for your feedback.

| Te hauorataka, te orakataka me te whakaputaraka / Health, survival and productivity | | | | | Collaborators | Status |
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| | Year 6 (July 2024-June 2025) | Year 7 (July 2025-June 2026) | Year 8 (July 2026-June 2027) | Years 9 and 10 (July 2027-June 2029) | Who else may be involved & HGG lead(s) in bold | Progress on this action in 2024/25 |
| Strategic Priority 1 Intervene and care for sick, injured or underweight hoiho to improve survival and breeding success. | Action 1a Ensure that the system from uplift, through hospital care and rehabilitation to release, is funded and resourced to provide essential care for hoiho on an ongoing basis. (E) | | | | DOC , YEPT, vets and rehab groups | Good collaboration between organisations which continues to grow. c25-35% of adults / juveniles (Northern popn) required rehab, 95% successfully released. 17% chicks required rehab, 94% successfully fledged. Progress has been made on setting up a relationship with the NZ Nature Fund (HGG). Ongoing YEPT rehab coordinator role created. HTG have worked with vets & rehabbers to draft a protocol around uplift of compromised birds from Whenua Hou to manage any disease transmission risk between birds from Whenua Hou and other locations. Continued conservation focus at the Otago Peninsula Eco Restoration Alliance (the OPERA, formerly Penguin Place). DOC Coastal Otago funded a car and fuel costs for Penguin rescue to transport hoiho chicks to and from DWH for disease treatment in November. DOC Coastal Otago also funded a paid position at DWH allowing them to take on extra sets of hands in December to help with chick raising after the bulk of the volunteers finished up at the end of the busy November period. |
| | Action 1b Increase capacity and capability to identify sick, injured or underweight hoiho through an expanded programme of intervention (including Rakiura and Whenua Hou). (E) | Annually implement the intensive management programme. (E) | | | DOC , YEPT, Kāi tahu, mana whenua, site managers and landowners | Ongoing ranger capacity at DOC Rakiura. Reduced ranger capacity at YEPT. Continued monitoring and interventions for Rakiura but no option for chicks (resulting in low productivity). Green Island mahi (egg removal again, and minimal moult monitoring). Egg uplift undertaken from Paterson Inlet, Rakiura. DOC Senior Ranger role to coordinate DOC hoiho operations work was disestablished. |
| | Action 1c Annually assess short-term outcomes and the long-term survival and breeding success of birds who have undergone treatment and/or rehabilitation to make improvements to practices. (E) | | | | DOC , YEPT, Kāi tahu, vets, rehab groups and researchers | End of season debrief and reporting (release/survival rate, fosters, fledging). Data collected by all organisations. Short-term survival of chicks to fledge and treatment / rehab success of birds is very high. Further investigation into long-term outcomes needed. |
| Strategic Priority 2 Minimise the impact of disease and unexplained mortality events on hoiho. | Action 2a Annually review and update hoiho management and disease protocols (e.g. chick management, avian malaria, and others as necessary) and incorporate Kāi Tahu tikaka. (E) | | | | DOC , YEPT, Kāi tahu, vets and site managers | Significant improvements to management of chicks. 88% of chicks from the northern population (inclusive of monitored/visited nests from Rakiura and Whenua Hou) were uplifted to WHD for treatment, 60% successfully released and an additional 7% were hand raised until fledge. The decrease in success from last season's 96% release rate has been reviewed and measures put in place to address issues found. DS again very reduced in hospital. RDS increased again, possible reason due to metabolic bone disease (MBD), but other reasons can't be ruled out at this stage. No malaria cases in hospital. Malarone pharmacokinetic research completed(WHD, Uni Otago). Review of unexplained mortality response plan planned, but lower priority (UM levels, triggers & requirements) (latest version: Sept 2019). End of season review meeting with operational groups (21-May-2025). |
| | Action 2b Adequately resource and provide training to ensure effective implementation of intensive management in line with hoiho management protocols. (E) | | | | DOC , YEPT, site managers, vets and rehab groups | Oversight of disease response for hoiho led by DOC Vet Coordinator. New rangers at YEPT, still growing experience. Limited resources to provide training to new staff around implementing the intensive management protocols. |
| | Action 2c Annually fund and send birds for necropsy to investigate cause of death, summarise necropsy results, and identify and respond to novel diseases as appropriate. (E) | | | | DOC , YEPT, vets, rehab groups and site managers | Contract for hoiho necropsies is ongoing (Wildbase, Massey Uni). 24 adult hoiho died (excluding fisheries deaths): 4 due to predation, 4 malaria, 1 suspected marine biotoxin, 1 hepatic lipidosis, 1 aspiration pneumonia, 2 starvation, 11 unknown). Five juvenile hoiho died, all of unknown cause. Seven hoiho chicks (>4wo) died: 2 malaria, 1 aspergillosis, 1 starvation, 2 other and 1 unknown. Sixty-two early chick mortality (<4wo) necropsies completed (WHD/Massey Uni). Continued funding of DOC Vet Coordinator role. Article published about six cases of Pasteurellosis observed during 2023/24 season. Monitoring Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) and risk to NZ avifauna continues. Paper published on a retrospective review of penguin necropsy records in Aotearoa New Zealand (Auckland Zoo, Murdoch University). |

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| | Action 2d Commission research to fully understand the disease status for hoiho and investigate the causes, mechanisms and dynamics of diseases affecting hoiho. Use results to inform management and research direction. (E) | DOC, YEPT, researchers, vets, rehab groups and site managers | Vet Coordinator annual report on disease and hoiho deaths in preparation. Ongoing disease research includes; Gyrovirus genomics (Otago), PhD on association between RDS and Gyrovirus (Massey), Purification of Gyrovirus VP1 (Otago), RDS histopathology review (Massey). Research completed this season includes; Malarone pharmacokinetics study (DWH), Pasteurellosis investigation (MPI, DOC), Virus isolation of Gyrovirus (Massey/Otago), Investigation into metabolic bone disease (DWH). Planned future research for next season includes: PhD on clinical disease of RDS and DS (WHD/Massey/Otago), Megivirus association with DS (Otago), Genetic impacts on immunity and disease (Otago). | |
| Strategic Priority 3 Follow appropriate kawa and tikaka for treatment of all hoiho. | Action 3a Develop tikaka / best practice protocol for handling and care of all hoiho for research and management purposes. (E) | Implement the protocol, including as part of the permitting process. (E) | Kāi tahu, DOC, YEPT, vets, rehab groups, researchers and site managers | Work has commenced on how we can implement Tikanga as a cultural tool throughout our strategy, when working with Hoiho and when working with each other. YEPT is working towards a plan to fund the work. |
| Strategic Priority 4 Investigate and develop additional intervention options to improve breeding success and survival. | Action 4a Investigate the full range of conservation intervention options which have the potential to improve breeding success and survival of hoiho and implement as required. € | | DOC, YEPT, Kāi tahu, rehab groups, vets and researchers | Continuous improvements to conservation intervention options available. Fourth season of uplifting eggs from Green Island to DWH for artificial incubation. Streamlined chick monitoring and treatment of chicks across mainland sites and stakeholders. A number of chicks from Rakiura, Coastal- and North Otago hand-reared to fledging. First season of uplifting eggs from Paterson Inlet to DWH for artificial incubation and captive rearing. |
| Strategic Priority 5 Ensure monitoring programmes, including cultural monitoring tools, provide quality information to support management decisions. | Action 5a Ensure that knowledge about the status and health of the northern population is complete and robust, by developing and implementing a well-defined annual monitoring and marking programme. (E) | | DOC, YEPT, site managers, and researchers | Monitoring protocols were provided at the pre-season meeting. Protocols were reviewed at the post season meeting by all stakeholders. Continued efforts to monitor and mark birds at remote sites (e.g. Green Is, Rakiura). Senior Ranger role to coordinate DOC hoiho operations monitoring programme disestablished. |
| | Action 5b Maintain engagement with mana whenua and undertake regular surveys of all colonies on Rakiura and outliers in partnership with Kāi tahu during the hoiho breeding season. (E) | | DOC, YEPT, Kāi tahu, mana whenua and landowners | Ongoing objectives for increased action determined through Kaitiaki roopu following full survey in 2020/21. Continued liaison and involvement of mana whenua (e.g. Rakiura Māori Lands Trust, Whenua Hou Komiti). CSP project planned to look at at sea distribution of hoiho breeding at the Neck. All sites with recent documented hoiho activity around Rakiura were surveyed this season, other than Bench Island and titi islands. Kāi Tahu has received funding from MBIE to develop a conservation and restoration framework for endangered manu which will be embedded with Kāi Tahu mātauranga. The tool will first be used for kākāriki karaka and later rolled out to other manu, including hoiho. |
| | Action 5c Provide knowledge about the status and health of the southern population by agreeing objectives and a methodology, and securing funding for a monitoring programme. (E) | Commence a monitoring programme for the southern population. (E) | DOC, YEPT, Kāi tahu and researchers | Year 2 of 2 of CSP project POP2023-03 fieldwork completed. Analysis required to update distributional surveys, provide a population estimate, establish baseline health, monitor diet, and investigate foraging strategies for Campbell Island ongoing (DOC Marine Bycatch and Threats team, in collaboration with University of Otago). Draft report due October 2025. Year 3 of ongoing monitoring and research using trail cameras to monitor activity times, proxy foraging trip duration, survival to 28 days, and feeding events. Fieldwork completed and led by DOC Marine Bycatch and Threats team. |
| | Action 5d Identify and use cultural monitoring tools and approaches for enhancing management of hoiho populations. (H) | | Kāi tahu, DOC, YEPT, mana whenua and site managers | 2024/2025: Initiated contact with Ōtākou Runaka and Aukaha to begin planning for a project about tikaka at Okia Reserve. Ongoing - awaiting update from Runaka. |
| Te Marae o Takaroa / Marine habitat | | | | |
| | Action 6a Implement and incentivise practices that eliminate bycatch particularly from set netting throughout the northern population range. (E) | Fisheries NZ, YEPT, DOC, Kāi tahu, fishing industry, LFRs and fishers | Ongoing bycatch issues for hoiho. Voluntary setnet exclusion areas off Rakiura (East of Neck, and Port Pegasus) and around Whenua out to 4 nmi remain in place and monitored by FNZ via Waka Haurapa mapping software, as well as restrictions for Hector's dolphin along the mainland coast. Stage 1 of research projects on green LEDs for mitigating bycatch scheduled to commence August 2025 (CSP funded). Stage 2 (FNZ-funded) expected to start soon. The Fisheries NZ – commissioned multi threat risk assessment is being finalised. The results will guide additional measures to reduce the risk of fishing-related mortality. | |
| | Action 6b Ensure review levels of electronic monitoring are effectively prioritised, and are at least 50% on setnet and inshore trawl vessels within hoiho habitat, to enable overlap and risk to be estimated effectively. (E) | Fisheries NZ, fishing industry and fishers | All in-scope set net and inshore trawl vessels operating on the east and south coasts of the South Island have onboard cameras operating and uploading footage to FNZ. Review rates are high by international standards. Review rates vary by fishery and are based on random selection within a risk-based approach. Areas where there is greater overlap of inshore trawl and set net fishing effort with known Hector's dolphin and hoiho distribution are accorded higher review rates. | |

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| Strategic Priority 6 Ensure bycatch does not threaten hoiho. | Action 6c Build the positive working relationship with fishers, fishing industry representatives, Licensed Fish Receivers (LFRs) and as part of the Fisheries Information Group to share information and work together to solve bycatch and other fisheries issues. (E) | Fisheries NZ, YEPT, DOC, Kāi tahu, fishers, fishing industry, LFRs, researchers. | Continued liaison with fishers, industry reps, LFRs and DOC Protected Species Liaison officer. FNZ directly liaises with skippers following captures, and pre-emptively with regards to avoiding seasonal hoiho capture 'hot-spots'. |
| | Action 6d Maintain the mechanism to ensure that timely information on bycaught hoiho is provided to operations staff that monitor hoiho. (E) | Fisheries NZ, DOC, YEPT, fishing industry and fishers | Significant improvements to mechanism for reporting chipped hoiho in operation. Fine-scale Geographical Position Reporting on fishing vessels and electronic catch reporting facilitates this - details of associated fishing event verified by review of onboard camera footage. Daily alerts (via FNZ) if protected species are caught. Excellent line of communication between Otago/Southland DOC Protected Species Liaison Officer and FNZ. |
| | Action 6e Investigate the potential impacts and opportunities of transitioning fisheries from set netting to other fishing methods. (E) | Fisheries NZ, DOC, YEPT, Kāi tahu, fishing industry, fishers and researchers | Ongoing discussion with industry re. transition costs, esp. set net to bottom longline. Preliminary estimated cost in range of \$200k/vessel. |
| | Action 6f Update spatially explicit fisheries risk assessment (SEFRA) whenever new information is available to provide reliable and up-to-date estimates of risk. (E) | Fisheries NZ, YEPT and DOC (through AEWG process) | FNZ & contractors continue to improve info and modelling for SEFRA and AEBR. |
| | Action 6g Identify mitigation measures based on the results from a Multi-threat risk assessment for hoiho for fisheries around the east coast of the South Island, Rakiura and offshore islands. (E) | Fisheries NZ, fishing industry and fishers | Multi-threat Risk Assessment expected to be finalised in August this year. Assessment expected to identify areas at higher risk of set net bycatch, which will inform subsequent engagement with regional operators, LFRs and Seafood NZ. |
| | Action 6h Identify areas where hoiho are at risk from recreational fisheries (e.g. Rakiura) and use appropriate tools to educate fishers and mitigate risk. (M) | Fisheries NZ, DOC, YEPT, rec fishers and researchers | This action has not been progressed in 2024/25. Publication of Multi-threat risk assessment may provide opportunity to address risk from recreational fisheries. |
| | Action 7a Determine which marine protection measures are most appropriate/effective to protect hoiho habitat and food sources and promote their implementation. € | DOC, Fisheries NZ, Kāi tahu, YEPT, fishing industry, mana whenua, researchers, and local authorities | South East Marine Protection (SEMP) type 1 protected areas currently on hold due to judicial review - although these are unlikely to offer significant protection to hoiho (minimal overlap). No reported captures during 2024/25 fishing inside a Type-1 or Type-2 area. |
| | Action 7b Contribute to marine spatial planning exercises to map biotic and abiotic factors within hoiho habitat, and use the data to inform marine protection measures and applications for activities which may adversely affect hoiho. (E) | DOC, YEPT, Kāi tahu, Fisheries NZ, researchers and local authorities | Research published on spatial overlap between hoiho, fisheries and protected areas (Hickcox et al. 2023; Young 2024). Otago Peninsula Marine Habitat Mapping group established with various stakeholder groups. Marine habitat data gathered using animal-borne cameras, satellite tags, and GPS-TDR from subantarctic populations (DOC Marine Bycatch and Threats team, draft report due October 2025). |
| Strategic Priority 7 Protect and support marine habitats and ecosystems that nourish hoiho. | Action 7c Contribute to national and international policy instruments relating to climate change that will recognise and promote the conservation of hoiho and their habitat. (E) | DOC, YEPT, Kāi tahu and researchers | No further progress with DOC climate change adaptation action plan (including biodiversity risk assessments). |
| | Action 7d Commission research to investigate foraging ecology of hoiho including diet, habitat utilisation and physical habitat parameters using results to inform management and research direction. (E) | DOC, YEPT, Fisheries NZ, Kāi tahu, researchers and local authorities | Tracking of hoiho from Campbell Islands continued in the second year (2024-25 season). Funding approved and work contracted for CSP project to further investigate foraging around Rakiura. Foraging tracks of mainland hoiho used to support Multi-threat risk assessment work. |
| | Action 7e Advocate for the protection of hoiho and their habitat in statutory processes relating to marine activities which may adversely affect hoiho, including applications under the Resource Management Act, Crown Minerals Act and EEZ Act. (H) | DOC, YEPT, Kāi tahu and local authorities | Advice provided for resource consent applications. Work on finalising the new land and water regional plan has been paused while a new national framework on freshwater management is being developed by the Government. |
| | Action 7f Assess the conservation status of the southern population (using data collected under Action 5c) in relation to environmental and anthropogenic variables, and compare to the northern population. (H) | DOC, YEPT, Kāi tahu, and researchers | Not started: Requires additional data from Action 5c and Year 2 of Campbell Island CSP programme to progress. (DOC Marine Bycatch and Threats team). Anticipated start by March 2026. |
| | Action 7g Commission research to analyse the extent of predation from marine predators to ensure confidence when assessing the impact of this threat. (M) | DOC, YEPT, vets and researchers | Hoiho death data is collated by DOC Vet Coordinator (includes predation cases). MVSc research on marine predator injuries in mainland hoiho completed (2023, Massey University). |
| | Action 8a Ensure oil spill response plans include specific hoiho population data and treatment options and engage with the agencies responsible to prepare for emergencies as required. (E) | DOC, YEPT, local authorities, and other agencies | (Latest version of ORC plan: April 2019; latest version of ES plan: Sept 2018). |
| | Action 8b Build proactive relationships and collaborate with local and regional government to understand, avoid and mitigate the impacts of marine pollution, sedimentation, disturbance and noise on hoiho. (H) | DOC, YEPT, Kāi tahu, local authorities, and researchers | Discussions started with ORC highlighting issues related to hoiho as part of their Te Awa Ātākou scoping work. Relationship building with DCC wastewater liaison group, CDC and SDC needs some work as key relationship holders have left their roles. |
| Strategic Priority 8 Ensure marine pollution, disturbance and noise do not threaten hoiho. | Action 8c Engage with local and regional government to promote hoiho conservation and contribute to the development of marine monitoring frameworks. (H) | DOC, YEPT, Kāi tahu, local authorities and researchers | Liaison with biodiversity, marine and policy staff at ORC (including as part of Te Awa Ātākou). Relationship building with DCC wastewater liaison group, CDC and SDC needs some work as key relationship holders have left their roles. |
| | Action 8d Commission research to identify, characterize and highlight the potential impacts of marine pollutants and sedimentation on hoiho and identify important areas for further work. (H) | DOC, YEPT, Kāi tahu, local authorities, and researchers | No known research conducted this season. (Heavy metal testing of hoiho chicks completed in 2021/22). Sedimentation effects on birds report published on DOC website in 2021. |
| Te whakaekaka o te takata / Human disturbance | | | |

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| Strategic Priority 9 Reduce the impact of tourism and recreation activities to ensure they do not threaten hoiho. | Action 9a Use available information to investigate and implement mechanisms (e.g. closure / rāhui, controlled access, rangers, fences, signs, tracks) to manage visitors at hoiho sites. (E) | DOC, Kāi tahu, YEPT, local authorities, mana whenua, site managers, tourism industry, landowners and researchers | Specific closures / restrictions at hoiho sites (e.g. Boulder Beach, western Sandfly Bay and Tavora from 1 Nov to 28 Feb). Track closed temporarily at Curio Bay to protect hoiho. DOC is progressing the procedure to implement a bylaw to permanently close access to the portion of petrified forest at Curio bay which is used by hoiho to get to/from habitat. Summer rangers (coastal Otago & Catlins), kaitiaki ranger at Katitiki Pt, volunteers and community groups. Looking into track re-alignment mapping and assessment to avoid hoiho habitat at Sandfly Bay. Volunteers at the Nuggets. | |
| | Action 9b Move moulting and other at-risk birds from beaches where disturbance is likely to safer areas, as required. (E) | DOC, YEPT, site managers and public | Increased effort to identify moulters (Rakiura) and ongoing efforts across the mainland. Relocation of birds effectively delivered by several organisations. Wildlife response (DOC hotline calls) within Coastal Otago forwarded onto the Dunedin office where any at-risk hoiho reported are responded to. | |
| | Action 9c Educate visitors about appropriate tikaka / behaviour and consequences for hoiho and ensure that messaging is consistent. (E) | DOC, Kāi tahu, YEPT, site managers, mana whenua, landowners, tourism industry, local authorities, public and researchers | Kaitiaki rangers, summer rangers and volunteers provide advocacy and education to public, encouraging visitors to join guided tours where behaviour and disturbance is managed. Education and advocacy via press releases and social media (several groups). Ongoing work to ensure consistency of messaging. | |
| | Action 9d Commission a site-based analysis of the key risks recreational activities pose to hoiho and methods to alleviate them. (M) | Work with landowners and local government to implement recommendations. (M) | DOC, Kāi tahu, YEPT, local authorities, landowners, site managers, recreation users, public and researchers | No progress. |
| | Action 9e Coordinate with marketing agencies and tourism companies to rectify unrealistic expectations for hoiho tourism. (M) | DOC, YEPT, Kāi tahu, local authorities, tourism industry and marketing agencies | No progress. | |
| Strategic Priority 10 Eliminate mortality from dogs. | Action 10a Work with local government to improve enforcement of bylaws at hoiho sites which are listed as prohibited dog areas and assess whether new sites need to be added. (E) | DOC, YEPT and local authorities | Update to DCC Dog Bylaw and Dog Control Policy: dogs must be leashed in all coastal dune areas including access paths, to protect wildlife (effective from 5 May 2025). Work with local councils on ongoing compliance issues at sites as people continue to ignore signage. Additional signage stating "no dogs" been added to the walking tracks around Boulder Beach. DOC compliance App to aid enforcement (fining ability). | |
| | Action 10b Use available information from social science research to improve the effectiveness of advocacy, signage and other tools for reducing dog impacts. (E) | DOC, YEPT, local authorities, dog owners and researchers | Review and Evaluation of Dog-related Messaging finalised, focused on sites in Otago and Catlins (Uni of Otago). | |
| | Action 10c Advocate for the protection of hoiho on beaches through education programmes with the wider community or using other tools to prevent dog attacks. (E) | DOC, YEPT, site managers, local authorities and dog owners | Several social media posts and media releases particularly during moult to inform dog owners and highlight risks, given ongoing issues with dogs. Info about interactions with wildlife on beaches sent to dog owners with dog registration packs. Lead the Way Programme (dog interactions on beaches) currently inactive due to resource constraints. | |
| Strategic Priority 11 Provide opportunities for Kāi Tahu to exercise kaitiakitaka. | Action 11a Identify opportunities for Kāi Tahu to be active kaitiaki in relation to hoiho visitor management and tell the story of hoiho as taonga. (M) | Kāi tahu, DOC, YEPT, mana whenua and tourism industry | Kaitiaki ranger at Moeraki. | |
| Strategic Priority 12 Minimise stress and disturbance from research and management activities. | Action 12a Support disturbance for research and management purposes only where there is direct conservation benefit for hoiho and ensure consistency with Kāi Tahu tikaka and kawa. (H) | DOC, Kāi tahu, YEPT, site managers and researchers | Managed through Wildlife Act permissions process for research and conservation organisations, case by case evaluation. Operational management through specific protocols and SOPs. | |
| Strategic Priority 13 Effectively control mammalian land-based predators at hoiho breeding sites. | Action 13a Ensure all mainland hoiho sites have effective predator control in place for mustelids, cats and rats. (E) | DOC, YEPT, Kāi tahu, landowners, mana whenua, site managers and pest control organisations | Additional trap coverage and ongoing replacement of traps: Tavora Reserve traplines extended and upgraded. Rabbit-proof fencing is going up at Seal Bay in Irahuka Long Point (YEPT in collaboration with Forest & Bird). Feral cat control planned for Winter 2025 at Okia Reserve as part of ORC Site-Led Project. Rabbit control planned along Margaret Hazel Slope (YEPT in partnership with DCC). All DOC peninsula sites have traplines that are checked by volunteers or community groups. Cat trapping is limited, most trap lines target rats and mustelids. | |
| | Action 13b Support predator control initiatives in hoiho habitat (e.g. Predator Free Rakiura, Maukahuka Project), and leverage funding and technical knowledge to increase efficiency in the delivery of predator control. (E) | DOC, YEPT, Kāi tahu, pest control organisations, landowners, mana whenua, site managers | Halo and Otago Peninsula Biodiversity Group (OPBG) now focusing on mustelid trapping across the Otago Peninsula (inclusive of hoiho sites). Predator Free Rakiura project focused on planning and community engagement. Various individuals and organisations working towards predator free. Whenua Hou 26y predator-free. | |
| | Action 13c Reduce pig numbers at hoiho sites to minimise the impact on hoiho in their northern population range. (E) | DOC, site managers and pest control organisations | Monthly checks and follow-up undertaken in North Otago. Control at targeted sites as necessary. Hinahina has been highlighted as an area requiring further pig control, but none has been undertaken recently. | |
| | Action 13d Implement management tools derived from the observations and monitoring by kaitiaki to inform predator control planning and decision-making. (H) | Kāi tahu, DOC, YEPT and mana whenua | Not started. | |
| | Action 13e Analyse the extent of predation from weka to ensure confidence when assessing the impact of this threat and develop preferred management options. (M) | DOC, YEPT, Kāi tahu, mana whenua, landowners and researchers | Not started. All hoiho eggs from the Bravo Islands were uplifted this season, so weka predation was not a factor. However weka are present at other sites around Rakiura where hoiho occur e.g. Bench Island, Noble Island. | |

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| Strategic Priority 14 Provide habitat on land that protects hoiho and buffers against natural events and other impacts. | Action 14a Optimise hoiho habitat to ensure adequate provision for moulting, nesting, socialising and access, and implement land-based tools to buffer the potential impacts of fire, erosion, flooding, and increased temperatures. (E) | DOC, YEPT, Kāi tahu, landowners, site managers and mana whenua | Continued site based management (e.g. tracks for hoiho, nest boxes, shade, flood protection (various organisations). For example: moving new nestboxes at Okia, cutting penguin access tracks at Waianakarua Bluffs and Otapahi. Ongoing monitoring of dune erosion and management of hoiho access into habitat. |
| | Action 14b Ensure important hoiho habitat that is public conservation land prioritises hoiho conservation over other objectives and that the classification of these lands reflects this priority. (H) | DOC, YEPT and Kāi tahu | Reclassification of strip as Wildlife Refuge between Katiki and Okahu Point under discussion between rūnaka and DOC. |
| | Action 14c Engage with landowners to ensure that important hoiho habitat has adequate statutory protection. (H) | DOC, YEPT, Kāi tahu and landowners | Minimal discussions occurring at specific sites, but slow progress. |
| Strategic Priority 15 Protect hoiho and habitat from the negative effects of stock and browsers | Action 15a Exclude large stock from hoiho habitat. (E) | DOC, YEPT, Kāi tahu and landowners | Ongoing liaison and discussions with landowners, and fixing fences as required. |
| | Action 15b Work with regional councils to ensure Regional Pest Management plans are effective at protecting hoiho habitat. (H) | DOC, YEPT, Kāi tahu and local authorities | (Advice provided for latest version of strategies: ORC and ES 2019). |
| | Action 15c Identify priority sites and implement wild browser control. (M) | DOC, YEPT, Kāi tahu, local authorities, pest control organisations, landowners and site managers | Site by site implementation of control. Possum control (e.g. via PF2050, PF Dunedin, OPBG) and Otago Peninsula almost possum free. Rabbits are a major problem, but improved, funded and coordinated rabbit control occurring (ORC). |
| Ka mahi tahi / Working together | | | |
| Strategic Priority 16 Prioritise and support resourcing of hoiho conservation | Action 16a Develop strategies to enable resourcing to deliver the actions in this plan. (E) | DOC, YEPT, Kāi tahu and Fisheries NZ | On the whole, hoiho community groups are still struggling for funding in 2025. Project-based applications have proven effective in this year's funding round, though resource pool available has shrunk. Some funding for research through grants, Conservation Services Programme and Marine By-catch & Threats / DOC Biodiversity. Joint funding application (YEPT with OPERA) for Rakiura rehabilitation coordinator role was successful. This will keep rehabilitation services for hoiho on Rakiura running for the next season. YEPT has also endorsed OPERA's application for EcoFund to run their rehabilitation centre on the Otago Peninsula. Lost at Sea campaign will be launched at YEPT as an advocacy campaign for ocean health. UNESCO representation at UN Oceans Conference to attract partnerships and donors. |
| | Action 16b Advocate to funding agencies the need to recognise and fund all project aspects, including administration and management, and the importance of multi-year funding. (E) | DOC, YEPT, Kāi tahu and Fisheries NZ | HGG have established a relationship with the New Zealand Nature Fund with the aim to raise sustainable funding for hoiho conservation. Biggest gap in funding still lies in human resourcing. |
| Strategic Priority 17 Support the delivery of hoiho conservation through effective communication and collaboration strategies | Action 17a Maintain and improve mechanisms to support effective communication with everyone involved in hoiho conservation to ensure collaboration. (E) | DOC, YEPT, Kāi tahu, Fisheries NZ and all stakeholders | HGG with media teams from DOC and TRoNT are working on a sequence of comms for hoiho to collaboratively tell the hoiho story and keep the public informed about their status. Improved operational mechanisms include: pre-/post-season meetings, regular email updates, annual YEP symposium. Kaitiaki roopu committees and Whenua Hou komiti. Other comms through working groups (e.g. fisheries, disease, AEWG) and spatial advisory groups (e.g. Te Rere). |
| | Action 17b Maintain and improve effective collaboration with local and regional government to deliver hoiho conservation. (H) | DOC, YEPT, Kāi tahu and local government | Ongoing liaison with ORC biodiversity, marine and policy staff but needs some work as key relationship holders have left their roles. |
| Strategic Priority 18 Ensure Kāi Tahu is engaged in decision-making from the flax roots to governance | Action 18a Ensure Kāi Tahu are involved in planning and decision-making from 'flax roots' to governance. (E) | DOC, Kāi tahu, YEPT, Fisheries NZ and mana whenua | Ongoing liaison at various levels: Crown Treaty partnership, HGG/HTG partnership, Kaitiaki roopu, Whenua Hou Komiti, Rakiura Māori Lands Trust, Papatipu rūnaka (e.g. kaitiaki ranger at Moeraki, iwi rep for WH monitoring and Catlins mahi). |
| | Action 18b Increase awareness of Kāi Tahu mātauraka and tikaka that guides hoiho management among all practitioners. (H) | DOC, Kāi tahu, YEPT, Fisheries NZ and mana whenua | Guidance through Te Kaweka and Te Mahere. |
| | Action 18c Ensure Kāi Tahu engagement occurs when DOC enters into partnerships with other parties. (H) | DOC and Kāi tahu | Ongoing relationship building - Crown Treaty partnership. |
| | Action 18d Support opportunities that enable Kāi Tahu to reconnect with hoiho in the takiwā, undertake cultural practices and build capacity and capability. This includes training and employment, involvement in research / monitoring and use of cultural management tools. (M) | DOC, Kāi tahu, YEPT and mana whenua | Continuing Kaitiaki roopu and Whenua Hou komiti relationships, Moeraki kaitiaki ranger, ongoing RMLT liaison, rūnaka level hoiho monitoring opportunities provided on Whenua Hou and through Awarua. TRoNT visits to Rakiura and mainland hoiho sites with various groups. |
| Strategic Priority 19 Ensure research is strategic, well-coordinated and includes Mātauranga Māori perspectives | Action 19a Establish and maintain a process to identify and coordinate research and disseminate research outcomes. (E) | DOC, YEPT, Kāi tahu, mana whenua and researchers | Continued coordination and identification through Te Mahere. Dissemination at Annual YEP Symposium and through DOC updates. Improved management of disease projects through Vet Coordinator. |
| | Action 19b Support and invest in Mātauranga Māori based research and management. (H) | Kāi tahu, DOC, YEPT, mana whenua and researchers | Investment opportunities not found. |
| | Action 19c Support opportunities for Kāi Tahu whānau, hapū and iwi to undertake research. (M) | Kāi tahu, DOC, YEPT, mana whenua and researchers | Opportunities not found. |
| Strategic Priority 20 Ensure accurate, usable and accessible data contributes to hoiho conservation. | Action 20a Ensure permit conditions set minimum data standards so that all groups are providing consistent accurate data for hoiho conservation. (E) | DOC, YEPT, Kāi tahu, rehab groups, vets, site managers and researchers | Permit conditions set on a case by case basis. Data standards included in protocols shared at pre-season meeting. Data contributions to shared platforms (e.g. via shared OneDrive) by several organisations has improved. |
| | Action 20b Identify and undertake priorities for improvements to the data sets and systems (including accountability for curation) which are managed to support hoiho conservation. (H) | DOC, YEPT, Kāi tahu, Fisheries NZ, rehab groups, vets and researchers | Improved data contribution and sharing through OneDrive folder and hoiho database. Diseases monitored by Vet Coordinator. Improved sharing of fisheries bycatch data. Some investigations into long-term options for the hoiho database has begun. |