



National Action Plan 2026–2030

Predator Free 2050



Moko kākāriki / jewelled gecko. Photo: Sabine Bernert

1. Mobilise for action

2. Maintain the gains

3. Innovate for eradication

4. Prepare to accelerate

**Whakahokia mai
ngā reo karanga**
o te pēpeke,
o te pekapeka,
o te ngārara
o te manu
ki ngā ngahere,
ki ngā whenua pāmu,
ki ngā tāone iti,
ki ngā tāone nui me
ngā takutai.

Return the
voices of the
insects,
bats,
reptiles
and birds
back to the forests,
farmlands,
towns,
cities and
coasts.



Photo: Department of Conservation

Introduction

*Innovate for a predator-free New Zealand: Predator Free 2050 Strategy (2026–2030)*¹ sets the strategic direction for the Predator Free 2050 (PF2050) programme and highlights four focus areas and five indicator goals that will guide the programme and help track progress to 2030.

The strategy sets the focus for the next 5 years on driving innovation in tools, techniques and community engagement to achieve a predator-free New Zealand. This action plan supports the strategy by presenting a fuller set of 2030 goals, showing how they relate to each focus area and outlining the priority actions needed to achieve them.

The indicator goals included in the strategy are highlighted through this plan with an asterisk (*).

To date, the PF2050 programme has received significant contributions from across New Zealand, including from the Department of Conservation Iwi, Iwi, Hapū, large-scale predator elimination projects, communities, scientists, non-government organisations, regional councils, philanthropists, businesses and a diverse range of individuals.² All of these parties are critical to the success of PF2050 over the next 5 years and beyond.

This plan was created with input from many of those involved in PF2050 and will be a key tool in guiding and aligning involvement and investment in the programme. We will provide online visibility of what actions are being worked on – and by whom – across the many parties actively involved in PF2050. It is a working document that will be updated regularly as we gain knowledge and insights, and as we evaluate progress towards our goals.

We recommend always referring to the online version to ensure that you are reading the most up-to-date information.

¹ doc.govt.nz/pf-strategy-documents

² doc.govt.nz/pf2050/whos-involved

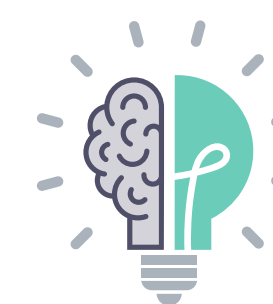
FOCUS AREA 1



Mobilise for action

Inspire and empower New Zealanders and communities to take action towards achieving PF2050.

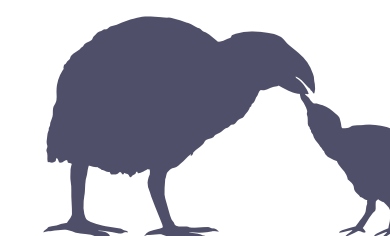
FOCUS AREA 3



Innovate for eradication

Advance affordable, humane and socially acceptable tools and techniques to build a toolbox and adaptable blueprints for large-scale predator elimination across diverse landscapes.

FOCUS AREA 2



Maintain the gains

Maintain predator-free areas and continue suppression efforts to protect threatened species, while supporting community-led groups to sustain their work.

FOCUS AREA 4



Prepare to accelerate

Ensure that the foundations are in place to transition from local to national elimination, with clear actions, costs and benefits, and community readiness.



Mobilise for action

CURRENT ISSUES

- Only 39% of New Zealanders are aware of PF2050 and only 20% have confidence it can be achieved.
- 89% of New Zealanders think nature is in good shape, a perception that is disconnected from the reality.
- Many New Zealanders face barriers in connecting with nature and the benefits of PF2050.

- The inclusion of Imi, Iwi and Hapū aspirations in PF2050 is inconsistent.

- There is a perception that trapping is the only way to take action for PF2050, but achieving the PF2050 goal requires people with diverse experience and expertise.

ACTIONS

- Grow awareness of PF2050 among New Zealanders who are unfamiliar with it, emphasising the vision and its many benefits.
- Build people's confidence that PF2050 is achievable.
- Share stories of success, progress and innovation to tell a national PF2050 story.
- Inspire future generations to take on the mantle of PF2050.
- Increase the number of predator-free areas located in or near places where New Zealanders live.
- Promote ecosanctuaries as a vision for a predator-free future and enhance the connection between them and PF2050.
- Collaborate across organisations to amplify a consistent, inspiring and national PF2050 story.
- Analyse storytelling and engagement initiatives to strengthen and grow their impact.
- Build confidence in the range of tools and approaches that will be needed to achieve PF2050.

- Establish a baseline of how PF2050 is currently enabling mana whenua aspirations, then implement actions to better realise them.
- Support governance and leadership development for the next generation of Māori leaders.
- Embed successful working models at the project level that realise the aspirations of Imi, Iwi and Hapū.
- Explore and develop te ao Māori approaches to PF2050 through wānanga (educational seminars) and other practical initiatives.
- Support mana whenua to embed kaitiakitanga (guardianship) and build capability in te ao Māori approaches to PF2050.

- Promote a range of actions that New Zealanders can take to be involved in PF2050.
- Draw insights from social science to develop further actions people can take to support PF2050 (beyond trapping).
- Incentivise businesses to support PF2050.
- Provide pathways for the next generation to lead PF2050 projects and activities.
- Provide training opportunities and access to resources to achieve the PF2050 goal.

2030 GOALS

GOAL 1
1 in 2 New Zealanders is aware of PF2050.*

GOAL 2
All large-scale PF2050 projects actively support the aspirations of local Imi, Iwi and Hapū.*

GOAL 3
A growing number of New Zealanders are taking action for PF2050.



Maintain the gains

CURRENT ISSUES

- Most of New Zealand's threatened species survive only where there is sustained predator management (on mammalian pest-free islands, at landscape elimination and suppression project sites and in ecosanctuaries).
- Predator incursions on islands and in ecosanctuaries impact threatened species and can be costly.
- Community-led groups face challenges sustaining predator control momentum and scaling restoration efforts.

ACTIONS

- Maintain and enhance predator suppression at national, regional and community levels, and improve coordination.
- Implement best-practice biosecurity standards where elimination or eradication has been achieved.
- Carry out threatened species translocations to maintain and grow populations of threatened species.
- Improve access to funding, knowledge and technology for those involved in predator management.
- Embed outcome monitoring activity at PF2050 project sites.
- Connect the PF2050 community to enable effective knowledge-sharing pathways.

2030 GOALS

GOAL 4

Populations of threatened species are secure and thriving in areas where elimination has been achieved.

GOAL 5

Populations of threatened species are maintained and increased through predator suppression.*



Innovate for eradication

CURRENT ISSUES

Eradication tools and technologies

- There are no species-specific toxins for carnivores (feral cats, stoats, ferrets, weasels and hedgehogs).
- The effectiveness of aerial 1080 on mice, Norway rats and kiore remains uncertain, limiting large-scale eradication options for these species.
- There are no effective, scalable tools for mouse eradication on mainland New Zealand.
- Existing tools can remove most predators, but trap- and toxin-shy individuals remain, creating costly and prolonged 'mop-up' phases.
- The impacts of toxins and traps on non-target species can limit deployment in areas with native species, livestock, people and pets.
- The regulatory system, including approval processes for new toxins, is slow and not aligned with the urgency of PF2050.

Ecosystem response

- We do not fully understand how the removal of some or all predators will impact ecosystem responses.

ACTIONS

- Complete the development and registration of new toxic baits.
- Optimise eradication tools to reduce non-target impacts without reducing effectiveness.
- Develop mouse-specific tools that are suitable for mainland and inhabited areas (beyond brodifacoum or aerial 1080).
- Develop self-resetting traps for mustelids.
- Improve the reliability and cost-effectiveness of artificial-intelligence-enabled devices.
- Explore genetic and fertility-related solutions.
- Streamline, simplify and accelerate regulatory processes for toxins and tools with the Environmental Protection Authority, Ministry for Primary Industries, Civil Aviation Authority, Department of Conservation and others.
- Promote and resource practitioners, tool developers and researchers to work together.
- Ensure ongoing capacity and capability in eradication science and tool development.
- Scan global advances for transferable solutions.

- Assess the costs and risks of eradicating different combinations of predator species.
- Identify how the control or eradication of some predator species affects the ongoing cost of suppressing others.

2030 GOALS

GOAL 6

New toxic baits are registered and available to directly control one or more target species.

GOAL 7

A feasible proof of concept is identified for a new predator control technique that is not a toxin or a trap.

GOAL 8

The impact that eradicating different predators has on native and pest species is sufficiently understood for national rollout planning.

CURRENT ISSUES

Detection and defence

- Detection and response systems are not cost effective at scale or in remote locations for supporting eradication and rapidly responding to incursions.
- Defending long, complex mainland boundaries against reinvasion is challenging and costly.

Operational optimisation

- The set up and deployment of available tools is not always optimised.
- Adding feral cats to the target species list means they now need to be considered as part of predator management operations.

Mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge)

- Our ability to support and integrate mātauranga into predator-free research and operational strategies remains limited.
- Kiore are culturally significant to some tangata whenua but pose ecological risks, and there is no co-developed, place-based approach for managing them.

ACTIONS

- Develop wide-area and/or autonomous detection technologies.
- Develop methods to distinguish reinvading animals from resident survivors.
- Design optimal device distribution for the detection and removal of predators at low densities.
- Understand how best to utilise natural and artificial barriers.

- Continuously optimise the use of tools and approaches.
- Develop cost-effective, end-to-end and interoperable remote communication solutions.
- Better understand tool effectiveness, operational techniques and public acceptance relating to feral cat eradication.
- Have national systems in place for cross-agency data management that recognise data sovereignty, including Māori data sovereignty.

- Resource and embed mana whenua leadership and co-governance in project design, monitoring and decision making.
- Incorporate mātauranga into predator-free practices.
- Investigate and discuss options for kiore management.

2030 GOALS

GOAL 9

The ability to defend predator-free areas against reinvasion is faster and more cost effective.*

GOAL 10

Tools and techniques for the detection and removal of predators at low densities are cheaper and more effective.

GOAL 11

The outcomes and value for money of existing tools and techniques are improved.

GOAL 12

Māori drive the development and use of mātauranga Māori in large-scale predator elimination projects and research.



Prepare to accelerate

CURRENT ISSUES

- Eradicating predators in urban and rural environments alongside people, pets and livestock is not affordable at scale.

- Some of New Zealand's rarest species can live only on islands and there is not enough available habitat for them.

ACTIONS

- Progress multi-species, multi-landscape eradications, with a focus on reducing costs, addressing critical knowledge gaps and demonstrating benefits.
- Progress the expansion of Predator Free Wellington across urban, peri-urban and rural landscapes and capture learnings.
- Develop the innovative tools and techniques needed for urban and rural eradications.

- Complete the feasibility phase and commence implementation for Predator Free Rakiura.
- Commence the Maukahuka Pest Free Auckland Island project.
- Complete eradications on priority uninhabited offshore islands.
- Progress Predator Free Hauraki Gulf.

2030 GOALS

GOAL 13

One New Zealand city is free of predators.*

GOAL 14

Cost-effective and adaptable blueprints for elimination are developed for both urban and rural environments.

GOAL 15

Predator Free Rakiura is on track to make New Zealand's third largest island free of predators and a safe haven for kākāpō.

GOAL 16

The subantarctic World Heritage area is on track to be completely free from mammalian pests by 2040.

CURRENT ISSUES

- Companion and stray cats are not regulated, which can lead to the establishment of new feral cat populations.

- There is insufficient evidence on the long-term benefits and financial return of PF2050.

- An achievable and sustainable path to national eradication is not yet known.
- We do not yet have the resources (financial, personnel, infrastructure, etc) to manage the scale and complexity of nationwide eradication.

ACTIONS

- Understand the social barriers to companion cat regulation.
- Explore international models of cat management and their applicability to New Zealand.
- Develop a national cat management framework.

- Establish the cultural, ecological, social and economic benefits of achieving PF2050 and the costs of inaction.

- Develop a scenario model to explore and assess different operational rollout strategies.
- Make any policy and regulatory changes necessary for national rollout.
- Build a landowner permission framework.
- Build capability and capacity through educational and career development pathways.
- Understand and plan for infrastructure and supply chain needs to support national rollout, including the training and supply of detection dogs and their handlers.
- Finalise a proof-of-absence model that is transferable across all elimination projects.
- Develop clear investment opportunities for businesses and philanthropic co-funding.

2030 GOALS

GOAL 17

A national cat management framework is in place to distinguish between companion, stray and feral cats, and to enable their consistent, humane and effective management.

GOAL 18

The long-term benefits for New Zealand of achieving PF2050 are proven.

GOAL 19

An evidence-based, achievable and sustainable plan to roll out PF2050 nationally is developed.