

Review of progress against the Predator Free 2025 goals

The first Predator Free strategy, *Towards a Predator Free New Zealand*, set seven goals to achieve by 2025. These goals were deliberately ambitious, designed to significantly change how we manage predators in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Two of the seven goals have been achieved. The progress we have made against the remaining goals has helped shape the new strategy, *Innovate for a predator-free New Zealand (2026–2030)*, which sets five new indicator goals to mark progress over the next 5 years.

A full suite of 19 goals and actions for the programme to achieve by 2030 are detailed in the *National Action Plan 2026–2030*. You can find links to the strategies and action plan [here](#).

*Indicator goals included in *Innovate for a predator-free New Zealand (2026–2030)* are marked with an asterisk.

GOAL FOR 2025

(set in *Towards a Predator Free New Zealand* in 2020)

1. By 2025, we will increase by 1 million hectares (from 2016 figures) the area of New Zealand mainland where predators are suppressed, through Predator Free 2050 projects.
2. By 2025, we will have demonstrated that predator eradication can be achieved in areas of mainland New Zealand of at least 20,000 hectares and that these areas can be defended from reinvasion without the use of fences.
3. By 2025, we will have eradicated all mammalian predators from New Zealand's uninhabited offshore islands.
4. By 2025, we will have developed a breakthrough science solution that would be capable of eradicating at least one small mammal predator from the New Zealand mainland.
5. By 2025, whānau, hapū and iwi will have identified sites of importance for predator eradication and at least five eradication projects led by whānau, hapū and iwi will be underway across the country.
6. By 2025 we will have eradicated possums or mustelids from at least one New Zealand city.
7. By 2025, effective tools and knowledge will be available to achieve predator eradication on farmland.

PROGRESS BY 2025

- Achieved in 2021**
As at June 2025, this figure had increased to over 2.5 million hectares under sustained predator suppression on public conservation land (through Department of Conservation programmes) and public and private land (through Predator Free projects).
- Achievable, but not by 2025**
For the Predator Free South Westland project, initial assessments indicate elimination has been successfully achieved on at least 20,000 hectares and is being maintained without the use of fences. Independent verification is underway.
- Achievable, but not by 2025**
Eradicating predators from all 160 offshore islands will take longer than expected, as efforts have been focused on the Maukahuka Pest Free Auckland Island project. As New Zealand's largest offshore island, completing eradication on this island will more than double the area of pest-free islands.
- Achievable, but not by 2025**
Promising research is advancing future technologies, such as genetics and fertility control. Future work will build on research from the past 5 years and continue to seek out promising transferable solutions from other technology and innovation research.
- Achievable, but not by 2025**
Whānau, hapū and iwi have identified sites of importance across Predator Free projects. Four hapū- and iwi-led projects are underway and have become respected exemplars nationwide, influencing and supporting many other projects.
- Achievable, but not by 2025**
Possums, rats and mustelids have been eliminated from Te Motu Kairangi/Miramar Peninsula in Wellington. Predator Free Wellington is now focusing elimination efforts across more of the city, but this will take longer to complete.
- Achieved**
Predator elimination on farmland has been achieved at varying scales. Tool innovation, along with effective community and landowner engagement, is reducing costs and increasing efficiency for ground-based operations, making elimination in rural environments possible.

CONNECTION TO 2030 GOALS

(as outlined in the *National Action Plan 2026–2030*)

- GOAL 5**
Populations of threatened species are maintained and increased through predator suppression.*
- GOAL 4**
Populations of threatened species are secure and thriving in areas where elimination has been achieved.
- GOAL 9**
The ability to defend predator-free areas against reinvasion is faster and more cost effective.*
- GOAL 16**
The subantarctic World Heritage area is on track to be completely free from mammalian pests by 2040.
- GOAL 7**
A feasible proof of concept is identified for a new predator control technique that is not a toxin or a trap.
- GOAL 2**
All large-scale Predator Free 2050 projects actively support the aspirations of local Imi, Iwi and Hapū.*
- 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.
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