

# Rēkohu / Wharekauri / Chatham Islands Te Pou Atawhai Conservation Board

## Annual Report 2024-2025



*Figure 1 Chatham Islands stag beetle (Geodorcus capito) Sweetwater Covenant, Tuanui Farm, South Chatham, Rēkohu | Wharekauri | Chatham Island. Image: Peter J. de Lange, 2 February 2025*

# Rēkohu / Wharekauri / Chatham Islands Te Pou Atawhai Conservation Board

## Annual Report 2024 – 2025

Presented to the New Zealand Conservation Authority  
pursuant to Section 6(O) of the Conservation Act 1987

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### Photographs:

**Front Cover:** Chatham Islands stag beetle (*Geodorcus capito*) Sweetwater Covenant, Tuanui Farm, South Chatham, Rēkohu | Wharekauri | Chatham Island. Image: Peter J. de Lange

**Figure 2:** Chatham Islands Conservation Board Jurisdiction. Image by DOC Media Library

**Back Cover:** Chatham Islands Black Robin. Image Leon Everett, DOC Media Library

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## Chairperson's report



Kioranga kotoa,

The 2024 / 2025 year for the Chatham Islands Conservation Board was an unexpectedly busy year following the change proposal implemented by the Department of Conservation. In July 2024 the change proposal was enacted resulting in a major shift in island-based management to one directed from the Wairarapa Office in the Lower North Island. As a result, a significant amount of adjustment was necessary, and this dominated most of the 2024 / 2025 period.

During this time the board worked with the Department and island-community to ensure a smooth transition to this new management system. This process will be ongoing for some time as the Chatham Islands community adjusts to the changes undertaken.

As always, the board acknowledges the wise tutelage of Racheal Mora based in Wellington, who has helped us steer our way through the labyrinthine joys of legislation, permits and other statutory requirements. Rachael's input has been greatly appreciated, especially by the chair.

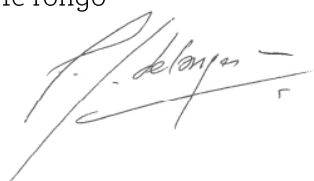
The 2023 / 2024 year also saw most of the board's terms up for renewal and a later than usual announcement by the Minister of Conservation of new board appointments. Unfortunately, this meant that of the three new board members by the time the appointments were made two of the new members had elected to resign. We are thrilled though to have Greer Paterson on the board for her first term. Peter de Lange and Levi Lanauze were returned to serve another three years each. Collectively I wish to thank my other Chatham Island board colleagues for the sterling work they have done over the last year a great boon for a Chair based in Auckland.

Board Field trips included a range of visits to local nurseries', and when bad weather scotched a meticulously planned visit to Rangihau | Rangiauria | Pitt Island last February, a rapid switch to examining the remains of an ocean-going waka being excavated by archaeologists with local assistance at Wharekauri Farm Station. Some board members were also invited to see the nightlife of the Sweetwater Covenant on the Tuanui Farm, South Chatham I wish to acknowledge the Tuanui family, Bruce & Liz especially for allowing access to Sweetwater, and Dave Boyle for showing us the wonders of the Chatham islands stag beetle (*Geodorcus capito*) whose image graces this report.

On a more serious note, while the Chatham Islands is free from a range of common conservation issues found throughout the main islands of Aotearoa / New Zealand, the islands have their own conservation problems. Currently the key conservation problem remains an out-of-hand wild pig (*Sus scorfa*) problem. The board, especially Denny Prendeville, is working with the community to try and find a solution to this serious problem.

Finally, a board, and indeed the chair is only as good as the support they receive. Again, I wish to thank Holly Murphy for her sterling work as the Chatham Islands Conservation Board Support Officer. Holly does all the behind-the-scenes work, organising flights, accommodation, venue, as well as taking minutes and dealing with claim forms and correspondence. Thank you, Holly, for making all of our lives so much easier.

Me rongo



## Introduction

This is the 35th Conservation Board Annual Report. Section 6(O) of the Conservation Act requires conservation boards to provide the New Zealand Conservation Authority (the Authority) with an annual report as soon as practical after 30 June each year. In recognition of this requirement the Chatham Islands Conservation Board submits this annual report.

Conservation boards are appointed by the Minister of Conservation under section 6(P) of the Conservation Act 1987. Board functions are outlined in section 6(M) and the powers, which enable the conservation boards to carry out those functions, are under 6(N) of the Act.

Conservation boards are independent advisory bodies, established by statute. They represent the community and offer interaction between communities and the Department of Conservation (the Department), within their area of jurisdiction.

Conservation boards have several statutory roles under various Acts including:

- The recommendation of the Chatham Islands Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) to the Authority for approval.
- Advising the Department and the Authority on how conservation management strategies and plans will be put into practice.
- Reporting on the implementation of the CMS.
- The approval of conservation management plans (CMP).
- The recommendation of national park management plans to the Authority for approval.
- Advising the Department and Authority on conservation matters, and proposed changes to status of land of national and international significance.
- Liaising with the regional Fish and Game Council on conservation matters; and
- Carrying out other powers delegated by the Minister of Conservation, the Conservation Act, or any other Act.

Conservation boards also have several functions under section 30 of the National Parks Act 1980. These functions include recommending the review or amendment of national park management plans and recommending approval of these plans by the Authority.

# Conservation Board Region

## Chatham Islands Conservation Board

The Chatham Islands Conservation Board's area of jurisdiction covers the area in the map below (Figure 1). The area also extends out to the 12-nautical mile limit with respect to coastal and marine issues, and out to the 200-nautical mile limit with respect to protected species.

The Chatham Islands archipelago lie 860 km east of Christchurch, at 44° south in the path of the Roaring Forties and consist of eight islands of appreciable size. The total land area is 97,000 hectares of which Rēkohu / Wharekauri / Chatham Island (90,000 ha) and Rangihau / Rangiauria / Pitt Island (6,190 ha) are the largest. The Chatham's local time is 45 minutes ahead of the rest of New Zealand.

The Chatham Islands archipelago are an amazing collection of islands consisting of contrasts and extremes: beautiful still sunny days with magical blue skies through to raging 45 knot storms that in their own way are awe-inspiring. For much of the year the climate is temperate – temperatures in the low twenties in midsummer but can drop close to 0 degrees in the winter with scattered hail and sleet and occasional snow.

Generally Rēkohu / Wharekauri / Chatham Island is low-lying and comprises flat to rolling topography. The highest point on the island is only 299m. There are many swampy valley floors and extensive peatlands. The catchments are generally small and shallow but there are a few incised streams in the south. Here the land is at a higher altitude forming a tableland of deep peat covering basalt with a fertile coastal clay region which ends abruptly at impressive basalt bluffs. In the north there are scattered volcanic peaks, karst topography, schist outcrops and long stretches of sandy beach, while the island has a large central lagoon of 20,000 ha and there are many moderate sized dune and peat lakes.

As a result of extensive land clearance and the depredations of introduced pest animals the Rēkohu/ Wharekauri/ Chatham landscape is highly modified and indigenous vegetation is now reduced to remnants. Approximately 10% of the forest cover remains – most in the south of the main island.

Five main forest associations are present featuring broad-leaved species and tarahinau (*Dracophyllum arboreum*). Much of the area has converted to bracken and shrubland and to a lesser extent pasture. There are extensive areas of restiad bog, sedge and heath wetlands.

The Chatham islands archipelago have the highest level of endemism of any New Zealand biogeographic region. At least fifty of the Chatham Islands 465 native plants, one moss, two lichens (*Lecanora kohu*, *Lithothelium australe*), 18 of the 73 native birds and 8.5% of New Zealand's threatened freshwater fish are found nowhere else. About 20% of the 800 insect species and one reptile are also endemic to these islands. The New Zealand Geo-Preservation Inventory lists 31 sites of nationally important geological interest. 700 archaeological sites are recorded and many more unrecorded.

The Department of Conservation has an Office at Te One on main Chatham with 12 permanent staff, two of which are based seasonally on Pitt Island. Volunteers, staff and researchers are present on Hokoreoro / Rangatira / South East Island and Maung'Re / Mangere Island for periods during the year, undertaking species monitoring work during the breeding season of endangered bird species, and continuing with the habitat restoration programme.

The vast expanse of ocean surrounding these islands is rich in marine life and supports internationally significant populations of sea birds and nationally significant populations of whales, dolphins, seals and sharks.

The Chatham Islands Conservation Board represents a total island population of approximately 700 people that live on the two main islands. Chatham Islanders have very strong ties to their land and resources, reflected by their livelihoods of fishing, farming, and ecotourism

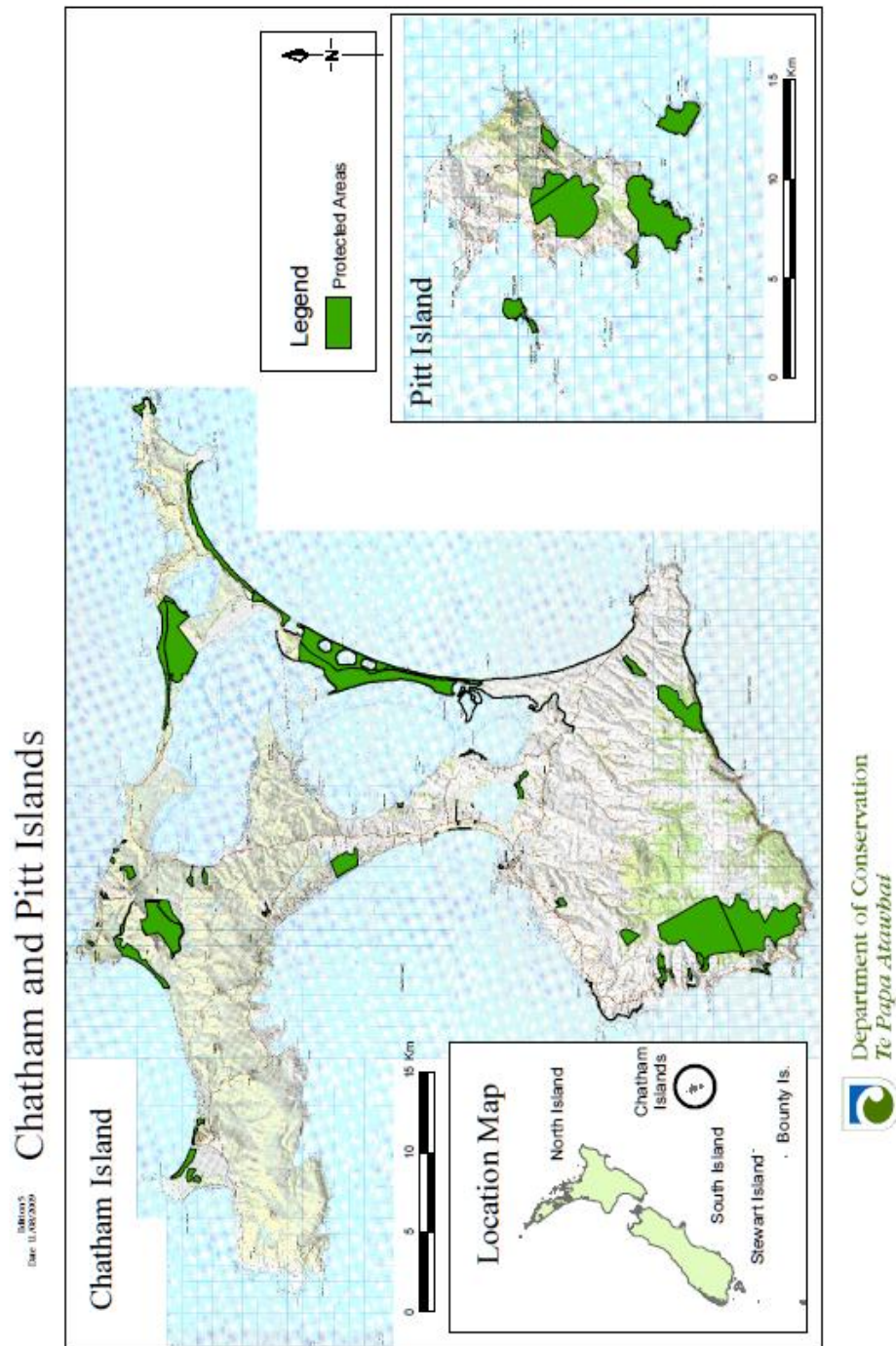


Figure 2: Chatham Islands Conservation Board Jurisdiction



For simplicity and for consistency this report will use the English names and/or official Nature Reserve names. However, the DOC District Office has adopted the practice of using Moriori, Māori and English names for the islands out of respect for the two island Treaty partners and as a way of helping our community understand the importance of place-names. These include: Rēkohu/Wharekauri/Chatham Island and Pitt Island/Rangihau/Rangiauria. Most of the smaller islands and reefs will also have dual names confirmed or recognised through relationship redress in the Settlement legislation

**Table 1: Chatham Islands Conservation Feature Names**

Official name – post Moriori Deed of Settlement	Unofficial original Moriori name	Other names
Waikokopu (Canister Cove) Scenic Reserve		
JM Barker (Hapūpū) Historic Reserve		
Manaua (Ocean Mail) Scenic Reserve		
Waipāua Scenic Reserve		
Waimihi/Point Alison		
Tamarau Point		Napper Point
Whenuahau Point		Red Bluff
Tapuika		Taupeka
Pana (Blind Jim's Creek)		
Maung'Re / Mangere Island		
Hokoreoro / Rangatira / South East Island		
Little Mangere	Tapuaenuku	The Fort
Rangiwheoa (The Castle)		
Star Keys	Motchu Hopo	Motuhope
The Sisters (Rangitatahi)	Rakitchu	
Motuhara	Motchu hara	The Forty Fours or Bertier Rock
The Pyramid (Tarakoikoia)	Tcharako or Tcharok'	Terekoekoe
Waitangi	Waiteki	
Cape Pattison	Tapuaki-o-Hiti	

The large number of issues which are of interest to the Board include:

- Island Biosecurity
- Threatened Species Viability
- Landscape Restoration
- Landscape Regeneration
- Biodiversity Protection
- Freshwater and Coastal Lagoon Ecology



Conservation features of the area

The main features of Public Conservation Land and Waters within the Board's boundaries are shown in the table below:

**Table 2: Chatham Islands Conservation features**

Frequency	Section	Recorded Area (Hectares)
2	Administration Purpose - s.60 Conservation Act 1987	3
24	Conservation Covenant - s.77 Reserves Act 1977	2182
3	Conservation Covenants entered into under both the Conservation and Reserves Act	80
15	Fixed Marginal Strip - s.24(3) Conservation Act 1987	206
1	Government Purpose Reserve - s.22 Reserves Act 1977	1
3	Historic Reserve - s.18 Reserves Act 1977	1303
1	National Reserve - s.13 Reserves Act 1977	30
3	Nature Reserve - s.20 Reserves Act 1977	1579
9	Scenic Reserve - s.19(1)(a) Reserves Act 1977	2926
9	Stewardship Area - s.25 Conservation Act 1987	2053
11	Nga Whenua Rahui kawenata	691

## Board functioning.

### Board functions under section 6M of the Conservation Act 1987

The functions of the Board are:

- 1) To recommend the approval by the Authority of conservation management strategies, and the review and amendment of such strategies, under the relevant enactments.
- 2) To approve conservation management plans, and the review and amendment of such plans, under the relevant enactments.
- 3) To advise the Authority and the Director-General on the implementation of conservation management strategies and conservation management plans for the area within the jurisdiction of the Board.
- 4) To advise the Authority or the Director-General:
  - a. on any proposed change of status or classification of any area of national or international importance; and
  - b. on any other conservation matter relating to any area with the jurisdiction of the Board.
- 5) To liaise with any Fish and Game Council on matter within the jurisdiction of the Board.
- 6) To exercise such powers and functions as may be delegated to it by the Minister under this Act or any other Act.

#### **Powers of the Board under section 6N of the Conservation Act 1987**

- 1) Every Board shall have all such powers as are reasonably necessary or expedient to enable it to carry out its functions.
- 2) Without limiting the generality of subsection (1), each conservation board may:
  - a) advocate its interests at any public forum or in any statutory planning process; and
  - b) appoint committees of members and other suitable persons, and delegate to them functions and powers.
- 3) The power conferred by subsection (2)(a) shall include the right to appear before courts and tribunals in New Zealand and be heard on matters affecting or relating to the Board's functions.

#### **Functions of the Board under section 30 the National Parks Act 1980**

- 1) To recommend management plans, and the review or amendment of such plans, for parks within the jurisdiction of the Board in accordance with sections 45 to 47.
- 2) To consider and determine priorities for the implementation of management plans for national parks.
- 3) To make recommendations to the Minister for the appointment of honorary rangers under section 40.
- 4) To review and report to the Director-General or the Authority, as appropriate, on the effectiveness of the administration of the general policies for national parks within the jurisdiction of the Board.
- 5) To give advice to the Director-General or the Authority:
  - a) on the interpretation of any management plan for a park; and
  - b) on any proposal for the addition of land to any national park or the establishment of a new national park; and
  - c) on any other matter relating to any national park, — within the jurisdiction of the Board.

## Board membership.

There were 7 Board members for the reporting year appointed by the Minister of Conservation. Peter De Lange was elected Chairperson in February 2025 – as the board is small there is no Deputy Chairperson.

The following table lists the membership of the Board between 1 July 2024 and 30 June 2025 and their term of office.

Table: 3 Board membership (2024/ 2025)

Board member	Area	Term start	Term end
Peter de Lange	Auckland	01/07/2018	30/06/2027
Alfred Johanson	Chatham Island	01/07/2021	30/10/2024
Denis Prendeville	Chatham Island	01/07/2022	30/06/2025
Levi Lanauze	Chatham Island	01/07/2021	30/06/2027
Lois Croon	Chatham Island	01/07/2021	30/10/2024
Rob Chappell	Coromandel	01/07/2023	30/06/2026
Greer Paterson	Chatham Island	01/11/2024	30/06/2027

## Member profiles

**Peter J. de Lange**, of Owairaka (Mt Albert), Tamaki Makarau (Auckland), New Zealand *1 July 2018 to 30 June 2027 (three terms)*. Peter is a Professor in the School of Environmental & Animal Sciences, Unitec Institute of Technology - teaching biosystematics, ecology, environmental sciences, and learning from his students daily. A Fellow of the Linnean Society of London, Peter holds degrees from the University of Waikato (B.Sc., M.Sc. (Hons)) and PhD from the University of Auckland. Peter first visited the Chatham Islands in 1996 and has continued to do so regularly ever since. Peter has written many papers on the Chatham Islands Flora and together with other researchers has described a number of new endemic species including Chatham Island scurvy grass (*Lepidium rekohuense*) and the lichen *Lecanora kohu*. Born at Kirikiriroa (Hamilton) in 1966 Peter is of Dutch descent (his whanau hail from the province of Zeeland, Netherlands) with his parents emigrating to Aotearoa / New Zealand in 1960.

**Alfred Johanson** of Rēkohu / Wharekauri / Chatham Island *(1 July 2021 to 1 November 2024) (one term)* is of mixed Māori and Finnish descent. Alfred is a long-term resident of the Rēkohu / Wharekauri / Chatham Island where he lives in Te One. He has worked a variety of jobs on the island including fishing, truck and school bus driving. He has a keen interest in the islands history and is currently writing a book about his families history on the island.

**Denis Prendeville** (Denny) of Rēkohu / Wharekauri / Chatham Island *(1 July 2022 to 30 June 2025)* is a sixth-generation Islander of mixed Māori, Moriori descent who has a long history of involvement with the conservation of the Chatham Islands environment. He has a detailed knowledge of the past uses of the islands flora and fauna for food, medicine and timber. This knowledge and his connections to the people of the islands helps provide a strong terrestrial and marine focus to the boards activities. Denny is also a covenant owner with predator control including possums, cats, rats and pigs.

**Levi Lanauze** of Rēkohu / Wharekauri / Chatham Island *(1 July 2021 to 30 June 2027)*, a Pitt island landowner, is of Moriori and Ngati Mutunga o Wharekauri descent. He is a member of the Hokotehi Moriori Trust (HMT), and the Land Advisory Committee, chairman of the Chatham

Island Farmers Group, Pest free 2050 trustee, Tcheki Farm and Forest for HMT, a member of pauamac, cramac, and finfish. Agriculture, Conservation and the Chathams are his passions.

**Lois Croon** of Rēkohu / Wharekauri / Chatham Islands (1 July 2021 to 1 November 2024) is the chairperson of the Chatham Island arts restoration trust, Ngati Mutunga o Wharekauri Kaumatua, and a registered member of Ngati Mutunga o Wharekauri,. She is the business owner of Admiral Garden

**Rob Chappell** of Coromandel, (1 July 2023- 30 June 2026) Rob has a long history of involvement with Doc and with the Chatham Islands. First coming over in 1985 as the first permanent wildlife reserves ranger and then moved onto being field centre manager for the area. He was then transferred to the Coromandel Peninsular as a field centre manager there but did return to the islands as a temporary area manager for periods of up to 6 months. Rob is now Retired.

**Greer Paterson-** of Rēkohu (1 July 2024 – 30 June 2027) Greer is living on the Chathams with her young family she is involved in a number of community groups and is passionate about the success of small communities. Greer is a Chatham Island Landowner and a partner of KD construction.

**Board meetings.**

The Board held 4 meetings during the reporting period. Venues for the meetings vary each year to ensure a wide coverage and enable members of the public in the district to attend meetings and access the Board.

**Table: 4 Board meeting dates and location**

Board meeting date	Meeting location and venue
19 <sup>th</sup> July 2024	Doc Office, Te One
8 <sup>th</sup> October 2024	Kōpinga Marae
5 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	Council Building, Waitangi
21 <sup>st</sup> May 2025	Council Building, Waitangi

**Attendance**

The table below summarises the number of Board meetings attended by members out of the total number of meetings held during the year.

Members attended other meetings and events in their role as Board members, including subcommittee meetings and representative roles.

**Table: 5 Board meeting attendance**

Board member	Board meetings
Peter de Lange	4/ 4
Alfred Johanson	0/4
Levi Lanauze	3/4
Lois Croon	2/4
Denis Prendeville	3/4
Rob Chappell	3/4
Greer Paterson	2/4

## Field trips and site inspections

Field trips are an excellent opportunity for Board members to become more aware of conservation issues within their region.

**Table 6: Field trips and site inspections**

Field trip date	Field trip destination and purpose
19 <sup>th</sup> July 2024	Rautini site visit
8 <sup>th</sup> October 2024	Manukau tree planting
5 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	Waka excavation and Henga nursery

## Board Committees

The Chatham Island Conservation Board has to date seen no need for subcommittees – the board is small and the issues the board usually covers are best dealt with by the whole board. However, from time-to-time board members may be delegated to deal with particular issues, for example, the wild pig problem is being handled by Denis Prendeville. Who report's back to the board at each meeting.

## Training for members

The Chatham Islands Conservation Board members are hoping to be provided with a refresher course on the implications of the Moriori Treaty Settlement Act (14 February 2020) by an officer from the Treaty Settlement Office, Department of Conservation in the next year.

## Department involvement in Board meetings

DOC Staff who regularly attending our meetings include:

- Regional Director, LNI and provided Director updates.
- Statutory Manager, LNI
- Operations Manager
- Administrative Support was provided to the Board by the Board Support Officer

## Annual work plan

Please refer to Appendix 1 for the full Board Annual Work Programme and progress commentary.

# Statutory activity

## 2024-2025 Conservation Management Strategy (CMS)

The Chatham Islands Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) (1999) is significantly out of date. The board has helped the Department update sections of a draft Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) three times since 2018. However, the board and the Department could not proceed further without input from a Department of Conservation Planner. In August 2025 the Department advised that CMS would be replaced with 5-yearly plans. The first of which was drafted by February 2025 and commented on by the board by May 2025.

## Advice and advocacy

All Board members have responsibility for liaising with other groups when opportunities arise, and some members have specific roles in liaison. The Board appointed various members to liaise with other groups and agencies.

Table 7: Board liaisons and representatives

Board member	Group/agency/organisation
Levi Lanauze	Land Advisory Committee, Hokotehi Trust Acting Chair
Peter de Lange	Chatham Islands Restoration Trust, Chatham Islands Predator Free 2050, Taiko Trust, Moriori Imi Settlement Trust

### Other Conservation Boards liaison

The board has connections to East coast Hawkes Bay conservation Board through liaison officer Nicola McCarthy who was kept informed of board activities by email.

### Authority liaison

The New Zealand Conservation Authority Chair Edward Ellison is the Chatham Islands Conservation Boards Liaison officer. Edward holds two monthly phone conversations with the Chatham Islands Conservation Board Chair, who reports on these as needed to the board at their meetings.

### Department advice

The Board provided advice to the Department on the following issues:

- Management of Chatham Island Threatened Plants, especially *Lepidium panniforme* and *L. rekohuense*.
- Seed collection and propagation requirements of assorted Chatham Islands endemic plants
- A support letter was written for the Loder cup nomination of John W. Barkla, a prominent botanist who started his long career working on the Chatham Islands when the reserves were managed by the Department of Lands & Survey. John's nomination was successful.
- Greer Paterson, Board member wrote a letter to former Department of Conservation staff Jemma Welsh & Jamie Cooper thanking them for their valuable input into managing the islands biodiversity.

### Community advocacy and involvement

The Board believes that working with conservation organisations and members of the public is very important. As such the board has attempted to hold meetings in different parts of the Islands and provides opportunities for the public to attend Board meetings (advertised via Chatham Islands social media and websites). Participation from resident Environment Canterbury Biosecurity Officers, Chatham Island Council representatives and Chatham Islands Predator Free 2050, Taiko Trust is encouraged for all meetings. The board tried to have a meeting on Pitt Island this year, however a broken down plane and bad weather didn't allow this to happen, they will try again over the next summer season.

Members of the public attended the Public Forum at several of the year's meetings and a range of issues were raised. The Board appreciated their input and efforts made to attend the meetings and responded by letter with a response to questions asked or concerns raised.

Public forum issues raised were:

- Wild pig control concerns
- Concerns over the Moriori Treaty Settlement right to harvest hakoko / titi (*Ardenna grisea*) from Maung'Re / Mangere Island or Hokoreoreo / Rangatira / South East Island Nature Reserves

These were predominantly voluntary groups carrying out huge amounts of conservation work within the community. The Board recognises and appreciates volunteers and thanks them for the work done in this area.

### **Community visibility**

The board has started to post regular updates and have its meetings and activities posted on the Chatham Islands Restoration Trust website and Chatham Islanders Worldwide Facebook Group.

### **District and regional council advocacy and advice**

The Board appreciates the opportunities to meet with representatives of the Chatham Islands council, Chatham Islands Restoration Trust, Predator Free 2050, Biosecurity Officers, Hokotehi Trust Board, Moriori Imi Settlement Trust, Ngati Mutunga o Wharekauri, Taiko Trust and Chatham Islands Museum Councils and other interested parties.

### **Iwi liaison and advocacy**

The board through its composition routinely liaises with iwi and imi. The Chair uses visits to the islands to engage in personal visits to HMT and MIST especially to ensure that the responsibilities of the Department of Conservation and the Chatham Islands Conservation Board under the Moriori Treaty Settlement Act are being upheld.

## **Acknowledgements**

The board would like to thank the numerous Chatham Islanders who have accommodated and given us their hospitality. We wish also to draw attention to the late Professor David Johnston one of the two owners of Whareweka | Science House, which the board has used for accommodation. David was a staunch 'Chathamphile' i.e. Chatham Lover, who really cared about the islands' environment, its people, cultures and their safety from Natural Disasters. David was taken from us all too soon last January at the age of 58. Together with Dr Jocelyn Powell, David set up Whareweka as a place for use by researchers and conservation worked. The board used the house for several meetings in the last few years, and as accommodation in 2022-2025.



# Appendix I –Annual Work Plan

## Chatham Islands | Rēkohu | Wharekauri

### Conservation Board

#### Work Programme 1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025

##### Work Programme overview.

This Work Programme responds to the Letter of Expectation from the Minister of Conservation, sent by the New Zealand Conservation Authority in 18<sup>th</sup> September 2024. The intention is that this document will be reviewed and updated at Board meetings during the year, as a living document.

It comprises three parts, some of which contain overlapping objectives:

##### Part A: Planned Board activities aimed at meeting the Board’s strategic priorities and its core statutory functions:




1. Support feral cat and pest control on the outer islands.
2. Support predator free Chatham Islands initiatives.
3. Support completion of the CMS.
4. Better integrate the Chatham Islands Conservation Board and other parties on the Island concerned with conservation.
5. Ensure threatened species management of all threatened biota on Chatham Islands is maintained.

##### Part B: The Minister’s fundamental priorities as set out in the Letter of Expectation:

6. Support the Implementation of Te Mana o te Taiao – The Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy
7. Contribute to any reviews of National Park Management Plans and Conservation Management Strategies and support their progress effectively to promote strong conservation outcomes.
8. Embed the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi in accordance with the obligations of Section 4 of the Act in all aspects of work.
9. Support the transition to a lower carbon conservation delivery model, having regard to the Climate Change Response (Zero Carbon) Amendment Act 2019

##### Part C: General expectations contained in the Minister’s Letter:

10. Work closely with the Department of Conservation to achieve strategic outcomes.
11. Working with adjoining conservation boards, the New Zealand Conservation Authority (the Authority, NZCA) and other conservation boards.
12. Inform the Minister of any material or significant events relating to the Board, whether positive or negative.
13. Understand the Board’s legal obligations covered in section 5 of the Conservation Board Manual.
14. Monitor and self-review.

Key:	Means...
	Action under way and on track, ongoing or completed.
	Potential for concern, early flag.
	Risks identified, delay or concern.

## PART A: REGIONAL WORK PROGRAMME

- 1 Review / development of statutory management plans including conservation management strategies (CMS)

**Board objective** The board will obtain from the Department of Conservation the necessary CMS Planner to enable the CMS to proceed.

### Planned Board Activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary – from June 2025
A	Board Approached the Department for a CMS Planner	In Active	The Department aware of the delays in CMS staff assistance and completion shifted to Five-early plans (announced at Chairs meeting August 2024) in December. A draft was circulated for board comment, which was received by the Department in May 2025,

- 2 The board will work with and enhance relationships with treaty partners to ensure biodiversity management goals are appropriate and in accord with settlement agreements.

**Board objective** The board will work with iwi / imi representatives and through its membership ensure that any treaty issues raised by iwi / imi are brought to the board's attention. Further, the board will ensure that the Department acts as a good treaty partner.

### Planned Board Activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary – from June 2025
A	Board to be updated on the Department and Boards Obligations under the Moriori Treaty Settlement Act of 14 February 2020	Not done	Due to the length of time taken for the Minister to announce the new board appointments the board did not do this, as the 'caretaker' board had already been through this exercise in 2022.
B	Board will seek to meet with and work alongside imi partners	Ongoing	The board visited the site where the newly discovered waka artifacts were being curated at Wharekauri in February 2025. The board also visited the Henga Nursery run by Hokotehi on behalf of Moriori. There they were shown a range of seedlings and saplings grown for their restoration projects. There exists an excellent relationship between board and Moriori.
C	Board will be informed of the Departments relationship with imi / iwi	Ongoing	The Operations Report has been used as a vehicle to outline progress on matters that concern imi / iwi. The board is awaiting the outcome of the Ngati Mutunga o Wharekauri treaty settlement.

### 3 Other statutory functions

<b>Board objective</b>	The Board will form relationships with and liaise with other conservation agencies, non-government organisations and council on the island to enhance collaboration and achieve better conservation outcomes
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#### Planned Board Activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary – from June 2025
A	Generic invite to Board meetings sent to Chatham Islands Council, Predator Free 2050, Chatham Islands Landscape Restoration Trust, Taiko Trust, Environment Canterbury and landowners	Ongoing	Chatham Islands Council attended no meetings – and offered no apologies. One of the newly appointed members (November 2024) has agreed to find a suitable council liaison person to attend meetings. Chatham Islands Landscape Restoration Trust, Predator Free and Taiko Trust provided some reports but did not attend meetings over the last year simply because meetings were held when they were otherwise committed. There is an excellent working relationship with these NGO's.. Some landowners attended meetings. There has been no response from Environment Canterbury – they have not attended any meetings for two years now.

#### Board objective

Maintain strong working relationships with hunau / whānau, kapū / hapū, imi / iwi and tchakat henu / mana whenua on the Chatham Islands

	Action	Status	Progress commentary – from June 2025
A	Board will invite imi / iwi to board meetings	Ongoing	Most board members whakapapa to imi / iwi on the island and report back as relevant to imi / iwi. Furthermore some board members are representatives of the relevant branches of Moriori (Hokotehi Trust / Moriori Imi Settlement Trust (MIST) and / or Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri – so carry out the same function. The Chair of the board frequently liaises with Hokotehi Trust and MIST.

### 4 Advocacy

<b>Board objective</b>	Through the appropriate media available on the Chatham Islands the board will announce its meetings, advocate and report on conservation activities
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## Planned Board Activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary – from June 2025
A	Provide regular reports to Chatham Islanders via the Chatham Islands website and Chatham Islanders Worldwide facebook group	Ongoing	Reports on the boards meetings and activities and that of the Department of Conservation and researchers were regularly provided via the Chatham Islands website (and from there shared with Chatham Islanders Worldwide Facebook group) – this continued until late December 2023 when it was discovered that the Chatham Islands website had been irrevocably hacked and all content (some 18 years' worth) destroyed. The board now report its activities via the newly set up Chatham Islands Landscape Restoration Trust website (see <a href="https://www.chathamrestorationtrust.org.nz/">https://www.chathamrestorationtrust.org.nz/</a> ) and also on various Chatham Island facebook pages.
B	Encourage the Department to publish its findings in popular and peer-reviewed literature	Ongoing	No immediately obvious outputs this year though staff did attend the May 2025 Birds of New Zealand Conference held at Ellerslie, Auckland.
C	The board will be represented (when possible) at Chatham Islands community gatherings, festivals and other such activities	Ongoing	Three board members (including the chair) attended a September 2024 public meeting at the council chambers regarding a proposal to plant a range of exotic trees on the islands for carbon credits. The company concerned Tāmata Hauhā was answering public concerns over this measure. The board was asked to be present and provide comment as necessary by a range of Chatham Islanders. On advice the board members attending agreed to make clear their presence was in their professional capacity not a board one.

## 5 Working with the Department

<b>Board objective</b>	Board members will maintain good working relationships and open dialogue with directors, managers and board support officers in order to engage strategically in conservation for the region
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### Planned Board Activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary – from June 2025
<b>A</b>	The Department and its representatives are invited to all board meetings	Ongoing	Excellent – see main body of report
<b>B</b>	The chair will regularly update the Department and its representatives of board issues (no surprises)	Ongoing	Excellent – see main body of report

## 6 Taking account of Ministerial priorities for the Department

<b>Board objective</b>	The board will within the working place that is the Chatham Islands support the implementation of Te Mana o te Taiao – the Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy
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### Planned Board Activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary – from June 2025
<b>A</b>	Ensure that biodiversity milestones set by the Department Waitangi Office are met	Ongoing	Operations Report used to track progress. Board provides feedback / comments, specialist advice when needed (or solicits advice from other experts).
<b>B</b>	Pig Control Plan	Ongoing	Draft plan circulated to the board and discussed with feedback given as appropriate
<b>C</b>	Threatened Biota management	Ongoing	Reports to the board, advice solicited from the board. Advice and specialist skills provided as required. Board members often working outside the islands to obtain help as needed.
<b>D</b>	Support feral cat and pest control on the outer islands	Ongoing	Regular updates from Operations Report. Regular meetings with Chatham Islands Predator Free 2050 staff / Chatham Islands Landscape Restoration trust and Taiko Trust

<b>Board objective</b>	The board will work with the Operations Manager, Department of Conservation, Chatham Islands and Wairarapa (Kathy Houkamau) to ensure that staff well-being is met.
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### Planned Board Activities success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary – from June 2025
A	Operations manager to develop plan on staff well-being within six months of starting position	Ongoing	Following major restructuring upheavals the remaining Department staff were in need of support to get on track. The board spoke with Department Staff – all of whom demonstrated, despite the shock, retained a strong commitment to work. In the unavoidable absence of the Wairarapa-based Operation Manager during the first six months of the change proposal being effected, the board heard from her representative on the island. Matters will improve as the new changes take effect.
B	Operations manager to provide regular updates on staff well-being through the year	Ongoing	This didn't happen for the 2024 / 2025 period. But the board heard from island-based staff.
C	The board will recognise staff achievements with verbal and written assessments	Ongoing	Staff performance was praised (when necessary). A staff member who reported to the board on a whale stranding was commended for taking on a difficult task so well.

## 9 Working with adjoining conservation Boards and the Authority

<b>Board objective</b>	The board will work with Tairāwhiti / East Coast Conservation Board Liaison Office and the New Zealand Conservation Authority (NZCA) Liaison Officer as well as attend NZCA hosted Chair meeting as required
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### Planned Board Activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary – from June 2025
A	Contact made with Tairāwhiti / East Coast Conservation Board Liaison Officer Nicola McCartney	Completed	With Nicola the chair discussed how the Chatham Islands Conservation Board functions and contrasted this with how the Tairāwhiti / East Coast Conservation Board – there really is no overlap with issues and activities. As such it was agreed to keep in contact when necessary,
B	Contact with NZCA liaison officer Edward Ellison	Ongoing	The board chair and Edward hold two monthly phone calls (as required) and, again, as required Edward has attended Chatham Islands Conservation Board meetings online to discuss issues when needed. Edward has also worked with the Chair to provide advice on new board appointments.

C	Attend NZCA hosted Chair meeting	Completed	The chair attended a NZCA hosted Conservation Board Chair meeting in Wellington in August 2025
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10	Understand the boards contribution to giving effect to the principals of the Treaty of Waitangi		
	Board objective	The board will receive a refresher course on the implications of the Moriori Treaty Settlement of 14 February 2020 from the Department of Conservation Treaty Settlements Office (Matt Russell).	

#### Planned Board Activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary – from June 2025
A	Matt Russell to speak to the board sometime in 2024 / 2025	Ongoing	This was put on hold as the new board was not announced until November 2024
B	The board will support the Departments development of and ongoing partnership with imi	Ongoing	The board has supported the Department in implementing treaty-based issues such as hakoko / titi ( <i>Ardenna grisea</i> ) harvest and island visits by imi, repatriation of bird feathers to local weaving groups, and ongoing efforts to resolve the handling of tohoroa remains like rautini.
C	When the Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri Treaty Settlement is resolved the board will act in the same way as it has for the Moriori Treaty Settlement – i.e. in good faith in open partnership	Ongoing	The Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri Treaty Settlement has yet to be reached with the crown. When it has the board will seek to be briefed and will act as directed thereafter.

11	Engaging with the community, including raising the profile of the Board		
	Board objective	Board members will liaise regularly with other conservation entities, such as district and regional councils, NGOs and community groups, in order to enhance the profile of the Board and pursue good working relationships on issues of mutual interest and concern]	

#### Planned Board Activities, success measures and key milestones

	Action	Status	Progress commentary – from July 2022
A	Invite Chatham Islands Council, Environment Canterbury (when on island) and their resident biosecurity officers, NGOs . community groups, iwi and imi to board meetings	Ongoing	See annual report above for evidence of engagement and activities. For 2023 / 2024 it is intended to seek better engagement with the Biosecurity Officers.
B	Board members to liaise with those organisations listed in 'A' above	Ongoing	See annual report above for evidence of engagement and activities.



C	The board will seek meetings with new agencies. NGO's etc as they arise	Ongoing	As and when opportunities arise the board will take the initiative.
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## Part C: Risks and Opportunities 2024-2025

### 12 Risks form the Boards perspective

A	Loss of capability, expertise from the board.  At this stage there has been no loss of expertise within the board. Of the three members announced by the Minister of Conservation in November 2025 only one took up the position. That board member is a well-known person living on the island with an excellent understanding of the islands needs and conservation issues.
B	Loss of continuity to board turn over  Not a risk at this stage.

### 13 Opportunities for conservation growth

A	Invest in young researchers visiting the islands  This is ongoing.
B	Encourage a presence at the Chatham Islands science festival, and iwi and imi hui.  Following the unexpected death of the instigator of the science festival last January, the festival has been uncertain. However, as of June 2025 it appears to be going ahead. Island-resident board members are encouraged to attend.
C	Stay abreast of new developments and initiatives on the islands that relate to conservation activities  This is achieved through the boards many connections on and off island



*Figure 3 Chatham Islands Black Robin. Image Leon Everett, DOC Media Library*

This report is presented to the New Zealand Conservation Authority as required by the Conservation Act 1987 and distributed to interested parties. Members of the public are welcome to attend conservation board meetings. If you would like more information on the Rekohu/Wharekauri/ Chatham Islands Conservation Board please see the website [www.conservationboards.org.nz](http://www.conservationboards.org.nz) or contact the Board Support Officer, at the Department of Conservation in Palmerston North phone 027 417 5246 or e-mail Claire Jacobs [cljacobs@doc.govt.nz](mailto:cljacobs@doc.govt.nz)