

# JOBS | MAHI

FOR NATURE | MŌ TE TAIAO

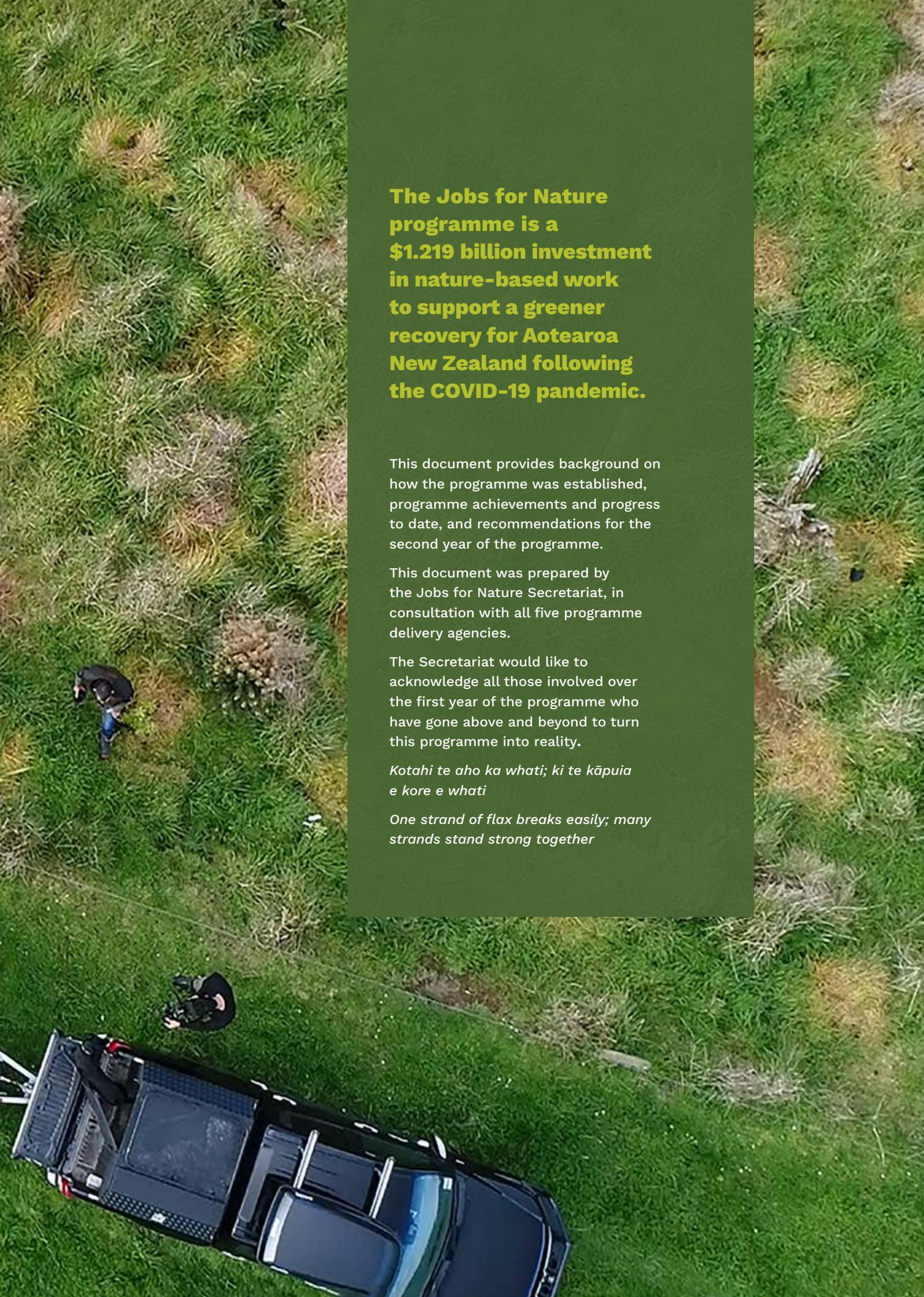


## Annual Review – Year One

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021







**The Jobs for Nature programme is a \$1.219 billion investment in nature-based work to support a greener recovery for Aotearoa New Zealand following the COVID-19 pandemic.**

This document provides background on how the programme was established, programme achievements and progress to date, and recommendations for the second year of the programme.

This document was prepared by the Jobs for Nature Secretariat, in consultation with all five programme delivery agencies.

The Secretariat would like to acknowledge all those involved over the first year of the programme who have gone above and beyond to turn this programme into reality.

*Kotahi te aho ka whati; ki te kāpuia e kore e whati*

*One strand of flax breaks easily; many strands stand strong together*



“

**Jobs for Nature  
is such a big  
investment in  
people. This is  
life changing.**

**Brian Ireland, Training  
and Education Manager  
Bay Conservation Cadets**



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# Jobs for Nature programme highlights 2020/21



**1,332,330**  
hours worked

**4,094**

people  
employed

**343**

approved  
projects

**243**

contracted  
projects



**980,119**

plants in  
the ground



**29,869**

hectares of land under  
plant pest control



**819,689**

hectares of wilding  
conifers controlled



**305,165**

hectares of land under  
animal pest control



**427**

hectares of  
freshwater under  
restoration



**547**

hectares of land under restoration  
(excluding freshwater areas)



**1,402**

kilometres of fencing  
constructed



public reporting dashboard launched

Reference Group established

Secretariat established

investment framework developed

independent programme review undertaken

completed review of delivery confidence across the programme



**Jobs for Nature** social media content reached

**416,696** PEOPLE



**11** VIDEOS PRODUCED to showcase **THE MAHI**



# Executive summary

Aotearoa New Zealand's environment has been degrading over decades. We have lost 90 per cent of our natural wetlands, our waterways are in major decline, and biodiversity is diminishing with over 4,000 of our plant and animal native species now being threatened. More needs to be done to protect the environment and improve ecosystems.

When the COVID-19 pandemic first hit, the Government was presented with an opportunity to revitalise the economy by investing in projects which would restore our environment. The Government announced \$1.1 billion of funding through Budget 2020, alongside previously announced funding, to create the \$1.219 billion Jobs for Nature programme. This funding marks a significant investment for the environment, the largest of its kind in Aotearoa New Zealand.

This funding is supporting people into nature-based work, including vegetation planting for freshwater and biodiversity restoration, fencing waterways, pest control (including predators, wilding pines and other pest plants), fish passage remediation, and skills training to support people into environmental careers.

The Jobs for Nature programme has three core objectives:

1. create approximately 11,000 jobs in regions that need work the most
2. establish enduring benefits for healthy waterways, biodiversity, climate change and cultural values
3. support sustainable land use and the implementation of regulatory requirements, including for freshwater, biodiversity, and climate change.

## First year achievements

In its first year, the Jobs for Nature programme has employed over 4,000 people, who worked 1,332,330 hours across 343 projects throughout the motu (country) improving our waterways and restoring our biodiversity.

In the early stages, the Jobs for Nature programme primarily focused on delivering jobs at pace to people who had been directly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. This was initially achieved by upscaling existing contractual arrangements, reallocating displaced forestry workers into wilding pine control projects, and providing funding for projects that could quickly set up and begin employing people. Early success stories proved this approach was effective in supporting people through the initial impacts of COVID-19.

The programme continues to support a number of businesses in distress as a result of COVID-19, enabling them to keep their workers employed. It has also provided security to people and their families, who would have had to relocate from areas where work was scarce.

Remaining funding was phased as agencies worked to support project partners through application processes, to ensure partners would be well placed for delivery. This engagement took time, but was key to ensuring projects were set up to succeed and to create enduring environmental outcomes.

Over the year, it became apparent that the all-of-Government response to COVID-19 had softened the anticipated economic impact and that unemployment was not as high as had been initially forecast. Considering this, Sustainable Land Use (SLU) Ministers directed a shift in focus to place a greater emphasis on environmental outcomes, with an additional focus on improving long-term job prospects and filling environmental management skills gaps.

At the end of Year One the programme is on track to reach the overall employment objective through the multi-year appropriation of this funding. As the programme moves into its second year, environmental and employment outputs will continue to increase as project delivery continues to grow.



# From the Independent Chair



The Jobs for Nature programme was established at a time of great uncertainty for Aotearoa New Zealand. We knew COVID-19 was going to have a significant impact on our economy, especially for some sectors like tourism and hospitality. We also knew the environment was in severe need of a helping hand after decades of underinvestment, and there was not a skilled workforce to implement the significant upcoming environmental management reforms. Out of that need, the \$1.219 billion Jobs for Nature programme was created.

As Independent Chair of the Jobs for Nature Reference Group, I sat alongside colleagues bringing perspectives and experience in environmental management, te ao Māori, primary sector, environmental NGOs, and crisis recovery. Our purpose was to advise and oversee the establishment of this programme, working alongside government officials from the Jobs for Nature agencies.

I am proud of the work that has been achieved over the first year of the programme, from establishment to delivery and with the backdrop of COVID-19.

## The impact of the programme

In its first year, the Jobs for Nature programme has had a significant impact in Aotearoa New Zealand's communities. The programme created employment for over 4,000 people, in some cases providing a lifeline redeploying people at pace at a time when jobs were needed most. That's no easy feat and is a true credit to the projects that have managed the recruitment, training, and pastoral care of these workers.

The scale and diversity of the programme should also be recognised. We have people working across the length and breadth of



Aotearoa, from the Far North to Rakiura (Stewart Island) and all the way to the Chatham Islands, planting trees, controlling wilding pines, wallabies, and other invasive species, fencing waterways, and restoring wetlands and fish passages. This is the biggest injection of funding and human effort that Aotearoa New Zealand has ever put into te taiao (the environment).

The multiple impacts of investing \$1.2 billion of funding into these programmes have also provided an economic stimulus to the regions and communities that will endure long past the four-year term of this programme.

I am particularly pleased to see the emphasis that has been placed on building skills and environmental management training into the jobs created through this programme. This newly trained workforce is going to deliver environmental outcomes now and in the future as we look ahead to the changes being made in how we sustainably manage and protect our natural resources. Aotearoa New Zealand faces significant challenges in terrestrial and marine biodiversity, land, freshwater, and climate change mitigation over coming decades; we need to make the most of this opportunity to prepare ourselves to respond to these challenges.

It's also been heartening to see how delivery agencies have embraced this challenge of allocating funding, and supporting iwi and hapū, community, and local government aspirations. Without exception, every funding round has been heavily oversubscribed, often many times over. This made it very challenging to decide

which projects would receive funding. While we have been able to support many great projects, there are so many more worthy projects that we were not able to fund. This speaks to the need for ongoing environmental investment beyond the current funding.

### An enduring legacy

This programme has so much potential, not only to make an immediate impact but to shape the way we invest in the environment in the future.

Jobs for Nature provides an opportunity for the Government to work together with local government, Māori, community groups, and the private sector to gain insights and inform a longer-term strategy for investment in nature. The Jobs for Nature programme provides a platform to do things differently, learn lessons, connect, and collaborate for a better future for future generations and te taiao.

My hope is that this four-year programme leaves an environmental legacy and positively changes the fabric of our society in the way that individuals and communities value and interact with te taiao, and in a way that enables iwi and Māori to fulfil their role as kaitiaki. Also, that these changes are supported by ongoing environmental investment through sustainable funding streams that build on the success of the Jobs for Nature investment.

### Doug Leeder

**Independent Chair of Jobs for Nature Reference Group**

## Investment in our natural capital

The COVID-19 pandemic provided the Government with an opportunity to improve environmental outcomes and accelerate economic recovery through investment in job-creating environmental projects in regional Aotearoa New Zealand.

Previous budgets have invested in the environmental sector, including \$81 million for pest control in 2018, and \$220 million for sustainable land use in 2019.

Budget 2020 dwarfed these figures, with a \$1.1 billion Government investment in various nature-based initiatives through the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund. These initiatives were later combined with other existing allocations for similar work, to establish the total \$1.219 billion Jobs for Nature programme.

Although reversing the environmental damage caused over previous decades will not happen immediately, this \$1.219 billion has and will continue to provide much-needed support for te taiao (the environment). This investment will support the things we value most in Aotearoa New Zealand, improve the health and wellbeing of people, the quality of our environment and strengthen communities through connecting with nature. The skills the programme will build across Aotearoa New Zealand will improve the use and protection of our natural resources and create a more sustainable future.

This investment was made across five government agencies (referred to as delivery agencies): Department of Conservation, Ministry for the Environment, Ministry for Primary Industries, Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment, and Land Information New Zealand.

The Department of Conservation and Ministry for the Environment are the primary delivery agencies; each have separated the funding into further workstreams. Agency allocations for the programme are shown on the left, with further detail provided in the agency-specific sections.

# \$488M

Department of Conservation

# \$477M

Ministry for the Environment

# \$172M

Ministry for Primary Industries

# \$41M

Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment

# \$40M

Land Information New Zealand

# Programme objectives

## Context

The 2020 Budget Economic and Fiscal Update forecast the unemployment rate would approach 10 per cent by September 2020, before easing to around 8 per cent by mid-2021.<sup>1</sup>

This forecast, along with the drive to support te taiao, led to the three core objectives for the programme: creating jobs, improving freshwater and biodiversity, and supporting sustainable land use.

Delivery agencies will contribute to other programme objectives, including empowering iwi and hapū to lead and achieve their own aspirations for te taiao within their rohe, or increasing the capacity and capability in environmental management of those employed.

## Initial focus

Early in the programme there was strong emphasis on achieving the employment objective, given the concerning initial unemployment forecast.

This led to many projects being developed quickly for deployment on the ground. The purpose of these projects was to get people rapidly employed and achieving environmental outputs. One of many examples was the South Westland: Conservation and Tourism Support project funded by the Department of Conservation which began work in June 2020 and employed 34 people within two months.

This project provided jobs to people in need and much needed support to a region heavily impacted by the reduction in tourism due to COVID-19.



### Employment

Creation of additional employment opportunities for 11,000 to 13,000 people with regional spread.



### Freshwater and biodiversity

Enduring benefits for freshwater ecosystems and water quality, biodiversity, climate change, and cultural values.



### Sustainable land use

Supporting sustainable land use and the implementation of new regulatory requirements, including for freshwater, biodiversity, and climate change.

1. [www.treasury.govt.nz/publications/efu/budget-economic-and-fiscal-update-2020](http://www.treasury.govt.nz/publications/efu/budget-economic-and-fiscal-update-2020)

“

**It's really nice to know that you're doing a job that supports the area. It feels good.**

**Cliff, Ōkārito Sanctuary, West Coast**

Learn more [about Cliff's story](#).<sup>2</sup>



One of these people was Cliff, who had been guiding with Glacier Valley Eco Tours for 11 years. When the borders closed, the business lost 95 per cent of its trade. Cliff went on to clearing access tracks in Ōkārito Sanctuary to support pest trapping and bring eco-tourism benefits to the area.

## Changing tack

As the year progressed, it became apparent that while the size of the environmental task was still large, the reality for unemployment was not as dire as the original forecast in the 2020 Budget and Economic Fiscal Update.

The nationwide unemployment rate for the June 2021 quarter sat at 4 per cent, and updated forecasts indicated the peak would reach 5 per cent in 2021.<sup>3</sup> Even with decreasing unemployment figures, the number of people on main benefits and underutilisation statistics remained higher than the pre-COVID-19 level.

Sustainable Land Use Ministers directed that for the remaining unallocated funding, greater emphasis be put on environmental outcomes relative to employment objectives. Employment outcomes remain an important objective for the programme, but with a greater focus on building capability and capacity of people to improve long-term job prospects and fill environmental management skills gaps.

2. [www.environment.govt.nz/what-you-can-do/stories/jobs-for-nature-cliffs-story/](https://www.environment.govt.nz/what-you-can-do/stories/jobs-for-nature-cliffs-story/)

3. [www.stats.govt.nz/indicators/unemployment-rate](https://www.stats.govt.nz/indicators/unemployment-rate) and [www.treasury.govt.nz/publications/efu/budget-economic-and-fiscal-update-2021](https://www.treasury.govt.nz/publications/efu/budget-economic-and-fiscal-update-2021)

# Programme governance

Due to the significance of the overall investment, governance structures were set up to ensure shared oversight of the Jobs for Nature programme and its delivery, while also retaining traditional agency accountabilities.

## Sustainable Land Use Ministers

Sustainable Land Use (SLU) Ministers have oversight, decision-making power over, and accountability for the programme. The following ministerial portfolios are included: Environment, Local Government, Agriculture, Biosecurity, Land Information, Forestry, Economic and Regional Development, Conservation, and Climate Change.

SLU Ministers set the strategic principles, priorities, and overall phasing of funding for the programme. To ensure direct decision-making, SLU Ministers jointly approve all individual projects with a total value over \$1 million. Approval for projects under that threshold is delegated to the delivery agencies. For previously-established programmes expanded with Jobs for Nature funding, existing governance, prioritisation, and funding approval processes apply.

## Reference Group

A Reference Group was established to support SLU Ministers by providing independent oversight, advice, and assurance of the programme. The Reference Group was made up of members with experience in environmental management, te ao Māori, the regional council sector, the primary sector, and non-government organisations.

The Reference Group supported the establishment of the programme, including developing an investment framework<sup>4</sup> to guide agencies in targeting funding across the programme. The group also provided on-the-ground insights to agencies, giving feedback on the funding allocation approach and on individual proposals/projects in the regions.

Ministers endorsed the ongoing role of the Reference Group (now the 'Jobs for Nature Advisory Group'). The focus of the Advisory Group is to:

- facilitate regional collaboration
- provide insight on successes and learning gained from the programme, to inform future options for strategic and sustainable investment and address environmental challenges
- provide an external perspective on implementation
- provide a feedback loop on how projects are performing.

## Delivery agencies

As the funding was individually appropriated to each delivery agency, it continues to be the responsibility of each agency and their respective appropriation Minister(s) to ensure work is progressing to an acceptable standard. Each agency has their own internal systems and processes to ensure that their objectives are achieved.

4. The investment framework can be found on the Ministry for the Environment website at <https://environment.govt.nz/assets/uploads/appendix-jobs-for-nature-reference-group-investment-framework.pdf>

## Secretariat support

A standalone independent Secretariat was established to support SLU Ministers and the Reference Group in decision-making, through providing briefings and programme-level insights. The Secretariat acts as a conduit between the delivery agencies and coordinates the programme.

The Secretariat works closely with delivery agencies to ensure the appropriate processes are in place to allow the programme to function cohesively. They regularly collate information centrally on many different aspects of the programme, to give a comprehensive view of progress and achievements.

## Interagency risk assessment committee

With the shift in the Advisory Group's focus from Year One, an interagency risk assessment committee will be established to ensure cross-agency oversight of relevant programme-level risks. This committee will be supported by the Secretariat, and report to Chief Executives quarterly.



## CASE STUDY

## \$3.7m project to restore the mauri of Nelson’s Mahitahi catchment

When COVID-19 hit, tourism worker Adam Haack was out of a job. Now he’s part of a crew working to restore the mauri of the Mahitahi catchment, a project that received \$3.7 million from the Jobs for Nature programme.

“It’s been perfect, conservation just fits with my values. I’ve learnt a whole bunch coming into this job, I’m ticking off new environmental management skills slowly but surely,” says Adam.

Over the next five years, Project Mahitahi will generate employment for around 54 people, who will plant around 125,000 plants, restore 1.3 hectares of wetlands and undertake comprehensive pest and plant control throughout the whole catchment.

“We are making really good progress. We have planted over 15,000 native plants, hosted five community events, undertaken weed control over more than 10 hectares of land, and employed 32 people working across six different host employers,” says Jo Martin, Manager Science and Environment at Nelson City Council.

The \$3.7 million boost, from Ministry for the Environment and Department of Conservation’s Jobs for Nature funding, builds on work that landowners in the catchment and the wider community have been doing for many years. The New Zealand Forest Service – Te Uru Rākau has also contributed plants.

“This is the first project that Nelson City Council has co-developed and delivered with the iwi of Te Taihū, under the guidance of the Kōtahitanga mō te Taiao strategy,” says Jo.



**It’s been perfect, it’s exactly where I want to be, outside helping the environment. It’s good for the soul.**

**Adam, Trainee Ranger on Project Mahitahi, Nelson**

“Project Mahitahi has given Ngāti Koāta a platform to acknowledge tupuna Ben Peneamine Hippolite who historically was denied access to this significant cultural harvesting area back in the 1950’s. The iwi has paid tribute to him and his active role in gaining back this significant site by naming the Peneamine restoration project after him,” said Alice Woodward, Environmental Manager at Ngāti Koāta Trust.

“Partnerships like this allow us to employ whānau to take an active role in projects that have a lot of meaning to us and restore not only the sites, but also our own connection to the whenua,” says Alice.

The project is a collaboration between Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Rārua, Ngāti Koata Trust, Te Ātiawa Manawhenua Kī Te Tau Ihu Trust, and Nelson City Council.

“The result of all this employment is that we are going to end up with an ecological restoration workforce,” says Jo.

“Nelson City Council are hoping that through this new trained workforce in our region we will be able to make a huge difference in the regeneration of our natural ecosystems in the coming years,” says Jo.

# Measuring employment

## The challenge

Alongside the Jobs for Nature programme, the Government made significant investment into other employment initiatives as part of its COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund. Some of these initiatives were being delivered by agencies more familiar with job creation and employment support. Others, such as SLU agencies, were previously more focused on measuring environmental outcomes as an objective.

An early challenge with the programme was the lack of a consistent way to measure and talk about employment. Consistent measuring and reporting of employment across these initiatives is important to allow cross-programme comparisons. It also means data can be used to assess progress. No consistent metrics had previously been used by all agencies.



### Employment starts

This is a cumulative 'stock' measurement.



### People currently employed

This is a changing 'flow' measurement.



### Full-time equivalent

This is a cumulative 'stock' measurement.





**It's really important to me to work in nature. It sings to my soul.**

**Tessa, Fish Passage Project Coordinator, Horizons Regional Council**



**I get jobs to do on our traditional pā sites. It's kind of awesome, I get to be a jack of all trades.**

**Kahurangi, Kāti Māhaki ki Makāwhio, South Westland**



**I feel like I've found a passion for conservation that I never knew I had.**

**Sarvannah, Wairarapa Moana Wetlands project**

## The solution

The Employment, Education and Training Secretariat worked with the Jobs for Nature Secretariat and other accountable agencies to agree and implement a broadly consistent set of quantitative measures now used across the programme.

Each metric in isolation has limitations, however when reported together, the metrics provide an appropriate overall metric of employment at the programme level. The metrics that all agencies are now required to report on are:

### Employment starts:

This is the number of employment contracts created for Jobs for Nature-funded projects, and includes all employment types: full-time, part-time, fixed-term, and contractors. In some cases, the roles themselves will be short-term (for example, based around planting seasons), while others will be longer term (for example, project managers).

### People currently employed:

This is a snapshot of the number of people currently employed across Jobs for Nature-funded projects at the end of each reporting period. It is expected that this number will fluctuate over the life of the programme.

### Hours worked:

This is the total number of hours worked across all Jobs for Nature-funded projects, which can be used, amongst other things, to calculate the number of full-time equivalents (FTE).<sup>5</sup>

The use of standardised employment metrics is just one example of successful collaboration. There will be further opportunity for collaboration as the programme moves into Year Two, especially in relation to outcome reporting.

5. For example, one annual FTE = 1,560 hours worked.

# Programme reporting

Appropriate monitoring and reporting are needed over the lifetime of the Jobs for Nature programme to track overall programme progress and success of the investment. Substantial effort went into setting up the current reporting process during the establishment stage of the programme, both by the Secretariat and the delivery agencies.

The delivery agencies have set up the processes and structures to gather information from each of the projects that they fund and then feed this data to the Secretariat, who provide an overall picture of how the programme is progressing. Similarly, the Secretariat has developed the process and platform for amalgamating the data from five delivery agencies into one overall programme picture.

The information gathered from this regular reporting is valuable to inform the programme agencies, stakeholders and public of the overall progress of the programme. It also provides assurance that the funding is being used for its intended purpose and the programme is achieving its ultimate goals.

The specific metrics captured through reporting have been selected to ensure that the reporting is streamlined whilst still providing an accurate and holistic picture of programme progress. Any additional data requests require consideration to the trade-off between the costs of acquisition and the benefits arising from its use.

Over the first financial year, agencies reported employment weekly at first, which then shifted to monthly with the establishment of the new cross-Government employment metrics. Environmental metrics were reported every quarter. This data was then compiled and used to inform a range of different audiences and decision-makers.

Considerable effort throughout the first year has also gone into ensuring reporting on the programme achievements is transparent and easily accessible by the public. A public dashboard was developed and published on the Jobs for Nature web page in early 2021, to show the progress made on allocating funding, creating employment, and the environmental outputs achieved. The dashboard is updated quarterly to ensure the public and interested stakeholders can see the most up-to-date data available.

The Ministry for the Environment website also provides programme information about new and open funding rounds, and individual stories about the impact of Jobs for Nature on funding recipients. Programme progress for all five agencies is published on an interactive map of Aotearoa New Zealand. This map shows the project name, location, funding amount, and agency. There is also a project list feature that allows the public to filter projects by location, funding agency, and project environmental objective.

## Reporting themes

Two key themes have emerged for the programme regarding reporting processes and data: forecasting vs actuals, and delivery confidence.

### Forecast vs actual

Agencies are asked to provide forecasts of projects' expected financial, employment and environmental outputs as part of reporting, which is then aggregated to provide a programme-level view.

For the initial year of the programme, forecasts were ambitious and, in many cases, not met. However, this was not necessarily due to project performance, and should not be interpreted in this way. Rather, key reasons for these forecasts not being met were varied, and include:

- **System and process establishment:** Setting up internal processes for project approval, contracting, and reporting for new initiatives required significantly more effort than initially anticipated. This effort, and associated time, was not factored into forecasts generated in the early stages of the Jobs for Nature programme.
- **Reporting cycle misalignment:** Some reported forecasts were not aligned with the financial year. The Department of Conservation and Ministry for the Environment reported that many of their forecasts were based on a project-year cycle (rather than a financial year). This had a significant impact on the accuracy of financial year forecasts. In many cases projects did not start on-the-ground activity until 2021, having missed the 2020 planting season.
- **Retrospectively fitted data requirements:** Monthly and quarterly reporting processes and data requirements were, in many cases, set up after a project had been contracted and commenced. This meant that for existing programmes reporting was retrofitted where possible, but data was not always available in the form requested.
- **Seasonality:** Environmental work is seasonal and can often only occur in specific months. Although the expectation is that projects should have factored it into their forecasts, this was not always the case.
- **Unavoidable disruptions:** Bad weather, especially flooding, and repeated COVID-19 level change restrictions, have delayed planting for some projects.
- **Labour market dynamics:** The programme was initially established to support communities and industries that had been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. As unemployment rates were not impacted as expected, the programme has adapted to the needs of regional communities. For example, supporting those who have been unemployed for a significant amount of time, including funding projects that target iwi and youth unemployment. As workers are now staying in roles for longer than initially expected, employment start figures are not as high as forecast.

As the programme moves into the next financial year, agencies are working to ensure their future project forecasts are robust, as these will be used as a measure of delivery progress.

## Delivery confidence

Although reporting of specific metrics can be used as a proxy for delivery progress, it has limitations in what can be communicated. To understand more, in March 2021, the Secretariat undertook a separate delivery confidence review.

The review indicated a high degree of delivery confidence across the reviewed projects. It is important to note, however, that this assessment was a snapshot in time and some projects were still in their early stages. In those cases there was limited information on which to base the assessments. This confidence may change across the contracted lifetimes of a project.

Overall agency-specific results from March 2021 are:

Rating	Agency	Commentary
Amber <sup>6</sup>	Department of Conservation	Successful delivery appears feasible. The programme is relatively different from business-as-usual activities, and the systems and governance for this investment are still being finalised.
Green	Ministry for the Environment	Successful delivery appears highly likely. This type of work is not new, but the scale of investment means investment in new systems and a greater focus on engagement are required.
Green	Ministry for Primary Industries	Successful delivery appears highly likely. The funding is largely through existing and mature delivery models.
Green	Kānoa (REDIU) – Ministry for Business Innovation and Employment	Successful delivery appears highly likely. There is little complexity to the delivery programme, and it is largely business as usual.
Green /Amber	Land Information New Zealand	Successful delivery appears probable. Several of the projects and relationships are new and require active support and engagement.

The delivery confidence review supplements that done at an individual agency level to present a programme-level view. This approach is being designed into future quarterly reporting including both an objective and subjective assessment to mitigate the potential for optimism bias within agencies.

6. An amber rating was given by the Department of Conservation in March 2021, as, at the time, a substantial portion of funding was still unapproved, funding transfers between financial years were not yet approved and governance processes were still being established. Work on these areas is being strengthened to increase delivery confidence across the DOC programme.

## Independent review

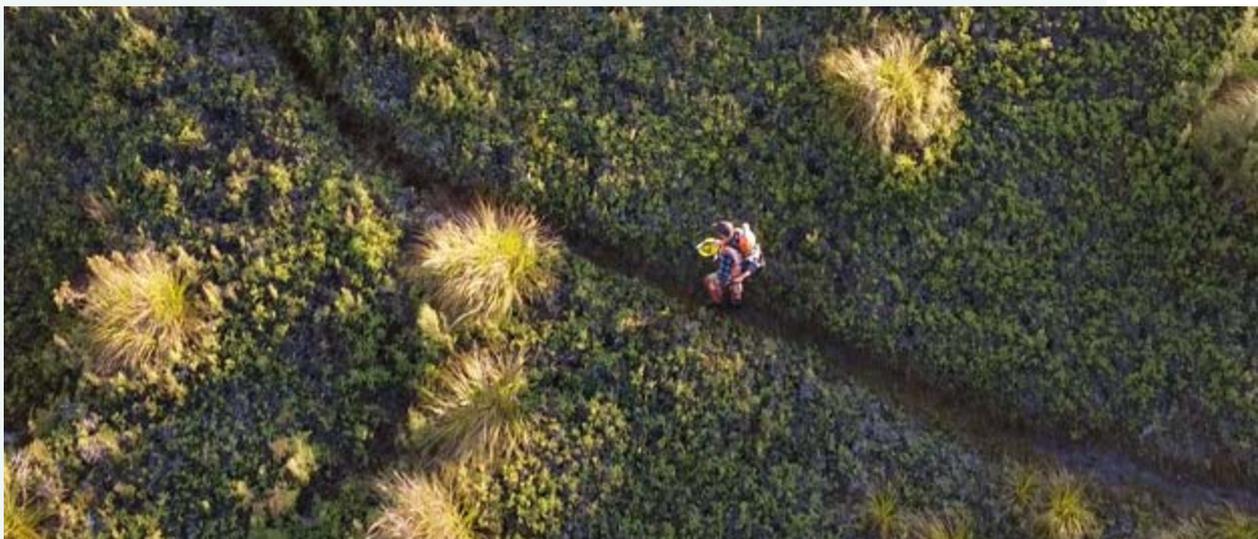
A proactive early independent review of the programme was carried out in May 2021.

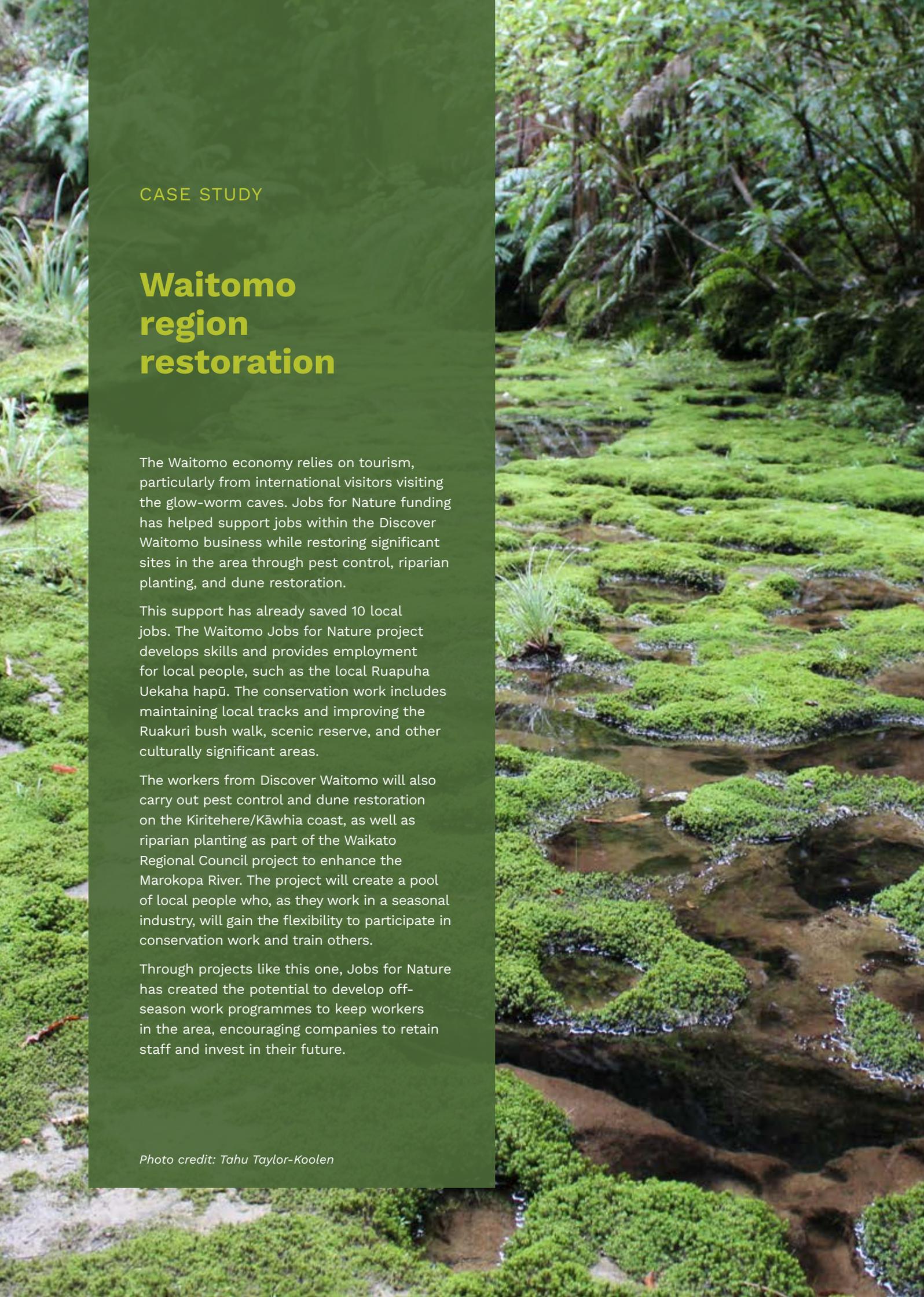
This early-stage review was designed to gain an independent view of whether the programme was set up to be successful and consider whether the programme's current arrangements were fit for purpose. The review also included a deep dive on six diverse projects from across the programme, to gain insights from funding recipients and key partners on their experiences.

The findings of the review were positive overall and found the programme's current arrangements reasonable. It made recommendations on ongoing governance, accountability, assurance, and risk management through to the end of the programme.

The six projects showed a varied but positive development path to delivery on the investment framework. Overall, and in the scope of the review, it is considered that the projects are soundly managed and capable of delivering. It also highlighted the challenge for the programme that, given the nature of environmental outcomes, many projects will not be able to show enduring environmental benefits until well after the funding has ceased.

The review also recommended the programme decision-makers develop a transition plan to help delivery partners prepare for the period after the end of the programme, and to identify future funding possibilities. It suggested this could include creating the platform of a 'community of practice'. This work is now in the early stage of being scoped and co-designed with partners across the programme. We anticipate similar independent reviews will be conducted at different points throughout the programme.





## CASE STUDY

# Waitomo region restoration

The Waitomo economy relies on tourism, particularly from international visitors visiting the glow-worm caves. Jobs for Nature funding has helped support jobs within the Discover Waitomo business while restoring significant sites in the area through pest control, riparian planting, and dune restoration.

This support has already saved 10 local jobs. The Waitomo Jobs for Nature project develops skills and provides employment for local people, such as the local Ruapuha Uekaha hapū. The conservation work includes maintaining local tracks and improving the Ruakuri bush walk, scenic reserve, and other culturally significant areas.

The workers from Discover Waitomo will also carry out pest control and dune restoration on the Kiritehere/Kāwhia coast, as well as riparian planting as part of the Waikato Regional Council project to enhance the Marokopa River. The project will create a pool of local people who, as they work in a seasonal industry, will gain the flexibility to participate in conservation work and train others.

Through projects like this one, Jobs for Nature has created the potential to develop off-season work programmes to keep workers in the area, encouraging companies to retain staff and invest in their future.

*Photo credit: Tahu Taylor-Koolen*

## CASE STUDY

## Jobs for Nature supporting farmers in Hawke's Bay to protect waterways

Hawke's Bay dairy farmer Ivan Knauf says he's thrilled to be able to fence a significant 90-hectare wetland surrounded by native bush on his farm, thanks to a \$4.2 million Jobs for Nature partnership between the Ministry for the Environment and Hawke's Bay Regional Council.

Over two years, the Hāpara Takatū project will establish 195 kilometres of new riparian fencing to exclude all classes of stock from vulnerable waterways across the region, reducing erosion, enabling riparian plantings to grow, and creating jobs.

Knauf's wetland fencing is one of 70 projects across Hawke's Bay, funded by the Jobs for Nature Hāpara Takatū project. QEII National Trust and Fonterra also made financial contributions to fencing off Knauf's wetland.

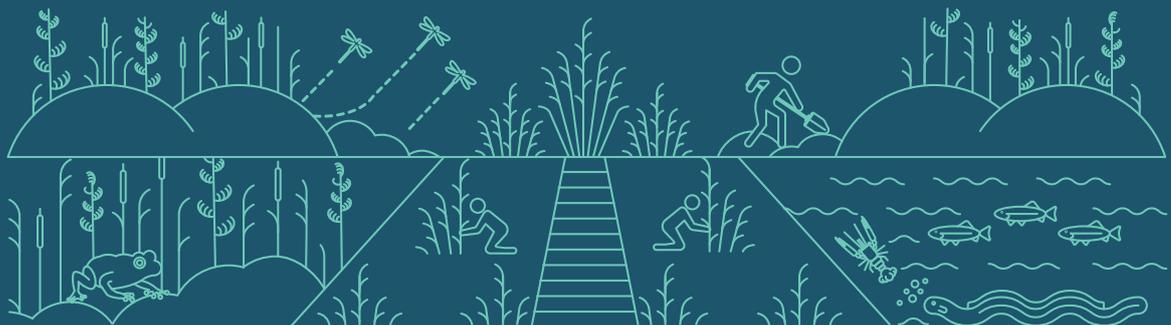
Knauf has established four kilometres of fencing around the wetland to keep out feral deer and other animals to prevent feeding on native plants and trees.



“

**This fencing is a crucial first step to restore the wetland and improve freshwater quality. The next step is to manage willow trees, blackberries and other weeds to allow the native bush to flourish, and native birdlife to return.**

**Ivan Knauf, Dairy Farmer, Hawke's Bay**



## Programme progress

The following pages use data submitted to the Secretariat to provide a snapshot of Jobs for Nature programme progress after the first financial year; initially focusing on the entire programme, and then separating into each delivery agency, to allow comparison against the mean.

It is important to note that data is only received for approved projects, the funding for which sits at \$941.8 million at year-end. The figures below do not include any unapproved funding.

### Financial metrics

Monthly reporting provided financial metrics such as contracting levels or funding paid. Contracted funding amounts are reported over the entire life of the programme, while funding paid is representative for the first financial year. Headline metrics for the programme are:

Approved funding (\$ million)	Contracted funding (\$ million)	Funding paid (\$ million)	Approved projects	Contracted projects
941.8	676.5	166.2	343	243

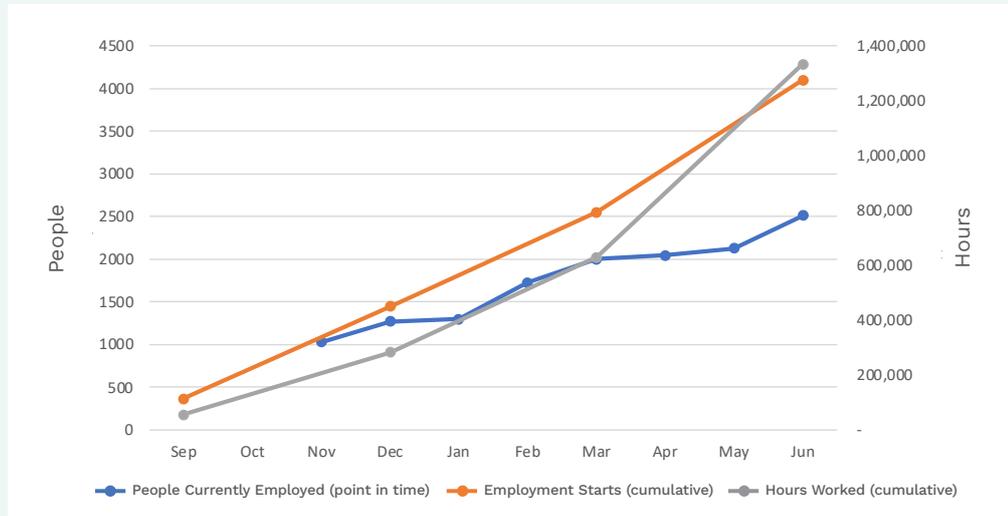
### Employment metrics

The rate at which overall employment has been supported through the programme has increased in the fourth quarter of the financial year. Quarter 4 showed a 99 per cent increase in hours worked, and a 41 per cent increase in employment starts when compared to the previous quarter.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Hours worked	54,201	226,716	347,666	703,747	1,332,330
Employment starts	359	1,084	1,104	1,547	4,094

The 'currently employed' metric is not included in the table above, as it is a point-in-time measure that does not aggregate like the other metrics. The number of people employed each month can be seen in figure 1. It is expected this will fluctuate throughout the programme and may reflect seasonal changes.

**Figure 1: Programme employment metric progress**



### Environmental metrics

Reporting on environmental metrics has varied in the first financial year. The initial emphasis placed on establishing projects as quickly as possible potentially impacted the quality of reporting. When many of these projects were initially contracted, the current programme reporting requirements had not yet been set up. The programme has therefore been operating in an environment where the reporting systems and processes are being developed at the same time as projects initiating and beginning delivery, and sometimes fit retrospectively; in some cases, the capacity to do so is limited.

	2020/21 achievement	Lifetime forecast
Area of freshwater restoration (ha)	201	1,334
Area of riparian/lake/wetland planting (ha)	226	4,027
Number of plants planted in riparian/lake/wetland areas	745,431	10,730,131
Length of fencing constructed (km)	1,402	7,132
Number of fish passages remediated	7	1,912
Area of ecosystem restoration (ha)	547	8,383
Number of plants planted in terrestrial areas	234,688	4,649,596
Length of tracks maintained (km)	364	2,325
Number of assets maintained (including huts)	38	263
Area of wilding conifer control (ha)	819,689	2,594,801
Area of other plant pest control (ha)	29,896	210,153
Area of wallaby control (ha)	148,685	665,000
Area of other animal pest control (ha)	305,165	1,756,871

Environmental area legend: freshwater, biodiversity, pest control

There are various reasons for the differences in progress of output achievement, which are outlined in more specific terms in the agency-specific sections of this report. However, as outputs across the funded projects increase, we anticipate project reporting to mature further, resulting in improvements across reporting of environmental metrics.

### Project distribution

When a new project is first approved, the delivery agency is required to report on several categories of metrics, which when collated at a programme level give an overview of how projects are spread across domains. Some of the main groupings are shown in the figures below, which show the first financial year’s projects were diverse in both intent and location.

Projects can be undertaking work on more than one environmental objective. For example, a project could involve freshwater and plant pest control.

**Figure 2: Number of projects that support different environmental objectives**



**Figure 3: Percentage distribution of project intent across the programme**

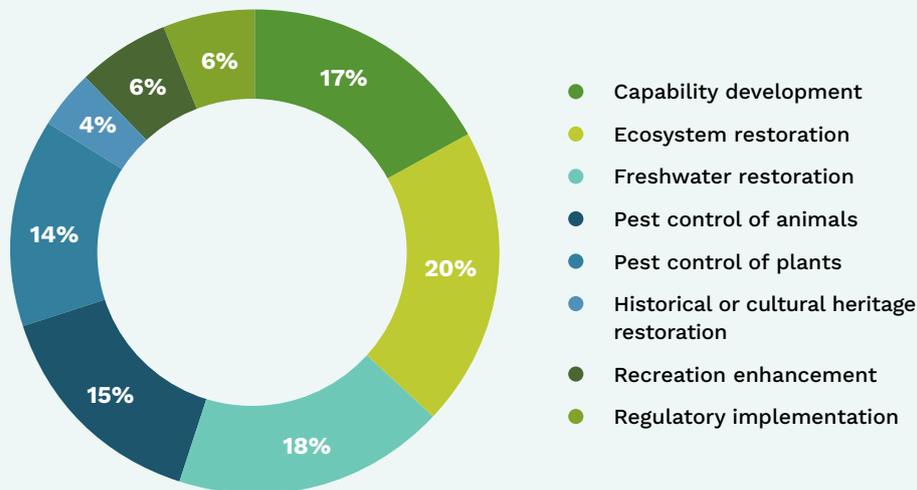


Figure 4: Distribution of funding approved across the programme

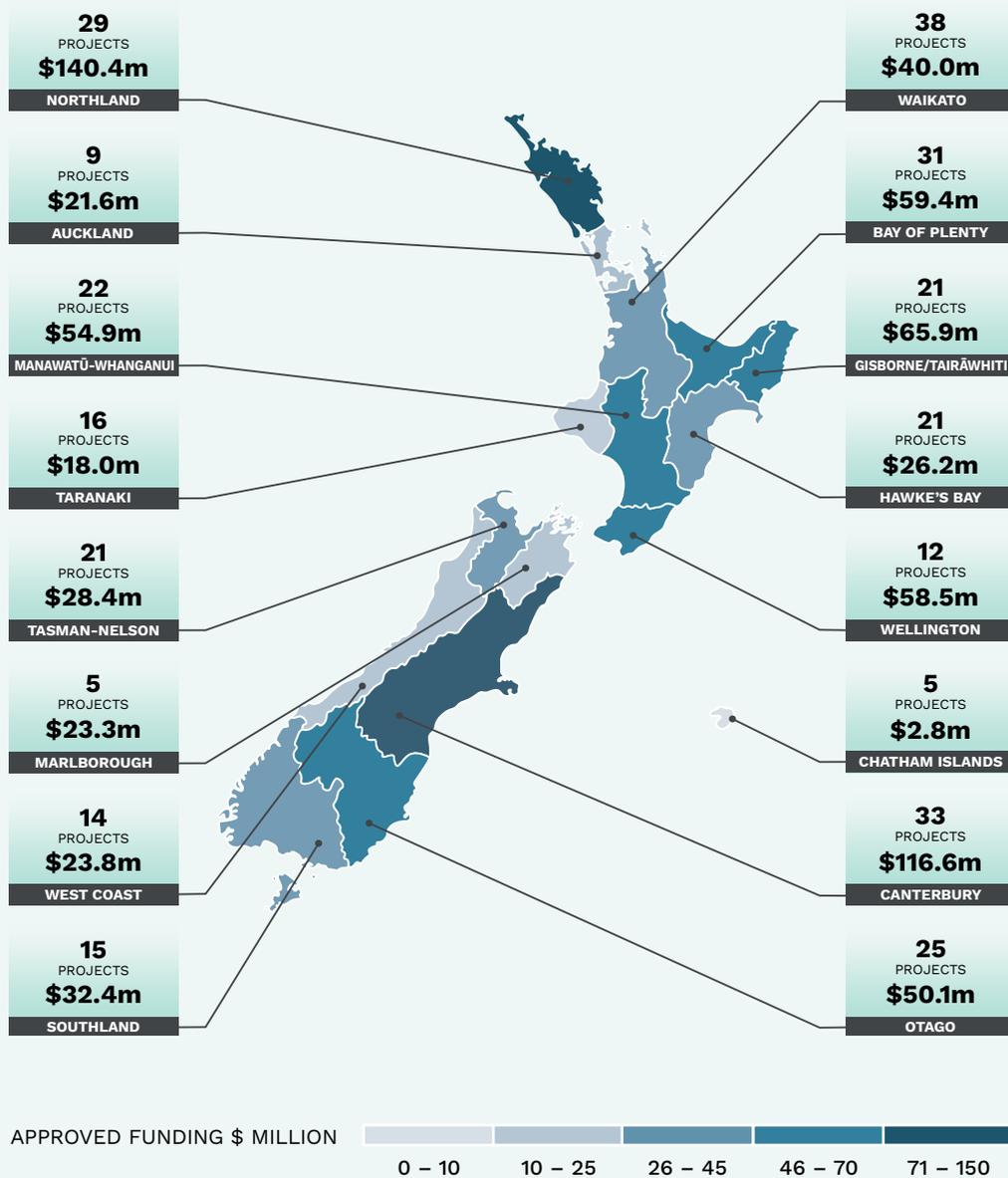


Figure 4 shows a large concentration of funding approved within the Northland region. This is being heavily skewed by the \$100 million Kaipara Moana project. Similarly, Canterbury receives funding for four large-scale priority projects which make up \$70 million of funding: Wilding Conifer Control programme, restoration in the Mackenzie Basin, and two at-risk freshwater catchment projects. Approved funding for nationwide projects of \$179.5 million is not represented on this map.

Figure 5 shows a dispersion of announced programme projects, irrespective of the approved funding amount. Nationwide projects are not represented on this map.

**Figure 5: Distribution of announced projects across the programme**



# Department of Conservation

## Lou Sanson's reflections: changing the face of conservation and DOC

Before heading off to new pastures, Department of Conservation (DOC) Director-General Lou Sanson shared his thoughts on one of the programmes he's most proud of – Mahi mō te Taiao/Jobs for Nature.

Lou believes Jobs for Nature is creating something powerful and different.



**Jobs for Nature has supercharged the way DOC works with others. DOC has shifted from doing the work out in the field, to building capability across iwi and community groups and supporting them to deliver conservation work.**

**Lou Sanson, Department of Conservation, Former Director-General**

## A different Aotearoa New Zealand

Jobs for Nature answered the call when the community needed help following lockdown in autumn 2020.

“The tourism industry had completely collapsed in places like Te Anau, Waitomo and Franz Josef, and communities were crying out for jobs. DOC was able to provide a lifeline to these communities through Jobs for Nature.”

The programme was designed to provide nature-based jobs to communities and industries impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, such as the tourism and hospitality industry. The programme has had to adapt to the needs of regional communities, including funding projects that target iwi and youth unemployment.

Lou is quick to ease concerns that Jobs for Nature is taking labour away from industries like dairy, fruit picking and tourism.

“The programme is giving back, rather than taking away. For instance, tourism workers participating in Jobs for Nature projects have a wealth of knowledge about tikanga Māori and conservation which will enrich their work when the border reopens – with the added bonus that they’ll also be ambassadors for nature!”

He echoes the words of the Prime Minister who, at the start of the programme, said Jobs for Nature would contribute to making New Zealand a different country when the border reopens.

## From the bigger picture to personal benefits

By visiting as many projects as he could, Lou saw first-hand how Jobs for Nature projects were making positive impacts on those participating in them.

“There’s a story on every project,” he says. “On one particular visit a worker told me, ‘This project changed my life. I used to be a night watchman and now I’m living in light with other people.’”

Lou also recalled how visits to projects in Northland made his spine tingle. “One particular area had gone from high levels of unemployment to everyone working for a cause. People told me the ngahere (the forest) used to push them away, but now it’s pulling them in.”

## Looking towards a lasting legacy

Lou is looking forward to enjoying Jobs for Nature’s successes.

“For me, it will be driving through the Mackenzie Basin and seeing the great marching army of wilding pines under control.

“I’m looking forward to seeing river birds and invertebrates thriving on the Waikanae River. I’m also excited to see people in far Northland and Ngāti Awa (Whakatāne) in really meaningful work.”

Jobs for Nature is all about partnerships. Whether it’s with iwi, community groups, other government departments, or nature, DOC working with others will help ensure Papatūānuku thrives.

Lou notes that while it took the hard work of some to get Jobs for Nature off the ground, it will be the work, aspirations and determination of many more people that will create a lasting legacy once the programme finishes in 2024.



**Workers at the Tucker Beach Restoration Project, Queenstown**

DOC implemented the Jobs for Nature programme at pace over the 2020/21 financial year, driven by need to support communities affected by COVID-19.

While DOC has worked in partnership with other organisations since 2013, large-scale investment in projects led by third parties is relatively new for the Department and DOC had to quickly establish systems, governance, and assurance structures for Jobs for Nature projects. DOC has a district-level presence across the country, with staff living and working regionally. This has enabled staff to develop close working relationships with Jobs for Nature project partners on the ground.

DOC's Jobs for Nature programme now has over 200 projects across regional Aotearoa New Zealand, with funding to projects averaging between \$500,000 to \$3 million. There are some flagship projects which have received significant funding. For example, the Prevention of North Island Indigenous Forest Collapse programme is investing over \$34 million into the restoration of the Raukūmara Range. There is also the Kaimai Mamaku Conservation Park project, which has received over \$19 million. These projects are a partnership with iwi, hapū and whānau supporting them to exercise rangatiratanga and kaitiakitanga for these special places.

A key milestone for DOC was progressing 107 approved projects through to contracts in the first year of the programme. With the focus on immediate support to communities and New Zealanders in need, executing contracts and paying funds to partners was the first priority for DOC's programme.

One of the main challenges for DOC has been establishing clear and easy-to-use reporting systems which do not overly burden newly established projects. Multiple cycles and different ways of reporting have caused confusion amongst funding recipients, and this has impacted the quality of data received. This improved towards the end of the year and a data landscape review and implementation of the 'Enquire' funds management tool is currently under way.

## Financial metrics

DOC is responsible for 40 per cent of the programme funding, which is a total of \$488.5 million. Headline metrics for the Department are displayed below.

Approved funding (\$ million)	Contracted funding (\$ million)	Funding paid (\$ million)	Approved projects	Contracted projects
440.6	294.3	56.5	193	107

As 193 projects were approved in Year One, DOC has been focused on engaging with stakeholders, assessing projects, progressing approvals, and negotiating funding agreements. This is the largest number of individual projects across the Jobs for Nature programme. The high number of projects reflect the regional community reach and purpose of DOC's Jobs for Nature programme. It is expected that funding agreements for all projects approved in 2020/21 will be executed by the end of 2021.

The total amount of funding paid for the first financial year is \$56.5 million. DOC is satisfied with the result, acknowledging the work and time required to establish systems, conduct assessments, and progress project approvals and contract negotiations over the year.

Programme funding is separated into different funding streams, each with their own allocation, and progressing at different rates. They are listed below:

	Approved funding (\$ million)	Contracted funding (\$ million)	Contracted projects
Kaimahi for Nature	193.4	107.5	93
Predator Free 2050 Ltd	76.0	76.0	1
Ngā Awa Strategic Waterways	42.9	24.5	3
Prevention of North Island Indigenous Forest Collapse	53.8	53.8	2
Māori Land Fund	2.5	2.5	1
Restoring Nature Programme One	20.3	12.3	5
Private Landowner Biodiversity Fund	18.1	-	-
Kiwis for Kiwi	17.7	17.7	1
Jobs for Nature Community Fund	15.9	-	1

The Private Landowner Fund, Community Fund, and Māori Land Fund are contestable funds with an open process to seek applications for assessment. Because of the time required to set up and run these processes, funding was allocated late in 2020/21 and negotiations were entered into. Projects that received funds through the Private Landowner Fund and Community Fund are expected to be contracted by the end of 2021.

The Māori Land Fund is expected to be fully allocated by the end of 2021, with all approved projects contracted by early 2022.

### Employment metrics

DOC has been steadily increasing the rate at which employment objectives have been achieved over the first financial year. This increase reflects the substantial establishment work required in the early months of the programme. It is likely these employment metrics will continue to increase heading into the next financial year as more projects move into delivery. Employment forecasts from projects approved so far indicate that DOC is tracking to exceed employment targets over the life of the programme.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Hours worked	39,775	43,011	62,011	259,149	404,312
Employment starts	284	251	264	414	1,213

## Environmental metrics

Within the first year of delivery, DOC-funded projects achieved or overachieved their plan across eight outputs including riparian restoration, pest control for multiple species, fencing, and hut maintenance. Projects also achieved 99 per cent of planned track maintenance work, and 95 per cent of planned deer control work. Additionally, over 175,000 plants were cultivated through nursery work for future planting projects, and projects achieved 85 per cent of their planned wilding conifer control work.

Work was delayed for projects with planned weed control, goat control, and pest control (such as feral cats, pigs, rabbits, wallabies), with these environmental outputs achieving between 50–65 per cent of their planned target.

In line with the programme-level view, reporting on environmental metrics has varied in the first financial year. This reflects low response rates in the first six months as systems were established, data phasing errors, and confusion by projects arising from multiple data sources and changing reporting cycles.

Additionally, the majority of projects were approved and contracted in the last half of the year, with projects focusing on recruitment, planning, governance, and leadership work that does not lead directly to conservation outputs in the early stages.

DOC has work underway to strengthen its reporting system and lift data quality. This includes a review of the Rataka Taiao reporting app, alongside additional monthly and quarterly survey questionnaires within the data landscape. Implementation of the 'Enquire' funds management system in December 2021 will greatly improve the user experience for project reporting and is expected to further lift data quality.

Delivery agencies often provide environmental data to the Secretariat at more detailed sub-categories than is aggregated at programme level. For example, separating into area treated for a specific species rather than as the general label of 'pests'.

	2020/21 achievement	Lifetime forecast
Area of riparian strip restored by plantings (ha)	122	3,156
Number of plants planted in riparian/lake/wetland area	72,311	4,273,990
Area restored by plantings (non-riparian) (ha)	359	5,093
Existing fencing maintained (km)	14	294
New fencing (km)	36	691
Area treated for deer (ha)	12,000	49,853
Area treated for goats (ha)	1,126	139,377
Area treated for other animal pests (ha)	6,800	207,725
Area treated for possums (ha)	76,125	405,516
Area treated for rats and/or mustelids (ha)	77,913	823,449
Area treated for weeds (ha)	2,692	182,673
Area treated for wilding conifers (ha)	2,976	65,126
Length of tracks maintained (km)	364	2,325
Number of historic heritage assets maintained	8	136
Number of huts maintained	30	86
Number of plants planted in terrestrial areas	135,790	92,000
Number of indigenous plants produced for restoration	178,486	-

Environmental area legend: **freshwater**, **biodiversity**, **pest control**

### Other areas of note

At 30 June 2021, DOC still had \$47.8 million of funding to be allocated to specific projects. This is expected to be fully allocated by early December 2021, with most contracts finalised by the end of 2021, and funding agreements for the Māori Land Fund to be finalised in early 2022.

I love being out in the outdoors, growing things and that respect is being given to nature. Jobs for Nature, it's just a really good buzz.

**Caitlin, Ranger on Bullock Creek Restoration project, Punakaiki**



# Ministry for the Environment

## Vicky Robertson's reflections

*Secretary for the Environment Vicky Robertson shares her thoughts on the first year of the Jobs for Nature programme.*

In its first year, the Jobs for Nature programme has mobilised over 4,000 New Zealanders to come together through a shared goal; a healthier more sustainable environment.



“

**I feel extremely proud of all the work that the team have put into the first year of the Jobs for Nature programme, especially as it was often at an extremely swift pace.**

**Vicky Robertson, Ministry for the Environment, Secretary for the Environment**

For Ministry for the Environment, it gave us the opportunity to do things differently in supporting the delivery of the freshwater reforms, answering a need that both the Ministry and stakeholders had identified. We needed to support Aotearoa New Zealand to make the changes our environment needs from us all, and to ensure that the changes are having the right impact.

The Jobs for Nature funding has gone into creating jobs for people to plant riparian plants, fence off waterways, and remove fish passage barriers, all with the goal of improving the state of Aotearoa New Zealand's waterways. It is providing New Zealanders with enduring career opportunities and the skills to participate in the freshwater management system long after the programme has finished.

For cadets in the Bay of Plenty they are starting new careers in conservation and strengthening their connection with te taiao. For the community of Nelson and iwi of Te Taihū, the funding is helping to restore the mauri of the Mahitahi catchment and create local jobs. For Hawke's Bay dairy farmer Ivan Knauf, the funding means that he can finally fence off a large wetland on his farm that's home to rare manu, like the mātuku (bittern).

I feel extremely proud of all the work that the team have put into the first year of the Jobs for Nature programme, especially as it was often at an extremely swift pace. I am also proud of the role the Ministry has played as system lead for this programme, providing a new means for collaboration with our DOC, MPI, LINZ and MBIE partners. The programme has provided our agencies with a platform to work together and deliver on a shared goal. Empowering projects across the country to do this important mahi means that we have a better chance of leaving a flourishing environment for the next generation.

The Ministry provided a leadership role in the stand-up of the Jobs for Nature programme, leading to the establishment of the Secretariat, Reference Group, and reporting framework. The Ministry also led the development of 24 quick-start projects announced in July 2020, two months after the Jobs for Nature programme was announced. Overall, the Ministry had five funding programmes underway in 2020/21, which included four contestable funding rounds (Public Waterways and Ecosystems Restoration Fund, Freshwater Improvement Fund Round 2 and 3, Te Mana o Te Wai Fund) and one strategic investment (Kaipara Moana Remediation). The Ministry is currently implementing the new Essential Freshwater Fund, focused on strategic investments to support the implementation of the Essential Freshwater reforms.

### Financial metrics

The Ministry is responsible for the second largest portion of programme funding, 39 per cent or \$476.7 million, and the second largest number of individual projects. Headline metrics for the Ministry are displayed below.

Approved funding (\$ million)	Contracted funding (\$ million)	Funding paid (\$ million)	Approved projects	Contracted projects
251.8	187.7	32.5	46	34

Programme funding is disaggregated into seven funding streams (including overheads), each of which have their own allocation and are progressing at different rates:

	Approved funding (\$ million)	Contracted funding (\$ million)	Contracted projects
Essential Freshwater Fund	-	-	-
Kaipara Moana Remediation	100.0	\$100.0 m	1
Public Waterways and Ecosystems Restoration Fund	67.5	\$67.5 m	24
Freshwater Improvement Fund	36.0	\$12.1 m	8
Jobs for Nature programme setup	36.3	\$7.4 m	1
Te Mana o Te Wai Fund	-	-	-
At-risk Catchments	12.0	\$0.6 m	-

Decisions have yet to be made on \$224.9 million of Jobs for Nature funding. This is the largest component of unallocated funding and represents 18 per cent of total programme funding.

The Essential Freshwater Fund accounts for the largest amount of funding yet to be approved and contracted, with \$175 million allocated to the fund. The Essential Freshwater Fund was set up to take a more strategic and targeted approach to increasing capability and capacity in the freshwater management system, ultimately supporting effective implementation of the Essential Freshwater reforms. Time has been taken to make changes to the funding criteria and processes and undertake analysis to support the objectives of the fund. The fund has been established and is currently assessing and approving applications with the aim of having all funds approved and contracted by 30 June 2022.

Programme setup costs covered functions for the Secretariat, Reference Group, operational costs to support programme monitoring and reporting, and administer a larger funding portfolio.

### Employment metrics

The Ministry saw steady growth in hours worked and employment starts since Quarter 2; the greatest level of achievement was in the final quarter of 2020/21. This reflects the early stages of the year being more focused on establishment, approval and contracting. It is expected these metrics will increase as the programme moves forward.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Hours worked	55	22,853	76,105	162,531	261,544
Employment starts	0	211	248	343	802

### Environmental metrics

There is varied reported progress against the environmental metrics for the Ministry. The 'area treated for weeds' metric has shown significant progress after a Greater Wellington Regional Council project created a new pest plant control network, which expanded their pest plant control by 577 hectares.

Less progress was made towards remediating fish passage barriers. Delays were due to high rainfall events in Southland, preventing mitigation work due to health and safety concerns. However, 554 fish passage crossings were assessed this year.

More generally, a shortage of contractors impacted many projects and their outputs, including how much fencing could be completed, plants planted and, therefore, hours worked. COVID-19 alert level restrictions also had an impact, especially for projects in the Auckland region or with supplies coming from there.

Planting seasons straddle project and financial years, and funded projects began after the 2020 planting season. The planting output for Year One represents only part of the 2021 planting season, which falls across the end of Year One and beginning of Year Two.

While recipients have reported a slow start to their projects, they are confident the pace will pick up in coming years to make up for the low outputs of Year One.

	2020/21 achievement	Lifetime forecast
Area covered by farm environment plans completed (ha)	11,422	120,041
Area of riparian or lake or wetlands planting completed (ha)	104	871
Freshwater area under active restoration (riparian/wetland) (ha)	3	153
New fencing constructed or existing fencing maintained (km)	915	1,575
Number of farm environmental plans completed	73	575
Number of fish passage barriers remediated	5	1,911
Number of plants planted in riparian/lake/wetland area	563,500	4,328,947
Area of afforestation or other biodiversity planting not riparian or lake or wetland (ha)	81	632
Area of animal pest control completed (ha)	2,415	28,790
Area treated for weeds (ha)	1,346	2,261

Environmental area legend: **freshwater**, **biodiversity**, **pest control**

### Other areas of note

A focus for the next quarter is to actively work with key partners such as iwi groups, regional councils, existing catchment umbrella groups, and agency partners to identify and engage with potential applicants for the Essential Freshwater Fund, and encourage more applications to be submitted and assessed.

The Te Mana o Te Wai Fund intervention logic is clear that the primary objective of the funding is to support tangata whenua to build their capacity and capability to participate in and make decisions for freshwater management (local authorities' decision-making processes, and monitoring and preparation of policy statements and plans). This makes explicit its contribution to the Essential Freshwater/Te Mana o Te Wai policy implementation, and is consistent with the assessment panel, Kāhui Wai Māori, and Sustainable Land Use (SLU) Ministers' feedback. It also makes the other two objectives (improving the health of freshwater bodies of importance to them and creating nature-based employment opportunities) secondary. This means these elements will only be supported if they can show a measurable contribution to the primary objective.

I feel like my wellbeing, my wairua is skyrocketing. When you are up on that maunga, planting a native tree, you feel like you're actually making a difference.

Hunter, Kaimahi at Te Rea programme, Gisborne



# Ministry for Primary Industries

## Ray Smith's reflections

*Ministry for Primary Industries Director-General Ray Smith shares his thoughts on the Jobs for Nature programme.*



**The National Wilding Conifer Control programme has made big strides in the past 12 months. It has partnered with community and iwi groups and councils to undertake control work for wilding conifers across more than 800,000 hectares of New Zealand, and invested more in control than the previous four years combined.**

**Ray Smith, Ministry for Primary Industries, Director-General**

The Jobs for Nature programme has enabled the Ministry for Primary Industries to expand its important mahi tackling wilding conifers and wallabies, supporting catchment groups, and creating jobs.

The National Wilding Conifer Control Programme has made big strides in the past 12 months.

It has partnered with community and iwi groups and councils to undertake control work across 817,000 hectares of New Zealand – and invested more in wilding conifer control than the previous four years combined.

This programme has created more than 1,000 full or part-time jobs.

Wilding conifers cost New Zealand around \$100 million each year in lost productivity, lost water for irrigation and hydro-electricity generation, and the costs of fire prevention and control.

A dollar spent now to stem the spread of these weeds delivers massive future savings.

We've also invested more into research and field trials for better wallaby detection and control tools.

We have allocated \$35 million from the One Billion Trees Fund for large-scale planting and catchment initiatives. This funding will bolster employment opportunities and deliver environmental benefits.

Boosting sustainability and jobs is a key theme in delivering Fit for a Better World – Accelerating our Economic Potential, our roadmap for the food and fibres sector.

The Jobs for Nature funding allocation to the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) is being delivered through three separate MPI business units:

- Biosecurity New Zealand
- Te Uru Rākau – New Zealand Forest Service
- Agriculture and Investment Services.

Each business unit reports separately to the Secretariat, and each faces their own unique challenges depending on the type of project being delivered.

Jobs for Nature funding has enabled a significant expansion of the National Wilding Conifer Control Programme, and the establishment of a new Wallaby Eradication programme. Both programmes are coordinated by MPI, with national programme teams, collaborative programme governance, and numerous partners including central and local government, Māori, industry, and community groups.

Both programmes achieved their environmental and employment objectives in 2020/21, except for the fencing target for the wallaby programme. Delays in agreeing the Jobs for Nature metrics caused additional work for the programme team and partners. It was challenging to provide detailed reporting on the breadth of the work of these large, complex, national programmes through the Jobs for Nature reporting framework, which is designed to report on discrete projects.

In contrast to other agencies, the complex nature of the work MPI is undertaking means business as usual processes such as annual planning, fund, and programme management will continue to be priorities for MPI teams until the end of the Jobs for Nature funding period and beyond. Their regular reporting is streamlined, and quality is managed and maintained using bespoke GIS databases developed by Land Information New Zealand for these programmes.

The programmes are already delivering substantial progress in the regions where they are operating. Before the National Wilding Conifer Control programme, wildings were invading the equivalent of 90,000 hectares (approximately nine high country stations) every year. In 2020/21, wilding conifer control was carried out on more than 800,000 hectares of infested land.

Wallabies were expanding their range before the new wallabies programme began, and it was estimated the economic impact of wallaby spread could reach \$84 million a year by 2025. Wallaby control was carried out on 148,000 hectares in 2020/21, slowing the spread of this pest species in those areas.

The One Billion Trees Fund administered by Te Uru Rākau – New Zealand Forest Service has performed exceptionally well in stimulating the planting of trees. The One Billion Trees Fund has contributed to a wide range of key outcomes for New Zealand that includes bolstering employment and opportunities in the forestry sector.

## Financial metrics

MPI is collectively responsible for \$172.5 million, or 14 per cent, of Jobs for Nature funding. The funding split and headline metrics for each business unit are displayed below.

Business unit	Approved funding (\$ million)	Contracted funding (\$ million)	Funding paid (\$ million)	Approved projects	Contracted projects
Biosecurity New Zealand	127.4	99.2	36.3	16 (funding agreements)	14 (funding agreements) <sup>7</sup>
Te Uru Rākau	34.7	32.7	5.6	29	28
Agriculture and Investment Services	9.8	9.8	3.9	9	9

Biosecurity New Zealand's funding is further disaggregated into two separate funding streams: the National Wilding Conifer Control programme (Wilding Fund) and the Containing Wallabies to Protect Agriculture, Forestry and Native Plants; and Boost Regional Economies programme (Wallabies Fund). Funding from Te Uru Rākau and Agriculture and Investment Services rests in a single funding stream.

	Approved funding (\$ million)	Contracted funding (\$ million)	Funding agreements
Wilding Fund	99.9	95.6	10
Wallabies Fund	27.4	3.6	4

7. Biosecurity New Zealand's report on the number of funding agreements with regional councils is not representative of the actual number of projects supported. In 2020/21 Biosecurity New Zealand supported 26 community partnership projects (in addition to programme operations); however, funding for these projects was paid through 14 regional council funding agreements.

## Employment metrics

Like the rest of the programme, the reported level of employment increased towards the latter quarters of the year. Many of the projects funded through MPI were expansions of existing programmes of work. This is reflected in the higher employment statistics in the earlier quarters of the financial year when compared to the programme average.

Employment start figures for Agriculture and Investment Services have been forecast using the difference in information collected on people currently employed.

		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Biosecurity New Zealand	Hours worked	1,350	126,900	103,713	142,140	374,103
	Employment starts	15*	457*	436	499	1,161
Te Uru Rākau	Hours worked	11,960	21,860	26,585	37,141	97,546
	Employment starts	39	56	45	59	199
Agriculture and Investment Services	Hours worked	-	3,724	11,125	23,444	38,293
	Employment starts	-	-	44	64	108

\* For the Wilding Fund, some Q1 employment starts were reported in Q2 due to the timing of the employment metrics being generated.

A large portion of Te Uru Rākau's work is tree planting, an activity predominantly undertaken in the June to September period. This means that end-of-financial-year metrics are unlikely to capture full employment figures for the 2021 planting season.

## Environmental metrics

In line with the programme-level view, reporting on environmental metrics has varied in the first financial year. Due to the homogeneity of projects being delivered by Biosecurity New Zealand, the environmental metrics reported on are limited to area treated (in hectares) for wilding conifers and area of wallaby control.

		2020/21 achievement	Lifetime forecast
Biosecurity New Zealand	Area treated for wilding conifers (ha)	816,721	2,529,583
	Area of wallaby control (ha)	148,685	665,000
Te Uru Rākau	Riparian fencing (km)	100	501
	Fencing not riparian (km)	3	21
	Freshwater area under active restoration (riparian/wetland) (ha)	198	1,180
	Number of plants planted in riparian or lake or wetland areas	109,620	2,127,194
	Area under active restoration (not riparian/wetland) (ha)	16	1,900
	Number of other plants	47,999	150,000
	Number of trees	62,599	4,389,296
Agriculture and Investment Services	Fencing not riparian (km)	2	-
	Number of fish passage barriers remediated	2	-
	Number of other plants	31,600	-
	Number of trees	5,000	-
	Area treated for weeds (ha)	40	-

Environmental area legend: freshwater, biodiversity, pest control

When Agriculture and Investment Services began their projects, employment metrics were the key focus. Due to the retrospective nature of the reporting requirements, they could not provide planned environmental metrics in the first financial year. These have been in development and will be integrated into future financial years' reporting.



### Other areas of note

In 2021/22, Biosecurity New Zealand will focus on continued excellence in the delivery and programme management of the wildings and wallabies programmes. Wallabies management work will increase in scale and scope; in 2020/21 Biosecurity New Zealand established the programme, and work will now begin to scale up. Wilding conifer control work is expected to extend into new regions and continue supporting 30 community partnership projects. Both programmes are flagships for Biosecurity New Zealand's national pest management work.

For Agriculture and Investment Services, the focus in the second year of delivery is on preparing for seasonal plantings and working with the project's respective communities to build the profile of their mahi through public events. For example, WAI Wānaka is currently recruiting for the spring planting season. The North Otago Land Sustainability Management Jobs for Nature project is working on planting days with local schools, as they progress planting sites across the North Otago region.

The 2020 lockdowns had a direct impact on activities such as eco-sourcing of seeds required for Te Uru Rākau projects, which has had a flow-on effect on seedling availability for the 2021 planting season. The further disruptions in 2021 could also impact the capacity to plant. Te Uru Rākau will work with stakeholders to adjust project timelines and deliverables where necessary.

**It's good being able to turn around at the end of the day and see all the trees you've cut down. It's quite satisfying**

**Jakob, National Wilding Conifer Control Programme, Canterbury**



# Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's (MBIE) Fencing of Waterways programme is funded by the Provincial Growth Fund (PGF), managed by Kānoa – Regional Economic Development & Investment Unit (Kānoa – REDIU), previously known as the Provincial Development Unit. The Fencing of Waterways projects are delivering on time, within budget, and meeting contractual expectations of Kānoa – REDIU.

Kānoa – REDIU continues to see value in the Fencing of Waterways projects in employment and capability development. Agreed social procurement requirements in contracts have ensured a high percentage of locals employed into projects, and procurement of local contractors to complete works. Recipients of Fencing of Waterways funding have reported feeling particularly passionate about the value of this investment for their waterways and whenua.

The Fencing of Waterways projects were originally developed as a PGF COVID-19 response scheme to create immediate employment opportunities. These projects were only brought into the programme after the rollout was well under way. As a result, reporting on employment and environmental metrics has been challenging for Kānoa – REDIU, as the reporting requirements for the programme were added to the PGF reporting already in progress. Officials have tried to balance those requirements with limiting onerous reporting burdens on recipients.



Work is currently being undertaken to address these issues and ensure effective reporting for the programme. Kānoa – REDIU is confident more can be provided for the 2021/22 financial year on employment and environmental metrics, to bring Fencing of Waterways reporting in line with other programme reporting. Further information is provided below.

### Financial metrics

MBIE is responsible for three per cent, or \$40.9 million, of the total programme funding and delivers this allocation through Kānoa – REDIU. This funding was allocated from the PGF and was not part of the \$1.1 billion Budget 2020 allocation. Kānoa – REDIU funding has been fully contracted, with most projects expected to be completed by the 2023/24 financial year. Headline metrics are:

Approved funding (\$ million)	Contracted funding (\$ million)	Funding paid (\$ million)	Approved projects	Contracted projects
40.9	40.9	23.3	35	35

There's only one funding stream for Kānoa – REDIU, so this is not further disaggregated. Of the 35 approved projects, four have been completed in the first financial year.

### Employment metrics

There are gaps in the data relating to reported hours worked and reported number of employment starts. This is because Kānoa – REDIU projects had several reporting processes already in place before the relevant projects were formally included in the Jobs for Nature programme. Reporting requirements for Jobs for Nature therefore had to be retrospectively fitted from December 2020.

The increase in hours worked reported between Quarters 3 and 4 of the financial year was due to Kānoa – REDIU seeing a higher percentage of responses about employment data across projects.

As part of PGF reporting requirements, Kānoa – REDIU did not collect employment starts. The employment starts figure was estimated from PGF monthly employment reporting.<sup>8</sup> Because these are estimates based on assumptions, this method has the potential to both overstate and understate the actual employment starts.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Hours worked	-	-	50,200	55,960	106,160
Employment starts	-	-	-	152	152

8. These are based on the difference between the reported people currently employed in relation to the previous month's reported figure.

Hours worked were not reported for Quarters 1 and 2 due to the late inclusion of Fencing of Waterways into the programme. Hours worked was not estimated for Quarters 1 and 2; therefore, the actual above only represents Quarters 3 and 4, and not the full year total to date.

All Kānoa – REDIU Fencing of Waterways projects are achieving agreed employment targets in their contracts, with some projects exceeding expectations. Forecasts for the 2021/22 financial year and beyond will be undertaken to bring reporting requirements in line with overall programme reporting.

### Environmental metrics

All Fencing of Waterways projects supported by Kānoa – REDIU are riparian fencing. Kānoa – REDIU reports on these projects through two environmental metrics.

	2020/21 achievement	Lifetime forecast
New fencing constructed or existing fencing maintained (km)	406	1,021
Riparian planting (ha)	255	582

Environmental Area Legend: [freshwater](#)

### Other areas of note

From December 2021, fencing components of projects will begin to be completed, with the focus moving to riparian planting, clearance of weeds, pest control, and maintenance. This work will continue for the remainder of the 2021 planting season, with most projects completing their works by the end of the 2022 planting season.

# Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand

## Gaye Searancke's reflections

*Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand  
Chief Executive Gaye Searancke shares her  
thoughts on the Jobs for Nature programme.*



**Our mahi is making a difference for our environment – from supporting the survival of native birds through trapline extensions, to helping restore the habitat of New Zealand's native bat along the Tengawai River in South Canterbury.**

**Gaye Searancke, Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand, Chief Executive**

Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand is privileged to be responsible for many of Aotearoa New Zealand's most well-known and loved places. It's critical we take a collective approach to pest and weed control, and Jobs for Nature is enabling government agencies to accelerate this.

Through the programme, we've expanded work on the land and waterways we manage – largely achieved through our relationships with iwi, community groups and local government. These partnerships are building capability and skills that will provide the foundation for long-term economic and environmental gains.

Our mahi is making a difference for our environment – from supporting the survival of native birds through trapline extensions, to helping restore the habitat of New Zealand's only native bat along the Tengawai River in South Canterbury. It's great to see our Jobs for Nature projects creating positive change for Aotearoa New Zealand and our people and we're looking forward to seeing the impacts of our work in the coming years.

Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) has upscaled its delivery through its existing third-party contractor, Boffa Miskell Ltd, and provided partnership opportunities with iwi/rūnanga, community trusts, regional councils, and Department of Conservation in the Bay of Plenty, Waikato, Canterbury, Otago, and Southland to deliver on joint outcomes. This mixed model looks to balance mature delivery with the opportunity for other partners to grow capacity and create jobs.

## Financial metrics

LINZ is responsible for three per cent, or \$40 million, of the programme funding specifically for LINZ's biosecurity programme. Unlike many other agencies under the Jobs for Nature programme, LINZ funding was not available for competitive allocation, and was attributed to projects where LINZ knew there was a need for investment. Headline metrics for LINZ are displayed below.

Approved funding (\$ million)	Contracted funding (\$ million)	Funding paid (\$ million)	Approved projects	Contracted projects
40.0	10.0	8.1	15	15

The programme funding is disaggregated into four different funding streams (including overheads), each of which have their own allocation:

	Approved funding (\$ million)	Contracted funding (\$ million)	Contracted projects
Strategic projects workstream	29.9	6.0	12
Boffa Miskell – Terrestrial Weeds and Pests	3.7	1.8	1
Boffa Miskell – Aquatic Weeds and Pests	2.6	1.2	1
Overheads	3.8	0.9	1

## Employment metrics

LINZ has seen a steady increase in the number of hours worked over the four quarters. The first six months of the financial year focused on allocation, co-designing projects and contracting, with on-the-ground delivery ramping up in the last two quarters of the year. A large portion of LINZ's projects involve pest, weed and predator control activities, all of which have ecological seasonal components such as flowering or weed and water clarity for treatments to be effective. There is also an element of seasonality to delivery of on-the-ground works, and the workforce required to deliver it.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Hours worked	1,061	9,368	17,561	23,346	51,336
Employment starts	17	102	163	133	415

Employment metrics are expected to increase in the second financial year, as most of LINZ's projects are in full delivery stage.

## Environmental metrics

LINZ's projects predominantly revolve around pest control activities and have subsequently reported on three environmental metrics. Lifetime forecasts were not provided by LINZ, however both the 'Area of animal pest control completed' and 'Area treated for weeds' achieved more than 100 per cent of their respective first financial year forecasts.

	2020/21 achievement	Lifetime forecast
Area of animal pest control completed (ha)	128,670	-
Area treated for weeds (ha)	23,554	-
Area where aquatic weeds were controlled	0	-

Environmental area legend: **pest control**

## Other areas of note

Irrespective of the employment focus of the Jobs for Nature funding, there remains a strong environmental case to address pest and weeds on LINZ-administered lakes, rivers, and land, to ensure LINZ is at least meeting compliance minimums like good neighbour rules<sup>9</sup>. LINZ is working with iwi/rūnanga, councils, other agencies, and landowners at the regional and local level to ensure they are working on joint strategic priorities where possible and making sensible on-the-ground arrangements to minimise the risk of duplication.

LINZ is also exploring micro-credentials and other training opportunities with iwi/rūnanga partners in particular, to build capacity in key areas where there is a need to deliver services, including increasing the range of biosecurity tools and innovative approaches.

9. Further information on good neighbour rules can be found on the Ministry for Primary Industries website at <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/biosecurity/about-biosecurity-in-new-zealand/national-policy-direction-for-pest-management/>

# Recommendations

Several recommendations have emerged to better support the Jobs for Nature programme to support the work in the next years of the programme. The Secretariat has already begun work on these recommendations with agencies.

## Reduce frequency of reporting and look for opportunities to streamline

The monthly cadence of reporting was a significant challenge for delivery agencies and funding recipients. There were data quality issues in most rounds of reporting, which took time to remedy. Monthly reporting is often undertaken by delivery agency officials who are also responsible for other non-reporting tasks. It is recommended the programme moves to a quarterly reporting cycle, to give agencies more time to compile the quarterly data. Allowing more time to compile and submit reporting templates will support agencies to submit higher-quality data.

## Ensure focus on delivery confidence through regular delivery confidence reporting

This reporting provides visibility of the extent to which individual projects, and subsequently the programme, remain on track; it also gives visibility to all agencies of the delivery risks across the programme. It is recommended this type of reporting is included in the quarterly reporting cycle.

## Review forecasts to ensure they are robust

All delivery agencies need to review their forecasts for the future financial years to ensure they are accurate, considering learnings from the first year where possible (for example, seasonality impacts). This will allow the reported achievement to be a better measure of delivery progress and help identify performance on individual projects.

## Finalise and embed programme benefits reporting

This reporting can capture a programme-wide cross-agency view of the strategic-level benefits of the programme. This reporting should build a list of indicators based on data already reported on, or easily collectable measures, and will likely also require data from other reporting methods such as surveys or case studies. It will be important to consider agency capacity constraints when implementing any further reporting requirements.

## Design a programme evaluation approach

A programme evaluation should take all forms of reporting to capture a holistic view of whether the programme has achieved its objectives. An independently contracted report has suggested that an evaluation occur at the mid-point and the end of the programme lifetime.

### **Pilot and co-design with partners a ‘community of practice’**

Establishing communities of practice can facilitate strong connections between regional funding recipients, share experiences, research, and connections, provide opportunities for collaboration, and promote the long-term legacy of the programme.

### **Refresh the programme communications strategy**

With the programme being of high public interest, it is important it has an effective communications strategy, to ensure a consistent approach when communicating progress and engaging with the public, media and interested stakeholders. This also focuses on sharing positive stories that demonstrate the impact of the investment on te taiao and Aotearoa New Zealand’s communities, as the quantitative reporting has limits in what can be captured. Showcasing stories of people doing the mahi builds on the qualitative reporting captured across the programme.

### **Develop a transition strategy**

Planning for the end of the programme will ensure both the environmental and social legacy of the programme. This will take the form of a transition strategy. The strategy will aid delivery partners to continue to deliver when environmental outcomes require further action past the funding timeframe. The transition strategy is closely linked to the development of communities of practice, where delivery partners can share knowledge and ensure the long-term sustainability of the project outcomes. Future funding possibilities will also be considered as part of the strategy.





**Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa**  
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