



The  
Aotearoa  
Circle

Mā te  
Kaitiakitanga  
ko te  
Tōnuitanga  
Prosperity  
Through  
Guardianship

Biodiversity



# Biodiversity

**‘New Zealand’s natural environment is our most important tourism product. It’s the main reason why international visitors come here, it’s important to domestic travel and it supports thousands of tourism businesses’.**

Tourism Industry Aotearoa Chief Executive Chris Roberts

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## Current State

New Zealand's biodiversity faces ongoing pressures associated with changing land use, climate change and invasive species. These pressures are causing biodiversity decline even with legal protection and implementation measures are in place. Lack of quality data is inhibiting our ability to understand the scale of the problem and where to focus our responses.



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## Current Trend

New Zealanders value our unique biodiversity and have a strong desire to restore and protect it. Government, business and communities are already working collaboratively with programmes like Predator Free 2050, but to really make a difference we need to strengthen these partnerships and take our leadership to the next level.



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## A Future Vision

Our unique biodiversity is considered as taonga to all New Zealanders and we are empowered to exercise kaitiakitanga throughout the motu. How we live, work and play supports the restoration and protection of our habitats and species and increases our resilience to climate change.

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# What's happening already?

- Government is engaging with the public on the National Policy Statement for Indigenous Biodiversity, the New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy, and more widely on New Zealand's contributions towards developing post 2020 goals under the Convention on Biological Diversity
- There are numerous collaborations underway like the Cape to City, Reconnecting Northland, and Wild for Taranaki projects. Public/Private partnerships such as the Living Waters partnership (DOC/Fonterra) and the Kākāpō Recovery Programme (DOC/Meridian) illustrate how the public and private sectors are achieving good biodiversity outcomes together
- Industry groups like Beef + Lamb and NZ Wine are implementing strategies and policies that embed protection and enhancement of biodiversity into their membership
- The number of pest free sanctuaries on the mainland and islands is increasing, with Sanctuary Mountain Maungatautari and the recently announced Te Korowai ō Waiheke as key examples
- There are a number of important native tree planting programmes and community groups, such as Trees that Matter and the Million Meters Streams Project (Sustainable Business Network)
- Many conservation projects around New Zealand benefit from business support. The recent release of 30 Takahe next to the Heaphy Track is a great example of business, iwi, community and Government combining forces on a conservation project (Air New Zealand)
- Innovative ways for DOC to work in partnership with iwi, hapū and whānau are being developed through Treaty settlements. For example, Te Urewera was granted legal personhood through Tūhoe's Treaty settlement – a first for New Zealand. DOC and Tūhoe are now working together to protect Te Urewera's intrinsic worth, and its distinctive natural and cultural values and heritage, for the benefit of all New Zealanders

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## Key data

# 72%

of freshwater fish

# 31%

of plants

# 34%

of invertebrates  
are threatened with, or at  
risk of, extinction

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# 4,000

species are threatened with,  
or at risk of, extinction

Source: Environmental indicators  
Te taiao Aotearoa

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## Biodiversity

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# Why act now?

- Pollinators, including bees and butterflies, provide significant environmental and economic benefits to agriculture and natural ecosystems, including adding diversity and productivity to food crops
- Our indigenous biodiversity is critical for other industries such as tourism
- Our natural landscapes and scenery are the leading reasons why visitors consider coming to Aotearoa New Zealand
- Despite heavy investment in targeted activities to protect and restore unique landscapes and species, we are not halting the decline in our biodiversity.
- Gaps in data mean in some areas we don't always know what we're losing or where we should be focussing our efforts to the best effect
- Today's challenges will be compounded by issues like climate change, and increasing competition for land and water use, so we need to think differently about how we respond
- We have a strong foundation of expertise and commitment to build from. We are one of the world's leaders in pest management and species revitalisation. New Zealanders are keen to play their part, we have a fantastic nationwide resource that we can tap into

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# Opportunities for collective action

- Government is increasing its focus on biodiversity with ambitious programmes like One Billion Trees and Predator Free 2050 - setting the scene for New Zealand to lead the world in protecting and restoring its biodiversity
- Central and local government policies are increasingly recognising the importance of biodiversity in reducing emissions, cleaning our waterways, and protecting our soils
- The biodiversity workstream agreed to a goal of every New Zealand business restoring nature by 2050. The key focus is identifying work required to mainstream ecological restoration as 'business as usual' sustainability practice
- This will include making conservation 'easy to see and easy to do' for the business community, while supporting the leadership efforts and exemplary businesses

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## Key data

# 71,000ha

Between 1996 and 2012 there was a net loss of 31,000 hectares of tussock grassland, 24,000 hectares of indigenous shrubland, and around 16,000 hectares of indigenous forests, through clearance, conversion, and development.

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# 2/3

Almost two-thirds of New Zealand's rare and 'naturally uncommon' ecosystems are threatened.

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Predation and plant-eating by pests, as well as disease and competition from weeds, continue to threaten indigenous biodiversity.

Source: Our land 2018

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These snapshots are designed to be living documents. They will be updated regularly to incorporate activities and insights that highlight progress towards the desired future state.

If you have feedback please email: [info@aotearoacircle.nz](mailto:info@aotearoacircle.nz)

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