



Annual Review – Year Three Arotake ā-Tau – Tau Toru

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023
MŌ TE TAU I MUTU AI I TE 30 PĪPIRI 2023



Mihi

E rere kau ana ngā mihi ki te motu whānui, tēnā koutou katoa.

Ki te kāhui mate e kore e kitea kanohitia ki runga i te mata o te whenua, tangihia ko rātou ki a rātou.

Hoki mai ki a tātou ngā mahuetanga iho a rātou mā, mauri ora ki a tātou.

Ka huri ngā whakaaro ki te tini ngerongero kua pā kino nei i ngā āhuatanga i puta i te huripari o Gabrielle.

Nā te huripari Gabrielle i miramira te hiranga o te tiaki taiao.

Kō tā mātou mahi, he hāpai i ngā kaupapa whakarauora i te taiao, he whakarato mahi ki ngā hapori me ngā rohe e matea nuitia ana.

Otirā, me mihi ka tika ki ngā ringa raupā e hāpai ana i ngā kaupapa maha a Mahi mō te Taiao.

E kite ana mātou i ngā painga kua hua i te taiao, i ngā hapori hoki.

Greetings to all.

We lament and pay respects to those who are no longer with us.

We acknowledge those whom they left behind and give thanks to us who remain

Our thoughts turn to the many people who have been impacted by Cyclone Gabrielle.

Cyclone Gabrielle highlighted the importance of environmental protection.

Our job is to support environmental restoration projects and provide jobs to the communities and regions that need it the most.

Finally, we give thanks to the many workers who support the various Jobs for Nature projects.

We are seeing the benefits in the communities and the environment.

Cover photo: Planting at Te Tapu o Tāne project on Mt Dewar, Queenstown. Credit: Department of Conservation





The Jobs for Nature Programme is a \$1.19 billion investment in nature-based work to support a greener recovery for Aotearoa New Zealand following the COVID-19 pandemic.

This report provides the background on achievements and progress to date, and recommendations for Year Four of the programme. It was prepared by the Jobs for Nature Secretariat, in consultation with the five agencies delivering the programme.

The Secretariat would like to thank agencies for their contributions over the past year. Each agency's work with its funding recipients and other stakeholders has helped build a cohesive, cross-agency programme.

Tū ake rā ki runga i te taumata
o Hine-tū-pari-maunga,

Ka huri te kanoahi mai i te tōpito
o te whenua, ki te ara a Tangaroa,

Ka kekeho atu nei ki te tahatū o te rangi,

Tēnei te whakamiha ki te taiao e taiāmio
nei i a tātou.

Maimoatia, matapoporetia,
Kia ora ai te taiao,
Kia ora ai te tangata,

Tērā te kōrero;
“Toitū te marae a Tāne,
Toitū te marae a Tangaroa,
Toitū te tangata.”

Standing at the summit of
Hine-tū-pari-maunga

Scanning from the edge of the land,
across the passageway of Tangaroa

Looking forth to the horizon

In awe of the environment that
surrounds us

Cherish it, care for it
So that the environment lives on
So that the people live on

There is a saying
If the land is well
And the sea is well
The people will thrive



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Photo left: Welcoming volunteers to the Coronet Peak community planting event hosted by Te Tapu o Tāne. Credit: Department of Conservation

THREE YEAR HIGHLIGHTS

2020 – 2023

Jobs for Nature programme highlights Ngā painga o te hōtaka Mahi mō te Taiao



8,193,492
hours worked

12,508

people
employed

501

approved
projects

465

contracted
projects



8,508,389

plants in
the ground



631,077

hectares of land under
plant pest control



1,954,324

hectares of wilding
conifers controlled



2,247,534

hectares of land under
animal pest control



4,400

hectares of
freshwater under
restoration



6,406

hectares of land under restoration
(excluding freshwater areas)



7,298

kilometres of fencing
constructed



THIS YEAR'S HIGHLIGHTS

2022/23

Jobs for Nature programme highlights Ngā painga o te hōtaka Mahi mō te Taiao



3,597,439
hours worked

3,490

people
employed

85

approved
projects

68

contracted
projects



3,485,680

plants in
the ground



165,319

hectares of land under
plant pest control



482,338

hectares of wilding
conifers controlled



811,835

hectares of land under
animal pest control



2,070

hectares of
freshwater under
restoration



3,578

hectares of land under restoration
(excluding freshwater areas)



1,308

kilometres of fencing
constructed



Milestone of
11,000
additional
employment
opportunities
reached

Tūhono Taiao -
national communities
of practice
website launched
for testing
with funding
recipients

First
independent
evaluation
reports
completed
and published

Programme
Transition
Strategy
endorsed and
published

89
projects
successfully
completed

Assessed
expected programme
benefits as over
\$2.147 billion
of economic,
environmental,
and wellbeing
benefits



Executive summary

Te whakarāpopoto matua

Jobs for Nature was initiated in 2020 as part of the Government's COVID-19 response to the forecasted economic downturn for Aotearoa New Zealand and is the largest nation-wide investment in the environment and its people.

The \$1.19 billion programme is administered across five government agencies: Department of Conservation, Ministry for the Environment, Ministry for Primary Industries, Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand (LINZ), and Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment (Kānoa – Regional Economic Development & Investment Unit).

Jobs for Nature has three core objectives:

1. Create approximately 11,000 employment opportunities 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.

The funding is being used to finance nature-based work, including planting vegetation to support land stabilisation and restore freshwater and biodiversity, fencing waterways, pest control (including wilding pines and animal pests), remediating fish passages, and skills training for career development. Funding recipients include community groups, councils, iwi and hapū, charitable trusts, and private companies.

The focus at the cross-agency level is to support and oversee overall programme delivery, including through monitoring; risk identification and management; social and economic evaluation; and reporting on the benefits and expected long-term outcomes of Jobs for Nature. The implementation of the Programme Transition Strategy will help ensure that benefits of Jobs for Nature investments last beyond the life of the funding. The Strategy also provides a framework for agencies to support projects in their individual transition.

Projects continue to experience the challenges of inflation and supply chain issues that hinder output delivery. Year 3 also brought severe weather that impacted projects across the country, with acute pressures in Tairāwhiti and Hawkes Bay. Despite these challenges, Jobs for Nature continues to make a difference for people and the environment as demonstrated through case studies, programme evaluation and benefits reporting.

CASE STUDY

Te Awarua-o-Porirua – Restoring the mauri of the Porirua Harbour

Te Awarua-o-Porirua is a collaborative project between Porirua City Council and Ngāti Toa that engages the community in restoring the streams around the harbour catchment, helping to restore the mauri of the streams and harbour. The project was awarded \$3 million funding over five years through the Essential Freshwater Fund and the Jobs for Nature Programme. It is part of the Council's wider Streamside Planting Programme 2021 – 2041. Porirua City Council won both the Air New Zealand Excellence Award for Environmental Wellbeing and the Fulton Hogan Local Excellence Award for the project at the Local Government NZ (LGNZ) Excellence Awards 2022.

“The focus of the project is about restoring the health of Porirua Harbour. At the moment, every single water quality indicator in this area is declining, mostly in the poor to very poor range, which....is not where we want to be.” explains Nigel Clarke the project manager, who also manages the wider Porirua Harbour, Catchments and Resource Recovery for the Council.

Over 20 years the goal is to plant more than 6 million plants on the banks of the 588 kilometres of streams that run into the harbour. The programme has a strong partnership focus, and the community will play a key role in its long-term success, by joining planting events or through streamside management on their own properties.

“For every catchment in Porirua, we worked out the priority areas to restore. Riparian management is a core tool to do this, so we've

been able to work out for every hundred metre stretch of stream, how much it's going to cost to restore, what plants need to go in, and how long we need to maintain the area to make sure the restoration is a success.”

“The Essential Freshwater funding has been a fantastic start for us, and Council has matched the funding made available, so for the next five years we are going to be working on as many streams as we can. Hopefully with the water quality monitoring we are doing, which includes citizen science-based approaches, we will be able to see directly the difference it's making.”

The project recently finished its second year and has seen over 100,000 plants in the ground across 9 hectares, 6 kilometres of fencing completed, and 36,000 people-hours worked. Animal pest control across 700 hectares and plant pest control across 230 hectares of land has also been completed.

“Community support and school involvement for the project has been hugely successful. Without working partnerships and community involvement, looking after our streams and harbour would simply not be possible.”



Kaimahi working together to restore native ecosystems in Porirua

Photo: Ministry for the Environment

From the Programme Director Nā te Ringatohu Hōtaka



As the programme director for the past three years, I have a deep sense of pride as we mark the third-year review of the Jobs for Nature programme. From its inception in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic's uncertainty, this programme has embodied our commitment to addressing pressing economic challenges while simultaneously restoring and preserving our environment for future generations. Reflecting on the remarkable progress achieved in the first three years, I'm truly in awe of the transformative impact this programme has had on our environment and the lives of the dedicated individual people who have been a part of it across New Zealand.

Over the last three years, Jobs for Nature has generated employment for over 12,000 people, offering a lifeline to those affected by the economic fallout of the pandemic. This programme has touched every corner of Aotearoa New Zealand, with workers engaged in restoring ecosystems and conserving our indigenous biodiversity from our northernmost tip to the southernmost reaches. The magnitude of this fund, totalling \$1.19 billion across 501 projects, reflects the largest and most comprehensive investment our country has undertaken to protect and preserve our environment.



The long-term vision of Jobs for Nature is exemplified by its focus on building a skilled workforce equipped to address the complex environmental challenges of the future. By investing in training and environmental management, we have sought to foster a workforce that will continue to deliver enduring environmental outcomes for years to come beyond the programme. As we confront the urgent need to address climate change, biodiversity loss, and sustainable resource management, this well-prepared workforce is an invaluable asset, ensuring our ability to meet these challenges head-on and secure a brighter, more sustainable future.

While we acknowledge the breadth of environmental outcomes and social impact, the Jobs for Nature programme has forged a legacy that extends beyond its five-year funding term. Our collaboration with iwi, hapū, community groups, local government, and the industry partners has nurtured a culture of environmental stewardship and intergenerational responsibility. The overwhelming demand shown in every funding round, underlines the need for sustained environmental investment.

The recent devastating floods that struck Auckland on February 27, and the severe weather impacts of Cyclone Gabrielle, have served as stark reminders of the increasingly frequent and intense challenges our environment is facing. In these trying times, the Jobs for Nature programme underscores the importance of investing in environmental initiatives that enhance resilience. The floods

and cyclone events highlight the added value of supporting projects that restore and protect our natural resources. Through these initiatives, we not only create jobs and stimulate economic growth, but also fortify our communities and ecosystems, enhancing their resilience against future environmental threats.

As we approach the final two years of the programme and its eventual transition, we find ourselves at a pivotal juncture. This programme provides an exceptional opportunity to reshape our nation's approach to environmental conservation and sustainable development. I am deeply heartened by the dedication and passion displayed by all involved, from the dedicated individuals working on projects, to the delivery agencies and partners. Your tireless efforts exemplify the spirit of cooperation and determination that defines New Zealand's commitment to environmental protection.

In conclusion, I want to extend my profound gratitude to all those who have contributed to the success of the Jobs for Nature programme. Together, we have laid the foundation for a more resilient and sustainable New Zealand. It is essential that we maintain this collective effort, building on the achievements of the past three years. Let us be driven and inspired by our shared responsibility as kaitiaki (guardians) of our precious environment.

Ilana Miller
Programme Director
Jobs for Nature Programme

CASE STUDY

Mauri Oho Ruahine Species Recovery

Based in the western Hawkes Bay region, the Mauri Oho project which is run by the Manaaki Ruahine Trust focuses on conservation efforts in the Ruahine forest park as well as multiple owned Māori Trust Lands. The vision of Mauri Oho is Hononga Taiao - Huinga Mauri Ora which translates to “By connection with nature all life is rejuvenated.” Their work protects whio, kiwi and other taonga species and their diverse range of tasks includes trapping, native planting, weed control, new fencing, cultural health monitoring, and hut maintenance.

The project employs 13 kaimahi from hapū distributed along the length of the Ruahine range who appreciate the opportunity to work on their whenua. The kaimahi were all unemployed before being brought on by the Trust, who used wananga style recruitment to bring people on board.



Mauri Oho’s team planted 7,000 plants during a week-long stay at a farm’s shearer quarters

Photo: Department of Conservation

Project Manager Arapera Paewai says there was a lot of talking about the goals of the trust, and visits to the hills to ensure potential workers were onboard with the tough work of walking up and down the Ruahine Range all day with traps on their back. This has resulted in low turnover in the team, and people who work really hard because they are onboard with the values and the goals of the project.

Arapera lists some of the benefits of the project on top of the environmental benefits - seeing people feeling better about themselves with physical outcomes, social outcomes, and economic outcomes, because people are earning more and spending more in the community. The work is also benefiting people psychologically - they are saying how great they feel every day. “They’re jumping out of bed every single morning to go to work, and no one is ever late or missing. It goes to show all the other outcomes that have been achieved here rather than just the environmental ones.”

The Trust was already operating trap lines in the Ruahine and had the vision of a more extensive network before the Jobs for Nature funding opportunity came up, “It seemed like perfect timing, we’re getting outcomes that would have taken 20 years to achieve, and I think that’s the reality around the country” says Arapera.

Despite facing significant challenges earlier this year when Cyclone Gabrielle hit the region in February, the Mauri Oho project has made impressive strides in recovering and getting back on track. The project kaimanaaki taiao assisted civil defence in emergency support and cleanup in the Waipawa community which was inundated after the cyclone. The team also spent several weeks assisting the seaside community of Pōrangahau. While the team has returned to their regular operations, they continue to grapple with ongoing impacts. They are currently engaged in the crucial task of replacing trap lines in the Ruahine forest park, after approximately 540 traps including whole trap lines were lost due to the devastating cyclone flooding.



Mauri Oho kaimahi out planting with local rangatahi

Photo: Department of Conservation



It seemed like perfect timing, we're getting outcomes that would have taken 20 years to achieve, and I think that's the reality around the country.

**Arapera Paewai
Mauri Oho
Project Manager**

Undeterred by setbacks, the Mauri Oho project has set ambitious targets, one of which is to plant 30,000 riparian trees over the course of three years. In May 2023, the project organised consecutive planting days at Lake Whatumā, which holds historical, spiritual, cultural and ecological significance to the Central Hawkes Bay area and local iwi. It was an opportunity to foster whanaungatanga by inviting other Jobs for Nature projects in the region and Department of Conservation staff to contribute to the planting effort. The aim was to plant 6,000 native trees and grasses, locally sourced from the Hawkes Bay, during the three-day planting event. The project received support from the Te Ngāhere Jobs and Ruahine Kiwi Jobs for Nature projects, as well as DOC Rangers from the Hawkes Bay and Manawatū offices.

The project has been working on how to be sustainable once Jobs for Nature funding comes to an end. They are planning to become a contracting group and apply for tenders. Arapera credits the Jobs for Nature funding with setting up the Trust to be in the position to be sustainable, as well as having strong links in the community “The relationship with the community and integrating as part of the community is really important to be able to get sustainable work into the future, I'm pretty confident that we'll be right.”

Reflections

Te whaiwhakaaro

\$485M

Department
of Conservation

\$444M

Ministry for
the Environment

\$188M

Ministry for
Primary Industries

\$41M

Ministry for Business,
Innovation and Employment

\$40M

Toitū Te Whenua Land
Information New Zealand

After three years, \$1.19 billion Jobs for Nature programme funding has been allocated to 501 projects across the country, leaving no further funding available for allocation from the programme¹.

The projects, which are operated by Māori and community groups, councils, and local businesses, continue to create jobs and deliver important environmental work for communities and New Zealand.

The majority of projects funded are now well established and delivering the work they set out to do. In addition to the delivery of environmental outcomes at scale, there is increasing evidence that Jobs for Nature funding is enabling a wide range of social benefits. With 86 projects completed and the majority of remaining projects scheduled to close in the next two years, the importance of maintaining the momentum and sustaining the benefits will only grow.

Success for our people | E angitū ai tātou katoa

“The idea of Jobs for Nature is really great because we’re doing something good for the environment, and at the same time, we’re providing employment for people who might be struggling to find work.” – Tom McGuire, team leader for the Mana in Kaimahi project

1. Cabinet directed in April 2023 that any unallocated Jobs for Nature funding from the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund was to be returned to the centre (CAB-23-MIN-0137.01). As a result, \$7.679 million in total were returned from Vote Environment, Vote Conservation, and Vote, Agriculture, Biosecurity, Fisheries and Food Safety portfolios in [Budget 2023](#).

Jobs for Nature is an investment in people, demonstrating that healthy ecosystems and thriving communities are interconnected. The benefits of supporting people to work in nature can already be seen through improved mental health and wellbeing. Besides providing employment opportunities throughout an economic crisis, projects often play a broader pastoral care role supporting people and communities.

“It’s the perfect way to combine the healing aspects of working in nature for our kids and our people who are coming out of prison. We give them wraparound care, get them budgeting, we build up their life skills, so they learn how to earn. And every Friday they come here and all do NZQA qualifications.”
Mana in Kaimahi

Training and qualifications are building the environmental capability and a wider range of work opportunities for people and organisations. The investment in capability development has not just created a skilled workforce, but also given people a trade set and confidence which will support them beyond the life of the programme. Further, Jobs for Nature has enhanced employment prospects by creating greater inclusivity for nature-based work. As more and more people transition to employment outside of funded projects, there is increasing evidence of career development, with some now even running their own businesses (e.g., fencing contractors)².

“Some of our kaimahi are impacted by the seasonal nature of employment, other kaimahi had never been given opportunities for employment” – Arapera Paewai, the Mauri Oho Project Manager and Manaaki Ruahine Trustee



Mauri Oho team taking a moment, while out deploying traps in the Ruahine Ranges

Photo: Department of Conservation

For iwi, hapū and other Māori communities, Jobs for Nature has been an opportunity to build or increase environmental capacity and capability. The programme supported iwi in exercising kaitiakitanga, particularly in regions such as Manawatū-Whanganui that have a high proportion of projects led by iwi and Māori. Where the funding provided opportunities to carry out restoration activities (including on land returned through Treaty settlements), it also opened a pathway for restoring and delivering effective Māori Crown partnerships.

Jobs for Nature kaimahi talk about a sense of pride in what they have achieved, greater connection and a deeper appreciation of nature, history and of the beauty of the place they worked in².

“Working with DOC and those that already knew us has enabled us to co-create this project to give the flexibility to be able to do what we wanted to do... To be trusted and left to do the work that is needed. This J4N is one of the first meaningful and authentic partnerships, with the funding to be able to do anything.” – Di Rump, CEO of the Muaūpoko Tribal Authority

2. [Jobs for Nature Evaluation Year One Report.](#)

Programme Milestones | Ngā tutukitnga o te Hōtaka

With the programme set to close in 2025/2026, and the majority of projects completing at various times before then, focus is shifting more towards ensuring the investment in people and nature leaves an enduring legacy. The Jobs for Nature Programme [Transition Strategy](#) was published in June 2023, providing a shared approach and objectives across delivery agencies for supporting people and projects into the future. The upcoming year will see further progress towards implementing the strategy, including direct and tailored support from agencies for their respective projects.

Considerable engagement and research have informed the development of a national communities of practice website called Tūhono Taiao ('Nature Connections'), which intends to enable stronger collaboration between projects and wider environmental stakeholders. Tūhono Taiao connects projects, supporting them to restore nature by sharing best practices, tools, data, knowledge, resources, expertise, and people. The past year has seen the launch of a minimal viable product to project partners for further testing, to ensure it supports their needs. Feedback has been positive, indicating the potential Tūhono Taiao could have for transforming the way environmental initiatives work together when protecting and restoring our precious natural world.

By assessing the programme against its core objectives, the programme evaluation framework is supporting the improvement of current and potential future investment programmes. Two programme evaluation^{3,4} reports were published finding the programme has been successful in providing employment opportunities where they were needed. This has resulted in a wide range of environmental improvements, and developing the capacity and capability of individuals and communities.

Impacts of severe weather events | Te pāpātanga o te huarere taikaha

While inflation and supply chain issues continue to challenge projects, the past year was marked by severe weather events that had an unavoidable impact on the delivery of programme outputs. Flooding in the Nelson/Tasman/Marlborough regions in 2022 was followed by heavy rainfall in Auckland in January 2023 and, shortly after, Cyclone Gabrielle and its devastating destruction across landscapes and communities in February.

Severe weather impacted projects in Northland, Auckland, Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Tairāwhiti, Hawke's Bay, Tararua, and Marlborough. The latest information from agencies shows that 69 projects experienced some adverse impacts in 2022/23 (DOC: 28; MFE: 30; MPI: 10; Kānoa: 1; LINZ: 0). We would like to acknowledge all Jobs for Nature projects that have been affected by these weather events, and especially the kaimahi and their whānau, families and communities who had to overcome extreme adversity.

3. [Jobs for Nature Evaluation Year One Report.](#)

4. [Jobs for Nature Interim Evaluation Report.](#)

Affected projects, particularly in Hawke's Bay and Tairāwhiti, needed to be delayed or halted due to road closures, limited site access, health and safety risks, and prioritising emergency response and community clean up. A loss or damage of outputs such as riparian planting, pest control, tracks, and fencing was seen across multiple projects in the affected regions. These impacts also extended into the nursery sector, limiting the local supply of seedlings in the aftermaths. With the added burden of having to assess damage, re-establish site access, and regroup communities, many projects would have been unable to meet their original targets.

The extent of the impacts varied between projects, and Jobs for Nature agencies responded and supported on a case-by-case basis. In the first instance, this consisted of providing space and flexibility for projects to prioritise the needs of their kaimahi and communities. To support agency engagement with Jobs for Nature projects during and immediately after the event, the Secretariat provided consistent central government messaging – with the most important message being to ensure staff wellbeing.

To raise further awareness, the Secretariat also shared resources and wider support that came available over time through Civil Defence, Ministry of Social Development, and other grant funding. In some cases, Jobs for Nature project staff were able to support community clean-up efforts and civil defence responses.



Clean up effort in Hawke's Bay following Cyclone Gabrielle

Photo: Department of Conservation

Since then, agencies have been actively working with funding recipients to understand options for project recovery including rephrasing, reprioritising and adjusting contracted outputs. For several projects this process is still ongoing, as damage continues to be assessed.

Thinking beyond the immediate recovery efforts, these events also highlight the importance of the work Jobs for Nature projects undertake in protecting and restoring our native ecosystems. Planting, fencing and other catchment activities can help to reduce erosion and runoff, stabilise land and contribute to mitigating the potential impact of climate-related extreme weather events in the future.

The [Ministerial Inquiry into Land Use in Tairāwhiti and Wairoa](#) also spotlighted that Jobs for Nature projects such as the Raukūmara Pae Maunga project provide labour, management, and governance capabilities required to transform vulnerable land for future resilience. The Inquiry notes that funding is limited but recommended continuing and expanding the Jobs for Nature programme in the region to match the size of the challenge faced.

Programme governance

Mana urungi hōtaka

Due to the significance of the overall investment a governance structure exists to share the oversight of the Jobs for Nature programme and its delivery.

Sustainable Land Use Ministers | Ngā Minita Toitū Te Whenua

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

For projects with a total value of over \$1 million, SLU Ministers share approval and decision-making responsibilities. Approval for projects under that threshold is delegated to the delivery agencies. Most previously established programmes that were expanded with Jobs for Nature funding retained their existing governance, prioritisation, and funding approval processes.

Advisory Group (disestablished) | Rōpū Tohutohu (kua whakakorehia)

With the programme now moving past its mid-point, and the funding fully allocated, the Advisory Group function has been dissolved. The role of the Advisory Group (previously the Reference Group) was to provide the SLU Ministers and delivery agencies with independent advice on the programme. The members of the Group had experience in

environmental management, Te Ao Māori, regional council, the primary sector and non-government organisations. The Advisory Group provided valuable external perspectives into the decision making for the programme.

SLU Ministers did not extend the Advisory Group following a scheduled review at the end of its second term, and the group provided its final advice on the programme to Ministers in February 2023.

The Group's insights and feedback continue to inform ongoing work, such as the programme evaluation workstream, and long-term strategy and planning for potential future environmental investment. The Jobs for Nature agencies would like to thank all members of the Advisory and Reference Groups for their contributions, which ensured the decision making for the programme was closely connected to those actively delivering environmental work.

Secretariat | Te Tari

A standalone, independent Secretariat, based at the Ministry for the Environment, coordinates the programme across agencies. It supports SLU Ministers, agency governance groups and previously, the Advisory Group, in monitoring and decision-making, providing programme level briefings, data and dashboards, and insights.

The Secretariat also facilitates and advises interagency collaboration in areas such as the Interagency Risk Assessment Committee, Transition Strategy, and programme reporting. It leads the programme evaluation workstream, engaging with agencies and independent evaluators to assess the effectiveness and impact of the Jobs for Nature investment.



For the Transition Strategy, the Secretariat is responsible for overseeing implementation across agencies, leading the start-up development of the national communities of practice website Tūhono Taiao, maintaining connections with external organisations and strategies to understand opportunities, sharing relevant information across agencies and wider sectors, and considering overall transition plans as part of the Programme evaluation.

Interagency Risk Assessment Committee | Kōmiti Mātai Tūraru Ā-Umanga

The Jobs for Nature Interagency Risk Committee facilitates collaboration between agency risk management advisors and operational or project leads, to identify and manage the highest risks to the Jobs for Nature programme.

The committee provides insights, understanding, and recommended management options that enhance the success and sustainability of the \$1.19 billion programme.

Collaboration and preparation in managing risks is especially important given the high level of interest and scrutiny that large-scale funding programmes attract. Effective risk management has been crucial to help maintain the performance of the programme.

Delivery Agencies | Ngā umanga kōkiri

The Jobs for Nature programme is made up of different funding streams from various appropriations across five different delivery agencies. It is the responsibility of each agency and their respective appropriation Minister to ensure funded work is progressing to an acceptable standard. Each agency has its own systems and processes to ensure projects achieve their outcomes. Delivery agencies report to the Secretariat for quarterly programme-level progress reporting.

Agencies also have a central role in implementing the Transition Strategy, their responsibilities include:

- Engage directly with their individual project delivery partners to understand needs, opportunities and provide tailored support
- Explore external resourcing opportunities
- Participate in development of Tūhono Taiao and enable projects to do so
- Build on partnerships emerged or matured through Jobs for Nature
- Report to the Secretariat about progress on implementing the Strategy
- Coordinate with each other where appropriate, for example when projects are receiving Jobs for Nature funding from more than one agency.

Programme performance

Tutukinga o te hōtaka



Employment

Creation of additional employment opportunities for 11,000 to 13,000 people, at pace and 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.

Context | Horopaki

At the end of Year Three, \$1.19 billion Jobs for Nature funding was approved to 501 projects across the country. Projects are tracking well, with most in the delivery phase and 86 already completed. A small number of projects are still working through contracting details.

Progress on recommendations | Te ahunga whakamua o ngā tūtohunga

The Jobs for Nature Secretariat has worked with agencies to address the recommendations in the Annual Review – Year Two, to better support the work ahead. Below are details of the progress on these recommendations:

Adjusting full-time equivalent (FTE) goals to help projects achieve long-term objectives

In light of a stronger than expected labour market, SLU Ministers agreed that the programme should shift emphasis from short-term job creation to enduring environmental outcomes and building capacity and capability to meet future environmental needs. When the decision was made in 2021, \$240 million of Ministry for the Environment and \$89 million of Department of Conservation administered funding was awaiting approval for specific projects, representing about 27 per cent of total programme funding.

Following consideration by the Deputy-Prime Minister in response to the Programme review by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's Implementation Unit, in early 2022 SLU Ministers also agreed that agencies could adjust FTE targets for specific projects already approved or contracted. This was also to enable greater long-term benefits or to respond

to changes in their operating environments including, for example, significant cost inflation or the impact of severe weather events.

In response to the above Ministerial direction, the Ministry for the Environment redesigned investment criteria for several of its funds within the Job for Nature programme to focus on long-term capability building and made decisions not to fund projects geared towards short-term employment. DOC shifted emphasis within the same investment criteria to give greater weight to projects with skills and training components in areas with high social need. While this may result in fewer jobs relative to the original programme design, this shift allowed recruitment for roles better suited to developing career pathways, such as land management advisors and planners. These have the potential to better address long-term needs within the environmental sector, providing sustainability of employment can be secured.

For projects already contracted or in the process of doing so at the time, agencies have since considered reviews of targets set on a case-by-case basis. This flexible approach proved valuable in response to rapidly changing needs following extreme weather events. However, the independent [Evaluation Year One Report](#) from Allen + Clarke found the different contracting arrangements applied by agencies resulted in variable levels of flexibility across the programme.

Continue to strengthen delivery through evaluation, benefits, and delivery confidence reporting

The Secretariat designed an approach to programme evaluation which includes a internal evaluation, independent evaluation, Te Aō Māori evaluation, as well as economic and social impact assessments. These outputs are being delivered over the remaining programme years, strengthening delivery by identifying opportunities for improvement and providing insights into the value of the Jobs for Nature investment.

To improve measurement of programme benefits, the Secretariat put in place an approach that includes a greater focus for reporting on the wider programme economic and social benefits. This complements the completed work to measure environmental benefits, forming a better picture of key opportunities enabled through the programme.

A cross agency benefits forum has been set up and meets regularly, discussing common benefits emerging across the programme and how to measure and demonstrate them consistently. The group, coordinated by the Secretariat, also work together to address the challenges in measuring social and environmental benefits that are often realised after work is completed.

The method of reporting on delivery confidence has been updated in Year Three to improve visibility and joint agency management of issues. Now, financial data and project numbers are included alongside confidence ratings, providing a more comprehensive view of the risks. Additionally, individual project ratings are monitored to identify trends.

Greater cross-agency collaboration

The Secretariat continues to drive and amplify cooperation across natural resource management agencies, through facilitation of cross-agency forums such as monthly Deputy Chief Executive (DCE) meetings and the Interagency Risk Assessment Committee. In addition, the Secretariat has led cross-agency workshops and collaboration initiatives to inform the Programme [Transition Strategy](#), Communities of Practice and the development of Tūhono Taiao, and the Benefits Forum. Jobs for Nature has provided a good mechanism for collaboration and cohesion on shared topics of interest related to environmental restoration, as agencies are connected through the programme and leveraging off the combined strength and resources.

Improving the experience for funding recipients

By Year Three, systems for reporting and monitoring had largely been established and understood by funding recipients. To ensure the administrative burden on projects remains manageable, the Secretariat has not introduced any additional metrics for recipients to regularly report.

It is also important that responsibilities and resources for transition are well understood as projects are finishing. This is outlined and addressed through implementation of the Programme Transition Strategy.

The national communities of practice website Tūhono Taiao has been developed in partnership with funding recipients, delivery agencies, and industry representatives. The Secretariat has incorporated comprehensive user testing and feedback to ensure the website fits requirements of funding recipients and is easy to use.

Lessons for future programmes

Challenges and lessons from the implementation of the programme are being captured from Advisory Group feedback and across the Evaluation workstream. These reports provide agencies and Ministers with insights on the current investment and recommendations for potential future environmental programmes.

Progress on 2020/21 recommendations | Te ahunga whakamua o ngā tūtohunga 2020/2021

The Annual Review – Year One also provided recommendations to support programme outcomes. An update is provided on the following recommendations for which work was progressed:

Develop a transition strategy

The Programme Transition Strategy was published in June 2023, providing a shared approach and objectives for transition while enabling work and planning already occurring to be shared and applied more widely.

The past year has seen initial implementation of the strategy by delivery agencies, including scoping of transition requirements across their managed projects. To achieve the purpose and objectives of the strategy in supporting long-term programme outcomes, ongoing direct transition support from agencies for projects is required. Direct support may be financial and non-financial in the context of time limited Jobs for Nature funding.

Pilot and co-design with partners a 'community of practice'

The Transition Strategy also includes a national communities of practice website to enable funding recipients to connect and link with other projects and organisations to support transition and environmental work. The website, Tūhono Taiao is being developed in collaboration with fund recipients and has undergone user testing. Through Tūhono Taiao, Jobs for Nature funding recipients will soon have access to a tool to share and search for advice, tools, data, knowledge, resources, expertise and people. It is not intended to replace face-to-face collaboration, but aims to support and enhance existing regional communities of practice and enable additional collaboration and knowledge-sharing.

Programme reporting

Ngā pūrongo mō te hōtaka

Regular monitoring and reporting help ensure the Jobs for Nature programme is meeting its objectives. Each quarter, the five programme delivery agencies gather information from funding recipients on each of the funded projects and report to the Secretariat. Subsequently, the Secretariat amalgamates all agency data to create a picture of the programme's progress.

The information gathered from this regular reporting informs agencies, the public, and other stakeholders of programme progress. This provides assurance the funding is being used for its intended purpose and delivering value.

Where agencies received funding for existing workstreams, the administration of funding has been incorporated into existing budgets. For some agencies, administration costs have been allocated from the programme budget to set up new workstreams. For accuracy these separately allocated administration costs have been tracked to give the best overview of project spending. However, these are not recorded as active “projects” as no metrics, other than financial, are recorded against the overheads.

The specific metrics captured through reporting have been selected to provide consistent environmental and employment measures across the programme and an accurate picture of progress and performance.

The standalone [Jobs for Nature](#) website hosts information and stories about the impact of Jobs for Nature on funding recipients. It is updated quarterly with programme-level data. Projects that have received Jobs for Nature funding are visible on an interactive map of New Zealand. This shows the project name, location, funding amount, agency and forecast end date. Projects can also be filtered by location, funding agency, and environmental objective.

Reporting themes | Ngā kaupapa pūrongo

One delivery agency was unable to submit data to the Secretariat at the start of Year Three, continuing a theme from the previous year of largely manual processes within agencies causing inconsistent reporting. Since then, several changes have been implemented to improve quality checks at the agency level and streamline the process at the programme level.

Some other themes from Year Two continued to have varying effects on the programme in Year Three. While environmental projects are always dependent on weather and seasonality, the impacts from significant weather events have emerged as a more prevalent issue affecting several regions around the country. The following themes have affected the programme in Year Three:

- **Weather events** – Multiple regions in the northern South Island and Auckland were hit by significant rainfall in August 2022 and January 2023, respectively. Following this, the Cyclones Hale and Gabrielle hit several regions across the North Island in early 2023, causing devastation in regions such as Northland, Coromandel, Hawke’s Bay and Tairāwhiti. Based on information to date, 18 projects from the Department of Conservation (12), the Ministry for the Environment (5), and the Ministry for Primary Industries’ Te Uru Rākau fund (1) were impacted significantly by Cyclone Gabrielle. The biggest variation within the reported environmental outputs is for “number of plants planted in riparian or lake or wetland areas”. However, reporting still shows a positive net increase in all environmental outputs across the affected projects. So far, only one project is unable to continue as intended.
- **Strong delivery** – With 465 contracted projects at the end of Year Three the programme is well into delivery. Where projects provided planned and actual reporting metrics, eight of the twelve metrics are tracking proportionally against their lifetime targets, with over 60% completed to date. Only the ‘number of fish passages remediated’ and the ‘number of plants planted in freshwater areas’ and ‘number of plants planted in terrestrial areas’ are tracking below 50% of their lifetime targets (noting project delivery is ongoing)⁵.

5. Based on projects who report planned (lifetime) and actual output data.

- **Labour market dynamics** – Projects continue to report staff recruitment as a significant issue affecting timely project delivery. Previously attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic, the labour market remained tight throughout 2022/2023. Recruitment challenges have been particularly noted for projects in remote rural projects. This has often resulted in projects varying their full time equivalent (FTE) targets or project completion date to accommodate for delayed recruiting, staff changes, or staff shortages.
- **Inflation** – Certain projects reported planned deliverables were reduced or postponed due to increasing costs of specific materials and tools. New Zealand’s consumer price index (CPI) remained high at 6.0 percent for the June 2023 quarter⁶. However, rising costs do not translate into a theme across all funding recipients. It is unclear whether this is because impacts have been absorbed into Year Three plans in previous project variations. Prices paid by producers⁷ (PPI)⁸ were up 1.1 percent on average, with varying effects to project costs. For example, wood and timber were down 9.6%, and petrol and diesel were down 15.5% and 24.8%, respectively.⁹
- **Social impact** – The programme reporting framework has increasingly apparent gaps for collecting non-environmental data. While it captures high-level data on formal training and employment, the changing economic context has increased the desire across agencies for measuring how the programme has benefitted the population. In the absence of appropriate qualitative and quantitative social reporting, this will instead be achieved through the benefits and evaluation workstream currently underway.

6. [StatsNZ – Annual inflation at 6.0 percent.](#)

7. PPI output indexes measure changes in the prices received by businesses for the goods and services they produce.

8. [StatsNZ – Business price indexes: June 2023 quarter.](#)

9. The government temporarily reduced fuel excise duty by 25 cents a litre in March 2022 which had a noticeable effect on the overall price. This reduction was in place over the whole year and ended on 30 June 2023.

Delivery confidence reporting | Pūrongo mō tematatau ki te kōkiri

Agencies have reported on delivery confidence for the second year since its inclusion as part of regular reporting. This reporting uses aggregated information from individual projects funded for \$1 million and over, to show how well the programme remains on track.

194 projects or 39% of the total report delivery confidence. These projects account for 73% of the programme's funding or \$880.4 million, providing a good indication of whether the overall programme is tracking towards successful delivery.

Delivery confidence reporting involves agencies selecting a red/amber/green (RAG) rating for a project, based on five criteria: time, cost, outputs, skills and capability, and dependencies. Agencies also comment on the reasons for a project's rating and what, if anything, they are doing to manage it. The Secretariat also produces a data-based rating for environmental outputs and hours worked. This tracks progress for those projects (in terms of planned versus achieved outcomes).

As part of the quarterly dashboard, Ministers receive a rating to show how the programme is tracking, the main issues, and how these are being managed. Delivery confidence reporting is also reviewed each quarter by the Interagency Risk Assessment Committee. The Committee also considers the remaining time for a project, and the financial risk it poses. The Committee ensures any risks are monitored, and there is further investigation if needed.

At the end of Year three, the overall programme delivery confidence has gone down slightly from the previous year, from Green to Amber-Green, as the number of projects has increased and more projects shifted to lower ratings. A number of projects in cyclone affected regions had their delivery confidence reduced as they addressed challenges and uncertainty from not being able to access project sites, reassignment of staff to civil defence and community work, and damage to project sites and equipment. In the aftermath of the cyclone, ongoing issues like landslides and road closures continue to impact some projects and they are being closely supported by agencies.

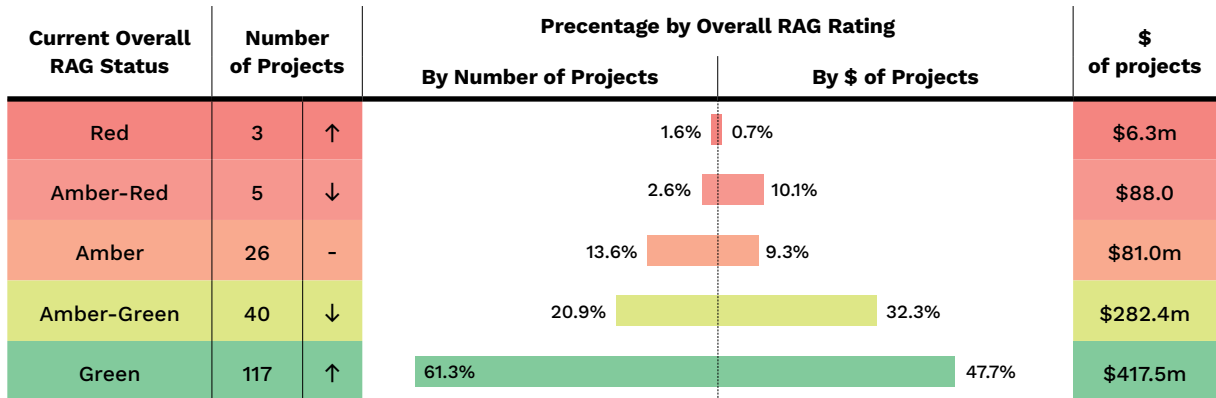
Consistent themes reported across projects with amber-red or red rating include:

- Weather events such as flooding delaying planting activities are making it difficult for some projects to meet their targets.
- Skills and capability shortages contributing to recruitment delays in a tight labour market.
- Time needed to build relationships with a range of project partners has impacted project planning and traction in some areas.
- Ongoing supply chain disruptions.

All agencies have processes to manage delivery risks and issues. For example, contracts between projects and agencies can be varied to manage delivery expectations and account for unforeseen circumstances, such as severe weather, supply chain issues, access to staff to undertake work, and the impacts of inflation.

1.6 per cent of projects are rated red. These are being actively managed by the respective agencies. Depending on the scale of the project and risk to the programme, agencies take an active role and can require audits or defer payments if necessary. In general, agencies work closely with recipients to ensure the success of each project, and timely management of issues.

Figure 1: Year three programme delivery confidence and overall RAG rating



Programme evaluation

Arotake hōtaka

The Secretariat and agencies have a broad programme of work designed to assess the success of the Jobs for Nature programme. The two main reports received this year are the [Interim Evaluation](#) which looked at the programme processes and their effects, and the [Year One Report](#) from the independent external evaluation, which looked at how the programme was working on the ground.

Interim evaluation | Arotake taupua

The Interim Evaluation examined the programme to identify areas of improvement and gather learnings to inform future programmes. Overall, Jobs for Nature investments are found to have been successful in providing employment opportunities in line with programme objectives, resulting in environmental improvements across a wide range of areas, from protecting biodiversity to improving water quality. Other reported benefits include the development of capacity and capability of individuals, iwi, hapū and marae, and communities, building on environment-led opportunities in both rural and urban areas.

Coordination across the programme had some difficulties, as individual agencies are responsible for managing their respective funds (subject to ministerial approval) and implementation processes. While this allowed a degree of innovation, it also resulted in some missed opportunities. The application, contracting and reporting processes for organisations on the ground were costly and complicated, particularly where contestable funding or funding from multiple agencies were involved. In some cases, this also led to issues when contracts needed to be amended due to external factors such as COVID-19 outbreaks and restrictions, supply chain and pricing issues, and adverse weather.

Jobs for Nature was established in the wake of COVID-19, and there was urgency at the start of the programme to support people in industries impacted most by the pandemic. The evaluation identified tension between the need for rapid investment in the short term and requirements for developing long-term enduring relationships, and between fixed-term funding and the necessity of long-term environmental protection and improvement. Recipients with existing working relationships were able to move quickly while other projects built trust and new relationships over time as the imperative to move at pace decreased.

Independent evaluation | Arotake motuhake

The Secretariat commissioned Allen + Clarke to undertake an independent review of Jobs for Nature over three years, culminating in the delivery of a final report on the outcomes of the programme in 2025. The Year One Report of the review includes a qualitative assessment of how the programme is being implemented on the ground, which involved talking to projects in three [case study](#) regions, as well as to staff in the delivery agencies.

The independent evaluation found examples of important outcomes for individuals, iwi and communities. Projects have created new employment opportunities at all levels, from leadership and supervision to on-the-ground roles in fencing and pest management. Many of the projects embedded a social wellbeing approach to job creation by targeting historically marginalised groups, providing pastoral care for their employees and encouraging staff to complete formal qualifications. However, in remote areas recruiting proved to be more challenging for projects.

While the independent evaluation found it to be too soon to see conclusive environmental outcomes resulting from the programme, there is anecdotal evidence from projects about more birds, bats and native plants, among other environmental improvements.

Despite attempts to establish cross-agency processes, the independent evaluation found that projects considered there to be inconsistencies between agencies in reporting and administration requirements, and in the approaches to contract management and negotiating amendments. This finding is also reflected in the Interim Evaluation.

The need for collaboration is a recurrent theme throughout the independent evaluation report, with projects most successful where existing partnerships were already in place. The evaluators from Allen + Clarke found other regions had to build relationships first, which affected their ability to deliver at pace.

It is too early for the independent evaluation to provide firm findings on the extent to which benefits can be sustained beyond the programme. However, the evaluators found evidence of people employed through Jobs for Nature moving on to employment outside the projects. In some cases, this evidence included people shifting to run their own businesses, for example as fencing and spraying contractors. Certainty of sustainability was found to be less clear for physical infrastructure and biodiversity outcomes as they will require a degree of ongoing maintenance.

Te Ao Māori evaluation | Arotake Te Ao Māori

As part of the independent evaluation, Allen + Clarke will also provide an assessment from a Te Ao Māori perspective. This report, which is expected in 2025, will focus on programme outcomes for Māori. To design a framework for the assessment, evaluators from Allen + Clarke held a wananga with a group of iwi-led Jobs for Nature projects.

Economic impacts assessment | Aromatawai pāpātanga ohaoha

To help understand the economic benefits of the programme investment, the Secretariat commissioned an independent economic feasibility assessment from MartinJenkins Ltd.

The assessment finds that Jobs for Nature is providing significant economic and financial benefits by creating jobs, investing in environmental projects, and contributing positively to regional productivity. The programme has also supported regional development and helped address environmental challenges, such as freshwater ecosystems, biodiversity, and climate change.

As of 30 June 2023, the programme has resulted in 12,508 employment starts and \$637.9 million provided to 501 projects across Aotearoa: The total investment is anticipated to provide the following expected benefits:

- The Jobs for Nature programme is expected to deliver \$2.147 billion of benefits over 30 years through its investment.
- It has a calculated benefit-to-cost ratio of 2.46. This indicates that for every dollar spent on the programme, it is expected to generate \$2.46 in economic, environmental and well-being benefits.
- The programme directly spent \$786.308 million in the regions, and is estimated to create \$994.5 million in economic benefit, with a benefit-to-cost ratio of 1.20 overall.

The payback period for the investments is comparatively long at 7 years, due to the long-term achievement profile of environmental outcomes and impacts. This highlights the importance of long-term planning and commitment when investing in projects aimed at addressing environmental challenges.

To improve reporting on the expected benefits of the programme the report outlines recommendations that aim to improve data quality and collection, and support better reporting on environmental and economic outcomes. These focus on:

- Understanding and collecting ongoing costs to determine the level of investment needed to maintain the programme's benefits.
- Collect baseline data on place. This includes data on land use, soil quality, biodiversity, and ecosystem health.
- Collect additional demographic information, such as the nature of employment and training provided, as well as demographic data, such as age, gender, ethnicity, and educational background.
- Collect more evidence on the impact of restoration activities on Māori cultural values.

Social impacts assessment | Aromatawai pāpātanga pāpori

We are aware that many Jobs for Nature projects have realised social benefits that are not currently captured within regular reporting or the forementioned evaluation outputs. To see whether we can capture the social value (not just monetary) of the funded work, the Secretariat is working with ImpactLab on a social impact analysis. In the first instance, this has involved working with a small sample of projects to scope and create a framework for measuring and reporting these impacts.

CASE STUDY

Te Manahuna Aoraki project

Sam Shaw was a glacier guide when Covid closed our borders to visitors. Thanks to LINZ's investment in the local Te Manahuna Aoraki project he now has his own weed control company, Sam's Outside Works Ltd, and manages his passion for outdoor work according to the season.

Walking in big circles spraying weeds carrying a heavy backpack in full safety gear in the heat of the day on a vast, monotonous river plain is not a job many people would choose.

But for Sam and partner Olivia Taylen it's a job that pulled them out of the Covid unemployment blues and set them on a path of self-employment.

And it's not just any river valley.

The MacKenzie Basin where the pair set up a spray contracting business in 2021 is one of the most outstanding landscapes in the country and home to a vast array of rare river and alpine birds, skinks, native fish and more.

It's the location of Te Manahuna Aoraki project, a large-scale collaborative project where mana whenua, high country landowners, government departments, philanthropists, and the community are working collaboratively towards a shared vision to care for this special environment.

The project area spans 310,000ha within the upper Mackenzie Basin and Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park. It includes mountain ranges, Lake Pukaki, Lake Takapo and the extensive braided river systems that feed them.

Sam was working as a glacier guide at Aoraki/Mount Cook when Covid hit and the bottom dropped out of tourism bookings. He spent the following year finding temporary work in the area and as far north as Kaikōura.

Then a friend in Twizel offered to sell him some gear from his spray business. This, and the promise of ongoing work through



Sam Shaw says he never expected to own his own business and is “pretty pleased” to have been able to achieve this.

*Photo courtesy:
Sam's Outside Works Ltd*

Te Manahuna Aoraki project and the Department of Conservation, saw the couple take the plunge into self-employment.

Sam says the business started with the bare minimum. They kept it simple but got to the point where they could start growing – buying bits and pieces once money started flowing in.

He says while it's hard work, it's satisfying to remove weeds and return the area to a more pristine natural state:

“Conservation and outdoors have always been a big in my life and working in the mountains – especially the glaciers – we can see the effects of climate change. So working on restoring the environment is motivating.”

Sam says being outdoors as well as being his own boss added to the attraction.

“Working for myself and the challenges of learning how to run my own business choosing when I can and can't work, that's what draws me to it.”

In late 2020 LINZ provided funding of up to \$12 million over four years from its biodiversity and biosecurity programme to Te Manahuna Aoraki project.

Since then, the cumulative area controlled for weeds to 30 June 2023 is 74,193 hectares. Plant species targeted are mature rowan, flowering cherry, gorse, willow, Scotch broom, wild lupins and cotoneaster.

CASE STUDY

Tipu Mātoro National Wallaby Eradication Programme

Creating partnerships through a shared vision to protect our native biodiversity.

The Tipu Mātoro National Wallaby Eradication Programme recognises that no one entity or organisation can tackle the wallaby problem alone.

An example of this collaboration in action is a partnership with iwi at the foot of Ngongotahā Maunga. It has significant cultural importance to iwi and hapū located on the western side of Lake Rotorua and is steeped in history.

The contract at Ngongotahā involves a local iwi contractor working with the Toi Moana Bay of Plenty Regional Council to carry out ground control of wallabies.

They are installing a new bait station network to cover the whole maunga, as well as cutting tracks for access. They also do night shooting of wallabies where the terrain and vegetation allows.

“It is crucial to control this wallaby population at Ngongotahā, before they can spread further west, towards the Kaimai-Mamaku ranges,” said Biosecurity New Zealand’s director of readiness and response John Walsh.

“It’s also important we live the treaty partnership and involve iwi in practical operations on the ground.”

Charles Te Kowhai is the team leader of the crew doing the mahi and is affiliated to Ngāti Whakaue.

His team is also working on a larger Jobs for Nature funded project, Kaimai Kaponga, which focuses on holistic pest control over a large area in the Kaimai-Mamaku ranges.



**Charles instructing kaimahi
in GPS navigational bushcraft**

Photo: Ministry for Primary Industries

Ngāti Tura Ngāti Te Ngakau, a local iwi at Ngongotahā, is the contract organisation responsible for the project management that led to this outcome.

For Charles, it feels very special for his iwi to be involved at this level as it allows iwi to reconnect to the land, which to him is an expression of mana whenua.

“You can’t exercise mana if you’re not on the land,” said Charles Te Kowhai.

Charles is a hunter but working on the wallaby eradication project has changed the way he looks at the world.

“My eyes have been widened. I see that our food house is in trouble, and lots of work needs to be done to restore that,” Charles said.

“I used to think the Department of Conservation (DOC) was the only one that had the mana to look after the maunga, so why should I get involved?”

“It’s a first for many of us to be actively helping on the maunga. Our connection is now strong, and we have an avenue to be involved long-term.”

Charles reflects that his team now really embraces the kaupapa of restoration and that animal pest control is an important part of conservation. “They love hunting and tramping but getting on top of these pests, plant and animal, and supporting rejuvenation is also important. It’s not a one or the other. Hunters can be great conservationists too!” Charles said.

Programme progress

Te ahunga whakamua o te hōtaka

This section presents data submitted to the Secretariat as part of regular quarterly reporting, providing a snapshot of Jobs for Nature progress after Year Three. Amalgamated data from all agencies is presented first, providing an overall programme insight. Reporting data from each individual delivery agency is provided in the relevant agency sections to allow comparison against the mean.

In June 2021, \$26.6 million from the Jobs for Nature programme was reprioritised to the roll-out of cameras on fishing vessels. In March 2023, Cabinet approved the re-prioritisation of \$11.55 million from the Environment Jobs for Nature funding to the Environmental Monitoring and Reporting System initiative. A further combined \$7.679¹⁰ of Jobs for Nature funding from the Environment, Agriculture and Conservation portfolios, not allocated to projects, was returned to the centre through the [Budget 2023](#) process. As a result, the total allocation for the Jobs for Nature programme reduced from \$1.245 billion at inception to \$1.198 billion.

Financial metrics | Ngahuru ahumoni

Quarterly financial reporting provides metrics such as contracting levels or funding paid. Contracted funding amounts are reported for the life of the programme, while funding paid is up to the end of the financial year. The headline metrics are:

Approved funding (\$ billion)	Contracted funding (\$ billion)	Funding paid (\$ million)	Approved projects	Contracted projects
1.195	1.117	637.9	501	465

At the end of Year Three, \$1.117 billion of the funding has been contracted to 465 projects. The remaining funding sits allocated to projects with the Ministry for the Environment's Essential Freshwater Fund and the Ministry for Primary Industries' Agriculture and Investment Services Fund. Programme funding has shifted to later years in conjunction with project end dates which have been delayed due to factors such as recruiting, COVID-19-related disruptions to staffing and supply, and severe weather. At the end of June 2023, 53 per cent of the total funding had been paid to approved projects.

10. \$7.679 million was returned to the centre through the initiative, and an additional \$850,000 from Vote Environment was reprioritised to the Secretariat to wind down the programme in 2025/26. [Cabinet paper and minutes: Jobs for Nature progress update](#).

Measuring employment | Aromatawai taimahi

In 2020, the Employment, Education and Training (EET) Secretariat worked with the Jobs for Nature Secretariat and other accountable agencies to develop and apply a broadly consistent set of quantitative measures. These are now used to measure employment outputs. Individually, each measure would present its own challenges for reporting and interpretation. However, when reported together, they provide an appropriate illustration of overall job creation.

The table below sets out the measures agencies are required to report on.

Measure	Scope	Type of measure
Employment starts	Number of job contracts created for funded projects in the year. Covers all employment types: full time, part time, fixed term and contractors. Many jobs are short term or seasonal.	Cumulative stock
People currently employed	Number employed in projects at the end of each reporting period. This is anticipated to fluctuate over the life of the programme.	Changing flow
Hours worked	Total number of hours worked across all projects.	Cumulative stock

It has been previously noted that standardised reporting at inception would have supported the programme. While this was not possible due to the time urgency several funds were stood up under, standardised employment metrics have since implementation proven to be a huge benefit of cross agency collaboration. Because of standardisation, programme reporting for Jobs for Nature is now significantly less complicated, and employment outputs can be compared with reporting for wider government initiatives.

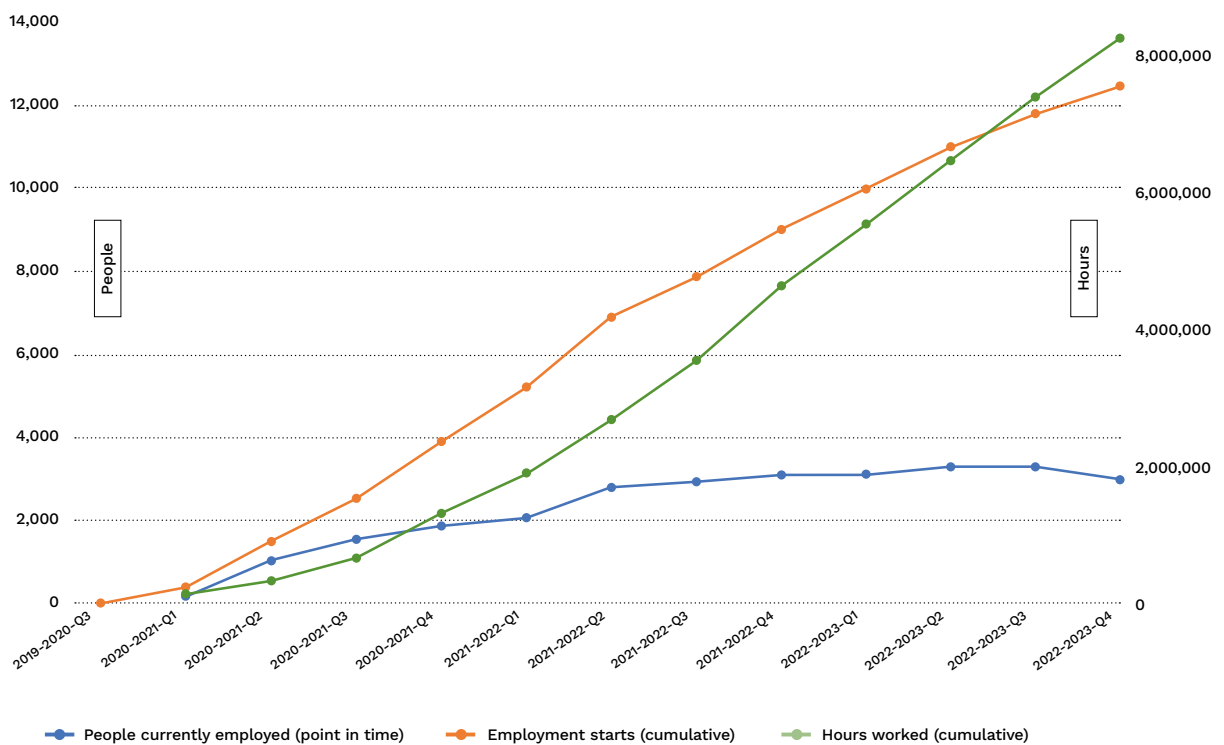
Employment metrics | Ngahuru taimahi

The programme recorded 11,000 employment starts since inception, in quarter three of Year Three. Over the last year, the number of people currently employed has been consistently above 2,500. The number of new employment starts for each quarter within that period has decreased steadily, suggesting stable employment for individuals in some projects.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Hours worked	896,945	932,545	891,757	876,193	3,597,439
Employment starts	1,012	982	796	700	3,490

The ‘currently employed’ metric is not included in the table above, as it is a point in-time measure and does not aggregate like the other metrics. Figure 2 shows the number of people employed each quarter. It is expected this will fluctuate throughout the programme and may reflect seasonal changes.

Figure 2: People currently employed in the programme by quarter



Environmental metrics | Ngahuru taiao

Progress against environmental metrics tracked well in Year Three based on reports from recipients that included both planned and actual metrics. Year Two saw significant adjustments to agency data and adjustments have continued in Year Three as systems and understanding of the data supplied has continued to mature. In Year Three adjustments have been minor with more attributed to variations in projects rather than errors in reporting.

	2022/23 achieved	Completed to date	Lifetime forecast
Area of freshwater restoration (ha)	2,070	4,400	6,080
Area under farm environment plans (ha)	40,218	93,942	158,448
Fencing constructed (km)	1,307	7,298	9,952
Number of farm environment plans completed	300	656	2,242
Number of fish passages remediated	461	654	1,752
Number of plants planted	2,716,039	5,606,393	11,021,047
Area of ecosystem restoration (ha)	3,578	6,406	9,080
Length of tracks maintained (km)	808	2,741	2,690
Number of assets maintained including huts	358	550	690
Number of plants planted	769,641	2,901,996	4,938,554
Area of animal pest control (ha)	811,835	2,247,534	2,380,240
Area of plant pest control (ha)	165,319	631,077	667,501
Area treated for wallabies (ha)	552,555	1,353,660	1,627,306
Area treated for wilding conifers (ha)	482,337	1,954,324	2,192,273
Area of other animal pest control (ha)	1,292,691	1,499,768	2,178,016

Environmental area legend: freshwater, biodiversity, pest control

During Year Three there were significant disruptions related to weather and staff recruitment. However, not all regions or funding recipients experienced disruption and there has been progress across all environmental outputs at the programme level. The ‘numbers of plants planted’ metrics (both terrestrial and freshwater) show less progress than most tracking at 54 and 41 percent of planned outputs respectively¹¹.

At least half of the projects contributing to the ‘percentage of freshwater planting complete’ metric report being on track, as they plan their projects to deliver over multiple years and can phase more planting in later years after fundamental project set ups are completed.

Environmental metrics are broken down by agency in their respective sections. Different agencies focus on different outputs, and the scale of funding and projects determines why some outputs are reported on more than others.



Nursery crew monitoring plants in Te Kōhaka o Tāne nursery

Photo: Department of Conservation

11. This only measures projects who report both ‘planned’ (lifetime) and ‘actual’ output data and excludes any ‘actuals’ reported by other projects who don’t report ‘planned’ data.

Project distribution | Whakarato kaupapa

When a project is approved, the delivery agency is required to report on several categories of metrics. When collated, this shows how projects are spread across domains. The figures below indicate some of the main groupings (figure 3), the diversity of project intent (figure 4), and location (figure 5).

Projects can address more than one environmental objective – for example, a project could involve both restoring freshwater and controlling weeds.

Figure 3: Number of projects that support different environmental objectives

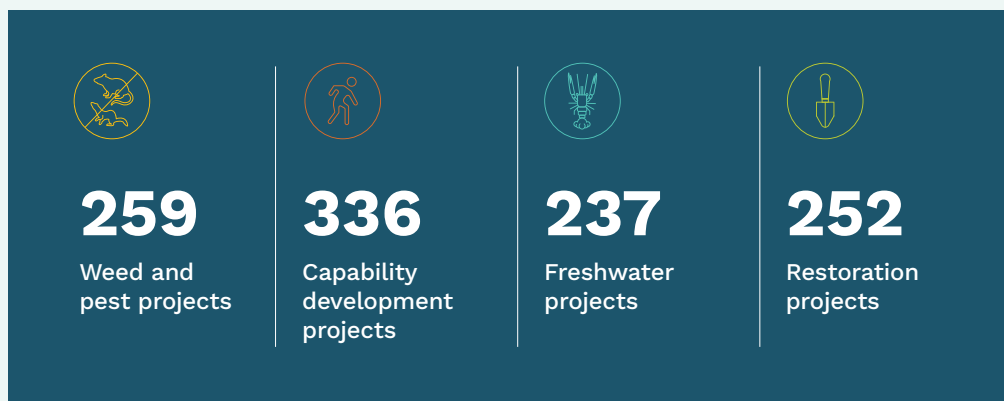


Figure 4: Percentage distribution of project intent across the across the programme

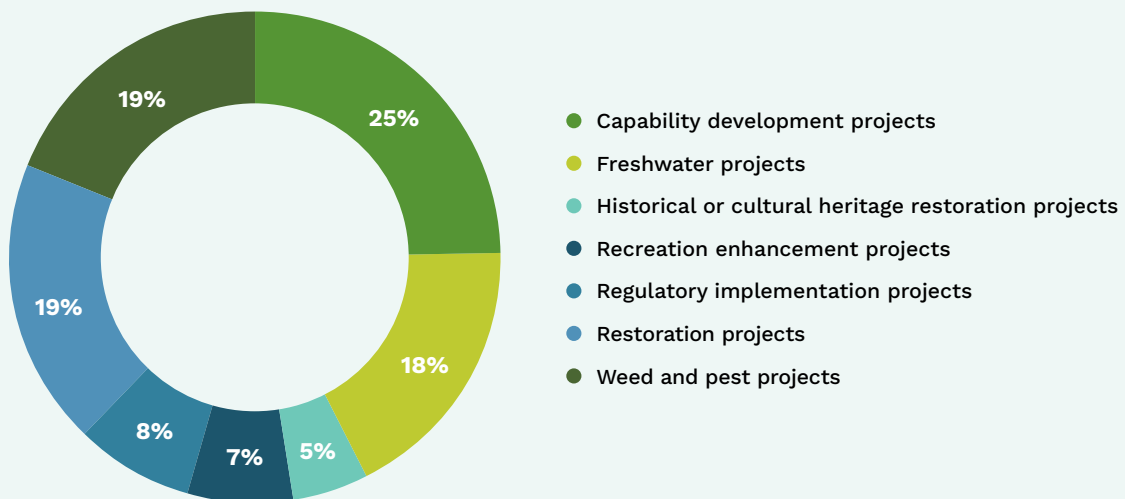
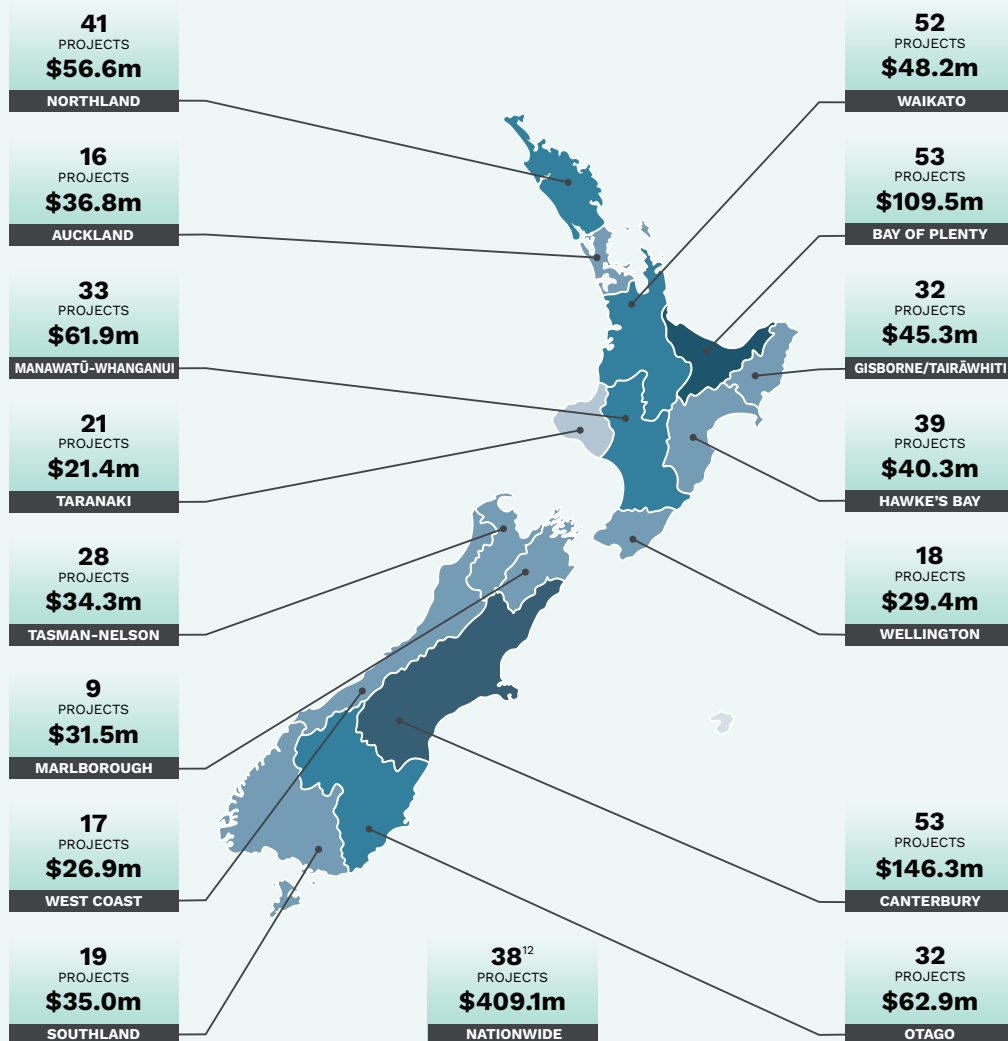


Figure 5: Distribution of funding approved across the programme

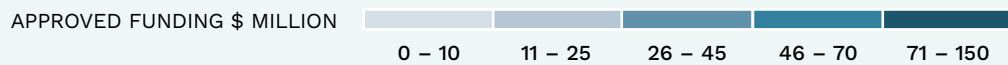


501

Total number of approved projects

\$1,195.4m

Total approved funding (\$ Million)



12. Nationwide projects include projects that are national in scale and extent and projects that span across more than one region. Note: projects previously classified under one region may be updated to Nationwide if project scope is extended.

Department of Conservation



The third year of the programme has helped us progress our predator free goals, protect biodiversity and strengthen connections with iwi, hapū and whānau.

**Penny Nelson
Director-General,
Department of Conservation**

Penny Nelson's reflections

Department of Conservation (DOC) Director-General Penny Nelson shares her thoughts on Mahi mō te Taiao/Jobs for Nature.

Working together to support our changing world.

DOC's COVID-relief programme has invigorated communities by providing nature-based employment across Aotearoa New Zealand. Project partners are successfully eradicating pests, controlling weeds, and planting native bush along waterways and sacred places.

The third year of the programme has helped us progress our predator free goals, protect biodiversity and strengthen connections with iwi, hapū and whānau.

The investment has made new approaches to conservation possible and supported meaningful work in nature. Communities are coming up with different ways of doing things, for example on Waiheke Island where Te Korowai o Waiheke project is carrying out pest control in a dense wetland mangrove. There you will find floating rat bait stations made from bamboo poles and recycled milk bottles. Unconventional yet innovative, this kind of initiative is supporting the goal to make Aotearoa New Zealand predator free by 2050.

DOC knows that increasing employment and conservation effort through partnerships works. Investing in project partners means New Zealanders can get more done for conservation, recreation, and heritage than DOC could do on its own. Kaimahi/employee local knowledge and connection to the whenua is invaluable for working in conservation. Nature will continue to benefit from the growing numbers of skilled kaimahi, with formal and on-the-job conservation training being increasingly accessible.

DOC is supporting project partners to lead their own transition and maintain the conservation gains of their projects as the programme ends.

As Aotearoa New Zealand experiences the impacts of climate change, implementing nature-based solutions can help to restore the environment. With a skilled conservation workforce and a multi-agency support network, we can continue to work towards DOC's goal of a thriving Papatūanuku.



Kaimahi on Mt Dewar project site, Queenstown

Photo: Department of Conservation



The Department of Conservation (DOC) has fully allocated \$485.28 million of funding from the programme. This funding is distributed through twelve key funding streams with the goal to create nature-based employment for around 4,800 people across Aotearoa New Zealand.

One of the long-term benefits the investment is bringing to Aotearoa New Zealand is a stronger conservation workforce, with the uptake of relevant qualifications and training in conservation. Over 662 kaimahi/employees have entered formal training, with all projects providing on-the-job training and experience. Kaimahi/employee engagement is high, Project Manager Arapera Paewai, Mauri Oho Ruahine Species Recovery explains. “They’re jumping out of bed every single morning to go to work, and no one is ever late or missing. It goes to show all the other outcomes that have been achieved here rather than just the environmental ones.”

The programme is also delivering to Te Mana o te Taiao | the Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy, to protect and restore our ecosystems and bring biodiversity protection into the heart of the economy. Projects like Te Waipounamu Threatened Species Protection specifically support the recovery and protection of threatened species such as kākārīki karaka/orange-fronted parakeet, hoiho/yellow-eyed penguin and kiwi, in conjunction with local tourism businesses and their employees. With the help of the programme, Hiking New Zealand has switched from outdoor guiding to predator control helping protect threatened species in Arthur’s Pass National Park.

With nearly two million hectares of plant and animal pest control, the Te Waipounamu project and Hiking New Zealand employees are revitalising the unique biodiversity of Aotearoa New Zealand. Dan Murphy, owner of Hiking New Zealand says, ‘Jobs for Nature provided certainty to our business at a time when there wasn’t any.’

The year has seen an increase in projects led by iwi, hapū and whānau through the allocation of Ngā Whenua Rahui funding. With over \$134 million now invested in 90 different Māori collective entities as well as Māori-led organisations, the investment has supported DOC to increase its work alongside mana whenua/people who have local tribal authority. Through the efforts of projects such as Sentinel ā Nuku, Te Ao Māori/Māori customs and protocols and mātauranga Māori/traditional knowledge of the Māori people woven through more aspects of conservation work. The Sentinel ā Nuku project is a cadetship programme for youth operating in Kerikeri, Auckland, Tauranga, Murupara, Gisborne and Invercargill which provides conservation education with a Te Ao Māori/Māori customs and protocols lens.

Early this year, projects across the country were impacted by severe weather events such as Cyclone Gabrielle. DOC staff have visited impacted project partners and are working proactively to provide support through these unique circumstances.

Another success of the investment is increased wellbeing. The health of our people and our environment are closely related and people’s health and wellbeing have improved through their participation in the programme. Yvette Couch-Lewis, Representative of Ngāi Tahu says, ‘Jobs for Nature benefits the hauora/health for both the environment and people. When our environment is well so are our people. One cannot be without the other.’

Financial metrics | Ngahuru ahumoni

DOC was allocated 40% or \$485.3 million of the overall programme funding to create nature-based employment. There are currently 187 projects in delivery and 36 projects have been completed. With over 220 projects approved, DOC has the highest portion of individual projects of all five agencies in the programme. The table below shows the latest metrics.

Approved funding (\$ million)	Contracted funding (\$ million)	Funding paid (\$ million)	Approved projects	Contracted projects
485.28	485.28	311	225	225

The allocated funding is split into twelve different streams which continue to progress at different rates.

	Approved funding (\$ million)	Contracted funding (\$ million)	Contracted projects
Kaimahi for Nature	198.6	198.6	143
Predator Free 2050 Ltd	76.0	76.0	1
Prevention of North Island Indigenous Forest Collapse	53.8	53.8	4
Nga Awa	42.9	42.9	6
Māori Land Grant	25.6	25.6	14
Private Land Biodiversity Fund	18	18	21
Kiwis for Kiwi	17.7	17.7	1
JFN Overheads DOC	16.3	16.3	
JFN Community Fund	16	16	28
QEII National Trust – Covenanting	8.0	8.0	1
Programme 1 Quickstarts	7.2	7.2	3
South Island Threatened Species Recovery	5.1	5.1	1

A total of \$311 million has been paid out to date with \$132 million paid out this year. DOC continues to closely monitor project milestones and financial reports and remains confident that projects will achieve their financial targets over the extended life of the programme. Finalising the contracts within the Māori Land – Ngā Whenua Rahui fund has been a key focus in Year Three.

Employment metrics | Ngahuru taimahi

This has been a challenging year for employing staff due to extreme weather events, high inflation, and difficulties with recruitment. This has affected delivery against the programme’s targets. However, with five million hours achieved, and 5,605 employment starts generated collectively across DOC’s funded projects, DOC continues to achieve expected outcomes. The focus of some projects shifted to support recovery efforts for weather events. Hours worked towards recovery relief are included in the overall numbers.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Hours worked	660,024	673,013	660,140	670,923	2,664,100
Employment starts	478	533	453	321	1,795



Planting day at Lake Whatuma, Hawke’s Bay

Photo: Department of Conservation

Environmental metrics | Ngahuru taiao

Jobs for Nature projects continue to achieve significant conservation gains for Aotearoa in Year Three of the programme. Current data shows that projects are achieving or overachieving against most conservation output targets.

	2022/23 achieved	Completed to date	Lifetime forecast
Area restored by plantings (excluding riparian planting) (ha)	979	1,682	4,194
Length of tracks created (km)	65	176	169
Length of tracks maintained (km)	660	2,437	2,424
Number of historic heritage assets maintained	140	258	191
Number of huts maintained	203	270	449
Area of riparian strip restored by plantings (excluding other restoration planting) (ha)	564	980	2,064
Existing fencing maintained (km)	208	442	492
New fencing (km)	253	464	929
Number of plants planted in riparian or lake or wetland areas	890,028	1,612,859	4,180,505
Area treated for deer (ha)	34,500	164,118	212,353
Area treated for goats (ha)	17,651	148,659	255,887
Area treated for other animal pests (ha)	94,626	240,078	261,415
Area treated for possums (ha)	113,722	244,963	350,916
Area treated for rats and/or mustelids (ha)	203,231	790,235	819,653
Area treated for wallabies (ha)	6,250	81,400	81,306
Area treated for weeds (ha)	29,870	132,691	150,567
Area treated for wilding conifers (ha)	5,540	10,920	28,360

Environmental area legend: biodiversity, freshwater, pest control



Native planting at the new Murihiku Marae in Southland

Photo: Department of Conservation

Conservation has always been in the back of my mind and because of Jobs for Nature this opportunity popped up and I could give it a go.

**Kristin Tisdall
Employee Hiking New Zealand
Orange-fronted Kakariki program**



Other areas of note | Ētahi atu wāhi whaitake

As we enter the fourth year of the programme, DOC's focus is on supporting projects partners to lead their own transition and ensuring benefits are sustained when government funding finishes. This future-focused work is informed by the Secretariat's programme-wide [Transition Strategy](#) which sets a broad framework for agencies to identify opportunities as part of a multi-agency governance approach.

Year Four will see DOC continue to work closely with other agencies to consider a framework for potential future investment, including support for nature-based solutions and climate mitigation responses.

Impacts of severe weather events | Te pāpātanga o te huarere taikaha

As of May 17th, 2023, 28 projects funded by DOC's programme have reported being adversely impacted by Cyclone Gabrielle. These projects are spread across the Far North, Auckland, Bay of Plenty, Gisborne, Hawke's Bay and the Waikato.

Projects in impacted regions reported limited or no access to their sites and kaimahi/employees displaced from homes and communities. DOC understands the community needs space and time to start the rebuilding process and assess the damage. In acknowledgment of the emergency, project partners were able to shift their efforts towards response and recovery activities in their local communities. 100 kaimahi/employees are reported to have assisted in the clean-up in their community.

DOC sent out a short survey to impacted projects to understand how projects responded to the cyclone. Of the 26 survey results received, 17 of the projects will need a three-to-12-month extension to deliver. Six projects anticipated that they will not be able to meet their targets largely due to loss of outputs, workforce, and access to sites. Like the COVID-19 lockdown periods, DOC records hours paid but not worked where a project continues to pay their employees while the work is on pause. Approximately 16,426.5 hours have been paid using programme funding.

DOC staff engage regularly with project partners to understand their circumstances and work together on options for the future. In some instances, months of work and thousands of young plants were lost. As a result of the cyclone, projects have had to reassess what, how and when they can deliver their expected conservation achievements.

Project partners in Tairāwhiti/Gisborne and Wairoa/Hawkes Bay impacted by the cyclone expressed optimism and appreciation of the support from DOC staff during recovery.

CASE STUDY

Te Tapu o Tāne

Established in 2021, Te Tapu o Tāne is an iwi-led (Hokonui, Waihōpai, Awarua, and Ōraka Aparima Rūnanga) charitable conservation organisation that provides catchment rehabilitation services across the Murihiku/Southland takiwā/area. These include environmental project management, land management, a wholesale native nursery and planting and maintenance services.

The investment has enabled Te Tapu o Tāne to put into effect a vision and plan that had been brewing for some time. CEO Jana Davis (Waitaha, Kāti Mamoe, Kāi Tahu) says, “We were already heading this way, we just didn’t know how we were going to do it.”

The project originated when kaumātua/elders were mulling over how to scale up more boots on the ground mahi/work for the hapū/subtribe in Murihiku/Southland.

What Te Tapu o Tāne have achieved in two years is impressive. Operating from Wānaka to Rakiura/Stewart Island, Fiordland to the Catlins, they have 44 active projects and have recently established a second home base in Queenstown. Te Tapu o Tāne is fast becoming a focal point for landscape scale delivery and there are 31 schools throughout Central Otago and Southland waiting to put their rangatahi/youth through their program.

Jana describes what the Runanga want from Te Tapu o Tāne, “The dream is for the Runanga to be able to use Te Tapu o Tāne as a tool to enact their vision.”

He says that while commercial viability is a fundamental aim of Te Tapu o Tāne, they are driven by an ethos of “Not just build a business but a business that’s built on values versus profit...that has been the most difficult part of the journey, is really trying to adopt te ao Māori values and lifting people up and providing pathways.”

Of the investment he says “Three years isn’t enough – that’s the truth... after two years we have really just started to breathe. However, the ripple effects of what this will do for our country are fantastic. We won’t actually understand that for a while. A lot of these people are on this new journey in the environmental space and there’s a lot of momentum.”

He adds, “Our tikanga [customary practice] is give and take, so we’ll lift you up, this is the hand up, it’s not a handout. We’re conscious that we’ve got whanau who are ready to deliver commercially and we’ve got others that ... we need to build them up. Where are they at? What tickets do they have? What capabilities do they have? What sense of urgency do they have? We’ve had rangatahi [youth] in Te Tapu o Tāne who have never had a certificate before and now they’ve got plenty – first aid, chainsaw, growsafe, fourwheel drive, wheels tracks and rollers, they’ve never even had one certificate in their life and now they’ve got a resume that says they are capable.”



**Te Tapu o
Tāne staff
demonstrating
to local rangatahi
how to transplant
seedlings**

*Photo: Department of
Conservation*

“Where do they want to go in their life, what does success mean for each individual? It’s not about what Te Tapu o Tāne want, it’s about nurturing the natural skill sets of our people. Our people deserve to feel self-empowered, and we want to be standing on our own feet with greater connection with taonga species. A lot of the feedback is around how do we educate the public more on why they are taonga species, how do we value biodiversity differently in the community? You go through a lot of our towns and cities and it’s not native, it’s exotic, and it really is about shifting mindsets to put a bit of a different lens on what we need to be valuing in our country.”

“We believe the land and the water won’t be healed until the people are healed. Hit them at grassroots and change as many young mindsets as you can around positive and negative effects on the environment and provide more pathways outside of council for working in the biodiversity space.”

“Projects like Te Tapu o Tāne are the ones that are focused on truly an intergenerational approach. The organisation has been set up to bring in value outside of central government. Our goal is to reduce dependency on government institutions.”

“Isn’t it time that we made an investment like this into our whenua? It’s well overdue.”

Ministry for the Environment



Embracing nature-based employment like the Jobs for Nature programme not only helps address climate change and environmental degradation, it also provides New Zealanders with career opportunities and skills to improve our management of fresh water.

**James Palmer
Ministry for the Environment, Secretary for the Environment**

James Palmer's reflections

Secretary for the Environment James Palmer shares his thoughts on the Jobs for Nature programme.

Our work and careers play a significant part in all our lives, including building the economy and communities. Embracing nature-based employment like the Jobs for Nature programme not only helps address climate change and environmental degradation, it also provides New Zealanders with career opportunities and skills to improve our management of fresh water.

I am pleased to report that in Year 3 of the programme, Ministry-funded projects employed 782 new Jobs for Nature kaimahi or workers, bringing us to more than 2,200 kaimahi working towards a healthier, more sustainable environment, with more than 300 people in formal training. The programme also supported 396 hectares of riparian and wetland restoration with more than 1 million plants, as well as 395 kilometres of fencing built or maintained.

As well as supporting employment and action on the ground, Jobs for Nature has supported freshwater reforms and facilitated connections between tangata whenua, councils, and communities. This includes supporting newly regulated roles like freshwater farm plan certifiers and auditors, and support for tangata whenua to fulfil their vital role in freshwater planning.

Other programme highlights this year include noteworthy projects like Local Government New Zealand Project of the Year award winner Te Awarua-o-Porirua, a collaborative effort with Porirua City Council and Ngāti Toa to restore Porirua Harbour's health. Additionally, the Tauira Mahi programme has trained and employed 140 cadets, empowering them to pursue careers in the conservation and environmental sectors.

Much of this year has played out in the shadow of severe weather events including Cyclone Gabrielle. In just the first six months of 2023, Auckland, Tairāwhiti and Hawke's Bay each received more than their annual average rainfall amounts. The true costs of these events are immeasurable – resulting in lost lives, lost livelihoods, and destroyed homes, businesses and infrastructure.

These events also impacted the Jobs for Nature projects in Northland, Auckland, Tairāwhiti, Waikato, Hawke's Bay, Bay of Plenty and Tararua in early 2023. More than half of Ministry for the Environment (MfE) Jobs for Nature projects have been affected, from losing riparian planting, to key workers needing to take part in the response and recovery efforts. I know many Jobs for Nature workers and projects have supported each other through the disheartening loss of environmental gains made through many hours of work, and I applaud all those involved for their empathy and resilience. Despite these losses the events have reinforced the importance and urgency of this mahi.

There has been a focus this year on protecting the long-term legacy of the Jobs for Nature investment in people and the environment, with transition planning underway to ensure the valuable mahi of these projects continues.



Planting natives in Te Awarua-o-Porirua

Photo: Ministry for the Environment

The Jobs for Nature programme is essential for achieving biodiversity, land restoration, and climate goals both nationally and regionally. As we conclude the third year of this initiative, I am profoundly inspired and humbled by the accomplishments of everyone involved and grateful for the collaboration with our valued partners.

Growing this programme together with our communities has been a privilege for the public servants involved. With the momentum that has been built we will continue to build a flourishing environment for the wellbeing of generations to come through this initiative.

The MfE has six funding programmes underway in 2022/23. This included three contestable funds (Public Waterways and Ecosystems Restoration, Freshwater Improvement, and Te Mana o Te Wai) and three strategic investments (Kaipara Moana Remediation, At-Risk Catchments, and Essential Freshwater).

As the lead agency, MfE funding also included operational funding for the establishment and administration of the programme, including the Jobs for Nature Secretariat who oversee and coordinate the Jobs for Nature partnering agencies.

Financial metrics | Ngahuru ahumoni

MfE is responsible for the second largest portion of programme funding \$444.5 million (37 percent), and the second largest number of projects (125 in contract as of 30 June). By 30 June 2023, \$443.3 million funding had been approved for 159 projects.

The table shows MfE's headline financial metrics.

Approved funding (\$ million)	Contracted funding (\$ million)	Funding paid (\$ million)	Approved projects	Contracted projects
443.3	371.9	125	159	125

This funding is in seven funding streams (including overheads) approved at 30 June 2023 as follows:

	Approved funding (\$ million)	Contracted funding (\$ million)	Contracted projects
At-risk Catchments	12.0	12.0	3
Essential Freshwater Fund	144.4	74.9	64
Te Mana o Te Wai fund	30.0	28.0	35
Freshwater Improvement Fund	53.8	53.8	29
Public Waterways and Ecosystems Restoration fund	66.9	66.9	24
Kaipara Moana Remediation	100.0	100.0	1
Jobs for Nature administration	36.3	36.3	1

Programme set-up costs include the functions of the Secretariat, the Advisory Group (up until the end of 2022) and the costs of monitoring, reporting, and administration.

Progress on developing and contracting of Essential Freshwater Fund projects

To enable implementation of the Essential Freshwater reforms, the Essential Freshwater Fund (EFF) is developing projects through strategic partnerships. In 2022, funding was approved for specific themes and outcomes prior to recipients being identified. This allowed MfE to work with other project partners (including tangata whenua and councils) to refine project objectives, design and approaches before recipients were identified, and undertake robust procurement processes to identify the best placed third parties to meet system needs.

MfE has made good progress over 2022/23 in developing and contracting strategic projects through the EFF. All projects are in development or delivery with \$75 million of \$145 million in contract as of 30 June 2023. A further \$34 million was contracted at the end of December 2023 (total \$109 million), with the remaining \$36 million to be contracted by the end of 2024/25.

A large portion (\$21.7 million) of the uncontracted funding is allocated to Freshwater Farm Plan workforce development. The Freshwater Farm Plan regulations were gazetted on 8 June 2023, so projects to support this can now begin contracting as per the phased workforce development plan.

Funding reallocations

In March 2023, Cabinet approved the transfer of \$11.55 million of MfE Jobs for Nature funding to the Environmental Monitoring and Reporting System. This will set the foundation for consistent, fit for purpose national level environmental data and information and enable MfE to effectively monitor, evaluate and report against national priorities.

In April 2023, the Government directed MfE (along with other agencies) to return any unallocated Jobs for Nature programme funding to support the 2023/24 Budget 2023 package. MfE had \$1.39 million unallocated; \$0.54 million was returned and \$0.85 million was reprioritised to the Jobs for Nature Secretariat to support the wind down and evaluation of the programme in 2025/26.

Employment metrics | Ngahuru taimahi

MfE projects delivered steady growth in hours worked and employment starts until the end of December 2022, however there was a decrease in quarter 3 due to project disruptions in the wake of Cyclone Gabrielle in early February 2023.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Hours worked	71,508	97,881	73,715	127,400	370,503
Employment starts	225	142	226	189	782

Environmental metrics | Ngahuru Taiao

Projects performed well across the 12 key environmental measures. Four metrics: Freshwater area under active restoration; Area Of Afforestation Or Other Biodiversity Planting; Area of animal pest control completed; and Area treated for weeds have already exceeded their lifetime delivery targets.

These results were achieved during general reports of contractor shortages, material inflation (especially for fencing), supply chain delays, and severe weather events that prevented access to sites and in some cases meant key staff were unavailable.

	2022/23 achieved	Completed to date	Lifetime forecast
Area covered by farm environment plans completed (ha)	40,218	93,942	158,448
Area of riparian or lake or wetlands planting completed (ha)	209	530	916
Freshwater area under active restoration (riparian/wetland) (ha)	187	672	359
New fencing constructed or existing fencing maintained (km)	395	4,770	6,822
Number of farm environmental plans completed	280	593	2,182
Number of fish passage barriers remediated	461	653	1,752
Number of plants planted in riparian/lake/wetland area	1,078,498	2,328,272	4,695,400
Area of afforestation or other biodiversity planting not riparian or lake or wetland (ha)	25	349	162
Area of planting for erosion control completed (ha)	81	133	178
Number of historic heritage assets maintained	6	13	55
Area of animal pest control completed (ha)	12,547	37,866	26,186
Area treated for weeds (ha)	763	3,688	2,955

Environmental area legend: freshwater, biodiversity, pest control

Impacts of severe weather events | Te pāpātanga o te huarere taikaha

During the life of Jobs for Nature projects, extreme weather events have battered parts of Aotearoa, including areas where MfE funds projects.

Floods and Cyclone Gabrielle impacted projects in Northland/Auckland, Tairāwhiti, Waikato and Hawke's Bay, Bay of Plenty and Tararua District in early 2023. MfE administers 49 J4N projects in these areas.

More than half of MfE J4N projects (30 projects) have been affected to some extent by the early 2023 Floods and Cyclone Gabrielle. Some of the impacts to projects include loss of riparian planting and fencing, sedimentation and nutrient run-off degrading freshwater ecosystems, and/or key personnel being heavily involved in the emergency response and focusing their resources elsewhere.

Out of these 30 projects, seven projects (14 percent) have been deemed to have severe implications. There has been significant damage to project sites or their access and key personnel were heavily involved in the emergency response and focusing their time and other resources elsewhere. Discussions with project teams are ongoing and are focused on how to address the impacts, including rephasing activities and repurposing priorities within the current budget and future funding.

As such weather events unfortunately become more common, the Ministry will be considering how to help projects anticipate and manage climate change-related risks, and support projects through future climate-related events.



I've always wanted to do something like this but never had the opportunity. Now I've come out with all these skills.

**Cadet
Bay Conservation Cadets
Bay of Plenty**

CASE STUDY

Bay Conservation Cadets – Taurira Mahi

In early 2021, \$3.5 million was awarded to the Bay Conservation Alliance (BCA)¹³ through the Public Waterways and Ecosystem Restoration Fund, to deliver the Taurira Mahi programme through to June 2025.

The programme is a 12-week training, and employment programme for 140 cadets to develop foundational skills and knowledge and pursue careers in the conservation and environmental sector. It provides theoretical and practical training across a range of areas such as restoration planning predator control, freshwater monitoring, GIS/GPS mapping, ecology identification. Following completion, cadets receive NZQA certifications¹⁴. The programme has a large practical component where cadets undertake work at sites of BCA members, private landowners, and other locations.

The programme consists of three cadet intakes per annum, with a target of 11 cadets in each intake. Cadets come from all walks of life¹⁵, including mature cadets, and are selected for their passion, attitude and maturity to successfully complete the programme.

- BCA works with local Māori specialists and educators to deliver mātauranga Māori content.
- Cadets are employed by BCA for the 12-week duration of the programme, which allow cadets to participate in the programme without the financial pressure of making ends meet during the programme.
- Cadets provide a dedicated workforce to advance work on member groups' and partners' sites.
- This in return provides cadets with real life conservation and environmental work experience in a range of sites and enable them to build relationships with potential employers after the cadetship or consider volunteering opportunities.

13. BCA is an Incorporated Society and registered charity established in 2017 to support community-led environmental restoration and nature conservation across the Bay of Plenty through greater coordination, collaboration, and better access to funding for member conservation groups while lessening the day-to-day administrative burden on groups. BCA currently works with 27 conservation groups in the region.

14. NZQA certifications in outdoor first aid, light utility vehicle skills, Vespex (wasp) licence and Growsafe. Growsafe certificate enables agrichemical (e.g. pesticides and insecticides) users to work independently.

15. BCA spends time screening potential cadets to ensure they are a good fit with the programme and have the passion, attitude and maturity to successfully complete the programme. The selection of cadets has evolved over time. Initially, the programme targeted individuals between 18 to 40 years old, however, this has been relaxed in later intakes with cadets in the 50-year and 60-year age group. The project team thinks the mature age group bring key life skills and a positive dynamic to the cohort. Cadets come from a range of backgrounds, ethnicities, and social status, some with tertiary degrees and some with limited conservation experience.



John Bissell
briefing the Bay
Conservation Cadets

*Photo: Ministry
for the Environment*

Employment outcomes

- The programme is developing confident kaimahi who are work-ready with conservation knowledge and experience¹⁶. After three years of operation,¹⁷ approximately 82 cadets had completed the programme with an average 87 percent gaining employment in a conservation or environmental-related area.

Improving conservation capacity and capability of iwi

- BCA works closely with several iwi to offer training opportunities and experience through the cadet programme, while enabling iwi to increase their capability and capacity in conservation.

Outcomes for cadets

- One of the highlights for cadets has been the camaraderie within the group, with cadets developing relationships with each other extending beyond the duration of the programme.

Made some like-minded and lifelong friends who share in my same passions. (Cadet)

- Cadets have gained a huge confidence through the programme, acquiring life skills, lifelong friendships and education. The programme has given them purpose for what they want to do in the future, helped them mature and awakened their passion for the environment¹⁸.

I've always wanted to do something like this but never had the opportunity. Now I've come out with all these skills. I've gained so much confidence in these past 12 weeks. (Cadet)

Before the course, I'd hit the wall and didn't know what I wanted to do. I can see the opportunities now. (Cadet)

Conclusion

The Tauria Mahi Programme is building momentum, and interest from new stakeholders and partners. Organisations outside of the Bay of Plenty region are seeking advice on how to set up similar programmes in their regions and expressing interest in sending individuals on the Tauria Mahi programme.

Jobs for Nature funding has been a catalyst for BCA to grow this programme and developing the nature-based capability of individuals right across the Bay of Plenty region. The learning undertaken, the work completed in the field and the employment opportunities obtained at the end of each intake give confidence that investing in conservation skills and knowledge will yield far-reaching benefits in the future.

"We are the Avengers of the taiao" (Cadet)

16. From independent face-to-face interviews of current cadets, and feedback surveys of past cadets.

17. at the end of December 2022.

18. From independent interviews with past cadets.

Ministry for Primary Industries



Ray Smith
Director-General, 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.

Severe weather events in the North Island dominated the first few months of 2023, causing unprecedented damage. Contractors for some Jobs for Nature projects were redeployed to assist with community clean-up and recovery efforts.

In the 2022/23 financial year, our Jobs for Nature funding to support catchment groups received a \$16 million boost from the Ministry for the Environment. It has enabled the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) to fund more catchment projects, adding to our growing national total.

Several of the new catchment projects are in regions devastated by Cyclone Gabrielle. One is the Between the Two Rivers Community Catchment Collective in Hawke's Bay, which covers catchments where farmland and infrastructure sustained significant damage. The funding will enable it to assist with recovery and resilience activities, including planning and technical support, and to restore and enhance the environmental and social sustainability of the catchments.

Some of the additional funding will be used by our Māori Agribusiness team to support Māori entities, enabling them to deliver relevant advice and support.

During the past 12 months, the National Wilding Conifer Programme has hit further milestones in its important work to control the costly problem of pest trees. Between 1 July 2022 and 30 June 2023, the programme has completed approximately 427,000 hectares of aerial control and 42,000 hectares of ground control. That's on top of the 1,466,607 hectares controlled since Jobs for Nature started in 2020. The programme is a Biosecurity New Zealand-led collaboration across central and local government, industry, mana whenua, researchers, farmers, and communities.

The four-year Jobs for Nature programme gave the National Wilding Conifer Programme a significant boost. As that funding enters its final year, our shared vision of containing or eradicating all wilding conifer infestations by 2030, remains as important as ever.

The funding allocated in Budget 2020 included ongoing baseline funding of \$10 million per annum from 2024/25 through to 2030 and beyond, and we continue to work with our programme partners and potential partners to explore a range of possible opportunities to boost resourcing for control work.

The Tipu Mātoro National Wallaby Eradication Programme has continued its efforts to contain and eliminate wallabies. During 2022/23, wallaby operations covered an area of 550,000 hectares.

Operational activities have occurred in the Bay of Plenty, Waikato, Canterbury, and Otago regions. Activities included surveillance to identify wallaby populations, control operations (aerial and ground-based shooting, and poisoning) and fencing at key locations to prevent spread. Ongoing operational

research has led to improvements in the programme, and a targeted summer awareness campaign focused people's attention on the wallaby problem.

The One Billion Trees (1BT) programme received \$34.5 million of Jobs for Nature funding to support landowners, organisations, and communities to plant trees, revert land to native forest, and integrate trees into the landscape to complement and diversify existing land uses.

Over the last year, many of these planting projects have progressed towards their end goals.

The Waimarama – Waipuka project in Hawke's Bay is a partnership between MPI, local iwi, Kānoa – Regional Economic Development and Investment Unit, and Hawke's Bay Regional Council.

Over a three-year period, this project has gone from experiencing a punishing drought to excessive rainfall due to Cyclone Gabrielle but has stood strong with 156,000 native seedlings successfully planted across 174 hectares of iwi land.

Additional seedlings will be planted this year, completing the project's objectives to restore a steep gully and stream that leads out to an estuary and the ocean.

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

1. Biosecurity New Zealand
2. Te Uru Rākau – New Zealand Forest Service
3. Agriculture and Investment Services.

Biosecurity New Zealand

Biosecurity New Zealand's funding is separated into two funding streams:

- National Wilding Conifer Control (Wilding Fund)
- Containing Wallabies to Protect Agriculture, Forestry and Native Plants, and Boost Regional Economies (Wallabies Fund).

Wilding Fund: The National Wilding Conifer Control Programme (NWCCP) has successfully invested most of its \$100 million funding allocation, completing control work on more than 1.9 million hectares of infested land since 2020. The remaining \$10 million will be invested in 2023/24.

Wallabies Fund: Over the first three years of the Tipu Mātoro National Wallaby Eradication Programme we have been building up the collective capacity to deliver wallaby control operations at the landscape scale and investing in priority research. This year we have delivered all the planned operations, resulting in the most wallaby control work completed in a single year. These operations have covered 550,000 hectares during 2022/23. Benefits to this work are being realised, including improved understanding of the wallaby population's range leading to more cost effective and targeted control.

Te Uru Rākau – New Zealand Forest Service

Te Uru Rākau – New Zealand Forest Service in Year 3 continues progress with the planting of over 600,000 native trees on more than 1,000 hectares. To date, over 2.5 million trees have been planted representing over 50 percent of the total contracted trees to be planted under Jobs for Nature projects funded by Te Uru Rākau – New Zealand Forest Service. This contributes to a range of positive outcomes including bolstering employment and restoring land through afforestation.

Agriculture and Investment Services

Agriculture and Investment Services (AIS) has received two tranches of Jobs for Nature funding:

- Jobs for Nature catchment projects – AIS received \$9.8 million in 2020, which has been used to establish nine catchment groups, creating jobs in fencing, riparian restoration, pest control, and planting. All nine projects have been completed.
- Essential Freshwater Fund – AIS received \$20 million in 2022 (reduced to \$16 million by Cabinet in April 2023). This was evenly split between the Sustainable Land Use delivery team to accelerate its catchment group programme (Sustainable Land Use Essential Freshwater Fund), and the Māori Agribusiness (MAB) directorate to support Māori entities to engage with the freshwater regulatory reforms (MAB Essential Freshwater Fund). The Essential Freshwater Fund supports capacity and capability uplift, rather than job creation and on-the-ground works. A total of 18 projects have been contracted with this funding. All the projects are programmed to end by 30 June 2026.

One highlight from the Sustainable Land Use Jobs for Nature programme was the recently completed Tinaku project, Lake Ellesmere, Canterbury. This project:

- completed its programme of riparian fencing/planting through connections with schools and landowners in the area,
- had an employee launch an environmental restoration contracting business, and
- won the Selwyn District Council Environment and Sustainability Award.

Financial metrics | Ngahuru ahumoni

Biosecurity New Zealand

Wilding Fund: The National Wilding Conifer Programme paid over \$22 million for control operations in the 2022/23 financial year. In 2022/23, 12 Community Partnership Projects totalling \$2 million over two years completed their Jobs for Nature funded work.

Wallabies Fund: The budget for the Tipu Mātoro National Wallaby Eradication Programme increased over the first few years to a peak of \$8.2 million in 2022/23. The bulk of this funding was spent on wallaby control, and some was invested into applied research projects to improve methods of detecting and controlling wallabies. The programme has a fixed annual level of funding of \$6.9 million from 2023/24 onwards.

Te Uru Rākau – New Zealand Forest Service

To date Te Uru Rākau – New Zealand Forest Service has paid out \$23.8 million of the \$34.5 million contracted. \$7.45 million has been paid out for Year 3 (2022–2023 financial year). Two projects have reached completion in Year Three, with up to 19 more projects expected to be completed in the next financial year.

Agriculture and Investment Services

The Sustainable Land Use Jobs for Nature funding of \$9.8 million was fully contracted across nine projects and has now been fully paid out.

The original Essential Freshwater Fund programme budget of \$20 million (\$18.5 million project funding, \$1.5 million administration) was reduced by \$4 million in April of this year, when unallocated Jobs for Nature funding was returned to the Crown. All money is contracted or in the final stages of the approval process.

Business unit	Approved funding (\$ million)	Contracted funding (\$ million)	Funding paid (\$ million)	Approved projects	Contracted projects
Biosecurity New Zealand	126.8	126.8	106.9	13	13
Te Uru Rākau	34.5	34.5	23.8	29	29
Agriculture and Investment Service	24	24	12.5	28	28

Employment metrics | Ngahuru taimahi

Biosecurity New Zealand

Wilding Fund: The equivalent of 108 FTEs were created in the National Wilding Conifer Control Programme in 2022/23.

Wallabies Fund: The equivalent of 43 FTEs were created in the Tipu Mātoro National Wallaby Eradication Programme in 2022/23.

Te Uru Rākau – New Zealand Forest Service

A large portion of Te Uru Rākau – New Zealand Forest Service funded work is tree planting, mainly undertaken from June to September. This means that end-of-financial-year metrics are unlikely to capture full employment figures for the 2023 planting season. Activity during October to March is mainly site preparation and plant maintenance.

After a strong 2022 planting season, momentum has carried on into the 2023 season, though overall employment figures are slightly lower compared to the 2022 season due to the completion of projects.

Adverse weather events, such as Cyclone Gabrielle, have had an additional impact on employment activity.

Agriculture and Investment Services

The nine Sustainable Land Use Jobs for Nature projects have created employment although employment figures reduced in the last quarter as the projects were wound up. In response to the experience gained through these projects, some employees have gone on to establish their own contracting businesses providing environmental monitoring, wilding pine removal, and pest control services.

Within the Sustainable Land Use Essential Freshwater Fund programme, the employee starts, and hours worked has progressively increased over the course of the year as projects have been contracted and workers are employed.

The focus of the MAB Essential Freshwater Fund programme is on capacity/capability uplift, rather than employment generation. As such, employment figures for this programme will remain low. The bulk of the MAB Essential Freshwater Fund projects were contracted in the last quarter of the year, so employment statistics will start to register in the 2023/24 financial year.

		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Biosecurity New Zealand	Hours worked	43,924	63,450	61,446	67,207	236,027
	Employment starts	93	165	55	82	395
Te Uru Rākau	Hours worked	37,206	23,366	22,493	20,323	103,388
	Employment starts	76	12	13	9	110
Agriculture and Investment Services	Hours worked	16,808	17,891	17,051	19,196	70,946
	Employment starts	28	27	11	65	131
Total	Hours worked	97,938	104,707	100,990	106,726	410,361
	Employment starts	197	204	79	156	636



Charles Te Kowhai, GPS monitoring for wallaby control

Photo: Ministry for Primary Industries

Environmental metrics | Ngahuru taiao

Biosecurity New Zealand

Wilding Fund: The Jobs for Nature funding over the past three years has enabled the National Wilding Conifer Control Programme to carry out more than 1.9 million hectares of control protecting the surrounding land from the ongoing spread of wildings.

Wallabies Fund: The Tipu Mātoro National Wallaby Eradication Programme has increased the amount of wallaby control delivered over the last three years, delivering control across approximately 550,000 hectares in 2022/23.

Te Uru Rākau – New Zealand Forest Service

Work undertaken during the year has had a positive impact on environmental factors including water quality and biodiversity.

The 2023 planting season has seen over 600,000 trees, and 130,000 plants (riparian and other) planted across more than 1,000 hectares.

It is possible we may start to see a slowing in planting activity compared to previous seasons, as some projects re-evaluate their plans in response to Cyclone Gabrielle and other adverse weather events.

Agriculture and Investment Services

Sustainable Land Use Jobs for Nature project managers have highlighted the benefits they have achieved through the Jobs for Nature project funding with the focus on riparian planting and maintenance, environmental monitoring, and weed and pest management. This has been amplified where groups have collaborated with schools, local agencies and other community groups and businesses to provide long lasting connections with the different locations and activities.

Some groups have also promoted these activities by erecting signs to highlight their work.

The focus of the MAB Essential Freshwater Fund and Sustainable Land Use Essential Freshwater Fund programmes is capacity and capability uplift, rather than on-the-ground works. As such, there are no environmental metrics attached to these programmes.

		2022/23 achieved	Completed to date	Lifetime forecast
Biosecurity New Zealand	New fencing (km)	14	16	60
	Area of wallabies control (ha)	547,705	1,273,584	1,546,000
	Area treated for wilding conifers (ha)	469,091	1,935,698	2,164,436
Te Uru Rākau	Area of riparian or lake or wetlands planting completed (ha)	135	354	760
	Fencing not riparian (km)	35	143	155
	Freshwater area under active restoration (riparian/wetland) (ha)	353	764	973
	Number of farm environment plans completed	20	63	60*
	Number of plants planted in riparian or lake or wetland areas	698,072	1,499,697	2,187,642
	Riparian fencing (km)	123	344	506
	Area restored by plantings (excluding riparian planting) (ha)	143,686	2,574	2,296
	Area under active restoration (not riparian/wetland) (ha)	579	1,163	2,250
	Number of other plants	139,444	363,009	483,258
	Number of trees	607,386	2,516,176	4,455,296
Agriculture and Investment Services	New fencing (km)	13	13	-
	Number of fish passage barriers remediated		1	-
	Number of plants planted in riparian or lake or wetland areas	91,951	208,075	-
	Riparian fencing (km)	21	-	-
	Length of tracks maintained (km)	0	-	-
	Number of trees	22,811	22,811	-
	Area treated for weeds (ha)	115	1,633	-

Environmental area legend: freshwater, biodiversity, pest control

* This is an estimate

Other areas of note | Ētahi atu wāhi whaitake

Locally focused Community Partnership Projects funded through the National Wilding Conifer Control Programme completed over 21,900 ha of local project work in 2022/23, and a total of over 47,000 ha across the two-year funded period which started in 2021/22. These 12 funded projects were selected from more than 34 applications for their focus on protecting sites of significant ecological distinction as well as cultural and historical importance for local tangata whenua and communities.

Impacts of severe weather events | Te pāpātanga o te huarere taikaha

Biosecurity New Zealand

National Wilding Conifer Control Programme

Many of our North Island partners were affected by Cyclone Gabrielle and other severe weather over the summer.

In the Horizons and Bay of Plenty regions, many contractors, especially aerial contractors, were diverted to recovery work, however work was completed, albeit later than originally planned.

In the Waikato, contractors were diverted to recovery work, and there was a period that contractors were unable to access worksites due to infrastructure and safety issues. As a result, \$45,000 of funding was transferred out of the Waikato region to be spent on control in other regions.

In the Project Tongariro and Auckland Aotea Great Barrier community partnership projects, some planned ground control was unable to be achieved due to contractor unavailability and conditions preventing access to sites.

Tipu Mātoro National Wallaby Eradication Programme

No wallaby programme work was directly impacted by Cyclone Gabrielle. A minor related impact was that the Whakarewarewa fence construction, in Bay of Plenty, faced some delays. This was due to tree felling contractors, required for clearing land for the fence, being diverted to clearing fallen trees elsewhere.

Te Uru Rākau – New Zealand Forest Service

The Ūawanui Restoration Project is a Te Uru Rākau – New Zealand Forest Service funded riparian planting initiative.

The project had been previously impacted by a flooding event in 2022, which damaged both plants and fences that had already been completed. The project scope and timelines were adjusted as a result of this, and the project was in the process of completing its final milestone when the Cyclone occurred.

Riparian plantings are susceptible to damage by flooding during the stage that plants are still becoming established, and this has again proved the case with this project.

There are eight subsets to this grant, and hardest hit areas are at Kaiua Road and Karaka Bay. These properties are proximate to river mouths of coastal catchments, and as land erosion and river aggradation continues to be a major problem throughout Tairāwhiti, these areas are repeatedly exposed to flooding. The project is undergoing assessment, with staff currently meeting with grantees to fully assess the damage and what further actions may be required.

Agriculture and Investment Services

Two MAB Essential Freshwater Fund projects, both located within the Wairoa district, were impacted by Cyclone Gabrielle. In both cases, restricted access to the district combined with agencies/individuals being diverted onto other priorities, meant both projects experienced delays. Both contracts have since been varied, and milestone due dates adjusted accordingly. Two proposals located within Tairāwhiti were modified through the contracting process to account for the impacts of Cyclone Gabrielle. This included changes to the project approach and focus.

Two Sustainable Land Use Essential Freshwater Fund catchment group projects, both located in Hawke's Bay, were impacted by Cyclone Gabrielle. In both cases the original workplans needed to be adjusted. MPI is currently collaborating with both groups to determine if contract variations are required.

Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment



Across the regions, 585 people were employed, prompting many of the kaimahi to go on and seek higher training and education, and identify new vocational pathways.

**Robert Pigou
Head of Kānoa – RDU,
Ministry of Business,
Innovation and Employment**

Robert Pigou's reflections

The Head of Kānoa at the Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment shares his thoughts on the Jobs for Nature Programme.

When we embarked on the Fencing of Waterways programme three years ago, little did we know about how the extreme weather events in recent times might affect its progress.

However, despite destructive cyclones and heavy rainfall across many regions, the programme has continued to be a success.

Thirty of our 35 projects are now complete, which is more than double on this time last year.

What's more, we're on time and within our \$40.9 million budget.

Kānoa saw the economic and community benefit of this programme long before the wider Jobs for Nature initiative started. That's why we separately invested in the Fencing of Waterways programme from Kānoa's Provincial Growth Fund (PGF), as it fitted one of our core principles: Enabling the development of people and their communities to ensure their wellbeing and prosperity.



And it's worked. The achievements of this programme are nothing short of impressive. Since 2020, the programme has exceeded expectations by bringing more communities together, allowing them to lead these environmentally sustainable projects for the future benefit of our communities, people, and regions.

Along with providing landcare and environmental improvements, the programme also offers meaningful training and employment opportunities. This incredible two-fold benefit continues.

Across the regions, 585 people were employed, prompting many of the kaimahi to go on and seek higher training and education, and identify new vocational pathways.

Along the way training has been gained in activities such as fencing, first aid, site safety, driver licensing, pest control, water reticulation, and planting and nursery skills. Many in the project teams have also gained valuable understanding of employment law and how compliance systems work.

The projects have now completed more than 950 kilometres of fencing – about the distance between Wellington and Kaitaia. This is no mean feat as much of the land has involved areas of varied topography and works have been affected by challenges of extreme weather.

Nearly 98% of the programme's riparian planting has been completed, which now stands at 912 hectares – or about 900 rugby fields.

Riparian planting is of significant and ongoing benefit to the ecosystem, as it creates an additional layer of protection by stabilising banks, providing shade, cooling water, and enhancing oxygenation. This buffer between water and the land improves water quality and provides habitats for birds and several freshwater fish and invertebrates.

In addition to its environmental focus, Jobs for Nature programme has shown that 80% of the 35 completed projects have had either a direct or indirect economic benefit to Māori. This represents key focus areas of Kānoa and the PGF – increasing social inclusion and participation, enabling Māori to realise aspirations, while lifting overall productive activity in the regions.

We will most definitely see the ongoing benefits of these projects in years to come, so this is money well spent for the regions and sets a scene for further environmental protection work and skills development.

With almost all projects now complete and the remaining projects due to finish up within the next year, the Fencing of Waterways programme is coming to an end.

The programme focused on fast uptake and immediate employment, so the majority of projects were successfully assessed and contracted at pace. This provided significant opportunities for local contractors and those unemployed to gain 1-3 years of paid employment during a difficult and uncertain time for New Zealand's economy and workforce.

As of 29th August 2023, 585 people have been employed. 76% of those employed are local and 25% had joined the programme from being unemployed or displaced by COVID-19.

Despite the many challenges faced by the pandemic and North Island weather events, planned objectives across the programme have been exceeded for both riparian planting and fencing.

More than 80% of contracts had a direct impact on Māori and many included environmental restoration and improvements to farms on Māori owned land. Supporting economic opportunities for Māori business is an ongoing priority for Kānoa.

As a result of this funding, 56 Māori businesses have been directly involved as suppliers or contractors to the projects. Since this time a number of these businesses have also been able to scale up their operations and secure further contracts with local and central government.

Many of the projects also had social procurement objectives built into funding agreements, which have shown significant impact on social outcomes for the communities they serve.

Career development plans have been actively developed alongside training and development programmes, assisting employees to routinely transition out of their role and into further employment and education. Kānoa has also provided support from the Regional Skills and Leadership Groups to assist transition for kaimahi involved in other Jobs for Nature funded projects around New Zealand.

Broader outcomes of the programme include kaimahi developing a stronger connection to the whenua and a desire to restore and protect its natural state. Many transferrable skills were also gained by employees, including building, fencing, plant and nursery management, driver licensing, earthworks, project management and site safety.

Financial metrics | Ngahuru ahumoni

95.8% of funding has been paid, reflecting the status of the programme is now in its final stages. Remaining five projects are due to be completed in 2023/24.

Approved funding (\$ million)	Contracted funding (\$ million)	Funding paid (\$ million)	Approved projects	Contracted projects
40.9	40.9	39.2	35	35

Employment metrics | Ngahuru taimahi

Employment has steadily fallen throughout 2022/2023 as the majority of projects have been completed. Over the life of the programme 53% of jobs were filled by Māori, 35% were people previously unemployed or displaced from Covid-19, 25% of employees were aged between 15-24 and 76% of employees were local.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Hours worked	34,320	21,040	17,560	18,420	91,340
Employment starts	20	3		6	29

Environmental metrics | Ngahuru Taiao

Funding recipients report on two environmental measures. This includes hectares of riparian planting completed and kilometres of fencing completed. Across the programme both metrics have exceeded their targets.

	2022/23 achieved	Completed to date	Lifetime forecast
Area of riparian or lake or wetlands planting completed (ha)	621	1,099	1,014
Riparian planting (ha)	266	1,071	985

Environmental Area Legend: [freshwater](#)

Impacts of severe weather events | Te pāpātanga o te huarere taikaha

Persistent wet weather throughout 2022 and early 2023 impacted many of our North Island Fencing of Waterways projects. Restricted access due to health and safety risks from damaged unstable roads or saturated ground resulted in delays for some projects completing final work targets. In a few cases some targets were reduced to avoid budget overspends. But overall, Cyclones Gabrielle and Hale had a minor impact on projects despite nearly half of the projects being located in cyclone affected regions. Fortunately, most project work had been completed or was very close to completion when the cyclones occurred.

Despite challenges of heavy rain, reduced access caused by cyclones' Hale and Gabrielle, and delays due to COVID-19, the team completed the fencing early this year, including much needed stockproof fencing in the tributary headwater areas.



CASE STUDY

Puhake Taku Kapu Puhake Taku Wai

The latest successful project funded by Kānoa – Regional Economic Development & Investment Unit is the Puhake Taku Kapu Puhake Taku Wai.

In 2020, \$1.38 million was funded to complete 40 kms of riparian fencing across 2,300 hectares of landblocks in the greater Makatote Stream catchments, south of Ruatoria.

This work was of significant environmental importance to local landowners and iwi, to regrow native vegetation in this area, and to improve land management sustainability for future generations.

Despite challenges of heavy rain, reduced access caused by cyclones' Hale and Gabrielle, and delays due to COVID-19, the team completed the fencing early this year, including much needed stockproof fencing in the tributary headwater areas.

The project provided training and jobs for 14 full and part time locals, with nine others trying their hand at the work during its two-year operation.

With intergenerational participation and leadership being a key dynamic for Ngāti Porou, the team included a mix of younger rangatahi trainees, iramutu (late 20 to 30s), kaumatua, and pakeha. This dynamic increased the skills base, training and mentoring outcomes of the team.

When there were challenges in accessing training and vocational support services in this remote East Cape area, the project adapted by harnessing wider whanau networks for support when needed.



Proud kaimahi at the Puhake Taku Kapu Puhake Taku Wai project

*Photo: Ministry of Business
Innovation and Employment*

The project enabled further environmental awareness, with the variety of skills training in a real world setting fostering further restoration activities.

This led to the team also collecting native seedlings for replanting in erosion prone gullies, and on heavy weather days, kaimahi learnt about biodiversity restoration, pest management, GIS mapping and botany.

These project operations also informed and allowed collaboration with other environmental and climate change kaupapa locally.

Completing the project provided a prompt for the team to seek further pathways and advance specialist skills and training. Some have since pursued national certificates, continued with fencing or other agrarian roles, while a few are pursuing higher environment science and business management qualifications.

What's more, the project's outcomes have given the region's Land Trust clarity on what is needed for operational settings when developing further Māori infrastructure.

Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand



Since joining LINZ in May 2023 I have been impressed and inspired by the range of work underway in our biosecurity and biodiversity programme.

**Adrienne Meikle
Tumu Whakarae mō
Toitū Te Whenua,
Secretary for Land
Information New Zealand
and Chief Executive**

Adrienne Meikle's reflections

Tumu Whakarae mō Toitū Te Whenua Secretary for Land Information and Chief Executive Adrienne Meikle shares her thoughts on the Jobs for Nature programme.

Since joining LINZ in May 2023 I have been impressed and inspired by the range of work underway in our biosecurity and biodiversity programme.

Our investment in Te Manahuna Aoraki Project is delivering real benefits for the environment and supporting the local economy.

Te Manahuna Aoraki Project is working to protect and revitalise 310,000 hectares within the upper Mackenzie Basin and Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park. The project area includes mountain ranges, Lake Pukaki and Lake Tekapo and the extensive braided river systems that feed them.

With support from LINZ, the project removed almost 1.5 million of the most damaging weeds from the area during 2022-23.

Our profile on page 33 about Sam Shaw and the weed spraying company he set up to work in the project is a good example of skills gained because of the programme – not to mention the challenges of working in the southern region!

Further south our project collaboration with Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua and the Department of Conservation Te Papa Atawhai (DOC) has transformed the Waipopo Lagoon, a nationally significant habitat for wetland birds, including banded dotterel, black fronted tern and black stilt.

The wetland sits within the wider Opihi River mouth which contains land administered by various agencies including LINZ, DOC, ECAN and the Timaru District council.

The Lagoon is considered a taonga site of significance to Arowhenua for its mahinga kai value. In the past it provided habitat to many significant bird populations and fish spawning but over time it has been treated very poorly.

In 2021, Jobs for Nature funding was used to restore the wetland. Work began with the installation of basalt boulders along the southern edge of a gravel access road beside the wetland to prevent people entering the area and using it as a 4WD racetrack and a dumping ground for old cars and rubbish.

Since then, weed species including crack and grey willow, broom, gorse and tamarisk have been removed. The wetland has been replanted with seedlings from the Arowhenua nursery, Te Kete Tipuranga o Huirapa. The land is transformed from where it was just three years ago.

The Aspiring Biodiversity Trust, our project partner in northern Central Otago has continued to expand its work programme trapping pests. We enjoyed celebrating the Trust's volunteers during Volunteer Week this year, and the amazing work they carry out for the rock wren and other species high up in the alpine passes above the Makarora and Wilkins rivers.

Te Rūnanga o Hokonui has continued to restore plant and animal life across Southland's Hokonui hills, home to many native bird, plant and skink species that have a physical and spiritual significance to the people of Te Rūnanga o Hokonui.

Three years of dedicated trapping, water and habitat management has seen the environment of the Hokonui Hills flourish in part due to the hard work of the Kaitiaki Whenua Rangers Programme funded through our Jobs for Nature programme.

The programme has provided first aid and 4WD skills training, as well as horticultural and field-based skills and qualifications – competencies that will benefit individuals and communities into the future.

As we progress the final year of our Jobs for Nature programme we are working closely with our project partners to ensure project outcomes are achieved. We are also supporting partners to transition their work where possible beyond Jobs for Nature.

All 12 projects are on track for completion with a number already exceeding our initial project employment and environmental goals. But for now the hard work continues; checking traps, removing weeds and planting seedlings.

The investment has enabled LINZ to develop biosecurity and biodiversity projects that will create enduring benefits in the lakes, rivers, and lands it manages on behalf of the Crown. Many of the projects are in Canterbury, Otago, and Southland, with smaller projects in Te Arawa (Rotorua) Lakes and the Waikato region.

These projects have been developed in partnership with iwi and rūnanga, regional councils, the Department of Conservation, and community trusts. A selection of the work includes:

Terrestrial and aquatic pest and weed control in and around lakes and rivers

Increasing the capacity and capability for iwi and rūnanga to exercise Kaitiakitanga and rangatiratanga with a focus on Mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge). This has resulted in training programmes for staff working on a range of restoration projects, including seed collection and applying cultural approaches to habitat restoration

Habitat protection and monitoring of ground-nesting birds in braided rivers

Restoration and protection of biodiversity and habitats at key sites such as the long-tailed bat habitat in Canterbury and geothermal sites in the Central North Island.

LINZ is also supporting its project partners through the development of geospatial information tools. These weed and pest mapping and reporting tools are helping to build a detailed picture of invasive weed location and spread. The information provides LINZ and its project partners with a better understanding of the condition of the lands and waterways they are seeking to manage and restore. Employment and Environmental forecasts currently indicate LINZ is on track to meet or exceed the targets set over the life of the programme.

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Financial metrics | Ngahuru ahumoni

LINZ is responsible for three per cent, or \$40 million of the overall Programme.

Headline metrics for LINZ's project investments are displayed below.

Approved funding (\$ million)	Contracted funding (\$ million)	Funding paid (\$ million)	Approved projects	Contracted projects
40	40	30.1	12	12

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	27.6	27.6	11
Boffa Miskell – Aquatic and terrestrial weed and pest control	8.7	8.7	1
Overheads	3.8	3.8	

All \$40m of funding was allocated in year one with contracts, MOUs, and funding agreements in place to deliver over four years.

Employment metrics | Ngahuru taimahi

LINZ has been steadily increasing the rate at which employment and environmental objectives have been achieved over the third financial year. As with the first two years of the programme, LINZ is on track to meet its targets for the third year. The work involves the use of specialist equipment, such as helicopters for boom and spot spraying, boats, and specialist divers for aquatic weed control. The focus is to create jobs and at the same time achieve improved biosecurity outcomes.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Hours worked	33,156	35,903	39,351	35,628	144,039
Employment starts	93	100	39	43	275

Environmental metrics | Ngahuru taiao

LINZ projects predominately revolve around pest and weed control so it reports accordingly on three environmental metrics related to pest and weed control. The agency has met or exceeded achievements for these three environmental metrics. LINZ also collects information on native seed collection for propagating nurseries as part of its Hokonui Hills Restoration project, and information about Undaria, an invasive seaweed found at river mouths through Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu Undaria project. LINZ reports over 8 kgs of native seeds and 65,000 kgs of Undaria collected as part of these projects.

	2022/23 achievement	Completed to date	Lifetime forecast
Length of tracks created (km)	73	103	-
Length of tracks maintained (km)	1	1	-
Area of animal pest control completed (ha)	204,211	472,899	447,500
Area treated for weeds (ha)	115,187	458,313	498,000
Area where aquatic weeds were controlled (ha)	6,134	10,980	12,300

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

Other areas of note | Ētahi atu wāhi whaitake

LINZ has worked closely with funding recipients to meet project deliverables, particularly where projects have been adversely affected by circumstances outside of their control such as COVID-19 lockdown, weather, and lack of material and supplies due to supply chain problems.

Information and data from our biosecurity workstreams are automated and collated into an online dashboard to provide up-to-date information and reporting on progress and current state. This includes monthly updates on job figures, spending and equipment and provides data from contractors in the field performing biosecurity work.

LINZ is in the process of identifying which projects have a need for transition. This includes continuing discussions with each of its 12 projects to gather insight into how the agency may be able to support projects once funding ends in mid-2024. The agency is determining which of the projects will have achieved their purpose, which projects may continue to be maintained as part of the LINZ's biosecurity and biodiversity work programme and which projects need to secure further funding to maintain employment and environmental outcomes.

Many of LINZ's projects have expressed their desire to continue beyond the life of the programme but most will need some form of assistance to do so. LINZ is continuing to work with funding recipients to understand needs, and opportunities and provide tailored support where needed.

Photo right: Te Rūnanga o Hokonui has been working to restore plant and animal life across Southland's Hokonui Hills. Credit: Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand.



Recommendations

Ngā tūtohunga

The following key recommendations have emerged to better support the Jobs for Nature programme in the next financial year. The Secretariat has begun work on these.

Lessons to inform future strategy

It is recommended for the Secretariat and agencies to continue capturing lessons learned through the evaluation process and applying these in potential future approaches for investment in environmental restoration and resilience. The subsequent stages, which take place in Years Four and Five, include an independent final evaluation to be conducted by Allen + Clarke. This will see a full set of learnings to be shared for future investment programmes.

Agencies continue working with partners to implement Transition Strategy

While the Programme Transition Strategy sets the overall objectives to achieve lasting impacts, agencies implement the Strategy by enabling, connecting, and supporting their respective projects. It is critical for agencies to continue and, where possible, increase engagement with funding recipients and others so that future opportunities can be accessed and realised. Agencies' roles in supporting project transitions are outlined in the Transition Strategy and in the earlier Programme Governance section.

Continue development of Tūhono Taiao to support funding recipients and communities beyond the Jobs for Nature programme

The national digital community of practice website Tūhono Taiao forms a key part of the Transition Strategy. It will enable fund recipients to sustain environmental work through collaboration, connections and resource sharing.

Tūhono Taiao has potential to support wider environmental strategies and community driven initiatives at the national level. The Secretariat is exploring systems and pathways to enable wider functionality through connecting environmental groups with government agencies, NGOs, industry, and, potentially, philanthropic partners.

Improve cross agency engagement in regions

The Secretariat have been progressing the strategic community of practice model to support collaboration across the programme. Tūhono Taiao will support additional collaboration and knowledge-sharing but will not replace face-to-face collaboration and existing communities of practice in regions. The Secretariat is facilitating collaboration of delivery agencies to help connect their community of practice engagements across the programme.

Review of the Jobs for Nature response to Cyclone Gabrielle

The programme and agencies' responses to Cyclone Gabrielle should be reviewed to understand how environmental investment programmes can better prepare and respond to future severe weather events.

The cyclone had significant impacts on the people and outputs of affected projects. This should be understood as well as possible as part of assessing the overall impact and performance of the programme.

A review is also an opportunity to understand additional community benefits of the Jobs for Nature investment. Projects were able to redeploy kaimahi to support clean-up efforts, and the networking of people and groups around environmental causes may have enhanced the overall community response.

Better understand social impact of investment

The programme has shifted emphasis from immediate short-term job creation to capacity and capability building for longer-term social and environmental outcomes. However, this is not well reflected in reporting and the overall success measures of the programme. The programme needs to be able to assess who has been reached by the investment and the impacts of employment by collecting demographic metrics, including age, gender and ethnicity, and other metrics, such as training provided and permanency of employment. Encouraging the use of metrics defined by the EET¹⁹ will enable consistency across the programme and comparability with wider government initiatives. The best opportunity to gather this information at this stage in the programme is through good project closure reporting. The first stage of a social impact analysis is also being undertaken by working with a small group of projects to scope and create a framework for measuring and reporting these impacts.

19. MSD – Data Collection and Reporting of Job Creation Initiatives across government.

Glossary

Kuputaka

Allen+Clarke – Place-Based Case Studies

<https://environment.govt.nz/assets/publications/jobs-for-nature-place-based-case-studies.pdf>

Allen+Clarke – Jobs for Nature Evaluation Year One Report

<https://environment.govt.nz/assets/publications/jobs-for-nature-evaluation-year-one-reportl.pdf>

Budget 2023 – Summary of Initiatives

<https://budget.govt.nz/budget/pdfs/summary-initiatives/b23-wellbeing-budget-soi.pdf>

Cabinet paper and minutes: Jobs for Nature progress update

<https://environment.govt.nz/what-government-is-doing/cabinet-papers-and-regulatory-impact-statements/cabinet-paper-jobs-for-nature-progress-update/>

DOC – Te Mana o Te Taiao Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/conservation/biodiversity/anzbs-2020.pdf>

DPMC – Implementation Unit – Jobs for Nature Stocktake of Progress

<https://www.dPMC.govt.nz/sites/default/files/2022-03/proactive-release-iu-dPMC-2021-22-607-jobs-nature-stocktake-progress.pdf>

Jobs for Nature Annual Review Year One

https://environment.govt.nz/assets/publications/JFN_Annual-Review_2021_Final.pdf

Jobs for Nature Annual Review Year Two

<https://environment.govt.nz/assets/publications/Jobs-for-Nature-Annual-Review-Year-Two.pdf>

Jobs for Nature Programme Interim Evaluation 2023

<https://environment.govt.nz/assets/publications/Jobs-for-Nature-programme-interim-evaluation-2023.pdf>

Jobs for Nature / Mahi mō te Taiao Programme Transition Strategy

<https://environment.govt.nz/assets/publications/Jobs-for-Nature-Programme-Transition-Strategy.pdf>

Jobs for Nature website

<https://www.jobsfornature.govt.nz/>

MSD – Data Collection and Reporting of Job Creation Initiatives across government

<https://www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/information-releases/eet-counting-jobs-paper-for-public-release-final.pdf>

StatsNZ – Annual inflation at 6.0 percent

<https://www.stats.govt.nz/news/annual-inflation-at-6-0-percent/>

StatsNZ – Business price indexes: June 2023 quarter

<https://www.stats.govt.nz/information-releases/business-price-indexes-june-2023-quarter/>





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