



1 November 2018

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your Official Information Act request to the Department of Conservation, dated 30 October 2018. You requested the following: *I am requesting background information on the statement that "New Zealand has over 4,000 threatened species" used by the Department of Conservation.*

Your questions related to the statement and our responses are listed below:

1. *How the figure of "over 4,000" was calculated, including a list of sources/references and the exact number of "threatened species" calculated by the Department.*

The figure of "over 4,000" is based on data in the New Zealand Threat Classification System (NZTCS) database. The complete list of published NZTCS assessments is available at www.nztcs.org.nz and can be downloaded to an Excel spreadsheet for analysis. Individual reports on the assessments of species groups are published on the DOC website at <https://www.doc.govt.nz/about-us/science-publications/series/new-zealand-threat-classification-series/>.

In threat assessments that are published, threatened and at risk species presently account for 3,840. The number of threatened and at risk species increases to 4016 when assessments that have been completed but not yet published on the NZTCS website are included. New assessments of mites, freshwater invertebrates, land snails, lichens, and marine mammals have been completed and reports are in preparation. The website will be updated with these assessments as the new reports are published over the coming months.

2. *Which categories from the New Zealand Threat Classification System are used in this statement to define a species as "threatened".*

The NZTCS 'umbrella' categories of Threatened and At Risk were used in the statement to define a species as "threatened". The categories 'Threatened' and 'At Risk' can be applied to resident native species that are assessed as facing some level of risk of extinction. Species in the Threatened category are assessed as being either 'Nationally Critical, Nationally Endangered or Nationally Vulnerable. Species in the At Risk category are assessed as being Declining, Recovering, Relict or Naturally Uncommon.

The definitions and criteria for the NZTCS statuses are described in the New Zealand Threat Classification System manual, which is available at <https://www.doc.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/science-and-technical/sap244.pdf>

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) and will be published on the Department's website.

Yours sincerely,



Julie Knauf
Director, Terrestrial Ecosystems