

# Department of Conservation

## A Briefing to the New Minister of Conservation

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Front cover image: Mt La Perouse as seen from the terminal of Gulch Glacier, Westland National Park. *Photo: DOC*

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# Key Messages

The department is now at the leading edge of conservation practice internationally. This, combined with the increased funding to support the highest priority actions in the *New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy*, has placed us in a better position than ever before to continue the work towards halting the decline in biodiversity. With increased resources for recreational facilities, the department will be able to provide a full range of recreational opportunities for visitors.

Nevertheless, the conservation challenges facing New Zealand remain huge. The sheer scale of the task of just stabilising biodiversity decline, even where there are good strategies and clear accountabilities in place, is daunting. In the marine, freshwater and biosecurity areas there are still overlapping and confused management responsibilities among public agencies. For recreation and historic heritage, the challenge is to identify the costs and long-term choices for our management of the assets.

The size of the conservation challenges facing our country means that all New Zealanders must share responsibility for conserving our heritage. A major aim for the department over the coming years is to strengthen efforts to involve communities more fully in conservation work, and to motivate communities to undertake conservation initiatives.

# Introduction

Naumai haere mai. Welcome to the Department of Conservation.

As Minister of Conservation you will be responsible for overseeing management of 30% of New Zealand's land area; protection of the nation's native plant and animal life, marine areas and nationally important historic heritage.

This briefing paper gives you an overview of the strategic issues facing the department and conservation in New Zealand generally, and the policy responses that are either proposed or underway.

Part One is the strategic overview, and sets out the:

- Core role of the department and the broader role that we play in New Zealand communities;
- Major conservation issues facing the country at present; and
- Lessons learned by the department since our inception and how we intend to build on these.

Part Two addresses these issues in more detail, providing the department's policy responses with reference to our *Statement of Intent*, and setting out:

- Priority outcomes and the seven key steps we are currently taking to fulfil our conservation responsibilities; and
- Significant policy initiatives, proposed or underway, across the range of the department's work.

You will be provided separately with a manual introducing the department, including details of our statutory functions and mandate, structure, details of statutory boards and committees and other bodies with which you have an association, and a profile of the general management team and conservators.



Hugh Logan

DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF CONSERVATION



Part 1

# Strategic Overview

## A THE DEPARTMENT'S ROLE

The department is a public service agency committed to serving the public of New Zealand. We are well-placed to do this, working in close proximity to local communities throughout New Zealand and being one of the few central government agencies that maintains a strong presence in small towns across the country. Our aim is to see all communities fully involved with us in the conservation of New Zealand's natural and historic heritage.

The department's primary role is to manage for conservation purposes all of the lands, waters, wildlife, fish and marine mammals for which we are responsible. Our work also helps to achieve a wide range of other societal objectives. For example, we contributed to meeting a number of the previous government's key goals including:

- **strengthening national identity** through the conservation of natural and historic heritage and the provision of recreational opportunities;
- **upholding the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi** through a growing number of partnerships with tangata whenua;
- **growing an inclusive, innovative economy for the benefit of all** through the provision of tourism opportunities and the management of commercial concessions in protected areas; and
- **improving New Zealanders' skills** through developing its staff, working closely with communities, providing opportunities for volunteers, and supporting the trainee rangers' programme at the Nelson/Marlborough Institute of Technology.

The department has now developed clear strategies in most areas of its work and has a strong institutional framework. There is no doubt that conservation management in New Zealand benefits greatly from the fact it has one national agency tasked with the job of conservation management. It means we can better integrate management actions across the country and focus resources on the highest priority places. It also gives us the opportunity to consider the range of relevant values and desired outcomes for a particular place when management decisions are being made. For example, decisions can take into account both the different purposes of management (historic, natural heritage, recreation) and the value sets of different stakeholders (economic wellbeing of communities, cultural values of iwi), in a way that could not easily happen if management responsibilities were shared among a number of agencies.

Ultimately, effective conservation depends very much on public support. The size of the challenges still facing New Zealand, as described below, means that all New Zealanders must share responsibility for conserving our biodiversity. Although public ownership of natural and historic resources has enabled the public to play an increasingly important role in their management, a key aim for the department is not only to improve its efforts to involve them more fully in its work, but also to motivate communities to undertake their own conservation initiatives.

## B “RESTORING THE DAWN CHORUS”

The conservation challenges facing New Zealand are well documented, first in the Ministry for the Environment’s report *The State of New Zealand’s Environment*, and later in the *New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy*. Both of these concluded that biodiversity decline remains New Zealand’s most pervasive environmental issue. The *New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy* concluded that two key challenges are:

- restoring the condition of already protected ecosystems and the indigenous species found within them; and
- finding ways to maintain the indigenous biodiversity values of natural habitats and ecosystems outside public protected areas.

The *New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy* was approved in February 2000 along with a \$187 million funding package over five years to implement key actions<sup>1</sup> (announced in May 2000). The funding has allowed increased biodiversity effort on public conservation land, a range of initiatives on private land, research and protection of marine and freshwater biodiversity, and programmes for marine and terrestrial biosecurity. The department has the lead role in coordinating the implementation of the *New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy*.

The increased funding to support the highest priority actions in the *New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy* over the past three years has placed the department (and other departments) in a better position than ever before to continue their work towards halting the decline in biodiversity. While it is early days in the implementation of the *New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy*, there have already been some notable successes. These include the establishment of five kiwi sanctuaries on the mainland, the eradication of rats from Campbell Island, and a range of initiatives helping landowners to protect private land.

Helicopter with bucket used for spreading Pestoff 20R poison as part of the rat eradication programme, Campbell Island.

*Photo: DOC*



<sup>1</sup> Of the \$187 million over five years, approximately \$87 million is for land/freshwater biodiversity programmes on public conservation land, \$41 million for marine biodiversity and biosecurity (including \$27 million to projects led by the Ministry of Fisheries, \$2.5 million to the Ministry for the Environment, and \$11 million for marine reserves), \$37 million for biodiversity on private land, \$20 million on coordination, advice and information, and \$3 million for terrestrial biosecurity.



Ultimately though, the conservation challenges facing New Zealand remain huge. A combination of the scale of these challenges, the long-term commitment of New Zealanders to do something about them, and the experience built up by the department (and its parent agencies) has taken the department to the leading edge of conservation practice internationally. David Bellamy recently described the department as the most effective biodiversity conservation agency in the world.

Good progress is being made towards **halting the decline** in indigenous biodiversity, but the department is some way from its longer term goal of '**restoring the dawn chorus**'. We still lack clear strategies in certain areas and there are also some capacity gaps within the department.

The two pervasive issues facing the department in our work are:

- Overlapping and confused management responsibilities among public agencies and a lack of overall strategy in the marine, freshwater and biosecurity areas; and
- The sheer scale of the task of just stabilising biodiversity decline, even where there are good strategies and clear accountabilities in place, as is the case with biodiversity management in the terrestrial environment.

What follows is a summary of the main issues in respect of the department's **natural heritage** responsibilities<sup>2</sup> under the headings of:

- Marine
- Freshwater
- Biosecurity
- Terrestrial biodiversity management
- Biodiversity on private land
- International

More detail on the policy work underway in each of these areas is provided in Part Two of this paper.

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<sup>2</sup> Issues relating to helping people enjoy their heritage – visitors and historic heritage management – are dealt with later in this section of the paper.

## Marine

The greatest environmental policy issue facing New Zealand is developing an integrated framework for the management of our oceans. New Zealand's marine environment is



Blue moki, Paterson Inlet  
Photo: DOC

at least 14 times the size of our terrestrial and freshwater area, and our Exclusive Economic Zone is the fourth largest in the world. Mixed, and sometimes conflicting, management responsibilities with competing environmental, social and economic priorities need to be better co-ordinated. There is insufficient knowledge of marine life and how marine ecosystems work to show whether we are sustainably managing New Zealand's marine and coastal biodiversity.

The *New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy* target of protecting 10% of the marine environment is extremely challenging. For example, less than 1% of the marine environment around the coastline is protected in marine reserves, and there has been real difficulty in establishing additional areas for protection under the current Marine Reserves Act and its intersection with fisheries legislation. Although New Zealand's coastal waters and habitats are generally of high quality by international standards, they are under considerable stress in some areas, particularly in estuaries near towns and cities and at the mouths of large rivers. Fisheries by-catch, for example of albatross, Hector's dolphin and the New Zealand sealion, remains a serious threat to a range of protected species.

There is considerable growth in extractive activities (e.g. fishing). While these are often characterised by stakeholder reluctance to constrain activities or protect areas unless risk or damage can be proved, there are some encouraging signs that industry leaders are more accepting that there are issues they need to address.

## Freshwater

Management of freshwater ecosystems is probably the second largest environmental policy challenge. Again management responsibilities are complex, contradictory and overlapping and the achievement of conservation outcomes depends on agencies working effectively together. Although a significant proportion of upland lakes and streams are included within protected areas, very few lowland river or lake systems have any form of protection.



Detail of a wetland community,  
Pouo, Northland  
Photo: Lisa Forester/DOC

Rivers, lakes and wetlands in lowland areas face dramatic increases in demand from irrigation and, in some cases hydro-generation impacts, as well as increased pollution from urban and rural areas. Many are ecologically degraded through biological invasions, reduced water quality, channelisation and sedimentation. The habitat of some freshwater species is now severely restricted. One third of the 29 identified species of indigenous freshwater fish are threatened. There are also sizeable gaps in knowledge of freshwater species and habitat requirements.

The Auditor-General has recently assessed New Zealand's implementation of the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (the "Ramsar Convention") for which the department is the administering authority, and highlighted the lack of accountability for performance and achievement amongst agencies with responsibility for different aspects of freshwater wetland protection.

## Biosecurity

New Zealand's unique biodiversity is highly vulnerable to the impacts of exotic pests, weeds and diseases. Unless New Zealand has effective border biosecurity and achieves the rapid and effective eradication of introductions of new alien organisms, then many of the gains of decades of conservation effort are put at risk.

There are four central government agencies with responsibilities in the biosecurity area.<sup>3</sup> Regional councils also have an important role to play in managing existing marine and terrestrial pests and in providing support for new incursion responses. The overriding issues relate to leadership, strategic focus and co-ordination across the sector, although there has been significantly improved co-ordination in the past three years. More specifically from the department's point of view, the current decision-making framework has not always adequately considered risks to indigenous flora and fauna. This is partly as a result of historical confusion over who is responsible for the role and the inherent difficulties in identifying and evaluating potential risks.

The distinction between what is biosecurity work (funded under Vote: Biosecurity through the Minister for Biosecurity), and what is biodiversity work (funded under Vote: Conservation through the Minister of Conservation) is not always clear. Much pest and weed control work could be considered under either budget and this can create confusion when evaluating funding options for incursion responses.



Weasel (left front), ferret (back)  
and stoat (right front)  
*Photo: D. Garrick/DOC*

## Terrestrial Biodiversity Management

Evolution through a long period of isolation created New Zealand's unique flora and fauna and also made it especially vulnerable to new changes associated with human settlement. The department aims to maintain or restore the condition of a full range of natural environments with the goal of ensuring threatened species again flourish in their natural environments. Ecosystem management, however, is a difficult process that involves managing multiple species and the integration of weed and pest control efforts.

<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Ministry of Fisheries, Ministry of Health and the Department of Conservation. The department has a separate purchase agreement with the Minister of Biosecurity for this work.

Invasive introduced species pose the single largest serious threat to ecosystem functioning and the survival of indigenous species in many natural areas, and even now the problem may still be underestimated.

The costs of weed and pest control are high, and recent campaigns against the use of 1080 and other toxins have the potential to seriously undermine the department's pest control work. Further extinctions remain probable due to insufficient or degraded habitat, plant and animal pests, or the adverse effects of human activities. Although there have been significant advances and achievements over recent years, so far the overall decline of threatened species has been slowed rather than reversed. The example of the kiwi is a startling reminder of the vulnerability of our flora and fauna. Two hundred years ago there were millions of kiwi on New Zealand's mainland. Today there are less than 85,000 and the population is declining at the rate of 5.8% per year - or halving every decade. Without management kiwi will almost certainly become extinct on the mainland within the next 100 years. Fortunately intervention management is currently being undertaken.

The department has developed a new system for classifying indigenous species by the extent to which they are threatened. Under the "New Zealand Threat Classification System" there are currently about 2,400 species in the Threatened category [approximately 2000 terrestrial, 67 freshwater and 340 marine species] and another approximately 2,050 in the "Data Deficient category" [approximately 1,950 terrestrial, 20 freshwater and 70 marine species]. There are approximately 770 species in the "Acutely" and "Chronically Threatened categories".



South Island kiwi, Fiordland  
*Photo: Rod Morris/DOC*

Issues surrounding the use of genetic modification are also likely to raise public concern. The department takes a strong precautionary approach to the release of any new organism into the New Zealand environment, but also recognises that genetically modified biocontrols have the potential to provide new techniques for pest and weed control, as long as their use can be shown to be acceptable and safe. During the two year constraint period, research programmes have been established and officials are exploring ways that genetic modification and traditional agriculture can co-exist, including looking at the option of 'conditional release'. The department is involved in this work to ensure that risks to indigenous flora and fauna are not increased by any changes to the regulatory regime. Climate change also threatens to have significant long-term adverse effects on indigenous ecosystems, particularly for alpine and sub-alpine species and through improved conditions for alien pest species.

A key issue for the department is being able to demonstrate how we can add optimal value to conservation management. Conservation management is very much about making choices and the challenge for the department is not only to achieve conservation gains, but also **to show** how different management actions contribute to stem the decline in New Zealand's heritage. For example, choices may involve balancing ecosystem management with the often pressing need for single species management, or balancing the department's capacity to manage small areas intensively with dramatic effect through its mainland island work against the cost of less intensive work over much larger areas. Even the welcome explosion in community interest in restoration, which is primarily focused on restoring nature to areas close to urban settlements, must be balanced against the need to continue the department's work in more remote areas.

### **Biodiversity on Private Land**

New Zealand's protected area network is extensive (habitats protected within public conservation lands comprise about eight million hectares). Many distinctive natural habitats and ecosystems, however, remain primarily as small fragments in developed and modified landscapes. Examples of these include lowland and coastal forest remnants, dunelands, natural shrublands, wetlands, lower altitude tussock grasslands. Many of these terrestrial and freshwater habitats are scarce, located on private or Crown leasehold land and are vulnerable to future loss. Accordingly, these areas are the highest priorities for legal protection.

The recent addition of the 132,000 hectares of West Coast rainforest previously managed by Timberlands New Zealand, and the protection of areas of the South Island tussockland high country through the tenure review process have been significant for conservation. The ongoing pastoral lease tenure review process in the eastern South Island is likely to deliver further important gains for conservation in upcoming years. It is critical, however, that conservation gains continue to be achieved outside the protected area

The rolling tussocklands typical of the Lammermoor-Lammerlaw ranges.  
*Photo: Brian Patrick/Otago Museum*



framework to ensure that a representative range of natural habitats is protected.

The key issue is in finding the right mix of policies, regulatory and non-regulatory, to achieve conservation gains. Ultimately, communities must be motivated to want to conserve biodiversity. Regulatory intervention will at times be inevitable, but this alone will not work. Examining further the use of incentives through existing funds, like Ngā Whenua Rahui, the Nature Heritage Fund and the QEII National Trust,

developing stronger relationships with territorial local authorities, placing more emphasis on education, and assisting with the development of the national policy statement on biodiversity are all important for securing conservation gains outside of those areas of land that are already protected.

## **International**

One of the department's statutory functions is to 'promote the benefits of conservation (including Antarctica and internationally)'. The department plays a significant role in relation to international conservation agreements to which New Zealand is a signatory, and more widely.

Significant international work is carried out by the department, particularly in the Pacific, before the International Whaling Commission where New Zealand is an important advocate for whale conservation, and in relation to Antarctica where key issues such as minimising seabird by-catch, exploitation of fisheries and protection of Antarctica's wilderness are major concerns. The department also makes an active contribution to the Convention on Biodiversity and to UNESCO's World Heritage Committee. We are currently working to have New Zealand represented by Tumu te Heuheu (Paramount Chief of Ngati Tuwharetoa) on the World Heritage Committee.



Humpback calf.

## C HELPING PEOPLE TO ENJOY THEIR HERITAGE

Fostering recreation is a major part of the department's work. The National Parks Act, the Conservation Act, and the Reserves Act all contain explicit recognition that the enjoyment of natural heritage is one of the main reasons for the existence of the department and the protected area network. People should be able to experience and enjoy a full range of their natural and historic heritage, including knowing more about it.

### Visitors

More and more New Zealanders and overseas visitors want to enjoy protected areas and, as the National Parks Act states, receive the full measure of inspiration, enjoyment and recreation from them. Although the department is now considered to be a world leader in back country recreation facility management, important issues continue to be raised about the extent to which public demand can be met, and the need to ensure a quality experience for visitors. Most importantly, the department is required by its legislation to balance recreation and tourism with the department's obligations to conserve natural and historic places.



Trampers look toward Mount Aspiring from Cascade Ridge  
*Photo: C. Rudge/DOC*

In 2002, the government secured the long-term funding of recreation facilities with an agreement to provide additional capital injections and operating funding until 2022/23. Between 2012 and 2023, funding will be further increased to replace the large number of visitor assets that will be retiring during this period. This funding will enable the department to retain all existing recreation **opportunities**, but not necessarily all existing **facilities**.

There are a number of key issues to work through in relation to visitors. The department is putting in place a process to work with the public to determine the

appropriate mix of 'back country' and 'front country' opportunities that should be provided for visitors, and the appropriate standards and facilities for these. In doing this, consideration must also be given to how to protect wilderness areas and areas of natural quiet.

In some areas, (for example, the beaches and camping grounds in the Abel Tasman National Park and road end at Milford Sound), the social and environmental impacts of increasing numbers of visitors are prompting more emphasis from the department on visitor research and monitoring. The growth in tourism numbers is also increasing the pressure on the department to develop more public conservation areas for tourism and there are sensitivities about controlling access to ecologically vulnerable areas. The department's management of concessions must take these issues into account, as well as considering cumulative effects, to ensure that various activities are compatible with the primary aim of protecting the land and other resources.

## Historic

The department is New Zealand's largest manager of historic heritage properties. It actively manages 1174 historic heritage assets on 478 sites by maintaining heritage fabric in good condition and by providing sites for visitors. Another 10,000 recorded heritage sites, principally Māori sites, are in an acceptable condition and are protected



Water Race Walkway  
miner's hut  
Photo: K. Smith/DOC

from avoidable harm. In 1999, the overall government responsibility for historic policy and legislation, including the Historic Places Act and the New Zealand Historic Places Trust, was transferred from the department to the Ministry for Culture and Heritage. A priority is for the ministry, the trust and the department to work together to prepare an integrated strategy to ensure that a full range of historic heritage is protected across the whole country.

Due to competing demands on limited conservation funding, the maintenance of historic heritage on the public conservation estate has not received the highest priority since the department's inception, with the bulk of its resources being directed to biodiversity management and visitor facilities. Baseline inspections of historic assets show that the one-off deferred maintenance costs are extremely high. This may not allow the department's historic asset management plan to be fully implemented, and the condition of some historic heritage will continue to deteriorate.

## Relationship with Māori

Māori as tangata whenua have strong connections with many conservation areas because they include ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu and other taonga. Much of the land is subject to Treaty of Waitangi claims. The Conservation Act recognises Māori interests in conservation management by providing that the Act be so interpreted and administered as to give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi. It is one of the strongest proactive Treaty provisions in legislation.

The roles and responsibilities of the department in relation to Māori are complex and the issues can be difficult. The department, however, is placing considerable emphasis on developing enduring relationships with Māori. The results are encouraging in terms of mutual gains for conservation and there is potential for much greater success.



## D WHAT THE DEPARTMENT HAS LEARNED

The department was established in 1987 with the mission of promoting the conservation of New Zealand's natural and historic heritage, both on protected areas and on other areas, including private land. Over the last seven years, there has been a perception that the department has increasingly focused its role on the management of the public protected areas. Part of its response to the 1995 Cave Creek tragedy was a thorough overhaul of systems and a focus on improving the management of assets that the



People attending to a pod of stranded pilot whales, Puponga, Farewell Spit  
*Photo: DOC*

department is responsible for. Lessons in asset management have been learned that are now being widely applied to all aspects of the department's work. Possibly, however, it also led to undue introspection. The important task for the department is to re-engage fully with the community in conservation management.

While restoring the condition of priority ecosystems must remain the primary focus of our work, recent work, primarily connected to the *New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy*, has shown that important national conservation outcomes cannot be achieved

without a strengthened commitment in the wider community. The department can strengthen its contribution to the achievement of wider national conservation objectives through information, technical advice, educational material, community awareness, and collaborative projects with communities that are targeted to maximise conservation gains and prevent conservation losses outside protected areas.

The department is developing innovative ways to work co-operatively and effectively with tangata whenua, local government, community groups, landowners and individuals to halt the decline in indigenous biodiversity **both** on protected areas, and beyond onto land and waters not administered by the department.

One of the difficulties that the department has encountered is that communities tend to underestimate the rate and extent of decline of natural and historic heritage. They also tend to underestimate the costs of reversing this decline and of retaining a full range of recreation facilities. The reality is that because resources are limited, they need to be carefully directed into those areas where the greatest conservation gains can be made and this requires difficult choices to be made. The essence of effective conservation management is making informed choices about how best to use available resources.

The department has learned a lot over the last few years through the application of its Visitor Assets Management System (VAMS) and Historic Assets Management System (HAMS). Establishment of these systems has enabled the department to make better informed decisions and to demonstrate to the community what value is being added by management action. The systems demonstrate the importance of being clear about what assets are present, how they are changing, what the department can do that affects those changes, and the relative cost-effectiveness of each action.

The critical challenge now for the department is to compile better information on natural heritage management. This is a somewhat more difficult proposition than is the case for visitor and historic assets. An Ecological Management Strategy and Natural

Heritage Management Systems (NHMS) are being developed to support the conservation of natural heritage which, over time, will enable the department to better plan, record and report its achievements in relation to the condition of the natural heritage it is responsible for looking after. The application of these systems will help decide on priority places for conservation and to determine an effective mix of projects to maximise conservation outcomes with limited resources.

Better information and improved decision-making frameworks will contribute to changing the community perception of the size of the conservation challenges facing New Zealand and of the need for priority-setting and making choices. A better informed community will not only be able to understand the choices that need to be made, but will also be able to contribute more effectively to the priority-setting process.

Track maintenance and  
planting of vegetation near the  
Moeraki Boulders.  
*Photo: Chris Stewart/DOC*



## E THE DEPARTMENT'S PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

In order to succeed in its work, the department wants to show that it is adding optimal value to the conservation of New Zealand's heritage, and to people's enjoyment of that heritage. We also want to support and influence the conservation efforts of other New Zealanders for the overall benefit of the country.

To do this, the department needs to excel both in managing the areas for which we are directly responsible and beyond. This will mean that we:

- Achieve excellence in managing the public's natural, historic and recreational assets;
- Establish strong conservation policies for the management of protected areas;
- Exercise strong science-based advocacy for conservation; and
- Work closely with communities to achieve conservation outcomes.

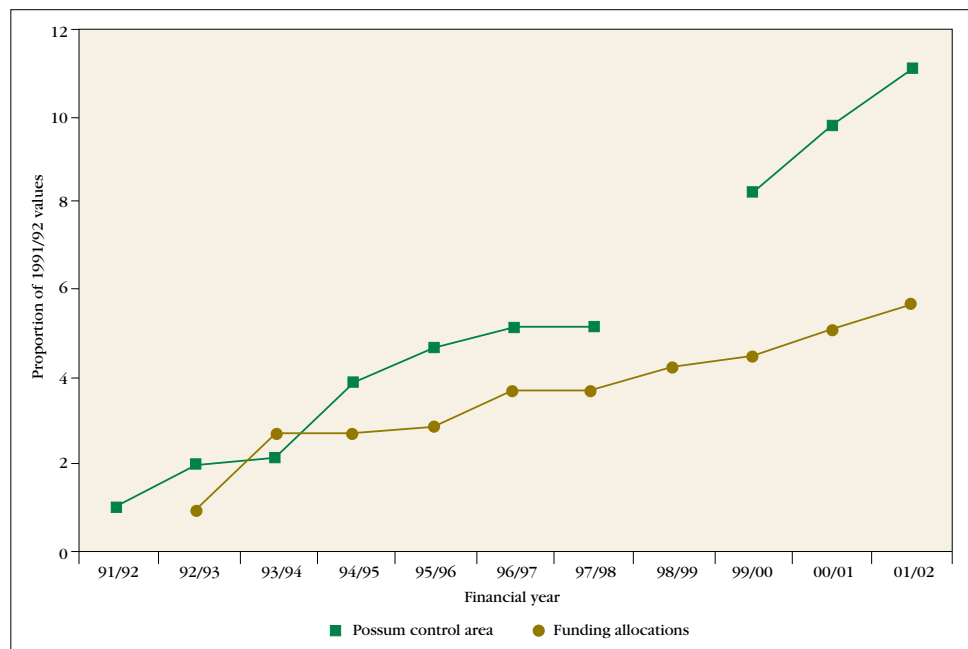
If we can both achieve and demonstrate excellence in each of these areas, others performing conservation functions (tangata whenua, public agencies, landowners, and the wider community) are likely to look to the department for leadership and guidance. The department will then be in the best position to secure community support and assistance for conservation, and to assist communities to achieve conservation outcomes.

### Excellence in Managing Protected Areas

The department's role is to halt the decline in New Zealand's indigenous biodiversity by maintaining or restoring the condition of a full range of natural environments, avoid extinctions, and legally protect a more comprehensive range of natural environments.

In order to achieve and demonstrate excellent performance as manager of the public's natural, historic and recreational assets, we will continue to develop systems to enable us to make better informed decisions on the relative merits of various pieces of work towards improving the state of natural heritage. These systems should result in better community understanding and involvement in the priority-setting process.

Figure 1: Improved Efficiencies in Possum Control



Area under sustained management for possums (1990–2001)

Proportional increase in area under sustained management for possums vs. proportional increase in funding allocated from 1991/92. First year levels used as baseline (1). There is a gap in "possum control area" because of a lack of data. **Note:** funding includes Task Force Green allocations.

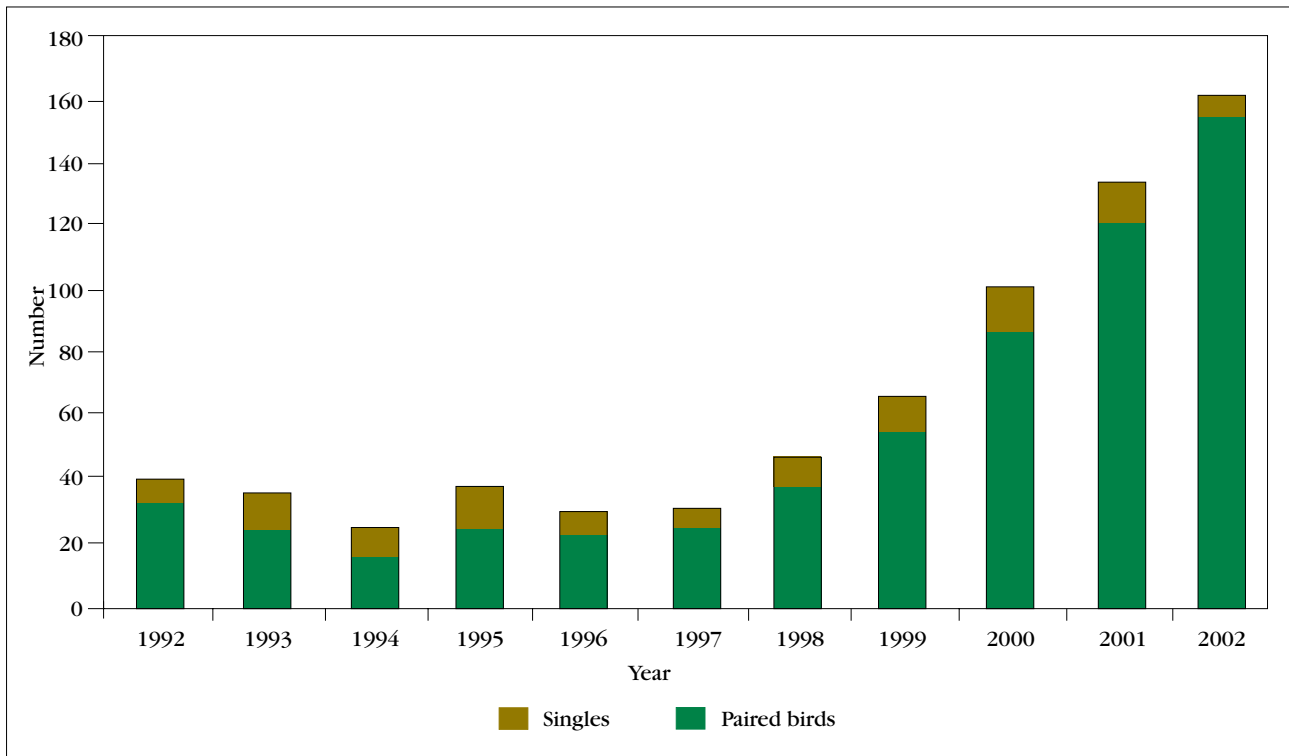
## Establishing Strong Conservation Policies

Strong and consistent conservation policies are essential for the effective management of the public's protected areas. These will be established through the development of a General Policy under the Conservation Act and the review of the current General Policy under the National Parks Act. While the development and review of these policies is a challenging process that is likely to attract a wide range of views, the finalised policies are intended to give national direction and consistency to conservation management strategies and plans developed over the next 10 years and beyond.

## Exercising Science-based Advocacy for Conservation

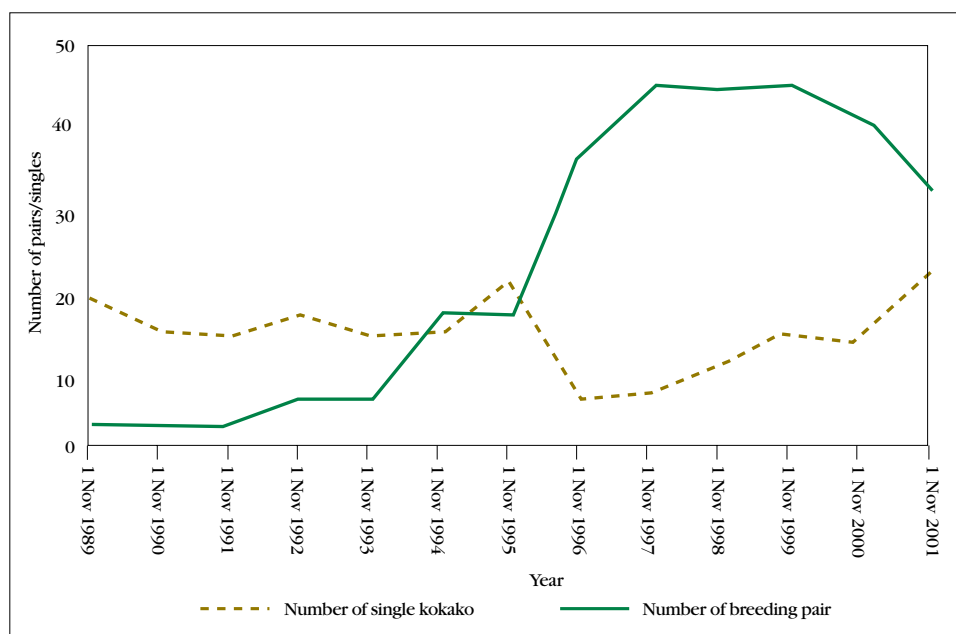
We want to exercise strong science-based advocacy for conservation, and to work harder to transfer our technical scientific work into accessible and authoritative information packages for the benefit of the public. There is room to improve our technical expertise in certain areas, particularly in relation to the marine and freshwater environments, biosecurity, and in the area of facilitating protection of biodiversity on private land.

Figure 2: Increase in kokako breeding population



We will work to provide intellectual leadership in conservation management by mixing sound theory, good science and research, practical experience and clear communication. Although the department is not responsible for delivery of all conservation outcomes across the country, with our focus on integrated conservation management we should be able to play a greater role in identifying and explaining key conservation issues for the country as a whole.

Figure 3: Mapara kokako population showing the effects of no pest control from 1997 to 2001



### Working Closely with Communities

We are looking to build an outward looking culture within the department and establish strong partnerships with the community in order to achieve conservation outcomes that are sustainable into the future.

Tangata whenua, landowners, conservation/recreation groups, concessionaires, industry, scientists, visitors, and others have different priorities and perspectives. All these need to be gathered and taken into account when formulating policies and delivering conservation in the field. Maintaining good working relationships with the range of groups, even if specific interests cannot be satisfied, is important for long-term conservation outcomes. These concepts are being encapsulated in the draft strategy of "Conservation with Communities" which aims not only to enhance conservation but also contribute to an improved community-government relationship. There are opportunities to work with other government departments and local government to increase community capacity to be involved in care of their local environments. In its partnerships, the department aims to be engaging, collaborative, and respectful of communities and their aspirations.

### Meeting the Challenge

Our challenge is to constantly improve in each of the four areas outlined above. Work in each of the four areas is mutually supportive of better conservation management. For example, strong conservation policies on their own may appear to support better management of the public's natural, historic and recreational assets, but can put distance between the department and some communities to the detriment of conservation outcomes. Too much focus on management can lead to introspection; science-based advocacy can tip into arrogance. Performing optimally in each area will enable the department to maintain and build a strong and sustainable future for conservation management in New Zealand.



Part 2

# The Statement of Intent

## OVERVIEW

The department's *Statement of Intent 2002-2005* has established national priority outcomes for the longer term, as well as the seven key steps that we will take towards fulfilling our conservation responsibilities over the next year and over the next five years. The *Statement of Intent* is consistent with the department's role and responsibilities in relation to the key government goals of the time, and the additional goals identified in the *New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy*.

Four steps relate to enhanced actual conservation and recreation outcomes and three relate to the capability required to achieve these. The key steps are:

- Key Step One: Expand biodiversity effort
- Key Step Two: Minimise biosecurity risks
- Key Step Three: Increase emphasis on historic and cultural values
- Key Step Four: Promote appropriate recreation and increased public enjoyment of protected places
- Key Step Five: Engage the community in conservation
- Key Step Six: Promote effective partnerships with tangata whenua
- Key Step Seven: Improve the department's capability

Each Key Step is described below. The national priority outcomes under each are taken directly from the *Statement of Intent*. Our assessment of the major outstanding policy issues and the policy responses (proposed or underway) are highlighted. These do not encompass the full range of policy work underway or the range of conservation action occurring in the field. More detail of this work is set out in various departmental publications, including the *Statement of Intent*, the Annual Report and on the department's website.

## KEY STEP ONE: EXPAND BIODIVERSITY EFFORT

The New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy sets out to halt the decline of New Zealand's indigenous biodiversity. The department has a central role to play and the expansion of our biodiversity effort refers both to newly funded programmes and to ongoing efforts to increase the effectiveness of interventions to achieve this goal.

### *National priority outcomes*

- Maintain and restore the indigenous natural character of the full range of New Zealand's terrestrial, freshwater and marine environments represented in areas administered by the department.
- No avoidable human-induced extinctions of indigenous terrestrial, freshwater and marine species have occurred and, where practicable, representative populations of all indigenous species have long-term security in predominantly natural habitats within their natural range.
- A more comprehensive range of terrestrial, freshwater and marine environments and habitats is legally protected.

### *Types of work involved in achieving national priority outcomes*

- Pest control (possums, goats, deer, koi carp, weeds etc), species conservation programmes, mainland island projects, island management and restoration, fire control, protecting a more comprehensive range of terrestrial natural heritage through the Nature Heritage Fund and Ngā Whenua Rahui funds, involvement in the tenure review process, wetland restoration projects, threatened freshwater fish work, creating and monitoring marine reserves, and the protection of marine mammals.

### *Recent achievements*

- Establishment of five mainland kiwi sanctuaries.
- Carried out rat eradication on Campbell Island, the largest island eradication project in the world, hopefully confirmed a success in 2002/2003, and on Raoul Island (with cat eradication currently underway).
- Establishment of a new national park on Stewart Island/Rakiura.
- Securing protection of over 100,000 hectares of South Island high country, leading in part to the creation of the Korowai-Torlesse Tussocklands Park.
- Successful breeding of kakapo on Whenua Hou.
- Protection of 132,000 hectares of former Timberlands rainforest on the West Coast.

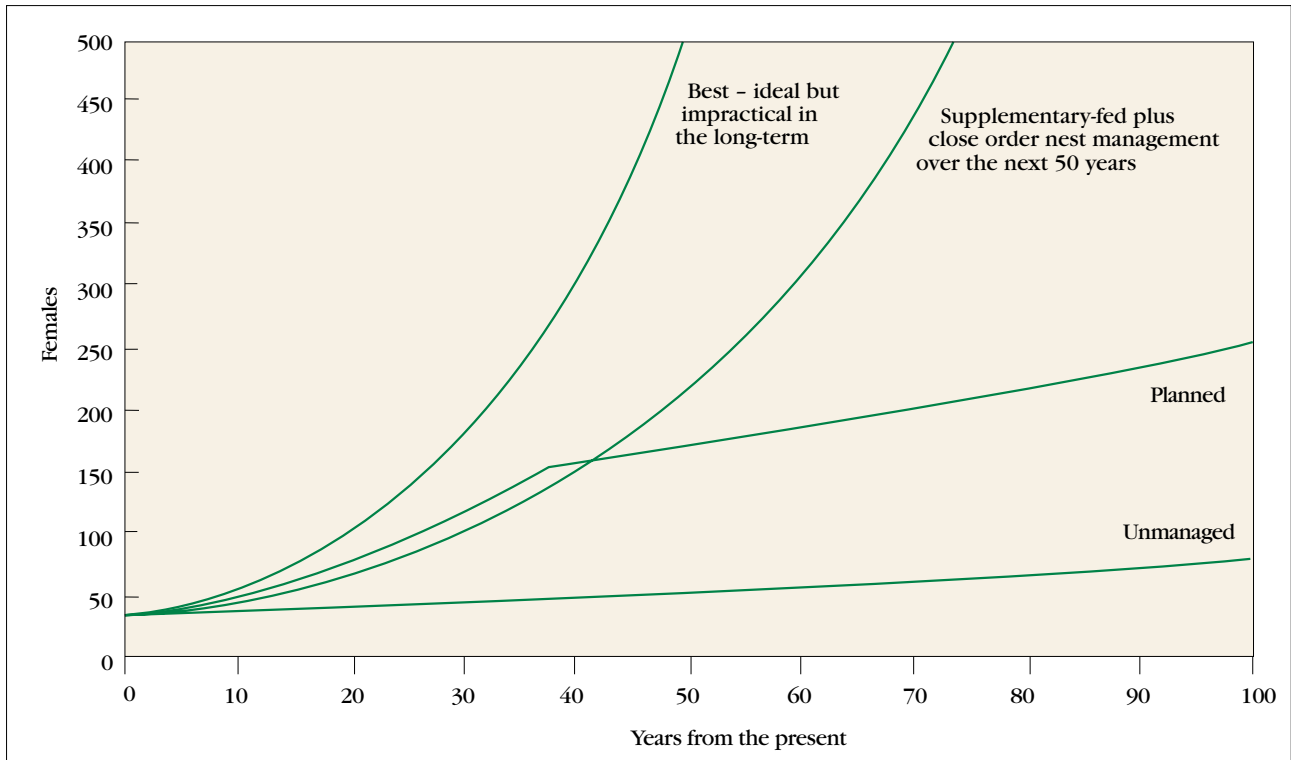
### *Major policy issues*

Approximately 50% of our annual budget is spent to achieve the national priority outcomes under this Key Step. Over the range of terrestrial, marine and freshwater ecosystems, a range of key policy issues emerge, including:

- The need for strong consistent conservation policies that can be applied across the country as a whole, particularly through conservation management strategies.
- The need to put into practice newly developed tools to enable better decision-making and reporting on conservation of all natural heritage.
- The lack of an integrated management framework in the marine and freshwater environments to coordinate the various central and local government agencies for the benefit of conservation, and to prioritise and increase the emphasis on protection of these environments.



Figure 4: Projected kakapo numbers taking into account different management options



- The failure to establish any new marine reserves over the last 3 years, largely due to problems associated with the Marine Reserves Act 1971 and its intersection with the Fisheries Act.
- In relation to the terrestrial environment, key issues relate to the tenure review process, campaigns against the use of toxins for pest control, specifically 1080, and maintaining indigenous biodiversity values outside the protected area framework.

**Policy response (underway and pending)**

**General**

- Development and review of general policies under the Conservation and National Parks Acts has begun, covering all conservation areas administered by the department, with the aim of giving national consistency and direction to conservation management strategies and plans across the country. The next step will be to seek Cabinet approval to conduct a full public consultation process.
- Development of an Ecological Management Strategy and Natural Heritage Management Systems (NHMS) as an integrated suite of planning and achievement reporting tools and information systems which will support the conservation of natural heritage. These will assist the department to plan, record, and report on achievements and condition of the natural heritage that we are responsible for looking after. Terrestrial and some freshwater components will be developed first, with the remaining freshwater and marine parts later in the programme.
- National Policy Statement on Biodiversity – the Ministry for the Environment, working closely with the department, has begun the process of developing a National Policy Statement (NPS) on biodiversity under the Resource Management Act.

## **Marine**

- Oceans Policy - in mid 2000 the government approved the development of an Oceans Policy. The policy is intended to encompass all interests in New Zealand's marine environment and resources, and to help harmonise government responsibilities and decision making in this area. It has been chaired by the Minister of Fisheries, assisted by Ministers of Conservation, Foreign Affairs and Trade, Environment, Māori Affairs, and Energy.
- Marine Reserves Act 1971 - the department has undertaken a review of the Act to consider the role of marine reserves, how they are established and how they are managed. A Bill has now been introduced to Parliament but has not yet had its first reading. The department is working closely with the Ministry of Fisheries to improve the way we work together under the existing Act and its intersection with the Fisheries Act. The two departments, along with the Ministry for the Environment, are also developing a marine protected areas strategy to provide a better co-ordinated approach to marine protection across a range of legislation.
- Review of aquaculture - a review of the current legislative regime is being led by the Ministry of Fisheries and is looking specifically at the Fisheries and Resource Management Acts (including provisions relating to the Minister of Conservation's functions under the Resource Management Act). The key issues are with the planning for the private occupation of coastal space, the need to manage any adverse effects on the environment, and the lack of provisions in plans that properly control aquaculture development.
- Review of the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (NZCPS) - the Resource Management Act 1991 requires that at all times there shall be a NZCPS. The current NZCPS is due to be reviewed by an independent reviewer in 2003 and the department is currently undertaking a project to monitor the effectiveness of the NZCPS since its gazettal in 1994.

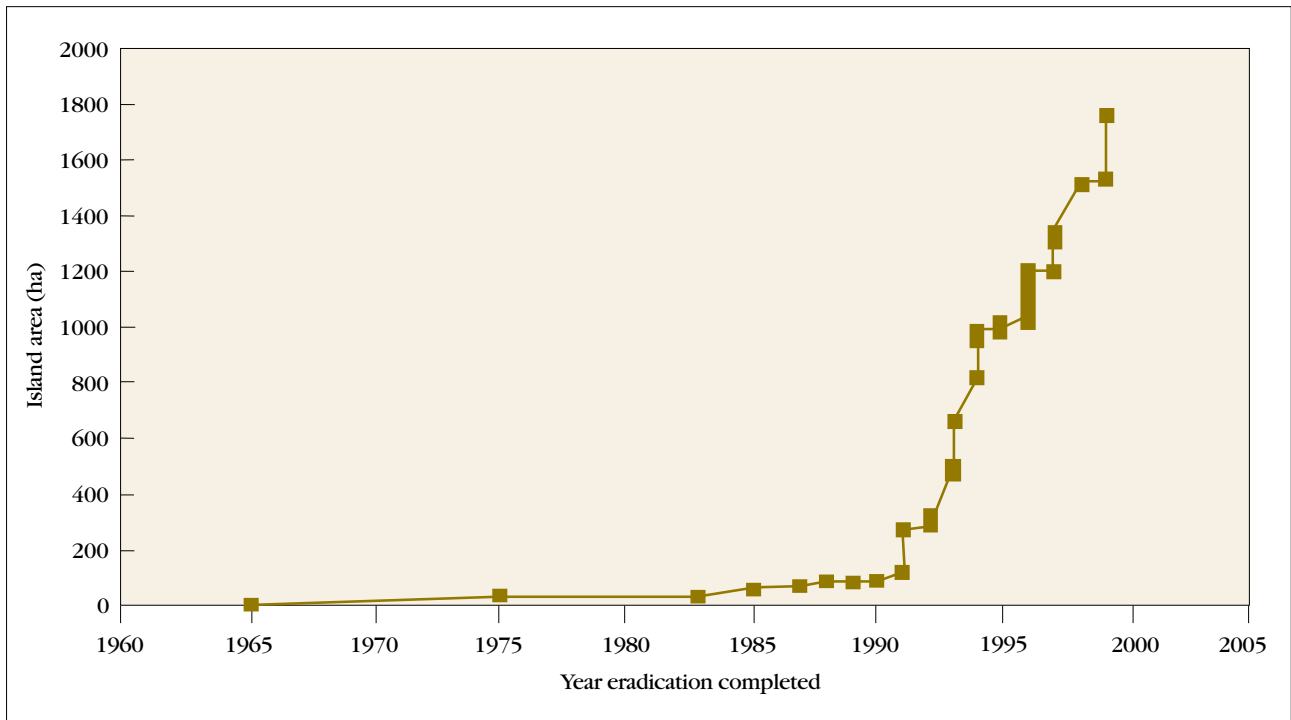
## **Freshwater**

- Developing our strategic approach to freshwater natural heritage protection through a formal strategic action plan. Over the next 3-5 years, this will see the department focus on greater protection of indigenous freshwater biodiversity that is of national importance, more actively seeking protection of priority freshwater ecosystems, and containing the spread and impact of invasive freshwater species (particularly freshwater fish and weeds).
- Working with other agencies in any government strategy on freshwater management.

## **Terrestrial**

- Tenure review process - Land Act leases over high country pastoral land in the South Island represent the last large area of Crown terrestrial land to be allocated between protection and production. The key issues for the department in the tenure review process are to protect significant inherent values for the Crown (natural, historic, recreational) in each tenure review, providing for public access as appropriate, and securing resources attached to ongoing management. The process is time consuming and resource intensive. Tenure reviews of 36 leases have been completed with approximately 70,000 hectares retained in Crown ownership to date and approximately 100,000 hectares placed in private ownership. 142 leases (almost half of the total of 303 remaining) are now in the process.

Figure 5: Island eradication graph demonstrating ability to achieve eradication over larger areas.



- Investigation of a pest eradication programme for the Auckland Islands.
- Preparing applications for the Environmental Risk Management Authority's registration (including review of the risks and benefits) of 1080 and Rotenone piscicide.
- Development of a strategy for integrated control and management of pests.
- The proposed Conservation Law Reform Bill aims to reform the compliance provisions under legislation administered by the department, introduce an infringement fee system, and to amend several miscellaneous provisions, including transferring ownership of wildlife products crafted into taonga in their care from the Crown to iwi.

## KEY STEP TWO: MINIMISE BIOSECURITY RISKS

Introduced species like possums, goats, deer, stoats, ferrets, rats, feral cats, and a variety of invasive weeds, pest fish and marine species, have long threatened our native flora and fauna. Many new species, particularly insects, plants and marine invaders create new threats as a result of increased international trade and tourism. The defence of our borders and the containment and eradication of new invaders is a major challenge which is currently being addressed through the development of a New Zealand Biosecurity Strategy. The department is a key player in this area, with a particular focus on the serious threats to our native species and ecosystems.

### *National priority outcomes*

- Prevent the entry and establishment of new exotic unwanted organisms.
- Eradicate or contain unwanted organisms that are newly established or are already established but not yet widespread.

### *Types of work involved in achieving national priority outcomes*

- Advice to the Minister for Biosecurity on biosecurity risks to indigenous flora and fauna and an operational biosecurity role with programmes funded through Vote: Biosecurity for specific eradication and control projects, and for pest control undertaken to meet agreed 'Crown as exacerbator' obligations under regional pest management strategies. Ninety percent of the Vote: Biosecurity funding the department receives is spent on pest and weed control under regional council pest management strategies.
- Research into biosecurity risks.
- Enhance public support and compliance through awareness campaigns.

### *Recent achievements*

- Substantial technical and policy input into programmes on the Southern Salt Marsh Mosquito and the Painted Apple Moth, surveys of the Waitakere Range for Eastern Banjo Frogs, the (hopefully successful) eradication of the Argentine Fire Ant on Tiritiri Matangi Island, operations to eradicate founding populations of *Undaria* (a highly invasive species of seaweed), and input into the Import Health Standard for Californian Grapes.
- Of the 38 new exotic organisms that are known to have established in New Zealand in the last year, none of those new species, pathogen or genetic stock pose a significant risk to indigenous flora or fauna.
- Surveys for Koi Carp, *Gambusia* and other pest fish following the identification of both species in Nelson.
- Biosecurity action for hornwort, a highly invasive aquatic weed, with containment measures having been instituted for the first South Island invasion.
- Work with the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry to develop the "Protect New Zealand programme", designed to increase public awareness of biosecurity issues.

### ***Major policy issues***

- Further improvement of leadership, strategic focus and co-ordination across the government sector, for both border biosecurity and internal biosecurity.
- The current decision-making framework does not adequately consider risks to indigenous flora and fauna.
- Much of the work involved in managing weeds and pests on protected areas is a core component of work under Key Step 1 through Vote: Conservation. Clarifying the Vote: Biosecurity and Vote: Conservation distinction is important in terms of allocating Ministerial responsibility for work in the containment and eradication of pests, and is essential for facilitating effective incursion response programmes.

### ***Policy response (underway and pending)***

- Development of a New Zealand Biosecurity Strategy. We are looking for the Strategy to provide:
  - an agreed vision, goals and objectives that deliver an appropriate level of protection, clear roles, responsibilities and governance for border biosecurity and pest management;
  - a risk management framework that takes into account risks to indigenous flora and fauna; and
  - adequate capabilities and resourcing.

## KEY STEP THREE: INCREASE EMPHASIS ON HISTORIC AND CULTURAL VALUES

Restoring, maintaining, protecting and interpreting sites of historic and cultural importance on public conservation lands is a costly business and there is a need to increase investment in this area. An historic asset management system has largely been developed that will provide an accurate picture of the condition of historic assets managed by the department and the long-run costs involved in their conservation.

### *National priority outcomes*

- Historic heritage in areas the department manages is identified and preserved and, where appropriate, conserved and interpreted.
- A comprehensive range of historic heritage is protected by various methods in areas not administered by the department.



Viaduct, Central Rail Trail,  
Poolburn Gorge, Ida Valley  
*Photo: DOC*

### *Types of work involved in achieving national priority outcomes*

- Protection, management, interpretation, restoration of sites of historic and cultural importance on public conservation land.

### *Recent achievements*

- Steady progress has been made on the highest priority restoration projects, including Mansion House on Kawau Island, North Head, Toki Toki archaeological site, Otatara Pa, Bridge to Nowhere, Pukerangiora Pa, Brunner Mine, Fort Jervois, Alexandra Courthouse and Kawarau Gorge Suspension Bridge.

- An asset management plan has largely been developed for historic heritage, based on the New Zealand Institute of Asset Management best practice.
- For most of our actively managed historic assets, service standards are set and baseline inspection completed. A comprehensive system of technical standards and guidelines has been developed.

### *Major policy issue(s)*

- Lack of an integrated approach to the management of historic heritage across the country.
- Establishing the long-term costs and choices for our management of historic and cultural resources. Baseline inspections show that the current deferred maintenance will not allow the asset management plan to be implemented, meaning that the condition of historic heritage will deteriorate. Repair costs increase when maintenance is not addressed.

***Policy response (underway and pending)***

- Implementation of the historic management asset plan. This will enable options to be put forward on priorities for the maintenance of historic heritage.
- Development of a financial strategy to address the issues of deferred maintenance and annual maintenance.
- Development of a co-ordinated strategy for historic heritage with the Ministry for Culture and Heritage, the New Zealand Historic Places Trust and the Ministry for the Environment.

## KEY STEP FOUR: PROMOTE APPROPRIATE RECREATION AND INCREASED PUBLIC ENJOYMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS

Public enjoyment of national parks, other conservation areas, historic reserves and marine reserves is a key part of conservation in New Zealand. The department is charged with fostering recreation and making the areas we manage accessible for the public to enjoy and appreciate. This involves the provision and maintenance of tracks, huts, visitor centres, signs, interpretation panels and other visitor facilities. A great deal of work has gone into developing an asset management system for the maintenance of these facilities and this has provided the basis for additional funding to secure their viability in the longer term. We will be seeking to enhance the visitor experience further, as well as managing the impacts of use.

### *National priority outcomes*

- More New Zealanders enjoy protected areas and receive in full measure the inspiration, enjoyment, recreation and other benefits that may be derived from them consistent with the protection of their conservation values.
- Visitor impacts on natural and historic heritage values are minimal.
- A range of recreational opportunities, consistent with conservation values, are provided to meet visitor needs. These are supported by facilities and services that meet required standards.

### *Types of work involved in achieving national priority outcomes*

- Provision and maintenance of tracks, huts, visitor centres, signs, interpretation panels and other visitor facilities.

### *Recent achievements*

- Immediately after the Cave Creek tragedy in April 1995 we began a 10-year programme to implement an asset management plan, including developing service and legal standards, the design and implementation of a comprehensive inspection and monitoring system, and the upgrading, replacement and ongoing maintenance of many thousands of assets. The first national inventory was completed in 1996 with approximately 16,500 structures, 1200 huts, and 2000 other recreation related buildings listed.
- The Visitor Asset Management System (VAMS) is now the key asset management tool providing data and analysis tools for strategic, business and operational planning. Baseline engineering inspections of all structures have been carried out.
- In 2001, we prepared a long-term strategy for the ongoing provision of recreation facilities and in 2002, the government secured the long-term funding of recreation facilities with an agreement to provide additional capital injections and operating funding until 2022/23. Between 2012 and 2023, funding will be maximised to replace the large number of assets that will be retiring during this period.



### ***Major policy issue(s)***

- Growth in tourism numbers will increase pressure to develop more public conservation areas for tourism and will require balancing between 'traditional' recreation users and demand for the use of short walks and picnic sites.
- Meeting the challenges posed by alternative recreation users, for example, mountain bikers.
- Development of a long-term national recreation strategy and decision-making framework that will ensure that:
  - there is a wide range of recreation opportunities that meet visitor needs now and into the future;
  - social and environmental visitor impacts are minimised;
  - facilities and services meet appropriate safety standards; and
  - tourism development is appropriate for the setting and current use.

### ***Policy response (underway and pending)***

Continued support for the implementation of the VAMS, including:

- consultation with stakeholders on the appropriate mix of recreation opportunities, and making long-term decisions on the future of visitor facilities;
- development of standards for key visitor facilities;
- development of key social and natural setting criteria for each recreation opportunity provided, in particular control of over flights by aircraft and controls on the number and types of recreation/tourism concessions allowed in public conservation areas; and
- implementation of an ongoing programme of visitor research and monitoring.

## KEY STEP FIVE: ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY IN CONSERVATION

Effective conservation depends absolutely on public involvement and support. There are both high public expectations of the department and a desire on the part of many communities to be involved. There are significant opportunities to increase conservation outcomes through partnerships with the community, although there is also a need to manage expectations to match available resources. Our culture needs to be one of openness to the community and of support for those organisations, groups and individuals who are able and willing to undertake their own conservation initiatives, whether on public or private land.

### *National priority outcomes*

- New Zealanders treasure their natural and historic heritage and are committed to its conservation.
- The department is a national conservation leader as a result of effective working relationships at the international, national, conservancy and area levels.
- Individuals, community groups, and other agencies undertake their own conservation initiatives supported by the department.
- Better protection and more sustainable management of natural heritage (terrestrial, freshwater and marine) and historic resources in environments for which the department is not directly responsible.

### *Types of work involved in achieving national priority outcomes*

- Maintenance of websites, public information, education initiatives, conservation volunteer programmes, and supporting the New Zealand Conservation Authority and Conservation Boards as a mechanism for independent community voice.

### *Recent achievements*

- Upgraded DoC, Kakapo Recovery and Kiwi Recovery websites, production of educational resources over 100 education supersites, establishment of the National Parks and Conservation Foundation and the Chinese Conservation Trust, launch of Wild Creations (artists in residence) partnership with Creative New Zealand, support of the Park Rangers TV series, and commissioning a history of New Zealand conservation. Major involvement with World Heritage, Ramsar, International Whaling Commission, Antarctica, and strengthening the ongoing relationships with Australia and the Pacific.

### *Major policy issue(s)*

- Achieving a culture within the department of openness to the community and support for those organisations, groups and individuals who are able and willing to undertake their own conservation initiatives, whether on public or private land.
- Sharing conservation work through developing partnerships and opportunities for participation, and supporting communities in developing skills and capability.
- Working effectively with local government to achieve conservation gains through the Resource Management Act processes.

***Policy response (underway and pending)***

- Development of the Conservation with Communities Strategy.
- Building our capability to work effectively with communities, including changes to organisational culture, working style, staff skills, and integration of community relations into all work planning.
- Working with education providers to support site-based conservation education.

## KEY STEP SIX: PROMOTE EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH TANGATA WHENUA

Section 4 of the Conservation Act directs the department to give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi in our conservation work. How this can best be done is set out in our recently published draft Treaty policy framework, Ngā Akiakitanga Nuka Kaupapa Māori. Māori have the longest human association with New Zealand's natural heritage, and a uniquely New Zealand approach to conservation is dependent on this Māori dimension being recognised and retained. This requires us to work in partnership with the tangata whenua associated with each particular place that is managed. Staff need to have the necessary skills and knowledge to develop effective partnerships; policies need to be in place that recognise the importance of this special dimension and of rights guaranteed by the Treaty of Waitangi.

### *National priority outcomes*

- The principles of the Treaty of Waitangi are reflected in the department's work. Partnerships between the department and tangata whenua achieve enhanced conservation of New Zealand's natural and historic heritage.
- Tangata whenua maintain their cultural relationship with their natural and historic heritage in areas managed by the department.

### *Types of work involved in achieving national priority outcomes*

- Development of co-operative arrangements and protocols with tangata whenua, ongoing involvement in the Crown's negotiation of Treaty of Waitangi settlements.

### *Recent achievements*

- Development of Ngā Akiakitanga Nuka Kaupapa Māori – a strategic policy initiative consisting of four related policies: giving effect to the Principles of the Treaty of Waitangi in the work of the department, customary use of natural resources, wāhi Tapu policy guidelines, and Te Kete Taonga Whakakotahi, a partnerships toolbox.
- Establishment of Te Pukenga Atawhai as a training programme developed by the department to enable staff to build and maintain effective working relationships with tangata whenua specifically and Māori generally.
- Biodiversity funding increases gained in the last 3 years has allowed more land to be protected than previously through Ngā Whenua Rahui, a contestable fund that enables multiply-owned Māori land to be covenanted to protect its natural values.
- Establishment of Matauranga Kura Taiao as a new contestable fund giving recognition to the importance of tangata whenua participation in managing biodiversity consistently with customary knowledge and practices.
- Part of the Crown's negotiating teams that have completed a number of successful Treaty of Waitangi negotiations with iwi/hapū.

### *Major policy issue(s)*

- Establishing clear policies that recognise the importance of the special dimension of, and of rights guaranteed by, the Treaty of Waitangi; ensuring staff have the necessary skills and knowledge to develop effective partnerships.

***Policy response (underway and pending)***

- Comments on the draft Ngā Akiakitanga Nuka Kaupapa Māori will be reviewed before these policies are implemented. The policies are currently being used as working drafts.
- Revision of the Kaupapa Atawhai Strategy. This generic strategy paper (released in February 1997) on the implications of section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987 for departmental staff will be reviewed to bring it in line with Ngā Akiakitanga Nuka Kaupapa Māori.
- Development of a Māori Language Policy is underway.

## KEY STEP SEVEN: IMPROVE THE DEPARTMENT'S CAPABILITY

A strong focus on future capability is needed for the department to meet the conservation challenges facing New Zealand. Skill requirements are changing with an increased emphasis on integrated ecosystem management, the development of partnerships with iwi and the wider community, and an expanding role in freshwater and marine conservation, and biosecurity. Scientific research is now strategically focused and the more effective transfer of the knowledge to staff, other organisations and the community, is being addressed. Better management and information systems are also under development to ensure that available resources are effectively applied to the most important tasks and that progress in achieving these is able to be measured, monitored and demonstrated. There is also a need to develop a more “natural balance” in the composition of our staff (men and women, European, Māori and other ethnic groups) to enrich the organisation and to enable it to communicate effectively with the increasingly diverse New Zealand community.

### *National priority outcomes*

- Conservation areas and resources are effectively and efficiently managed as public assets and are accessible for the benefit of the community.
- The department has the staff capability to work effectively now and in the future.
- The department derives and manages conservation information efficiently and effectively so that knowledge is used and shared to achieve maximum benefit.
- Conservation actions, results and outcomes are well monitored and reported.

### *Types of work involved in achieving national priority outcomes*

- Development of management and information systems, training courses for management and staff.

### *Recent achievements*

- The department's “Management for Performance” project, in consultation with an Advisory Group of central agencies, provides a framework for managing performance. This was implemented during the last year and will continue to be phased in over the next two reporting cycles.
- The new performance and measuring system will support good judgement and decision making at all levels, enabling an improvement in organisational performance, and will report on the value delivered and outcomes. This will enable effective communication with external agencies and staff so that performance is demonstrated to all stakeholders.
- A cascade approach from the Director-General through to Level II Managers has been used to introduce the new performance and reporting framework. Measures, used at each level to manage the business, have been introduced at each level through this process.

### *Major policy issue(s)*

- Improving workplace diversity, working to role, developing better management and information systems, and achieving a culture change within the department in respect of conservation with communities.

***Policy response (underway and pending)***

- Development of a decision-support framework and improving measures of conservation achievement, and improving staff performance management.