

Ngā taiao whenua, wai māori, moana hoki o Aotearoa | New Zealand's land, freshwater and marine domains



49%[#] of all assessed indigenous species are found nowhere else on earth.

[#]This figure is likely to be much higher given that a large proportion of the remainder is either unspecified or unknown

Biodiversity is inherently valuable. It is central to the identity of New Zealanders and is fundamental to Māori through whakapapa. Nature supports life and human activity, and our wellbeing can only thrive when nature also thrives.

Aotearoa is a global biodiversity hotspot – it is a part of the world where there are exceptional concentrations of species, many of which are endemic (not found elsewhere), and many of which are under threat.

Aotearoa New Zealand biodiversity state and trends

Decline in ecosystems



Pre human settlement
Indigenous vegetation

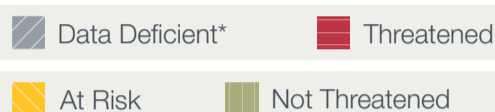
2018 / 2019
Indigenous vegetation

Source: reproduced with permission of
Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research



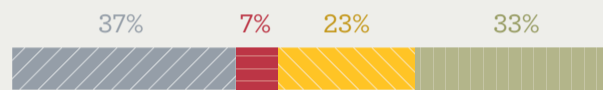
Decline is still occurring - between 1996 and 2018 there was a net loss of 85,600 ha of indigenous forest, scrub, shrubland and grassland.

Wetland ecosystems have been reduced by **90%** since human arrival in Aotearoa New Zealand.



*A species is 'Data Deficient' when not enough is known to assign a conservation status.

Conservation status of resident indigenous species 2019



Number of species assessed: 13385

Number of known extinct species: 79

Species under Threat



Roughly **1 in 14** indigenous species assessed is threatened with extinction

What we don't know



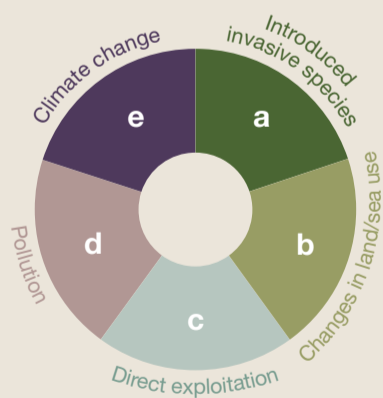
Roughly **1 in 3** species that have been assessed are considered to be Data Deficient i.e. there is insufficient knowledge to allocate a conservation status.



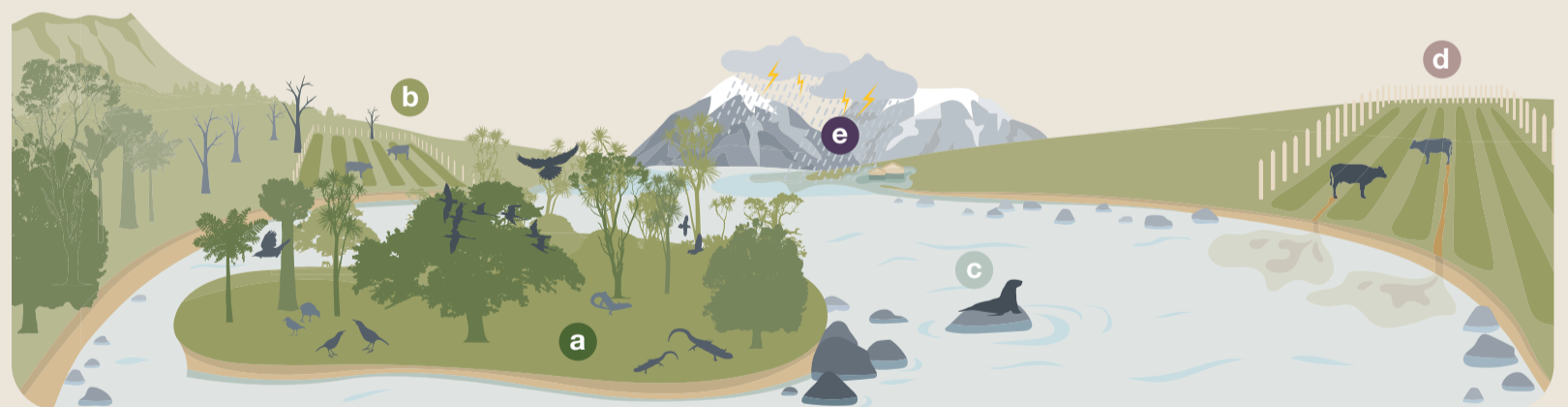
For some life forms, we know very little e.g. only a small percentage of freshwater macroalgae, fungi, invertebrates and mosses have been assessed under the NZ Threat Classification System.

Aotearoa New Zealand biodiversity pressures

Examples of how pressures are impacting on indigenous biodiversity



Five pressures, related to human activity, are causing the decline of biodiversity in Aotearoa. Their impacts are complex and different for each domain.



a Many species of birds, lizards, bats and invertebrates are under pressure from introduced predators. Predator-free islands, sanctuaries and intensively managed areas offer the best protection for these species.

b Drainage and conversion to intensive production land uses over many decades have dramatically reduced the extent and quality of indigenous ecosystems and habitats.

c Historical impacts of hunting marine mammals are still obvious today with several species such as seals, sea lions, and whales nowhere near their former abundance and distribution.

d Excessive leaching of nutrients (e.g. from fertilisers and stock effluent) into waterways and estuaries causes them to become hyper-fertile, leading to infestations of waterweeds and algal blooms.

e Climate change poses a significant threat to all indigenous biodiversity e.g. through more frequent and damaging storm and flood events, increased fire risk in many places, sea level rise and ocean acidification.

Related Resources:

The information presented in this series of factsheets is sourced from the report Biodiversity in Aotearoa – State, Trends and Pressures:

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/nz-biodiversity>

Te Mana o te Taiao – Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy www.doc.govt.nz/anzbs-strategy sets a strategic direction for the protection, restoration and sustainable use of biodiversity in Aotearoa for the next 30 years.

Factsheets are also available for the marine, freshwater and land domains at <https://www.doc.govt.nz/nz-biodiversity>