



Aotearoa New Zealand

*Te Papa Ao Tūroa, Aotearoa
Manaaki Taiao, Tiaki Ora*

Aotearoa New Zealand

OVERVIEW

Why New Zealand

Aotearoa New Zealand is home to breathtaking landscapes and coastlines. Evolving in isolation for over 80 million years without terrestrial mammalian predators, we are a global hotspot of unique biodiversity and a huge array of extraordinary species and ecosystems found nowhere else on Earth.

A third of the world's seabirds are found in New Zealand, giving us the title as the global seabird capital, with 96 breeding species and subspecies, as well as the highest global diversity of albatross, petrels, penguins and shags.

More than 1,500 species of our plants are found nowhere else on the planet. As world-renowned author Jared Diamond has observed, "examining the New Zealand biota is the closest we will get to the opportunity to study life on another planet".

This biodiversity is under threat.

Our landscapes have been heavily modified since the arrival of humans, with invasive species introduced; forests and wetlands cleared and agriculture, horticulture and forestry intensified. The population is growing, along with tourism.

At least 70 percent of New Zealand's primary native vegetation has been cleared. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the coastal environment and lowland

forests where most people live, work and play. Today we face the legacy of historical clearance: entire ecosystems have been lost, and we have the highest proportion of threatened species of any country.

Since 2018, The Nature Conservancy in Aotearoa New Zealand (TNC NZ) has worked to make the most positive impact — at scale. Using science, global know-how, creativity, and a can-do Kiwi attitude, we're bringing our unique blend of skills to restore nature.

The Māori cultural system of kaitiakitanga (guardianship) recognises the interconnectedness of people and nature. It is in this same spirit that TNC partners with communities up and down the country—from farmers to iwi (Māori tribes)—to drive conservation and habitat restoration on a scale unprecedented in this country. In doing so, we ensure that not only do their lands and waters thrive, but they do too.

New Zealand biodiversity is important to the world and we can only protect it here.

Cover: The kōtuku (white heron) is rare in New Zealand, but frequents coastal freshwater wetlands or estuaries © Robert Scotcher/2024 TNC Oceania Photo Contest; This page: The salt marshes at Wairau Lagoons near Blenheim attract thousands of breeding migratory birds each year. The area is an example of an area where blue carbon revenue could help restore wetlands, providing a buffer against sea-level rise and protecting communities as well as species. © Ricky Wilson



Our work in Aotearoa
New Zealand
contributes to The
Nature Conservancy's
2030 global goals.

NEW ZEALAND CONSERVATION PRIORITIES:

Restoring Landscapes



Forests



Waterways



Natives



Wetlands

Restoring the Marine Environment



Marine



Shellfish



Aquaculture

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is a global environmental non-governmental organisation (eNGO) dedicated to addressing the climate and biodiversity crises to ensure a future where both people and nature thrive. For over 70 years, TNC has been working with communities, Indigenous groups, governments, companies and other NGOs to implement nature-based solutions that restore nature and build ecosystem resilience. TNC is a leader in scientific research, policy and innovative finance.



RESTORING LANDSCAPES



Restoring coastal and freshwater wetlands through carbon credits

New Zealand has lost over 90 percent of its wetlands. Coastal wetlands such as mangroves, saltmarshes and seagrass meadows, as well as freshwater wetlands/peatlands are now being recognised as important carbon sinks, alongside their benefits for biodiversity and enhancing resilience in the face of sea level rise and a changing climate.

TNC NZ is part of TNC's Global Blue Carbon Programme, creating voluntary carbon and climate resilience credits from restoring these coastal habitats. Carbon credit revenue can, in turn, provide sustainable income for landowners as well as support future restoration and protection, ideally making conservation sustainable and profitable for local communities.

We are currently building the evidence base, laying the groundwork for pilot restoration sites and sharing policy research to support bringing blue and teal carbon credits to market.



Kotahitanga mō te Taiao Alliance

Aotearoa New Zealand's largest collaborative conservation effort across 3.4 million hectares of land and ocean.

The top of the South Island has many rare ecosystems that are increasingly at risk due to threats such as invasive species, habitat loss and climate impacts. Made up of nine iwi (tribes), five councils, the Department of Conservation, and the Ministry for the Environment and Fisheries New Zealand, the Kotahitanga mō te Taiao Alliance (KMTT; "collective action for our nature") advances projects that protect

and restore forests, wetlands and waterways—Ki Uta ki Tai / from coast to coast and from the mountains to the sea.

Through our partnership with KMTT, we support farming, forestry and horticultural land to bring back habitats for native species by establishing and connecting weed- and pest-free areas.



Hawke's Bay: Land for Life

We are supporting farmers to establish regenerative practices.

Land in the Hawke's Bay agricultural region has experienced extreme stress from current land use as well as the 2023 Cyclone Gabrielle, increasing hill country erosion, damage to infrastructure and sediment in waterways, affecting water quality, aquatic life and the economic viability of farming communities. Tree planting can stabilise soil, capture carbon, enhance biodiversity, provide forestry revenue and support alternative sources of income like honey production and credits for carbon storage.

This joint project with Hawke's Bay Regional Council and the Ministry for Primary Industries supports farmers to plant trees and engage in regenerative agricultural practices that reduce waterway pollution, restore nature and counter climate change to build a sustainable future.

Top to bottom: Waves rolling to shore near Raglan © Katie Pickering/TNC Oceania Photo Contest 2024; Planting natives on the hillsides of Evan and Linda Potter's farm © Hawke's Bay Regional Council; Fungi growing in Eves Valley, Brightwater © Crystal Richardson/2024 TNC Oceania Photo Contest

RESTORING THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT



Nature-smart Seafood

Aquaculture is not only the fastest-growing form of food production, it can also be one of the most environmentally efficient ways of producing food. This is especially true for shellfish and seaweed, which require almost no feed, fresh water or land, and result in minimal greenhouse gas emissions.

Research being conducted by TNC's scientists and partners shows that restorative aquaculture can help improve ocean health, as well as support economic development and food production in coastal communities — if it is done in the right way. The first steps are to measure how aquaculture is interacting positively with the environment, climate change and society.



Restoring the Mauri of the Hauraki Gulf

Collaborating to actively restore the coastal marine environment.

The Hauraki Gulf / Tīkapa Moana / Te Moananui-ā-Toi is a taonga (treasure) of national importance for both people and nature. But the ecosystem has suffered from changing land use, overfishing, sedimentation, agricultural run-off and other pollution. Shellfish play a key role in filtering the water, protecting against climate-related storm surges and rising seas, and providing food and habitat for diverse species as well as kaimoana (seafood) for communities.

Through the Revive Our Gulf project, we are collaborating with The Mussel Reef Restoration Trust, University of Auckland and iwi organisations Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei, Ngāti Manuhiri Settlement Trust and Ngāi Tai ki Tamaki to reseed mussel (kūtai) beds in the Hauraki Gulf and monitor the results.



Pacific Islands Community: Working together in Solomon Islands

New Zealand is committed to being a good neighbour in the Pacific. Working with our Solomon Islands programme colleagues, we support local women's collectives in Solomon Islands, alongside significant contributions from the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

We are contributing fundraising and knowledge towards the building of an education centre and eco-lodge accommodation within the Arnavon Community Marine Park which will strengthen local conservation initiatives and improve livelihoods. We are also exploring the feasibility of a carbon project as an alternative income source to commercial logging to protect significant biodiversity in the Barora Fa region of Isabel Province, which contains some of the last remaining un-logged forests in Solomon Islands.



Clockwise from the bird image: The Miromiro or New Zealand tomtit lives in forest or shrubland © Deb Corbett/2024 TNC Oceania Photo Contest; Bags of kūtai are emptied into the Hauraki Gulf to restore shellfish beds © Shaun Lee; Yellowtail kingfish swimming among mussel aquaculture lines in New Zealand © Lucy Underwood/University of Auckland

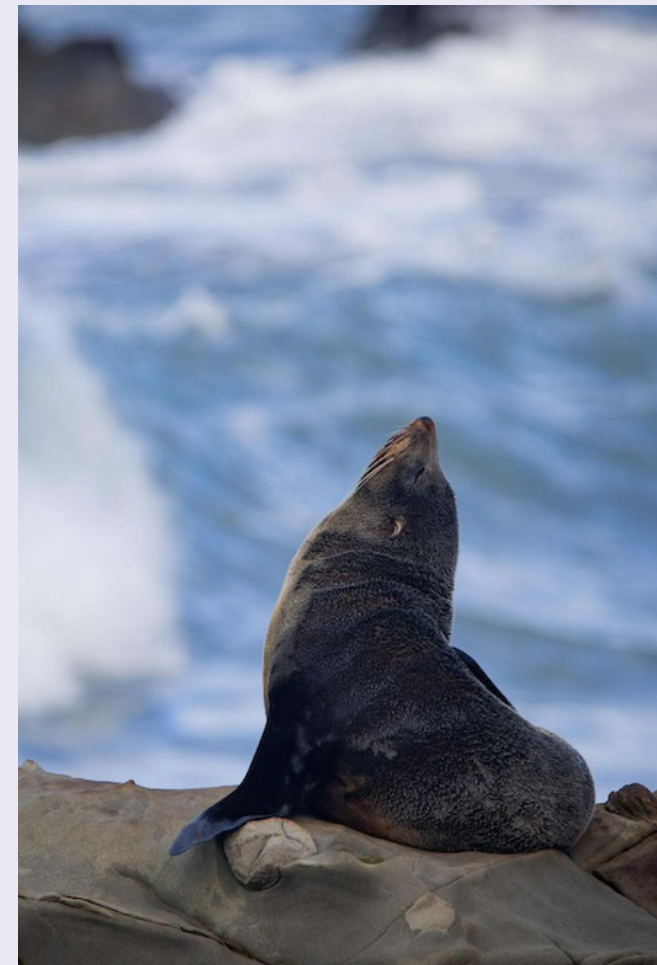
How You Can Help

For more information on The Nature Conservancy's Aotearoa New Zealand programme, and how your support can make a real difference, please contact:

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 **DONATE TODAY**



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project updates:**

nature.org/newzealand

Clockwise from top left: Pukeko family © Roger Smith/2024 TNC Oceania Photo Contest; Hinepango Wetland Restoration Group volunteers - David Wilson (front), with Blair, Roseanne and Adam Kibblewhite (L-R) - planting natives after clearing invasive weeds near Rarangi, Marlborough © Letticia Dodson/Hinepango Wetland Restoration Group; A New Zealand fur seal (Kekeno) rests on the rocks in northern Canterbury © Lauryn Wachs/TNC; Outboard motor within a waterway lined with Nipa palms, Solomon Islands © Douglas Junior Pikacha/2024 TNC Oceania Photo Contest