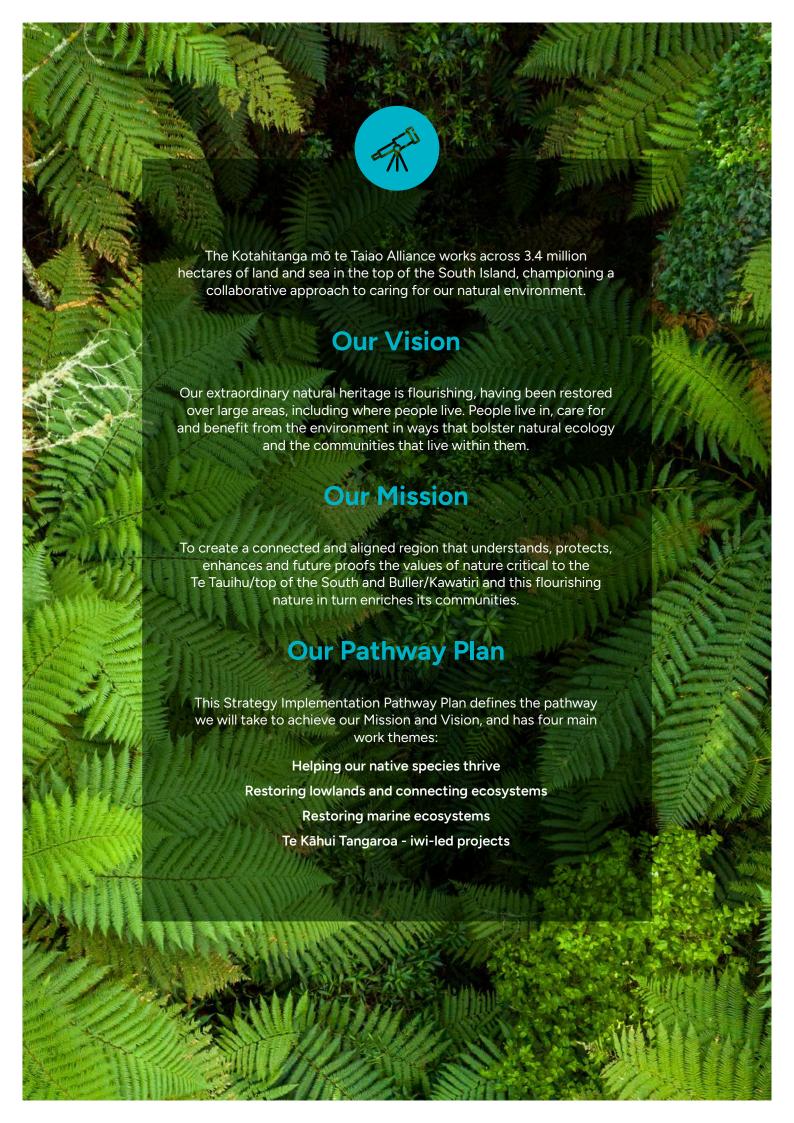






# Kotahitanga mō te Taiao

Strategy Implementation Pathway Plan

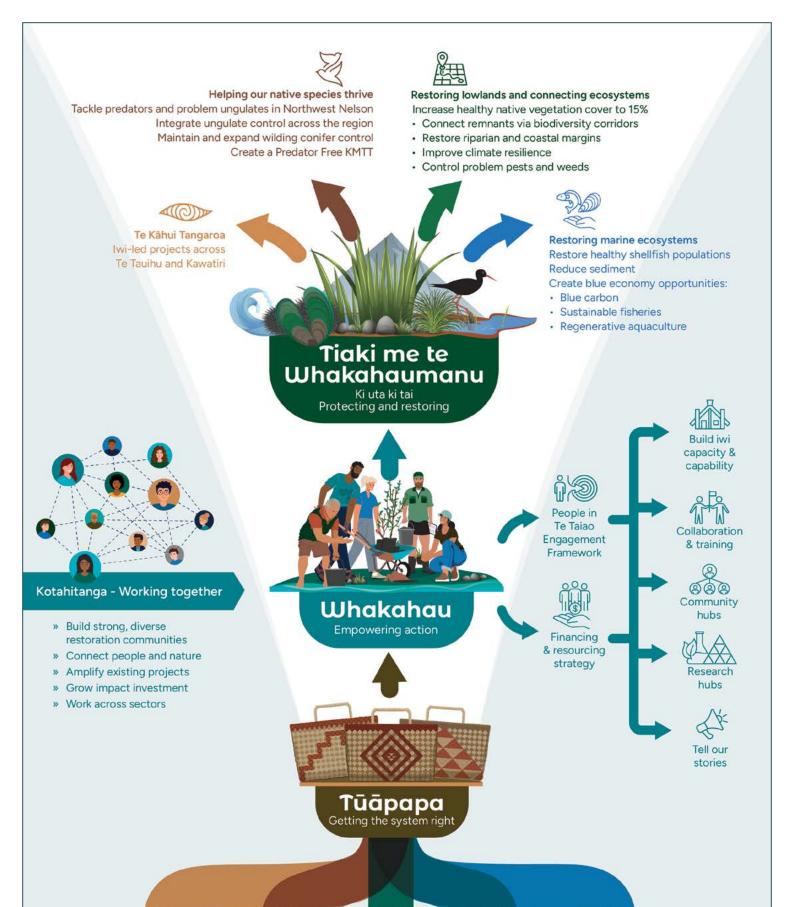


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# Kotahitanga mō te Taiao

Strategy integration

Climate resilience

Sustainable finance

Governance

& operations

lwi leadership

Strategy Implementation Pathway Plan

# Foreword – Co-Chairs

Kua rīwaru te waka, ka rata ngā tāngata o runga When conditions are right, anything is possible

(Whakatauakī nō Ngāti Rārua)

"When the Tainui waka was first launched it was off balance. Hoturoa and his people then hauled the waka ashore, and the correct adjustments were made to ensure that it would float properly. When it was launched for a second time, the people celebrated. This whakatauakī is best used in situations where people must ensure that everything is balanced before the kaupapa may proceed." (Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Rārua (2023), Kia Pai te Reo Pukapuka Tautoko).

When we think about the Kotahitanga mō te Taiao kaupapa at hand across Te Tauihu and Kawatiri and the responsibility we have as kaitiaki and rangatira, we liken our challenge to that of Hoturoa and his people. The conditions must be right to balance the waka, Te Waka Kotahi, to achieve our aspirations.

We are proud to present this transformative plan for our region, Te Tauihu/top of the South Island, and Kawatiri/Buller. It reflects the work of many people to improve the health of our incredible biodiversity and rich environment, empowering and connecting communities to be a part of this important mission.

This plan has been developed to realise the vision and outcomes of the Kotahitanga mō te Taiao Alliance (KMTT) Strategy, building on work already underway to maintain the gains for the long term. It identifies and sets a pathway for the key transformative actions needed to reverse our region's decline and set us on a path of landscape-scale restoration.

Despite funding and management challenges, our partners and communities have worked in this space for years. We will use this plan to focus and connect this work; to amplify current efforts by addressing the key challenges at scale and unlock sustainable funding mechanisms for conservation across the region.

By connecting and collaborating to address the threats facing climate and biodiversity, KMTT aims to create a liveable future for nature and people. Through this plan, informed by Western science and mātauranga Māori, we show how informed investment can transform the future of our region.

As a ground-breaking collaboration, KMTT can enable landscape-scale restoration in our region. Working with our community, we will collaborate to secure and direct resources to achieve the most meaningful impact across the landscape. The backing of the KMTT partners enables a coherent approach to the vision for this region.

In practical terms, this plan focuses on the four areas where we can collaborate to make the greatest difference:



Helping our native species thrive



Restoring lowlands and connecting ecosystems



Te Kāhui Tangaroa

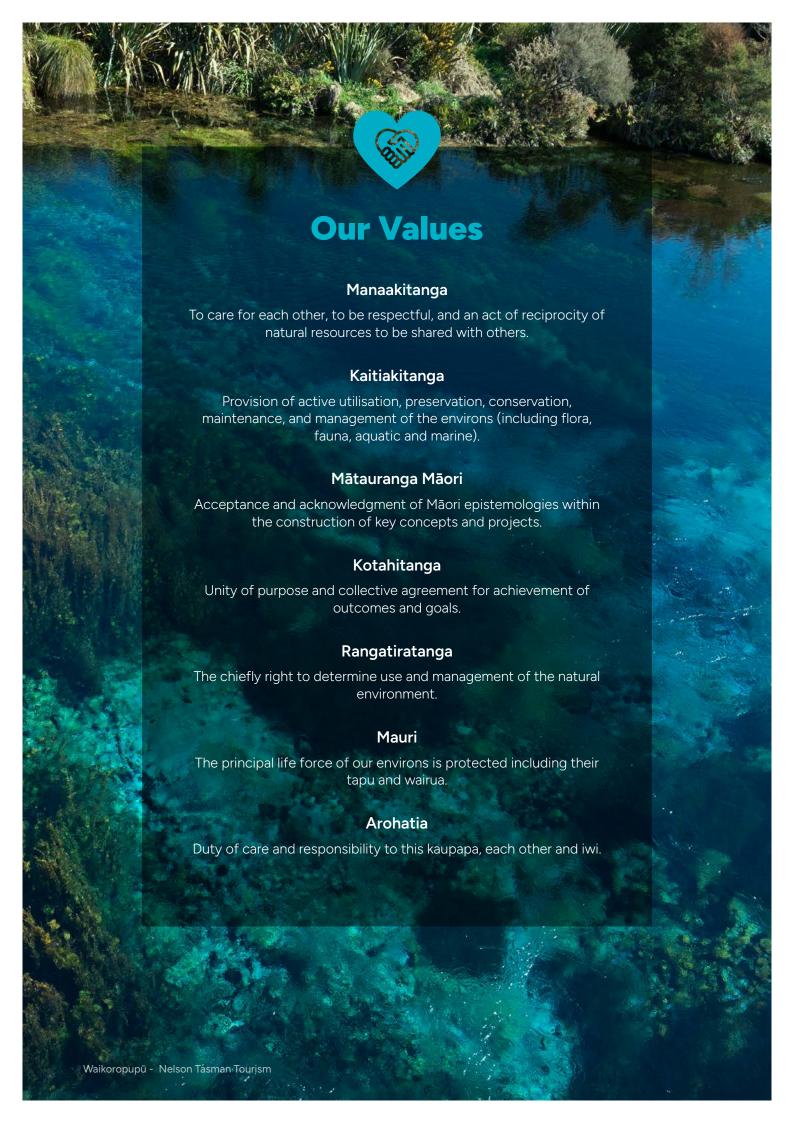


Restoring marine ecosystems

KMTT's partners – iwi, local and central government - are confident this is the path to follow, and that our funders, supporters, volunteers, projects, and communities can achieve what is necessary for us to be good ancestors for our people and our natural world.

Co-Chairs

Martin Rodd and Hemi Sundgren



## **Our Partners**

The Kotahitanga mō te Taiao Alliance (KMTT) is a collaboration of 17 iwi, council and government partners, supported by The Nature Conservancy Aotearoa New Zealand (TNC NZ) to recover and whakamana (empower) the mauri (life force) of the land, waters and people across 3.4 million hectares of land and sea in Te Tauihu/Nelson, Tasman, Marlborough, and Kawatiri/Buller.

In 2019, KMTT delivered the KMTT Strategy – a vision for the region's response to the twin crises of biodiversity loss and climate breakdown. KMTT recognises the many conservation and restoration projects in this region that are aligned to this strategy, and which will be amplified by this plan.































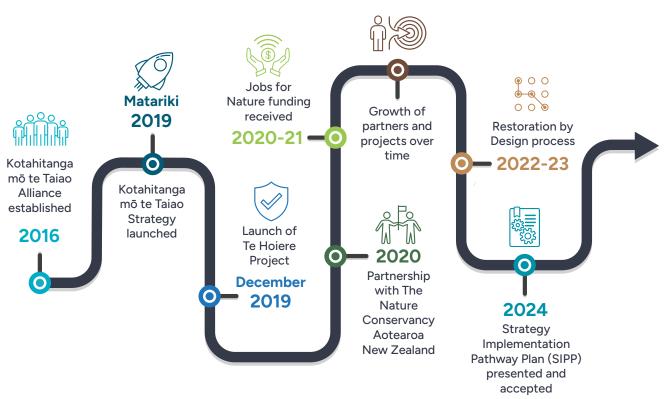


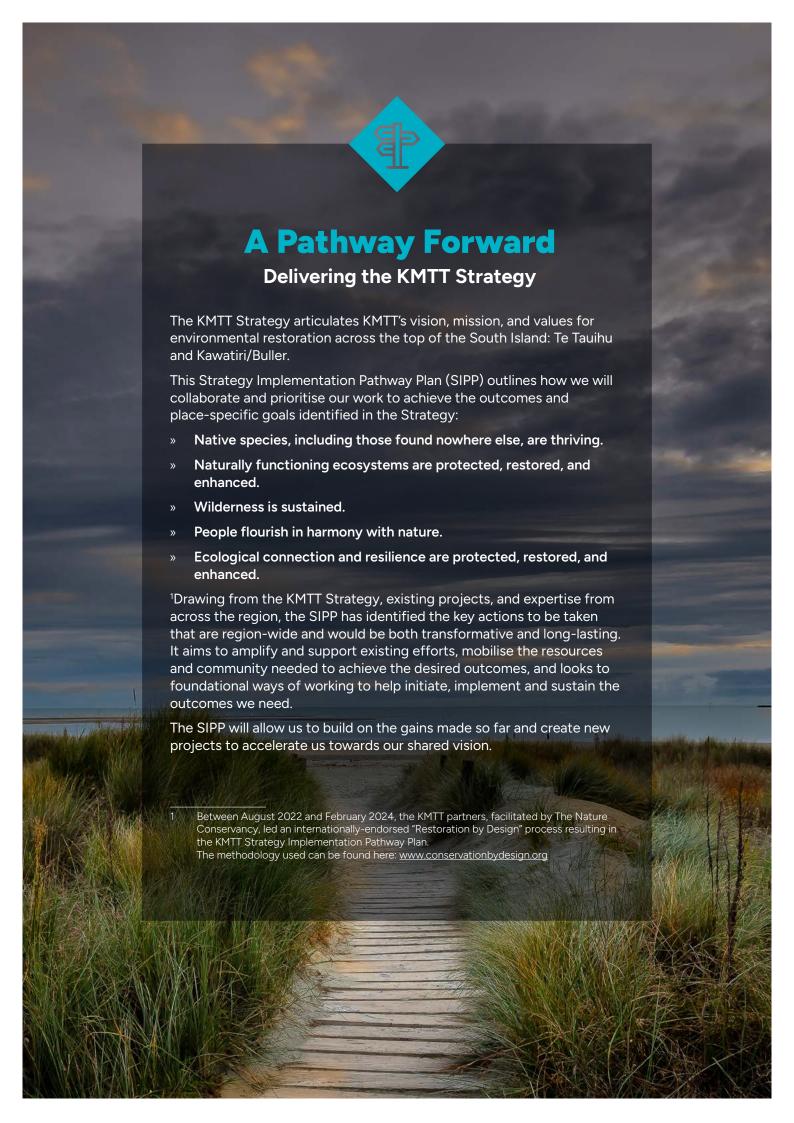


In collaboration with
The Nature Conservancy Aotearoa New Zealand



## **Timeline**





# **The Plan**

### Identifying the Challenges and Finding Solutions

The SIPP outlines how we will meet the challenges of invasive species, fragmented landscapes and marine ecosystem loss facing people and nature across our region.

We will need a solid foundation of communities empowered to act, sustainable resourcing, and strong, well-positioned governance integrating iwi leadership.

These three pou or pillars are critical to the success of the plan and reflect Te Mana o te Taiao – The Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy.



### Tiaki me te Whakahaumanu - Ki uta ki tai Protecting and restoring

Reducing the impact of invasive species, restoring and connecting fragmented landscapes, restoring our marine ecosystems and supporting iwi-led projects so that we can thrive in harmony with nature.



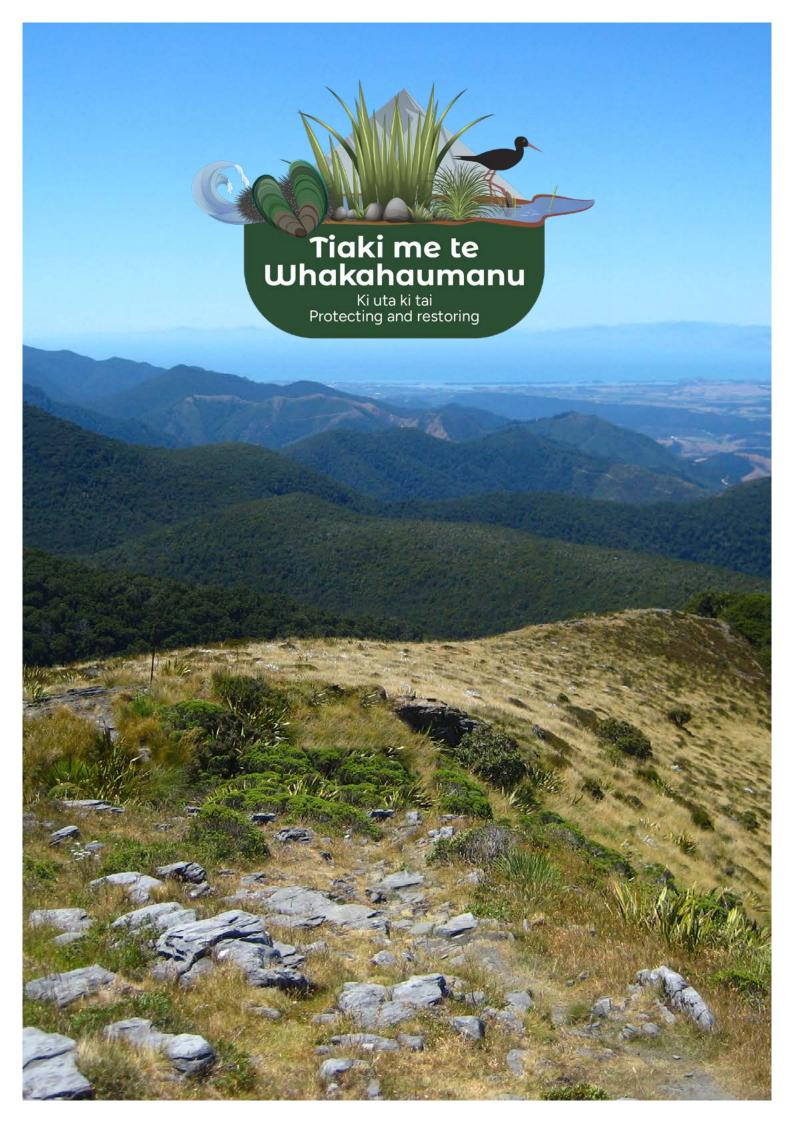
### Whakahau - Empowering action

Empowering our communities – from volunteers to businesses, landowners to schools – and our KMTT partners, to be active in the restoration and care of our lands and seas. By increasing access to training, research, resourcing, and building iwi capacity and capability to lead projects, we will ensure we are ready and able to meet the challenges.



### Tūāpapa - Getting the system right

Ensuring that governance, operational and organisational structure, iwi leadership, collaboration, overarching strategy, project outcomes, and sustainable financing mechanisms all support and enable the goals of the KMTT strategy.



# Tiaki me te Whakahaumanu

### Ki Uta Ki Tai – Protecting and Restoring

With sound governance and an empowered community, we can tackle predators and invasive species, reduce biosecurity threats, plant native forests, connect and restore ecosystems, and bring life back to our seas. Its four workstreams are: Helping our native species thrive; Restoring lowlands and connecting ecosystems; Restoring marine ecosystems and Te Kāhui Tangaroa (iwiled projects).

### Helping Our Native Species Thrive

Reducing the pressure of introduced species (wilding conifers, browsing animals, invasive wasps, and predatory mammals like rats and stoats) on our rich and biodiverse region so that birds, lizards, insects, bats and their native habitats and ecosystems are thriving.



#### **Current State**

Declining native species

Invasive species numbers and impacts are growing

Fragmentation of actions limits successful outcomes

Underfunding and reinvasion create a long-term crisis



#### Pathway to the Vision

Cross-agency control/ elimination of predators and browsing animals across Northwest Nelson using emerging science, mātauranga Māori and tools

Create secure boundaries against re-invasion of these areas

Resource and amplify ongoing wilding conifer control

Connect and amplify community-led predator-free activities across the region

Ensure sufficient investment to enable control and maintenance of invasive species



#### **Future State**

Northwest Nelson has eradicated or suppressed predators and controlled problem browsing animals

Wilding conifers are no longer a threat to key ecosystems

Native plants and animals at high-value sites and regenerating forests are thriving thanks to reduced pressure from invasive species

Biodiversity and ecosystem resilience to climate change is improved

Communities are connected to support suppression and prevent reinvasion

Cost of invasive species control declines after knockdown and ongoing investment ensures gains are maintained



#### Who could be involved?

Department of Conservation; Ministry for Primary Industries; iwi; councils; KMTT Strategy-Aligned Projects; community and environmental restoration groups; existing predator control groups; browsing animals control and wilding conifer projects; national Predator Free bodies; farmers and foresters; hunters; and landowners.



#### Restoring Lowlands and Connecting Ecosystems

Restoring natural vegetation cover across 15% (10-13,000 hectares) of our most threatened landscapes in the lowlands. By working with the support of communities, councils, government, landowners, and primary industries we will restore the well-being of the lands.



#### **Current State**

Less than 1% of natural cover is left in many of our lowland and productive ecosystems

Native habitats' biodiversity values and resilience are limited by fragmentation and a lack of connections

Soil loss and erosion leads to sedimentation of rivers and coastal habitats

Climate change and natural disasters amplify the damage to floodplains, rivers, and coasts

Lack of both sustainable funding and coordination makes it difficult to reverse the loss



#### Pathway to the Vision

Find sustainable funding sources to provide long-term stability, including impact investment of carbon markets and biodiversity credits and/or premiums

Find mapping tools to identify high-value sites as restoration priorities

Use Western science and mātauranga Māori to inform nature-based solutions to climate impacts

Identify barriers to success and support Community Connector Hubs to educate, inform and provide tools and resources



#### **Future State**

Lowland native cover is restored to 15%

Erosion and sedimentation no longer contribute to river and coastal ecosystem decline

lwi, landowners, and communities are engaged in restoration, backed by support and sustainable funding

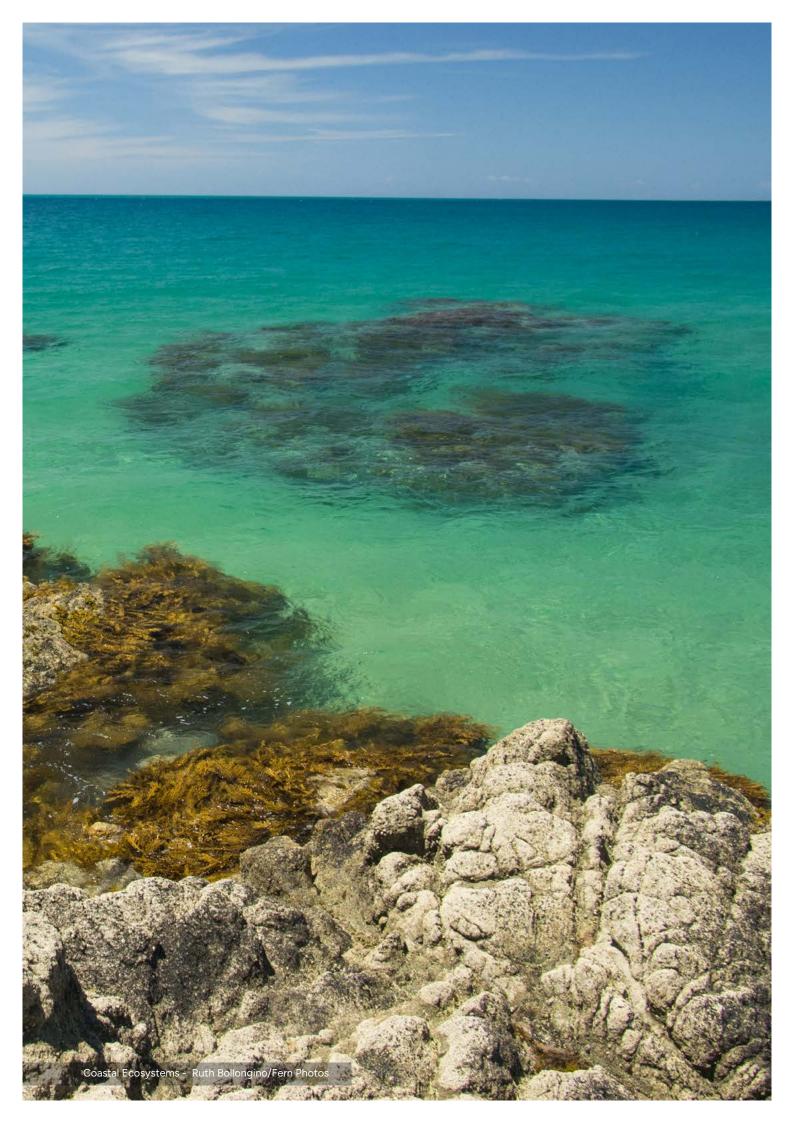
High-value ecosystems are resilient to climate impacts and protect and buffer the community

A sound and strong investment strategy supports restoration efforts



#### Who could be involved?

TNC NZ; Tasman Environmental Trust (TET); Kawatiri Nature Environment and Communities Trust; KMTT Strategy-Aligned Projects; Community trusts and conservation groups across the region; catchment groups; councils; iwi; Ministry for the Environment; Department of Conservation; Ministry for Primary Industries; QEII Trust; forestry companies; farming industry and leaders; public and private landowners.



#### **Restoring Marine Ecosystems**

Facilitating better management of river catchments and coastal bodies of water to reduce sedimentation, restore shellfish populations, and develop an environmentally aware and sustainable blue economy that encourages restorative aquaculture opportunities and improved marine harvesting methods.



#### **Current State**

Shellfish populations have collapsed, with ecosystems smothered by sediment inputs and re-suspension

Disruption to food chain ecosystems causes problems like a proliferation of kina

Climate change is impacting sea temperatures and coastal habitats

Marine and land ecosystem management are not integrated, with governance both challenging and fragmented

The opportunity for a sustainable blue economy is recognised but not well developed

Barriers prevent iwi exercising kaitiakitanga and rangatiratanga over ki uta ki tai approach



#### Pathway to the Vision

Support the establishment of an iwi-led approach from the mountains to the sea (ki uta ki tai)

Reduce sediment inputs and re-suspension through improved marine and land management systems

Use Western science and mātauranga Māori to inform decision-making

Use tools provided by Sustainable Seas and other research programmes to inform actions

Collaborate with the blue economy sector to improve ecosystembased management and regenerative aquaculture

Collaborate on mapping and restoring high-value ecosystems



#### **Future State**

A ki uta ki tai approach, led by iwi provides a strong framework for hā whakaora ō Tangaroa (restoring the life force to the ocean)

Shellfish populations are restored, with sustainable harvesting, including mahinga kai

Sedimentation is significantly reduced, and existing sediment is managed to minimise impacts

Rocky reef habitats close to the shore are thriving with life

A thriving and sustainable ecosystem-based management blue economy exists

Communities are actively involved in restoration to reduce sediment and restore habitat

#### Who could be involved?

Iwi; councils; TNC NZ; Fisheries NZ; Department of Conservation; Ministry for the Environment; fishing and seafood interests, organisations and collectives; existing shellfish restoration projects; universities and research agencies; forestry managers/owners; the farming industry and landowners; cultural kai moana interests.





#### Te Kāhui Tangaroa

#### Iwi-led projects across Te Tauihu and Kawatiri.

Te Kāhui Tangaroa is a space that enables a tino rangatiratanga approach to implement restoration projects for KMTT iwi partners. It is important to note that iwi are involved at many levels within KMTT from governance to supporting existing projects. This kaupapa is an opportunity for iwi to lead our own projects based on our priorities "Ki uta ki tai." The marine space is the end of the line, and our whakapapa means that we have intrinsic relationships with our taonga and ecosystems holistically from the mountains to the sea, ki uta ki tai. The Kāhui will be a group that makes decisions on behalf of KMTT iwi partners to support this approach and implementation.



#### **Current State**

Iwi are spread across many projects lead by council, community groups and science research institutes, sometimes duplicating work which can create iwi capacity issues

Tino rangatiratanga and kaitiakitanga work hand in hand. You cannot function as a kaitiaki if you cannot self-determine or make decisions for your taiao. With social injustice comes environmental injustice

The bays and sounds of the region and their surrounding ecosystems are victim to sedimentation and loss of taonga species such as our tipa/scallops, and degradation is ongoing



#### Pathway to the Vision

Support funding for iwi capacity and capability to enable iwi-led projects

Establish a Kāhui Tangaroa, 'iwi steering group' of partners to support iwi-led projects and function as an enabler hub for iwi

Source funding and investment for iwi-led projects

Tools, science, and expertise e.g. project management wrap around iwi to support our programmes of work and delivery



#### **Future State**

Established iwi-led projects are aligned to iwi priorities that whakamana and empower iwi leadership and tino rangatiratanga

Iwi capacity and capability is supported through training programmes, resourcing, and enduring succession initiatives

Kaitiaki aspirations are realised and acknowledged and the ability for manawhenua to be kaitiaki of their taonga, awa, moana and whenua is enabled

Shellfish populations such as tipa/scallops are restored, customary and sustainable harvest is achieved and the interconnectedness of ecosystems, ki uta ki tai is realised

Kotahitanga - collective self governance - is implemented, and shared collective decision-making is deployed to break down silos and barriers to management for a common purpose



#### Who could be involved?

KMTT iwi partners from Te Tauihu and Kawatiri; whānau and hapū; hāpori community groups; councils; science research institutes; government departments.



# **Whakahau**

### **Empowering Action**

This external-facing Pou draws on the Strategy Vision – "people live, care for and benefit from the environment in ways that bolster natural ecology and the communities that live within them," and supports the work of Tiaki me te Whakahaumanu – Protecting and Restoring – Ki uta ki tai.

Its key actions include the development of a People in Te Taiao Engagement Framework that supports Community Connector Hubs and empowers all sectors across our communities with the capability and resources we need to achieve transformative outcomes, whilst enabling people's closer connection to the natural world.



#### **Current State**

We have a base of strong community-led organisations actively involved in restoration and protection of our environments

Barriers to their success include size, resourcing, support, information, and ongoing funding

Community Connector Hubs are underfunded with varying capacity across the region

Research is often done in isolation and not always well connected to restoration needs

Active engagement in restoration is relatively limited to conservation community and landowners with minimal engagement from the broader community

Work programmes are critically underfunded to make a transformative and sustainable difference



#### Pathway to the Vision

Provide support for Community Connector Hubs across the region, engaging with all sectors of our community

Coordinate research providers and activities through a research hub

Support the application of mātauranga Māori in te taiao

Support the capability and capacity-building of workers and leaders of the future, particularly iwi

Develop a funding and resourcing strategy to support and enable the KMTT SIPP

Collaborate with partners to provide clear and costed investment prospectuses to deliver funding for key projects

Increase visibility of our work throughout our community and with funders, investors and supporters across the country and the world, through a strong Communications and Engagement Framework



#### **Future State**

A thriving, engaged community connects businesses, schools, individuals and families, industries, and landowners, to nature

Projects are well-funded for success and resilience

People have an improved sense of connection to te taiao. They contribute to strategy outcomes and embrace cultural diversity

The Inspire-Connect-Nurture-Empower framework is wellestablished across the region

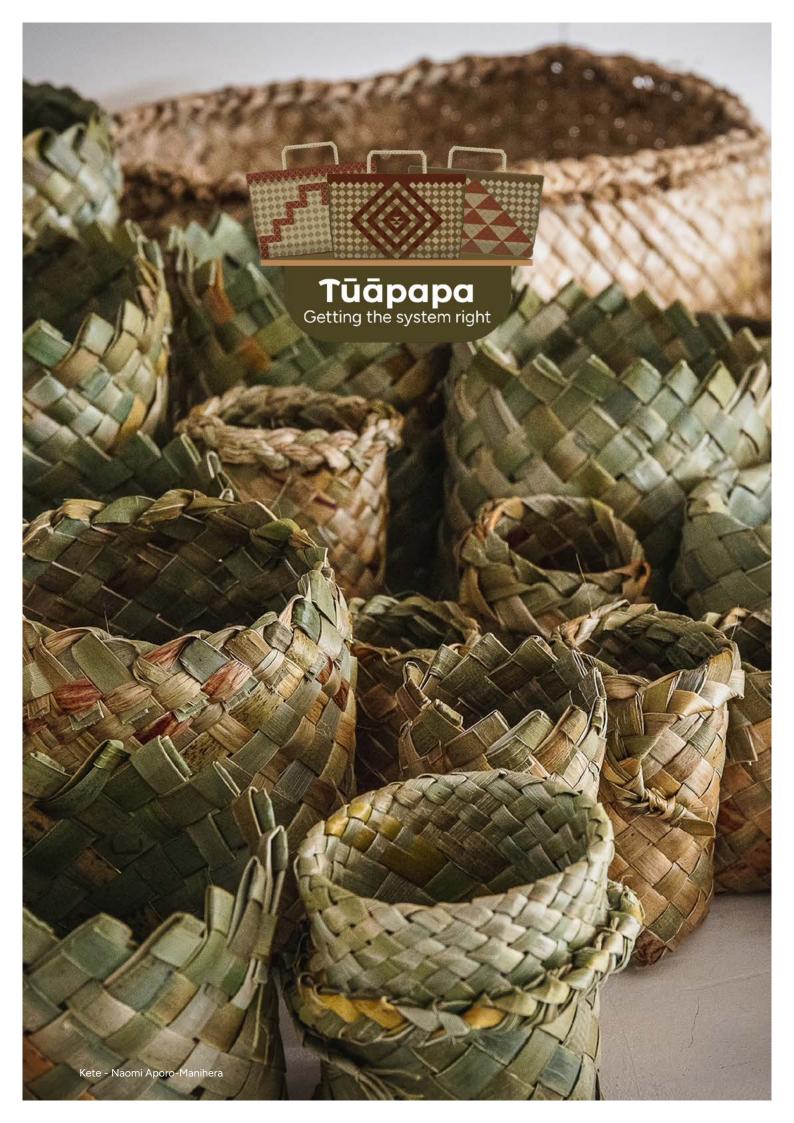
Community Connector Hubs support restoration by providing leadership, education, advice, and support

Research is well-connected through the hub and provides vital tools and knowledge for restoration activities

KMTT's work is well recognised locally, nationally and internationally

#### Who could be involved?

Department of Conservation; Ministry for the Environment; Fisheries NZ, Councils; iwi; Tasman Environmental Trust (TET); Kawatiri Nature Environment and Communities Trust (KNECT); businesses; educators; landowners; leadership trainers; community trusts and conservation groups across the region; Forest & Bird; Nelson Marlborough District Health Board; and the broader health and social development sectors.



# Tūāpapa

### **Getting the System Right**

This internal-facing Pou is a critical foundation of the plan. Its key actions are to ensure that the governance, operational, and funding structures are fit for purpose. It will provide a point of focus to measure outcomes and ensure climate resilience is embedded in our work. It will support and uphold actions to improve iwi leadership across te taiao.



#### **Current State**

Need to build capacity through KMTT Governance and Operations

Opportunity exists to facilitate KMTT Partners and Strategy Aligned Projects to work more closely together

Project funding issues create barriers to scope, effectiveness and longevity

Climate change is not necessarily integrated into biodiversity planning

lwi leadership opportunities are constrained by capacity and funding barriers

Need to integrate outcome monitoring to display a strong coherent story of our work



#### Pathway to the Vision

Review of governance and operational models to ensure delivery on SIPP outcomes

Work with national and international agencies to explore sustainable project financing tools and opportunities

Provide space and resources for iwi partners to lead

Regular reviews of the Strategy and SIPP to ensure they are fit for purpose

Establish strong links between climate and biodiversity outcomes

Ensure alignment with local and central government funding models and strategies

Using international best practice, use planning, implementation and monitoring frameworks to ensure compelling and well-thought out projects that achieve desired outcomes



#### **Future State**

A resilient and effective governance and operational structure supports the delivery of the KMTT Strategy Outcomes and SIPP

An effective Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Programme is in place

Sustainable financing underpins successful projects

Climate change resilience and adaptation is integrated into all project planning, with nature-based solutions adopted

Iwi are actively leading and expressing kaitiakitanga and rangatiratanga





All KMTT partners; KMTT Strategy-Aligned Projects; funding agencies; climate teams.





# **Acknowledgements**

Development of the Strategy Implementation Pathway Plan was made possible through the generous support of the following:

#### **Principal Supporter:**

Rata Foundation



**Key Supporters:** 

Commonland

The Nature Conservancy





# Kua rīwaru te waka, ka rata ngā tāngata o runga

When conditions are right, anything is possible

