



# National's Conservation Policy

## Overview

The National Party believes our unique native species and natural environment are some of our most precious taonga. We will invest in protecting and preserving them so that all New Zealanders can experience and enjoy them.

We know the value that New Zealanders place on protecting our unique flora and fauna, and preserving our globally recognised natural environment. The principle of conservation, of protecting what we have and improving it for future generations, has always been a core value of the National Party and we will continue to embody it. National will take a balanced, long-term and pragmatic approach to conservation to ensure that all New Zealanders – both here today and future generations – will have the opportunity to experience and enjoy our incredible natural environment.

## Policy highlights

### National will:

- Re-affirm our commitment to a Predator Free New Zealand by 2050, and fully resource efforts to keep us on track towards this goal.
- Begin work to establish two new National Parks – one on the Coromandel Peninsula and one in the Catlins, and build two new Great Walks.
- Provide \$15 million to DoC for predator-free ecological sanctuaries and breeding programmes.
- Recognise iwi have concerns and work with them to progress the Kermadec Ocean Sanctuary, while exploring options for the establishment of new marine reserves.
- Ensure New Zealanders are able to continue to enjoy access to recreational fishing, whitebaiting and hunting.

- Utilise expertise from the professional and recreational hunting community, including the Game Animal Council, in the control of tahr, wallaby and other game animals.

## Protecting our flora and fauna

Dedicated work from DoC and the wider community has seen many of our native species brought back from the brink of extinction. Over the last 25 years, we have established numerous predator-free areas, from small islands of a few hectares to largescale enclosed areas with many thousands of hectares. Many of these sanctuaries are now thriving with abundant bird and animal life, many of which are open to the public to enjoy. Building on this, in our last term in Government National announced the Predator Free 2050 initiative – an audacious goal to eradicate predators from our country that just a decade earlier most would have said was a pipedream. We invested millions in new traps, poisons and lures and in our next term, we will continue this vital work to ensure our threatened native species are once again able to thrive.

### National will:

- Re-affirm our commitment to a Predator Free New Zealand by 2050, and fully resource efforts to keep us on track towards this goal.
- Provide \$15 million to DoC for predator-free ecological sanctuaries and other breeding programmes – such as Sanctuary Mountain Maungatautari, Wellington's Zealandia and Dunedin's Orokonui – to enable them to continue to protect plant and animal species and support species re-introduction and breeding programmes through the disruption caused by Covid-19.
- Recommence work to develop new biotechnology tools and techniques to help reduce the impact of pests and predators on our native species.



- Recognise iwi have concerns and work with them to progress the Kermadec Ocean Sanctuary, while exploring options for the establishment of new marine reserves.
- Commit to the control of Kauri dieback disease, including through further investments in track and facility upgrades where needed to prevent its spread.

## Access to our outdoor environment

As New Zealanders, we are all rightfully proud of our pristine natural environment. National will ensure that all Kiwis continue to enjoy access to our great outdoors, and we will prioritise upgrading and expanding our walking tracks, huts and camp grounds. National will also work to expand the opportunities available for New Zealanders to enjoy our own backyard, by building new Great Walks and expanding our National Park network.

### National will:

- Guarantee freedom of entry to all public conservation land, and ensure that DoC huts, walking tracks and camping grounds are maintained to a high standard.
- Begin work to establish two new National Parks – one on the Coromandel Peninsula and one in the Catlins.
- Build two new Great Walks, including one along the Kaimai Range from Mt Te Aroha to SH29.

National supports a strong, sensible approach to conservation. We want a conservation system that is capable of managing the many competing demands for land use in New Zealand and can make sensible, pragmatic decisions about the long-term conservation of our natural resources, the promotion of biodiversity and the protection of our native flora and fauna. A National Government will continue to support the outstanding work carried out by the Department of Conservation (DoC) and will work to ensure the system is functioning as efficiently and effectively as it can to benefit all New Zealanders.

### National will:

- Ensure DoC remains focused on its core conservation functions of land management, pest and predator control, and the promotion of biodiversity.
- Amend the National Park management plans to allow for more recreational and commercial activities where these deliver a net conservation gain.
- Provide an opportunity for limited grazing on Crown pastoral lease land that has been through tenure review, provided there is a net conservation benefit from that activity and a net financial benefit to the Crown.

## Fishing and hunting

National recognises that for many New Zealanders, recreational fishing and hunting are a way of life, and one that we will work to protect. We also believe that the fishing and hunting communities have an important role to play in the conservation effort, as partners with Government alongside local communities and NGOs. National will ensure that New Zealanders continue to enjoy access to recreational fishing and hunting opportunities, balanced with careful, sustainable management of animal stocks and strict enforcement of existing conservation rules to ensure sustainability and the continued recovery of our native species.

### National will:

- Update the 1993 Tahr Management Plan, staying true to its principles of balancing environmental needs with commercial and recreational hunting opportunities.
- Utilise expertise from the professional and recreational hunting community, including the Game Animal Council, in the control of tahr, wallaby and other game animals.
- Ensure New Zealanders are able to continue to enjoy access to recreational fishing and whitebaiting, and that commercial fishing stocks are managed sustainably so recreational fishers are not adversely impacted.