

AOTEA CONSERVATION COLLABORATION WORKSHOP: OVERVIEW

SHARING GOALS AND PRIORITIES FOR THE PROTECTION AND RESTORATION OF AOTEA

This workshop brings together all the organisations with responsibility for activities that restore and protect the environment of Aotea.

Purpose

Identify and agree opportunities for collaboration over the next 12 months, based on shared priorities for conservation and ecosystem restoration on Aotea. These may be projects, places, species, education or other things of importance to the group.

When and where?

Claris Conference Centre, Monday 23 November, 10.15am-2.30pm

Agenda

REGISTRATION, MORNING TEA 10.15am

10.15am Registration, morning team and briefing

10.30am Karakia, welcome and Introductions activity (in groups)

10.50am How has the year gone for conservation on Aotea?

- Reflection on Values, Threats, Areas for Action and Priorities identified in Nov 2019
- How have we progressed in the last 12 months?
- What has changed? Where are the gaps?

12pm Sharing goals and priority projects

- What key projects or activities are planned for the next 1-2 years that protects what we value and addresses the threats?
- What are the most important changes we need to make?

LUNCH 12.30pm – 1.00pm

1.00pm Energiser activity— quiz

1.10pm Identifying priorities for collaboration in 2021

- Review the list of planned activities and projects
- What will the most impactful projects/activities be? (these could be projects, key sites, species projects, groups of people, stakeholders etc)
- How might we work together to make sure the most impactful projects succeed?

2.00pm What other opportunities might there be to collaborate for better outcomes?

2.15pm Closing reflections and summary of actions.

2.30pm Closing Karakia

CLOSE WORKSHOP 2.30pm

Facilitators: Aotea Great Barrier Island Environmental Trust

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Thanks go to all the participating teams who are giving their time and energy to the workshop.
An thank you again to Claris Conference Centre for donating the venue hire.

Other workshop outcomes

- Continue to build relationships between organisations and people
- Continue to build a understanding amongst all participants of the context for conservation activity on Aotea over the next 1-3 years
- Improve participants' understanding of the proposed work programmes and priorities of each organisation/projects over the next 1-2 years
- Create a joined up conservation story and key messages for our community and other stakeholders.

Participating organisations

- Department of Conservation (on island staff and regional Partnerships team)
- Aotea Great Barrier Local Board
- Ngati Rehua Ngatiwai ki Aotea
- Auckland Council (specialist biodiversity and biosecurity teams - those based locally and in Auckland)
- Kawa Marae and Aotea Mana Whenua Pest Management project
- Motairehe Marae
- Auckland Council Regional Parks
- Aotea Conservation Park Advisory Committee
- Ecology Vision
- Glenfern Sanctuary
- Windy Hill Sanctuary
- Motu Kaikoura
- Protect Aotea and S.P.A.C.E
- Okiwi Community Ecology Project
- Oruawharo Medlands Ecology Vision (OME)
- Awana Project
- Aotea Trap Library
- Aotea Great Barrier Island Environmental Trust
- Conservation contractors (Envirokiwi, Natural Logic, others tbc)

Assumptions

As in 2019, the outputs of the workshop will be documented and shared in summary with the community and stakeholders.

Protecting and restoring Aotea's ecology needs to be:

- *Informed by the same understanding of what is valued and important for Aotea and its communities*
- *Aligned*, because capacity is scarce, and we want to get as much conservation value/bang for buck as possible from public and private funding
- Meeting legislative, local and regional planning requirements
- Clearly contributing towards *shared goals and priorities*.

FEEDBACK FROM 2019 WORKSHOP

From participants' feedback, this was a worthwhile and valuable event.

What we achieved

- Together we gained a better understanding of the work and perspectives of all the organisations present
- We laid the foundation for future collaboration on the challenges ahead
- We agreed on what we and our organisations value about Aotea
- We agreed the threats to that value
- We agreed some areas for action in the next 3 years
- We agreed some next steps - including to meet again as a group.

What people liked

- Participation by almost all groups/organisations involved in conservation and restoration on Aotea
- Positive energy
- Enthusiasm and support for the workshop and different process – new, but it worked
- Opportunity to establish relationships with others in the group
- Presence of mana whenua at every conversation
- Desire to continue to work together
- Timely input for Local Board and Area Plan teams in their processes

Concerns or questions...

- What will we do differently as a result?

For improvement next time

- Opportunity for iwi lead next meeting
- Allow for more kai and a little more time
- More notice of next meeting

BACKGROUND TO THIS WORKSHOP

- Aotea Great Barrier is a national and regional stronghold for a number of nationally vulnerable species including pāteke, black petrel, kākā, dotterel, and bittern. It is also New Zealand's largest tract of stoat and possum free forest. DOC and Auckland Council are responsible for the protection and restoration of Aotea's biodiversity and ecosystems. They do this alongside Ngāti Rehua Ngātiwai ki Aotea as mana whenua. The Aotea Great Barrier Local Board and a number of not for profit sanctuaries, community trusts and projects and several hundred private landowners also contribute.
- Auckland Council's Regional Pest Management Plan identifies Aotea as key to regional conservation outcomes and has identified a large number of Biodiversity Focus Areas on Aotea. Biosecurity effort on the island is considerable and growing.
- DOC's Conservation Management Strategy includes milestones such as the return of kōkako to Te Paparahi, management of significant biodiversity sites and working towards a pest free island. Ngāti Rehua Ngātiwai ki Aotea's Hapu Management Plan prioritises restoration and protection of taonga and significant sites. In 2020, in support of this, a new project called Tū Mai Taonga has been proposed. It aims to remove feral cats from the Aotea Conservation park and surrounding private land, and to suppress rats to low densities.
- Pest management efforts began more than 20 years ago (in the sanctuaries, cat control at Okiwi and removal of goats and wild cattle in Te Paparahi). Focus on this has recently increased on the island, as it has across NZ, following the eradication of rats from Rakitu. There are important centres of expertise in the three sanctuaries at Windy Hill, Glenfern and Motu Kaikoura, and in the Aotea Great Barrier Island Environmental Trust. Community pest projects at Okiwi and Oruawharo/Medlands, a community nursery, an Ecology Vision facilitator, on-island biodiversity roles and a range of other projects are supported by the Local Board. The sanctuaries, GBIET, marae, papakainga and private landowners are supported by a number of funders including Foundation North, WWF, DOC and Auckland Council.
- There is low community capacity to volunteer relative to other areas in the Auckland Region (1000 residents, very low average incomes, with skilled people already at capacity). It is therefore particularly important that the resources and budgets of publicly funded agencies are optimised/get the best ecological outcomes possible (eg no overlaps, clear basis for prioritisation).
- The Aotea Great Barrier Local Board captured community aspirations through the Ecology Vision in 2015. The Ecology Vision has grown strongly in the last 12 months as has community conservation. This is demonstrated by the growth of the Aotea Trap Library, Aotea Bird Count, Community Nursery, new community lead projects at Oruawharo Medlands and Awana, and another covering Kawa and Motairehe marae and papakainga.
- In recent years there has been an increasing focus on the health of the marine environment. Aotea has some of the most intact and valuable marine ecosystems in the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park. Some areas are by contrast overfished. Sea Change has identified opportunities for change on Aotea to improve marine protection and adopt traditional tools for sustainable management. Local support for this is evident through schools and in the community. There has been very strong support for Protect Aotea's campaign to end the practice of marine dumping of dredge spoil off Aotea's east coast.