



Thriving Nature

For a healthy environment

The Green Party will double the number of rangers working on the front lines to defend nature and double the amount of pest control on conservation land.

Our kiwi, our kōkako and our mountain kea are some of the greatest living treasures on earth. Nearly half our birds are found nowhere else on the planet. Millions of tourists come here every year to see our pristine wild places, mainly because we still have them.

But our native birds and wildlife are in serious trouble. One third of our birds are facing extinction — many could disappear within our lifetimes. They face a plague of rats, stoats, possums, and feral cats, and the ongoing destruction of their natural habitat. To save our native birds and threatened species and see them thrive in our lifetimes, we need to invest a great deal more money into conservation and pest control.

The Green Party will:

- 1.** Restore the Department of Conservation's (DOC) role as nature's primary defender. By doubling DOC's baseline conservation budget within five years we can double the number of people working on the frontlines of conservation — DOC rangers and the technical staff and scientists who support them — and double the amount of pest control on conservation land.
- 2.** Stop all new mining on the conservation estate, strengthen legal protection for threatened species and the places where they live, and create a strong, overarching conservation action plan.
- 3.** Support community-based conservation and conservation on private land by doubling the government funding they can receive and better co-ordinate the great work of conservation volunteers nationwide.
- 4.** Increase funding for Predator Free 2050 through a \$20 [levy on international tourists](#) entering New Zealand, raising \$65 million per year for Predator Free New Zealand by 2021.

Nature under attack

Since taking office, National has put DOC through the wringer. DOC has been restructured, downsized, and had hundreds of millions of dollars cut from its baseline funding in real terms, forcing DOC to close field offices and to shed around 200 frontline rangers. Even worse, DOC's mission to be the primary defender of nature has been diluted by National's drive to open up conservation land for business.

As a result, DOC is unable to achieve the things that we most want from them — properly protecting nature, enhancing our wilderness, and our ability to enjoy it. We're going to fix that.

How much will our plan cost?

There are three new funding components to our plan:

1. Doubling DOC's budget for conservation work (Management of Natural Heritage) will be phased in over five years meaning that, by 2023, DOC will receive an additional \$192 million in baseline funding. From this, DOC will be able to fund an additional 720 frontline rangers, technical staff, and scientists, and the additional operating expenses to support them. The new funding will also enable DOC to double the pest control it does.
2. An additional \$24 million, by 2021, will enable a doubling of government funding for community conservation work on private, QEII, and Māori land.
3. A new \$20 [tourism levy](#) will, by 2021, raise an additional \$65 million per year for Predator Free New Zealand.

We believe protecting nature is a part of core Government spending so new conservation funding, besides the tourism levy, will come from the Crown's consolidated fund.

What can be done with more rangers and more pest control?

Currently DOC only actively manages less than half of the important ecological areas it is responsible for and does pest control in only 16 percent of the beech forest experiencing a prolific boom in rat and stoat numbers in a mast year. Doubling the number of rangers and the pest control work they do will ensure the important habitats of threatened species are properly managed and controlled for pests and weeds. We'll hear kiwi and kōkako calling in our forests again.

www.greens.org.nz/thriving-nature

The logo for the Green Party of New Zealand, featuring a stylized green leaf above the word "Green" in a white serif font.

Authorised by James Shaw, Parliament Buildings, Wellington