



the Jane Goodall Institute New Zealand

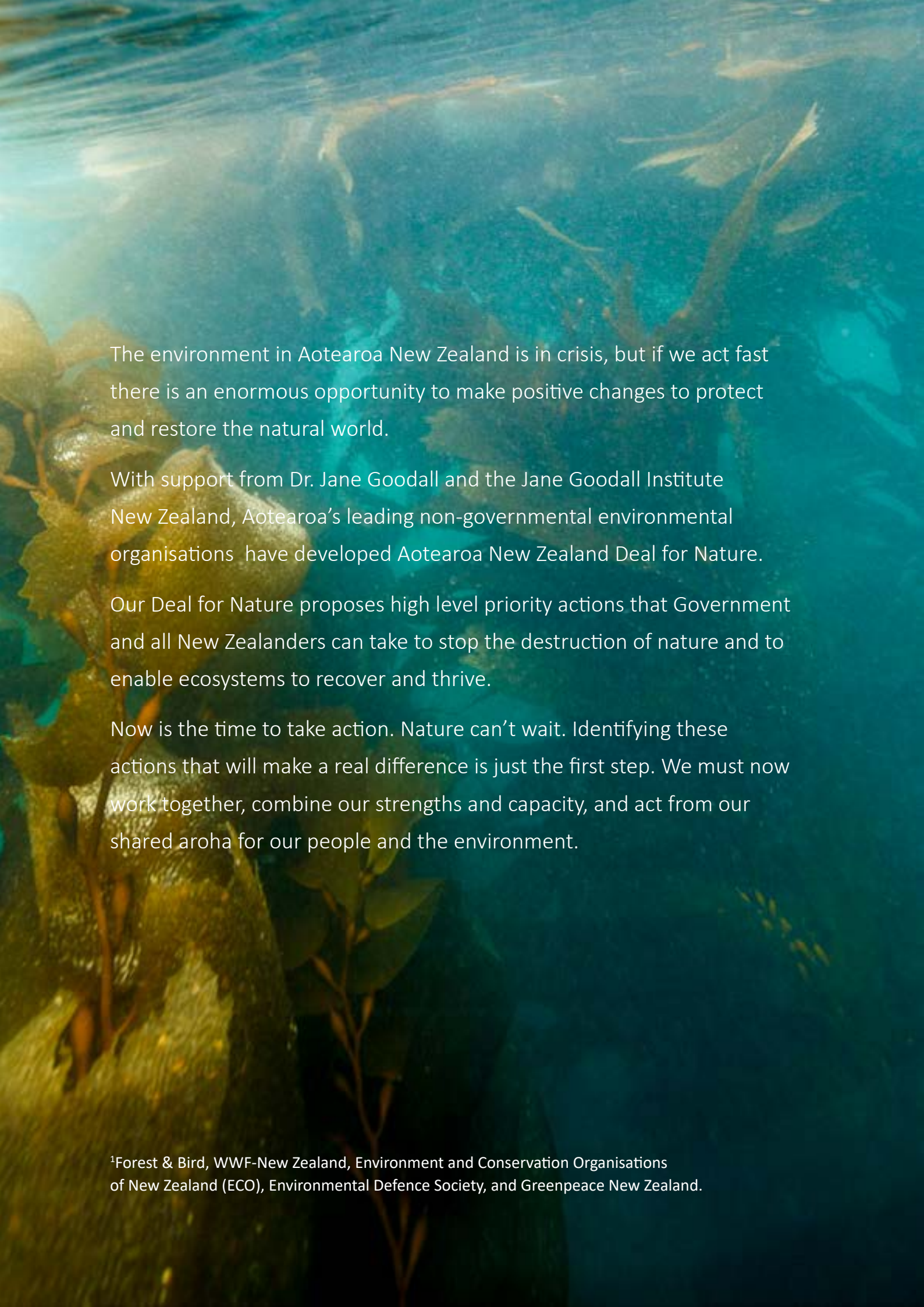
# AOTEAROA DEAL FOR NATURE



GREENPEACE





An underwater photograph showing a vibrant blue-green sea with various types of seaweed and kelp. Several small fish are visible swimming in the background. The lighting is bright, creating a clear view of the marine life.

The environment in Aotearoa New Zealand is in crisis, but if we act fast there is an enormous opportunity to make positive changes to protect and restore the natural world.

With support from Dr. Jane Goodall and the Jane Goodall Institute New Zealand, Aotearoa's leading non-governmental environmental organisations have developed Aotearoa New Zealand Deal for Nature.

Our Deal for Nature proposes high level priority actions that Government and all New Zealanders can take to stop the destruction of nature and to enable ecosystems to recover and thrive.

Now is the time to take action. Nature can't wait. Identifying these actions that will make a real difference is just the first step. We must now work together, combine our strengths and capacity, and act from our shared aroha for our people and the environment.

<sup>1</sup>Forest & Bird, WWF-New Zealand, Environment and Conservation Organisations of New Zealand (ECO), Environmental Defence Society, and Greenpeace New Zealand.

## An international movement for better environmental policy

We are not alone in sending this message. Internationally, the OECD has called for a culture that respects nature and life through new economic systems, less reliance on GDP growth, a cross-governmental focus on the environment, and recognising the need for more holistic measures of real human wellbeing.

The Global Deal for Nature (GDN) is a science-driven action plan to save the diversity and abundance of life on Earth. The GDN is calling for a bold commitment to protect at least 30 percent of all ecosystems by 2030.

The recent United Nations assessment of international biodiversity shows a million species are at risk of extinction by 2050 globally. Global problems are reflected in Aotearoa, as shown in the Ministry for the Environment's recent Environment Aotearoa 2019 report.

Aotearoa New Zealand should support the GDN, and adopt the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) goals of transformative change (UN, 2019), to take the lead in improving the state of our environment.





# Our natural world is important and in trouble

As an island nation, many of our unique native species have evolved in isolation. Now, a heartbreaking number of those amazing species are at risk. Human activities and introduced invasive alien species have pushed many of our native plants and animals towards extinction and devastated some of our most treasured landscapes.

## *We need a strong Biodiversity Strategy*

Although human history in Aotearoa New Zealand is relatively short, we've had an enormous impact on the natural world by burning forests, draining wetlands, and introducing unsustainable agriculture on a large scale. This significant habitat loss has caused localised extinction of native species, degradation of life-giving resources like fresh water, and driven native ecosystems to crisis point.

We now have an opportunity to start positive change to repair the damage we have caused. A strong new Biodiversity Strategy for Aotearoa should guide central and local government in producing better laws, and result in significant investment in our natural world. This Strategy should aim for an immediate halt in biodiversity decline and set out a plan for turning things around.

## *We need to transition from destructive land uses*

Some problems will take considerable time and resources to unravel. The last few decades of agricultural intensification has caused untenable habitat destruction and freshwater pollution, and is now responsible for 48 percent of our greenhouse gas emissions. More than three-quarters of our native freshwater fish and a third of the known freshwater native insects are now in serious trouble.



But the solutions are within our reach. We can shift to regenerative farming, and rapidly reduce the use of fertiliser (particularly synthetic) and irrigation. We can reduce the number of dairy cows in our countryside. We can protect wetlands and prevent barriers to fish migration. The rewards will be great: healthy soils, safe water, reduced emissions, and survival for our native plants and animals.

### *We need to protect our oceans*

Aotearoa New Zealand has rights over an enormous area of ocean. Our Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) is one of the largest in the world. Less than half a percent of our marine environment is fully protected, and nearly all of that is found around distant offshore islands.

Every year thousands of protected marine species like penguins, albatross, sharks and dolphins, are legally killed by commercial fishing boats. Thousands of tonnes of protected corals and other seafloor species are also legally destroyed. Our commercial fisheries are poorly regulated with outdated legislation. We must act to change this now.

### *We need effective Climate Change legislation*

Nothing shows how desperate our situation is more than climate change. We don't need compromises, procrastination, or party politics. We need bold climate change legislation that meaningfully commits us to achieving carbon neutrality and keeping warming this century below 1.5°C.

Our natural environment plays a critical role in our climate resilience. Healthy forests, coasts, and oceans can help to protect humans from the worst effects of climate change. But nature is vulnerable to climate change, and the impact is expected to be far worse if we stray above 1.5°C of warming.





## *We need Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Mātauranga Māori in our response*

In taking action, we need to work alongside Iwi and Hapū, and give respect to the provisions and principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Mātauranga Māori. Provisions should be made for the voice of Te Taiao (the natural world) to be heard in government and society. Tangata whenua are the kaitiaki (stewards) to interpret that voice.

The list of recommendations below gives specific actions, but we recognise ecosystems are interconnected. It is essential to commit to an integrated approach to environmental management, which recognises feedback loops, resources activities to address cross-cutting issues, and acknowledges the truly interconnected nature of the ecosystems we depend on.

What we do for and with our animals, plants, and natural habitats, impacts on our people. What we do on land affects our rivers. What we put in our rivers arrives in our estuaries, and ultimately the ocean. We acknowledge “ki uta, ki tai” – from the mountains to the sea, as a way of protecting and restoring nature.

New Zealanders are not afraid to lead the way. We stood up for what we believed in by going nuclear free. We can and should lead the way now.



# Key recommendations to the New Zealand Government

## Land:

1. Adopt a National Policy Statement on Indigenous Biodiversity that ends habitat loss and degradation across all land, as part of the implementation of a Biodiversity Strategy that halts decline and sets a trajectory to ensure nature thrives.
2. Ensure the Department of Conservation has sufficient long term resources and mandate to protect biodiversity across all of New Zealand (particularly all public conservation land), including by ramping up ecologically-sound landscape-scale biodiversity protection where and when needed, and strengthening conservation legislation.
3. Increase funding and support to the Department of Conservation, Biosecurity New Zealand, and regional authorities to address threats posed by invasive alien species, including wilding conifers, weedy exotics, fungal diseases and other pathogens, and the impacts of ungulates and other introduced browsing animals.
4. Stop exploration and mining on or under conservation land.
5. Strengthen New Zealand's resource management framework to ensure all activities occur within clear environmental bottom lines and limits, including by reforming the Resource Management Act.
6. Manage the pressures of housing and urban development within environmental limits by ensuring new development does not encroach on native ecosystems or result in loss or degradation of fresh water bodies.

## Fresh water:

7. Shift to regenerative land uses by: transitioning away from mono-culture into diversified farming with multiple crops and animals, and significantly reducing sedimentation, livestock numbers, fertiliser use (particularly synthetic), and irrigation.
8. Stop freshwater habitat destruction by: protecting all remaining wetlands and spawning habitats, ensuring all activities and structures allow for safe indigenous fish passage, and ensuring plantation forestry is managed to protect fresh water bodies.
9. Restore lost freshwater habitats, especially those critical to the survival of New Zealand's freshwater species, including by establishing major freshwater biodiversity corridors from mountains to sea, and implementing a goal to double wetland area across New Zealand.

## Marine:

10. Reform New Zealand's marine legislation (including the Fisheries Act and The Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf (Environmental Effects) Act) to avoid and reduce the environmental effects of marine activities, with proper application of the precautionary principle and ecosystem-based management, including spatial management.

11. Adopt robust Marine Protected Areas legislation with a clear goal to fully protect (no take) 30 percent of habitat types in each bioregion of our coastal marine space and our Exclusive Economic Zone in a meaningful, representative and well-connected network of protected areas, and in line with the Government's commitments and obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

12. Adopt a legal and policy framework effective in reducing fisheries impacts on endangered threatened and protected species towards a zero bycatch goal.





## Climate:

13. Reform the Climate Change Response Act 2002 to: commit the whole of government to work towards keeping warming this century below 1.5°C and reaching net zero emissions for all gases by no later than 2050, put a price on emissions from agriculture, and recognise both the risk of climate change to nature and the critical role that nature plays in climate change mitigation, adaptation, and resilience.

14. Enable a just transition by: ending permits for new oil and gas exploration offshore and onshore, ending coal mining, working in partnership with unions and working people, and ensuring climate policy fully respects Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

15. Implement real measures to cut emissions now, including enabling active, public and electric modes of transport and supporting people and communities to implement solar and wind power alongside battery storage.



## Economy:

16. Adopt the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services goal of “transformative change across economic, social, political and technological factors,” and reform the New Zealand economy to operate within biophysical limits.

17. Ensure trade and economic policy reinforces the four well-beings by ensuring economic decision-making takes into account social and environmental costs and benefits, and trade agreements prevent poor environmental standards from being used to gain a competitive advantage.

## International:

18. Advocate and negotiate internationally to: protect New Zealand’s migratory animals such as marine mammals, seabirds and fish, across their entire range, designate marine protected areas on the high seas (ocean beyond our EEZ) with a goal of 30 percent full no-take protection, and expand full no-take marine protected areas throughout the Southern Ocean.

19. Require imports to come from verifiable sustainable sources (such as for palm oil and timber) and reduce mining demands globally by reducing planned obsolescence of consumer goods, and focus on waste reduction and recovery.

20. Provide resources to ensure we comply with our international agreements to protect wildlife, such as ending domestic ivory trade.

**We look forward to discussing progress  
with the Government in 12 months time.**





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All photos by Rob Suisted.