



Proactive Release

The following documents have been proactively released by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC), on behalf of the Deputy Prime Minister, Hon Grant Robertson:

Progress report on Implementation Unit Assignments

The following documents have been included in this release:

Title of paper: Progress report on Implementation Unit Assignments
(CAB-21-SUB-0519 refers)

- Implementation Unit Work programme update
- Progress Update on Actions from the Mid-Term Review of the Budget 2019 Mental Health and Addiction Package
- New Zealand Upgrade Programme Transport Assessment
- Report: Emergency and Transitional Housing
- Jobs for Nature Stocktake of Progress
- Infrastructure Reference Group Programme Status Update

Title of minute: Progress report on Implementation Unit Assignments (CPC-21-MIN-0034 refers)

Title of minute: Report of the Cabinet Priorities Committee: Period Ended 10 December 2021
(CAB-21-MIN-0519 refers)

Title of paper: Stocktake of Progress Report – Carbon Neutral Government Programme
(CAB-22-SUB-0006 refers)

- Carbon Neutral Government Programme Stocktake of Progress

Title of minute: Stocktake of Progress Report – Carbon Neutral Government Programme
(CBC-22-MIN-0006 refers)

Title of minute: Report of the Cabinet Business Committee: Period Ended 25 February 2022
(CAB-22-MIN-0045 refers)

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Briefing

JOBS FOR NATURE STOCKTAKE OF PROGRESS

To: Hon Grant Robertson
Deputy Prime Minister

Date	29/10/2021	Priority	Medium
Deadline	12/11/2021	Briefing Number	DPMC-2021/22-607

Purpose

The purpose of this stocktake is to assess current progress across the Programme and within key elements and provide advice on whether components of the Programme require re-baselining and/or redesign given New Zealand's stronger-than-anticipated economic performance since the programme's inception.

Recommendations

1. **Note** that good progress is being made across the Jobs for Nature Programme and agencies are on track to achieve the objective of at least 11,000 people employed over by the end of the Programme.
2. **Note** that as at 29 October 2021, Sustainable Land Use (SLU) Ministers have approved \$1.016bn (83%) of the total \$1.219bn Programme funding for specific projects, and that there is \$202.9m (17%) nearing the final stage of approval.
3. **Note** that future programmes should take action to reduce administrative workloads for funding recipients related to applications, approvals, contracting, and reporting.
4. **Agree** to either:
 - 4.1. confirm that appropriate changes have been made given the stronger-than-expected labour market and that approvals should continue. (recommended)
 - OR
 - 4.2. discuss stopping further approvals and returning funding to the Crown with SLU Ministers.

subject to SLU/
national
Reserves
Commission

YES / NO

YES / NO

5. **Agree** to discuss with SLU Ministers whether agencies should provide funding recipients with flexibility to adjust FTE targets for specific projects to achieve greater long-term benefits. ☒ YES / NO *but needs to be a higher bar*
6. **Agree** that agencies and the Secretariat should continue to strengthen delivery by developing measures of progress, validating the delivery of outputs through fieldwork, and increasing coordination across agencies. ☒ YES / NO
7. **Invite** SLU Ministers to report back to Cabinet on the transition plan for sustainability of benefits beyond the Programme, including options for how any unused funding should be addressed. ☒ YES / NO
8. **Invite** the Chief Executive of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet to share the findings about lessons for future cross-agency programmes with public sector chief executives. ☒ YES / NO
9. **Agree** that this briefing is proactively released, with any appropriate redaction where information would have been withheld under the Official Information Act 1982, in January 2022. ☒ YES / NO
10. **Agree** that the Implementation Unit reports on progress against this set of recommendations as part of its regular reporting to you. ☒ YES / NO



Katrina Casey
Executive Director, Implementation Unit

29/10/2021

s9(2)(a)


Hon Grant Robertson
Deputy Prime Minister

12/11/2021

Contact for telephone discussion if required:

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Minister's office comments:

- ☐ Noted
- ☐ Seen
- ☐ Approved
- ☐ Needs change
- ☐ Withdrawn
- ☐ Not seen by Minister
- ☐ Overtaken by events
- ☐ Referred to

JOBS FOR NATURE STOCKTAKE OF PROGRESS

Executive Summary

1. The Jobs for Nature Programme ('the Programme') was designed to create nature-based employment opportunities as part of the COVID-19 economic recovery. In June 2020, the Government allocated \$1.219bn¹ to the Programme, of which 90% was funded through the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund and the remainder from existing appropriations across Vote Environment, Vote Forestry, and the Provincial Growth Fund.
2. Jobs for Nature comprises 22 programme funds across the Department of Conservation (DOC), Ministry for the Environment (MfE), Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI), Kānoa (Regional Economic Development and Investment Unit) within the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and Teitū te Whenua Land Information New Zealand (LINZ). The Sustainable Land Use (SLU) Ministers group oversees the Programme.²
3. The components of the Programme share three related objectives:
 - a) creation of additional employment opportunities for 11,000 to 13,000 people, at pace and with regional spread;
 - b) enduring benefits for freshwater ecosystems and water quality, biodiversity, climate change and cultural values;
 - c) supporting sustainable land use and the implementation of new regulatory requirements, including for freshwater, biodiversity, and climate change.
4. The Programme was created rapidly during the initial COVID-19 response and objectives were established without clearly defined targets. Officials did not adopt a cross-agency definition for what constituted a job until December 2020. Environmental output targets were not defined at the outset and were determined by the projects proposed by applicants and approved by SLU Ministers.
5. The initial focus was creating short-term jobs at pace in response to high unemployment forecasts, while directly delivering environmental benefits through activities like pest control, planting, and fencing waterways. Agencies were mostly successful at creating jobs at pace, particularly by increasing funding to existing programmes with programme management processes and relationships with partners already in place. This resulted in quick support to a range of distressed businesses and workers, particularly in tourism, who may otherwise have been worse off as a result of COVID-19.
6. As the Programme developed, the labour market remained stronger than initially forecast. In May 2021, SLU Ministers agreed that "agencies should place greater weight on environmental outcomes relative to employment outcomes" [2021-B-07910 refers]. At that point, approximately 27% (\$329m) of Programme funding was awaiting approval for specific projects, of which MfE administered \$240m and DOC administered \$89m.

¹ The initial total allocated to the Programme was \$1.246bn. In May 2021, \$26.6m was redistributed out of the Programme to support the rollout of cameras on inshore commercial fishing vessels [CAB-21-MIN-0181 refers].

² The SLU Ministers Group includes the Environment, Agriculture, Biosecurity, Climate Change, Land Information, Conservation, Economic and Regional Development, and Local Government portfolios.

7. Agencies took different approaches to implementing the SLU Ministers' decision with their remaining funding. MfE redesigned investment criteria for several programme funds to focus on long-term capability building and removed short-term employment as a consideration. DOC shifted emphasis within the same investment criteria to give greater weight to projects with skills and training components in areas with high social need.
8. As a result, the jobs being created have started to evolve towards roles better suited to developing career pathways, such as land management advisors and planners. These changes are likely to result in fewer jobs relative to the original Programme design, but the jobs that will be created will better address long-term Programme objectives.
9. Notwithstanding the change in approach it is likely that at least 11,000 people will be employed through the life of the Programme, noting the Programme comprises projects lasting between one and ten years and creating a mix of short- and long-term jobs. While SLU Ministers' decision to place greater weight on environmental outcomes meant projects being funded have become slightly less labour-intensive, more than two-thirds of Programme funding was approved prior to the decision and those projects are forecast to create more jobs than initially planned.
10. Programme employment metrics show good progress towards the employment objective:
 - a) **Full-time equivalents (FTE):** This refers to the total number of hours worked, expressed as an equivalent number of annual full-time jobs.³ As at 31 July 2021, projects approved to date are forecast to create 9,334 annual FTE over the life of the Programme. There is enough funding remaining for this to increase to at least 11,000 FTE from future projects, though future approval decisions – including to reduce the FTE targets of existing projects – may result in fewer than 11,000 FTE being created.
 - b) **Employment starts:** This refers to the number of people joining an employer in a job funded by the Programme, including part-time and full-time positions. As at 31 July 2021, up to 4,609 people had started employment. It is not possible to forecast employment starts as the total depends on the mix of part-time and full-time jobs and is affected by the number of resignations. It is possible total employment starts may exceed 11,000 over the life of the Programme.
 - c) **People currently employed:** This is a point-in-time count of people employed by the Programme, including part-time and full-time positions. In the first six months of 2021, the average number of people employed at a given time was 2,222. This metric is not directly applicable to the overall objective of supporting 11,000 people into employment as those people would not necessarily be employed at the same time.
11. Agencies and funding recipients do not report systemic challenges in hiring for their jobs, in part because projects generally pay at least the Living Wage, which is higher than comparable employment opportunities in most regions. Some programmes face isolated workforce challenges for specific specialised positions or in some regions.
12. Progress on the environmental outputs contacted so far is mixed: most projects are proceeding well, and a minority are receiving additional attention from agencies.
13. Funding recipients report that employment targets remain a constraint on their ability to design projects that maximise long-term objectives of the Programme. Some recipients

³ An FTE is defined as to 1,560 working hours (a 30-hour work week over 52 weeks). See Attachment B for full definitions.

report that flexibility on their FTE targets would allow them to structure projects to hire slightly fewer people but spend more on career development or materials.

Options for Continuation of the Programme

14. This stocktake is at a late stage in the approval of Programme funding. As at 29 October 2021, SLU Ministers have approved 83% of total Programme funding (\$1.02bn) for specific projects and \$202.9m is yet to be approved. There is no funding left to be approved in 18 of the 22 funds.
15. Three of the four remaining funds relate to freshwater and are administered by MfE: the Essential Freshwater Fund (EFF), Te Mana o Te Wai (TMOTW) and the Freshwater Improvement Fund (FIF). In total, MfE funds have a total of \$195.2m awaiting approval by SLU Ministers, of which EFF makes up \$164.5m. There is also \$7.7m awaiting approval in DOC's Māori Land Fund.
16. There are two options available for the four programme funds with pending approvals:
 - a) Option A: Confirm that appropriate changes have been made to respond to the stronger-than-expected labour market and continue the status quo, noting that this would only marginally impact the total number of jobs.
 - b) Option B: Stop further approvals and return funding to the Crown.
17. Option B carries significant risks for each of the programme funds with funding yet to be approved. Approval decisions are the final stage of an extensive process, and remaining approvals are mostly for iwi and hapū-led projects. Stopping further approvals is likely to cause significant harm to agencies' relationships with partners, who agencies rely on to build the social infrastructure necessary to achieve long-term Programme objectives and support environmental reforms. Stopping MfE approvals could delay delivery of freshwater reforms and would transfer costs to other programmes or may require additional funding in the future.
18. There is no option to return or reallocate funding from the 18 programme funds with no funding remaining to be approved. Approved funding is either committed in contract to third parties, or where contracting is ongoing, recipients have been notified in writing of approval in principle and withdrawing from negotiation could create possible legal risk.

Strengthening Delivery of the Programme

19. Over the past 12 months the Secretariat and agencies have made changes to strengthen delivery across the Programme. Programme management and governance arrangements within and across agencies are appropriate for managing delivery. The Secretariat and agencies should continue transition planning for how to sustain benefits beyond the end of the Programme.
20. Agencies should explore and seek a decision from SLU Ministers whether it is desirable to allow funding recipients to make changes to specific projects where greater long-term benefits could be achieved from the same budget. This would mean trading-off against the total number of jobs created as well as additional administrative workloads for agencies and recipients. s9(2)(f)(iv)

21. Agencies could more actively validate that projects are delivering their intended outputs, particularly related to workforce development components. Measures of progress should be developed that can show, through fieldwork, whether regional capability is improving.
22. Agencies deliver their programmes mostly independently. Emerging areas of coordination between agencies can be strengthened further to address shared opportunities and challenges, including workforce development, reporting, and regional communities of learning. Some topics, such as shortages of materials, go beyond the Programme and coordination is appropriate in other cross-agency settings.

Lessons for Future Programmes

23. In a context where high unemployment forecasts necessitated a Programme being stood up at pace, agencies mobilised and achieved substantial progress quickly. The Programme offers examples of good practice as well as lessons for future programmes, particularly where programmes can be established with a greater lead time and not in crisis conditions.
24. Coordination has improved over the course of the programme through the work of the Secretariat. Future programmes should replicate elements of the Secretariat's work including Programme-wide data definitions and alignment on outputs, shared communications, delivery confidence reviews, and knowledge-sharing across agencies.
25. Notwithstanding these improvements the potential for a cross-agency programme has not been realised. Future programmes can improve the experience of agencies and funding recipients.
26. Programme-wide arrangements were established several months into the Programme on top of the arrangements in place for existing programmes. Not all Programme arrangements applied to existing programme funds – for example, only new programme funds were subject to SLU Ministers' approval. However, many Programme arrangements duplicated agency processes or superimposed additional processes, particularly for approvals and reporting. In particular:
 - a) some approvals took up to nine months and some projects went through up to ten layers of consideration before reaching SLU Ministers for decision.
 - b) Programme-wide reporting created significant administrative workload for existing projects as contracts had to be re-opened to meet new reporting requirements.
27. The siloed approach, and subsequent coordination challenges, partly reflect that the Programme was set up at pace and combined existing and new programmes. A different Programme build may have been considered in a different, less-urgent context.
28. Future cross-agency programmes could significantly reduce administrative workloads for funding recipients by aligning applications, contracts, and reporting into a single source. Currently each agency and fund have different processes for applications, contracts, and reporting which adds considerably to workloads of recipients who seek and or receive funding from multiple agencies.

29. For future multi-year programmes, officials could consider creating multiple programmes or greater differentiation within a programme, where a programme has elements with different short-term and long-term objectives. This could help to improve alignment across agencies and reduce administrative workloads. Officials could also set decision points to be considered in cases where the assumptions underlying the creation of the programme do not eventuate or significantly change. In some cases this could necessitate a Cabinet report back.
30. Jobs for Nature agencies, particularly MfE, MPI, and DOC, will likely be responsible for supporting future multi-year programmes related to the environmental regulation and conservation. For future multi-year programmes, officials could consider suitable models for coordination across central government agencies and suitable models for incorporating regional expertise in decision-making.

Purpose

31. The purpose of this stocktake is to assess current progress across the Programme and within key elements and provide advice on whether components of the Programme require re-baselining and/or redesign given New Zealand's stronger-than-anticipated economic performance since the programme's inception.

Scope of this stocktake

32. The scope of this stocktake is provided in the Commissioning brief in Attachment A.
33. The findings of this stocktake draw from:
- a) interviews with, and data provided by, programme managers at MfE, MPI, DOC, Kānoa, Toitū te Whenua LINZ, and the Jobs for Nature Secretariat.
 - b) interviews with Reference and Advisory Group members and funding recipients.
 - c) prior reviews of different elements of the Jobs for Nature Programme, including:
 - i) an external review of programme arrangements submitted in May 2021.
 - ii) a 'delivery confidence review' undertaken by the Jobs for Nature Secretariat in March 2021.
 - iii) a range of internal and external reviews and audits that agencies have commissioned of their own elements of the Programme.
 - d) Where this stocktake overlaps with elements of prior reviews, their conclusions were considered in this stocktake and validated with stakeholders where appropriate.

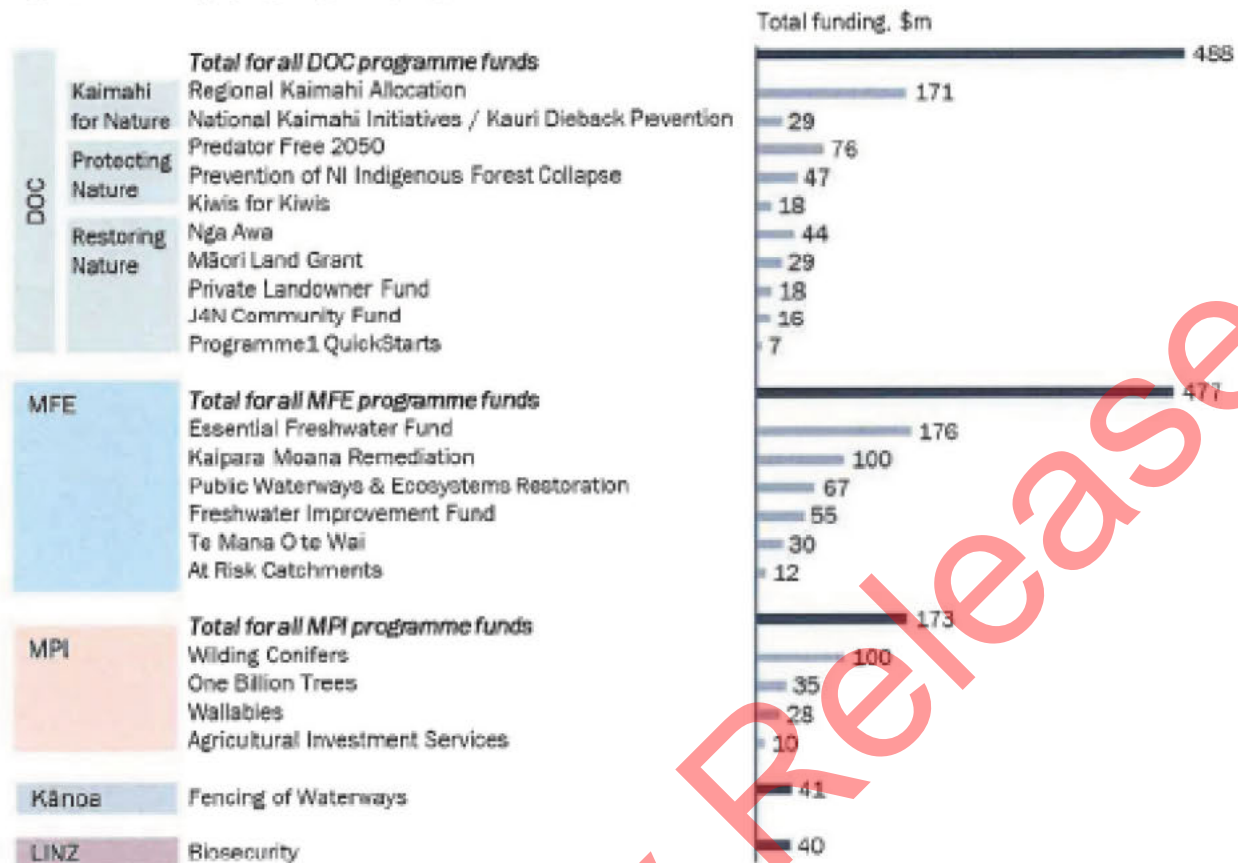
Programme inception and development

34. The Jobs for Nature Programme ('the Programme') was designed in May 2020 in response to an anticipated need for short-term jobs to bridge a gap in employment opportunities resulting from COVID-19.

35. The Programme was established with three related objectives:
- a) creation of additional employment opportunities for 11,000 to 13,000 people, at pace and with regional spread;
 - b) enduring benefits for freshwater ecosystems and water quality, biodiversity, climate change and cultural values;
 - c) supporting sustainable land use and the implementation of new regulatory requirements, including for freshwater, biodiversity, and climate change.
36. Total funding for the Programme is \$1.219bn,⁴ of which \$1.102bn was funded through the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund (CRRF), and the remainder through several non-CRRF initiatives including:
- i) Vote Environment, specifically the Freshwater Improvement Fund and At-Risk-Catchments initiatives (\$67m).
 - ii) Vote Forestry, specifically for catchment groups and water quality projects (\$35m).
 - iii) Vote Business, Science, and Innovation (Provincial Growth Fund) specifically for fencing of waterways (\$40.9m).
37. As at 31 July 2021, funding has been allocated to 357 specific projects under the Jobs for Nature Programme. Projects span anywhere from less than a year to ten years and focus on objectives ranging from short-term employment to long-term capability building.
38. Projects are contracted and administered through 22 programme funds, each with a funding allocation. Five agencies administer the 22 programme funds (Figure 1):
- a) Ministry for the Environment (MfE) administers \$476.7m of total funding (39.1%) across six programmes focussed on freshwater. MfE also serves as lead agency and the MfE Chief Executive as Lead Official.
 - b) Department of Conservation (DOC) administers \$488.4m (40.1%) across ten programmes focussed on predator control, restoring wetlands, weed control; freshwater restoration; ecosystem restoration; regenerative planting, and improving recreational assets including huts and tracks.
 - c) Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) administers \$172.5m (14.2%) across four programmes including One Billion Trees, wilding conifer control, wallaby control, and Agricultural Investment Services.
 - d) Kānoa (the Regional Economic Development and Investment Unit) within the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment (MBIE) administers \$40.9m (3.4%) in one programme, Fencing of Waterways.
 - e) Toitū te Whenua Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) administers \$40m (3.3%) in one programme, Biosecurity.

⁴ The initial total allocated to the Programme was \$1.246bn. In May 2021, \$26.6m was redistributed out of the Programme to support the rollout of cameras on inshore commercial fishing vessels [CAB-21-MIN-0181 refers].

Figure 1. Funding by agency and programme fund



Note: Figures are rounded. Agency totals are greater than the sum of the programme funds shown here, as DOC and MFE totals include programme management costs which are not covered by individual programme funds.

Programme Development

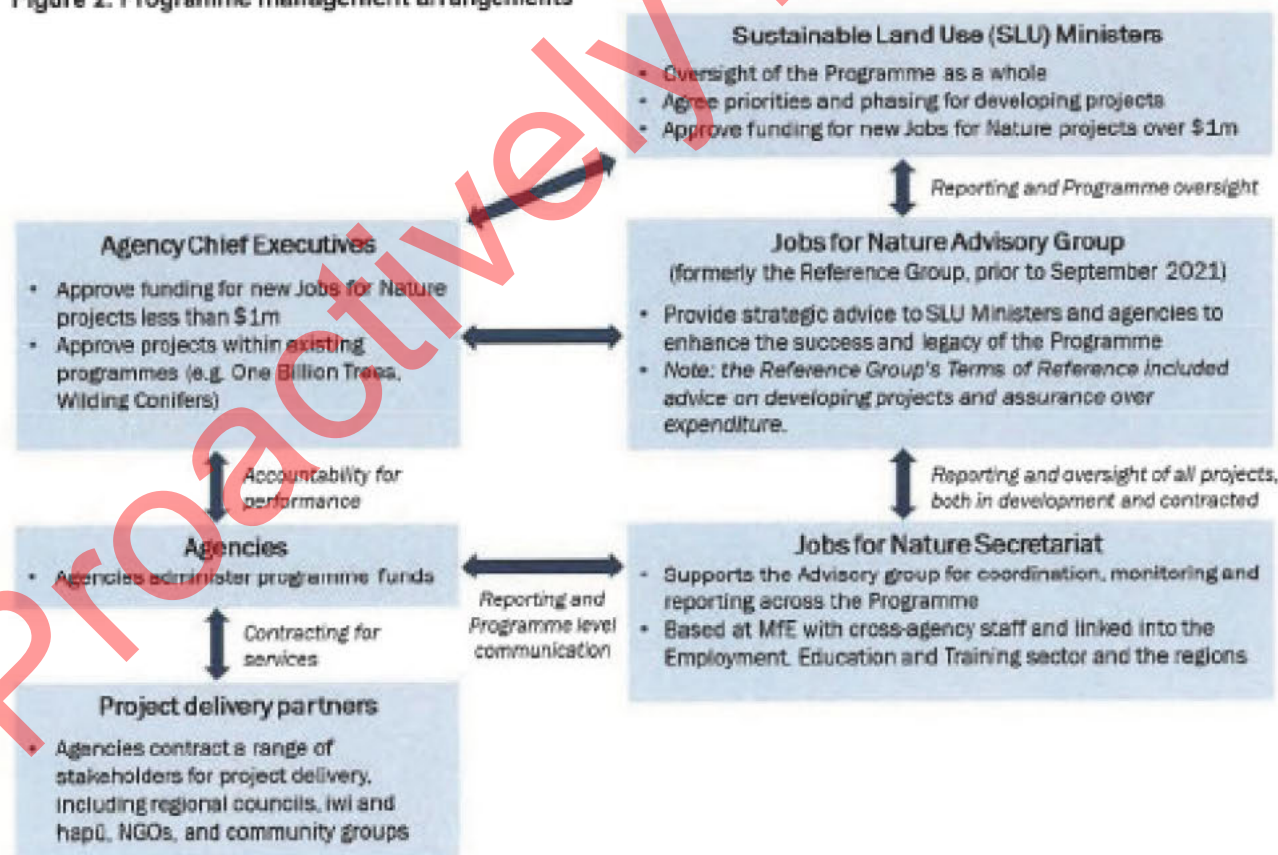
39. The initial focus of the Programme was creating jobs at pace to cushion the immediate impacts of COVID-19. This was achieved by funding labour-intensive projects to create mostly temporary or short-term jobs, such as planting, fencing, and pest control.
40. Agencies were able to create jobs quickly through programmes that could draw on relationships with third parties and existing programme management structures, including contract management, governance, and approval processes. Delivery models included:
 - a) increasing funding to agencies' existing initiatives (such as MPI's Wilding Conifers fund or the Toitū te Whenua LINZ Biosecurity programme),
 - b) ring-fencing parts of existing appropriations to prioritise projects that were suitable for creating jobs at pace (such as MPI's One Billion Trees), or
 - c) establishing new programmes that could be set up quickly based on similar existing programmes (such as Kānoa's Fencing of Waterways, MFE's Public Waterways and Ecosystem Restoration Fund, and MPI's Wallabies).

41. By November 2020, around 50% of all Programme funding had been approved for specific projects mostly focussed on short-term employment. This included essentially 100% of funding administered by MPI, Kānoa, and Toitū te Whenua LINZ.
42. Remaining funding administered by MfE and DOC was allocated to programme funds less suited to creating employment at pace. Developing implementation-ready programmes took time as agencies had to, for example, set up new programme management arrangements, design investment criteria, or consult with partners.
43. As at 29 October 2021, 17% of total Programme funding is yet to be approved for specific projects and some programme funds are still developing project concepts.

Programme management and governance arrangements

44. Programme funds that existed prior to Jobs for Nature approved projects according to the established decision-making procedures of each agency. Agencies also established internal programme management and governance arrangements, including approval processes, for programme funds established through Jobs for Nature.
45. Programme-wide management and governance arrangements – including approval processes for projects in later phases – were established in parallel. Programme-wide arrangements are illustrated in Figure 2.
46. The Secretariat coordinated Programme-wide approval and reporting processes, including cross-agency output metrics. These are discussed further in sections below.

Figure 2. Programme management arrangements



Status of delivery against Programme objectives

47. As at 29 October 2021, SLU Ministers have approved 83% of total Programme funding (\$1.02bn) for specific projects. Contracting is complete for most of this amount (approximately \$880m) and approximately \$135m is currently in the contracting process.
48. Projects approved to date are at varying stages of delivery: some have operated at scale for nearly a year, while some projects are awaiting SLU Ministers' approval.
49. An assessment of the delivery status of each Programme objective is provided in the following section and summarised in Table 1
50. An assessment of the delivery status of each programme fund is provided in Attachment C. Assessments are derived from existing programme progress reporting and triangulated through interviews with agencies and funding recipients.
51. More detailed information on delivery will become available as more projects start. The Secretariat does not currently have a mandate or the capacity to validate agencies' delivery assessments, but this could be strengthened if agencies and SLU Ministers consider it to be appropriate to do so. An expanded role might include scope to more actively validate agencies' delivery progress by conducting fieldwork or deep dives on specific programme funds or projects.

Table 1. Delivery status of Programme objectives

Programme objective	Delivery status
Employment <i>Creation of additional employment opportunities for 11,000 to 13,000 people, at pace and with regional spread</i>	On track – continue to refine <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing funding to existing programmes led to a lot of jobs created at pace, particularly to support tourism businesses. In some cases, these projects over-performed initial expectations for job creation. Programmes starting later continue to create jobs at a pace and, under current settings, are on track to meet the objective. As at 31 July 2021, approved projects are forecast to create 9,334 annual full-time equivalents through the life of the programme. 4,809 people have started employment (this includes part- and full-time positions and is not directly comparable to FTE figures).
Environmental benefits <i>Enduring benefits for freshwater ecosystems and water quality, biodiversity, climate change and cultural values</i>	Mixed - some aspects require attention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental output targets were not defined at the beginning of the Programme. Outputs were determined by the projects proposed by applicants and approved by SLU Ministers. Of the projects approved to date, progress is mixed. Early projects mostly delivered immediate results. More recent programmes proceeded more slowly due to a range of local challenges. Overall, contracted milestones are mostly being met. Agencies have put appropriate actions in place to address projects with delivery challenges.
Supporting sustainable land use <i>Supporting sustainable land use and the implementation of new regulatory requirements, including for freshwater, biodiversity, and climate change</i>	Insufficient information available to form an assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is too early to assess whether the Programme has been effective in supporting the implementation of regulatory requirements as the implementation of projects focussing on this objective are in early stages. Such projects tend to focus on long-term capability and capacity building. Outcomes frameworks for these objectives are being developed and will benefit from defining clear outputs and qualitative measures of progress, so that agencies can track whether capacity and capability are improving. Assessing progress through the Programme is likely to require fieldwork.

Creation of additional employment opportunities for 11,000 to 13,000 people

52. The Programme was established without agreed employment definitions and the objective to support at least 11,000 people into employment did not have a clearly defined target or associated metric.
53. Officials did not adopt a cross-agency definition for what constituted a job until December 2020. The Secretariat led the establishment of shared definitions and metrics for employment, working with the Employment, Education and Training (EET) Secretariat that support the EET Chief Executives group. Definitions are provided in Attachment B.
54. It is likely that at least 11,000 people will be employed during the Programme under current settings. This does not necessarily mean 11,000 people per year or at the same time, noting that the Programme encompasses projects that last between one and ten years and create a mix of short- and long-term jobs.
55. Programme employment metrics show good progress towards the employment objectives:

- a) **Full-time equivalents (FTE):** This refers to the total number of hours contracted or worked, expressed as an equivalent number of annual full-time jobs.⁵ For example, a person employed 30 hours a week for four years is equivalent to 4 FTE. A person employed 15 hours a week for six months is equivalent to 0.25 FTE.

As at 31 July 2021, projects approved to date are forecast to create 9,334 annual FTE over the life of the Programme. There is enough funding remaining for this to increase to at least 11,000 FTE from future projects notwithstanding any future decisions to reduce FTE targets.

- b) **Employment starts:** This refers to the number of people joining an employer in a job funded by the Programme, including temporary, part-time and full-time positions. The same person may join multiple employers through the life of the Programme, with each instance being counted as an employment start.

As at 31 July 2021, up to 4,609 people have started employment. It is not possible to forecast employment starts as the total depends on the mix of part-time and full-time jobs and is affected by the number of resignations and re-hires. It is possible total employment starts may exceed 11,000 over the life of the Programme as many jobs are part-time, but there is not enough information available to forecast this.

- c) **People currently employed:** This is a point-in-time count of people employed by the Programme, including part-time and full-time positions.

In the first six months of 2021, the average number of people employed at a given time was 2,222. This metric is not directly applicable to the overall objective of supporting 11,000 people into employment as those people would not necessarily be employed at the same time.

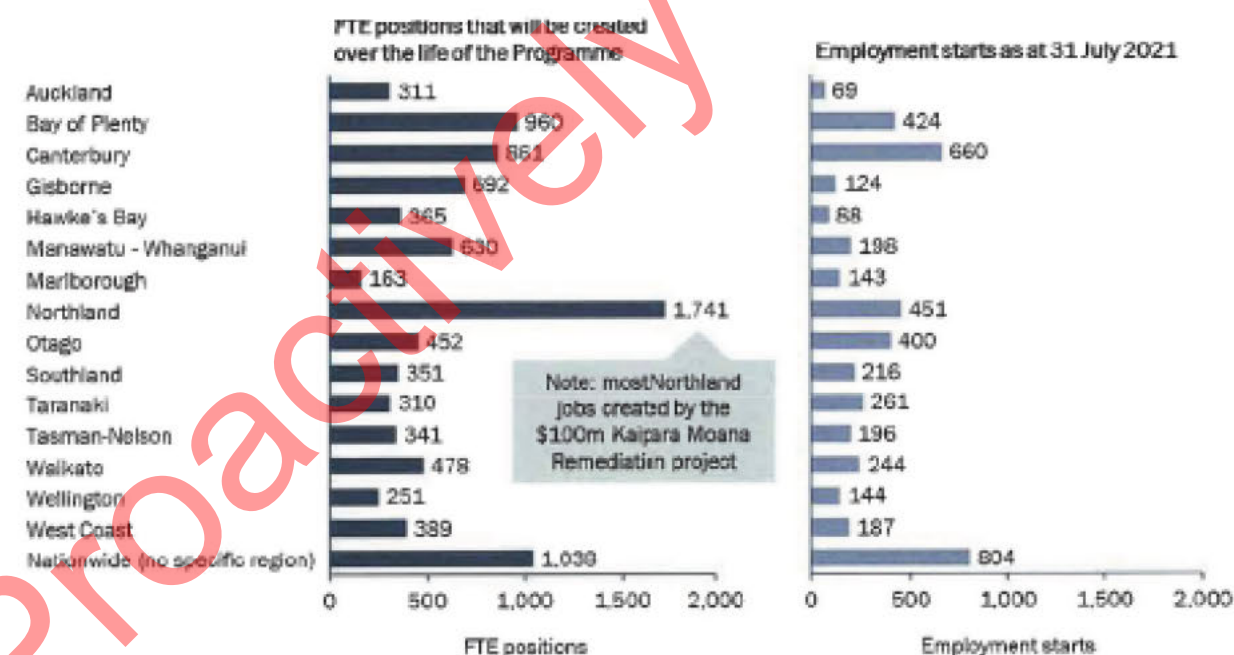
56. SLU Ministers' decision to place greater weight on environmental outcomes (see paragraph 75) meant projects being funded have become slightly less labour-intensive

⁵ An FTE is defined as to 1,560 working hours (a 30-hour work week over 52 weeks). See Attachment B for full definitions.

and will create fewer jobs. It is still expected the Programme will employ at least 11,000 people. This is because more than two-thirds of Programme funding was approved prior to the decision and those projects are forecast to create more jobs than initially planned.

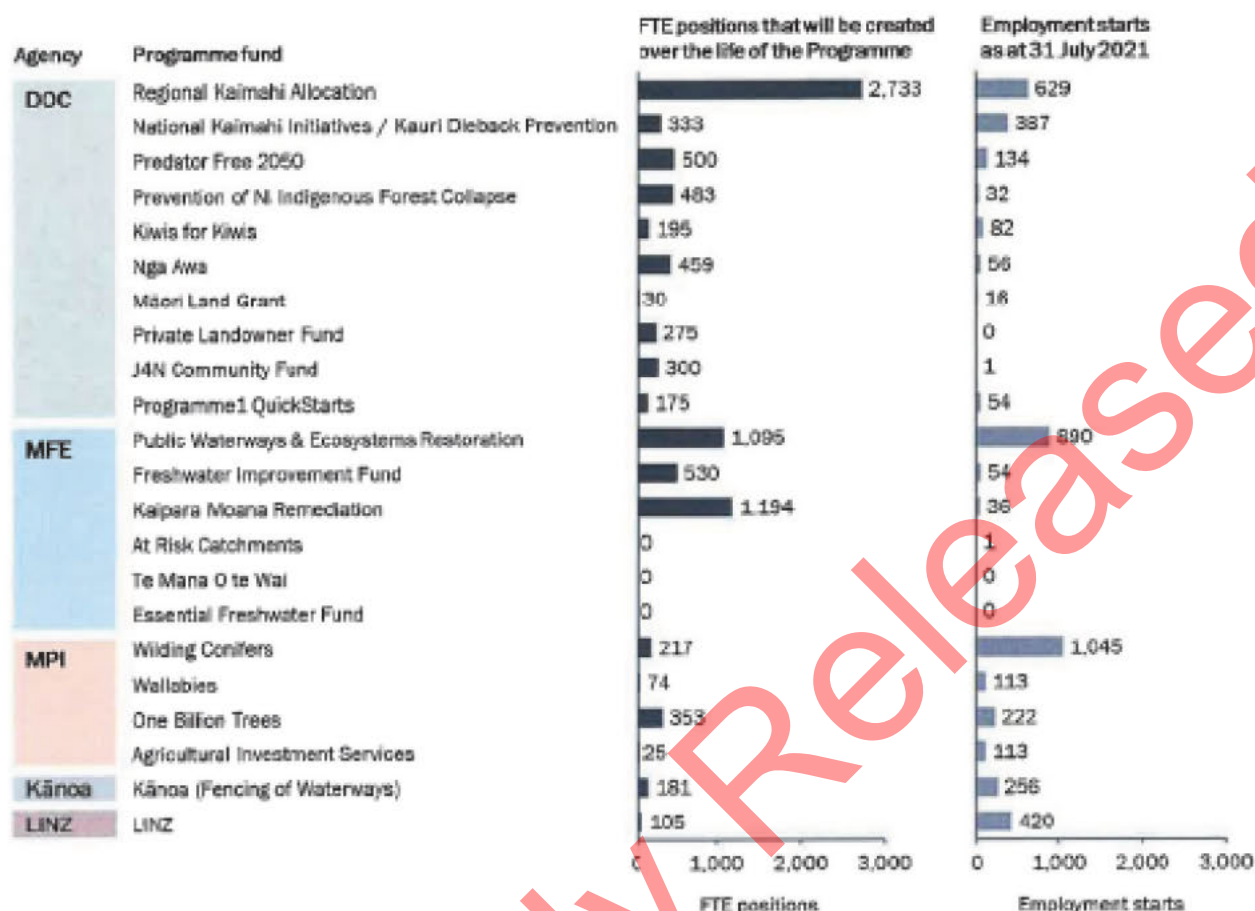
57. Future decisions – such as reducing the FTE targets of existing projects – may result in fewer than 11,000 FTE being created. This is discussed further in paragraph 100.
58. Agencies and funding recipients do not report systemic challenges in hiring for their jobs, in part because projects generally pay at least the Living Wage, which is higher than comparable employment opportunities in most regions. Some projects face challenges for specific specialised positions, such as project managers or land management advisors, or in specific rural areas.
59. Current data collection on employment is suitable for reporting at a Programme level, but there are some limitations. For example, each agency collects data slightly differently. While key statistics can be aggregated and reported at a Programme level, more granular analysis across the Programme is challenging.
60. Despite some streamlining, many funding recipients continue to report that reporting requirements remain burdensome which is likely to impact data quality. This is partly due to Programme reporting demands being added after many early contracts had been signed where agencies and funding recipients had not anticipated and could not have planned for Programme-wide reporting. This was exacerbated by some funds not allowing project budgets to include programme management costs.

Figure 3. Jobs by region, from projects approved as at 31 July 2021



Note: The number of FTE positions and employment starts are not directly comparable. This is because not all people starting employment will be in a full-time role.

Figure 4. Jobs by agency and programme fund, from projects approved as at 31 July 2021



Note: The number of FTE positions and employment starts are not directly comparable. This is because not all people starting employment will be in a full-time role.

Creating enduring environmental benefits

61. The Programme was not established with specific output targets for the enduring environmental benefits objective, reflecting that jobs at pace was the primary focus. Output targets were determined by the projects proposed by applicants and approved by SLU Ministers (rather than set top-down by agencies).
62. The Secretariat, with agencies, established fifteen environmental outputs across the Programme. Forecasts were created by summarising the contracted outputs of projects within each programme fund (Table 2).
63. Progress on the environmental outputs contracted so far is mixed: most projects are proceeding well, and a minority are receiving additional attention from agencies.
 - a) Some projects, particularly those funded through programmes that existed prior to Jobs for Nature, are delivering well against contracted outputs for pest control, tree planting, and fencing of waterways. These initiatives include almost all funding administered by MPI, Kānoa, and Toitū te Whenua LINZ, as well as some DOC and MfE funding.
 - b) Other projects have required greater attention and intervention from agencies due to:

- i) Delivery starting later than expected as programme establishment took longer than anticipated. Some projects took as many as nine months to be approved.
 - ii) Shortages in supply of key materials, such as seedlings and fenceposts.
 - iii) Localised workforce challenges.
 - iv) Unforeseeable events, including flooding and droughts, and COVID-19 Alert Level restrictions, which paused work on most projects.
 - v) In some cases, short delays at key times – such as during a planting season – resulted in much longer setbacks.
64. Programme managers are taking appropriate action to address these challenges and report confidence that contracts will ensure delayed outputs are delivered in later years.
65. Programme dashboards are used to report on progress against the 15 Programme-wide outputs but have some limitations. Dashboards do not always provide the most up to date view of progress because some contract milestones do not align with Programme-wide reporting timelines. The Secretariat is establishing Programme-wide quarterly forecasts for environmental outputs.

Table 2. Environmental outputs as at 31 July 2021

Area	Metric	2020/21 Achieved	Lifetime forecast
Freshwater	Area of freshwater restoration (ha)	201	1,382
	Area of Riparian/Lake/Wetland plantings (ha)	226	3,958
	Number of plants planted in Riparian/Lake/Wetland areas	745,431	11,400,054
	Length of fencing constructed (km)	1,402	7,229
	Number of fish passages remediated	7	1,912
Biodiversity	Area of ecosystem restoration (ha)	547	8,483
	Number of plants planted in terrestrial areas	128,898	4,557,596
	Length of tracks maintained (km)	364	2,325
	Number of assets maintained (incl. hits)	38	263
Pest Control	Area of wilding conifers control (ha)	819,689	2,594,801
	Area of other plant pest control (ha)	29,896	210,789
	Area of wallabies control (ha)	148,685	665,000
	Area of other animal pest control (ha)	305,165	1,755,714

Note: Agencies, with support from the Secretariat, are in the process of forecasting quarterly environmental outputs for each metric and future reporting will assess progress against these forecasts.

Supporting sustainable land use and the implementation of regulatory requirements

66. This objective is about helping organisations on the frontlines of environmental regulation to build capability and capacity for responding to reforms.
67. Programme funds focussing on this objective are mostly administered by MfE, in particular the Essential Freshwater Fund and Te Mana o te Wai. Some DOC projects have similar skills and training elements related to building regional capacity.

68. It is too early to say whether projects that support the implementation of regulatory requirements are on track to achieve their intended benefits. This is because:
- a) programmes with the primary objective of developing capability and capacity are at an earlier stage of delivery, and
 - b) outcome frameworks have only been created recently, and output measures for implementation of regulatory reform are still being developed.
69. Development of output measures falls largely under the Essential Freshwater Fund and to a lesser extent Te Mana o te Wai. This is appropriate as these funds form a substantial part of MfE's delivery of freshwater reform.
70. Developing measures of progress for capability and capacity should be a focus of future reporting at the programme fund level. The Secretariat should consider whether any measures are suitable for reporting at the Programme level. This is discussed further in paragraphs 102 to 105.

Programme responses to the stronger-than-expected labour market

71. As the Programme was rolled out in the second half of 2020, the labour market was stronger than initially forecast. In April 2020 Treasury forecast the 2021 unemployment rate to peak between 13% and 26%.⁶ By September 2020, Treasury reduced its 2021 forecast to 7.2%.⁷
72. Unemployment did increase in the early stages of the Programme but peaked at 5.3% in the September 2020 quarter. Unemployment is currently lower than pre-COVID-19 levels and was 4.0% in the June 2021 quarter.
73. In November 2020, officials advised incoming Sustainable Land Use (SLU) Ministers overseeing the Programme of the opportunity to pivot the focus of the Programme as a result of the stronger-than-expected labour market. Officials provided advice to Ministers to consider two courses of action to:
- a) target remaining funding to projects in areas with high residual unemployment
 - b) 'pivot' funding criteria towards projects with greater emphasis on environmental and regulatory objectives.
74. In May 2021, officials sought agreement from SLU Ministers to put greater emphasis on proposals that would "achieve enduring environmental benefits and sustainable land use objectives". This was because:
- a) *"nationwide unemployment has not eventuated in the way that was forecast when the Jobs for Nature programme was initiated.*
 - b) *other Government-funded initiatives in progress also have a focus on job creation (for example, the \$3 billion CRRF Infrastructure Fund).*

⁶ T2020/973 refers.

⁷ PREFU refers.

c) *the Jobs for Nature Programme presents a unique opportunity to focus investment on ecological infrastructure to address critical environmental challenges across Aotearoa.*"

75. SLU Ministers agreed that "agencies should place greater weight on environmental outcomes relative to employment outcomes" [2021-B-07910 refers].
76. As a result, the jobs the Programme is creating have evolved from short-term employment towards roles better suited to developing long-term career pathways, such as land management advisors and planners. These changes are likely to result in fewer jobs relative to the original Programme design, but the jobs that will be created will better address long-term Programme objectives.
77. At the time of SLU Ministers' decision, MfE programme funds had approximately \$240m remaining to be approved and DOC funds around \$89m.
78. Agencies took different approaches to implementing SLU Ministers decision.

Ministry for the Environment

79. MfE changed the investment criteria of several programme funds totalling around \$200m to remove short-term employment as an objective. This included:
- a) making decisions across a range of programme funds to not approve projects geared towards providing short-term employment
 - b) adapting investment criteria of programme funds to more explicitly create jobs suited to addressing long-term gaps in regional capability necessary for implementing environmental regulations (as opposed to short-term or temporary jobs).
80. These actions developed over time and started prior to SLU Ministers' decision:
- a) Essential Freshwater Fund (MfE) officials sought Ministerial approval to evolve the fund's focus away from employment in February 2021 [2020-B-07398 refers].
 - b) Te Mana o te Wai (MfE) opened for applications in February 2021 but undertook a pause and reset its investment criteria in July 2021. The revised criteria prioritised freshwater outcomes and reduced the focus on short-term employment outcomes.

Department of Conservation

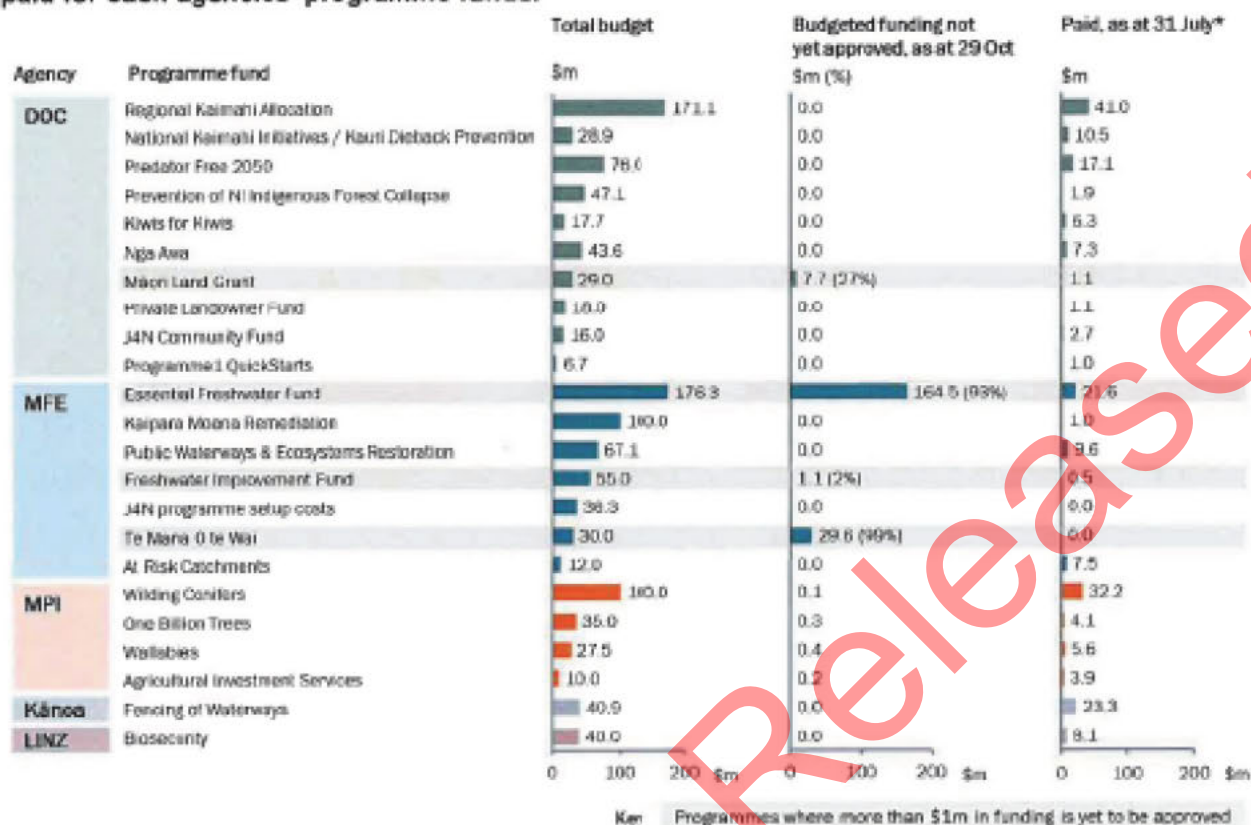
81. By the time of SLU Ministers' decision, DOC had committed most (83%) of its programme funds. For the remaining \$89m, DOC shifted emphasis within the same investment criteria to:
- a) place greater weight on projects that provided skills and training, including funding a small number of training-based projects where the primary objectives were to upskill workers rather than achieve direct environmental outputs.
 - b) consider regional unemployment statistics, including coordinating with MSD, to ensure projects were funded in regions with high residual unemployment and social need.
82. DOC aimed to achieve both employment and environmental objectives when assessing projects, in line with its broader organisational strategy of working through partners, developing the conservation workforce, and seeking sustainable conservation outcomes.

83. The projects DOC has funded since May 2021 tend to deploy labour to achieve specific environmental outcomes, such as pest control, in line with DOC's organisational strategy. These projects have funded job creation at a similar rate to prior to May 2021, and DOC report the jobs being created have greater skills and training components.

Options for Continuation of the Programme

84. This stocktake is at a late stage in the allocation of Programme funding. As at 29 October 2021, only 17% of Programme funding (\$202.9m) has not been allocated. There is no funding left to be approved in 18 of the 22 funds.
85. Four funds have a total of \$202.9m awaiting approval by SLU Ministers (Figure 6):
- a) Essential Freshwater Fund (EFF): This fund is administered by MfE and addresses capability and capacity gaps to support the implementation of freshwater reforms.
 - i) Tranche 1: three projects of up to \$17m will be presented for approval in November.
 - ii) s9(2)(f)(iv)
 - b) Te Mana o Te Wai (TMOTW): In November, MfE will work with partners to finalise up to 32 proposals, and will seek approval of up to \$21m. s9(2)(f)(iv), s9(2)(j)
Projects support iwi and hapū to participate in freshwater management by building capability and capacity.
 - c) Māori Land Fund (MLF): This fund is administered by DOC s9(2)(f)(iv)
 - d) Freshwater Improvement Fund (FIF). This fund is administered by MfE who will present the s9(2)(f)(iv), s9(2)(j) for approval in November.
86. There are two options available for the four programme funds with pending approvals:
- a) Option A: Confirm that appropriate changes have been made to respond to the stronger-than-expected labour market and continue the status quo.
 - b) Option B: Stop further approvals and return funding to the Crown.
87. The most appropriate option for each programme fund depends on:
- a) the extent to which a programme fund has pivoted investment criteria to achieve broader long-term Programme objectives
 - b) whether those objectives remain desirable compared to alternative uses of the funding
 - c) the risks of stopping approvals at this relatively late stage in the Programme.

Figure 6. Total budget, budgeted funding not yet approved for specific projects, and amount paid for each agencies' programme funds.



Note: The DOC 'Paid' totals are provided as at 19 October 2021, all other agencies as at 31 July 2021

88. Option B carries significant risks for each of the programme funds with funding yet to be approved. Approval decisions are the final stage of an extensive process, and remaining approvals are mostly for iwi and hapū-led projects. Stopping further approvals is likely to cause significant harm to agencies' relationships with partners, who agencies rely on to build the social infrastructure necessary to achieve long-term Programme objectives and support environmental reforms. Stopping MfE approvals would delay delivery of freshwater reforms and would transfer costs to other programmes or may require additional funding in the future.
89. There is no option to return or reallocate funding from the 18 programme funds with no funding remaining to be approved. This is because:
- a) around \$880m of approved funding is already committed in contract to third parties, or, s9(2)(h), s9(2)(j)
90. There are opportunities to explore whether funding recipients could be afforded greater flexibility to adjust approved projects to better meet the long-term objectives of the Programme, discussed further in paragraph 99.

91. In a Programme of this size it is unlikely every project will achieve all its contracted milestones. Some project failure or under-delivery is likely and as a result funding may become available over the life of the Programme. The Secretariat, in concert with agencies, should develop and seek SLU Ministers' agreement on a clear Programme-wide protocol for how funding can be reallocated or returned in such instances.

Considerations for strengthening delivery

92. The Secretariat has already made, or is in the process of making, changes which will strengthen delivery across the Programme. These include:
- a) simplified approval processes.
 - b) streamlining and strengthening reporting, including forecasting quarterly environmental outputs to measure progress against.
 - c) revising the role of the Advisory Group to focus on the long-term Programme objectives.
 - d) undertaking delivery confidence reviews to assess likelihood of delivery and risks.
 - e) developing a transition plan for how to maintain environmental benefits and support workers into long-term careers when Programme funding ends.
 - f) supporting agencies to coordinate regional communities of practice.
93. There are further opportunities to strengthen delivery within agencies and across the Programme.

Adjusting FTE goals to help projects achieve long-term Programme objectives

94. Recipients from a range of programme funds suggest they could structure projects to create greater long-term benefits if afforded flexibility to change FTE targets.
- a) One DOC recipient stated: "we did consider that maximising jobs was the number one priority and would have done a different build if we had been informed otherwise. [Our FTE target] became a significant constraint to designing and standing up projects and it is likely to be a long-term challenge to meet the targets written into contracts."
 - b) One Toitū te Whenua LINZ recipient stated they would prefer to hire and qualify a smaller number of full-time workers instead of a larger number of seasonal workers.
 - c) One DOC funding recipient stated that FTE targets result in projects being structured so that there is insufficient budget to provide for skills training, and that they experienced difficulty training and qualifying managers as a result.
 - d) One MfE funding recipient stated that they had asked to reduce or remove an FTE cap initially submitted in an expression of interest, but had been unable to do so at any stage in the nine months that passed between applying for funding and being approved.
95. Agencies could explore whether allowing changes to the FTE targets of specific projects could help to achieve greater long-term benefits from the same budget. Flexibility might allow funding recipients to, for example:

- a) hire full-time workers rather than a larger number of seasonal contractors.
 - b) hire fewer workers but spend more on skills training and qualifications for each worker.
 - c) rebalance positions towards roles with greater long-term career advancement opportunities, such as project managers instead of planters.
 - d) redirect labour spending towards materials, such as seedlings or traps.
96. Introducing greater flexibility to projects carries potential delivery risk which should be weighed against the potential benefits:
- a) Projects may hire fewer FTEs if targets are adjusted, which may result in the 11,000 objective not being met. This could be counterbalanced by the benefits of the jobs being created being better suited to the long-term needs of the sector.
 - b) Adjusting projects would create some additional administrative workload for agencies and recipients related to agreeing new milestones and amending contracts.
97. Changes would not necessarily be suitable for all projects, and agencies should start by considering where changes could be made in a way that minimises administrative workload. Changes are more likely to be suitable for projects that are:
- a) currently being contracted (\$135m across a range of MfE and DOC programme funds),
 - b) yet to be approved (\$202.9m across EFF, TMOTW, MLF, and FIF), or
 - c) subject to annual operational plans or contracts that are amended from year to year (at least \$81m across Toitū te Whenua LINZ Biosecurity and MPI's Wallabies programme, and possibly other multi-year projects under DOC and MfE).

Developing measures of progress and validating delivery of outputs

98. The Programme represents many discrete investments in a wide range of partners across all regions. An increasing number of projects have workforce development components, which are hard to measure directly. Agencies could consider more actively validating these outputs, including through fieldwork, to ensure delivery is on track.⁸
99. Work is underway to develop outputs and outcomes that will show whether regional capability and capacity are improving. This work includes the:
- a) Secretariat, with support from agencies, developing an overarching outcomes framework for the Programme.
 - b) Ministry for the Environment developing an outcomes framework for freshwater which will draw on expertise from the Employment, Education and Training sector.

⁸ This relates to ensuring delivery is on track, rather than contract assurance. Previous reviews, both across the Programme and internal to agencies, have made recommendations around strengthening assurance. This stocktake did not assess agencies' assurance functions but observes that agencies report having taken a range of measures to improve assurance and contract management practices.

100. This work should ensure that outputs and other measures of progress are developed for capacity and capability, as well as plans to measure whether progress is being made on the front lines. Assessing progress will include close relationships to the front lines, including fieldwork. This may require agencies:
- a) to define what changes in capacity and capability should be observable at different stages through each project. For example, observable precursors such as awareness and understanding of the regulations should be visible early in the project. Later in the project, participants should show more ownership and leadership related to regulatory implementation. If the precursors are not observed at earlier stages, it would be unlikely that a project could be considered 'on track'.
 - b) to conduct regular fieldwork to ensure projects have the desired impact at each stage.
101. Agencies and the Secretariat should consider whether fieldwork should be an explicit part of the Secretariat's role. This may require additional capacity.

Greater cross-agency coordination

102. There are a range of emerging areas of coordination between agencies, both within and outside the Programme. These include:
- a) within the Programme, cross-agency collaboration is occurring in three pilots for communities of practice and the development of a transition plan for how to maintain Programme benefits when funding ends.
 - b) outside the Programme, Te Uru Rakau is coordinating a cross-agency effort to address seedling supply shortages.
103. Emerging areas of coordination should continue to receive support and attention from agencies and the Secretariat, where appropriate. This would benefit from agencies making dedicated capacity available to support coordination.
104. This stocktake identified further potential opportunities for cross-agency coordination across a range of shared topics:
- a) supply challenges for materials other than seedlings, such as fenceposts.
 - b) shared challenges with workforce capability building and training, including:
 - i) supply and demand across the sector targeted at areas of acute shortages, such as land management advisors.
 - ii) new qualifications to support the sector needs, such as sediment management.
 - iii) aligning elements of workforce training across agencies working in the same regions, such as providing joint health and safety or project management trainings.
 - c) similar challenges from funding recipients navigating legal elements of project management, including aligning project contracts and determining health and safety responsibilities in projects with multiple parties and contractors.

- d) shared opportunities to train and qualify regional workforces, particularly iwi, and particularly related to skills suited for supporting the implementation of regulatory requirements, such as land management, farm planning, and sediment expertise.
- 105. By default, coordination can and should begin at the working levels. However, it may be prudent for the Secretariat and agencies to determine appropriate escalation pathways where senior attention or direction is needed on issues cutting across multiple agencies.
- 106. Some shared opportunities and challenges go beyond the Programme and coordination would be more appropriate in other cross-agency settings.

Lessons for future programmes

Cross-agency arrangements on the Jobs for Nature Programme

- 107. In a context where high unemployment forecasts necessitated a Programme being stood up at pace, agencies mobilised and achieved a substantial amount quickly.
- 108. Coordination has improved over the course of the programme and future programmes should replicate elements of the Secretariat's work, including:
 - a) aligning output and metric definitions (ideally at the beginning of the programme) – notwithstanding challenges in aligning agencies to report the same outputs, shared measures of progress allowed for Programme-level reporting that provided Ministers and the public a sense for what is being achieved.
 - b) facilitating the creation of a Programme-wide investment framework.
 - c) supporting meetings of SLU Ministers and external expert groups.
 - d) undertaking specific ad hoc analyses related to strategic objectives of the Programme.
 - e) cross-agency coordination on shared opportunities and challenges.
 - f) shared communications functions.
 - g) assessments of delivery confidence across the programme (though may be appropriate for future Secretariats to have a more explicit mandate on delivery).
- 109. The potential for a cross-agency programme has not been fully realised in that each agency and programme fund:
 - a) operated different processes for applications, contracting and approvals. The timeline from application to approval took up to nine months for some projects, which went through as many as ten layers of consideration and approval before reaching SLU Ministers for decision (see Figure 7).
 - b) uses different templates and processes for reporting and require different information from recipients. Recipients report 'moving goalposts' with reporting requests from agencies changing from month to month (partly as a result of agencies' efforts to continue streamlining). Some organisations established full time roles to deal with reporting and report placing BAU work on hold to free up funding for programme management, reporting and other administrative costs.

- c) developed its own investment criteria for each programme fund in addition to the Programme-wide investment framework developed by the Reference Group, and projects were assessed against both during approvals.
 - d) developed programme funds mostly independently, which meant some projects did not fit into any one fund and had different components funded by different agencies. Fund boundaries also made it difficult to scale or replicate successful projects.
 - e) made different allowances for the amount of budget funding recipients could use towards programme management costs (ranging from 0% to 10%).
110. Programme arrangements – while providing valuable functions – mostly duplicated, rather than streamlined, agency processes, particularly for approvals and reporting:
- a) Programme-wide approval arrangements did not apply to existing programme funds. However, some approval arrangements duplicated agency processes (see Figure 8). The approval delegation threshold meant SLU Ministers approved each project greater than \$1m, which extended lead times for approvals for funding recipients.
 - b) Programme-wide reporting created significant administrative workload for existing projects as contracts had to be re-opened to meet new reporting requirements:
 - i) In some cases, agencies responsible for projects contracted early in the Programme through existing funds had to re-open contracts to require recipients to report additional data which had not been planned for in initial contracts.
 - ii) As a result of being established before Programme reporting, contract milestones for early projects did not necessarily align with monthly or quarterly reporting. This resulted in uneven reporting across the Programme and gave the appearance of some projects being 'off track' where data was not available or reported seasonally.
111. The siloed approach, and subsequent coordination challenges, partly reflect that the Programme was set up at pace and combined existing and new programmes. A different Programme build may have been considered in a different, less-urgent context.

Lessons for future programmes

112. The Programme offers examples of best practice and lessons for future programmes. Programmes that can be established with a greater lead time (and not in crisis conditions) stand to benefit most from these lessons.

Improving the experience of funding partners

113. Future cross-agency programmes could significantly improve the experience of partners, particularly those receiving funding from multiple agencies. This includes reducing administrative workloads for funding recipients by aligning applications, contracts, and reporting across agencies. Achieving this would require a much stronger central Programme functions with different delegations to agencies.
114. Aligning at the Programme level may involve trade-offs in the speed at which a programme can be established, but could result in savings and efficiency gains through the life of the Programme. A more centralised approach may also help ensure successful projects can be scaled or replicated.

Figure 7. Illustrative steps in the Jobs for Nature Programme approval process

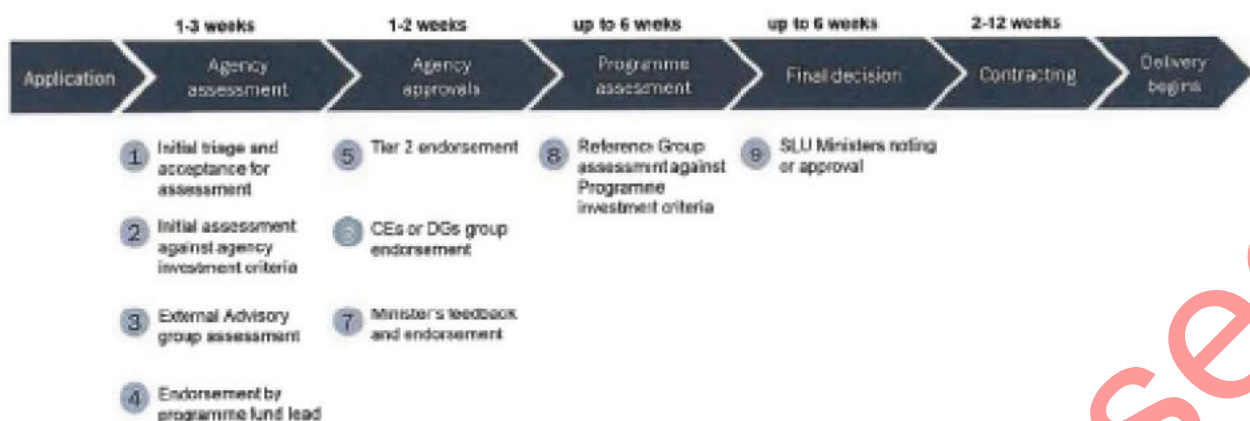
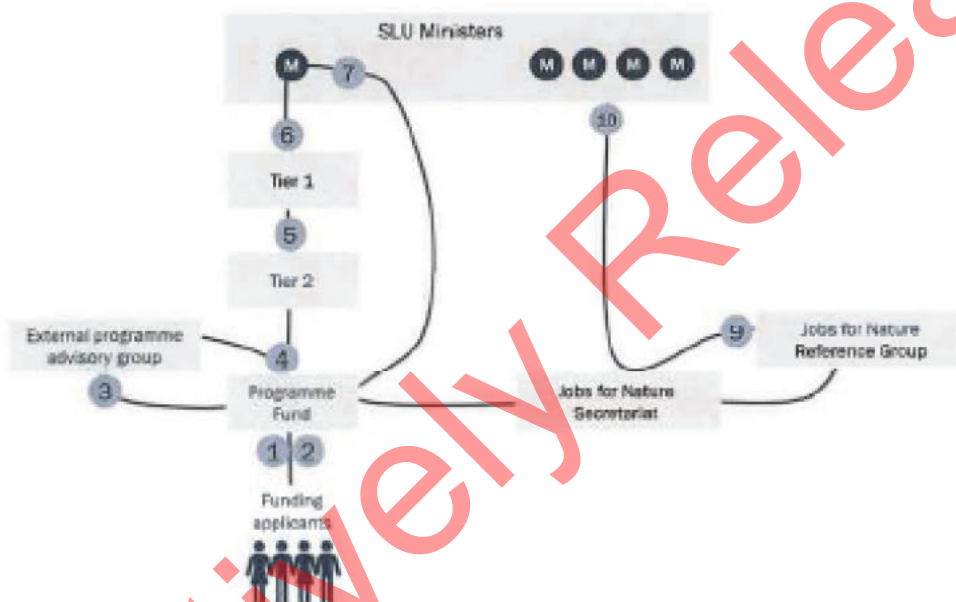


Figure 8. Illustrative diagram of duplication in approval processes



Note: Programmes that existed were approved according to existing approval processes which did not include review by the Jobs for Nature Reference Group and did not require SLU Ministers' approval.

Composing a multi-agency programme

115. Where programmes need to be established at pace, it may be most suitable to deliver short-term funding through a short-term programme or task force focussed on scaling up existing projects.
116. For future programmes with different short-term and long-term objectives, officials could consider creating multiple programmes or greater differentiation within a programme. This could help to improve alignment across agencies and reduce administrative workload associated with aligning programmes serving various objectives.
117. Future multi-year programmes could be established with decision points to be considered in cases where the assumptions underlying the creation of the programme do not eventuate.

118. A Secretariat is a valuable function for a multi-agency programme and there are several design choices to be made. Future programmes could consider the timing of Secretariat creation and whether it is appropriate for a Secretariat or similar function to play a more explicit role in validating whether agencies' delivery is on track.
119. Constructing a programme does require a lot of forward planning and trade-offs between the consideration given to programme design and speed will inevitably be made in response to a crisis. This includes considerations for approval delegations.

Considerations for the environment sector

120. Future cross-agency programmes should also find a way to incorporate regional expertise at opportune times. Some Reference Group members reported that:
- a) External expertise, particularly from regional stakeholders, was not always included in programme assessment, or occurred in a scattershot way (such as a Reference Group member happening to have local knowledge of a project's suitability).
 - b) The Reference Group's input did not add value to project approval process. Some members were not clear on their scope to send projects back as agencies' Ministers endorsed projects before they reached the Reference Group, and members did not always feel they had a mandate to not approve projects that Ministers had endorsed. Some members expressed hesitance to ask for more information on a project as this would result in further delays to a sometime lengthy approval process.
121. Jobs for Nature agencies, particularly MfE, MPI, and DOC, will likely be responsible for supporting future multi-year programmes related to the environmental regulation and conservation. For future multi-year programmes, officials could consider suitable models for coordination across central government agencies and suitable models for incorporating regional expertise in decision-making.

Financial Implications

122. This report has no financial implications.

Consultation

123. This stocktake was conducted with the cooperation of the MfE, DOC, MPI, Kānoa, and Toitū te Whenua LINZ, as well as the Jobs for Nature Secretariat. Agency staff, including Tier 2 leaders, were advised of emerging findings and recommendations throughout the course of the stocktake. Where suitable, findings were also tested with members of the Reference and Advisory Groups.

Attachments:	
Attachment A	Implementation Unit Commissioning Brief
Attachment B	Employment definitions used across the Jobs for Nature Programme
Attachment C	Delivery confidence assessments by agency and programme fund

ATTACHMENT A

Implementation Unit Commissioning Brief Jobs for Nature Stocktake of Progress

Commissioning Agent:	Deputy Prime Minister
Commission to:	Implementation Unit, DPMC
Commission:	To provide a stocktake of progress on the Jobs for Nature Programme to the Deputy Prime Minister on 29 October 2021 including advice on whether components of the programme require re-baselining and/or redesign in light of stronger than expected economic performance.

Background

The Jobs for Nature Programme was designed in anticipation of a material increase in unemployment resulting from the shock of COVID-19. The primary purpose of the Programme was to provide up to 11,000 jobs and economic support for people and communities across New Zealand while providing ancillary environmental benefits.

The COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund (CRRF) provided \$1.102bn of funding across various agencies. Several non-CRRF-funded initiatives (primarily Provincial Growth Fund initiatives, and One Billion Trees funding) are also included, bringing the total funding to \$1.219bn. The funding is administered across five Government agencies.

As at 30 June 2021, the programme had provided 3,966 total jobs across 343 projects, with \$941.8m of funding approved, \$683.3m contracted and \$179m paid.

Since the inception of the Jobs for Nature Programme the economy has performed stronger than anticipated and it is timely to examine whether the programme will deliver the 11,000 jobs as initially planned particularly given the strong employment market.

Purpose

The purpose of this stocktake is to evaluate current progress across the programme and within key elements and provide advice on whether components of the programme require re-baselining and/or redesign in light New Zealand's stronger-than-anticipated economic performance since the programme's inception.

Scope

The Implementation Unit will:

- Evaluate the impact of changes in the labour market since the programme was created and the implications any changes have on the future of Jobs for Nature projects and programme milestones.
- Identify options for Ministers concerning the continuation of the Programme.

- Identify whether there are appropriate project, programme management, and governance structures in place to deliver the programme and foster effective working relationships across agencies and identify what further work may be needed in this area.

Parties

This stocktake will be undertaken by the Implementation Unit, which will work closely with relevant senior leaders and officials from the Ministry for the Environment, Department of Conservation, Ministry for Primary Industries, Land Information New Zealand and the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment, as well as external providers and the Jobs for Nature Reference Group. Treasury will support the Implementation Unit as required. The Implementation Unit may actively test and validate agencies' planning and delivery for example by talking to sectoral stakeholders or providers.

The Implementation Unit will be open and transparent and work constructively with agencies with the expectation that this is reciprocated.

Timeframe

The Implementation Unit will provide a report to the Deputy Prime Minister on 29 October 2021 as well as interim updates as part of the Unit's regular reporting cycles.

ATTACHMENT B

Agreed framework for collecting data and reporting employment-related results of job creation initiatives⁹

This excerpt covers measures that agencies must collect and report. Agencies are encouraged to collect a range of other measures on people and quality. The full paper is available at <https://www.msd.govt.nz/documents/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/information-releases/leed-counting-jobs-paper-for-public-release-final.pdf>

Measure	Definition	Recommended collection method	Rationale for the measure and collection method
Employment starts	<p>Employment starts is the number of employees (including all employment types, contractors, and self-employed people) funded by a job creation programme who have joined the employer since the previous reference date, i.e. the previous month.¹⁰</p> <p>Employment starts are counted regardless of whether they are full time or part-time.</p> <p>A job filled by a person employed on a casual contract is counted when the employment relationship begins, not each time the employee does some work.</p> <p>No distinction is made between new relationships, existing relationships retained from this funding, or extension (in hours, or tasks undertaken) of existing relationships. <i>Note: A measure to capture existing versus new relationships is proposed in the next section.</i></p> <p>Jobs indirectly supported by the programme are not included, e.g. nursery staff who grew the plants purchased for a riparian planting project, or 'downstream jobs'.¹¹</p>	<p>Reporting by funding recipients at an agreed point in time and frequency i.e. last day of the month.</p> <p>The People Currently Employed measure will enable the calculation of the net employment created over the life course of the programme, and the average employment opportunities created by the programme.</p> <p>This measure will be reported monthly and also calculated as an average figure over the life of the programme to enable further reporting analysis.</p>	<p>Meets credibility criteria; is consistent with the Stats NZ job creation measure.</p> <p>Enables comparison of different types of programmes.</p> <p>Not differentiating between part-time and full-time, or new and existing relationships, makes it administratively simple to collect</p>

⁹ This framework will be used for contracts not yet agreed (as at December 2020). The framework is designed primarily for reporting accountability purposes, not evaluation of effectiveness.

¹⁰ http://archive.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/income-and-work/employment_and_unemployment/LEED-quarterly-tech-notes.aspx#gsc.tab=0 accessed on 1 October 2020

¹¹ A 'downstream job' is, for example, where a Council contracts with a farmer to create jobs for 3 people to fence a waterway on the farmer's land. If the farmer then subcontracts with a fencing company to do the work equivalent to one of the 3 jobs, the work done by the fencing contractor is not counted as an additional job/jobs.

~~[IN-CONFIDENCE]~~

Measure	Definition	Recommended collection method	Rationale for the measure and collection method
People currently employed	<p>The number of people employed in jobs funded by a job creation programme, where a job is an employer/employee match³ (including self-employment matches).</p> <p>People are counted whether they work full-time or part-time. Casual employees are included, as are self-employed people contracted by an employer funded by a job creation programme.</p> <p>Jobs indirectly supported by the programme are not included, e.g. nursery staff who grew the plants purchased for a riparian planting project, or 'downstream jobs'.¹²</p>	<p>Reporting by funding recipients of the number of people employed at an agreed point in time and frequency.</p> <p>This can either be monitored by tracking the number of employment starts and stops, or the number of people currently employed at a particular date. This is not a cumulative figure but will enable the calculation of the net employment created over the life course of the programme, and the average employment opportunities created by the programme.</p>	<p>Meets credibility criteria; is broadly consistent with the Stats NZ definition of a job, extended to include self-employed people, given the use of contractor relationships in some of the job creation programmes.</p> <p>Enables comparison of different types of programmes.</p> <p>Demonstrates the number of people who have participated in job creation initiatives and will facilitate telling the 'people benefit' story.</p>
FTE	<p>Total number of hours worked by all individuals employed in job creation initiatives will be collected by initiatives each month.</p> <p>This figure can then be used to calculate the equivalent number of full-time jobs for a given period, for instance in a year (1560 hours¹³)</p>	<p>Cumulative reporting by funding recipients of the total number of hours worked by all individuals in the jobs created.</p>	<p>Provides agencies with the information needed to calculate programme FTE into, for instance, an annual equivalent (which is an accountability requirement for some programmes)</p> <p>Reporting total hours worked will be useful for understanding the extent of job creation for the length of a programme (in addition to providing data to calculate annual FTE).</p> <p>Taken with the data of employment starts and people currently employed, the FTE count allows calculation and comparison of the size of the jobs created by different initiatives.</p>

¹² A 'downstream job' is, for example, where a Council contracts with a farmer to create jobs for 3 people to fence a waterway on the farmer's land. If the farmer then subcontracts with a fencing company to do the work equivalent to one of the 3 jobs, the work done by the fencing contractor is not counted as an additional job/jobs.

¹³ FTE is 30 hours per week for 52 weeks a year, consistent with NZ Stats definition of full-term work being 30 hours or more per week.

~~[IN-CONFIDENCE]~~

ATTACHMENT C


Delivery confidence assessments by agency and programme fund

Notes: Delivery status ratings are derived from three sources:






- agencies' self-assessments and internal dashboards.
- the Secretariat's most recent delivery confidence review, conducted in March 2021.
- interviews and document reviews with agencies and funding recipients.

Agencies self-assess against a scale that includes amber. For the purposes of this assessment, ratings are provided as either amber-green or amber-red.

Delivery status ratings reflect a range of factors, including the degree of challenge, the stage a programme is in, as well as the quality of planning and the capacity to drive progress.

Agency and programme fund		\$m	Delivery status
Department of Conservation		488.5	 Mixed – DOC's own self-assessment is amber. Larger value projects are more on track. DOC's delivery confidence assessments are trending towards green as delivery continues.
Kaimahi for Nature	Regional Kaimahi Allocation	171.1	s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(g)(i)
	National Kaimahi Initiatives / Kauri Dieback Prevention	28.9	
	Predator Free 2050	76	
Protecting Nature	Kiwis for Kiwis	17.7	
	Prevention of NI Indigenous Forest Collapse	47.1	
	Private Landowner Fund	18	
Restoring Nature	Māori Land Grant	29	
	Nga Awa	43.6	
	J4N Community Fund	16	
	Programme1 QuickStarts	6.7	

Agency and programme fund	\$m	Delivery status
Ministry for the Environment	476.7	 Mixed – Some projects were set up quickly and are on track, while others are still being established.
Essential Freshwater Fund	175.9	 Delivery is at an early stage and most project concepts are still under development.
Kaipara Moana Remediation	100	 s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(g)(i)
Public Waterways & Ecosystems Restoration	67.5	
Freshwater Improvement Fund	55	 Delivery on track.
Te Mana O te Wai	30	 98% of funding is not yet approved.
At Risk Catchments	12	 s9(2)(b)(ii), s9(2)(g)(i)
MPI	172.5	 On track – MPI projects benefited from mostly having existing programme structures in place
Wilding Conifers	100	 Funding was deployed quickly for all MPI programme funds and delivery is on track.
One Billion Trees	35	
Wallabies	27.5	
Agricultural Investment Services	10	
Kānoa (Fencing of Waterways)	40.9	 On track – Funding was deployed quickly and delivery is on track.
Toitū te Whenua LINZ (Biosecurity)	40	 Mixed – Toitū te Whenua LINZ are actively managing partner relationships to bring delivery on track.

	On track – continue to refine
	Mixed – some aspects require attention
	Problematic – aspect(s) require significant attention and action
	Off track – requires urgent attention and action
	Insufficient information available to form an assessment