

27 May 2026

Conservation House
18-32 Manners Street
Te Aro, Wellington, 6011
doc.govt.nz
Ref: OIAD-6265

Tēnā koe

Thank you for your request to the Department of Conservation, received on 20 April 2026, in which you asked for:

“1. Introduction

This request is made pursuant to the Official Information Act 1982. This request concerns decision-making frameworks, environmental monitoring, and institutional learning across historical and current environmental interventions.

2. Purpose

To assess whether lessons from past interventions (including predator control and toxin use) have been formally recorded, evaluated, and incorporated into current decision-making frameworks, including those relating to gene technology and environmental management.

3. Scope of Request

A. Decision-Making Frameworks

- Documents describing frameworks used in predator control (including 2019 beech mast response).
- Documents describing frameworks used in current environmental or gene technology decisions.
- Criteria, thresholds, or triggers used to initiate or justify interventions.

B. Risk Identification and Assessment

- Records showing how risks were identified and assessed.
- Comparisons of short-term vs long-term risks.
- Consideration of environmental, economic, and public health impacts.

C. Post-Implementation Review and Learning

- Reviews or audits of predator control and toxin operations.
- Documents identifying lessons learned or unintended consequences.
- Recommendations for future improvements.

D. Incorporation of Lessons

- Records showing how lessons were applied to current frameworks.
- Reasons where lessons were not applied.

E. Environmental Contaminants and Monitoring

- Documents describing environmental monitoring frameworks.
- Substances currently monitored and known monitoring gaps.
- Records relating to microplastics, chemical residues, or emerging contaminants.
- Assessments of contamination linked to interventions.
- Audits identifying monitoring limitations or blind spots.

F. Accountability and Oversight

- Identification of decision-makers and oversight mechanisms.
- Records assessing failures or process limitations.

4. Form of Response

Please provide information in electronic form. Where information is withheld, please specify the statutory basis and whether partial release is possible."

We have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982.

On 29 April 2026 you refined your request to:

"Thank you for your response and indication of the scale of material.

To assist the Department in meeting its obligations under the Official Information Act 1982 while avoiding substantial collation, I refine my request as follows:

1. Scope – System-Level and Authoritative Records Only

This request is limited to centrally held, policy, governance, or review-level documents, and excludes site-level operational records unless specifically identified below.

2. Timeframe

1 January 2018 – present

3. Information Requested

A. Decision-Making Frameworks and Criteria

Documents (including policy, guidance, or internal frameworks) that:

Define criteria, thresholds, or triggers for initiating aerial toxin operations (including 1080 and other toxins)

Describe risk assessment methodologies used to support those decisions

Identify approval processes and delegated decision-making authority

B. National or Programme-Level Reviews

Any national, regional, or programme-level reviews, audits, or evaluations of aerial toxin operations (including the 2019 beech mast response)

Documents identifying:

Lessons learned

Identified risks or unintended effects

Recommendations for change

C. Environmental Monitoring Frameworks

Documents describing monitoring frameworks or methodologies used across aerial toxin programmes

Documents identifying:

Substances monitored

Known limitations, uncertainties, or monitoring gaps

D. Incorporation of Lessons

Documents showing how findings from reviews or monitoring have been:

Incorporated into subsequent policy, guidance, or operational frameworks; or

Not incorporated, including any recorded reasons

E. Representative Operational Sample (Limited)

To avoid substantial collation, I request documents for no more than three (3) aerial toxin operations, selected by the Department as representative, comprising:

One operation during the 2019 beech mast response

One operation from 2018–2020 (non-beech mast)

One operation from 2021–present

For each selected operation, please provide:

Approval or decision record

Associated risk assessment (if held)

Any post-operation review (if completed)

4. Exclusions

To reduce scope:

Routine field reports, raw monitoring data, and duplicate operational records are excluded unless part of a formal review or approval document

Internal emails are excluded at this stage

5. Duty to Assist

If any part of this request remains likely to be refused under section 18(f), I request that the Department:

Identify the specific component(s) creating difficulty; and

Engage further to refine those components, rather than refusing the request in full

6. Form of Response

Information is requested in electronic form.

This refinement is intended to focus on decision-making systems, accountability, and institutional learning, while remaining within a manageable scope.”

Your questions and our responses are listed below:

1. Decision-Making Frameworks and Criteria

Documents (including policy, guidance, or internal frameworks) that:

Define criteria, thresholds, or triggers for initiating aerial toxin operations (including 1080 and other toxins)

Describe risk assessment methodologies used to support those decisions

Identify approval processes and delegated decision-making authority

Aotearoa NZ Biodiversity Strategy

The overarching strategy guiding DOC's biodiversity protection programmes is the Aotearoa NZ Biodiversity Strategy. This provides the purpose, end-goal, and intended duration of DOC's pest control work, which includes the use of predator control tools such as 1080. You can find the document here: [Te Mana o te Taiao - Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy 2020](#).

Predator Free 2050

Predator Free 2050 is another key strategic plan that drives DOC's predator control work. Predator Free 2050 is a bold nationwide goal to eradicate damaging introduced predators from all of New Zealand by 2050. Many of our native species are found nowhere else in the world. They evolved for millions of years without mammal predators or defences against them. More than 4,000 of these unique native species are threatened or at risk of extinction. You can find the Predator Free 2050 Strategy here [Innovate for a predator-free New Zealand. Predator Free 2050 Strategy \(2026–2030\)](#):

National Predator Control Programme

DOC's National Predator Control Programme is a critical part of the Predator Free 2050 strategy. The goal of the programme is to ensure the survival of New Zealand's best surviving threatened species populations that are highly vulnerable to predators, through ongoing predator control, using the most effective predator control tools currently available, until advances in predator control technology allow Predator Free 2050 to be achieved.

I am sharing with you DOC's "Animal Pest System Summary for Managers". Please refer to this document for a high-level operational summary of the standards and management controls that DOC applies to animal pest control operations, including the use of 1080.

I am sharing with you DOC's "Operational Planning for Animal Pest Operations" standard operating procedure. This describes the planning process and standards DOC applies when controlling animal pests, which includes the use of pest control tools such as 1080.

I am sharing with you the National Predator Control Programme's current Four Year Predator Control Operational Plan, which gives an overview of the rationale for the predator control operations currently being undertaken.

I have decided to release the relevant parts of the documents described above, subject to information being withheld under the following section of the Official Information Act:

- section 9(2)(g)(ii) – to protect Ministers, officials, or employees from improper pressure or harassment.

2. National or Programme-Level Reviews

Any national, regional, or programme-level reviews, audits, or evaluations of aerial toxin operations (including the 2019 beech mast response)

Documents identifying:

Lessons learned

Identified risks or unintended effects

Recommendations for change

I am sharing with you DOC's "Pesticide Information Review for 1080". This sums up the current scientific knowledge about the environmental effects of 1080. This document guides DOC's technical assessment of 1080 as a potential pest control tool.

I am sharing with you, long-term trends in forest bird populations in relation to predator control in the Landsborough (progress report 2025). This report summarises long-term responses of forest bird populations to sustained use of aerial 1080, in conjunction with trapping, they have been measured in the Landsborough Valley consistently over 28 years (since 1998). The latest bird count trends are the November 2024 and 2025 monitoring sessions, which reflect management operations during the previous 12 months of each session.

I am sharing with you the NPCP Dart-Caples Outcome Plan 2021-2030. The purpose of this Outcome Plan is to:

- Describe the biodiversity values at the site and desired long-term outcomes
- Describe a management regime designed to achieve the outcomes
- Describe a measurement regime by which to gauge achievement
- Inform national site prioritisation by determining treatment frequency
- Inform technical advice and operational decision making at site
- Assist with communications about this site

I am sharing with you the Tiakina Nga Manu summary report 2016 to 2021. Tiakina Nga Manu (TNM) was the Department of Conservations (DOCs) landscape predator control program (now called National Predator Control Programme). TNM was initiated in 2014 as a response to rat and stoat irruptions caused by beech masting. The goal of (TNM) was to protect threatened native birds, animals and plants from rats, stoats, and possums.

I am sharing with you a research summary for improving and maintaining efficacy of aerial poison baiting for rat control "Timing of –Mast –Response Aerial 1080 –in Upland-masting-ecosystems". This analysis reviewed lessons learnt to identify optimal timing for mast-triggered aerial 1080 baiting.

I am sharing with you a research summary regarding improving and maintaining efficacy of aerial poison baiting for rat control.

I have decided to release the relevant parts of the documents listed above, subject to information being withheld under the following section of the Official Information Act:

- section 9(2)(g)(ii) – to protect Ministers, officials, or employees from improper pressure or harassment.

3. *Environmental Monitoring Frameworks*

Documents describing monitoring frameworks or methodologies used across aerial toxin programmes

Documents identifying:

Substances monitored

Known limitations, uncertainties, or monitoring gaps

I regret that I am not able to provide you with the information you seek. DOC undertakes several monitoring approaches and considerable monitoring activity, in order to provide information requested in the above question we will need to understand what monitoring reports are requested. This information is refused subject to the following section of the Official Information Act:

- Section 18(f) - the information requested cannot be made available without substantial collation or research

4. *Incorporation of Lessons*

Documents showing how findings from reviews or monitoring have been:

Incorporated into subsequent policy, guidance, or operational frameworks; or

Not incorporated, including any recorded reasons

DOC reviews every pest control operation that it completes, to identify improvements or lessons learnt for future operations. This information is used to update DOC's best practice documents and standard operating procedures. Monitoring data is also used to review the goals, targets, and monitoring undertaken to inform the programme.

To provide an example of this, I am sharing with you the TNM outcomes spreadsheet, and the Method Best practice for National Predator Control Programme Aerial 1080 baiting. Both of these documents are regularly updated in response to monitoring and review cycles.

Several other documents, already referenced (to be released) in response to your other questions, also illustrate how the findings from reviews or monitoring are subsequently incorporated into policy, guidance, or operational frameworks, e.g.

- Timing of –Mast –Response Aerial 1080 –in Upland-masting-ecosystems
- Long-term trends in forest bird populations in relation to predator control in the Landsborough Progress report 2025
- NPCP Dart-Caples Outcome Plan 2021-2030
- 1080 pesticide review report

I have decided to release the relevant parts of the documents described above, subject to information being withheld under the following section of the Official Information Act:

- section 9(2)(g)(ii) – to protect Ministers, officials, or employees from improper pressure or harassment.

5. *Representative Operational Sample (Limited)*

To avoid substantial collation, I request documents for no more than three (3) aerial toxin operations, selected by the Department as representative, comprising:

One operation during the 2019 beech mast response

One operation from 2018–2020 (non-beech mast)

One operation from 2021–present

For each selected operation, please provide:

Approval or decision record

Associated risk assessment (if held)

Any post-operation review (if completed)

I am sharing with you DOC permissions, Permission Applications, and Decision Support documents for the following operations:

1. Dart Caples 2019 (2019 beech mast response).
2. Wet Jacket 2020 (2018–2020 (non-beech mast)).
3. Landsborough 2025 (2021–present).

I have decided to release the relevant parts of the documents listed above, subject to information being withheld under the following section of the Official Information Act:

- section 9(2)(g)(ii) – to protect Ministers, officials, or employees from improper pressure or harassment.

Please find more information on Wet Jacket Peninsula operations here: [Fiordland Kiwi Diaries: Wet Jacket Peninsula's operation | Conservation blog](#) , [The Fiordland Kiwi Diaries: Tokoeka kiwi.](#)

For more information on the results of the Landsborough operations, please refer to: [Recovery of native birds in the Landsborough Valley: National Predator Control Programme.](#)

For more information on the Dart Caples operation, please refer to the "NPCP Dart-Caples Outcome Plan 2021-2030", released as part of the answer to one of your questions above.

You are entitled to seek an investigation and review of my decision by writing to an Ombudsman as provided by section 28(3) of the Official Information Act.

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) and attached documents may be published on the Department's website.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ben Reddiex".

Ben Reddiex
Director Biodiversity National Programmes
Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

Item	Document description	Decision
1	Animal pest systems summary for managers	Released in full
2	Operational planning for animal pest operations SOP	Released in part
3	Four-year predator control operational plan	Released in part
4	Pesticide Information Review for 1080	Released in part
5	Long-term trends in forest bird populations in relation to predator control in the Landsborough Progress report 2025	Released in part
6	NPCP Dart-Caples Outcome Plan 2021-2030	Released in part
7	Tiakina Nga Manu summary report 2016 to 2021	Released in part
8	Timing-of-mast-response-aerial-1080-in-upland-masting-ecosystems	Released in full
9	research summary for improving and maintaining efficacy of aerial poison baiting for rat control	Released in full
10	TNM outcomes spreadsheet	Released in full
11	Method Best practice for National Predator Control Programme Aerial 1080 baiting	Released in part
12	DOC permissions, Permission Applications, and Decision Support documents for Dart Caples 2019	Released in full
13	DOC permissions, Permission Applications, and Decision Support documents for Wet Jacket 2020	Released in full
14	DOC permissions, Permission Applications, and Decision Support documents for Landsborough 2025	Released in full