



Mō mātou | About us

A Rocha Aotearoa New Zealand is part of the A Rocha family of Christian environmental conservation organisations currently active in over 20 countries around the world.

A Rocha Aotearoa NZ is actively engaged in practical community conservation work through the Karioi Project and our network of local group projects. These offer opportunities for volunteer involvement across the country. We also train and mentor environmental leaders through our education and leadership programmes. And through our Eco Church project, we resource and inspire church communities to integrate care of the environment and sustainability into their activities and community.

Pae Tawhiti | Vision

Ecosystems restored and communities all across Aotearoa actively caring for the earth.

Pae Tata | Mission

To protect and restore ecosystems through community-based conservation, developing environmental leaders and taking practical action.

Ngā Arotahinga | Our Focus Areas



RESTORING ECOSYSTEMS:

Practical conservation for healthier and flourishing ecosystems and communities.



GROWING THE NEXT GENERATION OF KAITIAKI:

Connecting people to nature to inspire them to care and advocate for te taiao.



FOSTERING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES:

Inspiring and empowering communities to take action for sustainability and adaptability.

Te karere mai te Tiamana

Message from the chair

It is ten years since *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*, Pope Francis' Encyclical, was published in May 2015. There he says, "We are not faced with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather one complex crisis which is both social and environmental".

In A Rocha Aotearoa New Zealand, we live out this mandate, juggling hands-on ecological management at Karioi, and tree planting and stream management in local groups, with education programs, camps, and community building activities. For almost twenty years, our focus has been holistic: healing the forest or stream, and building up the community in partnership with local iwi and hapu. What began at Karioi is now working out this same vision in churches around the motu. For this, we as a Board are grateful for our funders, and for the stunning leadership and mahi of Kristel, James, Iris, Mo, Millie, Di and all the staff members in Raglan, together with those who lead camps and local groups, and speak in churches.

As a Board we welcomed our latest and youngest trustee, Cynthia Karikala, an environmental studies graduate working in the promotion of resilient communities at Auckland Council, and with broad cross-cultural experience. And as James moves into the lead Eco Church role, we as a Board are looking ahead to a year of planning for expansion and growth in the years to come.



Nicola Hoggard Creegan

Chair

A Rocha Aotearoa New Zealand Trust





Patrons

Sir David Moxon KNZM GCStJ

Prof Carolyn King FRSNZ



Advisor

Dr Jay Mātenga



Trustees

Dr Nicola Hoggard-Creegan (Chair)

Dr Philip Church (Treasurer)

Dr Stephen Pattemore

Dr Mary Hutchinson

Pete Armstrong

Gray Baldwin

Rev'd Ripeka Bijl (till Feb 2025)

Cynthia Karikala (from Mar 2025)



Te tau kua hipa

The year in review

Tēnā koutou katoa A Rocha whānau,

Over the past year, I've spent a lot of time reflecting on "purpose", both personally and as an organisation. It has been inspiring, at times daunting, and not always easy to capture in words. Yet again and again, two things have stood out to me.

Our purpose has been to connect people with nature and inspire them to care for it. That vision is lived out in countless small ways - in the habitats we restore, the species we protect, and the communities we serve. Each project, each team, each person brings this purpose alive in their own way.

Intertwined with this, our purpose is also to be uniquely ourselves. When we first began A Rocha in Aotearoa New Zealand, there was no organisation quite like ours. And despite being part of an international family of organisations, we had to find our own identity here in Aotearoa. While many groups focus on environmental advocacy or restoration, few combine practical conservation, education, and community-building in the way we try - rooted in place, committed for the long term, and working in partnership with local people and a wide variety of organisations. This uniqueness has become the hallmark of our conservation projects, our local groups, and our Eco Churches. Each has taken shape in its own distinctive way, grounded in the communities and landscapes where they belong.

It has been heartening to see how this purpose bears fruit. We are seeing real change: people connecting more deeply with the natural world, and more people inspired to care for this beautiful creation. These changes do not come all at once - they come step by step, through the faithful work of small groups of extraordinary people, each using their influence for good.

I am proud of what A Rocha stands for - our inclusiveness, creativity, breadth of participation, and our ability to provide a welcoming space where people across Aotearoa can join the journey of caring for creation. Together, we are building something both deeply rooted and full of hope.

Ngā manaakitanga o te taiao, me te aroha noa o te Atua.

Blessings of the natural world, and the gracious love of God.



Kristel van Houte

National Director A Rocha Aotearoa NZ



Te Whakaoranga o Karioi | The Karioi Project

The Karioi Project is a community-led conservation and education project, initiated by Te Whakaoranga o Karioi in partnership with members of Tainui o Tainui hapū and Ngati Whakamarurangi hapū, A Rocha Aotearoa NZ, Whāingaroa Environment Centre, Department of Conservation, Waikato Regional Council and the Whāingaroa/Raglan community.

Our work is focused on the maunga, Karioi, and the surrounding coastline, wetlands, and beaches. Thanks to extensive predator control and species monitoring, we're now seeing kororā (little penguins) waddling down the beach and ōi (grey-faced petrels) successfully breeding in coastal burrows. Our work also aims to protect other threatened species like matuku hūrepo (Australasian bittern) in the wetlands and pekapeka (native bats) in the surrounding forest habitats.



The Karioi Project... reflecting on the year

At the Karioi Project, one of the things I'm really proud of is the culture of feedback that has developed within our team. Creating an environment where feedback is welcomed - even when it is difficult - has allowed us to grow together, build trust, and strengthen the way we work. This culture has created a team that thrives and, in turn, makes the project a welcoming place for volunteers, schools, and people of all ages and backgrounds who come to contribute to restoring nature.

This past year, our work has spanned the mountain, the coastline, and the communities that connect them. We have deepened our relationship with Ngāti Whakamarurangi at Toreparu Wetland, worked alongside landowners all around the maunga, and continued to grow the involvement of the wider Whāingaroa community. From trapping and weeding to monitoring matuku hūrepo (bittern), pekapeka (bats), seabirds, and forest birds - the energy and commitment of so many people has been both humbling and inspiring.

We are grateful for the encouragement and positive feedback we receive from our community - and equally for the times when people share their concerns or challenges. Those honest conversations help us adapt, improve, and find better ways forward together.

Our education programmes continue to nurture the next generation of kaitiaki. Using the Te Whare Tapa Whā model of wellbeing, we teach tamariki and rangatahi about resilience - what it takes to be strong, balanced, and connected to nature. This resilience builds confidence to care for the environment and fosters leadership that will carry forward into all parts of their lives.

As we reflect on the year, we see a project that is thriving because of the people who contribute, the partnerships we hold, and the shared willingness to listen, learn, and grow together.

We are grateful for all the funding support we have received from trusts, businesses, foundations, Waikato Regional Council, Department of Conservation and many whānau and individuals. Without you, we would not be able to operate or achieve our goals.

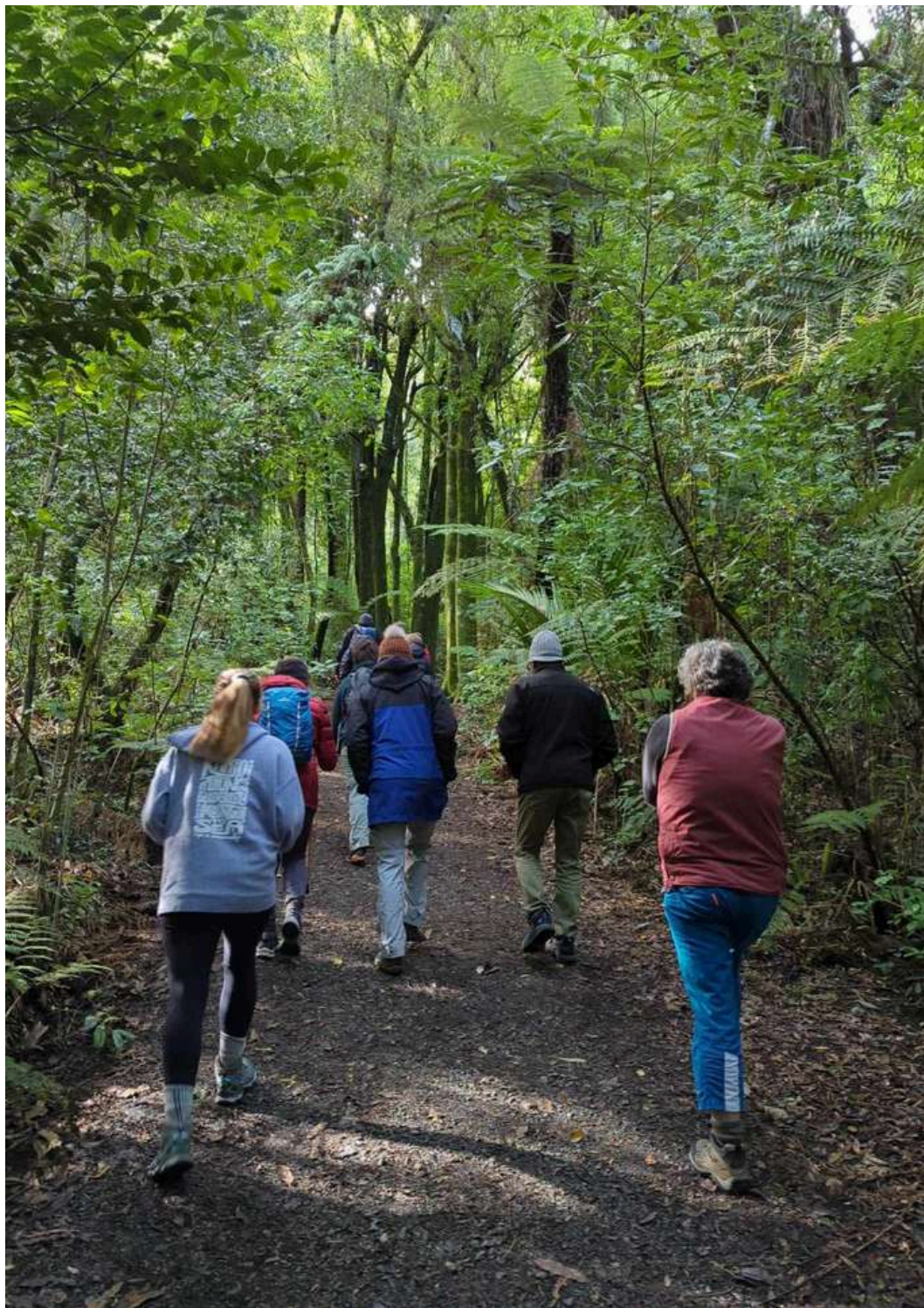
Ngā mihi nui to our community of volunteers, supporters and funders. Our hope is that we continue to listen, learn and grow together.



Kristel van Houte
Karioi Project Manager



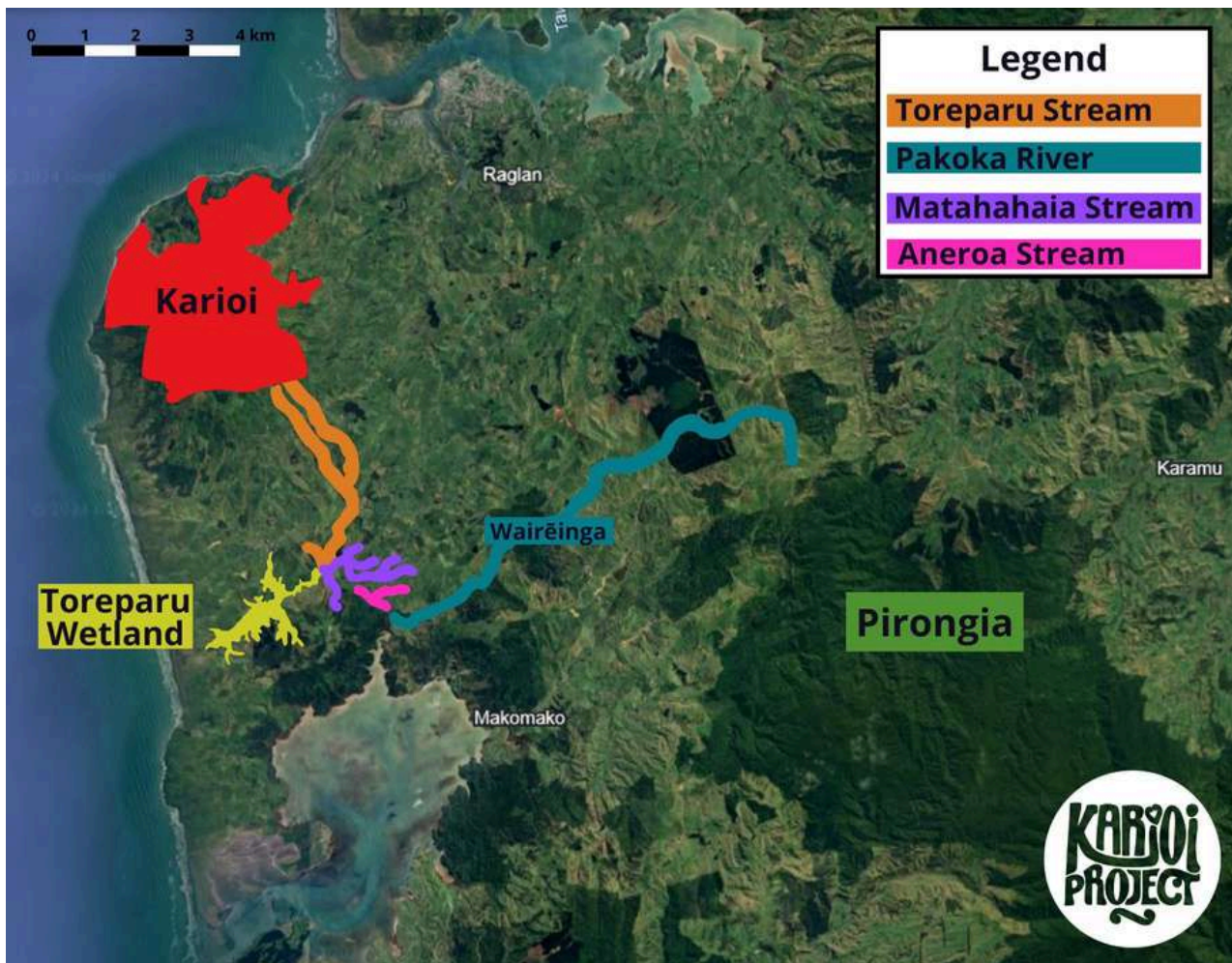

Te Whakaoranga O Karioi





Restoring ecosystems

Spanning from Whāingaroa to Āotea Harbours, including Mount Karioi, Toreparu Wetland, and connecting ecosystems, the Karioi Project restores ecological connections from mountain to sea. Our work focuses on landscape-scale predator control, species monitoring, environmental education, and community engagement. Through backyard trapping initiatives, hands-on education programmes, and collaborative conservation actions, we empower communities to protect and enhance Aotearoa's unique natural environment.



CUMULATIVE SINCE PROJECT'S INCEPTION:

- 2230 traps on Karioi traplines
- 246.4 km of traplines
- 5545 ha under stoat control
- 3324 ha under multi-species predator control





Monitoring of Ōi

The Karioi Project continues the monitoring of ōi (grey-faced petrel) populations as a key indicator species. Volunteers and staff checked burrows, conducted a species-detection dog survey, and maintained wildlife cameras 24/7 to track breeding bird activity and chick survival. These combined methods provide essential data to guide predator control and protect this threatened seabird.

➔ 19 ōi chicks fledged
84.6% chick-fledging success
Our best season yet!
57 ōi burrows monitored
6 ōi banded



Monitoring of Kororā

Thanks to effective predator control, kōrora (little penguin) are now breeding again along our coastline. This year, volunteers and staff recorded nesting activity, chick survival, and predator interactions, providing vital data to support ongoing conservation of this vulnerable seabird.

➔ 4 kororā chicks fledged!





Monitoring of Matuku-Hūrepo

The Karioi Project contributes to the Matuku-hūrepo Muster, a national initiative to monitor and protect the nationally critical Australasian Bittern/matuku-hūrepo. Through local wetland surveys and community hui, we are helping build a clearer picture of where these elusive birds are breeding, what habitats they rely on, and how we can better support their survival. This mahi also raises awareness of the value of healthy wetlands, including raupō and reed patches around Whāingaroa and beyond, for both matuku and wider biodiversity.



14 sites monitored by listening
5 bitterns recorded booming
across 4 sites

Monitoring of Pekapeka

Karioi Project continues to monitor long-tailed bats/pekapeka around Whāingaroa, using acoustic detectors to track their activity and habitat use. This work helps us understand where bats are present, how they move across the landscape, and how predator control and forest restoration are supporting their survival. By building local knowledge and sharing findings, we're contributing to the protection of this nationally threatened taonga species.

Bats detected at 26 sites,
mostly at low levels.
A few hotspots reaching up to
29 passes per night!





Fostering sustainable communities

The Karioi Project nurtures sustainable communities by connecting people with nature and empowering them to take practical action. Volunteers of all ages can get involved in hands-on conservation work, from restoring native habitats to backyard hub trapping to protect local wildlife. Through these opportunities, participants develop skills, deepen their connection with Karioi's unique landscapes, and join a growing community committed to caring for the environment.



Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers remain at the heart of the Karioi Project. This year they contributed to checking traplines, bait deployment days, trap tunnel working bees, seabird monitoring, and community events. Their commitment and passion are vital to protecting wildlife and caring for the maunga, ngahere and moana of Whāingaroa.



318 volunteers

5,560 volunteer hours

Karioi Backyard Hub

The Karioi Backyard Hub continues to support local landowners and residents with practical guidance, resources, and coordination for backyard pest control to build community action toward a predator-free Raglan.



471 households (34% of Raglan households)

1631 backyard traps

203 social enterprise traps (served)



Growing the next generation of kaitiaki



The Karioi Project's education programmes' vision is to connect people to nature and inspire them to be caretakers. We have created place-based, outdoor learning experiences and environmental education programmes for young people, our community and schools in our own backyard. We offered the following education and engagement programmes in 2024:

Karioi KIDS Programme (7-8 years)

Karioi KIDS is an afterschool programme providing a broad range of activities and opportunities that are challenging, physical, conservation-focused and fun, connecting kids to their local backyard.

Karioi RANGERS Programme (9-12 years)

Through place-based experiential learning, the Karioi RANGERS programme engages young people in hands-on conservation and leadership opportunities. Activities are based around the diverse ecosystems of Karioi with a focus on water, land and sea.

➔ 45 kids participated in these 7-week programmes



Manaaki Ao (Earthcare) Programme (Year 0-13)

At Raglan Area School, the Manaaki Ao programme works with students from the junior years to Year 13, building knowledge and skills around kaitiakitanga — environmental care, biodiversity, and protection of native species. Through outdoor learning, monitoring, and creative problem-solving, students develop leadership, ecological awareness, and a connection to nature. The programme also introduces pathways into conservation and related careers.

➔ 533 students from Years 0-10 participated





Environmental Holiday Programme (6-12 years)

This programme offers children a broad range of activities and opportunities during school holidays. The activities are challenging, physical, nature-focused and fun, connecting kids to their local backyard based on a free-play philosophy. The programme is based around the diverse range of Karioi ecosystems - whenua, wai and moana and the wider Waikato Region.

➡ 538 places filled over the school holidays!



Hauora Mentoring Programme

Our Hauora mentoring programmes support students who need a different environment to thrive. Students are referred to us for various reasons: they might find large groups stressful, are working through counselling, need help making friends, or haven't had opportunities to explore the outdoors. Our Hauora mentoring programmes create safe, nature-based spaces where students build resilience, connection, and confidence to thrive.

➡ 2 young persons mentored and one intern in 2024



In-School Visits & Visiting Groups

We offer "Living classroom" environmental education and connection to whenua programmes for local rural schools (Te Uku, Te Mata, Waitetuna) and visiting students and groups from the greater Waikato, Auckland and Bay of Plenty.

➡ 5 visiting groups from schools / tertiary programmes

➡ 2 visiting corporate groups





Te Whakaoranga O Karioi



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www.karioiproject.co.nz

Ngā mihi nui to our Funders and Sponsors!

Funders:

- COGS Waikato West
- Community Volunteering and Capability Fund
- DV Bryant Trust
- Department of Conservation Waikato Office
- Forest & Bird Valder Conservation Grant
- Gallagher Charitable Trust
- Gallagher Foundation
- Lottery Environment and Heritage
- NAR Foundation
- Pacific Development and Conservation Trust
- Patagonia
- Raglan Area School
- REN Fund
- The Sargood Bequest
- Trust Waikato
- WEL Energy Trust
- Waikato Hauraki Conservation Fund
- Waikato Regional Council
- WWW Foundation
- Wonderful Giving Fund
- WWF Community Conservation Grant

Major Business Sponsors:

- Morning Glory Coffee
- Orca Eatery
- Raglan Boat Charters
- Raglan Chocolate
- Raglan Food Company
- Raglan Four Square
- The Shack





Hāhi Tautaiāo o Aotearoa | Eco Church Aotearoa

The Eco Church Aotearoa project is an ecumenical initiative to support church communities across Aotearoa NZ to actively care for God's earth as an integral part of their mission. Eco Church Aotearoa works alongside eco church kaihāpai (advocates), church leaders, environmental leaders, rangatahi and tamariki, denominational bodies, and other organisations - with the common goal to see church communities across Aotearoa NZ take practical action while growing a new generation of kaitiaki / inspirational environmental leaders.

Being a part of the Eco Church Aotearoa whānau means that we are not journeying on our own. We are part of a bigger mission spanning various parishes, church groups and denominations across Aotearoa NZ. We are gathering our efforts under one umbrella – to give voice and momentum to our efforts. We support each other through the celebration of knowledge and stories which inspires others to action.

The five key areas that we explore are:

- **Leadership, worship and teaching**
Te Hautūtanga, te Korōria ki te Atua, me te Whakaako
- **Church buildings and facilities**
Ngā Whare Karakia me ngā Rawa
- **Church land and grounds**
Te Whenua o ngā Hāhi
- **Community and global engagement**
Te Kōtuitui Hapori, te Kōtuitui o te Ao
- **Sustainable living**
Te Noho Toitū

INDIVIDUALS
INSPIRED

LEADERS
EQUIPPED

CHURCHES
ENGAGED



Eco Church Aotearoa... reflecting on the year

The Eco Church Aotearoa network has continued to grow over the past year, as more churches across Aotearoa have embraced the call to care for creation. Each church that joins this movement bears witness to the reality that creation care is central to Christian mission and discipleship, proclaiming with their heads, their hearts and their hands that "the earth is the Lord's, and everything in it." (Psalm 24:1)

At the core of Eco Church is discipleship. We are seeing churches across denominations discover that caring for God's world is not an optional extra but a vital expression of following Jesus. This year, we've also been encouraged by the passion of young leaders who are stepping up with fresh conviction. Through initiatives like the Good News Project - a collaboration with World Vision's 40-Hour Challenge, E3 Wilderness Expeditions - in partnership with Scripture Union NZ and Adventure Specialties Trust, and He Māhuri Tōtara, rangatahi are living out a faith that is good news for all the earth.

As the network grows, our hope is not only for more churches to join, but for churches to put down deep roots in the kaupapa of creation care. We long to see Eco Churches become places where communities encounter the hope of Jesus, where worship and witness are woven together with care for land, water and people, and where our shared life points to the renewal of all things.

The Eco Church movement is more than a network – it is a visible testimony that the Spirit is at work in and through the Church today. When churches care for creation together, we bear witness to the gospel in ways our neighbours and communities can see and experience.



James Beck

Eco Church Project Manager

ECO CHURCH
A ROCHA AOTEAROA NZ





Restoring ecosystems

Through the Eco Church project, congregations have been supported to actively care for creation by restoring biodiversity on church grounds and participating in community conservation initiatives. Volunteers have been involved in native planting, habitat enhancement, and other biodiversity-friendly activities, creating healthier environments for local plants and wildlife. These efforts help churches model sustainable practices and inspire their communities to engage in caring for the natural world.

The Good News Project has further strengthened this work by engaging rangatahi in practical restoration alongside churches and community partners. Through planting, weeding, and habitat regeneration, young people from various youth groups have contributed to healthier ecosystems while exploring the connection between faith and caring for creation.

- June 2024: Good News Project in conjunction with World Vision 40-Hour Challenge @ Spencer Park - 30 youth attended
- March 2025: The Good News Project at Southshore Spit Reserve - 60 youth attended



Fostering sustainable communities



Through the Eco Church project, congregations are equipped and empowered to model and promote sustainable living in their communities. Our Eco Church kōrero and regional gatherings have created space for churches to share stories, encourage one another, and explore practical steps for reducing waste, improving energy efficiency, and living more lightly on the earth. By learning and acting together, congregations are building stronger connections, inspiring everyday climate action, and nurturing resilient, hopeful, and sustainable communities.





Growing the next generation of kaitiaki

A key element of the Eco Church project is education and engagement around the theological imperative to care for creation. Our focus has been on developing a new generation of kaitiaki through nature-based and ecology focused camps for tamariki and rangatahi and the training and equipping of environmental leaders within a church community. We offered the following education and engagement programmes in 2024:



He Māhuri Tōtara for Youth and Young Adults

An environmental leadership development course for youth, youth ministry leaders and young adults – offered in partnership with Wilberforce Foundation.

- July 2024: HMT in Raglan for Young Adults - 13 attendees
- Sept 2024: HMT in Christchurch for Youth - 17 attendees



A time and space to explore God's heart for the world, creation care, from the biblical beginnings to practically acting it out.

I've come away with renewed steadfastness in faith, inspiration in creation care, and connectedness to others who are committed to the same kaupapa.



Sustain Camp

A week-long programme in October for years 7-10 exploring Whāingaroa Raglan and learning how to contribute sustainably to the world around us, and how to sustain our relationship with God – offered in partnership with Scripture Union NZ.

- Oct 2024 in Raglan: 9 young people attended!





E3 Wilderness Journeys for Rangatahi x 3 locations

11-day wilderness journeys for rangatahi (17-18 years) at three amazing locations in Aotearoa (Canterbury, Otago, Bay of Islands) in December each year focused on developing character and strengthening their connections with God, others and creation – offered in partnership with Scripture Union NZ and Adventure Specialties Trust.

→ E3 Canterbury: 12 persons
E3 Otago: 11 persons
E3 Bay of Islands: 8 persons



E3 Wilderness Journey for Young Adults

7-day journey by sea kayak, foot, and bike for young adults (19-25 years) exploring Marlborough Sounds while living in community together and embracing questions of our faith and its intersections with life. Offered in partnership with Scripture Union NZ and Adventure Specialties Trust.

→ E3 Young Adults: 12 persons



Through E3 I have grown in confidence in myself. I also think my mental strength has improved. What I learned on E3 has already helped me in the leadership role I now have at school.

I have a new respect for creation and the need to conserve and appreciate what we have been given.



ECO CHURCH

A ROCHA AOTEAROA NZ

@ecochurchnz 

www.ecochurch.org.nz 

Education & Engagement

71 events (workshops, sermons, camps, online events, talks etc.)
3,307 participants

Eco Church Aotearoa network

86 church communities
5 denominational partners

Read stories of church communities taking action...

www.ecochurch.org.nz/stories

Metrics as at 31 Dec 2024



Our Funders:

Wilberforce Foundation
Auckland Council
Christchurch City Council
Whanganui District Council
COGS Auckland City
COGS Hamilton City
COGS Rodney North Shore
COGS Tauranga
COGS Whangnui-Waimarino-Rangitikei
Individual churches
Individual donors

Denominational Partners:

Anglican Diocese of Auckland
Anglican Diocese of Wellington
Anglican Missions
Northern Baptist Association
Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa NZ

Project Partners:

Para Kore Marae Inc.
Climate Stewards
Scripture Union NZ
Adventure Specialties Trust



Rōpū Ā-Rohe | Local Groups

A Rocha's network of local group projects work in partnership with other organisations and the local community to offer opportunities for volunteer involvement across the country. Local group volunteers are involved in a range of community conservation and sustainability initiatives: wetland, native bush and stream restoration, native plant nurseries, bicycle maintenance, education and engagement events, as well as engaging with church communities via the Eco Church Aotearoa project.

Our Local Groups

- Tāmaki Makarau Auckland
- Te Papaioea Palmerston North
- Te Whanganui-a-Tara Wellington
- Ōtepoti Dunedin

Volunteer Metrics

74 volunteer events
1217 volunteer hours

Our Local Group Projects:

- Matuku Link Restoration Project
- Unsworth Reserve Restoration Project
- Te Auaunga Oakley Creek Restoration Project
- Adventist Native Plants Nursery
- Waiu Wetland Restoration Project
- Kopua Monastery Restoration Site
- Swampy Gully Restoration Site
- Supporting Friends of Owhiro Stream
- Kapiti subgroup restoration sites
- Tirohanga Camp Restoration Project
- Hillary St Reserve Trapline with City Sanctuary, Dunedin
- Smith's Creek Restoration Site with Save the Otago Peninsula (STOP)

See our list of past events hosted by our local groups here:
https://www.facebook.com/ARochaNZ/past_hosted_events

See upcoming events by our local groups here:
<https://www.facebook.com/ARochaNZ/events>





Ahumoni | Finances

Full audited accounts are available on request from new.zealand@arocha.org

INCOME 2024/25

Karioi Project - Grants	438,581	52%
Karioi Project - Donations	54,285	6%
Karioi Project - Social Enterprise Income	49,252	6%
Karioi Project - Other Income	6,901	1%
Eco Church - Grants	124,426	15%
Eco Church - Donations	16,100	2%
Eco Church - Other Income	4,764	1%
General Grants	15,000	2%
General Donations	57,169	7%
Other Income	71,358	9%
TOTAL INCOME	837,835	100%

EXPENDITURE 2024/25

Karioi Project - Programme Delivery	415,241	65%
Eco Church - Programme Delivery	116,500	18%
Administrative and Overhead Expenses	107,296	17%
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	639,038	100%

Tō Mātou Tāngata | Our People

12 part-time persons | 6.5 FTE

10,670 volunteer hours | 5.13 FTE



A ROCHA

AOTEAROA NZ

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instagram: [@arochaaotearoanz](https://www.instagram.com/arochaaotearoanz)

ECO CHURCH NZ:

website: ecochurch.org.nz

facebook group: [@ecochurchnz](https://www.facebook.com/ecochurchnz)

KARIOI PROJECT:

website: karioiproject.co.nz

facebook: [@karioiproject](https://www.facebook.com/karioiproject)

instagram: [@karioiproject](https://www.instagram.com/karioiproject)

Charity registration number: CC36274