

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

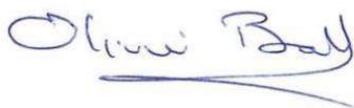
Message from our chairperson

Despite the extraordinary challenges of 2020, the Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust (MTSCT) has not only continued to operate, it has continued to make a real difference in the community. Through its educational and action-based programmes, the future of our environment is that much more secure.

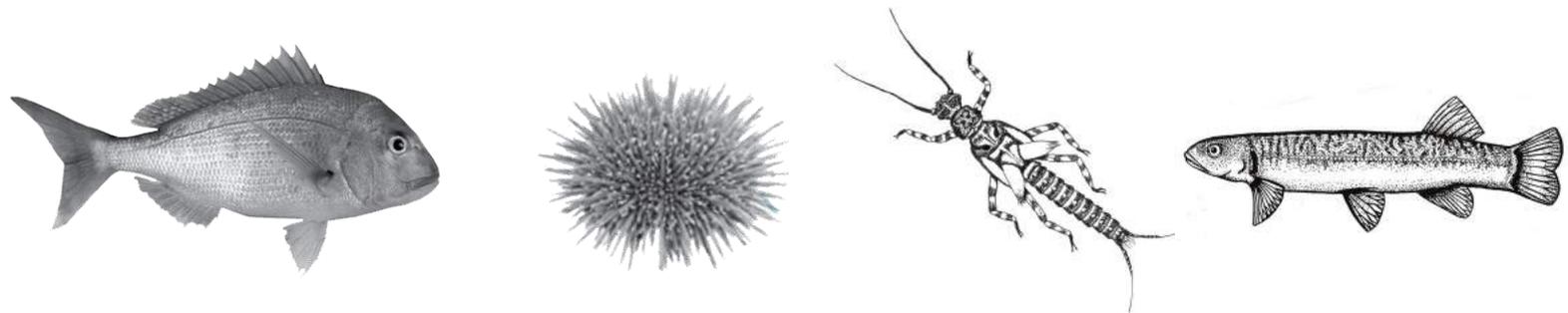
The Experiencing Marine Reserves (EMR) and Whitebait Connection (WBC) programmes now operate in ten regions, with teams of 44 coordinators. Every year, the number of people guided on their journeys of conservation discovery and action continues to grow and the 2019 - 2020 season was no different. Many children, parents and teachers enjoyed snorkel days with EMR, and communities contributed to the restoration of more riparian environments and whitebait spawning habitats with WBC. The various events around the country attracted more than 7626 participants indicating the sheer scale of the achievements. The trust also continues to promote the conservation message to the wider community via numerous printed and social media releases. Finally, the immense contribution of the volunteers must be acknowledged. Volunteers contributed a staggering 12643 hours in the 2019 – 2020 season, a commitment that is crucial in ensuring the trust realises its many and varied goals.

The trust board also continues its journey of development and discovery. Strategies that will improve the situation around funding continue to be investigated. As well as improving job security for the MTSCT team, this will enable the trust to contemplate more seriously moving towards further national expansion of its wonderful programmes in a safe and sustainable manner. Aotearoa/New Zealand needs this trust; and soon it will recognise this fact.

Chair of the Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust



Olwen Ball



Top Management

Trustees

- Olivier Ball - Science portfolio (chairperson)
- Manuel Springford - Te Waha Māori portfolio
- Vince Kerr - Marine conservation portfolio
- Matt Keene - Communications portfolio
- Geoff Butturini - Outdoor & H & S portfolio
- Eden Hakaraia - Education portfolio
- Hilton Leith - Business portfolio

Poutokomanawa - Co-Directors

- Samara Nicholas - MNZM, EMR founder and national lead
- Kim Jones - WBC national lead, DTH founder

Honoured patron

The late Dr Roger Grace

A memorial fund has been established and is administered by Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust. Moe mai ra e rangatira.



Our goal is to empower and support communities to achieve marine and freshwater conservation through science based experiential programmes, resources, projects and community engagement.

Whakamana te maunga Whakamana te wai He mauri o ngā tangata Ngā mea katoa he pai

If we look after the water from the mountains to sea, it will look after us. It is our life force.

visit www.emr.org.nz and www.whitebaitconnection.co.nz and www.mountaintosea.org.nz or email us at info@emr.org.nz



Our programmes and key outcomes in Northland and Auckland 2019-2020

Mountains To Sea Conservation Trust (MTSCT) has continued to empower communities and take action towards both marine and freshwater conservation. The trust is committed to citizen science as a way of empowering local people to contribute to national science databases in a meaningful way.

EMR

EMR increased delivery of community guided snorkel and kayak days from 29 to 31 events across Auckland and Northland. This season, EMR delivered its first community snorkel in Maunganui Bay (Deep Water Cove, Northland) and a drift snorkel focusing on engaging rangatahi. During the summer of 2019/20, 6799 students went through the programme.

WBC

WBC delivered 58 community events in Northland and Auckland this year with 1414 people participating. 36 school programmes were delivered with 3257 students across the two regions. A total of 71 action projects were undertaken by students, community groups and WBC including the planting of 6657 native plants along waterways, restoration of 1000m of fish passage, identification of 5 new inanga spawning sites, and 38 records uploaded to the NZ Freshwater Fish Database.

DTH

A new project led by Northland Regional Council in collaboration with NorthTec will monitor more than 30 gross pollutant littatrap in Northland to assess stormwater pollution. MTSCT is supporting ongoing action with schools around the Drains To Harbour programme.

Marine advocacy

Our marine advocacy work has continued to support the rāhui area established by Te Whanau Moana me Te Rorohuri, a Ngāti Kahu hapu under their traditional authority of mana moana. This year we continued with annual monitoring of the rāhui and a marine habitat map for the waters of the Maitai Bay rāhui and surrounding area has been completed and is presented in a series of maps. We are supporting the hapu in their kaitiaki role and providing opportunities for wider community engagement in ecological restoration.

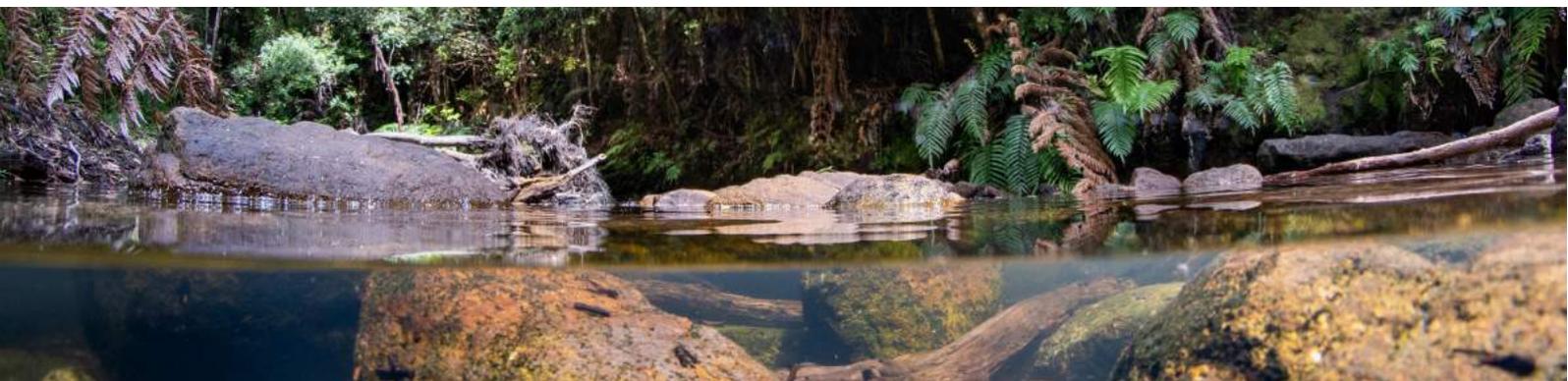
He Kakano

The He Kakano community native plant nursery in Whangārei that we run for Whangārei riparian restoration, is thriving thanks to the hard mahi of many regular volunteers and our nursery manager Jordan MacDonald. Thanks to Foundation North, Whangateau Harbourcare and Whangārei District Council funding we've been able to upgrade the nursery facilities, reinstate free school nursery programmes and produce over 10,000 plants this year. Over the 2018/2019 planting season our team have planted 15,000 plants next to waterways around Whangārei.

National Outcomes

Our Mountains to Sea (MTS) programmes have achieved significant national outcomes since 2001. Despite the challenges faced as a result of the current COVID-19 pandemic and the need to constantly adapt our programmes to meet COVID-19 restrictions, we have also achieved some great outcomes in the 2019 - 2020 season. A full breakdown of national outcomes for both the Whitebait Connection (WBC) and Experiencing Marine Reserves (EMR) programmes can be viewed on pages 8 to 11.

In summary, since 2001 our WBC programme has resulted in 113,245 trees being planted along 49.62km of riparian habitat, 98,368 people engaged in monitoring their local awa, and 92 inanga habitats identified and adopted. In addition, our EMR programme has engaged 182,471 people, taken 70,928 people through New Zealand marine reserves, and 132,478 people on guided snorkelling experiences. Collectively, over 257,977.50 hours of volunteer time have been contributed to our MTS programmes thanks to the constant support of short and long-term volunteers.



Highlights

This year we celebrated some of our big picture outcomes....

- Success with our bank recontouring for Īnanga spawning habitat creation in Northland that has been documented and shared with other regions.
- Continuation and expansion of our Mountains to Sea programmes in ten different regions including: Northland, Auckland, Gisborne, Coromandel, Wellington, Nelson, Tasman, Canterbury, Taranaki and Rakiura.
- EMR has continued to develop a reliable and skilled volunteer base to be able to run community events efficiently and safely across the country.
- The Nelson/Tasman team delivered the inaugural Kaikōura snorkel day with 54 snorkellers and had record attendance at Cable Bay with 199 snorkellers.
- Our Wellington team delivered five Community Snorkel Events across the greater Wellington region. These were located at Taputeranga Marine Reserve, Kāpiti Island Marine Reserve and Whitireia Park. These attracted a record number of participants at four of five events, with a total of 500 participants throughout the season
- Continuing the expansion of our National Īnanga Spawning Programme (NISP) in English, Te Reo and Te Whāriki in eight regions of NZ!
- Inspiring action for the environment - many diverse action projects have been reported from regional coordinators this year including inanga spawning site adoption, marine reserve extension, marine monitoring, riparian planting, whitebait spawning habitat restoration, stream clean ups, presentations to local politicians, artwork on display in schools and letters to the editors of local newspapers about local conservation issues.
- Over 1000 people have participated in our local free events including whitebait spawning site monitoring, community planting days, native fish spotlighting nights and community group freshwater biodiversity workshops. We took 15589 kiwis snorkelling over the season!



- Continuation of ramping up our contribution to national databases such as the NZ Freshwater Fish database and NZ Water Citizens and support for community groups and schools to do the same across NZ.

- Expansion of our DTH programme into Nelson thanks to funding from Nelson City Council and into the Far North thanks to funding from Far North District Council.

- The EMR team won the Wyland Award for 2020 from the NZ Underwater Association this year.

- In February we were lucky to be invited down to Rakiura to run a pilot EMR programme for Halfmoon Bay School in partnership with local operators Stewart Island Adventures. 17 students aged 8-12 had their snorkelling skills honed in the school pool and then it was time to raid garages for extra wetsuits, gloves and hoods to prepare for the 14 degree water. We headed over to Golden Bay to jump on the Ranui - Ulva Island Ferry which was generously sponsored for our trip. The snorkelling from Sydney Cove into Te Wharawhara marine reserve was spectacular. We were followed by huge blue cod and if you laid on the bottom a swarm of blue moki and spotties would appear. They make them tough in the South, with many of the students jumping back in for a second snorkel around the nugget after warming up around a fire on the beach.

- Supporting Patuharakeke kaitiaki with their water quality and biodiversity monitoring projects in their rohe at Takahiwai.

- Supporting Ko Waitangi te Awa Trust kaitiaki with their Waitangi Awa river restoration in Waitangi.

- Supporting our new EMR and WBC cadets in their roles in Northland and Auckland.

- Barker and Associates corporate planting day at Takahiwai and creation of a [video](#) to encourage more corporates to get involved in planting projects.

- Restoration of 1000m of fish passage along a Mahurangi River tributary.



Challenges

The biggest challenges the Trust currently faces concern sustaining funding streams in a contestable funding environment, and ensuring infrastructure and processes are in place to support growth and a regional approach. These challenges are not unique to MTSCCT and with ongoing leadership complemented by the level of community support we are privileged to receive, we will continue to deliver quality programmes.

Student/Community quotes

“Kāpiti Island is an amazing place and I’m super stoked to have had the opportunity to snorkel there. Day was well run and well organised. I love that all the guides and helpers are so friendly, enthusiastic and approachable. I felt completely comfortable on the water and enjoyed duck diving down, something I’ve not done before”

- Kāpiti Island Community snorkel participant.

“This is one of the things that I love about volunteering for EMR – the variety of people that participate in the events. It is such a joy to be able to share those moments with people. Thank you for making it possible to share the marine world with the community. See you at the next event!”

- Senior snorkel guide who volunteered over 100 hours over the season in Northland and Auckland.

“It [the Whitebait Connection programme] was relatable to current issues of pollution, plastics, climate and environmental change and our study which was about taking personal action to prevent waste and pollution and viewing ourselves as Kaitiaki, rather than owners of the world’s resources. I liked the way Māori tikanga and world view were interwoven – a big plus. Very good, I liked the information that was available to school to help with their planning. The educators took care with the students and whanau and gave good clear instructions. Both educators were very effective communicators, they built good rapport with the students and delivered the learning at a level appropriate to the students. They have very positive, clear and effective student management skills and enthused our students”.

- Teacher, St Josephs school, Nelson

“Science is so important in real life. But at school, it is often not engaging the students on a level that gets them interested in scientific topics. By taking them out of the classroom we are able to connect learning in the classroom with the natural world which is of huge value”

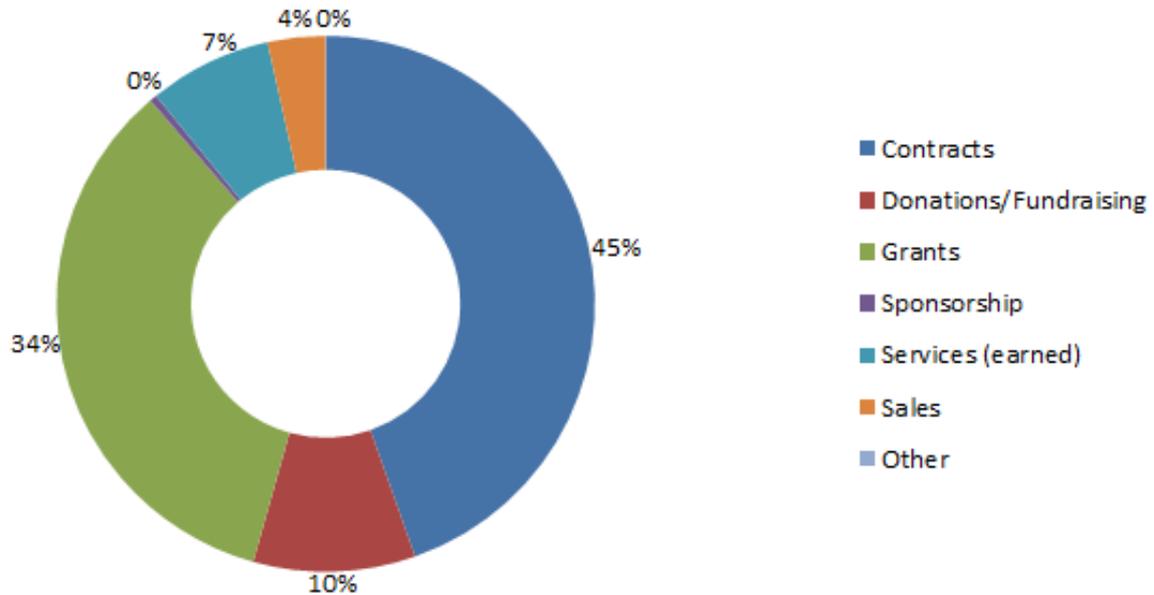
- Science teacher at Whangarei Girls High Northland (WBC)



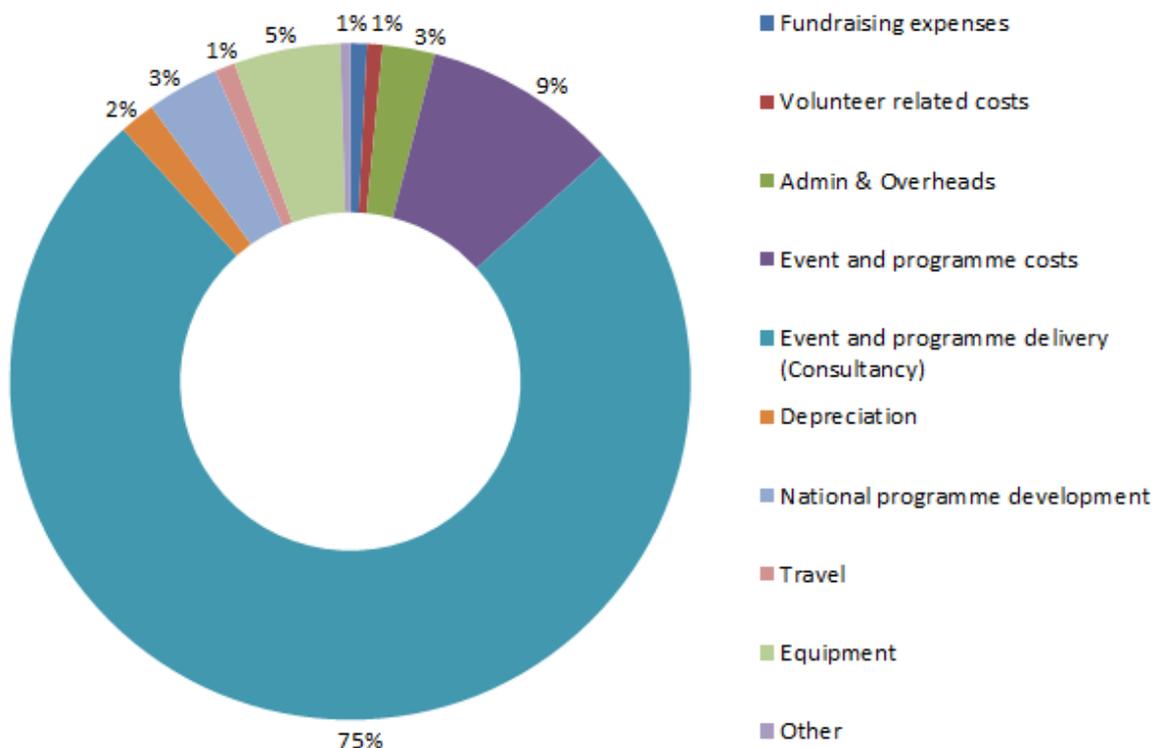
Financials

The Trust has performed well in securing revenue from a range of sources by being responsive to opportunities that present themselves and by strategically maneuvering themselves to be preferred providers of programmes. The risk created is being managed through a capacity building programme implemented in 2019. This capacity building work has ensured our staffing structure is fit for purpose, strengthened our governance, designed a volunteering strategy, and prepared a fundraising strategy exploring opportunities for creating sustainable fundraising approaches. Covid 19 has taught us that diverse funding streams are extremely beneficial. As can be seen by our expenses summary, our people are the main drivers of our work at the grassroots level, and it is important that we support them well and grow sustainably.

Income - year ended 31 March 2020



Expenses - year ended 31 March 2020



Our full financial statements and auditors report can be downloaded from the charities website by searching Registration Number: CC23406 NZBN Number: 9429043001552

WBC National Overview

2019 - 2020

8217



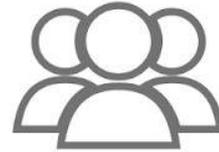
native seedlings
planted

5.22 km



riparian habitat
restored

6038



participants in WBC
programme

3041



hours of volunteer
time

5



whitebait spawning
habitats adopted

173



WBC inspired
action projects

809.75 m³



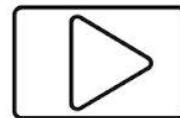
riparian rubbish
removed

60



school programmes
delivered

13



printed media
articles

"It's helping to build an awareness of Morningside Stream, how polluted it is and what we as a school can do along with the local council and other vested interest groups to make it a cleaner and healthier wetland."
Teacher, Morningside School

"I have realised how important it is to care for freshwater so now I care lots"
Student, Kapakapanui School

"We feel that we have the responsibility to treat it the way we treat ourselves. We know there are many other important creatures in the environment whom we need to protect."
Student, Queen Margaret College

WBC National Statistics since 2001

including trends since last season (▲▼)

113,245



native seedlings
planted

▲ 7%

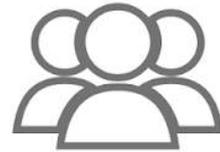
49.62 km



riparian habitat
restored

▲ 11%

98368



participants in WBC
programme

▲ 7%

86537.50



hours of volunteer
time

▲ 7%

92



whitebait spawning
habitats adopted

▲ 6%

437



WBC inspired
action projects

▼ 12.18%

5712.38m³



riparian rubbish
removed

▲ 17%

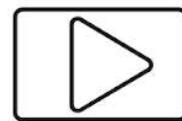
1734



school programmes
delivered

▲ 0.01%

251



printed media
articles

▲ 5%

EMR 2019 - 2020 Overview

NATIONAL



NORTHLAND & AUCKLAND



EMR Statistics since 2001

including trends from since previous season (▲ ▼)

NATIONAL



NORTHLAND & AUCKLAND



Funding

Department of Conservation (DOC) Whangārei, Tindall Foundation, Foundation North, Bobby Stafford-Bush Foundation, Whangārei District Council, Lotteries Community (Waikato), Lotteries (COGS), Whangārei Harbour Catchment Group, Kaipara District Council, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment Unlocking Curious Minds, Fonterra, Lion Foundation, Pacific Development and Conservation Trust, NZ Beef and Lamb, Auckland Council and local boards, Z Good in the Hood, Wette Wetsuits and Spearfishing, Far North District Council, Northland Regional Council

Sponsors

MTF Finance Whangārei, Million Metres Donors, 2plus, The Choc Fish Co, Barker and Associates and Fortuna Foundation

Corporate partnerships

Kauri Cliffs Luxury Lodge

Partnerships

Dive! Tutukaka, DOC Whangārei, BLAKE, Department of Conservation, Scuba Schools International, Auckland Zoo, SeaLife Trust, Auckland Whale and Dolphin Safari, Northland Community Foundation, Auckland Council and local boards, Forward, Wai Care, EOS Ecology, Ngā mahi Te Taiao, Tasman Bay Guardians, Friends of Te-Whanganui-A Hei Marine Reserve Trust, Mountains to Sea Wellington, National Advisory Group for Volunteer Freshwater Monitoring, Henderson Reeves Lawyers, Te Whanau Moana me te Rorohuri hapu, Para Kore Ki Tāmaki, Kelly Tarltons, Canoe and Kayak, SUP Waiheke, Waiheke Dive and Snorkel, Neureuter Whānau, Shakespear Open Sanctuary.

Collaborations

Learning Journeys, EcoQuest, Te Aho Tū Roa, Enviroschools, NRC, Community Waitakere, Patuharakeke Trust Board, Integrated Kaipara Harbour Management Group (IKHMG), NZ Landcare Trust, Reconnecting Northland, Papa Taiao Earthcare, Mahurangi Action Group, Fonterra, Forest Bridge Trust, NorthTec, Te Henga Connection (Bethells), Snells Beach Residents and Ratepayers Association, Sustainable Coastlines, Whangateau Harbourcare, NIWA, Whananaki Community Led Development Group, Te Waiariki/Ngati Korora, Far North Surf Rescue, Goat Island Marine Discovery Centre, Ngati Kahu Social Services, NZAEE (New Zealand Association for Environmental Educators), Pacific Coast Kayaks, TriOceans, VOYCE, Ko Waitangi te Awa Trust, Te Mahere Whakauka, Auckland Sea Kayaks



How you can support us

Subscribe to our newsletters

[Whitebait Connection](#)

[Experiencing Marine Reserves](#)

Volunteer with us -
register on our websites

Adopt a school -
fund a school programme

Donate \$ to the big picture
through our websites

Images taken by Lorna Doogan and Sophie Journee



**Experiencing Marine Reserves | www.emr.org.nz and
The Whitebait Connection | www.whitebaitconnection.co.nz**
are programmes of Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust
together we are Mountains to Sea
www.mountaintosea.org.nz

