

KEY INSIGHTS FROM THE J4N INDEPENDENT EVALUATION



ALLEN + CLARKE

Allen + Clarke undertook a three-year independent evaluation of the Jobs for Nature (J4N) programme. The evaluation found that the programme was an effective intervention. It successfully delivered employment when it was needed while establishing strong foundations for enduring environmental benefits.



The programme delivered significant employment and environmental benefits

The programme exceeded its employment targets and delivered environmental restoration activities at scale. While full environmental outcomes will take years to materialise, the programme's focus on scientifically supported conservation practices provides strong foundations for significant future benefits

Meaningful Māori partnerships delivered transformative outcomes but varied in quality

Many Māori communities described the programme as transformative, enabling essential work on their whenua and opportunities to exercise rangatiratanga and kaitiakitanga. However, some felt partnerships with agencies were "one-sided", highlighting the need for genuine power-sharing and adequate engagement processes.

Programme flexibility enabled adaptation to changing circumstances

The programme successfully adapted from an immediate COVID response to greater emphasis on environmental outcomes and building environmental and conservation capacity. This flexibility proved valuable in meeting evolving needs while maintaining core objectives.

The programme demonstrated additionality beyond its financial investment

The programme accelerated conservation work beyond normal funding mechanisms, converting environmental priorities into active projects at scale and pace. It also generated spillover benefits, including enhanced emergency response capacity and innovative conservation approaches.

National coherence was strong but regional coordination varied significantly

The programme aligned well with national environmental strategies and avoided duplication with other initiatives. However, regional coordination varied considerably, with some areas achieving strong coordination through existing frameworks while others experienced weaker coordination.

Sustainability foundations are solid

The programme's focus on scientifically supported conservation practices provides confidence in long-term environmental benefits, and many participants transitioned to permanent employment. However, historic underfunding of conservation work risks undermining the progress achieved during the programme.