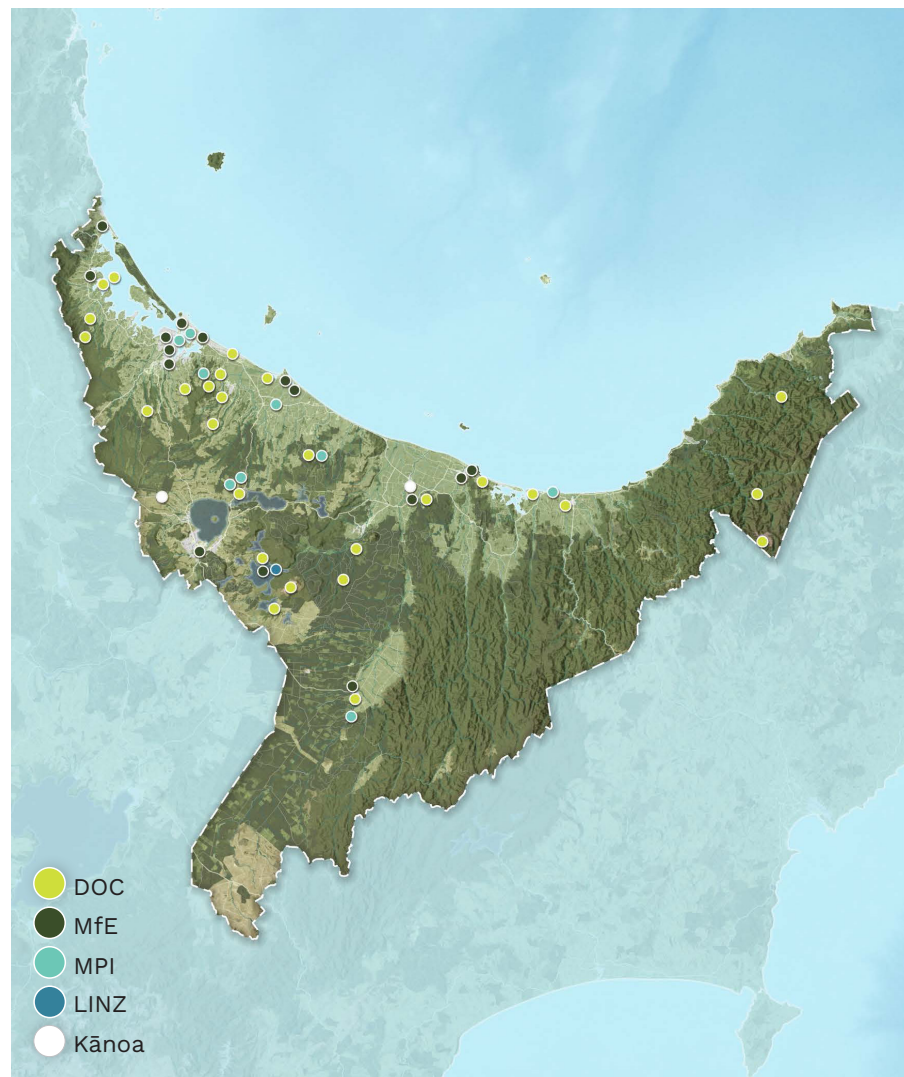


Purpose: To show the Jobs for Nature investment to date in the Bay of Plenty region and the significance of funding in context of the economic and environmental challenges.



Map sourced from Land Information New Zealand 2023

Significance of Jobs for Nature (J4N) funding to the Bay of Plenty region during the COVID-19 pandemic

Economic and employment impacts¹: The region faced several economic and employment impacts, which were felt across various sectors as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Areas like Rotorua faced a much more substantial hit to their local economy, due to the higher concentration of economic activity focused on the tourism sector.

It was estimated that around \$776 million in earnings were expected to be lost due to job losses in the Bay of Plenty region over the year to March 2021. There was a prediction 14,500 jobs to be lost in the region by March 2021. Lower tourism activity was also likely to see the largest reduction in Māori employment with Māori job losses at the time projected to be 7% (2020-22) for the region.

Low-skilled workers were expected to bear the brunt of the job losses, with nearly 7,000 low-skilled workers expected to lose their employment.

Environmental challenges facing the region

Climate change: The region is experiencing the effects of climate change, which include rising temperatures, shifting wind, rainfall, and seasonal patterns, and more extreme and unpredictable weather events.²

Coastal and marine ecosystems in the Bay of Plenty are under threat due to human activities. These include the loss of sea grass habitat, sedimentation, and biosecurity issues related to mangroves.³ Coastal development, such as marinas, subdivisions, aquaculture, reclamation and filling, roading, stock grazing, foreshore structures, and flood control works, also pose threats to these ecosystems.⁴

Biodiversity loss: Native plants, animals, and ecosystems are under threat due to changes in land use and vegetation, urban growth, and pollution.⁵

Pollution and land use: Pollution from agricultural, horticultural, and industrial activities is a significant issue, with catchments emptying into estuaries and leading to increased rates of sedimentation, inflows of nutrients, heavy metals, and Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs).⁶

How is J4N investment addressing environmental challenges facing the region while creating employment opportunities?

Data as at 30 September 2023

Funding	\$109.5 million across 53 projects
Employment opportunities	1,182
Hours worked	901,248

J4N projects in the Bay of Plenty region are collectively delivering a wide range of social and environmental benefits including:

Employment and skills development: These projects are delivering employment opportunities and skills development across a wide range of initiatives in the region and offering training programmes to upskill unemployed or under-employed individuals.

Ecological restoration and biodiversity conservation: Many projects focus on restoring and conserving native flora and fauna, eradicating invasive species, and protecting significant ecological sites.

Water quality improvement: Several projects aim to improve water quality in various catchments, rivers, and estuaries across the region. This includes efforts to reduce contaminants, implement freshwater management reforms, and restore natural habitats.

Social and cultural benefits: Projects in the region are also working on restoration of significant cultural sites and the strengthening of cultural connections, particularly for the Māori and iwi communities.

Community engagement and capacity building: Many projects aim to build capacity within local communities, particularly among iwi, to actively participate in environmental management and decision-making processes. For example, the Tauria Mahi Bay Conservation Cadets project works closely with iwi, community groups and landowners to give cadets training opportunities and conservation experience.

Sustainable land and water management: The projects promote best land management practices, sustainable agriculture, and the implementation of catchment management plans. They are also helping to improve decision-making roles in collaborative council and community models. Sector insights for the Bay of Plenty.

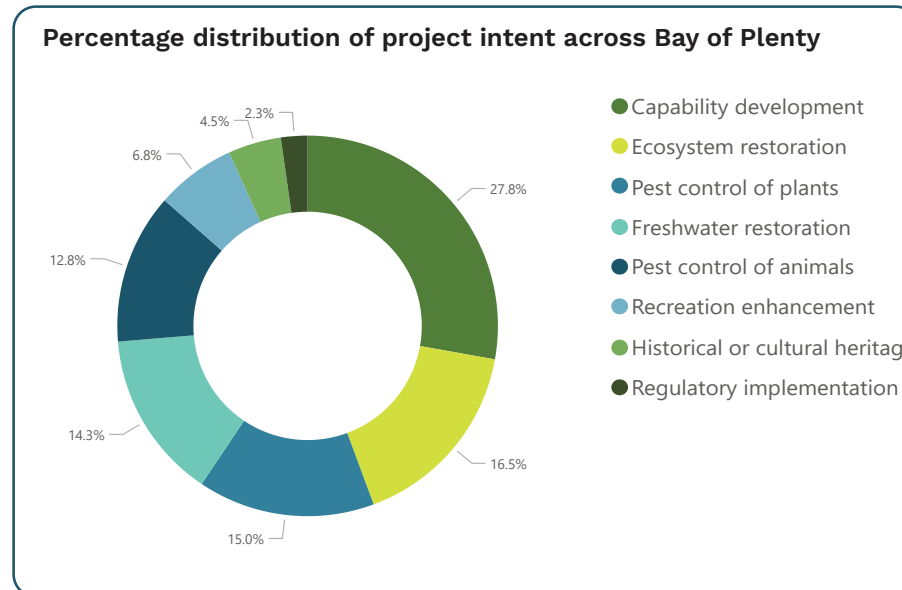
The Regional Skills Leadership Group local insights report for September 2023 noted a current labour market challenge for the region is a shortage in skills that require tertiary training, such as sustainable practice in horticulture. This indicates a need for more specialised education and training in environmental fields.⁷

Overview of labour market participation in the Bay of Plenty region

Labour market	
Working age population ⁸	215,190 (2022)
Participation	68.0%, with an estimated average of 185,700 employed (2023)
Employment rate	64.9% (2023)
Median annual household income	65% (2023)
Unemployment rate	5.8% (2023) NEET RATE 17.2% (2023)

Māori	
Population	29.4% (2018)
Working age population	55,300 (2020)
Labour force participation ⁹	60.4% with 44,900 employed (2023)
Unemployment rate ¹⁰	8.0% (2023)

Pasifika as at March 2020	
Population ¹¹	3.7% (10,926) (2023)
Participation ¹²	66.3% (2023)
Unemployment rate ¹³	4.5% (2023)



Source [Q1 Data as at 30 September 2023]

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