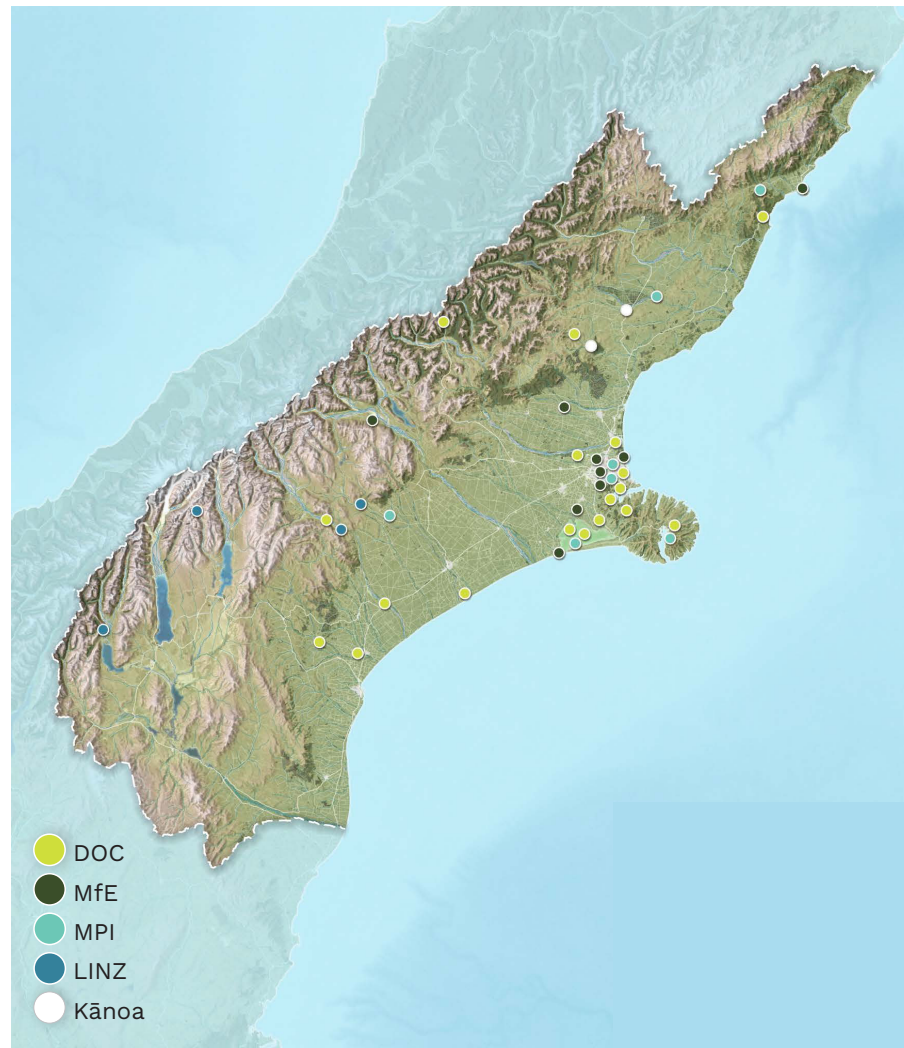


Purpose: To show the Jobs for Nature investment to date in Canterbury and the significance of funding in context of the economic and environmental challenges to the region.



Map sourced from Land Information New Zealand 2023

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

Economic and employment impacts: As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic the region faced several economic and employment impacts. A study found that 29% of participants reported a decrease in their household income, with 18% attributing this decrease to COVID-19. Furthermore, 26% of households had to seek government assistance during this period.¹ Modelling by CNZ economists estimated (as of 5 May 2020) a decrease of -6% to -12% in GDP for the Christchurch economy, and an additional 12,600 to 25,400 job losses in the city for the 2020/21 year.²

The manufacturing sector alone, employing 36,000 people and contributing \$4.1 billion or 11.4% to the region's economy, was predicted to suffer an economic loss of around \$167 million. This was primarily due to a decrease in non-essential manufacturing activities during the lockdowns.³

Tourism: The local tourism sector, which had the third largest spend in the country before the pandemic, was disproportionately struck. 90% of businesses in Canterbury reported a substantial impact from COVID-19 and the associated border closures.⁴

Small businesses, particularly those with 1 to 19 employees, were considered most at risk of COVID-19 related job losses. Compared with the two other major New Zealand population centres, Canterbury has significantly more Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) per residents. Small business employment in the accommodation and food sector in Canterbury accounts for 55% of the industry.⁵

Environmental challenges facing the region⁶

Canterbury is New Zealand's largest region by area, and home to many of the countries braided river ecosystems.

The region faces several significant environmental challenges which require comprehensive and adaptive strategies to mitigate their effects and protect Canterbury's biodiversity, infrastructure, and communities.

Flooding and its impact on biodiversity is a significant issue in the Canterbury region. Floods affect breeding sites of inanga and bird nesting habitats in braided rivers. In 2009, a flood event reduced the population of the nationally vulnerable scree skinks in the Canterbury high country by 84%. It took about eight years for the population to recover naturally.

Climate change is already posing challenges to infrastructure and communities in the Canterbury region, an effect which is likely to increase in the future. Vulnerable communities will be disproportionately affected by climate change and extreme weather events, including communities in vulnerable climatic areas, with limited economic resources, or under-represented in local and central government.

Drought conditions and wildfires: Climate change-induced drought conditions can also increase the risk of wildfires in the Canterbury region. This poses a significant threat to both the natural environment and human settlements.

Groundwater resources: The replenishment of groundwater resources, which is integral to the primary sector, will be affected by changing rainfall and water demand patterns which are likely to vary seasonally and regionally.

How is J4N investment addressing environmental challenges facing the region while creating employment opportunities? Data as at 30 September 2023

Funding	\$105.1 million across 51 projects
Employment opportunities	1,120
Hours worked	1,455,278

Projects in the Canterbury region are collectively delivering a wide range of environmental and social benefits through collaboration between local councils, conservation trusts, and iwi groups. The funded work covers a wide range of areas, from ecosystem restoration, pest control, sustainable agriculture, skills development, and training.

Biodiversity and conservation benefits

Many funded projects in Canterbury aim to restore and conserve ecosystems. This includes projects that control pests, protect native species, and restore native habitats, contributing to biodiversity improvements and healthier ecosystem.

The National Wilding Conifer Control Is a nationwide programme and the largest portion is distributed in the Canterbury region, with a budget of over \$42 million. Projects like the Ellesmere Sustainable Agriculture work towards sustainable farming practices, through riparian planting and fencing of wetland areas and streams.

Skills and training and other social benefits

A number of funded projects provide opportunities for skills development and training. For example, the Ecological Restoration Ōpihi Rock Art Sites project trains local Ngāi

Tahu people to undertake site preparation, planting, and weed control. This contributes to the region's capacity for undertaking environmental management and creates future employment opportunities for people in the region.

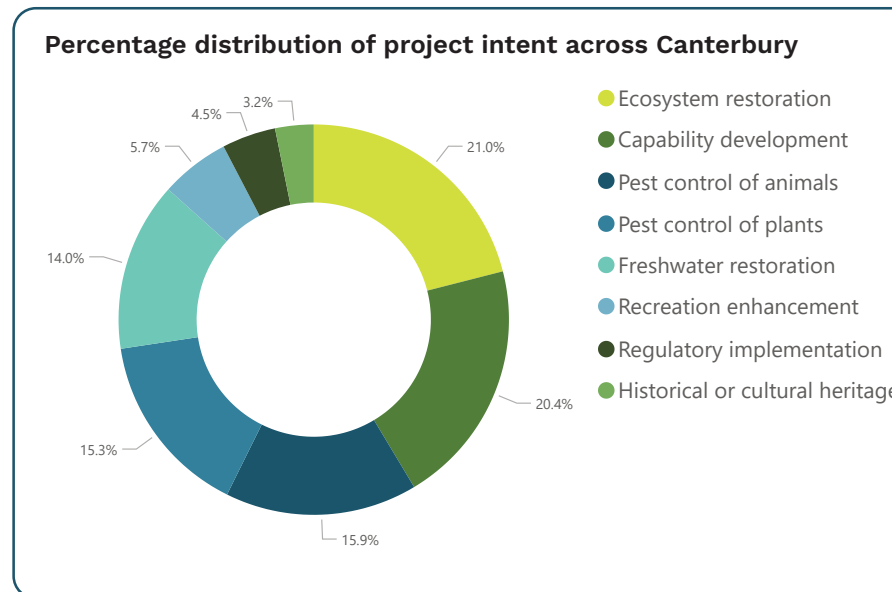
Several projects also have a cultural aspect, such as the Whakaraupo - He Hau Ringa e Oti Ai project which aims to regenerate the ecological and cultural aspects of Lyttleton Harbour.⁷

Overview of labour market participation in the Canterbury region

Labour market	
Working age population ⁸	528,700. 52% aged 25-64 years; 14% aged 15-24 years, 16% aged 65 and over
Participation	72.4% ⁹ as of March 2023
Employment rate	69.7% (as at quarter 2 2023)
Median annual household income	\$77,700 (2018)
Unemployment rate ¹⁰	3.9% (2023) NEET rate: 9.4% (2023)

Māori	
Employment rate	67.9% with 32,000 employed (September 2023)
Unemployment rate ¹¹	5.7% (2023)

Pasifika as at March 2020 ¹²	
Working age population	11,000
Labour force participation	76.6%
Unemployment rate	6.1% (March 2023)



Source [Q1 Data as at 30 September 2023]

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12. Figure.NZ. (n.d.). Unemployment rate of Pacific people in New Zealand. By region, year ended March 2023, % of the labour force.

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