

**MAUNGATAUTARI ECOLOGICAL
ISLAND TRUST
Annual General Meeting
unconfirmed Minutes 22 October 2019**

unconfirmed minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Maungatautari Ecological Island Trust held in Te Manawa o Matariki room at the Don Rowlands Complex, Mighty River Domain at Lake Karāpiro on Tuesday, 22 October 2019 commencing at 6.00m.

- 1 Opening Karakia** – Taiapa Kara;
Mihi Whakatau – Johnson Raumati; and MEIT response – Simon Anderson

- 2 Present**
Poto Davies (co-Chair), Don Scarlet (Acting co-Chair), Aaron Barnsdall, Graham Parker, Maryanne Sambells
Simon Anderson, Steve Cooper, Clare Crickett, Joce Dawkins, Neville Dawkins, Gabrielle Dela Rue, Anne Deulin, George Dingle, Antonia Eames, Ruth Etches, Joyce Fleming, Margaret Gasquoine, Adua Geremia, Ron Guest, Beth Guest, Angela Harris, John Innes, Bryan Jenkin, Nanette Jenkin, Taiapa Kara, Colleen Lecky, Pam Lemming, Helen Lewis, Alan Livingston, Rod Lugton, Rosemary Lugton, Linda McCarter, Nigel McCarter, David Mans, Graham Mayall, Craig Montgomerie, Brent Montgomerie, Robyn Nightingale, Kururangi Paki, Elaine Parkinson, Annie Perkins, Pat Quin, Johnson Raumati, Clare Ravenscroft, Sue Reid, Dan Ritchie, Tony Roxburgh, Sally Sheedy, Neil Smith, Carol Tauroa, Lance Tauroa, Tao Tauroa, Kiri Joy Wallace, Brian Walton, Harry Wilson, Phil Lyons, Sue Dela Rue, Daniel Howie, Nathalia Jellyman, Jessica Meade, Maureen Poole, Daniel Scanlon, Ricki-Lee Scanlon, Ally Tairi, Janelle Ward

- 3 Apologies**
The apologies from
Rahui Papa, Gary Dyet, John Erica, Raewyn Jones, Raewyn Kirkham, James Matthews, Jim Mylchreest, Dylan Newbold, Vaughan Payne Ashley Reid, Bruce Scott, Graham Scott, Dene Sambells, Pam Walton
were accepted.

4 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION OF TRUSTEES

On behalf of the Trust, Acting Co-Chair Don Scarlet welcomed everyone to the 2019 AGM and introduced all current Trustees present at the meeting. He noted that the Trust is currently working through the recruitment process to fill two (2) landowner and one (1) community Trustee vacancies.

He observed that the success of SMM is not about what is said, but what has and is being achieved, and that as an MEIT Board co-Chair he is proud of what the organisation has been able to achieve over the past year and that the presentations will provide a snapshot of some of those achievements.

5 GUEST SPEAKER – JOHN INNES

MEIT CEO Phil Lyons thanked everyone for coming to the AGM and introduced John Innes, Senior Wildlife Ecologist, Manaaki Whenua/Landcare Research, noting that John is a key member of the wider scientific community that support SMM through their knowledge, expertise and research efforts and that John's presentation was recently delivered at the Sanctuaries of New Zealand (SONZ) annual conference.

John acknowledged the mana whenua of Mt Maungatautari and presented a series of short video clips of introduced mammalian predators attacking native bird species including - cat/ruru; hedgehog/banded dotterill eggs, stoat/SI robin; stoat/kiwi; and possum/kiwi. NZ native birds have always been hunted/predated by other birds; but have very limited defences against mammalian predation.

MEIT monitoring data of predator incursions/trapping covering the period 2008-2019 has been compiled and analysed with supporting maps and graphs, to provide a long-term overview of incursion events/rates, noting that:

- rats (tracked/trapped) 80 over 12 years, all caught around the 'edges' of the Maunga (i.e. inside, but close to the perimeter fence).
- weasels are most probably targeting/eating mice
- other species tracked/trapped - hedgehogs (6), cats (1), stoats (2); possums (1); a great result that firstly, so few predators have breached the fence over more than a decade and secondly, they have then been eliminated.
- unfenced sanctuaries have much higher predator populations and issues.
- SMM has a number of significant advantages, it is ring fenced with active pest control and its large size provides sufficient habitat/space to sustain viable populations of bird species e.g. Kokako.

There are a range of eco-sanctuary types/regimes from remote islands, inshore islands, ring fenced, peninsulas and unfenced. The bottom line - there is never zero re-invasion. There is a national goal to have a Predator Free NZ, however the scale of the issue means that funding needs to include a 'new tools' focus.

Key factors that limit NZs bird population are predation, competition, food supply, disease and (shortage of) habitat. There is a complex interaction between these factors. Question - where is the vision to address the loss of suitable habitat?

There is a sanctuaries biodiversity monitoring database, with datasets from 27 sites and the results (graphed) showed that endemic bird species benefit most from predator control. SMM five (5) minute bird count results for Kaka, Tui, Tomtits, Fantail and Silvereye during the period 2002-2017 shows 'winners and losers'. There is competition between species (e.g. Whitehead/Grey Warbler); and the ecosystems are complex. Some work has been done to try and 'unravel' the complexities to enable valid/verifiable measurements to be taken. DOC has biodiversity data from 24 Sanctuaries throughout NZ.

Phil Lyons thanked John Innes and presented him with a gift.

6 RECEIPT OF REPORTS

(i) Minutes of previous (23 October 2018) Annual General meeting

Recommendation

That the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Maungatautari Ecological Island Trust held on 23 October 2018 be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.

Moved Don Scarlet/**Seconded** Maryanne Sambells
Carried

No matters arising identified.

(ii) Co-Chairs' report

Don Scarlet prefaced the co-Chairs' report with a recording of Kokako song from the Maunga and acknowledged:

- that everyone in attendance is an "inspired kaitiaki" aka "investors" of time, energy and passion to contribute in a multitude of ways to the inspirational ecological restoration project that is Sanctuary Mountain Maungatautari (SMM).

- the visionaries and leaders who through their passion and determination established/created this pest free environment for all New Zealanders.

The “assets” include:

- a substantial scale and largely intact old growth native forest covering the volcanic cone that is Maungatautari with its unique cultural history.
- 47 kilometres of predator proof fencing, protecting 3363 hectares of habitat for 15 years, making the Maunga the largest secure inland pest free environment in the world.
- the collaborative partnership between landowners, mana whenua and the community to co-manage the Maunga and the SMM project.
- the talented and dedicated group of people who work in ecological enhancement, guiding, visitor product development, business development and ‘behind the scenes’ to run the project.

The “enablers” include:

- the adjoining landowners and mana whenua.
- the funders comprising local government/government (Waipa DC, Waikato RC and Department of Conservation); philanthropic supporters including Trust Waikato, WEL Energy Trust and DV Bryant Trust; sponsors including Prolife Foods/Mother Earth; and all the Volunteers.

The “dividends” include:

- that SMM is contributing in a practical and material way to building and shaping resilience for the biodiversity of Aotearoa New Zealand.
- since the Sanctuary became pest free the following species have been re-introduced - Western brown Kiwi, South Island Takahe, North Island Kaka, Whitehead, Hihi, Kakariki, North Island Robin, Tieke and North Island Kokako, Giant Kokopu, Banded Kokopu, Tuatara and Mahoenui Giant Weta.
- SMM is a current ‘live’ example of Predator Free NZ that is accessible to all New Zealanders now.
- SMM is a key component in Kiwi for kiwis turning around the loss of kiwi numbers in New Zealand to a two percent per annum growth. There is nowhere else in Zealand that is as secure and as easily accessible to the Rotorua (Rainbow Springs) and now Taupo (Wairakei) hatcheries.
- SMM would provide an accessible secure mainland site for Kakapo. The Kakapo Recovery Group recognise the value of accessibility and a site where research and advocacy goals can be achieved.

- the SMM project and all of its achievements are delivered by a unique partnership between the community, mana whenua and landowners; acknowledging the complexities involved. Co-management is working well for the benefit of the project now and into the future.
- MEIT's management is dedicated, passionate and hard working with an increasingly high-performance team of people delivering results.

(iii) Chief Executive Officer's report

Phil Lyons noted that:

- SMM is a complex operation and an evolving project; and he thanked everyone involved for their hard work, passion and commitment.
- the current extinction crisis is caused almost entirely by humans. SMM is a 'beacon of hope' locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.
- MEIT is in the business of restoration - with a focus on ecological, cultural and people. The Restoration Plan has recently been reviewed and provides a roadmap for the next ten (10) years.

Staff presented/highlighted key achievements from 2018/19 as follows:

Natural Heritage Team

Species Co-ordinator/Ecologist Dr Janelle Ward:

- focus on translocations and species management/protecting the taonga
- the K4K (western brown kiwi) project with 38 kiwis released to date and plans to release 90-100 in the coming year.
- 13 western brown kiwi have been 'returned' to Waimarino
- three Takahe chicks have hatched this year (two in the Tautari wetland and one in the Coopers enclosure)
- a Hihi survey has been undertaken; and
- a Kokako survey has been undertaken and looking to add more birds to improve the genetic biodiversity of the SMM population.

Ranger Dan Howie:

- busy year in the Operations and Natural Heritage teams with all fence breaches and/or other infrastructure callouts responded to within the 90-minute timeframe.
- maintaining the integrity of the perimeter fence is a challenge with components needing replacement due to damage or wear and tear.
- maintenance of the access roads/tracks ongoing with terrain and weather condition challenges.

- ongoing tracking/monitoring and trapping programme in place, plus use of detector dogs to follow up on specific incursion issues.
- a review of the Biosecurity Plan will be undertaken this year.
- all procedures are being reviewed to ensure they are 'fit for purpose' and to make improvements/efficiencies where appropriate, for example reducing the turn-around time on tracking cards, better data keeping and the use of technology (cameras)

Cultural and People

Education and Guide Co-ordinator, Nathalia (Tali) Jellyman:

- thanked everyone for supporting the education programme. Total education visitors for 2018/19 - 4,500 plus.
- there are benefits of teaching and learning in nature.
- the Mother Earth brand has come on-board as a sponsor.

Marketing and Sales Co-ordinator, Jessica Meade:

- visitor numbers increased by nine percent (on the previous year) with an associated increase in revenue and sales.
- there has been a positive tour operator response to promotional efforts.
- there are a number of new products available, being developed and/or trialled including the wellness products (meditation, yoga, forest flow experience), a cultural tour app. due to go live early 2020, a kiwi experience promotion and the introduction of a 'shorter' tour option.
- positive online reviews are being received.

CEO Phil Lyons:

- outcomes are delivered by the whole team
- actively exploring/working on the strategic objectives "eco-tourism destination" and "productive partnerships"
- working with Arataki Cultural tours to implement an app to tell the mana whenua stories of the Maunga. Aim to be available in the Southern Enclosure in early 2020.
- have built a relationship with Te Puni Kokiri to create cadetship employment opportunities.
- the number of Education programme participants is increasing.
- over 17,000 people visited SMM in 2018 and looking to grow that by 10 percent annually.

- there is growing evidence of the benefits to people's mental and physical wellbeing from reconnecting with nature. The wellness events (mentioned by Jessica) have been very popular.
- Volunteers are the backbone of the project and we could not deliver a fraction of what is being done without their dedication and commitment.
- positive relationships are critical to the success of the project. MEIT is supported via expert advice, funding (grants and sponsorship), partnerships, government and local government agencies and private companies/enterprises, its Trustees and co-Chairs, its Committees and the team of staff, contractors and volunteers.
- MEIT's fourth Strategic Objective is to be a "viable enterprise". The approval of multi-year funding grants from organisations including Waikato RC, Waipa DC, Trust Waikato, WEL Energy and DOC greatly assist cashflow management to "run the business".
- securing capital funding is also critical to develop visitor and revenue growth opportunities. A decision is currently awaited (due early December 2019) on a funding application for the Education Centre from the Lotteries Commission. MBIE has approved funding towards the new carpark project (work due to commence in November 2019).
- reviews of all operational facets of the business have been undertaken, to identify/make improvements in processes/practices, for H&S and to support asset/infrastructure management and maintenance planning.
- staff and volunteers play a critical role and having good business practices assists with community engagement, retention and recruitment and succession planning.
- the viable enterprise objective will also be supported by the reporting on outcomes against the UN Sustainable Development goals from 2020.
- term loan debt will be paid off/cleared in full during 2019/20.
- the Kakapo Recovery Group is considering the potential of SMM for Kakapo with a draft MOU from DOC received.
- a 'beyond the fence' restoration/biodiversity proposal is, in collaboration with other partners, to create an ecological corridor between/to link the Maunga and Mt Pirongia.

Arising out of questions and responses, it was noted that:

Q: queried whether the building of the Education Centre (for example) would be at the expense of maintaining the integrity of perimeter fence. Without the fence there is no SMM as a predator free and biodiverse ecosystem.

A: a fence condition assessment/audit has been completed together with an inspection to develop an asset maintenance plan to schedule the works required and ensure the resources (people/funding) are available. As highlighted in the presentations the Maunga is going from strength to strength in terms of restoration efforts, biodiversity and species management.

Q: concerns raised about the impacts of the ongoing closure of access to the Northern Enclosure and what is happening?

A: advised that Waipa DC and the landowners are working to find/agree a resolution to the closure situation. The impacts on MEIT operations activities and staff/contractor/volunteer access, along with the public are acknowledged.

Q: queried whether any consideration has or is being given to the role and use of drones on the Maunga?

A: MEIT is keen to keep abreast of technology across the board, and the potential for the use of drones to support a range of tasks/activities on the Maunga.

(iv) Financial Report

In addition to the points already covered with respect to multi-year funding, asset management, repayment of term loan debt and FAR Committee cashflow forecasting and challenges CEO Phil Lyons noted:

- there has been positive growth in revenue from facility fees (up 11 percent), guiding income (up 35 percent) and funding and grants (up 8.5 percent). Donations were down by 54.5 percent on the previous year when significant contributions were received towards a couple of specific projects (the new entrance and the radio mast).
- a review of internal cost centres has resulted in a reduction in administration expense and a shift to apply those savings to field and operational activities.
- people are a critical asset, the right people with the right skills. SMM is a seven day, 364 and 24/7 operation.

MEIT's Annual Report, including the end of year audited financial reports are available on the SMM website and the email link can be provided.

Recommendation

That the Co-Chairs' report; Chief Executive Officer's report, the Annual Report 2018/19 and the Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2019 be received, and that the Financial Report (refer Annual Report 2018/19) as presented be accepted.

Moved Maryanne Sambells/**Seconded** Graham Parker
Carried

7 APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR for the 2019-20 year

Recommendation

In accordance with Clause 14.2(g) of the MEIT Trust Deed that Stephen Nelley of Anderson Accounting be appointed as MEIT's Audit for the 2019/20 financial year.

Moved Graham Parker/**Seconded** Don Scarlet
Carried

8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS (and presentations)

(i) Kaituuao – thank you to departed Trustee
Co-Chair Poto Davies acknowledged the hard work and contributions made by Trustees, and in particular to Melissa Sinton who resigned in May 2019. Melissa served MEIT with energy and commitment in a variety of roles - landowner Trustee (from 2015), co-Chair, Sanctuary Manager and Acting General Manager. A gift as a token of appreciation will be presented to Melissa.

(ii) Te Kootuku Rerenga Tahī – honouring longstanding exceptional volunteering service.

In speaking to the nomination of Robyn Nightingale for the White Heron Award, Don Scarlet on behalf of the Trust, staff and volunteers, acknowledged Robyn's mana whenua connection to the Maunga and thanked her for her considerable 'inspired kaitiaki' contribution to MEIT/SMM - including nine years as a Trustee, her active involvement in the Scientific & Technical Advisory Panel (and its predecessor Committees).

Robyn is a passionate voice for wildlife taonga and has worked tirelessly to build relationships with other iwi groups and develop MoUs that have assisted to guide the SMM through the tikanga of species translocations and she provided input to research proposals. Robyn brought a wide network of connections and relationships to SMM's natural heritage endeavours and tenaciously delivered on commitments and obligations. Robyn brought a breadth of knowledge and strategic outlook to the Board table and also made sure that the finer details were not overlooked.

In response Robyn acknowledged the recognition/award bestowed and noted that we are all standing on "tall shoulders" thanks to the vision and commitment of David Wallace and others to build the predator proof fence and thereby create the sanctuary. Also, thanks to Doug Arcus for guiding MEIT through/into co-governance and as a co-managed project - on these wings I have been carried. Robyn acknowledged the efforts of everyone involved in working through tikanga to successfully bring species like the western brown kiwi and the giant weta back to the Maunga. Robyn acknowledged the input and contribution of people like Graham Scott and David Coy (financial), the 'behind the scenes' staff, contractors and volunteers and the support from Ngati Koroki Kahukura.

- (iii) Volunteer long-service acknowledgements
CEO Phil Lyons on behalf of MEIT acknowledged the many years of dedication/commitment to the project of the following volunteers:
Neville Dawkins, Ruth Etches, Beth Guest, Ron Guest, Colleen Lecky, Pam Lemming, Graham Mayhall, Nigel McCarter, Dylan Newbold, Omundsen Family (Neil, Tania, Jake and Ethan), Pat Quin, Don Ritchie, Heidi Wheatley, Bruce Scott, Tarrant Family (Dylan, Cliff, Izzak, Ruby and Andrew), Pam Walton

MEIT Waiata - everyone

Closing Karakia and blessing of the kai - Taiapa Kara

Meeting closed 8.40pm