

Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust (MTSCT)

Annual Report 2022



Message from our chairperson

Kia ora koutou,

It is a real privilege to be the Trust's Chair and be able to highlight the extraordinary amount of work carried out by the Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust's team over the last 12 months. It is also daunting as there have been so many achievements. Over 9,000 native riparian plants were planted, nearly 3kms of riparian habitat restored and over 12,500 people engaged in freshwater experiential education, including 69 schools. What also stands out was that the team adopted 35 new whitebait spawning habitats and inspired 105 action projects. Over 5,600 students had snorkel experiences, over 4,900 people experienced a marine reserve or rāhui and got to see first-hand the benefits of marine protection, and a whopping 9,713 people have been taken snorkelling. The EMR team should be incredibly proud to have reached over 17,600 people.

These achievements are even more impressive given the COVID-19 pandemic has continued to disrupt operations over the last 12 months. The number of events and people the Whitebait Connection (WBC) and Experiencing Marine Reserves (EMR) teams have worked with over the last 12 months is impressive, but what also stands out is the Trust's Health and Safety record engaging with that many people. I need to acknowledge the significant amount of work our Co-Director Samara Nicholas does on this behind the scenes, and the skills of our contractors across the country.

I would also like to acknowledge the great news we received this year, the confirmation of up to \$18 million dollars from the Ministry for the Environment as part of the Essential Freshwater Fund for the Wai Connection project. The late nights and serious mahi has paid off. Our Co-Director, Kim Jones played a significant role in this, and we are so proud of Kim and the team. This is a huge opportunity for the Trust, not only the partnerships that will be formed, the work delivered, but the outcomes for nature, our freshwater life-supporting systems across Aotearoa.

While the Trust still has some work to do to achieve long-term sustainability, the support the Trust has received from our amazing supporters over the last 12 months has enabled us to expand our reach. Thanks to The Department of Conservation, Ministry for the Environment's Freshwater Improvement Fund and Fonterra for supporting the Northland Inanga Spawning Habitat Restoration Project and to Foundation North for continuing to support our core delivery in Northland and Auckland. Auckland Council are also a major supporter for our work in Auckland through projects such as the regional whitebait habitat restoration project. These are great achievements. This year we have also been able to recruit an Administrator Holly, thank you for the great mahi that you do that makes all our jobs that much easier!

The Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust has always had a big vision and the WBC and EMR programmes continue to inspire not only the next generation of leaders, our tamariki, but everyday New Zealanders. The achievements over the last 12 months are making a real difference out there in terms of freshwater and marine conservation education and are a testament to both our Poutokomanawa/Co-directors, Kim and Samara and the teams across Aotearoa. I would love to acknowledge everyone in the teams and the significant amount of work they do.

I had the privilege of joining this year's annual EMR Poor Knights 'action competition winners' trip, which includes students, parents, teachers, and some of our Trust funders from around the country. Experiencing some of these students' reactions to snorkelling at the Poor Knights was incredible, this is a once in a lifetime experience for all involved.

Our Board of Trustees have had a busy year. We have a significant opportunity for the Trust to grow, but this will come with some challenges. These will need to be navigated with care and attention to detail. However, I am confident the Board can support our Poutokomanawa/Co-directors to achieve this.

Noho ora mai

Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust Chairperson – Katrina Goddard



Governance and Executive Leadership Team

Trustees

Katrina Goddard - Marine Science and Policy Portfolio (Chairperson)
Jean-Louis Ecochard - Marketing Portfolio (Secretary/Deputy Chair)
Sheila Taylor - Business and Financial portfolio (Treasurer)
Matt Keene - Communications portfolio
Dr. Olivier Ball - Science portfolio
Arla Kerr - Legal portfolio
Manuel Springford – Te Waha Māori portfolio
Hilton Leith – Business portfolio
Geoff Butturini – Health and Safety portfolio

Advisor

Vince Kerr - marine science and advocacy

Poutokomanawa - Co-Directors

Samara Nicholas - MNZM, Experiencing Marine Reserves (EMR) founder and national lead
Kim Jones - Whitebait Connection (WBC) national lead, Drains to Harbour (DTH) and National Inanga Spawning Project (NISP) 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 rā rangatira ♥



Experiencing Marine Reserves (EMR) - Te Kura Moana Northland/Auckland



We took 4,717 people snorkelling and delivered 40 community guided snorkel, kayak and SUP events across Auckland and Northland. The most popular event was the Torbay Snorkel Day in January in partnership with Para Kore Ki Tāmaki (PKKT) and Whitebait Connection (WBC) with over 150 attendees. This site is one of the more accessible snorkel locations for Aucklanders and often attracts first time snorkellers and swimmers. Water safety messages are a big focus for this event and by collaborating with PKKT and WBC we could host land based activities like freshwater monitoring and raranga workshops, thus providing a more holistic conservation experience for participants. In Auckland the team hosted a record breaking 27 events throughout a condensed season with several new kayaking locations added. Even though participant numbers were down per event for both Northland and Auckland, people who did attend

were extremely appreciative of the experiences provided and gave very positive feedback.

Together Auckland and Northland managed to deliver 12 full programmes and 20 casual snorkel experiences throughout the season, with the addition of kayaking for some Auckland school programmes for locations where snorkelling is not possible. With Auckland having no term 4 due to lockdown restrictions and Northland schools being very apprehensive to have outside educators during early COVID waves it was a challenging season, however coordinators and volunteers showed impressive adaptability and perseverance throughout. We also continue to receive media coverage, including a feature on [News Hub](#)



Tāmaki River Kayak Day participant getting ready to launch

Whitebait Connection (WBC) Northland/Auckland

WBC engaged with a total of 8,746 people across Northland and Auckland during the 2021-22 season, 7,770 of which were students, parents and staff participating in 44 WBC school programmes. 976 people from the community were engaged in 28 planting days, survey work and community engagement events. A total of 74 action projects were undertaken by students, community groups and WBC, including the planting of 8,309 native plants along waterways, identification of 35 new inanga spawning sites, and 14 records uploaded to the NZ Freshwater Fish Database. We started a three-year collaborative region-wide inanga spawning habitat restoration project in Northland and developed a data collection hub with apps to help with habitat restoration prioritisation.



Kristin School at Lucas Creek tributary



Marine monitoring and advocacy

MTSCT and EMR continue to work closely with Te Whanau Moana me te Rorohuri to support the Maitai Bay rāhui that was established in late 2017. The rāhui aims to restore marine life, the bays' tapu and mana, and to implement a sustainability plan for future generations.

A monitoring programme for the rāhui was started, by MTSCT with support from the hapū, to document the restoration progress. 2022 marks the 5th year of the rāhui being in place and the corresponding annual monitoring. The program has been successful in following species abundance and diversity as part of the long-term monitoring strategy. Three survey methods have been used each year to keep track of these changes with fairly consistent and positive results to date. Two new surveys were also trialled this year to broaden the scope of the monitoring and restoration initiative. One of these included a pilot project to aid kelp regeneration by addressing kina barren areas within the rāhui. MTSCT are also currently helping Te Whanau Moana me te Rorohuri create a website for the Maitai Bay Rāhui.

Celebrating Seaweek

- *Te Ika o te Tau (Fish of the Year)*

Seaweek - Kaupapa Moana took place in the second week of March with many events nationwide celebrating our ocean. Like every year, EMR has contributed significantly to the success of Seaweek.

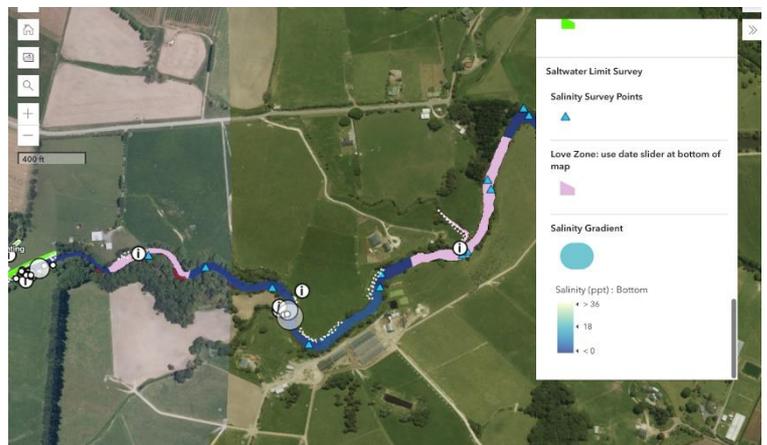
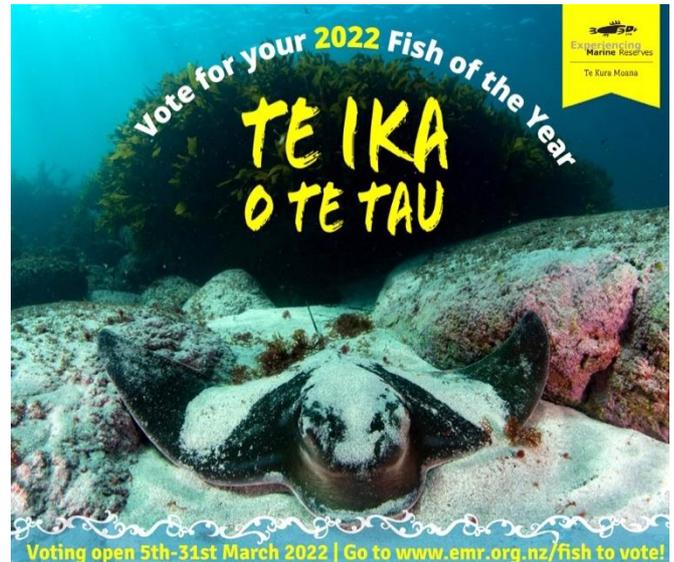
This summer we offered the second 'Fish of the Year' competition. Whai repo won two years in a row! We included an introduced fish to create awareness of the difference between endemic, native and introduced.

He Kākano

The He Kākano community native plant nursery in Whangārei continues to produce approximately 10,000 plants annually for riparian restoration projects around the Whangārei Harbour and the Ruakākā catchment. The nursery has also been utilised to host a number of nursery workshops for local schools and community groups.

Northland Inanga Spawning Habitat Restoration Project

Through this Freshwater Improvement Fund project our Northland team and collaborators have undertaken 54 Saltwater Wedge Surveys, 45 Habitat Assessments, 41 Spawning Activity Surveys and 47 new spawning zones have been found. Just shy of 600m of fencing has gone in to protect spawning zones from cattle. 4,200 natives were planted along Ruakākā River's spawning zones. 1 ha of pest plant and animal control has been undertaken along the Ruakākā River's spawning zone. The project is well on track. Demand is high from areas outside of the project scope, so we are actively seeking ways to meet increased demand. The ArcGIS Online data collector apps and hub are working well.



National Outcomes

Our Mountains to Sea (MTS) programmes have continued to achieve 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 2021 - 2022 season. A full breakdown of national outcomes for both the WBC and EMR programmes can be viewed on pages 12-15.

In summary, since 2001 our WBC programme has resulted in 131,599 trees being planted along 54.87km of riparian habitat, with a total programme reach of 119,920 people, and 141 inanga spawning habitats identified and adopted. EMR has taken 87,112 people into NZ's marine reserves and over 30,790 people have been engaged in EMR organised marine conservation events. A total of 157,618 people have snorkelled with EMR. The total number of Kiwis engaged in EMR has now reached 225,174 .

Collectively, over 283,150 hours of volunteer time valued at over \$7,000,000 (valued at living wage) have been contributed to our MTS programmes thanks to the constant support of short and long-term volunteers.

Highlights

This year we celebrated many big picture outcomes, here's a few of them!

- Continuation and expansion of our Mountains to Sea programmes in ten different regions including: Northland, Auckland, Tairāwhiti Gisborne, Coromandel, Wellington, Nelson, Tasman, Canterbury, Taranaki and Rakiura.
- Our [21st annual Poor Knights competition trip](#) took place in May and included students from as far north as Kerikeri and as far south as Otago. Since 2002, we have taken representatives from 373 schools, totalling 531 students on this annual trip!
- 'Year Two' of the NZWaterCitizens.co.nz project thanks to funding from the DOC Community Fund. 20 trainers from all around Aotearoa have been trained and have worked with community groups to achieve robust citizen science based freshwater monitoring and restoration.
- Supporting our new EMR and WBC cadets in their roles in Northland and Auckland. Patricia Clark our 2021 WBC cadet graduated to a fully endorsed lead programme coordinator and is now delivering WBC in Northland and Auckland. EMR continues to develop a rangatahi mentorship programme for taitamariki/rangatahi who have an affinity for the moana to engage in our kaupapa through mentorship programmes and volunteer development, which is also supporting a career pathway.
- As of 2022 the Love Rimurimu – Restoration project, led by Mountains to Sea Wellington has now entered the planting phase. The project aims to transplant the first lab-grown seaweeds into the marine farm by mid-July.
- Inspiring action for the environment - Action projects galore including marine biodiversity monitoring, , riparian planting and weed control, inanga spawning monitoring, community beach clean ups to name a few! Jade Gutsell from Caitlins School in Otago took inspiring action by gaining a scholarship from the Department of Conservation to study the effects of sedimentation on her local catchment. She compiled a video submission on her sedimentation study and she was picked as one of Otago's representatives for the Poor Knights Competition Trip. Her video is found here: <https://www.facebook.com/emr.mtsct/videos/874514807274506>
- Supporting Patuharakeke kaitiaki with their water quality and biodiversity monitoring projects in their rohe at Takahiwai and working together to achieve community engagement and freshwater improvement outcomes on the Ruakākā River.



Challenges

The biggest challenge the Trust currently faces is meeting the demand for our services whilst growing in a sustainable way that continues to serve our people and environment in the best possible way without losing our uniqueness. We must ensure strong infrastructure and processes are in place to support national growth and a regional approach that offers tailored solutions at place. 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

"The kids confidence and snorkelling skills in the water blossomed over the duration of the experience and was amazing to witness. Their excitement at seeing a living marine environment made the learning incredibly enjoyable"

- Lisa Fletcher, Ohaewhai Primary School

"Now I have seen this role model ecosystem that we can look up to and help develop, other ocean ecosystems can rise up to the same level and help our water wildlife thrive."

- Xinlai Zhang, Meadowbank School student (Auckland)

"Incredibly nourishing for the soul! Loved the knowledgeable helpers and the beautiful Te Atatu Māori focus. Beautiful!" - Wikitoria Maihi, Whau Paddle Day participant (Auckland)

I really enjoyed seeing the snapper and getting into the cave. Before hopping in I was excited and curious. I'm a little bit sad now that today is nearly over. Going to places like this makes me want to take care of our beach at home. It's really murky there, and there's no fish, but here you can see heaps! We need more filter feeders and to plant more trees at home to make it better." - Charlise Neilson, Ōrākei School student (Auckland)

"I was blown away with how engaged our ākonga were in this programme, they were so curious and asked lots of questions during and after every session. It was also great to see all their whānau come onboard and participate in the programme as well"

- Roimata Manaia, Ōrākei School Rumaki Kaiako (Auckland)

"The SUP excursion gave whānau the opportunity to be in nature and in particular the wetlands to experience the tranquillity, beauty and splendour as mana moana, whānau who have an indelible connection to Te Matuku, both the bay and the manu. Learning about the habitat and ecosystem, smelling and sensing her mauri and coming away with a more vivid and connected appreciation of our interconnectedness. He tuku mihi tēnei ki te whānui e hapai ana tēnei kaupapa, ngā ringawera koutou katoa. No mātou ngā uri Ngāti Paoa, o ngā hapū o Waiheke kē te waimarie." - Lucy Tukua, Mana Whenua Te Matuku Paddle Day participant (Auckland)



WGHS students after completing their Reotahi survey



Meadowbank students exploring Goat Island Marine Reserve



"I really enjoyed going out and doing all the water testing and comparing the two streams. It is so interesting to me and it's so important to learn this. It was really well organized. Thank you so much. We had lots of fun and are looking forward to working with the programme next year"

- Northland College Teacher

"I really enjoyed watching the students engage in their learning and their inquisitiveness into investigating local waters as well as seeing how much the tamariki retained from their learning experiences. Even though we translated a lot of the information into Te Reo Māori, it would be great to see components of it in Māori as well. Thank you for allowing Te Kura o Matihetihe to participate"

- Te Kura o Matihetihe Kaiako/Teacher

"I really enjoyed the interactive nature of the lessons, children were always engaged with Briar and the material she shared. The knowledge was basic enough for them to comprehend and discuss. The lessons were all well connected and flowed. The trip gave the children an opportunity to apply their knowledge and look at a waterway in their local community. The eel soft toys and tog activity collecting rubbish from a fake water body were a massive hit!"

- Mairangi Bay Teacher

"I'm a dairy farmer in Waipu and I went to the Whitebait Connection field day on Thursday down at the Langs Beach River with Nick and Patricia and I just wanted to say what a wonderful job they did and how I enjoyed it very much and the lessons most certainly weren't lost on me, I think the kids enjoyed it too. I've spotted a fish in one of my rivers which I've never seen before and I'd like to identify it. There's a lot I could do with my rivers and I found your team's support to be very well done. I just wanted to pass that on, thank you"

- Landowner/parent of student on field trip

"Great to connect with Whitebait Connection and have our students interact with experts in the field - the classes and sessions they did were really interesting and engaging - Great to get them outside and out of the classroom"

- Teacher (Auckland)

"[Kim] I'd like to thank you and Pat for sharing your knowledge and skills with our community it meant a lot to us to know our bathing awa is in good health, and has enabled us to check stream health ourselves, Also giving us a benchmark to get our other back to. Look forward to seeing you again in the coming month at the water hui, fill you in on what we may find in the coming weeks and how all our environmental efforts are going"

- WBC Northland SHMAK Training participant (2022)



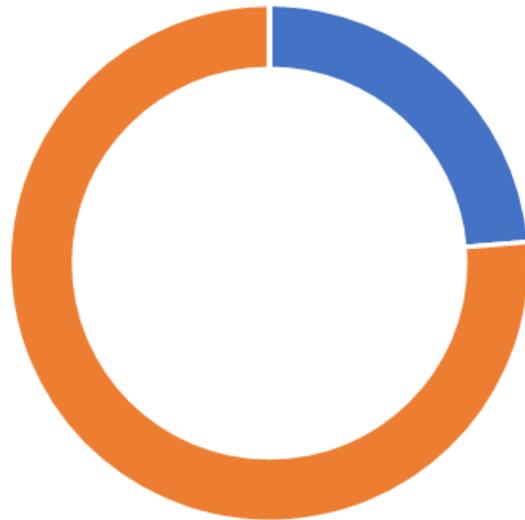
Attendees at an inanga spawning site planting day. Image: Ari Carrington.



Financials

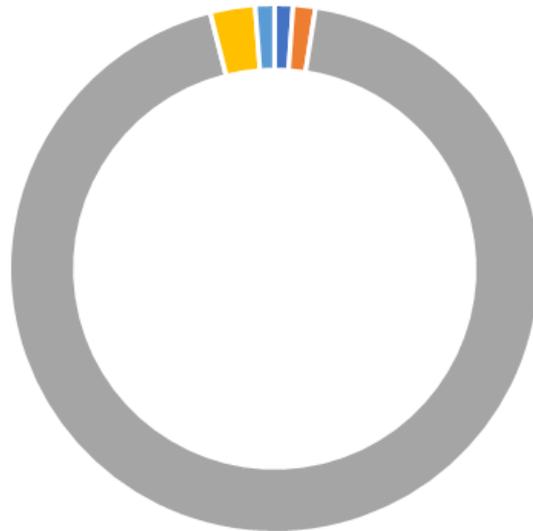
Income year end 31 March 2022

- Donations, Fundraising & Grants
- Revenue from Providing Goods & Services
- Interest, dividends and other investment revenue



Expenses year end 31 March 2022

- Expenses Related to Public Fundraising
- Volunteer Related Costs
- Costs Related to Providing Goods & Services including Consultancy Costs
- Administration & Overheads
- Depreciation & Impairment



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



WBC National statistics since 2001

131,599



native seedlings
planted

54.87 km



riparian habitat
restored

119,920



people reached
by WBC

93,972



hours of volunteer
time

141



whitebait spawning
habitats adopted

859



WBC inspired
action projects

5715



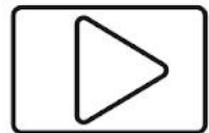
m3 riparian rubbish
removed

1869



school programmes
delivered

275



printed media
articles

National Overview

2021-2022

9,129



native seedlings
planted

2.85 km



riparian habitat
restored

12,509



people reached
by WBC

2,860



hours of volunteer
time

35



whitebait spawning
habitats adopted

105



WBC inspired
action projects

1



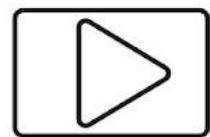
m3 riparian rubbish
removed

69



school programmes
delivered

11



printed media
articles

"This is an amazing learning experience for the students. The facilitators are excellent at working with kids and empowering them to be observant and think like scientists as well as consider the social and cultural aspects of our waterways." - Purua School Principal

"I feel very excited about all of the knowledge i have since starting this amazing programme. Knowing that all the creatures need help is more exciting for me to try and help in any sort of way i can" - Student from Titahi Bay North School

"I learnt that you can establish the health status of a stream, through river and stream tests such as alkaline and phosphorus tests, as well as identifying weeds and animals that live in the water." - Student from Kristin School

EMR Statistics since 2001

NATIONAL

108,417



snorkel experiences
for students

225,174



people reached by
EMR

\$4,312,603



worth of volunteer
hours at living
wage

189,178



hours of volunteer
time

87,112



people experienced a
marine reserve
or rāhui

157,618



people taken
snorkelling

62,833



snorkel experiences
for students

136,982



people reached by
EMR

\$2,982,664



worth of volunteer
hours at living
wage

130,872



hours of volunteer
time

55,865



people experienced a
marine reserve
or rāhui

94,180



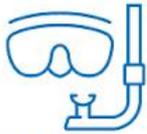
people taken
snorkelling

NORTHLAND & AUCKLAND

EMR 2021 - 2022 Overview

NATIONAL

5,623



snorkel experiences
for students

17,680



people reached by
EMR

\$168,816



worth of volunteer
hours at living
wage

7,034



hours of volunteer
time

4,918



people experienced a
marine reserve
or rāhui

9,713



people taken
snorkelling

2,329



snorkel experiences
for students

9,467



people reached by
EMR

\$102,288



worth of volunteer
hours at living
wage

4,262



hours of volunteer
time

2,608



people experienced a
marine reserve
or rāhui

4,717



people taken
snorkelling

NORTHLAND & AUCKLAND

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SUPPORTERS

Funding: Tindall Foundation, Foundation North, Bobby Stafford-Bush Foundation, Department of Conservation (DOC) Whangārei, Whangārei District Council, Lotteries Community, Lotteries (COGS), Whangarei Harbour Catchment Group, Kaipara District Council, Fonterra, Lion Foundation, Pacific Development and Conservation Trust, Auckland Council and local boards, Tu Manawa Active Aotearoa, Takapuna Business Association, Fortuna Foundation, Auckland Activation Fund (Auckland Unlimited), Wettle Wetsuits and Spearfishing, Far North District Council, Northland Regional Council, Fonterra, Reeve Davies and Associates, Seaweeek, Ministry for the Environment, DOC Community Fund, COMET, WWF, SouthSci, Digital Charity Art

Sponsorship: MTF Finance Whangārei, 2plus, Fullers 360, Hauraki Gulf Forum, Uru Whakaaro, Waiheke Marine Project, Goodbye Sandfly & Dive Tutukaka!

Partnerships: Dive! Tutukaka, DOC Whangārei, Para Kore ki Tamaki, DOC, SeaLife Trust, Fullers 360, Northland Community Foundation, Auckland Council and local boards, Wai Care, National Advisory Group for Freshwater Citizen Science, Te Rangi i Taiawhiaotia Trust, Fish Forever, Seaweeek, Patuharakeke te Iwi Trust Board, Whirinaki Trust, Auckland Sea Kayaks

Regional providers:

EOS Ecology, He Awa Ora, He Tai Ora, Healthy Rivers, Living Sea Education Trust, Tasman Bay Guardians, Friends of Te-Whanganui-A Hei Marine Reserve Trust, Mountains to Sea Wellington, Nga Motu Marine Reserve Society, Te Kaahui o Rauru

Collaborations: Learning Journeys, EcoQuest, Te Aho Tū Roa, Enviroschools, NRC, Community Waitakere, Patuharakeke Te Iwi 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, Snells Beach Residents and Ratepayers Association, Sustainable Coastlines, Whangateau Harbourcare, NIWA, Whananaki Community Led Development Group (Te Whana O Te Nanakia Trust), 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,, Ngati Kuri, New Zealand Underwater Association (NZUA), Ngati manu/Karetu Marae Committee, NZAEE, Auckland freediving club, Auckland Sea Shuttles, Auckland University Dive Club, Auckland Zoo, Charlie's Birds, Dolphin Underwater Club, Friends of Kurt Brehmer Walkway, Friends of Te Auaunga (Oakley) Creek, Friends of the Farm, HIWA Ltd, Kaipātiki Project, Leigh Marine Lab, Long Bay Okura Great Parks Society, Mission Bay Watersports, Motutapu Outdoor Education Centre, Nga Kaitiaki Hapori o Pourewa, Noises Trust, Ōtāhuhu Māori Wardens, Pest Free Kaipātiki, Poi Yeah, Rakino Ratepayers Association, Rotoroa Trust, SUP Waiheke, Tāwharanui Open Sanctuary -Society Incorporated Te Koru Trust, Te Whau Pathway Trust, Urban Ark, Waiheke Dive, Waiheke Marine Project, Waiheke Resources Trust, Whangateau Holiday Park, Whau River Catchment Trust, Wildlife Shaun, Matapouri Holiday Units, Schnappa Rock, I Have a Dream, Freedive Aotearoa

Thank you to the Ferrier family for supporting the MTSCXmas function.

Accountant: Bennett Associates

Auditor: Orbit Audit

Lawyer: Henderson Reeves Lawyers

Ways to support our work:

- *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*



mountainstosea.org.nz emr.org.nz whitebaitconnection.co.nz waiconnection.nz