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## Media Release

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# TIA dismayed at DOC funding cuts

Tourism Industry Aotearoa is dismayed by a significant cut in Department of Conservation funding in yesterday's Budget.

The detailed Budget appropriation papers for 'Vote Conservation' show that DOC's core operating budget for 2016/17 is \$344.808 million – down almost 9% on last year's figure of \$378.606 million.

The total appropriation, including non-departmental expenses and capital expenditure, has also been cut by 9%, from \$471.932 million to \$430.190 million.

"DOC has two core functions. The first is protecting our natural heritage – our indigenous species and the habitats and ecosystems that support them. The second is facilitating recreation and tourism, so that New Zealanders and our visitors are enriched by outdoor experiences," TIA Chief Executive Chris Roberts says.

"Both goals are being severely handicapped by a lack of Government funding."

Management of Natural Heritage – protecting species and habitats - is slashed from \$187.877 million to \$160.639 million, a reduction of 14%.

Management of Recreational Opportunities – the provision of huts, tracks and other facilities – is cut from \$148.346 million to \$143.345 million, a 3% cut.

While funding for one-off projects like removing wilding pines is welcome, what DOC needs is a permanent budget that allows it to do its job properly, Mr Roberts says.

"The tourism industry makes a significant financial contribution to DOC through concession payments and corporate sponsorship to support its vital work protecting species and habitats.

"Before we start talking about taxing visitors to fund conservation, we need the Government to properly meet its obligations."

Mr Roberts notes that one area that has been boosted in Vote Conservation is policy advice and services to Ministers, which has been increased from \$12.287 million to \$12.925 million.

In other Budget announcements, TIA welcomed a two-year trial to streamline border processing for low-risk travellers.

### TOURISM INDUSTRY AOTEAROA

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A key theme of the [Tourism 2025](#) growth framework is to facilitate travel, making it easier for our visitors to come here and thereby helping to reach the industry's goal of growing total tourism revenue to \$41 billion by 2025.

"While we acknowledge the importance of protecting New Zealand's biosecurity, this trial, targeting low-risk regular trans-Tasman travellers, is a step in the right direction," Mr Roberts says.

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## KEY FACTS

- Tourism in New Zealand is an \$81.6 million per day industry. Tourism delivers around \$32 million in foreign exchange to the New Zealand economy each day of the year. Domestic tourism contributes another \$49 million in economic activity every day
- Tourism is one of New Zealand's biggest export industries, earning \$11.8 billion or 17.4% of New Zealand's foreign exchange earnings (year ended March 2015)
- 12.1% of the total number of people employed in New Zealand work directly or indirectly in tourism. That means 295,908 people are working in the visitor economy
- The [Tourism 2025](#) growth framework has a goal of growing total tourism revenue to \$41 billion a year by 2025.

Visit [www.tia.org.nz](http://www.tia.org.nz) for more information

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