



BRIEFING TO THE INCOMING MINISTERS OF CONSERVATION AND HUNTING AND FISHING

**NEW ZEALAND GAME
ANIMAL COUNCIL**

NOVEMBER 2023



Game Animal Council
NEW ZEALAND

THE GAME ANIMAL MANAGEMENT OPPORTUNITY

Game animals have a complex history in New Zealand and are viewed variously as an asset for tourism; a recreational sport resource; a food source for many communities; a pest to be controlled or eradicated; wild animals to be managed; valued introduced species; the basis of a wild venison export industry; a part of the farmed livestock industry; and a resource for industries based on professional guiding.

The various values attributed to New Zealand's game animals have led to a history of conflict and division when it comes to their management. However, the next few years provides the opportunity to move past this and secure a sustainable future for game animals and hunting in New Zealand while improving outcomes for indigenous species. This challenge is concisely articulated in Te Mana o te Taiao Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy 2020 (ANZBS):

Reaching a balance to ensure that valued introduced species continue to provide the benefits they are valued for, while also ensuring that indigenous biodiversity thrives, is a key challenge for Aotearoa New Zealand.

The Game Animal Council (GAC) firmly believes this balance can be achieved by embracing and investing in modern management principles and practices. These principles and practices are provided for in the Te Ara ki Mua Wild Animal Management Framework that, in partnership with whānau, hapū, and iwi, the GAC and Department of Conservation (DOC) will implement.



KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

In March 2023 the GAC coordinated a briefing from the New Zealand hunting sector to key stakeholders on the issue of game animal management, being as it is the number one issue of interest with regards to game animals and hunting. Included in that briefing were the following key recommendations:

- Support and uphold the implementation of Te Mana o te Taiao Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy 2020 (ANZBS) and continue to resource and implement the Te Ara ki Mua game animal management framework appropriately.
- Commit to supporting and resourcing community-led game animal management and hunter education initiatives.
- Continue to fund the Game Animal Council in a long-term sustainable manner as the statutory body representing the hunting sector.
- Work with the Game Animal Council to identify, designate, establish and resource the first Herds of Special Interest.
- Continue to support the conservation system legislative review and embed the terms 'valued introduced species' and 'game animal' across legislation to provide certainty that the value of these species is recognised and incorporated into their future management.
- Initiate the following reviews to help support improved game animal management:
 - Review the tahr management system, including the Himalayan Thar Control Plan 1993 to align with the goals of the ANZBS.
 - Review the administration of wild animal recovery operations (WARO) to align with the goals of the ANZBS – partially satisfied through DOC's systems analysis undertaken during 2023.
 - Review the provision of public access and facilities on public conservation land to maximise opportunities for community contributions to game animal management.
 - Review firearms licensing and range use legislation to ensure the tools and training required for game animal management are readily accessible to communities.

Further discussion of these recommendations and other issues impacting game animal management can be found in this briefing.

Outside of game animal management issues the GAC's biggest area of current focus is on the provision of hunter training through the free hunter training e-learning platform, Better Hunting:

- With Better Hunting launching at the end of October 2023, it is critical that the platform continues to be provided for through appropriate investment and cross-agency support. This will work to allow the GAC to continue to upgrade and add to the platform and embed it as a key training and safety tool for the hunting sector and other outdoor recreation pursuits.

CONTENTS

About the Game Animal Council	4
Hunting in NZ	6
Game Animal Management	7
Issues impacting hunting	12
Hunter Safety and Education	13
Other Issues	14

ABOUT THE GAME ANIMAL COUNCIL

The GAC is a statutory entity established under the Game Animal Council Act 2013 to represent the interests of the hunting sector and improve the management of game animals (deer, tahr, chamois and wild pigs).

The GAC currently has eleven Councillors that offer a wide range of knowledge and skills from their experiences in the hunting, conservation, tourism, farming, forestry, community and kaitiakitanga sectors. Councillors are not appointed to represent any affiliated bodies but rather represent all hunting sector interests.



The GAC at work

Operationally, the GAC has a General Manager, a dedicated Policy Advisor, Hunter Safety and Education Programme Lead and Executive Administrator. These staff are supported by part-time and casual contractors who fulfil specific functions including technical and scientific advice, project management and communications.

OUR VISION

Sustainable management of game animals and hunting for recreation, communities, commerce and conservation.

The Game Animal Council is a national body working to improve the management of hunting and game animals for the benefit of all stakeholders. It works cooperatively both within the hunting sector and, as importantly, with those outside the hunting sector. In being effective the GAC is openly communicative and democratic, with a sound structure and governance, backed by appropriate legislation and sufficient, sustainable funding. It is accountable to its stakeholders and produces better outcomes for them, is respected for its balanced advocacy based on good science and research and gives authoritative advice.

KEY RELATIONSHIPS

The GAC relies on the Department of Conservation for governance support and has very good relationships with Department staff. The GAC and DOC liaise on a number of projects and benefit from constructive two-way communication. We look forward to maintaining and strengthening relationships between the GAC and DOC to improve the management of game animals and hunting in New Zealand.

The GAC works alongside a strong and diverse network of hunting sector clubs and NGO's, including the New Zealand Deerstalkers Association, New Zealand Professional Hunting Guides Association, New Zealand Association of Game Estates, Fiordland Wapiti Foundation, Central North Island Sika Foundation, New Zealand Tahr Foundation, New Zealand Pig Hunting Association and Safari Club International (New Zealand Chapter). We also have constructive working relationships with other important organisations relevant to the hunting and game animal sectors, including Fish & Game New Zealand, OSPRI, Mountain Safety Council, Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa – Outdoor Access Commission, Te Tari Pūreke – Firearms Safety Authority, Police, Ministry for Primary Industries, Federated Farmers and Federated Mountain Clubs.

The GAC is committed to upholding the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi by fostering meaningful partnerships with Māori, acknowledging the principles of partnership, participation and protection, and integrating these values into our policies and practices.

GAME ANIMAL COUNCIL ACT

Under the Game Animal Council Act 2013, the GAC's functions in relation to game animals and hunting are:

- To advise and make recommendations to the Minister
- To provide information and education to the hunting sector
- To promote safety initiatives for the hunting sector; including firearms safety
- To advise private landowners on hunting
- To develop, on its own initiative or at the direction of the Minister, voluntary codes of practice for hunting
- To raise awareness of the views of the hunting sector
- To liaise with hunters, hunting organisations, representatives of tangata whenua, local authorities, landowners, the New Zealand Conservation Authority, conservation boards, and the Department of Conservation to improve hunting opportunities to conduct research, including research on the hunting of game animals
- In respect of herds of special interest for which the Minister has delegated management powers under section 20 to the Council –
 - To undertake management functions that are compatible with the management of public conservation land and resources generally
 - To exercise its powers for the effective management of the herd
 - To operate voluntary certification schemes for professional hunting guides and game estates
- To promote minimum standards and codes of conduct for certified hunting guides and game estates
- To investigate complaints and take disciplinary action in relation to certified hunting guides and game estates
- To provide any other services to hunters that the Minister is satisfied are ancillary to the Council's other functions
- To perform any other functions conferred on it under this Act or any other enactment
- To assess the costs of managing herds of special interest and make recommendations to the Minister on ways to recover those costs.

GAC FUNDING

The GAC is primarily funded through a government appropriation via Vote Conservation. For 2023-24 this funding is \$800,000 and is set to rise progressively to \$1,200,000 by 2025-26. Additional funding of \$70,000 per year was also allocated through the Jobs for Nature - Mahi mō te Taiao Programme to progress the development of the online hunter safety and education programme, Better Hunting.

A five-year funding strategy was developed in 2022/23 with assistance from consulting firm MartinJenkins. As part of this strategy a funding assessment was made, which illustrated:

- A strong case for the Crown to continue to fund the GAC's operations until conditions are right to implement other funding sources.
- That the Game Trophy Export Levy, as set out in the Game Animal Council Act, remains a significant and viable revenue source for the GAC in the longer term.
- That voluntary schemes could contribute to the overall funding mix; however, they present a high level of uncertainty due to their voluntary nature.

HUNTING IN NZ

Over 160,000 New Zealanders are annually involved in some form of hunting, with an estimated 50-80,000 involved in large game animal hunting (deer, chamois, tahr and wild pigs). Over the last six years, an annual average of 45,000 individuals obtained permits to hunt on public conservation land. A large number of hunters also hunt on private land.

As well as its critical importance to game animal management and recreation, hunting is an important source of mahinga kai for many communities, has a positive impact on health and wellbeing and encourages participation in community-led conservation.



Photo Credit: NZDA

HUNTER HARVEST

A 2014 study estimated that recreational hunters in New Zealand annually harvest approximately 135,000 deer, 132,000 other big game animals (tahr, chamois and wild pigs) and over 230,000 feral goats. The GAC acknowledges that this data is now 10 years old, which is why we are undertaking a study to understand current hunter participation, expenditure and harvest figures.

The commercial harvest is highly volatile due to fluctuations in the venison market and the variability of input costs such as fuel. Over the last 11 years across all land tenures an annual average of 18,391 deer have been harvested by commercial operators.

ECONOMIC ACTIVITY FROM HUNTING

The total gross sales effect of New Zealanders participating in large game animal hunting was calculated in 2012 to be in the order of \$180 million annually, however that has likely increased over the last ten years. Prior to Covid-19, findings from a survey of some of the commercial hunting sector, estimated that the commercial tourist hunting sector brought in around \$100 million of direct overseas revenue annually, employed approximately 470 people in full time or seasonal employment and a further 60 people registered in the associated taxidermy and trophy exporting services.

GAME ANIMAL MANAGEMENT

HISTORICAL SITUATION

Deer, tahr, chamois and wild pigs have been a part of New Zealand for well over a hundred years (250 years in the case of pigs; 162 years in the case of deer) and have long been recognised as 'valued introduced species' by many New Zealanders. This status was officially and appropriately recognised in Te Mana o Te Taiao - Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy 2020 (ANZBS).

Game animals represent a significant source of mahinga kai for many communities and provide important recreational and commercial opportunities as well as physical health and wellbeing benefits. Unquestionably they can also present a challenge for conservation.

Historically, the management of these game animals (particularly deer and tahr) has suffered from an all-or-nothing approach as government policy and commercial market conditions have fluctuated. This has not only led to conflict with the hunting sector but has also ensured poor long-term management outcomes, both for game animals and for the protection of indigenous biodiversity.

CURRENT SITUATION AND WHERE WE NEED TO GET TO

Game animals will forever be in New Zealand; therefore, the question moves beyond are they 'good or bad' and 'should they be here, or not' to 'how do we best manage their impacts and maximise their resource, community and cultural value?'

In some areas of New Zealand deer numbers have increased to levels that cause unacceptable environmental impacts and this is also causing a reduction in local animal quality, negatively affecting hunters and hunting. In other areas, deer populations remain at low levels and negative environmental and animal quality impacts have not been observed. There are also areas where deer are absent, and the GAC supports the preservation of the 'deer free' status of these areas.

There are locations where deer exist in discreet high-value herds in low numbers, e.g., Wakatipu white-tailed deer. Herd management practices may be required to protect these herds. It must also be recognised that across many New Zealand communities, deer and pigs are an important food resource and the GAC is committed to making sure access to this wild source of free-range organic protein is preserved.

The GAC's objective is for New Zealand to have game animal herds of modest populations that are actively managed to achieve improved conservation, hunting and community outcomes. The GAC is working alongside others to achieve this through well-considered, science-based game animal management.

WHAT WE NEED TO SUCCEED

SUPPORT AND INVESTMENT

The Te Ara ki Mua wild animal management framework appropriately recognises that for enduring long-term success different game animal populations in different places require different management strategies. This will be achieved through the use of site-based management programmes grounded in science, an improvement in the monitoring, delivery and evaluation of game animal management, and coordination and capacity building across the communities, organisations and agencies involved.

Budget 2022 allocated \$30 million over four years to help implement Te Ara ki Mua. While this was a good start, and the GAC is enthusiastic about its role in assisting the hunting sector to help deliver it, **certainty of investment over the long-term is required to effectively implement Te Ara ki Mua and deliver effective game animal management across New Zealand.**

HUNTER-LED MANAGEMENT

Certainty of investment can lead to more operational activities, more science and more support for partnerships with whānau, hapū, and iwi and local communities. This can lead to more hunter-led management and conservation programmes.

Hunter-led management through volunteer management hunts, targeted recreational hunter harvest and hunter-funded control operations have so far been under-utilised in New Zealand. Where it has been applied at scale, in Fiordland through the Fiordland Wapiti Foundation and more recently through the work of the Central North Island Sika Foundation in the

Kaimanawas, good results are being achieved at a low cost to the Crown. With a strong network of clubs and foundations in the hunting sector willing to get involved in hunter-led management, there exists an opportunity to empower the sector to do much more in this area.

Working with the hunting sector has also been effective where it relates to official control undertaken by the Department of Conservation, with reduced conflict with hunters being achieved through the specific targeting of female deer. It is well established scientific fact that the harvest of females is a key factor influencing population abundance. The harvest of males, on the other hand, affects the population dynamics.



A volunteer management hunter in Lake Sumner Forest Park

HERDS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Under the Game Animal Council Act, the Minister of Conservation may designate any species of game animal in a specified area on public conservation land to be a herd of special interest (HOSI).

An example of how HOSI can work in practice already exists through the accord that DOC has with the Fiordland Wapiti Foundation (FWF). Deer in the wapiti area of Fiordland National Park are actively managed through a hunter-led, hunter-funded management regime that sees approximately 1000 deer (mainly females, red deer and wapiti-red hybrids) removed annually through control operations and regular vegetation impact monitoring. This active management is on top of the annual recreational hunter harvest.



Fiordland Wapiti

The GAC considers herds of special interest to be a tool that should be applied for intensive management of highly valued game animal herds in certain locations to improve both hunting and conservation outcomes.

Additional conservation benefits can result from volunteer hunter-led conservation initiatives. The FWF and recreational hunters undertake a large amount of predator control and native species conservation work in the wapiti area, including:

- The operation of over 500 predator control traps in five river catchments to protect whio and other native birds.
- The largest citizen science kea project in NZ.
- Over 40,000 hours of native bird survey work per year.

A DOC/GAC collaborative work programme that is looking into the necessary process steps to establish herds of special interest is nearing completion. **Ministerial recognition of the top herds of special interest candidates would assist the GAC and DOC to action any preliminary work required for more efficient development and then delivery of management plans for these herds and their habitat.**

Potential first-phase candidates for HOSI consideration include:

- Wapiti deer in Fiordland
- Sika deer in the Central North Island
- Himalayan tahr in the Southern Alps

REPLACING THE WILDLIFE ACT

The GAC is broadly supportive of the intention to repeal and replace the 70-year-old Wildlife Act, as it no longer meets the needs of modern conservation and species management. Ideally, we would like to see this as part of a coordinated review of conservation system legislation that enables the design of fit-for-purpose legislation to effectively manage game animals for both their impacts and values.

While indigenous biodiversity will naturally be the focus of new conservation legislation, the way in which we manage valued introduced species, including game animals must also be a key consideration. The opportunity, if we get it right, is to embed into law principles that recognise the unique place of these animals in New Zealand and allows for far more progressive, focused management, including community-led management, of deer, tahr, chamois and wild pigs.

WILD ANIMAL RECOVERY OPERATIONS (WARO)

WARO is an important part of a successful game animal management system, and the GAC wishes to see a long-term future for WARO in New Zealand. However, WARO currently does not align with modern population management principles (e.g., female-focused harvest) and remains an area of conflict with recreational hunters and those who are actively looking to manage game animal populations for increased quality and lower abundance. WARO is also heavily impacted by external market forces that lead to the boom-bust nature of the industry. This has a significant impact on the viability of WARO as a sustainable management tool.

While the GAC has pushed for a comprehensive review of the WARO system, we were pleased to be involved in the WARO system analysis recently undertaken by DOC. It is our expectation that this analysis will help chart a positive way forward for the WARO sector that includes closer alignment to conservation and community-based management objectives. The GAC is committed to working with WARO based businesses to find viable solutions to identified problems, to protect the industry and to achieve coordinated hunting to support conservation and community values.

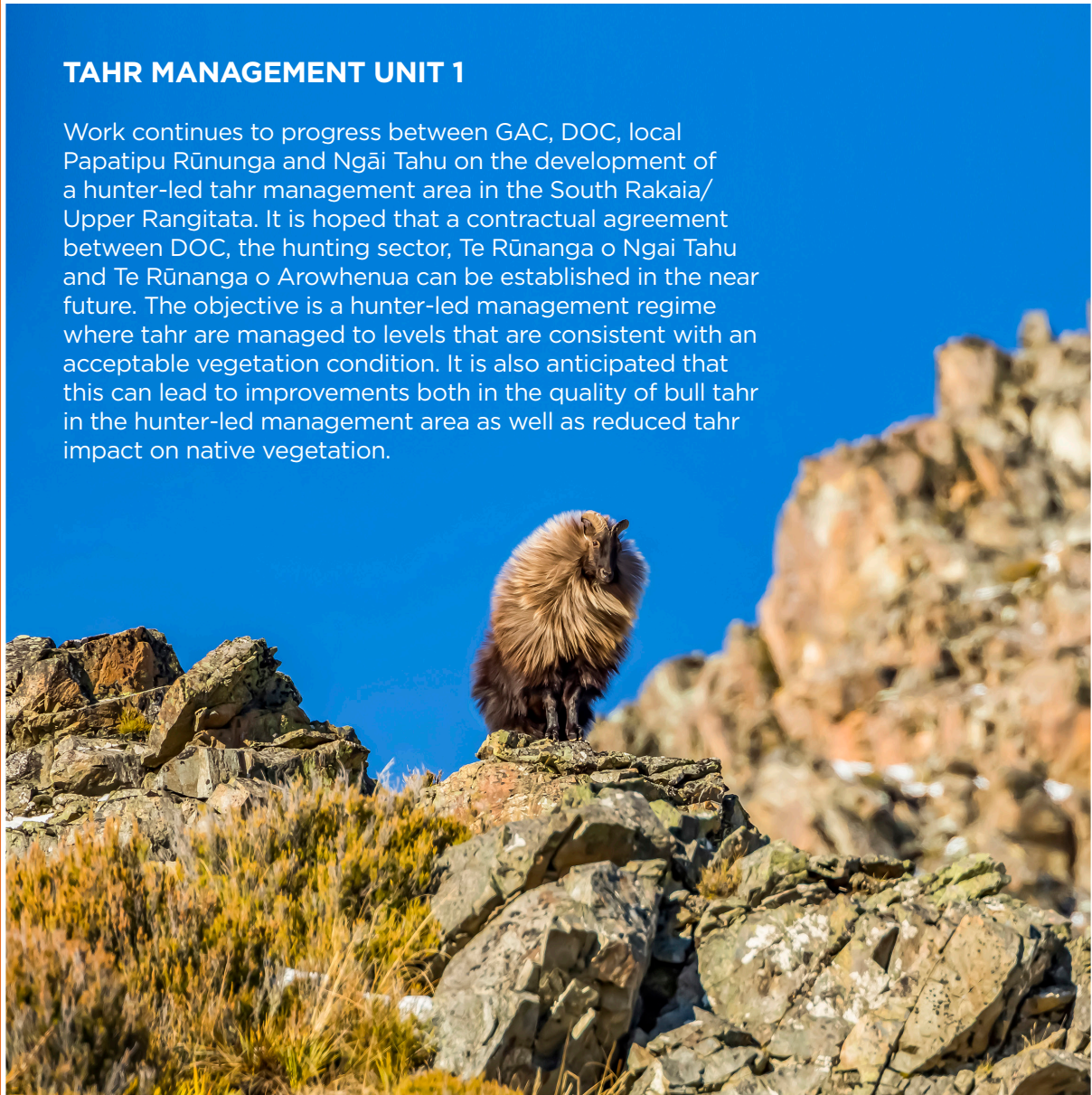
HIMALAYAN TAHR MANAGEMENT SYSTEM REVIEW

Tahr management has been a divisive issue in the past. Fortunately, and partly due to the constructive work of both the GAC and DOC, a more positive consultation process has been established through the Tahr Plan Implementation Liaison Group that is largely free of conflict and focuses on achieving satisfactory results for the majority of stakeholders.

The Himalayan Thar (sic) Control Plan 1993 (HTCP) is not fit for purpose as we consider the future of tahr management in the 21st century. Its blunt parameters do not provide for a modern management system incorporating new knowledge and advances in science and technology. This precludes the use of more sophisticated management knowledge. **The GAC is convinced that a review of the tahr management system, including the Himalayan Thar Control Plan 1993 is necessary to effectively implement Te Ara ki Mua and achieve a sustainable approach to tahr management.**

TAHR MANAGEMENT UNIT 1

Work continues to progress between GAC, DOC, local Papatipu Rūnunga and Ngāi Tahu on the development of a hunter-led tahr management area in the South Rakaia/ Upper Rangitata. It is hoped that a contractual agreement between DOC, the hunting sector, Te Rūnanga o Ngai Tahu and Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua can be established in the near future. The objective is a hunter-led management regime where tahr are managed to levels that are consistent with an acceptable vegetation condition. It is also anticipated that this can lead to improvements both in the quality of bull tahr in the hunter-led management area as well as reduced tahr impact on native vegetation.



ISSUES IMPACTING HUNTING

HUNTER ACCESS

Access issues are a major concern for hunters and impact the ability of hunters to help manage game animal populations.

Access difficulties were reflected in a survey the GAC conducted in late 2022. Of the nearly 700 respondents, 67 percent identified access difficulties as the thing that most impacted their hunting in their local region. This result was further supported by feedback gained at the 2022 Sika Show where nearly 43 percent of delegates asked also indicated access as an issue affecting their hunting.

While these results included access to hunting on private land (including forestry land), anecdotally, we know that access across private land to the public conservation estate has become more difficult in recent years.

Issues around access are complex and diverse, and the GAC understands that in many cases they are not easy to resolve. However, we support the work of Herenga ā Nuku Aotearoa, the Outdoor Access Commission and are encouraged by the refocusing of the Commission around outdoor access more generally as access to the outdoors is much more than just walking. It is important that suitable access is provided for vehicles, where appropriate, as well as hunters carrying firearms and accompanied by dogs (where dogs are permitted).

FIREARMS

Reasonable access to firearms is critical to participation in hunting and hunter's contributions towards game animal management and pest control. The GAC has worked constructively alongside other hunting sector organisations as well as with DOC, NZ Police and other agencies to make practical improvements to recent changes to firearms legislation. This includes making sure pest controllers retain the ability to access semi-automatic firearms, that the rules around the transportation of firearms, parts and ammunition remained pragmatic, and change of possession provisions acknowledge the realities of recreational and guided hunting.

Current proposals to significantly increase firearms licence fees as well as fees for dealer licences and licence endorsements are of significant concern to the hunting sector and could have an impact on compliance and the uptake of hunting. There is also concern that the proposals may affect entry into the professional hunting sector, including the recruitment of contract hunters.

The GAC is also concerned at regulatory changes that will make access to and operation of shooting clubs and ranges far more onerous. Increased compliance for smaller clubs and ranges and the prospect of their closure could have a detrimental impact on the provision of firearms safety training and sighting in opportunities for hunters.

The GAC continues to provide advice to NZ Police and other agencies on firearms-related issues of concern to the hunting community through the Firearms Community Advisory Forum and Range Certification Engagement Group.

1080 AND USE OF VERTEBRATE TOXIC AGENTS

The GAC's general policy is for a reduction in the use of toxins while accepting their importance for predator and vector control in certain places. Each toxin application should be designed and timed to minimise by-kill and suffering for both native and game animal species and have as little impact on hunting and recreation as possible.

It has come to the GAC's attention as cost-of-living pressures increase that a number of communities around the country are concerned at the loss of access to mahinga kai due to aerial toxin applications. Game Animal Councillors have raised this as a growing issue for their communities and as such we wish to see the potential impacts on mahinga kai elevated as an important consideration in the planning of operations and community consultation.

Deer repellent remains a critical tool to help mitigate the impact of aerial 1080 operations on deer and it is the GAC's policy that deer repellent should be used in aerial operations where deer are susceptible to poisoning. The GAC currently works with DOC, OSPRI and regional councils on the application of deer repellent in aerial operations where valued herds exist, however allocations for deer repellent use to date have been insufficient to protect valued herds.

The hunting sector does not generally consider the use of vertebrate toxic agents for the control of game animals in New Zealand to be acceptable, accordingly the GAC opposes the use of vertebrate toxic agents for this purpose.

HUNTER SAFETY AND EDUCATION

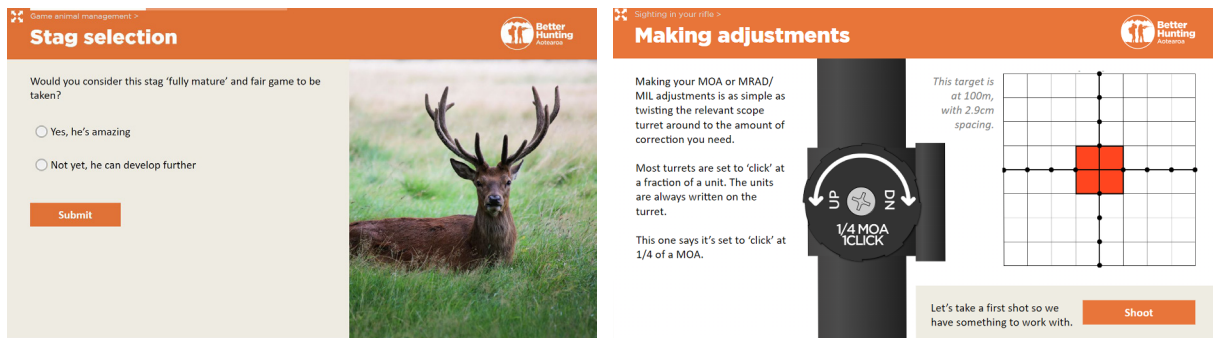
The GAC with support from the Jobs for Nature Fund has invested significant resources into the development of a free-to-use online hunter education programme, 'Better Hunting', which was launched in late October 2023.

The objective of 'Better Hunting' is to provide useful and accessible hunter training and safety information to new and inexperienced hunters, and over time to develop an increasing population of New Zealand hunters skilled to maximise their hunting success and to do so safely. With 28 separate modules expected to take a learner several hours to complete, Better Hunting is comprehensive and provides a bridge between gaining a firearms licence and more applied hunter training courses such as NZDA's HUNTS programme.

Better Hunting has been developed with a significant emphasis on safety, including general outdoor safety that encompasses bushcraft skills, weather forecasting, navigation and survival, and the information necessary to properly prepare and plan a hunt. Naturally, firearms safety is also a key component of the programme.



**Better
Hunting
Aotearoa**



Recreational hunters also require good information on what to hunt, where and when, and how to hunt successfully. Modules cover population dynamics and the contribution of hunting to good conservation outcomes so that hunters have the knowledge to make good game animal management decisions whilst out hunting.

With phase one launched at the end of October 2023, development is already underway on phase two, which will include additional modules that we hope to launch during 2024. The GAC will also be making a significant investment into promotion, including digital marketing.

Financial investment is required to ensure the ongoing viability and delivery of hunter safety and education initiatives. There is an opportunity for further funding support for Better Hunting and investment in practical training courses, such as NZDA's HUNTS programme and the NZ Professional Hunting Guides Association's professional training.

OTHER ISSUES

HUNTER-LED CONSERVATION

Current hunter-led conservation work includes a number of predator trapping and species conservation programmes. Both the Fiordland Wapiti Foundation and Central North Island Sika Foundation run extensive trapping programmes for who recovery, while hunters are involved in projects to bring kiwi back to the Kawekas, various pest control projects around the country, as well as monitoring kea in Fiordland and the tahr ballot areas.

Hunters, particularly experienced hunters, possess the skills, fitness and bushcraft knowledge required for backcountry conservation projects and are in many ways an under-utilised conservation resource. The GAC sees hunter-led conservation initiatives going hand-in-hand with hunter-led game animal management.

Hut building and conservation restoration work is also provided by the Rakiura Hunter Camp Trust, New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association and Safari Club International (New Zealand). Hunters are prominent participants in the Backcountry Trust, which has played a major role in refurbishing huts.



Who have benefitted from hunter-led conservation projects in both Fiordland and central North Island

UNLAWFUL HUNTING

Unlawful hunting, whether that be illegal hunting on private or public land, is of significant concern. Game estates and deer farms are disproportionately impacted by this type of offending and according to a 2021 survey of members by Federated Farmers, over 47 percent of rural people who had been victims of crime had been victims of unlawful hunting.

The GAC recently convened a workshop alongside New Zealand Police to investigate ways in which hunting sector organisations, landowners, the rural community and Police can coordinate to help prevent illegal hunting.

The stakeholders involved determined that a working group would be established to investigate the drivers of illegal hunting, its costs and impacts, and formally report on those. It was also agreed that the issue would be brought to the attention of the Attorney-General and a separate piece of work undertaken to understand the contribution of hunter access issues to the problem. The GAC will keep you informed of progress in this area.

BIOSECURITY

There are a number of diseases that affect game animals and hunting, which present a significant threat to New Zealand's biosecurity. The GAC endeavours to make hunters aware of these and to support initiatives to prevent incursions.

- The GAC continues to support the goal of eradicating Bovine Tb from New Zealand. The overriding concern for the GAC is the direct and indirect effects of Bovine Tb control operations on game animals and hunting. The GAC has a history of working constructively and cooperatively with DOC and OSPRI, around mitigation measures including, but not limited to, the ongoing development and application of deer repellent, and will continue this approach.
- Kauri Dieback Disease is of significant concern and the GAC supports current mitigation measures to prevent its spread.
- Chronic Wasting Disease is a fatal neurodegenerative disease of both farmed and wild deer. It occurs in most species of deer and is present in USA, Canada, South Korea and Norway. The GAC has provided advice to hunters and hunting guides on the importance of declaring and cleaning gear used in CWD-endemic regions to prevent its arrival into New Zealand.
- African Swine Fever is spreading in Europe and Asia with many wild and domesticated pigs becoming infected and dying. The GAC has provided hunters with Biosecurity NZ advice on what to look out for and how to prevent its spread if it does arrive in New Zealand.
- The potential of a Foot and Mouth incursion into New Zealand is taken extremely seriously by the GAC and we are engaged in work with other agencies to develop appropriate responses. This includes the development of a communication strategy to educate hunters on identification as part of disease monitoring, and on impacts to hunting and hunter contributions to disease elimination should foot and mouth be detected in New Zealand.

If you or your staff have questions about the information provided in this briefing please do not hesitate to contact:

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