

Understanding 2022/23 visitor activity

Making sense of where people went in the
outdoors during 2022/23

September 2023



New Zealand Government



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This document is produced to inform DOC staff about how things are tracking with visitors. This document provides insights gleaned from the 2022/23 season. It is not comparable to previous visitor insight reports due to changes in activity data reporting.

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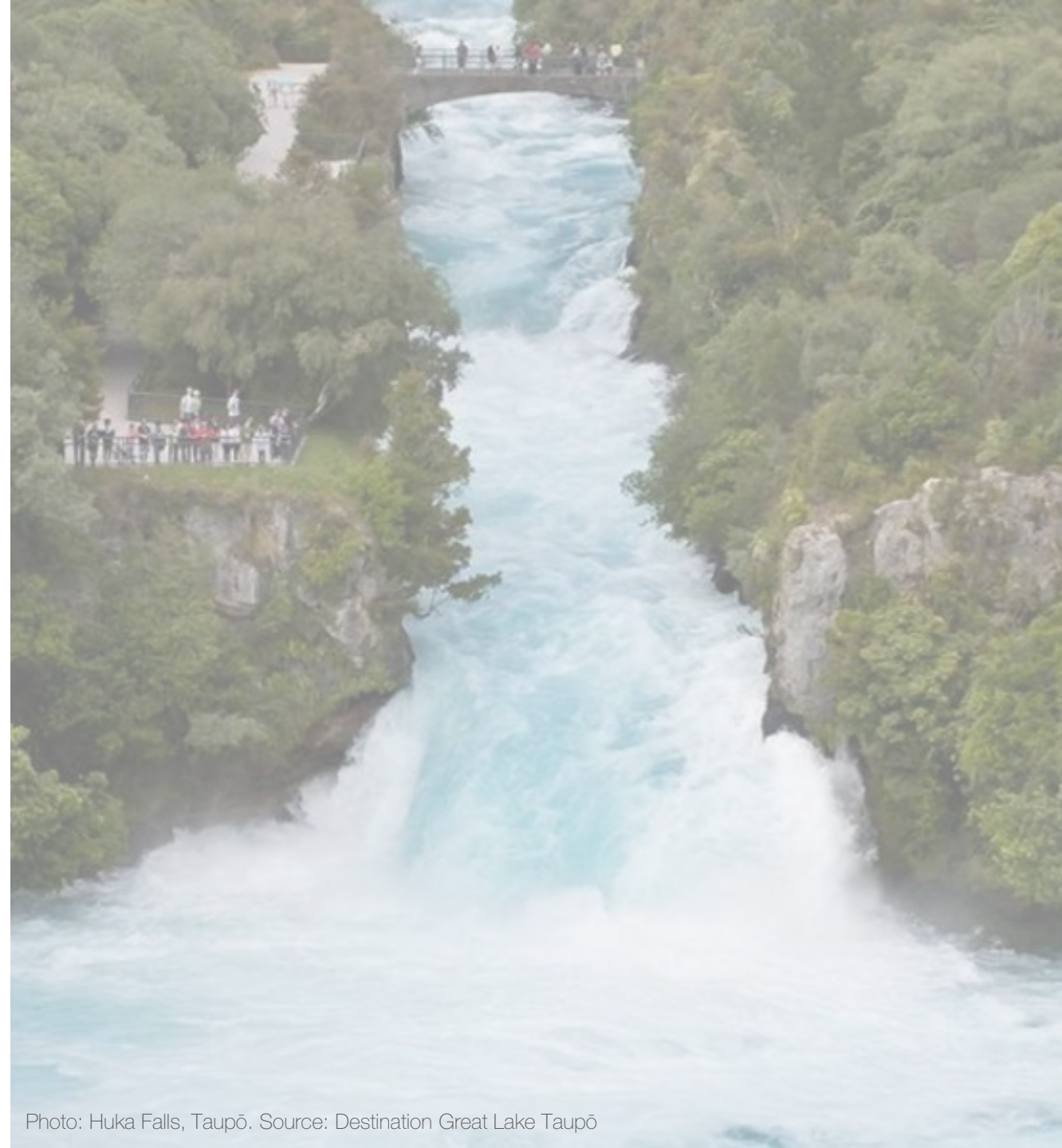


Photo: Huka Falls, Taupō. Source: Destination Great Lake Taupō

Executive Summary

UNDERSTANDING 2022/23 ACTIVITY

In 2022/23, millions of people are travelling internationally again but **climate change continues to affect the globe**. The recent heatwaves across the United States, Europe and China are impacting tourism.

Nationally, New Zealand **saw two consecutive extreme weather events** that damaged tracks, particularly across the North Island.

As a result, some DOC tracks, facilities and sites are still closed by storm damage and flooding, especially in the North Island.

“**Weather conditions are likely to gain more weight in travellers’ choices in the future.**”

- Pablo Caspers, eDreams Chief Air Supplier Officer (July 2023)

While at the same time, **short walks and leisurely activities, like sightseeing and photography, remain the most popular outdoor activities** with New Zealanders and international visitors.

Generally, **easy-access coastal areas near urban centres were popular with New Zealanders**. This reflects where most New Zealanders live and travel. Many of the most-visited destinations by New Zealanders were coastal areas located in or near the Auckland region.

2022/23 saw a change in visitor patterns. **Internationals returned at 76% of pre-COVID levels**. But China’s slower-than-expected economic recovery could slow tourism resurgence.

“**That first 50 percent of the recovery has come back a little faster than people had anticipated so that's been strong to see. I think the next 50 percent is going to be quite different and quite a bit more competitive.**”

- René de Monchy, Tourism New Zealand (April 2023)

While international tourism has returned, changing economic conditions could affect future tourism. **Worldwide, rising inflation could prompt consumers to cut back on travel, or switch to easier to get to destinations.**

Extreme weather events; the low levels of international visitors from China; and the cost of living will most likely continue to change tourism and recreation in New Zealand.

Thinking ahead, DOC faces change. As travel resumes in an era of high inflation and extreme weather events, fewer visitors might visit places managed by DOC.

Global and national trends

International tourist arrivals in New Zealand climbed over 2022, rebounding to 76% of pre-COVID (same quarter in 2019) levels in Q2 of 2023. The next sub-section explores how global and national tourism trends are affecting tourism.



Globally, international travel at 85% of pre-COVID levels in Q2 2023

Millions of tourists are making up for lost time during COVID years and engaging in tourism again.

However, international tourism isn't reaching pre-COVID levels yet. Globally, there are fewer Chinese tourists.

Before COVID, there were more than 150m Chinese tourists taking trips overseas each year. Post-COVID, airline bookings by Chinese tourists travelling abroad were around half what they were pre-COVID.

China's slower-than-expected economic recovery has left its people more hesitant to spend money travelling abroad.



Photo: Air New Zealand plane in Queenstown, New Zealand. Source: Tourism New Zealand

In NZ, international travel at 76% of pre-COVID levels in Q2 2023

Between January 2020 and August 2022, New Zealand imposed international travel restrictions due to the spread of COVID-19.

Overseas visitor arrivals were 2.54m in the June 2023 year, up 2.23m from the June 2022 year.

The Q2 of 2023 (April to June 2023) number of overseas visitor arrivals is 76% of the pre-COVID levels in Q2 2019.

The biggest changes were in arrivals from: Australia (up 1.03 million), United States (up 253,000) and United Kingdom (up 153,000).

International tourism is returning to New Zealand

International visitor arrivals to New Zealand (year ending June).

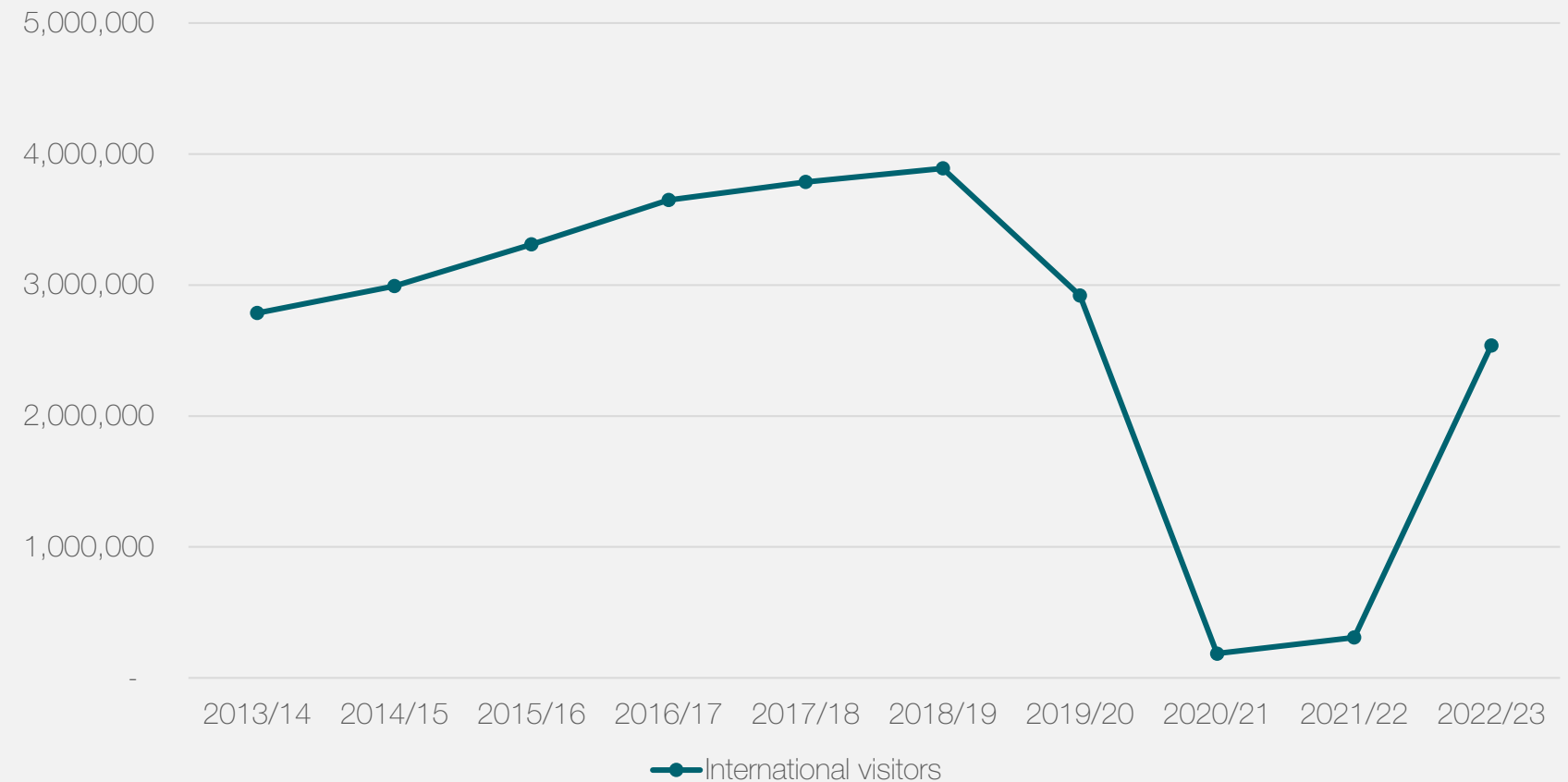


Figure 1: The number of overseas visitors entering New Zealand – year ending June.

Climate change is affecting all parts of society, including tourism

Globally, extreme weather events, including the recent heatwaves across the United States, Europe and China are affecting tourism.

In Athens, Greek authorities shut the Acropolis. While in Rome, several tourists collapsed due to heatstroke.

Pleasant weather remains the top consideration for Europeans when choosing where to go on holiday.

“ We are at war, we will rebuild what we lost, we will compensate those who were hurt...the climate crisis is already here...”

- Kyriakos Mitsotakis, Greece Prime Minister (July 2023)



Photo: Local residents look on at a forest fire, near Puntagorda on the Canary Island of La Palma. The fire coincides with a recent Europe heatwave Source: AP.

Climate change continues to affect NZ's infrastructure

Nationally, there have been extreme weather events, including Cyclone Gabrielle, affecting places across the North Island. Many destinations, including Cathedral Cove, remain closed because of storm damage.

This follows extreme weather events at iconic destinations in the Marlborough Sounds (2021), Fiordland (2020) and on the West Coast (2019).

These extreme weather events have highlighted our vulnerability to changing weather patterns and the need to increase the resilience of our accessible places to the impacts of climate change.



Photo: A slip covering the road at Sailor's Grave, near Tairua. Source: Supplied to NZ Herald/ Leonard Powell

Understanding New Zealanders in the outdoors

Getting a sense of what New Zealanders did outdoors helps build a picture of 2022/23 visitor activity. This next sub-section draws on survey data of adult New Zealanders to understand what they did, where they went and how they felt about their recent visit to the outdoors.

Protected natural areas include national parks, conservation areas and marine reserves. Protected heritage places include historic reserves, historic buildings, places important to Māori and places of national significance.



Many New Zealanders continue to head outdoors into nature

From July 2022 to June 2023, the proportion of NZers visiting protected natural areas each month has remained stable near 50% each month.¹

For the same period, the proportion of New Zealanders who reported visiting protected heritage places declined from 34% to 30%.

Flooding in Auckland and the impact of Cyclone Gabrielle closed many facilities and destinations in January/February 2023, reducing visitor numbers at affected sites.

Around one in two NZers visited a protected area each month

Proportion of respondents who reported visiting in the past month (July – June 2023)



Figure 2: Number of times New Zealanders visited any of New Zealand's [protected areas/heritage places] within the last month.

¹This document is similar but different from previous visitor insight reports. Previously, DOC reported on activity counters. However, DOC does not have current activity counter data reporting available.

New Zealanders went to easily accessible places near urban areas

DOC is New Zealand's largest provider of visitor activities. We manage over 21,800 visitor assets and 15,000 km of tracks.

Of 200 protected natural areas surveyed, the map to the right shows the top 10 places most recently visited by New Zealand adults.

Most of the top 10 recently visited places are in the North Island, near coastal areas and population centres.

Long Bay-Okura Marine Reserve (north of Auckland) was the most often cited recently visited area in New Zealand. Rangitoto Island (Auckland) was popular with New Zealanders. This reflects where New Zealanders live and travel.

Some of the other popular destinations were less than 2 hours from population centres, including Remutaka (Wellington), Arthur's Pass and Hanmer (Christchurch).

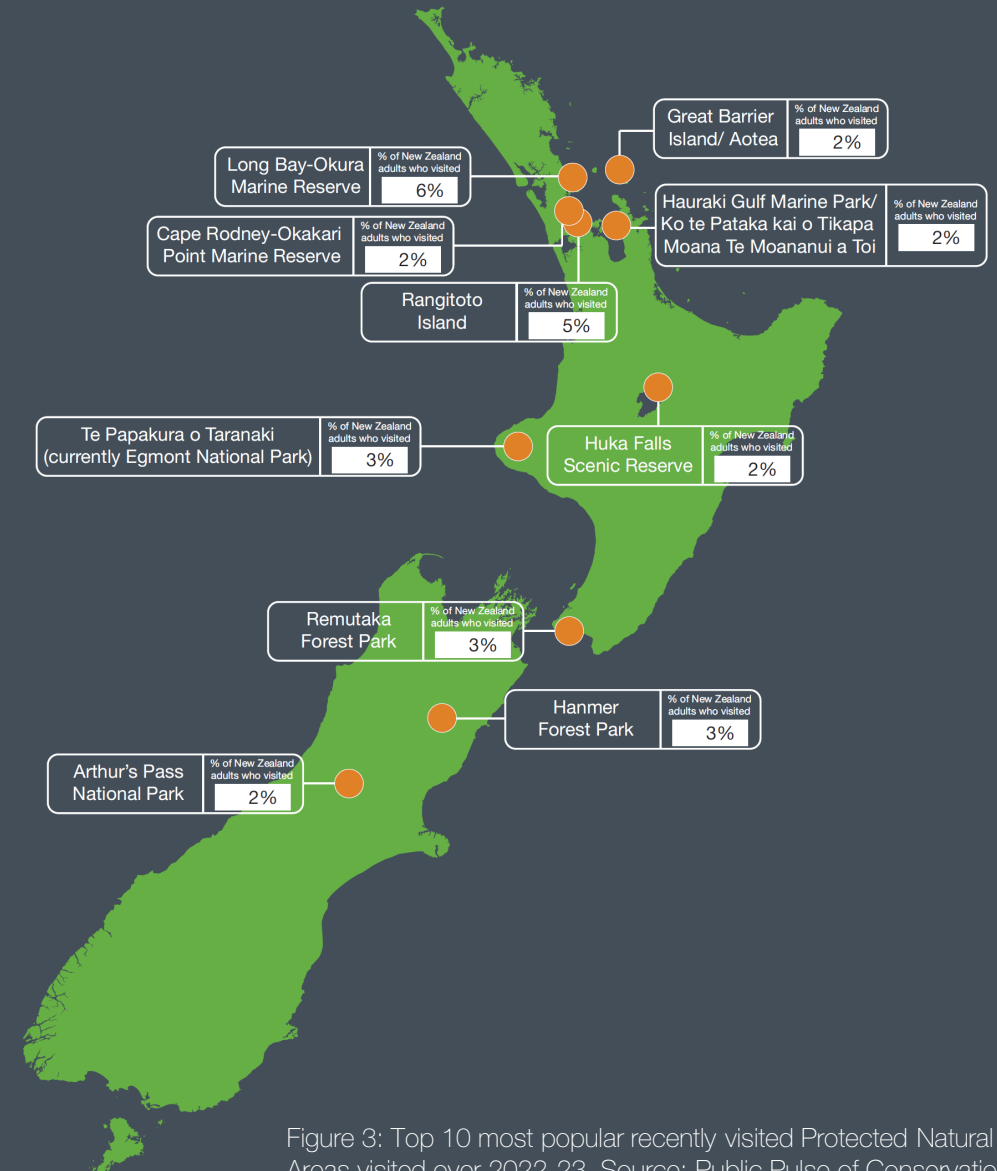


Figure 3: Top 10 most popular recently visited Protected Natural Areas visited over 2022-23. Source: Public Pulse of Conservation.

Leisurely activities were most popular with New Zealanders

Short walks (42%) remain the most popular activity undertaken by respondents on their last visit to a protected natural area. This was an increase compared to last year.

Day walks and camping decreased when compared to 2021/22. Camping may have been particularly affected by severe weather events over summer.

Sightseeing (31%), photography (27%) and bird/wildlife watching (25%) were also popular activities.

Small numbers also reported mountain biking (2%) and overnight/multi-day tramps/hikes (2%).

Short walks remain the most popular activity for NZers

Proportion of respondents who engaged in activities during most recent visit (July – June 2023)

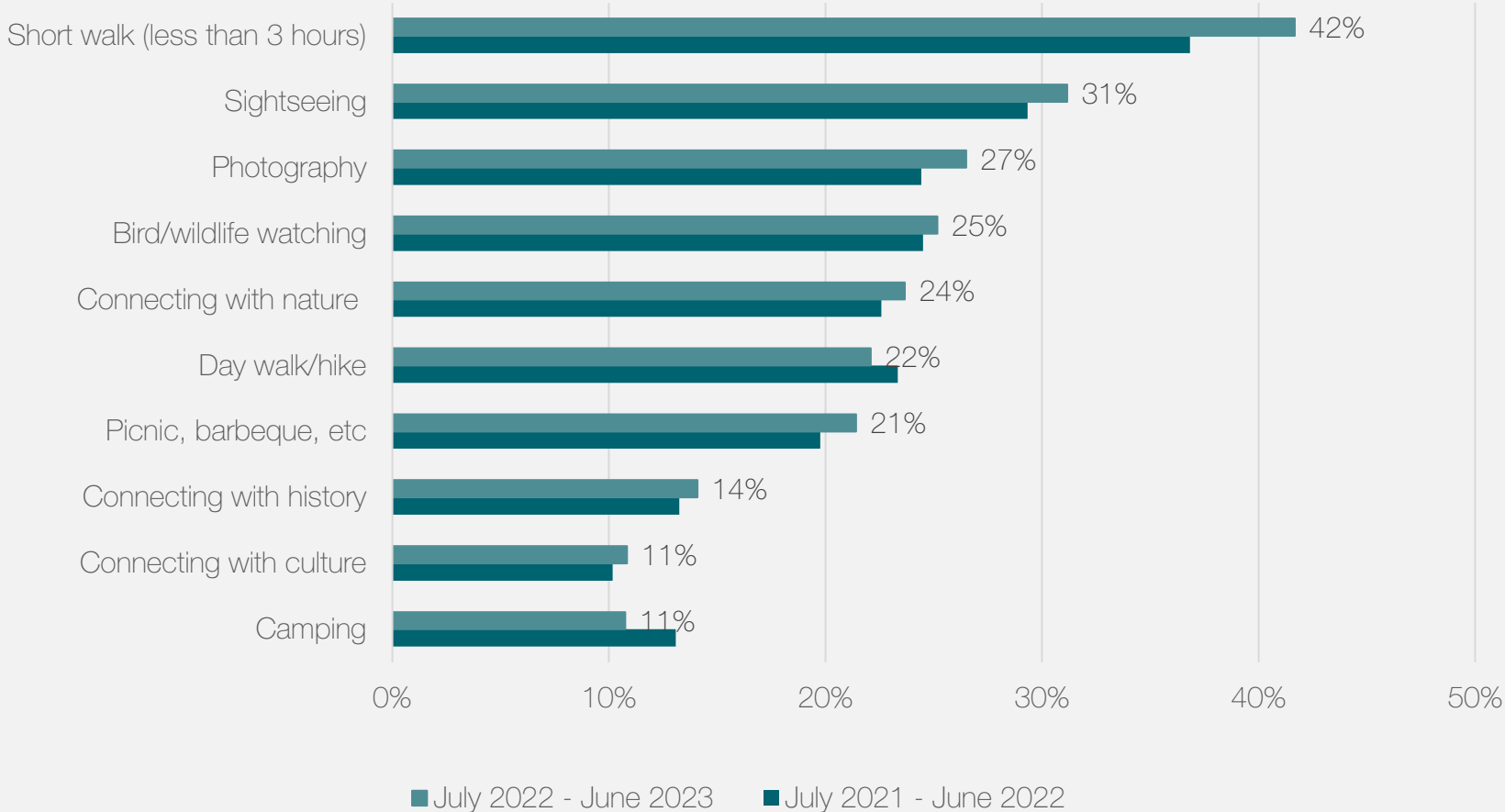


Figure 4: Top 10 activities New Zealanders engaged in during their last visit to a Protected Natural Area. These proportions are weighted averages. Year ending June.

Visitor impacts noticed by New Zealand visitors have decreased

Between July 2022 and June 2023 around a third (33% at protected natural areas and 31% at protected heritage places) of visitors reported that they had noticed damage from visitors. This was a decrease from the previous year.

At both protected natural areas and protected heritage places, damage to natural landscapes was observed the most (15% and 12% respectively), followed by damage to visitor facilities/infrastructure and poor/inappropriate behaviour.

NZ visitors noticed damage to natural landscapes most

Proportion of New Zealand visitors who noticed damage by visitors (July – June 2023)

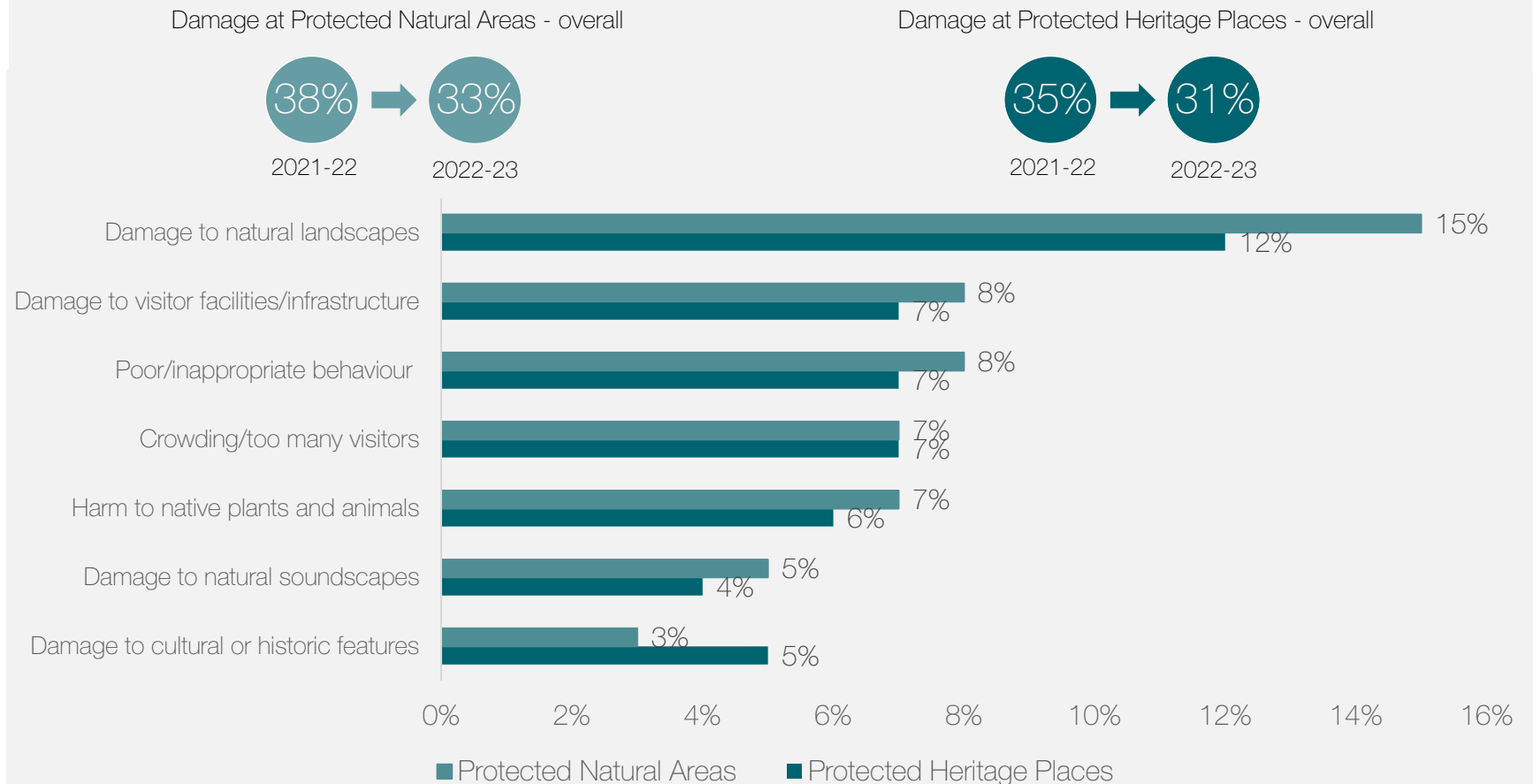


Figure 5: Proportion of New Zealand visitors who have noticed certain types of damage from other visitors, on their most recent visit to Protected Natural Areas and Protected Heritage Places. Year ending June.

Four in five New Zealand visitors had a good visit outdoors

Visitors generally had positive responses to their last experience at protected natural areas and protected heritage places.

Visitors' recent experiences of protected natural areas were higher than those of protected heritage places.

Satisfaction with the experience at protected natural areas and protected heritage places was similar when compared to the previous year.

Most NZers who went to protected areas had a good time

Proportion of New Zealand visitors who rated their most recent visit outdoors

Protected Natural Areas

2021-22

82% - good or exceptionally good visit



2022-23

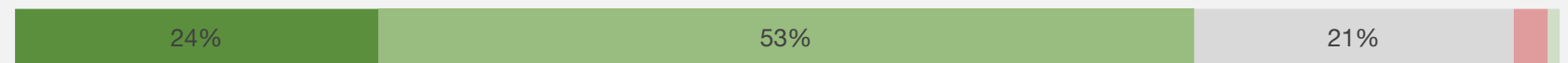
84% - good or exceptionally good visit



Protected Heritage Places

2021-22

77% - good or exceptionally good visit



2022-23

76% - good or exceptionally good visit



■ Exceptionally good ■ Good ■ Acceptable / OK ■ Poor ■ Extremely poor

Figure 6: The proportion of respondents who rated their most recent visit to Protected Natural Areas and Protected Heritage Places. Year ending June.

Understanding international visitors in the outdoors

2022/23 saw the return of international visitors following the COVID-19 pandemic. This sub-section contains the most recent [International Visitor Survey](#) (IVS) information available. It covers three quarters of 2022/23 (July to March 2023). Overseas visitor arrivals were 1.98 million during this period.



Many internationals visiting NZ headed out into nature

Beaches (48%) and national parks (43%), were the top-visited specified natural attractions; followed by hot pools (22%), geothermal parks (22%) and places significant to Māori (22%).

Over half (54%) of international visitors had also visited (or done) another type of unspecified natural attraction.

Other popular attractions were breweries/vineyards, etc. (23%), top-end restaurants (21%) and film locations/experience (17%).

Beaches and national parks were popular with internationals

Proportion of international visitors who went to places and experiences (July – March 2023)

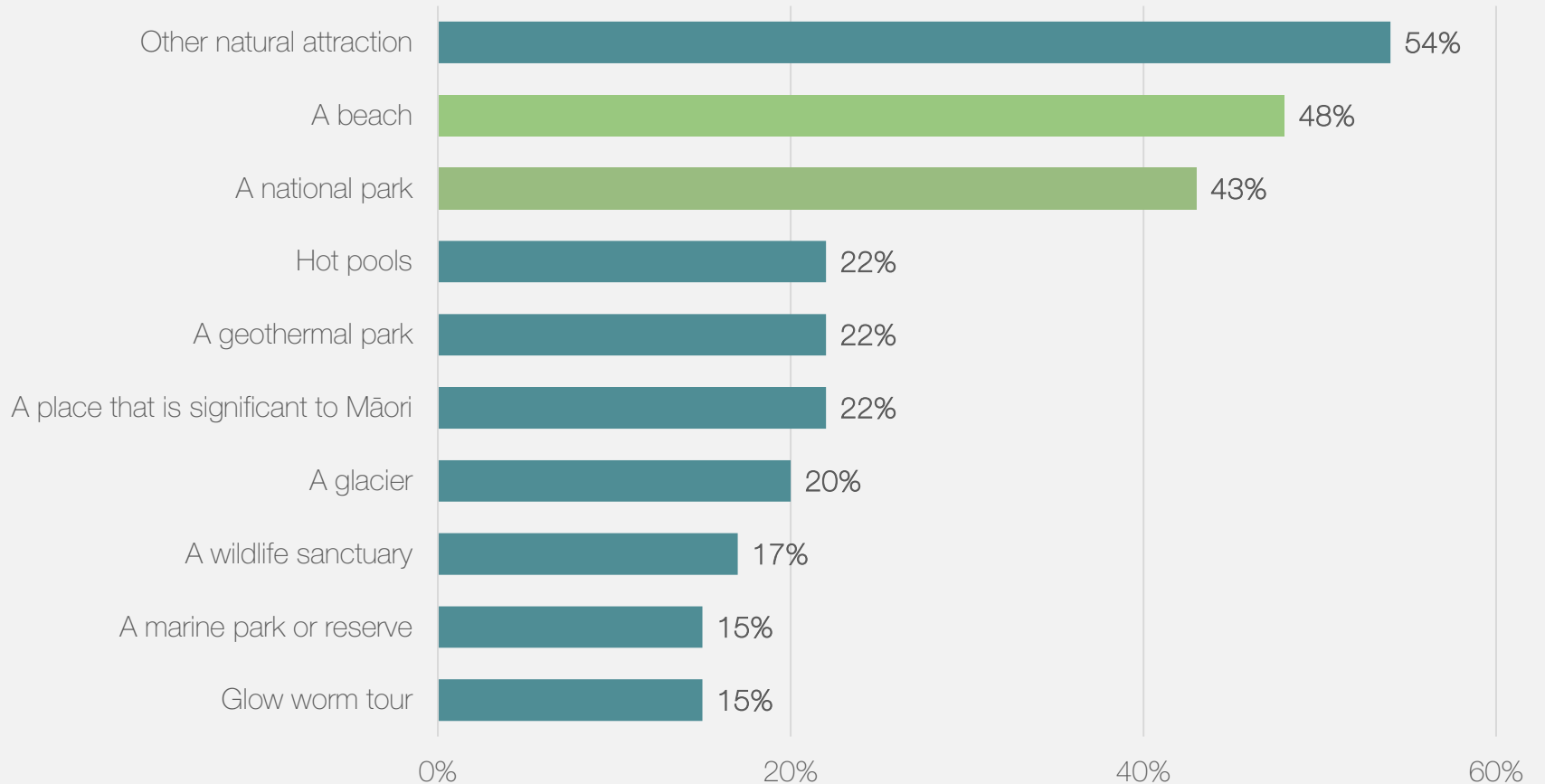


Figure 7: IVS: While International visitors were in New Zealand, which things did they go to? [Top places/experiences]

Te Wahipounamu – South West New Zealand was most popular

Just under half (43%) of international visitors visited one or more National Parks.

Fiordland and Aoraki Mount Cook National Parks had the highest levels of self-reported visitor activity. Other popular South Island National Parks were:

- Westland Tai Poutini: 10%
- Abel Tasman 9%
- Arthur's Pass: 9%.

Of the three North Island national parks, Tongariro National Park attracted the most (9%) international visitors.

Fiordland and Aoraki Mount Cook national parks were popular

Proportion of international visitors who visited national parks (July – March 2023)

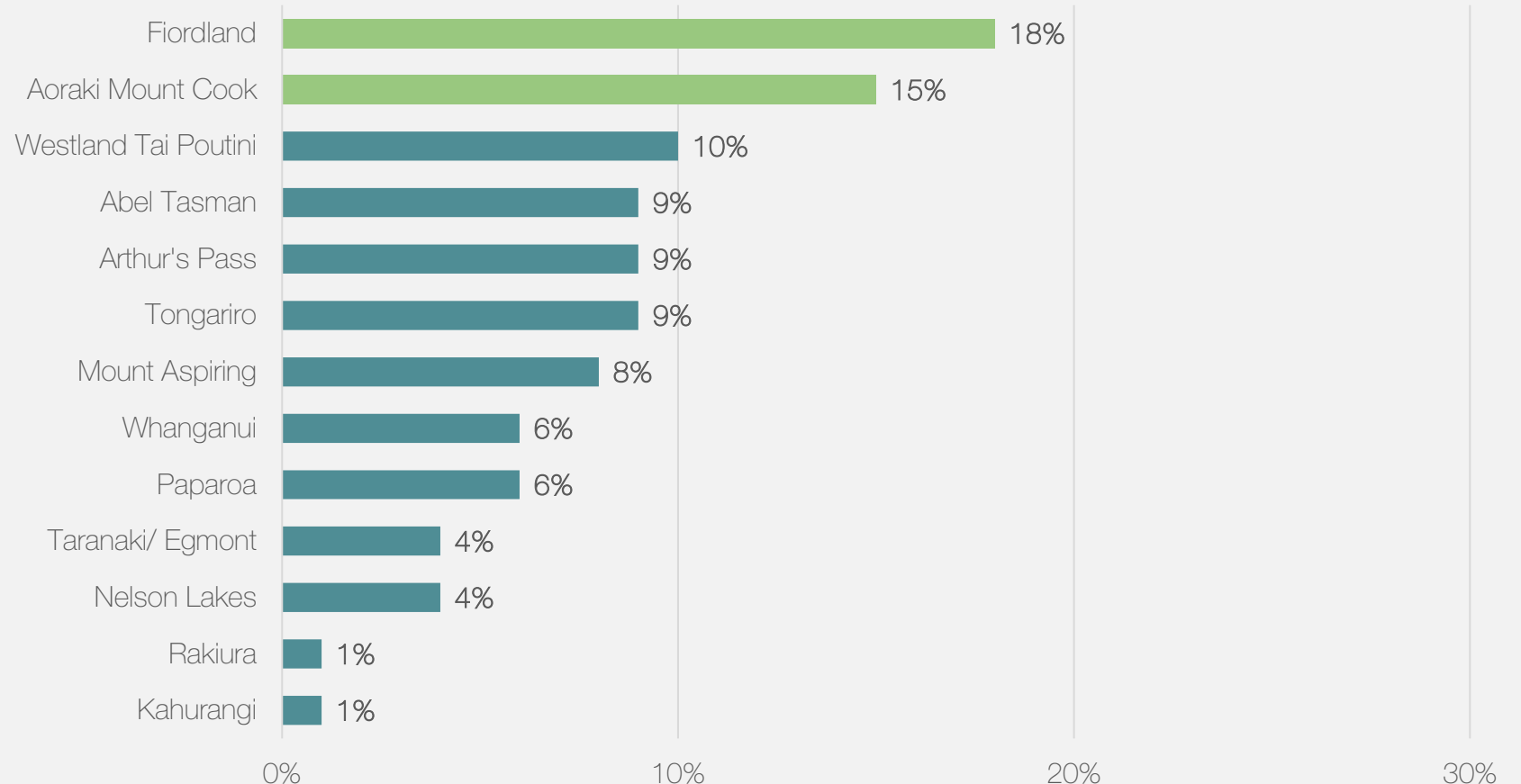


Figure 8: IVS: While International visitors were in New Zealand, which National Parks did they go to?

Note: The survey tool typically included prominent places (e.g. Milford Sounds) in addition to national park names.

Short walks (under 3 hours) were most popular with internationals

To the right are the top outdoor activities undertaken by international visitors from July 2022 to March 2023.

Overall, around six out of ten (61%) international visitors did a walk/tramp. Walks (between 30 minutes and 3 hours) were most popular.

A range of water- and equipment-based activities were undertaken by 5-14% of international visitors. Small numbers also reported fishing and mountain climbing/rock climbing (4%), a Great Walk (3%), air activities (3%) and trek/ tramp that included an overnight stay (2%).

Many internationals undertook day walks in the outdoors

Proportion of international visitors who undertook outdoor activities (July – March 2023)

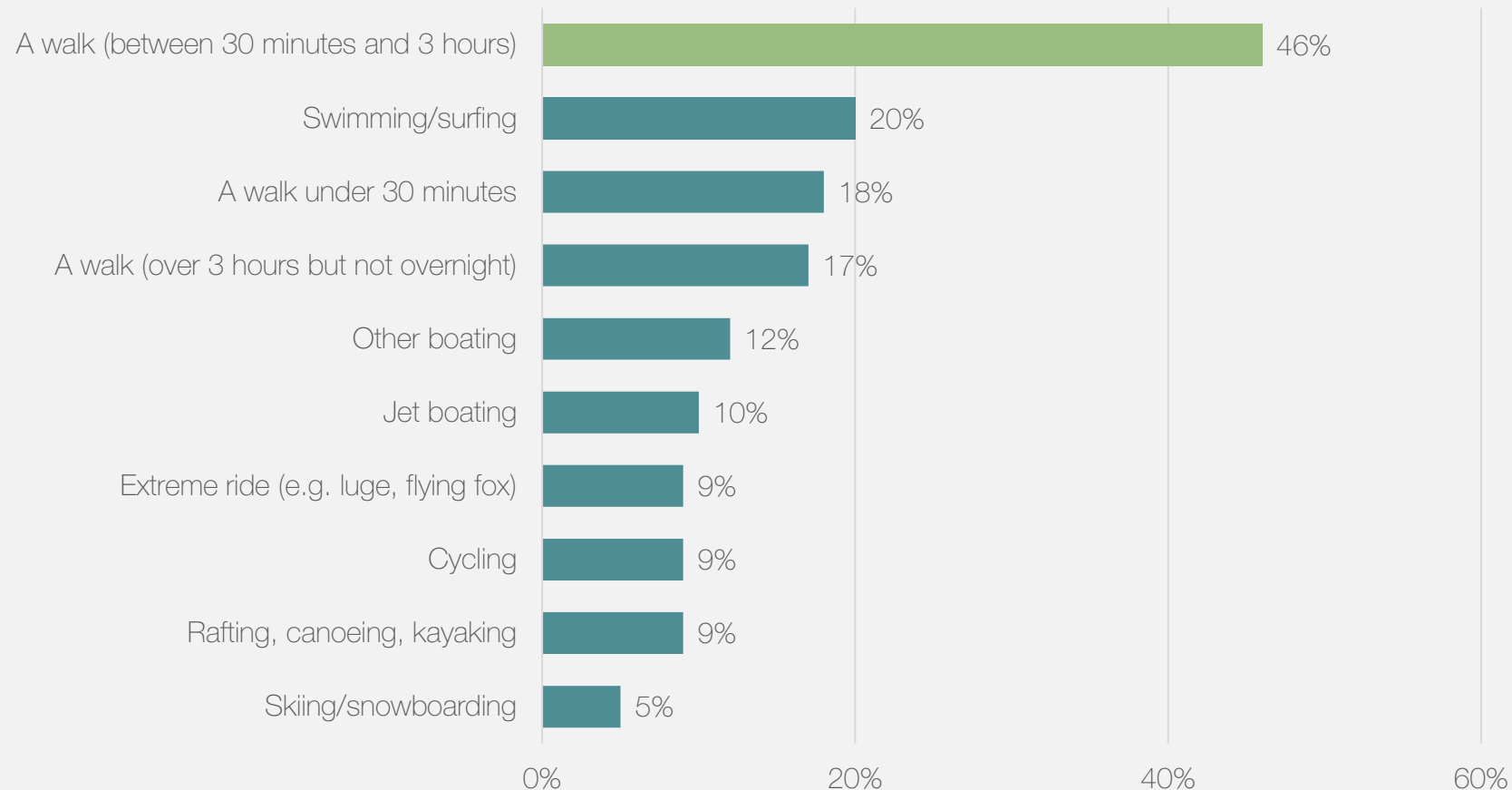


Figure 9: IVS: While you were in New Zealand, which of these things did you go to? [Top outdoor activities]

Most internationals rated natural scenery and wilderness as very good

Around 8 out of 10 (83%) international visitors rated the natural scenery and wilderness as very good. This was the highest rated attribute, with almost all visitors (95%) rating it as good to some degree.

While not as highly rated, other environmental attributes were also well perceived – around eight out of ten rated each attribute as good to some degree, with the availability of public facilities as worst.

Visitors felt welcome and safe (94% and 93% respectively rated these attributes as good).

Natural scenery/wilderness were rated high by internationals

Proportion of international visitors who rated attributes of visit (July – March 2023)

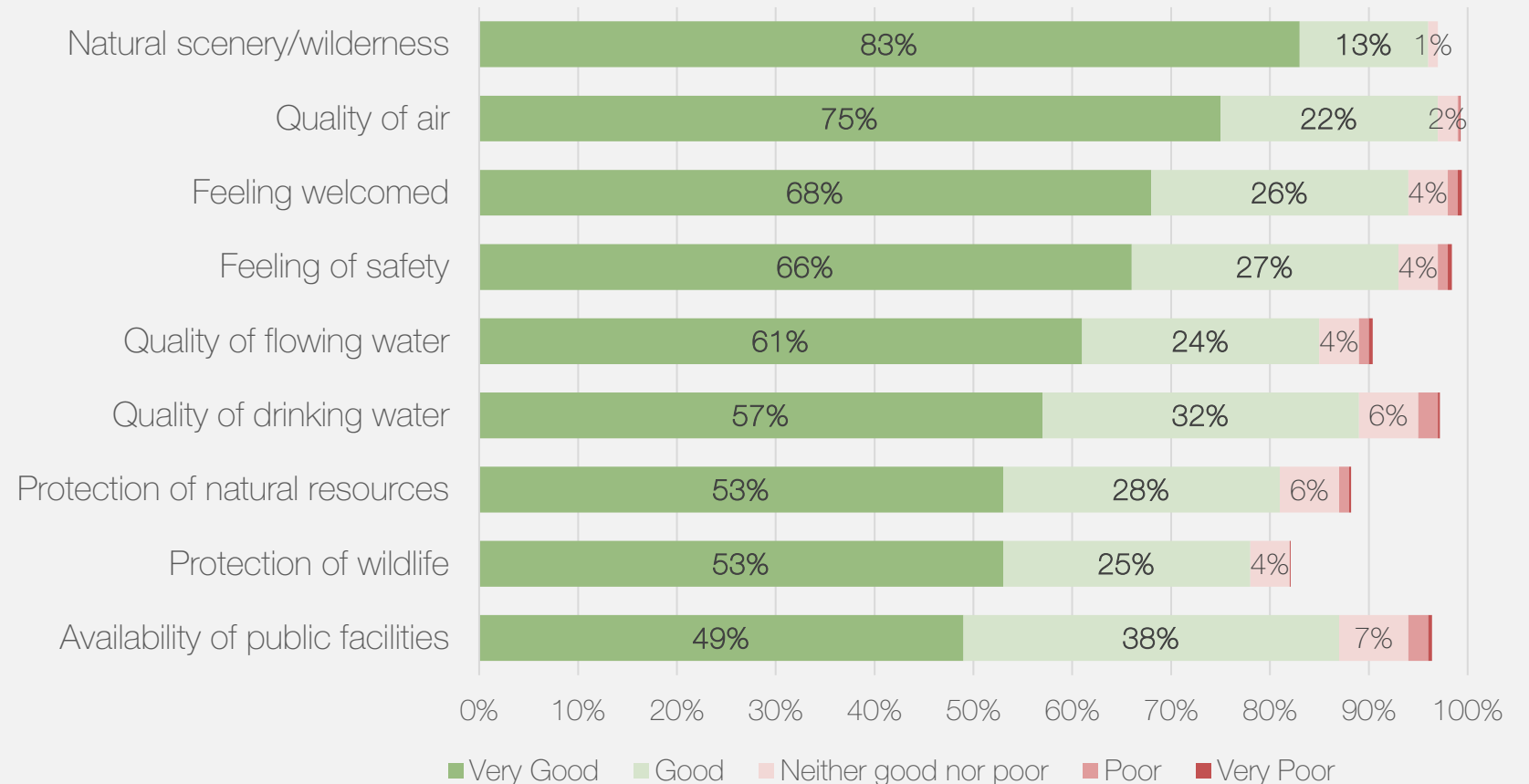


Figure 10: IVS: Based on your experiences during your trip to New Zealand, how would you rate the following? Note: this survey covers all experiences wider than those on public conservation lands and waters. Don't know and not applicable responses not included on graph above.

Most international visitors were satisfied when visiting New Zealand

Nine out of ten (90%) international visitors were either satisfied or very satisfied with their visit to New Zealand. Two in three (66%) international visitors were very satisfied.

Of those international visitors who went to Māori cultural experiences,¹ over nine out of ten (92%) agreed they enjoyed their experience.

92%

Agreed they enjoyed their experience of Māori culture¹

¹Experiences were not limited to public conservation land and waters.

Nine out of ten internationals were satisfied with New Zealand

Proportion of internationals who were satisfied with their most recent visit to New Zealand

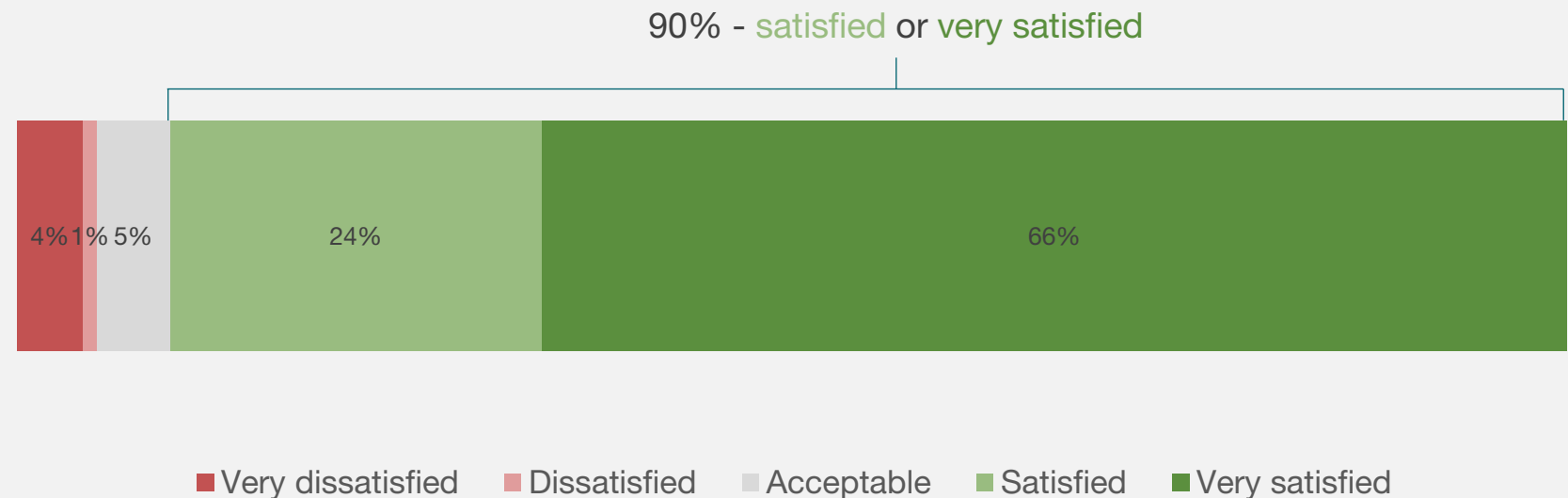


Figure 11: IVS: And thinking about all the aspects of your trip, how satisfied were you with your New Zealand visit overall?

Understanding where people stayed in the outdoors

Some of DOC's best visitor data is through an online booking system. Overnight accommodation is important to understanding where people stayed outdoors.

This sub-section contains data and information for the 2022/23 period (1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023) from DOC's booking system.

Note, this sub-section includes people staying on public conservation land only, not all accommodation in New Zealand.



Fewer New Zealanders and more internationals undertook Great Walks

There are ten Great Walks across the country. DOC manages nine of these, excluding Lake Waikaremoana.

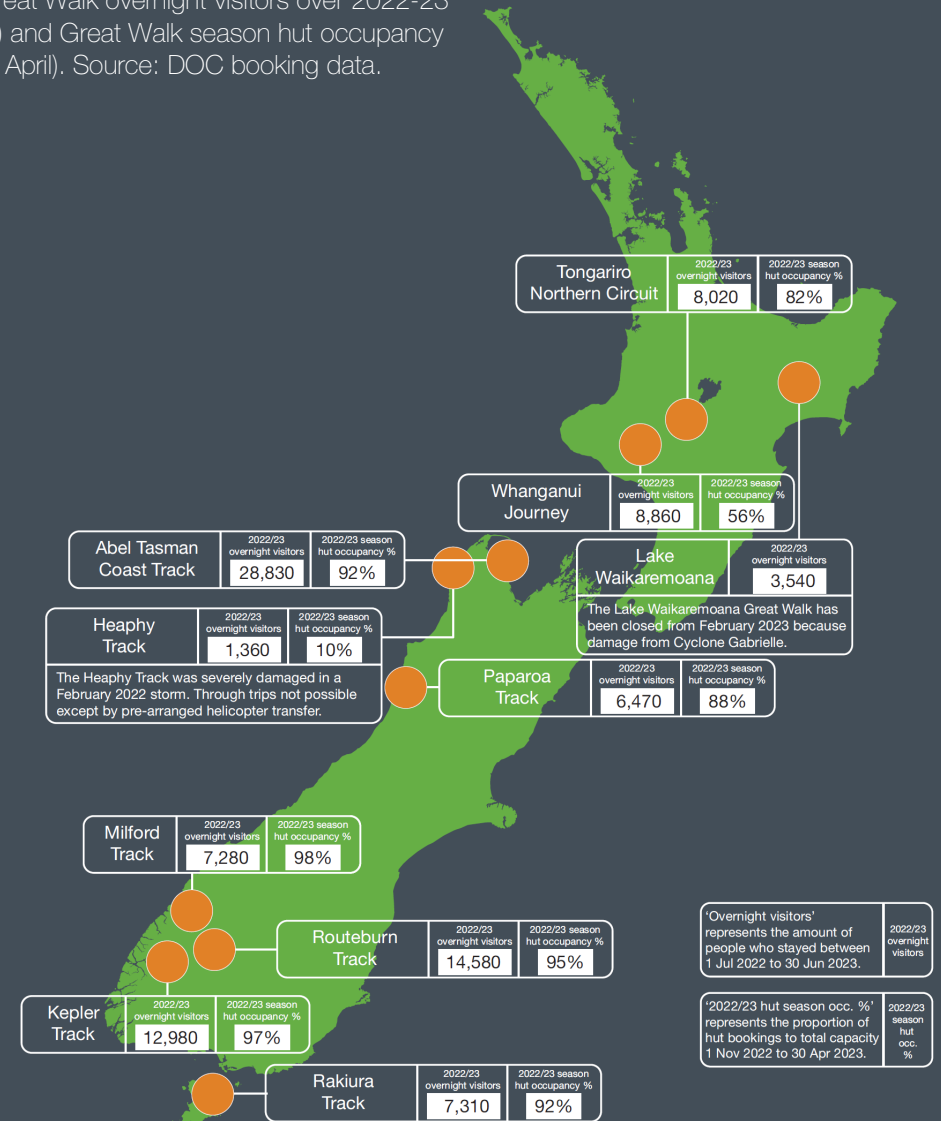
Around 87,950 people stayed at Great Walk huts and campsites, up 21% compared to this time last year, and similar to previous years. This occurred despite severe damage to the Heaphy Track.

There were fewer New Zealanders and more international visitors on Great Walks compared to 2021/22. This reflects the opening of international borders in 2022. New Zealanders make up 70% of overnight visitors to Great Walks.

The Abel Tasman Coast Track continues to be the busiest Great Walk, with more than double the visitors of any other Great Walk.

Across the Great Walks season (November to April), Great Walk huts had an average occupancy of 79%. Aside from the Heaphy Track, all South Island Great Walks were at or near capacity over the Great Walks season.

Figure 12: Great Walk overnight visitors over 2022-23 (July to June) and Great Walk season hut occupancy rates (Nov to April). Source: DOC booking data.



South Island camping more than doubled when compared to 2021/22

DOC manages close to 300 campsites. 149 of these campsites are bookable. Aside from 44 Great Walk campsites, 115 campsites are bookable. Around 245,800 people camped at these bookable campsites over 2022/23, up 49% compared to this time last year.

White Horse Hill Campground (Aoraki) surpassed Uretiti Beach Campsite (Northland) as the most visited DOC campsite in New Zealand over 2022/23. Uretiti Campsite was hit by flooding due to rain before the summer season.

Camping at bookable North Island campsites was down (-5%) compared to 2021/22. This reflects the severe weather events in the North Island.

South Island camping more than doubled, up 118% in visitor numbers compared to 2021/22. This reflects the return of international visitors to the country, including the South Island, and an increase in North Islanders staying at South Island campsites.

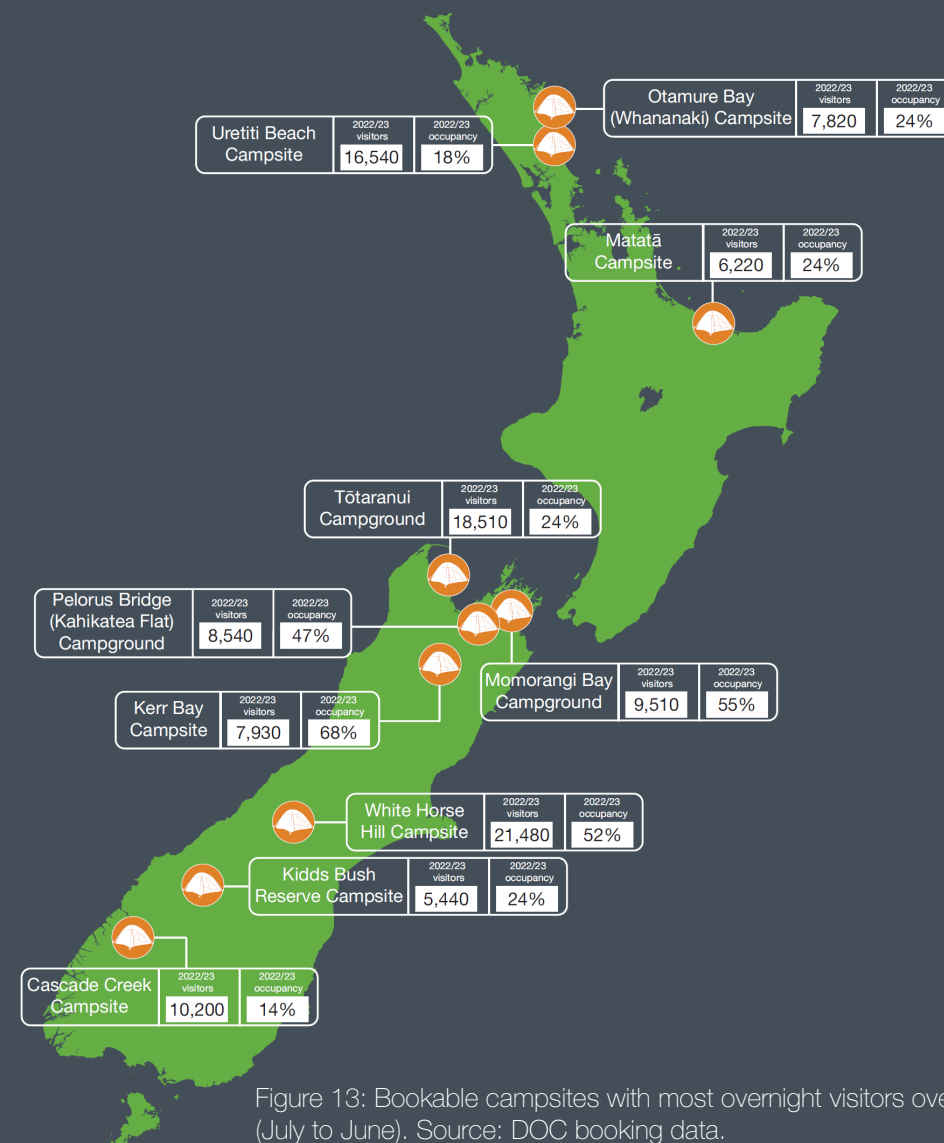


Figure 13: Bookable campsites with most overnight visitors over 2022-23 (July to June). Source: DOC booking data.

Aside from Great Walks around 89,000 people stayed at bookable huts

DOC manages over 950 huts across the country. Aside from Great Walk huts, 70 huts are bookable and many of these huts experienced high visitor demand.

Around 89,210 people stayed overnight at bookable huts, up 22% from last year. Hut occupancy rates average 36% occupancy over 2022/23.

Hooker Hut (Aoraki) and Packhorse Hut (Banks Peninsula) had fewer visitors than the huts shown on the map, but were the most occupied huts over 2022/23, at 80% and 71% annual hut occupancy, respectively.

The Pinnacles Hut (Coromandel) was the most visited non-GW hut in New Zealand, with around 11,240 people staying overnight and an occupancy rate of 47%.

Following Pinnacles Hut, iconic alpine huts located in National Parks – including Angelus Hut (Nelson Lakes) and Welcome Flat Hut (Westland Tai Poutini) – were busy.

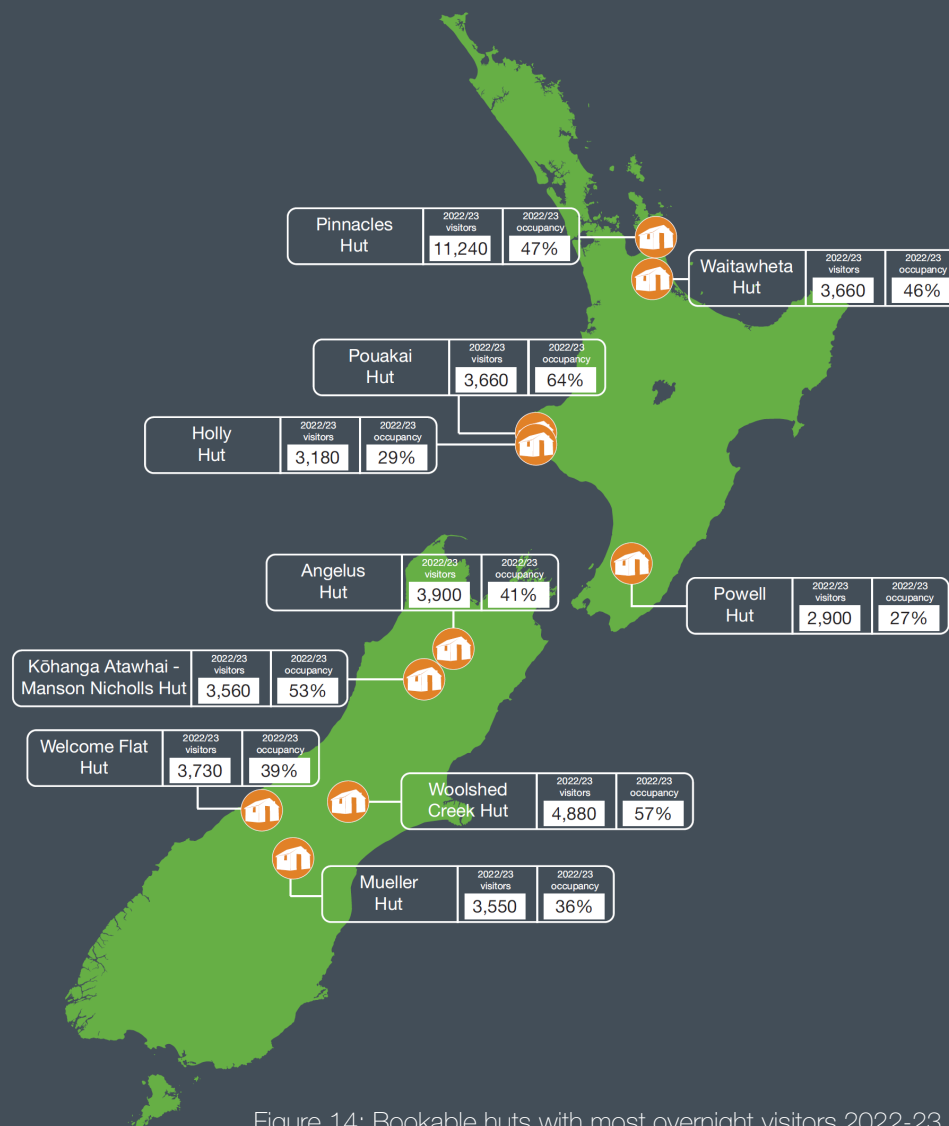


Figure 14: Bookable huts with most overnight visitors 2022-23 (July to June). Source: DOC booking data.

Looking to the future

As travel resumes in an era of high inflation and extreme weather events, visitor behaviour might continue to change in New Zealand. This next sub-section gleans what the future in recreation and tourism could be by understanding forecasts, forward bookings and trends.



Early signs show a busy 2023/24 Great Walks season ahead

The Great Walks will continue to be busy over 2023/24, with strong bookings.

Overall bednights on Great Walks are similar to this time last year – from 159,200 to 157,900.

Lake Waikaremoana remains closed from flooding earlier in the year, while the Heaphy Track is now partially open following storm damage.

The proportion of bookings by New Zealanders has fallen to 76% (down 6%) with the return of international visitors, compared to 2022/23 bednights. International visitors make up 24% of Great Walk bookings for 2023/24.

Great Walks	Bednights	% change
Abel Tasman Coast Track	36,600	+3%
Heaphy Track	8,400	+171%
Kepler Track	26,300	+2%
Lake Waikaremoana Track	Great Walk is currently closed due to flooding.	
Milford Track	22,300	No change as at full capacity
Paparoa Track	12,200	-5%
Rakiura Track	8,600	-12%
Routeburn Track	22,300	-5%
Tongariro Northern Circuit	12,300	+35%
Whanganui Journey	9,000	-11%
Great Walks – overall	157,900	-1%

Table 1: Comparing the amount of bednights booked between July 2023 to June 2024 as of 1 August 2023 to the previous year, between July 2022 to June 2023 as of 1 August 2022.

Expected resurgence in international tourism

To the right are DOC's international visitor forecasts based on existing tourism industry forecasts.

Australia, the United Kingdom, United States, Canada and Singapore have been performing well. Europe and Asian markets have been slower to return to NZ, with China only started to return in 2023.

“That first 50 percent of the recovery has come back a little faster than people had anticipated...I think the next 50 percent is going to be quite different and quite a bit more competitive.”

- René de Monchy, Tourism New Zealand (April 2023)

DOC expects international visitor arrivals to gradually rise

International visitor arrivals to New Zealand – actuals (blue) and forecasts (red).

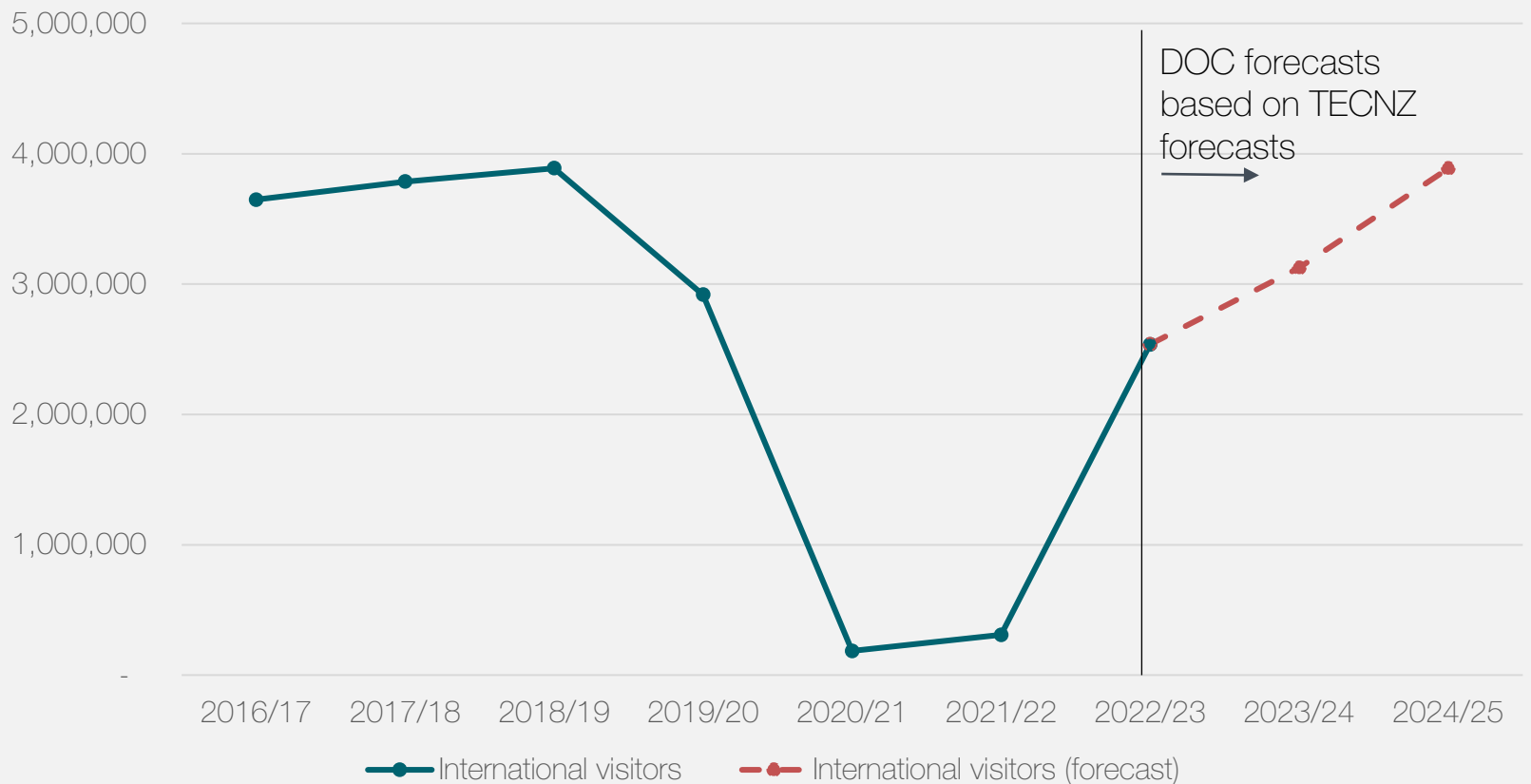


Figure 15: International visitor arrival forecasts. Source: DOC, utilising Stats NZ (historical figures) and earlier Tourism Export Council NZ (forecasts). These are a guideline only based on known factors at the time of preparation in September 2023.

Globally, locals are prioritising quality of life

Discontent is rising in some places from tourism. In Portofino, Italy, police are fining people who block foot traffic to take selfies.

While in Austria, locals in Hallstatt, a town that inspired the film *Frozen*, have given selfie-taking tourists a clear message: stop. They built a wall to partially obstruct a popular viewpoint because of the disruption caused by visitors crowding.

In Argentina, landlords are capitalising on international visitors returning. Many are pulling properties out of the long-term rental market and into Airbnb rentals, making it more difficult for locals to find a home. This has been reported in Queenstown as well.



Photo: Portofino has introduced no-waiting zones to prevent tourists stopping for selfies. Source: Canva.



Photo: Austrian village struggles with overtourism. Source: Reinhard Hörmandinger/AFP/Getty Images.

As visitors return there is renewed focus on regenerative tourism

In France, they intend to reduce visitor numbers at places, responding to environment threats, the quality of life for locals, and the visitor experience.

Patagonia has a focus on slow tourism. They prefer people visiting one region for a longer period, so the economic impact benefits the local community.

The Pacific nations are aiming for their people to be thriving from tourism, rather than being seen as dependent on tourism.

In Canada, there has been renewed interest in Indigenous history and culture and sharing this with visitors.



Photo: Aurora Village 'viTeepee' - Yellowknife, Northwest Territories. Source: Indigenous Tourism Canada.

“ Indigenous People today are really at a point of cultural rejuvenation. There’s been so much of our culture that has been lost due to colonisation....and what Indigenous tourism does is create a space for Indigenous people to be proud of who they are and to share who they are with visitors. It has a very high impact on rejuvenation and reconciliation.”

- Ryan Rogers, Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (June 2023)

Summary

Extreme weather events continue to damage tracks and accessways across the country. New Zealand saw two consecutive extreme weather events in the North Island. Some walks and camping sites are still closed from storm damage and flooding.

Shorter, accessible experiences near urban centres remain popular with New Zealanders. Coastal areas were popular over the summer, including places near main population centres. This reflects where New Zealanders live and travel.

International visitors are returning. However, changing economic conditions and more frequent extreme weather events will continue to affect tourism. **Looking after the environment and host communities is key going forward.**

Data and information sources

This document is similar but different from previous visitor insight reports. This is because DOC does not have current activity counter data reporting available.

- ▶ **DOC Public Pulse of Conservation (n=12,000)** – There were n=1,000 adults (18+) each month who participated in an online survey. No weighting has been applied to the data in obtaining a representative sample. Instead, quotas were relied upon.
- ▶ **MBIE International Visitor Survey (n=6,996)** – This document contains results for Quarter 3 2022, Quarter 4 2022 and Quarter 1 2023. Sub-samples vary and are unavailable, but are robust. Due to different qualifying rates data is not comparable between pre- and post-COVID-19.
- ▶ **DOC Bookable Accommodation** – DOC's booking system currently collects accommodation booking data for huts, campsites and lodges across New Zealand. Estimated visitor numbers and occupancy rates are from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023.

Appendix: Places New Zealanders visit

Understanding where New Zealanders undertake recreation and travel helps DOC understand the important places that contribute to the wellbeing of New Zealanders. Please note: this Appendix does not include places most visited by international visitors.



Whangārei area most popular with New Zealanders in NNI

Te Tai Tokerau Northland is steeped in rich cultural history and a place of spiritual significance, with many popular campgrounds and marine recreation. The map to the right shows the top places visited by New Zealanders in Northern North Island.

Te Tai Tokerau has low levels of domestic visitor activity to protected areas when compared to other regions of New Zealand.

The Whangārei area is most popular with New Zealanders. Other popular places visited by New Zealanders include: Tāne Mahuta in Waipoua Forest, Te Rerenga Wairua in the Far North, and walks in the Bay of Islands.

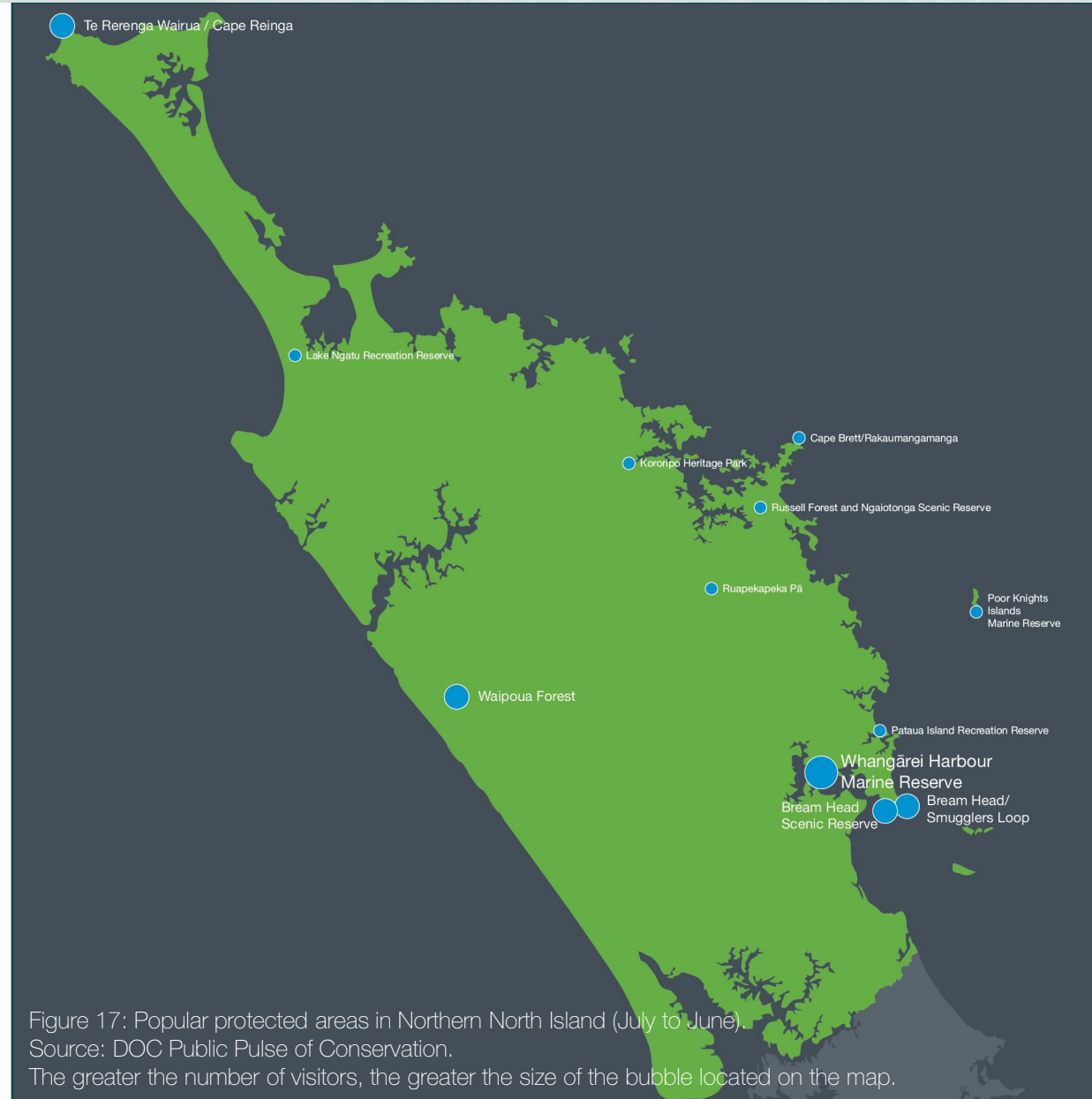


Figure 17: Popular protected areas in Northern North Island (July to June).

Source: DOC Public Pulse of Conservation.

The greater the number of visitors, the greater the size of the bubble located on the map.

Hauraki Gulf is popular with New Zealanders in Auckland

Auckland is New Zealand's largest region, home to more than one-third of our population, with many popular island experiences. The map to the right shows the top places visited by New Zealanders in the Auckland region.

The Auckland region has very high levels of domestic visitor activity to protected areas when compared to other regions of New Zealand.

Destinations located in the Hauraki Gulf are popular with New Zealanders. Long Bay-Okura Marine Reserve was the most popular protected natural area in New Zealand. Rangitoto Island and Fort Takapuna Historic Reserve were popular within the Auckland region.

Other popular destinations include Great Barrier Island/Aotea, the Hauraki Gulf Marine Reserve and Kawau Island Historic Reserve.

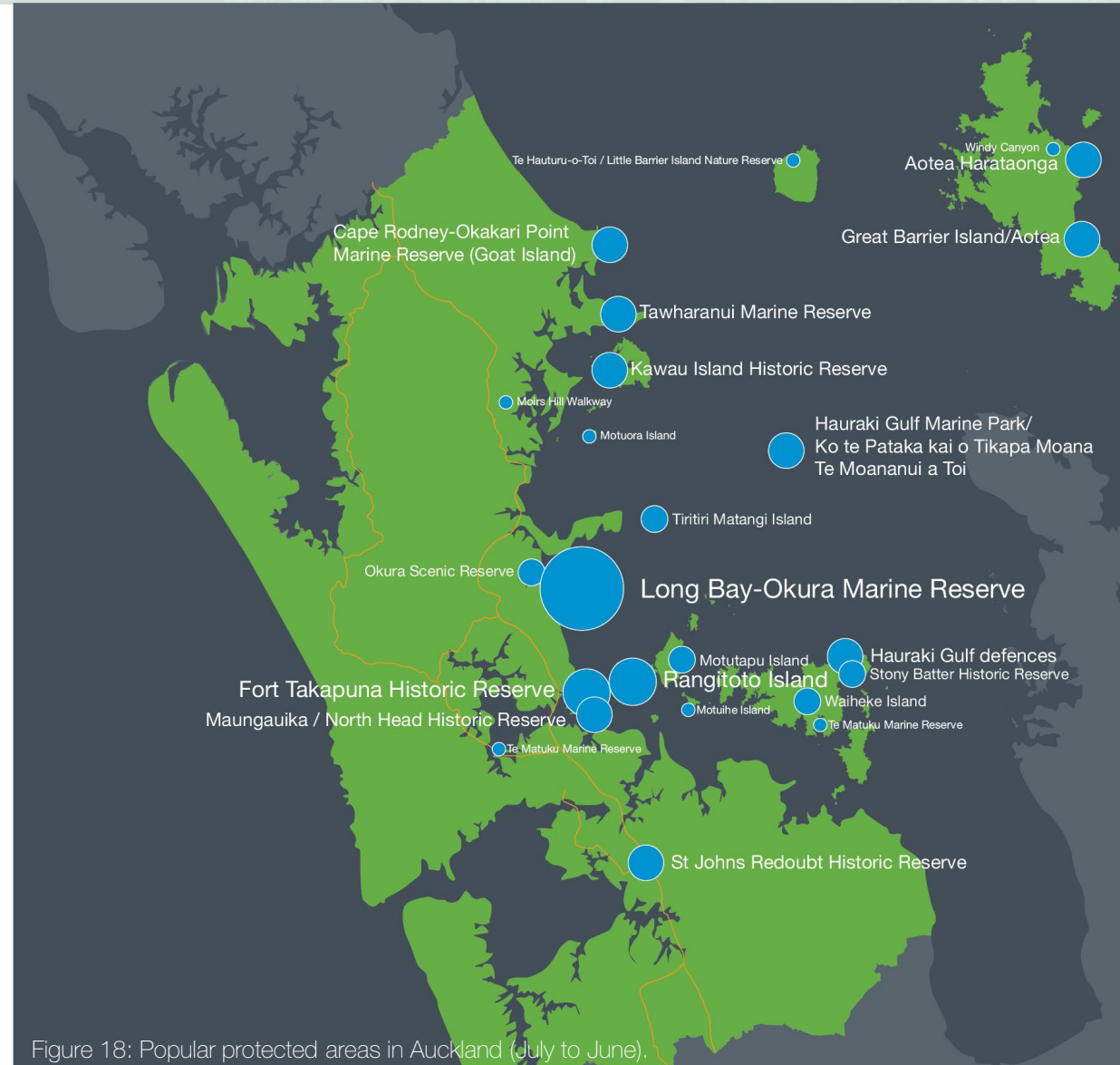


Figure 18: Popular protected areas in Auckland (July to June).
Source: DOC Public Pulse of Conservation.
The greater the number of visitors, the greater the size of the bubble located on the map.

Taranaki Maunga, Hakarimata and Coromandel busiest in HWT

The Hauraki-Waikato-Taranaki includes the Waikato awa, the longest river in New Zealand; Egmont National Park (proposed to be known as Te Papakura o Taranaki); and the Coromandel Peninsula. The map to the right shows the top places visited by New Zealanders in Hauraki-Waikato-Taranaki.

The region has medium levels of domestic visitor activity to protected areas when compared to other regions of New Zealand.

Taranaki Maunga attracted the most domestic visitors in the region, followed by Hakarimata Forest Park in Waikato. Other clusters of domestic visitors include:

- Waikato – Pirongia Forest Park and Kakepuku Historic Reserve.
- Coromandel – Coromandel Forest Park, Whitianga Rock.



Figure 19: Popular protected areas in Hauraki-Waikato-Taranaki (July to June).

Source: DOC Public Pulse of Conservation.

The greater the number of visitors, the greater the size of the bubble located on the map.

Visitor hubs near Kaimai ranges and Rotorua areas in ENI

Eastern North Island is a diverse region that is rich in history. The region has a range of unique and scenic landscapes, including coastal areas, forests, lakes and renowned geothermal areas. The map¹ to the right shows the top places visited by New Zealanders in Eastern North Island.

The Eastern North Island has medium-low levels of domestic visitor activity to protected areas when compared to other regions of New Zealand.

The Eastern North Island region has two clusters of popular domestic visitor activity:

- Kaimai Mamaku Forest Park – Karangahake Gorge and Waitawheta Tramway.
- Rotorua area – Okere Falls, Lake Rotoiti and Lake Rotoma scenic reserves.

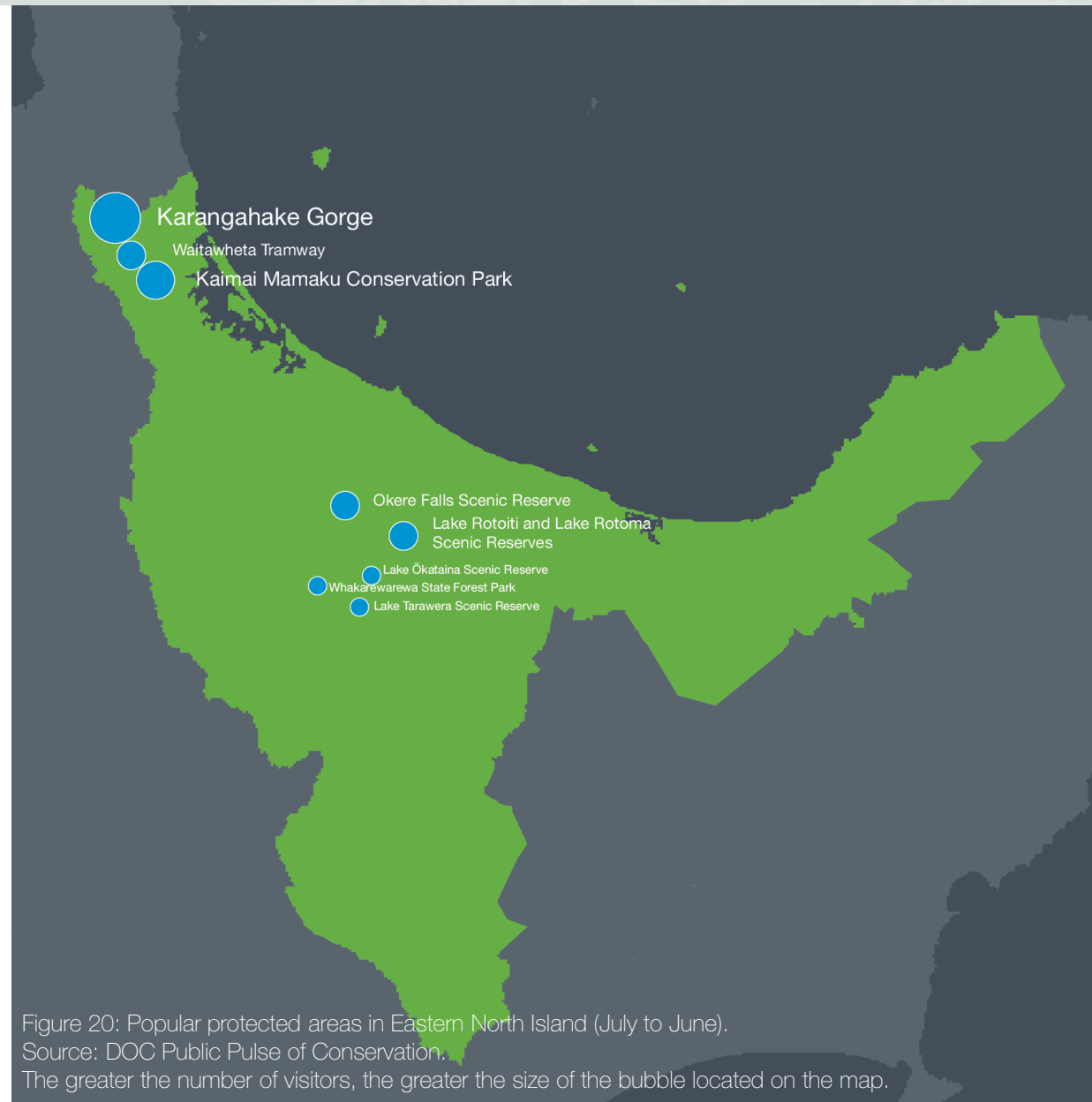


Figure 20: Popular protected areas in Eastern North Island (July to June).

Source: DOC Public Pulse of Conservation.

The greater the number of visitors, the greater the size of the bubble located on the map.

¹Tairāwhiti is not part of Eastern North Island map due to the boundaries not being finalised in DOC's geospatial system.

Taupō, Tongariro and Whanganui busiest in CNI

The Central North Island region is known for its outstanding natural environment, including the Tongariro and Whanganui National Parks. The map to the right shows the top places visited by New Zealanders in Central North Island.

The Central North Island has medium-low levels of domestic visitor activity to protected areas when compared to other regions of New Zealand.

Aside from Tongariro and Whanganui National Parks, the Central North Island region has a cluster of popular domestic visitor activity around the Taupō area, including Huka Falls, and Taupō Trout Fishery.

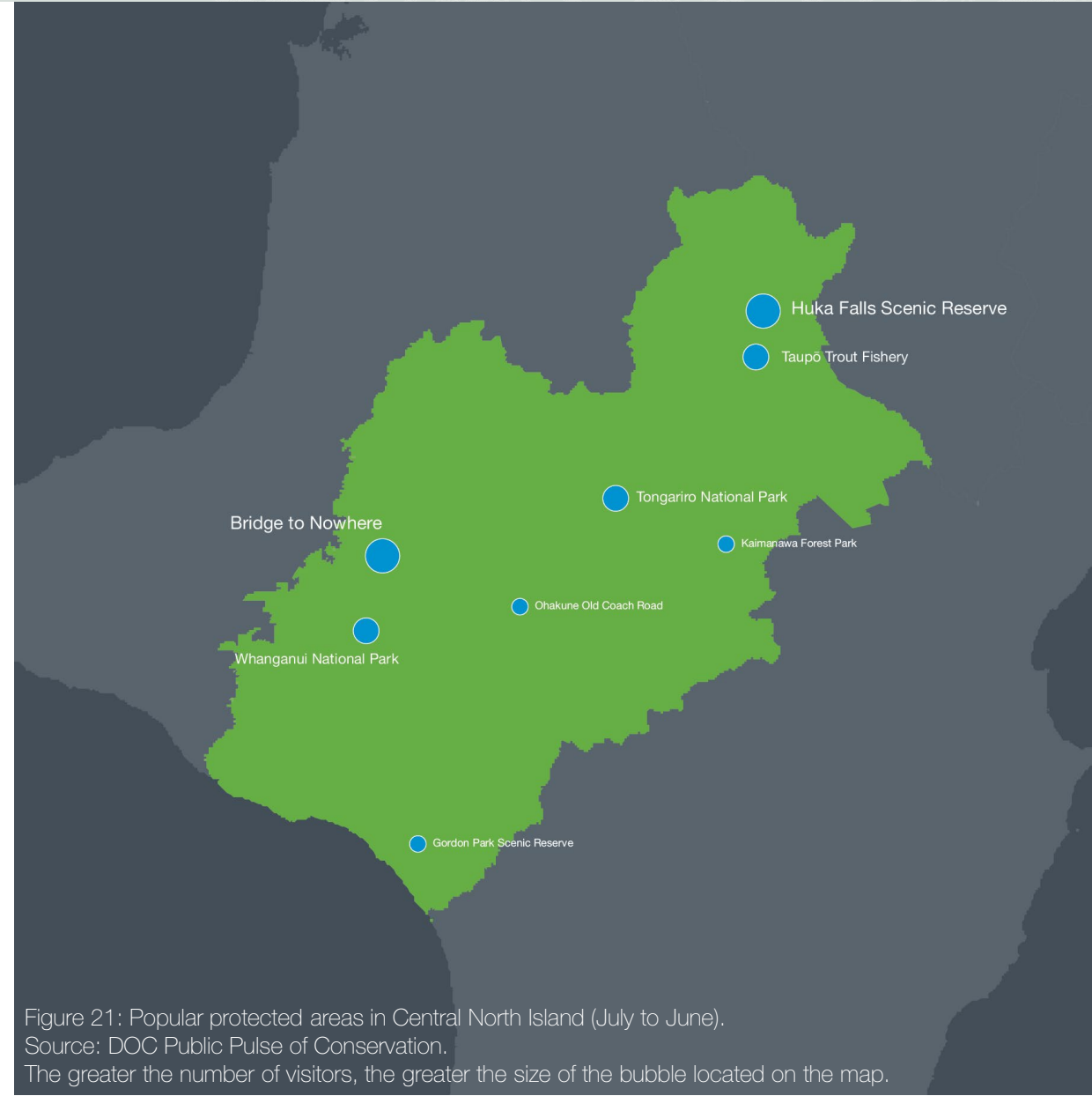


Figure 21: Popular protected areas in Central North Island (July to June).

Source: DOC Public Pulse of Conservation.

The greater the number of visitors, the greater the size of the bubble located on the map.

Experiences close to Wellington are most popular in LNI

The region includes Tairāwhiti,¹ the first place to see the sun, and the North Island's backbone – the Remutaka, Tararua, Ruahine, and Kaweka ranges. The map to the right shows the top places visited by New Zealanders in Lower North Island.

The Lower North Island has high levels of domestic visitor activity to protected areas when compared to other regions of New Zealand.

The most popular area in Lower North Island is Wellington where most people of the region live. Day trips to Matiu/Somes Island, and to neighbouring regions including the Kapiti Coast and Wairarapa are popular.

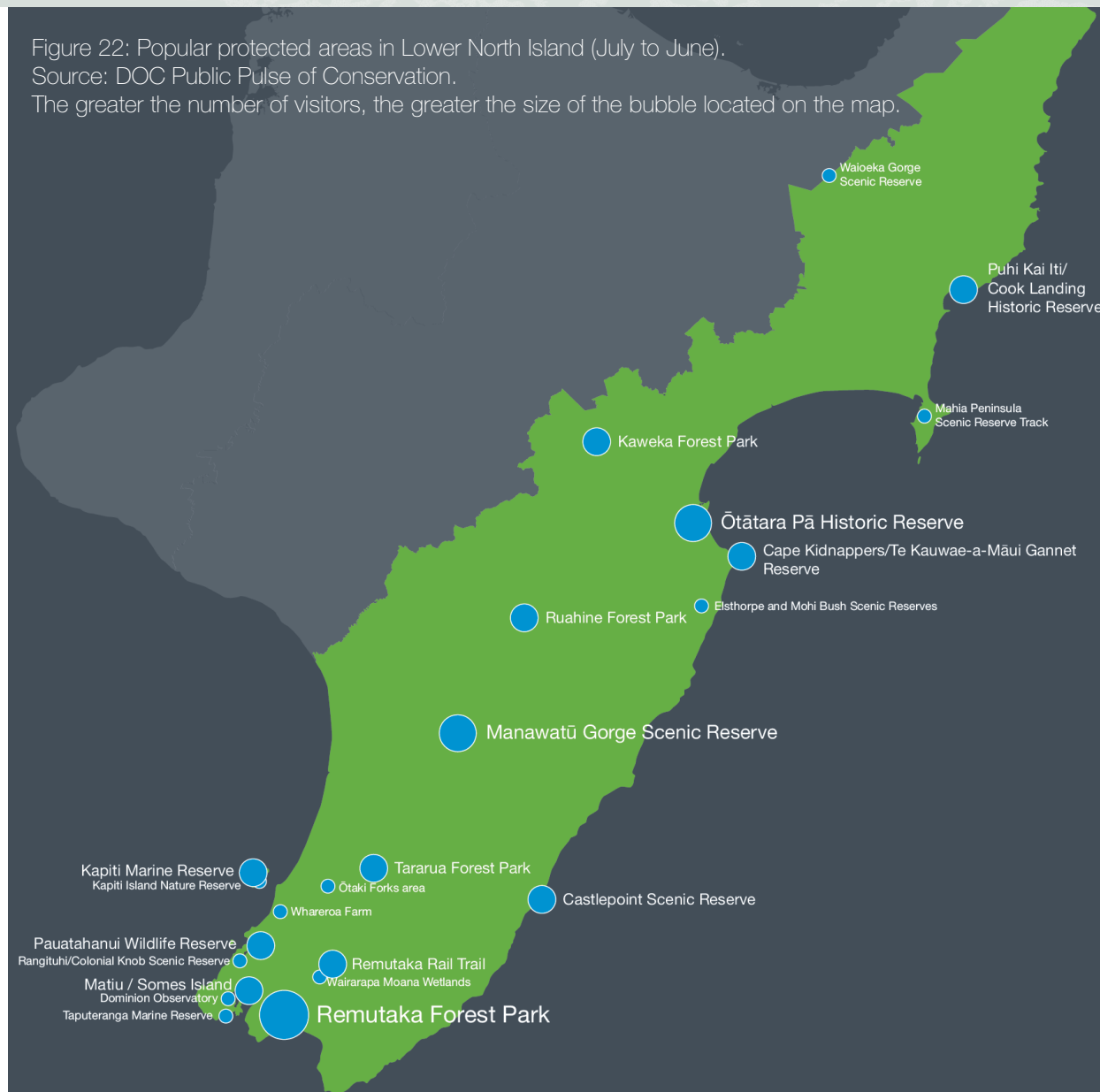
Other popular places include Te Āpiti – Manawatū Gorge, Ōtātara Pā in Hawkes Bay and Puhi Kai Iti/Cooks Landing in Te Tairāwhiti.

¹Tairāwhiti is not part of Eastern North Island map due to the boundaries not being finalised in DOC's geospatial system.

Figure 22: Popular protected areas in Lower North Island (July to June).

Source: DOC Public Pulse of Conservation.

The greater the number of visitors, the greater the size of the bubble located on the map.



Abel Tasman and Nelson Lakes most popular areas in NSI

Northern South Island is known for its stunning Abel Tasman National Park. The region includes Nelson Lakes National Park and the Marlborough Sounds. The map to the right shows the top places visited by New Zealanders in Northern South Island.

The region has low levels of domestic visitor activity to protected areas when compared to other regions of New Zealand.

Abel Tasman and Nelson Lakes national parks are the most popular places in the region. Other popular places include Glenhope Scenic Reserve near St Arnaud and Kawatiri Historic Reserve.

Looking at Marlborough, the most popular areas visited by New Zealanders include Whites Bay and Pelorus Bridge.

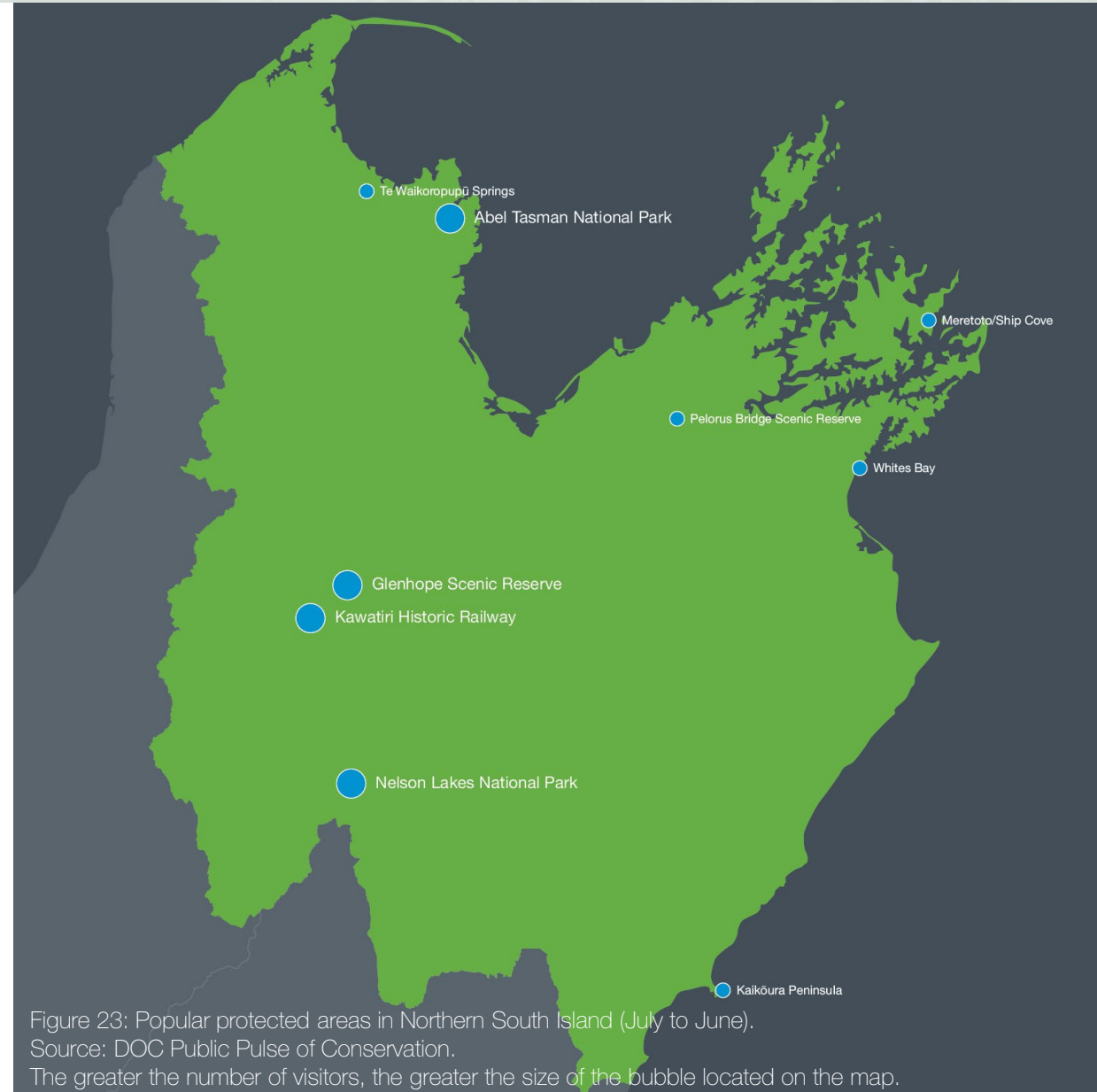


Figure 23: Popular protected areas in Northern South Island (July to June).
Source: DOC Public Pulse of Conservation.
The greater the number of visitors, the greater the size of the bubble located on the map.

Low number of New Zealanders heading outdoors on the West Coast

The West Coast, Te Tai Poutini, is synonymous with being one of the most beautiful and natural regions of New Zealand. The map to the right shows the top places visited by New Zealanders in Western South Island.

While the West Coast is popular with international visitors, the region has very low domestic visitor activity to protected areas when compared to other regions of New Zealand.

Places that were most popular on the West Coast were: Lewis Pass Scenic Reserve, Brunner Mine, Hokitika Gorge, Charming Creek and Denniston area.



Figure 24: Popular protected areas in Western South Island (July to June).

Source: DOC Public Pulse of Conservation.

The greater the number of visitors, the greater the size of the bubble located on the map.

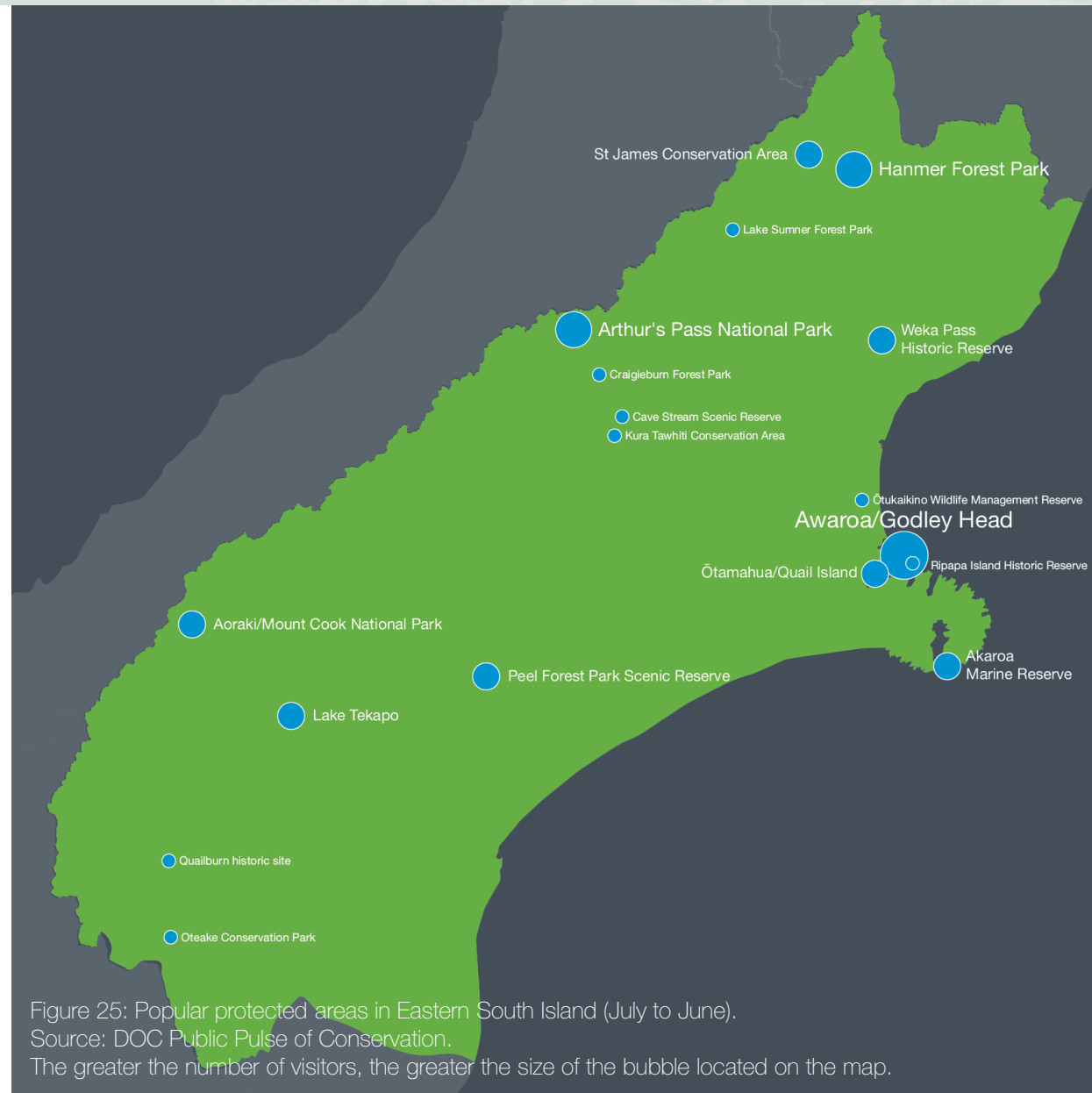
Experiences close to Christchurch are most popular in ESI

The Eastern South Island is a popular gateway to the South Island and home to spectacular natural experiences. This includes Aoraki and Arthurs Pass National Parks. The map to the right shows the top places visited by New Zealanders in Eastern South Island.

The Eastern South Island has many popular destinations and high levels of domestic visitor activity to protected areas when compared to other regions of New Zealand.

Popular places in Eastern South Island are within two hours of Christchurch, including:

- 30 min from Christchurch: Awaroa/Godley Head.
- 1 hour from Christchurch: Ōtamahua/Quail Island; Weka Pass.
- 2 hours from Christchurch: Hanmer Forest Park; Arthurs Pass National Park; Akaroa Marine Reserve; Peel Forest Scenic Reserve.



Otago is the most popular region with New Zealanders in SSI

The Southern South Island is one of the great natural areas of the world. The region includes Mount Aspiring and Fiordland National Parks. The map to the right shows the top places visited by New Zealanders in Southern South Island.

The region has many popular destinations with medium levels of domestic visitor activity to protected areas when compared to other regions of New Zealand.

Lake Hāwea near Wānaka attracted the most domestic visitors in the region, followed by Silver Peaks and Bushy Beach scenic reserves. Other clusters of places visited by domestic visitors include:

- Dunedin area – Tunnel Beach.
- Queenstown area – Arrowtown
- Fiordland – Lake Te Anau
- Central Otago – Otago Central Rail Trail.



Figure 26: Popular protected areas in Southern South Island (July to June).

Source: DOC Public Pulse of Conservation.

The greater the number of visitors, the greater the size of the bubble located on the map.