

OUR LAND  
AND WATER

Toitū te Whenua,  
Toiora te Wai

## *The Our Land and Water story*

Our Land and Water is a National Science Challenge. National Science Challenges are dedicated and designed to break new ground in areas of science that are crucial to New Zealand's future. In our case, this means, tackling the biggest science-based issues and opportunities facing our country in the area of primary production, and the complex relationship it has with our precious land and water resources.

Enhancing New Zealand's primary sector production and productivity while maintaining or improving land and water quality is our aim. The vision for Our Land and Water is that New Zealand is world-renowned for integrated and successful land based primary production systems, supported by healthy land and water and capable people. We already have research programmes underway that specifically target our aim and are working towards realising our vision.

A fundamental driver in the Challenge is the importance of Māori playing a more active role in the sustainable management and economic development of our land and water resources. This takes shape in a vision mātauranga strategy that is woven into our Challenge's research programmes.

## *Why do we need the Challenge?*

Did you know that New Zealand currently earns approximately \$37 billion from agrifood exports, but that these same products are sold in international markets for an estimated \$250 billion? That means we're missing out on about \$213 billion in profit for some of our nation's best produce. There is also potential for water quality limits to impact primary production across the country.

Our Challenge is trying to answer the difficult questions from producers and industry such as: how far can I reduce my environmental footprint and still be profitable? If this footprint is still too much, then what other land uses can I change to and where in the landscape is this most suitable? Furthermore, this needs to be done fast.

## Challenge Timeline

**November 2015:** Our Land and Water Challenge funding approved

**January 2016:** Our Land and Water Challenge launched

**May 2016:** Our Land and Water science research underway



Minister, The Honourable Steven Joyce launches the ***Our Land and Water Challenge***

## The Challenge is structured around three interlocking themes:

- **Greater value in global markets** – emphasise the role that primary products which are highly valued for their sustainability qualities, can play in incentivising changes in land use or land use practices.
- **Innovative, resilient land and water use** – evaluate and model land and water resource interactions with primary production systems to find new ways of assessing land and water use. This land and water use must incorporate productive, environmental, social and cultural factors that create the most efficient, innovative and resilient land use options for our resources.
- **Collaborative capacity** – best processes and methods to enact change via an increase in collaborative capacity and understanding.

The “Nexus” is the integrating function for these themes and is at the heart of *The Challenge*. It is the place where

the *Challenge* strategy is developed and updated, where Challenge leadership operates, and from where research impact is measured and strategic relationships overseen.

## Who’s involved with the Challenge?

Our Land and Water provides an opportunity for collaboration between the best teams and researchers from universities and other academic institutions, Crown Research Institutes, businesses and non-government organisations to create sustainable and long-term research plans, activities and solutions together. We have brought together the best team for the job to deliver our aim.

There are twelve partners in our Challenge including our host AgResearch: ESR, GNS Science, Landcare Research, Lincoln Agritech, Lincoln University, Massey University, NIWA, Plant & Food Research, SCION, University of Auckland and University of Waikato.

