

ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23



**THRIVING
SOUTHLAND**

*Tōnui ana te whenua. Tōnui ana te takata.
A thriving, prosperous land. A thriving, prosperous people.*



A message from the chair & project lead

WELCOME

Welcome to the 2022-23 Thriving Southland Annual Report. This report provides an overview of the projects, events, activities and much more that Thriving Southland has enabled, supported or led.

What a year we've had! More Catchment Groups have been launched and there are now 35 groups with over 1500 farmers and community members actively involved in Catchment Groups. There are more events than ever, and more farmers attending and engaging.

The projects taking place, in our catchments and on Southland farms, are inspiring! The science and data coming out of Southland is being sought nationally and helping to deliver a far-reaching impact.

This year we celebrated the amazing achievements of Southland Catchment Groups, with the creation of a series of Catchment Group Display Boards at a gallery in Invercargill, inviting the public in to appreciate some of the great work being done throughout the region.

Just some examples of these great projects, include Carbon Neutral Dipton, Hedgehope Makarewa Understanding our Landscape and the work of Aparima Community Environment (ACE) and the Aparima catchments.

We approved 35 new projects, plus two major projects had variations approved which saw additional funding deliver on the great work being done. The total funding approved for Southland Catchment Group projects (including variations) was \$764,168.

How we work



Jeff Grant
Independent Chair



Kate Scott
Vice Chair



Richard Kyte
Project Lead

Board of Directors

Bernadine Balle-Guilleux
(Independent)

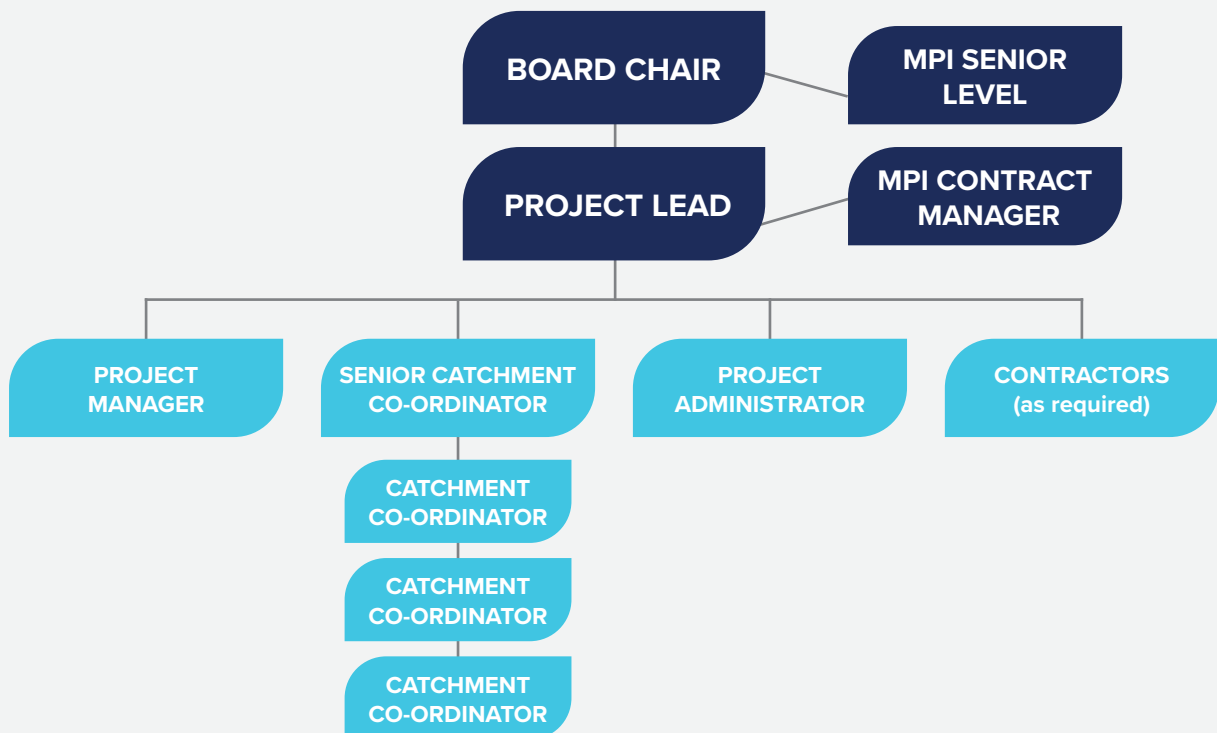
Neil Gardyne
Paul Marshall

Ewen Mathieson
Jonathan Pemberton

Lynden Prebble
John White

Operational Structure

(with linkage to Governance and Funder)



Thriving Southland's purpose is to *INSPIRE COMMUNITY ACTION*

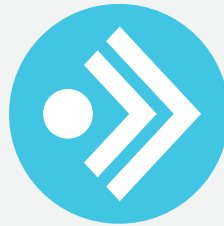
Thriving Southland is underpinned by its values.

At Thriving Southland we do...



Brilliant

Brilliant is facing our challenges head on, being prepared to work hard for success, and always celebrating our achievements.



Collaborative

Our best collaboration comes from being honest, acting with integrity, and being prepared to learn from others. Through collaboration we will deliver results.



Community

Community is at the centre of everything we do. Our success comes from connecting others, and empowering communities to thrive for the future of our children.



Inspiration

We will inspire greatness through our passion. Our passion for Southland and its communities is at the heart of who we are.

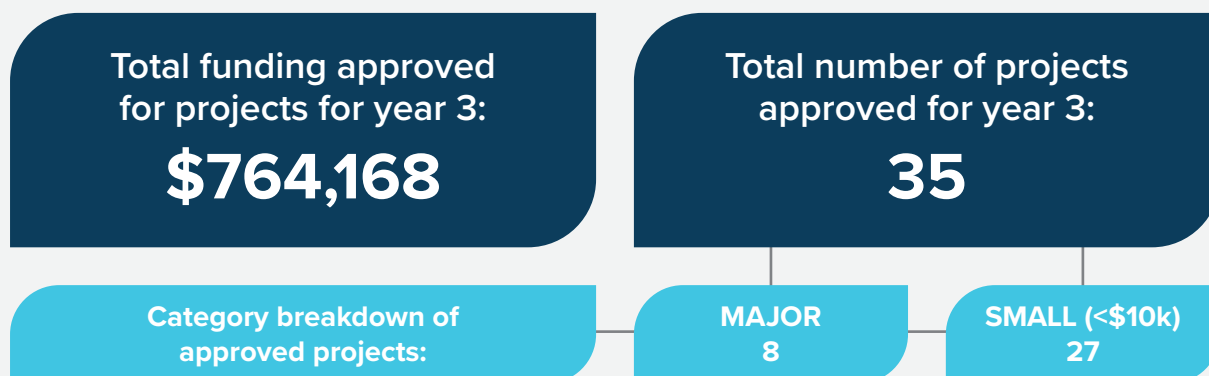


Solutions

We encourage innovation, foster opportunity and seek outcomes through on the ground action.

Catchment Group members maintained that Thriving Southland contributes to farmers' improved sense of wellbeing.

Catchment Projects funded by the MPI Change and Innovation Project



Of the 35 projects approved in this financial year for Catchment Groups, there are some wonderful examples, including the Orauea Understanding the Geology Project, Carbon Neutral Dipton Project, GHG Workshops with Ants Roberts (small project), Lower and Mid Oreti Bus Trip (small project), and the Waikawa, South Coast and Titiroa Mid-Winter get together (small project).

APARIMA COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT (ACE) GROUP

The Aparima Community Environment (ACE) Group is made up of six farmer-led Aparima catchment groups – Orepuke, Pourakino, Waimatuku, Lower, Mid and Upper Aparima – has been operating since 2018.

Over the three-year project term, ACE has successfully increased farmer and community engagement and awareness. It has also supported farmers to continue learning and implementing good farming practices, developing farm environment plans and trialling innovative practices.

ACE has worked with farmers to explore and trial future farming systems and new on-farm mitigations that will support the shift needed to improve freshwater ecosystem health, soil health and greenhouse gas emissions quality, in a cost-effective and humane way.

There are four workstreams funded under the ACE project:

1. **Stream walks and water testing** – raising community awareness and engagement through stream walks and water testing.
2. **Good farming practices** – involves working with farmers to understand and manage environmental risks on-farm and implement additional good management practices and farm environment plans (FEP).
3. **Sediment trap** – entails providing farmers with expert help to create a network of sediment traps and further guidance on cost implications and effectiveness.
4. **Exploring future solutions** – explores future solutions, including alternative farming systems and environmental mitigations.

This has culminated in a great farmer-facing reference tool “**ACE at a Glance**” pulling together all the learning and information from this impressive body of work.

Projects not funded by the Change and Innovation Project

Funded through different workstreams are the AgMardt and Just Transition Projects. We also received funding from BNZ and ASB Banks for Catchment Group small projects.

AGMARDT - UNDERSTANDING YOUR LANDSCAPE'S RESILIENCE: BEYOND REGULATION

In collaboration with Land and Water Science, Thriving Southland won the AgMardt Food and Fibres Aotearoa NZ Challenge and received \$498,000 to deliver the project.

The project is a joint initiative between the rural community, Thriving Southland and Land and Water Science. Many farmers are actively seeking opportunities to reduce their environmental impact to meet their goals, regulations, consumer and community expectations.

Farmers have long-term skills and knowledge balancing a range of internal and external factors in their decision-making. Uncertainty in on-farm decision-making has increased in recent years due to:

- » Changing consumer and processor expectations
- » Supply chain issues and change in cost structures
- » Cost of and access to capital
- » Concerns around climate change
- » Change in regulation.



Beyond Regulation has been brought together to deliver accessible, practical, and detailed information regarding environmental risk and mitigations, communicated through farmer facing information to facilitate the acceleration of change in the rural sector and provide land users with confidence in their decisions.

The project has three case study farms: sheep and beef, dairy and arable, set in a diversity of landscapes to give a broad understanding of the opportunities available to landowners and their communities when looking at mitigating environmental footprint.



JUST TRANSITION: SOUTHLAND FOOD AND FIBRE PROJECT

As part of the Southland Just Transition programme, which is funded through Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), we have been working on the Southland Food and Fibre project. The project received funding of \$60,000.

This project is exploring opportunities in the food and fibre sector, with the aim of prioritising ten specific opportunities for Southland and producing a detailed blueprint for each. The blueprints will have practical information, guidance, data and trends to help inform future investment and decision-making.



BNZ FUNDING

Thanks to BNZ for \$8,000 funding support for the Southland Catchment Groups. So far, the funding has gone toward growing native plants, holding education days, purchasing water quality eDNA testing kits, stream health testing field days and community barbecues.

ASB FUNDING

ASB have provided funding of \$3,250 to Catchment Groups for catchment maps.



Supporting Catchment Groups

ON THE GROUND

Providing on-the-ground support has been invaluable to enable Catchment Group meetings and events which bring people together with a common goal being to inform and connect.

Over the year there have been **186 catchment meetings** and events with over **3,000 attendees**.

TOOLS

In October 2022, the **National Catchments Forum** was held in Wellington and we sponsored two Catchment Group Leaders to attend, from Mid Oreti and Wendonside Catchment Groups. Jake Stewart (Greater Dipton) also attended under a Landcare Trust/MPI Young Farmers sponsorship.

The first of two Catchment Group Leaders Forums was held on 2 November at the Hokonui Rūnanga. The forum was an opportunity for Catchment Group Leaders to come together, connect, share and learn. Included at the Forum were speakers Riki Parata, from the Rūnanga, sharing information on their projects and community work, BNZ showcasing its funding to support Catchment Groups and DairyNZ demonstrating and providing water quality kits for the Groups.

A second Forum was held on 22 May 2023 with keynote speaker Nick Pyke, Board Chair of AgMardt. Nick also joined the panel discussion with Jeff Grant (Thriving Southland Chair) and Jon Pemberton (Thriving Southland board member). There were 55 representatives who attended from 18 different Catchment Groups.

Our annual **Christmas competition** was a huge success again in 2023. Although it wasn't funded by Thriving Southland, it was supported and funded by Catchment Groups, with amazing prizes being sponsored by local businesses.



In April 2023, we launched our **Couch Photo Project**. The project aimed to recognise Catchment Group members as farmers and valued community members. To do this, we offered a free family photo session and an opportunity to share their story. We took an old couch to different locations throughout the four main river catchments, where a photographer captured families or farm teams (including dogs). In return for the family photo, we asked three questions:

- » What they are most proud of?
- » What has been the most valuable thing from being involved with a catchment group?
- » What is something useful that your catchment group has done?

These photos were showcased prior to the Catchment Group Forum for the public to come and view.



What has been the most valuable thing about being involved with a Catchment Group?

“Learning how best to look after the environment, applying the most sustainable ways of farming.”

- SAM MUKUNDU



What is something useful your Catchment Group has done?

“Large variety of events and field days. Something for everyone.”

- GEORGIE GALLOWAY



What are you most proud of in your farming business?

“Retaining and preserving our native forest and clean streams – and showing them off!”

- BRETT FREW



What has been the most valuable thing about being involved with a Catchment Group?

“Connecting with the community.”

- JON PEMBERTON

In June 2023, eight Catchment Group members, and four others, took part in a one-day workshop on the Treaty of Waitangi facilitated by Sharon Annett from Treaty Education.

We also sponsored two Catchment Group Members to attend the Southland Business Chamber Leadership Academy. The purpose of this leadership programme is to provide the opportunity to build leadership capabilities through personal development and by learning from experience of others. The Leadership Academy was delivered across Southland and Jessica Goodwright attended the Otatau Academy and Katherine McCullum attended the Gore Academy.

EVENTS

Over the year, Thriving Southland has held a number of events where Catchment Groups have had opportunities to engage with speakers on a range of topics and subjects. These events were a combination of informal (stakeholder breakfast), formal (AGM) and inspiring (everything to gain conference). These events worked in conjunction with the 275 events that Catchment Groups also held across the year.

The Everything to Gain free event in December 2022 was hosted with AgResearch for farmers and stakeholders. This was held on 15 December using speakers with connections to international markets and customers to talk about the opportunities that exist nationally and internationally. They included Alice Ritchie from Tescos, Sinead Leahy from NZAgrich, Rod Carr from the Climate Change Commission, Vangelis Vitalis who is Deputy Secretary, Trade and Economic, and Simon Tucker from Fonterra.



The AGM was held on 10 November at Croydon Lodge in Gore. It included guest speaker Nick Pyke from AgMardt followed with a panel discussion with Nick, Blake Holgate from Rabobank and Bernadine Balle-Guilleux Thriving Southland Board Member. Over 40 people attended.

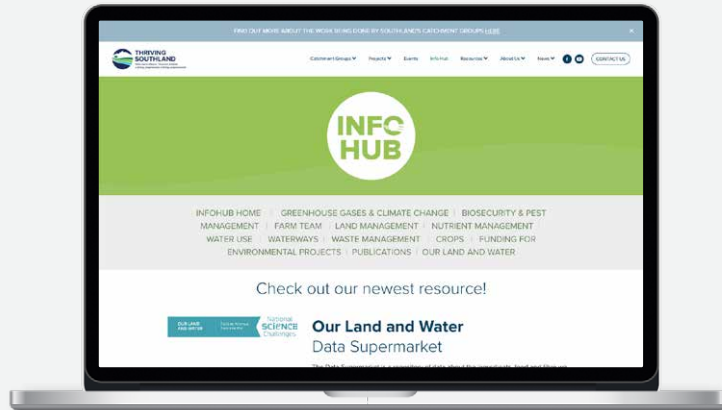


RESOURCES

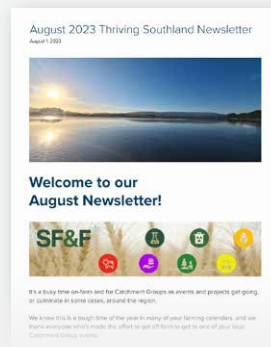
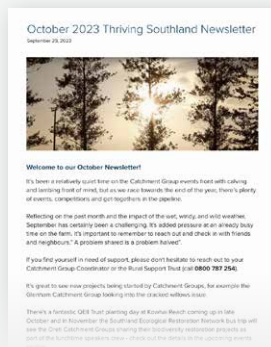
A range of new resources have been created in the 2022-2023 year, over and above resources created by the Catchment Groups. For example, to promote the groups and showcase the breadth of work being undertaken in Southland, we created an overview of the Catchment Groups through display boards and a booklet.



The Info Hub on the Thriving Southland website also had an overhaul, and more information was added, providing useful resources and tools for groups and farmers.

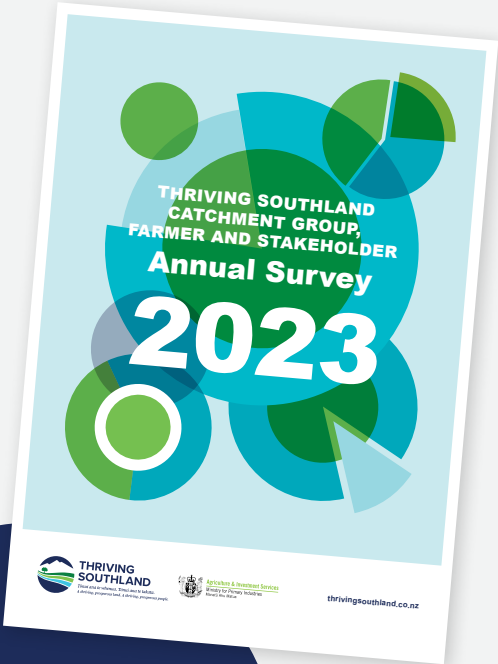


An important mechanism to connect with farmers is our monthly newsletter, now in its third year, and with over 1500 recipients.



Science

Each year, we conduct an Annual Survey with Catchment Group members, farmers and stakeholders from across the region. Farmers shared that they want to improve their businesses, both environmentally and financially, and that Catchment Groups are a safe place to focus on the issues and challenges they face and to see those things as opportunities. You can read the full survey results on our website.



NZIER RESEARCH

The aim of the project is to help the current farming generation negotiate with other generations and achieve change on farm. It will explore the issue of intergenerational communication, produce some initial advice for farmers, and suggest potential next steps. Research outcomes will be shared in the next financial year.

NZIER RESEARCH

The aim of the project is to better understand the farmer's voice to target efforts to influence regulations. The research continues into the new financial year.

EXTENSION FRAMEWORK

We worked with Scarlatti to create an extension template for groups with projects. The template helps groups to consider the objectives of their projects, understand what extension is and why it is important. It also provides the the prompts to consider the objectives of the project and how the activities lend themselves to extension.

Independent Evaluation



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Thriving Southland: Inspiring Community Action An Independent Evaluation 2022-2023



Access to science supports solution-based conversations and collective action among Catchment Group members.

There will be a continued need for Thriving Southland as the culture, climate and environment change to support farmers work through the different trade-offs and implement change.

Following the Catchment Group events, farmers say they are hopeful about the future and excited about positive opportunities.

33 new projects worth \$271,897 started between May 2022 and May 2023.

There are value-based synergies where **farmers and iwi can connect** the two worldviews to further positive change.

Farmers feel proud of their efforts and associate them with a positive sense of self-esteem and self-worth.

The Thriving Southland team are motivating and inspire farmers to engage.

In 2022-2023 there is clear evidence of farmers' increased confidence with the science.

"We can see individual farms – they're starting to be able to see the cumulative impact of doing smaller things together in different places, for the **benefit of everyone**. And then it doesn't become a blame game."

Farmer quote

*"If we didn't ...[have] access to regional funding like we do through Thriving, I don't know that we would be as advanced as we are as a group today."
Farmer quote*



Access to science is a game changer for farmers.

"I now have more understanding... about our environmental impacts [of] the stream that runs through our farm... and more understanding of regulations that are coming in and where to look for information and support."

Farmer quote

Through the Catchment Groups, Thriving Southland is uniquely **supporting cross-sectoral dialogue**



Thriving Southland...

contributes to farmers' **improved sense of wellbeing**

works in partnership with the **35 Catchment Groups**

is in a unique position to **bring together farmers from the different sectors**

enables farmers to lead and respond to their challenges with a better understanding of the science and what will work

fills the gaps that other organisations do not cater for.

Building relationships

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Thriving Southland's reputation continues to grow, and we are now established in Southland and across the country. We have received feedback that we are seen as an example to other Catchment Group coordinating bodies and they follow our progress and take learnings to apply to their own organisations.

Our focus on stakeholder engagement and building strong relationships remains a priority.

We are developing a relationship with the Reimaging Mataura River project and Hokonui Rūnanga Kaupapa Taiao. Together they offer opportunities for Catchment Groups to engage with iwi and better understand a te ao Māori worldview of the environment. Feedback is that this process has been hugely successful for the farmers involved.



Our Stakeholder breakfast on 20 April provided a great way for our local stakeholders to catch up on the work of Southland's network of Catchment Groups, and a chance for us to thank them for their support. Four Catchment Group members gave a brief run-down on projects underway in their catchment.

Thriving Southland communications activities

Over the past year, Thriving Southland's communication activities have continued to go from strength to strength. The brand remains well-established and widely recognised not only within Southland but also further afield – as evident from the increased interest and engagement from farmers, Catchment Groups and stakeholders outside of the region.

Thriving Southland and Catchment Groups have become prominent and influential players in the region, thanks to the regularly updated website, engaging videos, popular monthly newsletter, strategic radio advertisements, frequent radio interviews, robust presence on both organic and paid social media, cost-effective geo-targeted digital advertising campaigns, and positive media coverage.

KEY COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING ACTIVITIES:

1 July 2022 – 31 June 2023

NEWSLETTER

By June 2023, **1,417** people received the newsletter every month, achieving well over industry norm open and click rates (44.6% compared to 23.3% industry norm open rates and **3.32% click rate** compared to 2.94% industry norm). The August 2022 newsletter was sent to **1,311** recipients and achieved an impressive **50% open rate** and a remarkable 8% click rate.

WEBSITE

Targeted digital campaigns driving traffic to the website and specific project or campaign pages have resulted in high user engagement, with an average of over **2,132 monthly visits** and a total of **25,582 visits** over the year. The most visited pages in 2022-23 (after the homepage) were the Events and About Us pages.

MARKETING

Throughout the year, Thriving Southland ran a wide range of targeted digital marketing campaigns on various platforms, including Southland Times/Stuff, Farmers Weekly, Otago Daily Times and NZ Herald to raise awareness of Thriving Southland and to promote the Beyond Regulation project, the Winter Crop Trial video, our Give it a Go campaign, the Everything to Gain event, as well as other events, workshops and the Two Years of Thriving Southland video.

Two full page and two half page adverts were also placed in Farming First, a publication delivered to 19k RD Box Holders in Southland. A half page ad (plus free editorial) was placed in the March edition of Farming Outlook & Field Days – a special supplement/publication inserted into six papers: Farming First, Southland Times, The Press, Marlborough Express, The Timaru Herald, Nelson Mail.

MEDIA

Over the year, a great range of stories have appeared across multiple publications and media channels, from TV, to radio, print and online. There has been a minimum of nine stories per quarter, including coverage of the Carbon Neutral Dipton project, ACE and more.

FACEBOOK

Facebook ad campaigns have been particularly successful, resulting in more than **2,609 link clicks** and **390,265 impressions**, achieving an average click through rate (CTR) of **3.02%**; industry norm is 0.89%.

RADIO

Thirteen interviews aired on Hokonui's The Muster over the past year. All radio segments are shared on Thriving Southland's social media and uploaded on the website. The Muster is Southland's only local farming radio show, drawing an engaged audience. More than **10,000 daily listeners** tune in, with even more streaming segments online days after the show airs. It's not just farmers - businesses in the rural sector rely on this trusted source for local updates.

In addition to the regular Muster interviews, there has also been targeted radio advertising activity, including 40 radio commercials on Hokonui, 80 commercials on Newstalk ZB and Coast FM, 50 commercials on More FM and 280 spots spread over More FM, Magic, The Breeze, The Rock, The Sound and Channel X2.

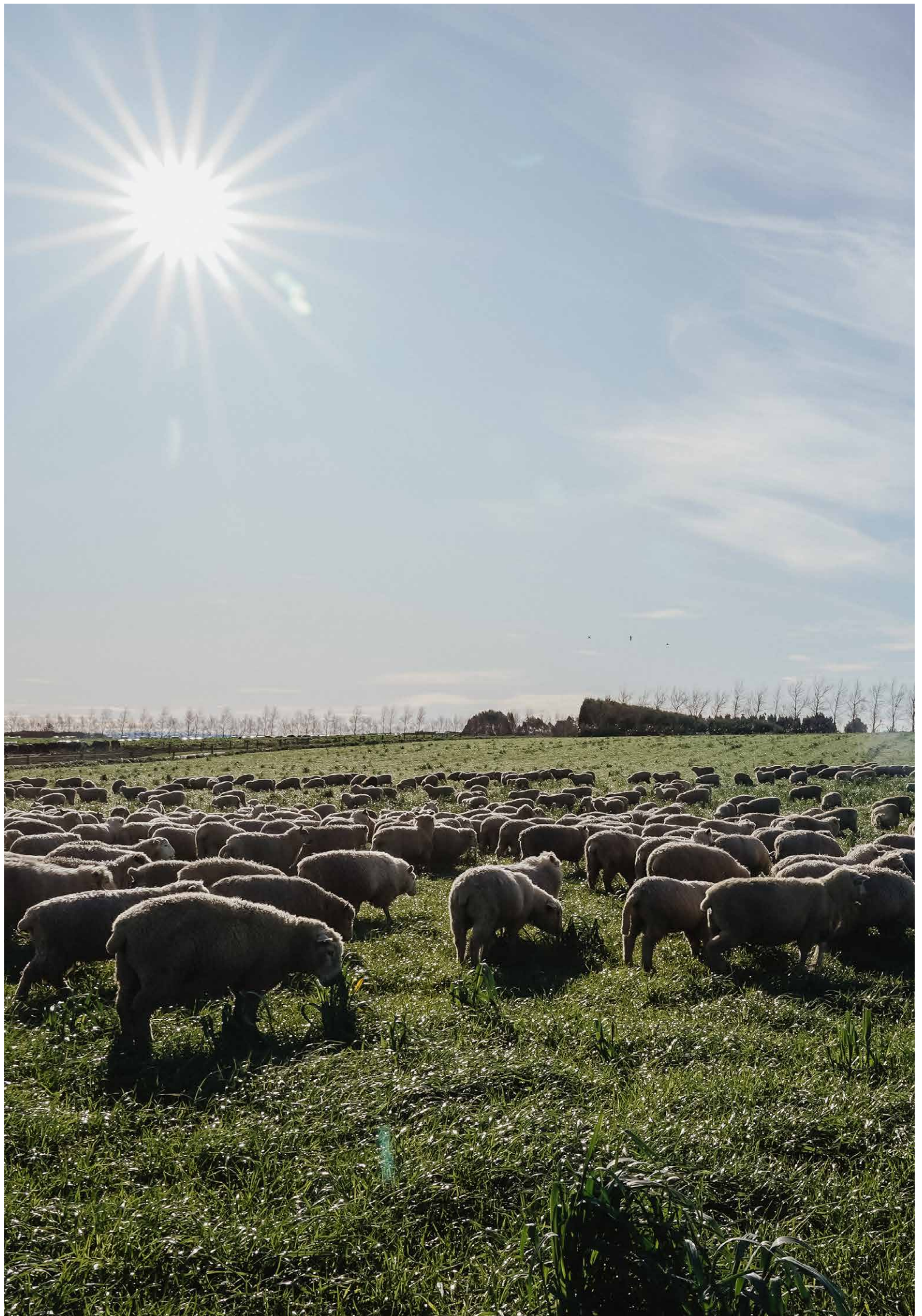
Statement of Service Performance

Thriving Southland supports and enables the community to create and lead innovations that build community wellbeing, environmental improvements, education and research across rural – and in many cases urban – communities. It all helps build the movement towards change in agriculture and farming. We do this by supporting Catchment Groups with funding for their projects, their meetings and events that bring people together.

Thriving Southland also invests in useful and targeted data-led science, modelling and case studies for increased learning and knowledge across Southland’s agricultural sector.

We use a range of different communication channels, including a strong focus on collaboration, to ensure information, tools, advice and learnings are shared between rural and urban communities.

	2022-2023	2021-2022
<p>Projects</p> <p>Projects have ranged from small projects, where the objectives were to support engagement and connecting, through to wintering and wetland field trips and larger projects looking at greenhouse gas education on farm, tackling the pest control issue and landscape science at catchment and farm level.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 57 approved projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 41 projects approved
<p>Community Wellbeing</p> <p>Enabling and supporting Catchment Group meetings and events which bring people together with a common goal to inform and connect people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 186 catchment meetings and events » Over 3000 attendees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 156 catchment meetings and events » Total attendance of 2,657
<p>Education and Learning</p> <p>Providing science reports, information, tools and workshops to Catchment Groups that enables informed decisions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Workshops x25 » Field days x31 » Catchment Group Leader Forums x2 » Education Kits created around growing natives, healthy estuaries and streams, and pest control » Updated online information hub providing information broken down into themes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Workshops x16 » Catchment Group Leader Forums x2 » Water quality literature brochures for each catchment » Wintering plan tool updated » Stream Health Monitoring Plan for Catchment Groups » Information Hub updated to provide focused farmer advice
<p>Communication</p> <p>A range of channels are used to effectively communicate with catchment members, communities and stakeholders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Facebook reach 30,223 » Monthly newsletter 1,430 with open rate of 46% (industry avg 23%) » Website page views 3.5k 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Facebook engagement 7% (NZ Avg 0.18%) » Monthly newsletter 1,217 subscribe with open rate of 41% (industry avg 23%)



Financials

Full Financial Statements

The full audited Financial Statements for the year ending 30 June 2023 for Thriving Southland have been summarised for this Annual Report.

The Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with Tier 2 not-for-profit PBE Standards: The Incorporated Society qualifies as a Tier 2 reporting entity as for the two most recent reporting periods it is not publicly accountable and not large (operating expenditure has been between \$2m and \$30m in the current and prior period).

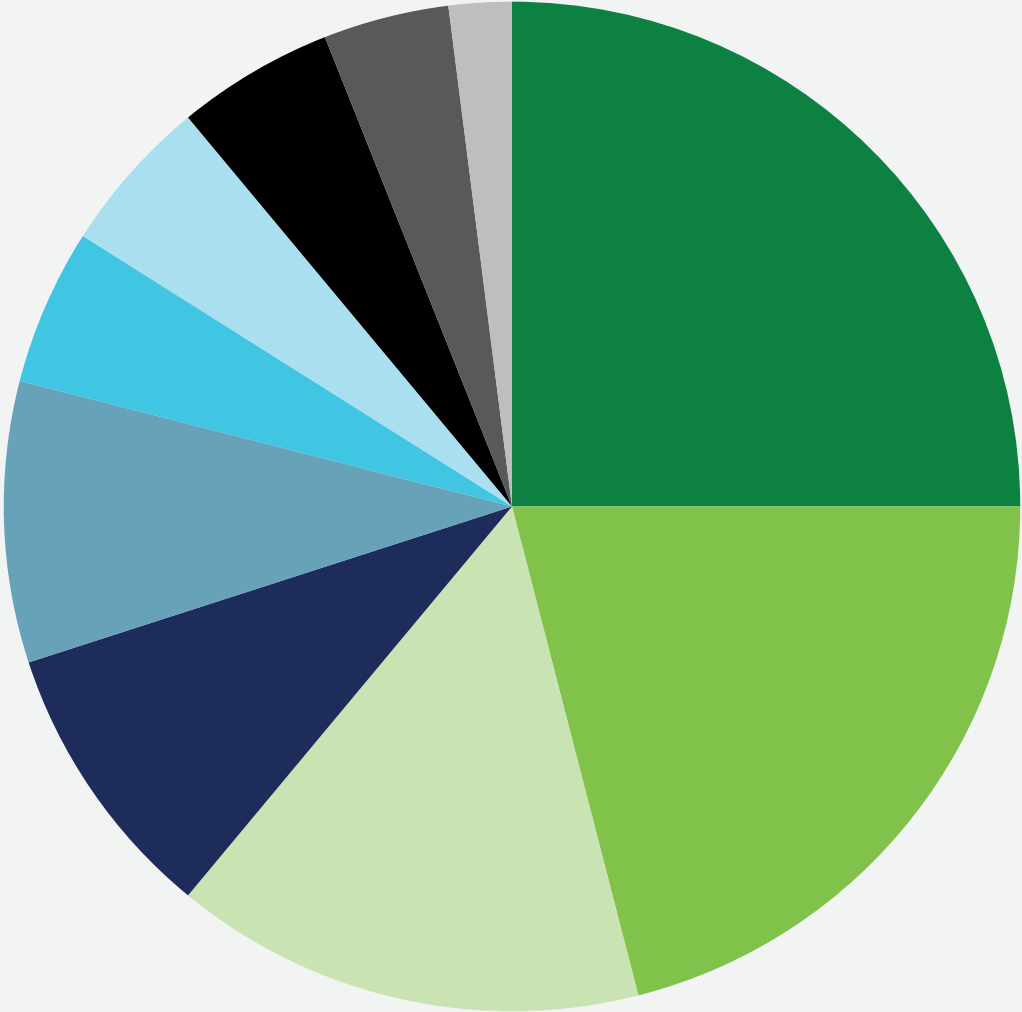
The full Financial Statements have been audited and were authorised for issue on 13 November 2023.

This summarised financial report has not been audited and may not contain sufficient information for a full understanding of the financial position of Thriving Southland, but copies of the full Financial Statements and the auditors report can be obtained from the Thriving Southland Office or from the Charities Services website following the AGM.

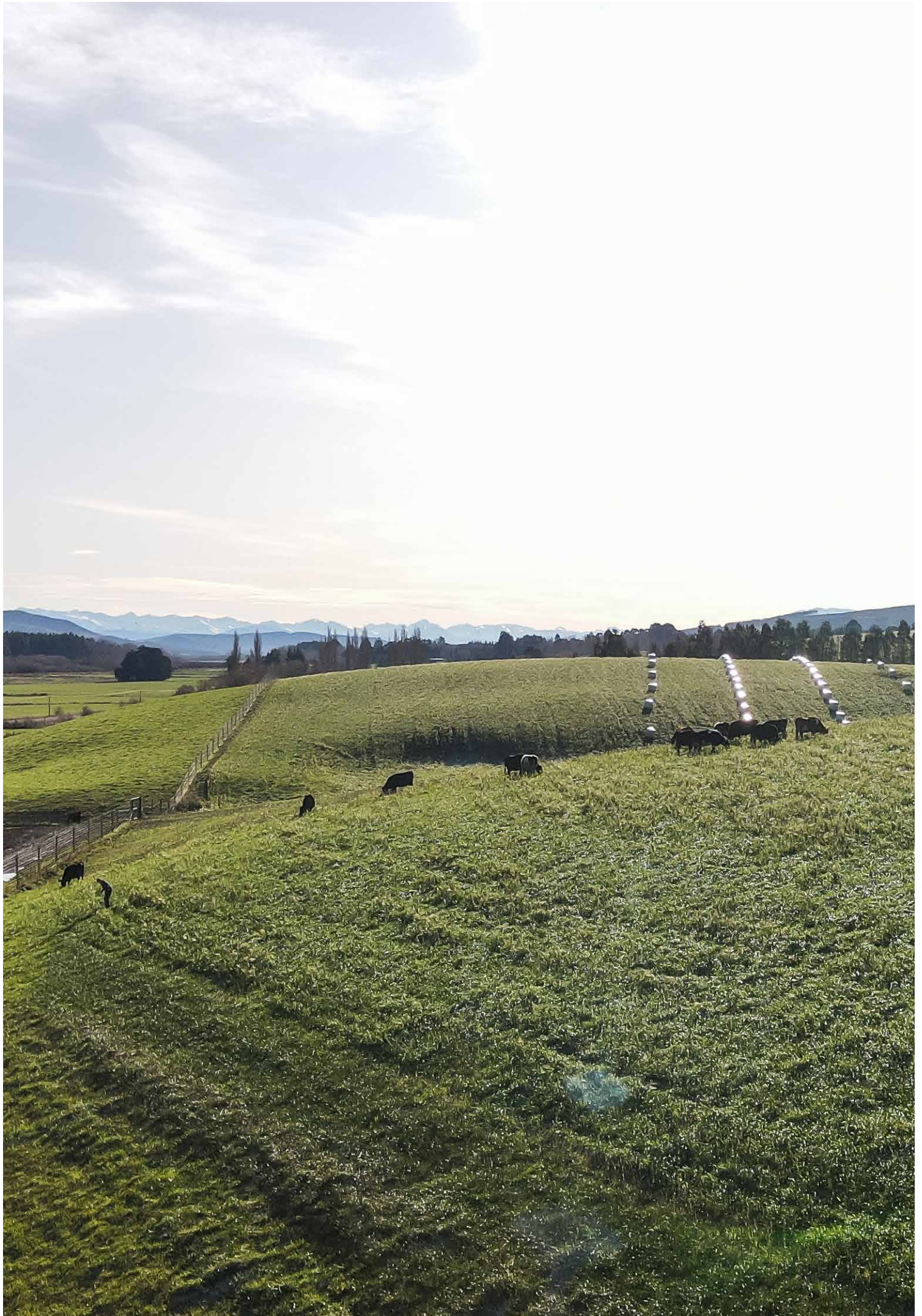
FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE	2023	2022
Income		
Ministry for Primary Industries Grant	1,993,523	1,833,771
Agmardt Contract Income	231,277	150,629
MBIE Contract Income (Just Transitions)	128,589	39,251
Our Land and Water National Science Challenge	31,095	
Interest	846	664
Total Income	2,385,331	2,024,315
Expenses		
Catchment Projects - MPI Funding	515,629	872,302
Agmardt Project	194,848	151,748
Just Transitions Project	84,649	39,251
Our Land and Water Project	533	-
Catchment Management	432,241	381,760
Applied Science	102,367	63,000
Communications	112,487	93,072
Stakeholder Engagement	2,930	16,586
Governance	99,113	107,580
Staff and Management	303,513	295,873
Planning and Project Management	32,601	45,494
Administration	189,718	179,564
Total Expenses	2,070,630	2,246,231
Net Deficit	314,700	-221,916
FINANCIAL POSITION		
Current Assets	1,510,424	1,006,345
Current Liabilities	1,418,800	1,229,421
Net Assets	91,624	-223,076

Financials

2023 Expenses



- Catchment Projects - MPI Funding 25%
- Catchment Management 21%
- Staff and Management 15%
- Agmardt Project 9%
- Administration 9%
- Applied Science 5%
- Communications 5%
- Governance 5%
- Just Transitions Project 4%
- Planning and Project Management 2%
- Our Land and Water Project 0%
- Stakeholder Engagement 0%





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