



# Otago Fish & Game Council Stakeholder Study

April 2023

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# Executive summary

## Overall performance ratings and roles

- Overall Otago Fish & Game received quite stellar ratings from their stakeholders for the job they did at engaging and working with stakeholder organisations.
- The few ratings towards the lower end of the scale were all from the wider stakeholder group that participated in the online survey and had less of a direct relationship with the organisation.
- Stakeholders in the in-depth interviews who rated Otago Fish & Game more favourably did so mainly because they were viewed as pragmatic, responsive and open to other perspectives.
- Most stakeholders appeared to understand the main roles of Otago Fish & Game. A few knew less about some of the wider environmental and habitat protection roles they played. And some questioned if the organisation was well resourced enough to manage the vastness of the Otago sports fishery.
- Otago Fish & Game were rated highly by the wider group of stakeholders on most of the activities they carried out. They received a very high rating for the work they did at 'encouraging recreational participation'.
- Stakeholders generally had low understanding of how Otago Fish & Game fits within a national framework of Fish & Game New Zealand.

## Tone of engagement

- The strongest theme that emerged in discussions around how Otago Fish & Game engaged with stakeholders was an ability to work constructively around shared interests and a willingness to compromise when needed. They were described several times as being 'a closest ally' by organisations that on the surface had quite different objectives to maintaining a sports fishery.
- Otago Fish & Game were viewed as strong advocates for their members who knew when to be assertive to achieve outcomes for those they represented.
- There was a sub-theme that they could potentially 'pick their battles' a bit more rather than spreading themselves too thinly across many issues.
- There was a sense that at times Otago Fish & Game could be a bit combative and that they could improve in this area by joining the process earlier rather than waiting until consent hearings or court room battles.
- A few stakeholders had picked up on a sense of entitlement to some waterways from Otago Fish & Game, which they felt was inappropriate given that New Zealand's natural resources were for all, not just anglers.

# Executive summary – (cont.)

## Contributing more to the community

- There were a few suggestions for hosting public talks that could showcase the work of Otago Fish & Game including some of their environment wins.
- Other ideas included working alongside other groups in habitat restoration projects, employing more females in front-facing roles and engaging more in catchment groups.

## Managing the impact of introduced species on indigenous species

- There was some recognition that Otago Fish & Game had been open to conversations in this area and seemed to be more forward thinking in this space than some of their counterparts. However, it was an area that required ongoing work, especially given some of the big national policies being driven out of Wellington discussed across the page.

## Strategic long-term issues requiring some attention

- There were four other long-term strategic areas identified by some stakeholders as needing work over a longer time frame. These included:
  1. Impacts of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPSFM) particularly around how the regional implementation of this policy is likely to place even more restrictions on the way trout are managed.
  2. A need for a more focused long-term program of research, especially given the challenges of water quality in the greater Otago region.
  3. Treaty of Waitangi obligations and biodiversity – this related to the review of the Conservation Act 1987 which determined DOC had come short of meeting these obligations and what this now meant for Otago Fish & Game, given they exist under this legislation.
  4. Building relationships with the land-owning community that had been largely destroyed due to the 'Dirty dairying' campaign and associated challenges to farming.
- Given the size of these issues in all cases stakeholders who raised them were expecting policy to be set by Fish & Game New Zealand and for the regions to work to implement. Most likely requiring extra support.

# Executive summary – (cont.)

## Communications and branding

- Most stakeholders were more than happy with the amount of ongoing communications and connections they had with Otago Fish & Game.
- A few stakeholders were less aware of the wider roles of Otago Fish & Game and felt that knowing more about their activities around habitat protection and management would be useful both to them and for this organisation's general public image.
- There were some suggestions for Otago Fish & Game to connect earlier with organisations during the policy development stage so consensus could be built prior to the implementation stage. This was to avoid unnecessary conflict.
- There were a range of views on the brand, ranging from an appropriate representation of the organisation to being a bit 'old school' and not really representing the entire range of activities they undertook.



## 2. Background and methodology

# Background and methodology

## Research purpose and objectives

- This study is about understanding the views of Otago Fish & Game stakeholders. The main objectives for this study were to:
  - Gain a measure of how Otago Fish & Game are currently viewed by their stakeholders
  - Achieve a deeper understanding of how they can work more effectively alongside key stakeholder organisations
  - Develop a clearer view of how they can more positively contribute to the local community that they share with their stakeholders.

## Methodology

- To answer these objectives an in-depth qualitative research methodology was used. This consisted of:
  - Sixteen in-depth interviews conducted either via online calling or over the telephone. These were flexible conversations allowing the participants to freely express their views and mostly took around 30 to 40 minutes to complete.
    - These in-depth interviews were conducted between the 1st and 17th of March.
  - An online survey designed to give a wider group of stakeholders the opportunity to share their views. This was a short survey with questions developed based on what was learnt in the more flexible and in-depth qualitative interviews.
    - The online survey was emailed to around 30 stakeholders from a wider group and 16 took part. A 50% response rate is a very good result for any survey.
    - This online survey was in the field from the 16th to 29th of March.

# Reporting notes

- The qualitative findings in this report have been produced using a thematic analysis approach. Notes were loaded into an Excel spreadsheet and used to help determine the main themes across all interviews and questions asked.
- Given the small sample for the online survey of the wider group of stakeholders that followed, these findings are also mainly qualitative in nature.
- The data collected in this survey is presented as counts (rather than percentages) mostly in charts and tables.
- To determine the overall ratings of how Otago Fish & Game engage with other organisations the same question was used in both the in-depth interviews and the online survey. Therefore, this data is combined into one table where the sample is n=32 (16 from each research stage). The rest of the tables only show the data from the online survey sample which is n=16.
- When reporting on the findings from the online survey these are mostly prefaced as coming from the 'Wider' stakeholder group.





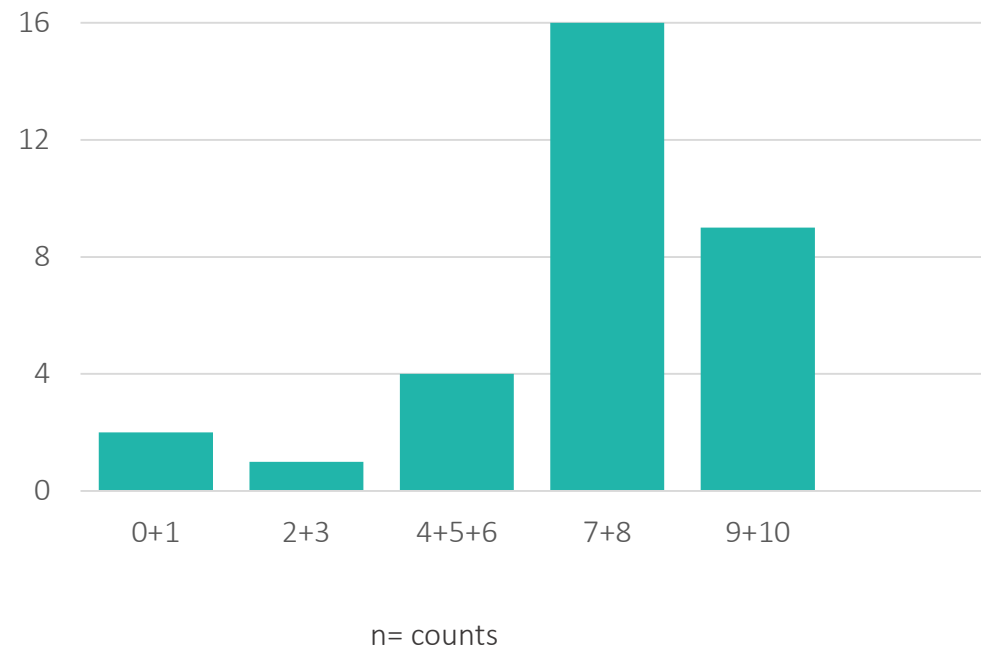
# 3. Overall views and ratings

# Otago Fish & Game receives high overall ratings

- Stakeholders in both the in-depth qualitative interviews and the online survey were asked to provide a rating out of 10, where 10 means that Otago Fish & Game is doing a 'very good job' at engaging and working with their organisation and 0 means they are doing 'a very bad job'.
- Out of the 32 stakeholders who gave a rating half of them gave a 'good' rating of either a 7 or 8, and close to one third of stakeholders gave a 'very good' rating of either a 9 or 10. Only a few stakeholders gave ratings of less than 5.
- None of these lower ratings came from stakeholders who participated in the in-depth interviews, meaning these lower ratings came from stakeholders that Otago Fish & Game have less of an ongoing relationship with.
- Reasons for the ratings provided in the in-depth interviews are presented over the page.

*How good a job does Otago Fish and Game do at engaging and working with your organisation?*

*[0= a very bad job and 10= a very good job]*



*Base: All stakeholders (n=32) 16 are online survey respondents and 16 are in-depth interview participants.*

# Otago Fish & Game rated highly because they were viewed as being pragmatic, responsive and open to other perspectives

- The current team of Otago Fish & Game staff were central to the favourable ratings they received. Many stakeholders used phrases to describe interpersonal qualities of staff such as being responsive, open, honest and engaging.
  - The way Otago Fish & Game engaged and worked with other organisations also received a positive feedback. Many talked at the collegial way that Otago Fish & Game worked with them. This included sharing information and commenting on each others' proposals to ensure they presented a united front as possible when lobbying for positive outcomes.
  - One of Otago Fish & Game's key ways of working with stakeholders that received praise was their willingness to listen to other perspectives.
- There were only minor areas that some stakeholders identified as issues for Otago Fish & Game to work more on. Some of the less positive comments tended to be more about issues that were largely out of their hands. This included being resource constrained.
  - There were a few big (national-level) issues relating to biodiversity and the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management that required some long-term heavy-lifting and stakeholders were interested in seeing how these were going to play out. There were a few questions around how relationships will evolve especially as some of these big Central Government initiatives would have an impact on the standing of exotic species.
  - A strong theme when rating Otago Fish & Game was the long-term nature of the relationship that many had enjoyed with this local organisation. Some talked of relationships that had been formed over many decades. Several of these relationships were characterised as organisation-to-organisation ones that had been sustained even as key staff had moved on.

# Stakeholders talking about Otago Fish and Game



*“They are very personable to work with and have a pragmatic view, as they are not overly zealous about their cause.”*

*“They see issues coming and approach us to talk about these things before they come up so we are on the same page. They send us proposals to review that they don’t have to, to get us involved and on the same page.”*

*“They are responsive and engaging to work with. I know them all at the office well and they always quickly respond to questions and emails.”*

*“We have different motivations, but they know how to compromise and will go away do some more mahi and come back to find a solution that works for those concerned when needed.”*

# 4. Roles and activities

# Most stakeholders understand the main roles of Otago Fish & Game

- Most stakeholders were well versed in the main roles of Otago Fish & Game. Several understood that the organisation operated under legislation which governed the range of activities they could undertake.
- Most talked about the role of running licensing and ensuring anglers obeyed the regulations. There was consensus that Fish & Game Otago's approach to enforcement of fishing regulations was less punitive and more educational, and this was appreciated.
- Otago Fish & Game were also seen as playing a key role around habitat protection, especially in relation to both the quality and quantity of water in local waterways. However, not all were aware of this and making this more widely known would help the organisation to be valued by a larger audience.
- They were seen to work hard to advocate on behalf of their members for maintaining access to areas to fish and hunt game birds, and to ensure a sustainable sports fishing and waterfowl hunting resource.
- Most stakeholders also talked about the key role Otago Fish & Game played in the consents space. A few noted that often it was Otago Fish & Game that showed up at these tough events when other relevant organisations were missing.
- Some noted that Otago Fish & Game were not well-resourced enough to undertake all the roles they were mandated to cover for the Otago region. They questioned if extra funding could be provided by Central Government, specifically to support their work around habitat protection and water quality, which, given the large number of lakes, required a lot of attention in the Otago region.
- A few stakeholders stated that Otago Fish & Game undertook a lot of work in the protection of waterways via the consents process. They elaborated that if Otago Fish & Game was not standing up for these natural habitats, often in court, this valuable work would not get done.
- Some stakeholders felt there was a lack of awareness around the full range of useful activities Otago Fish & Game undertook. They believed if licence holders could be better informed, they would be more readily accepting of licence fees.
- One stakeholder warned that in today's changing social landscape Fish & Game Otago needed join more with conservation groups. They suggested if Otago Fish & Game pushed too strongly on the sports fishing front, they were likely to struggle in maintaining wider public support for their cause.

# Roles and activities



*“They have statutory duties around sports fish and their habitat, fishing licensing and also managing water, rivers, streams and wetlands.”*

*“They work to protect fresh water and biodiversity. Restoring heathy waterways and controlling recreational fishing so it remains sustainable. I think the general public just see them more as just where you get licences from.”*

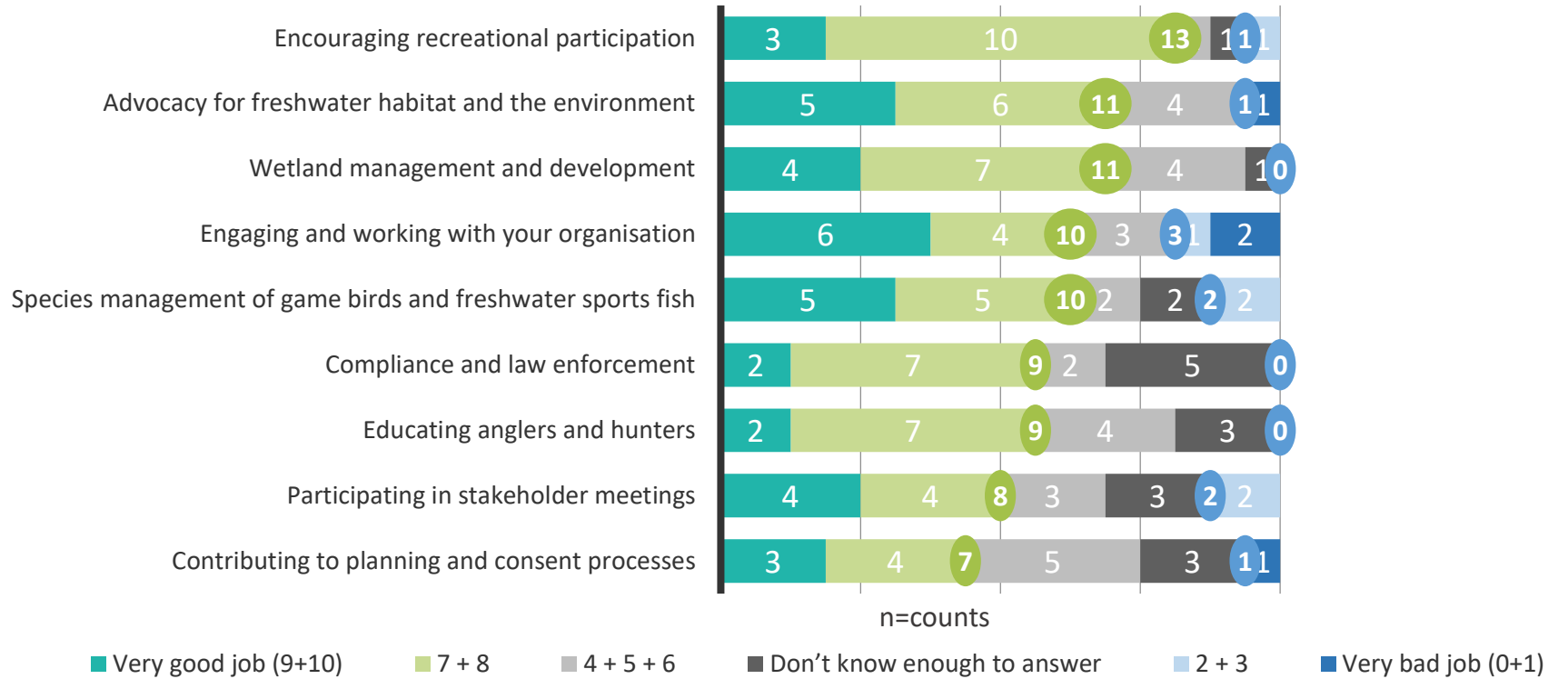
*“They do a lot of work at turning up at court to fight for the environment. This is great as sometimes they are the only ones there on behalf of conservation. It was them that stopped MRP putting in a dam on the Nevis River.”*

*“There is a lack of understanding about what is happening in the large lakes and waterways of Central Otago around how to maintain their water quality. And I fear that Fish & Game haven't got the capacity to do a great deal about how these lakes can be managed.”*

*“To manage sports fishing and game bird hunting resources in the best interest of hunters and they do a pretty good job at this.”*

# The wider stakeholder group rated Otago Fish & Game highly across these core areas

Q. How good or bad a job do you feel Otago Fish & Game does at each of the following activities?

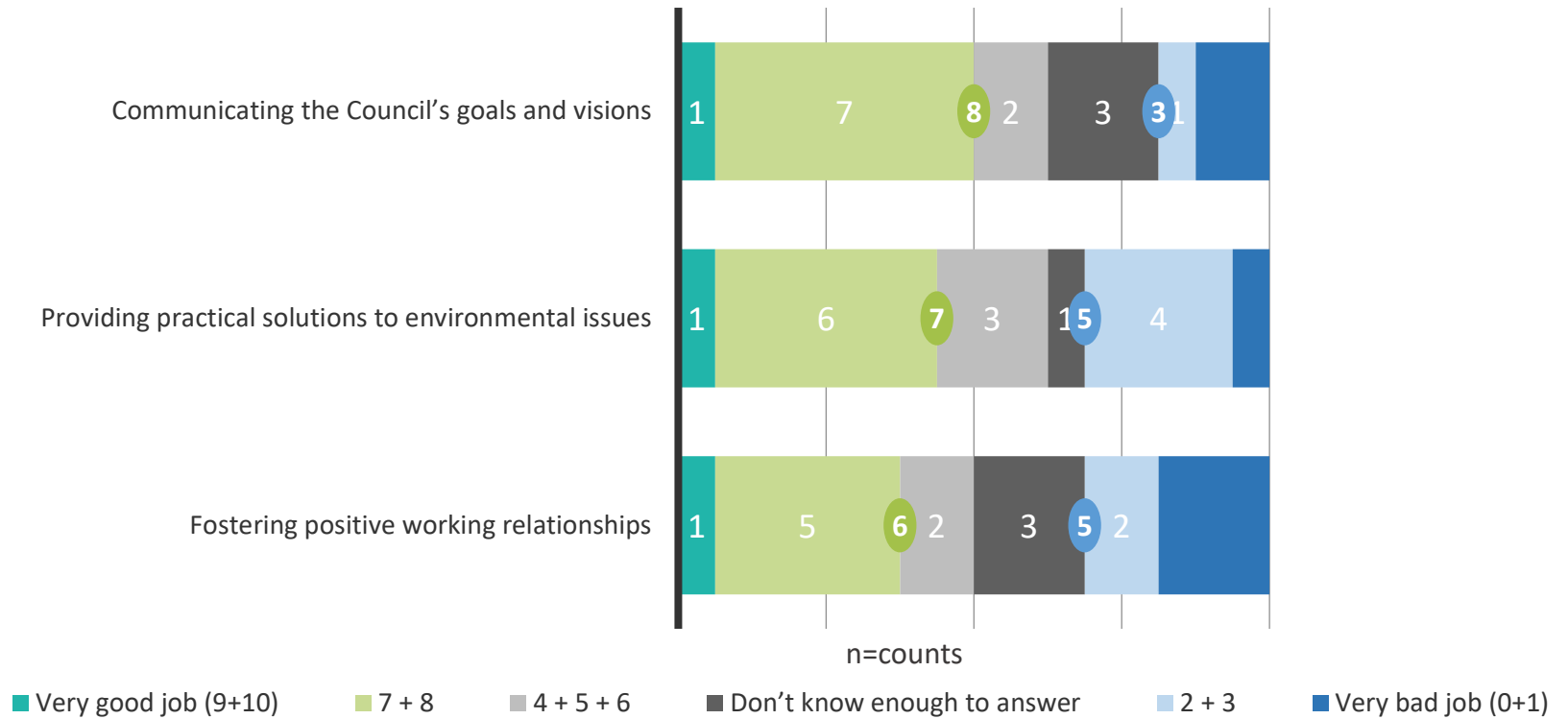


Base: Wider stakeholder group (n=16)



# The wider stakeholder group rated Otago Fish & Game lower across these three areas

Q. How good or bad a job do you feel Otago Fish & Game does at each of the following activities?



Base: Wider stakeholder group (n=16)

# 5. Working with stakeholders

# Tone of engagement – constructive and good advocates

## A strong ability to work constructively around shared interests

- The overwhelming theme of the way Otago Fish & Game was seen to engage with stakeholders was an ability to work very constructively around shared interests.
- It was stated on several occasions by stakeholders that Otago Fish & Game's primary motivation was very different to theirs. However, they also went on to say that this hunting and fishing focused organisation was quick to see the shared interest and knew the power of building consensus with others to find mutually beneficial solutions.
- Even among some organisations that opposed trout and the impact they had on natural habitats they described Otago Fish & Game as a 'close ally'.
- This warm appraisal of Otago Fish & Game was partly driven by the observation that they were willing to turn up at tough events (such as consent hearings) and do the mahi to achieve favourable outcomes.
- When it came to hearing and consent process, Otago Fish & Game were seen to be well briefed, knowledgeable and clear on what needed to be done. The only thing that was seen to constrain their effectiveness in the consent process was a lack of financial resources.

## Are strong advocates for their members

- We asked stakeholders if there were ways in which Otago Fish & Game could improve in its advocacy role. Almost all struggled to identify areas of improvement.
- When advocating on behalf of their members most stakeholders described Otago Fish & Game as being collaborative and not turning up with pre-conceived ideas, however, noting they remained assertive and focused on achieving outcomes that worked for their members.
- When searching for an area to improve, one stakeholder felt that Otago Fish & Game focused too widely, and they believe the organisation needed 'to pick their battles' a bit more.
- This stakeholder suggested Otago Fish & Game could be more effective at advocating for their members if they picked a few rivers they wanted to focus on that were more critical to the sports fishery and put more effort into ensuring these ones were protected the most for sports fishing .

# Tone of engagement – Stakeholder verbatim



*“Sometimes our staff just check with Fish & Game to see where they are on a particular issue. Over the years Fish & Game have been a key ally for us in the conservation area in Otago, especially as DOC is quite limited in what they can do in the RMA field. We are about 80% aligned with them most of the time.”*

*“Otago Fish & Game does give some support to other environmental groups that would otherwise be on their own in some of these public hearings.”*

*“They are one of my closest allies. They are always open to talking things through rather than jumping to a conclusion. I bounce a lot of things off them. We have a really close and long-term relationship.”*

*“They are always positive and respectful. They are open to listening and we compare views, and they provide feedback on our proposals. They are willing to work through issues to find a solution that works for all parties.”*

*“We all try to get on the same page so we can present a united front at consent hearings and Otago Fish & Game work well with us to present this united front.”*

# Tone of engagement – areas to focus

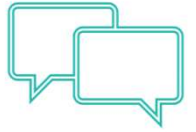
## Can be viewed as being a bit combative – but could be improved by joining the process earlier

- While Otago Fish & Game were seen as effective players in the consent process this did lead to them playing quite combative roles.
- A few stakeholders suggested that to help manage Otago Fish & Game's combativeness they could seek to more often engage earlier in the process.
- This included working alongside Councils (regional and local) when they were developing their long-term plans and seeking to more proactively engage with catchment groups, especially with farmers to find solutions before disagreements ended up in the environment court.
- A few stakeholders remarked that 'nobody wins when disagreements end up in court'. They wanted to see Otago Fish & Game around tables early with groups such as farmers instead of looking at them across court rooms.

## Can be perceived as having a sense of entitlement to water ways

- A stakeholder described that on one occasion Otago Fish & Game had pushed hard for exclusive access to an area for anglers that felt a little bit like 'colonial white man sense of entitlement' behaviour.
- They believed that when dealing with Otago Fish & Game at times there was this sense of entitlement when it came to access to waterways that was sitting in the background. It wasn't explicit but nevertheless this type of attitude was inappropriate – given New Zealand's natural resources were for all to enjoy.

# Tone of engagement – stakeholder verbatim



*“The catchment groups need to take a joint application to the council for water consents. If the different groups like Otago Fish & Game go alone without sitting down at the table first and working out a plan that will work for everyone they will just fail.”*

*“They are mostly quite constructive, and we have arrived at a good compromise in several cases. But there has been a few instances where they fought for exclusive access for anglers and hunters, which just feels a bit wrong given it is New Zealand's natural environment and should be open for access to more than just anglers and hunters.”*

6. Potential areas  
requiring some work

# Other ways to positively contribute to the community

- Most stakeholders were reluctant to suggest more activity for Otago Fish & Game. They mostly knew that this organisation was already very busy, and resource constrained.
  - Several praised Otago Fish & Game for their 'take a kid fishing' initiative. This was viewed as a great way to contribute to the community and encourage young people into the outdoors. Their ongoing work to run sessions to teach the general public how to fish was also viewed as a positive contribution.
  - One described an initiative where Canterbury Fish & Game had run a 'take a kid fishing day' for out-patients of their local hospital. This was viewed as a terrific way to give back positively to their local community.
  - A few suggested hosting talks for the general public to showcase some of the work Otago Fish & Game did to protect and sustain local environmental areas.
  - A few also suggested that working alongside other community groups in habitat restoration project could be a useful way to soften the combative image that some believe Otago Fish & Game has.
- There were a couple of suggestions for employing females in public roles as this would help to positively show the community that the sport was more than just a pastime for 'old white men'.
  - A few stakeholders recommended that one way to contribute more positively to the community was to engage more with community catchment groups.

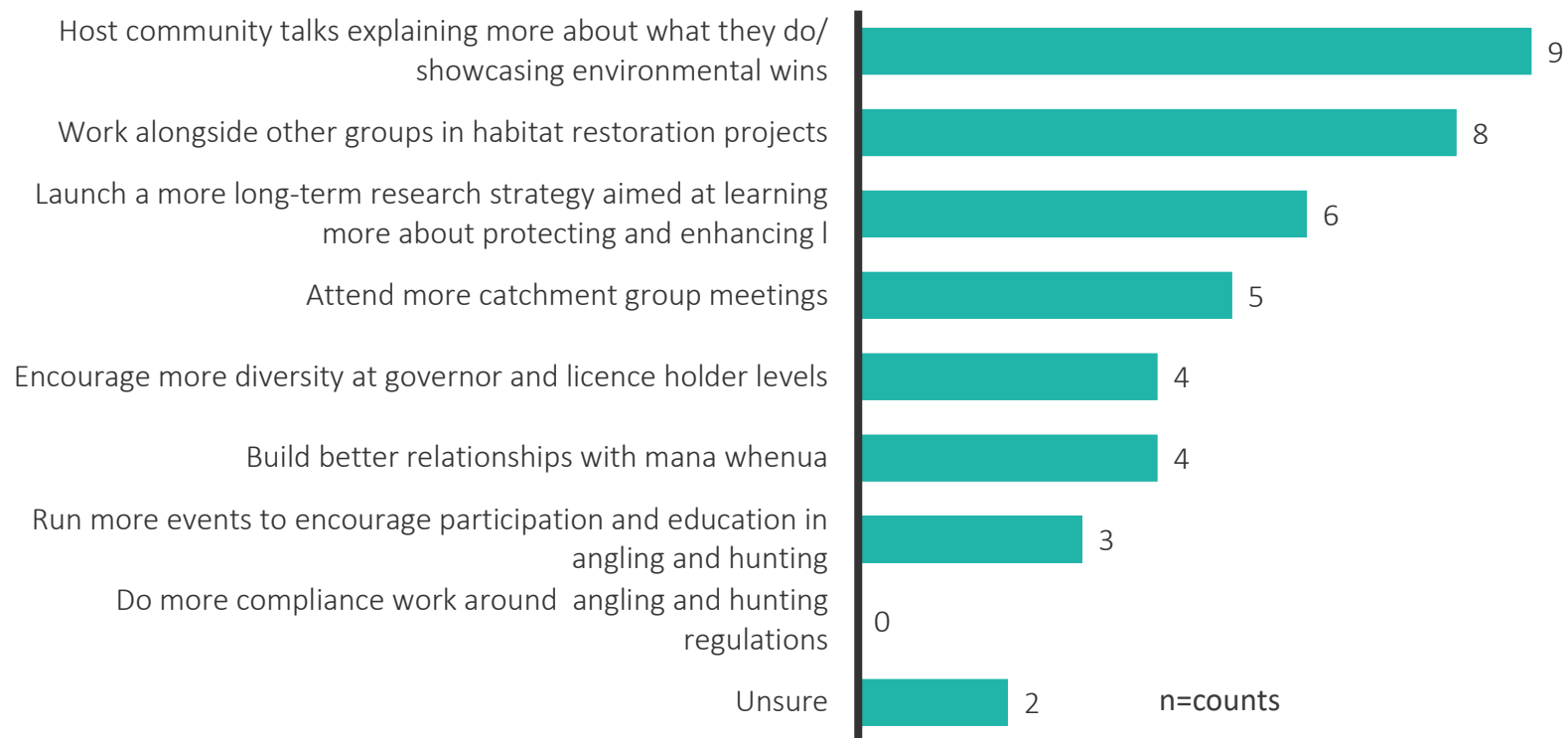


*"I would like to see them focus much more on working with catchment groups as whole to develop whole of catchment management plans to council so the consents to take water are owned and controlled by the catchment community and not by private enterprise".*



## The wider group of stakeholders identify 'hosting community talks explaining more about what they do/ showcasing environmental wins' and 'working alongside other groups in habitat restoration' as key ways to contribute more

Q. Which, if any, of the following do you believe Otago Fish & Game could do more of to positively contribute to its local community? [Select up to three]



Base: Wider stakeholder group (n=16)

# More work to do on managing impact of introduced species on indigenous species



- A significant challenge for Otago Fish & Game was the ongoing management of the impact that the sports fishery they promoted had on indigenous species.
- There is more work to do in this area, however, many did give Otago Fish & Game credit for being open to having conversations on this topic and working collaboratively to find solutions.
- A few stakeholders believed that Otago Fish & Game was more forward thinking in this area of protecting native species than their counterparts in other regions.
- All the scientific experts interviewed in this study agreed that exotics and indigenous species could be managed side-by-side.
- A few stakeholders highlighted what they believed to be the devastating impact that trout had caused to indigenous species. However, they also knew that there was no way trout could ever be completely removed from catchments. Therefore, they supported developing agreements around which rivers or stretches of water, where possible, could sensibly be preserved for native species while ensuring that trout were still free to thrive elsewhere.

*“The main conflict we have is that we are most interested in the preservation of native species and Otago Fish & Game are focused on introduced species. They need to work hard on to get this balance right.”*

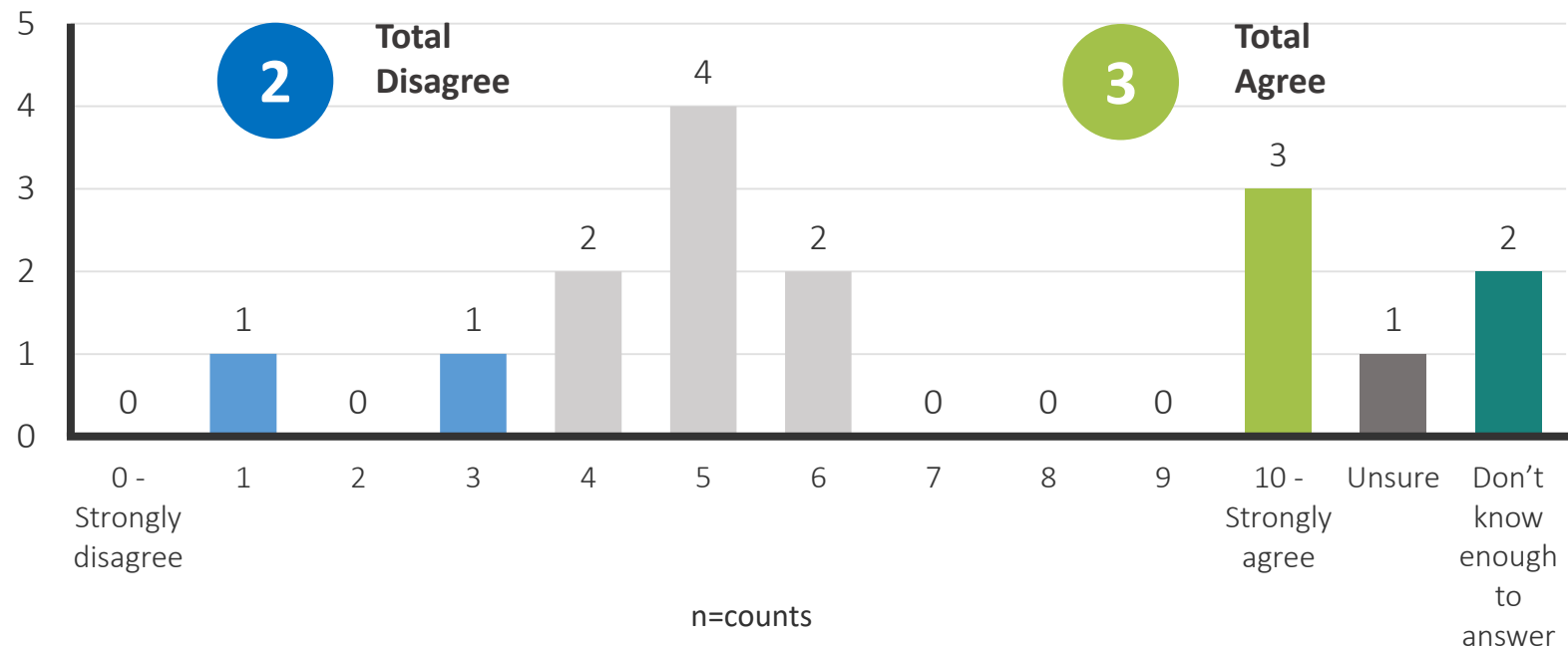
*“With some there is a bit of fear factor around taking trout out of rivers - we need to work better on this so we can understand where we can take trout out of and where we can leave in so we can achieve both the protection of indigenous fish and sports fish.”*

*“We can exclude brown trout from some waterways and put in weirs. Some regions think this is a great idea whereas other regions will treat you like the devil incarnate. These regions need to move to a place where they can see how trout and native species can be managed to coexist.”*

*“Otago Fish & Game do quite well with biodiversity in the past they have been more than open to removing trout from some locations to protect native galaxias species.”*

## The wider stakeholder group are also mixed on whether Otago Fish & Game is doing enough to manage interactions between sports fish and indigenous species

Q. Thinking about Otago Fish & Game's activities over the last five years or so, how strongly do you agree or disagree that: - Otago Fish & Game does enough work on managing the interactions between freshwater sports fish and indigenous species



Base: Wider stakeholder group (n=16)

# Strategic long-term issues requiring some attention

## Impacts of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPSFM)

- A few stakeholders noted that this policy would bring Otago Fish & Game some challenges that they would need to work through. One stakeholder talked of the way the statement will require their organisation to develop a hierarchy of importance placed on species and this will most likely see introduced species such as trout down the bottom of this list.

## More focused long-term program of research

- A few stakeholders felt Otago Fish & Game needed to work on a more ambitious research program that was less 'ad hoc'. They believed there were some big long-term challenges around maintaining healthy waterways to support fish. For these challenges to be managed, more in-depth and ongoing research was required.
- It was acknowledged that Otago Fish & Game most likely did not have the funds for such investment in research. However, they believed what was required was a more of national led strategy that could draw on wider sources of funding, along with tapping into a range of other potential sources such as wealthy benefactors with a passion for river and lake fishing and other university/ science-based pools of funding.

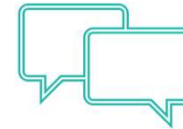
## Treaty of Waitangi obligations and biodiversity

- One stakeholder referred to the ruling on 'section 4' in the Conservation Act legislation. They noted that this had implications for Otago Fish & Game, which meant they had responsibility to give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi.
- They suggested that first Fish & Game New Zealand needed to decide how the organisation was going to respond and then the regions would need to follow. They said that once this was in place this would set the context for future talks with Otago Fish & Game around biodiversity and how the impact of exotics are managed going forward.
- One stakeholder suggested that it may be worth considering a position on the local council for an Iwi representative.
- While there is still along way to go in how Otago Fish & Game works with local Iwi there has been some encouraging steps in the right direction. One Iwi leader noted that a decade ago the last place they would go to would be Otago Fish & Game, but this is not the case now.
- A few called for some more tikanga Māori values to be weaved into the organisation. It was conceded this could cause a bit of a 'backlash' from some members of the fishing community. However, promoting these values was also seen as responsibility of public organisations. It was suggested that Otago Fish & Game had a role to also 'fly the flag' to help normalise these important New Zealand values.

# Strategic long-term issues requiring work –(cont.)

## Building back relationships with the farming community caused by the 'Dirty dairying' campaign

- Several stakeholders talked about the unhelpful 'rift' between farmers and Fish & Game generally. While there was some agreement that the 'Dirty dairying' campaign had been necessary, there was no doubt about the relationship damage it had created with many landowners.
- Some were aware that Fish & Game New Zealand had identified this is an issue to work on and noted the appointment of the current CEO from a previous role in the farming sector was a step in the right direction.
- Becoming more involved in catchment groups was another way that some thought would help to build back relationships with landowners.



*"In the past they have been way too adversarial with their approach to farmers and - which only breaks down relationships - They need to sit around the table more before issues get taken to environmental court. No one wins at the court."*

# Strategic long-term issues to work through



*“Under the RMA trout were looked after but under the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management trout are characterised much more as a pest - this will create a challenge for Otago Fish & Game who will need to work even more collaboratively with Council, iwi and DOC to manage the locations where trout are allowed to dominate.”*

*“It would help if they could put some more tikanga Māori in the way they position themselves. There will be backlash to this among some of their community - but the more organisations we have for flying this flag of acknowledging the importance of Māori, the better acceptance we will gain.”*

*“They could be more ambitious and coordinated in launching long-term research into how the fishery can be best managed.”*

# 7. Communications and branding

# Communications and branding

## Communications and connecting with Otago Fish & Game

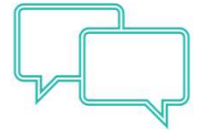
- Most stakeholders felt they had all they needed when it came to hearing from and connecting with Otago Fish & Game.
- Email updates plus a few face-to-face catch ups a year was all most required.
- Several stakeholders also commented on how efficient Otago Fish & Game were at getting back to them on requests.
- A few noted that Otago Fish & Game already had a busy timetable, and they didn't wish to put any extra load on them to more regularly provide them information.
- A few stakeholders were not aware about the wider range of roles Otago Fish & Game played and how these may connect with national level initiatives. They suggested just a short bullet point list would help them to know a bit more about when it would make sense to contact Otago Fish & Game over specific issues. Also, it would improve their public image.
- There were a few requests for connections to be made between the political levels of respective organisations. Some felt a better understanding at these levels could be positive for how respective councillors set the direction of their own organisations and how they could work more collaboratively together.

## Stakeholder thoughts on the Otago Fish & Game brand

- There were a range of views on the current branding. Stakeholders who could be described as more closely linked to the world of fishing and hunting felt the image reflected the core roles of Otago Fish & Game around promoting fishing and hunting.
- A few felt the brand was a bit old fashioned and gave the impression of 'old white guys who go fishing and hunting'. However, as this was generally who they represented - it meant the brand represented their constituency well.
- Most had not thought much about this topic and when put on the spot for comment there some agreement that it looked a bit 'old school'.
- There were a few comments that the brand held some legacy issues in relation to the 'Dirty dairying' campaign.
- A sub theme emerged with some stakeholders noting that the brand did not encapsulate well the wider range of activities (especially conservation work) that Otago Fish & Game was involved in.
- In the online survey the wider group of stakeholders were asked to give the first word that comes to mind when they think of the Otago Fish & Game logo. As shown on the table over the page, a range of responses were elicited. Most of them could be defined as neutral sounding words, however, about of third of them were more negative in nature.



# Communications and branding



*"It's a man with a hat, fishing rod and a gun. It looks like 1930s old school to me."*

*"Their brand is a fisherman casting - I'm not a fisherman. I see them as an advocacy group that is there to serve their members. I know they have a wider mandate, but I don't really understand what this is."*

When you see the Otago Fish and Game logo, what is the first word that comes to mind about the organisation?

Trout
Fish
Fishing
Fishing
Fishing
Fishing
Unity
Appropriate
Ranger
Hunting
Outdoors
what
Difficult
exclusive
old fashioned
eco-terrorist

Base: Wider stakeholder group (n=16)

# 8. Conclusions and suggestions

# Conclusions and suggestions

- Overall, Otago Fish & Game are viewed as working constructively with local stakeholders around shared interests. They are mostly seen as being able to see different perspectives and seem to be willing to compromise if needed.
- While most stakeholders had a grasp of the types of roles Otago Fish & Game undertook, there were a few who knew little about the wider activities of this organisation particularly in the conservation space. It was thought that promoting more about what Otago Fish & Game does in the habitat protection space is likely to build greater acceptance of the organisation among a wider audience.
- Otago Fish & Game were well regarded for their work in the consents space, however, this meant they often had to play a combative role. There was some suggestions that if they could be involved in processes earlier such as in the development of long-term plans and in catchment groups this could help them to work even more constructively with some stakeholders.
- Otago Fish & Game were already seen to be contributing quite well to their community with the ‘take a kid fishing’ initiative often sighted as an example. Other suggestions for them to consider included:
  - Hosting public talks to showcase what they do and some of their environmental wins.
  - Working alongside other groups in habitat restoration projects.
  - Engaging more in catchment groups.
- There was some acknowledgement of Otago Fish & Game being open to conversations around managing the impact of exotics on indigenous species. However, this was seen as a critical issue for the organisation to be progressive on and one that was becoming more front and centre under the requirements of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPSFM) and the review of the Conservation Act 1987.
- There were four longer-term more strategic type issues that were identified as areas for Otago Fish & Game to work through the implications of what they meant for their organisation and these included:
  - Impacts of the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPSFM) – especially around the impact this national policy will have of the status of trout in the regions. There was seen to be an opportunity for them to act now and get ahead of the game by identifying areas most important for maintaining trout populations and areas they would be more relaxed about the constraining of trout in.
  - A need for a more focused long-term research strategy – it was suggested they work with other interested parties to co-fund this, tapping into national, university and potentially benefactor streams of funding.
  - Treaty of Waitangi obligations and biodiversity – thinking and talking more about this will go along way towards further strengthening already developing local iwi and hapū relations.
  - Building relationships with farmer and landowners – becoming more involved with catchment groups was one suggestion for working in this area.

## The wider stakeholder group lists a range of descriptions about the way Otago Fish and Game engages with local communities – most of them positive

Q. What words or phrases would you use to describe the overall way Otago Fish and Game engages with its local community?

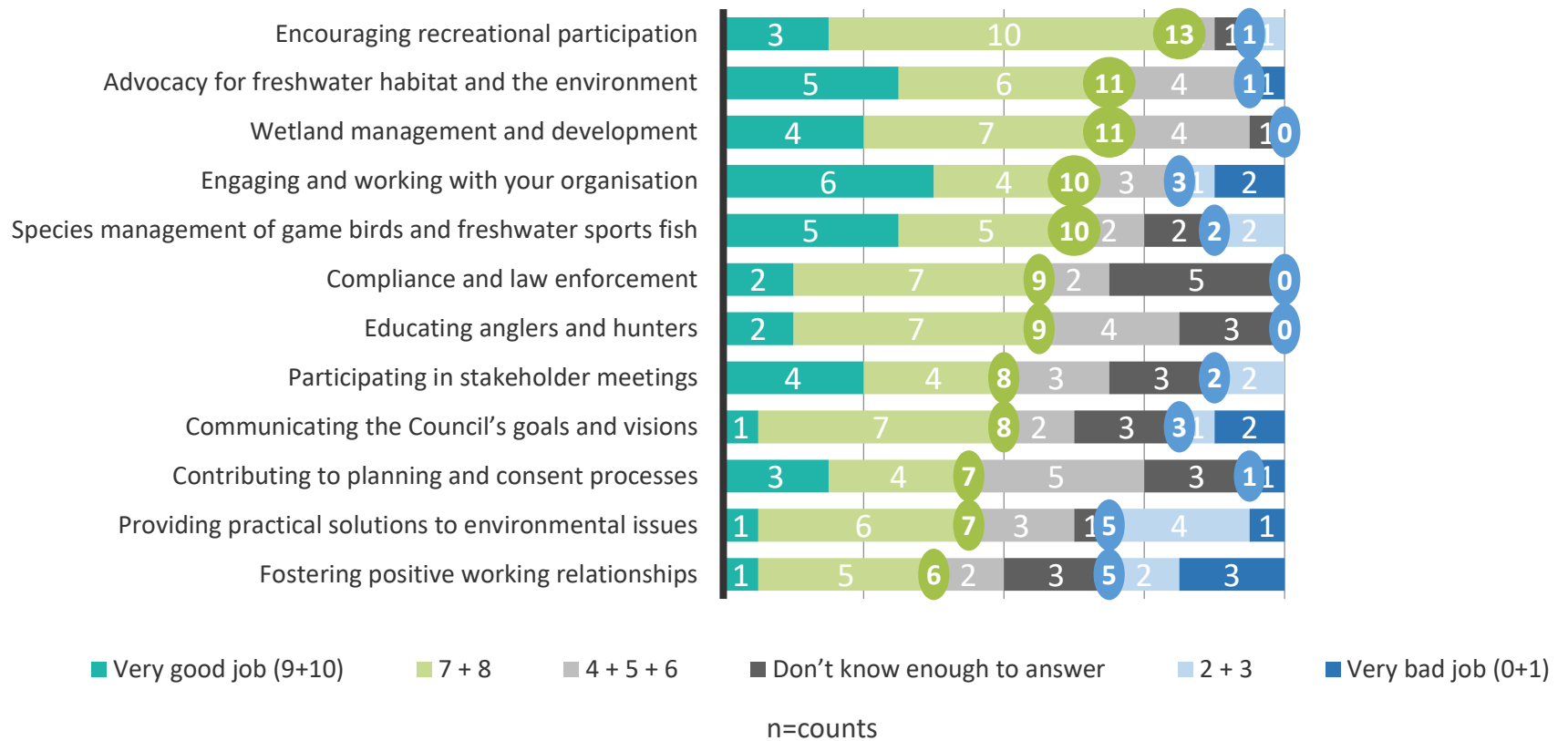
Positive:	Negative:
Active, clear communication, principled (this can be a double-edged sword)	bloody-minded eco-terrorists
Engaging	Enabling Defensive
Open to engage but considered confrontational by the public	Poor
Excellent considering the manpower available to Otago Fish and Game	Disconnected
Many initiatives, take a kid fishing and other public engagement programs are well accepted.	Inward focused, inconsistent governance to management approach, fight focused not consensus focused, but prepared to move over time
Do a great job	
Ok	
Good	
Good publications and social media communications	
Positively	
Active	

Base: Wider stakeholder group (n=16)

# 9. Appendix

# Summary table Otago Fish & Game activities

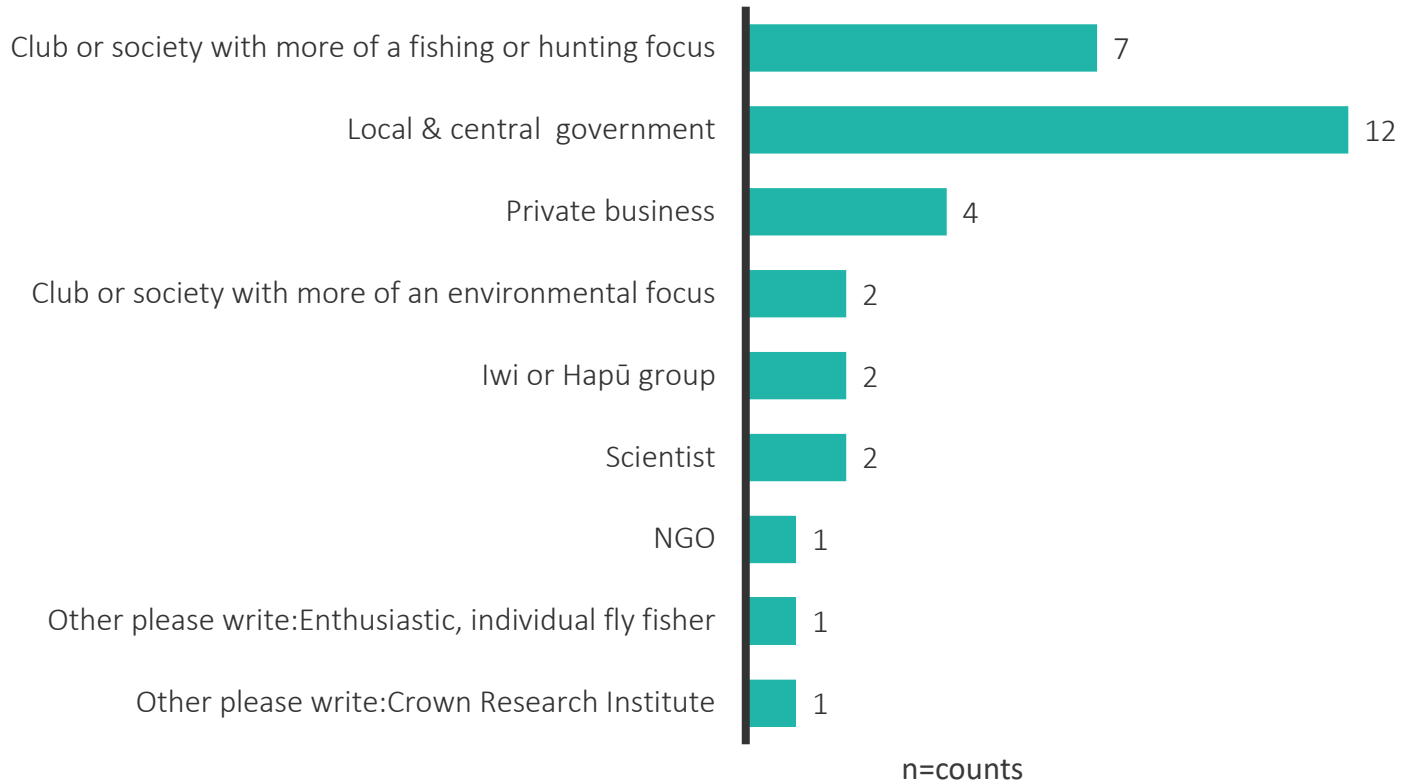
Q. How good or bad a job do you feel Otago Fish and Game does at each of the following activities?



Base: Wider stakeholder group (n=16)

# Sample make up: organisation type for both online survey respondents and in-depth interview participants

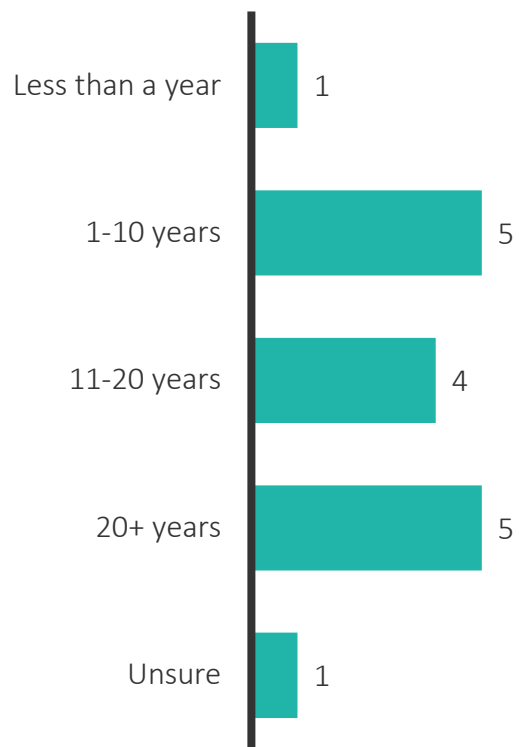
Q. Which of the following best describes the kind of organisation you represent?



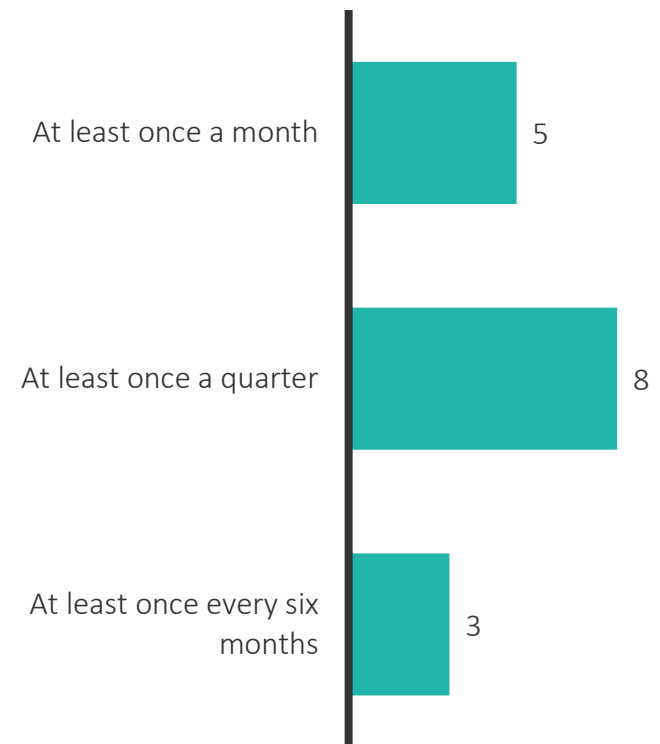
Base: Wider stakeholder group (n=16)

# Online survey sample

Years of relationship with Otago Fish & Game



Frequency or contact with Otago Fish & Game



n=counts

Base: Wider stakeholder group (n=16)



## Final survey comments:

Q. Is there anything else you'd like to add about your interactions with Otago Fish & Game?

I cannot believe that an organisation whose primary purpose is to enhance the prospects of an introduced pest that predates on our native species is allowed to exist.

They are okay

Governors seem more pragmatic - Management too defence focused - it should be more consistent, and outcome focused at both levels - hard to predict how issues will land

F&G needs to have long term goals and not be unrealistic in expectations of change. It is the native fish that are important to protect. Introduced fish and game should not be given priority in fact they need to be controlled

Stronger advocacy with Govt and Govt agencies

I've found Fish & Game to be good for us, politics is now a big part of their job as with all groups we must be diverse and adapt to the changing environment.

Rules on stock (bulls) on flood banks during duck shooting - what/how to do about it

An organisation trying to do the best they can with limited resources.

Otago Fish & Game need to work constructively rather than antagonistically to solve environmental challenges.

Professional. Committed. Constructive attitude. Well informed.

Great and professional people

Always great collaboration

Very slow to respond at council level

No

No

No

Base: Wider stakeholder group (n=16)