

# Community-based biodiversity sanctuaries

Under what conditions are they socially  
and operationally sustainable?

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Today: what do people think about the  
contributions they make to conservation in NZ?



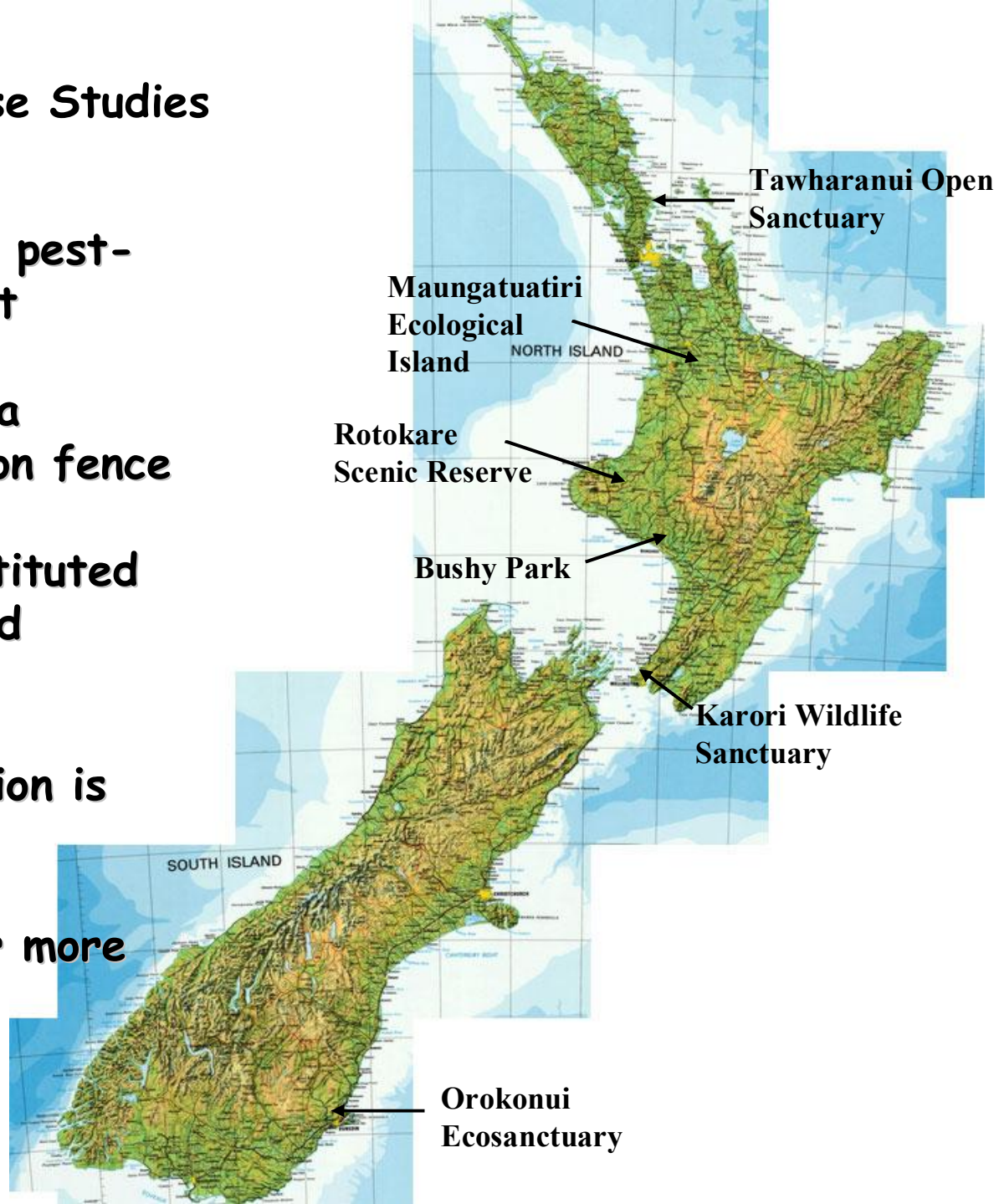
# Research Case Studies

Aim to create a pest-free environment through the construction of a mammal-exclusion fence

A formally constituted community-based organisation

Fence construction is complete

100 hectares or more in size



# Sanctuary sustainability-research questions:

- What models of engagement with the wider community are most likely to support and sustain a community-led biodiversity restoration project?
- How is the sustainability of a community-led biodiversity restoration project affected by its relationships with the agencies of government?
- What are the strengths and limitations of an enterprise approach to financial sustainability in a community-led restoration project?



# Methodology

- Qualitative social science research
- Interviews with key people from sanctuary groups, local iwi and government agencies
- Study of sanctuary documents: strategic plans, management plans
- My ongoing role as a trustee for Orokonui Ecosanctuary means this case study is treated differently in my research.

# Progress to date

- Case study interviews were conducted from October 2007 to April 2008.
- Currently engaged in analysing the interview transcripts and sanctuary documents.
- 2 years into a 3 year programme
- Today a sneak preview of one small element of my results



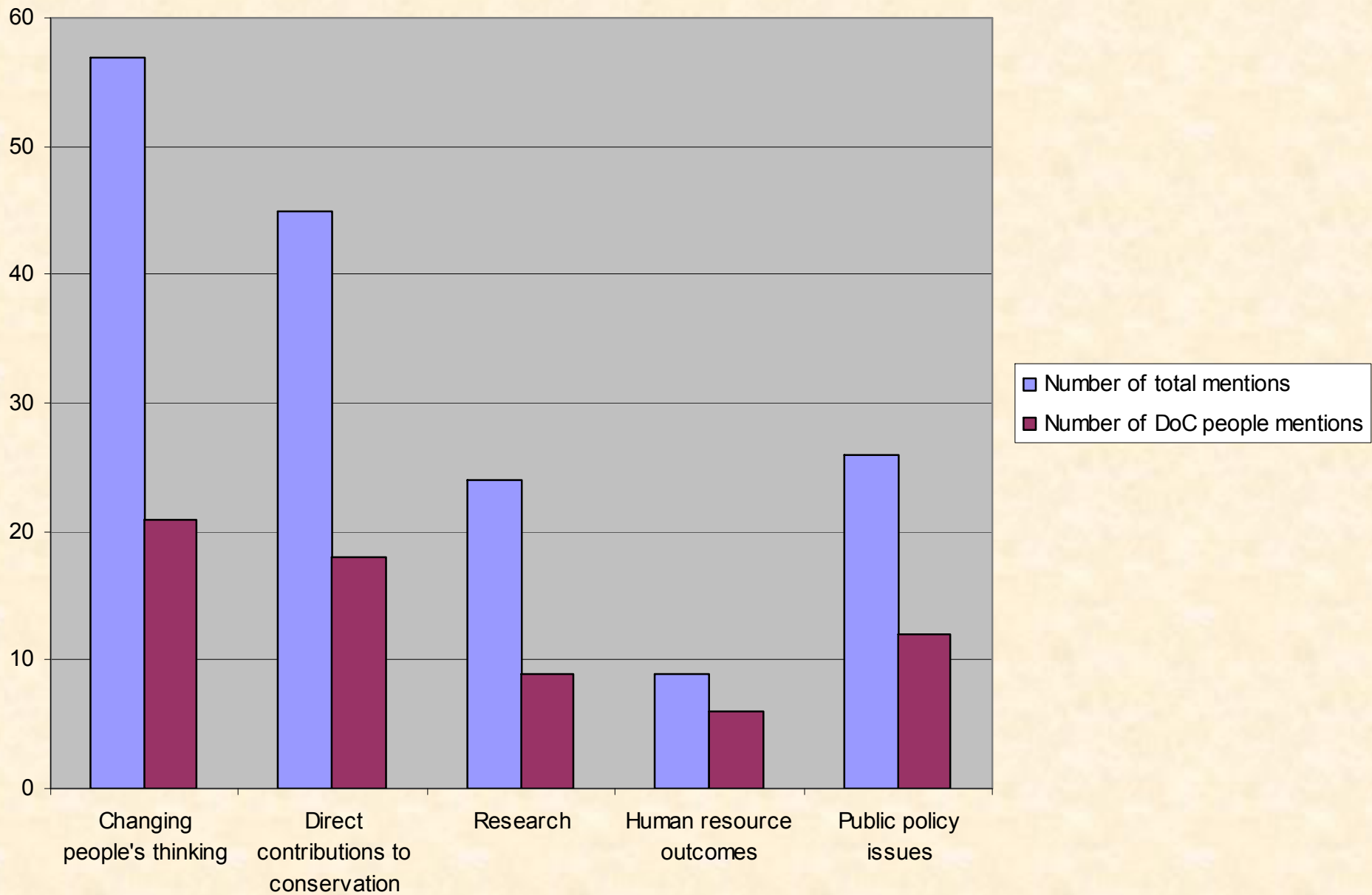


What do you see as the role of fenced sanctuaries in the New Zealand conservation scene?

55 interviewees, of which 12 currently work, or have worked within the Department of Conservation



# Contributions to conservation





# Changing people's thinking

- advocacy for conservation
- educating children in conservation
- changes in government policies
- changing attitudes towards money and conservation





*"They certainly have a role with getting the public to get in touch with a lot of species that are otherwise confined offshore, and I think if we want public support for conservation...people need to be able to go and see some of these things because otherwise it will become kind of an abstract thing that sits on an island offshore somewhere and why should anybody care."*

*"Both regional council and city council are getting more interested in biodiversity hotspots regionally so maybe our role will be to help them with some of their spots and increasing the corridors and the networks... I only see it as actually inspiring the councils to get out there and do more. "*



# Direct benefits to conservation

- caring for species
  - halo effect
  - biodiversity banks
  - creching
  - donating wildlife
  - localised restoration
  - migrating bird stopover
  - taking strain off other sites
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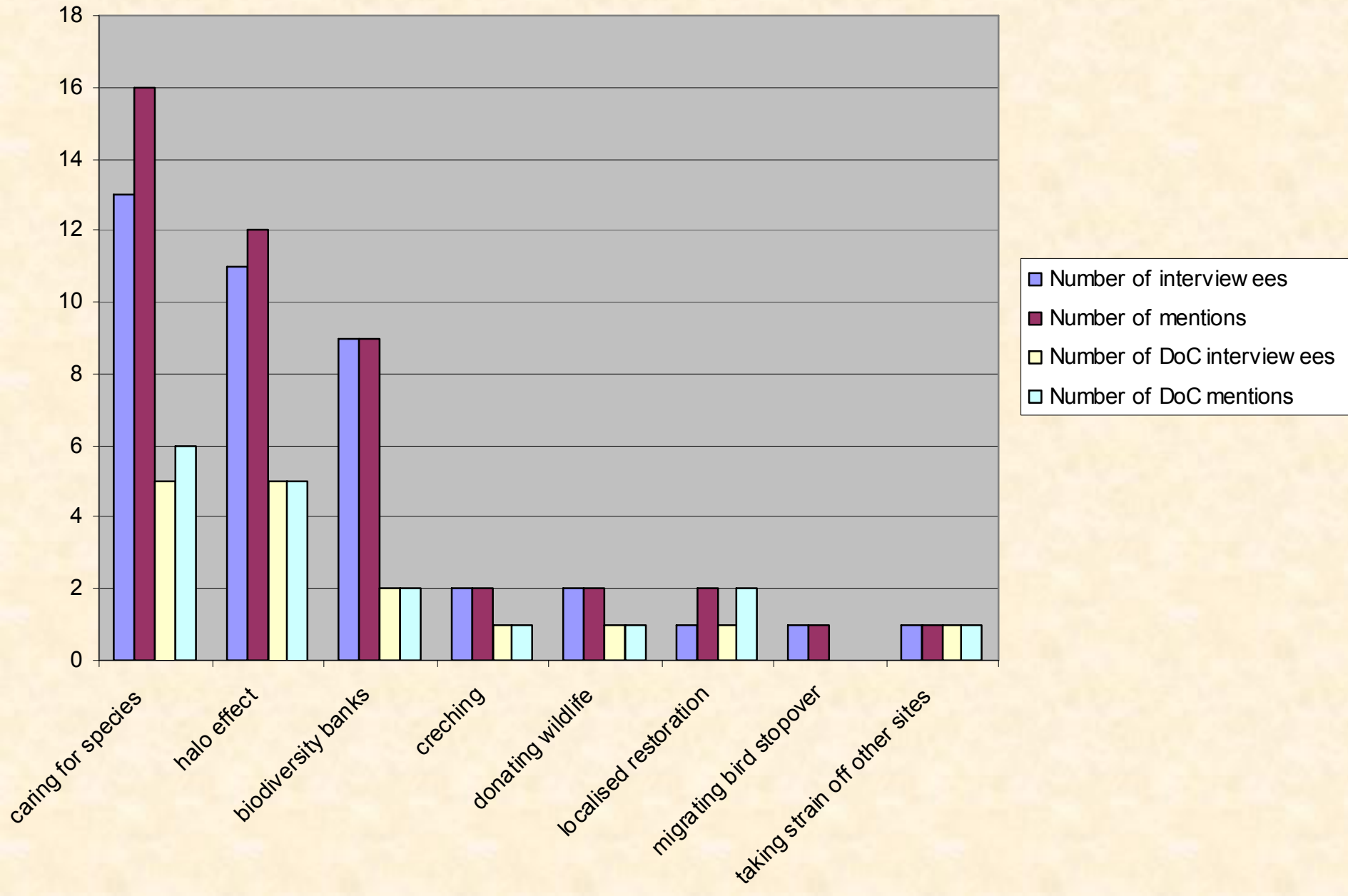
*"I think that we need these things for conservation, for the preservation of species and it's not just about birds. It's also about lizards and snails, frogs and even fish"*

*"For me it's exciting that we are seeing these native birds coming out onto our properties that we haven't seen...the immediate farms in the area are going to be more motivated to do trapping if they have got interesting native birds on their place."*

*"We are going to need a lot more than just fenced projects. We need our big mainland forests to have whole ecosystems supported and we need to have our offshore islands. But if you've got fenced projects and if things start going wrong - because those big mainland projects are going to need ongoing pest control - but if you've got those nice fenced projects with a core that is safe then it's your insurance policy."*

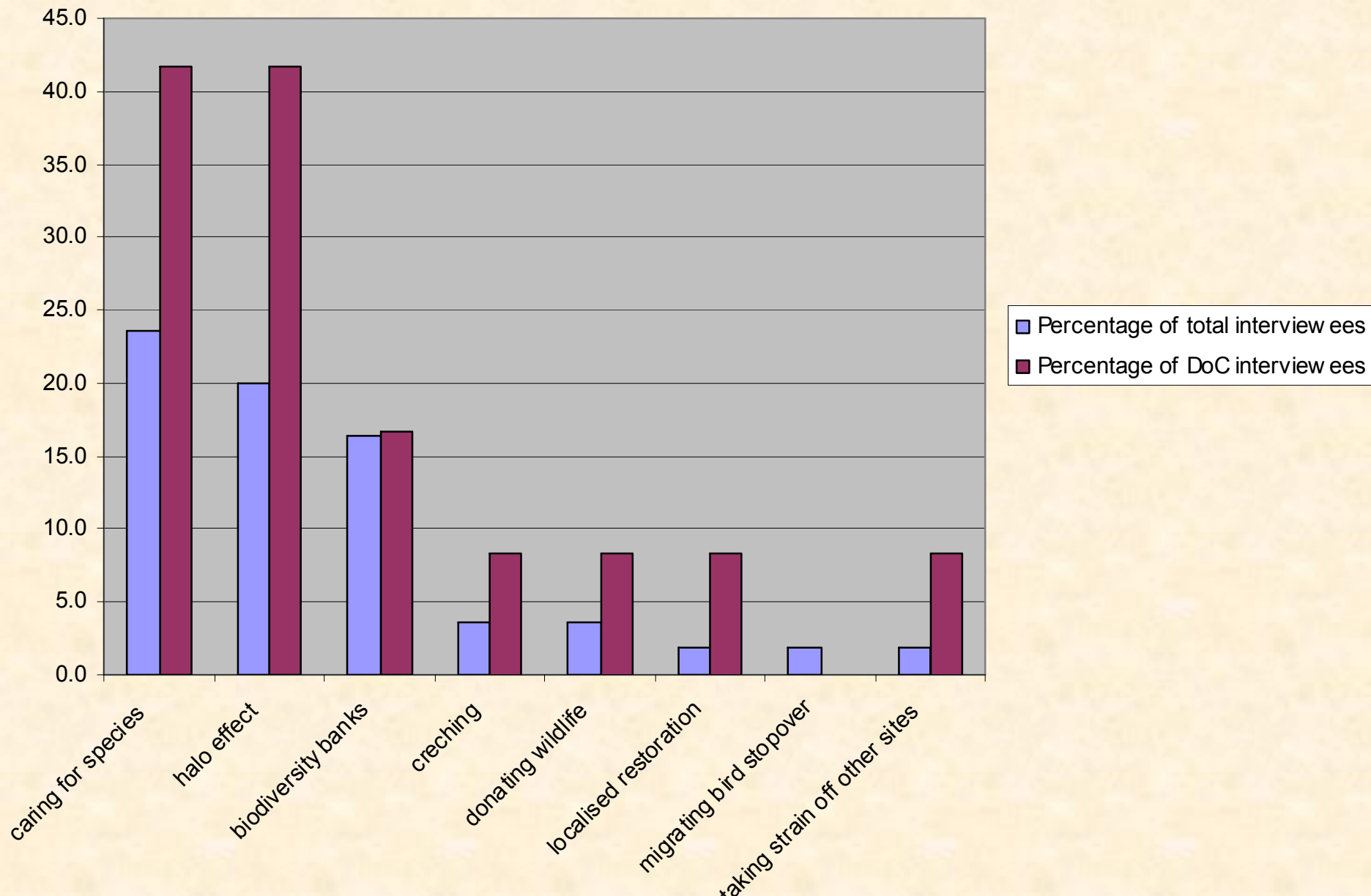


# Direct contributions to conservation





# Direct benefits to conservation





# Research

- learning lessons for application elsewhere
- test case; proving it's possible
- pest control without toxins
- combining tourism and conservation

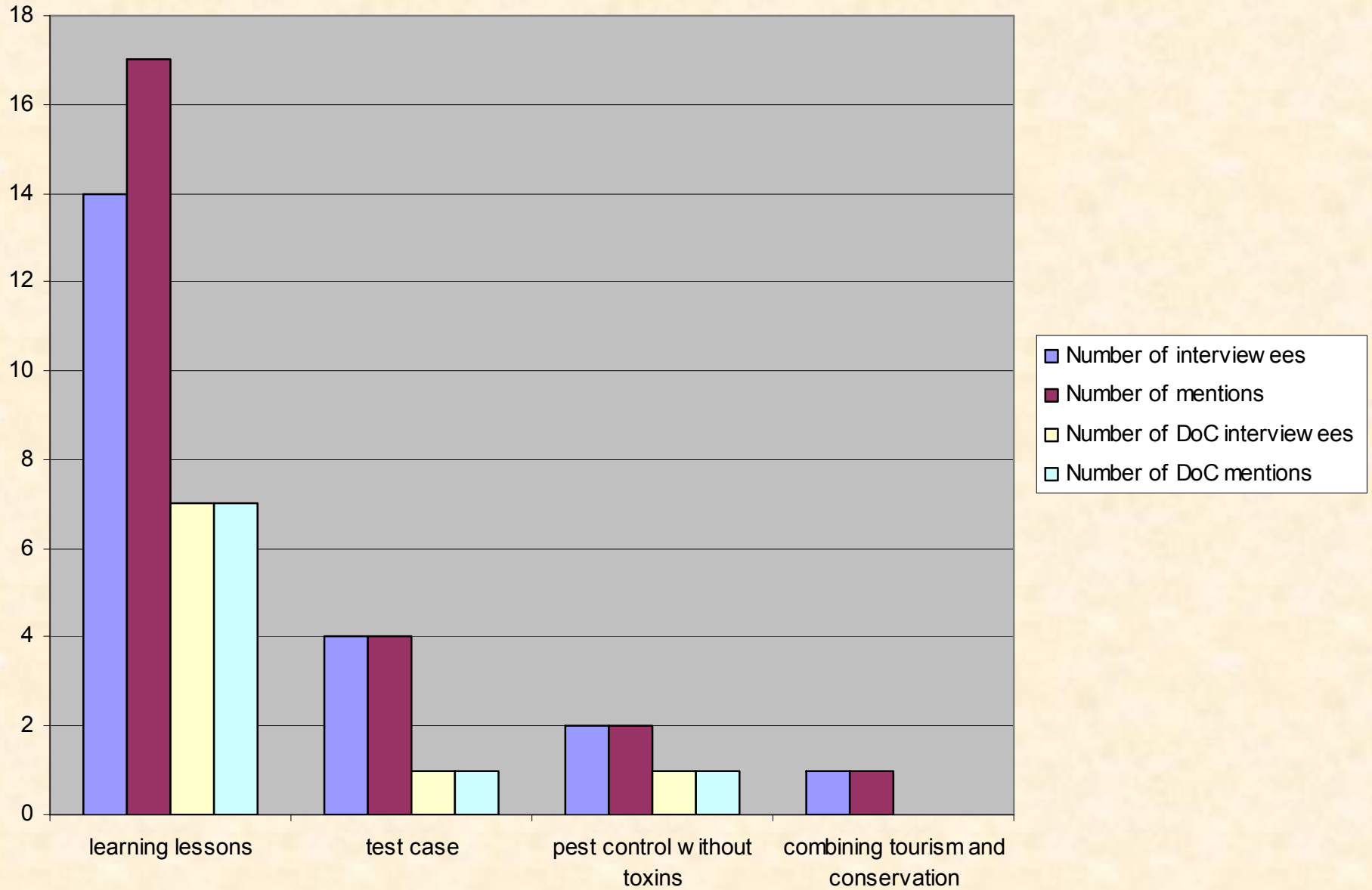


*"Every species that we translocate has a role to play in the conservation community in respect of the technology and knowledge that is gained."*

*"We are also learning and testing things that they are now applying in unfenced areas. We are showing what can be achieved with mouse control. And certainly some of the mainland projects have used our example to transfer the saddleback."*

*"I think that it is a fantastic opportunity to look at doing massive pest control in a completely different way that in the long term is going to be very safe for our communities because no more toxins are going to be put on the mountain."*

# Research





# Human resource outcomes

- movement of people between organisations
- building community capacity
- spreading the expertise
- iwi-iwi relationships
- open information sharing





*"A lot of our volunteers have gone on and volunteered or got employed by DoC. It's fed into the DoC system anyway. Staff have gone and done voluntary work with DoC and come back inspired."*

*"There's a huge confidence building in the groups of people that take these projects on."*

*"Gone are the days when conservation is the task of central government ... it does make people think 'well, if I want to ring up an expert I don't just ring DoC, in fact I will ring whoever the manager is on a conservation project here or down in Taranaki or somewhere else because their knowledge base is growing considerably.'"*

*"As far as the translocations from different areas it's always really special when we develop a relationship for a translocation because for us as iwi it's like we are adopting a whangai from another iwi... Special relationships have developed over that."*





Tentative conclusion: community-based fenced sanctuaries are primarily about changing the relationship between people and N.Z.'s native flora and fauna at the local level.

Photo: Evening Post