

NIWA's context for sustainability

NIWA carries a broad sustainability mandate on behalf of all New Zealanders. Charged with delivering science that positively contributes to the country's future environmental and economic sustainability, NIWA's impact is considerable. As a Crown Research Institute operating in a fully contestable funding market, we straddle commercial and social outcomes. It is a privileged position. As issues of climate change and sustainability become mainstream, NIWA finds itself centre-stage on many fronts. We recognise the challenges posed by increased competition, a tight labour market, and rising costs. NIWA is committed to carrying out its work in an environmentally, socially, culturally, and financially responsible manner.

John Morgan, Chief Executive

Approach to sustainability reporting

This spread summarises the sustainability section of NIWA's Annual Report 2008. That sets the benchmark for NIWA's future quadruple bottom line reporting, using guidelines and indicators from the international standard in sustainability reporting, the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI G3), for performance against environmental, economic, labour, and social/cultural indicators.

Environmental pillar

Aspirations

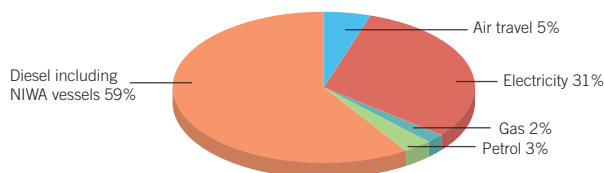
NIWA aspires to help maintain the health of the environment and minimise our operational impacts and, through our science, help New Zealanders make decisions and take actions that promote the sustainable use of our natural resources.

Key challenge

With many initiatives already undertaken, bigger leaps in efficiency will become harder to make without affecting our ability to deliver robust science to our clients.

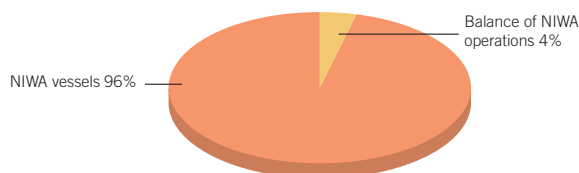
Highlights

NIWA's GHG emissions profile, 2007-08

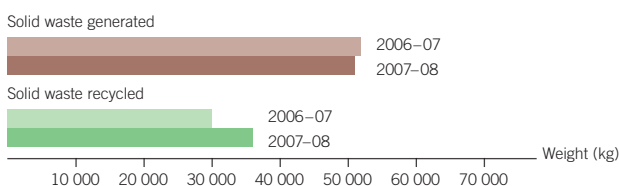


NIWA's biggest source of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions is diesel used by marine research vessels. We continuously seek to reduce diesel consumption; in 2007-08 we reduced cruising speeds of our vessels by 1.5 knots, resulting in a 25% reduction in diesel consumption, and reducing our GHG emissions by 1700 tonnes CO₂.

Diesel consumption across NIWA, 2007-08



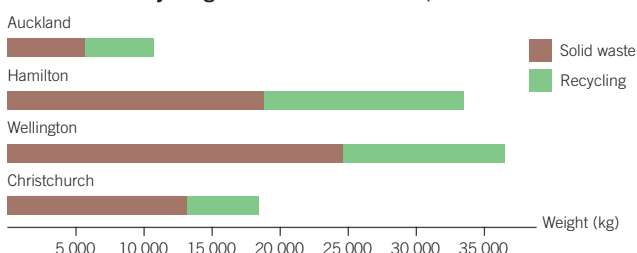
Total NIWA solid waste and recycling



Despite a 4% increase in permanent full-time employees (FTEs) between 2006-07 and 2007-08, we reduced our solid waste generation by 2% per FTE, and increased our total recycling of solid waste by 18% per FTE. The key initiatives NIWA employed were:

- Influencing the supply chain: requesting IT equipment suppliers to reduce or eliminate packaging materials
- More frequent waste audits: better information about waste flows
- Making the process easier: introducing paper recycling trays and more recycling bins
- Better support: increased internal communication about new processes and benefits.

Solid waste recycling at NIWA's main sites, 2007-08



Economic pillar

Aspirations

NIWA aspires to provide science that supports the sustainable management of New Zealand's natural resources and promotes innovation and economic success. We adopt financial strategies that ensure we continuously invest in our people, facilities, and equipment to enhance our scientific capabilities.

Key challenge

The key challenge for NIWA is that we have had three exceptional years. We must now maintain a good level of growth, profitability, and shareholder return in an economic environment defined by increasing competition, a tight labour market, and rising costs.

Highlights

See Financial Summary, pp. 8-9.

Social pillar

Aspirations

NIWA aspires to create a safe and supportive environment where staff grow and develop professionally and personally. We encourage a workplace that is empowering and free of discrimination; provide remuneration that attracts and retains quality staff to the best of our ability; and encourage and support people to achieve work-life balance.

Key challenge

Attraction and retention of staff in a competitive global talent market.

Highlights

Personal Development

NIWA Science	Total hours taken	Av. hours per employee
Personal development leave	3768	6

Personal development training is a benefit provided only to permanent staff. In keeping with NIWA's intent to promote and encourage work-life balance, permanent staff have a three-day leave entitlement to pursue personal interests.

Parental Leave

NIWA Science	No.	% returned
Maternity leave	15	87%
Paternity leave	7	100%
Total	22	91%

Staff turnover

NIWA Science	No.	% of category
Research teams	45	9.0%
Research support	1	7.1%
General support	12	10.7%
Executive/management	2	7.8%
Total	60	9.3%

Health & Safety

In 2007–08, NIWA lost 19.5 days due to staff injury, corresponding to 0.012% of total work days.

NIWA Science	No. of incidents
Medical treatment injuries/lost time	3
Medical treatment injuries/no lost time	41
First aid injuries	17
Minor injuries: no treatment	36
Other incidents	30
Near misses	13
Total	140

All figures in this column relate to permanent staff only.

Cultural pillar

Aspirations

NIWA aspires to be New Zealand's leading provider of water- and atmosphere-related research of benefit to Māori.

Key challenge

For NIWA's Māori environmental research group, Te Kūwaha o Taihoro Nukurangi, the key challenge is continuing to improve the way we carry out our work, including formalising relationships with Māori and representative organisations within an increasingly complex context of sustainability.

Highlights

Specific procedures to establish positive working relationships with iwi, hapū, and Māori organisations in areas impacted by the research NIWA wishes to conduct.

Enhanced tools for formalising relationships including Memoranda of Understanding, Letters of Support and Intent, and various subcontracts.

GRI G3 indicators reported in NIWA's 2008 Annual Report

Environmental Indicators (environmental pillar)

EN3	Energy consumption for electricity, petrol, diesel, and gas, comparing 2006–07 with 2007–08 levels
EN16/17	Total greenhouse gas emissions profile in Tonnes CO ₂ e, outlining the major sources
EN22	Solid waste generated and recycled at NIWA's major sites Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington, and Christchurch. Comparison of total figures between 2006–07 and 2007–08
EN26	Strategic initiatives being implemented and developed to mitigate environmental impacts of NIWA's work

Social (labour) indicators (social pillar)

LA1	Workforce profile detailing male/female ratios, average ages, employment contract type, ethnic/nationality diversity, and years of service
LA2	Total number and rate of employee turnover by age and gender
LA3	Benefits provided to full-time employees that are not provided to temporary or part-time employees
LA4	Union membership
LA7	Rates of injury, lost days, absenteeism, parental leave, personal development leave
LA11	NIWA guidelines on retirement
LA13	Male/female ratio across NIWA's Board of Directors, senior management, and sustainable development committee

Cultural indicators (cultural pillar)

SO1	Programmes and initiatives around NIWA's main cultural impacts – through NIWA's directive for the development of effective long-term relationships with Māori. These relationships are managed through NIWA's Māori environmental research group, Te Kūwaha o Taihoro Nukurangi
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Economic indicators (economic pillar)

EC1	Direct economic value generated and distributed, including revenues, operating costs, employee compensation, retained earnings, and payments to capital providers and government
EC4	Significant financial assistance received from government
EC6	NIWA's approach to sustainable purchasing and ethical supply
EC9	Interview with Chief Executive John Morgan describing the context of NIWA's economic impacts