

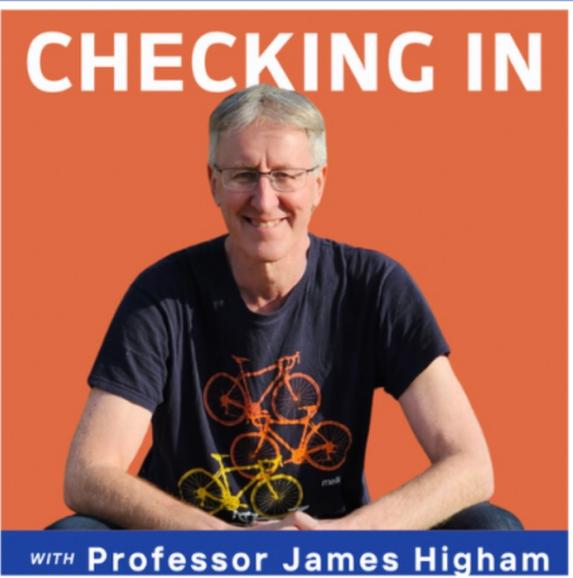
De-centralising tourism:

Integrating policy, practice, people and place

Destination Queenstown
Lake Wānaka Tourism
Members update
Arrowtown 9 July 2025

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CHECKING IN

WITH Professor James Higham

PODCAST EPISODE

SPACE - THE

BY JAMES HIGHAM · 29 APRIL

Space tourism is on 15th April. That's a global public. Space is the ultimate frontier.



NZ COULD BE A WORLD LEADER IN SPACE TOURISM

BY JAMES HIGHAM · 27 MAY 2025 · 12 MINUTE

Last year in my first podcast I stayed at home to make space for tourism is back in the news in New Zealand. What does this mean for New Zealand?



AVIATION CALL TO ACTION

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THE AVIATION

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Aviation is the Achilles' heel of tourism emissions. The promise of sustainable aviation is an industry-led void.



TURBO-CHARGED

PODCAST EPISODE

TOURISM GROWTH ROADMAP - SUPERCHARGED OR SHORT-SIGHTED?





Why Aussies are ditching the Bali dream

Aussies say they are rethinking their trips to Bali after a clip exposed the dire reality of the holiday destination.











SOCIAL LICENSE



HOME - SPAIN'S HOUSING CRISIS INTENSIFIES



“Evidence-informed policy making is a deliberate and rigorous approach that seeks to support policy with the best available evidence, rather than intuition, ideology, anecdote, or short-term political (and economic) expediency” (Kennedy, 2024: 2).

Dr Steven Kennedy (30 August 2024)

Secretary to the Treasury.

Evidence informed policy making.

Address to University of Adelaide, South Australian Centre for Economic Studies

What is the evidence-base?

How is it produced and communicated?

How is it taken up and acted upon?

How does it inform policy that supports tourism regions and businesses?



Tourism policy is not easy

- **Tourism is a constantly evolving and prone to sudden unpredictable shifts**
 - It is dynamic (COVID/post—COVID; AI technologies)
 - It is disparate (e.g., national/local infrastructure, conservation)
 - It faces a range of external challenges (e.g., climate change)
 - It is difficult to manage (e.g., markets, demand, behaviour)
 - It is political (e.g., change of governments, sudden reversals of direction)



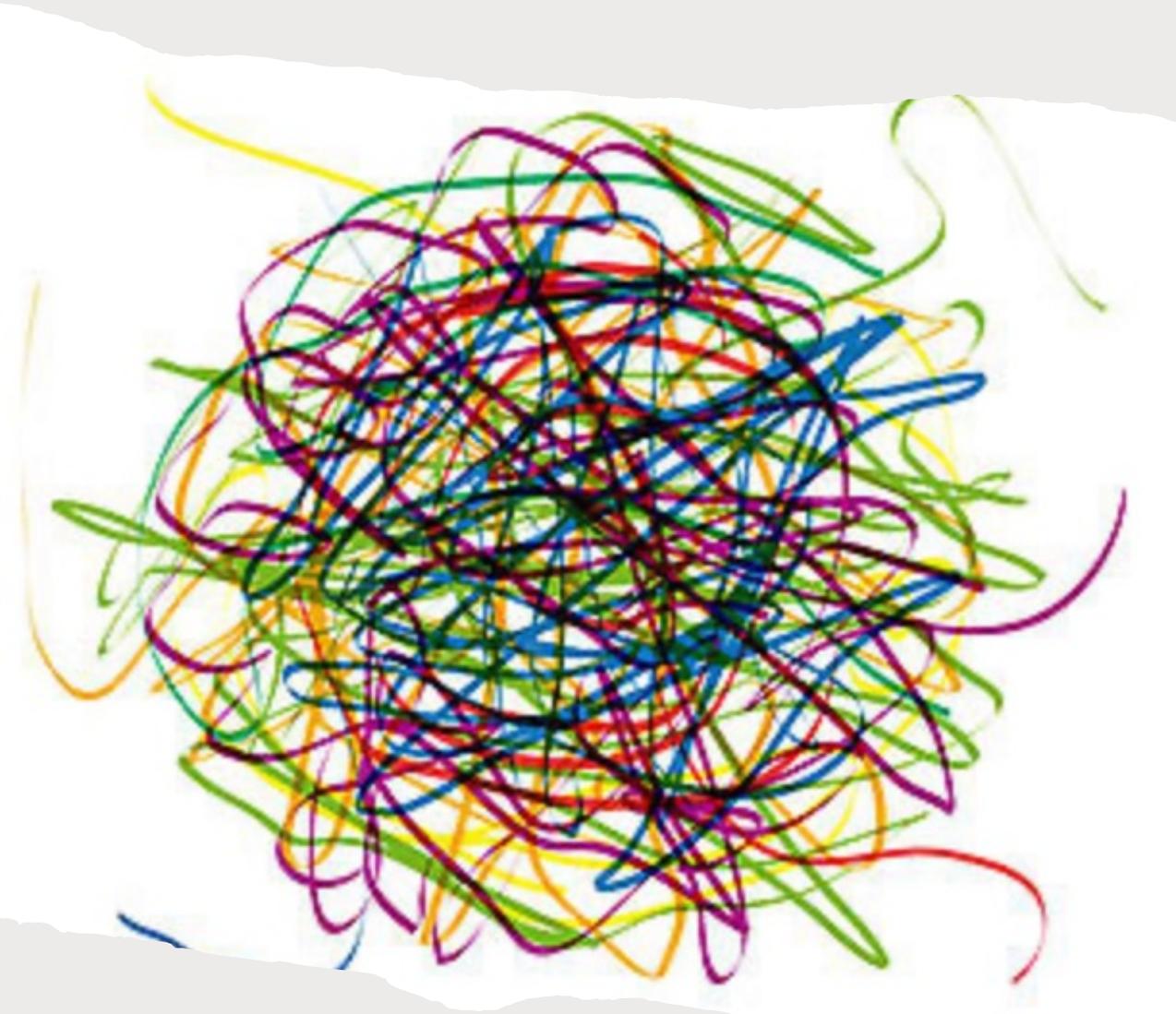
Tourism policy is not easy

- Often misunderstood by policymakers as purely economic.
 - Failure to recognize public value and public values (e.g., people and place)
- Public value and consensus around tourism is also uneven
 - Across regions and timeframes
- This all makes stable policy difficult.



Tourism policy failures

- Turnover of Ministers - Ministries lack courage (e.g., MBIE)
- Policy is often presented in glossy strategies (i.e., 'words on websites')
- Evidence and expertise is often ignored (e.g., PCE, Tourism Futures Taskforce)
- Not evidence based –options, implementation models, measure outcomes, revise
- Swayed by vested interests, advocacy and lobbying
- Evidence destroyed (i.e., removed from websites).



What we have at the moment is a chaotic, unpredictable, piecemeal and totally ineffective



Baggage Belts 2-3



International Arrivals

NZ's plan to 'welcome anyone, from anywhere, anytime' is not a sustainable tourism policy

Published: June 23, 2025 3.34pm NZST



**MINISTRY OF BUSINESS,
INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT**
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI



**Minister for Tourism and
Hospitality**



Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment
Te Kaitiaki Taiao a Te Whare Pāremata



NGĀI TAHU Tourism



NZSki
<https://www.nzski.com>

**Ngā Poari Hapori
Community boards**

Current system - not serving New Zealand well

Crippled by political footballing

- ... constant turnover in Ministers and other public sector roles
- ... lack of strategic direction (e.g., 'We Are Aotearoa')
- ... lack of policy to support strategic direction
- ... key agencies doing their own thing (e.g., Tourism New Zealand)
- ... unclear, undefined or disconnected responsibilities
- ... ineffective and ad hoc funding (e.g., DMPs)
- ... failure to acknowledge or address long-term challenges
- ... different stakeholders interacting in cross cutting ways
- ... lobbying as a key form of communication

A blue calculator is shown in the bottom-left corner of the slide. The calculator has several buttons visible, including a 'RECALL' button, a 'TAX-' button, a division button, a multiplication button, a subtraction button, an addition button, and several numeric buttons (9, 6, 3, 2, 5, 0). The calculator is set against a solid orange background.

International Visitor Levy

“The IVL is your contribution to maintaining the facilities and natural environment you will use and enjoy during your stay”.

New Zealand Immigration



International Visitor Levy

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) (on behalf of the Government) publicly consulted on 2 proposed changes to the operation of the International Visitor Conservation and Tourism Levy (IVL).

These were:

- the amount of the IVL paid by each eligible visitor, and
- where funding generated through the IVL should be spent.

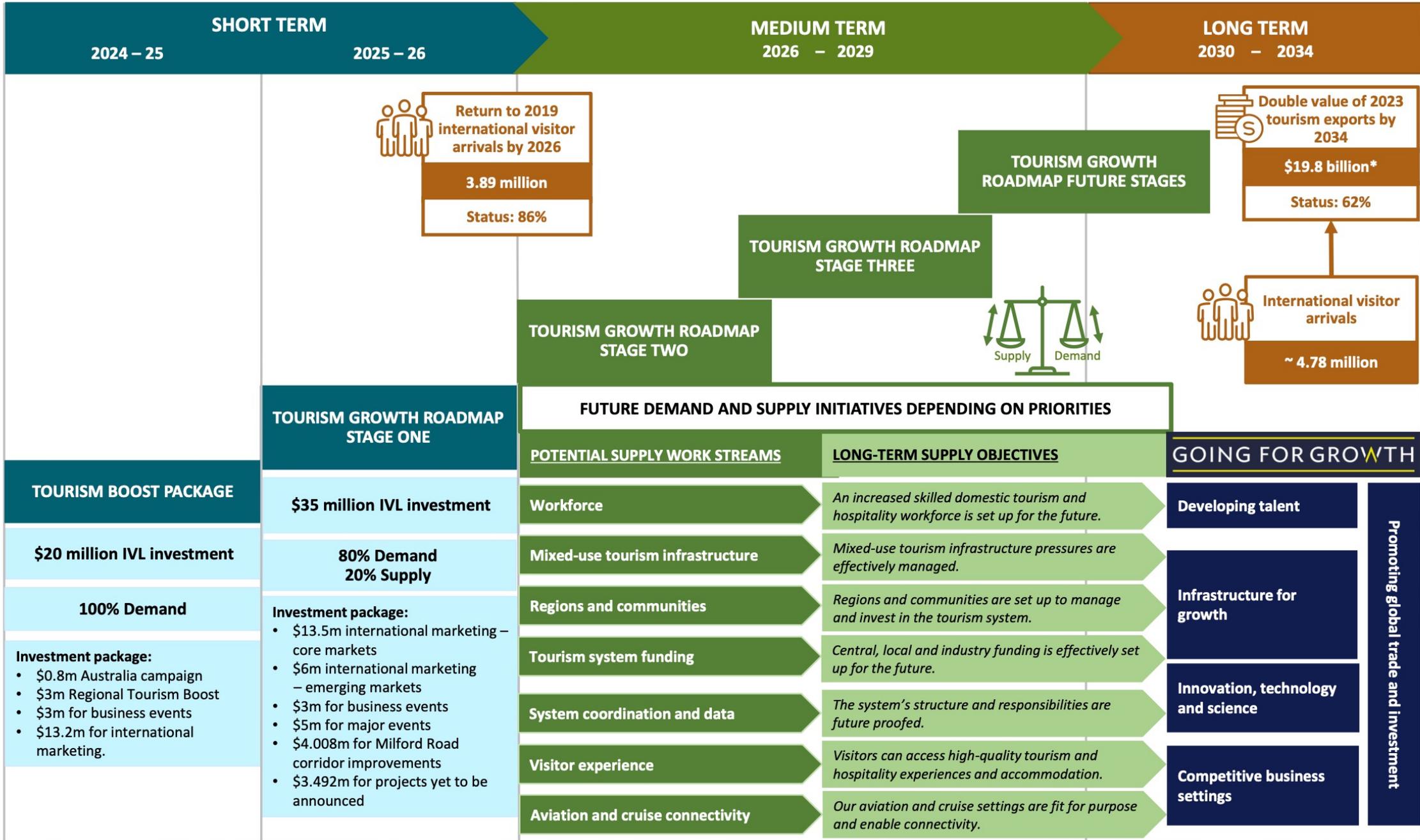
The discussion document that supported the consultation was published on MBIE's website on 15 May 2024 and a stakeholder alert was sent to MBIE's tourism stakeholder list. MBIE conducted targeted social media advertising to raise awareness of the consultation. Social media marketing was focussed on key tourism locations in New Zealand and on those profiles with an interest in tourism and conservation related issues.

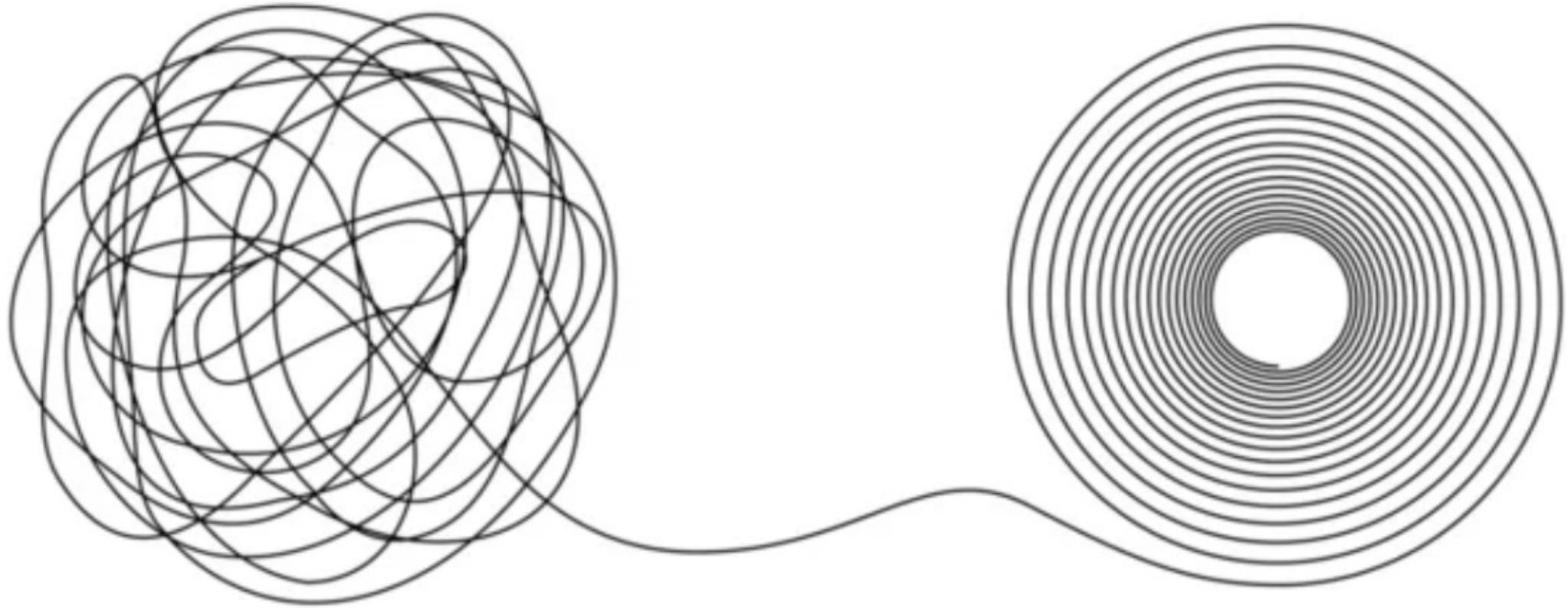


International Visitor Levy

- 66% of submitters supported an increase by \$65 to \$100, while 19% supported an increase by \$35 to \$70 and only 15% supported an increase by \$15 to \$50.
- 85% of submitters strongly agreed or agreed that the IVL should be used to address visitor pressure on mixed-use tourism infrastructure and wider tourism assets and 93% felt it should address visitor pressure on the public conservation estate.
- 54% of submitters strongly disagreed or disagreed with the IVL being used to contribute to the funding mix for international tourism marketing costs (investment into Tourism New Zealand).

The responses to this consultation will be used to inform advice to the Minister for Tourism and Hospitality, the Minister of Conservation, and the Minister of Finance regarding possible changes to the operation of the IVL.





**What do we need to create
order out of chaos?**

**1. National Tourism
Development
Authority**



Statutory Body

- A statutory body is an organization or entity:
 - Established by an act of parliament (or other legislative body)
 - Created by law, with powers and duties outlined in that law.
 - Carries out specific functions and responsibilities as defined in the legislation.
 - Tasked with implementing legislation, providing services, and regulating or overseeing certain activities on behalf of the government.



National Infrastructure Plan
Mahere Tūāhanga ā-Motu

Transforming infrastructure for all New Zealanders

Our infrastructure is vital to our way of life, supporting almost everything we do. Te Waihanga, the New Zealand Infrastructure Commission, works as a catalyst for change, helping Aotearoa get better results from our infrastructure.

The National Tourism Development Authority

Fast-track your career by upskilling at your own pace.

[Find out more](#)

Climate Action Programme

Receive expert guidance tailored to your business needs, helping you to take action to empower your business to become more sustainable.

[Register now](#)



Tourism Policy Framework 2025–2030



1 Introduction

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Fáilte Ireland is an important member of the Taskforce Report Implementation Group and continues to engage proactively in advancing the recommendations. A number of pilot

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National Tourism Development Authority

- Involve both the public and private sector
- Provide a coordinated approach to tourism development priorities
- Provide coordination and focus to guide and invest in tourism development These include:
 - Development priorities e.g., tourism infrastructure, regional development strategies, education/training;
 - Investment priorities
 - Managing funding programmes (e.g., IVL)
 - Registration and grading (e.g., assurance frameworks and short-term tourist letting registers);
 - Coordinating national and regional marketing, including regional experience brands;
 - Short-term strategic support (e.g., AI adoption);
 - Long-term planning (e.g., tourism climate action);
 - Coordinating tourism data management and research and managing research archives.

What do we need to create order out of chaos?

2. Create unique and world class macro-regions



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Māori](#)

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[NEW ZEALAND \(/NEWS/NATIONAL\)](#) / [TOURISM \(/TAGS/TOURISM\)](#)

North Island tourism operators 'move beyond competition' with new alliance

4:32 pm on 5 May 2025

The partnership involves three airports and 15 regional tourism organisations.

Auckland Airport chief customer officer Scott Tasker said regions were already competing against overseas destinations to attract visitors, so this would be a more coordinated approach to promote the North Island as a destination.

"The goal behind that is to encourage more visitors to explore more of the North Island, to spread around and to stay longer and increase their spend across our regions, and that's about shifting visitors from perhaps fly-in, fly-out into deeper more rewarding journeys across regions," Tasker said.

Five macro regions

- RTOs reduced from 31 to five macro regions with unique brands
 - E.g., Upper North Island region
 - E.g., Southern Way (8 RTOs)
- Uniquely branded
- Strategic and focused regional marketing support
- Coordinate regional tourism supply (e.g., regional cycle networks)
- Disperse visitors across regions rather than between destinations



What do we need to create order out of chaos?



3. Systematic tourism investment

Tourism policy must address supply and demand

- Requires investment in tourism superstructure, infrastructure and facilities:

"Infrastructure is the road network of a city, while the superstructure is the buildings that line those roads".

- **Superstructure** – e.g., Hospitals; rural health services, housing, disaster/emergency resources (i.e., *vital organs*)
- **Infrastructure** – Roads, bridges, power grids, sewerage systems, communication networks (i.e., *the connecting arteries*)
- **Local facilities** – public toilets, car parks, information centres

Superstructure and infrastructure funding

Central and regional funding for tourism
superstructure and infrastructure

Tourism GST revenue; regional bed taxes

IVL is totally inadequate – conservation, biodiversity
and local facilities only

National Tourism Development Commission

Analyse and advise government on regional tourism
infrastructure investment

Collaboration with Infrastructure Commission

This is the greatest risk that tourism currently faces

- Infrastructure stress and congestion
- Loss of community
- Loss of lifestyle values
- Perceived local rate payer subsidisation
- Lack of environmental protections (e.g., crowding at iconic sites; biodiversity, water quality)
- Declining social license

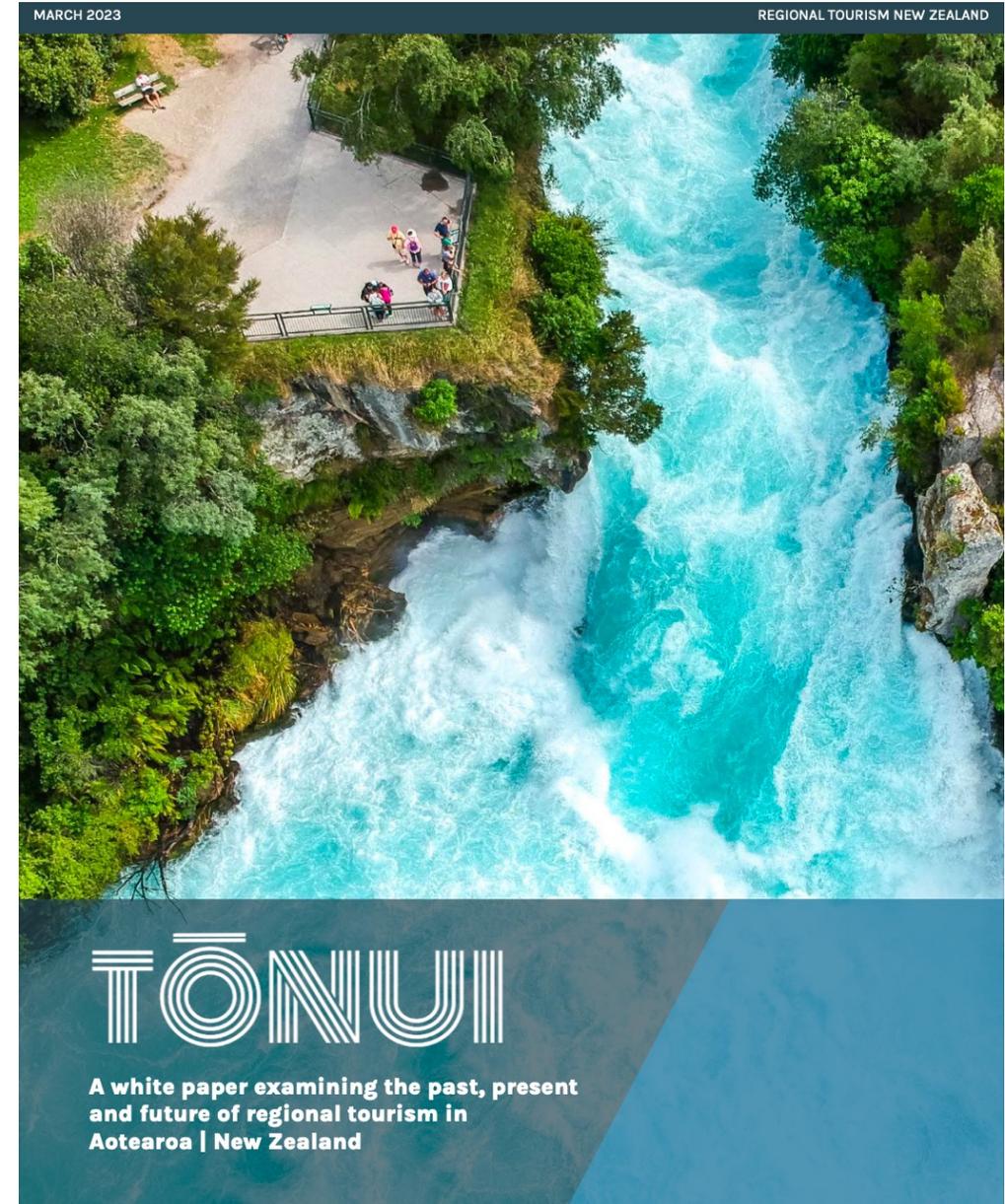


De-centralising tourism

Lack of progress towards sustainable destination management is widely attributed to centralised power addressing decentralised (regional) problems.

And 'an unfunded (non)-mandate', with Local Government being under-resourced and needing to prioritise resources to "core" activities.

- To address these problems we need:
 - A National Tourism Development Authority
 - World-class macro regions
 - Systematic and strategic tourism investment



Upston's view on inconsistent council funding shows urgent need for tourism rethink – Glyn Lewers

8th July 2025 By Natasha Jojoa Burling | natasha@tourismticker.com | @tourismticker

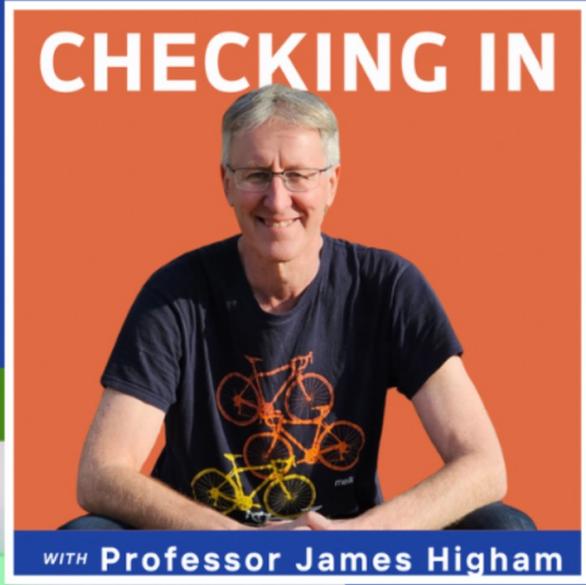


8 Jul 2025 QLDC / T&H Minister

Upston's view on inconsistent council funding shows urgent need for tourism rethink – Glyn Lewers

Glyn Lewers told the Ticker that he agreed with Tourism and Hospitality Minister Louise Upston that funding for the sector at a local level varied widely across the country but he said the government had also been inconsistent.

“I think the comments actually highlight the need to actually really have a good look at how we manage and structure the tourism system across the whole country,” Lewers said.



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