A framework for managing the impacts of land transport activities on New Zealand's endemic bats

Fiona Davies[1], Sarah Lindberg[1], Dr Kerry Borkin[2], Dr Des Smith[2], Chris Jones[3]
[1]AECOM, [2]Wildlands Consultants Ltd, [3]Landcare Research, [4]NZ Transport Agency

Roading and other land transport infrastructure projects may pose a threat to New Zealand's endemic bat populations which are already vulnerable. To date there has been no robust, empirical assessment of the impacts of land transport activities on bats in New Zealand, and there are no accepted standardised methods or guidelines for addressing any impacts of land transport projects on bats.
To address this, we are developing a Framework for the NZ Transport Agency which guides projects in identifying and reducing adverse impacts of land transport activities on bat species. The Framework provides managers of land transport projects (in areas where bats are present) with guidance on monitoring, mitigation and management of bats. The Framework has been developed in close collaboration with DOC, NZ Transport Agency and Regional and District Councils and follows the New Zealand Transport Agencies' business case development model. It is intended that the establishment of such a framework will allow potentially adverse effects to be addressed consistently and appropriately across New Zealand, guiding decision making and statutory processes. Adaptive management is a key component of the Framework and provides a backbone to many strategies outlined. Other key areas that the Framework will address include:

- Data collection requirements
- Resource Consent, Designation and Wildlife Permit consenting pathway (agreed with DOC)
- Model consent conditions (resource consent and wildlife permit)
- Key areas for future research
- Concepts of a collaborative model for future research

The Framework has been informed by an extensive literature review and field research.