

## Drylands

Drylands are unique ecosystems that provide habitat for rare and threatened species. Presently only around 3% (60,000ha) of dryland ecosystems in Canterbury are protected. Projects for protection and restoration are underway. Priority needs to be given to effective planning and regulatory mechanisms to ensure no further loss of remaining dryland biodiversity.

### Target and Progress to 2020

From 2010: Maintain existing high quality indigenous aquatic and dryland ecosystems in intermontane basins and on the plains.

Not started	Started	Progress	Good progress	Achieving
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- Zone Committees have awarded \$360,000 Immediate Steps Biodiversity funding to 29 projects at 19 locations for dryland ecosystems including work on weed and pest control, see fig 5.
- The Canterbury Biodiversity Strategy (CBS) has carried out an additional 52 projects, with \$390,000 of CBS funding. Only 60ha of land across the Canterbury Plains are protected dryland ecosystems.
- The Mackenzie Basin is recognised for its extensive dryland ecosystems. While large areas of high value habitats for indigenous biodiversity still remain, there has been significant loss of habitat on low-altitude flats and valley floors as a result of land-use intensification.
- Both the Upper and Lower Waitaki Zone Committees set community outcomes to protect and enhance the biodiversity of water bodies and high quality drylands. The resulting rule framework, Plan Change 5, limits the scope of dryland development and could result in fewer areas of high biodiversity disappearing and may provide better opportunities for ecological linkages across the drylands.
- DOC has an initiative called the Mackenzie Drylands Park which shows how dryland ecosystems can be restored. Landcare Research, together with a number of agencies, has also been investigating how dryland ecosystems function and how they can be restored.

Fig 5: Wetland and Dryland Projects

