

WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION - IUCN SUMMARY

SOUTH WEST NEW ZEALAND WORLD HERITAGE AREA (TE WAHIPOUNAMU)

1. LOCATION

Comprises a nearly contiguous network of reserved land covering much of the south-west of the South Island, including four national parks (Fiordland, Mount Aspiring, Mount Cook and Westland), two nature reserves, three scientific reserves, 13 scenic reserves, four wildlife management reserves, five ecological areas, a number of conservation areas and one private reserve.

2. JURIDICAL DATA

Owned by the Crown, apart from a small block of land at Martins Bay, owned by the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society, and a number of private enclaves. Virtually all the land is currently the subject of a claim by the Ngai Tahu Maori Trust Board before the Waitangi tribunal. The outcome will not jeopardize future protection as Ngai Tahu are committed to maintaining the protected status of the lands involved. The four national parks collectively cover 1,725,437ha out of a total nomination area of 2,600,000ha. The remaining areas comprises land managed by the Department of Conservation.

Westland/Mount Cook national parks and Fiordland National Park were inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1986. With the formation of the Department of Conservation in 1987 the opportunity was provided for the coordinated management of all the natural Crown lands in the area, and the nomination of one fully-representative World Heritage site.

3. IDENTIFICATION

Comprises the least disturbed tenth of New Zealand's land mass, with nearly two million hectares of temperate rainforest, 450km of alpine communities, and a distinctive fauna.

The overwhelming mountainous character of the area results from tectonic movement between the Pacific plate and the Indo-Australian plate over the last five million years. High local relief is the result of deep glacial excavation. Glaciers are an important feature of the nominated area, especially in the vicinity of Westland and Mount Cook national parks.

There have also been substantial post-glacial changes, especially marked in South Westland and the Southern Alps. Erosion is rapid, especially west of the Main Divide. Intense gullying, serrated ridges, and major and minor rockfalls are characteristic of this zone. However, glacial landforms are almost entirely intact in Fiordland.

Natural vegetation is distributed along a number of pronounced environmental gradients including altitudinal sequences, rainfall/temperature gradients, a north-south gradient covering three degrees of latitude, pronounced ecotones between open wetlands, grasslands, shrublands and forest communities, and distinct sequences of vegetation and soils developed on landforms of different age. The vegetation is notable both in national and international terms for its diversity and essentially pristine condition.

A floristically rich alpine vegetation of shrubs, tussocks and herbs extends around the summits of the mountains, from about 1,000m to the permanent snowline. At warmer lower altitudes, the rainforest is dominated by dense stands of tall podocarps. The wetter, milder west is characterised by luxuriant rain forest and wetlands; the drier, more continental east has more open forest, shrublands and tussock grasslands. The most extensive and least modified natural freshwater wetlands in New Zealand are found in the nominated area. Sizeable open wetlands, including high fertility swamps and low fertility peat bogs, are a particular feature of the South Westland coastal plain.

The best-known vegetation chronosequences are those on glacial landforms where the ages of outwash, terrace and higher piedmont surfaces are known. The most impressive landform chronosequence is the flights of marine terraces in southern Fiordland.

As the least modified region on mainland New Zealand, the South-West is the core habitat for many indigenous animals, including a number of primitive taxa, and contains the largest and most significant populations of forest birds in the country, most of which are endemic to New Zealand. A few mountain valleys in Fiordland harbour the total wild population (about 170 birds) of the takahe Notornis mantelli, a large flightless rail believed extinct until "rediscovered" in 1948 and which is recognised by IUCN as endangered. Most of New Zealand's fur seals Arctocephalus forsteri are found along the South-West coast. Virtually wiped out by sealing in the early 1800s, they currently number about 50,000.

A Maori association with the area falls into three broad categories: mythological, traditional history and ethnological. All of these values are contained within the tradition of the Ngai Tahu tribe, whose ancestral territories cover all except the extreme northern parts of the South Island.

4. STATE OF PRESERVATION/CONSERVATION

The principal uses of the nomination area are nature conservation, natural-resource based recreation and tourism and sustainable small-scale natural resource utilisation. With few exceptions, the area retains a wilderness character. Population increases of red deer in the 1940s and 1950s threatened the integrity of the forest and alpine ecosystems. Other browsing mammals, such as wapiti, fallow deer, goat, chamois and thar, have restricted distributions but have caused severe damage in places. Numbers of all the above species have fallen sharply since the advent of commercial hunting, with a corresponding recovery of the vegetation, particularly in open alpine areas. Australian brush-tailed possum has caused severe mortality in montane rata/kamahi forests in the north. Rabbit populations affect some grasslands on the eastern side of the nomination area. Introduced mustelids and rodents have had a devastating impact on indigenous bird life. Several species have become extinct and most bird populations have been greatly reduced. Exotic weeds are a minor problem and are mainly confined to disturbed sites.

National parks policy aims for the extermination of introduced animals. In other protected areas their populations are kept at low levels to minimise their impact on native flora and fauna. The Department of Conservation has initiated control programmes in fauna sanctuaries and is developing and implementing recovery plans for threatened species.

Provisions within the National Parks Act 1980, Reserves Act 1977 and Conservation Act 1987 are the principal means of ensuring legal protection for the nominated area. It is intended that all national parks, reserves and conservation areas will be covered by regional management strategies prepared by the Department of Conservation. The dates of approval of the current plans are: Mount Cook (December 1988), Westland (May 1988), Mount Aspiring (February 1981, under review) and Fiordland (March 1981, under review). There are no approved reserve management plans for the reserves in the nomination area although a draft management plan has been prepared for Waitangiroto Nature Reserve, and a management plan for the Hooker-Landsborough Conservation Area has been prepared under the provisions of the 1948 Land Act.

5. JUSTIFICATION FOR INCLUSION ON THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST

Natural property

The South West New Zealand nomination, as presented by the Government of New Zealand, provides the following justification for designation as a World Heritage property:

(i) South West New Zealand contains the best modern representation of the ancient flora and fauna of Gondwanaland. These include some 14 species of podocarp, genera of beech, flightless kiwis, 'bush' moas and carnivorous Powelliphanta land snails. There is also abundant evidence of the pleistocene glacial and inter-glacial periods in the landforms, distribution of flora and fauna and the marine terraces in the south.

(ii) The Alpine Fault boundary between the Pacific and Indo-Australian plates is one of only three of the world's major plate boundaries on land. There are incipient volcanic effects of the plate boundary but the tectonic effects are dominant. The uplift caused by the Pacific plate rising over the Indo-Australian plate results in the spectacular ocean coast of Fiordland and the abrupt edge of the Southern Alps along the Alpine Fault. The area includes the largest mid-temperate glacier and some of the fastest-flowing glaciers in the world. Fresh-water, temperate rainforest and alpine ecosystems are all outstandingly well represented, usually in close association, over an extensive array of landforms and across wide climatic and altitudinal gradients.

Notable examples of on-going biological processes include large expanses of temperate rainforest, plant succession after glacial retreat, chronosequences on beach ridges, plant succession on alluvial plains, vegetation development in glacial lakes, ecotypic differentiation on ultramafic soils, extensive and little modified freshwater habitats, a diversity of alpine ecosystems, some generic alpine plant endemism, and on-going evolutionary processes such as the differentiation between the isolated kiwi populations.

(iii) The area contains New Zealand's highest mountains, longest glaciers, tallest forests, wildest rivers and gorges, most rugged coastline and deepest fiords and lakes. The temperate rainforest and alpine plant communities are outstanding examples of these important ecosystems.

(iv) The region contains viable populations of threatened animal species, including the endangered takahe.

WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION - IUCN TECHNICAL EVALUATION

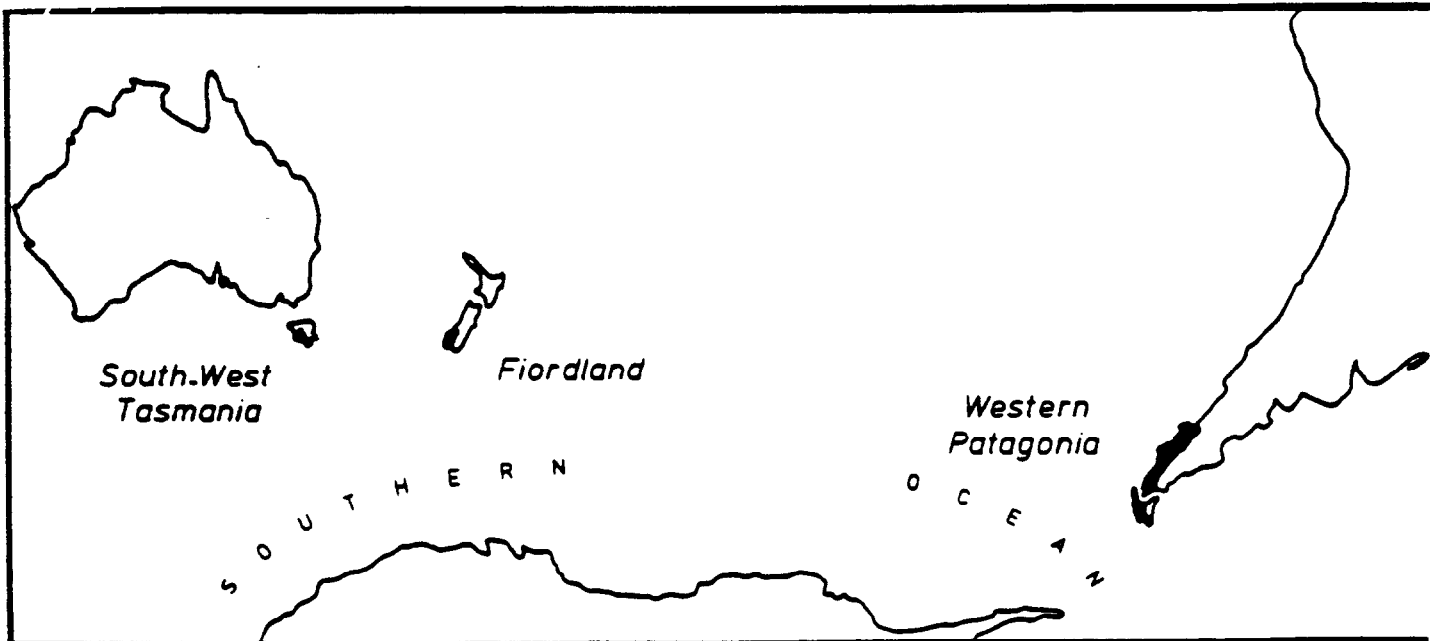
551 SOUTH-WEST NEW ZEALAND (TE WAHIPOUNAMU) (NEW ZEALAND)

1. DOCUMENTATION:

- i) IUCN Data Sheets.
- ii) Consultations: New Zealand Government Authorities, J. Marsh, C. Burns, R. Cahn, W. Neilson, D. Given, K. O'Connor.
- iii) Literature consulted: Forests, Fiords and Glaciers: New Zealand's World Heritage, 1987.
- iv) Site visits: January 1986, March 1990 (J.Thorsell)

2. COMPARISON WITH OTHER AREAS

On a global scale, South West New Zealand can be best compared with the two other areas of temperate wildlands that occur between the 40th and 50th parallels in the Southern Ocean. These are the Tasmanian Wilderness which was inscribed in 1989 and Los Glaciares in Argentina to which the adjacent contiguous parks in Chile may eventually be added. All three of these areas are rugged glaciated mountainous regions situated in the path of strong westerly, moisture-laden winds. All three have national parks on the World Heritage list whose areal extent are being enlarged. The affinities between these widely-separated sites are reflected in the strong floristic links which originated with the existence of the southern super-continent of Gondwanaland. Before the continents began to drift apart, a number of plants had begun their evolution and a striking example of a genus common to these now widely separated areas is the southern beech, Nothofagus. South-West New Zealand can be thus viewed as one part of a "trilogy" of three large natural World Heritage sites, each unique in many ways, but united in evolutionary history by the genus Nothofagus.



South-West New Zealand is distinct from all other protected areas in that country in terms of size, landscape and species composition. In other parts of the world (Chile, North America and Norway) fiord landscapes are found. Comparable sites which have protected area status are the Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Range, Glacier Bay National Park, the Kenai Fjords National Park, and the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge, and the Gros Morne National Park, Auyuituq National Park in Canada and North-East Greenland National Park. All of the above are in the Northern Hemisphere but have equally spectacular physical settings with vertical sea cliffs, waterfalls and remnant glaciers in the headwater regions. In terms of its Gondwana flora and endemic fauna the only comparable site is found in Chile's Bernardo O'Higgins and Laguna San Rafael National Parks.

3. INTEGRITY

The nomination of South-West New Zealand is a reformulation of two previous sites inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1986. The two sites were Fiordland National Park and Westlands/Mt. Cook National Park which together totalled 1.4 million ha. The new site adds 1.2 million ha. of the intervening land thus joining the two sites and almost doubling the size of the area put on the list in 1986. A major portion of this addition is the Mt. Aspiring National Park (356,000 ha.) with various other categories of reserves making up the remainder (except for 20 ha. of private land). In total, 70% of the area is under national park status while the remainder also enjoys a high level of protection under other categories.

The additional lands complement the existing two sites in four ways: (1) the new site provides some important geological features such as the Red Hills, the tors and marine terraces of Waitutu, and the full 260 km. length of the plate tectonic boundary; (2) the new area includes important floral elements, particularly coastal wetlands and podocarp/Kahikatea forests; (3) a 40% increase in coastline with high scenic values and with important wildlife values (penguins, seals); and (4) a number of exceptional scenic features such as Mt. Aspiring, the Dart Valley, and the Mavora Lakes. All of these natural features are exceptional in their own right and greatly add to the overall universal value, wilderness quality and integrity of the site.

Further to the extensions in size, there have been a number of other advances in management of the site in the past four years. These include up-dated management plans, more effective administrative arrangements under a new Department of Conservation, and new visitor education facilities. Action on the re-development plan for Milford Sound, as recommended by the Committee in 1986, has also proceeded. All of these activities represent positive actions to ensure high standards of management for the area.

In terms of management arrangements, the whole area is the responsibility of one government department but no overall management authority for the site is currently planned. There are a number of separate management plans, advisory bodies and staff from different districts but no unified administrative structure specific to the site.

IUCN's previous technical evaluations of the two sites outlined the various management issues being addressed including tourism impacts at key sites, introduced species and proposals for fresh water export. Measures to address these issues are underway and, given the large size of the area, its long term viability is not under serious threat.

A number of small scale human activities should be mentioned. These include harvesting of sphagnum moss (approx. 200 net tons per year under permit), traditional uses of vegetation by native maori people, fishing for whitebait, recreational hunting and short-term pastoral leases (perpetual pastoral lease areas excluded). All of these activities are closely regulated and do not result in significant impacts on the overall integrity of the site.

The boundaries of the site are closely and realistically aligned with the main features of the area. Approximately 20 small inholdings of private and developed land have been excluded. The fiords themselves are not included. There are seven small outliers, however, in the Te Anau area that do not contribute to the nomination and should be excluded from the site. The features found here (glacial erratic, remnant tussock vegetation and wetlands) are nationally important but are anomalies within the nomination.

4. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

There are two secondary issues on which the Bureau may wish to comment. One concerns the name of the property which, in English, is geographically descriptive but could be improved. Second, it became apparent during the field inspection that many of the 35,000 local people living in the region are not adequately aware of the meaning of the World Heritage Convention and the implications of its application in South-West New Zealand. Further efforts in public awareness need to be made.

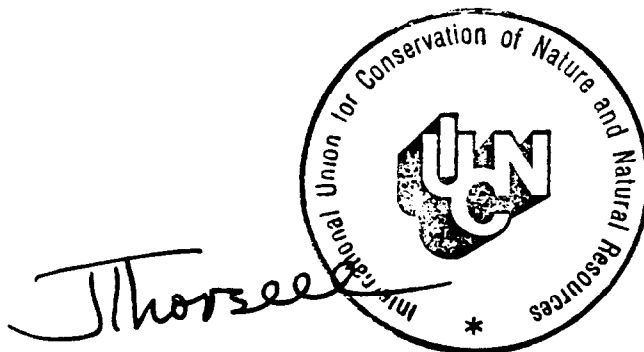
5. EVALUATION

As agreed by the Committee in 1986, South-West New Zealand is one of the world's most outstanding natural areas and merits inscription on the World Heritage List on the basis of all four natural criteria. With the combination of the three previously inscribed parks plus the intervening land, both the natural system has been completed and the integrity enhanced. Although there have been some losses to the diversity of the area through the introduction of exotic species and impacts from hydroelectric and tourism developments, the area is large and still retains its predominant wild character.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

South-West New Zealand should be inscribed on the World Heritage List incorporating the two former properties inscribed in 1986. The New Zealand Government should be commended on its initiatives to protect all of these spectacular landscape features of this major portion of the South Island. The Bureau has sought clarifications on the following issues:

- the name of the property;
- the suggestion to omit the seven outliers in the Te Anau area; and
- the need for a strengthened public awareness effort for local residents on the meaning and implications of the Convention.



NEW ZEALAND-South-West New Zealand World Heritage Area (Te Wahipounamu)

New Zealand

NAME South-West New Zealand World Heritage Area (Te Wahipounamu)
(proposed)

IUCN MANAGEMENT CATEGORY X (World Heritage - Criteria i, ii, iii, iv)

Fiordland National Park	II (National Park)
Mount Aspiring National Park	II (National Park)
Mount Cook National Park	II (National Park)
Westland National Park	II (National Park)

BIOGEOGRAPHICAL PROVINCE 7.01.02 (Neozealandia)

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION Located in the south-west of South Island, extending 40-90km inland from a 450km length of the western coast. The seaward boundary is generally the mean high water mark. 166°26'-170°40'E, 43°00'-46°30'S

DATE AND HISTORY OF ESTABLISHMENT Proposed for inscription on the Unesco World Heritage List in 1990. A major preservation initiative was the reservation for national park purposes of 950,000ha of Fiordland in 1904. The name was subsequently changed to Fiordland National Park when it was gazetted under national parks legislation in 1955. Mount Cook and Westland national parks were gazetted in 1953 and 1960, respectively, and Mount Aspiring National Park in 1964. Mount Aspiring National Park almost doubled in size by the mid-1970s, and 24,285ha was added in 1989. The upper Karangarua Valley was added to Westland National Park in 1983. Much of the land not included within national park has been managed as State forest land under the Forests Act, Crown land under the Land Act or as reserves under the Reserves Act.

The nomination comprises one contiguous unit, except for a number of smaller outlying areas. The national parks are described in separate datasheets. The protected areas included in the nomination are:

Name	Gazettal Date	Area (ha)
National Park		
1. Fiordland	1952	1,252,378
2. Mount Aspiring	1964	285,589
3. Mount Cook	1953	69,923
4. Westland	1960	117,547
Nature Reserve		
5. Waitangiroto	1957/1976/1986	1,230
6. Wilderness	1964/1980	88

Infobase produced by WCMC, January 1992

Scientific Reserve

7.	Gorge Hill	Pending	2,188
8.	Ramparts	1972	4.5
9.	Te Anau	1973	0.02
10.	Jacobs River	1973	120
11.	Karangarua Bridge	1950/1977	15
12.	Lake Moeraki	1964	243
13.	Lake Paringa	1950	396
14.	Lake Rotokino	1930	295
15.	Mahitahi	1952/1981	22
16.	Okuru	1981	46
17.	Paringa Bridge	1950/1968	93
18.	Rohutu	1911/1974	491
19.	Saltwater Lagoon	1928/1981	1,300
20.	The Exile	1905	56
21.	Toarona Creek	1978	97
22.	Waitangitaona	1961	118

Private Protected Land

23.	Chapman Reserve	1989	20
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Wildlife Managment Reserve

24.	Diamond Lake	1970	283
25.	Lake Pratt	1978	25
26.	Okarito Lagoon	1983	165
27.	White Heron Lagoon	1984	172

Ecological Area

28.	Diggers Ridge	1982	4,235
29.	Lillburn	1982	2,670
30.	Saltwater Lagoon	1981/1984/1985	1,483
31.	Oroko Swamp	1981	173
32.	Waikoau	1982	2,800

There are also a number of conservation areas, including Hooker-Landsborough (107,000ha) within the nominated area.

AREA 2,600,000ha

LAND TENURE The Crown. There is a small block of land at Martins Bay, owned by the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society and there are a number of private enclaves within the nominated area. Virtually all the land is currently the subject of a claim by the Ngai Tahu Maori Trust Board before the Waitangi tribunal. The outcome of the claim will not affect future protection as Ngai Tahu are committed to maintaining the protected status of the lands involved.

Infobase produced by WCMC, January 1992

ALTITUDE 0-3,498m (Mount Tasman)

PHYSICAL FEATURES South-west New Zealand lies across the boundary between the eastern, Pacific plate and the Indo-Australian plate to the west and is one of the most seismically active regions in the world. The mountainous character of the area results from tectonic movement over the last five million years. A detailed history of uplift over almost a million years is recorded in a flight of 13 or more marine terraces on the south coast of Fiordland and the contiguous Waitutu area. The terraces were formed by marine erosion at the coast, but are now found at up to 1,000m above sea level. The uplifted mountains have been very deeply excavated by glaciers, resulting in high local relief. Glaciers are an important feature of the nominated area, especially in the vicinity of Westland and Mount Cook national parks, which contain 28 of the 29 New Zealand peaks above 3,000m. While the basic pattern of landform was set during the Pleistocene glaciations, there have been substantial post-glacial changes. These are especially marked in South Westland and the Southern Alps. Erosion in the mountains remains very rapid, especially in the zone of high rainfall (and most rapid uplift) west of the Main Divide. Intense gullying, serrated ridges, and major and minor rockfalls are characteristic of this zone. Post-glacial modification of the Fiordland topography is very much less than in the Southern Alps, and the glacial landforms are almost entirely intact. Full exposure to Southern Ocean swells has produced a dramatic "iron-bound" coast on basement rocks, with irregular high cliffs and many offshore rocks and stacks. Intertidal rock platforms extending from the foot of low cliffs characterise the Waitutu Conservation Area coast and parts of the adjacent south coast of Fiordland. The rocks of Fiordland are generally crystalline, dominated by a wide range of plutonic types such as granite and diorite, and metamorphic gneisses. In the extreme south-west there are unmetamorphosed sedimentary rocks. In the north-east, the Fiordland block abuts a set of north-south trending volcanic and sedimentary rocks of mainly Permian age. The Dun Mountain Ophiolite Belt is the key unit, comprising a slice of oceanic crust and the underlying mantle. Eastwards, a Permian terrane of greywacke sandstone becomes progressively more highly metamorphosed to become schist which forms the Southern Alps contained within Mount Aspiring National Park. This band of schist narrows as it extends further north-east, paralleling the Alpine Fault on its south-eastern side. On its eastern margin in Mount Cook National Park, the schist gradually changes back into Permian-Triassic greywacke of a separate terrane.

West of the Alpine Fault, the rocks of South Westland consist of a basement of Ordovician greywacke with some high temperature metamorphic rocks and granites, and minor areas of younger Cretaceous and Tertiary sedimentary rocks along the coast. Severely eroded by Pleistocene glaciers, these now generally form blocks of rugged hill country or isolated hills standing above post-glacial alluvium and lagoon-infilling sediments. Pleistocene moraines and outwash form extensive areas of subdued hill country and low plateaux.

CLIMATE The Fiordland massif and the Southern Alps create a barrier to the

Infobase produced by WCMC, January 1992

prevailing westerly winds, causing rain which is often heavy and prolonged. East of the mountains air descends as a typical foehn wind creating warm, often violent, north-west winds. From 3000-5000mm on the coastal lowlands, annual rainfall increases inland, and with altitude, to exceed 10000mm on the western flank of the Southern Alps where much of it falls as snow. West of the mountains, rain is distributed uniformly through the year. East of the mountains, the annual rainfall is as low as 1000mm. The ocean has a strong moderating influence on temperature, especially in the west and south. The result is a cool, temperate climate with small annual and diurnal ranges. East of the divide, summer temperatures are slightly higher than in the west at equivalent altitudes, and winters are more severe.

VEGETATION The diversity of natural vegetation is distributed along a number of pronounced environmental gradients, including: altitudinal sequences from permanent ice in the high mountains to sea level or inter-montane basins; rainfall/temperature gradients from west-to-east, resulting in a compressed transect from rainforest to grassland; a north-south gradient covering three degrees of latitude; pronounced ecotones between open wetlands, grasslands, shrublands and forest communities; and distinct sequences of vegetation and soils developed on landforms of different ages.

A floristically rich alpine vegetation of shrubs, tussocks and herbs extends along the summits of the mountains, from about 1,000m in altitude above the tree line to the permanent snowline. Chionochloa snow tussocks (up to 1m tall) dominate the alpine grasslands and shelter mountain daisies Celmisia sp., buttercups Ranunculus sp., foxgloves Ourisia, lilies Astelia and many other alpine herbs. Most famous of these is Ranunculus lyallii, the largest buttercup in the world. South of the Paringa River, the lower limit of the alpine vegetation is usually marked by an abrupt tree line. Silver beech Nothofagus menziesii usually forms the canopy at the tree line, seen as a very distinct line running horizontally at about 1,000m. North of the Mahitahi River, the beech species are absent for a distance of some 160km, the so-called 'beech gap' which is a major biogeographic feature of New Zealand's vegetation. At warmer lower altitudes, the rain forest is dominated by dense stands of tall podocarps. In all, 14 podocarp species occur in the South-West (10 of them being forest trees) and their distribution is strongly controlled by landform, soil and climatic factors. The wetter, milder west is characterised by luxuriant rain forest and wetlands; the drier, more continental east (with colder winters and warmer summers) has more open forest (generally mountain beech), shrublands and tussock grasslands.

The South-West contains the most extensive and least modified natural freshwater wetlands in New Zealand. Sizeable open wetlands, including high fertility swamps and low fertility peat bogs, are a particular feature of the South Westland coastal plain. The best-known vegetation chronosequences are those on glacial landforms where the ages of outwash, terrace and higher piedmont surfaces are known. Raw gravels are colonised by mats of lichen Rhacomitrium; the youngest glacial moraines - some only 20 years old - have nitrogen-fixing shrubs and grasses and herbs growing on

a weakly-developed soil; on moraines aged 150 years rata-kamahi forests up to 20m high flourish. Tall podocarp trees (rimu, miro, Hall's totara) then succeed and the end point of this sequence can be found on the higher glacial outwash surfaces (around 25,000 years old); here the extremely leached, infertile soils can only support a stunted heath and bog vegetation.

The most impressive landform chronosequence is the flights of marine terraces in southern Fiordland. Ten terraces span an age range of 600,000 years. The vegetation ranges from tall mixed silver beech/podocarp/broadleaved forest on the lower terraces (50-100m altitude), through mountain beech/podocarp woodland at mid-altitudes (300-400m), to mosaics of dwarf manuka/mountain beech/podocarp shrubland and cushion bog on the higher and older terraces (600m).

FAUNA Most of New Zealand's fur seals Arctocephalus forsteri are found along the South-West coast. Virtually wiped out by sealing in the early 1800s, they currently number about 50,000.

As the least modified region on mainland New Zealand, the South-West is the core habitat for many indigenous animals including a number of primitive taxa and contains the largest and most significant populations of forest birds in the country, most of which are endemic to New Zealand. Two of New Zealand's three species of kiwi are found in the South-West: small numbers of great spotted kiwi Apteryx haasti, and the entire population of the South Island subspecies of brown kiwi Apteryx australis. An endemic family of passerines, the Xenicidae, is represented by rock wren Xenicus gilviventris and rifleman Acanthisitta chloris. It is also the stronghold of both members of an endemic genus of parrots. Kea Nestor notabilis, the only alpine parrot in the world, is restricted to the South Island mountain country. Its forest relative, the kaka N. meridionalis, is found most abundantly in the beech/podocarp forests of southern South Westland and south-east Fiordland, particularly Waitutu.

The country's largest populations of endemic yellow-crowned parakeet Cyanoramphus auriceps is found in the South-West's tall lowland beech forests and dense podocarp forests. A few mountain valleys in Fiordland harbour the total wild population (about 170 birds) of the rare and endangered takahe Notornis mantelli (E), a large flightless rail believed extinct until "rediscovered" in 1948. Other birds with no close relatives beyond New Zealand found in the area include: blue duck Hymenolaimus malacorhynchos, wrybill Anarhynchus frontalis and western weka Gallirallus australis.

Okarito Lagoon is the largest estuarine lagoon on the South Island's west coast and is an important habitat for wading birds, including South Island pied oystercatcher Haematopus sp., pied stilt and the migratory bar-tailed godwit Limosa lapponica and knot Calidris sp. Freshwater wetlands in the South-West support sizeable populations of several wetland birds, including grey duck, paradise shelduck Tadorna variegata and shoveler Anas rhynchotis, two species of shag Phalacrocorax spp. and marsh and spotless crane. Two species are largely confined to open water habitats of the area's numerous lakes: the nationally endangered southern crested grebe

Podiceps sp. and the endemic New Zealand scaup Aythya novaeseelandiae. In the lower tussock grasslands, native birdlife is restricted to a few open country species such as New Zealand falcon Falco novaeseelandiae, Australasian harrier Circus sp. and New Zealand pipit Anthus sp. River bed invertebrates support a diverse birdlife including wrybill Anarhynchus frontalis, paradise shelduck Tadorna variegata, black-billed gull, black-fronted tern Sterna albistriata and banded dotterel Pluvialis obscura. The nominated area contains the largest populations of the following other uncommon or declining bird species: the forest race of New Zealand falcon ; fernbird Bowdleria punctata and Fiordland crested penguin Eudytes pachyrhynchus. More than 100 species of birds have been recorded in the nominated area, more than half of the species that breed in New Zealand.

Very little is known about the lizard fauna of the South-West. Leiolopisma acrinasum, endemic to Fiordland is found and Haplodactylus granulatus is probably a distinctive species isolated to the South-West. Four species of carnivorous Powelliphanta snails are known from the area, all from high altitude silver beech forest. Fiordland is estimated to contain about 700 species of moths Lepidoptera, or 25% of the known New Zealand total, and it is estimated that 35 are endemic to Fiordland.

The native freshwater fish fauna, totalling 17 species, is exceptionally large relative to the rest of New Zealand. Several species rare or absent from settled regions are commonplace in the South-West, e.g. giant kokopu. All but four of the fish species are endemic. The best-represented genera are Galaxias and Gobiomorphus.

A number of species have been introduced, including rats Muridae, stoat Mustela erminea, fallow deer Cervus dama, wapiti (red deer) Cervus elaphus, Himalayan thar Hemitragus jemlahicus, goat Capra sp., chamois Rupicapra rupicapra, pigs Sus sp. and possum Trichosurus vulpecula, with severe ecological impacts discussed below.

CULTURAL HERITAGE A Maori association falls into three broad categories: mythological, traditional history and ethnological. All of these values are contained within the tradition of the Ngai Tahu tribe, whose ancestral territories cover all except the extreme northern parts of the South Island. In the 18th and 19th centuries, southern Ngai Tahu voyaged to Fiordland to hunt seals. It was thought until recently that Maori occupation of Fiordland was sparse and seasonal. More recent work suggests that it may have been more numerous and settled than was previously believed. The first European to see the area was the Dutch navigator, Abel Janszoon Tasman, in December 1642. Sealing began in Fiordland in 1792 and by 1820 the seal populations had been reduced to non-commercial levels. Seals were given legal protection in 1875. Whalers established short-lived coastal stations during the 1800s. Gold was discovered in the early 1860s in South Westland and Central Otago but within a few years most of the boom towns were abandoned.

LOCAL HUMAN POPULATION On the West Coast, land uses are grazing, whitebait fishing, small-scale mining and sphagnum moss harvesting. Extensive

pastoralism is the main land use to the east of the nomination area. In Southland intensive and extensive grazing, exotic and indigenous forestry is practised adjacent to the nomination area. Sheep and cattle grazing is permitted under licence or lease on some grassland areas on valley floors. Mineral exploration, prospecting and mining is permitted only with the consent of the Minister of Conservation. Small-scale gold mining occurs on the beaches and some rivers of the West Coast according to conditions monitored by the Department of Conservation.

VISITORS AND VISITOR FACILITIES Milford Sound, Mount Cook and Franz Josef and Fox glaciers have been major attractions from the earliest days of New Zealand's tourism industry. A variety of commercial recreation services operates under concession agreements with the Department of Conservation throughout the nomination area. Small areas for intensive visitor facilities and services development have been zoned at Milford Sound and Mount Cook.

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND FACILITIES By the turn of the century, exploration of the South-West had largely become the interest of mountaineer explorers. Some areas in the Mount Aspiring region were not explored by foot until the 1950s and some of the more remote valleys of Fiordland were still considered unexplored in the 1970s at the time that accurate detailed topographic maps became available for this remotest corner of New Zealand. The nomination document (Department of Conservation, 1989) includes a bibliography under the headings film and videos, geology, soils and landforms, vegetation, wildlife, natural history, cultural history, resource use, recreation and tourism, park handbooks, investigation reports, management plans and overviews.

CONSERVATION VALUE The site is considered to merit inscription on the World Heritage list on the basis of all four natural criteria: (i) outstanding examples of earth's evolutionary history; (ii) ongoing geological processes, biological evolution and man's interaction with his natural environment; (iii) superlative natural phenomena; and (iv) threatened species.

CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT With the formation of the Department of Conservation in April 1987, the opportunity was provided for the coordinated management of all the natural lands of the Crown. This opened the way for the creation of one, large, fully-representative World Heritage Site in the south-west of the South Island. In terms of management arrangements, the whole area is the responsibility of one government department but no overall management authority, or administrative structure, for the site is currently planned. National parks policy aims for the extermination of introduced animals within the parks. In other protected areas their populations are kept at low levels to minimise impact on native flora and fauna. Control methods include recreational and commercial hunting by foot and helicopter. The Department of Conservation has initiated control programmes in fauna sanctuaries and is developing and implementing recovery plans for the threatened species. Exotic weeds are a minor problem and are mainly confined to disturbed sites.

The four national parks in the nomination are preserved in perpetuity for their intrinsic worth and for the benefit, use and enjoyment of the public, protected under the provisions of the National Parks Act (1980). The Reserves Act (1977) makes provision for the protection of the different reserves within the nominated area as follows. Scenic reserves are managed for the protection and preservation in perpetuity of areas of scenic interest and beauty, and natural features or landscape for the benefit, use and enjoyment of the public (Section 19). Nature reserves are managed for the protection and preservation in perpetuity of indigenous fauna and flora or natural features, of rarity, scientific interest or importance (Section 20). Scientific reserves are managed for the purpose of protection and preserving in perpetuity for scientific, research, education and for the benefit of the country, ecological associations, plant or animal communities, types of soil and geomorphological processes (Section 21). Protected private land is held for scenic purposes and managed as if it were a scenic reserve (Section 76). Ecological areas were formerly ecological areas under the Forests Act 1949. They are set aside under Section 21 and Section 26 of the 1987 Conservation Act primarily for scientific purposes, to protect representative ecosystems or rare plant and/or animal communities. Conservation areas held under Section 62 of the Conservation Act are deemed to be held for conservation purposes, which means the preservation and protection of their historical and natural resources for the purposes of maintaining their intrinsic values, providing for their appreciation and recreational enjoyment by the public, and safeguarding the options of future generations. Some conservation areas have been gazetted under Section 7 of the Conservation Act and are held for the protection of natural and historic resources and are called stewardship areas (Section 25 Conservation Act). They may at some future time receive higher protection under Section 18 of the Conservation Act.

The principal uses of the nomination area are nature conservation, natural resource-based recreation and tourism and sustainable small-scale natural resource utilisation. While in detail there is some variation in management approach, all areas are protected or preserved for the purpose of maintaining their intrinsic values for present and future generations. Historic sites are to be found in a number of locations and depending on their sensitivity are available for public education and enjoyment. It is intended that all national parks, reserves and conservation areas will be covered by regional management strategies prepared by the department. National park management plans are operative for a period of ten years. The dates of approval of the current plans are: Mount Cook (December 1988), Westland (May 1988), Mount Aspiring (February 1981, currently under review) and Fiordland (March 1981, currently under review). There are no approved reserve management plans for the reserves in the nomination area. A draft management plan has been prepared for Waitangiroto Nature Reserve.

MANAGEMENT CONSTRAINTS The greatest impact has been the introduction of browsing and predatory mammals. Population increases of red deer in the 1940s and 1950s threatened the integrity of the forest and alpine ecosystems. Other browsing mammals, such as wapiti, fallow deer, goat, chamois and thar, have restricted distributions but have caused severe damage in places. Numbers of all the above species have fallen sharply

since the advent of commercial hunting from helicopters, with a corresponding recovery of the vegetation, particularly in open alpine areas. Australian brush-tailed possum has caused severe mortality in montane raqta/kamaha forests in the north. They are still extending their range into previously possum-free areas such as the Haast district. Rabbit populations affect some grasslands on the eastern side of the nomination area. Introduced mustelids and rodents have had a devastating impact on indigenous bird life. Several species have become extinct and most bird populations have been greatly reduced. The most prolific weed is gorse, marram grass is widespread in South Westland and willow is a potentially serious threat to streams, but at the present is easily controlled. A major underground hydro-electric power station is situated under the western extremity of Lake Manapouri. Associated high voltage transmission lines and roading have considerable but localised impacts.

STAFF No information

BUDGET Financial provision for the management of the nominated area is made annually through Vote: Conservation, approved by the New Zealand Parliament. Annual estimates of expenditure are assessed according to the Department of Conservation's Corporate Plan. In February 1989, as part of its decision to protect South Westland's forests, the Government allocated \$1.5 million towards recreational and tourist development in South Westland.

LOCAL ADDRESSES Department of Conservation, PO Box 10420, Wellington
National Parks and Reserves Authority, PO Box 2593, Wellington
Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society Inc, PO Box 631, Wellington

REFERENCES

Department of Conservation (1989). Nomination of South-West New Zealand (Te

Wahipounamu) by the Government of New Zealand for inclusion in the World Heritage List. Prepared by the Department of Conservation with the assistance of the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society (NZ) Inc. and Ngai Tahu Maori Trust Board. Wellington, New Zealand. 69 pp.

DATE March 1990, revised October 1990

DOCUMENT 0391W

Refer also to Fiordland National Park (0280W), Mount Aspiring National Park (0390W) Mount Cook National Park (0281W) and Westland National Park (0216W).

NEW ZEALAND-Tongariro National Park

Infobase produced by WCMC, January 1992

DESIGNATION POUR LA LISTE DU PATRIMOINE MONDIAL
RESUME PREPARE PAR L'UICN

551: BIEN DU PATRIMOINE MONDIAL DU SUD-OUEST NEO-ZELANDAIS
(TE WAHIPOUNAMU)

Résumé préparé par l'UICN (avril 1990) d'après la désignation d'origine soumise par le gouvernement de Nouvelle-Zélande. L'original et tous les documents présentés à l'appui de cette désignation seront disponibles pour consultation aux réunions du Bureau et du Comité.

1. SITUATION

Le site comprend un réseau quasi contigu de terres mises en réserves et couvrant une bonne partie du sud-ouest de l'île du Sud. Il comprend quatre parcs nationaux (Fiordland, Mt Aspiring, Mt Cook et Westland), deux réserves naturelles, trois réserves scientifiques, 13 réserves panoramiques, quatre réserves de gestion de la faune sauvage, cinq aires écologiques, plusieurs zones de conservation et une réserve privée.

2. DONNEES JURIDIQUES

Il s'agit d'un territoire de la couronne, à l'exception d'un petit bloc de terres de la baie Martins qui appartient à la Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society et d'un certain nombre d'enclaves privées. Pratiquement toutes les terres font actuellement l'objet d'une revendication du Ngai Tahu Maori Trust Board présentée au tribunal Waitangi. La décision ne remettra pas en cause la protection future car le Ngai Tahu s'est engagé à maintenir le statut de protection accordé à ces terres. Les quatre parcs nationaux couvrent, ensemble, 1 725 437 ha sur une superficie désignée totale de 2 600 000 ha. Le reste comprend des zones gérées par le département de la conservation.

Les Parcs nationaux de Westland/Mt Cook et le Parc national du Fiordland ont été inscrits sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial en 1986. L'institution du département de la conservation, en 1987, a rendu possible de coordonner la gestion de tous les territoires naturels de la Couronne se trouvant dans la région et de désigner un site pleinement représentatif pour le patrimoine mondial.

3. IDENTIFICATION

Le site comprend le dixième le plus intact de la masse terrestre de la Nouvelle-Zélande avec près de deux millions d'hectares de forêts pluviales tempérées, 450 km² de communautés alpines et une faune particulière.

Le caractère essentiellement montagneux de la région résulte des mouvements tectoniques entre la plaque pacifique et la plaque indo-australienne dans les derniers 5 millions d'années. Le relief local résulte de l'action des glaciers. Ces derniers forment un des éléments importants de l'aire désignée, notamment dans le voisinage des Parcs nationaux de Westland et du mont Cook.

Des changements post-glaciaires marqués, en particulier dans le sud-Westland et dans les Alpes du Sud ont également eu lieu. L'érosion est rapide, notamment à l'ouest de la principale ligne de partage des eaux. Ravinement intense, crêtes dentelées, éboulis de pierres plus ou moins importants sont caractéristiques de la région. Toutefois, les formes glaciaires sont presque entièrement intactes dans le Fiordland.

Autour des sommets des montagnes, de 1000 mètres environ aux neiges éternelles, s'étage une végétation alpine de buissons, de tussock et d'herbes, à la flore très riche. Plus bas, dans les zones où la température est plus élevée, la forêt pluviale est dominée par des stations denses de grandes podocarpes. L'ouest, plus humide et plus doux se caractérise par des forêts pluviales luxuriantes et des zones humides. L'est, plus continental et plus sec est couvert de forêts claires, de buissons et de prairies à tussock. C'est dans la région désignée que l'on trouve les zones humides d'eau douce les plus étendues et les moins modifiées de Nouvelle-Zélande. Les zones humides ouvertes de grandes dimensions - marais très fertiles ou tourbières peu fertiles - caractérisent la plaine côtière du Sud-Westland.

Région la moins modifiée de la plus grande île de Nouvelle-Zélande, le sud-ouest est l'habitat principal de nombreuses espèces animales endémiques, y compris un certain nombre de taxons primitifs. Il contient les populations d'oiseaux de forêt les plus nombreuses et les plus importantes du pays dont la plupart sont des espèces endémiques de Nouvelle-Zélande. Quelques vallées de montagne du Fiordland abritent la population sauvage entière (environ 170 oiseaux) du takahe Notornis mantelli, grand râle inapte au vol que l'on a cru éteint jusqu'à ce qu'il soit "redécouvert", en 1948. L'UICN le considère en danger d'extinction. La plupart des otaries à fourrure de Nouvelle-Zélande Arctocephalus forsteri se trouvent le long de la côte sud-ouest. Pratiquement éliminées par la chasse au début du 19e siècle, il y en a actuellement 50 000.

Les liens des Maoris avec la région sont fondés sur la mythologie, l'histoire traditionnelle et l'ethnologie. Toutes ces valeurs se trouvent préservées dans la tradition des groupes Ngai Tahu dont les territoires ancestraux couvrent toute la région à l'exception des parties septentrionales de l'île du Sud.

4. ETAT DE PRESERVATION/CONSERVATION

La désignation a principalement pour objet la conservation de la nature, les loisirs et le tourisme fondés sur les ressources naturelles et l'utilisation durable et limitée des ressources naturelles. A quelques exceptions près, les sites ont conservé leur caractère vierge. L'augmentation du nombre de cerfs communs, dans les années 40 et 50, menaçait l'intégrité de la forêt et des écosystèmes alpins. D'autres mammifères brouteurs tels que le wapiti, le daim, la chèvre, le chamois et le thar ont une distribution limitée mais ont causé de graves dommages par endroits. Depuis les débuts de la chasse commerciale, les effectifs de ces espèces ont fortement décru, permettant la régénération de la végétation, notamment dans les régions alpines ouvertes. L'opossum australien à queue en brosse est responsable d'une mortalité élevée dans les forêts de montagne de rata/kamahi du nord. Les lapins ont un impact sur certaines

prairies dans la partie orientale de la zone désignée. Les rongeurs et les mustélidés introduits ont dévasté l'avifaune indigène: plusieurs espèces sont éteintes et la plupart des populations sont fortement réduites. Les plantes exotiques non désirables posent un problème mineur et sont principalement restreintes à des sites perturbés.

La politique sur les parcs nationaux vise à exterminer les animaux introduits. Dans d'autres aires protégées, les effectifs sont maintenus à un niveau bas pour limiter l'impact sur la flore et la faune indigènes. Le département de la conservation a lancé des programmes de contrôle dans des sanctuaires de faune; il prépare et applique des plans de reconstitution pour les espèces menacées.

La Loi de 1980 sur les parcs nationaux, la Loi de 1977 sur les réserves et la Loi de 1987 sur la conservation sont les principaux moyens de garantir une protection légale à l'aire désignée. Il est prévu que tous les parcs nationaux, réserves et régions de conservation soient couverts par des stratégies de gestion régionales préparées par le département de la conservation. Les dates d'approbation des plans actuels sont: mont Cook (décembre 1988), Westland (mai 1988), mont Aspiring (février 1981, en révision) et Fiordland (mars 1981, en révision). Il n'existe pas de plan d'aménagement approuvé pour les réserves de la désignation bien qu'un projet de plan ait été préparé pour la Réserve naturelle de Waitangiroto. Un plan d'aménagement a été préparé pour l'Aire de conservation de Hooker-Landsborough, conformément aux dispositions de la Loi territoriale de 1948.

5. RAISONS JUSTIFIANT LA DESIGNATION POUR LA LISTE DU PATRIMOINE MONDIAL

Pour justifier la désignation de ce site en tant que bien du patrimoine mondial, le gouvernement de Nouvelle-Zélande a donné les raisons suivantes:

a) Bien naturel

(i) Le Sud-Ouest néo-zélandais contient la meilleure représentation moderne de la faune et de la flore du Gondwana, notamment 14 espèces de podocarpes, un genre de hêtre, les kiwis inaptes au vol, les moas et l'escargot terrestre carnivore Powelliphanta. Les périodes glaciaires et interglaciaires du Pléistocène ont laissé des traces abondantes sur le relief, la distribution de la flore et de la faune et les terrasses marines du sud.

(ii) La limite tracée par la faille alpine entre les plaques pacifique et indo-australienne est une des trois seules limites terrestres de plaques au monde. Le soulèvement causé par le glissement de la plaque indo-australienne sous la plaque pacifique a produit les côtes spectaculaires du Fiordland et les versants abruptes des Alpes du sud, le long de la faille alpine. La région comprend le plus grand glacier médio-tempéré et certains des glaciers les plus mobiles du monde. Les eaux douces, les forêts pluviales tempérées et les écosystèmes alpins sont tous bien représentés, généralement en association étroite, sur une large gamme de terrains et de gradients climatiques et altitudinaux.

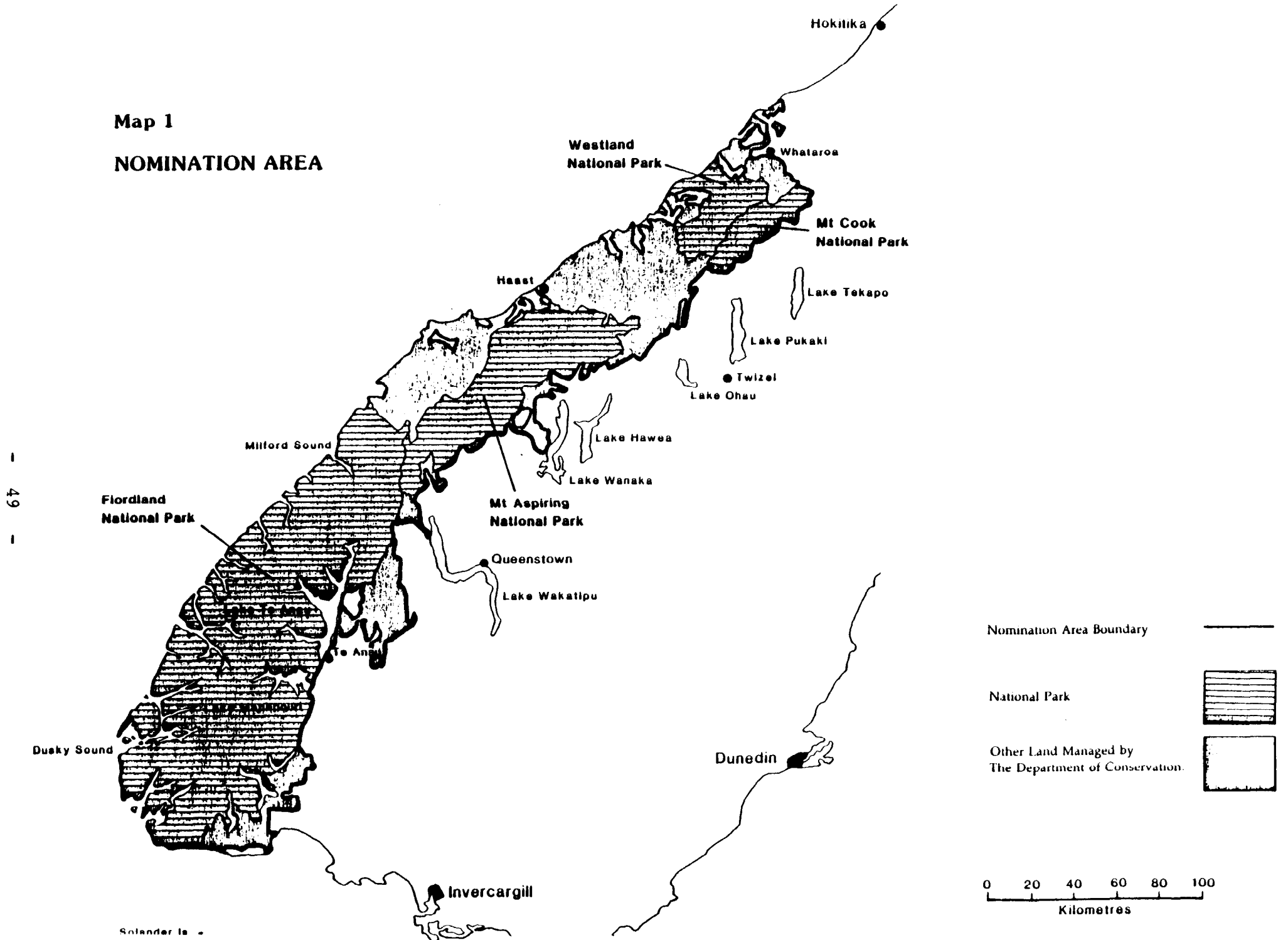
Parmi les exemples remarquables de processus biologiques en cours, on peut citer les vastes régions de forêts pluviales tempérées, les successions végétales après retraite des glaciers, les séquences chronologiques sur les crêtes sableuses, les successions végétales sur plaines alluviales, le développement végétal dans les lacs glaciaires, la différenciation écotypique sur sols ultramorphiques, les habitats d'eau douce étendus et peu modifiés, la diversité des écosystèmes alpins, des genres endémiques de plantes alpines et des processus d'évolution en cours tels que la différenciation entre des populations isolées de kiwis.

(iii) La région contient les plus hautes montagnes de Nouvelle-Zélande, les plus longs glaciers, les plus hautes forêts, les rivières et gorges les plus sauvages, les côtes les plus déchiquetées et les fjords et lacs les plus profonds. Les communautés de forêt humide tempérée et de plantes alpines sont des exemples exceptionnels de ces importants écosystèmes.

(iv) La région contient des populations viables d'espèces animales menacées, y compris le takahe menacé d'extinction.

Map 1

NOMINATION AREA



DESIGNATION POUR LE PATRIMOINE MONDIAL - EVALUATION TECHNIQUE DE L'UICN

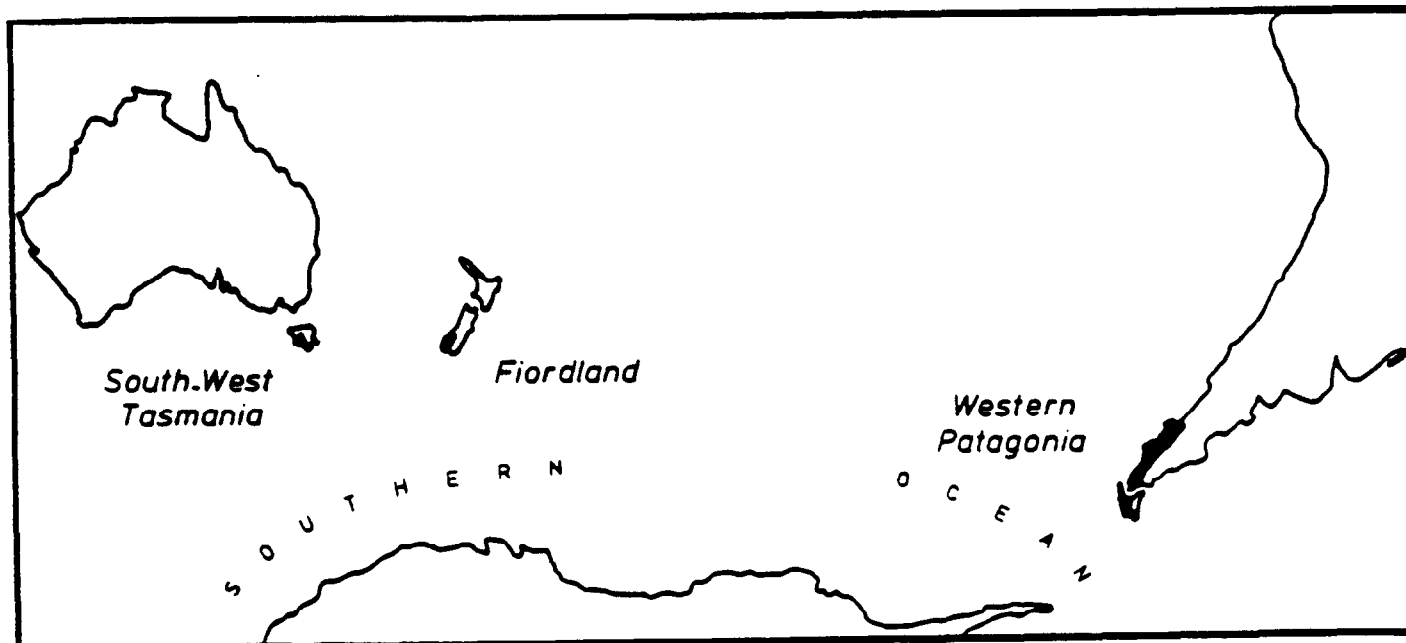
551 SUD-OUEST NEO-ZELANDAIS (TE WAHIPOUNAMU)
NOUVELLE-ZELANDE

1. DOCUMENTATION

- i) Fiches de données de l'UICN
- ii) Consultations: autorités gouvernementales de Nouvelle-Zélande; J. Marsh, C. Burns, R. Cahn, W. Neilson, D. Given, K. O'Connor.
- iii) Littérature consultée: Forests, Fiords and Glaciers: New Zealand's World Heritage, 1987.
- iv) Visite du site: janvier 1986, mars 1990 (J. Thorsell)

2. COMPARAISON AVEC D'AUTRES AIRES

Au niveau mondial, le Sud-Ouest néo-zélandais est comparable avec deux autres aires de nature sauvage tempérées se trouvant dans l'océan austral, entre le 40e et le 50e parallèles. Il s'agit de la Zone de nature sauvage de Tasmanie (Australie), inscrite en 1989 et de Los Glaciares (Argentine) à laquelle viendront peut-être finalement s'ajouter les parcs chiliens contigus. Ces trois régions possèdent des zones montagneuses couronnées de glaciers et déchiquetées, situées sous l'influence de forts vents d'ouest chargés d'humidité. Toutes trois ont des parcs nationaux inscrits sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial dont la superficie est en voie d'agrandissement. Les affinités entre ces sites si éloignés les uns des autres sont visibles dans les liens que l'on peut constater entre leurs flores qui datent de l'époque où existait le super-continent austral du Gondwana. Avant que ne commence la dérive des continents, un certain nombre de plantes avaient entrepris leur évolution. Un exemple frappant d'un genre commun à ces sites aujourd'hui fort éloignés est Nothofagus, le hêtre méridional. Le Sud-Ouest néo-zélandais peut, dès lors, être considéré comme élément d'une "trilogie" de grands sites du patrimoine mondial, chacun étant unique à plus d'un titre mais tous étant unis dans l'histoire de leur évolution par le genre Nothofagus.



Le Sud-Ouest néo-zélandais se distingue de toutes les autres aires protégées de ce pays par ses dimensions, ses paysages et la composition des espèces. On trouve des paysages de fjords dans d'autres régions du monde (Chili, Amérique du Nord et Norvège). Parmi les sites comparables au bénéfice d'une protection on trouve: La Région faunique nationale de la péninsule d'Alaska, le Parc national de la baie des glaciers, le Parc national des fjords de Kenai et le Refuge national de faune Kodiak aux Etats-Unis, le Parc national du Gros Morne et le Parc national d'Auyuituq, au Canada et le Parc national du nord-est groenlandais. Tous sont situés dans l'hémisphère nord et ont des paysages spectaculaires: falaises marines à pic, cascades, glaciers résiduels. Du point de vue de la faune et de la flore originaires du Gondwana, le seul site comparable se trouve dans les Parcs nationaux de Bernardo O'Higgins et de la Laguna de San Rafael, au Chili.

3. INTEGRITE

La désignation du Sud-Ouest néo-zélandais correspond à un remodelage de deux sites déjà inscrits sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial en 1986: le Parc national de Fiordland et le Parc national de Westland et du mont Cook qui, ensemble, couvrent 1,4 millions d'hectares. Le nouveau site ajoute les 1,2 millions d'hectares intermédiaires qui permettent donc d'unir les deux sites et de doubler, pratiquement, les dimensions de l'aire inscrite sur la Liste en 1986. Une bonne partie des terres ajoutées forme le Parc national du mont Aspiring (356 000 ha) tandis que plusieurs sortes de réserves couvrent ce qui reste (à l'exception de 20 ha de terres privées). Au total, 70% de l'aire a le statut de parc national et le reste, classé dans d'autres catégories, bénéficie aussi d'un statut de protection élevé.

Les terres ajoutées complètent les sites inscrits de quatre manières: (1) le nouveau site comprend quelques éléments géologiques importants: les Red Hills, tors et terrasses marines de Waitutu ainsi que les 260 km de la limite de la plaque tectonique; (2) il comprend des éléments floristiques importants notamment les zones humides côtières et les forêts de podocarpes/Kahikatea; (3) 40% de côtes supplémentaires, zone aux qualités panoramiques élevées et riche en faune (manchots, phoques); et (4) divers éléments panoramiques comme le mont Aspiring, Dart Valley et les lacs de Mavora. Tous ces éléments sont exceptionnels en soi et augmentent fortement la valeur universelle globale, la qualité naturelle sauvage et l'intégrité du site.

Outre l'augmentation de la superficie, on peut signaler plusieurs autres progrès d'aménagement dans les quatre ans écoulés: mise à jour des plans d'aménagement, dispositions administratives plus efficaces prises par le nouveau département de la conservation et nouveau centre d'éducation pour les visiteurs. On a commencé à prendre des mesures relatives au plan de redéveloppement du détroit de Milford comme l'avait recommandé le Comité en 1986. Toutes ces activités sont positives et visent à assurer une gestion de grande qualité pour cette région.

En ce qui concerne les dispositions relatives à l'aménagement, toute la région est placée sous la responsabilité d'un département gouvernemental mais il n'est pas, actuellement, prévu de créer une autorité chargée de la gestion globale du site. Il y a plusieurs plans d'aménagement distincts, plusieurs organes consultatifs et du personnel dépendant de différents districts mais aucune structure administrative unifiée, spécifiquement chargée de ce site.

La précédente évaluation technique faite par l'UICN, et qui portait sur deux sites, soulignait les divers problèmes de gestion: impact du tourisme sur les sites clés, espèces introduites et propositions concernant l'exportation d'eau douce. Des mesures ont été prise pour y remédier et, vu les dimensions de l'aire, sa viabilité à long terme n'est pas gravement menacée.

Il convient de mentionner plusieurs activités qui s'y déroulent, à échelle restreinte: récolte de mousses de sphagnes (environ 200 tonnes par an sous autorisation), utilisation traditionnelle de la végétation par les Maoris, pêche aux petits poissons, chasse sportive et concessions pastorales de brève durée (les concessions pastorales permanentes sont exclues). Toutes ces activités sont étroitement surveillées et n'ont pas d'impact significatif sur l'intégrité globale du site.

Les limites du site sont précisément calquées sur les traits physiques principaux. Environ 20 petites enclaves privées ou développées ont été exclues. Les fjords eux-mêmes ne sont pas inclus. Il y a cependant sept petits massifs, dans la région de Te Anau, qui ne contribuent pas à la désignation et devraient, par conséquent, être exclus du site. Les caractéristiques (blocs erratiques glaciaires, végétation résiduelle à tussock et zones humides) sont importantes au niveau national mais constituent des anomalies à l'intérieur de la désignation.

4. COMMENTAIRES ADDITIONNELS

Il y a deux questions secondaires dont le Comité pourrait souhaiter discuter. Il s'agit premièrement de l'appellation du site qui correspond à une description géographique mais pourrait être améliorée. Deuxièmement, lors de la visite du site, il est apparu que, sur les 35 000 personnes vivant dans la région, bien peu avaient réellement conscience de la signification de la Convention du patrimoine mondial et des conséquences de son application au Sud-Ouest néo-zélandais. Il convient de déployer davantage d'efforts de sensibilisation du public.

5. EVALUATION

Comme en avait convenu le Comité en 1986, le Sud-Ouest néo-zélandais est une des régions naturelles les plus exceptionnelles du monde et mérite d'être inscrit sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial sur la base des quatre critères naturels. Avec l'association de trois parcs précédemment inscrits et de la zone intermédiaire, le système naturel est complété et son intégrité améliorée. Bien que la diversité du site ait souffert de l'introduction d'espèces exotiques et des impacts du développement hydro-électrique et touristique, le site est vaste et conserve ses caractéristiques sauvages prédominantes.

6. RECOMMANDATIONS

Le Sud-Ouest néo-zélandais devrait être inscrit sur la Liste du patrimoine mondial et inclure les deux biens déjà inscrits en 1986. Il convient de féliciter le gouvernement de Nouvelle-Zélande pour les mesures prises en vue de protéger l'ensemble des paysages spectaculaires de cette vaste portion de l'île du Sud. Le Bureau s'est efforcé d'obtenir des éclaircissements sur les points suivants:

- le nom du bien;
- la proposition d'exclure les sept massifs de la région de Te Anau;
- la nécessité de renforcer les efforts de sensibilisation des résidents au sens de la Convention et aux conséquences de son application.

