



ANNUAL REPORT 2015/6

Te pūrongo ā tau o te Reo o te Taiao



Forest & Bird
GIVING NATURE A VOICE

President's Report

I am pleased to report Forest & Bird is in a strong and healthy state.

Five years ago the Board developed the first strategic plan for Forest & Bird. Last year the Board updated the strategic plan. In both plans we have had the goal of growing and strengthening our finances, membership and organisation.

The 2015 Strategic Plan is now being implemented nationally. This will mean some changes to focus and operations – but the Board is committed to this long-term approach. It takes time to see concrete results, but the persistence is paying off. The 2015/16 year shows real and substantial progress – the third year of financial surplus, enabling the build-up of reserves, reinvestment in IT systems and recruitment of new staff to support our campaigns, branch activity and membership.

The reason we are seeking to grow and strengthen Forest & Bird is simple: as a country we must invest more in conservation. In 2015/16 we saw the first substantial 'dividend' from this approach. With vital contributions from our donors, we were able to make substantial investments in a climate campaign, marine protected areas, the RMA review, freshwater as well as the ongoing work around forests, pest control and other conservation priorities.

Our climate disruption campaign was an important new initiative. The Board initiated this campaign after strong representation from members and branches. At the climate march in November 2015, hundreds of Forest & Bird supporters turned out to demand a strong climate target, and the campaign will continue into 2016 with a focus on local action.

Our donors have given us the ability – for the first time – to commit a substantial amount to internal funding of branch

projects and activities. A total of \$100,000 has been allocated for funding branch activities and projects in 2016/17. This is a major achievement, and one we hope to make permanent. Our intention is that internal funding be directed at projects or activities that support the wider strategic direction.

Over recent years the Board has focused on strengthening the national organisation. With this task well under way – and in the capable hands of the Chief Executive and staff – we are now focusing on how to strengthen the wider organisation. Because we have both a branch and national organisation, Forest & Bird is in a unique position to be able to make a substantial difference to conservation at the local, regional and national level. This is our 'strategic advantage'.

To fully achieve our potential, the Board believes we must continue to review and develop how we work. The \$100,000 investment is one element of this, but in the coming year we intend to look more widely at a range of issues around how our local, regional and national organisations can better work together. The financial and organisational health at national level now gives us options and choices we haven't had in recent years. The Board is committed to this direction and it will be a major component of our work in the coming year.

Conservation is a team effort and I would like to thank Board members, our Chief Executive and staff and all members and supporters of the Society for your ongoing support and commitment to nature. I'm also very grateful to the sponsors and donors who are making New Zealand a better place.



Andrew Cutler
President, Forest & Bird
Perehitini, Te Reo o te Taiao



Chief Executive's Report



Tēnā koutou

The 2015/16 year included some notable successes for Forest & Bird, as well as important work completed and progress towards protecting and enhancing our natural taonga. Importantly, we set our course for the future through the development and adoption of our new strategic plan.

We remain aware of the scale of the challenges ahead, particularly around climate disruption and the ongoing battle against the predators that have decimated our native animals and plants. Achieving big goals requires determination and persistence over a long period, a vision of a better New Zealand to sustain us and the support of New Zealanders like you.

One big goal became a reality in September when the Government announced it would establish the Kermadec Ocean Sanctuary. The almost pristine ecosystems of the Kermadecs will no longer face the threats of fishing, oil exploration or mining.

We worked with Pew Charitable Trusts and WWF-New Zealand for seven years to achieve this goal and the outcome shows the value of working with others and never giving up. We were also among the partners who organised the People's Climate March in November to show that New Zealanders are serious about the need for decisive action to curb climate disruption.

Our strategic plan includes the goal of New Zealand reducing its gross greenhouse gas emissions by 70 percent or more from the 1990 baseline by 2040 and being carbon neutral. This is an ambitious target but a realistic one if our government listens to New Zealanders who realise the damage climate disruption could unleash on their families, the environment, nature and the economy.

During the year we also completed reports on Important Bird Areas for seabirds in and around New Zealand, the seabird capital of the world. This is an invaluable resource to guide conservation work for the albatrosses, petrels and other seabirds

that feed and breed in New Zealand and its surrounding ocean.

We also ensured the voice of nature was heard in the Land and Water Forum, which is devising reforms to improve the state of our freshwater, and in the Auckland Unitary Plan and the Hauraki Gulf Spatial Plan.

At the community level, Forest & Bird branches and regional staff contribute to important planning forums as well as getting their hands dirty restoring habitats and protecting native species. For example, Forest & Bird is leading the restoration of Tuff Crater on Auckland's North Shore, Places for Penguins in Wellington and the Pelorus Bridge bat recovery project in Marlborough.

Forest & Bird can do what no other conservation organisation can do in bringing together staff, board, branch expertise and supporters at the national, regional and community level. We can influence every level of government, seek justice for nature in all our courts and work on community conservation projects. We speak up for our natural treasures on our land, in our rivers, lakes and wetlands and in the oceans that surround us.

We can do that thanks to you, our sponsors, partner organisations, donors and committed supporters and members. Thank you very much for being Te Reo o te Taiao, the voice of nature.

Hōne McGregor
Chief Executive, Forest & Bird
Kaiwhakahaere Matua, Te Reo o te Taiao





Conservation outcomes

1 Safe climate and resilient economy

Forest & Bird recognises the danger that climate disruption poses for our native species and ecosystems, as well as for the wellbeing and prosperity of New Zealanders. The Government needs to recognise that climate disruption is a priority for New Zealanders and start taking effective action to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.

In November, in the lead-up to the Paris Climate Change Conference we took a leading role in the People's Climate March. More than 32,000 people around New Zealand marched and Forest & Bird members and supporters were prominent with our distinctive signs calling for bold climate targets.

In June 2015 we appointed a climate change advocate to develop campaigns to ensure our supporters and the public are aware of what is at stake for nature. The campaign also highlights what New Zealand can do to help minimise climate disruption and its consequences.

Part of the answer is ensuring national legislation, and regional and local rules and enforcement create the right environment for sustainable management of our resources. The cornerstone of all of these laws and rules for protecting the environment on our land and coasts is the Resource Management Act.

Pressure from Forest & Bird and other environmental organisations ensured the Government withdrew plans in 2015 to substantially weaken the RMA's environmental principles. We still have concerns about changes in the Bill introduced to Parliament in November that would limit the participation of environmental groups and the public from decision-making processes. Forest & Bird continues to campaign to have these improved.

At the regional level where the RMA is applied through regional and district plans, our branches and staff – including the legal team and regional managers – have been speaking up for nature. In a nationally significant decision in December, Forest & Bird successfully argued in the Environment Court that the New Plymouth District Council had failed to protect significant natural areas by not including them in its district plan.

2 Nature within protected areas is secure and well managed

The Government announcement of the proposed 620,000 square kilometre Kermadec Ocean Sanctuary in late September was great news. But it was disappointing the Government then followed up in January by excluding the Exclusive Economic Zone – the area extending 200 nautical miles from land – from planned Marine Protected Areas legislation.

The legislation, aimed at creating a network of protected areas in the oceans around New Zealand, will instead cover only the territorial seas extending 12 nautical miles from land. This would leave out 96 percent of the area we have custody over. Forest & Bird strongly opposed this provision, along with some other proposals, in the Government’s discussion document and thousands of our members, supporters and the public made submissions through our website.

On land, we kept pressure on the Government to ensure the Department of Conservation had enough resources to deal with another predicted beech mast in 2016, which would lead to a massive increase in numbers of rats and stoats. In Northland, Forest & Bird highlighted the plight of forests being destroyed by an estimated 10 million possums.

Mainstream media carried our shocking drone footage in October showing dead trees stripped of their foliage in forests once teeming with flocks of kākā, kākārīki and kererū – or kūkupa as they are known in Northland. DOC has since agreed to carry out pest control work in some of the forests it manages.

Our efforts to prevent further freshwater degradation in the Tukituki River catchment in Hawke’s Bay included legal action to stop the building of the Ruataniwha water storage dam. The storage lake on the Makaroro River would cover 450 hectares, including 22 hectares of the Ruahine Forest Park.

We challenged the legality of DOC’s decision to revoke the protected status of the 22 hectares and to swap it for a larger area of land with lower conservation values. While agreeing with many of Forest & Bird’s legal arguments, the High Court found in favour of DOC.

We decided to appeal the decision because of its national implications. If special protection can be revoked, what meaning does special protection have?





3 Nature beyond protected areas is secure and well managed

The Ruataniwha dam is an important issue for Forest & Bird. It is also a good example of the way our local branches and staff work together to protect nature.

The rush to intensify agriculture, especially dairy farming, has serious implications for our already stressed ecosystems and native species. We believe the economic case for the Ruataniwha dam and irrigation scheme doesn't make sense either.

Forest & Bird continued to play a key role representing the environment in the Land and Water Forum, which brings together industries, iwi and other groups with an interest in freshwater quality and use. The Government's response to the recommendations of the Land and Water Forum were still to be finalised by the end of the year, and important issues remained to be resolved if the decline in water quality and freshwater ecosystems are to be turned around.

Bringing nature back to our towns and cities and linking wild areas by providing wildlife corridors through urban areas has been another focus of our activity. The most ambitious of these projects is the North-West Wildlink in our largest city Auckland.

North-West Wildlink is a collaborative effort between Forest & Bird's Auckland branches and staff and the Auckland Council to create green corridors through the city between the important habitats in the Waitakere Ranges and the Hauraki Gulf islands.

By joining together council-owned reserves, privately-owned land and Forest & Bird projects, the aim is to allow wildlife to move safely through areas, increasing their access to food and shelter. For example, our Hibiscus Coast branch has been expanding its pest control work on the Whangaparoa Peninsula in the last year to help provide safe havens for native species travelling to and from sanctuaries on the coast and offshore islands.

We also believe bringing native wildlife and plants back to our towns and cities will give New Zealanders a greater love for our unique natural taonga and a greater recognition of the need to protect them. In the past it's been a case of out of sight, out of mind.

This is obvious in Wellington, for example, where many city suburbs have seen a revival in native bird species. The endangered kākā can be seen in many western and central suburbs, and the native bush is making a comeback because of replanting by community groups. Many of these groups source plants from our Wellington branch's native plant nursery, where volunteers grew and distributed 7,829 plants to 22 local groups last autumn and winter.

Better protection of our seas and the life that depends on them was another important focus in 2015/16. By the end of year, several years of work had been completed in identifying 141 Important Bird Areas of global significance for seabirds and a further 69 marine seabird IBAs. This work was done in conjunction with Forest & Bird's international partner, BirdLife International.



New Zealand is known as the seabird capital of the world and many of the species that breed on our land and feed in our seas are threatened. The four IBA reports will be a valuable resource for community groups, the Department of Conservation and others working to protect these species.

Our Bird of the Year campaign plays a great role in heightening public awareness of our native birds and why they mean so much to us. The 2015 competition was the most successful ever, attracting more than 13,000 votes and international media attention.

Trans-global migrant the bar-tailed godwit, or kuaka, was the winner followed by the kōkako and kākā in the competition, which was made possible by sponsorship from Heritage Expeditions, Kereru Brewery, Kokako Coffee, Zealandia and Dragonfly Science.

The work of branches, volunteers and our regional staff is at the heart of conservation in our communities. Projects such as the Paremata Flats restoration near Nelson, Ark in the Park in Auckland and dozens of others around the country continued to restore some of the unique places and species that have been damaged or lost since humans came to New Zealand.

4 Organisational outcomes

An effective and united organisation

We continued to strengthen our financial position during the year to better equip us to face new and ongoing conservation challenges with confidence. In line with this aim, we appointed a new fundraising and membership group manager and a relationships manager to work with individuals who want to have a significant impact on nature in New Zealand. The importance of our RMA-related work was underlined by appointing a resource management planner.

Other staff appointments included a programmes and volunteer coordination manager and a seabird liaison officer, both based in Auckland.

A new regional manager for the lower North Island was appointed in Wellington and the marketing and communications team has been strengthened. The new staffing structure was implemented to better align the roles with Forest & Bird's

priorities and to better support branches in the coming years.

Branches have been forming regional groups to better align their conservation work and to allow them to take on larger scale projects. They continue to expand the conservation work they do in their communities and to play a crucial role in national campaigns.

As part of our focus towards encouraging more involvement from the young and to foster future conservation leaders, a new youth award was inaugurated during 2015/16. A new youth tertiary scholarship was created, with the first recipient to be named in 2016. The Kiwi Conservation Club for children was restructured to integrate it further with Forest & Bird and a new website set up as a result of survey feedback.



Our sponsorship programme continues to grow. Sponsors play an important role in advancing our aims, including Honda which provides seven vehicles for the use of key staff. During the year we added new sponsors The Collective, who produce gourmet yoghurts, and solar power business Solarcity. The support of our sponsors means our voice for nature is louder.

Thanks to the support of committed Kiwis, our regular giving programme continues to grow. While every form of support is highly valued and appreciated, the ability to receive sustainable regular income enables the organisation to make long-term plans to protect nature and be much more efficient with our future planning.

Last year 37 people donated more than \$2 million to fund conservation in New Zealand by leaving a gift to Forest & Bird in their will. Gifts have ranged from a couple of hundred dollars to half of a supporter's estate. Together they have made a big difference to enabling us to protect New Zealand's incredible environment for future generations.



Shirley Means left a very thoughtful gift in her will. Throughout her life she enjoyed bird watching and was knowledgeable about the plight of native species.

Her legacy to New Zealand will be felt in the protection of rare birds such as the tieke and North Island kōkako. Her gift has already been applied to the kōkako translocation and breeding programme at our Auckland open sanctuary project, Ark in the Park.

A third of Forest & Bird's conservation and advocacy work is funded by bequests from people who care about the world they leave behind. If you would like to be one of these remarkable individuals, please email legacy@forestandbird.org.nz or call 04 801 2219.

2015 IN NUMBERS

76,000

likes for our
Facebook page

18,000

trees planted at Paremata
Flats Reserve in 2015

\$92,170

raised in our RMA appeal

30

active KCC
branches

620,000 ha

to be protected in the
Kermadecs Ocean
Sanctuary

5,000

KCC members

57,000

pest vines removed in
Project De-Vine in 2015

\$2.3 million

donated annually by our
regular monthly donors

Kermadecs Ocean Sanctuary

Seven years of campaigning with Pew Charitable Trusts and WWF-New Zealand paid off in September 2015 when the Government announced it would establish the Kermadec Ocean Sanctuary, one of the largest in the world. The sanctuary contains almost pristine ecosystems and includes resident whales, seabirds and unique life forms living amongst undersea volcanoes.

The protection of some of the most complex deepwater habitats anywhere on the planet expands protected areas in New Zealand seas from a tiny 0.5 percent to 15 percent.

Among the marine habitats are the second-deepest ocean trench in the world at more than 10,000 metres, a convergence of tropical, subtropical and temperate species of plants and animals found nowhere else in New Zealand and around 10 to 15 million seabirds.

The announcement was a big breakthrough for marine protection in New Zealand. The next step is to achieve a representative network of marine reserves in our territorial waters and exclusive economic zone.



Strategic Plan

The implementation of the new Forest & Bird strategic plan during the year shone a light on Forest & Bird's priorities over the next quarter century to 2040. Within the longer-term goals are five-year and 10-year stepping stones to measure our progress.

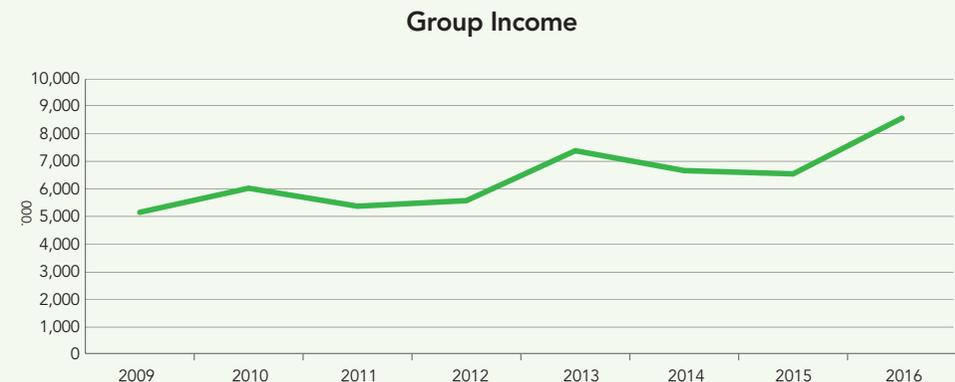
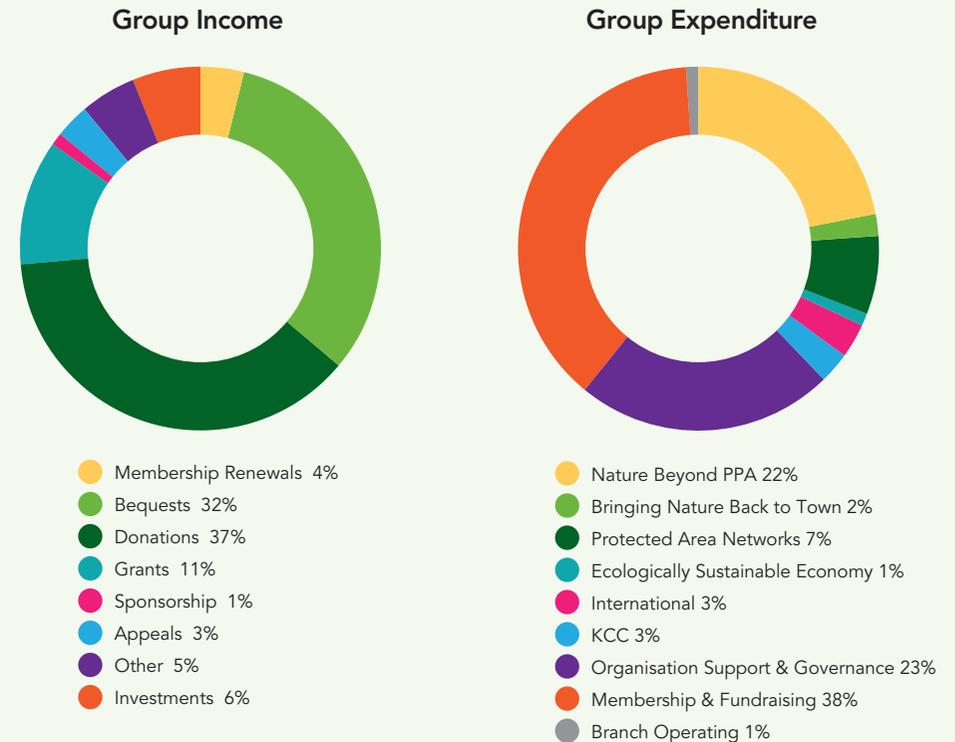
The strategic plan gives us a clear path to follow to help achieve protection and restoration of nature in and around New Zealand. We intend to make New Zealand nature more resilient against the many threats it faces. To achieve that goal, we are making our own organisation stronger and more resilient too. If you haven't seen the strategic plan, it is on our website or please request a copy from reception@forestandbird.org.nz or phone 04 385 7374.

Group Financial Report

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 29TH FEBRUARY 2016

	2016	2015
	NZD\$000	
Income		
Membership	374	464
Other Supporter Income	3,583	3,290
Bequests	2,723	1,049
Grants	944	803
Other Income	956	1,015
Total Income	8,580	6,621
Expenditure		
Conservation	2,919	2,468
Organisational Support & Governance	1,772	1,166
Membership & Fundraising	2,924	2,446
Branch Operating	40	156
Total Expenditure	7,656	6,237
Net Surplus	925	384
Summary of Forest & Bird Financial Position as at 29th February		
Current Assets	5,298	4,718
Non Current Assets	4,822	3,932
Property, Plant & Equipment	2,251	2,491
Total Assets	12,371	11,141
Current Liabilities	1,627	1,425
Non Current Liabilities	735	626
Total Liabilities	2,362	2,050
Equity	10,009	9,091
Total Equity & Liabilities	12,371	11,141

The information in this report has been summarised from the annual accounts of Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society of New Zealand Inc., and its branches for the year ended 29 February 2016 and the Forest & Bird Endowment Fund for the year ended 31 December 2015. The full financial statements have been audited by BDO Wellington. Further information relating to the annual accounts including our audit report, statement of financial performance and position, movements in equity and our accounting policies is available to members on request.



Branch Financial Information:

	Income	Expenditure	Surplus / (Deficit)	Assets	Liabilities	Member Funds		Income	Expenditure	Surplus / (Deficit)	Assets	Liabilities	Member Funds
Ashburton	5,120	5,471	(351)	10,799	2,830	7,969	North Shore	40,971	35,464	5,508	133,911	100,753	33,158
Central Auckland	8,029	38,829	(30,800)	50,480	0	50,480	North Taranaki	36,337	24,908	11,430	42,556	0	42,556
Central Hawke's Bay	6,539	7,521	(982)	25,407	300	25,107	Northern	0	0	0	139,992	0	139,992
Central Otago-Lakes	31,858	22,610	9,248	19,497	0	19,497	Rangitikei	16,193	330	15,862	41,586	0	41,586
Dunedin	112,484	60,313	52,170	1,109,457	525	1,108,932	Rotorua	8,772	6,831	1,941	216,173	0	216,173
Dunedin - LENZ	24,322	16,182	8,140	287,123	8	287,116	South Auckland	10,343	14,261	(3,917)	58,663	0	58,663
Eastern Bay of Plenty	6,500	8,406	(1,906)	43,422	0	43,422	South Canterbury	2,921	2,726	196	21,209	0	21,209
Far North	21,222	24,365	(3,143)	85,591	0	85,591	South Otago	8,293	9,928	(1,635)	24,603	0	24,603
Franklin	613	1,020	(407)	1,378	0	1,378	South Taranaki	20,181	18,974	1,206	44,254	0	44,254
Gisborne	3,620	2,128	1,492	15,013	0	15,013	South Waikato	7,019	6,087	932	37,760	34,854	2,906
Golden Bay	284,303	307,854	(23,552)	100,946	89,388	11,558	Southland	101,332	17,924	83,408	178,547	0	178,547
Hastings / Havelock North	14,297	17,037	(2,739)	263,259	1,701	261,558	Taupo	3,736	2,620	1,116	16,704	0	16,704
Hauraki Islands	82,237	56,863	25,374	313,465	1,608	311,857	Tauranga	5,865	6,906	(1,041)	89,532	2,292	87,240
Hibiscus Coast	11,379	8,319	3,060	22,791	12,802	9,989	Te Puke	4,062	3,822	241	35,046	1,000	34,046
Horowhenua	4,687	3,909	778	3,908	0	3,908	Thames- Hauraki	7,617	22,418	(14,802)	54,443	0	54,443
Kaikoura	894	46	849	3,686	0	3,686	Upper Coromandel	487	348	139	23,188	0	23,188
Kaipara	1,016	471	545	13,439	0	13,439	Upper Hutt	12,245	12,883	(639)	37,409	4,162	33,247
Kapiti-Mana	6,848	9,583	(2,735)	49,846	0	49,846	Waihi	268	310	(42)	5,040	0	5,040
Lower Hutt	8,596	3,735	4,861	33,670	0	33,670	Waikato	32,710	22,446	10,264	52,661	577	52,084
Manawatu	5,653	3,685	1,968	35,809	89	35,720	Wairarapa	5,814	5,913	(100)	28,086	3,749	24,338
Marlborough	6,122	4,106	2,016	20,831	7,429	13,402	Waitakere	61,053	50,012	11,040	351,240	17,275	333,965
Mercury Bay	2,480	1,464	1,017	5,940	0	5,940	Waitaki	222	765	(543)	3,450	0	3,450
Warkworth Area (Mid North)	5,547	5,174	373	33,467	8,435	25,032	Whanganui	141,794	5,871	135,923	281,068	0	281,068
Napier	14,397	7,367	7,030	252,494	200	252,294	Wellington	18,901	18,657	244	141,677	15,630	126,047
Nelson-Tasman	13,872	48,511	(34,639)	105,152	28,609	76,543	West Coast	8,226	11,771	(3,546)	9,706	6,727	2,980
North Canterbury	23,232	16,609	6,623	338,725	3,388	335,337							
								1,261,228	983,753	277,475	5,314,100	344,332	4,969,768

Branch assets include:

Cash, Cash Equivalents & Deposits on Call	1,634,189
Investments – Term Deposits	2,115,188
Investments – Term Deposits Held at National Office	400,553
Shares & Other Investments	859,583
Total Cash & Investments in Branches	5,009,513
Other Assets	304,586
Total Assets	5,314,100



HONDA
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Photos: Rob Suisted, Craig McKenzie, Philip Moll, Malcolm Francis, David Hallett

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