



**THRIVING SOUTHLAND**

*Tōnui āna te whenua. Tōnui āna te takata.  
A thriving, prosperous land. A thriving, prosperous people.*

# Thriving Southland:

## Delivering Effective Backbone Support for Catchment Group Success An independent evaluation (2024)

Thriving Southland has been driving positive change in Southland's farming communities since 2020. This report highlights the significant impact of our support in empowering Catchment Groups to build stronger connections, improve decision-making, and create lasting progress across the region.

### POSITIVE ENVIRONMENTAL OUTCOMES

Thriving Southland initiatives empower Catchment Groups to achieve positive environmental outcomes.

**86% of** Catchment Groups feel more capable and motivated to drive change.

Use of science and data to adapt projects **increased from 14% to 83% by 2024.**



### DATA-DRIVEN INSIGHTS

Scientific data is now integral to decision-making within Catchment Groups.

**83%** have become more informed about science options and solutions.

**"I think that without Thriving Southland, our Catchment Group – and many others in Southland – would struggle to maintain momentum and relevance. Their guidance is crucial to what we do."**

*Farmer quote*

**91% are** prioritising changes in water quality, climate or biodiversity that matter to the local community.

**89% reported** stronger connections with scientists and experts.

**89%** reported a better understanding of their farm and catchment-specific challenges and opportunities.

**"I don't believe our Catchment Group would keep moving forward without Thriving Southland's support. We would struggle to get projects off the ground."**

*Farmer quote*

**78%** now collaborate to advance community priorities, compared to 23% four years ago

### SKILL DEVELOPMENT

The support provided has equipped farmers with the tools and information to implement effective strategies on farm and in their catchments.

### RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

Thriving Southland fosters collaboration, building resilient farming communities able to adapt to change.



**"Thriving Southland provides cohesion within the region's groups. Without Thriving Southland, it would put a lot of pressure back on to volunteer roles within groups"**

*Farmer quote*

**75% can** identify clear steps to create action plans for their farms.

### ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

A wide range of workshops enhance knowledge and community engagement.

**Ongoing support is crucial**

to sustain these efforts and prevent potential loss of momentum.

**Thriving Southland acts as a catalyst,**

helping Catchment Groups set visions, plan strategies, and make data-informed decisions.

