Litter Intelligence Data Governance Group (DGG) Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, 8 May 2024
Time: 10.00am - 11.00am
Location: Microsoft Teams

Attendees: Shawn Elise Tierney (Chair - Sustainable Coastlines), David Harris (Stats NZ), Rick Leckinger (Be A Tidy Kiwi), Jordi Tablada (Department of Conservation) , Karina Brehmer (non-voting, Secretary)

Observers: Richard Griffiths (Northland Regional Council),

Apologies: Heather Saunderson (Keep New Zealand Beautiful), Logan Ashmore (Ministry for the Environment), Amanda Valois (Greater Wellington Regional Council/National Freshwater Advisory Group)

Actions from this meeting

Action	Owner	Status
Define "wadeable streams"	Karina/Amanda/Jordi	
Review if UNEP has expanded to consider vapes (SC) and follow up over email.	Shawn Elise	
Add to next meeting's agenda to discuss zippers, bitumen and cigarette papers.	Karina	
Karina to send calendar invites for the next meetings and follow up with everyone to get their phone number if we need to confirm RSVPs.	Karina	Done
Actions from Data Quality Meeting	Owner	Status
Amanda to re-examine sorting efficiency calculation	Amanda	
Shawn Elise will look into the Back of Beach and Beach Type fields for each survey area and get a picture of the number of & geographical spread of surveys based on beach type	Shawn Elise	

Opening karakia:
Whakataka te hau ki te uru
Whakataka te hau ki te tonga
Kia mākinakina ki uta
Kia mātaratara ki tai
E hī ake ana te atakura
He tio, he huka, he hau hū
Tīhei mauri ora!

Review Actions Table from last meeting

Action	Owner	Status
2024 ToR to be circulated and signed by all members before the next meeting.	Karina	Done
DGG members to provide nominations for the chair role via email to bellah@sustainablecoastlines.org. A poll will be circulated for voting before the next meeting	Bella	*Shawn Elise acting as interim chair until a new chair is elected. Acknowledged shared project.
StatsNZ to deliver a workshop/meeting with SC on data use and data quality. David and Ben will meet beforehand to discuss how this will be delivered. To be done before the next DGG meeting.	David/Ben	Done
SC to discuss how to incorporate back of the beach recommendations into training/tech. Look at how often these are recorded	Ben	On pause, acknowledged
Investigate the cost for changing the wording from 'freshwater' to 'streams' across the LI platform.	Ben/Shawn	Estimated $500-1000 Clarify wording: "wadable streams"
Amanda/David/Ben to meet to discuss QA/QC next steps and data analysis..	Amanda/David/ Ben	Meeting held 27/3/24. Notes below.
Present on the definition of LI as a brand and personality.	Josh/Ben	Done

1. **Review / Approve minutes from the last meeting: Link to Minutes Data Governance Group (DGG) Meeting 8 November 2023**
   Accepted, meeting minutes approved.

2. **Governance**

   - Shawn Elise has offered to step in as Interim Chair in Ben's stead while Sustainable Coastlines manages some team workload. Per the Terms of Reference, a Chair can be proposed & elected at the start of each calendar year. Please send any nominations to Karina to be voted on at the next meeting.
   - The 2024 Terms of Reference are here. Please sign and return to Karina before the next meeting or let us know of any changes.
   - Membership discussion: proposal for a formal seat for members of the Coastal Special Interest Group discussed and approved.

   Verification process: Sustainable Coastlines proposes an alteration to the Survey Verification process. Currently, verifications are done as follows:
   - The Lead Citizen Scientist submits a survey. It is live on the website (if it is official; if it is ad-hoc, which is uncommon, it is only visible on the website once it is verified).
   - The regional manager for the area the survey is submitted then contacts the lead CitSci by phone or email at their earliest convenience. This may take a

few days. They ask a standard set of questions to confirm the survey & audit details as well as visually reviewing the information & photos submitted.
- The lead may take a few days or even weeks to respond.
- Any changes to survey details (such as time spent, number of people, location) can be amended in the admin panel. Any errors or omissions to audit data is noted in the verification form but cannot be amended in the admin panel.
- Once verified, the SC staff member ticks it off as verified in the admin panel.
- The downsides to this system is the processing time between survey submission to verification can be substantial and also unpredictable. Leads may not remember information days or weeks later. It is also very manual for the SC staff person - needing to interact with email, a google form, the admin panel and the website to do a single verification. It can also be rather time-intensive for the SC Staff and they may chase up the same person multiple times before getting a response.

The proposal we suggest today is to have verifications done by the contributing lead CitSci at the Review & Submit stage - screenshots below. The technical/design specifics of this would need to be scoped out. We suggest it could work as follows:
- Leads complete their survey and audit. At the final "review & submit" screen they are prompted to Verify the survey on the spot. They would be able to review each litter category and edit on the same screen without having to exit and return to review. Each material class or category could be ticked off to verify. Items categorised as "other" could also be noted at this time.
- The comments box can continue to capture suggestions for keywords.
- SC staff would still do a visual inspection of data prior to verifying on the admin panel.
- This would boost the quality assurance by verifying the details at the point at which the lead can most accurately verify the results. It would remove the time delay and allow any errors or omissions to be corrected before submitting.
- We could also explore an option to "submit survey and return to verify" that automatically prompts them to verify the details daily, if instant verification is a barrier. To be explored!
- This would require tech updates, a refresh of the *QA document, and training of existing & new Citizen Scientists on the process. It would necessitate/reiterate the importance of using paper data sheets alongside the application (something we already recommend)
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Today we are seeking approval of this process in principle before we explore the cost of tech solutions. We suggest we run this idea past a few CitScis as a trial and then scope out the tech solutions.

*If this is acceptable, the amendments to the QA document are at this link.
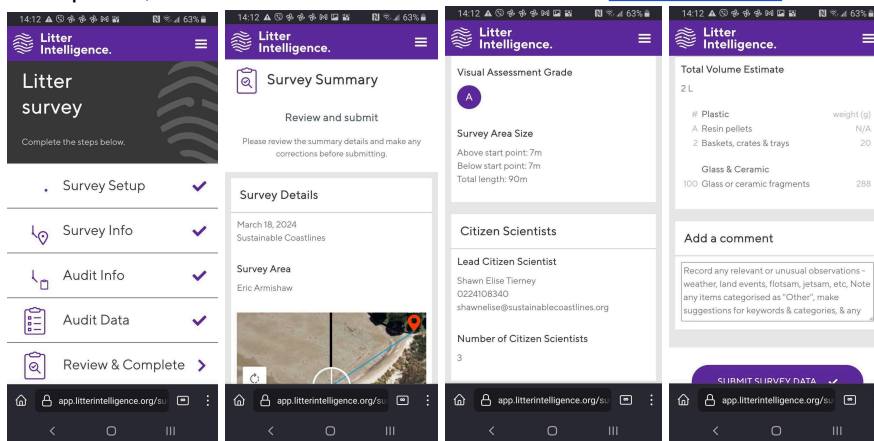
David is supportive of the option to edit in the review panel as going back to he previous screen introduces a hurdle..
Rick supports the idea of "Submit and return to verify" and automate the reminder to the lead citizen science as well as the Sustainable Coastlines rep to complete the verification.
Richard suggests a way to flag outliers; Stats NZ use a soft edit that allows data entry to continue but asks to confirm if something is outside the normal range.
The group supports this proposal, and thinks it is a good idea to keep audit details fresh and accurate. Proposal is approved and SC will investigate tech solutions.

3. **Discussion of wording of "Freshwater" or "Wadeable streams"**

David notes that as explicit a definition as possible to begin with is preferable.
Discussion on where lakes or rivers would fit is concluded that ideally these would have separate tools as the behaviour & source of litter would differ from both coastal and wadeable streams.

Everyone agrees that "wadeable streams" is the most appropriate language to use for now.

ACTION: Follow up with Jordi and Amanda on the definition of wadeable streams.
Richard suggests referring to the Resource Management Act for definition

4. **Quality Assurance and Quality Controls**

   ● David, Amanda, and Shawn Elise met on 27 March. Agenda here.
   ● Discussed the QC activities done to date and the need to clarify the sorting efficiency calculation.
   ● Actions from this session:
      ○ Amanda will re-examine the calculation
      ○ SC team will continue with quality control surveys & audits.
      ○ Shawn Elise will look into how the team have been completing the Back of Beach and Beach Type fields for each survey area. And get a picture of number of & geographical spread surveys based on beach type.
      ○ David Harris asked about the beach surface information. Shawn Elise confirmed that this is captured at each survey and shared this beach surface photo reference guide.

5. **Beach Monitoring**

   a. **New Zealand**

      ● 224 beach surveys were completed over 155 survey areas since the last meeting on 8 November 2023. Around 70k individual items of litter were classified.
      Surpassed the minimum of 432 surveys in a year for a total of 547 surveys this year.
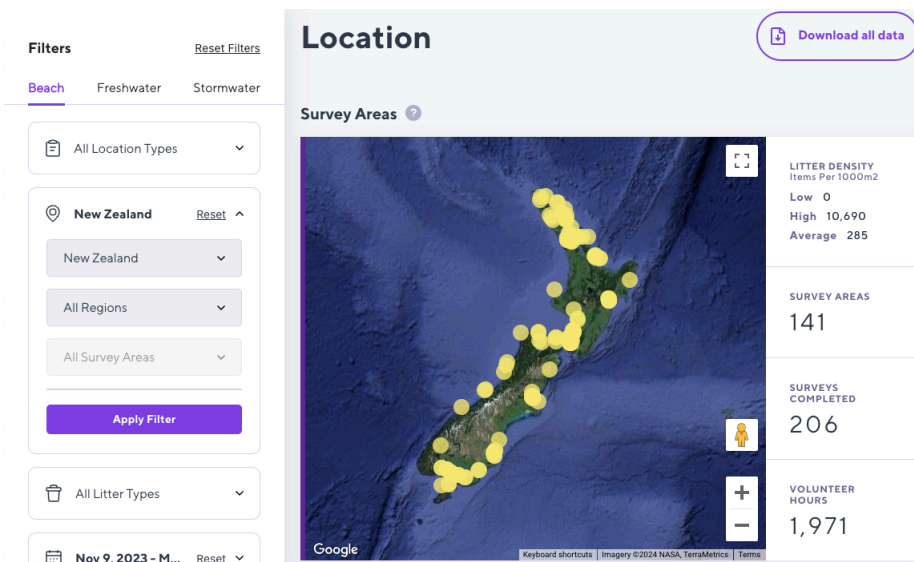
b. **Pacific Islands**
  - 18 beach surveys were completed over 14 survey areas in Solomon Islands, Fiji, Vanuatu, Samoa & Tonga since the last meeting on 8 November 2023. Around 22k individual items of litter were classified.
  - Supported Fiji former Olympic Athletes to set up monitoring programme.
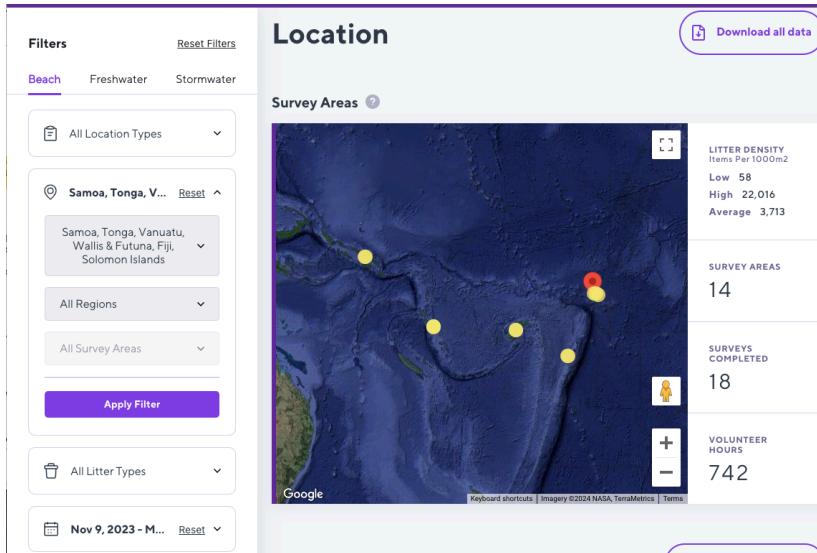
6. **Stormwater and Freshwater (Stream) Monitoring**
  - 4 surveys of 4 freshwater areas in Auckland & Wellington
  - 4 surveys of 3 stormwater areas in Auckland
  - Roughly half of all of these conducted by Sustainable Coastlines International Volunteer programme
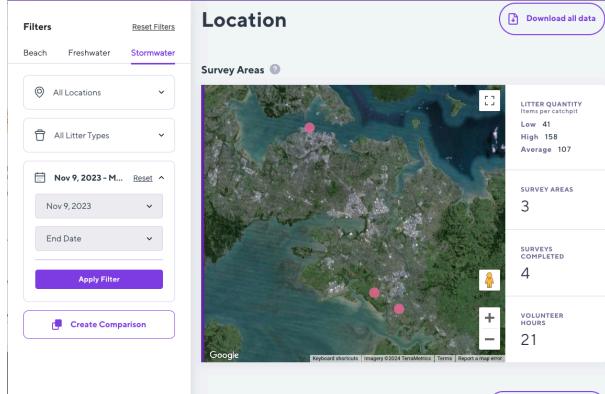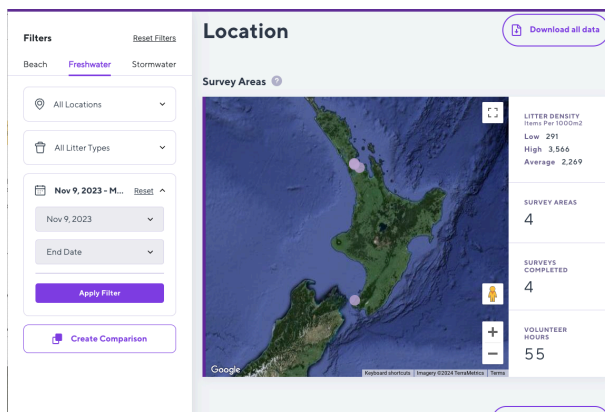
7. **Terrestrial Monitoring**

   ● Any updates from Stats NZ on the KNZB and LI category concordance project?
       Completed with no further actions. As land and coastal litter didn't end up on the same platform.

8. **Category and Keyword Review**

   a. **Want to request any changes? Refer to this document** and add in your comments in the column with your organisation name before the meeting. Make sure you are on the first tab, aptly named "Feedback on this tab".

Discussion of proposed keywords & categories.

● Proposal to rename "Cigarette lighters" to "Cigarette Lighters and Vapes"
  ○ Richard Griffiths suggests that they are different categories because of the battery component. He questions if a new category would be better?
  ○ Although we have strived to find a best fit of items in existing categories, the incidence of vapes is clearly growing and weren't even around when the categories were made.
  ○ Rick agrees that vapes with batteries are quite different from the capsules but both are growing in number - and notes that cigarette lighters on their own are probably on the decline because of vapes.
  ○ batteries are different and growing in number.
  ○ The team debates the components of vapes and where best to categorise them.
  ○ ACTION: Review if UNEP has expanded to consider vapes (SC) and follow up over email. If no news on vapes, the team supports creating a new category, under PL10.1 as it would come under Plastic predominantly. All vape material would get classified here.
● Rick suggests that Hangers need a metal category; Shawn agrees and they settle on "Metal: Other."
● Discussion of Nitrous oxide canisters. Rick and Shawn agree these fit under ME04.
● ACTION: Add to next meeting's agenda to discuss zippers, bitumen and cigarette papers.

Keywords added:
● **Plastic -** under category:
  ○ Bottles, drums, jerrycan, and buckets < 2L: Bucket handles
  ○ Fishing gear: Flasher rig packaging
  ○ Food containers: Food bag handles
  ○ Food wrappers: Gladwrap, cling wrap
  ○ Gardening & farming related: line trimmer, weed eater, line, fencing, waratah caps
  ○ Hangers & retail packaging: hanger, receipt reel
  ○ Plastic bags: post bags, courier bags
  ○ Plastic vehicle parts: car, vehicle parts
  ○ Safety & construction related: vinyl, lino flooring
  ○ Strapping bands & tape: tape
  ○ Toys, Sports & Recreation (Plastic): plastic plants, camping, ribbon
  ○ Other Plastic (specify): bank card, eftpos

● **Foamed Plastic -** under category:

  ○ Foam sponge: Sponge
  ○ Other Foamed Plastic (specify): expanding foam, mattress

- **Fabric and Textiles** - under category:

  - Backpacks & bags: Fabric
  - Canvas, sailcloth & sacking (hessian): Fabric
  - Carpet & furnishing: Fabric
  - Clothing, towels and linen: Fabric
  - Other Cloth:soft toys, fabric
  - Unidentifiable Cloth Fragments: Fabric

- **Glass & ceramic** - under category:

  - Construction material: Tile

- **Metal** - under category:

  - Other cans & containers (<= 4L): nitrous, canister, inhaler, nangs
  - Construction material: wiring, spanner
  - Other Metal (specify): Hanger

- **Paper & cardboard** - under category:

  - Cups, food trays & wrappers: paper straw, lollypop stick (paper), lollipop stick (paper), wrapper

- **Rubber** - under category:

  - Inner-tubes and rubber sheet: Tubing
  - Rubber footwear: Gumboots
  - Construction & Automotive: Tubing
  - Other Rubber (specify): Plug

- **Other** - under category:

  - Appliances & electronics: Electronics
  - Paraffin or wax: Candle, crayon
  - Personal care items: headband, fake fingernails
  - Sanitary items: wipe, wipes, band aid, bandaid, band-aid, wet wipes

Keywords removed/moved:
- **Plastic -** under category:

  - Other Plastic (specify): flasher rig packaging

9. **LI Brand and Personality**
   Brand overview work was shared with the group.

General Business

ACTION: Karina to send calendar invites for the next meetings and follow up with everyone to get their phone number if we need to confirm RSVPs.

Next meetings:
10-11am, Wednesday 7 August 2024
10-11am, Wednesday 6 November 2024

Closing karakia:
Unuhia, unuhia
Unuhia ki te uru tapu nui
Kia wātea, kia māmā, te ngākau, te tinana, te wairua i te ara takatū
Koia rā e Rongo, whakairi ake ki runga
Kia tina! TINA! Hui e! TĀIKI E