

# NSW VISITOR ECONOMY LITTER PREVENTION STRATEGY

# 2030

**PREPARED BY TAKE 3 FOR THE SEA**  
**MARCH 2022**



This NSW Visitor Economy Litter Prevention Strategy has been prepared by Take 3 for the Sea, with the support of NPWS Parks Eco Pass Operators and Outdoors NSW and ACT.

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Take 3 acknowledges that we operate and function on the lands of the Darkinjung people. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

Take 3 acknowledges the traditional owners of country here and throughout Australia, and recognises their continuing connection to land, waters and culture.





# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – HIGHLIGHTS

- ⇒ The NSW Visitor Economy Litter Prevention Strategy aims to create strategic partnerships and ensure litter prevention strategies are understood, delivered and integrated within the NSW Visitor Economy, allowing operators to Own It and Act on litter prevention.
- ⇒ Building on its brand and expertise in education around plastic pollution and litter reduction, Take 3 collaborated with NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), Parks Eco Pass Operators and Outdoors NSW & ACT on the First Wave Litter Reduction Pilot Program to create awareness and develop a shared vision for litter prevention in the Visitor Economy.
- ⇒ The First Wave Litter Reduction Pilot Program is a NSW Environment Protection Authority, Waste Less Recycle More initiative funded from the waste levy.
- ⇒ The strategy has three phases:
  1. **FIRST WAVE TOURISM PILOT PROGRAM – 2021**
  2. **GROUND SWELL – 2022**
  3. **ACCELERATE – 2030**
- ⇒ The strategy was developed following the First Wave Tourism Pilot Program which ran from April to October 2021. This program provided the opportunity to:
  - 1) Engage with NSW Visitor Economy businesses via a survey and workshops
  - 2) Introduce litter awareness
  - 3) Prepare a toolkit for operators consisting of educational materials to encourage litter prevention
- ⇒ 82% of survey respondents believe there is a litter issue in the Visitor Economy Industry and are committed to taking action to reduce it.
- ⇒ When asked what challenges tourism operators face around reducing litter, there were a range of answers. The most popular responses were lack of infrastructure (68.3%), inadequate education (43.7%) and the logistics of rubbish disposal in remote areas (41.7%)
- ⇒ The First Wave Pilot Project enabled the Visitor Economy businesses that participated to develop:
  - A shared understanding of the importance of litter prevention and reduction.
  - A baseline of knowledge and skills about litter prevention and reduction.
  - Networking opportunities to enable the sharing of problems, solutions and outcomes.

- ⇒ This strategy has been developed based on feedback from Visitor Economy businesses. It aims to reduce litter at visitor hotspots throughout the state and prevent litter from impacting the NSW Visitor Economy Industry and NSW's reputation as a world class visitor destination.
- ⇒ The Ground Swell Program will bring together new partners at a state and sector level on the litter issue. It will inspire ownership and challenge the Visitor Economy Industry to reduce litter in Visitor hotspots by 60%, reduce plastic in visitor hotspots by 30% and reduce plastic use by the industry by 30%.
- ⇒ Take 3, in conjunction with key industry partners, will lead a co-ordinated, whole-of-industry approach to rolling out litter prevention and enabling progress towards the NSW Visitor Litter Reduction Targets. It will also assist the NSW Visitor Economy Industry to phase out problematic and unnecessary plastics and transition towards a circular economy by 2025.
- ⇒ At present there is no established baseline for visitor litter data in NSW. Ground Swell will work with stakeholders to create this baseline and establish Regional Litter Prevention Working Groups.
- ⇒ Ground Swell has secured support and commitment to reduce visitor litter from significant stakeholders within the NSW Visitor Economy Industry.
- ⇒ A Visitor Economy Industry Litter Prevention Steering Group has been established with suitably qualified representatives from nominated organisations throughout the industry. The program will also see a 'living' toolkit and resources, developed during the First Wave Project, distributed and utilised by the broader NSW Visitor Economy Industry.
- ⇒ The final phase – ACCELERATE TO 2030 – when 'own it and act' has addressed the litter issue.





# VISION FOR VISITOR ECONOMY LITTER PREVENTION IN NSW TO 2030

## AMBITION:



Litter-Free Visitor Destinations



Visitor Economy Industry = Circular Economy Industry



Visitor Economy Industry 'Own It and Acts' on Litter

## OUTCOMES:

#TAKE3FOR THESEA  
Create Awareness of the Litter Issue



Inspire Ownership of the Litter Issue



Celebrate Action on the Litter Issue

## TARGETS:

60% reduction in total litter in visitor hotspots by 2030

30% reduction in plastic in visitor hotspots by 2025

Assist the NSW Visitor Economy Industry to phase out problematic and unnecessary plastics in the Tourism Industry by 2025



# STRATEGY AT A GLANCE

## PHASES OF THE STRATEGY

1 FIRST WAVE 2021	Start the 'Litter conversation' with a Pilot group from the tourism industry, identifying perceptions, challenges and needs of the industry in relation to litter prevention.
2 GROUND SWELL 2022	Grow and expand – launch the litter conversation, strategy and Toolkit to the broader tourism industry.
3 ACCELERATE TO 2030	Key stakeholders and partners have taken ownership and embedded long term litter prevention action.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

AWARENESS	OWN IT & ACT	CELEBRATE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Learn about the litter issue.</li><li>● Be aware of litter and empower others to take action.</li><li>● Understand the processes for developing long-term litter prevention strategies within the industry.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Become a leader in preventing litter in your business and the community.</li><li>● Commit to minimising your waste.</li><li>● Collaborate and lead within the industry by share learning &amp; stories to inspire change.</li><li>● Put in place source reduction processes to transition to a Circular Economy.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Leaders in litter prevention in the industry.</li><li>● Success stories.</li><li>● Removal and measurement of litter.</li><li>● We are the Visitor Economy front line with power to affect change.</li></ul>

## SIX KEY FACTORS FOR LITTER PREVENTION

 <b>Cleanliness</b> <p>Litter attracts litter. Keep bins and the surrounding area clean and free of litter, graffiti and vandalism.</p> <p><b>Key Result Areas:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>⇒ Destinations are litter-free</li><li>⇒ Visitors have a litter-free experience in NSW</li></ul>	 <b>Infrastructure</b> <p>Provide bins in the places people litter the most, along with easy-to-understand signage.</p> <p><b>Key Result Areas:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>⇒ Bin numbers (and servicing) are appropriate for visitor usage at the time/location eg. Christmas holiday visitor influx</li><li>⇒ Signage is appropriate for location and context</li><li>⇒ Specialised infrastructure available, e.g. cigarette butt bins</li></ul>	 <b>Education and Awareness</b> <p>Tell people about the harm litter can do to the environment, and the cost of managing it.</p> <p><b>Key Result Areas:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>⇒ Visitors are aware of the impacts of litter</li><li>⇒ Visitors proactively avoid littering</li><li>⇒ Visitors share their litter-free experiences</li></ul>
 <b>Enforcement</b> <p>It's against the law to litter, so reporting litter and litterers is the right thing to do.</p> <p><b>Key Result Areas:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>⇒ Visitors are self-regulating with regards to litter</li><li>⇒ Visitor litter reports decrease</li><li>⇒ Visitor litter penalties are significantly decreased</li></ul>	 <b>Involvement</b> <p>Different groups, such as local businesses or community groups, who work together to prevent littering can send a powerful message that your local area is important and valued.</p> <p><b>Key Result Areas:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>⇒ Inspire and facilitate Visitor Economy communities to be proactive on litter prevention</li><li>⇒ Encourage sharing stories on litter reduction</li><li>⇒ Celebrate litter reduction successes locally, regionally and state-wide</li></ul>	 <b>Source Reduction</b> <p>Look for opportunities to avoid creating litter – reduce litter at its source.</p> <p><b>Key Result Areas:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>⇒ Visitors avoid creating litter</li><li>⇒ Visitor Economy embraces re-usable, sustainable options</li><li>⇒ Visitor Economy transitions towards a circular economy</li></ul>



# 1.0 LITTER

## 1.1 Litter defined

### 1.1.1 What is litter?

Litter is defined as anything unwanted that has been thrown, blown or left in the wrong place. Litter is found anywhere there are people – in towns and cities, in the bush, on beaches and in parks. Typical items that are littered in NSW include plastic bottles, drink cans, cigarette butts, chip and lolly wrappers, fast food packaging, bottle caps, and plastic straws. Disposable masks now also appear in large numbers.

Tourism operators in the First Wave survey confirmed that plastic bottles, food wrappers and packaging were the most commonly littered items in their areas of operation.

### 1.1.2 Why is litter a problem?

There are many consequences to litter. These include:

- Litter makes places look unsightly and attracts more litter.
- Some litter may be dangerous for human or animal health, such as broken glass or syringes.
- Litter can damage natural environments and harm wildlife.
- Cleaning up litter is expensive. In 2016, the cost to manage litter in NSW was \$180 million.
- The value of easily recyclable items like bottles and plastic containers is lost when they end up as litter.

# VISITOR LITTER IS EVERYONE'S BUSINESS

Visitors come to NSW for many reasons – to visit beautiful beaches, attend events, participate in sport, employment, business meetings, or simply to be at one with nature in the outdoors and national parks.

OWN IT AND ACT





Litter in the tourism sector has unique characteristics – waste often varies seasonally and is generated in areas sensitive to littering, potentially putting pressure on waste management facilities during peak seasons and damaging high value natural resources. With 80% of all tourism taking place in coastal areas, waste from the sector can be a large contributor to pollution with huge amounts of plastic and litter ending up in rivers and getting carried into the oceans.

### 1.1.3 Where does litter come from?

Each year, over 25,000 tonnes of litter is tossed in NSW. Litter comes from different sources. It may be intentional – dropped on the beach or thrown out of car windows. Or it may be unintentional – blown by the wind from poorly secured sites and uncovered bins, or scattered by foraging animals. Whatever the source, millions of dollars a year is spent collecting and disposing of litter.

### 1.1.4 Why do people litter?

Research tells us that there is no such thing as a typical litterer. A person may litter in one place or in one set of circumstances, but not in another place or in different circumstances. For example, a person may walk 50 metres to put their coffee cup in a bin when at the beach with their friends, but may drop the same type of cup on the ground when alone in a car park later that day.

Attitudes to litter vary in different countries throughout the world and our international visitors may be unaware of the Australian attitude to litter, and the laws that govern it. So reducing littering is not just a question of stopping persistent litterers but instead the focus is on understanding people's attitudes to litter, and finding ways to influence their behaviour.

## 1.2 Litter and the NSW Visitor Economy

Litter impacts on the global visitor industry are apparent with even a cursory literature search, with articles from India to Africa and beyond proclaiming how 'Litter Spoils Tourism'. The Visitor Economy is of vital importance to NSW, contributing \$38 billion to the state's economy. The Visitor Economy supports over 100,000 businesses and employs almost 300,000 people, making it the fifth largest employment group in the state. However this comes at a cost. With visitors comes litter and the added pressure on waste management and infrastructure.

For NSW to achieve its target of reducing litter by 40%, it is essential to understand how, where and why litter occurs in the Visitor Economy sector and formulate a tailor-made strategy to address it. Beautiful litter-free and pristine destinations are what attracts visitors. To deliver this in the future will require the tourism industry working together to own it and act on the litter challenge.

### 1.2.1 Focus on the NSW Visitor Economy

The Visitor Economy is a concept that takes into account economic activity much broader than that traditionally described as 'tourism and events'. The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTTC) defines it as any direct, indirect, and induced economic activity resulting from visitors' interactions with a destination outside their usual environment. It is a phrase used to describe the economic benefit of visitor activity not only for the industry directly related to tourism, but in a wider sense.

Visitor Economy businesses vary enormously in purpose and scope, from sole trader tour companies to multinational hotel chains employing thousands. Industry sectors include accommodation, transportation, tour operators, inbound tour operators / wholesalers, attractions and theme parks, retail and online travel agencies and information services.

Partnering with NPWS and Outdoors NSW & ACT for the First Wave Project enabled Take 3 to engage with tourism operators from across the industry and provided the opportunity to reach operators in multiple locations across the state.

Each destination and region has its own unique litter issues. For example, the alpine region has a large seasonal influx of visitors who bring litter onto the mountains, while low lying coastal areas may experience an increase of litter due to natural disasters such as storms or floods.

As outlined in the *NSW Visitor Economy Strategy 2030*, the state has a new, three-phase strategy to recover from the dual impact of the 2020 bushfires and COVID-19 pandemic and grow visitor expenditure to \$65 billion by 2030. During this period of rapid and sustained growth in the industry, NSW anticipates increased demand for 'more eco-friendly, green and sustainable destinations and experiences' and plans to incorporate more environmentally sustainable features, notably waste reduction.

It is against this backdrop that Take 3, in conjunction with NPWS, Parks Eco Pass Operators and Outdoors NSW and ACT, have formulated this litter prevention strategy for the NSW Visitor Economy industry.





OVER  
**35 million tonnes**  
OF SOLID  
WASTE IS  
GENERATED  
per year  
BY VISITORS  
GLOBALLY

**80%**  
OF ALL TOURISM  
TAKES PLACE IN  
**coastal areas**

### 1.3 A Plan for Reducing Visitor Economy Litter in NSW

**This strategy aims to reduce litter generated by tourism in visitor hotspots by 60% by 2030.**

Over 35 million tonnes of solid waste is generated per year by visitors globally. It is believed visitors may generate up to twice as much solid waste per person as local residents. Tourism waste often varies seasonally and is generated in areas sensitive to littering, potentially putting pressure on waste management facilities during peak seasons and damaging high value nature resources. Increased visitation and waste results in increased litter. With 80% of all tourism taking place in coastal areas, plastic and litter from the sector can be a large contributor to pollution with huge amounts of plastic ending up in rivers and getting carried into the oceans. Litter that reaches the ocean poses a threat to whales, dolphins, sea turtles and birds.

#### FIRST WAVE – PHASE 1

Take 3 for the Sea and partners were successful in a funding application to deliver the First Wave: NSW Tourism Industry Pilot Program #TAKE3FORNSW. The mission of the project was to educate and inspire the NSW Visitor Economy Industry to own it and act by encouraging behaviour change in the way businesses and their visitors deal with litter. The project focused on engaging individual businesses across sectors of the industry who are on the front line of the litter problem.

First Wave started the conversation, introducing litter awareness, and creating resources and tools to enable NSW Visitor Economy businesses to own it and act. The project brought businesses together to workshop the issue of litter and identify solutions and actions that can be taken on an individual and business level. It inspired and educated businesses to join the journey and share their ideas, initiatives and successes, savings and impact, whilst making a significant and sustained contribution to achieving NSW's target of a 40% reduction in litter. The project empowered Visitor Economy business owners and teams to take the lead in litter prevention and inspire others by their example.

The pilot project undertaken between April and October 2021 included three separate research activities to obtain data and build a robust understanding of the beliefs and perspectives of NSW tour operators about litter in their sector. The activities included:

- A sector-wide survey.
- Local litter check.
- Focus groups with representatives from the Visitor Economy Industry.

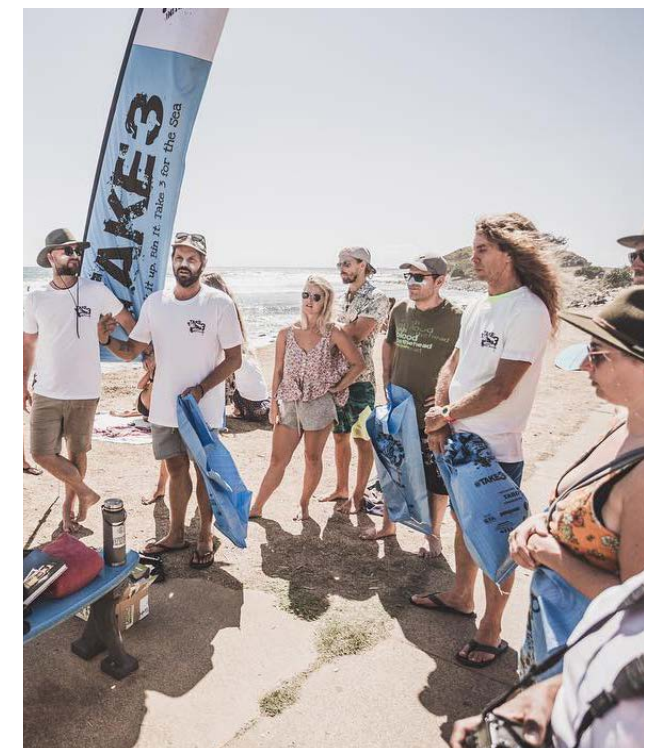
Findings from these activities can be found in Appendix 2 and have formed the basis of this Litter Prevention Strategy and recommendations for the future.

#### GROUND SWELL – PHASE 2

The Ground Swell program will bring together new partners at a federal, state and sector level to inspire ownership of the litter issue and challenge the NSW Visitor Economy Industry to:

- Reduce total litter by 60% in visitor hotspots by 2030;
- Reduce plastic litter by 30% in visitor hotspots by 2025; and
- Phase out problematic and unnecessary plastics in the Visitor Economy Industry by 2025.

Visitor Economy businesses will be invited to participate in the program, develop action plans to address litter and waste, and activate the #TAKE3FORNSW campaign. A Visitor Economy Industry litter prevention steering group has been established with suitably qualified representatives from nominated organisations throughout the industry. The final phase of the Strategy will accelerate the Visitor Economy Industry to 2030 when Own It and Act has wiped out the visitor litter issue



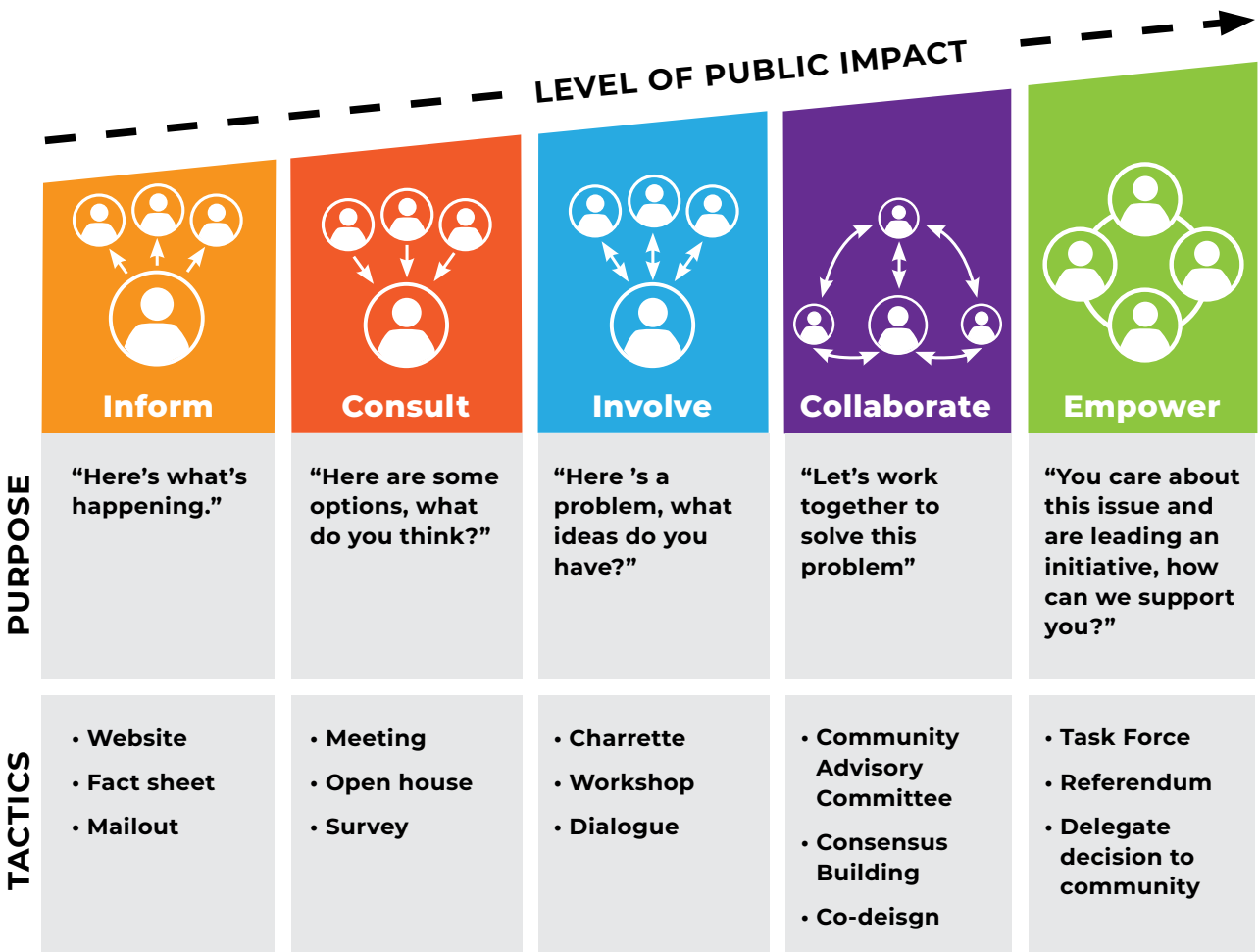


1.4 Engaging the Visitor Economy in litter reduction

The IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation is a tool based on the principle that all members of the community have a right, and a responsibility, to contribute to their community’s future. During the First Wave Program, the Spectrum was utilised to guide engagement with the Visitor Economy community. By taking this approach, the program aimed to establish ownership by the Visitor Economy Industry of the challenges and solutions around litter reduction. An outcome of the program is the implementation of litter management and prevention into policies and procedures at all levels.

To date, Take 3 has worked at the ‘involvement’ level with industry – actively working with tourism operators in NSW to ensure their concerns and ideas are reflected in the Visitor Economy Industry Litter Reduction Toolkit for NSW Tourism Operators. During Stage 2 of this Strategy, Ground Swell, Take 3 will target the ‘collaboration’ and ‘empowerment’ levels, where the Visitor Economy community takes the initiative in the ongoing problem-solving, delivery and monitoring of the Strategy.

Establishing a Visitor Economy Litter Prevention Steering Group and Visitor Economy Regional Workgroups (Task Force) in hotspot regions, will allow ongoing input into the process.



SOURCE: <https://www.iap2.org.au/resources/spectrum/>

1.5 Partners in Visitor Litter Reduction 2021

The Visitor Economy Industry has not previously featured as DPIE Litter Prevention Partners. The First Wave Program has provided the opportunity to develop relationships and collaborate from a sector and industry perspective. It has enabled conversation to start, and the integration of litter prevention into planning, managing and marketing visitation to NSW. Take 3 leads the project in collaboration with their partners NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, Parks Eco Pass Operators and Outdoors NSW & ACT.

TAKE 3

Take 3 believes in simple actions to address complex problems – through education

that inspires participation, they are building a global movement of people who are connected to the planet.

- 750,000 students educated by Take 3 school programs.
- 500,000 participants at Take 3 community events.
- 30 million pieces of rubbish removed from the environment.

Building on its brand and expertise in education around plastic and litter reduction, Take 3 collaborated with NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, Parks Eco Pass Operators and Outdoors NSW & ACT to create awareness and develop a shared vision for litter prevention in the tourism industry.







**NSW NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE SERVICE (NPWS)**

NPWS manages more than 9% of the land area in NSW. They are committed to conservation of the state's biodiversity and cultural heritage. They are a major player in the NSW tourism industry, licensing over 300 tour operators and delivering information, tours and accommodation in the 870 National Parks in NSW.



**NPWS PARKS ECO PASS OPERATORS (PEPS)**

Parks Eco Pass is the NSW NPWS program for licensing operators who conduct commercial tours and recreational and educational activities in NSW National Parks. The licenced businesses range from Aboriginal cultural tourism operators, seaplane tours and day tours, to horse riding, kayaking and surfing. Litter prevention is not currently featured in the Parks Eco Pass program even though it is an issue for NPWS.



**OUTDOORS NSW & ACT**

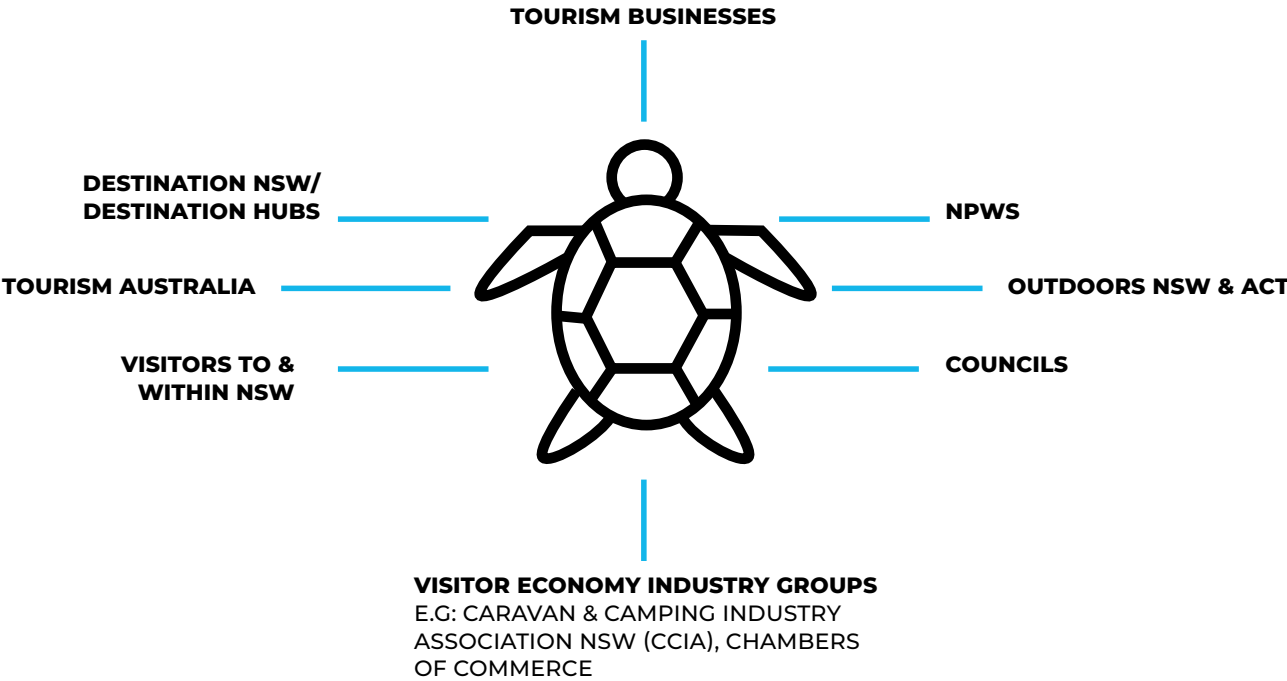
Outdoors NSW & ACT is the peak body representing the Outdoors Sector in NSW and the ACT. They are a member-based organisation that supports the people and organisations dedicated to facilitating outdoor experiences, including providers of outdoor recreation and education, nature therapy and adventure tourism. They promote greater participation in the outdoors and strongly advocate for adventure activity standards and safety.

By partnering with Take 3 for the Sea and participating in the First Wave Project, Outdoors NSW & ACT are able to focus on two of their organisational goals.

- To engage the outdoor community on key outdoor regulation and ‘user’ issues in order to improve the quality of their products and services and user experiences
- To unite the outdoor community so that it has a stronger voice on issues relevant to its users.

**GROWING THE ECOSYSTEM – GROUND SWELL PROGRAM STAKEHOLDERS**

Stakeholders who will be taking the strategy forward include:





## 2.0 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

### 2.1 Policies and Legislation

NSW has various legislative and policy drivers that set definable targets to prevent/reduce litter generated by tourism, amongst other sectors.

#### NSW Litter Prevention Strategy 2019–2022, December 2019

In 2015, the New South Wales Premier's Priority became a NSW Government commitment with a target to reduce litter by 40% by 2020 (based on volume and a 2013-14 baseline from the National Litter Index).

Litter volumes are inherently variable from year to year, so it is important to keep up the momentum to embed anti-litter behaviour for the long term. This means focusing on education and public awareness, keeping infrastructure well maintained, enforcing litter laws, and monitoring.

#### NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041 (DPIE 2021a)

Under the NSW Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2001, the NSW Government committed to refreshing and updating its waste strategy every five years – to review and continually improve the state's policies and targets for waste reduction and landfill diversion. The 40% reduction target set in 2015 was exceeded in 2020, with a 43% reduction achieved (DPIE 2021a).

The NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041: Stage 1 – 2021–2027, updates the previous Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy 2014–2021. Under this new

strategy, NSW has adopted several targets, including:

- Phase out problematic and unnecessary plastics by 2025,
- Reduce plastic litter items by 30% by 2025, and
- Reduce the overall litter by 60% by 2030.

#### Plastics Action Plan 2021 (DPIE 2021b)

The NSW Plastics Action Plan sets out the first six actions to achieve four long-term outcomes (Outcome 1: Reduce plastic waste generation; Outcome 2: Make the most of our plastic resources; Outcome 3: Reduce plastic leakage; Outcome 4: Improve our understanding of the future of plastics). These actions will:

1. Introduce new legislation to reduce harmful plastics
2. Accelerate the transition to better plastic products
3. Support innovation
4. Tackle cigarette butt litter
5. Reduce the risk of nurdles (small pellets used to manufacture plastic products) entering the environment
6. Support plastics research

The actions address each point in the life cycle of plastics. They not only deal with activities like recycling and litter prevention, but also focus new attention on the points of production and supply, stopping plastic waste before it becomes a problem. The actions outlined in this plan will help meet the targets outlined under the NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy: Stage 1 2021–2027.

#### NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) Regulation 2019 [NSW]; Part 2 Regulation of use of parks August 2019 (2019 No 408)

With regards to littering in National Parks, the NPWS legislation clearly identifies

- (1) A person must not —
- (a) deposit or leave any litter in a park except in an area or receptacle provided by the park authority for that purpose, or
  - (b) if no area or receptacle for litter is provided by the park authority—fail to remove from the park all litter taken into or created by the person in the park, or
  - (c) deposit or leave any waste in a park.

### 2.2 EPA's Own It and Act Framework

The EPA's Own It and Act Strategic Framework provides a foundation to improve two-way learning and shared litter prevention outcomes with key stakeholders across the state.

The framework is built on the four key enablers

- **Leadership**, e.g. become a leader in preventing litter
- **Commitment**, e.g. commit to minimising your waste
- **Permission**, e.g. empower others to take action
- **Processes**, e.g. understand the processes for developing long-term litter prevention strategies

The NSW EPA's vision is that the Framework will help develop new leaders in Litter Prevention and help the EPA to establish genuine partnerships with key stakeholders, working on an equal footing to reduce litter for the long term.

**Take 3 for the Sea** are a key stakeholder in the NSW litter reduction space, well positioned to assist the Tourism Industry to battle the litter

issue in NSW. The Own It and Act Framework helped to identify Take 3's strong position as 'leaders' with a 'commitment' to reduce litter in NSW. The NSW Visitor Economy Industry Litter Prevention Strategy aims to both broaden and deepen strategic partnerships and work to ensure litter prevention strategies are understood, delivered and integrated within NSW tourism businesses. It will also identify common strengths and capacity building opportunities within the industry, allowing operators to Own It and Act on litter prevention.

### 2.3 Market Context – Evolving Trends and Market Conditions

Post COVID the Visitor Economy Industry anticipates the following market trends:

- A need for connection with nature, to explore NSW and the vast land and wide open spaces.
- A growing concern over climate change and environmental issues
- Increased visitor demand for eco-friendly, green and sustainable destinations.





## 3.0 VISION FOR LITTER PREVENTION IN THE NSW VISITOR ECONOMY TO 2030

The target of the NSW Visitor Economy Litter Prevention Strategy is to reduce 60% of litter generated by visitors in visitor hotspots by 2030. This complements statewide litter reduction targets of:

- Phase out problematic and unnecessary plastics by 2025,
- Reduce plastic litter items by 30% by 2025, and
- Reduce the overall litter by 60% by 2030.

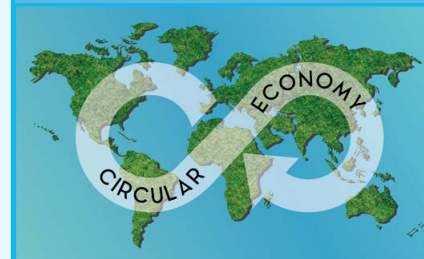
**The vision is for NSW to be the premier visitor destination state, leading by example – owning and acting on the Litter challenge.**

NSW is the leading Visitor Economy and has 107,115 Visitor Economy related businesses. If each of these businesses implemented litter prevention strategies it would have an immense impact. If 20 team members or visitors from each business simply picked up 3 pieces of litter there would be 2 million fewer plastic waste items that might become litter. If the same people stopped three of their plastic habits – takeaway coffee cups, plastic water bottles, plastic bags around vegetables – that would be 2 million fewer plastic waste items that might have also become litter. Some Visitor Economy businesses welcome thousands of domestic and international visitors per annum, and by working together to prevent litter in NSW and the Visitor Economy Industry we have the opportunity to create big impacts.

### AMBITION:



**Litter-free Visitor Destinations**



**Visitor Economy Industry transitions to Circular Economy**



**Visitor Economy Industry takes "Ownership and Action" on litter prevention**

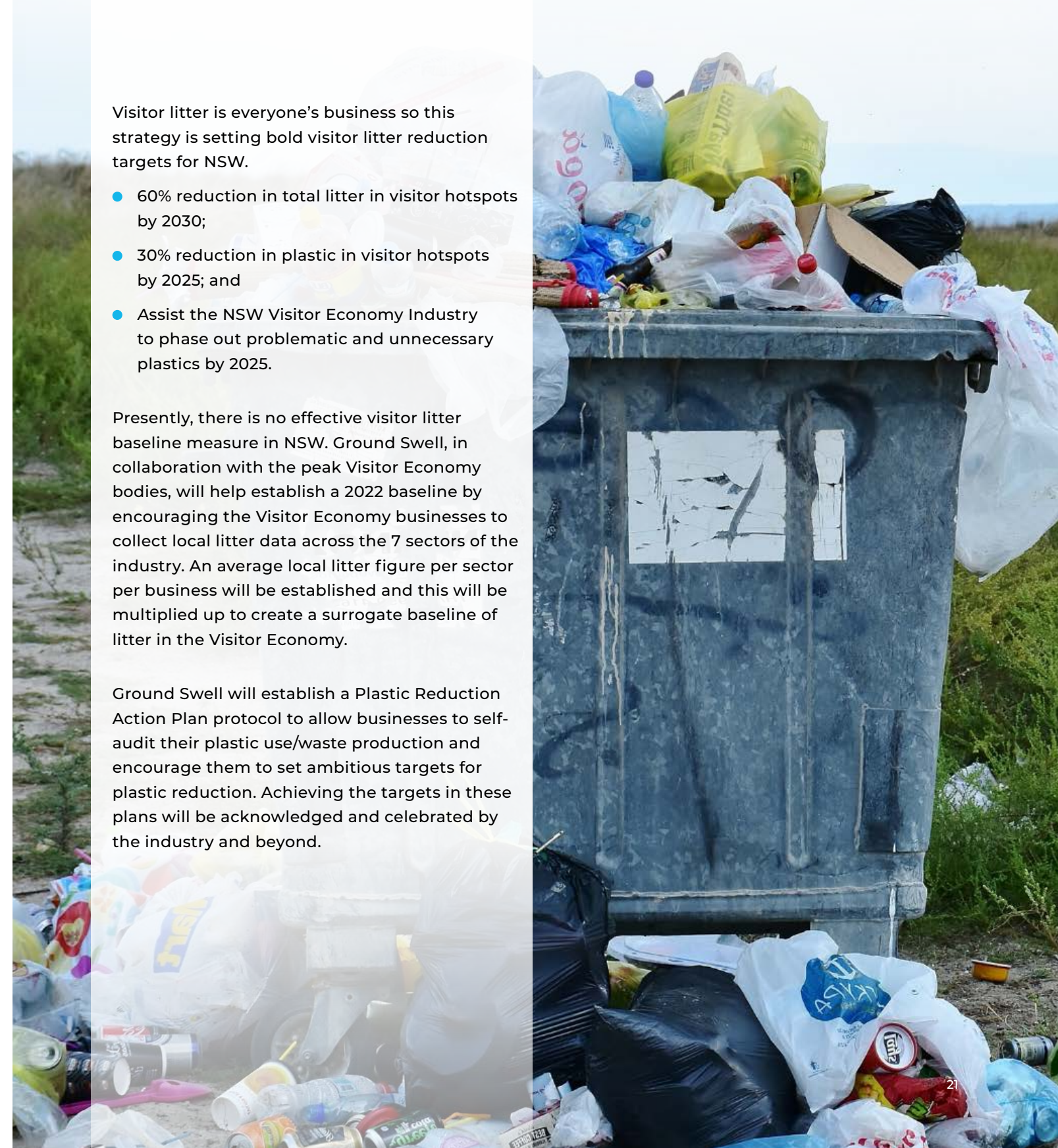
## 4.0 NSW VISITOR LITTER REDUCTION TARGETS

Visitor litter is everyone's business so this strategy is setting bold visitor litter reduction targets for NSW.

- 60% reduction in total litter in visitor hotspots by 2030;
- 30% reduction in plastic in visitor hotspots by 2025; and
- Assist the NSW Visitor Economy Industry to phase out problematic and unnecessary plastics by 2025.

Presently, there is no effective visitor litter baseline measure in NSW. Ground Swell, in collaboration with the peak Visitor Economy bodies, will help establish a 2022 baseline by encouraging the Visitor Economy businesses to collect local litter data across the 7 sectors of the industry. An average local litter figure per sector per business will be established and this will be multiplied up to create a surrogate baseline of litter in the Visitor Economy.

Ground Swell will establish a Plastic Reduction Action Plan protocol to allow businesses to self-audit their plastic use/waste production and encourage them to set ambitious targets for plastic reduction. Achieving the targets in these plans will be acknowledged and celebrated by the industry and beyond.





## 5.0 STRATEGIC PILLARS – 6 KEY FACTORS FOR LITTER PREVENTION

### 5.1 NSW EPA's Litter Prevention Framework

People litter for many reasons, so there are many different ways to influence their behavior in order to reduce litter. NSW EPA recommends that a combination of approaches are more effective in reducing litter than just one approach.

These are the six key factors NSW EPA identified that influence littering behaviour:

During the First Wave workshops, Visitor Economy businesses were introduced to the 6 key factors for litter prevention and were canvassed for their opinions on what approaches they believed would be the most effective in reducing visitor litter in their areas of operation.



## 1. CLEANLINESS

Keep bins and the surrounding area clean and free of litter, graffiti and vandalism.

WHAT THE VISITOR ECONOMY INDUSTRY (PILOT GROUP) SAID:

### PEER PRESSURE

- In the Blue Mountains, locals take care and collect litter themselves, others see them do it and do the same.
- Visitors often call out other participants in the group when littering, self regulating if you set the scene effectively for litter prevention.

### LEAD BY EXAMPLE

- Use social media – encourage visitors to collect litter, take a picture and share online to encourage others to do the same. Lead by example so start by doing it yourself.

### COLLABORATE

- Always try to be supportive of others' efforts, even if they appear to be 'greenwashing'. Bring them along with you, don't alienate them.

### WHAT THE VISITOR ECONOMY INDUSTRY NEEDS TO DO:

- ⇒ Encourage the industry to lead by example and collect litter when they see it.
- ⇒ Encourage operators to complete a Local Litter Check (LLC) in their main area of operation.
- ⇒ Adopt a strategic approach to litter prevention and cleanliness.
- ⇒ Does your business have a strategic position and/or policy on litter? Encourage businesses to be strong and proactive on litter and embed litter prevention in their business framework.



## 2. INFRASTRUCTURE

Provide bins in the places people litter the most, along with easy-to-understand signage.

WHAT THE VISITOR ECONOMY INDUSTRY (PILOT GROUP) SAID:

### BINS

- Provide more bins in high traffic areas such as around BBQs or recreation spaces, and don't worry so much about the low traffic areas.
- Need more bins (rubbish compounds) at access points.
- Need to be emptied more frequently particularly over long weekends and holidays.

### SIGNAGE

- Signage has really made a big difference – recycling signs made a massive impact and created change.
- Signs are great – however there is a problem if there are too many, have mixed messaging or are not clear enough. Signage messages should be concise, easy to read and positive.

- It's great when signage is motivational, pictures help ensuring the message is received correctly.
- Why not include photos of animals entangled in litter – provides an immediate, emotive message, and cuts through language barriers.

### WHAT THE VISITOR ECONOMY INDUSTRY NEEDS TO DO:

- ⇒ Encourage operators to conduct Local Litter Checks to justify the need for improved infrastructure.
- ⇒ Collaborate and work with landowners to identify opportunities for bin strategies and effective signage in areas of operation or litter hotspots.
- ⇒ Encourage businesses to think about signage they could implement: e.g. messaging near the door of the coach – so visitors see it every time they get on and off the bus. Or messaging on the backpack of the lead guide in a hiking business. Think outside the box on litter prevention strategies.



PLASTIC  
& GLASS



PAPER

## 3. EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

Tell people about the harm litter can do to the environment, and the cost of managing it.

WHAT THE VISITOR ECONOMY INDUSTRY (PILOT GROUP) SAID:

### TOP DOWN MESSAGING

- Message from the top down to raise awareness of the litter issue.
- We recently shifted social media policy to include storytelling about conservation, illegal dumping and raising awareness on litter and other issues.
- It comes down to raising awareness and having continual communication around outcomes of rubbish vs complacency.

### GUEST INDUCTION

- Our team talk through litter reduction when we welcome guests.
- Be sure to include litter prevention in your staff training so they can use storytelling about the issues in their commentary.
- We include litter prevention messaging, our litter expectations and requirements with our terms and conditions email to guests upon booking. We find it works when you state your expectations up front.

### CREATIVE IDEAS

- Monetize beach clean ups – each item collected earns 10c in 'shark dollars' to spend at Shark Encounters. Top prize = release turtle.
- Provide bio-degradable bags when visitors buy snack packs so they can bring the rubbish back in them.



### WHAT THE VISITOR ECONOMY INDUSTRY NEEDS TO DO:

- ⇒ Review Litter Reduction Toolkit for NSW Tourism Operators and continue to update it over time.
- ⇒ Establish an industry-wide campaign using a positive call to action/ messaging supported by partners.
- ⇒ Target international visitors (when they return) with litter reduction messages in their native language and/or using images to convey the message.
- ⇒ Engage with visitors on the topic of litter reduction with improved signage, infrastructure and one-on-one communication.
- ⇒ Manage sites and visitor audiences to particular locations to minimise litter impact.
- ⇒ Leverage networks to create awareness of the litter issue and the impact it can have on pristine world class visitor destinations.
- ⇒ Encourage Visitor Economy Industry businesses to 'Reward Responsible Behaviour'.



## 4. ENFORCEMENT

It's against the law to litter, so reporting litter and litterers is the right thing to do.

WHAT THE VISITOR ECONOMY INDUSTRY (PILOT GROUP) SAID:

### DETERRENCE

- “The presence of a ‘ranger’ has a good effect on littering rates; the ranger doesn’t have to do anything, their presence encourages people to behave.”
- “Signs reading ‘Under Surveillance’ can be effective, even if the area is not actually being surveilled.”
- “Councils can’t do all the surveillance. Need to think about the role industry plays in enforcement, holding everyone accountable, maybe with a code of conduct and training for staff.”

### ENFORCEMENT

- “On private property you have the power to enforce more rules, e.g. security guard, 10 or more guests need an environmental bond (allowing the land manager to remove money from the visitor's bond if the visitor leaves litter).”

### WHAT THE VISITOR ECONOMY INDUSTRY NEEDS TO DO:

- ⇒ Assist the Visitor Economy businesses to identify the appropriate avenues to enforce litter regulation with the land owners of the property where they conduct their operations.
- ⇒ Encourage business to work with land owners to take action and enforce regulations around littering behaviour.
- ⇒ Utilise the EPA mobile app, web app or litter hotline to report littering and illegal dumping.

THIS AREA IS UNDER  
24 HOUR  
VIDEO

## 5. INVOLVEMENT

Different groups, such as local businesses or community groups, who work together to prevent littering can send a powerful message that your local area is important and valued.

WHAT THE VISITOR ECONOMY INDUSTRY (PILOT GROUP) SAID:

### BUSINESS COLLABORATION

- “Encourage businesses to become more ‘eco’, and even get eco-certified themselves.”
- “Build community pride in an area, engage with local stakeholders – inspire local businesses via your local chamber of commerce to arrange community cleanups and work together on litter prevention.”
- “Both landowners & stakeholders should have conversations and be on the litter prevention journey in collaboration.”
- “In some locations, companies will come to your site and collect bottles and cans to take to Return and Earn and pay 5c per item. This saves the business the hassle of delivering them.”

### COSTS

- “Operators in National Parks have challenges with where to store rubbish to be collected without incurring costs. Illegal dumping in national parks is also a problem. Solution could be to actively discourage visitors from bringing waste in the first place.”
- “Managing waste was one of the biggest costs for operators. Cost could be a possible barrier to getting more compliance from operators – need visitors to reduce the waste they bring or a way to subsidise operators for waste removal.”



### WHAT THE VISITOR ECONOMY INDUSTRY NEEDS TO DO:

- ⇒ Build collaborative partnerships to work on litter prevention in cities and regions.
- ⇒ Assess opportunities to partner with other organisations to progress litter prevention accreditation/awards (e.g. EcoTourism Australia, Business NSW).
- ⇒ Encourage businesses to have a position and policy on litter and litter prevention.
- ⇒ Empower the industry to be ambassadors for litter prevention.
- ⇒ Formalise regional litter prevention steering committees (e.g. the Sutherland Shire).
- ⇒ Celebrate industry successes in litter prevention initiatives.



## 6. SOURCE REDUCTION

Look for opportunities to avoid creating litter and reduce litter at its source.

Source Reduction has been recently added to EPA's Litter Prevention Framework and as such was not part of the initial consultation with Visitor Economy businesses. However, Source Reduction is a major part of Take 3's core work.

### THE NSW PLASTICS PLAN

On 16 Nov 2021, The NSW Department of Planning & Environment (DPE) passed the Plastic Reduction and Circular Economy Act 2021. This legislation delivers on the government's commitment to ban certain problematic plastics, such as single-use plastics and address the problem of plastic waste.

### HOW TO TACKLE SOURCE REDUCTION IN THE VISITOR ECONOMY INDUSTRY:

- ➡ Build an understanding and commitment within the Visitor Economy Industry of the need for waste and plastic avoidance and introduce the sector to the concept of a Circular Economy and their part within it.
- ➡ Encourage the Visitor Economy Industry businesses to conduct an audit of their waste, with a particular focus on the plastic waste that their business generates.
- ➡ Work with businesses to identify what parts of their waste stream can be avoided or better processed.
- ➡ Encourage businesses to identify opportunities to avoid waste generation or make sustainable substitutions.

Input from over 16,000 people helped develop this legislation and the related NSW Plastics Action Plan. Support for action on plastic waste was widespread with 98% supporting a phase out of single-use plastics.

This legislation provides a comprehensive framework that will help transition NSW towards a circular economy where materials and resources are valued and kept in the productive economy while creating jobs and protecting the environment and the community.

The proposed actions will allow NSW to become a leader in managing plastics; eliminating harmful plastics, cleaning up plastic pollution and using our knowledge to get the most value out of our plastic resources.

### PREPARING FOR THE NSW PLASTICS BAN

In the lead up to 1 June 2022, the NSW Department of Planning & Environment (DPE) will be promoting the ban of single use plastics, educating consumers as to which plastic items are banned or not and from when, to aid the transition away from society's reliance on the following single use items:

#### From 1 June

- Lightweight shopping bags

#### From 1 November

- Single use plastic straws\*, stirrers and cutlery  
\*exemptions apply for providing a plastic straw for people with a disability or medical need.
- Single use plastic plates and bowls
- Expanded polystyrene foodware

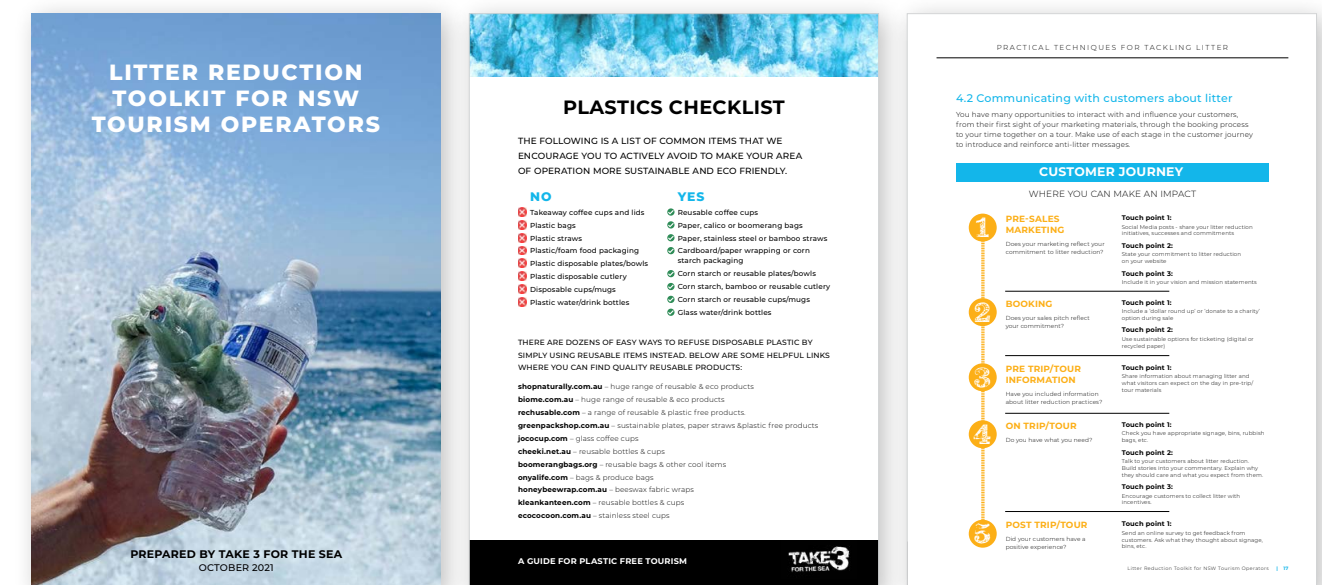
To help businesses prepare in advance, the DPE has created useful information, planning suggestions and additional resources such as downloadable counter signage, flyers and posters.

For more information, see The NSW Department of Planning & Environment website.

[dpie.nsw.gov.au/plastics-ban](https://dpie.nsw.gov.au/plastics-ban)

## 6.0 FOCUS ON OUTCOMES – TOOLS, MONITORING & EVALUATION

### 6.1 Litter reduction toolkit for the Visitor Economy Industry



Take 3 has prepared a Toolkit that will be distributed to Visitor Economy businesses in NSW. The Toolkit supports businesses as they take steps to reduce litter in their areas of operation. It will equip them with the language, tools and resources to contribute to a reduction in plastic and waste pollution in the sensitive natural areas of New South Wales in which they operate.

The Toolkit includes:

- A background to litter reduction, structured around the 6 factors of the NSW EPA litter prevention strategy.
- Advice on conducting local litter checks.

- Suggestions for ways that tourism operators can reduce their own litter, communicate with customers about litter, engage with local stakeholders, and report litter.
- Anti-litter campaign ideas.
- Case studies.
- Ways that operators can share their ideas, initiatives and successes with others.

In its first iteration the Toolkit will be a downloadable PDF but in 2023 the content will be migrated to a dedicated section of the Take 3 website. This will enable Take 3 to easily add to and update the content over time, ensuring the material remains accurate and relevant.



6.2 Monitoring

6.2.1 LOCAL LITTER CHECKS

Litter manifests differently everywhere it appears – no single approach works for every location or every community.

A Local Litter Check (LLC) can help people understand the extent and maybe the causes of the problem in their local area, and enables them to formulate their own litter prevention plan. Furthermore LLCs can measure outcomes, helping people understand what worked, what didn't work and why. Research tells us that locations don't stay clean by accident and that locals know what works in their community so an LLC can be invaluable as:

- An evidence-based planning tool .
- An evidence-based communication tool.
- An evaluation tool.

NSW EPA provides [Local Litter Check Guidelines](#) and provides an easy-to-use website which walks you through the steps in conducting an LLC.

Visitor Economy Industry businesses will be encouraged to adopt their own hotspot monitoring sites, undertake LLCs and use the resources available from Take 3's Litter Prevention Toolkit to monitor progress of their litter prevention strategies.

6.3 Monitoring and Evaluation of the NSW Visitor Economy Litter Prevention Strategy

This strategy is a blueprint for action, but implementation is dependent on the key players committing to litter prevention, allocating resources and taking action.

Monitoring and evaluation are critical tools in determining the success of this strategy.

A Visitor Economy Litter Prevention Steering Group has been established and will meet quarterly. They have reviewed the NSW Visitor Economy Litter Prevention Strategy, and have been tasked with assisting in distributing and promoting the strategy, encouraging litter prevention initiatives within the industry and reviewing outcomes and impacts resulting from implementation.



6.4 Evaluation – Ground Swell 2022

The Ground Swell Program will bring together new partners at a federal, state and sector level to inspire ownership of the litter issue and challenge the tourism industry to reduce litter and waste in visitor hotspots by 60%. 150 tourism businesses will be invited to participate in the program, develop action plans to address litter and waste, and activate the #TAKE3FORNSW campaign. The program will also see the Toolkit and resources developed during the First Wave Project distributed and utilised by the broader NSW Visitor Economy Industry.

Measures for the Ground Swell Program will include;

- Number of businesses registered for the program.
- Number of businesses completing the Ground Swell – Tourism Business Survey.
- Number of businesses using the Toolkit.
- Number of strategies implemented.
- Amount of litter removed – number of items and volume.
- Plastic reduction by the Visitor Economy Industry.
- Storytelling – #TAKE3FORNSW Campaign – social media metrics (likes and shares)
- Media and marketing exposure created by the program.
- LLC checks by operators and establishment of an industry baseline measure.
- Number of Visitor Economy Industry sector and business success stories about litter prevention (behaviour change).

6.5 Key findings and success stories from industry pilot group

During the First Wave Project over 80 Visitor Economy businesses were surveyed or attended focus group workshops to discuss litter and litter prevention. Here are some highlights from their learning:

***“What is wonderful to hear is that there is so much going on in Australia to minimise our impact on the land – it’s stressful knowing our work is dependent on the environment being healthy and unlittered”***

***“So many new ideas in thinking about plastics and litter! I’m more motivated to spread the message of reducing litter and promote litter reduction in my own business and on social media.”***

***“My key learning was the EPA’s six step litter reduction. I will use this information when looking at projects and how we can support businesses in reducing litter.”***

***“I’m going to look at how we can incorporate litter prevention messaging into our comms channels and policy.”***





## 6.6 Case studies

### NEW LITTER REDUCTION INITIATIVE FROM THE FIRST WAVE PILOT PROJECT – GLENWORTH VALLEY OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

Glenworth Valley Outdoor Adventures saw a large increase in litter left within their campgrounds over peak weekend periods – bottles and cans were the most prominent litter item. After attending the workshop Glenworth Valley started using the EPA key litter prevention factors as a framework to collectively identify solutions to their litter issues. Glenworth Valley has now implemented additional infrastructure to collect glass/plastic bottles and aluminum cans. Recycling bins have been placed around the campgrounds with additional signage informing customers that they now recycle these items separately. They have also placed this information in their camping check-in guidelines, letting customers know what the expectations are around litter. In the early stages they've seen a great response from campers who are willing to place their bottles and cans in the appropriate bins. There has been a visible decrease in the amount of glass bottles left within the campground at the end of a busy weekend period.



### EXAMPLE OF A SUCCESSFUL LITTER PREVENTION INITIATIVE: IRUKANDJI SHARK & RAY ENCOUNTERS

Irukandji is a unique, interactive aquarium that allows visitors to experience ocean life in a new and exciting way. This year for World Oceans Day, Irukandji came up with an initiative to support the Sea Shelter clean up the local beaches and help spread the World's Ocean Day 2021 30x30 message (protect 30% of the by 2030). Irukandji re-created the RETURN (rubbish from the beach) & EARN (shark bucks), whereby participants signed up to their event, collected a bag and gloves and picked up as much rubbish as they could. Irukandji gave away shark bucks for every piece of litter collected to be used for any activity at Irukandji Shark & Ray Encounters. The person who collected the most litter also won the opportunity to be a VIP the next time a turtle is ready to be released back to the wild.

#### OUTCOMES FOR THIS INITIATIVE:

- Participants collected litter from around the Port Stephens region helping keep the area litter free.
- Educated participants on the importance of reducing single use plastic and the effects it can have on wildlife and the ecosystem.
- Instilling a sense of pride in the local Port Stephens community– the community cares about its environment and wants it to be litter free.
- Participants spend their shark bucks at Irukandji and more than likely purchase other items/experiences as well.
- Educated the public on how to count rubbish and recorded it in the Tangaroa Blue database to help create as many scientist citizens as possible.
- Able to compare litter from a number of beaches simultaneously, very interesting to see the different types from different areas.
- Spread awareness about Sea Shelter and the important animal rescue rehabilitation and release they do.

# 7.0 OPTIMISM FOR THE FUTURE

## 7.1 Looking to the future

Ground Swell (Phase 2) of the project will position the Visitor Economy Industry of NSW as leaders in litter prevention. To ensure NSW continues to deliver pristine natural, litter free and world class visitor destinations.

### WORK WITH KEY TOURISM BODIES TO ENGAGE INDUSTRY

The aim is to work with peak Visitor Economy Industry bodies to create awareness, engage the industry to own it and act, developing and initiating actions within their sectors, integrating litter prevention strategy in their operations and celebrating achievements. A large number of organisations within the Visitor Economy Industry do not have a position or policy on litter prevention. Considering the industry relies on delivering pristine and beautiful world class visitor destinations, it provides a great opportunity to act.

Discussions with operators, during the First Wave Program identified that front line operators believe there is a litter issue in the Visitor Economy Industry and are committed to taking action to reduce it. They would appreciate assistance in tackling the problem, in particular, help communicating with customers, such as talking points and social media templates and case studies showing how similar businesses have addressed the problem.

To deliver on the target of reducing litter generated by the Visitor Economy in visitor hotspots by 60% by 2030, Take 3 aims to partner with the following key industry bodies to inspire and engage the Visitor Economy Industry to 'Own it and Act'.

Partners of choice for the project are Destination NSW, Tourism Australia, Caravan & Camping Industry Association (CCIA), NSW NPWS, Parks Eco Pass Operators, Outdoors NSW & ACT.

A Steering Group has been initiated with members from the Industry including: Destination NSW, CCIA NSW, NSW NPWS Parks Eco Pass operators, Outdoors NSW & ACT, the Walshe Group and AAT Kings. The Walshe Group and AAT Kings attended the last First Wave focus group in October, 2021 and their enthusiasm and commitment to litter reduction in the NSW Visitor Economy Industry inspired them to join us on the Steering Group and participate in the Ground Swell program.

The Steering Committee will meet quarterly and has been tasked with reviewing and approving the NSW Visitor Economy Litter Prevention Strategy and Toolkit, as well as monitoring implementation and outcomes.



## 7.2 Destination NSW

Destination NSW is the lead government agency for NSW tourism and major events sectors.. Their role is to market Sydney and NSW as one of the world's premier **tourism** and major **events** destinations; to secure major sporting and cultural events; to work in partnership with Business Events Sydney to win major international conventions and incentivise travel reward programs; to develop and deliver initiatives that will drive visitor growth throughout the State; and to achieve the NSW Government's goal of tripling expenditure within the State's Visitor Economy by 2030.

### WHAT WE REQUIRE FROM DESTINATION NSW

- In-kind support in the form of sharing the Visitor Economy Litter Prevention Strategy, Toolkit & Ground Swell Project opportunities with the NSW Visitor Economy Industry.
- In-kind support in sharing industry/project outcomes and success stories via newsletters, socials and media channels.
- In-kind support in the form of sharing initiatives outlined in the Media and communications project plan – for example – #TAKE3FORNSW Campaign.

## 7.3 Tourism Australia

Tourism Australia is the Australian Government agency responsible for attracting international visitors to Australia, both for leisure and business events. Their vision is to make Australia the most desirable and memorable destination on earth.

### WHAT WE REQUIRE FROM TOURISM AUSTRALIA

- In-kind support in sharing industry/project outcomes and success stories.
- Potential opportunity to showcase litter prevention via Tourism Australia initiatives.

## 7.4 Caravan & Camping Industry Association, CCIA (Sector Case Study)

CCIA represents the collective strength of over 700 businesses throughout NSW. They actively work for members to encourage and promote the caravan and camping lifestyle, and the benefits of manufactured home communities across government, businesses and consumers. To be effective and passionate at representing the Caravan, Camping and Manufactured Housing Industry in NSW, and seen as Indispensable to Members, the "go to" (key-contact) organisation for Government and, a valued source of information for Consumers.

### WHAT WE NEED FROM CCIA

- The opportunity to work with the caravan & camping sector to identify sector specific challenges and solutions litter prevention and develop a sector case study to showcase success stories.
- The possibility of showcasing litter prevention initiatives at the Caravan & Camping Holiday shows scheduled for 2022.
  - Caravan Camping Holiday Supershow – Sydney.
  - Newcastle Caravan & Camping Lifestyle Expo.
  - Illawarra Caravan Camping Lifestyle Expo.
  - Canberra Caravan Camping Lifestyle Expo.

- In-kind support in the form of sharing the Visitor Economy Litter Prevention Strategy and Toolkit with the Caravan & Camping Industry.
- In-kind support in sharing industry/project outcomes and success stories via newsletters, socials and media channels.
- In-kind support in the form of sharing initiatives outlined in the media and communications project plan – for example – #TAKE3FORNSW Campaign.

## 7.5 Visitor Economy Businesses

- Register online to participate in the Ground Swell Project which includes;
  - Awareness – Completing the Ground Swell Tourism Business Survey and attend the Inspiration and Information workshop online – dates are scheduled in April.
  - Own it and Act – Complete Business Action Plan for Litter Prevention – Identifying ways you will tackle litter prevention and report your outcomes at the end of the project in October.
  - Utilise the resources from Take 3's Litter Prevention Toolkit to monitor progress of your litter prevention impact by undertaking Local Litter Checks ( LLC) in your area of operation.
  - Share your findings with Take 3 to help develop a baseline for measuring visitor litter in NSW.
  - Share your litter prevention success stories via the #TAKE3FORNSW campaign.
  - Celebrate by attending the online Success Workshop at the conclusion of the project to share your success stories, impacts and outcomes.

## 7.6 Ongoing Partners

We aim to continue to work with our First Wave Partners during the Ground Swell Phase of the project.

### NSW NPWS & ECO PASS OPERATORS

- Encourage Parks Eco Pass operators to register for the Ground Swell Project.
- Implement litter prevention policy into the Parks Eco Pass Licence requirements.
- Measure the impact of strategies implemented by participating businesses.
- Celebrate and showcase the success of Parks Eco Pass operators Litter Prevention initiatives.

### OUTDOORS NSW & ACT

- Encourage Outdoors NSW & ACT operators to register for the Ground Swell Project.
- Implement litter prevention policy into Outdoors NSW & ACT policy.
- Measure the impact of strategies implemented by participating businesses.
- Celebrate and showcase the success of operators' Litter Prevention initiatives.



INCENTIVISE

To thank partners for participating in the project and encourage them to submit LLC and other monitoring/evaluation results, Take 3 will provide a complimentary Official Supporter Package to all participating Visitor Economy businesses in NSW for the duration of the Ground Swell Program. Official Supporters of Take 3 receive:

- Access to Take 3's suite of Official Logos.
- Access to a suite of Take 3 images and videos.
- Feature on Take3.org as an Official Supporter.
- Permission to publicly communicate Official Supporter status to your stakeholders and community for the full term of the agreement which is 12 months.

The retail value of this Official Supporter package is \$5,000.

# APPENDIX 1: DELIVERING ON THE STRATEGY

## STRATEGY ACTION PLAN

NO	STRATEGIES & ACTIONS	LEAD	SUPPORT PARTNERS	TIMING
1. AWARENESS				
1.1	Secure industry partners.	Take 3	Provide letter of support.	October 2021
1.2	Establish, Visitor Economy Litter Prevention Steering Group to meet quarterly. Tasked with reviewing the NSW Visitor Economy Litter Prevention Strategy, encouraging litter prevention initiatives and reviewing outcomes and impacts resulting from implementation.	Take 3	<b>GOV'T REPRESENTATION</b> Destination NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) Tourism Australia <b>INDUSTRY</b> Caravan & Camping Industry Association Ecotourism Australia Outdoors NSW +Business Representatives	February 2022
1.3	Create #TAKE3FORNSW Program – Litter Prevention Resources: Online Registration, Website content collateral, Ground Swell Tourism Business Survey, Digital Media, Business Action Plan.	Take 3 Project Manager	Project PR Team	February 2022
1.4	Marketing and Communications Plan implemented.	EPA & Take 3	Set the scene for launch of the strategy and Litter Prevention Steering Group.	February 2022
1.5	Launch #TAKE3FORNSW Program in conjunction with the launch of the strategy and Toolkit.	Take 3	All partners	March 2022
1.6	Launch the Visitor Economy Litter Prevention Strategy.	Take 3	All partners	March 2022
1.7	Create VEI Litter Baseline in conjunction with industry for future evaluation.	Take 3 Project Manager	#TAKE3FORNSW Program Participants	April – November 2022



NO	STRATEGIES & ACTIONS	LEAD	SUPPORT PARTNERS	TIMING
<b>2. OWN IT &amp; ACT</b>				
2.1	Visitor Economy businesses register for Ground Swell.	Take 3	All partners	March – May 2022
2.2	Work with industry to establish Regional Litter Prevention Groups.	Take 3 Project Manager	#TAKE3FORNSW Program Participants	2022
2.3	Marketing and Communications Plan implemented.	Take 3 Project Manager	#TAKE3FORNSW Program Participants	2022
2.4	Work with industry to assist Visitor Economy businesses to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete Take 3's Ground Swell Tourism Business Survey.</li> <li>• Incorporate a litter prevention position/policy for their business.</li> <li>• Identify litter issues and potential solutions in their area of operation.</li> <li>• Create Source Reduction Action Plans.</li> </ul>	Take 3 Project Manager	#TAKE3FORNSW Program Participants	2022
2.5	Visitor Economy businesses implement litter solutions with support of regional LPSC and land owners/managers	Take 3 Project Manager	#TAKE3FORNSW Program Participants	2022
2.6	Visitor Economy businesses identify hotspot in their area of operation and actively monitor litter loads using LLC.	Take 3 Project Manager	#TAKE3FORNSW Program Participants	2022

NO	STRATEGIES & ACTIONS	LEAD	SUPPORT PARTNERS	TIMING
<b>3. CELEBRATE (SHARE THE IMPACTS)</b>				
3.1	Celebrate and share Visitor Economy litter prevention initiatives on social media.	Take 3 & Business NSW	Visitor Economy Industry	2022
3.2	Share the Story – create an ongoing beautiful film narrative of success; case studies from each of the 7 sectors of the VE.	Take 3	Visitor Economy Industry	2022
3.3	Marketing and Communications Plan implemented.	Take 3	Visitor Economy Industry	2022
3.4	Identify and develop criteria for a Litter Prevention Award to be added to the 2022 NSW Tourism Awards run by Business NSW in October.	Take 3 & Business NSW	Conceptual idea – not floated with Business NSW yet.	October 2022





# APPENDIX 2: FIRST WAVE – NSW VISITOR ECONOMY PERSPECTIVES

## LITTER PERCEPTIONS FROM THE NSW TOURISM INDUSTRY

Litter impacts on the global tourism industry are apparent with even a cursory literature search, with articles from India to Africa and beyond proclaiming how ‘Litter Spoils Tourism’. Given litter as a recognised negative impact in terms of tourism, during the first half of 2021 the First Wave Program undertook three separate research projects in order to build up a robust understanding of the beliefs and perspectives of NSW tourism operators about litter in their sector. During this research phase, 74 Visitor Economy businesses from across NSW participated. The workshops were attended by 49 people, and we received 123 survey responses.

## 1. Survey results

Take 3, working with research partners ARTD and program partners NPWS and ONSWACT, developed a comprehensive survey designed to gather quantitative and qualitative data from tourism operators across NSW about litter and attitudes to litter in their areas of operation. The survey was distributed in April 2021 through the First Wave partner networks to over 200 tourism operators located in NSW. We received 123 responses (63 complete and 60 partial).

### WHO RESPONDED?

72% of responses were received from tour operators with the remainder businesses in the attractions and theme parks, information services, inbound tour operators and wholesalers, transportation and accommodation sectors.

## Litter is a Problem!

When asked to describe the extent of litter in their main area of operation, the vast majority of respondents stated that litter was always, often or sometimes present (83.8%) with only 16.2% stating litter was rarely present.

The most commonly reported **types of litter** were (in descending order): plastic bottles, food wrappers, plastic bags, packaging, cigarette butts, styrofoam, fishing gear, and straws.

Fig. 1 clearly demonstrates that the respondents consider the tourism industry to have a problem with litter. 84.1% replied in the affirmative with greater or lesser degrees of emphasis. Only 7.2% denied the existence of the problem (8.7% not sure).

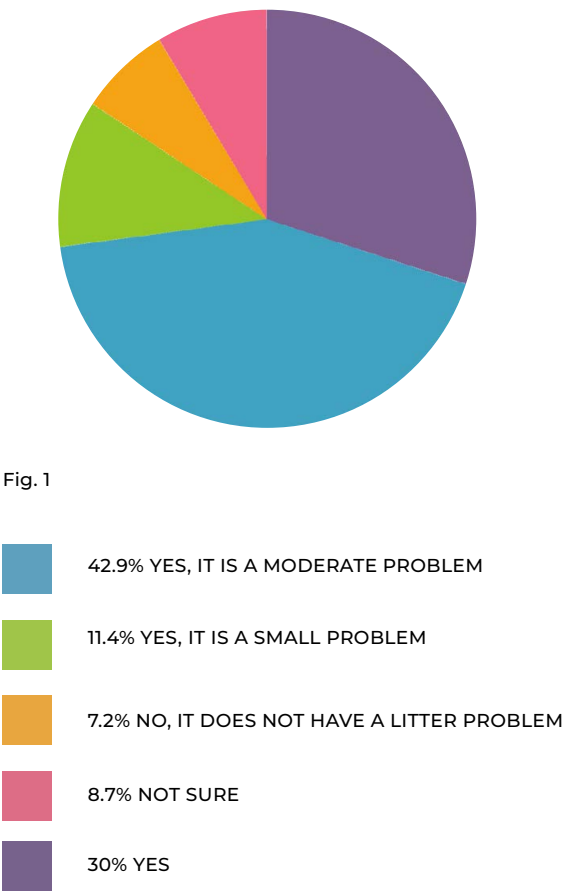


Fig. 1

## Peak Litter

There was little agreement about **where and when they considered the main litter problems to occur**. The majority (46.9%) thought it was a matter of timing, with most littering occurring during peak periods. About a third (31.3%) thought the location was more important than the timing, with more litter occurring in certain areas of operation regardless of timing. A small number (6.3%) believed that certain operators generated more litter than others.

Some individual comments focused more on the causes of littering than on the timing or location: **“It is not to do with areas etc, more to do with personal standards, some people do not care about littering.” “All of the above to some degree however the general public is the major contributor.”**

Overwhelmingly, the operators surveyed thought that the people who generated the rubbish should be **held responsible** for collecting their own litter (92%), with much smaller numbers thinking either the tourism operators themselves (65%), NPWS (44%) or the council (42%) were responsible.

Other operators correlated a decrease in litter with a decline in visitor numbers:

**“With less visitation, there was less litter.”**

**“Less people. Perhaps a decrease in overseas visitors.”**

Interestingly, one operator commented on an increase in people cleaning up litter **“A period of reduced usage with lots of people going out and cleaning up as part of their “get outside” routine.”**





Why Litter?

When asked why they think people litter, no consensus was reached. The operators ascribe littering to a variety of causes as shown in Fig. 2:

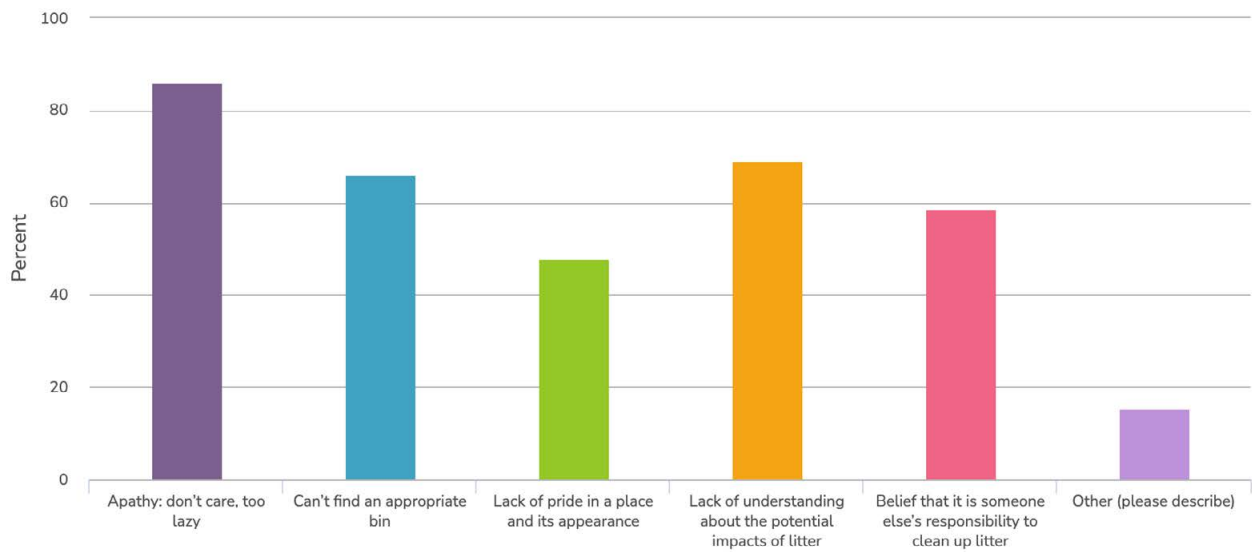


Fig. 2 Reasons people litter

In addition to the opinions shown in Fig. 2, one respondent commented: **“Lack of education around the problem. Time for a new litterbug campaign.”**



Litter Reduction

When asked what challenges tourism operators face around reducing litter, there was a range of answers. The most popular responses were lack of infrastructure (68.3%), inadequate education (43.7%) and the logistics of rubbish disposal in remote areas (41.7%). See Fig. 3.

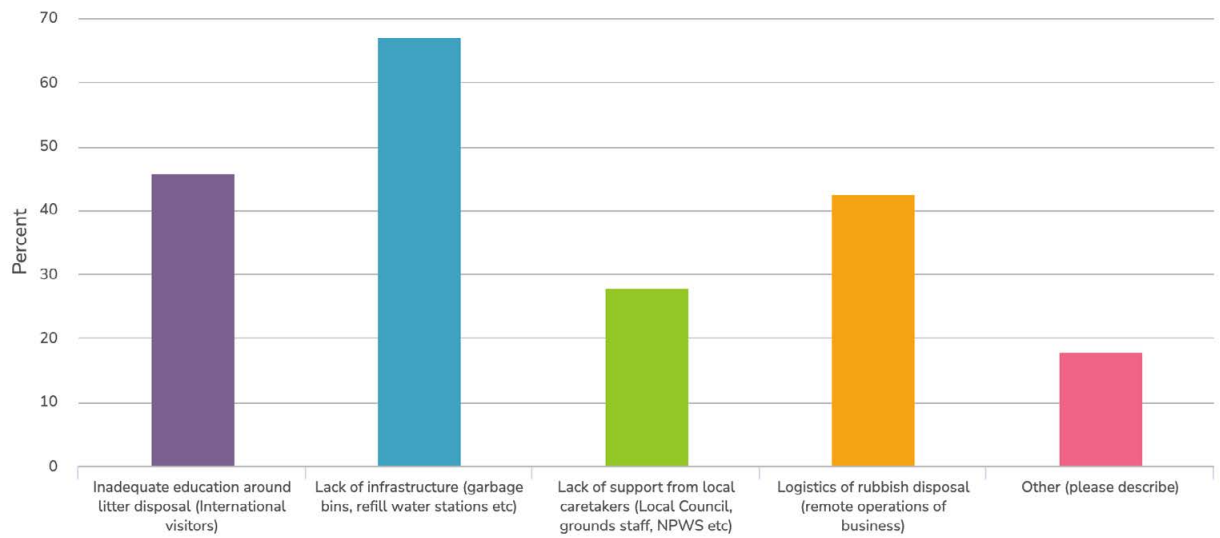


Fig. 3.

It was encouraging to learn that 86.2% of respondents already discuss litter prevention and reduction with their customers, and this responsible attitude was widely reflected in the comments on this question:

**“We explain our Eco Tourism accreditation and our “Take-in, Take-out” policy”**

**“We try to educate people as much as possible on how litter affects the local wildlife.”**

**“I make my customers pick up everyone’s litter, by always bringing garbage bags with me to assist them. Most people are very willing to help me when I explain the importance of it.”**



## 2. Workshops & Focus Groups

Workshops and focus groups were determined to be the best and most effective feedback loops to garner information from NSW tourism operators on the key litter issues, items, behaviours and sources of litter in their sector.

Take 3 had planned to undertake these workshops in-person with tourism operators in three tourism hotspots: Royal National Park, Blue Mountains National Park and Port Stephens. These had two main objectives: to educate operators about the extent and likely sources of litter in their areas of operation, and to gather qualitative data from the operators about their beliefs and attitudes about litter and their suggestions for reducing litter. We conducted one in-person workshop before COVID-19 restrictions were imposed so the remaining workshops were converted to online focus groups. During this stage of the research, we interacted with a total of 49 tourism operators.

## 3. Local Litter Checks (LLC)

In order to collect metrics for the First Wave Program, it was proposed to collect baseline data from three initial Local Litter Checks (LLCs) in three hotspot locations:

- Royal National Park.
- Blue Mountains National Park.
- Port Stephens region.

However, the ongoing COVID-19 lockdown measures meant that only one LLC was undertaken, at Royal National Park during this Program.

Currawong Flat Picnic Area and Ironbark Picnic area were the two sites selected within the Audley Recreation Precinct in Royal National Park. This is a high traffic area with public facilities including a Cafe and Visitor Centre (VC). This area constitutes approximately 3% of the Royal National Park yet it requires approximately 80% of the park's budget for the management of visitor services, cleaning, waste disposal, etc.

The results of the LLC indicated that the site closest to the Cafe and VC had the highest litter volume. As there were no bins at either site it was assumed that the site at Ironbark Flat would have a higher litter volume being further away, having no bins and being less in sight but this proved to be incorrect.

Despite the lack of a second LLC in the Royal National Park post litter reduction strategy implementation, the results of the initial LLC indicated significant litter reduction strategies. The lack of infrastructure at these sites is believed to be the main cause of litter. With adequate signage and more bins located immediately around the Cafe and VC (to be managed by the businesses themselves), the litter loads at this site could be improved.

## 4. The impact of COVID-19 on litter in the NSW tourism industry

It is clear from both the survey and the workshops that COVID-19 has had a discernible impact on litter in NSW tourism. However quantifying that impact is challenging because the impacts have varied across different factors.

As shown in Fig. 4, exactly half of respondents stated that the amount of litter in their area of operation had not changed since restrictions were imposed. But 23.2% thought the amount of litter had increased, while 17.4% thought it had decreased (10.3% not sure).

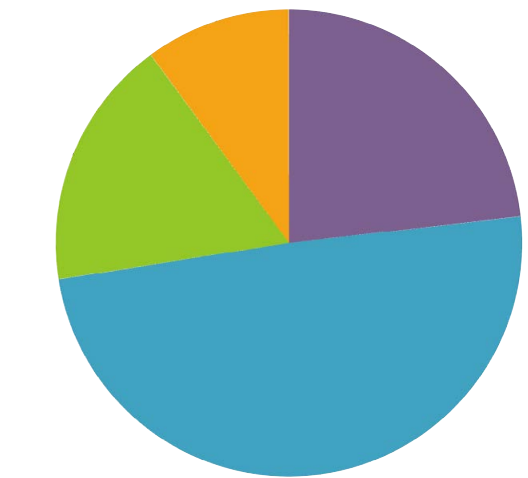
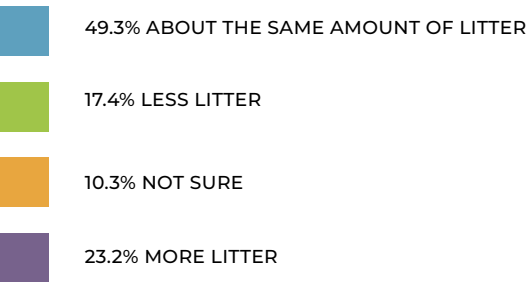


Fig. 4



The comments submitted help to explain these variations. Some respondents reported an increase in domestic visitors because they are unable to travel overseas. Furthermore, these 'new' visitors may not be well educated about litter avoidance:

***"More people are now visiting national parks due to travel restrictions and the inability to travel overseas. I'm guessing that a lot of these visitors are new to the outdoors and are unaware of/ignorant when it comes to leaving no trace."***

Conversely, one operator felt the domestic visitors needed less litter education: ***"I think the litter is less with the domestic market and I feel we don't have to educate them as much as the internationals."***

Other respondents reported a decline in visitors from overseas because of the international border closure and suggested international visitors typically generate more litter: ***"Less people. Perhaps a decrease in overseas visitors that may not care about our environment."***

One respondent suggested that a direct effect of COVID-19 was an increase in plastic litter: ***"More litter due to the increase of single use items due to covid. e.g. more plastic bottles, face masks, throw away items."***

Interestingly, one operator commented on an increase in visitors cleaning up litter: ***"A period of reduced usage with lots of people going out and cleaning up as part of their "get outside" routine."***

These changes in visitor demographics – an increase in domestic visitors in some locations and a decrease in international visitors in others – provide an opportunity to create targeted education programs for each group.



When international visitors return, it would be ideal to provide litter reduction education, using the visitors’ native languages. Other cultures have different attitudes to litter, and different laws around littering, so it behooves the NSW tourism industry to communicate the cultural norms and expectations around litter in Australia.

If domestic visitors continue to access parks and other tourist destinations in high numbers beyond the end of the pandemic, it would be wise to engage with them on the topic of litter reduction via improved signage and infrastructure and one-on-one communication.

5. Analysis and Conclusions

The following conclusions can be drawn from the findings of the survey and workshops.

**Operators believe there is a litter issue in the tourism industry and are committed to taking action to reduce it.** It is encouraging that there is such widespread awareness of, and willingness to tackle, the litter problem amongst operators within the Visitor Economy Industry.

**The litter problem varies in many dimensions.** Not only does the extent of the litter problem differ by location, with some locations being more impacted than others, but timing is also

a factor, with variations in littering seen between peak and off-peak periods. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the fact that visitor type has an impact on the litter problem. The influx of ‘new’ domestic visitors (e.g. those who are visiting a park for the first time), and the reduction in international visitors has shed light on the different litter profile of each group. Also operators reported generational differences in attitudes towards litter, with a sense that younger generations have a more responsible attitude than older generations.

These varied factors point towards a flexible approach to addressing the problem, with different litter reduction tactics being employed in different situations. **Producing targeted education programs** aimed at domestic and international visitors which employ **a combination of litter reduction approaches** will be more effective at reducing litter than a ‘one size fits all’ approach.

**Operators would appreciate assistance in tackling the problem.** In particular, they are requesting help with communicating with customers, such as talking points and social media templates, and case studies showing how similar businesses have addressed the problem.

**The Litter Reduction Toolkit for NSW Visitor Economy businesses is a living document and should continually evolve to include new resources, training and marketing material** for promoting litter prevention and waste reduction.

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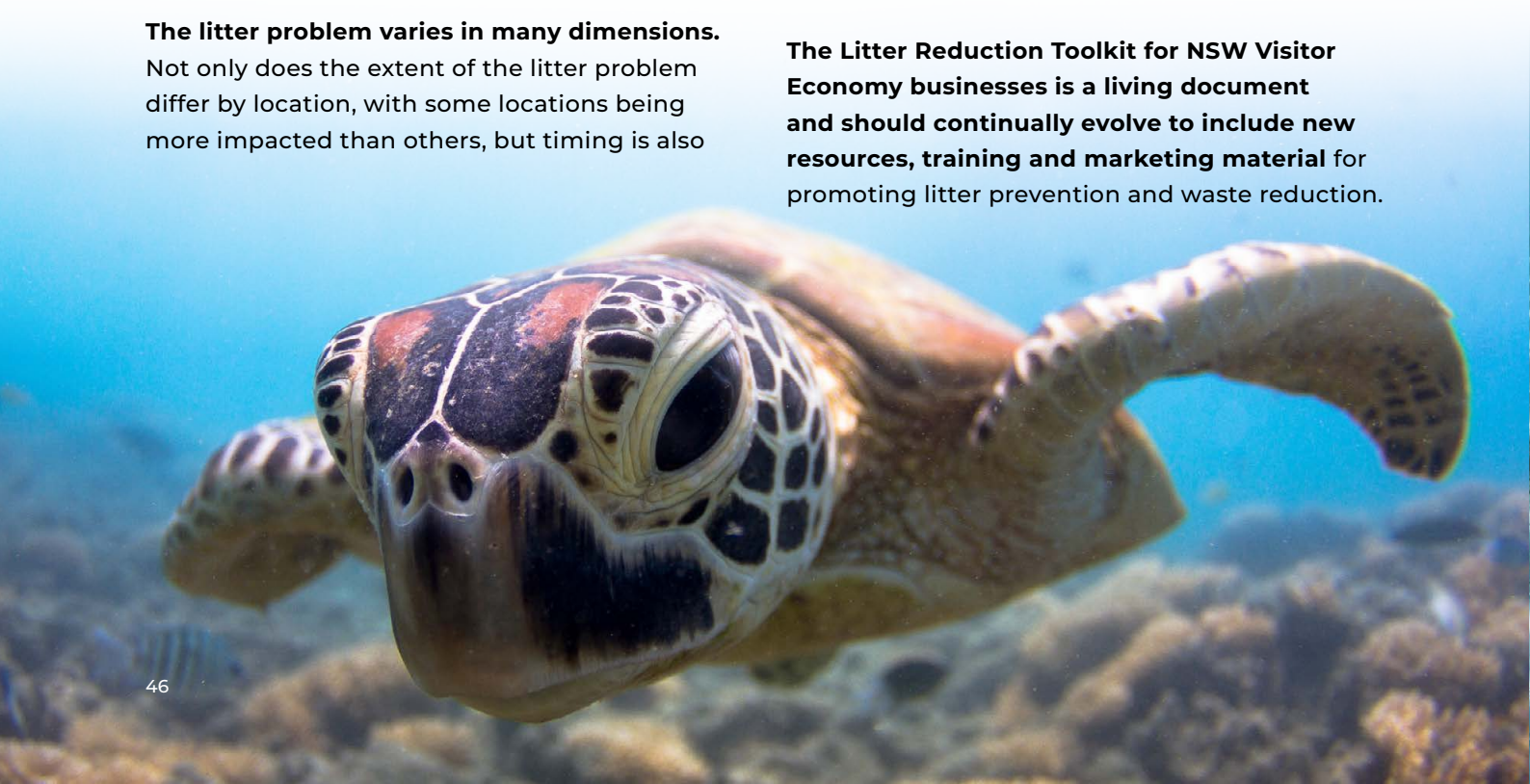
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## A big thank you to all businesses that participated in the First Wave Project

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