

## **Evaluation Report**

### **Seaweed 2019 – Evaluation**



**FINAL Report Prepared for NZAEE**

**June 2019**



## Contents

Background .....	4
Project Purpose.....	4
Survey Methodology .....	4
Methodology for Evaluation .....	5
Quantitative.....	6
Qualitative .....	6
Results of Participant Evaluation Survey .....	7
Appeal to a wide range of ages/different sectors/cultures within the community .....	7
Evidence of benefits from involvement in Seaweed .....	7
Evidence of ongoing action and benefits to communities .....	7
Question 1 Seaweed Event Attended .....	8
Question 3 Hands-on versus Passive Event.....	8
Question 4 Value of Event Attended .....	9
Question 5 Perceived Ability to Protect or Improve Marine Environment .....	10
Question 6 Species learned from Event Attended .....	11
Question 7 Habitats learned from Event Attended.....	12
Question 8 Issues affecting Habitats and Species .....	13
Question 9 New Skills learned from Event.....	14
Question 10 Actions taken at Event .....	15
Question 11 Actions taken after the Event .....	16
Question 12 What Age Bracket you belong to .....	16
Question 13 What Ethnicity you belong to .....	17
Question 14 How Participants Found Out about Seaweed.....	17
Results of Event Coordinator Evaluation Survey .....	18
Question 4 Target Audiences.....	18
Question 6 How Coordinators Promoted Seaweed .....	20
Question 7 Event Success .....	21
Question 8 New Partnerships.....	22
Results of Regional Coordinator Evaluation Survey .....	23
Question 7 How Coordinators Promoted Seaweed .....	23
Question 9 Event Success .....	23
Findings .....	24

Benefits from involvement.....24

## **Background**

The New Zealand Association for Environmental Education (NZAEE) is a national, non-profit organisation that promotes and supports lifelong learning and encourages behaviors that lead to sustainability for New Zealand/Aotearoa. NZAEE is an independent voice for environmental education, empowering people to respect and nurture the environment, recognising its link with the social, cultural and economic aspects of sustainability.

The Association's objectives are to provide a network and framework to promote environmental education initiatives in New Zealand/Aotearoa; to establish and strengthen environmental education networks nationally and internationally; to promote development of a national framework for environmental education; to promote and support related research and to encourage and promote environmental education training for formal and informal sectors.

One of the national initiatives led by the Association is Seaweed, New Zealand's key annual marine education and engagement event. Seaweed provides a vehicle for the NZAEE to meet its objectives through the delivery of social and community benefits and outcomes via programmes and their associated events. In order to achieve its goal and objectives the Association received a funding grant of \$35,000 for 2018-19 from Foundation North to support the coordination and delivery of Seaweed 2019 in Auckland and Northland.

## **Project Purpose**

This report will focus on the environmental, social and community benefits / outcomes of Seaweed, looking at the profile, scale, scope and impact of what has been achieved. It will include both quantitative and qualitative data.

The evaluation report will include:

- Summary of key findings
- Recommendations

## **Survey Methodology**

The research data was gathered via three questionnaires from Seaweed 2019

event participants and organisers as well as NZAEE Seaweed Regional Coordinators.

Seaweed event participant data was gathered from participants in the form of written responses relating to the type of event attended, how the event was heard about, learning outcomes, and current and future actions participants intend to take for the marine environment. Demographic information of event participants was also gathered. Participants were also asked to rate their ability to take action to help the marine environment.

Information was also gathered from event organisers and regional coordinators in the form of written responses relating to the target audiences, actions taken, outcomes of the events, and funding and sponsorship.

It should be noted that the evaluation presented only represents an evaluation of the data collected from specific participants, organisers and coordinators and is not an evaluation of Seaweed as a whole.

Evaluation results from Seaweed 2019 were received from a total of 79 of 250 registered events nationally with approximately 150,000 people participating in some form of Seaweed related activity.

## **Methodology for Evaluation**

Quantitative and qualitative methods have been used to evaluate the success of Seaweed 2019, delivered via various events throughout New Zealand. Specific goals identified for the project in relation to evaluation include identifying if the Seaweed programmes (or parts of it) are inspiring schools and communities in New Zealand to learn about and celebrate the sea. Specifically:

- Relationships built with key stakeholders and community organisations.
- Involve a wide range of ages/ different sectors of the community.
- Bi-cultural/multicultural involvement.
- Evidence of children and their teachers /families benefiting from being involved.
- Support on-going action and benefits to communities, beyond the week itself.

Meeting these goals will in turn contribute to meeting Seaweed Strategic Plan 2016-2020 Objectives to:

- Encourage and cultivate the lifelong pursuit of knowledge and understanding about New Zealand's marine environment.
- Foster informed public discussion of issues and impacts affecting the sea and encourage personal responsibility and action taking.
- Raise awareness of connections between land, sea and wellbeing.
- Promote opportunities to experience the marine environment.
- Provide a platform for collaboration and long-term engagement to

support marine stewardship and environmental action, taking action and ongoing engagement.

## Quantitative

Evaluation has involved analysing the Regional Coordinators', Event Organisers' and Participants' answers to evaluation forms following their participation in Seaweed 2019 events. Results relate to answers provided by 8 Regional Coordinators, 94 Participant survey respondents who attended 79 different events (out of 11,212 individuals recorded as participating in events in the Event Coordinator Evaluation Survey) and 79 Event Organisers who answered all or some of the evaluation questions. In contrast, 2015 results related to 171 Participant survey respondents and 36 Event Organisers.

Event Year	Participant Survey Respondents	Event Coordinator Survey Respondents	Regional Coordinator Survey Respondents
2015	171	36	-
2016	370	38	-
2017	503	45	10
2018	287	79	10
2019	94	79	8

Answers to each of the questions have been grouped into a number of categories and the frequency that each answer has been given has been summarised and compared. For example, in question 6 participant survey respondents were asked to discuss the types of species learned from the event. Answers have been categorised according to whether the fact learned is "generic" (e.g. "I saw a fish") or "specific" to a particular species or ecological relationship (e.g. "I saw a snapper") and then compared and evaluated.

The proportion of total responses that each response receives is illustrated with graphs that have percentages (%) identified.

Participant evaluation forms were amended since 2018 events, since the initial baseline surveying was completed for events in 2013. 2019 results are compared against 2013 baseline results where the questions have not been altered.

## Qualitative

Qualitative methods involved taking the quantitative results and assessing whether these numeric answers suggest that the Seaweed events have been

effective in meeting the key evaluation goals relating to:

- Relationship building,
- Appeal and benefits to different community sectors, and
- Ongoing actions.

Specific answers provided by organisers and participants in their surveys are included in this assessment. Direct quotes are included in "*italics*" in the report.

## **Results of Participant Evaluation Survey**

A summary of results of the Participant evaluation survey for 2013 compared with 2019 are outlined below, and are referenced in terms of how they meet Seaweed Goals:

### **Appeal to a wide range of ages/different sectors/cultures within the community**

- The largest proportion (70%) of 2019 Participant survey respondents were in the adult age bracket. However, other age brackets are well represented: primary school age and under with 13%, youth (11 – 22 years) with 12%, and retired age (65 years plus) with 5%.
- The largest proportion (79%) of 2019 Participant survey respondents identified themselves as Pakeha. However, other ethnic groups include Maori (1%), Asian (1%), Pacifica (2%) and "Others" (17%) which included Canadian, South African, and Lebanese participants.

### **Evidence of benefits from involvement in Seaweed**

- The proportion of Participant survey respondents rating Seaweed events as being of "high value" or "very high value" increased from 76% in 2013 to 87% in 2019.
- The proportion of facts recalled by Participant survey respondents that were specific to a particular species increased from 55% in 2013 to 79% in 2019.
- The proportion of facts recalled by Participant survey respondents that were specific to a particular habitat decreased from 55% in 2013 to 51% in 2019.

### **Evidence of ongoing action and benefits to communities**

- The majority of Participant survey respondents (80%) indicated the

- actions they will make after attending the Seaweeek event has increased.
- The proportion of participant survey respondents taking part in “action-oriented” events increased from 46% in 2013 (8 events) to 47% in 2019 (79 events).
  - The proportion of Participant survey respondents rating their ability to protect or improve the sea environment as being “medium” to “extremely high” increased from 75% in 2013 to 89% in 2019.
  - The use of the Seaweeek website increased from 1% of Participant survey respondents in 2013 to 16% of Participants in 2019.
  - 37% of Participant survey respondents in 2019 found out about Seaweeek through social media, up from 26% of respondents in 2018.
  - The proportion of Participant survey respondents finding out about Seaweeek at school has decreased from 9% of respondents in 2013 to 7% of respondents in 2019.

More detailed results of each question of the Participant evaluation survey are outlined below.

## **Question 1 Seaweeek Event Attended**

## **Question 3 Hands-on versus Passive Event**

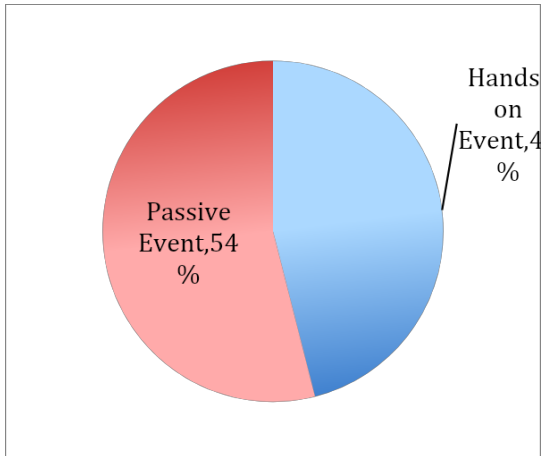
Participants were asked to explain what the Seaweeek event was that they attended and where it was held.

Events included activities where Participant survey respondents were passive attendees learning about issues and proposed actions for the marine environment. For example, a Bill Ballantine memorial lecture on “Changing ecology in a changing ocean”.

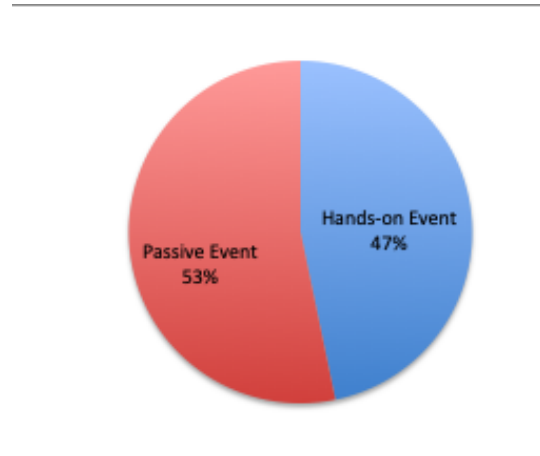
Events also included hands-on activities within the marine and coastal environment with an educational and action-related component. For example, Experiencing Marine Reserves snorkeling throughout NZ, Marine Metre Squared (Mm2) monitoring at Rosebank, and beach clean-ups at Picton foreshore, Maraetai Beach, Cornwallis Beach, Eastern Beach, and Sumner Beach.

The proportion of Participant survey respondents attending both these types of Seaweeek events in 2013 are shown in figure 1, and for 2019 in figure 2.





**Figure 1:** Type of Seaweed Event 2013



**Figure 2:** Type of Seaweed Event 2019

Evidence of hands-on “action-oriented” Seaweed events is apparent from participation in these type of events staying relatively constant, increasing from 46% of all Participant survey respondents in 2013 to 47% of all Participant survey respondents in 2019 as outlined in figures 1 and 2. With an increase in the number of “action-oriented” events from 8 in 2013 to 49 in 2019, this represents an increase in the numbers of active participants. .

Participants are increasingly being taught practical skills that allow them to have direct experiences of the marine environment, whilst also learning new skills (for example snorkeling instruction). This fosters capacity building to undertake ongoing actions. Direct participation in learning new skills (for example whale rescue training, species monitoring) also fosters capacity building to undertake ongoing actions.

#### Question 4 Value of Event Attended

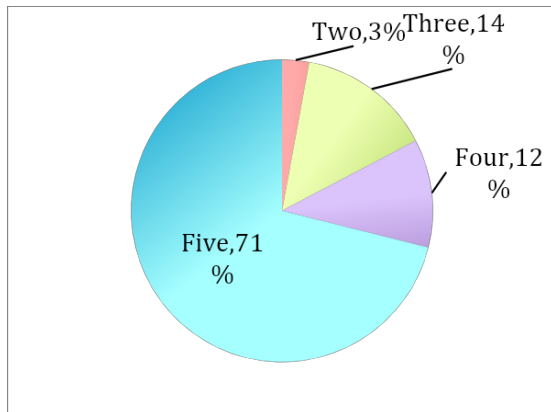
At the completion of the Seaweed event Participant survey respondents were asked to rate the value of the event (1 being “very low value” to 5 being “very high value”).

Values given by Seaweed event 2019 Participant survey respondents are shown in figure 3 below.

**Figure 3:** Scores for Seaweed event attended

A large majority (87%) of Participant survey respondents rated the Seaweed 2019 event they attended as being a 5, of “very high value”, or 4 of “high value”. This represents 94% of Participant survey respondents, as compared

with only 76% of Participants surveyed in 2013. 4% of Participant survey respondents rated the event they attended as a 3 and is outlined in figure 5 below. Comparison with 2013 event results outlined in figure 4, shows that Participant survey respondents are getting more value from Seaweeek events over time.



**Figure 4:** Proportion of scores for Seaweeek 2013 events attended

**Figure 5:** Proportion of scores for Seaweeek 2019 events attended

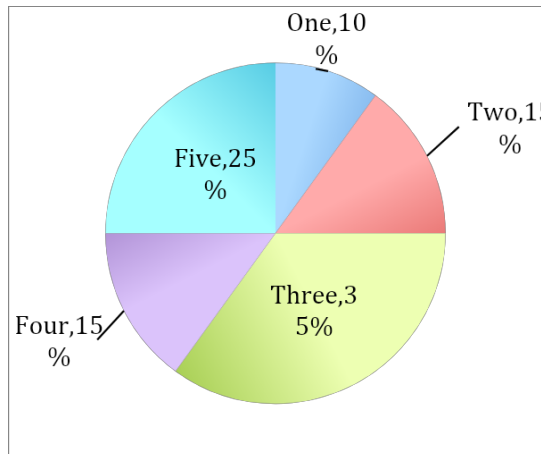
## Question 5 Perceived Ability to Protect or Improve Marine Environment

Seaweeek event Participants were asked to rate their ability to protect or improve the marine environment (1 being "extremely low" to 5 being "extremely high").

Values given by Seaweeek event 2019 Participant survey respondents are shown in figure 6 below.

**Figure 6:** Scores of the ability to protect or improve the marine environment

The largest proportion of Participant survey respondents (38%) rated their ability to protect or improve the marine environment as being a 4, or "high" and is outlined in figure 8 below. The number of Participant survey respondents rating their ability to protect or improve the marine environment as being a 3 or above has increased from 75% of Participant survey respondents in 2013 to 89% of Participant survey respondents in 2019.



**Figure 7:** Proportion of scores on the ability to protect or improve the marine environment in 2013

**Figure 8:** Proportion of scores on the ability to improve the marine environment in 2019

## Question 6 Species learned from Event Attended

Participants were asked to indicate how their attendance at the Seaweed event influenced their knowledge about types of species.

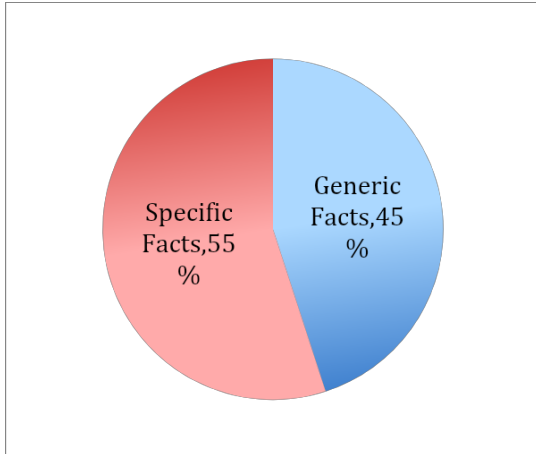
A majority of Participant survey respondents (72%) indicated their knowledge about types of species increased, while 28% said their knowledge stayed the same and is outlined in figure 9 below.

**Figure 9:** Knowledge about types of species

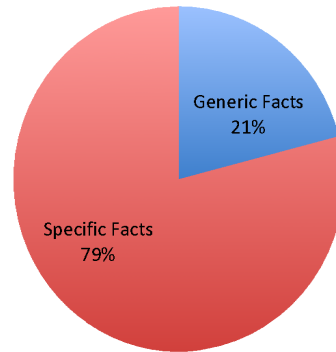
A diagram of most commonly used words or phrases is outlined in figure 10:

**Figure 10:** Most commonly used words or phrases

Of the facts learned about species, 21% were generic (e.g. "birds, fish, reptiles"), while 79% of facts learned were specific to a particular species. As outlined in figures 11 and 12, recall of specific facts increased from 55% to 79% of all facts learned by Participant survey respondents between 2013 and 2019.



**Figure 11:** Facts learned at Seaweeek 2013 events attended



**Figure 12:** Facts learned at Seaweeek 2019 events attended

Generic facts were typically broad descriptions of categories of species, for example "birds, plants, fish, stingrays, turtle, dolphins, marine mammals". Specific species identified were dominated by plants as shown in figure 13 below. These included some comprehensive lists, for example "Flagellates, Dinoflagellates, Coccolithophores, Copepods, Viruses, Bacteria, Predatory Bacteria, Ciliates, Diatoms, Radiolarians". Recall of phytoplankton has increased in the 2019 responses.

Specific species have been grouped into categories as part of this evaluation and are outlined in figure 13 below.

**Figure 13:** Species learned at Seaweeek 2019 events attended

## Question 7 Habitats learned from Event Attended

Participants were asked to indicate how their attendance at the Seaweeek event had influenced their knowledge about types of habitats.

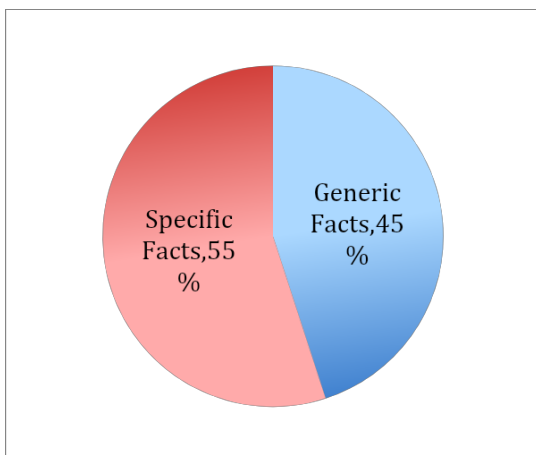
A majority of Participant survey respondents (73%) indicated their knowledge about types of habitats had increased, while 27% said their knowledge had stayed the same and is outlined in figure 14 below.

**Figure 14:** Knowledge about types of habitats

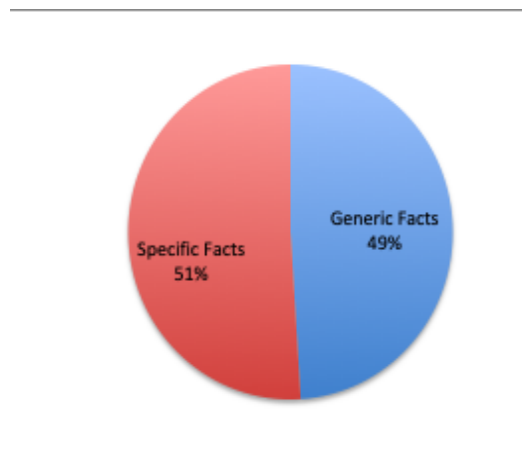
A diagram of most commonly used words or phrases is outlined in figure 15:

**Figure 15:** Most commonly used words or phrases

Of the facts learned about habitats, 49% were generic (e.g. "sea environment", "beach; shore"), while 51% of facts learned were specific to a particular habitat. As outlined in figures 16 and 17, recall of specific facts decreased slightly from 55% to 51% of all facts learned by Participant survey respondents between 2013 and 2019.



**Figure 16:** Facts learned at Seaweeek 2013 events attended



**Figure 17:** Facts learned at Seaweeek 2019 events attended

Generic facts were typically broad descriptions of categories of habitats, for example "sea, beach". However, generic descriptions have some detail in describing habitats and their relationships to species. For example, "coastal habitats of seabirds". Specific facts relating to different types of habitats were dominated by habitat types that were most accessible to event participants, specifically those that could be reached during some part of the tide (e.g. estuary, rocky shore). The frequency of different types of habitats mentioned is outlined in figure 18.

**Figure 18:** Habitats learned at Seaweeek 201 events attended

## Question 8 Issues affecting Habitats and Species

Participants were asked to indicate how their attendance at the Seaweeek event had influenced their understanding about issues affecting species and habitats.

A majority of Participant survey respondents (71%) indicated their knowledge about issues affecting species and habitats has increased, while 29% said their knowledge had stayed the same, as outlined in figure 19 below:

**Figure 19:** Knowledge about types of issues

A diagram of most commonly used words or phrases is outlined in figure 20:

**Figure 20:** Most commonly used words and phrases

Specific issues affecting habitats and species have been grouped into categories<sup>1</sup> as part of this evaluation and are outlined in figure 21 below.

**Figure 21:** Issues affecting habitats and species

The issue most commonly identified related to marine debris (29% of responses), followed by climate change (25% of responses), biodiversity (18% of responses), fishing pressure (16% of responses), human interference (14% of responses), pollution (12% of responses), introduced species (6% of responses), sedimentation (4% of responses), and as with 2018, responses are still dominated by issues relating to marine debris.

Climate change has become a more salient issue, mentioned in 25% of responses as compared with 2% of responses in 2015.

## Question 9 New Skills learned from Event

Participants were asked to identify what new skills they had learned from the Seaweeek event they attended.

Over half of Participant survey respondents (52%) indicated their participation in a Seaweeek event had increased the skills they learned, as outlined in figure 23 below:

**Figure 23:** Skills learned at Seaweeek event

A diagram of most commonly used words or phrases is outlined in figure 24:

plastics will Learnt Look snorkel children  
snorkelling find used

**Figure 24:** Most commonly used words and phrases

Specific skills learned after Seaweeek events have been grouped into categories as part of this evaluation and are outlined in figure 25 below.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from key environmental indicators outlined in the Hauraki Gulf Forum's "State of our Gulf 2014" Report

**Figure 25:** Skills learned from Seaweed 2019 events attended

The skill most commonly learned related to active skills such as snorkeling (31% of responses), followed by surveying & identification (29% of responses), advocacy (14% of responses), species enhancement or protection (6% of responses), and waste reduction (3% of responses).

## Question 10 Actions taken at Event

Participants were asked to identify the actions taken at their event based on the skills they had learned from the Seaweed event they attended.

A majority of Participant survey respondents (54%) indicated their actions taken at the Seaweed event had stayed the same based on the skills they learned, while 46% said their actions had increased as outlined in figure 26 below:

**Figure 26:** Actions taken at Seaweed 2019 event

A diagram of most commonly used words or phrases is outlined in figure 27:

**Figure 27:** Most commonly used words and phrases

Specific actions taken at Seaweed events have been grouped into categories<sup>2</sup> as part of this evaluation and are outlined in figure 28 below.

**Figure 28:** Actions taken at Seaweed 2019 events attended

The action most commonly undertaken relates to advocacy (41% of responses), followed by behaviour change (14% of responses), rubbish clean ups (7% of responses), pest control, surveying, and training (3% of responses each).

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<sup>2</sup> Examples of the “advocacy” category include inviting and taking other people to events. The “behaviour change” category involves taking consumer decisions or other changed habits that relate to the issues relevant to the Seaweed event.

## Question 11 Actions taken after the Event

Participants were asked to identify the actions they would make in the future based on the skills they learned from the Seaweed event they attended.

A majority of Participant survey respondents (80%) indicated the actions they would make after the Seaweed event had increased, while 20% said their actions would stay the same, as outlined in figure 29 below:

**Figure 29:** *Actions taken after Seaweed 2019 event*

A diagram of most commonly used words or phrases is outlined in figure 30:

**Figure 30:** *Most commonly used words and phrases*

Specific actions to be taken after Seaweed events have been grouped into categories<sup>3</sup> as part of this evaluation and are outlined in figure 32 below.

**Figure 31:** *Actions taken after Seaweed 2019 events attended*

The action most commonly undertaken relates to advocacy (28% of responses), followed by behavior change<sup>4</sup> (19% of responses), rubbish clean ups (16% of responses), surveying (12% of responses), and training (9% of responses).

## Question 12 What Age Bracket you belong to

Seaweed event Participants were asked to identify which age bracket they belong to.

Values given by Seaweed event 2019 Participant survey respondents are shown in figure 32 below.

**Figure 32:** *Age of Seaweed 2019 event attendees*

The largest proportion (70%) of 2019 Participant survey respondents were in the adult age bracket, followed by primary school age and under with 13% of

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<sup>3</sup> Examples of the “species enhance protect” category include taking specific action to protect a specific species. For example, taking part in a whale rescue in the event of a stranding.

<sup>4</sup> Examples of the “behavior change” category relates to making specific changes to a participants normal habits, decisions, or actions that helps protect a specific species or habitat. For example, reducing the use of plastics consumed in the home.



Participant survey respondents, youth (11 – 22 years) with 12% of Participant survey respondents, and retired age (65 years plus) with 5% of Participant survey respondents.

### Question 13 What Ethnicity you belong to

Seaweed event Participants were asked to identify what ethnicity they belong to<sup>5</sup>.

Values given by Seaweed event 2019 Participant survey respondents are shown in figure 33 below.

**Figure 33:** Ethnicity of Seaweed 2019 event attendees

The largest proportion (79%) of Participant survey respondents identified themselves as Pakeha, followed by Pacifica (2%), Maori (1%) and Asian (1%). 17% of Participant survey respondents didn't identify with any of the ethnicities outlined, but included Canadian, South African, and Lebanese participants.

### Question 14 How Participants Found Out about Seaweed

Participants were asked how they found out about the Seaweed event.

Values given by Seaweed 2019 event Participant survey respondents are shown in figure 34 below.

**Figure 34:** Finding out about Seaweed

The largest proportion of Participant survey respondents heard about the Seaweed event they attended through social media. This represents 38% of Participant survey responses. 26% of Participant survey responses heard about their Seaweed event via word of mouth while 16% heard about events through the Seaweed website and is outlined in figure 34 above.

While categories have slightly changed since the 2013 survey, it is worth noting how Participant survey respondents have heard about Seaweed since. The use of the Seaweed website increased from 1% of Participant survey respondents in 2013 to 16% of participants in 2019. The introduction of social media via the Seaweed Facebook and Instagram pages has also been highly

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<sup>5</sup> Based on categories outlined in the NZ Census as outlined by Statistics NZ.

significant, with 37% of Participant survey respondents finding out about SeaweeK through these mediums.

## Results of Event Coordinator Evaluation Survey

A summary of quantitative results of the Event Coordinator evaluation survey for 2018 is outlined below:

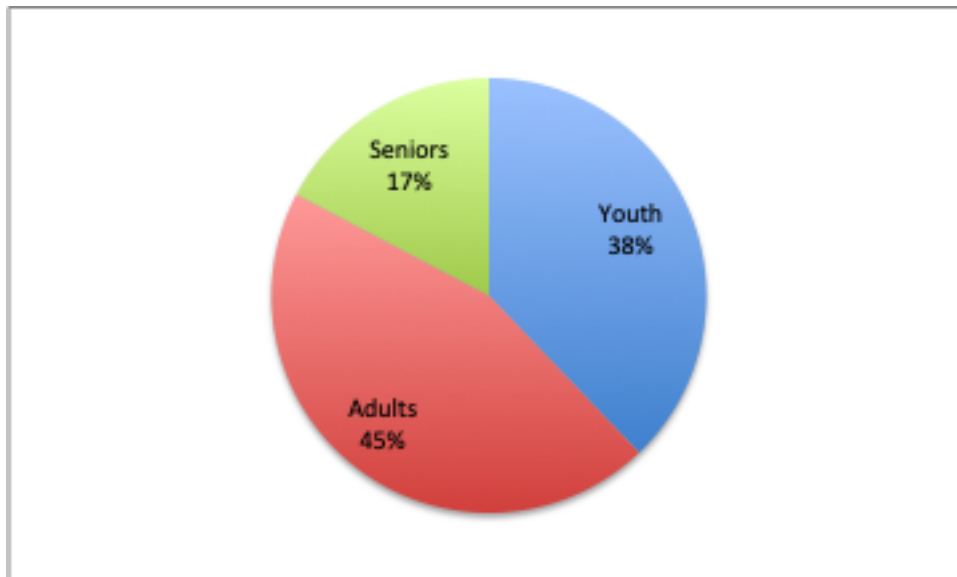
- The evaluation survey was completed by **79 event organisers** throughout New Zealand (35 events in Auckland/Northland and 44 events throughout the rest of New Zealand).
- The total number of SeaweeK Event Participants recorded from these 79 events was **11,305**.
- The total amount of money received from event sponsors other than NZAEE was **\$60,340.50**.
- Target audiences reached at SeaweeK events includes schools - teachers & students (32% of attendees), families (44% of attendees), ethnic groups (15% of attendees), educators and recreational interest groups (7% of attendees), commercial interest groups (1% of attendees), and NZAEE branches (1% of attendees).
- Means of promoting events include social media (**90%** of respondents), print media (**53%** of respondents), radio (**16%** of respondents), and television (**4%** of respondents).

More detailed results of each question of the event coordinator evaluation survey are outlined below.

### Question 4 Target Audiences

SeaweeK Event Coordinators were asked to identify the target audiences reached at their events.

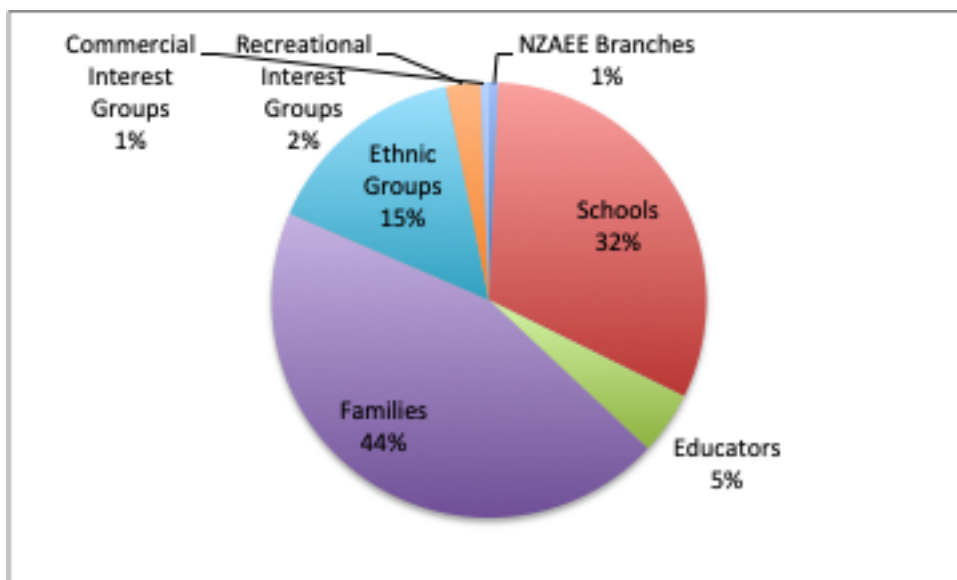
Values given by SeaweeK 2019 event coordinator survey respondents in relation to different age groups are shown in figure 35 below.



**Figure 35:** Age group targets

A majority of those reached at Event Coordinator's events were adults (45%), followed by youth (38%), and seniors (17%).

Values given by Seaweed 2019 event coordinator survey respondents in relation to different target audiences are shown in figure 36 below.



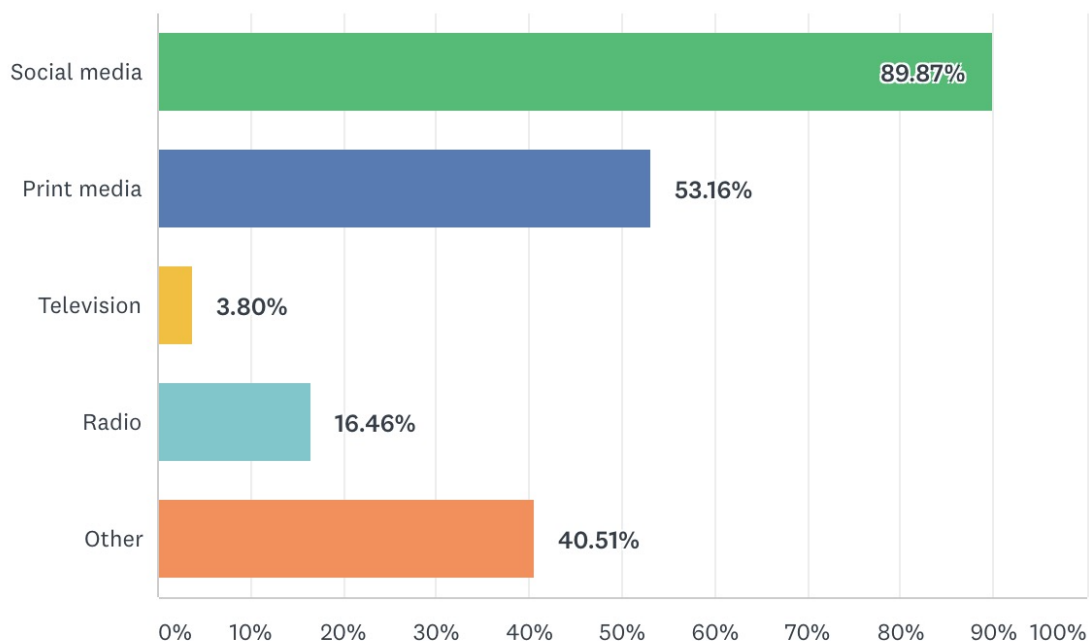
**Figure 36:** Target audiences

Target audiences reached at Seaweed events includes families (44% of attendees), schools - teachers & students (32% of attendees), ethnic groups (15% of attendees), educators (5% of attendees), recreational interest groups (2% of attendees), commercial interest groups (1% of attendees), and NZAEE branches (1% of attendees).

## Question 6 How Coordinators Promoted Seaweed

Event Coordinators were asked how they promoted their Seaweed event.

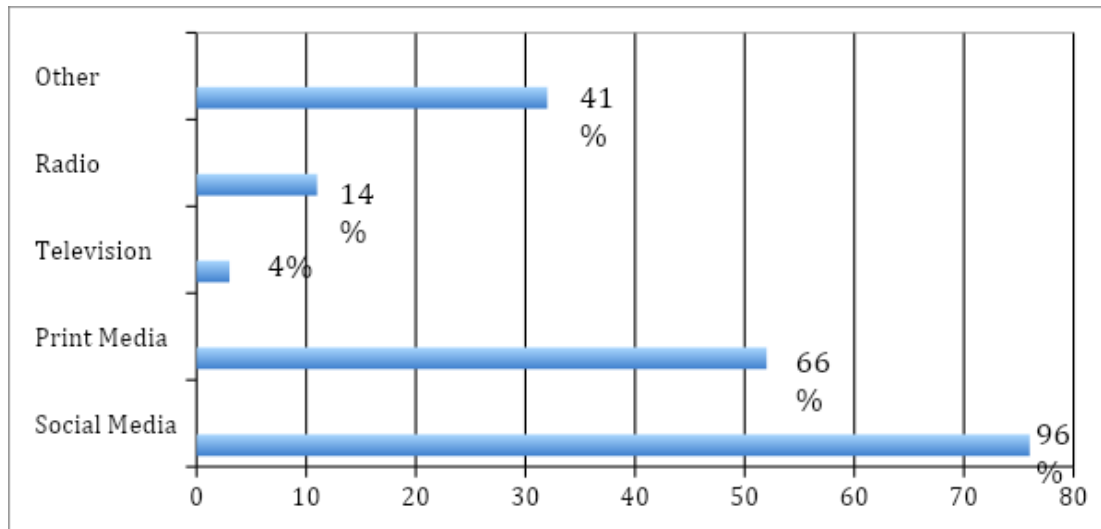
Values given by Seaweed 2019 event coordinator survey respondents are shown in figure 37 below. (Respondents could choose more than one answer).



**Figure 37:** Event Promotion 2019

Social media was the medium most used to promote events (90% of respondents), with Event Coordinators mentioning Facebook (including paid posts) and Twitter. 41% of respondents listed “other” mediums for promotion, most commonly their own websites, the Seaweed website and EventFinda. Print media was identified by 53% of respondents, including the use of posters, newsletters, and local newspapers. Radio (16% of respondents) and television (4% of respondents) were also identified.

Promotion in 2018 is outlined below in figure 38:



**Figure 38:** Event Promotion 2018

Proportions of event coordinators using various promotion media has remained relatively constant between 2018 and 2019.

### Question 7 Event Success

Seaweed Event Coordinators were asked what a successful Seaweed event looks like for them, and how they measured it.

A diagram of most commonly used words or phrases is outlined in figure 39:

numbers Well attended feedback conservation  
 everyone families attendance verbal feedback year attendees  
 turn positive engaged

**Figure 39:** Most commonly used words and phrases

Common responses about what success looks like related to participation, attendance and engagement (81% of responses). In terms of logic model evaluation, these are immediate outputs of the event activities.

Some looked beyond the event itself to short, medium and longer term outcomes. This includes immediate short-term results at the time of the event, for example, increased awareness or knowledge, or a commitment to change a behavior. One coordinator indicated that success related to "1) *micro plastics and other rubbish [being] removed from Tamaki Estuary - plastics removed photographed and some counted* 2) *awareness raised about microplastics including nurdles with students and teachers - conversation,*

*observation of student engagement”, while another remarked the success was about “an engaged audience asking questions and discussing content; remaining after formal talk closed for discussions with speakers and attendees”.*

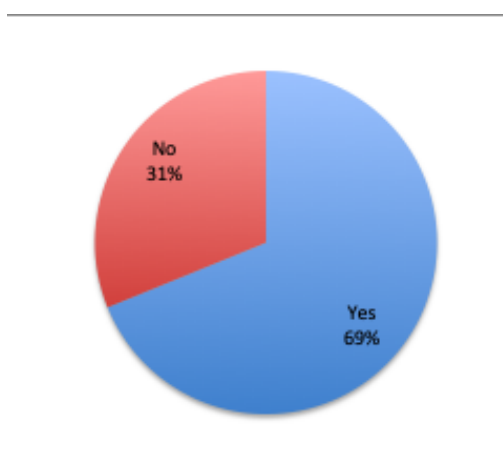
A number of coordinators are looking towards medium term outcomes around future planning and learning, with one commenting *“engaged teachers turning up and showing how they will use resources and experience with their students. Kowhai Intermediate whole school using Mm2 at Goat Island. Glendowie College using Mm2 for year 12 transect study NCEA”.*

Success in terms of longer-term environmental, social, cultural and economic outcomes would require follow up surveying.

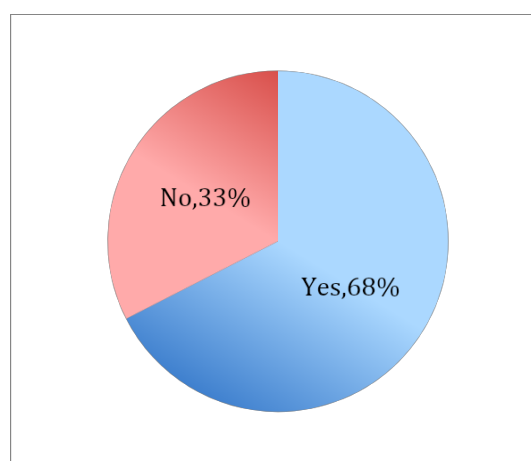
## Question 8 New Partnerships

Event Coordinators were asked whether there have been new partnerships made with and between participants, communities, and organisations as a result of their Seaweed event.

Values given by Seaweed 2019 and 2018 event coordinator survey respondents are shown in figures 40 and 41 below.



**Figure 40:** New partnerships formed 2019



**Figure 41:** New partnerships formed 2018

As outlined in figure 40, 69% of Seaweed event coordinators who responded to this question created new partnerships as a result of their Seaweed event. The number of new partnerships has increased from 68% of Seaweed Coordinators in 2018.

A diagram of most commonly used words or phrases is outlined in figure 42:

**Figure 42:** *Most commonly used words and phrases*

Common partnerships included with schools, NGO membership organisations (e.g. SeaCleaners, Legasea, Forest & Bird – Kiwi Conservation Club), Councils, Central Government (e.g. Department of Conservation, MPI, Auckland Council), community groups (e.g.) and NZAEE via Seaweed, and commercial organisations (e.g. Canoe and Kayak Ltd, Kelly Tarltons, Resene) .

## Results of Regional Coordinator Evaluation Survey

Quantitative results of the Regional Coordinator evaluation survey for 2019 is outlined below.

### Question 7 How Coordinators Promoted Seaweed

Regional Coordinators were asked how they promoted/publicized Seaweed event in their region.

Values given by Seaweed 2019 regional coordinator survey respondents are shown in figure 43 below. (Respondents could choose more than one answer).

**Figure 43:** *Seaweed Promotion*

Websites and social media were the mediums most used to promote events (100% of respondents each). With regards to social media, Regional Coordinators mainly mentioned Facebook (including paid posts). Print media was used by 71% of respondents. Local newspapers were the predominant print media mentioned (e.g. Marlborough Express, Blenheim Sun). Websites mentioned included the Seaweed website, and the Eventfinda website. 29% of respondents listed “other” mediums for promotion, most commonly using email networks to send out information to schools, Universities, and community organisations.

### Question 9 Event Success

Seaweed Event Coordinators were asked what a successful Seaweed event looks like for them, and how they measured it.

A diagram of most commonly used words or phrases is outlined in figure 44:

**Figure 44:** Most commonly used words and phrases

Common responses about what success looks like related to participation, attendance at events (100% of responses). In terms of logic model evaluation, these are immediate outputs of the event activities.

Some looked beyond the event itself to short, medium and longer term outcomes. This includes immediate short-term results at the time of the event, for example, increased awareness or knowledge, or a commitment to change a behavior. One coordinator indicated *"most importantly of all, people should be inspired to learn about, and protect, the ocean. This is achieved by high attendance rates across our events"*. Another notes that *"a successful Regional Seaweeek programme should ..... offer opportunities to learn more and make a instant difference in caring for our seas"*.

Success in terms of medium and longer-term environmental, social, cultural and economic outcomes would require follow up surveying.

## Findings

Findings are made with reference to specific goals identified for whether Seaweeek programmes (or parts of them) are making a difference to schools and communities in New Zealand:

- Evidence of relationships built with key stakeholders and community organisations
- Appeal to a wide range of ages/ different sectors of the community
- Bi-cultural/multicultural involvement
- Evidence of children and their teachers /families benefiting from being involved
- Evidence of ongoing action and benefits to communities, beyond the week itself.

## Benefits from involvement

Benefits from being involved in Seaweeek events have been clearly demonstrated from the results of the participant survey outlined in this report. This includes the value gained from events attended in survey question 4, and learning demonstrated by participants in survey questions 6, 7 and 8. For example, those **participants who rated the event they attended as being of "high value" or "very high value" increased from 76% in 2013 to 87% in 2019.**

The higher scores for survey question 5 relating to the ability to improve or protect the marine environment indicates that progress has been made to



facilitate participants undertaking ongoing actions. **The proportion of participant survey respondents rating their ability to protect or improve the marine environment as being “medium” to “extremely high” increased from 75% in 2013 to 89% in 2019.**

## Appeal to Community Sectors

To meet the goal of appealing to a wide range of sectors of the community, the 2016 participant surveys stratified participants in order to identify the actual audience for events. This in turn provides an evidence base for Seaweed planners to determine whether they are reaching their target audience and whether event themes and content needs to be tailored to achieve this.

**Young people (“primary school age” and “youth” categories) made up 25% of survey respondents in 2019 compared with 31% of respondents in 2014/5.** This was a move back to previous surveys showing attendance by adult NZ European. The ethnic makeup of attendants decreased in 2019 with participation by Maori (1% down from 3% in 2014/15). 17% of participant survey respondents didn’t identify with any of the ethnicities outlined, but included Canadian, South African, and Lebanese participants.

Question 14 of the participant survey still shows that a smaller proportion of people (26%) are hearing about events via “word of mouth” and therefore hard-to-reach communities are being reached through other means. The value of investing time and resources into the Seaweed website and social media platforms is paying dividends, with the use of the Seaweed website increasing from 1% of participants in 2013 to 16% of participants in 2019, while 37% of Participant survey respondents in 2019 found out about Seaweed through social media, up from 12% of respondents in 2017.

## Evidence of Relationships

**69% of Seaweed event coordinator respondents created new partnerships as a result of their Seaweed event.** Common partnerships included with schools, NGO membership organisations (e.g. Forest & Bird), Councils, Central Government (e.g. Department of Conservation), commercial businesses (e.g. Resene, Kelly Tarlton), and NZAEE via Seaweed.

## Outcomes and Learnings from Seaweed 2019 Evaluation

The Seaweed 2019 evaluation builds on previous evaluation by continuing to show improving trends in the attitudes, learning, and actions taken by Seaweed event participants. This is demonstrated in the key metrics outlined in the Participant Survey Results in pages 7 to 28 of this report.

Seaweed Event and Regional Coordinator results shows improving trends in

terms of participation numbers, sponsorship, and in the diversity of sponsors and partners.

In terms of both learning and action, the extra value that the Seaweeek programme provides is twofold. Firstly, having a coordinated scheduled Seaweeek programme that occurs at a set time every year provides an opportunity to maximize the promotion of a new resource or the exposure or awareness of a particular marine issue. Seaweeek in March has become a time of the year when people are thinking about the marine environment. Events, initiatives and the launch of new resources could all go ahead independently, but it's arguable whether they would receive such widespread promotion or attendance without Seaweeek.

There is huge value in having a national week about the sea – both as a learning and engagement intervention and, as importantly, an opportunity for a wide cross-section of organisations –schools, universities, marae, central and local government agencies, clubs, charities, NGOs, businesses and sponsors – to collaborate in bringing people and groups together to learn, celebrate, take action, make a difference, have fun – and to give our seas, shorelines, marine habitats and species a helping hand.