



Our Water: A Series of Public Service Announcements that Highlight the Impact of Plastic on Water

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Abstract

This research consists of two parts: the research project report and the production proposal. The purpose of this research was to explore how to make a series of poetic public service announcement (PSA) films that highlight the issue of the effect of plastic litter pollution on water and raise awareness amongst a broader audience beyond environmentalists. The production proposal explains how this series of PSAs will be produced and published. The aim of this research was to investigate the issue of plastic litter pollution in order to understand what causes the problem and the key aspects that contribute to exacerbating it. Furthermore, this research sought to take a closer look at the best ways to reduce the impact of this phenomenon and how we can communicate these solutions through PSAs.

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Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the Acknowledgements), nor material which, to a substantial extent, has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Student signature:

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Introduction

According to environmentalist filmmaker Gregg Mitman, ‘People don’t want to be preached at, they want to be entertained’ (Bohlmann 2013). This research project investigates how to make a series of poetic public service announcement (PSA) films that highlight the issue of plastic litter pollution in water and raise awareness amongst a broader audience beyond environmentalists. The project aims to investigate the issue of plastic litter pollution to understand what causes the problem. Also, it aims to highlight the best ways to reduce the impact of the issue through PSAs.

I investigated several different issues in this research project. Investigating these issues was important in order to have a better understanding of how to raise awareness about plastic pollution in water through PSAs. Investigating the issues and learning about other people’s work also impacted my decision-making during the production and outcomes of the project. The first issue was how to use environmental filmmaking strategies to reach a broad audience. Several film examples were examined to achieve a better understanding of this issue. The second issue was what key aspects must be considered to produce a series of poetic PSAs that can affect the audience’s emotions. This issue was investigated by looking at different environmental PSAs that discuss water quality issues. The third investigated issue consisted of three aspects: the source of plastic pollution in water, the effects of plastic pollution on water and ways to minimise the effects of plastic pollution on water. The fourth issue was about understanding the key factors that impact environmental social change. Through investigating different environmental organisations, I had a better chance at understanding how to impact people and convince them to take action.

The report starts with a contextual review summarising four key aspects that highlight different areas of the research project. The key aspects are environmental filmmaking strategies, environmental PSAs, plastic pollution in water and examples of environmental organisations. The review also addresses the existing gaps in each aspect. Then, the report explains the research methodologies (visual research and practice-led research) and methods (photographic documentation, case studies, visual diaries, a contextual review and web mapping) in detail and how they were used in the project. This section also explains why those particular methods and methodologies were chosen. Then, the report discusses three key concepts and their development through practice and research: plastic litter pollution in water, poetic storytelling in PSAs and action in the environmental protection sector. After that, the results and findings section of the report addresses the issue of plastic litter pollution in water and promotes environmental protection events. Finally, the discussion section analyses the findings and offers possible solutions. The possible solutions mainly rely on the importance of using social media platforms to raise awareness about the issue of plastic litter pollution in water through PSAs.

Contextual Review

Introduction

This research project explores how to produce a series of poetic PSAs in the form of fictional films that highlight a serious environmental issue: the current effects of plastic litter pollution on water. Water is one of the planet's major resources, without which life cannot survive. The aim of this contextual review is to provide an overview of the issue and the contexts that surround it. There are four key contexts in the research that address the issue from different perspectives. The first context discusses how environmental filmmakers use different strategies to reach their audience; the second highlights examples of several environmental PSAs and discusses their impact on audiences; the third indicates the source and effects of plastic pollution on water and ways to solve the issue; the fourth highlights examples of different environmental organisations that aim to reduce the effects of plastic litter pollution on water.

Environmental Filmmaking Strategies

Willoquet-Maricondi (2010) discusses examples of mainstream films that have had a positive impact on the environment, such as *Bambi* (1942) and *Finding Nemo* (2003). Both animated films target children and draw their attention to the importance of maintaining ecosystems; moreover, they show what happens to the animal characters if they leave their ecosystems. In these films, humans are the primary threats to the animal characters. For example, the hunters in *Bambi* and the dentist, his niece Darla and the military (indicated by debris on the ocean floor) in *Finding Nemo* all show the destructive impact humans have on the natural world.

When considering these different examples of mainstream films, I realised how filmmakers can use different strategies to reach their audience and draw their attention to the message they want to highlight. For example, in *Finding Nemo*, the filmmakers decided to design the characters based on real species of fish to indicate the reality of the situation. According to Chris Palmer, the director of the Center for Environmental Filmmaking at the American University in Washington, DC, 'Famous personalities, charismatic characters, powerful footage and humour are all devices that help draw in an audience and ensure that they're listening to the message' (Bohlmann 2013). In my film project, I will be using some of these devices, including poetic storytelling and powerful footage, to reach a broader audience than just environmentalists.

Environmental Public Service Announcements

It is important to understand how an environmental PSA works in order to be able to create one. There are several examples of PSAs that could be investigated for this purpose. One of these is an advertisement called *From Threat into Thread*.¹ In 2016, Adidas and Parley

¹ <https://www.parley.tv/updates/2016/11/3/adidas-x-parley-the-first-performance-products-from-parley-ocean-plastic>

collaborated in an attempt to find a solution to ocean plastic pollution. This collaboration resulted in the production of sports shoes from recycled plastic materials gathered from the ocean, in particular marine plastic waste collected from the coastal areas of the Maldives. The products were launched at world-leading football clubs, such as Bayern Munich and Real Madrid. In 2017, the target was one million pairs of shoes, the equivalent of at least eleven million plastic bottles retrieved from coastal areas by the Parley Global Network. By making ecological innovation the new industry standard, they hoped to end the practice of marine plastic pollution permanently. This PSA is a successful example in terms of highlighting the issue of plastic pollution in water and spreading awareness about it. It was successful because it attempted to change the way sport shoes are produced in order to reduce the impact of plastic litter pollution on water. This example gave me a new perspective to consider for my project by thinking of the impact of the PSA on people's daily lives and how it could encourage them to take action by doing small things to help the issue.

Another environmental PSA example is *Why Water*.² Clean water in developing countries can change many things in people's lives. Currently, there are 663 million people in the world living without clean water. This environmental PSA tells a story of change and how simple habits can cause big changes in the world. It targets a younger audience and encourages them to make wise decisions that can have a bigger impact on both them and society as a whole. This type of simple rhythmic storytelling style, which uses minimal motion graphics and a straightforward voiceover, can help to reach a broader audience, like children, and makes the message of the PSA easier to understand. This storytelling method influenced me to think of how to simplify solutions in my PSA and how to approach a wide audience through a simple storytelling style.

In the article, 'The Influence of Liking for a Public Service Announcement on Issue Attitude', Professor Xiaoli Nan discusses how advertising has not only been a significant tool in building the world's strongest brands, but is also one of the most important tools for persuading the public regarding issues of social significance (Nan 2008). PSAs can be seen as a similar form of communication to advertising and are an important component of most social campaigns.

Although PSAs were traditionally placed in donated media spaces, today many non-profit organisations purchase media space for these social-issue messages from professional advertising agencies. In the article, 'The Use of Emotional Appeals in Pro-Environmental Public Service Announcements', Kathleen Searles describes testing the effect of emotional appeals in an environmental PSA script by using a survey experiment. She observes that emotions significantly influence the environmental attitudes of participants (Searles 2010). This suggests that the use of emotional stories and a focus on the relationship between people and the environment could support the message of environmental PSAs. In my project, I explored different ways to apply emotional stories, such as narrating stories about wildlife by using a poetic script.

² <https://my.charitywater.org/global-water-crisis>

Plastic Pollution in Water

There are a variety of sources that contribute to polluting the ocean with plastic litter, a major one being rivers. Rivers will be highlighted in the first episode of the proposed PSAs. The article, ‘River Plastic Emissions to the World’s Oceans’, states that between 1.15 and 2.41 million tonnes of plastic waste currently enter the ocean every year from rivers. Furthermore, the top 20 polluting rivers are mostly located in Asia, comprising about 67 percent of the global total (Lebreton 2017). These findings show that a huge amount of plastic litter enters the ocean every year, which constitutes a major threat to the wildlife and ecosystems in both freshwater and the ocean.

Plastic pollution affects different ecosystems. Many of the animals and fish that live in the ocean feed on plastic by mistake, and this causes several problems for the ecosystem. The article, ‘How Plastic Pollution is Affecting the Ocean Wildlife’, shows that fish, marine mammals and sea birds are being injured and killed by plastic litter, and it is believed that 700 species could become extinct because of it (Smith 2018). Also, at least 267 species worldwide have been affected, including 84 percent of sea turtle species, 44 percent of sea bird species and 43 percent of marine mammal species.

There are multiple ways to lessen the impact of plastic litter pollution on the ocean, including, for example, recycling more and reducing the use of single-use plastics, such as plastic bags, water bottles, straws and cups. The article, ‘Seven Ways to Reduce Ocean Plastic Pollution Today’, mentions that just nine percent of plastic is recycled worldwide, which means that there is both a definite lack of awareness of the subject as well as a lack of recycling centres around the world. Participating in (or organising) a beach or river clean-up can significantly help reduce the amount of plastic litter that ends up in the ocean. This is one of the most direct ways to fight plastic litter.

For my practice, it is important to understand the different aspects of the issue of plastic litter pollution in water to get a clearer view of the problem. By understanding the source of the problem, I will have a solid foundation to tell stories about it, particularly how it was caused. For example, how rivers contribute to polluting water with plastic litter will comprise the content of my first public announcement. Furthermore, understanding the effects of the issue helps to create emotional sceneries that illustrates the harmful impacts. Understanding the ways in which the effects of plastic litter pollution on water can be reduced will provide an overview of how to communicate the suggested solutions to the audience.

Examples of Environmental Organisations

There are many environmental organisations that contribute to solving different environmental issues related to plastic pollution in water. For example, Sustainable Coastlines³ is a charitable environmental organisation that supports large-scale coastal clean-up events, educational programmes, public awareness campaigns and planting projects. It also helps other groups run

³ <http://sustainablecoastlines.org>

their own events. Since early 2008, Sustainable Coastlines has been working hard to reduce the effects of plastic pollution. The organisation's website notes that, to date, Sustainable Coastlines has collected around 1,435,145 litres of rubbish from its clean-up events and planted around 72,359 trees. These numbers indicate the efforts being made by this organisation and the large number of people who participate in these events. Sustainable Coastlines also endeavours to sort through the rubbish it removes from the beaches to learn which types of products pollute the most.

Surfers Against Sewage⁴ is a UK-based charity that is dedicated to the protection of oceans, waves, beaches and wildlife. Their office is located next to a beach, and they have only 12 full-time employees. There are also individuals who support the organisation's work through membership donations, volunteering and purchases made from the organisation's shop. The organisation began as a response by the surfing community to the pollution of British beaches from raw sewage. Later, its campaigning expanded to new members, such as swimmers, dog walkers, paddle boarders, beach cleaners and kite surfers.

Reviewing these environmental organisations provides some background information on how to fight the plastic pollution of water through large-scale efforts, like beach clean-ups and planting projects. These ideas could be applied by producing PSAs that encourage people to take real action. Thus, in the demo video I made for the production proposal, I created a scene of a water sports lover picking up a plastic bottle underwater (Figure 1). Reviewing the way these organisations work also helps in terms of understanding how to approach the audience and what is needed to reach wider communities.



Fig. 1. Scene from the Demo PSA: Picking up a plastic bottle underwater

⁴ <https://www.sas.org.uk>

Addressing Existing Gaps

By investigating my key contexts, I found that several aspects could be developed and studied in depth. When I looked at different environmental filmmaking strategies, I realised that not much work has been done on using a poetic script as a tool to develop environmental film projects. Also, by reflecting on several environmental PSA examples and discussing the impact of those examples, I found that not much work has been done on using emotional scripts about the issue of plastic litter pollution in water, in particular. When investigating the sources of plastic pollution in water, the subsequent effects of this pollution and ways to reduce it, I found that there was a lack of environmental films about educating people on the importance of recycling plastic. By investigating different environmental organisation examples and studying the ways they operate, I found that social media platforms have not been sufficiently utilised to spread environmental films.

Conclusion

There are several key contexts that have been highlighted in my research project, and each context has been investigated and reflected upon. The use of environmental film strategies was an important aspect to investigate in order to understand how filmmakers use different strategies to reach their audience. Identifying examples of environmental PSAs and discussing their impact are, together, one of the most important aspects needed to achieve an overall understanding of how to create a PSA. Finally, studying the sources of plastic litter pollution in water, investigating its effects and looking at ways to reduce it have been essential to understanding the different aspects of the issue.

Research Design

Introduction

The research methodologies used in this research project are visual research and practice-led research. The research methods included photographic documentation, case studies, visual diaries, a contextual review and web mapping. A research method is a systematic plan for conducting research, whereas a research methodology is the systematic, theoretical analysis of the methods applied to a field of study (Clough and Nutbrown 2012). I used the methods as research tools to collect and investigate data, while the underlying methodologies served as the justifications and frameworks for using these research methods.

Research Methodologies

1. Visual research

Visual research is a qualitative methodology in which an investigation is conducted through the use of artistic mediums (Rose 2001). In my research project, film and photography served as the artistic mediums through which I investigated the issue of the effects of plastic litter pollution on water. I began by searching for and visiting different locations around Auckland,

and I used film and photography to capture the essence of those locations, which helped me develop and shape my project's theme. This mainly occurred in Wenderholm Regional Park. Developing my project's theme depended on looking at the different natural elements that a location could provide. For example, in Wenderholm Regional Park, different elements could be used for this purpose, such as water, trees, hills and sunlight. These elements can contribute to linking the theme of my research by creating a particular environmental atmosphere that fits the meaning of the work. These natural elements needed to be considered when applying my visual research through a mood board or storyboard.

2. Practice-led research

Practice-led research is a methodology that focuses on advancing knowledge about or within a practice: 'Such research includes practice as an integral part of its method and often falls within the general area of action research' (Candy 2006). I used this methodology in my research by investigating my practice and observing and reflecting on the outcomes, which led me to explore new knowledge and perspectives. Practice-led research impacted the decisions I made throughout the project. It functioned in my practice by allowing me to look at the issue of plastic pollution in water and understand different ways to create scenes that communicate the issue.

While conducting my research, I combined visual research and practice-led frameworks, as they provide both theoretical and practical lenses.

Research Methods

1. Photographic documentation

Photographic documentation is a method used to document the process of a practice in a research project (Caldarola 1985). This method was helpful for my research project in terms of capturing the process of my practice, identifying environmental features and documenting geographical locations. I chose this method in order to have a record of the different stages of my process and to navigate my ideas and concepts in a systematic way. Capturing environmental features allowed me to investigate how to start my project and decide what locations would best highlight the issue of plastic pollution in water. By documenting geographical locations, I could determine which locations were best suited for the project (Figure 2).

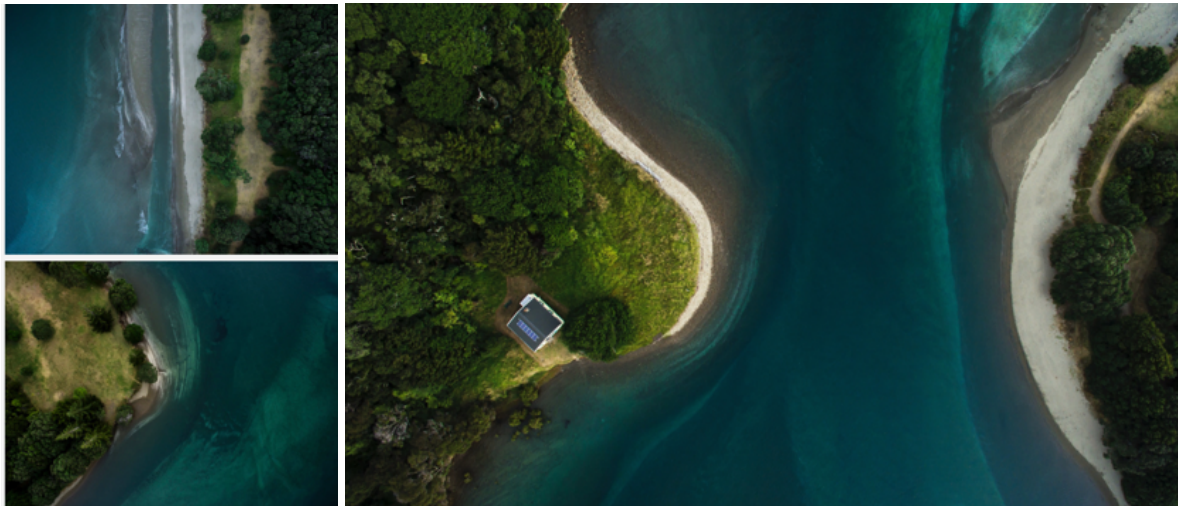


Fig. 2. Photographic documentation at Wenderholm Regional Park

2. Case studies

A case study is a research method that investigates the details of a case and examines the subject of a study and its related contextual conditions (Mills 2010). I used this method to analyse a variety of short films, PSAs and advertisements. The analysis helped me to study and observe different elements from each work, such as how the editing style might be used to affect the audience's emotions (Figure 4), as well as examples of PSAs, such as *From Threat into Thread*⁵ and *Why Water*.⁶ I chose this particular method to gain different perspectives on how my PSA could turn out and to understand how to approach the audience in an impactful way.

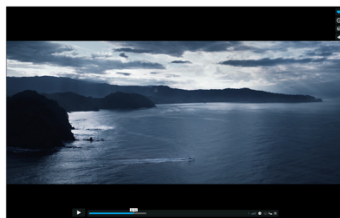


Fig. 3. Studying aerial footage

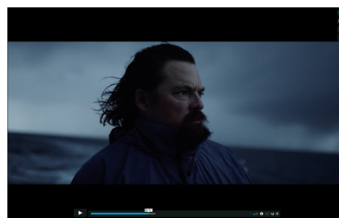


Fig. 4. Studying medium shots and underwater footage
From the short film, *YETI Presents: Carter Andrews*⁷

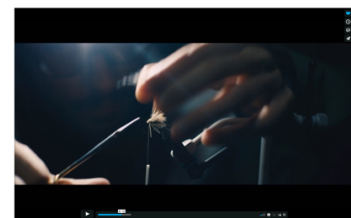


Fig. 5. Studying close-up footage

3. Visual diaries

A visual diary is a method of collecting and documenting concepts and ideas in a visual form (Bartlett 2015). I kept visual diaries in the form of a blog⁸ that documented different processes throughout my research. It was important for my research project to collect and organise different types of data, such as reflections, experiments, readings, questions and observations, by using the blog. These diaries helped me to navigate the research more easily and find relevant information when necessary. By collecting visual sources of information, this method

⁵ <https://www.parley.tv/updates/2016/11/3/adidas-x-parley-the-first-performance-products-from-parley-ocean-plastic>

⁶ <https://my.charitywater.org/global-water-crisis>

⁷ <https://vimeo.com/226199475>

⁸ <https://ajkstudio.wordpress.com/research-project/>

may also support the making of the film. For example, these diaries helped me navigate through my processes and concepts easily (Figure 6).

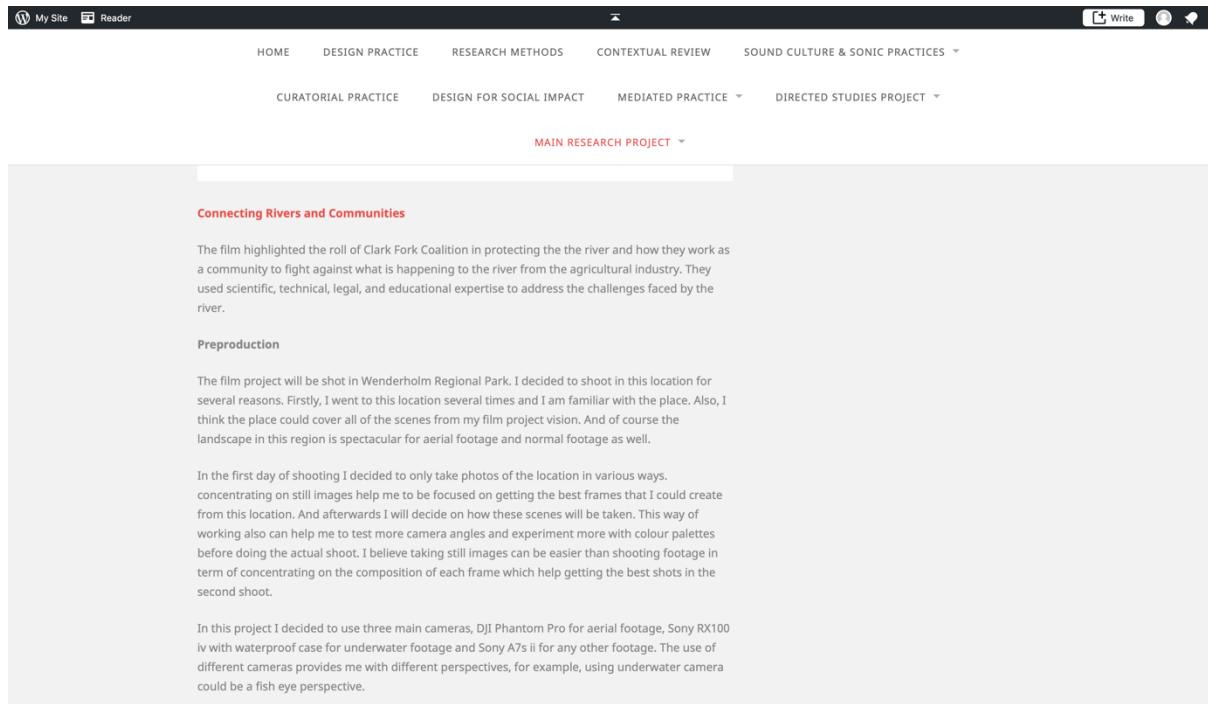


Fig. 6. Blog used as a visual diary⁸

4. Contextual review

A contextual review is a research method that explores current knowledge as well as theoretical and methodological contributions to a particular topic (Lederman 1992). I used this method to investigate the current knowledge about my topic and to understand important information regarding the environmental issue of plastic pollution in water. This includes, for example, discussing how environmental filmmakers use different strategies to approach their audience, highlighting examples of environmental PSAs and discussing their impact on audiences. Other relevant areas of knowledge include studying the sources and effects of plastic pollution on water, assessing ways to solve the problem and highlighting examples of different environmental organisations that aim to reduce these effects. For my research project, it was also important to understand the ways in which this topic has been discussed by others so that I could identify the research gaps. By examining different sources that highlight the issue, this research method allowed me to discover the most important aspects of the issue, such as the sources and effects of plastic pollution on water and the ways to reduce these effects.

5. Web mapping

Web mapping is a method that uses Google Maps or a similar tool to remotely observe the visual features of a particular location (Creswell 2010). This method was helpful, as it provided me with an effective way to research a geographical location before visiting it. I used this method by looking at the map, locating different shooting areas based on their visual features, and determining how long it takes to reach the chosen locations. I chose this particular method to search for and navigate different locations that suited the artistic essence of my filming practice.

Concept & Development

Plastic Litter Pollution in Water

Plastic is one of the biggest environmental problems worldwide. I was introduced to this issue during my research and participation with the environmental organisation, Sustainable Coastlines. In my contextual review, I studied three main aspects of the issue: the source of plastic litter pollution in water, its effects and several ways to reduce these effects. I have also reflected on how to apply this knowledge in my practice.

During the development of my project, I thought of focusing on the concept of incorporating microplastic in the storytelling aspect of the demo PSA. The voiceover starts with, 'How fantastic, if the water had less microplastic'. Meanwhile, the footage shows a close-up shot of microplastic mixing with water. The purpose of this scene is to highlight how microplastic can affect water quality. Another part of the script refers to plastic litter by saying, 'If we see a container, using it again is saner'. The footage in this part shows the action of picking up a plastic bottle that has been underwater for a long time. These types of scenes are essential to visually develop and incorporate the concept of the effects of plastic litter pollution on water.

This issue will be the main topic in the three episodes of the PSAs. The first episode will highlight the sources of plastic litter and how they contribute to increasing the plastic pollution in water; the second episode will focus on the effects of plastic litter pollution on water and marine life; the third episode will suggest solutions on how to reduce the effects of plastic litter pollution on water.

Poetic Storytelling in PSAs

The concept of poetic storytelling in PSAs has been showcased in different platforms that support their messages. Poetry has been used extensively to express feelings and emotions; thus, incorporating storytelling with poetry will also empower the narratives of the topic being discussed. Using poetic storytelling to highlight a serious environmental issue that is part of people's daily lives could help them to reflect on the issue and could affect their emotions. This can change the way they react to the issue of plastic litter pollution in water. I have been investigating this concept in my contextual review, and I referred to the article, 'The Use of Emotional Appeals in Pro-Environmental Public Service Announcements'.

I applied the concept of poetic storytelling in my practice development by using ideas that might affect people's feelings in the voiceover of the demo. In the poetic script, there are some ideas that reflect real stories about the problems plastic litter pollution in water can cause in different ecosystems; for example: 'sea birds could have a meal, of food that was real'. The rhythm of the line indicates a poetic way to describe the scene. In this scene, I used sound design to support the idea by adding the sound effect of sea birds. Another way to reach the

audience is to make them think about the way they use plastic in their daily lives. For example, at the end of the voiceover, it says, ‘most will be here to stay’, referring to plastic that will stay in the water for a long time. These ideas have been developed through my practice by adding scenes that attempt to touch people’s emotions.

The concept of poetic storytelling will be used throughout the three PSA episodes. In the first episode, the poetic script will highlight a story about the source of plastic litter. The poetic story will be produced by determining key concepts and arranging them through writing a poetic script. The poetic storytelling approach in the second episode will address the effects of plastic litter pollution on water. In the third episode, the poetic script will suggest solutions to reduce these effects.

Action in the Environmental Protection Sector

The concept of action in environmental protection assumes several forms. The focus of this concept is on the ways in which environmental organisations have motivated people to take action against plastic pollution in water. Sustainable Coastlines is one of the most well-known organisations that has been dealing with this issue by organising different environmental events that allow people to participate.

In terms of my practice development, I participated in Sustainable Coastlines’ Drury Planting Day event (Figure 7). In my role as a practitioner and videographer, my aim was to create a short video⁹ that highlighted how people are taking action to reduce the effects of water pollution and subsequently use this video to encourage more people to get involved to reduce the harmful effects of plastic pollution. The goal here was to protect the river in the Drury area of South Auckland by planting trees directly along the riverbank, which will help soak up the pollution. My participation in the event has presented a great opportunity to experience and develop my understanding of action in environmental protection. The video was shared on social media by the organisation to encourage more people to participate in taking action towards environmental protection.

I further developed the concept of action in my research by visiting some local beaches in Auckland City and Mission Bay. I noticed that most of the polluted areas are located next to fishing spots or other hubs for water activities, such as swimming, kayaking and windsurfing beaches. I found different types of single-use plastic, which I believe is most damaging to the marine environment, along with other types of small plastic pieces of unknown origin. As a result of this visit, I have been able to look closely at the issue of plastic litter and experience how challenging it is to collect it and reduce its damaging impact. This visit convinced me that fans of water activities are my primary target audience, and it also prompted me to realise that ‘taking action’ should be emphasised in the PSAs.

⁹ <https://vimeo.com/295072642>



Fig. 7. Drury Planting Day event

Results, Findings & Discussion

The results, findings and discussion are mainly contained in the production proposal (see Appendix 1, p. 26). The proposal outlines how the series of poetic PSAs will be produced and published. It starts by introducing the concept of the three episodes briefly in the synopsis section. Then, it presents an overview of the project and outlines the three episodes in more detail. The proposal also shows the stages of producing the demo PSA, which illustrates the style and aesthetics of the episodes. The proposal then highlights the target audience, explains how the interactive elements will be used to reach it, and what distribution and marketing

strategy will be used to reach an even broader audience. Finally, the proposal explains the fundraising strategy that will be used in the project.

Besides the production proposal, I would like to discuss the issue of plastic litter pollution in water and the strategy of environmental protection events in detail here, because they represent the foundation of this project. After conducting in-depth research, some findings were generated alongside the production project itself.

Plastic Litter Pollution in Water

Throughout my research, I determined that several sources contribute to polluting water with plastic litter. The main source turned out to be rivers. Single-use plastic items enter waterways and rivers easily, causing major damage to marine wildlife and ecosystems. However, there are several possible ways to reduce the amount of single-use plastic that enters rivers. Finding alternative non-plastic materials would be one effective way to solve the problem – indeed, this approach has been applied in many places around the world. Also, producing reusable items is another solution that could reduce the amount of single-use plastic products in waterways and rivers.

There is a high chance that any piece of plastic that has been left in the street could be washed out by the rain, where it would first enter drains and then be flushed into waterways, which would in turn carry it to the ocean (Croot 2017). Through this example, we can understand why rivers are rated as the worst source of ocean pollution with plastic.

Plastic litter that enters water has many negative effects. In my research, I discovered that many species of wildlife could become extinct because of it. Plastic can be mistakenly eaten by fish, birds and animals, and it could kill or injure them. Studies indicate that plastic litter pollution could severely impact different ecosystems in both freshwater and oceans. However, there are several ways to reduce the impact of plastic litter pollution on water. Proper plastic recycling is one such method. Studies show that the percentage of plastic that has been recycled is low compared to unrecycled plastic (Hutchinson 2017). These statistics confirm that there is a lack of awareness around plastic recycling, which must be raised in terms of understanding plastic recycling processes.

By analysing the effects of plastic litter on water, I also determined that different marine wildlife species could be adversely affected and possibly even go extinct. Furthermore, I realised that the effects of plastic pollution not only impact marine wildlife but also us, as people who use the ocean as a source of sustenance. To solve this problem, I believe various efforts should be made to raise awareness amongst different age groups and communities about the effects of plastic pollution on water.

By analysing the methods of reducing the effects of plastic litter pollution on water, I found that a lack of awareness has impacted our chances of reducing these harmful effects. However, I believe that many possible solutions exist that could increase awareness of this problem. One

of the most important methods is the production of PSAs. The plastic litter problem is illustrated in my demo PSA through a poetic script that raises awareness about the issue and uses visual storytelling to support the meaning of the script. These ideas are discussed in detail in the production proposal.

Promoting Environmental Protection Events

My production proposal is a way to contribute to the promotion of protection events. The proposal highlights the issue of plastic litter pollution in water and aims to reach a broad audience through a series of poetic PSAs that could be published and shared by different environmental protection organisations on their social media platforms, such as Sustainable Coastlines. Publishing these PSAs will hopefully encourage more people to participate in different environmental protection events.

After looking at different environmental organisations and analysing the findings, I realised that social media platforms are rarely used to promote environmental protection events, such as beach clean-ups and planting events. For example, looking at the social media accounts of Sustainable Coastlines, I think more content could be produced to promote the events and encourage people to participate in them. I believe that the PSA could be a powerful tool to reach a wider audience. Enlisting celebrities who care about this type of issue to help promote the PSAs could be another way to reach more audiences. Most importantly, the content should show the impact that the audience could have if they started to participate in these events. To demonstrate this impact, statistics of the plastic litter gathered during the events could be presented in the content. In addition, interactive calls to action that would encourage people to organise their own events and share their results through the organisation's hashtag could be promoted. The social media team could pick winners every month to encourage more people to participate.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this research project explores how to make a series of poetic PSA films that highlight the issue of plastic litter pollution in water and raise awareness amongst a broader audience beyond environmentalists. The aim of this research project is to investigate the issue of plastic litter pollution in order to understand what causes the problem, as well as to gain a closer look at the best ways to reduce the impact of this issue and how to communicate these solutions to the public.

Certain aspects allowed the study design to meet the study aims. The contextual review demonstrated four key contexts that reflect the aims of the study. The first context highlighted the importance of understanding how environmental filmmakers apply filmmaking strategies to communicate the message of the film to the audience in an impactful way. The second context showed examples of PSAs that highlight water quality issues and discussed the importance of using storytelling to affect the audience's emotions through poetic PSAs. The

third context explained the three aspects of the issue, which are the sources, effects and ways to reduce the effects of plastic litter pollution in water. I also highlighted how these aspects are presented in my practice. The fourth context demonstrated examples of environmental organisations and their role in fighting plastic litter pollution in water.

The research design explained the methods and methodologies used in the research project. The visual research and practice-led research methodologies were used throughout the research project to organise the collection of information and develop the stages of my practice. The methods of photographic documentation, case studies, visual diaries, a contextual review and web mapping were used to achieve different aims in the study through research and practice.

The concept and development section was also part of the study design that helped to achieve the study aims. Three concepts were discussed in this section. Each concept was identified by explaining its development through research and practice. These concepts were plastic litter pollution in water, poetic storytelling in PSAs and the importance of understanding action in the environmental protection sector.

The results and findings section addressed two aspects of the research project. Both aspects have been explained and referred to in the contextual review. The first section of the findings concerned the issue of plastic litter pollution in water. The second section of the findings focused on promoting environmental protection events. The discussion included an analysis of the findings and offered possible solutions developed from these findings. The possible solutions were mainly centred on the importance of using social media platforms to raise awareness about the issue through PSAs. Thus, I would like to close this report with the poetic voiceover in my demo:

How fantastic,
if the water had less microplastic.
Sea birds could have a meal,
of food that was real.
Less chemicals in the sea,
would be healthier for you and me.
If we see a container,
using it again is saner.
Be careful what you throw away,
most will be here to stay.

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Appendix:

Our Water:

The Production Proposal of a Series of Public Service Announcements that Highlight the Impact of Plastic on Water

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SYNOPSIS

This series of public service announcement (PSA) films will portray poetic scripts about the impact of plastic litter pollution on water. There will be three episodes, and each will share the same colour palate and artistic style. They will be from 30 to 45 seconds long and will contain information that highlights facts about each aspect of the issue, including the source, effects and ways to reduce the effects of plastic pollution on water.

Here is the breakdown of this production:

Episode I – The source of plastic pollution in water

Episode II – The effects of plastic pollution on water

Episode III – Ways to reduce the effects of plastic pollution on water

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Understanding how to reach an audience and convince them to take action on an environmental issue requires a thorough understanding of all aspects of the issue. There are three main aspects that will be discussed in this project. The first will discuss the source of plastic litter in water, the second will highlight the effects of plastic litter on water and the third will suggest ways to reduce the effects of plastic litter on water. This project explores how to produce a series of PSAs in the form of fictional films that highlight an environmental issue: the current effects of plastic litter on water.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT OUTLINE

Episode I – The source of plastic pollution in water: This episode will demonstrate the sources that contribute to polluting water with plastic litter. The content will be communicated to the audience through a poetic script that tells a story about these sources. The article, ‘River Plastic Emissions to the World’s Oceans’, states that between 1.15 and 2.41 million tonnes of plastic waste currently enter the ocean every year from rivers. The content of this episode will expose how plastic litter get into these waterways, and especially rivers, by telling different stories in a poetic way.

Episode II – The effects of plastic pollution on water: This episode will highlight the effects of plastic pollution on water by showing environments that have been affected by plastic. For example, the article, ‘How Plastic Pollution is Affecting the Ocean Wildlife’, states that at least 267 species worldwide have been affected, including 84 percent of sea turtle species, 44 percent of sea bird species and 43 percent of marine mammal species. The content will focus on stories about the marine life that have been affected by plastic pollution in a poetic way.

Episode III – Ways to reduce the effects of plastic pollution on water: This episode will focus on suggested ways to reduce the effects of plastic pollution on water. The end of the episode will highlight the results of the efforts of environmental organisations, such as Sustainable

Coastlines. Sustainable Coastlines have collected around 1,435,145 litres of rubbish in their clean-up events and planted around 72,359 trees so far. Environmental organisations have succeeded in making a positive impact on the issue of plastic litter in water. I will also suggest other ways of reducing the effects of plastic pollution on water, including reducing the use of single-use plastics and raising awareness about proper plastic recycling.

DEMO PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

The demo PSA is called *Our Water*.¹⁰ This demo is an example that demonstrates what the production process, aesthetics and theme will be in the three proposed PSAs. Here, I would like to describe my production process. In doing so, the development of the aesthetics and theme will also be detailed.

Preproduction

The first step in the preproduction stage was identifying locations that could inspire me to find visual elements that support the concept of my practice. I used several different locations in the demo PSA, such as Nihotupu Falls, Wenderholm Regional Park, Piha Beach (Figure 8) and Hunua Falls. I chose these locations to illustrate key concepts of the film that tell different stories about water ecosystems by showing shots of clouds, rain, waterfalls and waterways (Figure 9).

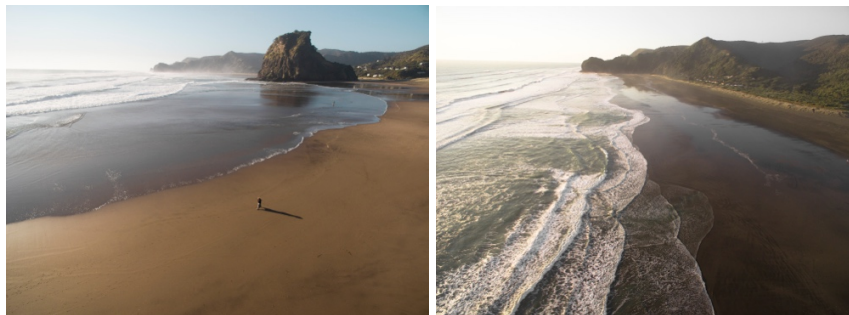


Fig. 8. Various shots in Piha Beach

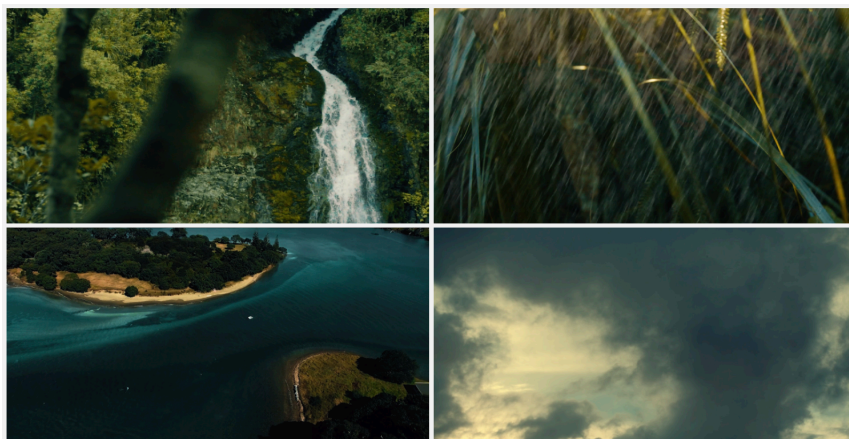


Fig. 9. Shots of clouds, rain, waterfalls and a waterway

¹⁰ <https://vimeo.com/343330349>

In this project, I decided to use three cameras: DJI Phantom Pro for aerial footage, Sony RX100 iv with a waterproof case for underwater footage and Sony A7s ii for any other footage. The use of different cameras provided different perspectives that can allow the environmental issue to be seen from a range of angles and make the visual storytelling aspect more accurate (Figure 10).

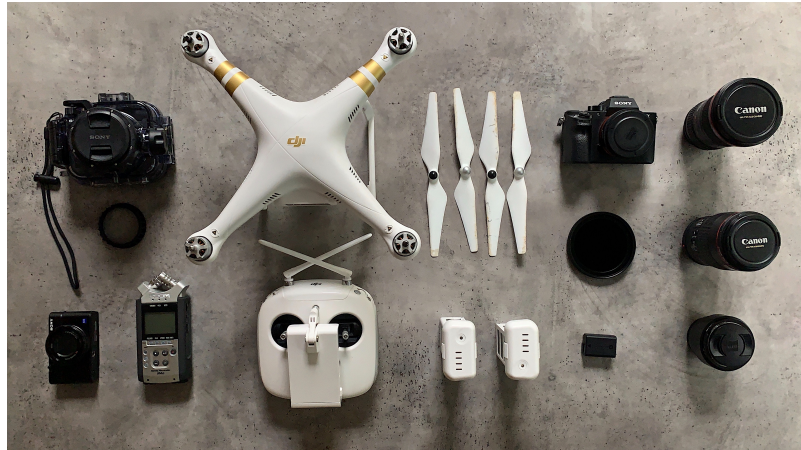


Fig. 10. Filmmaking gear used for the project

For the first day of shooting, I decided to only take photos of the location in various ways. Concentrating on still images helped me focus on getting the best frames from these locations. Afterwards, I could decide on how these scenes will be taken. This way of working helped me to test more camera angles and experiment more with colour palettes before doing the actual shoot (Figure 11).



Fig. 11. Experimenting with different camera angles

Production

In the production stage, I tried to realise most of the ideas I had planned for in preproduction. I started by filming aerial footage of the landscapes in multiple locations (Figure 11). In Wenderholm Regional Park, the approach was not only to film aerial footage but also to get several underwater shots of different scenes (Figure 12). I tried to make the acting in the underwater scenes realistic and simple. For the microplastic scenes, I decided to create a microenvironment of plastic at home and take close-up shots of it (Figure 13). The voiceover was developed by finding key ideas related to the topic of plastic litter on water through research and addressing these ideas in a poetic script.



Fig. 12. Experimenting filming aerial footage in multiple locations



Fig. 13. Production stage documentation



Fig. 13. Microenvironment of plastic

Postproduction

While I was experimenting with different themes and colour schemes, I decided to focus on the textures and lines of the water from the aerial footage. I think this is an important aesthetic element in this location as it demonstrates the environmental issue by addressing the beauty of nature, and it would be effective to incorporate it with the microplastic footage as a juxtaposition. Also, the underwater footage is another element I can develop and use in an appropriate way in the film to highlight the issue. In the editing process, I tried to match all the footage from different cameras by colour grading and using one colour palette (Figure 14).

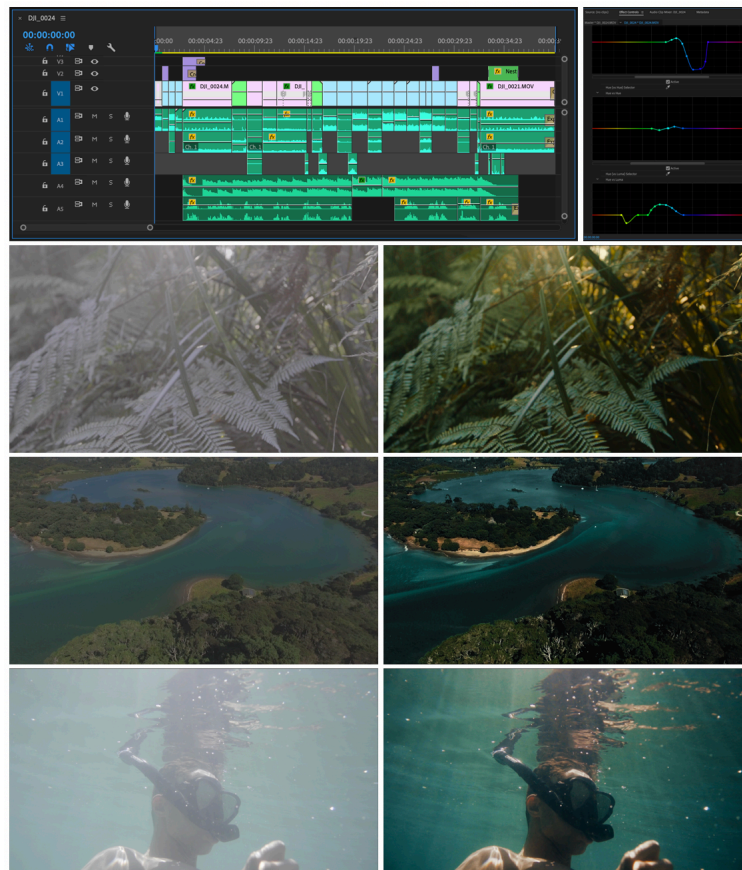


Fig. 15. Postproduction and colour correction processes

STYLE APPROACH AND AESTHETICS

There are several elements that contribute to forming the style and aesthetics of this series of PSAs. These elements are poetic storytelling, cinematography, editing style, colour grading, music and sound design.

Using poetic scripts throughout the series will enrich the message of the PSAs and deliver it in an effective way. The benefit of using a poetic script is that it creates a rhythm in the flow of the work. The goal is for the flow to mimic the rhythm of the water, which will emphasise its beauty. Thus, the audience may experience a more emotional connection with water.

Cinematography will also be one of the most important elements to enhance the aesthetics of the films. Using a variety of perspectives, such as aerial and underwater cinematography, to capture the environmental features could provide diverse angles of looking at the beauty of nature. These angles may likely be unfamiliar to the general audience, who may be strongly affected by these nature scenes. Consequently, when they see nature affected by plastic pollution from innovative angles, more empathy may be generated.

Editing style is another aspect that will be tailored to match all the concepts in the series. The editing approach will consist of a variety of fast cuts that show different scenes of environmental elements (Figure 15). The function of my editing style is to communicate a motivational mood through poetic storytelling that will capture the audience's attention and have an impact on their feelings towards water. By using fast cutting (a style of edit), the production will build a sense of tension that will show how fast the environment could be affected by plastic pollution.

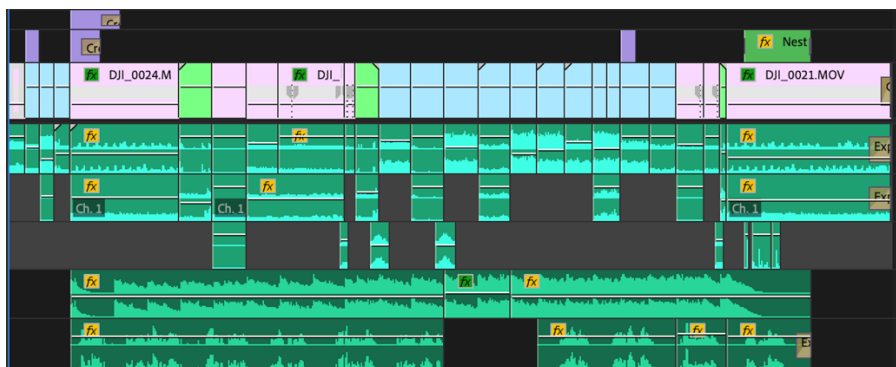


Fig. 16. Process of the editing approach

Colour grading will be used to identify the theme of the films and will have a major impact on the look and feel of the footage in various scenes. Working on colour grading will help to develop and control the theme, which will in turn communicate the emotional aspect of the films (Figure 16). This emotional aspect will guide the audience to think about the issue and motivate them to take action against it. The colour palette will be taken from the natural elements in different locations (Figure 17).



Fig. 17. Attempt to generate motivational emotion through colour grading



Fig. 17. Colour palette taken from natural elements

Music will also be another important aspect to develop the theme of the films. The flow and tempo of the music will vary depending on the concept of the scene and action that will be shown throughout the films. The music will support the theme of the work significantly by building another reflective and motivational layer. The style of the music will be ambient with textural feels to work with the transitions of the editing style. The instrumentation will most likely be a mix of piano and strings.

Sound design and sound effects will also bring the scenes to life. The process of adding sound effects will include an emphasis on the details of each scene and building a sonic environment that suits it. Sound design will have a major impact on communicating the message of these PSAs by adding another dimension to the scenes. For example, in the demo PSA, I added sea

bird sounds to echo the meaning of the voiceover in the ‘sea birds could have a meal, of food that was real’ part. The sound design strategy will be a mix of atmospheric sounds, Foley and other sound effects. The approach to using this strategy will be experimental.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience for this series of PSAs are people who engage in any type of water sports regularly. The primary goal of this project is to reach an audience beyond environmentalists. In order to achieve this, accessible narrative poetry and visuals must be considered. To be specific, the method to communicate ideas and concepts through the PSAs will be a form of narrative poetry that reflects the main purpose of the films, which is effectively to raise awareness about the effect of plastic litter pollution on water in the general audience. Also, using powerful visuals will increase opportunities to reach a wider audience beyond environmentalists because it will be more attractive to watch. As Chris Palmer says, ‘famous personalities, charismatic characters, powerful footage and humour are all devices that help draw in an audience and ensure that they’re listening to the message’ (Bohlmann 2013).

PARTNERSHIPS

Possible partner organisations and fiscal agents

There are several environmental organisations, such as **Sustainable Coastlines**,¹¹ that could possibly be interested in using this series of PSAs in their events or sharing them on their social media platforms.

The **ANZ NZ Staff Foundation**¹² is a charitable trust which supports organisations and projects that make a difference in their communities. In particular, the foundation supports charitable organisations that help communities to conserve New Zealand’s natural and historic resources. The foundation could support this project by funding costs related to production.

The **Waste Minimisation Fund**¹³ is a Ministry for the Environment organisation that funds projects that promote or achieve waste minimisation. This project aims to promote waste minimisation by creating PSAs that raise awareness about the effects of plastic litter pollution on water, so there is potential to acquire funding from this organisation.

My goal is to partner with an organisation that could be targeted for sponsoring and funding the project. As most of these institutions or organisations are already involved with environmental protection projects, there is a higher chance that these institutions will be interested in this project.

¹¹ <http://sustainablecoastlines.org>

¹² <https://www.anz.co.nz/about-us/corporate-responsibility/community/staff-foundation/>

¹³ <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/more/funding/waste-minimisation-fund>

INTERACTIVE ELEMENTS

Social media, website

This project will be presented and highlighted in various ways. One of the main ways to reach the target audience is by creating a social media presence that addresses the content of the project and its aim. Accounts will be set up on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Ideally, during a three-month period, in each month, a PSA film will be produced and published through these social media platforms. Each time, a survey will be offered to obtain feedback from the audience before developing the next PSA. Through social media, the audience will be asked to share stories and experiences that relate to the issue, and I will highlight these stories on social media to encourage the audience to interact further.

In addition, a website will be developed that will contain four sections. In section one, all the PSAs will be published. In section two, written content will outline the issue of the effect of plastic litter pollution on water. Section three will provide background information about our partners and their role in society and how to participate in supporting the cause of these environmental organisations. Section four will show the production stages of the PSAs and the behind-the-scene process. The website will be established to encourage people to take action and participate in spreading the word.

DISTRIBUTION

Film distribution and marketing strategy

There are different environmental film festivals that have contributed to raising awareness about environmental issues around the world. My distribution strategy is to participate in the following environmental film festivals:

The San Francisco Green Film Festival¹⁴ aims not only to show films but also to get people together to share stories on screen and talk about pressing environmental issues. This festival has shown that environmental films are powerful vehicles for spreading knowledge, starting conversations and encouraging people to take action.

The Environmental Film Festival Australia¹⁵ began in 2010 with a vision to inform, engage and inspire people to take action regarding today's environmental issues. The festival operates by collaborating with partners and giving them the opportunity to talk directly to the audience, supporters and stakeholders. Furthermore, the EFFA adds value to their business, brand and community profile by developing strong relationships that benefit everyone.

The reason behind participating in both environmental film festivals is to reach a broader audience and increase the chance of acquiring more partners. Looking at both film festivals

¹⁴ <https://www.greenfilmfest.org>

¹⁵ <http://www.effa.org.au>

and understanding the way they are run is helpful in terms of knowing how to market this environmental project and how to distribute such productions in these types of arenas.

PRODUCTION TIMETABLE

Dates and details

This project will be completed in a three-month timeframe. Each month a PSA film will be produced and published through social media platforms. A survey will be administered to acquire feedback from the audience on developing the next PSA film. After all the PSAs are finished, they will be sent to the environmental film festivals. Each month, there will be four production stages:

Week 1 – Preproduction: Writing the script and taking photos of the chosen location.

Week 2 – Production: Shooting footage, recording sound.

Week 3 – Postproduction: Editing, colour grading, music and sound design.

Week 4 – Publication: Publishing the work on the website and social media platforms.

FUNDRAISING STRATEGY

Budget, sponsors

Budget	
Above the Line	
Director & Staff	\$6000
Cast	\$750
Travel & Living	\$600
Production Expenses	
Camera	\$500
Production Sound	\$500
Production Staff	\$900
Transportation	\$400
Post-Production Expenses	
Film Editing	\$3000
Music	\$300
Visual Effects	\$150
Post Production Sound	\$1500
Other Expenses	
Publicity	\$1000
General Expense	\$300
Insurance	\$200
Total budget	\$16,100

The estimated total budget for the three PSAs is \$16,100. This amount will go to production and distribution. Finding sponsors to fund the project requires an understanding of the benefits that will interest each sponsor. Sponsors are usually interested in the way a project will represent their brand to the audience. The fact that this project is about an important environmental issue is an advantage for the sponsors. For example, when targeting a company, the proposal will mention the importance of highlighting and raising awareness about this problem; in addition, it will emphasise how being a contributor will demonstrate that the company supports important issues.

In addition, seeking sponsors who are already involved in raising awareness about environmental issues, such as Greenpeace and other environmental organisations, could be another option to support the project. The project will further be supported through sharing the PSAs on different environmental organisations' social media platforms, which will increase the chance of reaching a broader audience. There are multiple ways to sponsor and support this project, such as fundraising or contributing in marketing the project. The strategy is to target various sponsors to reach different communities that would be interested in the project.

SUMMARY

Final thoughts

This series of PSAs aims to reach an audience beyond environmentalists in order to encourage social change and raise awareness about the effects of plastic litter pollution on water. The project will highlight the issue in a poetic way that targets the general audience. Three different PSAs will highlight the issue in a continuous way. Social change requires consistency to happen. My next step will be finding more partners and sponsors who could potentially support the cause of this project.