



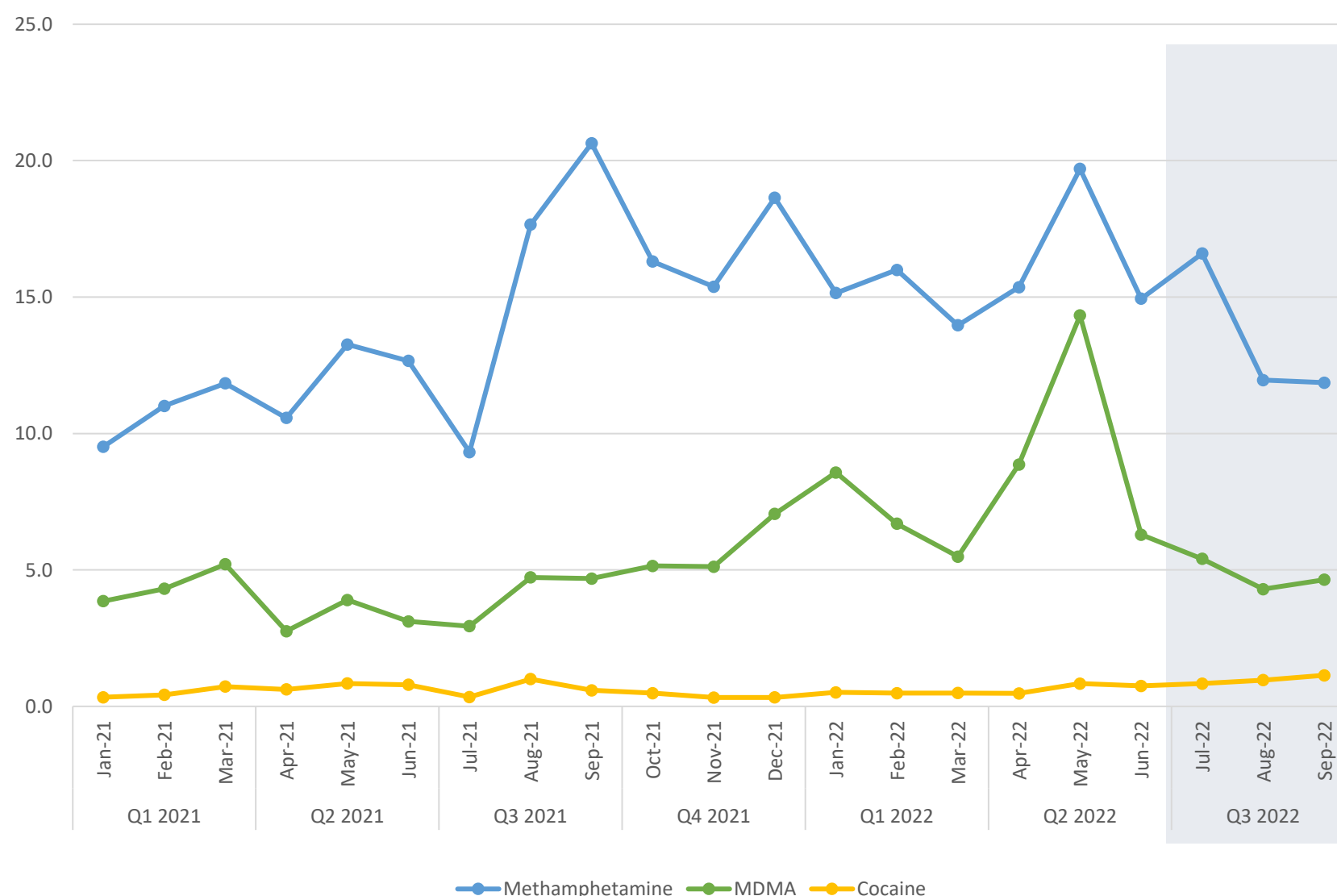
Wastewater Drug Testing in New Zealand: National Overview

Quarter Three: July – September 2022



- Wastewater testing occurs during one week each month, however the frequency of testing varies between sites. Nationwide testing started in November 2018, with current testing sites covering up to 75 percent of the total New Zealand population. While the nationwide programme tests for indicators of consumption of methamphetamine, MDMA, cocaine, heroin, and fentanyl, the three commodities routinely detected in sufficient quantities to accurately report on are methamphetamine, MDMA and cocaine.
- Q3 2022 covers the three month period between July and September 2022 (inclusive).
- All data is representative of the sites tested only. It is not possible to extrapolate this data to nearby communities that are not tested.
- Drug use is calculated from the concentration of each drug biomarker detected in the wastewater. This is reflective of the amount of pure drug being consumed and does not include fillers, binders or adulterants.
- The estimated dollar value generated from illicit drug distribution takes into consideration the estimated national drug use and the typical street price (per gram) of each commodity.
- The social harm cost estimates are derived from the New Zealand Illicit Drug Harm Index 2020 (DHI 2020). The DHI 2020 provides a conservative measure of the harms associated with the use of illicit drugs in New Zealand and considers both personal and community harms.

Estimated National Drug Use (kilograms/week)



KEY FINDINGS

METHAMPHETAMINE

- Methamphetamine consumption decreased in Q3 2022 to an average of 13.5 kilograms per week. This was below the average quantity detected over the previous four quarters (19 percent or 3.1 kilograms below). It is likely a reduction in methamphetamine availability in New Zealand has impacted on consumption rates in August and September 2022.
- Of the sites tested, Northland District consumed the most methamphetamine per capita consuming an average of 909 mg/day/1000 people. This was above the national average of 559 mg/day/1000 people.
- The 13.5 kilograms of methamphetamine consumed per week in Q3 2022 equates to an estimated weekly cost of \$14.9 million in social harm.
- Approximately \$4.7 million per week was generated from methamphetamine distribution across New Zealand sample sites in Q3 2022.

MDMA

- MDMA consumption also decreased in Q3 2022 to an average of 4.8 kilograms per week. This was below the average quantity detected over the previous four quarters (28 percent or 1.9 kilograms below).
- Of the sites tested, Southern District consumed the most MDMA per capita consuming an average of 381 mg/day/1000 people. This was above the national average of 202 mg/day/1000 people.
- The 4.8 kilograms of MDMA consumed per week in Q3 2022 equates to an estimated weekly cost of \$0.66 million in social harm.
- Approximately \$1.4 million per week was generated from MDMA distribution across New Zealand sample sites in Q3 2022.

COCAINE

- Cocaine consumption increased in Q3 2022 to an average of 0.98 kilograms per week. This was above the average quantity detected over the previous four quarters (70 percent or 0.4 kilograms above).
- Of the sites tested, Tāmaki Makaurau continued to consume the most cocaine per capita consuming an average of 69 mg/day/1000 people. This was above the national average of 41 mg/day/1000 people.
- The 0.98 kilograms of cocaine consumed per week in Q3 2022 equates to an estimated weekly cost of \$0.29 million in social harm.
- Approximately \$0.39 million per week was generated from cocaine distribution across New Zealand sample sites in Q3 2022.



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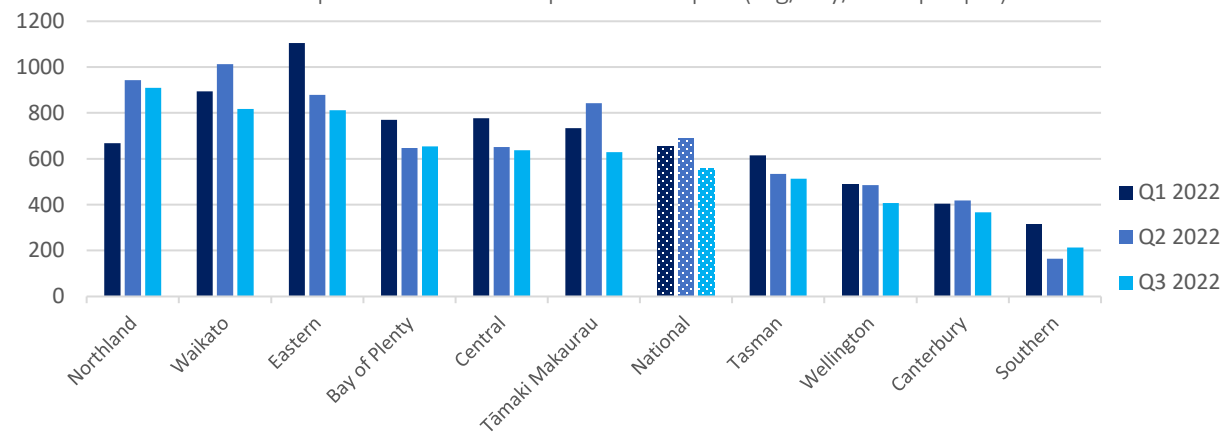
Quarter Three: July – September 2022



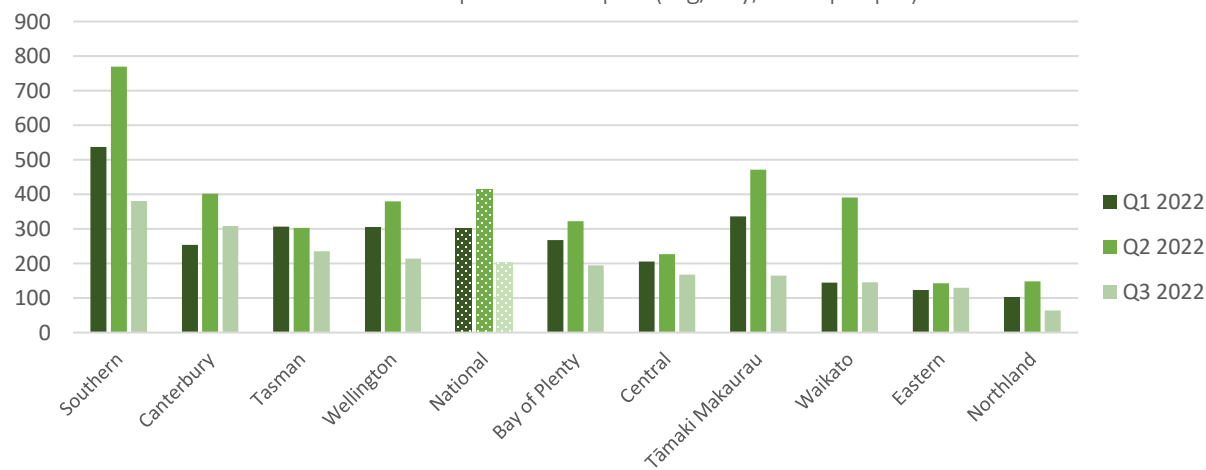
- Per capita drug consumption is shown as milligrams consumed per day, per 1,000 people. As a number of locations are tested every second month, the presence or absence of data from some sites within a district will affect the total load and per capita consumption rates reported each quarter.
- The average weekly drug use pie charts show the average estimated drug use (in grams) for each commodity per district during Q3 2022. As this data is not adjusted for population, larger metropolitan areas record higher quantities of drug use per week due to the larger number of people in the catchment zone.
- Population updates were applied in January 2022, these have impacted the per capita data for some districts. Most notably, the population update for Northland district resulted in a 27 percent decrease in per capita consumption rates. This means the per capita results from Q1 – Q3 2022 cannot be directly compared with results from previous reports. Further information is available from the NDIB. Additionally, Kaitiaki was unable to be sampled during Q1. This has also impacted the per capita consumption rates for Northland in Q1.

PER CAPITA DRUG CONSUMPTION BY DISTRICT: Q3 2022

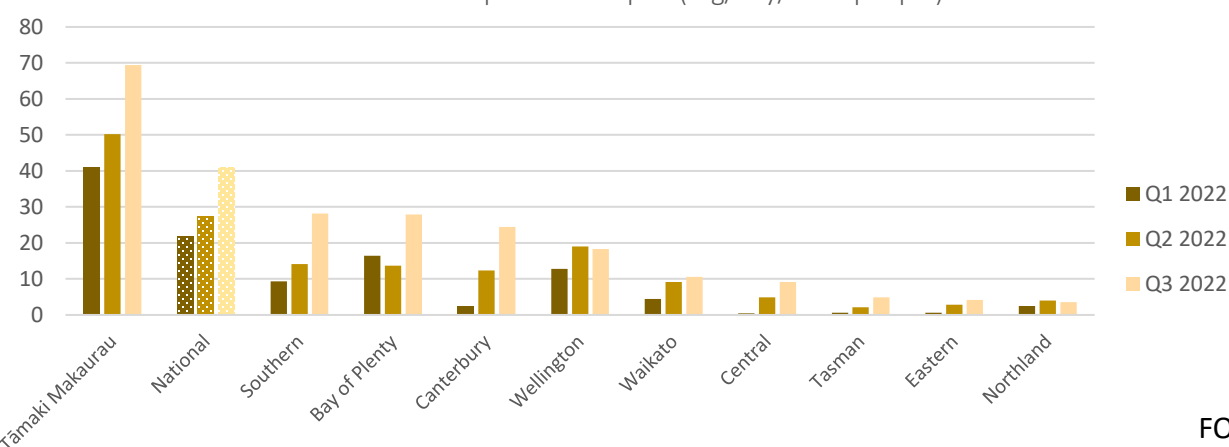
Methamphetamine Consumption Per Capita (mg/day/1000 people)



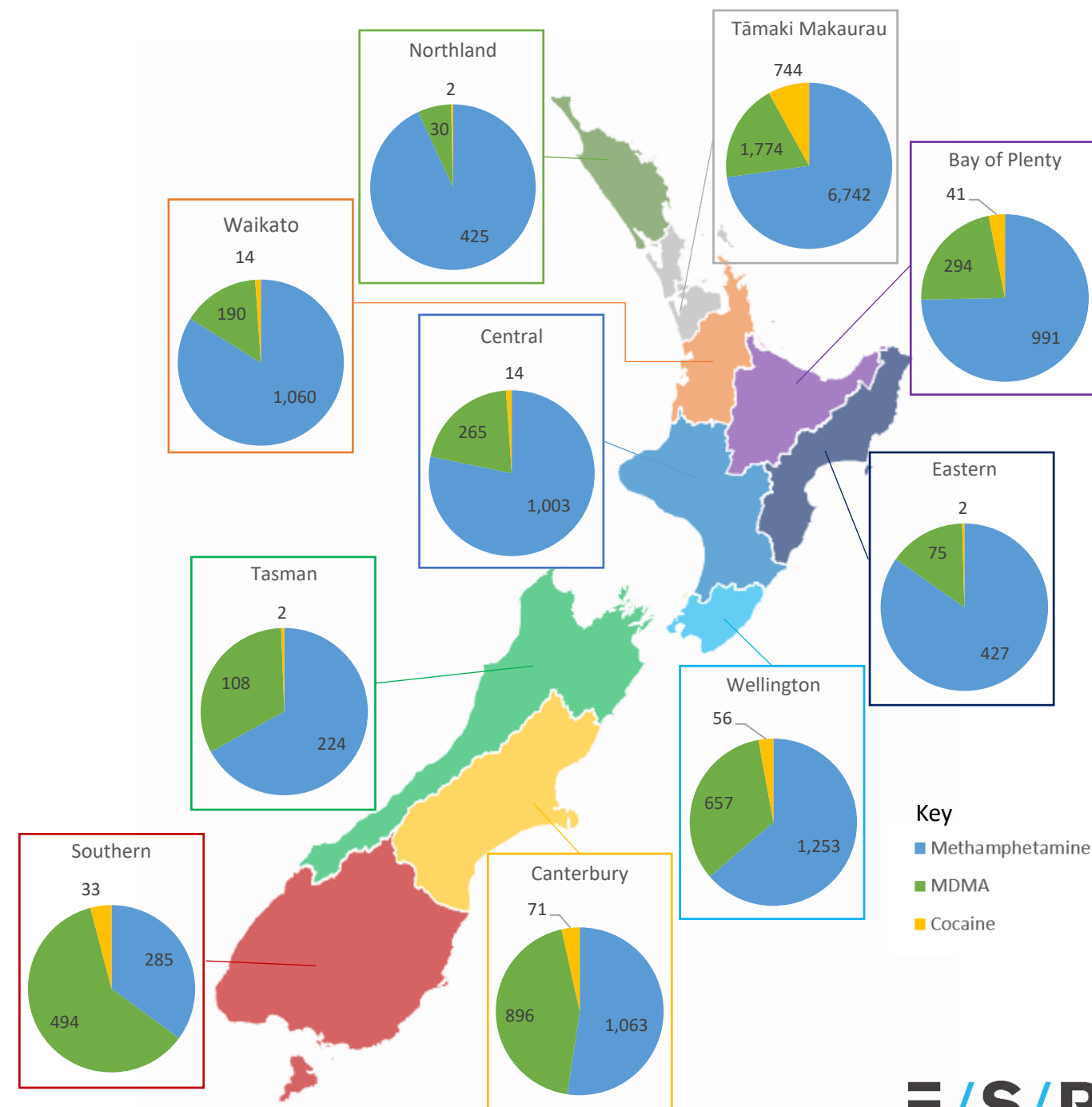
MDMA Consumption Per Capita (mg/day/1000 people)



Cocaine Consumption Per Capita (mg/day/1000 people)



AVERAGE WEEKLY DRUG USE BY DISTRICT Q3 2022 (GRAMS)



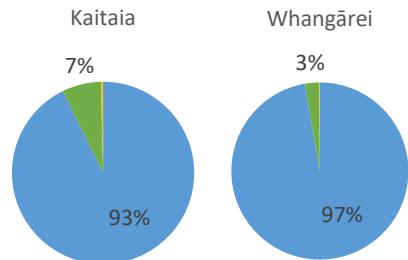


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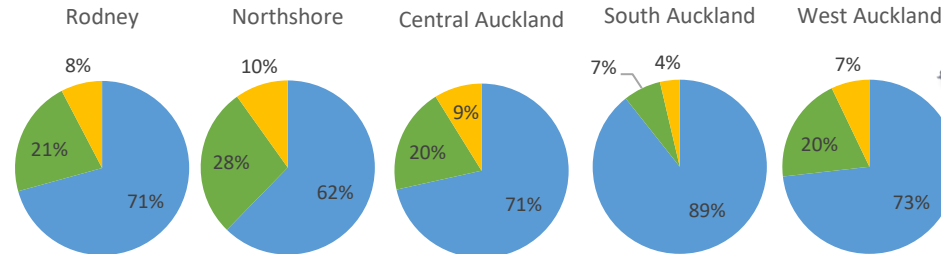
Quarter Three: July – September 2022

➤ The graphs below illustrate the proportion of drug use detected within catchment areas during Q3 2022. Tokoroa was unable to be sampled during Q3 2022 and therefore has been omitted from the chart.

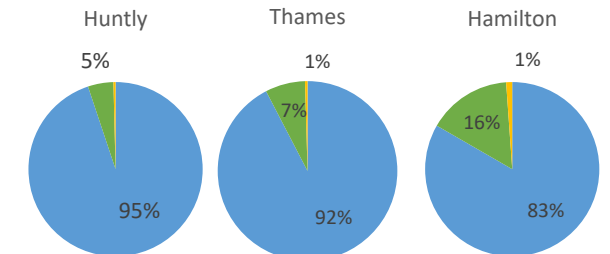
NORTHLAND



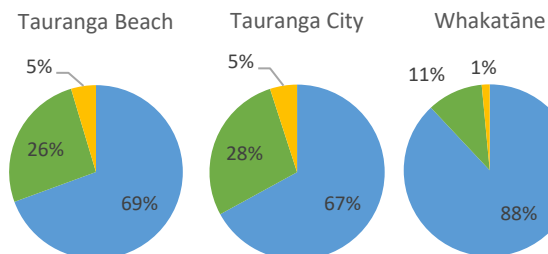
TĀMAKI MAKĀURAU



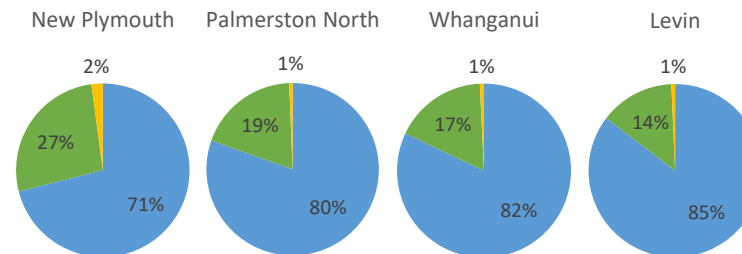
WAIKATO



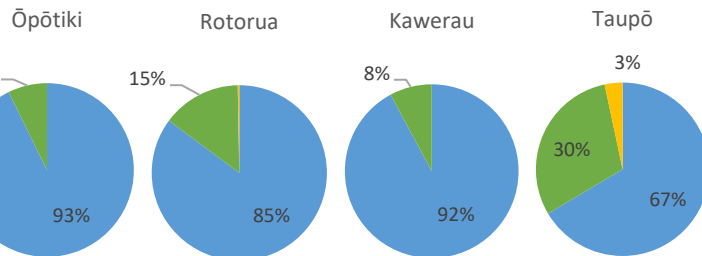
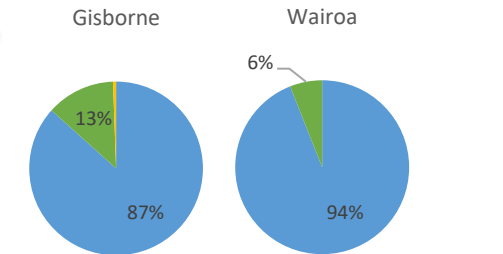
BAY OF PLENTY



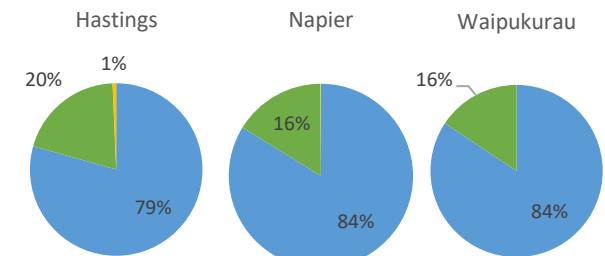
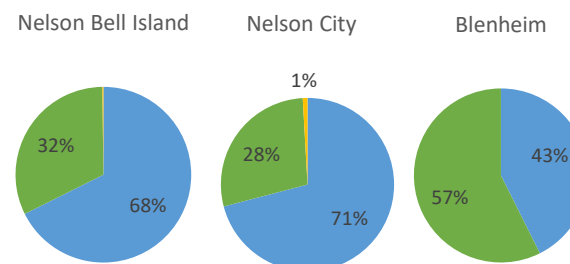
CENTRAL



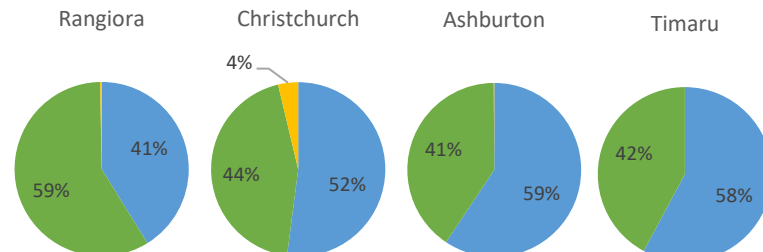
EASTERN



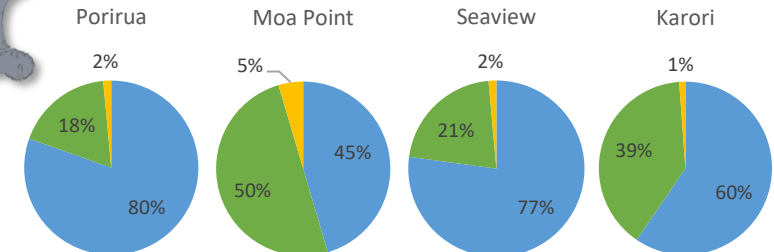
TASMAN



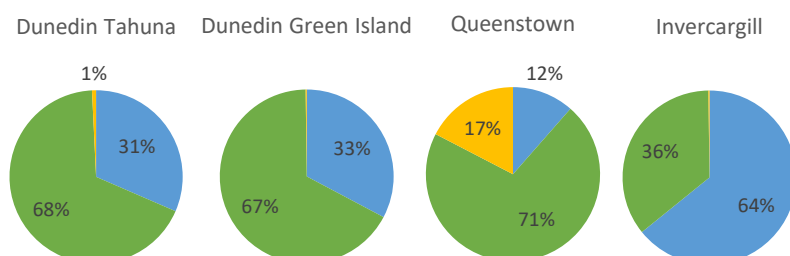
CANTERBURY



WELLINGTON



SOUTHERN



Key

