CECAN Case Study: QCA and the Environment Agency’s evaluation of waste crime

Co-produced case studies
Waste crime crackdown shuts 25 illegal sites a week

But number of successful prosecutions from illegal waste and fly-tipping down on year before, says Environment Agency

A crackdown on illegal waste and fly-tipping resulted in 1,279 unlicensed dumping sites being shut down in England last year – roughly 25 every week – according to figures published by the Environment Agency.
Complexity and evaluation challenges

1. **Nexus** – cuts across nexus domains

2. **Complex** – large number of variables, often interacting

3. **Evaluation challenges** – interventions often used in combination or sequence

4. **Methodological innovation** – EA keen to explore a more behavioural/contextual approach to evaluation

5. **Potential Impact** – A pilot of how the EA might approach evaluation of regulatory activity more broadly across Agency
So what did we do?

1) **Methods scoping workshop** (November 2016)

2) **QCA design workshop** (April 2017)
Next steps…

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Case file, case officer, (maybe CMS)
Key learning and insights

- Methodological innovation in context
- Building evaluation capacity and confidence
- Facilitating expertise exchange
Key role of champions

“CECAN has helped to introduce complexity-compatible evaluation methods into our work to understand the effectiveness of our interventions to prevent waste crime. This support, in particular using Qualitative Comparative Analysis, has helped us to take our evaluation of this work to a level which we would not otherwise have achieved.”

Dr Jon Greaves
(Senior Evaluation Adviser, Environment Agency)