



Voices of Concern Raised over Global Environmental Problems
Results of the Sixth Annual
“Questionnaire on Environmental Problems and the Survival of Humankind”
Asahi Glass Foundation

The Asahi Glass Foundation, chaired by Jiro Furumoto, has once again carried out its survey to gauge the perceptions of respondents—mainly specialists from both governmental organizations (GOs) and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) concerned with global environmental problems—regarding the progress of efforts to conserve the environment since the Earth Summit. This year marks the fifth year since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, or Earth Summit, was held in Rio de Janeiro. During 1996, the Earth Summit +5 convention was held in March, and in June the Special Session of the General Assembly to Review and Appraise the Implementation of Agenda 21 was convened, helping shed light on international cooperative approaches to solving global environmental problems. In December this year, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP3) will be held in Kyoto. Accordingly, this year’s survey includes questions about expectations for COP3, the progress of efforts to conserve the environment, and relationships between economically advanced and developing countries. The Foundation would like to express its gratitude to Professor Akio Morishima of the Faculty of Law of Sophia University for again providing invaluable advice at all stages of the project.

A Summary of Questionnaire Results

Expectations for COP3

The third meeting of signatories of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP3) will be held with the goal of reducing emissions of carbon dioxide in economically advanced countries after the year 2000. There are currently no plans to introduce limits on emissions in developing countries.

- * The most commonly chosen responses included “stronger legal backing for targets to make them binding for participating countries” and “pledges by countries to carry out measures designed to achieve the targets,” indicating support for the effective, binding enforcement of targets.
- * More than 70% of respondents from all regions support setting definite standards at COP3.
- * More than a quarter of all respondents indicated that carbon dioxide emission standards should be set for developing countries by the year 2000 (and more than half by the year 2005), showing eagerness for setting standards in the near future.

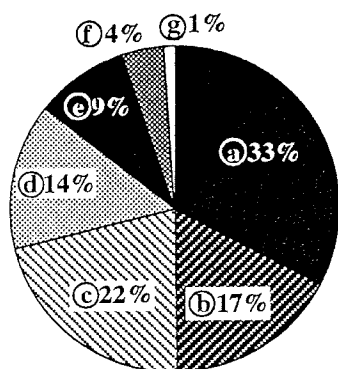
Efforts to Solve Global Environmental Problems

- * Opinions regarding progress on environmental issues since the Earth Summit were harsh; little progress was reported in many areas.
- * When asked to choose the areas in which the most effort should be focused, respondents named “changes in individual attitudes about the environment” first, and “more effective action at the national level and new legislation” second.
- * Respondents were asked to choose answers describing how they felt economically advanced and developing regions should work together. The top response was that economically advanced nations should set a good example and make environmental considerations more of a priority in their economies. The number two response was that economically advanced and developing nations should create programs to promote cooperation on environmental preservation issues.
- * Respondents were asked how they felt about reducing waste and adapting from a modern “throwaway” lifestyle to a more frugal way of life. The sum of responses of “currently do not pursue a wasteful lifestyle,” “plan to adapt,” and “could adapt to some extent” exceeded 85% of respondents from Japan and 89% for respondents from other countries. Although 32% of respondents from countries other than Japan answered that they currently do not pursue a wasteful lifestyle, only 2% of Japanese replied likewise.
- * A large majority of respondents from every region surveyed reported that they are endeavoring to carry out environmentally friendly activities in their daily lives.
- * Asked to indicate on a time scale their level of concern about the survival prospects of humankind, respondents on average showed “extreme concern” for the second year in a row. In general, respondents from Japan showed less concern than those from other regions, and women indicated greater concern than men.

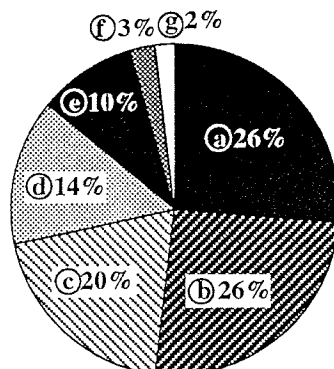
The most commonly chosen responses regarding expectations for COP3 included “stronger legal backing for targets to make them binding for participating countries” and “pledges by countries to carry out measures designed to achieve the targets,” indicating support for the effective, binding enforcement of targets.

Respondents from economically developed countries, including Japan, chose stronger legal backing for targets as their number one response. Those surveyed from developing countries tended to support pledges by countries to carry out measures designed to achieve the targets. More than 70% chose either one of the above answers or “more leadership from economically advanced countries on policy proposals and their implementation.” Thus, in general, respondents showed strong support for the effective, binding enforcement of emissions targets.

Economically Advanced Regions
(Japan, the U.S. & Canada, Western Europe)



Developing Regions
(Asia, Latin America, Africa)



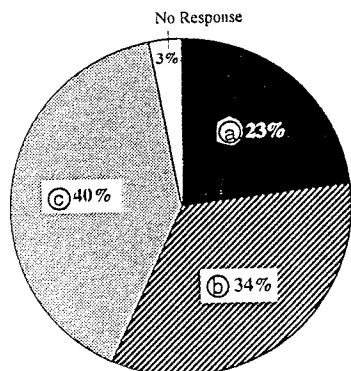
- (a) Stronger legal backing for targets to make them binding for participating countries
- (b) Pledges made by each country to carry out measures designed to achieve the targets
- (c) More leadership from host nation Japan and other economically advanced nations on policy proposals and their implementation
- (d) Broader awareness of global warming among corporations and individuals
- (e) Stricter emissions targets
- (f) Greater voice given to NGOs in policy formation
- (g) No response

(Reference: Page 17 of Questionnaire Report)

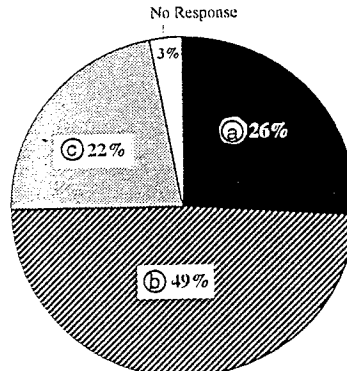
More than 70% of respondents from all regions support setting definite standards at COP3.

Approximately a quarter of respondents from both economically advanced and developing regions agreed that fair standards in setting targets are of the highest priority even if this means that no definite standards are set before the end of COP3. However, 40% of respondents from economically advanced regions (Japan, the United States and Canada, and Western Europe) favored stricter standards at the expense of fairness. In addition, 49% of respondents from developing regions (Asia, Latin America and Africa) answered that temporary standards should be set even if they are relatively lax. The total of responses in favor of either stricter standards or temporary standards exceeded 70% for all regions, indicating that a large majority of respondents hope to see definite standards set at COP3.

Economically Advanced Regions
(Japan, the U.S. & Canada, Western Europe)

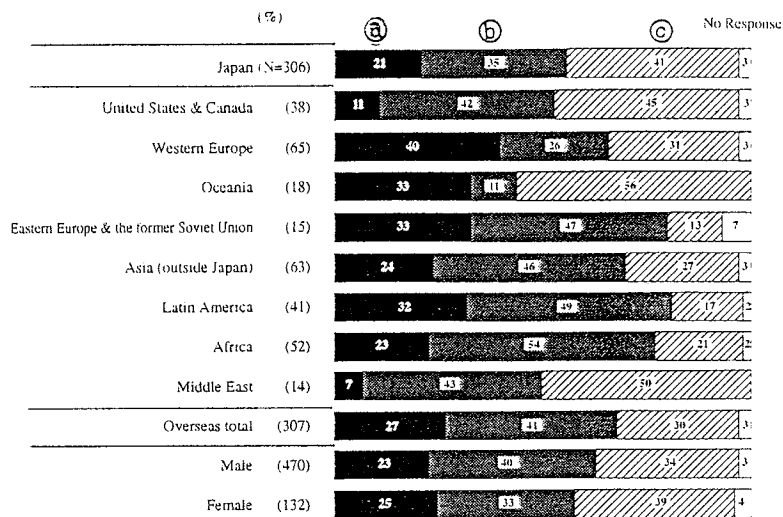


Developing Regions
(Asia, Latin America, Africa)



- (a) Guaranteeing fairly imposed standards is of the highest priority. If fair standards cannot be agreed upon at COP3, then deliberations should continue afterward.
- (b) Guaranteeing fairly imposed standards is important. If an agreement is difficult to reach at COP3, then temporary standards should be set even if they are relatively lax.
- (c) It is not important for fair standards to be guaranteed. Nations participating in COP3 should put aside questions of fairness and agree to impose stricter standards.

Respondents from economically advanced regions, including Japan, the United States and Canada, and Western Europe, supported the statement that nations should put aside questions of fairness and agree on stricter standards, but coming in a close second was the statement that guaranteeing fairly imposed standards is important, and if no agreement could be reached at COP3 then temporary standards, even if lax, should be set. Although 40% of respondents from Western Europe supported the statement that guaranteeing fairly imposed standards is of the highest priority and deliberations should continue if standards cannot be agreed upon at COP3, this response was the least popular overall. Respondents from developing regions (Asia, Latin America and Africa) showed overwhelming support in favor of temporary but fair standards.



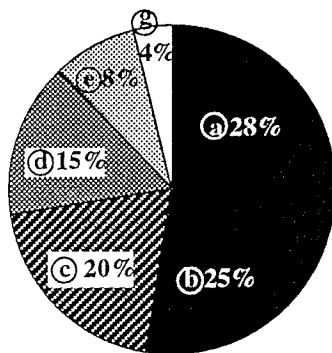
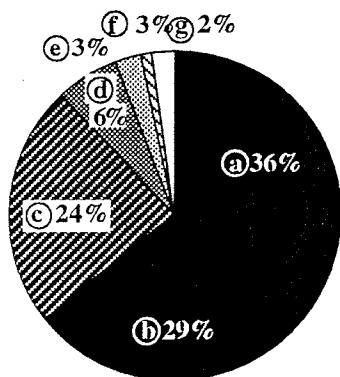
(Reference: Pages 18 and 19 of Questionnaire Report)

More than a quarter of all respondents indicated that carbon dioxide emission standards should be set for developing countries by the year 2000 (and more than half by the year 2005), showing eagerness for setting standards in the near future.

COP3 will be held with the goal of reducing emissions of carbon dioxide in economically advanced countries after the year 2000, and there are currently no plans to introduce limits on emissions in developing countries. However, more than 35% of respondents from developed regions, including Japan, answered that emissions should be restricted in developing countries by the year 2000. More than 60% of these respondents said that standards should be set by or before 2005. For respondents from developing regions, more than half answered that emissions should be restricted by or before the year 2005. Regardless of region, respondents showed eager support for setting standards in the near future.

Economically Advanced Regions
(Japan, the U.S. & Canada, Western Europe)

Developing Regions
(Asia, Latin America, Africa)

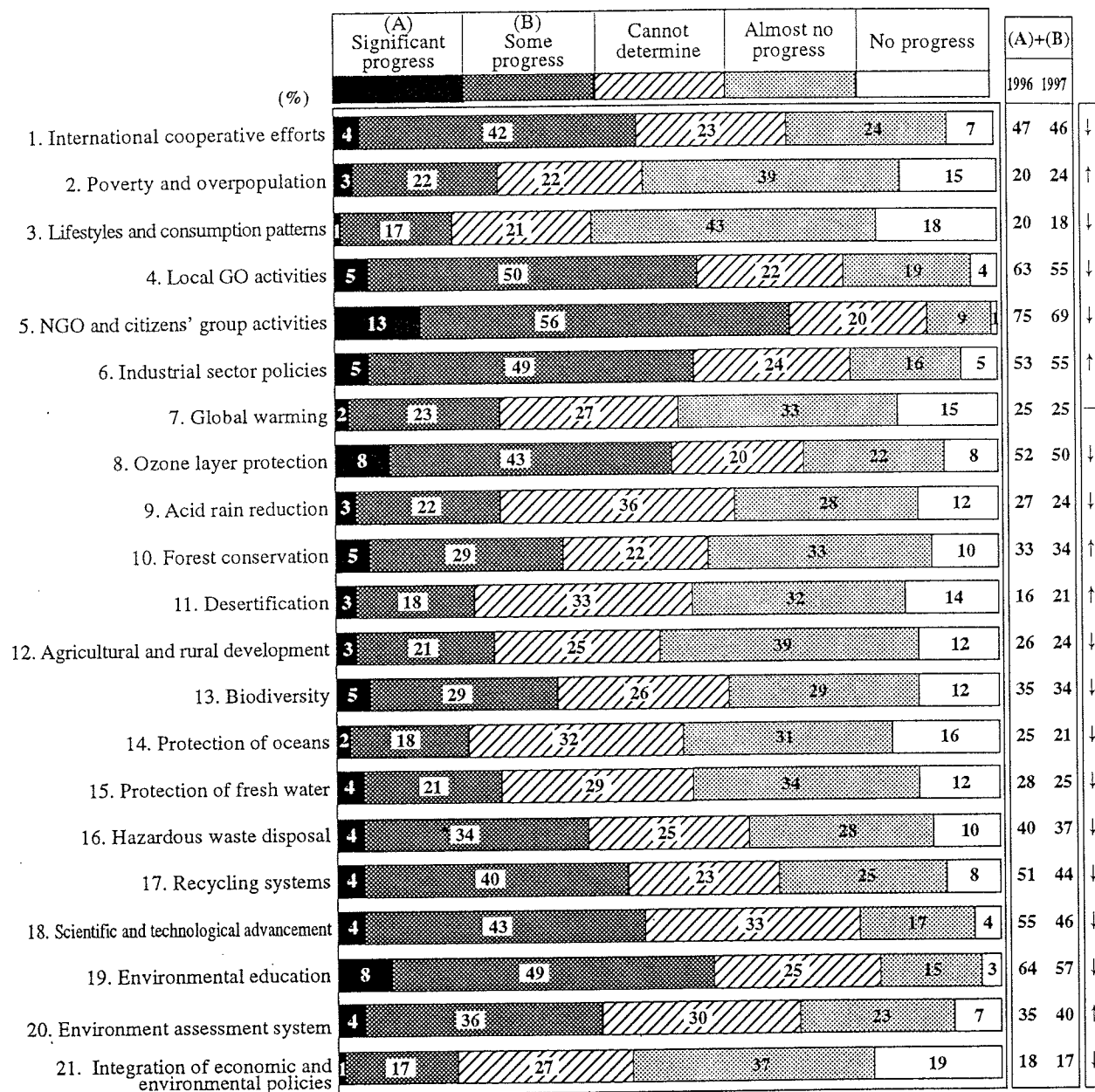


- (a) 2000
- (b) 2005
- (c) 2010
- (d) 2020
- (e) After the year 2030
- (f) Developing nations should not be restricted by carbon dioxide emission standards in the future.
- (g) No response

(Reference: Page 20 of Questionnaire Report)

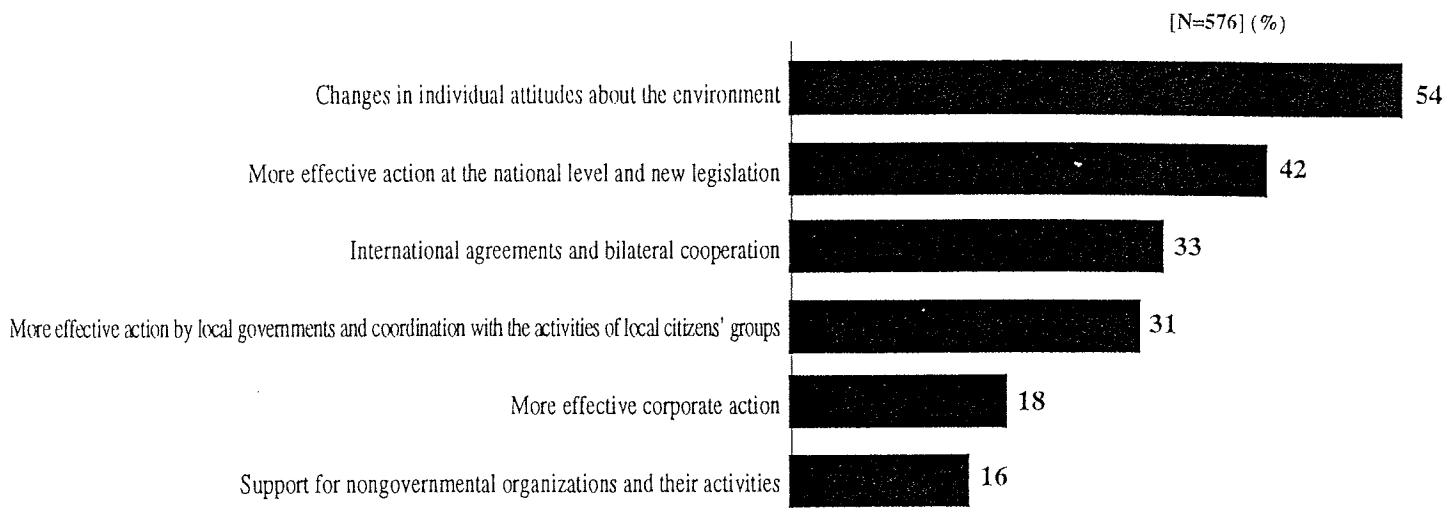
Opinions regarding progress on environmental issues since the Earth Summit were harsh; little progress was reported in many areas.

This year, the fifth since the Earth Summit was convened, respondents reported very little progress on environmental issues. Only a few specific areas were judged to have made any progress since 1993. Items in which progress since 1993 was evaluated positively included activities by NGOs and citizens' groups, environmental policies of the industrial sector and the formation of recycling systems.



Notes: In cases where no answer has been indicated by a respondent, a response of "Cannot determine" has been recorded. The column labeled "Progress" shows the sum of "Significant progress" and "Some progress" responses.

When asked to choose the areas in which the most effort should be focused, respondents named “changes in individual attitudes about the environment” first, and “more effective action at the national level and new legislation” second.



The most popular choice of respondents from all regions except Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union and the Middle East was changes in individual attitudes about the environment. The number two answer for respondents from Japan, Western Europe, Oceania, Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, and the Middle East was more effective action at the national level. The second most popular answer for respondents from the United States and Canada, Asia, Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East was more effective action by local governments and coordination with the activities of local citizens' groups.

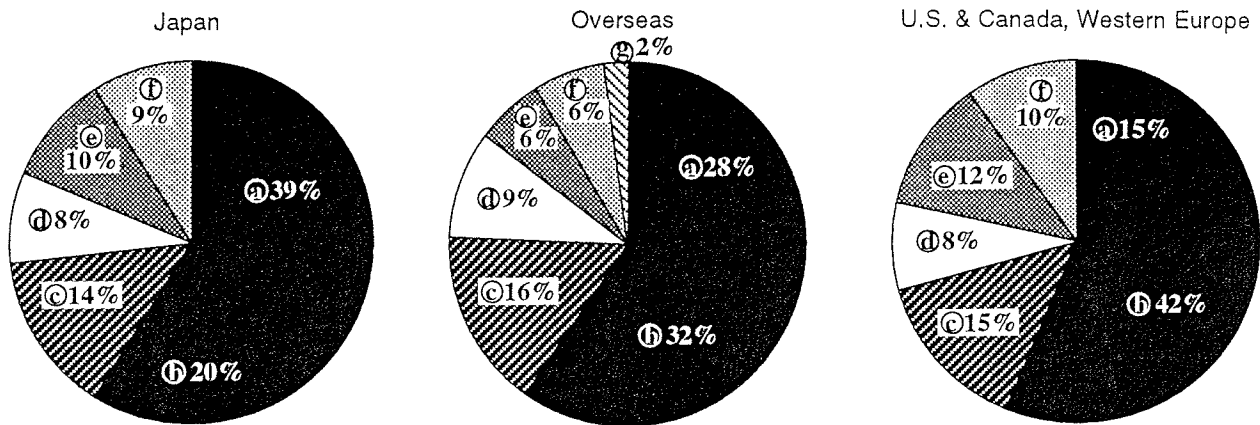
(%)

	Japan (N=306)	U.S. and Canada (38)	Western Europe (65)	Oceania (18)	Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union (15)	Asia (outside Japan) (15)	Latin America (63)	Africa (52)	Middle East (14)	Overseas total (307)
Changes in individual attitudes about the environment	54	46	59	59	38	61	50	53	46	54
More effective action at the national level and new legislation	42	32	48	53	54	42	37	38	54	42
International agreements and bilateral cooperation	37	32	33	35	69	14	34	21	8	28
More effective action by local governments and coordination with the activities of local citizens' groups	22	41	24	35	23	49	45	49	46	40
More effective corporate action	22	27	21	6	8	7	16	9	8	14
Support for nongovernmental organizations and their activities	14	19	16	12	8	19	13	26	38	19

Notes: Number one items in each category are marked with a circle. Number two items are indicated with a dotted circle. In the chart above, a “0” is used to express the range of 0.1% to 0.4%. A dash represents figures below 0.1%. Responses of up to two items have been considered valid.

Respondents were asked to choose answers describing how they felt economically advanced and developing regions should work together. The top response was that economically advanced nations should set a good example and make environmental considerations more of a priority in their economies. This number two response was that economically advanced and developing nations should create programs to promote cooperation on environmental preservation issues.

The top response to this question, that economically advanced nations should set a good example and make environmental considerations more of a priority in their economies, garnered support from 32% of non-Japanese respondents and particularly strong support from the United States and Canada, and Western Europe. Japanese respondents indicated more support for programs to promote cooperation on environmental issues and less support for environmentally sound import policies.



- a) Developing countries and economically advanced nations should create programs to promote cooperation on environmental preservation issues.
- b) Economically advanced nations should make environmental considerations more of a priority in their economies, and developing countries should take care not to follow the examples of environmentally destructive activities set by wealthy countries.
- c) Economically advanced countries should provide developing nations with more economic and technological aid for environmental conservation.
- d) To increase the effectiveness of cooperative environmental efforts, developing nations should institute stricter domestic environmental measures and implement environmental education programs.
- e) Multinational corporations active in developing nations should pursue sound environmental policies that can serve as positive models for local businesses.
- f) To help conserve the environment, economically advanced countries should adopt environmentally sound import policies and prohibit imports of products associated with environmental destruction.
- g) No response

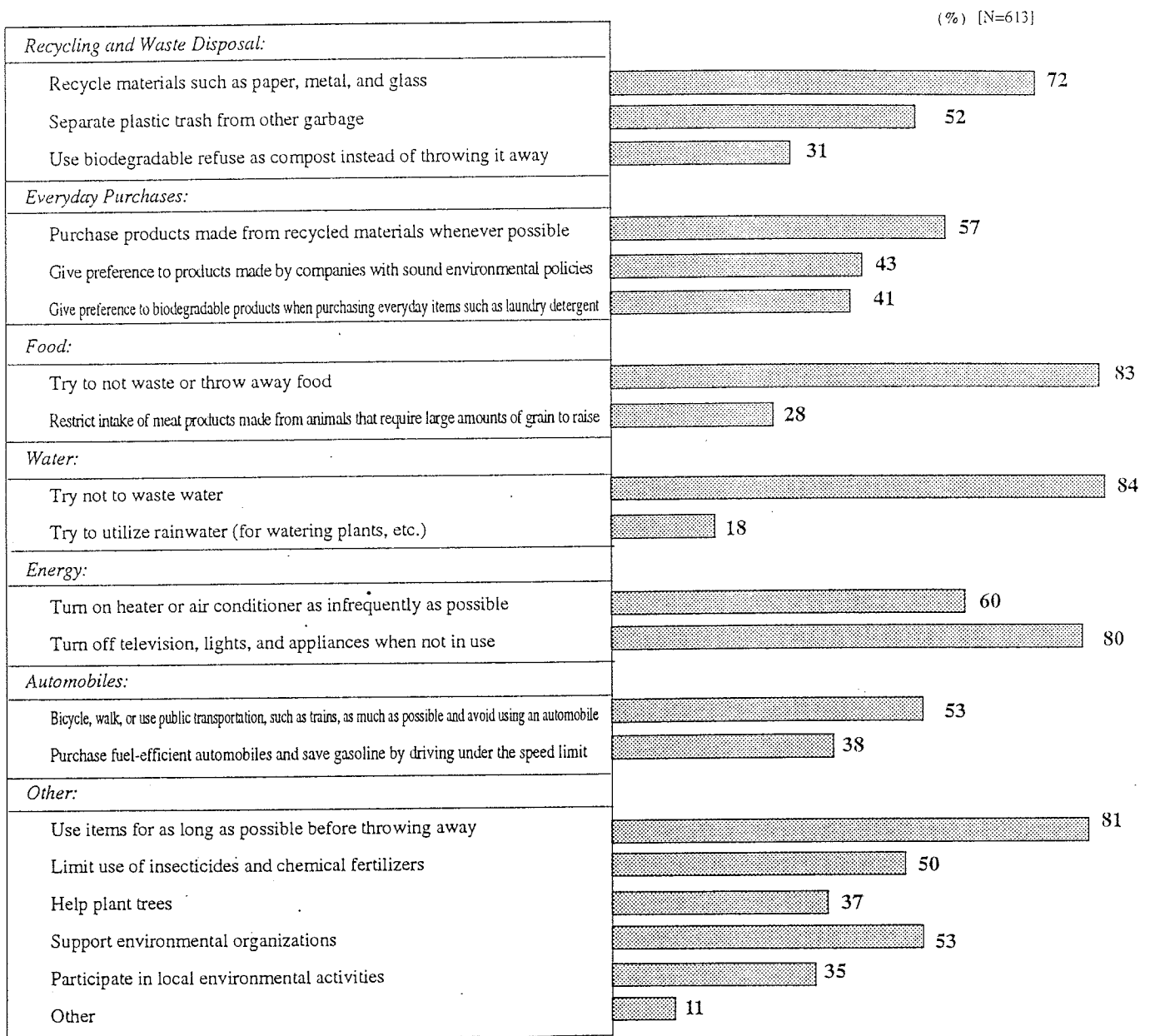
Respondents from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, Asia, Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East showed particularly strong support for the statement that economically advanced and developing nations should create programs to promote cooperation on environmental preservation issues.

(%)	Japan (N=206)	U.S. and Canada (38)	Western Europe (65)	Oceania (18)	Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union (15)	Asia (outside Japan) (63)	Latin America (41)	Africa (52)	Middle East (14)	Overseas total (307)	Total (613)
a	39	8	18	22	47	35	29	35	50	28	33
b	20	58	32	33	40	24	20	31	29	32	26
c	14	5	20	11	7	22	24	13	7	16	15
d	8	5	9	6	-	10	15	13	7	9	9
e	10	11	12	6	-	3	2	6	-	6	8
f	9	13	8	17	-	3	7	-	7	6	8
g	-	-	-	6	7	3	2	2	-	2	1

Notes: Number one items in each category are marked with a circle. Number two items are indicated with a dotted circle. In the chart above, a "0" is used to express the range of 0.1% to 0.4%. A dash represents figures below 0.1%.

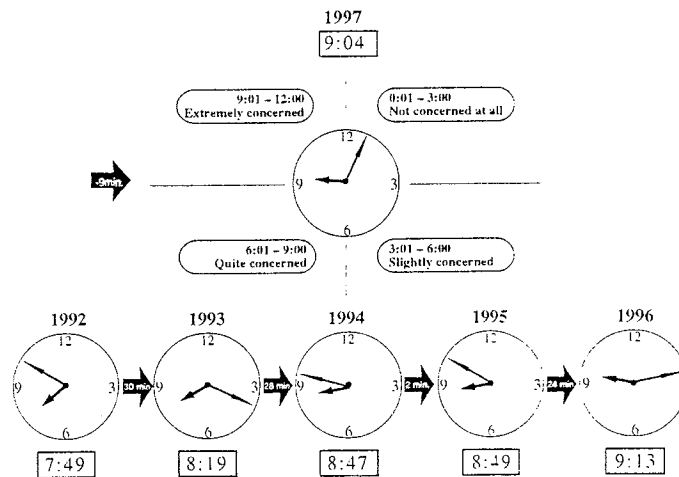
A large majority of respondents from every region surveyed reported that they are endeavoring to carry out environmentally friendly activities in their daily lives.

Respondents were asked to indicate from a long list which environmentally friendly activities they engage in. More than 80% of respondents indicated that they conserve water, try not to waste food, use items for as long as possible before discarding and conserve electricity. In addition, a majority of respondents reported that they recycle, limit use of air conditioning and heat, purchase products made from recycled materials, limit use of automobiles, support environmental organizations and separate plastic trash from other garbage.

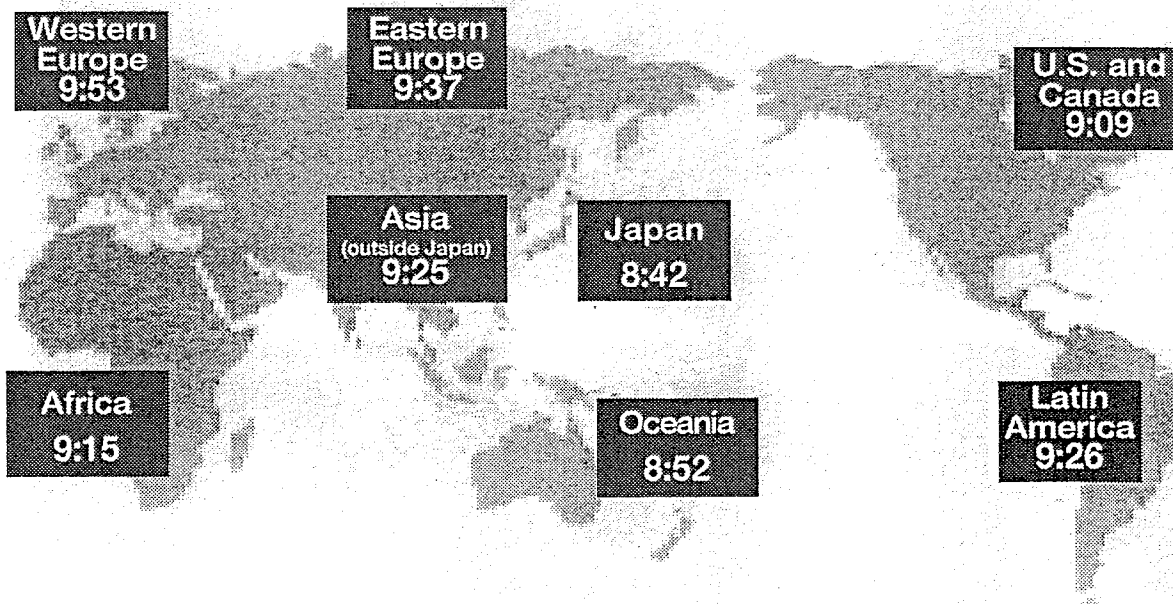


Asked to indicate on a time scale their level of concern about the survival prospects of humankind, respondents on average showed “extreme concern” for the second year in a row. In general, respondents from Japan showed less concern than those from other regions, and women indicated greater concern than men.

Since the first survey was conducted in 1992, respondents have been asked to indicate with a time their concern about the survival prospects of humankind in light of the deterioration of the environment, using a clock as a scale. The overall average time response, which was 7:49 in 1992, grew progressively later until last year, when the average time response was later than 9:00 and therefore crossed into the realm of extreme concern. This year’s average response of 9:04 was nine minutes earlier than in the previous year but remained in the time range of extreme concern. Unchanged from previous years, the greatest concern was shown by Western Europe and the least by Japan. Also as in past years, the average time reported by women remained later than that for men.



Humanity in Crisis changes in Responses by Region



Male	Female
8:57	9:30

Facts about the Questionnaire

Response period: Questionnaires were sent out in April 1997 with a return deadline in June 1997.

Questionnaire respondent pool: Selected from members of GOs and NGOs in the United Nations Environment Program and Asahi Glass Foundation databases.

Questionnaires mailed: 3,207

Questionnaires returned: 613⁽¹⁾

Response rate: 19.1%

Breakdown of respondents by age, sex and occupational affiliation:

Region	Number of responses	(Percent of total)
Japan	306	(49.9)
United States & Canada	38	(6.2)
Western Europe	65	(10.6)
Oceania	18	(2.9)
Eastern Europe & the former Soviet Union	15	(2.4)
Asia (outside Japan)	63	(10.3)
Latin America	41	(6.7)
Africa	52	(8.5)
Middle East	14	(2.3)
No response ⁽²⁾	1	(0.2)
Total	613	(100.0)

Sex		
Male	470	(76.7)
Female	132	(21.5)
No response	11	(1.8)
Total	613	(100.0)

Occupational affiliation		
Central government	168	(27.4)
Local government	100	(16.3)
University or research institution	81	(13.2)
Nongovernmental organization	158	(25.8)
Other	96	(15.7)
No response	10	(1.6)
Total	613	(100.0)

Notes: (1) All percentages in this analysis were calculated based on the 613 replies received. Percentages are rounded to the nearest tenth in most cases with some rounded to the nearest hundredth.

(2) The one reply of "No response" recorded under "Region" was from a respondent from outside Japan and so is included in the overseas total, when applicable.

For more information, please contact: Nobuaki Kunii
The Asahi Glass Foundation
2nd floor, Science Plaza, 5-3 Yonbancho
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102, Japan

Domestic Tel. (03) 5275-0620
Fax (03) 5275-0871

International Tel. +813 5275-0620
Fax +813 5275-0871

E-mail post@af-info.or.jp