



GOING GREEN

Environmental Engagement
& Future Outlook
among Older Adults



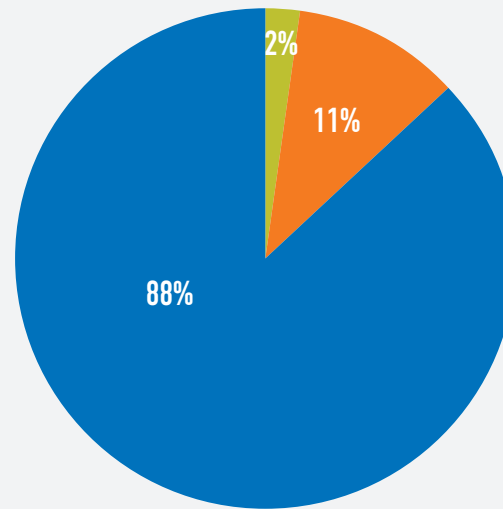
Based on a survey by Mather Institute of 658 people age 55 and better, the majority of older adults believe that preserving the environment is a top priority and engage in a wide variety of environmentally friendly practices. However, while older adults support protecting the environment, they aren't hopeful that current efforts will have a lasting impact.



OVERALL FINDINGS

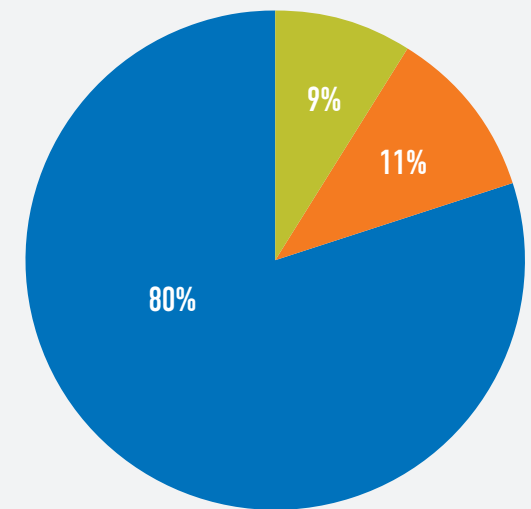
Almost 9 out of 10 respondents believe that it is very/extremely important to protect the environment, and 80% agree/strongly agree that protecting the environment is an urgent and immediate problem, as shown in the charts on the right.

HOW IMPORTANT IS IT TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT?



- Very important/Extremely important
- Somewhat important
- Not at all important/Not so important

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT IS AN URGENT AND IMMEDIATE PROBLEM

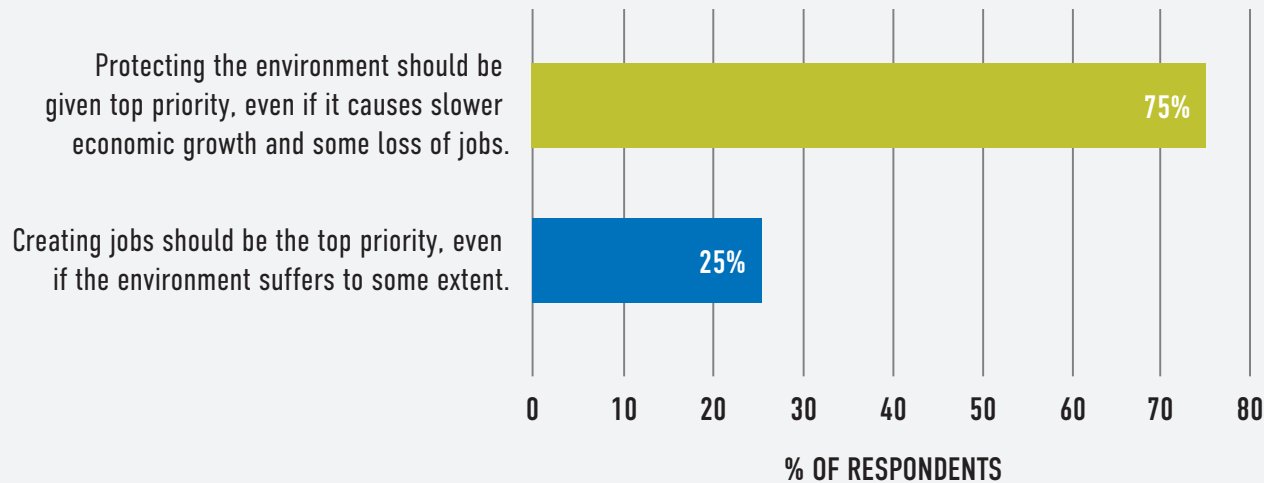


- Agree/Strongly agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Strongly disagree/Disagree

ENVIRONMENT RANKS HIGHER THAN ECONOMY

The vast majority of respondents indicated that protecting the environment is more important than the economy. **When asked to choose whether to prioritize protecting the environment or creating jobs, 75% of respondents indicated they believe that protecting the environment should be given priority over economic growth, even if it results in some job loss, as illustrated below.**

WHICH OF THESE STATEMENTS COMES CLOSER TO YOUR VIEW, EVEN IF NEITHER IS EXACTLY RIGHT?



75%

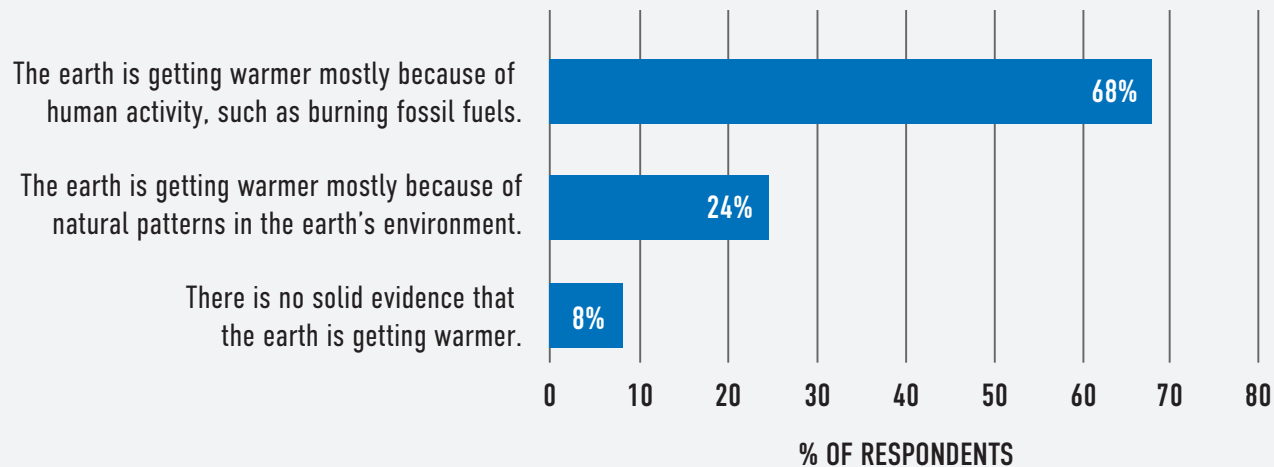
of respondents

believe that protecting
the environment should
be given priority over
economic growth,
even if it results in
some job loss.

CLIMATE CHANGE IS REAL

Not surprisingly, 92% of respondents recognize that climate change is real. Among those who believe that it is real, most believe that climate change is a man-made problem. 68% of respondents believe that the earth is getting warmer mostly because of human activity, such as burning fossil fuels. Only a quarter of respondents believe that the earth is getting warmer mostly because of natural patterns in the environment. Less than 10% believe that there is no solid evidence that the earth is getting warmer.

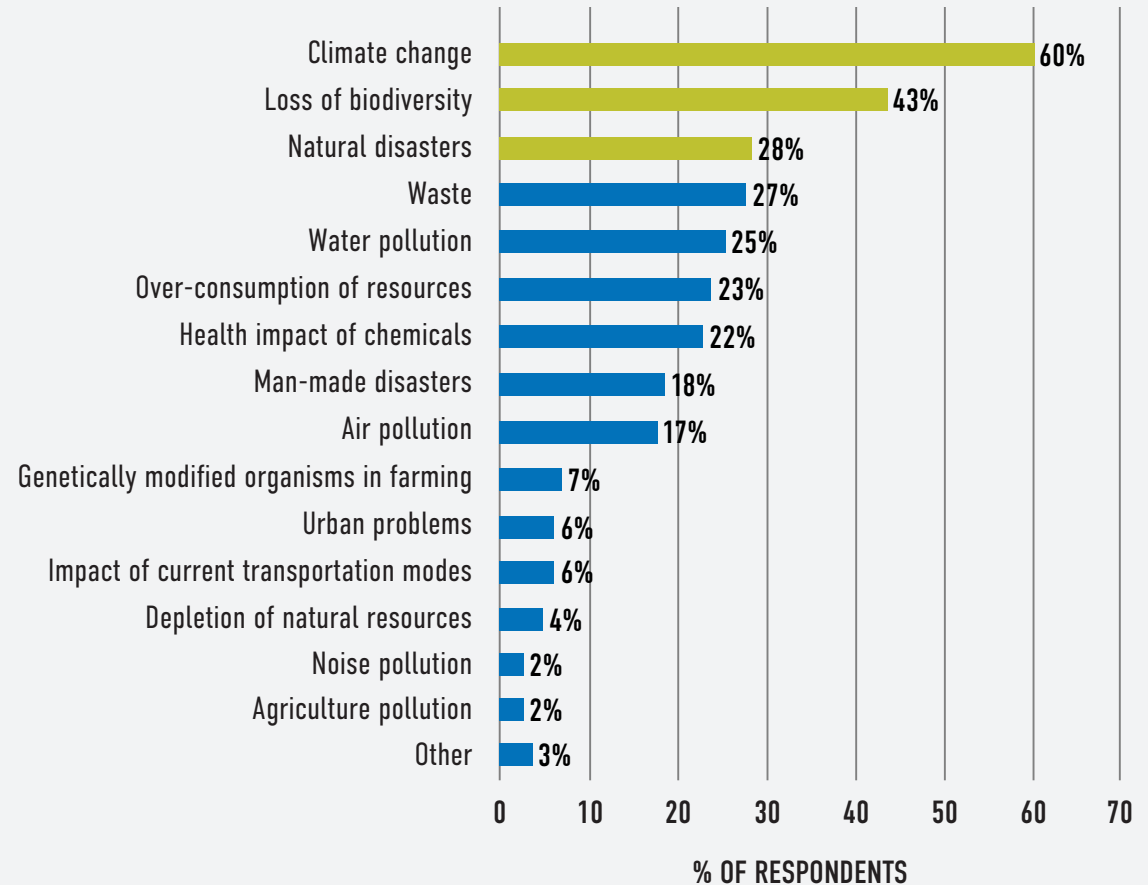
WHICH OF THESE THREE STATEMENTS ABOUT THE EARTH'S TEMPERATURE COMES CLOSEST TO YOUR VIEW?



TOP ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

Respondents were more concerned about some environmental issues than others. When asked to pick the top three most important environmental concerns, 60% of respondents prioritized climate change as one of the biggest concerns, and 43% expressed concern about the loss of biodiversity (loss of wildlife and habitats). About a quarter of respondents expressed concern about natural disasters (28%), waste (27%), and water pollution (25%). The graphic to the right shows additional concerns from respondents.

WHICH THREE ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES ARE YOU MOST CONCERNED ABOUT?

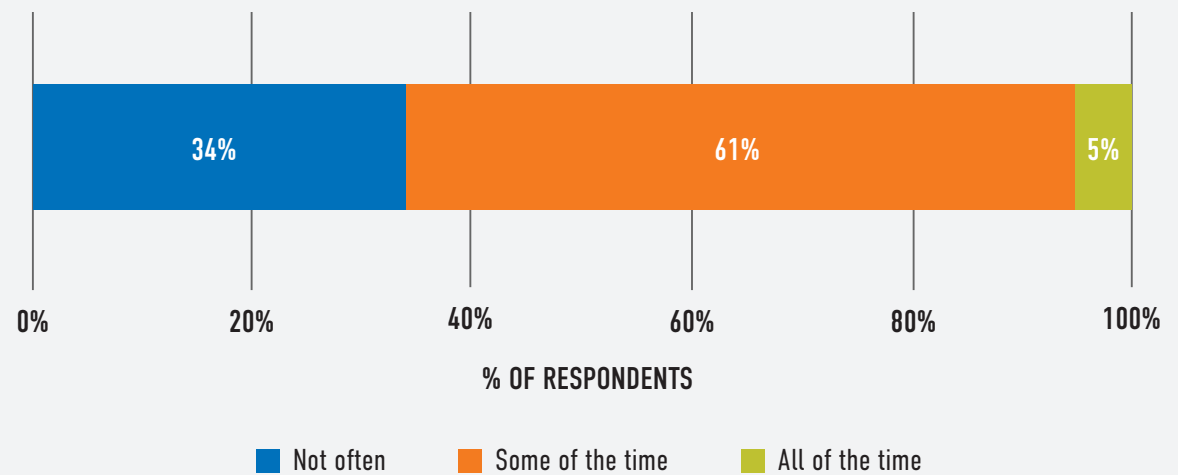




PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

Over 60% of respondents noted that they engage in environmentally friendly practices at least some of the time, and only about a third of respondents mentioned that they do not often try. Less than 1% of respondents indicated they were “not at all” willing to live in ways that help protect the environment.

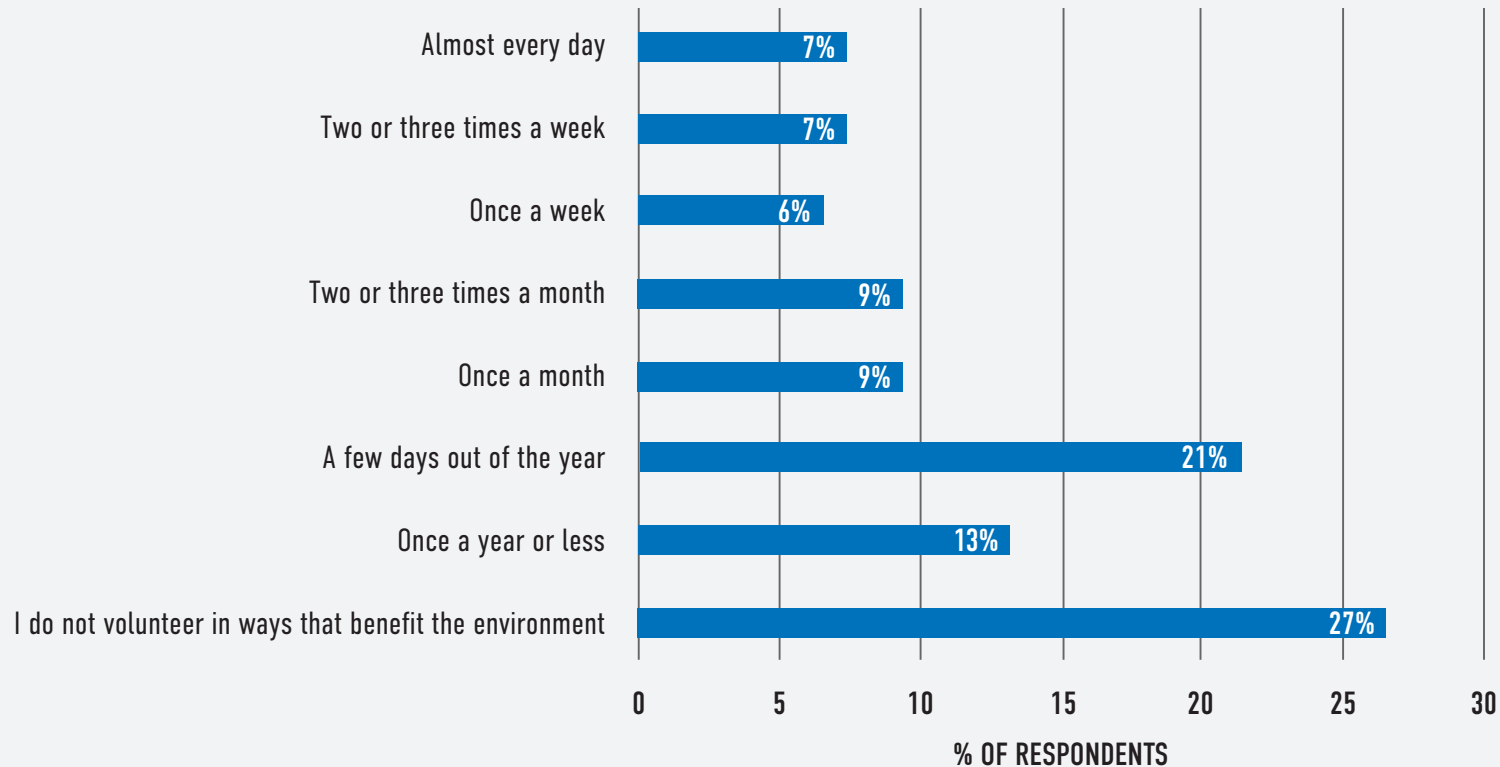
HOW OFTEN, IF EVER, DO YOU MAKE AN EFFORT TO LIVE IN WAYS THAT HELP PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT?



ENVIRONMENTAL ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS

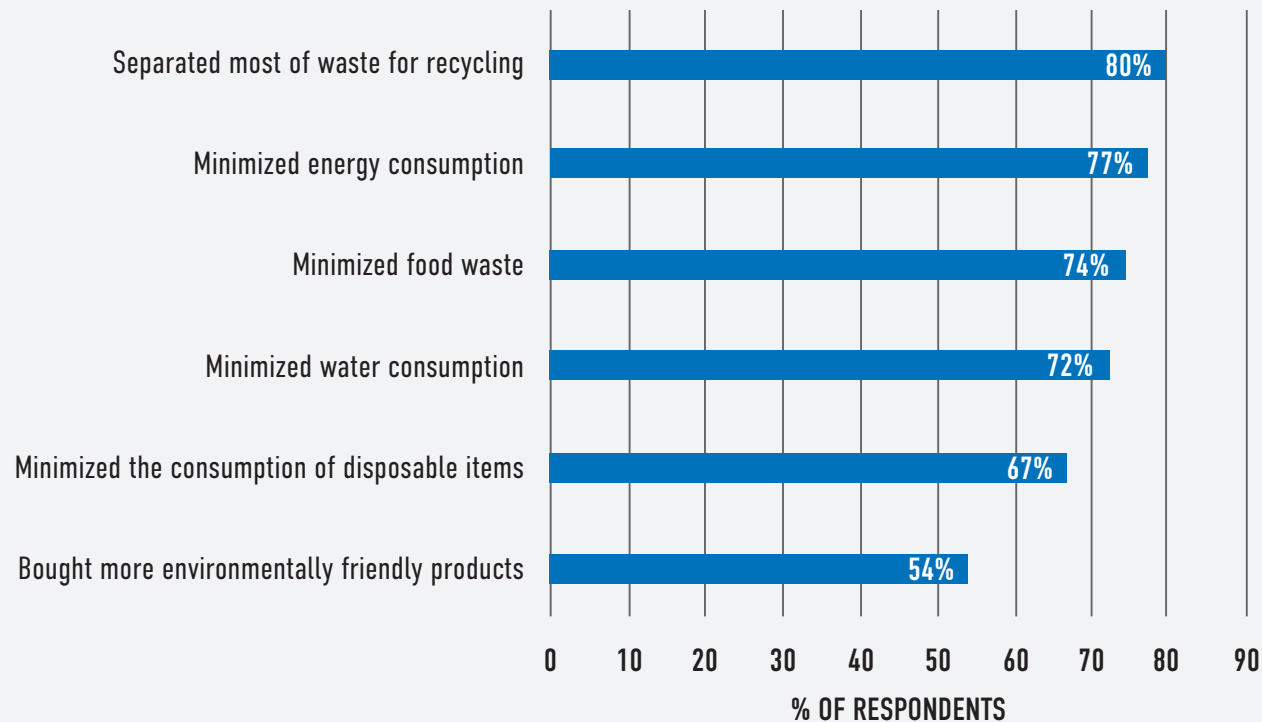
Not all respondents volunteer in ways that benefit the environment (such as planting trees, gardening, and picking up trash). In a typical year, 39% of respondents volunteer once a month or more frequently, while about a quarter of respondents do not volunteer at all.

IN A TYPICAL YEAR, HOW OFTEN DO YOU ENGAGE OR VOLUNTEER IN WAYS THAT BENEFIT THE ENVIRONMENT?



In order to help protect the environment, respondents engage in a large variety of environmentally friendly practices. Most respondents “often” or “very often” separated most of their waste for recycling (80%) and minimized their food waste (74%). They also minimized their energy consumption (77%), water consumption (72%), and disposable items (67%). About half bought more environmentally friendly products (54%).

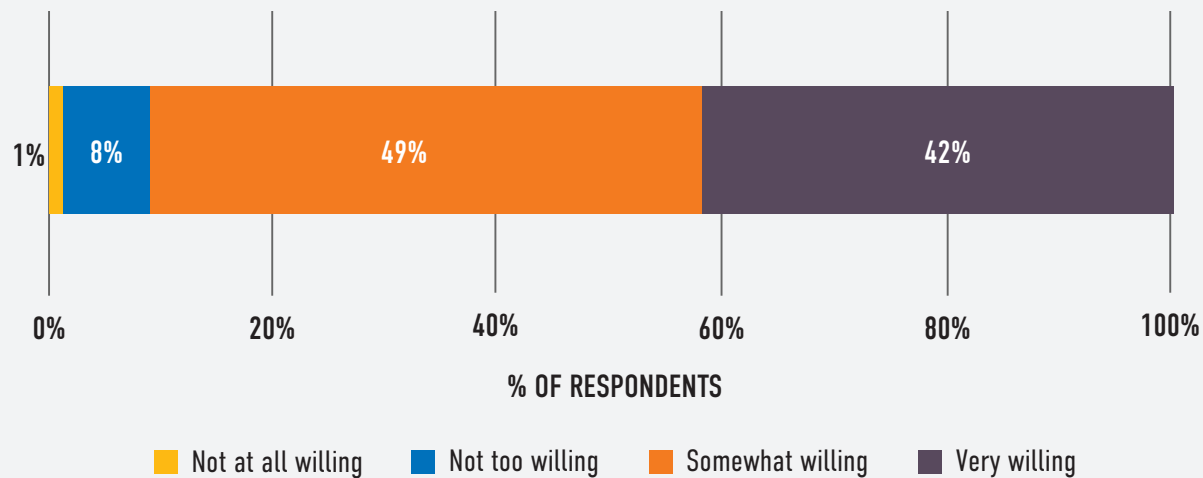
MOST COMMON ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY PRACTICES



RESPONDENTS' BEHAVIOR

Regardless of the extent to which respondents engage in environmentally friendly practices, more than 90% of respondents are at least somewhat willing to make future changes in the way that they live and work to help protect the environment.

HOW WILLING ARE YOU TO MAKE FUTURE CHANGES IN THE WAY THAT YOU LIVE AND WORK IN ORDER TO HELP PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT?

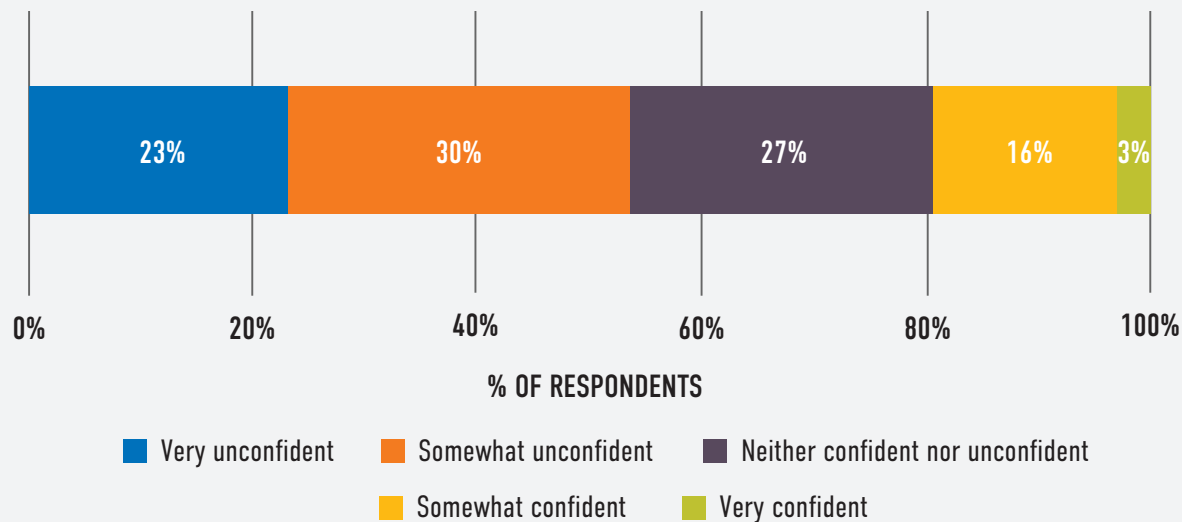


FUTURE OUTLOOK

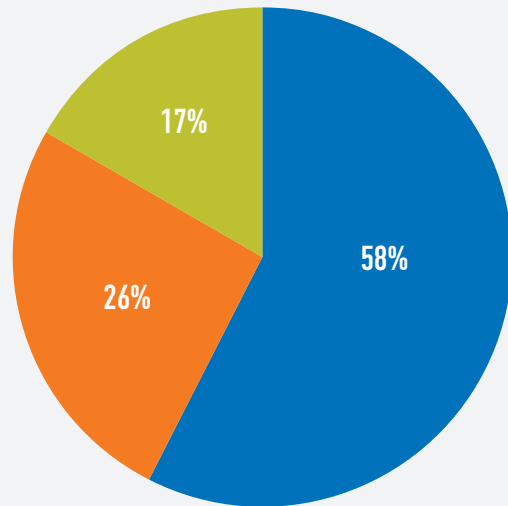
Despite how most respondents expressed extreme concern about the environment and engaged in a wide variety of environmentally friendly practices, respondents did not express much hope for the condition of the environment in the future.

Only one out of five respondents are at least somewhat confident that actions taken so far by society will significantly reduce the effects of climate change (19%), compared to over half of respondents who are at least somewhat unconfident (53%).

HOW CONFIDENT ARE YOU THAT THE ACTIONS TAKEN SO FAR BY SOCIETY WILL SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCE THE EFFECTS OF GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE?



**BY THE YEAR 2050,
DO YOU THINK THE OVERALL
CONDITION OF THE ENVIRONMENT
WILL BE BETTER THAN IT IS NOW,
WORSE THAN IT IS NOW,
OR THE SAME AS IT IS NOW?**



- Worse than it is now
- About the same as it is now
- Better than it is now

Not only are most respondents skeptical about the benefits of current environmentally friendly efforts, but most also think that the environment will be in worse condition by the year 2050 (58%). Only 17% of respondents were optimistic that the condition of the environment will be better by 2050.

ABOUT THE STUDY

The 658 respondents were ages 55+, and most were White/Caucasian (73%), female (60%), and married (60%). Almost two-thirds of respondents earned a bachelor's degree or higher education (65%), and 53% reported an annual household income of \$79,999 or less.

The study was conducted between June 6 and June 20, 2022, using a SurveyMonkey audience and a panel of respondents maintained by Mather Institute.



Staffed by a multidisciplinary team of researchers, Mather Institute is an award-winning resource for research and information about wellness, aging, trends in senior living, and successful industry innovations. In order to support senior living communities and others that serve older adults, the Institute shares its cutting-edge research in areas including effective approaches to brain health, ways to enhance resilience, and successful employee wellness programs. Mather Institute is part of Mather, an 80+-year-old not-for-profit organization dedicated to creating Ways to Age Well.SM

(888) 722.6468 | institute@mather.com | matherinstitute.com

